

The Sussex Bird Report

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P James, Dr JA Newnham, TW Parmenter, A Thomas & Dr BJ Yates.*

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Cover photograph by Ian Barnard

Reed Bunting at Weirwood Reservoir, March 2004.

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Best Annual Bird Report

Placed 3rd in 2000, 2001, 2002 and 4th in 2003 competitions.

Sussex Bird Report 2003 — Amendments & Corrections.

Very few errors in the 2003 *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>	Great Spotted Woodpecker, Red Kite (juv), Shelduck brood, Nightingale.
<i>John Reaney</i>	Great Grey Shrike, Whimbrel, Shore lark, Firecrest, Twite, Little Grebe, Whinchat.
<i>Bob Greenhalf</i>	Turnstone, Subalpine Warbler.

Photographic acknowledgements: The Photographic Editor would like to thank those photographers who submitted photographs of Sussex birds, taken in 2004, 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 are again due to the many contributors who submitted their records for inclusion in this 57th Sussex Bird Report. It is pleasing to see an increase in the number of contributors and a full list of acknowledgements, both to them and the many people who take part in regular surveys and counts, is given on pages 192-197.

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Number submitting records	394	383	472	507	590
Number of records received	53,271	49,553	60,031	59,040	65,730
Number of species recorded	269	257	261	258	262
Number of birds ringed	40,355	32,833	45,650	52,449	57,538
Number of species ringed	126	123	104	113	119

The species accounts were written by a large team of authors, namely **CJR Barfield, IT Barnard, Mrs VP Bentley, PM Brayshaw, C Brooks, DEG Copeland, JR Cowser, DE Crawley, J Curson, RJ Fairbank, D Green, AC Gutteridge, JA Hobson, CA Holt, A House, P James, ME Kalaher, G Kennett, R Knight, DJ Madgin, L Manns, MJ Mason, JA Newnham, PN Paul, RT Pepper, A Perry, GCM Roberts, A Thomas, AB Watson, JA Whitman and TJ Wilson**. The initials at the end of each species account identify the writer to whom sincere thanks are extended.

Thanks are also due to **Richard Fairbank, Paul James, Phil Jones, Robin Pepper, Adrian Thomas and Barry Yates** who read through the species accounts and suggested a number of improvements. As in previous years, some of the draft accounts have been altered and edited to reflect the suggestions made and to summarise the records in a more accessible form for future researchers. I trust that this action will not have offended any of the authors but, if it has done so, I offer my sincere apologies.

In addition to those already mentioned, special thanks must be given to **Tony Cocks** for editing the scientific papers, **Jon Curson** for writing the Review of the Year, **Tim Parmenter** for selecting the photographs for inclusion in the Report, **John Hobson** for coordinating the writing of the Systematic List, **John Newnham** for organising the computerisation of all the records and **David Brothwell** for typesetting the text.

Over the last four years the annual **Sussex Bird Report** was placed third for three years and then fourth last year in the BTO's Best Annual Bird Report Competition, a fitting testament to the dedication of all those involved.

Council has decided that the new species order announced by the BOU in October 2002 should now be used for the Annual Reports. In addition, the opportunity has been taken to incorporate those changes in species name on which there is reasonable consensus.

I trust that you will enjoy this Report. There has been a very encouraging increase in the number of people contributing records, including records of the more common species and I hope that this trend will continue over the coming years.

Nick Paul, November 2005

REVIEW OF 2004

by Jon Curson

As in previous years, this review of 2004 is a chronological summary (month by month) of the year's weather and significant birds, including high counts of various species, first and last arrival and departure dates, and other interesting and unusual records. A total of 262 species and sub-species was recorded in the county, which is four more than the total last year; the totals recorded since 1996 now range between 257 (in 1998 and 2001) and 269 (in 2000). The highlight of the year was arguably the four stunning-looking **Northern Long-tailed Tits** which frequented the Cockshut Road area of Lewes in January and February. Although 'only' a subspecies, these beautiful birds are rare in Britain and were admired by many observers during their stay. A **Lesser Scaup** at Scotney Court Gravel Pit from November into 2005 was the first county record (and long overdue?) but perhaps not quite as good looking! Other significant rarities included the first **Spotted Sandpiper** in the county since 1977 (which was unfortunately on private land and therefore not widely seen), and the county's 10th **Ring-necked Duck** and 12th **Subalpine Warbler**. Two **Yellow-browed Warblers** were seen during the first winter period, with another being seen in December.

Although not the best year on record for rarities, 2004 was notable in other ways. A pair of **Red Kites** nested in the county for the first time in almost 200 years and a pair of **Marsh Harriers** for the first time ever. The ca.300 pairs of **Sandwich Tern** at Rye Harbour probably produced in excess of 400 young, which is also a county record. The 80 **Mediterranean Gulls** at Pett Level constituted a new county record count and the fifth successive year that the record has been broken for this species. **Little Egrets**, **Honey Buzzards** and **Ravens** also nested in the county once again. Arrival and departure records were broken by the earliest **Hobby**, **Turtle Dove**, **Black Tern**, **Sedge Warbler** and **Swift** (the latter by a month), and the latest **Wood Warbler**. The largest flock of **Tree Sparrows** for many years was a welcome find in the east of the county and a very large flock of **Bramblings** on the West Sussex Downs was also notable. Two interesting escapes were also recorded during the year: a **Lesser Rhea** reported at Henfield in May was quite mind-boggling, while a **Spangled Cotinga** (a denizen of the Amazonian rainforest) in a Billingshurst garden in July was surely only slightly less startling. Photographs of some of the birds listed in this review appear in this Report and others can be found on Ian Barnard's Birds of Sussex web-site www.thebirdsofsussex.co.uk.

JANUARY was a very mild month, the mildest since 1990 over England as a whole. Rainfall was well below the average and it was also relatively sunny. The first half of the month was unsettled and windy; there was a brief spell of settled weather in the middle of the month as high pressure built, before a return to unsettled and colder conditions, with some snow showers in the east of the county. Mild weather returned at the very end of the month. Scarce and unusual birds remaining from 2003 included a **Yellow-browed Warbler** at Ivy Lake (Chichester Gravel Pits) until the 17th, a **Long-tailed Duck** on Barcombe Reservoir (on the 1st), a **Great Northern Diver** on Weir Wood Reservoir (until the 3rd), three **Snow Buntings** at Pett level (until 21 February), two **Twite** at West Wittering and **Great Grey Shrikes** on Ashdown Forest and Ambersham Common (where they ranged until 7 March and 9 January respectively). **Little Stints** were recorded at East Head (3), Rye Harbour (2) and Scotney Court Gravel Pit (1) throughout the early part of

the year. On the 1st, a **Red-necked Grebe** was at Pett Level (staying intermittently to the 13th) and the following day a **Black Brant** was at Climping and a male **Red-crested Pochard** was seen at Northpoint Pit. On the 3rd, the county's 10th **Ring-necked Duck** was found at Scotney Court GP, two **Pale-bellied Brent Geese** were at Climping, 16 **Ruffs** were recorded at Henfield Levels and 32 **Smews** at Castle Water included three drakes or 'white nuns'. A flock of 2000 **Golden Plovers** was at Rye Harbour on the 5th and the following day a second wintering **Yellow-browed Warbler** was discovered at Shinewater (Eastbourne), staying until the 19th. Also on the 6th, two **Pale-bellied Brent Geese** were seen at Pagham North Fields, remaining there until 13 March.

A **Shore Lark** found at Pett Level on the 7th was seen regularly until 28 March, often feeding with the three **Snow Buntings** there. An impressive 45 **Little Gulls** were at Brighton Marina on the 8th while, on the 9th, a **Great White Egret** was at Rye Harbour. A **Black Brant** appeared at West Wittering, where it stayed until 23 February, and two hybrid *branta* geese (presumably Black Brant x Dark-bellied Brent Goose) were also there during this time. The following day a flock of 3000 **Golden Plovers** was counted there. On the 13th, 60 **Ruffs** were at Pett Level and the next day a **Spoonbill** was seen there. Also on the 14th a flock of 250 **Bramblings** on the Downs between Storrington and Patching had increased to 400 by 21 February in what was a very good year for this species in Sussex. On the 18th, six **Tundra Bean Geese** were found with the **White-fronted Goose** flock at Scotney Court GP and were seen regularly until 2 March; a **Red-necked Grebe** was seen at nearby Northpoint Pit the same day. **Great Northern Divers** are regular at Selsey Bill in winter and a high count of five was seen there on the 20th. On the 21st, a **Hooded Crow** was found at Rye Harbour and stayed in the area until 22 March providing many with their first opportunity to see this newly 'split' species in the county. A **Black Brant** at Pagham Harbour on the 23rd was probably the West Wittering bird.

On the 24th, four stunning-looking **Northern Long-tailed Tits** were discovered in Lewes, staying until at least mid-February, where they were admired by many observers; at least one of these birds may have been present since 19 December 2003. On the same day 8000 **Dunlins** were counted on Pilsley Island and a high count for the year of 39 **Water Pipits** was made at the regular Combe Haven wintering site. A **Glaucous Gull** was seen at Telscombe Cliffs on the 26th and 34 **Ruffs** were at Amberley Wild Brooks on the 28th in what was a good winter for this species. A winter high count of 6 **Eurasian Bitterns** flew into roost at Castle Water (Rye Harbour LNR) on the 29th and the month ended with another **Glaucous Gull** at Rye Harbour on the 30th and a **Puffin** flying east past Telscombe Cliffs the same day.

The January *WeBS*' count recorded 7102 **Dark-bellied Brent Geese** and 11,413 **Dunlin** in Chichester Harbour and 3470 **Eurasian Wigeon** and 1132 **Eurasian Teal** at Amberley Wild Brooks.

FEBRUARY started mild, with mostly west or southwest winds, but colder than it had been at the start of the year. A cold front on the 5th-6th, which produced heavy thunderstorms in southwest England, did not affect Sussex in the same way and rainfall was once again well below the monthly average with some areas having only a quarter of the normal precipitation. The night of the 11th-12th was one of the mildest February nights on record in the southeast. The second half of the month was significantly colder, as Arctic airs blew in from the north and northeast, producing snow in some parts of East Sussex at the month's end. The month started with a high count of 115 Red-throated

Divers in Rye Bay, the only **Golden Pheasant** of the year reported at Deanlane End (Rowland's Castle) and the first drumming **Lesser-spotted Woodpecker** of the year at Burton Mill Pond where up to five **Eurasian Bitterns** were coming in to roost through most of the month. A **Great Grey Shrike** was at Iping Common on the 7th, while on the following day a **Red-crested Pochard** was at Chichester Harbour and 255 **Maggies** went to roost at Brighton Wild Park. On the 9th, there were two very early **House Martins** at Weir Wood Reservoir and 33 **Ruffs** at Rye Harbour. A **Glaucous Gull** at Rye Harbour on the 11th and 15th was presumably the bird that had been seen there in January. Also on the 11th, there was a **Pink-footed Goose** (which stayed until 3 March) with the flock of **White-fronted Geese** at Scotney Court Gravel Pit (which peaked at 187 two days later) and another **Great Grey Shrike**, this time at Weir Wood Reservoir.

Slavonian Grebes on the sea off Church Norton peaked at 35 on the 12th and 900 **Stock Doves** were counted at Rye Harbour on the 13th. The **Hen Harrier** roost at Scotney Court GP was well patronised during February with at least 11 birds seen during the middle of the month. A **Snow Bunting** on the sea wall at Selsey West Fields on the 14th was seen again four days later and two **Whooper Swans** of unknown origin were at Ivy Lake on the 15th, remaining there intermittently until 11 April. Following on from the **House Martins**, an almost equally unseasonal **Barn Swallow** was at Pett level on the 18th. A flock of 11 **Wood Larks** at Pett Level from the 21st until 2 March may have been continental birds. A second large flock of **Bramblings**, at Stapleash Farm (Chilgrove), peaked at 125 on the 22nd. A **Great White Egret** graced Rye Harbour on the 25th, while four days later there was a **Rough-legged Buzzard** at Mill Hill (Shoreham) and a very early **Pomarine Skua** past Telscombe Cliffs (this being the first February record since 1924).

The February *WeBS'* count recorded 352 **Great Crested Grebes** at Pett Level, 8290 **Dark-bellied Brent Geese** in Chichester Harbour and 325 **Shovelers** at Chichester Gravel Pit (the highest county total for this species in the last four years).

MARCH began as February had ended, with cold north or northeast winds and sharp overnight frosts. In the first week, there were some significant accumulations of snow in the east causing widespread travel disruption and school closures, with many areas recording their heaviest March snowfall for at least ten years. From the 9th, it became significantly warmer as winds returned to southwesterly. An area of high pressure built up in the third week, giving a spell of dry and sunny weather, but the weather became unsettled again in the last week and many areas remained relatively dry. The first **Northern Wheatear** of the year was seen at Newhaven Tide Mills on the 1st; the good showing of **Ruffs** continued with 20 at Scotney Court Gravel Pit on the 6th and the following day there was an astonishingly early **Common Swift** at Norman's Bay (beating the previous early county record for this species by a month). On 8th a **Turtle Dove** at Pond Lye beat the earliest county arrival date by two weeks. Three **Red-necked Grebes** were at Selsey on the 11th and on the same day the only **Scandinavian Rock Pipit** of the year was reported from Birling Gap. The passage up-channel of **Dark-bellied Brent Geese** was not particularly marked this year and 1017 east past Splash Point (Seaford) on the 12th was the highest day total. The next day saw a **Great White Egret** at Chichester Gravel Pit, the first **Sand Martin** of the year at Ditchling Common and a **Great Grey Shrike** again at Iping Common (remaining until the 23rd).

On the 14th, a **Serin** was seen at Selsey Bill, the first two of 20 spring **White Wagtails** were found at Stapleash Farm (Chilgrove) and the first **Little Ringed Plover** of the year was at Sidlesham Ferry. The following day, the first **Garganey** of the year was at Pett Level, a **Snow Bunting** was at Cuckmere Haven and there was a marked movement of **Slavonian Grebes** (which continued on the 16th) including ten east and two west past Splash Point. A total of 250 **Meadow Pipits** was noted at Selsey Bill on the 17th. On the 18th, the first **Willow Warbler** of the year was noted at Weir Wood Reservoir, there were three **Water Pipits** at Thorney Deeps and another **Serin**, this time at Ferring. There was a **Hoopoe** at Brighton on the 19th and 20th, while on the 21st the county's earliest ever **Hobby** was seen at Coldwaltham and the first **Common Redstart** of the year arrived at Hastings. Two days later, the earliest ever **Sedge Warbler** (by just one day!) arrived at Combe Haven; it or possibly a different bird was also reported from nearby Filsham. Telscombe Cliffs recorded its second **Puffin** of the year, flying west on the 25th, and the first of 13 spring **Ring Ouzels** was at Newick on the 27th, on which day there was also a **Chiffchaff** showing characteristics of one of the 'eastern' races at Steyning Sewage Farm. A **Pale-bellied Brent Goose** flew east past Birling Gap with **Dark-bellied Brents** on the 28th and the following day there was another **Hoopoe**, at Sidlesham, and the first **Tree Pipit** of the year at Newhaven Tide Mills. The month ended with five **Slavonian Grebes** off Splash Point and another **Pale-bellied Brent Goose** east past Brighton Marina, again with **Dark-bellied Brents**.

APRIL started warm and wet with bands of rain moving across Sussex from the west during the latter part of the first week. The second week was drier and colder, but warm wet weather returned during the third week. It was unseasonably warm in the latter third of the month but wet weather returned at the month's end with heavy, thundery rain, including a particularly violent storm over the Downs on the 28th. On the 1st, the first and second of 23 spring **Ospreys** were seen at Beachy Head and Ferring, the first **Common Tern** of the year was noted at Worthing, and a high count of 320 **Shovelers** flew east past Selsey Bill along with 3350 **Common Scoter**; there were also five **Black-necked Grebes** at Brighton Marina. The next day, Sussex's earliest ever **Black Tern** was seen at Easton Farm (Earnley) and a male **Kentish Plover** was present at Pilsey Island. Two days later, there was a female **Kentish Plover** at Pilsey Island and a female **Bluethroat** at Church Norton (the 18th since 1990). On the 6th, first sightings of the year included a **Common Whitethroat** at Hastings and a **Garden Warbler** at Barcombe. These were followed the next day by the first **Common Cuckoo** at Barcombe and **Eurasian Reed Warbler** at Rye Harbour while two **Spoonbills** flew east over Chichester Harbour. Three **Penduline Tits** seen at Filsham LNR on the 9th were the first in the county in spring. Other first sightings of the year came thick and fast in mid-April with an **Arctic Tern** at Rye Harbour on the 9th, two **Little Terns** at Rye Harbour on the 10th, **Common Nighthales** at Greatham and Pulborough Brooks on the 14th, two **Whinchats** at Sheepcote Valley and **Lesser Whitethroats** at Pulborough Brooks and Rye Bay Wood on the 16th, and **Grasshopper Warbler** at Alciston on the 20th.

The latter half of the month was notable for some less usual birds. These included a **Yellow-browed Warbler** reported at Warnham on the 11th, a **Wryneck** at the Isle of Thorns (Ashdown Forest) on the 13th (the first of three spring birds) and the first of ten spring **Pied Flycatchers** at Old Lodge (Ashdown Forest) on the 14th. In addition, three **Whooper Swans** flew west past Birling Gap, three **Water Pipits** were found at Thorney Deeps on the 16th, seven **Spoonbills** flew north over Denton on the 21st and a **Great Grey**

Shrike was found at The Severals (Church Norton) on the 23rd. These were followed by a **White Stork** over Crawley and a **Hoopoe** at Storrington on the 24th and another **Hoopoe** at Nutley on the 27th (which stayed until 1st May). There was then another (or possibly the same) **White Stork** over Pagham Harbour on the 28th and a **Red-rumped Swallow** in the lower Cuckmere on the 29th-30th. The first four **Spotted Flycatchers** of the year were at Church Norton on the 29th.

Seawatching was also productive. Sightings on the 15th included six **Black-necked Grebes** east and four west at Splash Point (Seaford) plus four lingering offshore at St. Leonards and, on the 16th, four **Garganey** east past Selsey Bill. On the 25th, 66 **Velvet Scoters** flew east past Brighton Marina, 44 east were counted at Splash Point and 30 past Selsey Bill. The following day, 64 **Pomarine Skuas** flew east past Splash Point and 105 **Little Gulls** went east past Brighton Marina.

*MAY began wet and thundery, becoming more showery after the first few days. The middle of the month was unseasonably warm and sunny as the Azores high exerted an early influence and, following the passage of a cold front on the 20th-21st, warm weather returned for the remainder of the month. Rainfall for the month as a whole was below average. On the 1st, the first **European Nightjars** and **Wood Warbler** of the year were noted in Ashdown Forest and there was another **Kentish Plover** at Pilsley Island. The following day, there was another significant passage of **Pomarine Skuas**, the high count being 80 east past Brighton Marina. There was also a **Spotted Crake** at Amberley Wild Brooks that day and a **White Stork** flew over West Hove Golf Course. Three **Curlew Sandpipers** were seen at Pett Level on the 3rd and a **Goshawk** was seen in the west of the county, the only report of this species all year. On the 4th, 88 **Manx Shearwaters** flew past Brighton Marina and the following day there was an astonishing report of a **Lesser Rhea** near Henfield. On the 6th, the last **Short-eared Owl** of the spring was recorded at Rye Harbour and the following day saw a **Hoopoe** at Thorney Deeps and a **Pectoral Sandpiper** at Pett Level – only the fourth county record of this species in spring. On the 8th, two **Spoonbills** flew over Henfield, there was a **Stone-Curlew** at Pett Level and another **Hoopoe**, this time at Hastings. A **White Wagtail** at the Breech Pool (Pagham Harbour) on the 10th stayed until 15 June, providing an unusual summer record.*

On the 11th, there was a **Temminck's Stint** at the Breech Pool, which stayed the next day, and 20 **Hobbies** were seen at Pevensey Levels. A **White Stork** flew over Hooe Level (Pevensey) on the 12th; these birds wander widely and one wonders how many individuals there actually were in Sussex this spring. Three days later there was a **Purple Heron** at Horse Eye Level (Pevensey) and the first **Roseate Tern** of the year was noted at Rye Harbour. A **Long-tailed Skua** was reported past Birling Gap on the 17th and on the 18th an elusive **Black Kite** drifted over Mount Caburn (Lewes).

The latter third of the month started with the first **Common Quail** of the year at Newmarket Hill on the 22nd. Another **Temminck's Stint** at the Breech Pool on the 24th was joined by a second bird the following day. Three more **Curlew Sandpipers** dropped in to Pett Level on the 26th and an adult female **Red-footed Falcon** was found at Cocking on the 27th. On the 28th, there was a **Purple Heron** at Pett Level and a **Dotterel** on the Downs above Alfriston and the month ended with a male **Silver Pheasant** in West Dean Woods on the 31st (where a male was also seen last year).

JUNE was warm and settled for the majority of the month, but the latter third was more changeable and a major Atlantic front crossed the region on 22nd-23rd with gales

along the channel coast. This depression was one of the deepest ever recorded in June in England (at 982 mbar) with gusts of more than 50 knots along the coast. The **Silver Pheasant** reported from West Dean Woods on 31 May was seen nearby at Stead Combe (Cocking) on the 3rd. Up to three **Roseate Terns** were seen regularly at the Ternery Pool (Rye Harbour LNR) from the 5th-26th. A minimum of four **Common Quail** were calling on the Downs near Lancing from the 13th into July. A **Marsh Warbler** was trapped at Pett Level on the 20th and a **Spoonbill** was at Pagham Harbour the same day. Two **European Storm Petrels** flew west past Selsey Bill on the 24th and on the 26th another **Marsh Warbler** was seen at Pagham Harbour. A **Pomarine Skua** which flew west past Selsey Bill on the 30th could have been one returning early. A flock of 25 **Mistle Thrushes** near Worthing on the 27th was the largest flock reported of the year.

As is perhaps usual, the county's birds experienced mixed fortunes in the breeding season, though there were some undoubted successes and exciting occurrences. The **Great Cormorant** colony at Castle Water (Rye Harbour LNR) continued to grow with a record 132 nests there. Some of these birds were proved through DNA tests to be of the continental race *sinensis*; this therefore constitutes the first confirmed nesting of *sinensis* in Sussex, although the birds have been breeding at Rye Harbour for several years. **Little Egrets** bred at five locations, the largest of which contained 12 nests. There were 247 **Grey Heron** nests at 21 heronries, a reduction from the 267 at 23 sites recorded last year. A pair of **Red Kites** nested in the west of the county for the first time since the early 1800s, raising two young; this is hopefully the beginning of a re-colonisation of the county by this magnificent raptor. Meanwhile, in East Sussex, a pair of **Marsh Harriers** bred for the first time ever, also rearing two young. Remaining on the raptor theme, three pairs of **Honey-buzzards** nested successfully, each raising two young and 13 pairs of **Peregrine Falcons** raised at least 33 young; three of these were on coastal cliffs, seven in inland quarries and three in nestboxes on tall buildings in towns. The decline in **Grey Partridge** numbers continued, with records received from only 11 sites (compared with 20 last year) during the breeding season. Three pairs of **Garganeys** stayed at Pulborough Brooks through June but no signs of breeding were detected.

Avocets had another good year, with ten pairs raising at least 30 young, all in the east of the county. At Rye Harbour, 31 pairs of **Oystercatchers** fledged 20-25 young and for the second year running one pair bred on a flat roof. A total of 52 pairs of **Ringed Plovers** nested in the county, 41 of these being at Rye Harbour, and 149 pairs of **Northern Lapwings** bred at 32 sites, including 29 at Rye Harbour and 25 at Pett Level. **Common Redshanks** also did reasonably well with 60-67 pairs at 12 sites, including 13 pairs at Rye Harbour which raised 15 young, and 7-12 pairs at Pulborough Brooks. Gulls and terns had mixed fortunes at Rye Harbour: 27 pairs of **Mediterranean Gulls** reared at least 36 young and 300 pairs of **Sandwich Terns** probably produced more than 400 young, which would be a county record. The 18 pairs of **Little Terns**, however, reared only five chicks between them, due to combination of poor weather and probable predation by **Common Kestrels**. This species did not breed at South Stakes Island (Chichester Harbour) this year. The 95 pairs of **Common Terns** at Rye Harbour fared considerably better, raising 175 young; 165 pairs also nested at Pett Level, but fledging success there was not reported, and at least two young were raised on Tern Island in Pagham Harbour this year.

Barn Owls were confirmed as breeding at 97 sites (two fewer than in 2003); 63 pairs in the west reared 184 young, while 34 pairs in the east reared 104. The National Nightjar

Breeding Survey found a total of 228 male **European Nightjars** in 109 1-km squares. The Wealdon Heaths Breeding Birds Survey found 51 territorial males in ten sites, while on Ashdown Forest there were 67 males. Worryingly, **Lesser-spotted Woodpeckers** were reported as breeding or probably breeding at only six sites, with evidence of territorial activity from another four. A total of 54-55 pairs of **Wood Larks** was recorded breeding in the county, down on the 68-70 pairs reported last year. This species appears to have stabilised in recent years, following a rapid increase in the 1990s. The 102 territories of **Wrens** in Brighton Wild Park were remarkably similar to the 103 in 2003 and a comparable result came from Rye Harbour LNR, where 35 territories were mapped within the SSSI in 2004, as against 36 in 2003.

Only one singing **Black Redstart** was reported, in Horsham, during the breeding season, and 38 pairs of **Common Redstarts** were reported, just two fewer than last year; Pippingford Park in Ashdown Forest again held most pairs with 20 this year. Singing male **Cetti's Warblers** were reported from 17 sites, two more than last year, and included eight at Rye Harbour, 12 at Pett Level, seven in the Arun Valley and nine at Thorney Deepes, which latter raised about 36 young. Only seven reeling **Grasshopper Warblers** were reported from five sites, while the estimated 97-102 pairs of **Dartford Warblers** in the county were only marginally less than last year. Between six and eight pairs of **Wood Warblers** were found, compared with seven-ten last year, and just 12 pairs of **Firecrests** were reported from West Dean Woods; this was only about half the number recorded last year but a complete survey was not carried out this year. At least one pair of **Ravens** bred at Beachy Head and raised two young. Another pair bred at the regular site near Shoreham hatching five chicks, of which four fledged and one was taken by a fox. Twelve pairs of **Tree Sparrows** breeding in nest boxes in the Brede Valley was a very welcome turnaround in this species' fortunes in the county. There was also a pair at Pett Level but no breeding records from elsewhere.

JULY began with a rather unsettled spell of sunshine and frequent thundery showers for the first 11 days and it was cool, with a northwesterly airflow during the latter part of this period. High pressure then built up and the remainder of the month was largely settled with long sunny periods. July is often a quiet month bird-wise and this year was no exception. However, an escaped **Spangled Cotinga** was seen and photographed in a Billingshurst garden on the 2nd and again on the 13th, a quite extraordinary record of this Amazon rainforest species. A **Spoonbill** was present at Pett Level on various dates between the 4th and 17th, and was joined by a second bird on the 11th. A **Roseate Tern** was seen at Pagham Harbour on the 4th and a **Eurasian Bittern** was at Rye Harbour on the 13th; perhaps they will breed at Castle Water before too long. Another **Spoonbill** frequented Pagham Harbour from the 13th to the 22nd and a **Night Heron** was at Weir Wood Reservoir from the 22nd to the 24th. On a more predictable note, the first returning **Northern Wheatear** was seen at Thorney Island on the 25th and the first passage **Whinchats** were singles at Shoreham on the 27th and Newhaven Tide Mills on the 31st. Early returning migrant waders included two **Purple Sandpipers** at Brighton Marina on the 21st and a **Little Stint** at Pilsey Sands on the 27th.

The July WeBS' count recorded a notable 323 **Great Crested Grebes** at Bewl Water and 445 **Great Cormorants** at Rye Harbour.

AUGUST was a very wet month overall, with more than double the average rainfall nationally, and it was also hot and humid for much of the month. Sussex did not get as

much torrential rain as other parts of the U.K. and escaped the flooding which occurred in e.g. Boscastle (Cornwall) mid-month. It was cooler at the end of the month as the winds switched to the northwest following the passage of a low front, but the last day of the month was fine and settled. A **European Bee-eater** flew over Pett Level on the 3rd and there was a **Great White Egret** at Chichester Harbour and the first **Pied Flycatcher** of the autumn was seen at Sidlesham Ferry the same day. The following day there was a high autumn count of 210 **Yellow-legged Gulls** at Pagham Harbour. On the 5th, the first of six autumn **Wood Warblers** was noted at Pagham Harbour and an **Eurasian Bittern** at Pett Level was also seen on three subsequent dates during the month. The first **Short-eared Owl** of the autumn was seen at Rye Harbour on the 7th and an **Aquatic Warbler** was seen at Thorney Deeps on the 10th. A **Marsh Warbler** was trapped at Pett Level on the 13th and a second-year male **Montagu's Harrier** was at Selsey West Fields two days later.

A **Spoonbill** roosted at Pagham Harbour on the 17th and on the same day the **Wood Sandpiper** flock, which had been building at the new flood on Pett Level all month, peaked at 18 birds which is a county record for a single site, exceeding the 15 at The Midrips on 3 Sep 1956. A **Wryneck** was discovered in a Steyning garden on the 20th, the first of ten recorded during the autumn but unusual inland. A total of nine **Marsh Harriers** flew out to sea from Scotney Court Gravel Pit on the 21st and there were 12 **Pied Flycatchers** at Beachy Head on the same day. **Honey Buzzards** were seen at Beachy Head on the 22nd and the 28th, in what was a poor autumn for this species, and three **Ospreys** were seen at Thorney Deeps on the 29th. A rather quiet August closed with five **Red Knots** inland at Arlington Reservoir on the 30th.

The August WeBS' count recorded 330 **Great Crested Grebes** at Bewl Water; a county high count for the year.

SEPTEMBER began as August had finished, with high pressure giving warm and sunny weather for the first ten days. It then became more changeable with low pressure systems bringing bands of cloud and rain during the rest of the month. Despite this it was quite warm with above average sunshine and below average rainfall. The month began with four **Spoonbills** at Pagham Harbour on the 1st. An **Aquatic Warbler** was trapped at Pett Level on the 4th and the same day the last **Common Nightingales** of the year were seen at Sheepcote Valley and Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head). A **Great White Egret** which arrived at Rye Harbour on the 6th stayed until at least 12 October; it had been colour ringed in France in May 2004. A juvenile **Montagu's Harrier** was seen at Selsey West Fields on the 8th and what was probably the same bird was at Pagham Harbour the following day. Also on the 8th, the first three **Fieldfares** of the autumn were reported from Sidlesham, two **Little Stints** were seen at Arlington Reservoir (one stayed to the 11th) and a **Marsh Warbler** was trapped at Pett Level on the 9th. Another **Spoonbill** was at Pagham Harbour from the 11th to the 16th and a juvenile **Long-tailed Skua** flew west past Selsey Bill on the 14th.

A juvenile **Red-necked Grebe** at Darwell Reservoir on the 15th stayed until 3 October and there were six **Little Stints** at Sidlesham Ferry on the 16th. There were two **Curlew Sandpipers** inland at Arlington Reservoir on 18th. On the 19th, a major rarity arrived at Darwell Reservoir in the form of a **Spotted Sandpiper**; it stayed until at least 3 October and was the first record for the county since 1977. Unfortunately it was on private land and access restrictions unfortunately meant the news could not be broadcast. Single **Sooty Shearwaters** were recorded off Selsey Bill on the 20th and 23rd and a **Dotterel** found at

Springhead Hill (Storrington) on the 21st stayed until the 23rd. Also on the 21st there were eight **Little Stints** at the Breech Pool (Pagham Harbour). A **Common Cuckoo** recorded at Cuckmere Haven on the 22nd, four **Curlew Sandpipers** at Thorney Deeps on the 27th and a **Garganey** seen at Pagham Harbour on the 29th were all the last of their kind for the year. Also on the 29th, single **Spoonbills** were seen at Pagham Harbour and over Hastings.

OCTOBER was a wet and windy month overall with nearly double the average rainfall nationally, though there was a brief spell of more settled weather from the 7th to the 11th. A series of Atlantic depressions brought frequent rain and the 20th was particularly wet, with thunderstorms in many places. High pressure built on the 30th giving a quieter end to the month, though this resulted in some dense fog patches forming. The first **Slavonian Grebe** of the season was seen at Sidlesham Ferry on the 4th. On the 7th, there was a **Yellow-browed Warbler** at Cissbury Ring but, perhaps more unusually, the county's latest ever **Wood Warbler** was at Pagham Harbour the same day. The following day another **Yellow-browed Warbler** was found at Horseshoe Plantation (Beachy Head) and a **Little Ringed Plover** at Rye Harbour on the same day equalled the latest ever date. On the 9th, the last **Spotted Flycatcher**, **Sedge Warbler** and **Tree Pipit** of the year were at Pagham Harbour, Pett Level and Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) respectively. On the 10th, yet another **Spoonbill** arrived at Pagham Harbour, staying until the 28th. Also on the 10th there were 59 **Song Thrushes** at Hastings Country Park and a very impressive movement of **Redwings**, including 10,000 over Sheepcote Valley and 2100 over Hastings. A **Great Grey Shrike** returned to Ashdown Forest on the 11th and was seen regularly at least until 23 November. Seven **Firecrests** arrived at Beachy Head on the 12th and there were 40 **Goldcrests** at Sheepcote Valley on the 13th, with 60 at Pett Level the following day. A **Turtle Dove** at Durrington on the 13th, associating with a flock of **Collared Doves**, was the last one of the year and remained until the 19th. Also on the 13th, the last **Lesser Whitethroat** of the year was seen at Pett Level. Another **Great Grey Shrike** turned up on the 15th at West Hove Golf Course and there was an impressive count of 18 **Ring Ouzels** at Beachy Head the same day. The next day the last **Hobby** of the year was noted at Beachy Head.

Continuing the theme of departing summer visitors, the last **Common Redstart**, **Garden Warbler** and **Osprey** were seen on the 17th at Hardham, Pett Level and Arlington Reservoir respectively. On the same day there were reports of **Red-crested Pochards** at Burton Mill Pond and Chichester Gravel Pits, the former staying until the 19th. A **Snow Bunting** at Kingston (Lewes) on the 19th was an unusual inland record. Also on the 19th, 19 **Tree Sparrows** flew west at Hastings and a **Great Grey Shrike** was at Ashdown Forest; this one was considered to be different to the previous one as it had no tail; it was also seen on the 28th. The last **Black Tern** of the year was at Worthing Beach on the 23rd and the last **Common Quail** of the year was a very late bird found dead in the road at Runcton (Chichester) on the 24th.

Another **Red-crested Pochard** was found on the 25th, this time at Milton Mount Lake (Crawley). On the 26th, a **Little Auk** was at Pagham Harbour and a different individual, found in Pagham village, was taken into care at Brent Lodge but unfortunately died. Also on the 26th, the last **Common Swift** of the year was seen at Wisborough Green (a remarkably late date); there were **Pallas's Leaf** and **Yellow-browed Warblers** at Beachy Head (the latter trapped at Whitbread Hollow) and the county's 12th **Subalpine Warbler** was found at The Severals (Church Norton) – this latter was the latest ever record for the

county. A second **Pallas's Leaf Warbler** was found in Eastbourne on the 27th, remaining there for the next two days, and a **Spoonbill** was at Rye Harbour, staying until the following day. Two **Arctic Terns**, unusually inland, at Arlington Reservoir on the 28th were the last of the year while eight **Little Terns** at Brooklands were remarkably late and also the last of the year. On the 30th, the last **Reed** and **Grasshopper Warblers** of the year were at Beachy Head. On the last day of the month a **Pallas's Leaf Warbler** was trapped at Whitbread Hollow, three **Common Terns** at Brighton Marina were the last of the year and 500 **Sanderling** at Ferring was one of the highest ever counts of this species in the county.

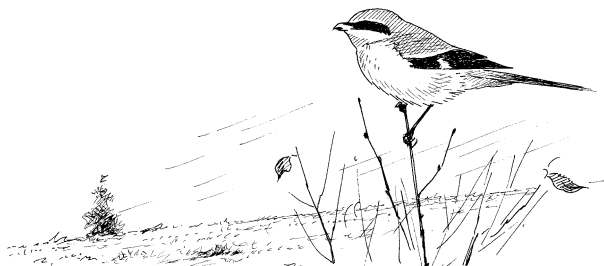
*NOVEMBER was much drier than October, with below average rainfall, but it was generally dull. The first week was mainly dominated by high pressure, with the first air frost recorded on the night of the 5th, though a front brought rain to coastal areas in particular on the 2nd. It remained relatively quiet, but with occasional weather fronts moving through, until the 18th when it became much colder with Arctic winds bringing snow as far south as the Chilterns (but not to Sussex). It warmed up on the 21st as westerly winds returned, but there was another cold snap, with overnight frost, on the 30th. On the 1st, the last **Northern Wheatear** of the year was noted at Cobnor Point (Chichester) and on the 3rd there was a **Spoonbill** at Rye Harbour, a **Pallas's Leaf Warbler** in Ovingdean Churchyard, a **Yellow-browed Warbler** at Pagham Harbour (and also there the following day) and 120 **Blackbirds** were counted at Sheepcote Valley. There was an arrival of **Firecrests** on the 3rd-4th, with seven at Beachy Head, five at Whitehawk Hill and five at Climping. A very late **Willow Warbler** was seen at Pagham Harbour on the 4th and presumably the same bird was subsequently seen on the 9th and 24th. There were reports of this species wintering elsewhere so perhaps this individual was attempting to do the same. The 5th saw two **Great Northern Divers** at Bewl Water, a juvenile **Rough-legged Buzzard** and the last **Common Whitethroat** of the year at Beachy Head and a very late **Corn Crake** trapped at Pett Level. The next day four **Snow Buntings** arrived at Rye Harbour and the last **Whinchat** of the year was seen at Newhaven, while four **Dartford Warblers** at Pagham Harbour was a high count for the autumn at that locality. A **Black Brant** was seen at Chichester Harbour on the 9th and remained there until at least 20 December; it may have been the returning West Wittering bird seen earlier in the year.*

On the 11th, there were seven **Snow Buntings** at East Head, eight at Pett Level, two **Red-necked Grebes** at Church Norton and three **Water Pipits** at Sidlesham Sewage Works (which were also seen on the 23rd). A **Ring Ouzel** at Sheepcote Valley on the 12th was the last of the year and on the 13th there was a very large movement of c.16,400 **Woodpigeons** over Brighton; another c.15,500 the following day made these the largest recorded movements of the year for this species. Also on the 14th, a **Red-crested Pochard** was at Chichester Gravel Pits, a **Little Auk** was seen at Rye Harbour and a flock of 90 **Corn Buntings** was at Sidlesham Sewage Works. On the 17th another major rarity arrived, in the form of the county's first **Lesser Scaup** at Scotney Court Gravel Pit. This species has been eagerly anticipated in Sussex and was well-watched during its long stay (into 2005). The only **Grey Phalarope** of the year was at Snowhill (West Wittering) also on the 17th, while a **Red-crested Pochard** at Chington Pond (Duncton) on the 19th may have been the bird that was at Burton Mill Pond in October. Yet another **Red-crested Pochard** was seen on the 22nd, this time at Pett Level Pools, and a total of 12 **Cetti's Warblers** was recorded at Thorney Deepes on the 23rd. At the end of the month, an impressive count of 4000 **Golden Plover** was made at Northpoint Pit on the 29th and on

the 30th five **Greater Scaup** turned up on Brooklands Lagoon (Worthing) staying into December.

DECEMBER. *The first two weeks were generally dry and quite sunny, but it was cold at times with the temperature only reaching 3°C at Shoreham on the 3rd, where fog lingered all day. There was another cold snap on the 12th-13th as the winds swung to the southeast, but it warmed up on the 14th and a weather front arrived from the west on the 17th giving strong winds and heavy rain and a reported tornado at Brede. After this, colder weather returned, but it became milder again at the very end of the month as another weather front brought a spell of rain on the 30th, clearing to give a sunny end to the year.* The month began well with a **Yellow-browed Warbler** at Hardham on 1st-2nd and two late **Sand Martins** at Lancing that were only four days short of the county record for late departures. There was a **Water Pipit** at Barcombe Reservoir on the 4th and an impressive flock of 59 **White-fronted Geese** was seen in the lower Cuckmere Valley on the 7th. On the 9th, 70 **Corn Buntings** were counted at Beeding Cement Works which is a respectable winter flock and a high count for the season of ten **Long-eared Owls** was made at an undisclosed winter roost site. A **Tundra Bean Goose** was seen at Charleston Reed Bed on the 11th and 15 **Ruffs** were at Amberley Wild Brooks on the 12th. On the 14th, a large flock of passerines on setaside at Pett Level included 270 **Tree Sparrows** and 300 **Reed Buntings**. This flock had been accumulating since October; 270 is the highest number of **Tree Sparrows** that has been recorded in the county for many years, hopefully setting a welcome trend, and 300 **Reed Buntings** is also a very welcome number for this red-listed species. Eight **Hawfinches** at Eartham Woods on the 19th was the highest count for the year. Five **Greater Scaup** on the Adur on the 21st were presumably the birds from Brooklands and the **White-fronted Goose** flock was seen again in the lower Cuckmere on the 22nd. On the 26th, two **White-fronted Geese** were seen on Weir Wood Reservoir and two **Hen Harriers** were quartering Pevensey Levels. The year ended with a large influx of **Fieldfares**, including an amazing 3000 at Lewes Brooks on the 28th, 1000 at Findon on the 30th and 1000 at Pett level on the 31st.

The December WeBS² count recorded 2321 **Eurasian Teal** and 834 **Pintail** at Pagham Harbour.



CLASSIFIED RECORDS FOR 2004

This list covers all species in Categories A and C of the BOU check list with records of Category D species listed separately.

In October 2002, the BOU announced a new systematic order to replace the Voous order that has been used for many years. The Society's Council has now decided that the new BOU species order should be used with effect from this Annual Report. As yet there have been no corresponding changes to Euring Numbers, which continue to be shown against each species.

In addition, the Society's Council has decided that the Annual Report should incorporate some of the changes to species names that have been recommended by the BOU. Considerable debate is still taking place on the names of certain species and this Report therefore includes only those changes on which a reasonable consensus has been reached.

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
Very rare		1-10 records in total
Rare	less than annual	Less than annual
Very scarce	1-10 per year	1-20 per year
Scarce	11-100	21-200
Fairly common	101-1000	201-2000
Common	1001-5000	2001-10,000
Very common	5001-30,000	10,001-60,000
Abundant	30,000+	60,000+

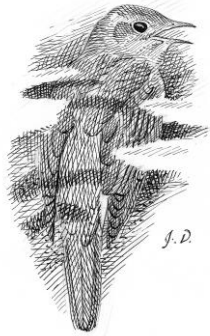
Seawatching records were received from several sites. The following table lists the hours watched in each month at the four locations for which this information was available:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	20	5	39	89	219	36	25	39	72	58	24	23
Worthing Beach	13	7	17	65	37	3	9	11	14	25	22	12
Brighton Marina	12	8	29	159	108	7	0	0	0	4	4	7
Splash Point (Seaford)	0	0	12	31	17	0	0	1	0	0	0	0

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 2004 the recommended dates were 25 Jan, 22 Feb, 21 Mar, 25 Apr, 23 May, 20 Jun, 18 Jul, 22 Aug, 19 Sep, 17 Oct, 14 Nov and 12 Dec. 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. Prior to 1996 the sites displayed in these tables were randomly selected, invariably choosing sites with the highest counts. Between 1996 and 2003 the tables presented sites where any of the monthly counts held 5% or more of the county total for that month. The tables in this Report, however, show only sites where this figure is reached during the core (Sep – Mar) monthly counts.

The following abbreviations are used in the Systematic List as standard practice:

N,S,E,W etc.	As cardinal compass points	LNR	Local Nature Reserve
BBRC	British Birds Records Committee	NR	Nature Reserve
BTO	British Trust for Ornithology	NNR	National Nature Reserve
BOU	British Ornithologists Union	Res	Reservoir
CBC	Common Bird Census	RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
CP	Country Park	SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
Fm	Farm	WeBS	Wetland Bird Survey
FMD	Foot and Mouth Disease	WBBS	Wetland Breeding Bird Survey
GP	Gravel Pit	WWT	Wildfowl & Wetland Trust
GC	Golf Course	ha	hectare(s)
Hbr	Harbour	hr	hour(s)
IUCN	The World Conservation Union	km	kilometre(s)
MP	Mill Pond	km²	square kilometre(s)
R	River	m	metre(s)
SF	Sewage farm or works	nc	no count



0152. MUTE SWAN

*Cygnus olor***Fairly common resident. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.**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	946	788	692	361	283	167	461	287	709	732	691	687
Chichester Hbr	158	123	76	75	8	5	146	90	188	173	195	179
Chichester GP	84	89	80	4	2	2	5	55	56	53	29	
Climping	82	65	49	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	86	79	66	93
Bury Brooks	151	11	18	10	2	3	7	2	6	4	nc	10
Pulborough Brooks	36	12	32	14	35	11	15	8	23	40	15	6
Adur (Steyning – Henfield)	16	56	42	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	Nc	47	21	14
Henfield Brooks	8	44	37	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	21	29	49	39
Iford Brooks	10	25	26	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	Nc	23	31	50
Eastbourne Lakes	63	58	53	42	nc	nc	nc	nc	68	52	61	53
Pevensey Levels	25	98	28	34	29	10	nc	40	54	17	43	47
Scotney Court GP	110	30	76	73	74	nc	136	63	21	6	18	7

Notable counts at the start of the year, that are not shown in the table, were 82 at Lewes Brooks and 86 in the Upper Adur Valley, both on 4 Jan, 81 at Castle Water (Rye Hbr) on 2 Feb and 108 near Ford on 12th.

The first reported nesting activity was 12 days later than the previous year with pairs at the nest at Warnham LNR on 21 Mar and The Severals (Church Norton) on the 23rd. The first hatching was noted on 12 May at Southwater CP and at Thorney Deepes where seven cygnets were noted, five of which fledged but were later taken by a fox. Breeding was confirmed at at least 12 sites as follows (the number of cygnets shown in parenthesis): two farm ponds in Yapton (six and two respectively), South Stoke (two), Billingshurst (five), Warnham LNR (six), Partridge Green (two), Upper Adur Levels (seven), Henfield Levels (two broods of six and eight), Widewater (Lancing) (two broods of four and six in June but one pair with seven cygnets in July), Glynde Levels (six), Shinewater (Eastbourne) (two pairs raised three and five), East Guldeford Level (a single adult with one) and Castle Water/Farm (Rye Hbr LNR) (three pairs, one with four cygnets). Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas are shown on pages 189 – 191.

A concerning report related to a pair at West Langney (Eastbourne) which were attacked on 11 Apr by youths who stoned them, hit them with branches and smashed their eggs.

There were no significant spring coastal records – the totals for May at Selsey Bill and Worthing were 2 E and 3 E respectively.

On 1 Aug, 70 were counted on the R Adur between Shoreham and Beeding Cement Works and on 15 Sep, 118 were in Fishbourne Channel. Thereafter, significant flocks not included in the *WeBS*' table were 84 that roosted at Castle Water on 5 Nov, 140 at Tortington (Arundel) and 115 at Ford on 21 Nov (possibly the same flock). [TJW]

0153. BEWICK'S SWAN

*Cygnus columbianus***Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.**The monthly *WeBS*' counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	22	44	-	-	9	24
Arun (Offham to Houghton)	-	44	-	-	nc	23
Bury Brooks	6	-	-	-	nc	-
Amberley Wild Brooks	16	-	-	-	-	-
Pulborough Brooks	-	-	-	-	9	1

Numbers in the county were slightly up on the previous year but the peak count of 45 at Pulborough Brooks on 4 Mar was still well short of the 69 seen in 2002. There were some small flocks in January at sites other than those tabled above with peak counts of six at Jury's Gap on the 2nd, ten at Lewes Brooks on the 17th, 19 at Henfield Levels on the 18th and 14 at Offham (Arun Valley) on the 26th. In February and March birds consolidated in the Arun Valley where up to 45 were visiting various sites, particularly Amberley Wild Brooks, Pulborough Brooks and Offham. The only other record in this period was of four flying northwest over Hurst Green on 10 Feb. Counts of juveniles were low with the maximum being six roosting with 33 adults at Amberley Wild Brooks on 11 Feb.

The first returning birds of the autumn were two adults and a juvenile at Pulborough Brooks on 1 Nov but numbers there had only increased to six by the end of the month. Elsewhere, one was at Fishbourne on the 13th and four were at Bines Bridge (Ashurst) on the 18th. In December, four adults and two juveniles were at Henfield Levels on the 16th and the Arun Valley flock had increased to 33 by the 28th. Of these 12 were juveniles, suggesting a better breeding season, and one adult, bearing the ring '14J', was found to have been ringed in Arctic Russia in summer 2003. [TJW]

0154. WHOOPER SWAN

Cygnus cygnus

Very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

For the third year running there were just two records of this species. The first of these involved two adults, of unknown origin, at Ivy Lake (Chichester GP) intermittently from 15 Feb to 11 Apr (RAI, DIS JAW *et al*). These were presumably the birds first seen at the North Wall (Pagham Hbr) in November 2003. The second record was of three flying west at Birling Gap on 16 Apr (JFC, RHC, RKH). [TJW]

0157.02 TUNDRA BEAN GOOSE

Anser fabalis rossicus

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

A flock of six birds with White-fronted Geese at Scotney Court GP on 18 Jan (DC *et al*), which subsequently rose to seven and remained until 2 Mar (AJH, PNP *et al*), was considered to have been of this race, though some individuals showed intermediate characteristics.

A solitary bird was seen in a mixed flock of wildfowl near Charleston Reedbed on 11 Dec (ARK). [AH]

0158. **PINK-FOOTED GOOSE***Anser brachyrhynchus*

**Very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant; also recorded as a feral bird.
Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.**

A poorer than average showing, after a good year in 2003, with just a single bird with White-fronted Geese at Scotney Court GP from 11 Feb to 3 Mar (PNP *et al.*). [AH]

0159. **WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE***Anser albifrons*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The first record of the year was of three flying east past Selsey Bill on 1 Jan, followed by flocks of 47 over the Brede Valley and 56 W over Scotney Court GP on the 18th. Thereafter numbers built up at the latter location to a peak of 187 birds on 13 Feb, declining to 21 on 22 March. No reports were received from elsewhere in the county.

Unusually for this species, there were more records for the second winter period than the first although all occurred in December apart from 2 E past Selsey Bill on 6 Nov. A flock of 19 seen over Pagham Hbr on the 1st and 26 E past Brighton Marina on the 2nd started this month off well. Then, on the 4th, a notable influx occurred, in terms of distribution if not numbers. A group of three was seen at Barcombe Res, another three at Cuckmere Haven, seven were on the Pevensey Levels, two flew over Rye Hbr LNR and a further three (which took up residence until the 30th) were seen on Thorney Deeps. Further December records comprised a flock of 59 at Exceat Bridge (Cuckmere Valley) on the 7th and the 22nd, 12 birds at the North Fields (Pagham Hbr) on the 9th, two on Weir Wood Res on the 26th and, finally, a mixed-age flock of nine at Easton Fm (Earmley) on the 31st. [AH]

0161. **GREYLAG GOOSE***Anser anser*

Fairly common introduced resident. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

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	553	173	324	145	225	41	405	758	326	976	549	271
Amberley Wild Brooks	212	2	9	11	15	-	53	-	-	225	-	-
Pulborough Brooks	32	-	39	6	2	1	5	200	105	-	1	12
Kneppmill Pond	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	160
Ardingly Res	-	55	42	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	95	-	-
Weir Wood Res	-	-	-	-	-	nc	-	130	-	-	-	25
Iford Brooks	9	-	18	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-
Glynde Brooks	8	14	77	40	66	10	nc	nc	17	135	nc	21
Bowl Water	12	9	-	nc	nc	nc	38	4	3	3	-	1
Pett Level	20	34	29	32	46	8	84	-	-	-	-	-
Rye Hbr	1	48	29	36	14	21	46	-	85	1	-	-
Scotney Court GP	250	-	51	10	78	nc	170	420	112	492	520	41

As usual, Scotney Court GP, with a first winter peak count of 500 on both 13 Jan and 12 Feb, and the Pulborough Brooks/Amberley Wild Brooks area (Arun Valley), with a

peak of 244 on 25 Jan, held most of the county's birds. Other noteworthy totals included 54 at Brightham's Fm (Partridge Green) on 16 Jan, 53 at Warnham LNR on 30 Jan, 63 on Henfield Levels on 7 Feb and 50 on Wiston Pond (Steyning) on 25 Mar.

Splash Point (Seaford) was the only coastal location to note any passage, though totals of 7 E and 7 W over four dates between 2 Mar and 24 Apr hardly suggests genuine migration.

A few more breeding records were received than in 2003. The most successful locations were Rye Hbr LNR and Pett Level both of which hosted six pairs with young. Other reports came from Wiston Pond where a crèche of ten goslings was noted on 9 May, Henfield Levels where a crèche of 12 goslings was seen on 22 May, Troutbeck (Eridge) where two pairs raised four young (although a fox killed an adult and a juvenile), and Balcombe Lake where five young were seen with ten adults on 8 Jun.

The first signs of the usual early autumn gathering of moulting birds came when 81 birds were seen at Rye Hbr LNR on 1 Aug and 150 on Pulborough Brooks the following day. Thereafter, peak counts before birds dispersed were 307 on 6 Sep at Rye Hbr LNR, 261 at Weir Wood Res on 12 Sep, and 300 on Pulborough Brooks on 23 Sep.

In November and December there many records from non-*WeBS*' sites but mostly of small flocks or single birds. Noteworthy counts included 160 on Kneppmill Pond on 12 Dec, 100 at Brightham's Fm (Partridge Green) on the 20th and 100 at Weir Wood Res on the 26th. [AH]

0166. CANADA GOOSE

Branta canadensis

Common and increasing introduced resident and partial migrant.

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	2449	1219	792	296	375	216	1040	2781	2662	2328	1831	2249
Chichester GP	39	60	58	2	-	-	-	-	111	184	119	115
Petworth Park	163	81	33	35	81	116	117	81	192	6	61	nc
Amberley Wild Brooks	335	2	12	18	19	-	-	18	-	935	302	218
Waltham Brooks	38	7	4	7	3	-	-	2	-	91	211	56
Pulborough Brooks	170	26	51	13	14	5	11	102	262	202	85	364
Glynde Brooks	2	182	103	56	120	2	nc	nc	7	110	nc	130
Arlington Res	4	-	4	2	-	7	8	575	750	18	1	2
Cuckmere Haven	460	53	32	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	43	215	170	153
Eastbourne Lakes	142	82	149	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	5	45	63	168
Pevensy Levels	77	20	10	13	6	nc	nc	128	-	-	270	127
Bewl Water	583	280	91	nc	nc	nc	551	986	598	233	90	520
Rye Hbr	95	99	39	31	19	45	61	191	94	68	116	77
Scotney Court GP	1	5	4	3	35	nc	165	273	363	92	65	30

The totals from *WeBS*' counts were similar to previous years' and provided the highest tallies. Away from the sites tabled above, other notable counts included 104 on Barcombe Res on 15 Jan, 184 at Brightham's Fm (Partridge Green) the following day and 216 at Weir Wood Res on 16 Feb. By early March flocks were dispersing but seawatchers only noted 12 birds heading east at four sites between 7 Mar and 14 Apr.

As usual with this species, breeding was confirmed right across the county, from about 18 locations. These included Thorney Deeps, Selsey West Fields, Henfield Levels,

Kneppmill Pond, Pulborough Brooks, Forest Mere (Liphook), Iford Brooks, and Weir Wood Res. Most locations held a maximum of two pairs, but 12 pairs at Rye Hbr LNR, 6 pairs at Pett Level and 3 pairs at Troutbeck (Eridge) were the only reported exceptions.

Post-breeding moulting flocks had started to assemble at favoured sites by late July. This was illustrated by numbers at Arlington Res where they rose from eight on 6 Jul through 400 on 10 Aug to a massive peak of 1200 on 3 Sep before declining rapidly as birds dispersed to only 18 in the October *WeBS* count.

There were few notable autumn counts away from traditional sites, although the count of 185 at Chichester GP on 7 Oct was possibly a record for the far southwest of the county. [AH]

0167. **BARNACLE GOOSE**

Branta leucopsis

Very scarce winter visitor, often in severe weather, and an increasingly common feral resident. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

As usual with this species most reports are likely to refer to feral birds. Regular feral flocks were present at Barcombe Res and Scotney Court GP. The former flock was present from the start of the year until 30 May and peaked at 68; it was usually accompanied by two hybrid birds thought to be Barnacle x Snow Goose crosses. It had returned by 7 Aug and was present into mid-December. Ten to 12 birds were present at Scotney Court GP from 22 Apr to 22 July and again from 11 Aug to the end of December, peaking at 34 in November.

Elsewhere no more than two were seen at any time. In the Rye Bay area two were present from mid-January to mid-May and again for the last five months of the year. Single birds were seen at Pagham Hbr in May and November, in Chichester Hbr during the first three months of the year and occasionally at Bewl Water, Pulborough Brooks, Warnham LNR and Weir Wood Res. [AH]

0168. **DARK-BELLIED BRENT GOOSE**

Brant bernicla bernicla

Common winter visitor and passage migrant; a few oversummer. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

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	8308	9508	1824	8	4	8	6	5	10	2822	8433	9383
Chichester Hbr	7102	8290	1762	8	1	6	5	5	7	2659	7431	7436
Pagham Hbr	1206	1210	60	nc	3	2	1	-	3	159	998	1945

Numbers were typical in the western harbours during the first winter period and once again demonstrated the importance of these areas for this species. Numbers exceeded the 1% International Level of 2200 in five winter months and the 1% National Level of 981 in six months.

There was a scattering of records from elsewhere in the county being particularly notable at Climping Beach where 450 birds were present in early Jan and 150 still present on 1 Feb. Elsewhere, up to 14 birds were present in the Rye Bay area, four were seen at Weir Wood Res on 11 Jan, a single bird was on Henfield Levels on 18 Jan and another was (seen) at the Ouse Estuary Project (Newhaven) on 21 Mar.

The commencement of return migration was not noted until 3 Mar - noticeably later than in the previous three years (20, 1 and 11 Feb respectively). On that date, 60 birds passed both Selsey Bill and Birling Gap but the first substantial movement did not occur until 11 Mar when 484 birds were seen heading east past Splash Point (Seaford). The following day 975 birds passed Birling Gap and 1017 passed Splash Point, the biggest day movement of the spring. Thereafter, moderate numbers passed coastal sites until 18 April, but the overall figures were well down on last year. The last reports were of 2 E past Splash Point on 19 May and a very late bird there on the 30th.

The monthly totals from the main seawatching sites were as follows:

	Jan		Feb		Mar		Apr		Oct		Nov		Dec	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	-	8	-	-	826	5	929	3	50	117	2	11	1	4
Worthing Beach	16	2	2	1	428	5	1139	-	31	177	8	351	1	2
Telscombe Cliffs	1	13	38	4	994	-	1608	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Birling Gap	-	-	-	-	2060	-	2082	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Splash Point (Seaford)	7	-	-	-	2588	-	2680	-	5	-	-	-	-	3

During the summer months up to six birds were regularly noted in Chichester Hbr and up to two in Pagham Hbr.

The first returning birds were a flock of 66 that flew over Rye Hbr LNR on 14 Sep. In Chichester Hbr, the first 13 arrivals were seen on 26 Sep, but by 8 Oct a flock of 250 was seen on Thorney Island. Return migration was sporadic throughout October and November - the biggest count being 550 SW over Rye Hbr LNR on 9 Oct – and by early December numbers were back to typical winter peaks in the western harbours.

The only birds seen away from these sites in the latter part of the year were two at Pett Level on 22 Nov, one at nearby Cliff End on 11 Dec, several reports from the Rye Hbr LNR area of between four and 35 birds between 20 and 27 Nov and a single bird at Cuckmere Haven on 4 Dec. [AH]

0168.01 PALE-BELLIED BRENT GOOSE

Brant bernicla hrota

Very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The first record of the year was of two birds with Dark-bellied Brent Geese at Climping Beach on 3 Jan. This was followed by regular sightings of one or two birds from the North Fields area (Pagham Hbr) between 6 Jan and 13 Mar. There were four reports of birds seen with migrating Dark-bellied Brent flocks: 1 E past Birling Gap on both 28 Mar and 3 Apr, 1 E past Brighton Marina on 31 Mar and 1 E past Rottingdean on 16 Apr.

The sole record for the latter part of the year was of three birds at Scotney Court GP on 14 Nov. [AH]

0168.02 **BLACK BRANT***Branta bernicla nigricans***Very scarce winter visitor.**

2003: The bird seen and reported regularly during 2004 was first seen on 31 Dec at East Head (BFF).

2004: The first report was of one with Dark-bellied Brents at Climping Beach on 2 Jan (CWG). Subsequently, a single adult bird was reported from the East Head/West Wittering area from 9 Jan to 23 Feb (MO) but two reports mentioned the presence of two hybrid birds (presumably Dark-bellied Brent x Black Brant) in the flock of Dark-bellied Brents. A Black Brant was also reported near Pagham Village on 25 Jan (PNP), presumably the same adult bird.

In the second winter period, an adult was again with the Dark-bellied Brents in the Chichester Hbr area from 9 Nov to at least 20 Dec (MO) and at the North Wall (Pagham Hbr) on 31 Dec (JAW).

It is possible that just one individual was responsible for all the records. [AH]

0170. **EGYPTIAN GOOSE***Alopochen aegyptiaca***Very scarce visitor from introduced populations elsewhere in Britain, though possibly more commonly recorded as a presumed escape. Bred for the first time in 2000.**

Only 42 records were received (cf. 62 in 2003) from eleven widely scattered sites and for every month except March. There were no records or suggestions of breeding. The only breeding record in Sussex was in 2000 at Shipley, from where there was just one record in 2004 on 3 May.

The highest count was of three birds at Pulborough Brooks on 13 Aug and 7 Sep, with a scattering of records of singles there and at Amberley Wild Brooks in January and from July onwards.

Two birds were seen at Petworth Park Lake on 20 Jun and at Chingford Pond (Duncton) on 29 Jul but all other records were of singles. It was of note that one stayed at Warnham LNR from 17 Aug to 16 Sep, and the 'washed-out' individual at Chichester GP first seen in 2001, was recorded in January and February, with presumably the same bird reported there between September and the year's end. The only other sightings were all one day visitors during the year at Southwater CP, Partridge Green, the Ferry Pool (Sidlesham) and Beeding Brooks. [AT]

0173. **COMMON SHELDUCK***Tadorna tadorna***Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant; a scarce but regular breeding species. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.**

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	1271	1159	741	313	314	230	97	27	77	222	543	725
Chichester Hbr	757	810	501	196	75	86	13	22	15	152	378	487
Pagham Hbr	363	203	81	nc	121	94	33	1	50	41	105	134
Scotney Court GP	20	25	25	3	5	nc	-	-	10	15	12	38

Figures for the first winter period, after high numbers in January, were then a little down on last year. Only the February count from Chichester Hbr exceeded the National 1% Threshold Level of 782, and last year's count of over 1000 from that site was not repeated. The largest single count within the Chichester Hbr complex was of 238 at Thorney Deeps on 20 Mar. These figures are, however, well down on those historically.

Away from the main sites, the largest gathering at the start of the year was at the Ouse Estuary Project (Newhaven) where there were 22 on 23 Feb.

Passage was noted in most months, including a late summer record of 6 E past Worthing on 12 Aug. There were good totals for the peak months of April and May; the largest day total was on 16 Apr when 29 flew east past Splash Point (Seaford). The monthly totals at the main seawatching sites were as follows:

	Jan		Feb		Mar		Apr		May		Jun		Oct		Nov		Dec	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	-	-	-	-	2	-	34	8	11	2	-	-	7	2	-	-	3	1
Worthing Beach	-	3	-	-	11	1	40	44	31	14	-	-	1	14	4	45	-	3
Splash Point (Seaford)	3	1	26	-	22	6	97	13	31	6	4	-	-	-	14	-	-	6

Breeding was reported from 13 sites spread widely along the coast and the main river valleys. The number of pairs noted was probably less than 25, and it seems very likely that there has been a dramatic decrease in this species from the estimate of 215 pairs in 1992.

In West Sussex, 28 young were hatched from four pairs at Thorney Deeps and nine young were reported from the Lower Chichester Channel on 24 May. At the Ferry Pool (Sidlesham), 20 young were in the company of 40 adults on 29 May, with 25 youngsters in a crèche on 7 Jul. At Chichester GP, a pair raised four young on Drayton GP, a female was with nine ducklings on 20 Jun near Valdoe Wood (East Lavant) and display was noted at Chingford Pond on 16 Apr. In the Arun Valley, a pair seen from Greatham Bridge on 17 Apr and reported to be breeding, could be the same pair seen with eight young on 21 Jun at the South Brooks (Pulborough Brooks). In the Adur Valley, a pair was reported breeding on Henfield Levels on 22 May and eight young seen at Brightham's Fm (Partridge Green) on 13 Jun was the first breeding recorded there.



In East Sussex, there were reports of two broods totalling ten ducklings in the Lower Cuckmere Valley on 19 Jun and two broods raised at Pett Level. Rye Hbr LNR had what was described as “probably its worst ever breeding season”, with a maximum of just ten ducklings seen on the Ternery Pool in June and a total of probably only three pairs in the entire SSSI. Finally, one pair was seen with six young on the Union Canal (East Guldeford) on 20 Jun.

In the autumn and second winter period, the *WeBS*' counts were up in every month from July onwards compared to 2003 with the highest December figures since 2001. [AT]

0178. MANDARIN DUCK

Aix galericulata

Scarce but increasing introduced resident.

Records were received from 53 widely spread sites, slightly fewer than in 2003. However, counts of 15 or more birds were made at seven different sites (cf. four in 2003). These were the regular sites at Darwell Res, Arundel WWT and neighbouring Swanbourne Lake, Troutbeck (Eridge), and Weir Wood Res, but also Warnham LNR, Elmers Marsh in the northwest of the county, where the species is probably under-recorded, and the lake at Parham House. The latter site provided the highest count of the year with 58 on 26 Sep.

In the first quarter, Weir Wood Res recorded its highest count of the year with 27 on 15 Feb. A single bird was seen leaving a Kestrel nestbox at Constantia Manor (Isfield) on 18 Mar but further proof of breeding was not obtained.

In the breeding season, there were records from 34 sites, again slightly down on 2003. However, proof of breeding was not easy to come by – eggs or ducklings were seen at just eight sites. In West Sussex, a female with four young was at Valdoe GP on the early date of 28 Mar; three pairs produced broods of three, six and eight at Minepit Cope Lake (Fernhurst); there were three ducklings at Cedar Fm (Hurst Green) on 1 Jun; and a maximum of eight ducklings was seen at Pulborough Brooks in May. Fourteen eggs and five ducklings were found at Weir Wood Res on 21 May. Two broods of six and seven seen on 22 May at Warnham LNR were the first breeding records there. No breeding was proved at the sites around Arundel WWT, although the year's peak count for the area was 18 at Swanbourne Lake on 19 Jul.

In East Sussex, a female with two ducklings was at Darwell Res on 20 Jun, although no birds were then seen in July. At Troutbeck, where the species was present all year, the only brood of two was seen on 27 May. However, a significant disparity between the numbers of males and females seen at any time during the season at Troutbeck suggested strongly that there were several females with broods undetected in the area. The best count of the year there was of 25 (24 males and 1 female) on 8 Jun.

A large autumn gathering at Darwell Res did not appear to take place this year, where the pond usually frequented was disturbed by building work. The peak count from this site was just 15 on 18 Aug. [AT]

0179. EURASIAN WIGEON

Anas penelope

Common winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

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	10581	9532	4636	13	1	-	-	3	1533	2941	7303	8204
Chichester Hbr	1682	1817	751	1	-	-	-	-	361	859	1787	1990
Pagham Hbr	1300	1186	585	nc	-	-	-	3	897	660	1548	2070
Amberley Wild Brooks	3470	2000	577	-	-	-	-	-	53	514	1207	800
Pulborough Brooks	1439	1972	1088	-	1	-	-	-	14	437	1549	1723
Cuckmere Haven	420	570	220	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	41	155	270	430
Pevensey Levels	170	349	304	10	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	5	226	374
Scotney Court GP	173	222	280	-	-	nc	-	-	25	45	124	150

The figures for the first quarter were remarkably consistent with those from 2003. The Arun Valley once again confirmed its importance in the county, with combined figures for Pulborough Brooks and Amberley Wild Brooks again exceeding the 1% National Threshold Level of 4060. Numbers in Chichester Hbr were also significantly higher than in 2003, and the county *WeBS*' total for February was the highest ever for that month beating the 8798 of 2001.

Counts in excess of those made during *WeBS*' included 400 at both Hankham and Horse Eye Levels on 14 Jan, 2060 at Pulborough Brooks on 24 Jan, and 500 at Scotney Court GP on 12 Feb.

Away from the main *WeBS*' sites, notable counts included 140 at Henfield Levels on 3 Jan, 387 at Pett Level on 4 Jan, 300 on the Lewes Brooks also on 4 Jan, 200 at Ifield Brooks on 9 Jan, 232 at Kneppmill Pond on 17 Jan, and 200 offshore at Pett on 22 Feb. Impressive figures were recorded at Brightham's Fm (Partridge Green) where 600 were present on 9 Jan and 500 on 1 Feb. Encouraging numbers were also seen at Rye Hbr LNR where conservation work around Castle Water seems to be favouring them with regular counts of between 300 and 450 in the area in January and February. There was also a count of 500 birds at the Beach Reserve on 27 Jan.

Daytime movements offshore during the spring were remarkably light. The largest day count was eight past Splash Point (Seaford) on 2 Apr and only 23 birds were logged there in the month passing east in 159 hours of watching. The main movements reported from seawatching sites were as follows:

	Mar		Apr		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	-	-	9	-	-	16	25	79	-	40	-	-
Worthing Beach	-	-	3	-	-	9	20	41	-	15	2	1
Splash Point (Seaford)	-	-	23	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	-
Birling Gap	5	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Numbers of birds at the wintering sites quickly fell away during March, and the latest count in double figures was of 28 at Pulborough Brooks on 9 Apr.

There was the usual scattering of records of single birds and occasionally two together during the summer months, but there was no indication of breeding anywhere. Three birds at the Breech Pool (Pagham Hbr) on 6 May and 5 Jun were exceptional.

The first sign of returning birds was possibly the four seen together at Pagham Hbr on 14 Aug, but more probably the four at Thorney Deeps on 2 Sep. As usual, quite large flocks then quickly appeared, with 13 at Barcombe Res on 5 Sep, 220 at Pagham Hbr on 6 Sep and 50 at Pulborough Brooks on 7 Sep. The *WeBS*' count for September was close on a county record for that month

In the final quarter of the year, numbers were again remarkably consistent with those from 2003, with numbers in November a county record for that month, exceeding the 6094 of 1996. There was, however, no repeat of the previous year's large flocks at Scotney Court GP late in the year. Some passage was noted towards the end of the year, almost matching that in spring, with 55 W and 15 E past Selsey Bill in just 4½hr on 10 Oct. [AT]

0182. GADWALL

Anas strepera

Scarce breeder and fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

2003: A female with six ducklings was also seen at Waltham Brooks on 2 Jul.

2004: 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	872	580	202	93	71	14	52	73	143	243	369	515
Chichester Hbr	48	51	12	2	2	-	-	-	2	-	6	32
Pagham Hbr	6	20	-	nc	4	1	8	-	8	-	-	-
Chichester GP	319	273	88	-	-	-	-	-	6	29	72	115
Arundel WWT	41	17	14	18	20	nc	19	nc	4	9	-	6
Eastbourne Lakes	33	23	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	4	13	9	12
Bewl Water	152	70	16	nc	nc	nc	-	27	53	67	100	168
Darwell Res	60	20	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	25	40
Powdermill Res	31	12	4	-	nc	-	nc	nc	-	18	52	54
Pett Level	25	18	8	8	8	-	7	6	14	62	50	27
Rye Hbr	69	9	17	16	9	1	-	20	44	18	24	34

No county records were set this year in any month, with figures for most sites and in most months down on those from 2003. However, the 1% National Threshold Level of 171 was once again comprehensively exceeded at Chichester GP in Jan and Feb, and came close at Bewl Water in December.

Away from the main *WeBS*' sites in the first winter period, peak figures included 64 at Pett Level on 2 Jan and a good series of records from around Rye Hbr with a maximum of 45 at the Beach Reserve on 30 Jan. The peak count for Scotney Court GP was 20 on 12 Feb, and 24 at the Breech Pool (Pagham Hbr) was the highest count from that area all winter. There were 17 at Kneppmill Pond on 17 Jan and 20 at Burton MP on 29 Feb, while 12 at Wiston Pond (Steyning) on 11 Jan and nine at Filsham on 14 Jan were good totals for small water bodies.

There were some good totals for seawatching sites in April, thanks to a bumper passage on the 1st (when good numbers of Teal were also moving east), as shown in the following table:

	Apr	Peak count	Hours watched
Selsey Bill	39 E	37 E on 1 Apr	89¼
Worthing Beach	10 E	8 E on 2 Apr	65
Splash Point (Seaford)	48 E	35 E on 1 Apr	159
Birling Gap	38 E	13 E on 1 Apr	31¼

In addition to the above figures, 2 E past Selsey Bill on 26 Jun was unusual.

Birds were occasionally noted at many widely spread sites throughout the breeding season, although proven breeding records were once again scant. Indeed, there are indications that many of the birds that remain in the county during the summer are non-

breeders. At Rye Hbr, for example, up to 17 birds present until mid-July were not suspected to be breeding. Pairs of birds at Aldingbourne Rife (Bognor) and Seftor Fm (Pagham) were also not holding territory. The only two confirmed breeding records came from Pett Level, where a female was seen with a brood on 1 Jun, and from the Long Pool (Pagham Hbr) where a female was with four very young ducklings on 10 Jul.

Elsewhere, records that mentioned breeding activity were of a pair at Waltham Brooks on 17 April, another pair on Henfield Levels on 11 May, and a pair possibly breeding at Wiston Pond. A pair at Warnham LNR on 23 May was notable as it is a scarce species there in winter.

In the second winter period, a count of 62 at Pett Level on 17 Oct was notable. A small winter passage was also noted at Selsey Bill, with 9 W in Nov and 4 W in Dec. [AT]

0184. EURASIAN TEAL

Anas crecca

Scarce resident and common winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

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	5764	2755	1543	100	7	12	13	360	1953	2704	4271	5431
Chichester Hbr	1451	933	462	15	1	-	3	7	279	369	1170	1850
Pagham Hbr	1355	299	146	nc	1	4	-	22	734	918	1375	2321
Burton & Chingford Ponds	2	16	13	14	-	-	-	6	108	2	14	nc
Amberley Wild Brooks	1132	252	191	7	3	-	-	-	55	329	515	200
Pulborough Brooks	604	224	70	28	2	-	4	155	337	310	433	211
Glynde Brooks	160	130	180	4	-	-	nc	nc	35	23	nc	38
Pevensey Levels	193	329	188	3	nc	nc	nc	19	2	60	72	118
Pett Level	189	51	63	13	-	3	4	80	114	95	14	84
Rye Hbr	77	29	18	-	-	-	2	20	13	140	58	28

There were no county records in any month, with numbers in the first winter period in particular falling away dramatically with a very low total for February for which figures well in excess of 1500 might be expected in the Arun Valley. The 1% National Threshold Level is 1920 birds, a figure that was not exceeded this year at any site.

Counts in excess of the *WeBS*' totals included 1000 at Pulborough Brooks on 24 Jan, 400 at Horse Eye Level and 200 at Hankham Level (Pevensey Levels) on 14 Jan, 226 at Castle Water (Rye Hbr LNR) on 17 Jan, and 207 at Pett Level on 4 Jan. There was an impressive count of 204 at Brightham's Fm (Partridge Green) on 16 Jan, 150 were at Iford Brooks on 9 Jan, 72 at Kneppmill Pond on 17 Jan and 63 on the R Adur at Shoreham on 22 Feb.

At seawatching sites, passage was very light in March with singles east past Worthing Beach on the 29th and 31st and 5 E past Birling Gap and 6 E past Splash Point (Seaford) on the 31st being the highest counts. However, things accelerated dramatically in April, with peak numbers passing eastwards on the 1st (when good numbers of Gadwall were also noted), as shown in the following table:

	Apr	Peak count	Hours watched
Selsey Bill	93 E	87 E on 1 Apr	89¼
Worthing Beach	14 E	7 E on 1 Apr	65
Splash Point (Seaford)	211 E	88 E on 1 Apr	159
Birling Gap	136 E	88 E on 1 Apr	31¼

The April Splash Point total also includes 40 on the 16th and 25 on the 25th. Only a few were noted in May and the last passage birds seen were a very late five past Splash Point on 3 Jun.

There were records from seven wetland sites in May, with a maximum of seven birds at the Breech Pool (Pagham Hbr) on 6 May, and from six sites in June, with the Breech Pool again holding the largest number with five on 15 Jun. Birds were recorded as present at Amberley Wild Brooks and Pulborough Brooks, perhaps two of the likeliest breeding sites. However, breeding was not recorded anywhere and the summering birds at Rye Hbr were not suspected to be breeding.

Six birds at Pett Level on 9 Jul were recorded as the first returning migrants. *WeBS'* counts from August until the year's end were slightly higher than in 2003 but were not exceptional. In addition to the figures in the table, a single-site count of 662 at Snowhill Marsh (West Wittering) on 13 Nov was noteworthy and 220 at Drayton GP (Chichester) on 28 Nov was by far the highest count from that site during the year. At Weir Wood Res, 90 on both 17 Oct and 26 Dec were year maxima, as were 60 at the Drove Marsh (Newhaven) on 20 Dec and 58 at Warnham LNR on 30 Dec. [AT]

0186. MALLARD

Anas platyrhynchos

Common resident and winter visitor.

The BTO Bird Trends shows a “steady increase in Mallard numbers since the 60’s, contributed to by long-term releases for shooting in the UK. Wintering populations are declining due to a decrease in continental migration.”

The peak monthly total for the last seven winters, taken from the county *WeBS'* counts, shows a decline in the wintering population in Sussex as the following table demonstrates:

Winter	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
Peak count	4583	4394	3999	3633	3443	3893	3354

The above figures are the highest count of the three winter months December to February with the exception that, since counts in 2001 were incomplete due to the FMD restrictions, counts for that year are not included. The overall decline is approximately 25%, or 4.1% per annum.

The monthly *WeBS*' counts in 2004 from the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	3053	2055	1603	614	888	705	1700	2175	3524	3469	3027	3317
Chichester Hbr	319	246	158	41	36	70	48	72	315	148	299	333
Pagham Hbr	247	132	106	nc	132	61	195	122	427	212	201	237
Chichester GP	308	294	249	5	1	27	17	29	134	175	247	194
Wicks Farm Res	21	8	3	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	118	196	109	78
Arundel WWT	98	144	61	142	135	nc	252	nc	170	158	83	137
Amberley Wild Brooks	57	27	43	46	53	10	13	187	83	299	129	58
Ardingly Res	175	64	45	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	65	55	80
Glynde Brooks	19	15	24	8	17	48	nc	nc	190	100	Nc	53
Arlington Res	56	45	31	27	31	38	80	82	119	188	180	177
Bewl Water	492	200	230	nc	nc	nc	249	451	501	472	427	469
Rye Hbr	152	62	67	81	84	77	117	323	321	211	202	325

Breeding success was reported widely, including 96 young from 12 broods at Thorney Deepes in June and one pair having three broods at Wilbees Farm (Arlington) between mid April and late June (suggesting poor survival rates). However, breeding success is usually under-recorded on this species and the absence of breeding records from some major sites does not enable comparisons to be made with previous years' success rates. The last reported breeding success was a very late brood of 13 ducklings at Wisborough Green on 3 Nov.

Following the main breeding season, reports of concentrations in post-breeding moult included 194 birds "loafing and feeding" at Angmering Decoy Pond on 3 July. [JRC]

0189. PINTAIL

Anas acuta

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant; occasionally summers and breeds. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern

The monthly *WeBS*' counts in 2004 from the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	516	596	80	-	-	-	2	-	59	159	595	1035
Chichester Hbr	220	233	64	-	-	-	-	-	41	37	176	167
Pagham Hbr	-	268	-	nc	-	-	-	-	14	46	403	834
Amberley Wild Brooks	109	19	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	-	-
Waltham Brooks	16	33	3	-	-	-	2	-	1	8	2	15
Pulborough Brooks	158	22	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	55	9	14
Pevensy Levels	1	4	5	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	-

In 2004, *WeBS*' counts were low for most months of the year, but the numbers in the second winter period were well above 2003's disappointingly low figures. The Pagham Hbr *WeBS*' counts in November and December exceed the 1% National Threshold Number (279) and that for December exceeds the 1% International Threshold Number (600) and confirms this site's international importance for this species (which is one of the reasons it is designated as a RAMSAR site). Other significant observations, not reflected in the *WeBS*' data, included counts of 200 at Pagham Hbr in both January and March, 195 and 375 at Pulborough Brooks in October and December, and 100 at Amberley Wild Brooks in December.

Although the peak number recorded at Amberley Wild Brooks was well down on last year's 533, this site and Pulborough Brooks remain nationally important areas for wintering Pintail.

Whilst numbers of birds away from the main sites remain low, 44 Pintail were observed loafing offshore at Rye Bay on 23 Mar.

Spring coastal movements were the lightest for many years and were all easterly. The totals at the main sea watching sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Selsey Bill	16	-	-	22
Worthing Beach	-	-	-	3
Telscombe Cliffs	-	-	29	-
Splash Point (Seaford)	-	-	16	5
Birling Gap	-	-	2	35

Autumn coastal movements, which are usually lower than recorded spring movements, were also very low with only four records at the main seawatching sites, the largest being 6 W at Worthing on 26 Dec. Inland, an unusual movement was that of 65 flying southwest over Cedar Farm (Hurst Green) on 29 Oct (MJP).

One bird was present at Waltham Brooks on 22 May and two in July, and a single bird was reported at Pagham Hbr in May and July. There were no records of attempted breeding.

The first returning autumn birds were 32 seen at Pagham Hbr on 5 Sep, somewhat later than usual. [JRC]

0191. **GARGANEY**

Anas querquedula

Scarce passage migrant and rare summer visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

It was another reasonably good year with an estimated minimum of 65 birds reported from 19 discrete locations. The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
No. of birds	6	25	24	7	3	16	4

The first recorded arrival was a singleton at Pett Level on 15 Mar. This was followed by a male at Coldwaltham Brooks on the 22nd, which was joined by a female on the 28th, and two at Rye Hbr LNR on 27 and 29 Mar.

Seawatchers recorded 1 E at Birling Gap on 27 Mar, 1 E there on 1 Apr and 2 E at Brighton Marina on 2 Apr. On 16 Apr 4 E were recorded at Selsey Bill and 2 E at Worthing Beach, Lancing Beach and Splash Point (Seaford) the same day could all have been the same birds.

At inland sites, the pair at Coldwaltham Brooks was still present on 5 Apr but only one was seen on the 12th. At Pett Level, two were seen regularly from the 24th to the month's end, there were two pairs there on 1 May and three birds in mid-June. Up to three pairs were present at Pulborough Brooks from early May into June. A pair was seen at Sefter Fm (Pagham) on 2 Apr. In the general Pagham Hbr/Sidlesham area, the first bird was noted on 21 Apr, two were recorded from the 24th and up to four were present, usually in the Breech Pool/North Wall area from 9 May through the month and into June. At Rye

Hbr LNR, one or two were seen through April into June.

Although birds were present during the breeding season at several suitable sites e.g. Pulborough Brooks and Rye Hbr LNR, breeding was not confirmed. Five juveniles seen at Weir Wood Res on 7 Aug were likely to have been migrants and one at Whites Creek (Pagham Hbr) on 29 Sep was the last bird of the year. [DEC]

0194. SHOVELER

Anas clypeata

Very scarce resident and fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The peak monthly total for the last seven winters, taken from the county *WeBS*' counts, shows a significant increase in the wintering population in Sussex as the following table demonstrates:

Winter	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
Peak count	378	428	633	419	643	524	706

The above figures are the highest count of the three winter months December to February with the exception that counts in 2001 were incomplete due to the FMD restrictions. The overall increase is in excess of 80%, or 13% per annum.

The 2004 monthly *WeBS*' counts from the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	471	657	233	25	10	2	5	23	161	177	378	522
Pagham Hbr	4	28	7	nc	1	1	-	-	12	4	14	9
Chichester GP	162	325	71	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	138	149
Burton & Chingford Ponds	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	7	-	nc
Amberley Wild Brooks	92	20	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	4	31
Waltham Brooks	15	31	11	-	-	-	-	1	-	10	18	34
Pulborough Brooks	88	47	31	7	1	-	-	-	1	8	96	44
Glynde Brooks	-	13	3	1	-	-	nc	nc	1	2	nc	29
Eastbourne Lakes	7	11	11	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	28	36	7	1
Pevensey Levels	6	115	40	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	7	24
Pett Level	44	29	16	7	2	1	5	20	2	9	4	18
Rye Hbr	34	21	2	7	-	-	-	2	103	39	65	144

Chichester GP, the Arun Valley and the Rye Hbr area remain the strongholds for this species with an even greater percentage of the county's annual *WeBS*' total than last year (86% versus 78%). The 325 recorded at Chichester GP in February was the highest count at any site for the past four years, and confirms the national importance of this area for Shoveler. Records were also received from 27 other sites, with 24 at Filsham LNR in January being the highest count.

The main spring coastal movement was easterly and occurred on 1 and 16 April. The counts from the main seawatching localities were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Peak movement
Selsey Bill	-	332	8	-	320 E on 1 Apr
Worthing Beach	-	35	-	-	19 E on 1 Apr
Splash Point (Seaford)	-	396	2	2	175 E on 1 Apr
Birling Gap	15	411	4	-	275 E on 1 Apr

As with Pintail, autumn coastal movements, always lower than recorded in spring,

were almost non-existent this year, with only a single record of 5 W past Worthing on 8 Nov.

Breeding was confirmed only at Pett Level where there were two broods by 1 Jun. Elsewhere, there were single pairs at Pulborough Brooks and Thorney Deeps in the first week of May and presumably summering birds at Pagham Hbr in mid-May and Sidlesham Ferry in mid-July. [JRC]

0196. RED-CRESTED POCHARD

Netta rufina

Possibly rare winter visitor although most records probably relate to escaped or feral birds.

Seven or eight individuals were recorded. A male was at Northpoint Pit (Rye) on 2 Jan and a singleton was in Chichester Hbr on 8 Feb. In the second winter period, a female or juvenile bird was at Burton Mill Pond on 17 and 19 Oct and possibly the same bird was noted at nearby Chingford Pond (Duncton) on 19 Nov. A single bird (unsexed) was recorded at Chichester GPs on 17 Oct and 14 Nov. A single male was noted at Milton Mount Lake (Crawley) on 25 Oct and the last record was of two at Pett Level Pools on 22 Nov.

While it is not possible to ascribe an origin to birds of this species those at inland localities seem to be good candidates for escapes while those at coastal sites could be dispersals from European breeding grounds. [DEC]

0198. COMMON POCHARD

Aythya ferina

Very scarce breeder and fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The peak monthly total for the last seven winters, taken from the county *WeBS*' counts, shows a small decline in the wintering population in Sussex as the following table demonstrates:

Winter	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04
Peak count	1470	1474	1167	1292	1170	1375	1310

The above figures are the highest count of the three winter months December to February with the exception that counts in 2001 were incomplete due to the FMD restrictions. The overall decline is approximately 12%, or 2% per annum.

The monthly *WeBS*' counts in 2004 from the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	1109	982	222	10	8	1	24	14	37	397	636	760
Chichester GP	181	219	113	-	3	-	-	-	6	34	103	189
Forest Mere	19	11	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	3	37	33	30
Swanbourne Lake	29	32	27	-	-	nc	-	nc	7	9	42	60
Arundel WWT	168	205	12	7	4	nc	17	nc	-	33	33	81
Weirwood Res	65	80	-	-	-	nc	-	-	-	-	-	2
Barcombe Res	23	10	-	-	nc	-	-	-	2	31	36	22
Eastbourne Lakes	35	8	5	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	3	9	15	16
Bowl Water	42	73	17	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	14	26	24
Rye Hbr	22	157	23	3	1	-	-	1	3	27	106	108
Scotney Court GP	400	90	7	-	-	nc	4	13	13	187	186	195

The December count was particularly low, but counts were down across the year. It will be interesting to see whether future *WeBS*' figures show these totals to be a one-off anomaly or not.

Away from the principal *WeBS*' sites, birds were recorded at 24 other sites over the year, including 128 at Pagham Hbr on 27 February. As the 1% Threshold Number for a site to be of National Importance for this species is 595 and for International importance 3500, it can be seen that whilst significant numbers of Common Pochard winter in Sussex none of our sites contain sufficient numbers for them to be regarded as of national importance for this species.

Between 7 April and the end of July birds were recorded at Rye Hbr and Chichester GP, and at ten other sites, but no evidence of breeding was recorded.

The only record of a bird flying offshore was of 1 E at Selsey Bill on 16 May. [JRC]

0200. RING-NECKED DUCK

Aythya collaris

Very rare vagrant.

2003: The two first-winter females present at Wiston between at least 17 Feb-14 Apr were also recorded at Swanbourne Lake (Arundel) for about a week from 23 Feb (AH *et al*).

2004: A first-winter female seen at Scotney Court GP on 3 Jan (TJW *et al*) was the 10th county record, half having been during the last two years! It was also present at Lade GP (Kent) on 18 Jan. [RJF]

0203. TUFTED DUCK

Aythya fuligula

Scarce breeding species and fairly common winter visitor.

The monthly *WeBS*' counts in 2004 from the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	1375	1128	802	330	291	131	314	198	529	547	780	937
Chichester Hbr	18	19	18	4	6	6	6	6	14	14	50	62
Chichester GP	434	436	178	21	19	-	-	7	10	77	257	261
Swanbourne Lake	149	51	36	-	-	nc	-	nc	12	16	8	24
Arundel WWT	54	56	29	42	49	nc	12	nc	10	17	9	72
Barcombe Res	34	32	7	17	nc	12	3	8	26	35	32	34
Eastbourne Lakes	69	64	64	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	22	27	58	83
Bowl Water	116	50	22	nc	nc	nc	67	-	64	56	28	26
Powdermill Res	9	-	2	1	nc	4	nc	nc	37	22	16	12
Pett Level	28	32	62	41	38	16	11	6	12	13	18	15
Rye Hbr	200	166	249	135	139	83	33	69	67	126	158	210
Scotney Court GP	53	40	27	23	16	nc	149	60	179	30	36	30

Aside from the principal *WeBS*' sites, birds were recorded at many other sites, with 50 at Southwater C P in January being the largest count.

Records of coastal movements were, as usual, sparse.

Breeding records came from Rye Hbr (at least 12 broods), Pett Level (8 broods), Sidlesham Ferry (2 broods), Selsey West Fields (2 broods), Chichester GP (3 broods), Easton Farm (Earnley) (1 brood) and Barnetts Farm (Graffam) (2 broods). [JRC]

0204. **GREATER SCAUP***Aythya marila*

Scarce winter and passage migrant; rare in summer. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>Monthly totals</i>	-	3	2	12		1	15	25*
Chichester GP	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Church Norton	-	-	-	-		-	1	-
Brooklands (Worthing)	-	-	-	-		-	5	5*
R Adur (Shoreham)	-	-	-	-		-	-	5*
Barcombe Res	-	-	-	-		1	-	-
Arlington Res	-	-	-	-		-	-	6
Birling Gap	-	-	2	12		-	-	-
Rye Hbr	-	-	-	-		-	8	14
Scotney Court GP	-	1	-	-		-	1	-

* it is highly probable that the five birds on the R Adur (Shoreham) were the same as the five at Brooklands (Worthing) only 4 km west.

The earliest records were of a single bird at Scotney Court GP on 20 Feb and two at Westhampnett GP (Chichester) on 22 Feb. The only other spring records were from Birling Gap of 1 E on 28 Mar and 30 Mar and 12 E on 1 Apr.

In the autumn, a first year bird was at Barcombe Res from 10 to 17 Oct. At Rye Hbr LNR, two on Ternery Pool on 21 Nov had increased to eight on Castle Water by the 30th. Numbers in that area during December fluctuated but peaked at 14 on the 31st. An adult female and four first winter birds were at Brooklands (Worthing) from 30 Nov to 21 Dec and then two remained and were seen on the 28th to be moulting and revealing themselves as first winter males. It is suspected that the five birds seen on the R Adur at Shoreham on 21 Dec were the same five wandering locally. [DEC]

0205. **LESSER SCAUP***Aythya affinis*

Very rare vagrant.

A first-winter male found on the Kent/Sussex border at Scotney Court GP on 17 Nov remained into 2005 (DW *et al*). It has been accepted by *BBRC* and is the first record for both Sussex and Kent. Its long stay, and frequent crossing of the border, was widely appreciated by observers from both counties. [RJF]

0206. **COMMON EIDER***Somateria mollissima*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant; non-breeding birds summer annually. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The approximate monthly totals at the main seawatching sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May		Oct	Nov	Dec

Selsey Bill	23	4	7	43	5		2	42	2
Worthing Beach	6	-	-	8	-		20	7	-
Telscombe Cliffs	-	4	11	38	-		-	-	16
Splash Point (Seaford)	-	-	4	76	21		-	10	-
Birling Gap	-	-	12	50	2		-	-	-

In January the largest gathering of birds was in the west of the county: nine were seen at both Selsey Bill and Church Norton between the 4th and 27th. They remained in the area through February peaking at 12 at Church Norton on the 27th and ten on 6 Mar. During this period the only birds seen in the east of the county were three in Rye Bay on 10 Jan.

Migration was first noted in March. All movements were easterly in small numbers, with the single exception of 80 E past Brighton Marina on 3 Mar. During April, records suggested that at least 73 birds moved east in small numbers and that there could have been much duplication between sites. The largest group was 20 E past Selsey Bill on the 4th while 15 E were counted at both Splash Point and Birling Gap on the 16th when 11 were also seen to pass Rottingdean.

An immature drake took up residence in Chichester Hbr on 5 Jun and was joined by a second similar bird by the 29th. Two were then seen through to 1 Sep and a single immature was still present in the area on 1 Oct.

In the second winter period, a single bird was seen off Cooden Beach on 3 Nov and two birds were seen in Rye Bay on 13 and 22 Nov, the only records from the east of the county. Numbers elsewhere during November and December were low and most movements were westerly. The highest count was of 31 W at Selsey Bill on 30 Nov. [DEC]

0212. LONG-TAILED DUCK

Clangula hyemalis

Scare passage migrant and winter visitor; usually scarcer in summer and autumn. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The approximate monthly totals at the main seawatching sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May		Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	6	7	5	7	2		1	4	5

The single bird seen at Barcombe Res on 1 Jan had been present since at least 9 Nov 2003 but it was not recorded on any later date. Similarly, the one seen at Camber GP on 1 Jan and the two at Northpoint GP, Rye the following day might also have been present in the area since October 2003. The latter two birds, one a particularly washed out individual, were last seen in the area on 11 Apr. One was seen from Brighton Palace Pier on 26 Jan. At Church Norton, following 1 W on 17 Jan and one offshore on the 20th, two to three were seen from 12 Feb to 6 Mar.

From 28 Mar to 6 May birds were seen on several occasions moving eastwards past regularly manned coastal sites, usually in twos but as a single male on 1 May and another singleton on the 6th.

The first bird of the autumn was one in Pagham Hbr on 26 Oct. A single female or immature bird was in the Chichester Hbr area from 30 Nov to at least 9 Dec and two were seen swimming steadily westwards in Rye Bay on 30 Dec. As few as six birds may have been seen during the last two months of the year. [DEC]

0213. COMMON SCOTER

Melanitta nigra

Common spring passage migrant and winter visitor; usually scarcer in summer and autumn. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

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	150	-	-	-	-	-	90	1	-	2	18	-
Chichester Hbr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-
Barcombe Res	-	-	-	-	nc	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Pett Level	150	-	-	-	-	-	90	-	-	-	-	-
Rye Hbr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	-

Similar numbers compared to recent winters were seen offshore during the early part of the year. The largest flocks occurred in Rye Bay where up to 200 were seen regularly until mid-February. Elsewhere, congregations included 74 off Seaford on 2 Jan with 55 there on 17 Feb, 150 off Fairlight on 18 Jan (presumably birds from Rye Bay), 80 in Pevensey Bay on 13 Feb and 18 off Church Norton on 7 Mar.

Easterly passage during spring from the main seawatching locations is summarised below:

	Mar	Apr	May
Selsey Bill	102	1608	1042
Worthing	105	2040	387
Brighton*	-	1515	-
Telscombe Cliffs	9	2825	334
Splash Point (Seaford)	1111	8174	1532
Birling Gap	851	7470	370

* includes Marina and Palace Pier

Typically, the heaviest passage was recorded in Apr with maximum numbers seen off eastern seawatching locations. Peak days were 1 Apr (Selsey Bill 545, Worthing 854, Telscombe Cliffs 1130, Seaford 2771, Birling Gap 3550), 2 Apr (Brighton Marina 1105, Seaford 1575, Birling Gap 1500) and 16 Apr (Rottingdean 502, Seaford 1047, Birling Gap 1200).

After a scattering of coastal reports during late spring, including four in the entrance to Chichester Hbr on 26 May, good numbers were reported offshore during the summer. In Rye Bay numbers built up in July from 100 on the 11th to 260 on the 18th while 150 were counted off Cooden on the 26th.

Several flocks featured during the second winter period. Numbers in Rye Bay built up steadily, as illustrated by counts of 60 on 19 Oct, 120 on 8 Nov, 160 on 28 Nov, 250 on 9 Dec and 200 on 28 Dec. Elsewhere, notable flocks included 50 off Hove on 10 Oct, 65 W off Selsey Bill on 2 Oct and 55 there on 15 Nov and 40 in Bracklesham Bay on 21 Nov. A male at Barcombe Res on 17 Oct was the only truly inland record of the year. [CAH]

0215. **VELVET SCOTER***Melanitta fusca*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor along the coast; rare inland. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
15	52	8	127	26	-	-	-	-	224	28	21

The majority of records at the start of the year involved small numbers (generally 1-3) seen off Church Norton and Pett Level. The flock in Rye Bay peaked in early February with 20 recorded on the 1st and an impressive 50 on the 13th. Elsewhere, occasional singles were seen off Selsey Bill and three were seen off Fairlight on 18 Jan.

A moderately heavy easterly spring passage occurred in the period mid-April to early May. The peak days were 16 Apr (Selsey Bill 13, Seaford 41, Birling Gap 34) and 25 Apr (Selsey Bill 30, Brighton Marina 66, Seaford 44, Birling Gap 17). Monthly totals for the main seawatching localities in spring are shown below:

	Mar		Apr		May	
	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	-	-	54	-	19	-
Worthing Beach	-	-	30	-	-	-
Splash Point (Seaford)	-	-	94	-	21	-
Birling Gap	1	-	54	-	4	

Small numbers were recorded elsewhere along the coastal stretch to the end of the year with peaks of 18 off Church Norton on 24 Nov and ten in Rye Bay on 4 Dec. There were no records away from the open sea during the year. [CAH]

0218. **COMMON GOLDENEYE***Bucephala clangula*

Scarce winter visitor; rare in summer. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar		Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	36	32	5		1	6	31
Chichester Hbr	27	16	-		-	2	22
Pagham Hbr	6	5	-		-	-	1
Chichester GP	-	2	-		-	1	-
Forest Mere	-	-	-		-	1	1
Iford Brooks	-	1	1		-	-	-
Barcombe Res	-	1	-		-	1	1
Bowl Water	2	1	-		-	1	1
Darwell Res	-	-	3		-	-	1
Rye Hbr	1	6	1		1	-	3

The above county totals for January, February and December are marked reductions on the averages for the previous four years, viz. January 64, February 61 and December 36 suggesting that 2004 was not a good year for this species.

Records additional to those in the table above included 25 in Chichester Hbr on 11 Feb and single females at Piddinghoe on 26 Jan and Iford Brooks on 22 Feb and 9 Apr. The last birds of the spring were a pair at Rye Hbr on 30 Apr.

The first returnees were 2 E at Telscombe Cliffs on 11 Oct after which birds had returned to the traditional wintering locations by mid-November. Away from the above counts, seven at Pagham Lagoon on 29 Dec represented the only notable concentration. [CAH]

0220. **SMEW**

Mergellus albellus

Scarce winter visitor mainly to the east of the county.

The approximate monthly totals, conservatively estimated, were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar		Nov	Dec
County total	33	19	5		2	8
Pett Level	1	2	-		-	-
Rye Hbr	32	15	5		2	8
Scotney Court GP	-	2	-		-	-

The above county total for January is a significant increase on the average of 17 for the previous four years but February's total is comparable (17) while December's 8 is significantly less (14).

Typically, all records originated from the east of the county with the majority of birds seen in the Rye Hbr LNR area in both winter periods. During the first winter period, the peak count at Rye Hbr was 32 (three drakes) at Castle Water on 3 Jan, which had declined to 21 (two drakes) by 29 Jan. The final sighting of the winter there and in the county as a whole was on 13 Mar.

All sightings in the second half of the year were from Rye Hbr LNR where the first returning bird was seen at Castle Water on 27 Nov, increasing to a maximum count of nine (four drakes) by the end of the year. [CAH]

0221. **RED-BREASTED MERGANSER**

Mergus serrator

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant to the coast; a few 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	181	140	152	-	1	-	1	-	13	29	125	330
Chichester Hbr	144	129	147	-	1	-	-	-	-	15	97	172
Pagham Hbr	2	2	5	nc	-	-	1	-	-	6	11	49
Climping	-	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	19
Goring Gap	35	7	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	3	78

Numbers in Chichester Hbr during the months of January to March and December exceeded the 1% National Threshold Level of 98 making this a site of national importance for this species.

As in previous years, this species continued to remain remarkably scarce in the east of the county. Food supplies are presumably the reason that the majority of records originated from Chichester and Pagham Hbrs and offshore at Worthing where the beach shelves very gently. The peak count at Worthing was 205 on 27 Jan. The last passage birds were noted at seawatching stations on 20 May.

Monthly totals for the main seawatching localities are shown below:

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May		Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	E	-	-	18	65	3		23	14	19
	W	11	-	4	12	6		89	95	15
Worthing Beach	E	443	47	13	129	-		7	40	55
	W	117	40	-	5	-		37	102	11
Splash Point (Seaford)	E	3	8	44	397	8		4	34	-
	W	-	-	-	4	1		-	-	-
Birling Gap	E	-	-	20	322	2		-	-	-
	W									

Early returnees were seen in July: one (un-sexed) at Church Norton on the 6th and a female – surprisingly inland - on the River Ouse at Freshfield on the 19th, after which the species was widespread in the county from late September. Large numbers were present offshore in late November, including peaks of 340 off Goring Beach on the 27th and 150 off Worthing the next day. Away from the main sites, up to four were seen in Rye Bay during November and December and a single was at Newhaven Tidemills on 2 Dec. One on the R Arun at Arundel on 16 Nov provided the only other inland record of the year. [CAH]

0223. GOOSANDER

Mergus merganser

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

A relatively poor year with no cold weather influxes observed. The monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		Nov	Dec
<i>Monthly total</i>	11	8	10	2		18	16
Chichester Hbr	-	-	-	-		1	-
Pagham Hbr	-	-	-	-		9	8
Worthing Beach	-	-	-	-		1	-
Lower Adur Valley	-	-	-	-		-	1
Balcombe Lake	-	-	2	-		-	-
Weir Wood Res	8	8	8	2		-	2
Arlington Res	-	-	-	-		2	3
Darwell Res	-	-	-	-		-	1
Filsham LNR	1	-	-	-		-	-
Pett Level	-	-	-	-		4	1
Rye Hbr	1	-	-	-		-	-
Scotney Court GP	1	-	-	-		1	-

The opening months saw the eight redheads, first seen on 23 Dec 2003, present at Weir Wood Res until 27 Mar, two remaining until 16 Apr. Other records during the first winter period comprised singles at Filsham LNR, Rye Hbr LNR and Scotney Court GP in January and two drakes at Balcombe Lake on 1 Mar.

Birds were more widespread at the end of the year. There were regular reports of up to nine redheads at Pagham Hbr from 13 Nov to the year's end which, contrary to some beliefs, frequented the saline waters adjacent to the harbour mouth. Elsewhere, November saw two at Arlington Res on the 14th, singles at Chichester Hbr on the 16th, Scotney Court GP on the 18th and Worthing Beach on the 21st, and four over Pett Level on the 23rd. A scattering of records during December included singles in the Lower Adur Valley on the 1st and 4th and at Pett on the 11th and, from inland waters, three at Arlington Res on 5 Dec,

one at Darwell Res on the 12th and a pair at Weir Wood Res on the 26th. [CAH]

0225. **RUDDY DUCK**

Oxyura jamaicensis

Scarce resident and winter visitor.

Monthly maxima at the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Chichester GP	1	-	2	-	-	-	1	-
Swanbourne / Arundel WWT	1	2	6	10	-	-	-	-
Bewl Water	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	1
West Langney (Eastbourne)	-	2	2	-	6	5	-	2
Pett Level	20	6	9	6	10	2	16	-
Rye Hbr	6	10	8	6	12	13	4	1
Northpoint GP	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Scotney Court GP	2	-	-	-	-	2	2	2

Birds were present at the traditional sites throughout the year. Maximum counts during the opening winter months comprised 20 at Pett Level and eight at Northpoint GP both on 18 Jan, and ten at Rye Hbr LNR in late February. Smaller numbers, generally one or two birds, were reported from Chichester GP, Scotney Court GP, Arundel WWT, Bewl Water and West Langney Lake (Eastbourne). One at Plumpton Place on 26 Mar was evidence of spring dispersal and provided the most interesting record of the year.

Breeding was confirmed at Pett Level, where four broods were noted on 1 Jun, and Rye Hbr LNR, where a pair with two chicks was seen on 4 Jul and a female with four very young ducklings was seen on 10 Sep. Elsewhere, reports were suggestive of breeding at Arundel WWT and Swanbourne Lake. Records later in the year were similar in location to the first winter period, peaks comprising up to 13 at Rye Hbr LNR on 15 Oct and 12 at Pett Level on 15 Nov. [CAH]

0358. **RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE**

Alectoris rufa

Introduced resident. Population augmented annually by captive bred stock.

Records were received from 51 sites, 37 of them from downland or near the coast, an increase from the 35 and 28 respectively recorded in 2003.

Double figure counts in the first winter period were received from four sites. The highest count was of 30 at Chantry Hill on 4 Jan. Twenty five were found at West Side Field (Pagham Hbr) on 3 Jan, the same number at Pilsey Island on 9 Jan and 14 at Sefter Fm (Pagham) on 26 Jan. Many of these birds could have been of captive origin.

Records were received from 34 sites during the breeding season. Breeding was possible at all of these but only in the Sandgate Park (Storrington) area was there positive evidence of success. Here a female was seen with eight chicks on 30 Jun escorting them along the grass verge in Hillside Road. Breeding surveys at Marsh Fm (Yapton) and Sefter Fm revealed one and two pairs holding territory respectively. Records were received from only five sites north of the Downs during the breeding season.

Higher counts were received, as is usual, in the second winter period. The maxima were 80 in fields adjacent to Pagham Hbr on 6 Oct and 70 at Lee Fm (Patching) on 9 Nov. Other double figure counts came from Sefter Fm, Tegdown Hill (near Brighton) and from

a kale field at Southease. [RTP]

0367. **GREY PARTRIDGE**

Perdix perdix

Scarce and decreasing resident. Red listed species of high conservation concern.



Records were received from 28 sites compared with 53 in 2003 and 50 in 2002, a worrying decline. All the records were from downland or the coastal regions apart from two at Faygate (Crawley) on 25 Jan (see above map). The paucity of records from the east of the county is worthy of note. In the first winter period the highest counts all came from the Climping area including 19 on 11 Jan, 24 on 28 Jan and 21 on 7 Feb, although these records doubtless include significant duplication. The only other double figure counts came from Rye Hbr SSSI where the maximum was 17 on 9 Jan at Harbour Fm.

During the breeding season, pairs were recorded from 11 sites (20 in 2003). At Rye Hbr numbers were again low and similar to 2003, with at least four broods in the Beach Reserve / Harbour Fm areas from perhaps four to six pairs although 64 birds were counted on the beach road on 10 Oct. Copulation and other breeding behaviour was noted at Climping in May and breeding surveys at Sefter Fm (Pagham) (95ha) and at Marsh Fm (Yapton) (67ha) noted two and one territories respectively. Up to four birds were seen in the same garden at Sidlesham between April and July, where they were reported in 2003, but no young were seen. A covey of five was flushed at Steep Down (Lancing) on 8 Aug.

In the second winter period the only double figure counts, including that mentioned above, came from Rye Hbr LNR. [RTP]

0370. **COMMON QUAIL**

Coturnix coturnix

Scarce summer visitor, recorded in variable numbers from year to year; formerly occasional in winter. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

2003: A bird was also recorded at Steyning Round Hill on 16 Sep.

2004: Records were received from 12 sites (17 in 2003) from the Downs and the coastal regions across the county from Chichester to Rye and involving a possible 19 birds (23 in 2003). The first arrival was on 22 May at Newmarket Hill followed by singles at Beachy Head on 30 May and at Hobbs Hawth (Seaford) on 2 Jun.



The area of Steep Down (Lancing) and the Sompting Downs was again the best place to hear these birds. There were at least four individuals singing there between 13 Jun and 21 Jul and a possible six birds were involved in reports from 12 Jun to 8 Aug, when one was flushed and seen briefly associating with a covey of Grey Partridges. This was the last record of a live bird for the year. Further records of singing birds came from Thorney Deepes, West Dean Woods, Ditchling Beacon, Streathill Fm (Streat), Newmarket Hill, Pickers Hill (Balsdean), Seaford and Rye Hbr LNR. A very late record was from Runcton (Chichester) on 24 Oct where a bird was freshly found dead in the road. The latest county record is 31 October 1999. [RTP]

0394. COMMON PHEASANT

Phasianus colchicus

Very common introduced resident; population augmented annually by captive bred stock.

Records were received from 108 sites across the county. Only five counts were of 20 or more birds. In the first winter period there were 40 at Constantia Manor (Isfield) on 4 Mar and 24 at Rye Hbr on 28 Feb. In the second winter period there were 100 at Kithurst Hill on 1 Oct, 55 at Sefter Fm (Pagham) on 16 Nov and 25 in the Arun Valley on 26 Oct. The first evidence of breeding came from Partridge Green where a hen bird was seen with three juveniles on 2 May. Several broods were seen at Castle Water and Harbour Fm (Rye Hbr LNR) during the season and young were also reported from Millbrook and Churlwood in Ashdown Forest, Climping, where 11 chicks were seen, and Wilbees Fm (Arlington). A cock bird took up residence in a conservation area at St Anne's Well (Hove) in October. [RTP]

0396. GOLDEN PHEASANT

Chrysolophus pictus

Very scarce introduced resident.

For the second year running, only a single record was received. A bird was observed at Deanlane End (Rowland's Castle) on 1 Feb (JSi). [RTP]

0002. RED-THROATED DIVER

Gavia stellata

Fairly common coastal winter visitor and passage migrant but scarce inland. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

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 *sp*’ 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		Oct	Nov	Dec
302	289	57	97	20		7	74	330

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May		Oct	Nov	Dec
County total (*)	228	155	52	93	20		7	56	269
Selsey Bill	77	0	15	19	9		4	30	76
Worthing Beach	65	7	2	18	3		3	22	20
Brighton Marina	-	145	-	51	-		-	2	55
Telscombe Cliffs	80	21	30	16	-		-	10	22
Splash Point (Seaford)	6	24	34	35	14		-	2	14
Birling Gap	-	-	21	3	-		-	-	-

(*) adjusted to compensate for duplication.

The variation between site counts is partly reflected by the differences in time spent seawatching at each site. Numbers were generally lower than in recent years with only seven records of more than 50 birds, although the absence of daily totals from Brighton Marina may give a slightly misleading picture. Notable counts were 72 offshore at Norman’s Bay on 4 Jan, 115 in Rye Bay on 1 Feb, and easterly movements of 90 and 55 past Brighton Marina on 16 and 18 Feb respectively. The largest easterly movements after this time occurred in early April, with counts of 60 Diver *sp.* at Beachy Head on the 1st, and on the 2nd 45 Red-throated at Brighton Marina and 46 and 50 Diver *sp.* at Beachy Head and Seaford respectively. Small numbers were noted until the last was offshore at Seaford on 15 May.

Records of birds away from the open sea came from just four sites with singles at Northpoint GP on 25 Jan, Rye Hbr on 25 Jan and 28 Feb, Emsworth Channel (Chichester Hbr) on 21-23 Feb and on the R Ouse by Barcombe Res between 28 Mar and 4 Apr.

The first returning bird was a single passing east at Worthing Beach on 9 Oct. Numbers remained small until December when 143 were noted passing east in Rye Bay on 11th and, on 18th, 55 W at Brighton Marina and 54W and 2 E at Selsey Bill.

There were no records away from the open sea in the latter part of the year. [PMB]

0003. **BLACK-THROATED DIVER**

Gavia arctica

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May		Nov	Dec
18	12	15	45	14		9	12

The total of 125 represents a poor year for this species, particularly on spring passage.

Records from the main seawatching sites are summarised below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun		Oct	Nov	Dec
County total (*)	17	8	14	45	13	-		-	8	10
Selsey Bill	2	-	-	5	7	-		-	2	1
Worthing Beach	2	1	-	3	-	-		-	1	-
Brighton Marina	-	-	-	11	11	-		-	-	-
Telscombe Cliffs	7	6	4	14	-	-		-	-	3
Splash Point (Seaford)	6	1	3	24	4	-		-	-	2
Birling Gap	-	-	8	23	2	-		-	-	-

(*) adjusted to compensate for duplication.

A winter movement of 6 E was noted at Seaford on 1 Jan.

Spring passage occurred in two waves, with 8 E at Beachy Head on 31 Mar and 10 E at Brighton Marina on 2 Apr being followed by 8 E and 6 E at Beachy Head and Seaford respectively on 16 Apr. Small numbers were noted until 26 May but 4 E at Selsey Bill on the 3rd was the maximum.

Notable sightings away from the main seawatching sites came from Scotney Court GP on 2 Jan and 4 at Rye Hbr LNR on 19 Feb.

The first autumn bird was noted at Selsey Bill on 6 Nov with more widespread sightings to the year end including one on Pagham Lagoon on 28 Nov, four offshore at Pett Level on 11 Dec and a single noted around Pilsey Island on 26 and 29 Dec. [PMB]

0004. GREAT NORTHERN DIVER

Gavia immer

Scarce winter visitor and spring passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

2003: A series of late records was received from Brighton Marina. In January, sightings were of three singles flying east and one west between the 5th and 17th, 2 E on the 18th, a juvenile flying west on the 21st and 1 E on the 24th, although there is possibly some duplication amongst these records. Single summer plumaged birds flew east on 8 and 28 Apr. One in non-breeding plumage flew east on 10 May and one in breeding plumage went west on the 21st. The sighting of a non-breeding plumaged bird on the sea on 8 Jun was noteworthy. In the autumn, sightings involved 1 W on 4 Nov, 1 E on 30 Nov and 3 W on 21 Dec (all IJW).

The approximate monthly totals now become:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun		Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	11	4	4	5	4	2		1	5	4
Max. off Selsey	0	4	3	2	3	1		0	3	3
Brighton Marina	6	0	0	2	1	1		0	2	0
Other sites	5	0	1	1	0	0		1	0	1

2004: The approximate maximum monthly totals for the Selsey Bill / Church Norton area are given below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May		Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total (*)	7	2	5	6	5		1	1	8	3
Selsey Bill / Church Norton	5	2	4	4	5		1	1	6	3
Number of days noted	8	4	6	15	12		2	1	8	4

(*) allowing for duplication.

Birds were regularly noted lingering off Selsey Bill and Church Norton, with occasional singles noted from nearby Bracklesham Bay. There remains no evidence to suggest that birds noted in flight off Selsey are on anything but local feeding movements due to the frequency of such sightings and the fact that the movements were not observed at other seawatching sites. The peak monthly counts at Selsey Bill were five on 20 Jan, two on 12 and 14 Feb, four on 27 Mar, four on 25 Apr and five on 2 May. The last reported sighting was on 18 May.

Other records comprised singles at Weir Wood Res from 2003 to 3 Jan, Scotney Court GP on 13 Jan and passing east on 5 Mar and 21 Apr at Telscombe Cliffs, and at Beachy Head on 24 Apr.

The first returning singleton was noted offshore at Church Norton on 26 Sep but few were noted until six were at the same site on 4 Nov with up to three noted in this area until the year end. The only other record comprised two at Bewl Water on 5 Nov. [PMB]

DIVER Species

Gavia sp.

The specific identification of divers in flight is difficult, particularly when they are in winter plumage. Those recorded as 'diver sp.' can form a significant proportion of those seen. The numbers of divers recorded at the main seawatching locations in January-May (J-M) and October-December (O-D) are shown in the table below. The totals for each site have been calculated by adding the monthly totals of flying birds (east + west) to the numbers seen on the sea. Duplication is likely both between sites and with divers specifically identified. No attempt should be made to add the columns, since many birds will have been seen at more than one site.

	Diver spp		R-t Diver		B-t Diver		Total (*)		No. per hr	
	J-M	O-D	J-M	O-D	J-M	O-D	J-M	O-D	J-M	O-D
Selsey Bill	35	34	120	110	15	3	261	168	0.47	1½
Worthing Beach	32	13	95	45	5	1	132	59	0.95	1
Telscombe Cliffs	38	-	147	32	31	3	218	35	1.49	2
Splash Point (Seaford)	290	16	113	16	38	2	441	34	1.40	2¼
Birling Gap	180	0	21	-	33	-	235	-	3.92	-

(*) includes Great Northern Divers.

The rates of passage were the lowest for at least eight years, with notably few significant movements in the first winter period compared to recent years. Peak passages occurred during onshore winds, particularly light southeast winds in early spring. [PMB]

0007. **LITTLE GREBE***Tachybaptus ruficollis***Scarce resident 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	220	177	130	41	49	28	59	133	253	212	239	219
Chichester Hbr	65	59	25	11	8	6	6	20	53	44	85	90
Pagham Hbr	24	10	14	nc	3	3	5	11	7	9	11	9
Chichester GP	22	11	10	-	3	2	1	-	10	14	6	1
Brooklands Worthing	1	-	-	-	1	-	3	8	7	12	2	4
Cuckmere Haven	24	23	9	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	10	20	28	48
Bewl Water	12	14	17	nc	nc	nc	22	41	80	53	30	16
Pett Level	1	1	13	11	9	3	4	-	-	4	6	-
Rye Hbr	41	42	22	14	15	12	13	52	65	41	45	33

As usual small numbers were widely noted from suitable coastal and inland sites during the winter months.

Breeding behaviour was noted from mid-March with approximately 39 pairs reported from 15 sites. Ten pairs were at Pett Level, with six pairs at both Rye Hbr and Selsey West Fields. Breeding success was generally moderate. The apparent decrease in numbers from 2003 can be attributed to a lack of breeding records from Bewl Water.

Post breeding dispersal was noted from late June. Notable counts not included in the *WeBS*' table were 40 at Drayton GP (Chichester) on 22 Aug and a peak of 35 at Thorney Island on 13 Nov. [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
County total	604	254	313	140	123	82	564	581	579	526	368	484
Chichester GP	54	58	55	2	7	4	1	3	24	39	46	36
Goring Gap	18	13	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	2	10
Weir Wood Res	15	7	26	32	36	nc	102	77	90	114	54	47
Arlington Res	11	16	25	18	12	12	33	42	44	55	24	28
Bewl Water	56	60	82	nc	nc	nc	323	330	256	161	94	50
Darwell Res	12	16	30	28	25	31	44	39	30	26	27	14
Pett Level	352	7	4	2	1	-	-	1	2	1	28	140
Rye Hbr	13	14	14	19	15	13	26	58	65	46	24	46

The only notable inland counts that were additional to the *WeBS*' totals came from Weir Wood Res with 61 on 7 Mar, 75 on 4 Apr and 60 on 2 May, and 36 at Arlington Res on 17 Mar. The late summer counts from Bewl Water have only once been exceeded - in 2002.

The peak coastal counts came from Rye Bay, where 41 on 16 Jan increased to 120 on the 18th and 350 on the 25th before reducing to 80 by 1 Feb, and Worthing Beach, where a peak of 67 was noted on 15 Feb. The largest coastal movement was 14 E at Seaford on 17 Feb, with the last sighting off Telscombe Cliffs on 7 Jun.

Breeding display was noted from early February with a very early juvenile noted in the Brede Valley on 23 Mar. A total of approximately 70 pairs was noted at 16 sites but breeding was confirmed at only 13. The largest numbers noted were at Weir Wood Res where a count of 135 of 25 Jul included 35 young. There were an estimated 16 pairs at Darwell Res, but only six young were noted from three broods. At Ardingly Res four pairs were noted with ten young on 8 Jun, two pairs at Liphook Forest Mere produced three young, two pairs at Ifield MP produced two young each, two pairs at Castle Water (Rye Hbr LNR) produced three young but two pairs at Shinewater Lake (Eastbourne) were seen with only one young on 12 Jun. Elsewhere, only single pairs were noted with either one or two young.

Post breeding dispersal was noted at the coast from late July, with 28 at Pagham Hbr on 27 Sep the first notable count. Numbers increased rapidly in late November with 32 offshore at Worthing Beach on the 20th increasing to 103 on the 24th, with 50 still present on 28 Dec. Rye Bay also noted the influx with 20 on 22 Nov increasing to a Sussex record of 600 on 4 Dec before falling to 140 on 12 Dec and 80 on the 30th. However no significant coastal movements were observed. [PMB]

0010. **RED-NECKED GREBE**

Podiceps grisegena

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The approximate monthly totals were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
3	2	4	2		3	1	2	-

In the early part of the year presumably the same single was noted at Pett Level on 1-3 and 12-13 Jan and at Northpoint Pit on 18 Jan. Elsewhere most records came from the Selsey peninsula, with sightings at Selsey Bill on 15 dates up to 13 Mar, three sightings at Church Norton, and one record from Chichester Hbr. The peak count was three at Selsey Bill on 11 Mar.

Spring passage was almost non-existent with a single offshore at Rottingdean on 28 Mar and 2 E at Seaford on 20 Apr the only records.

Autumn passage commenced with a juvenile at Darwell Res from 15 Sep to 3 Oct. Further singles were seen at Pagham Hbr on 26-27 Sep, offshore at Selsey Bill on 20 Oct with two offshore at Church Norton on 11 Nov. The only other record was of a single offshore at Cooden Beach on 17 Nov. [PMB]

0011. **SLAVONIAN GREBE**

Podiceps auritus

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The approximate monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May		Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	31	37	33	30	1		6	31	29
Max in Church Norton area	29	35	21	1	1		2	28	29

As usual most winter records were from the Selsey peninsula where the peak count was 35 offshore at Church Norton on 12 Feb, consistent with numbers reported at the end of 2003. The last double figure count was 21 there on 7 Mar. Other sightings of singles came from Northpoint Pit on 18 Jan, 8 and 18 Feb, and Chichester GP on 25 Jan.

Spring passage commenced in early March with three offshore at Widewater on the 2nd and a different individual there the following day. A single was at Northpoint Pit on 15 Mar and a flock of seven was observed off Birling Gap on the 31st. A group of five off Seaford the same day may have been part of this group. The following day four were at Birling Gap and three at Newhaven Tidemills, while, on 2 Apr, one was offshore at Church Norton and three offshore at Worthing Beach.

Further strong coastal passage occurred over 15-16 Apr, with sightings from Widewater (2), Brighton Marina (5), Rottingdean (3), Telscombe Cliffs (1), Seaford (10E, 2W) and Birling Gap (2). The last spring sighting was of a single at Selsey Bill on 9 May.

Returning birds were noted in October with singles at Sidlesham Ferry on the 4th, Weir Wood Res on the 13th and two at Powdermill Res on the 17th. All remaining records came from the Selsey peninsula with peak counts offshore at Church Norton of 16 on 27 Nov and again on 7 Dec, and Worthing Beach/Goring, where singles were noted on 5, 20 and 27 Nov. [PMB]

0012. **BLACK-NECKED GREBE**

Podiceps nigricollis

Very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The approximate monthly totals were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
3	1	3	22		1	1	2	1	1

A total of approximately 34 was recorded, with a typical peak in April. The early winter period records came from Scotney Court GP, from 2003 to 18 Jan, with probably the same bird then noted at nearby Northpoint Pit until 15 Feb, and another at Emsworth Channel (Chichester Hbr) on 2 Jan.

Spring passage commenced with a single at Piddinghoe on 1 Mar and a pair at Arlington Res two days later. Coastal passage in April included five offshore at Brighton Marina on the 1st, one remaining to the next day, and a peak on the 15th when two were offshore at Worthing Beach, 6 E and 4 W noted at Seaford and four offshore at St Leonards on Sea. A single was noted at Barcombe Res between 7-12 Apr.

The first returning bird was a juvenile at Weir Wood Res on 11 Aug, with the next offshore at Church Norton on 26 and 29 Sep. Further singles were then noted at Arlington Res on 5 Oct, Scotney Court GP on 18 Oct and 12 Dec, and again offshore at Church Norton on 24 Nov. [PMB]

0022. **FULMAR***Fulmaris glacialis*

Fairly common breeding species and passage migrant, resident on coastal cliffs from November to September. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

Movements at the main seawatching localities were as follows:

	Jan-Feb		Mar-May		Jun-Jul		Aug-Oct		Nov-Dec	
<i>Direction:</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>W</i>
Selsey Bill	1	2	51	137	18	39	42	100	-	-
Worthing	-	-	81	91	-	-	3	2	-	-
Splash Point (Seaford)	11	2	85	-	-	-	-	-	15	13

No daily totals were received from Brighton Marina in 2004.

No notable movements were observed in the first winter period, with 55 E at Seaford on 3 Mar the first significant record.

Spring records were similarly unspectacular, with all records close to the breeding cliffs: 145 at Brighton Marina on 25 Apr, 194 offshore at Telscombe Cliffs on 8 May and 315 E at Brighton Marina on 15 May.

The only breeding records concerned 13 pairs along Telscombe Cliffs, while seven were noted at Cliff End (Pett) in late June. However the presence of 200 offshore at Saltdean on 26 Jun was perhaps more reflective of the true numbers present. Birds departed the breeding sites by mid-September but had returned by late October.

Even fewer records were received in the autumn, with the largest movements at Selsey Bill comprising 13 W and 8E on 12 Aug and 40 W and 25 E on 18 Aug. Single blue morph birds were noted passing Brighton Marina on 21 and 24 Apr and Telscombe Cliffs on 31 Dec. [PMB]

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

Rare vagrant.

2002: One flew east off Birling Gap on 9 Sep (RHC). There have been 16 records in the county involving 21 individuals. Four were seen during the 1970s, eight in the 1980s, four during the 1990s and this is only the second record since. The other was also at this location, in April 2000, while the only previous record in September was the county's first, seen from the Newhaven Ferry in 1936. [RJF]

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

Very scarce autumn visitor.

2002: One flying east off Birling Gap on 3 Jul (RHC) takes that year's total to seven. It was the first record in July since 1980 and the earliest summer record ever, although one was found dead in early June 1850.

2004: One flew west off Selsey Bill on 20 Sep (OM) with another west there on the 23rd (TJE, OM *et al*). Forty-five have been recorded since 2000 including 28 in that year but none in 2003. Recent records have fallen in January (2), July, August (2), September (9), October (28), November (2) and December. [RJF]

0046. **MANX SHEARWATER***Puffinus puffinus*

Fairly common spring to autumn passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The minimum total of 169 birds was very low compared to the last four years which averaged 332 a year. The totals at the main seawatching localities were as follows:

	Mar		Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Monthly totals	3		5		144		3		4		5		1		4	
Selsey Bill		3			10	26		2		3	3	1		1		1
Worthing					6											
Brighton Marina					88											
Splash Point (Seaford)			4		18		1									1
Birling Gap			2		11											
Other sites			1		9				1		1				2	

Three early birds flew west at Selsey Bill on 14 Mar but there were no further records until 2 E at Birling Gap and 1 E at Seaford on 16 Apr. The majority were recorded in May although passage was only noted on nine dates. The only double figure counts were 88 at Brighton Marina on the 4th (the only record received from that site for the spring), 20 W at Selsey Bill on the 12th and 11 E at Birling Gap on the 29th.

Summer and autumn records were scarce, as in 2003, and mostly consisted of singles although three flew west at Selsey Bill on 15 Jul. The last records were 1 W at Brighton Marina on 4 Oct, 2 E off Brighton on the 21st and 1 W at Seaford on the 24th. [TJW]

0052. **EUROPEAN STORM PETREL***Hydrobates pelagicus*

Very scarce visitor, mainly in mid-summer and after autumn gales. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

Two flew west off Selsey Bill on 24 Jun (DF, RM *et al*). Nineteen have been recorded since 2000 although there were none in 2003. The eight individuals in 2000 were all in late October/early November, the two in 2001 in August and the seven in 2002 during mid-May/mid-June. [RJF]

0071. **GANNET***Morus bassana*

Common passage migrant and non-breeding summer visitor; once scarce but now increasingly numerous in winter. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

Movements at the main seawatching 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	10	2	431	349	60	571	330	4791	10	661
Worthing	116	23	263	486	3	32	353	575	51	133
Telscombe Cliffs	124	69	586	117	398	69	886	786	86	269
Splash Point (Seaford)	492	16	2976	592	247	10	2	-	81	77
Beachy Head	-	-	1108	-	-	-	-	60	-	-

At the start of the year the only notable count was 409 W at Seaford on 1 Jan. The regular rooftop bird was present for its seventh year spending most of its time in Kemp Town (Brighton).

In the spring there were 15 dates when counts of over 100 were made. The best of these were 220 E at Beachy Head on 3 Mar, 274 W at Seaford on 30 Apr, 268 E and 30 W at Splash Point (Seaford) on 5 May and 298 E there on 30 May. There were no spring counts received from Brighton Marina. An unusual inland record concerned a single over the dam at Weir Wood Res on 6 Apr (NAD).

In June, 400 were off Selsey Bill on the 27th and in July the highest counts were 180 in Rye Bay on the 10th and 320 W at Selsey Bill on the 21st. The autumn peaks at Selsey Bill were 711 W on 29 Aug, 525 W on 18 Sep, 650 W on 25th, 800 W on the 30th and 600 W on 2 Oct. Elsewhere, 550 flew west at Brighton Marina on 2 Oct and the seawatching total at Telscombe Cliffs between August and October was 886 E and 789 W in 58hr (but unfortunately no day counts were given for this site). From then until the end of the year the only notable count was 590 W at Selsey Bill on 18 Dec. [TJW]

0072. GREAT CORMORANT

Phalacrocorax carbo

Fairly common but localised resident and common winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

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	561	509	437	244	260	420	715	395	629	645	786	831
Chichester Hbr	40	26	38	20	5	11	26	54	63	78	74	46
Pagham Hbr	123	54	54	nc	3	45	165	7	142	160	222	225
Chichester GP	93	75	46	-	-	-	-	5	46	58	107	58
Climping	30	19	2	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	12	2	71	25
Ardingly Res	5	18	2	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	11	21	90
Weirwood Res	14	13	10	2	-	nc	11	23	21	14	19	63
Iford Brooks	12	6	30	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	8	6	9
Barcombe Res	12	36	6	3	nc	2	6	6	22	17	10	13
Pevensey Levels	5	21	23	3	2	1	1	8	11	24	16	10
Bowl Water	35	20	20	nc	nc	nc	40	50	45	20	9	25
Rye Hbr	84	115	109	205	244	357	445	227	165	99	108	114

With a large and increasing breeding population, Rye Hbr continued to be the most heavily populated site throughout the spring and summer. In April there was a record 132 nests in the breeding colony at Castle Water; 127 of these were on a wooded island and the other five on a smaller island nearby. There was considerable breeding success and on 16 Jul no less than 500 birds were at Castle Water. The sheer volume of nutrients discharged into the water by these large numbers causes ecological problems which may need addressing sooner rather than later. A suspicion that many of the breeding birds in the colony were of the continental *sinensis* race was confirmed when DNA tests on 13 broods showed that 11 broods had *sinensis* characteristics corresponding to the haplotypes found in Continental Europe (the other two corresponded to haplotypes found mainly in Great Britain and Brittany). This is the first confirmed breeding record of *sinensis* in Sussex although birds exhibiting these characteristics have been breeding at Rye Hbr for several years. There is an identification paper on how to separate North Atlantic and Continental Great Cormorants in *Birding World* **18** (3): 122-123 (see also *BW* **18** (6): 262).

The only other reported breeding site was again at Iford Brooks (Lewes). This inland colony appears to be growing; it had a record number of eight nests in April and 17 young were present on 20 Jun.

The familiar pattern of movement into the west of the county through the autumn and winter months is shown by counts at the main nocturnal roosts:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Chichester GP	131	106	95	75	17	15	59	45	137	71	201	191
South Stoke	143	141	82	84	81	35	32	85	124	155	184	205
Beeding Brooks	93	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	60	nc	69	nc

Until April the nocturnal roost at Chichester GP was split between the traditional site on islands in Ivy Lake and the relative tranquillity and security of trees and bushes fringing New Lake, 0.5km to the southeast. From May onwards, only the New Lake roost was used, probably because of harassment and disturbance at Ivy Lake. At both sites large numbers habitually swim round in tight groups at dusk immediately before flying up to roost. There was an isolated report of 71 feeding in a tight group in Westhampnett North Lake, three km to the north: maybe this also was pre-roosting behaviour although there have been no reports to date of roosting there.

The principal daytime loafing roosts were again Rye Hbr in the east and Pagham Hbr in the west. At the latter there was a spring maximum of 165 on 3 Apr and an autumn maximum of 172 on 2 Sep.

It was noticeable that at several sites the monthly maxima greatly exceeded the snapshot *WeBS* figures given above. An example for comparison was the monthly maxima for Barcombe Res:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS	12	36	6	3	nc	2	6	6	22	17	10	13
Maxima	57	66	7	45	4	4	8	9	45	24	17	18

High numbers were reported from many other inland waters in both winter and autumn. Ifield Mill Pond had a highest ever count of nine on 1 Feb. Strangely, in a year which saw record numbers breeding and above average winter and autumn visitors, reports from coastal stations showed relatively small activity. The maximum coastal count during the first four months of the year was 42 E off Worthing on 3 Apr whilst, during the last four months, the maximum was 40 offshore, also at Worthing, on 19 Dec.

One of three nestlings ringed in Suffolk at Loompit Lake (St. Martin) on 16 May 2000 was found dead near Darwell Res on 20 Jan. [RK]

0080. SHAG

Phalacrocorax aristotelis

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

It was a better year for this species than of late, particularly in the second winter period when good numbers were seen at Selsey Bill. The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
7	10	9	24	8	-	1	23	18	34	72	45

The majority of records in the first three months of the year came from Brighton Marina where up to six birds were wintering. Other lingering birds in this period were an

immature at Newhaven and two off Splash Point (Seaford) throughout, while the only other record was of a single at Glyne Gap (Bexhill) on 20 Feb. There were no inland records.

April brought an increase in records with a monthly total of 13 E at Selsey Bill, including 7 E on the 24th, and at Splash Point four flew east during the month and two remained offshore. A single also flew east at Birling Gap on the 1st. In May, three were still lingering at Brighton Marina and occasional singles were at Selsey Bill, Worthing and Seaford.

The only record during the summer was one at Seaford on 10 and 17 Jul. Numbers increased in August, primarily at Selsey Bill, where 12 flew east on the 24th and numbers offshore there peaked at eight on the 29th. One also remained at Birling Gap from the 26th into September. All records during September and October were from Selsey Bill with the most notable counts being 18 offshore on 28 Sep, 18 E on 3 Oct and 16 E on 13 Oct. The monthly total in November at the same location was 37 E and up to 24 offshore and in December 33 flew east on the 2nd. Thereafter numbers dropped off significantly. Elsewhere during the last two months of the year up to seven were off Church Norton, up to five were off Seaford and occasional singles were at Goring, Worthing and Newhaven. [TJW]

0095. EURASIAN BITTERN

Botaurus stellaris

Scarce winter visitor, rare outside the winter months. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

Another good year for this species with the number of records submitted increasing to 120 although the minimum number of 21 birds was only half of the previous year's total. (Plate No. 1 shows a bird at Rye Hbr.)

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar		Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total:	13	11	8		1	1	-	4	2	5
Burton Mill Pond	-	5	3		-	-	-	-	-	-
Brede Valley	2	1	1		-	-	-	1	-	1
Pett Level	2	1	-		-	1	-	1	-	1
Rye Hbr	6	3	3		1	-	-	1	2	3
Other Sites	3	1	1		-	-	-	1	-	-

In January, a single was at Arundel WWT on 9th and 18th, two flew over the Brede Valley on 20th, one was at Plashett Park on 26th and one was fishing at a garden pond in Vine's Cross on 28th. Rye Hbr recorded its peak count for the year of six on 29th. Attention moved to Burton Mill Pond in February where up to five birds gave excellent views from the roadside in the evenings. Elsewhere, a single was at Filsham on the 25th. Numbers reduced in March although three were still at Burton Mill Pond on 10th. The last record at Rye Hbr was on 13th and singles were still at Pevensey Levels on 17th and in the Brede Valley on 23rd.

Continuing the recent run of summer records, one was at Rye Hbr on 13 Jul and what was presumably a different bird was at Pett Level on 5th Aug and three further dates in that month. A more typical returning date was a single at Ivy Lake, Chichester GP on 5 Oct and one was trapped and ringed at Pett Level on 6th. Birds were then seen at Pett Pools on 17th and in the Brede Valley on 21st. Rye Hbr held two birds in November with other

presumed wintering birds being seen at Cliff End (Pett) on 12 Dec and in the Brede Valley on 18th and 25th [TJW]

0104. **NIGHT HERON**

Nycticorax nycticorax

Rare vagrant.

An immature was seen at Weir Wood Res from 22-24 Jul (RJJ *et al*). This is the first record since 2000 and takes the county total to 31. It is the first to have been found in July although one was present in Hastings during June-July 1996. Most have been recorded in April (7), May (12) or September (5). [RJF]

0119. **LITTLE EGRET**

Egretta garzetta

**Formerly rare, but now breeds and is a fairly common autumn and winter visitor.
Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.**

The number of records increased again to 820 although, while the autumn maxima are stabilizing, the county's breeding population is increasing rapidly.

The monthly maxima at the four main sites are shown in the following table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Chichester Hbr	34	38	26	41	22	38	67	97	129	127	78	40
Pagham Hbr	41	8	3	1	7	5	53	63	60	34	52	10
Cuckmere Valley	9	12	4	-	5	6	30	20	26	14	12	9
Rye Hbr	27	26	20	11	5	9	18	34	53	46	46	40

Birds were widely reported in the first three months of the year and included garden records from Angmering, Upper Horsebridge (Hailsham) and Hodcombe (Beachy Head). Total numbers were about the same as the previous year and no double figure counts were made away from the four main sites at this time.

In the spring, birds were occasionally seen from the main seawatching locations with notable records being 3 E at Splash Point (Seaford) and Birling Gap on 25 Apr, 2 W at Splash Point on 9 May, 1 E with three Arctic Skuas at Brighton Marina on the 11th, 3 E at Worthing on the 12th, and a further 3 E at Brighton Marina the next day.

Breeding season records were received from five locations. Four of these were from the west of the county; at the first, 12 nests were counted on 18 Jun, including seven nests in a single oak tree. Most nests had two young of varying sizes although at least two young birds were killed during a heavy storm. At the second location there was an adult and three nearly fledged young at a nest on 9 Jun. At the third location there were three or four occupied nests but breeding success was not recorded and at the fourth location the observer recorded three active nests. In the east of the county, at a site where breeding has taken place in the last couple of years, the only records received were of an adult on 4 June and two juveniles nearby on 9 August. In addition, a very young juvenile was seen at Arlington Res on 16 Jul suggesting local breeding and at a number of other sites birds were present throughout the summer.

Dispersing birds were seen at numerous locations in the autumn but the peak counts at Chichester Hbr of 129 on 19 Sep and 127 on 17 Oct were well down on 2003. The only locations away from the four main sites shown in the table above where double figure counts were made were Widewater (Lancing) where up to ten were seen regularly and the

nearby R Adur at Shoreham with up to 12. There were no notable records at the end of the year although numbers at Rye Hbr remained high. [TJW]

0121. GREAT WHITE EGRET

Ardea alba

Rare vagrant.

One was seen at Castle Water (Rye Hbr LNR) on 9 Jan (AJH, BJH *et al*) with it, or another, at Long Pit (Rye Hbr SSSI) on 25 Feb (TF). Others were seen at West Chidham (Chichester Hbr) on 13 Mar (NGH), Hook Creek (Dell Quay, Chichester Hbr) on 3 Aug (GAC) and Castle Water on 26 Sep. The latter bird stayed in the area until at least 12 Oct; it had been colour ringed in France in May 2004 and, as well as Rye Harbour, was seen at Cliffe Pools (Kent) and an RSPB reserve in South Yorkshire! (BJY). These records have been accepted by BBRC and, assuming they relate to four different individuals, take the county total to 18. All but two of the records have been since 1996 making it seem a long time ago that this species was a real rarity. May and December remain the only months in which it has not been recorded in the county. [RJF]

0122. GREY HERON

Ardea cinerea

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
County total	130	113	77	67	47	58	75	95	123	139	133	117
Chichester Hbr	18	20	8	19	6	4	8	28	19	26	14	21
Pagham Hbr	12	10	9	nc	4	6	7	6	12	9	8	4
Chichester GP	4	5	4	3	-	-	-	-	6	4	7	6
Burton & Chingford Ponds	-	1	-	-	-	4	4	-	-	-	-	nc
Amberley Wild Brooks	4	3	3	6	12	6	7	5	5	4	14	6
Pulborough Brooks	-	2	5	4	5	4	5	2	3	-	4	5
Kneppmill Pond	4	3	2	1	3	3	1	2	-	1	-	-
Warnham LNR	3	9	5	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	3	1
Lower Adur Estuary	4	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	3	5	5	7
Weirwood Res	8	7	17	14	11	nc	12	9	2	2	4	9
Glynde Brooks	5	6	4	8	3	3	nc	nc	4	5	nc	8
Arlington Res	2	-	-	1	-	3	4	5	7	4	2	1
Cuckmere Haven	10	4	1	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	4	5	10	8
Eastbourne Lakes	7	3	2	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	5	6	4	3
Pevensey Levels	nc	4	1	3	3	6	2	3	4	4	3	3
Bowl Water	7	3	2	nc	nc	nc	13	14	18	21	10	2
Darwell Res	2	1	-	1	1	2	1	7	3	2	2	4
Pett Level	1	2	-	1	-	3	1	1	2	2	1	1
Rye Hbr	8	14	2	3	-	8	6	13	14	17	14	11

During the breeding season, 246 nests were counted at 21 heronries (267 nests in 2003). Many of the heronries have decreased a little in size although there was a significantly higher count at Leasam. Counts for individual heronries, listed from west to east, were as follows:

Fishbourne 13; Pagham Owl Copse 3; Church Norton 2; Flansham 14; Warningcamp 1; Parham 23; Knepp 12; Warnham 6; Henfield 18; Hurstpierpoint 0; Ardingly 13; Weir Wood Res 15; Iford 0; Firle 14; Charleston 15; Hadlow Down 11; Eridge 11; Glynleigh 15; Wartling, Horsebridge Road 13; Burwash 7; Pebsham 2; Winchelsea 8; Leasam 30.

The small but longstanding heronry at Sidlesham moved 0.7km to "Owl Copse" (Pagham), probably due to a Common Buzzard nesting in one of the original trees. During the count at Parham it was suspected that a Common Buzzard might be predated the nests there.

During the rest of the year single birds and small groups of herons were seen feeding or loafing in suitable habitat throughout the county and occasional birds or small parties moved offshore on the coast. [ABW]

0124. **PURPLE HERON**

Ardea purpurea

Rare vagrant.

Two were seen in May: at Horse Eye Level (Pevensey) on the 15th (SHL) and Pett Level on the 28th (PEJ *et al*). The Pevensey bird was considered to be a first-year. Since 1990 records are averaging just under one a year with six of these thirteen individuals being seen in May. [RJF]

0134. **WHITE STORK**

Ciconia ciconia

Rare vagrant, mainly in spring.

Singles flew southwest over Southgate (Crawley) on 24 Apr (PFM), southwest over Pagham Hbr Information Centre on the 28th (OM *et al*), east over West Hove GC on 2 May (TJW) and northeast over Hooe Level (Pevensey) on 12 May (KMJ). These records conform to established patterns of natural occurrence, and, assuming all were different, move to 54 the total recorded in the county since 1960. Of these, 29 have been in the second half of April or in May. [RJF]

0144. **SPOONBILL**

Platalea leucorodia

Very scarce visitor, most frequent in spring and autumn. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

One was seen at Pett Level on 14 Jan. In spring, two adults flew east over Chichester Channel on 7 Apr, an impressive flock of seven, all thought to be second-years, flew north over the A259 near Denton (DHH) on the 21st and two flew west over Henfield on 8 May. A sub-adult was seen at Pagham Hbr on 20 Jun, with an adult there between 13-22 Jul, while at the opposite end of the county one was seen at Pett Level on 4, 13 and 17 Jul with two there on the 11th.

During the autumn there were several sightings in the west of the county: an adult roosting at Thorney Deeps on 17 Aug flew off east, four were seen in Pagham Hbr on 1 Sep with an immature there during 11-16th, an adult on 29 Sep and an immature during 10-28 Oct. One flew west over Hastings seafront on 29 Sep and the final records of the year came from Rye Hbr LNR with two on 27-28 Oct and one on 3 Nov.

About 27 individuals would seem to have been involved in these records, about twice the average showing in recent years, although just one was seen in the county as recently as 1998 and only two in 1997. The flock of seven is the largest number seen together in the county since 2000, when ten flew over Church Norton in October. [RJF]

0231. **HONEY-BUZZARD**

Pernis apivorus

Very scarce breeding summer visitor and spring and autumn passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

2003: An adult male was recorded at Pagham Hbr on 30 Aug 2003 (AH). Single dark morph juveniles flew over Brighton on 3, 5 and 7 Sep and a pale morph juvenile flew west over the Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) on 21 Sep (all IJW).

2004: This species successfully bred in the county for the eighth consecutive year. The group monitoring this species reported three pairs, each successfully fledging two young. With the usual protection afforded to rare breeding species all inland localities and observers' identities have been withheld.

There were no coastal sightings of spring migrants but during the summer months there were fully documented records for three different localities additional to that above. Two of these localities had single records only on 29 Jun (PHu) and 10 Jul (JER) respectively. The third locality was well watched by several observers with a pair seen on 3 Jun (BFF *et al*), followed by a number of sightings throughout the summer culminating in four birds on 19 Aug and five birds on 26 Aug, which included four in the same spiral. Some care is required when interpreting August gatherings. It is quite possible that there are two pairs in the general area of this third locality but it is not unusual for migrating birds to locate a territorial pair and remain in the area for a few days, thus temporarily boosting the numbers of birds seen.

There were just two coastal migrants in August and slightly surprisingly, none in September or October. There was an adult female at Beachy Head on 22 Aug (ASC) with another probable adult seen on 28 Aug at the same location (DC). [MEK]

0238. **BLACK KITE**

Milvus migrans

Rare vagrant.

One seen at Mount Caburn (Lewes) on 18 May (JC) has been accepted by *BBRC*. It drifted around for 10 minutes before departing high to the southeast. It was considered to be an adult due to its primary moult. It is the tenth record since 1990 and the 23rd in total. Over half of the county records have been in May. [RJF]

0239. **RED KITE**

Milvus milvus

Very scarce resident and scarce visitor, especially in the spring. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

A pair of Red Kites bred in West Sussex, successfully raising two young - the first time a pair of this species has bred in Sussex since the early 1800s (see pages 209-211). The birds took up residence on or around 9 Mar and settled in a mature piece of woodland, choosing a larch as the nesting tree. The nest was lined with sheep's wool by 28 Mar and

incubation began on 4 or 5 Apr. The two juveniles fledged on 3 Jul (see Plate No. 2) and were independently foraging by 7 Aug. Yellow wing tags, marked with the letters ‘Y’ and ‘Z’, were attached to the juveniles. They were also fitted with radio tracking devices, which allowed their movements to be followed both within the county and elsewhere by other Red Kite groups.

Apart from the above, it proved to be another very interesting year with records coming from 25-30 different localities. Whilst West Sussex downland dominated numerically, the split between the two halves of the county was fairly even as regards the number of locality records. The monthly totals are summarised as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	8	8	15	3	8	5	6	3	5	9

Rather surprisingly there were no reports for January or February. In March there were singles at Hollingdean (Brighton) on the 7th and 10th, both of which were untagged adults heading north, another single at Broadwater (Worthing) flying west on the 11th and a single at Ambersham Common on the 31st. In April there were singles at Cuckfield on the 1st, at Iping Common on the 3rd, at Apuldram (Chichester) on the 7th, at Deanlane End (Rowland’s Castle) on the 11th and 21st and at Fairlight on the 27th. In May there were two heading west at Pyecombe on the 2nd, singles at Charlton on the 11th, at Storrington on the 14th, at Bignor Hill on the 15th, and at Hove on the 19th. At Brighton Marina one came in off the sea on the 21st, and singletons were seen at Filsham LNR and Ripe on the 25th, at Golden Cross (Hailsham) on the 29th and at Pulborough Brooks on the 31st. At an East Sussex location two were seen disappearing into woodland on 19 and 20 May and there was also a brief interaction with a Common Buzzard, which tends to suggest territoriality. At the same location there was a single on 18 Jun. Otherwise there was only one other June record away from the home range of the breeding pair and that was a single heading north at Amberley Wild Brooks on the 12th.

In the second half of the year there were singles at Midhurst on 11 Jul, at Netherfield on 19 Jul, and at Horsham and Pulborough Brooks on 31 Jul. There were also singles at Barcombe Res on 1 Aug, at Pagham Hbr and Rotherfield on 2 Sep, at Kithurst Hill (Storrington) on 8 Nov, at Pickwell (Bolney) on 27 Nov and Steyning on 28 December.

In December there were at least eight different birds in the home range of the breeding pair. Not surprisingly, the breeding pair was ‘site faithful’ and in addition there was at least one other adult, four different untagged juveniles and juvenile ‘Z’. [MEK]



0260. **MARSH HARRIER***Circus aeruginosus*

Scarce spring and autumn passage migrant and very scarce winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

A pair successfully bred at a site in East Sussex, raising two young (MS-H). The addition of this species to the county breeding list is very welcome indeed. Hopefully this pair will remain faithful to their chosen site and in due course other pairs will follow.

There were approximately 28 different birds in the first half of the year and 66 for the second half, making it another excellent year for this species. The numbers seen at the major localities and the county monthly minima are summarised as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	2	2	6	3	10	5	5	24	17	13	5	3
Chichester and Pagham Hbrs	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	6	5	4	1	-
Beachy Head	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	2	2	2	-	-
Filsham LNR	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pett Level & Rye Hbr area	2	1	3	3	4	1	2	13	6	5	3	2
Other sites	-	1	1	-	4	3	1	3	4	2	1	1

Most of the records for the early part of the year were from the Rye Hbr area and the only unusual report was of a single at Sheffield Park on 14 and 15 Feb. In early March there was an isolated record at Combe Haven on the 2nd followed later by singles at Rye Hbr LNR on the 23rd, a female heading northeast at Thorney Deeps on the 26th, a female drifting west at Chichester GP on the 29th and a male at Pett Level on the 30th. There were a few records from the Pett Level/Rye Hbr area in April and then a second spring passage occurred in early May. This involved singles at Beachy Head, Coombes (Shoreham), Pett Level and Pulborough Brooks, all on the 1st, and further singles at Pagham Hbr on the 2nd, Rye Hbr on the 6th, Pulborough Brooks on the 8th and 9th and Pett Level, also on the 9th.

Records in mid-summer have become a regular feature. Whilst predominantly from Rye Hbr, there was a single at Southwater CP on 1 Jun, one flying out to sea at Beachy Head on 5 Jun, another there on 31 Jul, and singles at Newmarket Hill and Pagham Hbr on 19 and 27 Jul, respectively.

There were multiple sightings on several dates for the second half of the year with two at Scotney Court GP on 11 Aug and another two on 20 and 29 Nov, two at Pagham Hbr on 14, 17 and 26 Aug and 2 Sep, three at Rye LNR on 21 Aug, a staggering nine birds flying out to sea at Scotney Court GP on 21 Aug, and three at Elms Farm (Icklesham) on 23 Sep.

Beachy Head had a good autumn with singles on 26 and 28 Aug, 9 and 19 Sep and 9 and 30 Oct with several of the birds seen flying out to sea. [MEK]

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

There were rather fewer records compared to the past few years and as usual for just a small number of localities. The principal areas involved together with the probable monthly minima are summarised as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May		Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	14	21	14	5	1		1	8	7	9
NW Sussex Commons	1	3	-	-	-		-	-	-	1
Chichester & Pagham Hbrs	1	-	-	-	-		1	2	2	-
Arun Valley	3	-	1	-	-		-	-	2	1
W. Sussex Downland	2	3	4	2	-		-	-	1	2
E. Sussex Downland	-	2	1	-	-		-	1	-	3
Ashdown Forest	2	2	1	-	-		-	2	-	-
Beachy Head	-	-	-	1	1		-	-	-	-
Pevensy Levels	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	1
Pett Level & Rye Hbr area	4	11	7	2	-		-	2	2	1
Other Sites	1	-	-	-	-		-	1	-	-

A welcome feature was the number of roosts that were located and visited periodically. In the first half of the year the most significant was in the far east of the county at Scotney Court GP. In January there were two ringtails and a male in the general area but on 13 Feb three adult males and six ringtails went into roost. A few days later on 18 Feb there were four adult males, a second calendar year male and three ringtails, a minimum total of 11 different birds for this one roost in mid-February. The last available record for this locality was 6 Mar when six different birds were present. Otherwise three ringtails went into roost in the Arun Valley on 4 Jan, three at one of the northwest Commons on 19 Feb and three at West Dean Woods on 2 Mar. At the Ashdown Forest roost a male was seen fairly regularly and a ringtail very occasionally, but rather surprisingly there were no records for more than one bird on any one date.

There were several records in April with a ringtail at Pett Level on the 1st, an adult male at Rye Hbr SSSI on the 3rd, a ringtail at Beachy Head on the 7th, an adult female at Rye Hbr SSSI on the 10th, a ringtail at Deanlane End (Rowland's Castle) on the 11th, and a ringtail on the Downs near Steyning on the 16th. The final spring sighting was a ringtail at Beachy Head on 1 May.

In the autumn there were just two records in September with a second summer male at Newmarket Hill (Brighton) on the 13th and a ringtail at Pagham Hbr on the 14th but then a whole month passed before there was a small influx in October. There was a male at Ashdown Forest on 12 and 15 Oct and a ringtail on 30 Oct, a ringtail at Pagham Hbr on 16 and 21 Oct, a ringtail at Rye Hbr SSSI on 19 Oct and a male at the same location on 29 Oct, an inland sighting of a ringtail at Weir Wood Res on 29 Oct and to complete the month a ringtail flying over Mill Hill (Shoreham) on 31 Oct. Otherwise, the rest of the year was fairly quiet. Singles only were reported from the usual localities except for two which went into roost at Amberley Wild Brooks on 9 Nov and two which were quartering Pevensy Levels on 26 Dec. [MEK]

0263. **MONTAGU'S HARRIER**

Circus pygargus

Very scarce spring and autumn visitor; last bred successfully in 1962. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

2003: A juvenile flew south slowly over Brighton on 14 Sep (IJW, PJWh).

2004: It was a very disappointing year for this species with just three records. A male in its second calendar year was at Selsey West Fields on 15 Aug (AH). It was quartering a stubble field for a few minutes before thermalling up and away to the southeast and out to sea. Also at Selsey West Field there was a juvenile hunting over rough grassland during the early evening of 8 Sep (BFF, CW). The following morning, either the same bird or another juvenile was seen hunting over cut hay and maize fields at the North Wall (Pagham Hbr) (ARK). [MEK]

0267. **GOSHAWK**

Accipiter gentilis

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

After the flurry of records in 2003, it was somewhat disappointing that there was just one authenticated record for the entire year. In the far west of the county, an adult male was seen on several occasions throughout the day on 3 May (JSi). Within the county there is plenty of suitable breeding habitat and with the expanding population in neighbouring Hampshire it can only be a matter of time before a breeding attempt is made. One of the problems with this species, however, is that it is difficult to identify and describe in sufficient detail for all possible sightings to be accepted by the Society's Records Committee. [MEK]

0269. **SPARROWHAWK**

Accipiter nisus

Common resident and passage migrant.

A large number of casual records were received, identifying an approximate total of 60 territories. As usual there were minimal data regarding breeding success. Whilst all records are welcome, perhaps the most informative are those that relate to breeding pairs in well defined areas. In the absence of any formal survey the county estimate still remains at 800 pairs.

The usual range of small prey was taken with failed attempts involving a juvenile Rook, Tufted Duck and a Green Woodpecker.

In the spring there were three passage migrants with a single coming in off the sea at Brighton Marina on 14 Apr, and singles flying east at Selsey Bill on 20 Apr and Splash Point (Seaford) on 3 May. In the autumn a singleton was observed coming in off the sea at Brighton Marina on 24 Sep. [MEK]

0287. **COMMON BUZZARD**

Buteo buteo

Fairly common but localised resident and passage migrant and possible winter visitor.

This species continues to flourish with a very obvious on-going expansion of the breeding population. Just over ten years ago there were fewer than ten pairs in the county

but the population now is probably of the order of 120-150 pairs. In the west of the county all of the downland is very well populated but there are also significant clusters of breeding pairs on the borders with Hampshire and Surrey and in the far south-west there are several pairs in the Chichester/Pagham Hbr area.

In the east of the county the principal breeding population remains between Lewes and Ashdown Forest and in the far east, close to the Kent border, there are a couple of isolated pairs.

The pattern of reporting has already begun to change and many regular pairs are not recorded annually and breeding data are virtually non-existent. As recompense, records for multiple sightings have increased dramatically. These gatherings may occur at any time of the year but the late winter/early spring counts provide the most accurate information regarding the local breeding population. There needs to be some caution when interpreting the figures as the breeding pairs will inevitably be joined by local non-breeding immature birds and other migrants passing through.

There were eight birds at Steyning on 15 Feb, 14 at Graffham/Woolavington Downs on 18 Feb, 20 at West Dean Woods on 16 Mar, 30 between West Marden and Apple Down on 4 Apr, seven at Barcombe Res on 9 Apr and eight in the Pagham Hbr area on 11 Apr. Into the late spring and summer there were ten at Pagham Hbr on 2 May and 12 at Deanlane End (Rowland's Castle) on 30 Aug. In the following month there were 12 at Pagham Hbr on 1 Sep and 11 at Storrington on 23 Sep. Finally, on 27 Nov there were 11 in a spiral over Compton Down and a total of at least 40 different birds in the area encompassing West Dean Woods, East Marden and Compton Down.

Commenting on passage migration has become more difficult but where the nearest known breeding pair is some considerable distance away, the exercise remains worthwhile. At Beachy Head there were records in the spring for 28 Mar and 1 May and in the late summer/autumn for 21 and 31 Aug, 4 and 5 Sep (with three birds on the latter date) and finally a single on 5 Oct. At Pett Level there was a single on 1 Mar, two on 30 Jul and singles on 8 Oct and 7 and 15 November. At Hollingdean (Brighton) ten flew west on 16 Oct. [MEK]

0290. **ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD**

Buteo lagopus

Rare winter visitor.

There was an adult female hunting over downland to the north of Mill Hill (Shoreham) on 29 Feb (RJF). Unfortunately, it could not be relocated the next day and was presumably on passage.

In November there was an excellent close view of a juvenile at Beachy Head on the 5th (JFC, RDME). At one point it was just 80 metres away and when last seen was drifting towards the west. [MEK]

0301. **OSPREY**

Pandion haliaetus

Scarce passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

There were 23 different birds recorded in the first half of the year and, allowing for birds seen in consecutive months, a probable 24 different birds in the second half. The

minimum monthly totals, together with the numbers seen at the principal sites, are summarised as follows:

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
County total	9	11	3	5	12	10	1
Chichester Hbr	3	1	1	1	3	3	-
Pagham Hbr	-	4	-	-	4	3	-
Weir Wood Res	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
Arlington Res	1	1	1	1	1	-	1
Beachy Head	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bewl Water	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Other sites	4	5	1	2	3	3	-

The first of the spring migrants was not seen until 1 Apr with singles at Beachy Head and Ferring. Shortly after, at Pilsley Island, there was a single on 3 Apr, which was joined by another the following day. Both birds then stayed for the next few days. Thorney/Pilsley Islands remain the most reliable locality to see this species, with three to four birds in April, with a maximum of two on any one day but on eight different dates. The other April sightings were singles at Worthing Beach on the 7th, at Woodingdean on the 8th, at Firle Beacon on the 19th and finally at Arlington Res on the 22nd. Of the ten birds seen in May, three singles were at Pagham Hbr on 1, 11 and 19 May.

In the summer months, there were singles at Arlington Res on 26 Jun, 7, 13, 15 and 28 Jul, at Rye Hbr LNR on 29 Jun, at Chichester Hbr on 30 Jun, at Ashburnham Place (Battle) on 2 Jul, at Bewl Water on 10 Jul, at Darwell Woods on 16 Jul and Thorney Deeps on 20 Jul.

Most of the records in August came from the western harbours with the highlight being at Thorney Deeps on the 29th where there was one bird hunting locally and a further two up high and heading south out to sea. Otherwise, there was a single at Brighton Marina flying east on the 23rd and two at Warnham LNR on the 28th. In September, there was a long-staying juvenile at Pilsley Island, which was identified as a female that had been ringed at Loch Garten on 5 Jul 2004. Once again, most of the records came from the western harbours but there were isolated records at Weir Wood Res on 1 Sep, at Hollingdean (Brighton) on 2 Sep and a juvenile at Barcombe Res on 12 Sep. The final record for the year was a single at Arlington Res on 17 Oct. [MEK]

0304. COMMON KESTREL

Falco tinnunculus

Fairly common resident and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

With over 500 records involving more than 100 different localities it would seem that this species continues to be widespread and fairly common. Approximately 60 breeding pairs were identified but there were very little data regarding fledging success. Five nest boxes were occupied and tree cavities in ash, oak and cedar trees were recorded.

There were three records for birds on spring passage with a single in off the sea at Goring on 3 May and singles flying east at Selsey Bill on 9 and 12 May. In the autumn, there was one flying west on 2 Oct and on 3 Nov there was a single flying east at Splash Point (Seaford) and another flying out to sea at Beachy Head.

The only prey item reported was a Common Starling. [MEK]

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

An adult female seen at very close quarters at Cocking Down on 27 May (AJH, PFM) has been accepted by *BBRC*. Unfortunately, the bird could not be relocated the following day.

The last record from the west of the county was in 1979 although sixteen have been seen in East Sussex during that period. Twenty of the last 21 records have occurred between 8 May-14 Jun, with the exception of one seen on 3 Jul 1987. [MEK]

0309. **MERLIN***Falco columbarius***Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.**

A large number of records were received but as usual from a relatively small number of localities. The eastern and western harbours contributed rather more than half the total but there were also a good number of reports from the Arun Valley and Beachy Head. Downland records were somewhat scarce. The approximate monthly figures are summarised in the table below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	15	9	11	7	4	13	14	11	11
Chichester and Pagham Hbrs	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	4	3
Arun Valley	1	1	1	-	-	-	1	2	-
W. Sussex Downland	2	1	1	-	-	1	2	-	2
E. Sussex Downland	3	1	2	-	1	1	1	1	1
Beachy Head	-	-	-	1	-	2	2	2	-
Rye Hbr and Pett Level	3	3	2	1	1	2	2	2	3
Other Sites	3	-	2	3	-	4	3	-	2

In the first half of the year, there was an interesting report of two Merlins chasing the same Sky Lark at Rye Hbr SSSI on 6 Jan. Then, on 9 Jan, there was another sighting of two Merlins (the same?) similarly jointly hunting one Sky Lark – surely not the same Sky Lark! A female chased but failed to take a Common Snipe at Selsey West Fields on 18 Feb but a few days later on 23 Feb a female took a Common Snipe at Pulborough Brooks. Other records of note included three singles at Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) on 14 Jan, all heading north, an unusual urban record of a single at Woodvale Cemetery (Brighton) on 6 Mar and a single coming in off the sea at Worthing Beach on 13 Mar.

In the second half of the year, there were no records before the end of August when there were singles at Balsdean (Rottingdean) and Pagham Hbr on the 26th, with singles also at Rye Hbr on the 27th and Selsey West Fields on the 28th. Numbers built up quickly the following month and remained fairly stable for the rest of the year. There were multiple sightings on seven dates with two at Beachy Head on 9 Sep, 7 Oct and 6 Nov, three birds at Pagham Hbr on 4 Nov, two at Scotney Court GP on 18 Nov, two at Rye Hbr SSSI on 14 Dec and finally two at Pagham Hbr on 22 Dec.

Prey species that were either chased or taken were Dunlin, Common Snipe, Sky Lark, Meadow Pipit, Goldcrest, Greenfinch, Linnet, Reed Bunting and Corn Bunting. [MEK]

0310. **HOBBY**

Falco subbuteo

Scarce breeding summer visitor and regular passage migrant.

The county record for the first spring migrant was well and truly broken with a single recorded at Coldwaltham Brooks on 21 Mar (ARK). The 10-year average arrival date is currently 13 Apr and the previous earliest spring record was at Lancing on 3 Apr 2000. In April there were reports involving 15 different localities, which included singles seen at Cock Marling (Udimore) on the 10th, at Rye Hbr LNR on the 15th, at Tegdown Hill (Brighton) on the 17th and 20th and at Etchingham on the 21st.

At the various seawatching stations a good number of fresh arrivals was recorded, either coming in off the sea or 'coasting'. At Selsey Bill there were singles on 25, 27 and 30 Apr, four on 1 May, and further singles on 2, 3, 6 and 9 May. At other coastal localities, there were singles at Cuckmere Haven on 25 Apr, at Worthing Beach on 27 Apr, at Beachy Head on 20 May and at Brighton Marina on 25 May.

During the breeding season approximately 20 territories were identified with reports from a further 15 localities that indicated probable breeding activity. As usual, there were very little meaningful data on breeding success. The estimated county population is currently 120-150 breeding pairs and clearly only a small fraction of the total is identified in any one year.

It proved to be a special year for the Pevensy Levels area as there were approximately ten on 6 May, a staggering 20 on 11 May, 11 on 22 May, five on 23 May, singles on 8 and 20 Jun, and five on 5 Jul. Previous estimates for this area have suggested two breeding pairs. Whilst this figure may need revising, it is likely that most of these birds were non-breeding migrants in their second calendar year.

In late summer and early autumn several family parties of three to four birds were reported but the only gathering of note was at Pulborough Brooks on 7 Sep when there were seven birds present. More than 70 different birds were recorded in September and 16 in October with the latest at Beachy Head on the 16th. [MEK]

0320. **PEREGRINE FALCON**

Falco peregrinus

Scarce breeding resident.

The Sussex Peregrine Study kindly provided the data for most of the known breeding pairs. There was a total of thirteen successful pairs of which three were situated on chalk headlands, seven were nesting at inland quarries and three were in nest boxes on tall buildings. There were incomplete data for five other known sites.

During the first winter period, birds were seen to roost at three sites. At Telscombe Cliffs a bird was seen roosting on the cliffs on 3 Jan. At Shoreham Power Station, one was seen on either the chimney or the nest box on three dates between 14 Jan and 23 Mar. At Stakes Island either a male or a female (sometimes both) roosted regularly between 1 Jan and 26 Mar although a male – possibly the same – was sometimes seen on nearby Pilsey Island.

Of the recorded successful pairs, one pair fledged one young, four pairs fledged two young, seven pairs fledged three young and one pair fledged four young resulting in a minimum annual total of 33 fledglings for the county.

Both the Chichester Cathedral and Sussex Heights (Brighton) pairs were monitored on CCTV. At Chichester, the first egg was laid on 27 Mar, the second and third egg at two

daily intervals but the fourth was not confirmed until 4 Apr. Three female chicks were ringed on 27 May and there was one addled egg. At Brighton, the first egg was laid on 17 Mar, the eggs hatched on 27 Apr and the three chicks - two females and one male - were ringed on 20 May.

The large wader flocks at Pagham Hbr and Thorney Island provided plenty of potential prey and these two locations gave good opportunities to watch birds actively hunting. In late summer family parties may be seen and there was an adult and two juveniles at Pagham Hbr on 19 Jul with an adult and four juveniles present on 29 Jul.

During the second winter period, roosting behaviour was noted again by a female bird at South Stakes and Pilsey Islands from 3 Sep onwards, on the nestbox at Shoreham Power Station on 11 Nov and on the spire of Chichester Cathedral on 23 Dec.

Prey items reported were Oystercatcher, Dunlin, Black-headed Gull, Feral Rock Dove, Wood Pigeon and Common Starling. [MEK]

0407. WATER RAIL

Rallus aquaticus

Very scarce resident and fairly common winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The approximate monthly totals from all sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sites	22	19	22	6	5	6	2	6	10	18	27	22
Birds	69	60	68	11	8	7	3	13	25	32	55	55

Summing the maximum counts from each site between October 2003 and March 2004 inclusive, gives a rough estimate of the winter population. In 2003/04 this was 247, an average figure for the whole winter period although numbers were generally down for the calendar year, which could be partly accounted for by the lack of records from Arundel WWT. During the first winter period the only double figure count was of 20 at Filsham LNR, this number being recorded in January, February and March. The last wintering bird noted at Thorney Deep was on 11 April.

Birds were noted from ten different sites during the breeding season with a maximum count of four at Church Norton (Pagham Hbr) on 14 May. Young were seen at Filsham LNR on 24 May and at Sidlesham Ferry Pool at the end of August. At Rye Hbr LNR birds were seen at three different locations during April and May but breeding was not proven.

The first returning bird at Thorney Deep was not seen until 3 Sep. Autumn numbers were generally low with the only double figure counts being 12 at Filsham LNR and ten at Pett Level. [RTP]

0408. **SPOTTED CRAKE***Porzana porzana*

Very scarce spring and autumn passage migrant and rare winter visitor. Amber listed species of conservation concern.

One was heard at Amberley Wild Brooks on the evening of 2 May (PHu, AP). This record follows two blank years, the first such since before 1987. Fifty-five have been recorded since 1990, but just ten of these have been since 2000. This is the first May record since 1988 although there have been several in April since then, the most recent in 2000. [RJF]

0421. **CORN CRAKE***Crex crex*

Very scarce passage migrant. Considered vulnerable by IUCN. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

One was trapped and photographed at Pett Level on 5 Nov (RBRG) (see Plate No. 3). Records continue to average one a year, with most of the post-1980 records falling between late August and late October. This is the latest to be recorded in the county since one was seen at Cissbury Ring on 9 Dec 1973. [RJF]

0424. **MOORHEN***Gallinula chloropus*

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
County total	751	644	567	214	190	158	343	438	596	712	714	750
Chichester Hbr	74	85	59	16	16	7	10	12	25	30	102	98
Pagham Hbr	37	9	13	nc	22	17	10	14	15	35	45	26
Chichester GP	148	161	101	1	-	1	-	2	87	126	117	120
Arundel WWT	51	49	37	32	20	nc	55	nc	56	47	61	63
Brooklands Worthing	26	26	11	13	7	8	9	14	10	39	46	39
Bewl Water	63	45	50	nc	nc	nc	94	165	120	130	80	101
Alexandra Park	26	26	21	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	15	23	41	33
Pett Level	51	54	37	37	26	24	47	22	42	44	20	36
Rye Hbr	65	11	28	26	28	28	26	63	61	43	41	42

Records for this species were received from 160 sites across the county. The main concentrations are shown in the *WeBS*' table above.

Records were received from 93 of the sites from March to July but breeding was confirmed at only 20. At Angmering a nest was located 8ft (2.4m) up in a Hawthorn tree. It produced five chicks, none of which survived. Second and third attempts beside a stream were both abandoned. At Rye Hbr 45 nests were located at sites around the reserve and at Thorney Deeps ten pairs produced three broods totalling 12 young. A pair at Wilbees Fm (Arlington) hatched their fourth brood on 9 Aug and at Darwell Res 29 birds on 21 Aug included one sub-adult and 12 juveniles. Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas can be found on pages 189 191. [RTP]

0429. COMMON COOT

Fulica atra

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

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	3841	2964	2077	355	387	565	2135	2902	3868	4006	4089	3815
Chichester Hbr	154	200	70	18	18	23	18	40	85	78	113	129
Chichester GP	1208	938	763	25	39	105	207	477	1133	1393	1372	1013
Barcombe Res	89	40	13	1	nc	8	12	67	170	227	75	78
Eastbourne Lakes	241	210	95	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	228	246	296	301
Bewl Water	533	521	330	nc	nc	nc	490	1089	745	519	553	563
Pett Level	342	154	101	57	50	94	79	170	84	120	150	250
Rye Hbr	439	293	217	82	49	178	254	443	624	691	622	676
Scotney Court GP	460	235	208	33	54	nc	830	374	417	240	455	375

Numbers wintering at Barcombe Res have increased in recent years but this is the first time that the site has qualified for inclusion in the *WeBS*' table. Breeding records were received from 12 sites across the county from Pagham in the west to Rye Hbr in the east. There were at least 46 pairs at Rye Hbr from where the earliest fledging record was received: a single chick seen on 12 April. Fourteen pairs at Thorney Deepes produced 16 young from five broods. At Sefter Fm (Pagham) 13 territories were identified. The rate of attrition at this site is illustrated by the fate of two nests observed; seven eggs were laid in one nest, six hatched and three survived and from another nest four eggs were laid, all hatched but none survived. At Brooklands (Worthing) seven nests were being brooded on 24 Apr. The largest brood reported was of eight young chicks on Poynings Pond on 24 May with the same number still there on 28 Jul.

Winter numbers are augmented from July onwards by migrant birds as illustrated by the *WeBS*' table above, although visible migration is seldom observed. There were no notable records away from these sites apart from 70 at Brooklands on 10 Dec. [RTP]

0459. STONE-CURLEW

Burhinus oedicnemus

Rare passage migrant. Formerly a scarce breeding summer visitor. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

One was inadvertently flushed from Pett Level on 8 May (JD). Records are currently averaging just under one per year and this is the first to be seen in the month of May since 1994. [RJF]

0450. OYSTERCATCHER

Haematopus ostralegus

Scarce breeder, fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

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	1829	1509	954	479	505	484	654	1562	1704	1319	1493	1554
Chichester Hbr	1284	1104	536	337	328	286	402	1320	1188	995	1207	1048
Pagham Hbr	289	203	141	nc	33	115	146	106	123	143	106	105
Cuckmere Haven	-	2	2	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	120	-	3	1
Rye Hbr	253	190	246	129	127	78	101	136	256	150	167	350

Oystercatchers were recorded throughout the year along or near the coast, with the exceptions of a single bird at Bewl Water on 17 Jan and up to three at Ford (Arun Valley) in February, March and April. The main concentrations were at Pilsley Island, within the Chichester Hbr complex, and at Rye Hbr (see Plate No. 4). The monthly maxima at Pilsley Island and at the Ternery Pool (Rye Hbr LNR) roost were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Pilsley Is	700	374	302	144	231	250	318	1200	1000	nc	663	700
Rye Hbr	340	200	232	97	117	40	44	135	256	150	250	350

Other notable counts from areas away from those in the *WeBS*' table were confined to the second winter period. At Climping Beach there were 65 on 15 Aug, a roost at Rustington had monthly maxima of 70 on 18 Sep, 79 on 26 Oct and 40 on 4 Nov and at Telscombe Cliffs there were 60 on 7 Aug.

Records of breeding within the Chichester Hbr complex came from Pilsley Island where a pair with two eggs hatched, probably on 27 Jun, at North Stakes Island four pairs laid ten eggs and at South Stakes Island two pairs laid four eggs. In the R Adur estuary two adults with a juvenile, which was probably not yet able to fly, were seen on 16 Aug. At Rye Hbr LNR 31 nests or territories were located. Hatching success was high on the Beach Reserve although low at Castle Water. However, with 20 to 25 fledglings this was probably the best year recorded. In Rye a pair again nested successfully on a flat roof. Light offshore movements in the first winter period were noted at Splash Point (Seaford) and Worthing, with a maximum on any one day of 15 at West Worthing on 25 Apr and 28 at Splash Point on 24 Oct. [RTP]

0456. AVOCET

Recurvirostra avosetta

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant; very scarce and localised breeder. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The approximate monthly totals allowing for duplication were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
36	26	28	45	29	23	18	19	20	5	31	36

Chichester and Pagham Harbours continue to be the main wintering areas. Counts in the Chichester Hbr area were very similar to recent years, with a maximum in the first winter period of 17 at Thorney on 29 Jan. Numbers at Pagham Hbr, however, were lower than usual, the maximum being 19 on 22 Jan compared with maxima of 44 in 2003 and 30 in both 2002 and 2001. The only other winter record was one at Rye Hbr from 8 to 11

Feb. There were up to five at Sidlesham Ferry Pool throughout March, and singles at Pulborough Brooks on the 20th and 23rd.

During April, a total of 43 was recorded from seawatching sites, starting with 1 E at Selsey Bill on 1 Apr. The largest counts, however, came from Splash Point (Seaford) with eight on 2 Apr and 12 on the 26th but seven were noted passing Birling Gap on the 30th. Only eight passage birds were noted during May, the latest being 1 W at Birling Gap on 19 May. There was one at Cuckmere Haven on 26 May.

It was by far the most successful breeding season to date, with at least ten pairs raising a minimum of 30 young, all in the east of the county. At one site nine pairs raised 27, and at Rye LNR a pair nesting on Ternery Pool from 9 Jun hatched three chicks on 4 Jul, the first time this has occurred on the reserve. Unfortunately the chicks disappeared during a period of bad weather on 11 Jul. At a third site, six adults were present in June, with three juveniles seen nearby in late July indicating probable breeding there. At a West Sussex site where birds bred for the first time last year, a pair present throughout was seen nest building, but no further breeding activity was noted.

In the autumn, two were at Pulborough Brooks on 23 Aug, three at Cuckmere Haven on 2 Sep flew out to sea, and one was at Newhaven Tide Mills on 30 Sep. In the second winter period there were maxima of 16 at Pagham Hbr on 21 Dec and 22 at Thorney on 23 Nov. [CJRB]

0469. LITTLE RINGED PLOVER

Charadrius dubius

Scarce breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first records were of singles at Sidlesham Ferry on 14 Mar and Pulborough Brooks on the 17th, but the main arrivals were not until 31 Mar. Passage involved about 23 birds at ten sites, the highest counts being five at Holmbush Tip (Faygate) on 9 Apr and three at Sidlesham Ferry Pool on the same date.

The minimum monthly totals were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
No. of sites	4	10	10	6	13	9	3	1
No. of birds	4	23	25	17	49	14	5	1

Breeding was confirmed at four sites. At Pett Level, four pairs raised eight young, at Faygate and East Chilmington single pairs raised two each, though at the latter site the family disappeared only a week after hatching, and at Gatwick Airport, a pair with two chicks was seen twice in July. At Pendean SP (Midhurst) a pair laid but was flooded out, and a pair at East Lavant also failed. In May and June two pairs were displaying at Rye Hbr but no breeding was proved, and birds were also present at Pulborough Brooks, Weir Wood Res, the Ferry Pool (Sidlesham) and the Breech Pool (Pagham Hbr).

In July, autumn dispersal involved about 54 birds at 14 sites, including six each at Barcombe Res, Pulborough Brooks and the Breech Pool. There were still six at Pett Level on 19 Aug and three at Ferry Pool on 15 Sept. The last record was one at Rye Hbr on 8 Oct, equaling the previous latest date in 1983. [CJRB]

0470. **RINGED PLOVER***Charadrius hiaticula*

Fairly common breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

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	185	178	51	49	135	54	64	128	274	86	375	248
Chichester Hbr	36	64	5	7	99	4	8	72	94	6	288	158
Pagham Hbr	46	33	14	nc	4	35	7	-	14	4	2	40
Goring Gap	-	16	1	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	69	44	-	4
Widewater Lancing	10	-	4	5	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	5
Lower Adur Estuary	1	28	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	9	32	31	15
Newhaven	9	2	5	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	19	-	19	2
Langney	30	1	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc
Rye Hbr	48	25	19	23	26	12	41	45	60	-	34	22

As usual there were high numbers at Pilsley Island (Chichester Hbr) where the monthly maxima were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
34	93	58	87	98	38	56	700	130	66	258	52

In addition to the above tables, a count of 869 at Thorney Island on 20 Aug exceeded the 1% International Threshold Level of 730 for a site of international importance for the species. The maxima at Pagham Hbr were 80 on 25 Mar and 250 on 27 Sep, and there were also 72 at Brighton Marina on 4 Jan and 107 there on 4 Oct. A count of 335 on Shoreham Beach on 22 Nov was especially notable.

At least 52 pairs were confirmed breeding, with another four pairs which probably did. At Rye Hbr, at least 41 pairs bred on the Beach Reserve, where good success was reported, especially on the Flat Beach area (see Plate No. 5). Eight pairs bred in the Chichester Hbr area, two pairs at Pett Level raised three young, and a pair raised at least one at Brighton Marina. Single pairs probably bred at The Crumbles, Normans Bay, Saltdean and Rustington. Up to six birds were also present at Widewater (Lancing) throughout.

The only inland records were three at Pulborough Brooks on 16 Mar (with two there on 22 May), one flew over the Round Hill (Steyning) on 9 May, three at Arlington Res on 3 Sep (with one there on 9 Sep) and two at Rolls Fm SF (Gatwick) on 20 Aug. [CJRB]

0477. **KENTISH PLOVER***Charadrius alexandrinus*

Very scarce spring and autumn passage migrant; formerly bred.

Three were seen at Pilsley Island, an adult male on 2 Apr (CBC) and adult females on 4 Apr (CBC, MAC) and 1 May (CBC). An average showing in every respect - 56 have been recorded since 1990, 35 of these were seen at Pilsley while 23 appeared in April and 15 in May. [RJF]

0482. **DOTTEREL***Charadrius morinellus*

Very scarce spring and autumn passage migrant; one winter record. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

A first-summer female was seen on the Downs above Alfriston on 28 May (MS-H) while one was present on the Downs at Springhead Hill (Storrington) from 21-23 Sep (BFF, JAW *et al*). Just two is a well below average showing as 30 have been recorded since 2000. For the second year running no records were received from the Downs to the east of Brighton, traditionally the most regular site for this species in the county. [RJF]

0485. **EUROPEAN GOLDEN PLOVER***Pluvialis apricaria*

Common winter visitor and passage migrant, rare in summer.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	3060	1124	120	-	-	12	-	262	72	734	1383	2660
Chichester Hbr	2282	1012	90	-	-	12	-	12	36	142	1329	1871
Pagham Hbr	595	62	-	nc	-	-	-	-	1	60	23	360
Pett Level	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	120	-	-
Rye Hbr	83	22	30	-	-	-	-	-	10	111	31	22
Scotney Court GP	-	-	-	-	-	nc	-	250	25	300	-	400

Maximum counts outside *WeBS* were 2000 at Rye Hbr on 5 Jan, 3000 at West Wittering on 10 Jan - exceeding the 1% National Threshold Level of 2500 for a site of national importance - and 1000 at Pagham Hbr on 16 Feb. Inland there were 100 at Lewes Brooks on 8 Jan, a maximum of five at Pulborough Brooks on the 11th, and 32 flying north over Kithurst Hill on 6 Mar. The last 3-figure counts at Pagham and Chichester were in mid-March, but at Rye Hbr numbers built up again to 350 on the 29th, and there were still 98 there on 12 Apr. The only May records were singles at Pagham on the 8-9th and Thorney on the 10th and 22nd. Light passage was shown by a maximum of 3 W at Worthing on 20 May, and the only June record was one at Pagham Hbr on the 26th.

Six flew west calling over Steep Down (Lancing) at 04.00hr on 6 Jul, beating the previous earliest record for returning birds of 9 July 1989. The main arrival was not until 30 Jul, when there were eight at Rye Hbr. The first birds at Thorney were 12 on 3 Aug, with 300 at Scotney Court GP on the 11th. In September, the maxima at seawatching sites were five in off the sea at Beachy Head on the 24th, and 55 W at Selsey Bill on the 30th. Singles flew over Lancing Clump on the 2nd and Heighton Hill (Newhaven) on the 11th.

In the second winter period the maxima in the east were 3500 at Rye Hbr on 3 Nov and a larger count of 4000 at nearby Northpoint GP on the 29th. In the west there were 3000 at Thorney on 17 and 23 Dec. Inland, there were singles at South Harting on 7 Nov and Five Ways (Ashdown Forest) on 5 Nov, 12 at Barcombe Res on 14 Nov (with 18 there on 10 Dec), and 22 at Pulborough Brooks on 28 Nov. [CJRB]

0486. GREY PLOVER

Pluvialis squatarola

Common winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	2100	1534	1362	48	57	-	11	101	1306	2797	1453	1964
Chichester Hbr	636	1102	1082	44	52	-	7	18	990	2140	1005	1013
Pagham Hbr	1348	289	245	nc	5	-	4	83	299	587	377	873
Climping	105	85	35	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	21	55	58

All the Chichester Hbr winter *WeBS*' counts and three of those at Pagham exceeded the 1% National Threshold Level of 530 for a site of national importance. An unusually high January count at Pagham with a low one at Chichester on the same day suggests movement between these sites. At other regular sites, maximum counts in the first winter period were 90 at Worthing Beach on 17 Jan, 30 at Rye Hbr on 14 Mar, 22 at Pett Level on 16 Jan, and 28 on the Lower Adur on 24 Feb.

The largest counts from seawatching sites were 80 W at Selsey Bill on 22 Mar, 18 E at Worthing Beach on 25 Apr, and 35 E at Brighton Marina on 12 May. The only inland record was one at Bewl Water on 1 May, and one at Pett Level on 26 May was also reported as unusual.

At the end of the year, the largest counts outside *WeBS* were 93 at Kingston Gorse on 3 Nov, 70 at Worthing Beach on 27 Nov, 50 at West Worthing on 23 Nov, and 51 at Rye Hbr on 25 Dec. On 4 Dec, there was a movement of 120 W off Selsey Bill. [CJRB]

0493. NORTHERN LAPWING

Vanellus vanellus

Scarce breeder and very common winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

2003: Breeding was also confirmed at Coldwaltham Wild Brooks (one brood of two chicks), Wyckham Fm (Steyning) for the first time at this site, Wepham Down (one brood of two chicks), Lee Fm (Patching) and on Bignor Hill (one juvenile).

2004: The *WeBS*' counts for the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	14344	5475	423	230	184	496	1132	2366	2084	3943	4576	12417
Chichester Hbr	3375	1797	27	68	33	138	97	318	330	400	1045	2055
Pagham Hbr	2718	1037	11	nc	11	94	10	-	23	136	279	2627
Amberley Wild Brooks	1117	228	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	156	606	921
Waltham Brooks	123	383	1	6	6	2	-	-	-	17	15	140
Pulborough Brooks	1015	206	14	15	12	36	179	232	180	257	99	154
Lower Adur Estuary	27	188	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	78	221	194	151
Newhaven	700	45	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	15	90	-	780
Glynde Brooks	325	-	106	36	24	-	nc	nc	-	-	nc	100
Cuckmere Haven	-	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	11	330	6
Pevensey Levels	300	279	118	39	34	53	nc	2	20	340	320	98
Pett Level	1400	350	29	20	28	80	210	425	241	720	257	1104
Rye Hbr	2687	618	34	48	24	96	445	937	1024	484	1024	2497
Scotney Court GP	-	215	50	4	6	nc	-	300	10	700	100	500

Many other notable counts in addition to those in the above *WeBS*' table were made during the first winter period. These included 3000 at Castle Water (Rye Hbr LNR) on 9 Jan, 2000 at West Wittering on 21 Jan, 3000 at the North Wall (Pagham Hbr) on 16 Feb and 2000 at Northpoint GP on 18 Feb.

Breeding activity was first noted on 22 Mar. Breeding or possible breeding was noted at 32 sites and consisted of around 149 pairs. The largest concentrations were 29 pairs at Rye Hbr and 25 pairs at Pett Level. Only 13 pairs were recorded at Pulborough Brooks with many being noted as having moved to arable fields off the reserve.

Territorial activity was first noted on 22 Mar at Ashdown Stonehill. Breeding was confirmed at 21 sites by at least 122 pairs, was probable at a further nine sites by at least 25 pairs and possible at a further six sites by at least 22 pairs. Wepham Down was the only lowland site reported, all other sites being lowland. The largest numbers of breeding pairs were 29 at Rye Hbr LNR and 25 at Pett Level. Although at least ten pairs were counted at Pulborough Brooks many of these relocated off the reserve. Elsewhere, 12 pairs were noted on Glynde Levels but without any indications of breeding, ten pairs were noted at Court Lodge Fm (Udimore) on spring cereals, of which at least one pair bred, and eight pairs bred on Amberley Wild Brooks. Three sites held five pairs and a further three held four.

Returning birds were first noted from early June in low numbers with the first large gathering of 1200 noted at Castle Water on 10 Aug. Notable counts in the second winter period were 3000 at Castle Water on 25 Nov, 5000 at Northpoint GP on 29 Nov, 1100 at Shoreham Airport on 8 Dec and 1000 at Barcombe Res on 18 Dec. [ITB]

0496. RED KNOT

Calidris canutus

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber list species of medium conservation concern.

The monthly *WeBS*' counts, which were from Chichester and Pagham Harbours only and usually account for between 95% and 100% of the county total, were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	462	1216	65	-	19	-	1	2	52	58	220	537
Chichester Hbr	462	716	65	-	13	-	1	1	50	52	130	278
Pagham Hbr	-	500	-	nc	-	-	-	-	-	6	90	258

Birds were noted in every month of the year with all records being coastal apart from five at Arlington Res on 30 Aug and one there on 10 Oct. The sighting on 30 Aug coincided with other inland records of Knot at many of the London reservoirs. Good numbers were recorded from January to March with notable counts of 530 at Pagham Hbr on 5 Feb and, at Pilsey Sands (Chichester Hbr), of 450 on 16 Jan, 400 on 24 Jan, 696 on 21 Feb and 550 on 4 Mar. From then on numbers decreased until November when they increased again with the first notable count being 100 at Pagham Hbr on 4 Nov and 520 there on 23 Dec.

The first offshore migrants were noted on 30 Mar when 15 flew east past Birling Gap but offshore passage was generally poor. The approximate monthly totals from the regularly watched sites were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total
County total	15	65	99	179
Selsey Bill	-	20	6	26
Worthing Beach	-	37	55	92
Splash Point (Seaford)	-	8	38	46
Birling Gap	15	-	-	15

The peak movement was in May. The only passage recorded during the autumn was off Selsey Bill during September and included 13 W on the 14th. [ITB]

0497. SANDERLING

Calidris alba

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	185	118	61	2	141	-	5	6	29	44	154	173
Chichester Hbr	51	74	8	2	96	-	5	-	12	-	74	57
Climping	130	36	29	nc	nc	nc	nc	Nc	14	1	6	3
Goring Gap	-	-	24	nc	nc	nc	nc	Nc	3	43	-	84
Lower Adur Estuary	-	7	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	Nc	-	-	2	1
Rye Hbr	3	-	-	-	45	-	-	6	-	-	72	21

Birds were noted in every month of the year with all records being at or near the coast. A count of 248 at Rustington on 4 Jan was the only notable first winter period count apart from those in the table above. Numbers then remained low until the second winter period when peak counts included 210 at Rye Hbr on 30 Oct and 500 at Ferring on 31 Oct.

A count of 500 at Ferring on 31 Oct seems particularly noteworthy as it far exceeds any of the monthly totals in the *WeBS*' table.

The first offshore migrants were noted on 7 Apr when 20 flew east past Worthing. The approximate monthly totals from the regularly watched sites were as follows:

	Apr	May	Jun	Total
County total	261	481	9	751
Selsey Bill	35	179		214
Worthing Beach	177	215	9	401
Beachy Head	2	8		10
Splash Point (Seaford)	47	79		126

Peak movement offshore was in May. The highest day counts were from Worthing Beach with peaks counts of 78 E on 27 Apr and 60 E on 15 May. The overall total was up slightly on last year.

The highest autumn count was of 40 W past Worthing Beach on 3 Oct. [ITB]

0501. LITTLE STINT

Calidris minuta

Scarce passage migrant; a few winter in most years.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	2	4	3	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	4	3
Chichester Hbr	1	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	3
Pagham Hbr	-	-	-	nc	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	-
Scotney Court GP	1	1	-	-	-	nc	-	-	-	-	-	-

Birds additional to the above in the first winter period consisted of three at East Head, two at Rye Hbr LNR and one at Scotney Court GP. Spring passage was not noted but two were seen feeding at Rye Hbr LNR on 8 May and one was seen on Goring Beach on 18 Jun.

Possibly the first returning migrant was noted on 27 Jul at Pilsey Sands, followed by another at Rye Hbr LNR on 6 Aug. Thereafter birds were noted at Pett Level, Pagham Hbr and Sidlesham Ferry in ones or twos throughout August with a highest count of three at the Sidlesham Ferry on the 28th. The peak autumn counts in a fairly average passage included six at the Ferry Pool (Sidlesham) on 16 Sep, eight at the Breech Pool (Pagham Hbr) on 21 Sep and six at Pett Level on 1 Oct. During November and December up to five were seen regularly at East Head (Chichester Hbr) and there was one at Rye Hbr LNR on 2-3 Nov and two at Pett level on 6-9 Nov. The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
6	3	3	-	2	1	1	10	17	12	8	3

The only inland records came from Arlington Res with two there on 8 Sep and one still present from 9-11 Sep. [ITB]

0502. TEMMINCK'S STINT

Calidris temminckii

Very scarce spring and autumn passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

2003: An adult was seen on Pevensy Levels on 17 May (ITB, IJW)

2004: There were three records, all in the spring and all at Pagham Hbr. One was seen at the Breech Pool and also on a scrape in the adjacent horse field on 11-12 May (AH, ARK *et al*). Another individual present on the Breech Pool on 24 May (CJRB *et al*) was joined by a second bird on 25 May (OM, JAW *et al*). Forty three have now been recorded in the county since 1990 of which 32 have been in May. [ITB]

0507. PECTORAL SANDPIPER

Calidris melanotos

Rare vagrant, mainly in autumn.

One was seen at Pett Level on 7 May (KH). Twenty-one have been recorded in the county since 1990, all the others falling between 23 July and 30 October. The last of just three previous spring records was at Pevensy Levels, on 11-14 May 1987. [RJF]

0509. CURLEW SANDPIPER

Calidris ferruginea

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

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	1	-	-
Chichester Hbr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-
Pagham Hbr	-	-	-	nc	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
Cuckmere Haven	-	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	2	-	-	-

The first bird of the year was of one at Rye Hbr on 27 April. The spring total was six with other birds being three at Pett Level on 3 and 26 May, one at Pilsey Island on 7 May and one at Sidlesham Ferry Pool from 2-8 Jun. An individual at Church Norton on 30 Jun occurred between the spring and autumn passages and mirrors a record from last year on 30 Jun at Sidlesham Ferry Pool. A rather weak autumn passage started with one at Pagham Hbr on 29 July. The peak counts thereafter were of five at Rye Hbr on 12 Aug, nine at Pett Level on 13 Aug, five at Sidlesham Ferry on 8-9 Sep and five at R Adur (Shoreham) on 17 Sep. The last record of the year was of four at Thorney Deeps on 27 Sep.

The last record of the year was of four at Thorney Deeps on 27 Sep.

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1	4	2	1	25	44

The only inland record came from Arlington Res with two there on 18 Sep. [ITB]

0510. PURPLE SANDPIPER

Calidris maritima

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant; very rare in summer. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The status of Purple Sandpiper in the county, with increased numbers in the second winter period at both Brighton and Newhaven, is illustrated by the minimum monthly totals for the main sites in the following table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	28	26	25	18	11	-	2	2	5	14	37	37
Shoreham	6	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1
Newhaven	8	10	10	8	6	-	-	-	-	5	15	11
Brighton Marina	11	10	10	10	5	-	2	2	5	8	18	20
Bexhill	1	2	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	4
Other sites	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1

The highest counts came from the traditional sites and included 11 at Brighton Marina on 1 Jan, six at Shoreham Fort on 1 Jan and ten at Newhaven East Pier on 3 Feb. The last birds of the spring were six seen at Newhaven West Pier on 2 May. It is not unusual for this species either to remain at their preferred sites or to be seen elsewhere while on passage through May. Over the past 15 years there have been 53 records covering every date to the 15th (most frequently on the 4th) and the last date recorded is the 26th.

The first returning birds were two at Brighton Marina on 21 Jul. While the earliest 'arrival' date is 1 Jul, over the past eight years there have been 13 records for dates from the 9th, more frequently on the 25th/26th.

Peak counts in the second winter period were of 20 at Brighton Marina on 11 Dec and 15 at Newhaven East Pier on 27 November. Again a single bird was seen regularly in the Pagham Hbr/Selsey Bill area in both periods. [ITB]

0512. **DUNLIN***Calidris alpina*

Very common winter visitor and common passage migrant; small numbers summer. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	12827	11958	739	163	671	4	219	388	776	5442	12539	14001
Chichester Hbr	11413	10835	609	122	617	-	63	201	543	4690	11143	12651
Pagham Hbr	1020	720	114	nc	13	-	113	-	73	653	1085	1076
Rye Hbr	210	307	15	36	39	4	33	127	130	60	188	174

The numbers in Chichester Hbr exceeded the 1% National Threshold Level of 5600 during four winter months, making this a site of national importance for this species. Other notable counts in the first winter period included 8000 at Pilsley Island (Chichester Hbr) on 24 Jan with 3500 there on 21 Feb and 800 at Pagham Hbr on 26 Feb.

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

	Mar	Apr	May
County total	21	364	293
Selsey Bill	17	82	88
Worthing Beach	-	244	147
Brighton Marina	-	-	90
Splash Point (Seaford)	4	31	52
Birling Gap	-	7	6

Peak spring passage occurred on 29 Apr when 134 E (116 in one party alone) were noted passing Worthing Beach in two hours. Another, but smaller, peak occurred on 10 May when 45 E were noted at Selsey Bill in 6½hr and 48 flew east past Worthing in almost two hours (possibly the same birds).

There were no significant movements noted during the autumn. The only high count noted was 1000 at Pilsley Island on 11 Sep.

Only small numbers were noted at inland sites, mainly ones and twos but with a peak count of ten at Iford Brooks on 25 Jan. This is surely due to a lack of recording. [ITB]

0517. **RUFF***Philomachus pugnax*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	35	59	4	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	5	18
Chichester Hbr	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Bury Brooks	-	26	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	nc	-
Amberley Wild Brooks	34	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-
Pulborough Brooks	-	26	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17
Scotney Court GP	-	7	4	-	-	nc	-	3	-	-	-	-

The *WeBS*' counts do not show a true picture of the status of this species as good numbers were recorded at the traditional wintering sites. Peak counts in the first winter period included 16 at Henfield Levels on 3 Jan, seven at Lewes Brooks on 4 Jan, 60 at Pett

Level on 13 Jan, 34 at Amberley Wild Brooks on 28 Jan, 15 near Greatham Bridge on 7 Feb, 33 at Rye Hbr LNR on 9 Feb and 20 at Scotney Court GP on 6 Mar.

The approximate monthly totals, conservatively estimated, were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar		Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	176	171	63		27	18	8	35	34
Chichester Hbr	3	-	-		1	2	-	1	1
Pagham Hbr	-	-	1		2	3	1	2	-
Amberley Wild Brooks	34	25	-						
Pulborough Brooks	10	25	8		-	1	1	12	17
Pett Level	60	13	-		8	10	3	-	-
Rye Hbr LNR	25	33	12		13	2	3	9	3
Scotney Court GP	-	7	20		3	-	-	6	1
Other	44	68	22		-	-	-	5	12

The first returning bird was a single at Pett Level on 1 Aug. By the 12th, numbers in the east of the county had peaked at 13 at Rye Hbr LNR while at Pett Level they reached eight on the 14th. At this latter site they peaked at ten on 19 Sep but numbers at Rye Hbr dropped, probably reflecting the onwards passage of non-wintering migrants. Numbers in the west remained very low until November when numbers again increased, particularly this time in the west, probably of wintering birds. Peak numbers at Pulborough Brooks were 12 on 27 Nov and 15 on 12 Dec. [ITB]

0518. JACK SNIPE

Lymnocyptes minimus

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

2003: On 3 Jan no less than 38 Jack Snipe were counted on Thorney Deeps (Chichester Hbr), a number which is both a site and a county record (CBC).

2004: The monthly *WeBS*' counts at some of the principal locations were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	6	8	11	-		-	-	-	5	4
Chichester Hbr	5	6	6	-		-	-	-	5	4
Pagham Hbr	-	1	-	nc		-	-	-	-	-
Petworth Park	-	-	1	-		-	-	-	-	nc
Glynde Brooks	1	-	3	-		nc	-	-	nc	-
Pevensey Levels	nc	-	1	nc		nc	-	-	-	-
Rye Hbr	-	1	-	-		-	-	-	-	-

Incorporating the *WeBS*' counts, the minimum monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
20	12	21	2		1	0	8	25	15

In the first winter period numbers were significantly lower than last year's totals, particularly at Thorney Deeps where the highest count was only seven, compared with 38 last year. The maximum count elsewhere was nine at Rye Hbr LNR on 5 Jan and there were seven in the Cuckmere Lower Valley on 3 Mar. Elsewhere only singles were reported at 12 localities, including Pilsey Island, Lavington Common, Amberley, Ferring Rife and Widewater. The last spring record (and the only April one) was of two birds at Bewl Water on the 2nd.

A singleton at Pett Level on 29 Aug was the first of the autumn; this species is not usually recorded until October. More predictably, the next was at Rye Hbr LNR on 12

Oct, but returning birds were not noted at Thorney Deepes until 23 Nov when there were five there. Numbers in the second winter period were again low compared to last year, but the November total was boosted by the high count of 11 at Thorney Deepes on the 23rd. Elsewhere there were a maximum of three at Rye Hbr LNR on 27 Nov, two at Pett Level on 15 Nov and singles at the Ouse Estuary Project (Newhaven), East Head and Weir Wood Res. [JC]

0519. COMMON SNIPE

Gallinago gallinago

Very scarce breeder and fairly common winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	599	154	155	46	2	1	1	43	41	171	376	335
Chichester Hbr	113	40	33	41	-	-	-	2	9	4	69	42
Arun (Offham to Houghton)	-	-	-	-	-	nc	-	-	-	-	nc	20
Amberley Wild Brooks	35	39	10	-	2	-	-	13	9	64	93	91
Waltham Brooks	12	1	17	-	-	-	-	12	-	2	-	-
Pulborough Brooks	37	32	20	3	-	1	-	5	1	25	54	36
Lower Adur Estuary	147	-	2	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	36	59	53
Henfield Brooks	7	5	11	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	4	7	2
Glynde Brooks	15	7	27	-	-	-	nc	nc	-	3	nc	5
Eastbourne Lakes	23	12	5	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	1	3	17	16
Pevensy Levels	162	7	13	2	nc	nc	nc	7	-	16	44	50
Pett Level	-	2	11	-	-	-	-	3	19	-	2	2

The *WeBS*' counts for the first winter period were very similar to 2003 in January, but significantly lower in February and March. Although the two January counts were so similar, the individual site contributions were quite different. In 2004 there were far fewer recorded from Chichester Hbr and a much higher contribution from Pevensy Levels, where only seven were counted in Jan 2003. *WeBS*' counts for the latter part of the year were similar in October and November but significantly higher in December; this being largely due to higher counts at Amberley Wild Brooks and Pevensy Levels. Other notable counts during the first winter period included 90 at Rye Hbr LNR on 5 Jan, 40 at West Wittering on 10 Jan, 110 by the houseboats in the Adur Estuary at Shoreham on 15 Jan and 40 at Steyning Levels on 6 Mar. Generally these were notably lower than the high counts recorded in 2003 with only one record of over 100.

Once again the only record of probable breeding in the county came from Amberley Wild Brooks where chipping males were located and a minimum of two pairs reported. A recently fledged young bird was also seen at nearby Pulborough Brooks in July. A single bird seen at Sefter Fm (Pagham) on 30 Jun during a breeding survey was reported as holding territory.

In July, a single bird was seen at the North Wall (Pagham Hbr) on the 14th which, if it was not summering, could have been the first autumn migrant, preceding one at Rye Hbr LNR on the 18th and 19th. where breeding was not suspected. A count of 90 at Pett Level on 22 Aug was a remarkably high count for autumn migration. Numbers were relatively low during the second winter period. Notable counts included 40 at Pulborough Brooks on 2 Nov, 38 at Thorney Deepes on 23 Nov, 89 at Rye Hbr LNR on 30 Nov, 70 at Pevensy

Levels on 5 Dec and 115 between Offham and Houghton in the Arun Valley on 15 Dec. [JC]

0529. WOODCOCK

Scolopax rusticola

Fairly common resident and winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

As usual, numbers in the first winter period were generally low with mostly single birds at a variety of sites. There was one double figure count, of 12 at Isfield on 23 Feb. Other than that, the only records involving more than one bird were of twos at Darwell Woods, Etchingam, Cissbury Ring and Linchmere Common. Spring migrants are not often recorded, but one was at Pett Level on 5 Apr.

The first recorded roding bird was at Five Ways (Ashdown Forest) on 17 Mar; this was the same date as in the previous two years although the location was different. Roding birds were recorded from most of the regular locations in the county and there were high counts of four pairs in 1 km² at Ambersham and Linchmere Commons, and five were seen at Iping Common on 4 Jun. Once again, there were no records of confirmed breeding. The last recorded roding bird was at Nap Wood on 16 Jul.

Numbers during the second winter period were very low, with only single birds recorded from a wide variety of sites. [JC]

0532. BLACK-TAILED GODWIT

Limosa limosa

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant; a very scarce summering species. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	775	366	711	113	33	52	131	526	407	546	592	622
Chichester Hbr	393	198	167	112	-	4	98	482	323	533	565	531
Pagham Hbr	380	164	541	nc	31	34	10	2	64	12	22	87

The county total for January represents 5% of the estimated British wintering coastal population (15,390) although this figure was markedly lower than last year's. Counts of 500+ at Chichester Hbr on October and November were significant. With a 1% National Threshold Level of 150 it can be seen that both Chichester and Pagham Harbours continue to provide significant wintering sites for this species.

Other notable counts in the first winter period included 450 at Pagham Hbr on 11 Jan and 400 at Dell Quay (Chichester Hbr) on 5 Feb. The highest count at Thorney Deeps was 217 on 26 Mar. Inland there were several records from Pulborough Brooks (with a maximum of nine there on 12 Feb) and also four at Offham (Arun Valley) on 21 Feb and one at Waltham Brooks on 3 Mar.

Spring migration involved mainly small numbers at the usual coastal sites. However, there were some significant numbers including 400 at Fishbourne Channel on 7 Apr (which may have involved some or all wintering birds) and 162 at Thorney Deeps on 9 Apr, decreasing to 130 there on the 19th and 82 on the 23rd. Inland there were singles at Pulborough Brooks on 2 and 5 May, probably involving the same bird, and seven in the Brede Valley on 12 May. There were no significant movements up-channel recorded from

seawatching sites, though 30 flew east past Worthing beach on 9 May and there were 22 past Brighton Marina on 16 May.

As usual, birds were present throughout the summer at Sidlesham Ferry, and numbers during June were higher than last year, with 37 on the 5th, increasing to 43 the next day and 67 on the 9th. Elsewhere in June there was one at Rye Hbr LNR on the 4th, with four there the following day and then up to four regularly through the month. There were regular reports from Chichester Hbr with a maximum of 22 at Cobnor Cottage on the 28th. There were no more than four at Thorney Deeps during June, but numbers here built quickly during July, from 25 on the 1st to 93 on the 5th and 126 on the 20th, and increased further during August to an autumn peak of 317 on the 17th. At Sidlesham Ferry numbers did not increase markedly, but there were 50 there on 5 Aug which was the autumn maximum at this locality. Inland, at Pulborough Brooks there were five on 25 Jun and 13 on 4 Jul, falling to 11 on 9 Jul and two on 6 Aug and singles at Weir Wood Res on 22 and 30 Aug, possibly involving the same bird, while a migrant at the R Adur (Shoreham) on 4 Sep was unusual.

The monthly distribution of inland records was as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
7	13	4	0	8	5	13	2	0	0	7	5

In the second winter period numbers were significantly lower than in the previous year and the most notable counts not covered by the *WeBS*' were 146 at Thorney Deeps on 1 Oct, 150 at Pagham Hbr on 22 Nov, 189 at Bosham Channel (Chichester Hbr) on 29 Nov and 200 at Pagham Hbr on 29 Dec. Inland there were maxima at Pulborough Brooks of seven on 29 Nov and five on 19 Dec. [JC]

0534. **BAR-TAILED GODWIT**

Limosa lapponica

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	911	798	80	42	129	-	25	39	542	210	435	479
Chichester Hbr	910	798	77	-	80	-	24	39	541	210	434	462

At the main site, Chichester Hbr, numbers in the first winter period were much above those of this period last year (roughly 800-900 as opposed to roughly 200-300 last year). With a 1% National Threshold Level of 620, this confirms Chichester Hbr as a wintering site of considerable importance for this species.

Other notable counts in the first winter period included between 600 and 850 regularly at Pilsey Sands (Chichester Hbr) during January and early February, but numbers elsewhere were very low with no double figure counts and just a handful recorded at Pagham and Rye Harbours.

Spring passage, involving birds moving east along the coast, was recorded from the main seawatching sites and is summarised below:

	Mar	Apr	May	Peak movement
Selsey Bill	-	3	39	16 on 12 May
Worthing Beach	-	1	253	167 on 1 May
Brighton Marina	-	-	758	50 on 20 May
Splash Point (Seaford)	2	2	181	71 on 2 May
Birling Gap	-	267	18	200 on 25 Apr

This year the main passage was at the beginning of May, but numbers were significantly down on last year (compare the high day total of 167 this year with 1144 at the same site last year). What up-channel movement there was had largely fizzled out by mid-May, though 50 were recorded east past Brighton on 10 May and on the ground there were 111 at South Stakes Island (Chichester Hbr) on 18 May.

Small numbers were seen at coastal sites throughout the summer, with 38 at South Stakes Island on 30 Jun and 46 on nearby Pilsley Sands on 15 Jul, although the latter may have been early returning migrants. The highest counts during the autumn and second winter periods were at Pilsley Sands. Here there were 124 on 11 Aug, building to 150 on 5 Sep, 250 on 26 Nov and a peak of 400 on 11 Dec, though this was significantly lower than the late winter peak of 700 recorded there last year. Again, most other sites recorded only single figures during this period, though there were 50 at West Wittering on 2 Dec. [JC]

0538. WHIMBREL

Numenius phaeopus

Common passage migrant; very scarce summering and wintering species. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	1	3	-	224	153	1	25	159	11	1	2	1
Chichester Hbr	-	3	-	90	150	1	21	143	10	-	2	-
Pagham Hbr	1	-	-	nc	-	-	2	7	1	1	-	1

In the first winter period, single wintering birds were recorded regularly in the Pagham Hbr area and occasionally in the Chichester Hbr complex but in the February *WeBS*' count three birds were recorded in Chichester Hbr.

Spring passage up channel was first noted on 2 Apr when 17 flew east past Splash Point (Seaford) and a single bird flew past Birling Gap. The eastbound spring totals at the main seawatching sites, excluding Bexhill/Hastings where very few were recorded, were as follows:

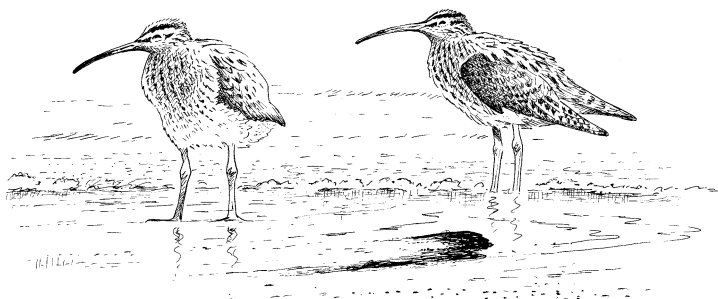
	April	May	Total
Selsey Bill	152	99	251
Worthing Beach	220	122	342
Brighton Marina	144	140	248
Telscombe Cliffs	175	34	209
Splash Point (Seaford)	562	247	809
Birling Gap	125	25	150

Peak passage was again in late April, with a highest count of 111 E at Splash Point on 25 Apr. With the exception of this site, numbers were considerably lower than last year though this may have been due to reduced coverage at some sites; for example the 140 past Brighton Marina in May were all recorded on one day (1st).

At the Rye Hbr LNR nocturnal roost, numbers reached 63 on 24 Apr before peaking at 214 on 1 May, then slowly falling during the month. During the day these birds spread out to feed in the surrounding grasslands of Rye Bay and the Brede Valley. Elsewhere on the coast there were 60 at Pagham Hbr on 25 Apr and 50 there on 11 May. Inland there was one seen at Henfield Levels, two seen at North Stoke and one was on Pulborough Brooks, all on 24 Apr. On 2 May, 25 at Offham (Arun Valley) were feeding on wet pasture while three were on Pulborough Brooks. These were followed during the remainder of the first two weeks of the month by two seen at Partridge Green, one at Pulborough Brooks, 15 in flight over the Brede Valley and 1 N over Ashdown Forest.

Small numbers were present at various coastal sites during much of June and July making it difficult to determine when spring migration ended and return autumn passage began. However, there was a two weeks gap between one at Telscombe Cliffs on 18 Jun and one at Pagham Hbr on the 30th, which may have made the latter the first returning autumn bird. Birds were recorded regularly from early July and, as usual, numbers in the autumn were much lower than in spring, spread among the usual coastal locations. A few were reported from inland sites. Notable counts included 20 on Pilsey Island on 3 Aug, 12 in Pagham Hbr on 4 Aug, 13 SW over Troutbeck (Eridge) on 10 Aug and 18 SW over Barcombe Cross on 18 Aug.

In the second winter period singles were recorded regularly at Pagham Hbr and Thorney Island, and also at Hope Gap (Seaford) on 10 Oct (probably a late migrant), Fishbourne Channel on 26 Oct and Rye Hbr SSSI on 4 Nov. [JC]



0541. **EURASIAN CURLEW**

Numenius arquata

Formerly a very scarce breeder; common passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	2574	1767	863	167	45	216	1323	1045	2118	1587	1860	1608
Chichester Hbr	1670	1181	421	164	40	151	1031	637	1628	1119	1262	1006
Pagham Hbr	370	433	334	nc	5	51	285	345	233	307	290	397
Pett Level	350	61	22	-	-	12	1	20	67	76	120	90
Rye Hbr	139	45	78	2	-	2	6	33	166	21	119	72

The county total for January represents 1.75% of the estimated British wintering coastal population (147,100). Chichester Hbr held numbers above the 1% National Threshold Level of 1500 during January and September. Counts at Pagham Hbr were below the 1% level but were still notable, as was the January count at Pett Level.

Other notable counts in the first winter period included 376 at Rye Hbr SSSI on 26 Jan, and 44 at Newhaven Tide Mills on 9 Jan. Coastal movements at the main seawatching locations are shown in the following table:

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May		Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	E	-	-	6	14	-		-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	1	-		-	-	-
Worthing Beach	E	-	-	3	7	-		1	-	-
	W	-	-	-	1	-		3	-	-
Splash Point (Seaford)	E	5	-	15	29	3		-	-	-
	W	-	4	1	3	-		-	-	9
Birling Gap	E	-	-	16	37	6		-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	-	-		1	-	-

Elsewhere a total of 37 flew east past Birling Gap during April with a daily peak of 23 on the 1st, which was also the highest daily movement east of the spring anywhere on the coast. Otherwise small numbers were involved, with the highest concentration of birds on the ground being 52 at Thorney Deeps on 8 April.

Small numbers were present at several coastal sites throughout the summer, making it difficult to determine where spring passage ended and return migration began, but none was seen during the summer on Ashdown Forest. Notable autumn and later winter period counts not noted in the *WeBS*' table above included maxima of 841 at South Stakes Island (Chichester Hbr) on 20 Jul, 350 at Thorney Deeps (Chichester Hbr) on 17 Aug, 370 at Rye Hbr SSSI on 22 Nov and 38 at Newhaven Tide Mills on 29 Dec.

There were very few inland records this year; singles were seen at Pulborough Brooks on 17 Jan, Steyning on 18 Jul and Arlington Res on 19 Sep, and there were two at Weir Wood Res on 28 Oct. [JC]

0545. SPOTTED REDSHANK

Tringa erythropus

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	10	5	5	-		1	2	3	6	4
Chichester Hbr	3	4	3	-		1	-	1	4	4
Pagham Hbr	5	1	1	nc		-	2	2	2	-
Rye Hbr	2	-	1	-		-	-	-	-	-

The approximate minimum monthly totals, including *WeBS*' and all other records, were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar		Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
13	10	7		2	15	10	7	6	6

This year wintering birds were more equally divided between Pagham and Chichester Harbours, whereas in the last few years Pagham Hbr has held the highest numbers. In the first winter period there were up to five at both Pagham Hbr and Thorney Deeps, with ones and twos at East Head/West Wittering and elsewhere in Chichester Hbr, and in the Rye Hbr area. There was also one at Newhaven Tide Mills on 27 Jan.

The presence of wintering birds makes the start of spring passage difficult to ascertain. There was a trickle, mostly involving single birds, at the usual coastal localities on many dates through the spring, with one inland at Waltham Brooks 18 Apr. This was one of only two recorded inland this year. The last spring record was one at Pett Level on 9 May.

This year there was a six weeks gap before the first returning bird was seen at Thorney Deeps on 30 Jun. On 5 Jul there were two at Thorney Deeps, but then none was seen until singles at Thorney Deeps and Pulborough Brooks on 3 Aug. After this there was a trickle of birds, again mostly singles, at the usual coastal localities of the Pagham, Chichester and Rye Hbr areas. There were no significant numbers however, with the autumn high count being only four at Rye Hbr LNR on 12 Aug.

The winter flock at Pagham Hbr peaked at four birds by 26 Oct and at Thorney Deeps there was a maximum of three on 10 Dec. Elsewhere, there was just a single bird recorded regularly at East Head/West Wittering and one at Rye Hbr on 18 Oct in what was altogether a rather poor year for this species. [JC]

0546. COMMON REDSHANK

Tringa totanus

Scarce resident but common winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern

2003: Five pairs also bred on the Glynde Levels.

2004: The monthly *WeBS*' counts at the principal locations were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	3062	2141	1174	259	111	157	1168	1316	2326	1543	2594	2378
Chichester Hbr	2450	1717	784	156	40	91	862	1055	1600	1099	1695	1582
Pagham Hbr	198	95	152	nc	10	30	167	119	595	204	493	491
Lower Adur Estuary	108	104	29	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	50	101	138	91
Rye Hbr	145	105	94	24	23	22	139	132	64	63	156	124

The county total for January represents 2.6% of the estimated British wintering coastal population (116,100). The highest counts were in Chichester Hbr, where numbers exceeded the 1% National Threshold Level of 1200 during several months and confirm the importance of the area as a wintering site and a photograph of a bird at Rye Hbr appears as Plate No. 6.

In the first winter period, notable counts not included in the *WeBS*' table included 680 at Thorney Deeps on 24 Jan and 360 there on 6 Mar, 148 at Sidlesham Ferry on 5 Jan, 60 at Scotney Court GP on 21 Jan, 55 at Pett Level on 5 Jan, 62 at Rye Saltings on 25 Jan, and 42 at Newhaven Tide Mills on 7 Jan and 23 Feb.

Spring passage was not particularly marked. Numbers at Thorney Deeps decreased from 300 on 23 Mar to 120 on 5 Apr, 54 on 22 Apr and 20 on 16 May, giving an indication of the departure of wintering birds during this time. At Worthing Beach, two flew east along the coast on 10 May; no others were recorded from the spring seawatching sites.

Breeding, or attempted breeding, was confirmed at 12 sites involving a minimum of 60-67 pairs. At Rye Hbr LNR 13 pairs fledged about 15 young; 11 of these pairs were on the beach reserve and the other two were at Harbour Fm. At Pett Level six pairs bred. At Amberley Wild Brooks at least five pairs were present; most of these were off the reserve itself. At Pulborough Brooks 7-12 pairs were estimated to have bred. At Glynde Levels there were 10-12 pairs, and at Nep Town (Henfield) there was a single pair which was the first attempted breeding at this site in at least 20 years. In addition, up to four birds were seen displaying on the Upper Adur Levels, southwest of Henfield. There was no information on breeding success from any of these sites. In Chichester Hbr there were ten pairs at Thorney Deeps, two pairs on Thorney Island, two pairs on Pilsey Island, two pairs at Cobnor Cottage, a pair at Cobnor Point and a pair on North Stakes Island. There was no information on breeding success here either, although the North Stokes pair was seen with a probable juvenile on 28 Jun.

The first non-breeding birds started returning at the end of June. Numbers at Thorney Deeps increased from 68 on 16 Jun to 300 on 30 Jun, 455 on 1 July and an autumn/late winter peak of 1000 on 16 Aug. The first returning bird noted at Newhaven Tide Mills was on 1 Aug. Notable counts during the second winter period away from Thorney Deeps included 116 at Pagham Hbr on 26 Oct, 51 at Newhaven Tide Mills on 7 Nov, 500 at Apuldram (Chichester Hbr) on 9 Nov and 60 at Union Canal, East Guldeford on 14 Dec. [JC]

0548. **GREENSHANK**

Tringa nebularia

Fairly common passage migrant; a few winter.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	15	11	13	22	21	1	59	94	90	17	20	36
Chichester Hbr	15	11	13	18	16	-	45	74	80	13	20	14
Pagham Hbr	-	-	-	nc	-	-	1	6	2	4	-	-

During the first winter period most records were again from Chichester Hbr, where there were up to 13 at Thorney Deeps, four at Swear Deep Channel on 8 Mar and a single bird in the West Wittering/ East Head area throughout. The only other record was of one at Cliff End (Pett) on 10 Mar.

The first probable spring migrant was 1 E at Worthing Beach on 12 Apr. Birds were then recorded virtually daily throughout the spring at the usual coastal sites with regular inland records from Pulborough Brooks, where there were four on 18-19 May, and occasional records from a variety of other locations, including three at Henfield Levels on 24 Apr. The highest numbers were recorded from Thorney Deeps (as usual) with double figures recorded on several dates in April and early May. Spring passage past the main seawatching sites was again light with the highest day total being eight east past Selsey Bill on 30 Apr. The last spring record on the coast was probably one at Thorney Deeps on 2 Jun. Inland a single bird appeared to summer at Pulborough Brooks, being seen

regularly through June and early July, and it is unclear whether a single bird at North Stakes Island (Chichester Hbr) on 13 Jun was a late spring or an early autumn bird.

The first returning birds at Thorney Deepes were five on 29 Jun. The typical build up of numbers at this site occurred during the autumn, reaching 100 on 30 Jul and a peak of 120 on 31 Aug. Numbers then declined to leave the regular wintering flock of a dozen or so by December. As usual, Thorney Island recorded far higher numbers than any other site, but other notable autumn counts included nine at the Union Canal (East Guldeford) on 18 Jul, eight there on 26 Aug and nine over Barcombe Cross on 5 Sep.

Away from Thorney Deepes, wintering birds were recorded at Pagham Hbr, Pulborough Brooks and West Wittering/East Head, where there were three. A photograph of a bird at Rye Hbr appears as Plate No. 7. [JC]

0553. GREEN SANDPIPER

Tringa ochropus

Scarce spring and autumn passage migrant; small numbers winter. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The monthly *WeBS*' counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	3	2	2	6	-	5	20	25	9	5	7	7
Chichester Hbr	1	-	-	-	-	1	4	3	2	-	-	-
Pagham Hbr	-	1	-	nc	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Chichester GP	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	2	-	-
Burton & Chingford Ponds	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	1	1	1	nc
Arundel WWT	-	-	-	1	-	nc	-	nc	-	-	-	-
Pulborough Brooks	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	1	-	-	-	-
Adur (Steyning-Henfield)	-	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	1	-
Henfield Brooks	-	-	1	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	-
Weirwood Res	-	-	-	-	-	nc	-	2	-	-	-	-
Barcombe Res	-	1	-	1	nc	-	-	-	1	-	2	2
Glynde Brooks	2	-	1	1	-	-	nc	nc	2	-	nc	-
Pevensey Levels	nc	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	1
Darwell Res	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	1
Powdermill Res	-	-	-	-	nc	-	nc	nc	-	-	-	2
Pett Level	-	-	-	2	-	1	1	4	-	-	3	-
Rye Hbr	-	-	-	1	-	1	7	10	1	-	-	-

Figures extracted from daily records suggest minimum monthly numbers as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
24	10	13	24	2	13	72	76	29	21	10	18

These figures show the typical peak in August and monthly totals are generally higher when compared with 2003. In the first winter period no more than four were noted at any one time; these were at Barcombe Res on 10 Jan and Pett Level on the 12th. Spring records came from across the county but the only notable count was five at Constantia Manor (Isfield) on a six-foot scrape (which they shared with a Northern Lapwing and a Common Redshank) on 28 Mar! Near the coast, records were received from the Sidlesham/Pagham area, Newhaven Tide Mills, Pevensey Levels and Rye Hbr. The last two, in May, were at Pulborough Brooks and Rye Hbr LNR on the 18th and 30th respectively.

Evidence of the first returning birds came in June with records of singletons at various sites in the Rye Hbr area and at Sidlesham Ferry from the 1st and the 5th respectively. Four birds were seen at Pulborough Brooks on 28 Jun. Notable counts in July, were six at Castle Water (Rye Hbr LNR) on the 19th, rising to 12 on the 31st, five at Thorney Deeps on the 20th, seven at Pulborough Brooks on the 22nd and 13 at the Drayton and Portfield Pits (Chichester GP) on the 26th. By 2 Aug the total at the latter site had risen to 16, the monthly maximum there. Other significant counts in the month were ten on the Bittern Excavation (Rye Hbr) on the 10th, seven at Thorney Deeps on the 12th, five at Weir Wood Res on the 13th and nine at Ternery Pool (Rye Hbr LNR) on the 20th. Sightings declined in number in September with three birds seen at Rolls Farm SF (Tinsley Green) on the 30th being the highest count. A count of six at Chichester GPs on 14 Oct was the best for that month whilst from then to the end of the year records were no higher than two except for threes at Pett Level on 14 Nov, Barcombe Res on 4 Dec and Long Pit (Rye Hbr SSSI) on 27 Dec. [MJM]

0554. **WOOD SANDPIPER**

Tringa glareola

Scarce spring and autumn passage migrant; recorded once in winter. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The estimated minimum monthly totals, in a year in which August stands out, were as follows:

Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1	3	-	7	30	1

The first sighting of the year was a single bird on the Wader Pool (Rye Hbr LNR) on 18 Apr. In May, single birds were seen at the North Wall (Pagham Hbr) on the 15th, at Pett Level on the 16th and on the North Brooks (Pulborough Brooks) on the 23rd.

The first birds of autumn were singles in July at Pett Level on the 1st, 8th, 14th and 31st, at Pulborough Brooks on the 10th, when there was also one on the Ternery Pool (Rye Hbr LNR), and one feeding at the Bittern Excavation (Rye Hbr LNR) on the 24th. In August, birds were recorded at Pett Level almost daily from the 1st with counts of seven, six and eight on the 14th, 22nd and 28th respectively but a maximum of 18 on the 17th - a Sussex record in modern times for the largest day count at any site. Four birds were at the Bittern Excavation on the 10th.

The final record of the year was of a single bird at Drayton GP (Chichester) on 21 Sep. [MJM]

Fairly common passage migrant. A few regularly winter. Has bred at least once.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	-	-	-	7	9	3	47	79	23	5	-	2
Chichester Hbr	-	-	-	2	-	-	5	13	2	-	-	-
Pagham Hbr	-	-	-	nc	-	2	1	1	2	2	-	-
Adur (Steyning-Henfield)	-	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	1
Barcombe Res	-	-	-	1	nc	-	3	2	2	-	-	-
Arlington Res	-	-	-	-	1	-	3	6	3	-	-	-
Bewl Water	-	-	-	nc	nc	nc	-	3	3	1	-	-
Darwell Res	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	3	4	-	-	-
Pett Level	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	6	1	-	-	-
Rye Hbr	-	-	-	2	5	1	28	40	5	1	-	1
Scotney Court GP	-	-	-	2	1	nc	2	2	-	-	-	-

Birds were recorded in all months and figures extracted from daily records suggest minimum monthly totals for the county as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	3	3	55	99	15	142	286	40	10	18	6

The pattern of records was much as usual with a few birds present in both winter periods and peaks during spring and autumn passage. Wintering individuals were seen in on the R Adur near Upper Beeding on 4 Jan, 28 Feb and 8 Mar; in the Lower Cuckmere Valley on 7 Jan and 3 Feb; at Weir Wood Res on 9 Feb and at Rye Hbr LNR on 19 Feb. In March, single birds were also seen at Pett Level on the 17th and at Ford (Arun Valley) on the 30th. Some notable April sightings were of four on the R Ouse at Durham Farm (Southeast) on the 11th, ten at Brighton Marina on the 23rd and four on the eastern R Rother on the 28th. Coastal passage was noted in May at Splash Point (Seaford) on eight dates when 15 birds passed east in 108hr seawatching and at Selsey Bill with just 3 E on two dates in 218½hr; 30 birds in total were recorded at Brighton Marina during the month.

Six birds were noted at Cuckmere Haven on 30 Jun and thereafter both numbers and distribution increased. In July, seven birds, including four juveniles, were present at Pagham Lagoon on the 4th and nine were at Weir Wood Res on the same day; 18 were counted on the Union Canal (East Guldeford) on the 18th, ten were at Thorney Deeps on the 23rd and eight were noted at Castle Water (Rye Hbr LNR) on the 31st. Double figure counts among the many records in August were ten at Chichester GPs on the 2nd, 11 feeding at Castle Water on the 7th when 35 were present at Weir Wood Res and ten by the R Adur Toll Bridge at Shoreham. There was a flock of 18 at Brighton Marina on the 9th, 15 on the Bittern Excavation at Rye Hbr LNR on the 11th, and 12 at Widewater (Lancing) on the 13th. On 15 Aug, ten were at Drayton GP (Chichester), 20 at Piddinghoe and 16 at Thorney Deeps. Twenty birds were found at the Union Canal (East Guldeford) on 26 Aug, this being the final double figure count of the year.

The only recorded passage movement of the autumn was 3 W at Worthing Beach in 1½hr on 7 Sep. Small numbers were noted in the remaining months of the year with a maximum of five at Darwell Res on 19 Sep, and the same number seen near Beeding Cement Works in the Lower Adur Valley on 14 Nov and 1 Dec. The final report was a single bird at Ford in the Arun Valley on 6 Dec. A photograph of a bird at Rye Hbr appears as Plate No. 8. [MJM]

0557. **SPOTTED SANDPIPER**

Actitis macularius

Very rare vagrant.

A summer plumaged adult present at Darwell Res from 19 Sep to at least 3 Oct (RGH *et al*) has been accepted by BBRC and is the 6th county record. It is the first since 1977 and many observers will have been disappointed that access restrictions meant it was not considered possible to release the news of this occurrence more widely. Previous records have been in August, October and November. [RJF]

0561. **TURNSTONE**

Arenaria interpres

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant, scarce in summer. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	455	630	535	114	23	30	10	146	718	572	467	635
Chichester Hbr	79	156	90	82	5	-	1	88	102	93	172	166
Pagham Hbr	165	175	86	nc	-	23	1	27	150	173	34	217
Climping	18	57	103	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	25	14	33	22
Goring Gap	-	9	30	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	45	52	8	33
Lower Adur Estuary	2	8	26	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	8	43	52	24
Glyne Gap	163	175	115	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	365	149	136	106
Pett Level	2	29	40	-	5	1	3	30	14	38	11	38
Rye Hbr	26	15	9	31	13	6	5	1	9	8	21	18

Other notable counts in the first winter period included 116 on the beach at Rustington on 4 Jan, 54 feeding at low tide on the R Adur at Shoreham on 18 Jan, and 58 on Pilsey Island on 24 Jan.

The monthly totals of eastbound birds at the main seawatching locations were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total
Selsey Bill	200	126	23	349
Worthing Beach	8	17	40	65
Splash Point (Seaford)	-	26	46	72

Counts in April of 60 on the 7th on the beach at West Worthing and 50 on the tide line at East Preston on the 12th were the highest reported in that month. The maximum number noted on passage was 40 E in 2½hr at Selsey Bill on the 29th. At Flat Beach Quarry (Rye Hbr LNR) 47 birds were recorded on 29 May. In the autumn, there were some significant counts which are not shown in the *WeBS*' figures: 135 were noted on mudflats at Church Norton on 5 Aug, 70 flew east at Selsey Bill on 17 Sep, 137 were counted at Rustington on 26 Oct, whilst 300 roosted on the beach at St Leonards-on-Sea on 4 Nov. Birds were present along the whole county coastline in December with maxima of 35 at Pilsey Island on the 11th and 38 at Pett Level on the next day. A photograph of a bird at Rye Hbr appears as Plate No. 9. [MJM]

0565. **GREY PHALAROPE***Phalaropus fulicarius***Very scarce autumn and rare winter visitor, usually occurring after gales.**

The only record was of one was seen at Snowhill (West Wittering) on 17 Nov (ADe). Another poor showing following a blank year in 2003 prior to which the previous blank year had been 1991. Thirty-eight have been recorded in the county since 1990 (and 11 since 2000); all these records have been between September and January and nine were in November. [RJF]

0566. **POMARINE SKUA***Stercorarius pomarinus***Passage migrant in varying numbers in spring but very scarce in autumn; a rare visitor in winter.**

Many more birds were seen in spring 2004 than in both the preceding years. There was an estimated minimum of 240 birds, compared with 138 in 2003 and 73 in 2002, as shown below:

	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
<i>Monthly total</i>	1	-	89	148	2	240
Selsey Bill	-	-	52	47	2	101
Worthing	-	-	24	37	-	61
Brighton Marina	-	-	11	140	-	151
Rottingdean & Telscombe Cliffs	1	-	31	19	-	50
Splash Point (Seaford)	-	-	74	71	-	145
Birling Gap	-	-	1	27	-	28

A bird seen from Telscombe Cliffs on 29 Feb (DHH) was the first record for that month since prior to 1924 (*Birds of Sussex*, 1996). The next sightings were on 15 Apr with records of 2 E at Splash Point (Seaford) and 1 E at Birling Gap. Further birds were seen on the 16th, 17th and 18th and then on six days between the 21st and 29th inclusive. The largest daily total in April at any one site was 64 (all east), in 14hr seawatching at Splash Point on the 26th. During that day the wind veered from a northerly Force 1 to a

favourable southeasterly, strengthening to Force 3, and the birds were all noted between 1306hr and 1840hr. Included in this total were flocks of 11 and 12 which had been seen 50 minutes earlier at Worthing.

During May there were records on 11 days between the 1st and 17th. The highest daily total at one site in this month was 80 (all east) at Brighton Marina on the 2nd, including flocks of 11, 12 and 13. By contrast, on this day only 39 birds (also all east) were sighted at Splash Point in 8hr. Two records of single birds at Selsey Bill - 1 E on 10 Jun and 1 W on 30 Jun - completed the year's sightings. [MJM]

0567. ARCTIC SKUA

Stercorarius parasiticus

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

2003: The first paragraph and table should have read as follows:

The annual total of approximately 535 birds is based, as for 2002, on minimum daily figures and assumes that birds seen on consecutive days were different. The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Monthly totals	6	324	164	12	2	5	21	4
No. of days	3	21	26	6	2	5	8	3

2004: The annual total of approximately 574 birds is based on minimum daily figures and assumes that birds seen on consecutive days were different. This compares with the total of 535 for 2003, estimated on the same basis. The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Monthly totals	4	278	176	8	9	14	51	29	4	1
No. of days	3	22	23	7	8	11	13	14	4	1

No birds were reported as having been seen in January or February.

After a slow start to the year with 2 E at Church Norton on 14 Mar, the main body of spring passage began on 28 Mar with 1 E at Birling Gap and another east at Newhaven Tide Mills on the next day. Birds were then seen on 45 of the next 61 days. The main seawatching months of April and May produced a significantly lower 172 at Brighton Marina compared with 370 in 2002, whereas 378 birds at Splash Point (Seaford) exceeded the previous year's total of 301. The extent of observer coverage undoubtedly accounts for many of these variations. On 20 Apr, 60 E, including 11 dark-phased birds, in 12¼hr at Splash Point was the highest daily total; wind conditions were almost ideal being Force 3 from the southeast, veering southerly Force 3-4 with rain setting in. In May the biggest movement noted was 20 E on the 9th at Splash Point in 9¼hr. Monthly totals at the main seawatching sites were:

	Apr	May	Total
Selsey Bill	50	50	100
Worthing Beach	30	10	40
Brighton Marina	74	98	172
Telscombe Cliffs	54	7	61
Splash Point (Seaford)	253	125	378

In the autumn, four birds were noted flying east at Brighton Marina 23 Aug; a minor flurry of activity at Selsey Bill saw 6 W and 10 W on 17 and 18 Sep respectively. At Brighton Marina 12 W were observed on 2 Oct and the last significant count was of 4 W in

Rye Bay on 9 Oct. The final record of the year was of a juvenile light phase bird flying west at Rottingdean on 22 Dec. [MJM]

0568. **LONG-TAILED SKUA**

Stercorarius longicaudus

Rare vagrant.

One flew east off Birling Gap on 17 May (RHC) while in autumn a juvenile flew west off Selsey Bill (OM *et al*) on 14 Sep. These are the first records since 2001. Despite there having been twenty-one records since 1990 (nine in May, eleven during August-October and one in December) this remains a difficult species to see in the county and a well-watched autumn bird on an inland reservoir would seem to be long overdue. [RJF]

0569. **GREAT SKUA**

Stercorarius skua

Scarce spring and autumn passage migrant; very scarce but increasing in winter. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

2004 was another good year with an estimated 192 birds reported as compared with 211 in 2003, but only 147 in 2002. The records may be summarised as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Monthly totals	5	1	-	80	58	2	1	15	3	27	-	-
East	4	-	-	76	48	-	1	10	-	6	-	-
West	1	-	-	2	5	2	-	1	1	20	-	-
Offshore	-	1	-	2	5	-	-	4	2	1	-	-

Birds were seen in all months of the year except for March, November and December, though most records were in the spring passage months of April (on 22 days) and May (on 20 days). In these months totals at the principal seawatching sites were:

	Apr	May	Total	Peak movement
Selsey Bill	16	27	43	7 28 Apr
Worthing Beach	13	8	21	7* 18 Apr*
Brighton Marina	15	41	56	12 5 May
Splash Point (Seaford)	55	8	63	24 18 Apr

* at nearby Goring Beach

Spring passage was very steady during both April and May. In 42 days of observation there were 21 days when only one bird was recorded and nine with only two

Summer records were 2 W at Brighton Marina on 24 Jun and 1 E at Telscombe Cliffs on 21 Jul. The first record of the autumn was one off Brighton on 9 Aug followed by singletons at Selsey Bill flying east on the 12th and off Church Norton on the 15th. Six birds flew east at Selsey Bill on 18 Aug and one similarly on the following day, whilst another flew west at Brighton Marina on the 20th. The month concluded with 1 E at Telscombe Cliffs on the 23rd, another 1 E at Birling Gap on the 24th when one was also reported off Rye Hbr. Three records in September were of single birds west at Birling Gap on the 12th and in Rye Bay on the 14th and the 25th. The month ended with 17 W at Selsey Bill during 7hr of seawatching on the 30th. Some 27 birds were reported on ten days in October, all were singletons except for 3 W at Brighton Marina and 12 W in 6hr at Selsey Bill on the 2nd, 3 W at the latter site on the 6th and 2 E there on the 13th. The final report for the year was of one flying east in Rye Bay on 29 Oct. [MJM]

0575. **MEDITERRANEAN GULL***Larus melanocephalus*

Fairly common visitor throughout the year; has bred annually since 1994. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

Although recorded at fewer sites and on fewer days than 2003, this was another exceptional year for this species. Records were from approximately 70 different locations, noted on 230 different days and included an increased number of large counts with 81 records involving more than ten individual birds and 16 counts in excess of 40 birds. Gatherings of 80 (40 pairs) at Pett Level in April and of 79 at Rye Hbr on 1 May create, for the sixth consecutive year, a new county record. Once again the plethora of records, especially from several sites near Pagham Hbr and the coastal seawatching locations, makes it impossible to evaluate the number of different individuals in the county and, as in previous years, causes the following table of monthly totals to be approximations. Furthermore, as the species becomes more numerous fewer records are detailed to specific age classes.

	Adult	2 nd Yr.	1 st Yr.	Juv	Total(*)	Inland	Highest number recorded
Jan	10	7	-	-	29	4	13 at Pagham Hbr on the 18 th .
Feb	40	5	3	-	64	2	26 (adults) in Chichester Hbr on the 27 th .
Mar	75	7	5	-	173	2	54 (4 1 st year) at Rye Hbr on the 31 st .
Apr	138	18	21	-	290	5	80 (40 pairs) at Pett Level on the 15 th .
May	33	3	11	-	109	1	79 (6 1 st year) at Rye Hbr on the 1 st .
Jun	7	3	4	5	73	-	54 (27 pairs) at Rye Hbr.
Jul	20	1	7	31	71	4	26 at Rye Hbr on the 13 th .
Aug	9	1	3	2	20	-	12 at Selsey West Fields on the 28 th .
Sep	26	3	6	-	52	1	30 at Selsey West Fields on the 9 th .
Oct	7	-	3	-	44	1	33 at Pagham Lagoon on the 2 nd .
Nov	18	1	8	-	27	1	20 (12 adults) at Pagham Hbr on the 17 th .
Dec	16	1	3	-	30	1	15 (12 adults) at Pagham Hbr on the 22 nd .

(*) Total includes individuals with no precise age assigned.

The table shows the pattern of occurrence was similar to other years with the highest number being recorded in spring, adults being the most frequently recorded age group with a notable increase in the number of first year birds seen in late spring. During both winter periods the highest numbers were seen at Pagham and Chichester Harbours whilst numbers in East Sussex increased during March. Additional high counts, not shown in the table above, include 25 at Church Norton on 12 Feb, 44 roosting in Chichester Hbr on 8 Mar, 37 at Thorney Deepes on 3 Apr and 59 at Rye Hbr on 10 Apr.

As usual the coastal movements were predominantly in an eastward direction and were most evident in spring. The largest spring movements occurred in March and April when peaks were 30 E in 2½hr at Birling Gap on 21 Mar, 24 E at Brighton Marina and 19 E in 5hr at Worthing on 25 Apr and 20 E at Brighton Marina on the following day. The April total of eastbound birds recorded at Brighton Marina was 100. After spring, few were recorded except at Selsey Bill where the largest movement of 7 W occurred on 25 Sep. The following table, showing the monthly totals of birds passing the timed seawatching sites, demonstrates these points:

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	E	4	4	2	20	2	3	2	-	6	-	-	3
	W	-	-	-	2	1	-	2	1	12	-	-	2
Worthing Beach	E	-	-	1	49	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	-
Splash Point (Seaford)	E	-	-	-	43	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Birling Gap	E	-	-	33	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

A minimum of 27 pairs nested at Rye Hbr: 26 at Ternery Pool and one at Castle Water (see Plate No. 10). A healthy 36 fledglings were seen on 13 Jul. Although 40 pairs were present at Pett Level during April there was no breeding attempt with the last pair leaving in mid-May.

The above table shows that most, as usual, were recorded at or near the coast with the inland records comprising mainly single birds from 16 different sites. However there were two at Weir Wood Res on 25 Jan, two at Arundel WWT on 26 Apr and four adults over a ploughed field on the Downs at Compton on 9 Jul. [JAN]

0578. LITTLE GULL

Larus minutus

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

2003: Six adults were also seen on floodwaters at Steyning on 1 Jan.

2004: Although fewer than the record year in 2003, the estimated total of 1032 birds recorded in 2004 made this the fourth best year for this species. The following table of approximate monthly totals shows the two clear passage periods:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Monthly total	57	2	13	463	138	2	1	17	8	318	13	-
Inland	-	-	3	12	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	-

With the exception of 45 recorded at Brighton Marina on the 8th, the January records were of small numbers on nine days in the first half of the month. Thereafter singles were seen at Brooklands Lake (Worthing) on 2 Feb and at Seaford Head the following day. One passed east at Selsey Bill on 14 Mar and after 21 Mar the species was recorded regularly until mid-May. Between 22 Mar and 9 Apr birds were recorded regularly at Chichester GP with a maximum of nine on 1 Apr but two at Arlington Res on 13 May was the only other inland spring record.

Spring coastal passage started in earnest on 1 Apr and details of the nine best days are tabulated below with the number of hours watching recorded in brackets (rounded to the nearest whole hour):

	1 Apr	2 Apr	15 Apr	16 Apr	25 Apr	26 Apr	27 Apr	1 May	2 May
Selsey Bill	21 (8)	0 (2)	17 (6)	19 (7)	4 (4)	32 (10)	0 (9)	8 (12)	10 (12)
Worthing Beach	0 (3)	10 (2)	1 (4)	7 (4)	9 (5)	4 (6)	4 (6)	2 (6)	7 (4)
Brighton Marina	nc	nc	nc	2 (?)	66 (?)	105 (?)	29 (?)	35 (?)	57 (?)
Splash Point (Seaford)	12 (4)	22 (8)	53 (7)	81 (7)	90 (13)	46 (14)	7 (4)	3 (10)	5 (8)
Birling Gap	16 (6)	28 (4)	10 (4)	76 (4)	0 (3)	nc	nc	0 (1)	0 (4)

The following table of the monthly totals from each site shows that the spring passage started and ended abruptly:

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	E	2	-	1	105	26	-	-	-	1	81	-	-
	W	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	3	43	-	-
Worthing Beach	E	-	-	-	42	9	-	-	-	-	18	-	-
	W	-	-	6	3	1	-	-	-	-	20	5	-
Brighton Marina	E	45	-	-	240	125	-	-	-	-	234	-	-
	W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Splash Point (Seaford)	E	-	1	-	339	19	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
	W	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Birling Gap	E	-	-	-	136	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

After mid-May few were recorded but six were at Rye Hbr on 16 May and five still there on the 17th. Singles at Pilsley Island on 4 Jun, at Rustington on 26 Jun and at Pagham Hbr on 1 Jul were the sole records for those months.

The tables show that the autumn passage was concentrated in October when, as last year, most were recorded off Brighton Marina. The October total of 234 birds included 44 E on the 12th, 48 E on the 13th, 66 E on the 21st and 27 E on the 24th. Smaller numbers were seen elsewhere although 53 passed east at Selsey Bill in 4hr on 21 Oct. After October the species was recorded only on 24 Nov when five passed west at Worthing and eight were recorded at Church Norton. None was recorded in December; this being the first year this species has been absent in this month since 1992.

One at Arlington Res on 13 Oct was the only autumn inland record. [JAN]

0579. SABINE'S GULL

Larus sabini

Rare autumn vagrant.

A juvenile flew, and drifted, east around Selsey Bill on 20 Sep (OM *et al*). Fourteen have been seen in the county since 1990, in April (1), late August (1), September (2), October (7) and early November (3). [RJF]

0582. BLACK-HEADED GULL

Larus ridibundus

Common breeding species and abundant winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The highest counts were, as in recent years, at the evening roost at Bewl Water where 18,000 were counted on 16 Jan, 10,000 on 31 Jan, 15,000 on 4 Feb and 9000 on 15 Mar. The peak counts occur in stormy weather (see *Sussex Bird Report* 55:199-203) thus on 17 Jan, the date of the *Winter Gull Roost Survey (WinGS)* when offshore winds prevailed, only 8000 roosted at Bewl Water. The *WinGS* produced a total of 32,247 for this species and the full county results can be found on pages 223-227. Other four figure counts not included in the *WinGS* were 7000 roosting in Thorney Channel (Chichester Hbr) on 18 Jan, 3000 roosting on Stakes Island (Chichester Hbr) on 26 Jan and 1150 roosting in a cereal field near Lidsey on 13 Feb.

Spring coastal passage was, as usual, inconsistently recorded. The monthly eastbound totals and peak movements for the spring are shown below:

	Mar	Apr	May	Peak movement
Selsey Bill	23	158	64	60 on 24 Apr (4.5hr)
Worthing Beach	34	624	328	118 on 27 Apr (6hr)
Birling Gap	4000	650	-	4000 on 21 Mar (2.5hr)

The breeding season was again successful with between 1500 and 1600 pairs recorded. At Rye Hbr LNR an estimated 900 pairs nested at Ternery Pool, between 150 - 200 pairs at Castle Water and a small number (less than ten) on the Quarry. Success was high at Ternery Pool while the colony at Castle Water suffered a high level of predation, though some bigger chicks survived with overall a total of 900-1200 fledging. First chicks were seen at Ternery Pool on 7 May, with the first fledgling seen on 5 Jun. At Pett Level an estimated 480 pairs nested. A different story came from West Sussex where there were just two pairs, with two eggs, and ten empty nests on Stakes Island on 2 Jun. There were no records from Arundel WWT although a record of 527 counted between Arundel and South Stoke on 30 Apr suggested this colony was thriving.

The first notable counts of the autumn were 800, of which all but one were adults, in Chichester Hbr on 21 Jul, 2000 roosting on Thorney Island on 28 Jul and 400 at Rustington on 28 Sep. At Bewl Water 1400 roosted on both 12 and 21 Oct; however, the largest roost counts at this site were at the year's end with 5800 on 6 Dec, 11,800 on the 16th and 23,500 on the 23rd. Although 6000 were counted roosting near Pilsey Island on 19 Nov, the counts from other sites involved smaller numbers; the highest numbers being 350 roosting at Southwater CP on 11 Nov, 600 at Angmering on 13 Nov and 500 at Newhaven Tide Mills on 15 Dec.

A leucistic individual was seen at Arlington Res on 7 Feb, a pure white individual flew over Pilsey Island on 18 May, and a white individual with a dusky throat was at Pulborough Brooks on 9 and 28 Jun. [JAN]

0590. MEW GULL/Common Gull

Larus canus

Very common winter visitor and passage migrant; small numbers summer; bred until 1963. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

2003: Five adults were also recorded at Stedham SP on 29 Jun.

2004: The total recorded during the *WinGS* was 18,751; details of these counts can be found on pages 223-227. This county total, however, was eclipsed by roost counts at Bewl Water where, during stormy weather, 23,000 occurred on 16 Jan, 30,000 on 31 Jan, 75,000 on 4 Feb and 64,000 on 15 Mar. These last two counts are the highest recorded in the county with all the previous counts exceeding 50,000 birds being recorded at the Bewl Water roost (see *Sussex Bird Report* 55:199-203). Elsewhere numbers were considerably smaller and the highest counts, not included in *WinGS*, were 2000 roosting at Stakes Island (Chichester Hbr) on 26 Jan, 8000 roosting in Thorney Channel (Chichester Hbr) on 12 Feb and 1400 in the lower Ouse Valley on the same day.

The coastal spring passage was, as usual, inconsistently recorded but 1300 were recorded at Birling Gap during 2½hr watching on 21 Mar and 1250 flew east at Brighton Marina on 2 Apr. Two hundred were noted offshore at Worthing on 24 Mar and on the 28th there were 300 offshore at Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) and 400 on the R Adur at Shoreham.

This species is scarce in the county in the late spring and early summer and just seven were recorded in the first half of May. One in first summer plumage was at Pilsey Sands

(Chichester Hbr) on 1 Jun, and two adults were seen at Pilsey Sands on the 16th. An adult was at Ternery Pool (Rye Hbr LNR) throughout the summer. Thereafter numbers slowly built and counts at Thorney Island were of 80 on 12 Jul, 1000 on 28 Jul and 200 on 10 Aug. Elsewhere the only other three figure counts in the early autumn were of 150 at Stedham Sand Pit on 12 Sep, 350 at Pett Level on 22 Sep and 130 at Bewl Water on 12 Oct. Roost counts at Chichester Hbr during November were 5000 in Thorney Channel on 16 Nov and 300 at Pilsey Sands on the 19th. The maximum count at Pett Level was 500 on 17 Nov and 400 were counted at Racton on both 30 Nov and 8 Dec.

By comparison with the spring the evening roost at Bewl Water was small with 400 on 6 Dec, 500 on the 16th, 550 on the 20th and 8500 on the 23rd.

An albino individual was seen at Shoreham-by-Sea on 20 Mar; this is the third successive year that this, or a similar individual, has been recorded at this location in March. [JAN]

0591. LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL

Larus fuscus

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor; small numbers (mainly immatures) summer and a few pairs breed. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The *WinGS* total was a mere 44; details of these results are shown on pages 223-227. The largest counts in the first winter period were from the lower Ouse Valley with 70 on 30 Jan, 155 on 20 Feb, 120 on 3 Mar and 230 on 12 Mar. On 13 Mar 59, mainly *intermedius*, were on the R Adur at Shoreham and 240 were counted at the same site on 20 Mar. Apart from 20 *graellsii* at Beachy Head on 12 Mar, all other spring coastal counts were of small numbers and there was no spring passage recorded at the usual seawatching locations. The highest counts from inland sites were 12 at Bewl Water on 15 Mar and 32 at Warnham LNR on 8 Apr.

Nesting activity was reported from Rustington, Worthing, Newhaven and Rye Hbr but the total of less than ten pairs reported presumably reflects under-reporting rather than a decline from the 56 pairs located during the *Seabird 2000* Survey (*Sussex Bird Report 54*: 177-90).

A count of 155 on the R Adur at Shoreham on 15 Jun was the largest for this month since 200 were recorded at both Chichester GP in 1968 and at Rye Hbr in 1984 (*Birds of Sussex*). Roost counts at Rye Hbr fluctuated but generally showed an increase as autumn progressed with 11 on 7 Aug; 18 on 12 Aug, 89 on 25 Sep and 180 on 3 Oct. The only significant counts in West Sussex were 35 at Sidlesham Ferry on 18 Jul and 45 in Pagham Hbr on 22 Oct. There were few records at the end of the year with eight at Bewl Water on 17 Dec being the highest number seen. [JAN]

0591.01 BALTIC GULL

Larus fuscus fuscus

Records of this race are being considered by *BBRC* although, to date, the only acceptable British record relates to a bird ringed as a chick in a mixed gull colony. Previously published county records in 1999 and 2000 (*SxBR 53:92*) are therefore best regarded as unconfirmed until such a time as they have been accepted, or otherwise, by *BBRC*. [RJF]

0592. **HERRING GULL***Larus argentatus argentus*

Common breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The total of 15,835 recorded during the *WinGS* was the highest of the coordinated roost surveys. Details of these counts can be found on pages 223–227. Additional high counts were 3000 at Pebsham refuse tip on 2 Jan, 4000 roosting in Pagham Hbr on 14 Jan, 405 and 640 in the Rother Estuary on 15 Feb and 14 Mar respectively, 500 at Rye Hbr on 3 Mar and 900 on the R Adur at Shoreham on 20 Mar. As usual most of the larger counts were near the coast but just over 100 flew northwest at Hurst Green on both 25 and 26 Jan with 205 recorded there on 30 May; 106 were at Bewl Water on 15 Mar; 178 at Warnham LNR on 6 May were noted as “unseasonal visitors” and 100 at Barcombe Res on 23 May was considered a high count for the site.

Nesting was recorded from just nine locations; at Rustington, Goring, Worthing, Brighton, Saltdean, Newhaven, Rye Hbr LNR, Rye Hbr village and roof tops at Rye Wharf. A pair at Worthing was still feeding unfledged, downy young on 4 Aug, about a month after most young had flown from the rooftops.

Regular counts of roosting birds at Rye Hbr were 350 on 29 May, 430 on 12 Aug, 215 on 30 Sep, 4000 on 3 Oct, 3500 on 10 Oct and 285 on 16 Nov. The other high counts in the autumn and winter were 600 loafing and feeding on pasture near Coombes on 26 Sep, 320 on the R Adur at Shoreham on 20 Oct, 1000 at Filsham LNR on 15 Dec and 213 at Faygate on 31 Dec.

A single adult showing the characteristics of the northern Scandinavian Herring Gull (*L. a. argentatus*) was recorded at Newhaven on 25 Jan (DC). At Pebsham Tip (Combe Haven) ten birds, including four adults, one fourth-winter and five first-winters, were present throughout January and into February (KMJ). Members are reminded that descriptions are required for all sub-species other than *L. a. argentus* and *L. a. michahellis*. [JAN]

0592.03 **CASPIAN GULL***Larus argentatus cachinnans*

Very scarce winter visitor.

A first winter bird was seen and photographed at Combe Haven on 19 Jan (KMJ) and one, probably in 3rd summer plumage, was amongst other large gulls in Pagham Hbr on 11 Aug (OM). [JAN]

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

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

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
Total	7	2	5	3	5	12	43	233	69	53	14	2
Selsey Peninsula	3	-	-	-	1	7	40	210	63	52	14	2
Shoreham	-	-	3	-	-	5	2	11	6	1	-	-

The table shows the typical occurrence with a scattering of records from a small

number of coastal sites until the mid-summer influx to the Selsey Peninsula. The highest counts were, as usual, from Pagham Hbr where 24 were recorded on 1 Jul, 210 on 4 Aug, 75 on 31 Aug, 63 on 29 Sep and 52 on 22 Oct. Twelve on 8 Nov was the last double figure count. Elsewhere numbers were lower but of interest were four at Combe Haven on 26 Jan, 12 following the plough at Balsdean on 16 Aug and 11 on the R Adur at Shoreham the same day. [JAN]

0599. **GLAUCOUS GULL**

Larus hyperboreus

Very scarce but regular winter visitor and passage migrant.

One in second or third winter plumage was seen at Telscombe Cliffs on 26 Jan (DHH). The only other was a first winter bird seen at Rye Hbr on 30 Jan (AJH), 11 Feb (ITB) and 15 Feb (GRB) (see Plate No. 11). [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.

A total of 1225 was recorded during the *WinGS*; details of these counts can be found on pages 223-227. Throughout the year the species was counted regularly at Chichester, Pagham and Rye Harbours and the following table shows the maximum count in each month from these sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Chichester Hbr	360	-	3	24	90	90	40	36	78	-	100	-
Pagham Hbr	150	-	30	-	285	-	2	220	60	70	30	-
Rye Hbr	230	93	31	-	12	-	-	82	415	840	85	209

At all other coastal sites counts were sporadic and the only additional three-figure counts were 100 at Pebsham refuse tip on 2 Jan, 160 on the Ouse Estuary Project (Newhaven) on 30 Jan, and 700 at Cuckmere Haven and 255 E, mainly first and second year birds, at Brighton Marina on 2 Apr.

Two successful pairs at Southwick were the first confirmed breeding in West Sussex. In Brighton there were five pairs and a pair nested again on the roof of a building at Rye Wharf.

Apart from the figures shown in the table above the highest numbers in the autumn and second winter period were 255 roosting at Rye Hbr on 30 Sep, 500 at Cuckmere Haven on 3 Oct and 103 on the R Adur at Shoreham on 3 Dec. The year's highest count was 840 roosting at Rye Hbr on 3 Oct.

As usual, inland records involved small numbers; the highest counts were 16 at Bewl Water on 31 Jan and at Arlington Res there were 23 and 20 on 21 Feb and 31 Oct respectively. [JAN]

0602. **KITTIWAKE***Rissa tridactyla*

Common but localised breeding species; common winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

As usual most of the records of this species were of coastal movements but the numbers involved during 2004 were notably lower than in recent years. The smaller numbers are evident in the following table showing the monthly totals from the seawatching sites. Only at Selsey Bill and Worthing were both east and west bound birds recorded and the close proximity of a breeding colony to Splash Point (Seaford) makes recording movements at this site unreliable during the spring and summer.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Selsey Bill	E	-	-	7	29	14	-	3	16	4	12	1	1
	W	38	-	-	2	11	2	5	29	82	23	58	130
Worthing	E	1	-	-	9	11	-	-	-	-	2	23	23
	W	5	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	7	5	47
Brighton Marina	E	nc	nc	145	180	nc	Nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	850
Birling Gap	E	nc	nc	465	500	-	Nc	nc	-	nc	nc	nc	nc

The table shows that the largest movements were recorded in East Sussex with counts from Brighton Marina of 145 E on 3 Mar, 180 E on 2 Apr, 400 E on 12 Dec and 450 E on 19 Dec. At Birling Gap there were 200 E on 13 Mar, 250 E on 28 Mar, 100 E on 14 Apr and 400 E on 16 Apr. The only other three figure counts were 120 and 100 at Newhaven on 31 Jul and 15 Dec respectively, 250 at Church Norton on 24 Nov and 100 in Rye Bay on 10 Dec.

Once again there were no breeding season counts from the cliffs at either Newhaven or Splash Point although it was noted that the first chick flew from Splash Point on 12 Jul, an earlier date than previous years. There were no inland records. [JAN]

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

Scarce breeding summer visitor and common passage migrant; rarely recorded in winter. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

There were records of three birds in Chichester Hbr on three dates in January and February, which were no doubt wintering and were probably the same seen in March at East Head on the 3rd and Thorney Island on the 5th. The first likely spring migrants were three at Rye Hbr on the 8th, three at Cliff End (Pett) on the 10th and a single at Selsey Bill on the 11th. Numbers increased at Rye Hbr throughout the month with 110 on the 24th, rising to 160 on the 31st.

The easterly spring passage totals at the main seawatching localities were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr watched
Selsey Bill	17	1325	482	1824	5
Worthing	60	1782	425	2267	19
Brighton Marina	80	730	635	1445	-
Telscombe Cliffs	19	821	134	974	15
Splash Point (Seaford)	37	3215	1149	4401	15
Birling Gap	68	1894	200	2162	36

The records from Brighton Marina may be incomplete.

Numbers peaked on 2-3 Apr and again on the 15-16th as follows:

	2 Apr	3 Apr	15 Apr	16 Apr
Selsey Bill	173	270	293	nc
Worthing	256	362	194	163
Brighton Marina	400	330	nc	nc
Splash Point (Seaford)	428	397	368	520
Birling Gap	600	500	215	300

Many of the above birds would, of course, have been counted at more than one site as they tracked eastwards. Thereafter, passage numbers lessened although there were still several counts in excess of 100. The highest count in May was of 655 E on the 2nd at Brighton Marina (but the numbers of hours watched was not stated). A first summer bird flew east there on the 9th – unusual at that time of year. In June the best count was 40 at Selsey Bill on the 27th. High tide roosts at Rye Hbr LNR were larger than last year with 450 on 3 Apr, rising to 900 on the 28th and still 700 on 4 May. Counts at Pagham Hbr were 150 on 8 May and 145 on 29 Jun.

Breeding at Ternery Pool (Rye Hbr LNR) increased for the second year running. Up to 300 pairs nested from late April and 260 fledglings were seen on 9 Jul. It is thought that the total number of fledglings was probably in excess of 400, creating a new county record.

In July the Rye Hbr roost totalled 450 on the 9th and 500 on the 23rd, dispersing thereafter. Westerly passage was slight in both August and September, with no more than double figures anywhere, apart from one notable exception at Selsey Bill on 29 Aug with a massive 765 W in seven hours. The best count in September was 90 offshore in three hours on the 15th, again at Selsey Bill. October records were mainly in single figures, but there were 16 at Newhaven Tide Mills on the 5th and 21 at Selsey Bill on the 6th. The last record in October was of two offshore at Church Norton on the 31st. There were no further records until 30 Nov when finally there was one offshore at Selsey Bill and another flying east at Worthing Beach.

There were no inland records. [DEGC]

0614. ROSEATE TERN

Sterna dougallii

Very scarce passage migrant and non-breeding summer visitor. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

2003: Sightings at Brighton Marina in May included 1 E on the 4th and 3 E on the 15th (IJW).

2004: The first spring record was later than usual on 15 May at Ternery Pool (Rye Hbr LNR) (SS) and the next, at the same location, was on the 28th. Birds were seen on nine dates in June at this site, from the 5th to the 26th (MGF, BJY, *et al*), mostly as singles but sometimes two or three. Elsewhere, the only other record was at Pagham Hbr on 4 Jul on the old harbour wall, seen well from Church Norton (BFF, DIS). [DEGC]

0615. COMMON TERN

Sterna hirundo

Fairly common breeding summer visitor and common passage migrant.

The first record was one at Worthing Beach on 1 Apr, followed on the 2nd by one at Birling Gap and four at Splash Point (Seaford). Small numbers only were identified

throughout the month until the 25th when there was a count of 132 at Selsey Bill. On the 26th 700 flew east at Brighton Marina. Pre-breeding gatherings included 120 on the 29th at Rye Hbr LNR – rather less than usual – and 120 at Pilsley Sands on 9 May.

Breeding success at Rye Hbr LNR was good, with at least 175 chicks fledging from late June from some 90 pairs. Although 165 pairs nested at Pett Level no breeding results were reported. Two pairs laid five eggs at South Stakes Island (Chichester Hbr) and two week-old chicks were seen at Weir Wood Res. Heavy rain immediately before 27 Jun at New Lake (Chichester GP) resulted in 49 dead chicks but fortunately left 47 live ones and 30 eggs. At least two juveniles were raised at Tern Island (Pagham Hbr), as they were seen being fed by parents on 17 Jul.

In July, records were few. There were 85 offshore at Selsey Bill on the 3rd, 80 at Pagham Hbr on the 4th and 100 at New Lake on the 5th. Counts in early August were generally small, notable exceptions being 76 at Pagham Hbr on the 3rd and 139 at Rye Hbr on the 15th. Higher counts then occurred later in the month with 800 E on the 23rd at Brighton Marina and 508 W in seven hours on the 29th at Selsey Bill. At Brighton Marina 380 flew east on 11 Sep and 225 flew west on the 20th. October was quiet with records in single figures, the last being three at Brighton Marina on the 31st. [DEGC]

0616. ARCTIC TERN

Sterna paradisaea

**Uncertain, but probably a fairly common spring and autumn passage migrant.
Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.**

As usual, few passage terns recorded at the main seawatching localities were identified as Arctic Terns; the majority were recorded as “Commic” Terns. The first Arctic Tern was identified at Rye Hbr LNR on 9 Apr, followed by two at Splash Point (Seaford), on the 14th and seven at Rottingdean on the 16th. A further eight were recorded during the month, mainly in single figures, except for 30 E at Brighton Marina on the 21st and 18 E at Splash Point on the 26th. In May, a total of 110 was recorded on ten dates, mainly at Splash Point, the highest being 21 on the 15th. The only record in June was again at Splash Point with two on the 3rd. In July there were singles at Pagham Hbr on the 1st and Sidlesham Ferry on the 18th.

Autumn records at coastal sites were better than for the last few years with approximately 247 birds on 21 dates, the highest counts being at Brighton Marina with 50 on 2 Oct and 32 on the 13th. The last birds were singles - one at Church Norton on 30 Oct and a juvenile fishing inside Brighton Marina on the 31st.

Arctic Terns were specifically identified at five inland sites during the year. In the spring, one was seen at Weir Wood Res on 20 Apr. Later in the year, at least one of unspecified age was at Arlington Res on 13 Oct and two juveniles were there on the 28th; one was at Brede Valley on 16 Oct, two were at Darwell Res on the 19th – unusual for this site – and two were seen at Bewl Water on the 21st. [DEGC]

COMMON/ARCTIC TERN

Sterna hirundo/paradisaea

Most birds passing seawatching localities remain unidentified as “Commic” Terns. The totals at the main seawatching localities were as follows:

	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr watched
Selsey Bill	759	3184	3943	12¾
Worthing	575	1263	1838	18
Brighton Marina	nc	8660	8660	
Splash Point (Seaford)	3316	4179	7495	28
Birling Gap	411	1389	1800	37½

Spring passage figures were up by *c.*75% on 2003, but still not as high as in 2001. The best figures in April came from Splash Point (Seaford) with 575 E on the 18th and 503 E on the 26th. Peak passage came at the beginning of May. On the 1st there were 583 E at Splash Point, 672 E at Selsey Bill, 1400E at Brighton Marina and 889 E at Telscombe Cliffs in 31hr. On the 2nd there were 860 E at Splash Point, 3335 E at Brighton Marina, 514 E at Selsey Bill, 576 E at Newhaven West Pier and 750 E at Birling Gap. Splash Point had 717 E on the 3rd and 551 E on the 9th. There were 901 E at Selsey Bill also on the 9th and Brighton Marina had another large count of 800 E on the 18th.

Passage slowed down with only two records in double figures in June, none in July and 5 W in both August and September. There were just three records in October, ending with ten birds at Worthing on the 13th.

Common/Arctic Terns were recorded at Arlington Res with two on 21 Apr, 17 on 4 May and three on 19 Aug. [DEGC]

0624. LITTLE TERN

Sterna albifrons

Scarce breeding summer visitor and fairly common passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The totals at the main seawatching localities were as follows:

	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr watched
Selsey Bill	195	115	310	1
Worthing Beach	72	58	130	1¾
Brighton Marina	21	48	69	
Splash Point (Seaford)	58	46	104	½
Birling Gap	8	24	32	¾

The first record was of two at Rye Hbr LNR on 10 Apr, followed by three at Selsey Bill on the 12th and two at Pagham Hbr on the 14th. Thereafter records occurred daily in April with relatively small numbers on passage the highest being 33 E at Selsey Bill on the 16th, 26 E at Splash Point (Seaford), on the 25th, 42 E at Brighton Marina on the 26th and 30 E at Selsey Bill also on the 26th. May records were better than last year. Although they occurred virtually every day there were no particularly high counts. The best were on the 1st with 48 E at Brighton Marina, 32 at Pilsley Sands and 40 E at Selsey Bill. A further 34 flew east at Selsey Bill on the 2nd and 38 were at Rye Hbr on the 14th.

A very poor breeding season was reported from Rye Bay LNR. Although 18 pairs nested, only five chicks fledged. There were a number of problems from prolonged cold spells, wet weather and probable predation by Kestrels. There was no breeding at North Stakes Island (Chichester Hbr).

In July birds were recorded on nine dates, seven of which were in double figures, the highest being 33 at Rye Hbr LNR on the 6th. The 12 records in August were all in single figures, except one of ten at Pilsley Sands on the 13th. Single figures continued in September on seven dates, plus a record of ten at Pagham Hbr on the 12th. There were

three records in October; one at Worthing Beach on the 5th, three in flight offshore at Rye Bay on the 6th and eight at Worthing Brooklands on the 29th. There were no inland records. [DEGC]

0627. **BLACK TERN**

Chlidonias niger

Scarce passage migrant.

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
27	26	3	2	87	14

The first spring bird was seen in the late afternoon of 2 Apr (AH) on Easton Lane pond at Easton Farm (Earnley) and is a new county earliest date record. Previously, the earliest was one at Chichester GP on 4 Apr 1957. The next to be seen were at Splash Point (Seaford), with 3 E on the 16th and 13 E on the 18th. At Weir Wood Res there was also one on the 18th, increasing to two on the 20th when three also appeared at Rye Hbr LNR. Singles were seen at Brighton Marina on the 25th, Selsey Bill on the 26th and 27th, another at Cliff End (Pett) also on the 27th and one at Arlington Res on the 30th. In May there were 13 records, mainly singles, but four at Rye Hbr on the 11th and five at Pilsley Island on the 17th.

Singles were seen at three sites in June; on the 5th at Pilsley Sands, the 13th at Rye Hbr and the 26th at Selsey Bill. Both records in July were singles at Rye Hbr on the 22nd and 23rd.

More birds than usual were recorded on 19 dates at 15 sites in August, commencing on the 12th with 12 at Selsey Bill and 11 at Rye Hbr on the 15th. On the 18th there were ten at Arlington Res, 14 E past Selsey Bill and six at Bewl Water. Birds were present for most of the month at Ivy Lake (Chichester GP), with a highest count of 15 on the 23rd, 12 on the 26th but only two by the 31st. Pagham Hbr had records on ten dates, the highest being six on the 28th. September was unusually quiet with records on only seven dates from seven sites, mainly singles, but five flew west past Brighton Marina on the 18th and three were at Ivy Lake on the 19th. There were more sightings than usual in October with 13 birds at eight sites, all in ones and twos, the last at Worthing Beach on the 23rd. [DEGC]

0634 **COMMON GUILLEMOT**

Uria aalge

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant: formerly bred. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
402	33	368	33	87	14	2	-	17	13	32	188

The following are the totals recorded at the main seawatching localities. There were no records from Brighton Marina or Bexhill/Hastings, but limited records are included for Telscombe Cliffs and Birling Gap.

Direction	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	-	-	2	14	1	9	-	2	7	3	1	5	6	-	51
Worthing Beach	82	1	62	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	1	9
Telscombe Cliffs	48	-	128	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Splash Point (Seaford)	-	6	8	45	43	-	-	3	-	2	-	-	31	28	2
Birling Gap	-	-	-	310	37	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Records were mainly in single figures in January with only three days worthy of note - at Widewater (Lancing), there were 30 W on both the 21st and the 24th. At Worthing Beach there were 40 W in ½hr on the 21st and 82 E in 2hr on the 27th. Both February and March records were poor apart from 300 E in 3 ¾hr on 31 Mar at Birling Gap.

From September to November, records were few and in single figures, but improved in December commencing at Rye Bay with 30 on the 10th and 20 on the 11th. On the 12th, there were 19 E and 15 offshore in ½hr at Splash Point and 30 W in 2hr on the 18th at Selsey Bill.

One bird was found dead, washed up at Pilsey Sands, but there was no mention of oil. [DEGC]

0636. RAZORBILL

Alca torda

Common winter visitor and fairly common passage migrant: formerly bred. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The approximate monthly totals were as follows and are the lowest figures for five years probably reflecting the absence of records from Brighton Marina:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
111	7	76	20	21	8	4	3	12	48	179	249

The following are the totals recorded at the main seawatching localities. There were no records from Brighton Marina or Bexhill/Hastings, but limited records are included for Telscombe Cliffs and Birling Gap.

Direction	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	2	-	19	4	4	2	1	1	6	16	10	14	37	17	101
Worthing Beach	8	4	5	3	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	6	106	5
Telscombe Cliffs	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Splash Point (Seaford)	7	6	-	36	24	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	36	8	6
Birling Gap	-	-	-	20	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

There were 30 records in January, but the only ones in double figures were 35 on the sea off Widewater (Lancing) on the 24th and 12 at Newhaven West Pier on the 30th. Records in February were very few. The largest numbers in March were at Birling Gap with 25 (6 offshore and 19E) on the 3rd and ten offshore on the 30th and 11 offshore at Splash Point also on the 30th.

Records in November were similar to last year, the highest being 14 offshore at Church Norton on the 24th, 15 at Worthing on the 27th and 22 at Selsey Bill on the 30th. Larger numbers were seen in December, the best being 28 at Splash Point on the 12th, 89 at Selsey Bill on the 18th and 40 at Worthing on the 19th. Single birds were seen on the 31st at both Splash Point and Selsey Bill.

Only one oiled bird was reported at Newhaven Tide Mills on 5 Jan. [DEGC]

AUK species

2003: The total reported should have been an estimated 109,484 bird-days not the 89,721 quoted. Even allowing for inevitable duplication this figure creates a new county record, showing a 13 % increase on the previous high of 2001 and a 64 % increase on 2002, although it may reflect observer coverage as much as anything.

2004: Numbers were barely a fifth of those for 2003 and the lowest for five years. It should be noted, however, that no regular counts were made at Brighton Marina; although an impressive 11,500 (no direction) were reported there on 26 Jan and 750 W on 18 Dec. This site accounted for 80 % of records in 2003 making it difficult to compare this year's numbers with those for previous years.

The following are approximate monthly totals (including positively identified Common Guillemots and Razorbills) recorded at the main seawatching localities. Some duplication is inevitable with counts both east and west at the same time. There were no records from Bexhill/Hastings, but two additions are Telscombe Cliffs and Birling Gap.

Direction	Jan-Feb			Mar-May			Jun-Jul		Aug-Oct		Nov-Dec		
	E	o/s	W	E	o/s	W	E	W	E	W	E	o/s	W
Selsey Bill	16		59	38		67	1	8	19	40	38	100	1535
Worthing Beach	951		1511	9		17			27	35	71		85
Telscombe Cliffs	349		661	12									
Splash Point (Seaford)	213	14	177	406	59	25	2				826	10	133
Birling Gap				263	60								

There were only five counts over 100 in January, the first being 100 E in ¾hr at Splash Point (Seaford), on the 3rd. The peak came at the end of January at Worthing Beach with 112 E and 2 W in ½hr on the 22nd, 746 E in ¾hr on the 26th and 1500 W in 2hr on the 27th. Records from Telscombe Cliffs were monthly totals only, 301 E and 594 W in 16hr in January. February counts were low and the best counts in March were 120 E in 1½hr at Birling Gap on the 28th and 82 E and 15 offshore in 4 ¼hr at Splash Point on the 31st.

At the end of the year there were 37 E and 2 W in 1hr on 3 Nov and in December at Selsey Bill, 3 E and 1472 W in 2hr on the 18th. At Splash Point 279 E and 54 W were recorded in ½hr on the 12th, 194 E and 4 W in 2hr on the 21st and 88 E and 6 W in ½hr on the 28th.

The overall proportion of Common Guillemots to Razorbills, where birds were specifically counted, was 60/40. However in Jan/Mar it was 80/20 compared with Nov/Dec at 35/65. [DEGC]

0647. LITTLE AUK

Alle alle

Very scarce autumn passage migrant and winter visitor.

It was another poor year for this species. After only five records last year, there were only three this year. The first was seen at Pagham Hbr on 26 Oct (KRB) swimming and diving up to 40m offshore. The second – assumed to be different - was picked up in a garden near Pagham Hbr, also on the 26th (MSm), and taken to Brent Lodge where it unfortunately died. The third, which stayed for only about five minutes, was at Rye Hbr

on 14 Nov (Mhu, MR) about 25m offshore near the Old Lifeboat station. [DEGC]

0654. **PUFFIN**

Fratercula arctica

Very scarce visitor, most frequently recorded in spring. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

There were just two records, for the tenth year in a row. Both sightings were at Telscombe Cliffs, the first flying east about 100m offshore on 30 Jan and the second west about 50m away on 25 Mar (DHH). [DEGC]

0665. **FERAL ROCK DOVE**

Columba livia

Common resident.

Although over 100 records were submitted (an increase compared with 2003), most related to the BTO Migration Watch. The largest concentrations recorded during the year were 320 at Stanmer Park (Brighton), on 2 Sep and 100 at Brighton Marina on 25 Dec. Regular monthly counts at Hotham Park (Bognor), produced maximum counts of 67 in November and 97 in December, while the peak count at Marsh Fm (Yapton) was 53 in November. [PJ]

0668. **STOCK DOVE**

Columba oenas

Common resident and possible winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The year started with large flocks mainly in the east of the county in coastal areas. In January, large numbers were present at Rye Hbr LNR all month peaking at 600 on 11 Jan. Several large flocks were also noted in February and March together with a large number of sightings of one to six birds away from coastal areas. Peak counts were of 900 on 13 Feb at Harbour Fm (Rye Hbr SSSI), 40 at Sidlesham SF on 16 Feb, 40 at Harrow Hill (Patching) on 3 Mar and 200 at Castle Water on 6 Mar.

During April, May and June observations were widespread and typically of pairs. Significant numbers, however, were of 50 at Mill Hill (Shoreham) on 7 Apr, 20 at Compton on 20 Apr, 250 at Harbour Farm on 12 May, 24 at Pett Level on 20 May and 24 at Thorney Island on 25 May.

Breeding records came from 25 sites involving 42 pairs of which no less than 27 bred in owl boxes. Six pairs at Troutbeck (Eridge) used all the available boxes.

The first indications of dispersal from breeding areas were of 19 seen at Thorney Deeps on 21 Aug and 32 there on 21 Sep. Flocks continued to build up during the autumn. In October, 60 were counted at Barnettts Fm (Graffham) on the 5th. In November, they were seen mainly in coastal areas around Hastings, Pett and Rye, typically of 100-150 birds, and a movement of 220 E was noted at Beachy Head on the 1st.

In the last month of the year peak counts were of 100 birds from both Harbour Fm and Thorney Deeps on 19 and 26 Dec respectively. [GK]

0670. **WOOD PIGEON**

Columba palumbus

Abundant resident and winter visitor.

In the first winter period the largest flocks reported were 750 at Chantry Hill on 4 Jan, 1000 at Chilgrove on 8 Feb and 600-700 at Poynings on 22 Feb. The regular monthly censuses at Hotham Park (Bognor), Marsh Fm (Yapton), and Sefter Fm (Pagham), produced totals of 81, 42 and 226 respectively in January and 42, 113 and 622 in February.

Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas can be found on pages 189-191.

Late autumn movements commenced with 250 S at Handcross and 2170 W at Hastings on 26 Oct followed by 2500 S at Beachy Head on 30 Oct. Passage continued with 15,000 W at Beachy Head, 8000 W at Sidlesham Ferry and 1000 over Wivelsfield Green on 5 Nov and 2500 over Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head), 1030 over Brighton and 700 over Wivelsfield the following day. By far the largest movements occurred in the period 11 – 14 Nov with totals over Brighton (flying west or southwest) of c.34,000 on the 11th, c.16,400 on the 13th and c.15,500 on the 14th. The total autumn movement over the city was estimated to involve 80,000 birds (90,000 in 2003). Few birds were reported thereafter until the latter part of December when there were 3000 roosting at Hooksway on the 15th and 2000 at Earham Woods on the 23rd. The regular monthly censuses at Hotham Park, Marsh Fm and Sefter Fm produced totals of 37, 27 and 77 in November and 37, 10 and 53 in December. [PJ]

0684. **COLLARED DOVE**

Streptopelia decaocto

Very common resident.

As in previous years the largest gathering recorded was at Harbour Fm (Rye Hbr), where 131 went to roost on 16 Oct. There were however very few other large flocks reported, the most notable being 50 at Mountfield on 29 Sep and 8 Nov and 36 at Brooklands (Worthing), on 11 Nov. This presumably reflects a lack of grain spillages. Possible migrants included 14 W at Beachy Head on 14 May and a further 5 W there the following day.

Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas can be found on pages 189-191. A pair with eggs was noted at the Royal Sussex County Hospital (Brighton) on 20 Jan. [PJ]

0687. **TURTLE DOVE**

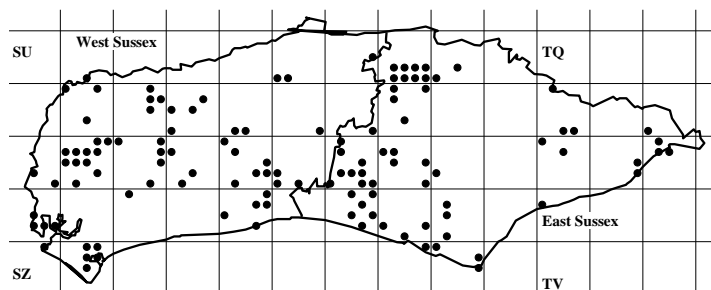
Streptopelia turtur

Scarce summer visitor and passage migrant. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

2003: The account should have stated that the first bird of the year was one heard calling and seen well at Pond Lye (Goddards Green) on 27 Mar (JWK).

2004: For the second year running one was seen at Pond Lye in March, this time on the 8th (JWK *et al*). This is the earliest county arrival date by two weeks and would seem likely to involve the same individual as in 2003. The next recorded were single birds at The Burgh (Burpham), on 6 Apr and at Pond Lye (Goddards Green), the following day. Typically there were no further records until mid-month when there were singles at Stanmer Park (Brighton), and Thorney Deepes on the 16th and Ditchling Common on the 17th. Ones and twos were reported on most days thereafter including two that flew in off

the sea at Splash Point (Seaford) on 10 May. The maximum counts in a better spring compared with 2002 and 2003 were eight at Beachy Head on 17 May and 11 at Rye Hbr on 21 May, with ten still there the following day. A late migrant was noted at Brooklands (Worthing) on 4 Jun.



As the map shows, the species continues to be widely recorded during the breeding season, but reports totaling 28 pairs and a further 59 singing males represents a huge decline compared with estimated county population 15 years ago of 2800-3500 pairs (*Birds of Sussex*). The total for 2004 included ten pairs at Pett Level, eight singing males at Bayham, at least six pairs at Rye Hbr and six singing males at Venus Wood (Cocking).

The largest reported autumn counts were seven and five at Thorney Deeps on 14 Aug and 5 Sep respectively, and six at Colworth Down on 26 Aug, a far cry from the flocks of 50 or more regularly seen in the autumn in the 1960s and 1970s. The last recorded were singles at Durrington (with Collared Doves) from 13-19 Oct and at Sidlesham Ferry on 14 Oct. [PJ]

0712. ROSE-RINGED PARAKEET

Psittacula krameri

Very scarce introduced breeding resident.

Compared with neighbouring Surrey, where up to 7000 have been recorded at a single roost site, this species remains surprisingly scarce. This may be due to a combination of its sedentary nature and attachment to a core roost site within range of which it needs to forage daily. The above roost is 18 miles from the Sussex border in a straight line which crosses areas of unsuitable farmland. However, some authorities predict that, with the Surrey population now increasing rapidly with roosts being established in, e.g. the Reigate area, Sussex could be colonised within the decade.

There were just four records in 2004 comprising 15 at Roffey (Horsham) on 26 July, a pair (known to have escaped from captivity) at Barcombe throughout August, and single birds at North Heath (Horsham) on 5 Sep and in flight over the Ashdown Forest Centre on 8 Nov. [PJ]

0724. **COMMON CUCKOO***Cuculus canorus*

Fairly common summer visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The first bird was heard at Scobells Fm (Barcombe) on 7 Apr – rather later than the ten-year average date of 2 Apr. This was quickly followed by a singing bird at Pippingford Park (Ashdown Forest) on the 9th, a male at Lord's Piece (Coates) on the 10th and another bird at Weir Wood Res the same day. There then followed a steady stream of arrivals during the month with peak counts of nine on the 17th and 11 on the 25th. By the end of the month a conservative 77 had been noted.

There were no sightings of confirmed breeding. However, from the records received it was estimated that there were at least 23 males/pairs probably breeding at 20 sites and at least 58 male birds in the county during the season. In addition, 14 juveniles were recorded between 12 Jul and 12 Aug, almost all from coastal or near coastal sites. The last bird recorded was at Cuckmere Haven on 22 Sep. [JAH]

0735. **BARN OWL***Tyto alba*

Scarce breeding resident. Amber list species of medium conservation concern.

Records of all sightings are shown in the map below.



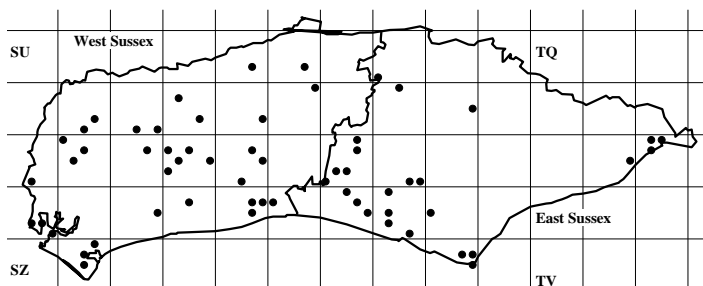
The monthly totals, excluding visits for ringing, were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
53	22	14	8	7	7	13	7	4	8	14	6

Eleven of the January sightings were in the Amberley Wildbrooks/Coldwaltham area.

Breeding was confirmed at 97 sites (99 in 2003) of which 63 were in West Sussex and 34 in East Sussex. Ten of these attempts are known to have failed. There were 57 nests in barns and other buildings, 35 nests in boxes on trees and five in pole boxes. Young likely and known to have fledged totalled 184 in West Sussex and 104 in East Sussex. Two females laid five and two eggs in one box in a barn. Elsewhere one pair had a second brood.

Reported deaths were four owls killed on roads, one struck by an aircraft at Shoreham and one drowned in a cattle trough. Two recently fledged birds were found dead, starved after bad weather. [ABW]

0757. **LITTLE OWL***Athene noctua***Fairly common resident.**

Records were received from 60 sites, compared to 69 in 2003 and 81 in 2002 and were distributed as shown in the above map. Breeding was confirmed at two sites with four nestlings observed fledging at Rye Hbr SSSI on 1 Jun. Two nestlings were recorded in a Barn Owl box in a barn on 18 Jun. Breeding was probable at most other sites, due to the sedentary nature of the species. Up to four pairs were recorded at Rye Hbr SSSI. One bird was found dead at Thorney Island on 6 Aug. [DJM]

0761. **TAWNY OWL***Strix aluco***Fairly common resident.**

Records were received from 110 sites, compared to 78 in 2003 and 87 in 2002. Most records were of calling birds but some were of roosting birds. Birds were present all year in East Grinstead and Darwell Woods, where two were present on 6 Jan. There were five recorded casualties, all near roads, one of which was a first year male found at Ashdown Reservoir on 20 Jan.

Breeding was confirmed at 11 sites and was very probable at a number of others. At Ashdown Forest a breeding pair was observed with one egg on 8 May. At Etchingham two juveniles were observed with an adult on 25 May. Young were heard calling at Mountfield on 7 Jun and Elmer on 13 Jun. At Duncton Common a juvenile was seen on a track and two juveniles were noted at Fittleworth, both on 18 Jun. Two birds were noted at Belle Tout (Beachy Head) on 13 Oct, one of them being a grey bird. [DJM]

0767. **LONG-EARED OWL***Asio otus***Very scarce resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.**

Ninety-two records were received from ten sites of which four were in West Sussex, six were in East Sussex and six in the breeding season. Breeding was confirmed at one site where a bird was seen sitting on a nest. Site details for this species are strictly confidential because of the species' sensitivity to disturbance. It was an exceptional year for roosting birds at Rye Hbr SSSI, with birds present until 23 Mar and from 14 Nov involving two regular roosts with a maximum count of four and three on 28 Jan. Ten birds

were seen at an undisclosed winter roost on 9 Dec. One bird was found dead by the roadside in West Sussex on 26 Jan. [DJM]

0768. **SHORT-EARED OWL**

Asio flammeus

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant; has bred. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The following table gives approximate monthly totals taking account of possible duplication at well watched sites. Summing these should not be attempted, as there will be duplication between months.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
8	6	9	6	1	-	-	4	7	21	16	10

Two birds were present at Thorney Island on 1 Jan, rising to four on 9 Mar, and at Waltham Brooks two were seen on 2 Jan. At Rye Hbr LNR there were three on 9 Jan, single birds were noted on 20 Feb and 15 Mar and finally on 6 May, the last record of the season.

The first autumn migrant was observed at Rye Hbr LNR on 7 Aug. One was seen there on 24 Aug and two were noted there on the 25th and 27th. Single birds were seen flying in off the sea at Brighton Marina on 11 Oct, Splash Point (Seaford) on 23 Oct, and Beachy Head on 31 Oct. Another bird was observed flying west over the sea at Brighton Marina on 11 Nov. Winter records were generally of ones and twos except at Thorney Island where three were noted on 19 Dec and four on the 27th. [DJM]

0778. **EUROPEAN NIGHTJAR**

Caprimulgus europaeus

Fairly common summer visitor rarely seen on migration. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

The first reports were of two in Ashdown Forest on 1 May and of one calling at Lavington Common on the 9th. These were followed on the 10th by a further six in Ashdown Forest and one at Warnham and, on the 11th, by one at Hesworth Common and another single at Benbow Pond (Midhurst), both breeding areas. The majority of the 76 subsequent May records were in the second half of the month, the distribution of which is shown in the map below.



This was the year of the National Nightjar Breeding Survey, organised by the BTO and coordinated in Sussex by the SOS. The full results for Sussex can be found on pages 214

221. In summary, an estimated 228 males held territory in 109 1-km squares. The *Wealden Heaths Breeding Bird Survey* (see page 191) identified 51 males holding territory in 10 sites and Ashdown Forest observers reported 67 individual males. This latter total returned almost to the level of 2001 (69) but is perhaps due to the greater observer coverage in this survey year. The only observed breeding was noted at Buchan Park where on 24 Jul a female was found sitting on two eggs in bracken.

Preliminary results from the national survey produced an U.K. total of 4132 individual males, which constitutes a 34% increase since the 1992 survey (3039 males). The national population estimate for 2004 is a minimum 4500 males (*BTO, RSPB, English Nature and Forestry Commission*). The national results showed a total of 243 males for Sussex and the difference from our own results (228) may have been due to some records not being channelled through the County Recorder together with a more rigorous assessment of our results by the Sussex survey team. These preliminary results indicate that Sussex holds about 5% of the UK population.

Records dwindled through the second half of July, as the main survey period drew to a close and few records were received from the breeding areas in August. In all there were seven reports, mainly from Ashdown Forest, relating to 11 individuals. The only coastal sightings of returning migrants were all from Pett Level. The first of these was on 18 July followed by three on 28 Aug, one on the 31st with the final bird of the year - and the only one recorded in September - on the 8th. [AP]

0795. COMMON SWIFT

Apus apus

Common summer visitor and passage migrant.

An exceptionally early swift, thought to be this species, was seen at Norman's Bay on 7 Mar (MKR). This record would exceed the previous earliest arrival date for Sussex by a whole month. A single at Stanmer Park (Brighton) on 16 Apr, a much more typical first arrival date, was followed by another at Barcombe Res on the 17th and five at Rye Hbr LNR on the 20th. Large numbers were observed on 27 Apr at coastal locations with 210 in off the sea at Brighton Marina, 48 at Splash Point (Seaford), 62 at Selsey Bill and 27 at Worthing Beach. The following day concentrations were noted at traditional feeding sites with 130 at Ivy Lake (Chichester GP), 100 at Pulborough Brooks and 80 at Barcombe Res.

A gathering of 20 birds screaming over West Worthing on 28 Apr was an early date for this behaviour, which is usually associated with breeding sites. The first screaming party reported from Chichester was of eight birds on 7 May.

Some information was received on nest sites which included three churches, a number of houses and an old flint barn in Charlton. This barn supported five nests, all only 3 m above the ground. A new colony of eight nests was located in a property in Chichester. Sadly, at a traditional colony in St. Peter ad Vincula Church in Wisborough Green, birds were seen attempting to enter former nest holes which had been blocked during recent restoration works.

During June there were several notable counts of feeding concentrations including 300 at Ambersham Common on the 12th, 500 at Combe Haven on the 12th and 1000 over the Downs at Berwick on the 18th.

As usual, some large movements were recorded during July. The most impressive was 1500 over Beachy Head on the 26th with many flying out to sea and others heading west along the coast. Also 400 were recorded at Newhaven Tide Mills on the 26th and 500 at

Pagham Hbr on the 31st.

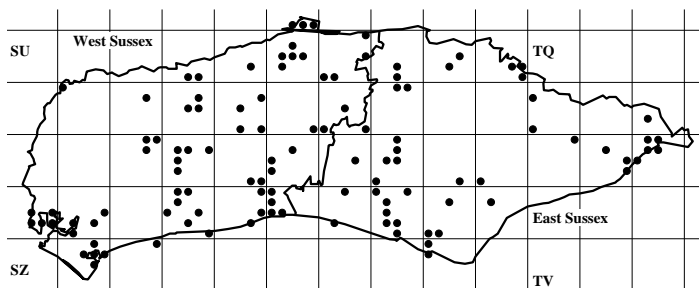
There were 80 sightings in September, of which six were during the second half of the month. Four birds were recorded in October with two at Southwater CP on the 10th, one at Birling Gap on the 16th and one at Wisborough Green on the 26th. [GCMR]

0831. COMMON KINGFISHER

Alcedo atthis

Fairly common resident and occasional winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

A total of 588 records was received for over 100 sites distributed as shown on the following map:



Observations during the winter months were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Nov	Dec
Number of birds	43	27	54	48
Number of inland sites	19	15	23	25
Number of coastal sites	12	8	14	10

The total number of birds reported and the number of sites involved were both higher than in 2003.

The April to July records were from 23 tetrads in West Sussex and 20 in East Sussex. Breeding was confirmed at three sites (Burpham, Warnham LNR and Pett Level) and was probable at a further nine (Petworth, Loxwood, Weir Wood Res, Troutbeck (Eridge), Bewl Water and four locations on Ashdown Forest). There was little breeding detail reported: an adult was seen feeding a fledged young at Burpham on 12 Apr and an adult was carrying food at Rye Hbr on four dates in late May.

In the final quarter of the year, reports were in single figures with up to a maximum of three at six locations – Thorney Deeps, Warnham LNR, R Adur near Beeding Cement Works (twice), Iford Brooks (twice) and Rye Hbr LNR (twice). [LM]

0840. EUROPEAN BEE-EATER

Merops apiaster

Rare vagrant; has bred.

One was heard calling and seen in silhouette flying northwest over Pett Level on 3 Aug (JC). There have been 21 records since 1990 involving 27 individuals. All have been

between 1 May and 1 Sep although only three were in August. One record is a well below average showing in recent years, although it should be noted that none were recorded during 1995-99 and only one in 2003. [RJF]

0846. **HOOPOE**

Upupa epops

Very scarce spring and even scarcer autumn passage migrant; has bred.

Six were recorded in spring. They were singles at Bevendean (Brighton) on 19-20 Mar, Shutter's Nursery (Sidlesham) on 29 Mar, Hampers Lane (Storrington) on 24 Apr, Nutley on 27 Apr-1 May, Thorney Deeps on 7 May and West Hill (Hastings) on 8 May. This is an above average showing as 61 have been seen in the county since 1990 (and 14 since 2000). Of these eight arrived in March, 28 in April and six in May. [RJF]

0848. **WRYNECK**

Jynx torquilla

Very scarce passage migrant; has bred. Red listed species of conservation concern.

The reports received indicated a minimum of 13 different birds in the year, all occurring as singles, compared with totals of 31 in 2002 and 12 in 2003. The spring records were from the Isle of Thorns (Ashdown Forest) on 13 Apr, Church Norton on 13 and 14 Apr and Beachy Head on 2 May.

In August, there were reports of single birds from Steyning on the 20th (feeding on ants in a garden), the Beachy Head Hotel on the 21st, Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) on the 22nd, when this individual was trapped and ringed, and Pett Level the same day, which was also trapped and ringed. What was probably a different bird was seen at Pett Level in September on the 2nd and 11th. Others were reported from Thorney Deeps on the 5th, Shooters Bottom on the 26th and Whitbread Hollow (both Beachy Head) on the 30th and Upper Dicker on the 29th, the latter killed by a cat. There were two reported in October, at Pagham Hbr from the 5th to 7th and Belle Tout (Beachy Head) on the 13th and 16th. [LM]

0856. **GREEN WOODPECKER**

Picus viridis

Fairly common resident. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

A total of 502 records was received from 219 1-km sites across the county, distributed as shown in the following map:



Reports relating to the breeding season provided the following totals of 1-km squares and pairs or territories:

Breeding status	Confirmed	Probable	Present	Totals
No. of 1-km squares	38	23	35	96
No. of pairs/territories	56	32	38	126

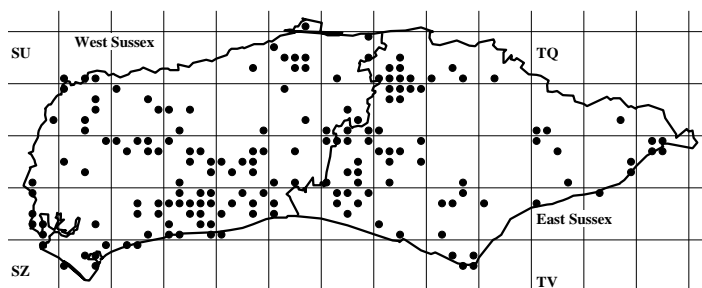
Of the above total of 96 1-km squares, 16 were in Ashdown Forest. At least 22 of the above confirmed breeding pairs are included in the counts of common breeding birds in defined areas on pages 189 - 190 and 36 pairs identified in 21 1-km squares during the *Wealden Heaths Breeding Birds Survey* are detailed on page 191. In Ashdown Forest there were nine confirmed or probable breeding pairs in eight 1-km squares. A survey of five woodlands (totalling 44.3ha) in the Balls Cross/Kirdford area recorded five territories. [LM]

0876. GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER

Dendrocopos major

Common resident.

A total of 470 records was received from 207 sites across the county, distributed as shown in the following map:



Drumming was first reported from Patching and Barcombe on 18 Jan but there were no further reports until 9 Feb ushered in many more.

Reports relating to the breeding activity provided the following totals of 1-km squares and pairs or territories:

Breeding status	Confirmed	Probable	Present	Totals
No. of 1-km squares	40	28	20	88
No. of pairs/territories	54	39	25	118

Of the above total of 88 1-km squares, 16 were in Ashdown Forest. At least 16 of the above confirmed breeding pairs are included in the counts of common breeding birds in defined areas on pages 189 - 190 and 36 pairs identified in 24 1-km squares during the *Wealden Heaths Breeding Birds Survey* are detailed on page 191. In addition, there were 16 territories in 15 1-km squares in Ashdown Forest and a survey of nine woodlands (totalling 93ha) in the Balls Cross/Kirdford area recorded at least nine probable breeding pairs. The Beachy Head Ringing Group commented that the species is becoming more common there.

Possible migrants were single birds seen on six widely spaced dates from 16 Sep to 24 Nov in the Rye Hbr area. At the end of the year, birds were drumming on 25 Dec at Ifield and on the 30th at Washington. [LM]

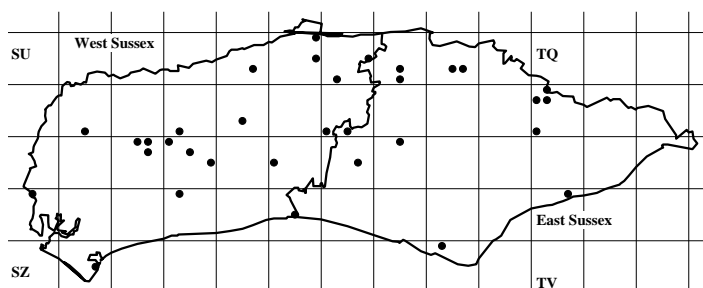


0887. LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER

Dendrocopos minor

Scarce resident. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

A total of 63 records was received from 35 tetrads across the county, a disappointing second annual reduction from the high of 102 (from 46 tetrads) in 2002. The distribution of these records is illustrated in the following map:



There were several first sightings: a bird seen at Arundel WWT on 1 Feb was the first there for three years; one which flew over Constantia Manor (Isfield) on 9 Feb was the first ever for the estate; and one at Plumpton on 27 Jun was the first there for four years. The only location to record the species throughout the year was Pulborough Brooks.

Drumming was first reported from Burton Mill Pond on 1 Feb, where one or two birds were seen and heard regularly to mid-May. Drumming was heard from a garden in Stopham on 26 Feb and one fortunate householder had a female or young bird on an apple tree in their garden in Storrington on 18 Jun. An individual was seen on two successive days in mid-July in a Southwick garden

Breeding was reported as confirmed or probable from Heath End (Burton), Amberley Wild Brooks, Ashdown Forest (Pippingford Park and Army Training Area), Hurst Green and Filsham LNR. There were reports of territorial activity from four other locations: Burton MP, Stopham Woods, Friston Forest (West Dean) and Troutbeck (Eridge).

It is unclear whether the reduction in the number of records received indicates an increasing scarcity of this Red Listed species. Reports of all occurrences, especially of territorial behaviour or confirmed breeding, would be appreciated. [LM]

0974. **WOOD LARK**

Lullula arborea

Scarce resident and passage migrant. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

2002: In the comparison of county totals, the figure for 2000 was 74 territories not 66 as published.

2004: Records were received for 11 months of the year but, unusually, there were none for December. Apart from the flock of 11 noted below, all records during the first winter period were from breeding areas.

A flock of 11 was seen at Pett Level from 21 Feb to 2 Mar. With most breeding birds back on their breeding grounds by mid-Feb, it is possible that these birds were continental migrants. However, with limited knowledge of the dispersal and winter range of British birds, the origin of these birds must remain uncertain.

In the west of the county, singing on the breeding grounds was first reported at Ambersham and Heyshott Commons on 11 Jan and regularly thereafter from the northwest Wealden Heaths. *The Wealden Heaths Breeding Bird Survey* (see page 191) reported 30 potential pairs from ten locations (36 from 11 in 2003). Ambersham and Heyshott Commons plus the adjoining Goldballs Plantation usually hold the greatest number of pairs but recent lack of active heathland management on the SSSI and the loss of sites to maturing forestry led to only five pairs being recorded against nine in 2003. A pair was found on downland east of West Marden on 4 Apr and a possible seven singing males were located further west on the Hampshire border in the Forestside (West Marden) and Deanlane End (Rowland's Castle) areas between 1 Feb and 12 Apr. This appears to be a relatively new and expanding population. There were no records from the far northwest corner, where a population is known to exist on the Wealden Greensand ridge. Chapel Common (Liphook) was omitted from the *WHBS* this year but a report was received of two pairs. Breeding was noted on Stanley Common where a pair was seen with two fledged young on 10 May and on Stedham Common where up to four fledglings were seen between 21-24 May. Adult birds collecting food at Stedham Common on 19 Jul evidenced later breeding. The resulting total for West Sussex was an estimated 41-42 pairs (40-41 in 2003).

In the east of the county, the first record was from the Old Airstrip (Ashdown Forest) on 9 Feb. Ashdown Forest was the only East Sussex site to report breeding and an estimated 13 pairs were found (14 in 2003). The population in the Forest used to be centred on the Chelwood Gate area but, due to disturbance, some of the population has moved to the Old Lodge LNR area (D. King *pers Comm*). There were no records from Broadwater Forest (Groombridge) where four to five pairs were found last year.

The county total of 54-55 compares with 68-70 in 2003. The *Hampshire Bird Report 2003* comments that after rapid expansion the species seemed to have reached a plateau

within the Thames Basin and Wealden Heaths area, which abuts our northwestern heaths. In Sussex, the breeding population appears to have been relatively stable since 1998.

Autumn passage was even worse than last year with just five birds noted at three coastal sites, compared with 13 in 2003. There were two at Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) flying west on 9 Oct, one at Newmarket Hill (Woodingdean) on 18 Oct and 1 E and 1 NW at Sidlesham on 26 Oct and 5 Nov respectively.

There were regular records from inland sites at this time although none were reported after 11 Nov when three were seen at Iping Common. [AP]

0976. SKY LARK

Alauda arvensis

Fairly common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

Numbers in the first winter period were again low. The largest flocks reported were 77 at Sefter Fm (Pagham) on 26 Jan and 50 at Pagham Beach on 10 Jan. In Chichester Hbr, small numbers were noted on several dates through to early March at Pilsley Island but the largest count was of 40 at East Head on 21 Jan. Small flocks were reported from several coastal sites through to early March but the largest count was of 40 at Rye Hbr LNR on 10 Mar. Inland, 50 were reported from a wet setaside field at Annington (Bramber) on 4 Jan and 60 were on the Downs at New Erringham Fm on 2 Mar. Either on the Downs or elsewhere counts did not exceed 25 during the period.

Spring movement may have been indicated by three flying north at Worthing Beach on 25 Apr.

Singing was first noted on 5 Jan at the Ouse Estuary Project (Newhaven) where 14 singing males were noted in June. The numbers of territorial males, allowing for duplication (2003 figures in brackets where available), totalled c.550 (275) from 107 (75) sites. This apparently significant increase may, however, be due to better observer coverage. Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas are shown on pages 189 - 190. The counts at Rye Hbr and Pulborough Brooks in that table are closely comparable to 2003 and indicate a genuine increase in numbers. Other counts include up to 100 (60-70) in Ashdown Forest and 30 at Selsey West Fields. A report of 47 Sky Larks at Chailey Commons suggests a substantial breeding population. BBS surveyors recorded Sky Larks in 60% of the 45 1-km squares surveyed, an average of 2.64 per 1-km square and of 4.41 per occupied 1-km square. All these figures are very close to the average for 1994-2004 and give no indication of any improvement in the fortunes of this species.

The first evidence of autumn movement was two flying south on 24 Sep at Five Ways (Ashdown Forest). At Brighton Wild Park a 'poor passage' was reported with c.150 between 2 and 9 Oct. Other significant movements were 145 W on 9 Oct at Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) and 55 at Selsey Bill on 11 Oct. On 28 Oct a flock of over 1000 was estimated at Birling Gap but there was no mention of their activity.

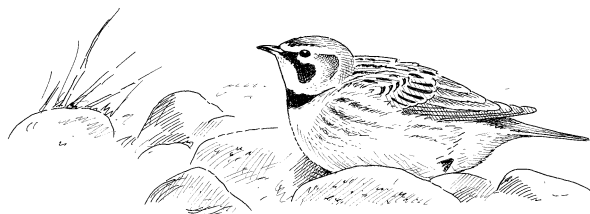
Notable counts elsewhere included a flock on weedy stubble at Goring Gap which increased to 70 by 23 Oct, 110 at Chantry Hill (Storrington) on 26 Oct, c.200 at Srompting Refuse Tip on 5 Nov and 60 at East Head on 11 Nov. A total of 82, including one flock of 40, was counted on 23 Nov at Drove Marsh (Newhaven). Further counts included 46 in a rhubarb field at Sefter Fm on 27 Oct, 80 the next day on stubble at Steep Down (Lancing), 100 at Rodmell, 50 at Beeding Cement Works on 9 Dec and 60 at Thorney Island on 29 Dec. [ACG]

0978. **SHORE LARK**

Eremophila alpestris

Rare winter visitor.

One delighted observers along the sea wall at Pett Pools from 7 Jan to 28 Mar (AJH, BJH *et al*) (see Plate No. 12) and another was seen at Glyne Gap (Bexhill) on 11-12 Dec (IS *et al*). These are the first records since 1999, although there have been 19 since 1990, all between 18 October and 21 April. The Pett individual, a photograph of which appeared in *Birding World* 17: 96, was often to be found associating with three Snow Buntings, providing a rare opportunity to see both these scarce winter visitors together in the county. [RJF]



0981. **SAND MARTIN**

Riparia riparia

Fairly common summer visitor and very common passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

2003: The note in last year's report of no breeding of this species at Stedham SP was incorrect; 50 pairs were noted there and the 15 pairs at Fitzhall (Iping) were part of the same colony. In addition, 80 pairs were noted at Pendean SP and 200 pairs at Duncton SP.

2004: The first record was of a single at Ditchling Common on 13 Mar, close to the 10-yr average date of 9 Mar. Numbers for the month were in single figures until the 22nd, when there was a count of 50 at Chichester GP after a hailstorm. Other double-figure reports were of 20 at North Mundham on the 23rd and from Chichester GP of 20 on the 25th and 40 on the 28th. The largest counts in April were of 80 at Chichester GP and 60 at Rye Hbr LNR on the 5th, 54 at Warnham LNR on the 10th, 40 at Sullington Warren on the 25th, and 60 at Coldwaltham Brooks and 200 at Chichester GP on the 29th.

Breeding was reported from six sandpits: 80 pairs at the Valdoe (East Lavant), 200 at Pendean, 30 at Stedham, 70 at Heath End, 50 at Coates Common, and 70 at Sullington. Up to five birds were seen at West Heath on three dates in May, but apparently did not breed; there were none at Eartham.

Among the late summer movements were reports in July of 250 on the 12th and 200 on the 19th at Selsey, 150 roosting in a reedbed at Thorney Deeps on the 24th and 200 at Rye Hbr on the 27th. August brought similar numbers to coastal areas, with maxima of 2000 each at Chichester GP on the 19th and Pagham Hbr on the 28th. September records included 100 at Arlington Res on the 11th, 400 at Barcombe Res on the 12th and 200 at Chichester GP on the 20th, with peak counts at Rye Hbr of 260 on the 23rd and 200 W on the 24th.

The October records were of 30 moving east at Littlehampton GC on the 1st, four at Newhaven on the 17th and 30 at Pett Level on the 20th. The last records of the year were from the Lancing area, with reports of two flying west on 30 Nov and the same or another two on 1 Dec, the latter close to the latest recorded date of 5 Dec. [LM]

0992. **BARN SWALLOW**

Hirundo rustica

Common summer visitor and abundant passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The first record of the year was of a single at Pett Level on 18 Feb, a very early date. There were no further reports until that of a single at Lancing on 16 Mar. The other records for that month were in single figures from a scattering of 14 sites, the first inland reports being from Stanmer Park on the 17th and Warnham LNR and Steyning on the 18th. In April, most of the 208 records were in single figures; prior to the 21st, the largest counts were of 70 at Rye Hbr LNR on the 6th and 40 at Aldsworth on the 18th. The 21st brought a larger movement of 300 at Chichester GP and there were two later counts of 300 each at Thorney SF and Arlington Res. The May reports included counts of 100 each at Selsey Bill on the 3rd and Rye Hbr LNR on the 5th and just over 1000 from a watch at Selsey Bill on the 12th.

Reports of breeding came from: Ebernoe, Yapton, Byworth, Climping, Houghton, Pulborough Brooks, Littleworth, Gatwick, Weir Wood Res, Millbrook (Ashdown Forest), Mountfield and Battle, though this scattering of records does not reflect the species true status in the county. On 2 Sep, a leucistic bird was seen in the Cuckmere Valley, apparently being mobbed by other Barn Swallows.

Reports of flocking in July were of 21 at Weir Wood Res on the 11th, 35 at Sidlesham on the 18th, 300 roosting at Thorney Deeps on the 24th and 200 at Pilsey Island on the 27th. August reports included 100 at Pilsey Island on the 15th, 30 at Darwell Res on the 18th, 600 and 300 at Rye Hbr on the 20th and 23rd respectively, 150 at Beachy Head on the 26th, 2000 at Pagham Hbr on the 28th and 150 roosting at Thorney Deeps, 50 at Mount Caburn and 80 at Beachy Head on the 31st. The numbers reported in September were much greater. These included 2000 roosting at Thorney Deeps on the 2nd, 1000 at Beachy Head on the 3rd, 5000 at Pagham Hbr and 10,000 (roosting) at Pett Level on the 4th. There were 1000 over Brighton Wild Park on the 6th, 3000 at Sidlesham Ferry on the 16th, 5000 in an hour at Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) on the 25th and 1000 landing in bushes in heavy rain at Beachy Head on the 27th. There was a maximum count of 10,000 at Selsey Bill on the 28th and 1000 at Birling Gap on the 29th.

Among the counts of coastal movement in October were 700 in the Adur Valley north of Shoreham on the 3rd, 3000 (the maximum for the month) at Pett Level on the 7th, 1000 juveniles east at Goring Gap on the 9th, 560 E in an hour at Worthing and 600 E at Beachy Head on the 11th, 300 W at Birling Gap on the 12th and 200 E at Littlehampton on the 13th. There were reports from inland of 25 hawking over fields at Deanlane End (Rowland's Castle) on the 17th, 40 at Darwell Res on the 19th and 200 at Chesworth Fm (Horsham) on the 20th. At the end of the month, there were 50 flying out to sea at Eastbourne on the 24th, 26 W at Church Norton on the 26th and 45 over Selsey Bill on the 30th. In November there were 35 records on 13 days, all from coastal areas, the last of the year being a single at Sidlesham Ferry, two at Selsey Bill and two at Worthing Beach, all on the 30th, a day earlier than the 10-yr average date. [LM]

0995. **RED-RUMPED SWALLOW***Hirundo daurica***Rare vagrant.**

One was seen in the lower Cuckmere Valley on 29-30 Apr (AJD, PJW *et al*) and has been accepted by *BBRC*. Twenty-one have been recorded in the county, 14 since 1990 and all but one between 17 April and 29 May (the other being in early September). [RJF]

1001. **HOUSE MARTIN***Delichon urbica***Common summer visitor and abundant passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.**

There was an early record of two birds over Weir Wood Res on 9 Feb, only eight days later than the earliest recorded date. There was then a gap until 17 Mar, with two over Hunston, followed by singles in the Arun Valley on the 21st and at Patcham on the 25th. In April there were almost daily reports; these were in single figures in the first half of the month, apart from counts of 40 at Chichester GP on the 9th and 20 at Warnham LNR on the 15th. In the second half of the month, the highest coastal counts were of 150 at Chichester GP on the 21st and 29th and 300 at North Mundham on the 30th, with the inland ones being 200 at Coldwaltham on the 19th, 200 at Pulborough Brooks on the 28th and 450 at Barcombe Res and 300 at Pulborough Brooks on the 30th.

The earliest reports of breeding activity were in April, of four birds collecting mud from puddles in Rye Hbr village on the 19th and five with nesting material near Wych Cross on the 24th. There were records of pairs at 18 other sites during the summer. These included nest counts of three at Stansted, 12 at one of three locations in Chichester, three at Madehurst, five at Bignor, eight at Balls Cross, five at Fittleworth, two at Kirdford, 19 at Knepp (West Grinstead), two at Littleworth, two at East Grinstead, one (with three young) at Newark and six at Ashdown Golf Club. Twelve artificial nests were used at Wilbees Fm (Arlington) and there were at least 15 nests in Rye Hbr village. All breeding records are welcomed.

The first reports of significant numbers in late summer were a day-total of 1000 passing Deanlane End (Rowland's Castle) on 21 Aug, 150 at Beachy Head on the 26th, and 200 at Church Norton on the 30th. In September, numbers built up from 100 each at Beachy Head on the 1st and Thorney Deeps on the 2nd, to 300 at North Stoke, 200 at Littleworth and 2000 passing Selsey Bill on the 5th. The peak autumn count at Brighton Wild Park was of 2000 on the 6th, there were 200 at Barcombe Res on the 12th, 2500 at Sidlesham on the 16th and 1500 S through the Findon Valley in five minutes on the 18th. On the 19th 1500 E were counted along the scarp at Devils Dyke, 5000 were counted at Beachy Head on the 24th and 3000 passed Selsey Bill on the 28th.

October also produced some significant movements, with 200 at Barcombe Res and 120 at Weir Wood Res on the 3rd, 2000 through Sheepcote Valley (Brighton), 800 at Beachy Head on the 8th, 1200 past Selsey Bill on the 10th, 920 were counted in three hours at Telscombe Cliffs on the 11th and 250 headed out to sea at Church Norton on the 14th. In the second half of the month, there were reports of 70 at Lancing, 250 at Beachy Head and 43 at Pett Level on the 17th, 22 at Darwell Res on the 19th, 30 at Pett Level on the 20th. Inland, there were sightings of four at Chesworth Fm (Horsham) on the 20th, two at Barcombe Cross on the 22nd and singles at Littleworth, East Chilton, Horsham and Lancing on the 22nd, 23rd, 24th and 25th respectively. The final records of the year were in November, of three at Beachy Head on the 5th, two singles at Rye Hbr on the 6th and a

single over Wisborough Green on the 7th (ten days earlier than the 10-yr average departure date). [LM]

1009. TREE PIPIT

Anthus trivialis

Fairly common but local summer visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The only March records were of a single at Newhaven Tide Mills on the 29th (an average arrival date) and three at Ashdown Ridge on the 30th. The spring coastal records in April were of single birds at Brighton College (flying north with Meadow Pipits and wagtails) and at Ovingdean on the 1st, Thorney Island on the 13th, Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) on the 16th, Selsey Bill on the 24th and 25th, Brighton Marina on the 27th, Brighton College on the 28th, Worthing Beach on the 28th and 30th and Selsey Bill on the 30th.

The first reports of singing birds were from three locations on Ashdown Forest on 9 Apr. The number of territories recorded on Ashdown was 67 in 27 1-km squares, up significantly from 52 in 2003. Details of the 57 pairs/territories (cf. 60 in 2003) located during the *Wealden Heaths Breeding Bird Survey* are shown on page 191. Additionally there were three pairs on Chapel Common.

As is usual, there were few records in July and the first half of August. From mid-month reports were in single figures, apart from 12 at Beachy Head on the 15th and again on the 21st. Numbers were regarded as poor at Pett Level with only 15 over in August and six in September. In the latter month, there were inland records of four flying over Churlwood (Ashdown Forest) on the 2nd, four at Cissbury Ring on the 4th, two at Five Ways (Ashdown Forest) on the 4th and a single on the 10th, with a further single at Holmbush on the 5th. The reports from five coastal areas were of singles, apart from two at Beachy Head on the 1st and two at Selsey Bill on the 19th. The final birds of the year were in October, of singles at Pett Level on the 8th and Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) on the 9th. [LM]

1011. MEADOW PIPIT

Anthus pratensis

Locally common resident, very common passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The highest count in January was of 200 birds on an area of new scrapes and wet grass at Constantia Manor (Isfield) on the 2nd. Counts in double figures came from 13 other sites but the only one in excess of 40 was 50 at Hurst Green on the 27th. There were reports of four roosts, three of which were in Ashdown Forest the largest of which was c.100 at the Old Airstrip (Ashdown Forest) on the 4th.

February brought high counts from Ashdown Forest of 100 at the Old Airstrip and 80 at Five Ways on the 16th, near to areas where similar numbers were roosting. Other notable counts were of 100 on the Downs above Cocking, 80 on grassland near Friston Forest on the 8th and 60 at Pett Level on the 10th. Of three other roosts reported the largest was of 100 at Lavington Common on the 15th. Records were received from 24 sites in January and 28 in February.

The first indications of passage occurred in March from the 17th when 160 were grounded by fog at Beachy Head on the 17th and a maximum count of 250 was made at Selsey Bill followed by 95 on the 22nd. Northwards movements involved an estimated 100 over Combe Haven on the 23rd and 40 over Beachy Head on the 25th. Similar movements in April were of 350 N at The Severals (Church Norton) on the 8th and 100 N on the 9th at Thorney Island. In addition, there were eight double figure counts from elsewhere across the county.

The earliest report of song was of seven singing males at Newhaven Tide Mills on 16 Mar. Breeding records from 58 sites produced a total of c.132 pairs (110 at 34 sites in 2003). Of particular note were 10 pairs at Pilsey Island, 22 at Pulborough Brooks, 46 on Ashdown Forest and 21 at Rye Hbr LNR.

Coastal movements in September were not noted until the 9th, when 80 flew east past Beachy Head, but took off from the 15th with 200 N there and 300 W at Sidlesham followed by 260 W at Beachy Head again on the 22nd and 1400 W at the Sheepecote Valley (Brighton) on the 24th. Other sightings around this time were a peak autumn count of over 740 in Brighton Wild Park on the 15th, 500 feeding in Selsey West Fields and 400 at Thorney Island on the 16th, 400 at Selsey Bill and 200 at Felpham on the 19th and 300 at Pagham Hbr on the 29th.

Few movements were noted in October; the largest being 400 E at Sidlesham Ferry on the 9th and 60 E at Beachy Head on the 30th. Counts in three figures included an influx of 100 at Deanlane End (Rowland's Castle) on the 4th when 100 were also noted at Cedar Fm (Hurst Green), 200 at Beachy Head on the 9th, 135 at Brighton Wild Park on the 13th, 120 at Sidlesham Ferry on the 24th and 100 at Goring Gap in weedy fields with Sky Larks on the 30th. An estimated 150 were at roost at the Old Airstrip (Ashdown Forest) on the 13th.

In November, there were 26 records involving ten or more birds but the only counts over 50 were an exceptional 400 at the Old Airstrip (Ashdown) on the 13th and 60 at Selsey Bill on the 3rd. Of six roosts reported, the largest were of 60 at Ashdown Five Ways on the 30th and 50 each at Trotton and Iping Commons on the 21st. The 30 records in December included 50 at Malling Down on the 5th and 60 roosting at Southease on the 26th. LMJ

1014.2. **ROCK PIPIT**

Anthus petrosus

Scarce resident and scarce visitor; rare away from the coast.

There were reports from 14 locations in January (cf. 17 in 2001, ten in 2002 and 12 in 2003). At the start of the year, five birds were recorded along the coast in the Saltdean to Telscombe Cliffs area and eight in the Newhaven area. Other winter reports included four at Thorney and Pilsey Islands, four at Pagham Hbr, three at Shoreham, two in the Selsey area and singles at Sidlesham SF, Goring and Worthing Beaches, Brighton Marina and Seaford Head.

In the breeding season, reports and survey results suggested a total of six pairs between Rottingdean and Peacehaven (cf. eight pairs in 2003) and a further pair at Cow Gap (Beachy Head). Two pairs with one and two juveniles were seen at Saltdean on 5 Jun, and at Cow Gap a group of six birds was seen, possibly a family party, on 15 Aug.

The first autumn reports away from the breeding sites were of single birds at Shoreham on the 18th and 29th and at the North Fields (Pagham Hbr) on the 23rd. Two were reported from Church Norton on the 30th. There were reports in November from 14 locations away

from the cliffs, all in single figures with the largest numbers being five at Selsey Bill and four at the North Wall (Pagham Hbr). There were no inland winter records. The total numbers reported in the last two months of the year were about 36 and 22 respectively.

Although it might appear from the above that this species does not occur east of Beachy Head, this is not the case. However, of 138 records received, only 15 were from this area. All these records were from the Rye Bay area, five in the first winter period and ten in the second. [LM]

1014.3. **SCANDINAVIAN ROCK PIPIT** *Anthus petrosus littoralis*

Probably a very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

There was only one confirmed record, of a single at Birling Gap on 11 Mar (JFC). [LM]

1014.0. **WATER PIPIT** *Anthus spinoletta*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

A good year opened in the Combe Haven area with 39 on 24 Jan and 10 on 15 Feb (KMJ). In March, a single was seen on 2 Mar (PRC), 33 on the 15th, 30 in the week ending the 20th, at least ten on the 23rd and 21 on the 27th, with the final spring record of 16 on 12 Apr (KMJ). At Coldwaltham SF, there were reports in February of a single on the 1st (RJF, DIS) and on the 10th (BFF) which is likely to have been the bird present in December 2003. At Thorney Deeps in March, there were three on the 18th, two on the 20th and a single on the 27th; and in April, three on the 16th and 20th (CBC).

In the autumn, the first record was from Combe Haven with six on 25 Oct and 13 on 15 Nov (KMJ). At Sidlesham SF there were three in November, on the 11th and 23rd (DIS, BFF) and a single was at Thorney Deeps on 23 Nov (CBC). In December, there was a single at Barcombe Res on the 4th (SHL) and on the 12th (RK, SHL). A count of 20 was made at Combe Haven on 31 Dec (KMJ). [LM]

1017. **YELLOW WAGTAIL** *Motacilla flava*

Scarce and localised summer visitor and fairly common autumn passage migrant.

Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The first record of the year was from Pickers Hill (Balsdean) on 31 Mar, ten days later than the ten-year average (21 Mar).

Over 130 birds were seen in April, a number which was heavily influenced by an influx at Rye Hbr LNR. After the first bird was seen on the Reserve on the 9th, 18 were at Castle Water on the 16th although only three remained by the 22nd. A big arrival occurred on the 30th when 30 were around Castle Water, the largest spring count for many years. However, few birds were seen at other coastal sites and the monthly totals for Selsey Bill, Worthing and Splash Point (Seaford) were only 12, three and eight respectively. Inland records for April included small groups on Tegdown Hill (Brighton) and singles at Barcombe and Partridge Green. One flew north over Wivelsfield, in company with six Goldfinches, on the 4th.

There were 21 records for May, including singles at Bewl Water and Holmbush Tip (Faygate) on the 1st and at Henfield Levels on the 7th. The May totals for both Selsey Bill and Seaford were only four. By mid-May, potentially breeding birds were present on Pevensey Levels, three were at Pulborough Brooks and at least 12 pairs were at Rye Hbr. A pair bred on Brede Levels but again none bred on Glynde Levels.

Apart from breeding birds, the only June records were of a single at Pagham Hbr on the 2nd and of four at Cliff End (Pett) on the 27th. The next reports were of a single at Pagham Hbr on 22 Jul and, on the 31st, a single at Birling Gap and two at Pagham Beach. This little flurry of records ended with a single at Pett Level on 2 Aug.

Autumn movements were noted from 8 Aug. Rye Hbr attracted substantial numbers from mid-month, with up to 60 in the middle third of the month, and then 140 on the 21st. There were 23 near Sidlesham Ferry the same day and over 90 flew mainly westward over Beachy Head. A further 100 birds were attracted to Beachy Head on the 25th after fields had been spread with manure. On the same day, 30 were at Seaford Head and 34 at Climping. Eight double figure counts were received for the 26th mostly from familiar locations, but eight at Polegate, keeping company with Wheatears and Whinchats, were noteworthy. Further high counts came on the 28th, when there were 90 at Pett Level and c.300 around Rye Hbr. The year's highest count, c.400, came from Rye Hbr on the 31st.

Twenty-five double figure counts were received for September, but a single at Rolls Fm SF (Crawley) on the 16th was the only record from north of the Downs in the month.

Eighteen records were received for October. These involved c.56 birds, including 14 at Thorney Deepes on the 1st, ten in the Cuckmere Valley on the 3rd and two at Warnham LNR on the 4th.

The last bird was seen at Sidlesham Ferry on 28 Oct, an earlier departure date than the ten-year average of 5 Nov. [CB]

1019. GREY WAGTAIL

Motacilla cinerea

Fairly common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

There were 17 records for January, well down on the 2003 total of 31, and 23 in February, the same as in 2003. All these were singles except for a small group of up to five at Sidlesham SF. Several records were from urban locations. The first bird of the year on Ashdown Forest was at Millbrook on 12 Feb, with song heard at Pippingford Park on the 14th. One was found on the February count at Sefton Fm (Pagham) - a new winter location.

There was some evidence of passage birds from mid-February. One stayed at Warmdene playing fields (Patcham) from the 15th to the 24th; on the 28th two singles were in Durrington and another at Brooklands (Worthing). Further arrivals were evident in mid-March when two were at Litlington on the 15th, one flew north over Sidlesham Ferry on the 17th and a single bird was at Ovingdean on the 27th.

Pairs were present from early March in both regular and previously unreported Wealden localities: Harwood's Green (Stopham), Penhurst (Battle) and Mardens Hill, on the northeast edge of Ashdown Forest, were new sites this year. Two pairs were found near Withyham. A few pairs were reported from the river valleys through the Downs, such as at Swanbourne Lake (Arundel). Perhaps the most surprising breeding location was Brighton Marina, where a pair was found at the end of May and a pair bred on the Adur at

Shoreham. Chichester Cathedral is, by contrast, becoming a regular site and breeding was again suspected there. The first young, a brood of four, were found at Pippingford Park on 8 May and the next juvenile was at Troutbeck (Eridge) on the 13th. Three broods were fledged by a pair at Kingscote Station on the Bluebell Railway. There were good numbers of breeding season reports from the Weald and surrounding areas.

A single at West Beach (Selsey) on 28 Jun marked the onset of autumn. Only seven records were received for July. There were seven at Beachy Head on 21 Aug and firsts of the autumn were seen at Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) on 1 Sep and at Shoreham Sanctuary on the 4th. Throughout September, birds were seen in small numbers across the south of the county. The largest day count was 12 over Pett Level on the 12th and 14 were counted on four days during the month at Selsey Bill. October was marginally better, with c.90 birds reported as against 2003's 73. November produced 43 records against 41 the previous year.

Birds were found in unexpected places late in the year: at Leap Cross (Hailsham) on 11 Oct; flying over Myrtle Grove Fm (Clapham) on the 14th and on East Grinstead Station roof on the 26th. A young male was killed flying into a window in Shoreham on 17 Oct. December brought 24 records of 33 birds, including five at Sidlesham SF on the 21st and a male singing at Millbrook (Ashdown Forest) on the 30th. [CB]

1020. **PIED WAGTAIL**

Motacilla alba yarrelli

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Twenty-three records were received for January and 27 for February, both slightly down from 2003. Twelve of the January records were of double figure counts with three of 100 or more: 100 leaving a roost in the car park at Brighton Marina on the 21st, at least 235 leaving the roost at Asda in Hollingbury (Brighton) on the 18th and c.500 going to roost at Tesco's in Lewes on the 16th. On 3 Jan, 32 were counted in a winter census at Marsh Fm (Yapton) but only a single was found there in the count on 11 Feb. At Carter's Pit (Rye Hbr) there were 120 on 2 Feb but 200 there at dusk the next day.

During the winter, Pied Wagtails are widely spread along the coast making the onset and scale of spring migration difficult to detect. Many of the records submitted to the BTO Migration Watch project seem to have referred to wintering rather than passage birds. Only two were logged in 38½ hr of watching during March at Selsey Bill and these were both on the 30th. Similarly in April, only one was recorded in 65 hr of watching at Worthing Beach and three (on the 27th) was the monthly maximum at Cliff End (Pett). In April, numbers gradually decreased at wintering sites: at Coldwaltham SF, where there had been 28 on New Year's Day and 30 on 12 Feb, ten remained on 19 Apr. There was only one other double figure count in April, of ten in Stanmer Park on the 21st.

The first juveniles were noted on 30 May with two at Barcombe Res. Three fledged birds were at Troutbeck (Eridge) the next day. Counts of breeding pairs in defined areas are shown on pages 189 - 190.

Post-breeding gatherings were in evidence after mid-June: on the 20th there was a party of eight on the dam of Darwell Res. Few records were received for July but numbers increased in early August: whereas there had been eight on Pulborough Brooks on 29 Jul, 35 were counted there on 6 Aug. On the next day, ten were at Barcombe Res and on the 8th there were 22 on the Adur Recreation Ground (Shoreham). On the 29th there were 18 at Weir Wood Res and 60 were recorded there on 12 Sep. On 16 Sep, 200 roosted at the

North Terminal (Gatwick Airport) and there were 32 nearby at Rolls Fm SF. Only 14 were counted in 7½ hr watching at Selsey Bill during the month.

There were 36 double figure counts in October. A series of records came from Middleton-on-Sea where five were seen on 3 Oct, 22 on the 9th and 16 on the 11th. Over 100 were with Meadow Pipits at Cedar Fm (Hurst Green) on the 6th and 20 with Skylarks in a weedy stubble field at Goring Gap on the 23rd. On the 10th, 107 came in to Selsey Bill from the southwest in three hours and, on the 11th, 59 flew east along Worthing Beach in an hour. The first substantial roost recorded during the month was of 90 at Carter's Pit on the 15th and there were 70 going to roost at the Old Airstrip (Ashdown Forest) on the 13th.

On 6 Nov there were 70 at Henfield and on the 26th 180 roosted at Sidlesham SF, although there were only 60 there on 21 Dec. On 5 Dec there were 500 at the Princess Royal Hospital (Hayward's Heath) and 300 at Carter's Pit on 7 Dec. At Thorney SF, 108 were on the filter beds on 20 Dec and at least 250 roosted at Burton MP on the 29th. [CB]

1020.01 **WHITE WAGTAIL**

Motacilla alba alba

Probably a scarce spring and autumn passage migrant; both pure and mixed pairs have bred.

Spring migrants were reported from 14 Mar, when two were at Stapleash Fm (Chilgrove), to 10 May. There were six records in March and 14 in the first half of April to the 15th. All were of singles except for two at Church Norton on the 1st, three males at Newhaven Tide Mills on the 9th and two at Church Norton again on the 13th. Unusually, a bird was seen at the Breech Pool (Pagham Hbr) from 10 May through to 15 June.

In the autumn, just one bird was noted, at Arlington Res, on 14 Sep. This was another poor year for White Wagtails. The comment in the 2003 Report on the status of White Wagtails in England in the autumn still holds. Considerable research is being carried out at Slapton Ley (Devon) which should tell us more about the position, at least for the west of the country. [CB]

1066. **WREN**

Troglodytes troglodytes

Abundant resident.

A total of 409 records was received, of which 276 came via the BTO Migration Watch/Birdtrack project, covering 165 1-km squares. Monthly counts covering the whole year were received from only six sites. However, there were 48 1-km square sites where breeding was either confirmed, or probable, or birds were seen in suitable habitat during the season involving 320 pairs/territories, of which 12 sites were for confirmed breeding by 103 pairs. Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas are shown on pages 189 - 190. In addition, 16 pairs were found in mid-April and 14 in mid-May along a 3 km stretch of the western R Rother at Kilsham Fm (Petworth), figures which should be compared with the 2003 counts of 18 pairs in Apr and 26 in June. Also, there were 14 territories on 49ha of Wantley Fm (Storrington) in early May. The 102 territories in Brighton Wild Park were remarkably similar to the 103 in 2003 and a comparable result came from Rye Hbr LNR, where 35 territories were mapped within the SSSI in 2004, as against 36 in 2003.

The following table shows the numbers of birds counted at several sites through most months of the year:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sefter Fm (Pagham)*	11	8	-	-	-	28	-	-	-	-	20	17
Hotham Park (Bognor)*	3	6	8	7	7	5	6	4	5	4	6	4
Marsh Fm (Yapton)*	14	6	-	-	-	40	-	-	-	-	17	3
Patcham (Brighton)	-	3	4	3	4	4	-	-	-	2	-	-
Bedelands Fm (Burgess Hill)	3	3	3	6	11	11	8	5	1	2	3	-
Stanmer Park	-	24	27	26	26	23	-	-	32	29	-	22
Weir Wood Res	1	1	2	5	1	5	3	4	2	3	2	P
Wilbees Fm (Arlington)	-	2	3	4	3	2	-	-	1	1	-	-

P = birds present but not counted. A small hyphen (-) does not necessarily mean the species was absent.

* = see also Common Breeding Bird Counts on pages 189 - 190.

A peculiar feature of the above data is that there was no sign of a breeding season peak in numbers – as would be expected with juveniles being counted – at Hotham Park, Patcham, Stanmer Park, Weir Wood Res and Wilbees Fm. Conversely, a peak was evident at Sefter Fm, Marsh Fm and Bedelands Fm.

British Wrens are mostly sedentary but dispersal after the post-juvenile moult does occur and may involve distances of up to 50 km. Most autumn movements away from breeding areas occur in September and October, although they may begin in August (*The Migration Atlas 2002*). However, there was only one record suggestive of such autumn movement: a ‘distinct influx and very early’ was reported on 15 Aug from Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head). [CB]

1084. DUNNOCK

Prunella modularis

Very common resident. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

A total of 440 records was received, of which 211 came via the BTO Migration Watch/Birdtrack project, covering 155 1-km squares. Monthly counts covering the whole year were received from only five sites. However, there were 45 1-km square sites where breeding was either confirmed, or probable, or birds were seen in suitable habitat during the season involving 119 pairs/territories, of which 13 sites were for confirmed breeding by 42 pairs. Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas are shown on pages 189 - 190. In addition, three pairs were found along a 1-km stretch of the Lidsey Old Canal on 13 Apr and five pairs along 3 km of the western Rother at Kilsham Fm near Petworth on the 14th (three birds in 2003). Surveys at Bedelands Fm (Burgess Hill) surprisingly revealed no evidence of breeding. At West Wantley Fm (Storrington), there were 14 pairs in 49ha and at Scobells Fm (Barcombe), six territories in 10.4ha. The count of 58 territories at Brighton Wild Park maintained the 2003 total, which was a considerable increase over 2002 and 2001.

Although most British Dunnocks do not move more than 1 km from their natal area, some do make short movements which, however, are limited to post-breeding dispersal. Some evidence of this was noted at Cissbury Ring and Beachy Head. At the former, 37 new birds were ringed up to 7 Nov and counts of 30 were made at the latter site on 15 and 31 Oct with the comment for the latter date that there had been a distinct increase in numbers.

A good number of individual records were received for the closing months of the year, but little year to year comment can be made on the basis of the information provided. [CB]

1099. **ROBIN**

Erithacus rubecula

Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Although a total of 614 records was received, of which 312 came via the BTO Migration Watch/Birdtrack project, the data they provided do not provide a basis for estimating the fortunes of this common species. As with many common resident species, the only way of monitoring status is via statistically reliable surveys. With the increase in the number of Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) 1-km squares now being covered it is hoped that, with time, it will be possible to produce statistically reliable trend data.

Monthly counts data for the whole year were received for only seven sites. However, reports were received for 28 1-km squares where breeding was confirmed involving a minimum of 111 territories and a further 17 sites where breeding was probable (a minimum of 53 territories). Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas are shown on pages 189 - 190. In addition, 19 territories/singing males were mapped in the 49ha of West Wantley Fm (Storrington) on 1 May. The 125 territories counted in Brighton Wild Park represented a decline on the totals of 152 in 2003 and 148 in 2002, returning close to the 129 of 2001. There seems to have been a similar decline in breeding pairs at Rye Hbr SSSI where the downward trend from an exceptional 11 pairs in 2002 continued: in 2004 there were five or six territories. By contrast, Robins were considered 'unusually common' in the SSSI at the end of the year.

Although there were no reports of the directional movement of Robins on passage, it was obvious from some reports that movement was taking place. It was reported from Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) that by mid-August the autumn build up and onward movement of Robins was taking place. During September, counts of 20-25 were made on several dates from the 1st at both Beachy Head and Whitbread Hollow. In October, 40 were counted at Beachy Head on the 15th but it was in the last five days of the month that there was a marked arrival of, presumably continental, birds. At Whitbread Hollow, 35 were counted on the 26th, but 100 on the 30th when there were a further 50 in the rest of the Beachy Head area. At Pett Level, there was an overnight arrival of 40 on 28 Oct. The arrival persisted (or arriving birds lingered) at coastal sites into November. There were 14 at Newhaven Tide Mills on the 1st; numbers at Beachy Head declined from 40 on the 1st to 15 on the 10th and 15 were noted at Whitbread Hollow on the 7th. Elsewhere, there were 20 on Whitehawk Hill (Brighton) on the 3rd and 27 on Mill Hill (Shoreham) on the 7th. [CB]

1104. **COMMON NIGHTINGALE**

Luscinia megarhynchos

Fairly common summer visitor and infrequently seen passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The first birds of the year were recorded at both Greatham and Pulborough Brooks on 14 Apr: this was a late arrival, the average date over the last decade being about 5 Apr. Further arrival was then particularly rapid and there were records for every day (except 15 and 21 Apr) through to 10 May. By 17 Apr there were three between Hurst Green and

Robertsbridge, four on Ditchling Common and five at Pulborough Brooks. On the 24th, a thorough survey of the Henfield area revealed a remarkable 13 birds. In total there were over 50 records for April involving about 85 birds. This was on a par with 2003, itself a considerable improvement on 2002.

Only two of the birds on Ditchling Common appear to have stayed through into May but up to six were found at Pulborough Brooks through the month. On the 14th, a third survey at Henfield found 20 singing birds. Good numbers were reported elsewhere, with three in newly coppiced woodland at Pett Level and four singing at Wilbees Fm (Arlington) on the 1st and three at South Stoke (Arun Valley) on the 2nd. On the 14th eight were singing along Streat Lane and on the 18th four were at Plumpton Plain and three on Oreham Common. As many as 17 singing males were logged in a survey of Abbots Wood (Hailsham) on the 20th although this was a decrease from the 23 found in 2003. Unusually, passage birds were still being reported at the same time: one was at Cow Gap (Beachy Head) on the 16th and another at Cliff End (Pett) on the 18th.

Further surveys were undertaken at the start of June which revealed eight around Kirdford and four at Ebernoe. Unfortunately, there were very few records from the east of the county, although two or three were singing at Darwell Res throughout.

The first returning migrant was found at Beachy Head on 6 Aug and at least 16 further birds were recorded in August and four in September. The last were noted on the 4th, when a singleton was at Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) and two at Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head). This represents an earlier departure than the ten-year average of 15 Sep.

Given the paucity of records from the east of the county, it is impossible to estimate the numbers breeding this year. Late but rapid arrival and early departure were striking features of the year. [CB]

1106. **BLUETHROAT**

Luscinia svecica

Very scarce spring and autumn visitor. Amber list species of medium conservation concern.

A female was present at Church Norton on 4 Apr (ITB *et al*). This is the 18th record since 1990 but only four of these have been since 1998. It is the first April record since 1971 although there have been more recent occurrences in March and May (two in each month since 1990). A photograph of this individual appears in Plate No. 13 and in *Birding World* 17: 143). [RJF]

1121. **BLACK REDSTART**

Phoenicurus ochruros

Rare resident, fairly common passage migrant and scarce winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern,

There were six records in January, one of which was a bird which wintered in the middle of Brighton from 7 Oct 2003 to 3 Mar. There were 15 records for February suggesting an arrival mid-month as birds were at six sites on the 14th and 15th. Another was singing at Brighton Marina on the 23rd. In March, 25 records were received, with a pair at Shoreham Beach for most of the first half of the month and a pair at Pagham Lagoon on the 31st. However, some observers commented on the absence of this species from its usual haunts: only one was seen in the Saltdean-Telscombe Cliffs area in the first

few months, it was absent from Shoreham Power Station all summer despite frequent searches and none was seen at Newhaven Tide Mills all year.

The first bird seen away from the coast was a female which stayed at Wakehurst Place, an unusual location, from 23 to 25 Mar. Nine records in April were from widely spread locations, including Horsham where one was singing near the Town Hall on the 24th and presumably the same bird was singing from the nearby Kings Head Hotel on 29 May. That sighting represented the only potential breeding record of the season.

In the autumn, birds were seen at Pett Level and at Alciston on 20 Aug. The only records for September were from the more familiar localities of Beachy Head, on the 6th, and Pett Level, where singles were seen on three dates from the 9th to the 12th.

October was more productive with 36 records and some evidence of arrivals from the 19th to the 21st and from the 27th to 3 Nov. Two were at Bury on the 25th and a single at Steyning and a female at Three Bridges were seen on the 27th. On the last day of October, a male was flycatching from rooftops at Mile Oak (Portslade). There was a sprinkling of records in the first half of November but, surprisingly, none was seen between the 13th and the 23rd. Six were noted in December bringing a very poor year to a close.

Only October produced an above average showing of birds. Records from Bury, Steyning and Alciston join the one at Firlie in 2003 to remind us that the Black Redstart can be found in the area just below and to the north of the Downs. [CB]

1122. COMMON REDSTART

Phoenicurus phoenicurus

Scarce summer visitor and fairly common passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

2001: There were 47 records in Ashdown Forest in 2000 not 77 as published.

2004: A spring migration total of 50 was a welcome recovery from the poor 2003 total of nine and compares with 36 in 2000 and 42 in 2001, although still below the 2002 total of 67. With the exception of three May birds, found on the 1st, 2nd and 6th respectively, all other records occurred in April, the majority being from the well-watched coastal areas of Beachy Head, Brighton and the Selsey peninsula. Only four records were from inland sites and only eleven birds were sexed. However, of these it was noticeable that seven males were logged between 2 and 22 Apr, whilst the first of six females was reported on 22 Apr. Most records were of singles, with the largest count being of four at Ovingdean on 22 Apr.

The first breeding reports related to a minimum of seven males holding territory on 20 Apr in Pippingford Park (Ashdown Forest). In West Sussex, a male was found in a potential breeding area at Ambersham and Heyshott Commons on 24 Apr, the same date as in 2003. Subsequently potentially breeding birds were reported exclusively from either Ashdown Forest or the northwest Wealden Heathlands. The former held, as usual, the largest population estimated at 28 pairs (34 in 2003) with c.20 potential pairs in Pippingford Forest. There appears to have been a decline in the number of pairs within the Ashdown Forest area. The previous five year low was 32 in 2002 and in 2000 the population had stood at c.47 pairs. There were no reports from the former northeastern population on the Kent border while the ten pairs recorded in the northwestern heaths was higher than usual (six in 2003). Exceptionally, four males were found singing on Blackdown on the 15th and 16th May. The apparent decrease in breeding numbers in the

east and the increase in the west is hard to explain and the situation requires monitoring. The total county population for 2004 is estimated at 38 pairs/singing males.

The first post-breeding dispersal report from the coast was of an individual at Beachy Head on 14 Aug. Because of the intense observer activity in areas such as Beachy Head and the Selsey Peninsular, there is likely to be a certain amount of duplication but a reasonable estimate indicates that 130 records referred to approximately 251 individuals (241 in 2003), with 151 from East Sussex and 100 from West Sussex. The monthly split was 140 in August, 93 in September and 18 in October. This is a change from the normal trend when September is usually the highest recording month. The highest single counts were all from Beachy Head, with peaks of 12 on 22 Aug and at least 17 on 28 Aug. West Sussex numbers centred on the Selsey Peninsular, where the peak count was of six individuals on 28 Aug at Sidlesham Ferry. The peak day counts for the entire county were 16 on 22 Aug, 15 on the 26th and 36 on the 28th. Other than regular reports from Cissbury Ring there were few inland reports during this period. The last record from the breeding grounds was of a bird in Ashdown Forest on 4 Sep and the final record of the year was a female at Hardham on 17 Oct. [AP]

1137. WHINCHAT

Saxicola rubetra

Rare summer visitor and fairly common passage migrant.

The first record for the year was of two in Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) on 16 Apr. This was followed by singles at Halseys Field (Pagham) and at Sompting on the 22nd. There were only fourteen records in April, a continuation of a worrying downward trend, but May brought 35 reports, a considerable improvement on last year. The May records were concentrated between the 8th and the 16th; only four of them referred to two birds with all the others being singles. Two birds were seen at Church Norton on the 1st, at Pagham Hbr West Side on the 2nd, at Church Norton on the 10th and Pett Level on the 14th. All others sightings were either on the Downs or at the coast where observers at Selsey Bill logged only three birds during May.

Only one bird was noted in June: at Old Lodge LNR (Ashdown Forest) on the 11th. The next sighting was not until 27 Jul when there was one at Old Erringham Fm (Shoreham) followed on the last day of the month by one at Newhaven Tide Mills. In August, one at Pett Level on the 8th signalled the start of autumn passage proper and was followed by about 180 further birds in the month, a considerable reduction from the



approximate totals of 325 in 2003 and 250 of 2002. There were only two double figure counts: of 11 at Beachy Head and Pett Level on the 21st and 28th respectively.

Passage was particularly noticeable and widespread in the first six days of September. The 14 seen at Beachy Head on the 1st, 15 in Sheepcote Valley on the 4th and 15 at Pett Level on the 19th were the highest counts and the latter was the last double figure count of the year. The September total was probably *c.*350, which compares poorly with the totals for some previous years - ten years ago the September total was 1066!

There were 15 records involving 22 birds in October and the last of the year was at the Ouse Estuary Project (Newhaven) on 6 Nov, an average date. Holmbush Tip (Faygate) and the areas around Gatwick and Ashdown Forest were the only sites north of the Downs from which reports were received.

There has been a run of poor years for Whinchats in Sussex. The substantial falls of previous years have not recurred and numbers appear to be generally down. [CB]

1139. **STONECHAT**

Saxicola torquatus

Fairly common resident and partial migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern,

There were records from 38 localities in January, down from the previous year's 45 and near to the 35 of 2002. About 90 birds were involved, a rather lower total than in 2003 when there were *c.*125. Groups included seven at Iping Common on the 16th, eight at Pagham Hbr the next day and three pairs along Glynde Reach on the 25th. In February, three pairs were noted at Newhaven Tide Mills on the 1st and in mid-month there were ten around Rye Hbr SSSI and nine on Thorney Island. Reasonable weather allowed birds to winter on the high Downs e.g. Gardeners Hill (Newhaven), Blackcap Hill (Firle), above Stanmer village and at Ditchling Beacon.

Nine birds seen at Tide Mills on 1 Mar were, perhaps, a sign of new arrivals since two days later only one pair was evident there while four were at Beachy Head on the 3rd and 4th. Passage was also witnessed on the 16th when 15 were at Pagham Hbr and a further ten at nearby Church Norton. There was an influx of ten seen on 16 Mar in Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) and six were at nearby Ovingdean. An influx of 15 at Beachy Head occurred on 10 Apr.

The first song was noted at Hindleap Warren (Ashdown Forest) on 8 Mar. An interesting series of reports came from Iping Common where a return to breeding territories was noted at the end of March. There was only one pair through the first half of the month but a second established themselves on the 28th and a further three pairs were evident the next day. Areas of the common were burnt on the 30th and on the 31st six birds - one pair and four males - could be found in the affected area. This imbalance of sexes continued through April, with one pair and up to five apparently unpaired males but the imbalance corrected itself from mid-May, with five-six pairs on the common thereafter. A preponderance of males was also noted at Coates Common and Tide Mills.

The Wealden Heath Breeding Bird Survey (see page 191) reported 43 breeding pairs compared to 62 in 2003. Unfortunately direct comparison is not possible since some areas counted in 2003 were not covered in 2004. At the very least, this suggests that breeding numbers are not increasing and perhaps Stonechats have reached their maximum density on these commons. The first fledglings were seen on West Heath Common on 2 May.

It was an excellent year for Stonechats in the Ashdown Forest area with c.160 territories overall (cf. 105 in 2001, 113 in 2002 and 105 in 2003) and clearly many second broods. The first fledglings were seen at Millbrook on 5 May. Reports from elsewhere, which also suggested a good breeding season, came from Dean Lane End (Rowland's Castle), Marden Hill (where a possible second brood was noted on 10 Jul), Tegdown Hill (Brighton), Thorney Island, West Fields (Selsey), Tide Mills, Holmbush Tip (Faygate) (where, by 22 Aug, a third brood was active) and Broadwater Forest. Breeding continued into late summer: two pairs with young were on Steep Hill (Lancing) feeding in unharvested wheat on 8 Aug and another pair nearby seemed still to have birds in the nest. On 26 Sept, three family parties (of six, four, and four) were there and a family group of seven was at Sompting Refuse Tip.

There was little evidence of a drift to the coast until the end of August when five were seen in Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) on the 30th and six at Cold Coombes (Lewes) the next day. On 5 Sep, 15 were on Thorney Island and on the 9th a further 15 gathered at the West Fields (Selsey). A count at Pagham Hbr on the 14th found 14 birds.

The first autumn bird at Pett Level was noted on the 20th and ten on the 28th was the maximum for the month. Between 2 and 9 Oct the highest double figure count was 22 at Castle Hill (Falmer) on the 7th. One on the 10th at Chesworth Fm (Horsham) was the first site record. Numbers in Sheepcote Valley had increased to 15 by the 13th. Subsequently, there was only a handful of double figure counts: from Thorney Island in both November and December and the Ouse Estuary Project (Newhaven) where there were ten on 7 Dec.

Records for November and December suggested a wintering population of around 120 birds, up from 2003 when there were c.90 in December. These birds were widely distributed but the only reports from downland sites were of a pair on Steep Down in 28 Nov and another on Tegdown Hill on 14 Dec. [CB]

1146. **NORTHERN WHEATEAR**

Oenanthe oenanthe

Very scarce breeding summer visitor and common passage migrant.

The first spring records were of single birds at Newhaven Tide Mills on 1 Mar, at Brooklands Beach (Worthing) the next day – a date very close to the ten year average of 2 Mar – and two singles at Rye Hbr LNR on the 6th. From 10 Mar birds arrived in a steady stream and were recorded on most days through until about 22 May. There were several days when counts were in double figures (nine days in March and 15 in April) but there were some obvious peak arrival days. These were on 16 Mar (79 birds at 21 coastal sites), 28 Mar (109 birds at 15 coastal sites) and 16 Apr when a total of 82 included 55 at Sheepcote Valley (Brighton). On 28 Apr there was an arrival of birds considered to be showing characteristics of the Greenland race: 22 were counted at Ovingdean and 24 at Tide Mills were considered to be mostly of this race.

The first inland record was of two at Gatwick Airport on 10 Mar and the first downland sighting came from Ditchling Beacon on the 13th. Small numbers were seen on the Downs and a single at Compton on the 24th was a good find. Further north, Holmbush Tip (Faygate) attracted several, including two groups of five on two occasions, and a few could be found on most April days in Ashdown Forest.

On 22 Apr a pair was seen prospecting a rabbit hole at Southeram Fm (Lewes) and a pair spent time in early May at Philliswood Down (Marden), apparently tempted by stony ploughed land and a convenient rabbit hole, but left without breeding. At least ten pairs

bred in the Rye Hbr area with good success and many second broods. Fledged young were first seen there on 29 May. Single pairs bred at Telscombe and Southwick Beach. A male summered at Tide Mills but was not paired. There were no records from The Midrips or from Seven Sisters.

Although a male was seen on Goring Beach on 19 Jun, return passage started in earnest on 25 Jul, when the first returning bird was reported from Thorney Island, and then continued steadily through to at least mid-October. Counts in double figure were made from 11 to 13 Aug and then almost daily from the 17th to the 28th. The maximum in this period was 36 at Beachy Head on the 28th. The next notable counts were of a concentration of 40 around Horseshoe Plantation (Beachy Head) on 6 Sep, 28 in Sheepcote Valley on the 8th and the same number at Thorney Island on the 9th. There were 20 at Balsdean on the 10th and 35 at Sidlesham Ferry on the 15th. The last count in excess of 20 was of 23 at Thorney Island on the 16th and the last double figure count was of ten at Beachy Head on the 26th.

In all, 87 birds were reported in October and the last of the year was one at Cobnor Point on 1 Nov. This was a far better autumn in terms of overall numbers than 2003 but departure was surprisingly early, as in 2003, the ten year average date being 15 Nov. [CB]

1186. RING OUZEL

Turdus torquatus

Passage migrant, very scarce in spring and scarce in autumn. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

A slightly better year with a total of 113 birds seen compared to 99 in 2003. Thirteen birds were seen in spring, which is two-thirds of the 10-year spring average of 19, and in autumn 100 birds were seen, which is three-quarters of the 10-year autumn average of 134. The latter figure, however, includes 380 seen in October 1998, otherwise this autumn's figure would be nine-tenths of the norm. The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Mar	Apr	May		Sep	Oct	Nov
2	9	2		4	81	15

The first spring bird was photographed in a garden at Newick on 27 Mar followed by one the next day ten miles to the southwest at Tegdown Hill (Brighton). These were a week later than the 10-year average first sighting of 21 Mar. April sightings were all of single birds and were well distributed across the south of the county, with some birds staying several days. At Church Norton a male stayed from the 17th to the 21st and at Sidlesham Yeoman's another male was present from the 17th to the 22nd. Late birds were seen at Church Norton on 3 May and finally at Combe Haven on the 20th, much later than the 10-year mean of 2 May.

Return migration would have been late but for a single adult male at Cold Coombes (Lewes) on 1 Sep, which is a week earlier than the 10-year average. The next was not recorded until the 25th, at Beachy Head, and a trickle of single birds was seen until five appeared at Sheepcote Valley on 9 Oct and eight the next day at Hastings CP. On 15 Oct up to eighteen were seen at Beachy Head and this area dominated the autumn records with 45 birds reported. Apart from five at Sidlesham on 11 Oct, the west of the county seemed bereft of birds until the week of 17-24 Oct. At Church Norton, a single bird was seen on the 17th and the same, or possibly other singles, were seen daily to the 20th. Then on the 20th two, a juvenile male and a female, were seen and probably the same two until the 24th. Elsewhere in the county just one was seen. At Cold Coombes another three birds were

seen on 17 Oct but nearly all the remaining sightings were from Beachy Head. A healthy November passage included five birds at Whitbread Hollow on the 3rd, a sighting at Rye Hbr SSSI on the 5th was the last one there and a male seen at Beachy Head on the 7th was the last in the east. The final county sighting came from Sheepcote Valley on 12 Nov, rather earlier than the 10-year average of 16 Nov (ignoring 1995's very late bird of 27 Dec). [JAW]

1187. BLACKBIRD

Turdus merula

Abundant breeding resident and winter visitor; perhaps a passage migrant.

Winter numbers were a little lower than in 2003 but the autumn counts were substantially higher. Some of the increase may have been due to extra reports received via BTO Birdtrack. Total sightings probably reflect 2400 birds.

The following table of approximate monthly totals shows the pattern of recorded sightings during the year:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of Birds	213	233	322	508	754	533	79	42	195	455	465	508
No. of Records	14	39	70	104	207	79	23	15	29	60	60	57

Thirty birds in one Blackthorn bush were part of 45 at Crowhurst Marsh on 3 Jan and there were 55 at Marsh Fm (Yapton) on the same day. The latter site still held 40 into February and 37 were seen at Stanmer Park (Brighton) on the 24th and into March when 43 were at Bedelands Fm (Burgess Hill) on the 6th. Large counts in April totalled over 500 birds and included 40 at Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) on the 13th, 42 at Wakehurst Place on the 24th and 43 at Stanmer Park on the 27th.

At Woodingdean a six-week old juvenile was rescued on 10 Feb but more conventional first breeding reports came from Nutley on 2 Apr and a pair nesting again after losing a brood at Aldwick (Bognor Regis) in mid-April. Tireless monitoring in the Bognor area (Rex) located 19 pairs in Hotham Park, 11 pairs at Lidsey old canal, 6 in Barn Copse (Binstead), 22 at Sefter Fm (Pagham) and 21 at Marsh Fm. Darwell Res supported six singing males and reports came in of 25 territories on Ashdown GC and at least 34 in Ashdown Forest. In all, 640 territories were identified including 133 breeding pairs confirmed. Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas can be found on pages 189 - 190.

Autumn movement was apparent in September (total sightings 195) when 40 birds were seen on Thorney Island on the 18th followed in mid-October by 62 at Stanmer Park, 81 at Cliff End (Pett) and 50 at Brooklands (Worthing) out of a total of 455 sightings. The only notable count at Whitbread Hollow was 50 on 30 Oct but 120 birds at Sheepcote Valley on 3 Nov, out of 465 recorded in November, was some compensation. In December, 508 birds were reported including 54 at Sefter Fm on the 8th, 50 at Newmarket Hill on the 19th and 50 at Marsh Fm on the 28th. [JAW]

1198. FIELDFARE

Turdus pilaris

Common, occasionally very common, passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

A total of 6,725 birds was recorded in the first winter period compared with last year's 13,650. The autumn brought in nearly 15,000 birds, the highest since at least 1970 and five times the 10-year average of 2,600. The 1984-93 average was almost 6,000. The

approximate monthly totals in the three W-E bands of the county are shown in the table (only the easting grid numbers are given), the bands being divided to west of Littlehampton and east of Seaford,

Eastings	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	3226	2203	1158	136	8	2626	2389	9680
SU/SZ70-99	1056	641	303	85	3	49	660	1541
TQ/TV00-49	460	1472	529	49	5	1489	1535	6307
TQ/TV50-99	1710	90	326	2	-	1088	194	1832

New Year flocks of 200 at Byworth (Petworth), 300 at Hurst Green and 250 at Sidlesham paled beside 1000 at Pannel Sewer (Pett) on 5 Jan. Three flocks of 200 birds and dozens of 100 or less were spread across the county later in the month. In February, however, there was a westward bias of which 325 at Burton MP on 1 Feb, 250 at Littleworth on the 8th and 200 at Isfield on 19th were notable. In March birds spread out again though numbers dropped with 200 at Hurst Green on the 13th in the east and 150 at Chilgrove on the 7th in the west being the most notable. By mid-April even the small flocks had gone and individuals were last seen at Hurst Green on 28 Apr, Sheepcote Valley on the 29th and Sidlesham on 3 May. This is the latest departure, by one day, in the last ten years and nine days later than the 10-year average of 24 Apr, but during 1965-1993 the average last date was 2 May (*Birds of Sussex*, 1996).

Three returning birds were reported from Sidlesham on 8 Sep. This relatively early date compares with the 10-year average of 27 Sep, although the earliest in that period was in 1996 on 13 Aug, and the average arrival date for the period 1970-93 of 15 Sep (*Birds of Sussex*, 1996). The next sighting was at Barcombe on 21 Sep, but the main influx spread broadly through the county from the weekend of 10 Oct with 600 at Sheepcote Valley, nearly 1000 at Hastings CP and 300 at Cliff End (Pett). In mid-October several flocks of 100 and 200 were in Ashdown Forest but there seemed to be few birds elsewhere. November saw a southerly trend and 400 birds were seen at Coldwaltham Brooks on the 2nd and 250 at Chilgrove on the 23rd, but 300 were at Airman's Grave (Ashdown Forest) on the 3rd and 200 at Millbrook on the 22nd in the north. December continued the drift with 350 appearing near Cissbury on the 17th and 400 at Ashcombe Bottom (Lewes) the day after.

An inundation of 7000 birds after Christmas included 3000 on Lewes Brooks [MJH] on the 28th, 1000 at Findon on the 30th, 500 at West Dean also on the 30th and another 1000 at Pett Level on the 31st. It is not evident from the data how the large Lewes Brooks flock dispersed. A photograph of a bird at Southease appears in Plate No. 14. [JAW]

1200. SONG THRUSH

Turdus philomelos

Decreasing resident and partial migrant; common passage migrant and winter visitor. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

An apparently excellent year may have been distorted by contributions from observers undertaking the Nightjar Survey (200 from 71 sites) and reports received via BTO Birdtrack (189 from 76 sites). The total of 1540 sightings, compared to 1100 in 2003, reflects vast increases in June and October where these two sources peak. Comparison with earlier spot counts suggests that 2004 was above the average for the last ten years. The BTO Migration Watch total of 276 birds was similar to 2003.

The following table of approximate monthly totals shows the pattern of recorded sightings during the year:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of Birds	46	108	109	142	230	316	48	18	36	269	98	71
No. of Records	16	36	55	73	114	122	29	12	19	42	37	35

Early records were fewer than last year and spread evenly throughout the county; they included five males singing in January (total birds 46) and a juvenile being fed at Brighton Pavilion on 23 Feb. Thirty birds were mixed with other thrushes at Constantia Manor (Isfield) in mid-February when there were also ten at Sidlesham. March showed a slight bias to the east but little movement though reports were more northerly in April and again in May when 18 were on Ashdown GC on the 15th.

Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas can be found on pages 189 - 190. Breeding by 40 pairs was proven, similar to 2003. At Hove Park six nests produced 24 juveniles while at Brooklands (Worthing) three nests produced nine young (CAH). Last year these two sites produced four and ten young respectively. Another 292 pairs probably bred (last year 76) and a further 175 pairs were in suitable territory or singing, improving on last year's 100. However, 200 of the 'probables' came from contributors to the Nightjar Survey and four of its 1 km squares held ten singing males each, at Chiseldown (East Dean), Beacon Hill (Harting) and two squares on Chailey Common. Other breeding concentrations were 16 pairs in Brighton Wild Park, 16 also in 44ha at Kirdford and nine pairs or more on Pulborough Brooks. Following 316 sightings in June (88 in 2003) only 48 birds were noted in July, 18 in August and 36 in September (9, 2 and 3 in 2003).

October brought 269 sightings, the highest in ten years and three times the average. A distinct eastward bias included 59 at Hastings CP on the 10th, 27 at Cliff End (Pett) on the 17th, 16 at Sidlesham on the 20th, 46 trapped at Whitbread Hollow from the 26th to the 31st and 19 seen at the Wild Park also on the last day. November's 97 sightings, still to the east, included four sites with ten or twelve birds while December produced a meagre 75 sightings. [JAW]

1201. REDWING

Turdus iliacus

Common, occasionally very common, passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber list species of medium conservation concern.

Numbers in the first winter period were relatively low compared with the previous year and a reflection of the low numbers of the previous autumn. However, the influx in the autumn of over 15,000 birds was one of the highest in Sussex's history and over five times the 10-year average of 3300. The approximate monthly totals in the three E-W bands of the county are shown below (only the easting grid numbers are given), the bands being divided to west of Littlehampton and east of Seaford.

Eastings	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	443	1314	365	4	6	15223	628	1979
SU/SZ70-99	102	180	51	1	-	54	83	300
TQ/TV00-49	250	1106	259	3	6	11911	371	1425
TQ/TV50-99	91	28	55			3258	174	254

No flock exceeded 50 birds in January which had the lowest count recorded since at least 1997. One hundred birds were counted in mixed thrush flocks in the Constantia Manor, Isfield region on 27 Jan and peaked there at 200 on 19 Feb before falling to 50

birds at the end of March. Most February sightings were moderate and from the middle of the county and the highlight was 450 birds in flocks at Warnham on the 21st. March sightings were sparse though more widely spread and 65 seen at Burgess Hill on the 12th was the largest count. A solitary bird at Marsh Farm (Yapton) on 7 Apr was just two days earlier than the 10-year average last sighting.

The first returning birds, five at Warnham on 26 Sep, were a week later than average but 200 in Brighton Wild Park on 3 Oct heralded a bonanza. On 9 Oct over 800 birds flew west over Icklesham and 700 over Sheepcote Valley followed on the 10th by an estimated 10,000 high over Sheepcote (IJW), 470 at Ashdown Friends and 2,100 over Hastings in a nation-wide movement west. It should be noted, however, that in Oct 1972 10,000 birds moved through Beachy Head in one day. The rest of October was an anticlimax with small numbers mainly in the north and east and in November similarly there were just two sightings of 100 birds. December was better with half-a-dozen gatherings of 100, mostly around Christmas, culminated in 210 birds moving north from Warnham LNR on the 30th. [JAW]

1202. MISTLE THRUSH

Turdus viscivorus

Common resident and partial migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The numbers reported were slightly better than in 2003 and 2002 and continue a much-improved trend. Sightings were evenly spread throughout the year in small numbers except in September when there were several sightings of post-breeding groups of c.20 birds. The 650 individuals seen probably represents 475 birds, many being sedentary. As many as 219 were seen in flocks of ten or more which is less than last year's 280. Numbers may have been swelled by 60-odd records submitted via BTO BirdTrack.

Winter reports were biased to the west, rather than last year's east, and rarely exceeded ten birds. The exceptions were 15 seen at Burton Mill Pond on 5 Feb and 12 at Constantia Manor (Isfield) on the 19th and again on 31 Mar. April and May reports never exceeded four birds each but 25 feeding on grazing land at Myrtle Grove Fm (NW of Worthing) on 27 June was the largest sighting of the year.

Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas can be found on pages 189 - 190. Five pairs are known to have bred: one at Warnham, another at Troutbridge and three in Ashdown Forest, but there was no information on the degree of success. Fourteen or more pairs probably bred and 51 were seen in suitable territories. While these numbers improve on 2003's, there were still no reports from the previously fruitful Rye and Brighton areas and late summer numbers were average.

Group size increased as the year progressed until records of over twenty birds came in September from four sites: at Cissbury Ring on the 3rd, Troutbridge (Eridge) on the 12th, Pett Level on the 18th and Deanlane End (Rowland's Castle) the next day. Twenty were also seen also in the west of Ashdown Forest on 28 Sep. There were no further significant sightings and fifteen feeding with Redwings and Fieldfares at Hooksway (North Marden) on 16 Dec was the only one exceeding ten birds. [JAW]

1220. CETTI'S WARBLER

Cettia cetti

Scarce but increasing resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

From January to March there were reports from 15 sites; five at Rye Hbr LNR, 10-12 regularly heard at Arundel WWT, a maximum of five at Filsham LNR and six at Thorney Deeps, with most sites showing a slight increase in numbers over 2003. Singles were also recorded at Warnham LNR, Aldingbourne Rife (Bognor), Pilsey Island, Pett Level and Beeding Brooks.

In April and May, singing males were heard at 17 sites. Eight singing males were at Rye Hbr LNR, of which six probably bred, four at Filsham LNR, seven along the Arun Valley near South Stoke, and 12 at Pett Level. There were singles reported at Fittleworth Common on 28 Apr and Eridge on 3 May. On 12 Jun, two were reported at Shinewater Lake (Eastbourne). At Thorney Deeps nine broods fledged about 36 young, with one brood of four still being fed by adults on 13 Jul. Although it was reported from Pett Level that only four pairs probably bred, no less than 64 birds were trapped (53 of which were new). The single bird seen at the Sanctuary (Shoreham) on 6 Nov was the first there since October 1977. No reports of breeding numbers were received from Arundel WWT.

Notable counts during November and December were ten at Filsham LNR on 15 Nov, 12 at Thorney Deeps on the 23rd, three at Warnham LNR on 9 Dec and five at Cliff End (Pett) on the 12th. The spread of this species into suitable habitat continues. [VPB]

1236. GRASSHOPPER WARBLER

Locustella naevia

Very scarce and declining summer visitor and fairly common passage migrant. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

The first record of the year was of a single bird at Alciston on 20 Apr, ten days later than the ten-year average. The following day one was seen at Pulborough Brooks.

Breeding season records were lower than in 2003, with just two pairs reported at Amberley Wild Brooks (four in 2003), a pair at Combe Haven and two birds (but no other information) at Beeding Brooks. Reeling males were also heard at Thorney Deeps on 1 May and at Balsdean on 5 Jun, a maximum of five sites. There were no reports of any at West Dean Woods, where there were two pairs in 2003 and four pairs in 2002.

Autumn passage, however, appeared to show an improvement in numbers. At Beachy Head 24 were ringed, the best year there since 1973; the peak daily catches at Pett Level were 32 in July and 66 in August. Singles were reported at Ovingdean on 10 Aug, Five Ways (Ashdown Forest) on the 22nd and Pagham Hbr on the 28th. In September two were at Five Ways on the 4th, and singles at Whitehawk Hill on the 9th and Pagham Hbr on the 19th, where close and lengthy views were obtained near the Information Centre. At Coldwaltham Brooks on the 26th one was flushed from long grass, to where it returned.

The last migrant at Pett Level was seen on 12 Oct; a late individual was trapped at Beachy Head on the 30th, but the bird did not appear very strong. [VPB]

1242. **AQUATIC WARBLER**

Acrocephalus paludicola

Very scarce autumn visitor to selected sites, rare elsewhere. Considered Vulnerable by IUCN. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

Juveniles were seen at Thorney Little Deep on 10 Aug (SKW) and trapped near Pett Level on 4 Sep (RBRG). The former was a rare case of a positive attitude paying off as the observer went to Thorney at a peak time of year for the species with the express intention of finding one! Fifteen have been recorded since 2000 so these two represent a below average showing for this decade, let alone the 1990s when 97 were seen (including 30, all trapped at Pett Level, in 1997). Most records are in August and all fall between late July and early October. [RJF]

1243. **SEDGE WARBLER**

Acrocephalus schoenobaenus

Fairly common summer visitor and abundant passage migrant.

Two reports on 23 Mar, at Combe Haven and Filsham LNR may have been the same bird, but still beat by one day the earliest county record, only established in 2003. The next arrival was at Pulborough Brooks on 1 Apr. From 7 Apr a general influx commenced. A bird in a Worthing garden on the 16th was unusual, as was an individual in bushes near the Asda supermarket at Brighton Marina on 29 Apr.

In the breeding season at least 340 singing males/breeding pairs were reported, an increase over the previous year. The largest population, 104 at Rye Hbr LNR, was over a quarter more than in 2003. Other significant sites for this species were Thorney Deeps (41 pairs), Combe Haven/Filsham LNR (34), Amberley Wild Brooks (15), Pulborough Brooks (11-14) and Paghham Hbr (13). There were also 11 at the Ouse Estuary Project (Newhaven) and 12 at Beeding Brooks. Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas can be found on pages 189 - 190.

Autumn passage was reported as good at Pett Level, but average at Beachy Head. A late brood had recently emerged at Amberley on 14 Sep and eight juveniles were trapped and ringed at Thorney Deeps on the 29th, where the last West Sussex bird was seen on 7 Oct. The final East Sussex individual was at Pett Level two days later. [VPB]

1250. **MARSH WARBLER**

Acrocephalus palustris

Very scarce summer visitor and passage migrant. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

Three were trapped near Pett Level, an adult on 20 Jun and juveniles on 13 Aug and 9 Sep (RBRG), while one was seen at Paghham Hbr Information Centre on 26 Jun (PB). About 26 have been recorded in the county since 2000. [RJF]

1251. EURASIAN REED WARBLER

Acrocephalus scirpaceus

Common summer visitor and very common passage migrant.

The first bird to arrive was seen at Rye Hbr on 7 Apr, the same date as in 2003. This was followed by one at Combe Haven on the 9th and singles at Brighton Marina and Pagham Hbr on the 10th. A late migrant was seen in Durrington Cemetery on 14 Jun.

Breeding records came from 44 different sites, with numbers recovering in most places after three years of decline. There were 72 pairs at Thorney Deeps, 63 at Aldingbourne Rife (Bognor) and 49 at Sefter Fm (Pagham). However, there was a further reduction, from 24 to 20 pairs, at Marsh Fm (Yapton). At Rye Hbr LNR 168 territories were mapped, but the population was probably in excess of 200 pairs again, and Combe Haven had 40 singing males on 28 May. There were 14-16 pairs reported from the Ouse Estuary Project (Newhaven). Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas can be found on pages 189 - 190.

Return migration commenced around 17 Jul – the date the last bird at Barcombe Res was noted - and continued steadily through the following months. Daily numbers were generally in single figures but there were several reports of double figure day counts in August. At Beachy Head, where the Ringing Group recorded 97 birds – their best total since 1989 – the peak count was 20 on the 7th and 15th. At Steyning, the peak count was 21 on the 14th.

Few were reported after 9 Oct and the last record for the year was one at Beachy Head on the 30th. [VPB]

1277. BLACKCAP

Sylvia atricapilla

Very common summer visitor and passage migrant; small numbers winter.

The number of wintering birds recorded from January to early March was a minimum of 37 from 26 sites. A male was fed daily on cut apples on a Keymer bird table from 1 Jan to 30 Mar, one was seen attacking *Mahonia* flowers in Lewes on 5 Jan, and another fed on a fat ball in a garden in Hove from 8 Feb to 12 Mar. An individual in Peacehaven spent three months feeding on apples, but on 22 Mar was seen taking nectar from a flowering cherry; similar feeding behaviour was noticed in Barcombe in spring 2002.

Returning migrants started to arrive from 23 Mar, when one was at Combe Haven, and good numbers were reported throughout the county. There were 20 singing males at Combe Haven, a maximum of 16 at Stanmer Park and nine at Warnham LNR. Only seven pairs on Thorney Island was another decrease on the disappointing ten the previous year, but the six at Marsh Fm (Yapton) was a return to more normal numbers. Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas can be found on pages 189 - 190.

Return passage in the autumn was reported as either broadly comparable with 2003 at Shoreham or good but not spectacular by the Beachy Head Ringing Group. At the Sanctuary (Shoreham), of 135 different birds handled, 112 were young ones. At Cissbury, 305 new birds were ringed including 100 on 11 Sep and 59 on the 25th. At Pett Level there was a huge overnight fall on 16 Sep resulting in 421 being ringed. In October the maximum number trapped and ringed there was 271 and the species was being seen there up to and including 12 Nov.

Late November and December records from nine gardens and parks comprised 11 individuals, with two males in a Shoreham garden and three, including two males, at Kings Barn (Steyning). [VPB]

1276. **GARDEN WARBLER**

Sylvia borin

Common summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first East Sussex record was of one singing at Barcombe on 9 Apr, while in the west the first arrival was at Deanlane End (Rowland's Castle) on the 11th.

There were breeding season reports from 49 sites, with three pairs at Cissbury, four singing males at Warnham LNR, five at both Darwell Res and Petsalls Copse (Kirdford) and six at West Dean Woods. However, only three were reported on Ashdown Forest this year. Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas can be found on pages 189 - 190.

A poor autumn migration was reported by both observers at Brighton Wild Park and the Beachy Head Ringing Group who ringed only 76 birds, commented that numbers have been poor since 1998 and had a maximum at the site of only 25 on 14 and 22 Aug.

The last individual at Beachy Head on 16 Oct was a tame and scruffy bird with drooping wings, which could fly well but did not look fit for migration. The final bird of the year, a fortnight later than in 2003, was seen at Pett Level on 17 Oct. [VPB]

1274. **LESSER WHITETHROAT**

Sylvia curruca

Fairly common summer visitor and passage migrant; has wintered.

The first arrivals were 11 days later than the previous year, with three at Pulborough Brooks on 16 Apr and one heard singing at Rye Bay Wood on the same day. By the end of April there were reports from 37 sites across the county.

Only one pair was confirmed breeding at Cissbury compared with three in 2004, and numbers at Thorney Island decreased by one, to ten pairs. At least four pairs were at Pulborough Brooks, two at Amberley Wild Brooks and seven at Rye Hbr, an increase of one at this last site. There were three singing males at the Sanctuary (Shoreham). Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas can be found on pages 189 - 190.

The Beachy Head Ringing Group is becoming increasingly worried by the scarcity of this species - they trapped only 24 birds, their lowest ever total.

Most birds had departed by the end of September with just a few lingering into October, mainly near the coast. The last two individuals were at Pulborough Brooks on the 12th and Pett Level on the 13th. [VPB]

1275. **COMMON WHITETHROAT**

Sylvia communis

Very common summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first of the year was seen in Hastings on 6 Apr, and the first West Sussex record came from Sidlesham two days later. The main influx was from 16 Apr onwards, when singing males were widely reported. Numbers increased rapidly; there were four singing

males at Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) on the 16th, five on the 20th, 13 on the 25th and 15 on the 26th. At Selsey West Fields a maximum of 50 was reported.

Breeding pairs in 6.6ha at Cissbury remained steady at four. Elsewhere there were up to 11 at Stanmer Park, 13 at Plumpton Plain, a maximum of 17 at Tegdown Hill (Brighton), 15-20 at Pulborough Brooks, 24 at Brighton Wild Park, more than 40 on Ashdown Forest, 45 at Thorney Island and 69 at Rye Hbr. Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas can be found on pages 189 - 190.

After a disappointing return passage in 2003, numbers passing through Beachy Head were significantly higher and the Ringing Group reported its best year since 1977 with 424 ringed. The highest daily counts at Beachy Head were 200 on 21 Aug, 150 on the 22nd and 120 six days later. At Sheepcote Valley 150 were noted on 9 Aug. Some individuals turned up in gardens, e.g. at Angmering on 28 Aug, Fairlight on 4 Sep and Rodmell on the 25th.

Most birds had left by 16 Sep and there were records from just 11 sites from the 18th-30th. The last bird at Thorney Island was seen on 1 Oct, at Church Norton on the 26th and a very late individual was at Cow Gap (Beachy Head) on 5 Nov, almost a month later than the final sighting of 2003. [VPB]

1262. DARTFORD WARBLER

Sylvia undata

Fairly common but localised resident. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The majority of records in the first winter period for this relatively sedentary species were from the two main breeding areas of the county, i.e. Ashdown Forest in East Sussex and the Wealden Heaths in the West. A total of 16 birds, mainly singles, was reported from Ashdown Forest up to the beginning of March, with a high count of five on 23 Feb. There were day counts of up to seven on Iping Common in January and February and six at Ambersham and Heyshott Commons on 7 Jan. Away from these centres, at least one bird wintered at Newhaven Tide Mills from 2 Jan to 5 Mar. Other coastally orientated wintering birds were found from 17 Jan through to 15 Mar at Thorney Deepes (the only such record from West Sussex), Birling Gap, Hastings, Rye Hbr, and Camber Dunes. Inland, birds were located at Ditchling Beacon, Piddinghoe Pond and Brede Valley.

The annual *Wealden Heaths Breeding Birds Survey* reported 57 pairs (66 in 2003) from seven heaths (Iping & Stedham being treated as one heath), as shown on page 191. A single pair at Blackdown in the northwest, was Sussex's highest proven altitude breeders at c.260-280 m. Chapel Common (Liphook), with a usual count of between one and four, was not surveyed this year. There was a welcome, although not large, reversal in the apparent decline of breeding numbers since 2001 in Ashdown Forest where 40-45 pairs were recorded (35-40 in 2003). Elsewhere a male sang at Chailey Common on 19 May.

The recent run of mild winters ensured that the species continues to hold its own as a breeding resident, but-its specialised habitat requirements may limit any substantive further range expansion. However, an interesting record was of a singing male in mid-March on the Brighton Downs, a reminder that at one time the main county breeding habitat was on East Sussex downland (*des Forges and Harber*, 1963). The estimated county total is 97-102 pairs/males holding territory. The following table gives a comparison with previous years' totals:

Year	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Breeding population	97-102	103-109	115	100-110	122

Although there will have been some duplication of records from well-watched sites, this cannot obscure the underlying trend of increasing autumn coastal records involving post-breeding dispersal. There were 22 sightings from seven sites in East Sussex with the Beachy Head area, as usual, providing the bulk of these, followed by the Cuckmere Valley and Newhaven Cliffs. The first coastal bird at Belle Tout was noted on 2 Sep. In a reversal of the spring experience, the greatest number of autumn sightings (49) came from West Sussex. These were exclusively from two sites. In the Pagham Hbr area (including Selsey) 42 were noted, with a highest single count of four on 6 Nov, while on Thorney Island seven were noted. The total county coastal monthly sightings were as follows:

Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	5	28	23	5

Reports continued to be received from the breeding areas up until the end of the year. The highest day counts were of ten on Iping Common on 26 Sep and eight on Ambersham and Heyshott Commons on 29 Nov. [AP]

1265. SUBALPINE WARBLER

Sylvia cantillans

Rare vagrant.

A female or first-winter present at the Severals (Church Norton) on 26 Oct (KRB, BFF, DIS *et al*) has been accepted by *BBRC* (see Pages 212-213). It is the 12th county record and the first since 2000. It was considered most likely to have belonged to the greyer eastern race *albistrata* (as was the individual at Beachy Head in May 1988). Records have been in April (3), May (6), June and October (2). The previous autumn record, also in the Pagham Harbour area, was during 9-16 October 1993 making this the latest to be seen in the county. [RJF]

1298. PALLAS'S LEAF WARBLER

Phylloscopus proregulus

Very scarce visitor, mostly in late autumn.

Five were recorded in late autumn: at Peacehaven on 24 Oct (AT *et al*), Belle Tout Wood (Beachy Head) on 26 Oct (SRG *et al*), Eastbourne from 27-29th (STU, MFV), Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) on 31 Oct (RDME, Pfo) and Ovingdean Churchyard on 3 Nov (ITB *et al*), the last an excellent local patch find. The Whitbread Hollow individual was trapped and found to be a male on wing length (females having shorter wings) while the Eastbourne bird was seen in a garden in Silverdale Road. Fifteen have been recorded since 2000 with at least 38 during the 1990s, eleven during the 1980s, seven during the 1970s and three in 1968. Most records are from mid-October to mid/late November. [RJF]

1300. **YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER**

Phylloscopus inornatus

Very scarce visitor, mostly in late autumn.

The individual first seen at Ivy Lake (Chichester GP) in early Dec 2003 (SxBR 56:130) remained to at least 17 Jan (MO) while another individual attempted to overwinter at Shinewater (Eastbourne), being present from at least 6-19 Jan (DAH *et al*). One was reported from Warnham LNR on 11 Apr (CHH, JHa). In the autumn, there were records from Cissbury Ring on 7 Oct (BFF, CEH *et al*), Belle Tout Wood (Beachy Head) on the 8th (JFC, PJ), Whitbread Hollow (also Beachy Head) on the 26th (RDME), Pagham Harbour Information Centre on 3-4 Nov (AF, AH *et al*) and Hardham on 1-2 Dec (MPL). Winter records are very unusual, there being only two previously (both in 1975 but both considered to show some characters of Hume's Leaf Warbler *P. humei*), whereas there is only one previous spring record (in 1971). The Whitbread Hollow individual, which was trapped, was found to be a male on wing length (females having shorter wings). Records have pulled ahead of the previous species, but not by much, with eighteen recorded since 2000 (cf. 14) while the 37 during the 1990s is the same. [RJF]

1308. **WOOD WARBLER**

Phylloscopus sibilatrix

Very scarce summer resident and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The year's total was just 29 records relating to 13-15 individuals (29 reports for 20 birds in 2003). This species is rarely recorded at the main migration watch points during the spring as presumably most birds overfly the coast en-route to their breeding areas. The first bird of the year was seen on 1 May at Marden Hill (Ashdown Forest).

It is evident that the British population is now in a marginal situation and the current European status is provisionally evaluated as "declining" due to a fall in numbers in the north and west of the continent. *The Breeding Bird Survey* 2003 (BTO) reported a 68% drop in the population between 1994 and 2003. In Sussex the estimated breeding numbers have varied little from the eight in 1992 and ten in 1993 stated in *Birds of Sussex*, the total for 2004 being 6-8 potential pairs. Observers at Ashdown Forest, a seemingly ideal habitat, reported only 1-3 pairs, while on the elevated sandstone ridges on the northwest borders of the county up to five were noted. One was at Blackdown and four singing males were located between 12 May and 4 Jun at Stanley Common. There was a further report of a bird singing at Balls Cross (Kirdford) on 1 Jun although it was not found on subsequent visits.

There were six autumn records. The first was of one at the Information Centre (Pagham Hbr) on 5 Aug. This was followed by two at Pett Level on 13 Aug and one from an inland site at Warnham LNR on 14-15 Aug. Beachy Head produced only one individual on 21 Aug. The final bird of the year was at the North Wall (Pagham Harbour) on 7 Oct (AF), the latest ever report for the species, beating the previous latest date of 1 Oct in 1992. [AP]

1311. COMMON CHIFFCHAFF

Phylloscopus collybita

Very common summer visitor and passage migrant; small numbers winter

During January and February reports of wintering birds came from 31 sites, mostly single records, though there were three birds at Filsham LNR on 2 Jan and Glebe Fm (Steyping) on the 25th. However, numbers at Thorney SF were unprecedented: there were 18 on 27 Jan but, following some exceptionally cold nights, 30 were noted on the 29th, 42 on 10 Feb and 48 on the 26th after a minimum overnight temperature of -7°C .

Migrants started to arrive from about 16 Mar; 52 were noted at Beachy Head on the 27th when there were also eight singing males at Weir Wood Res. During the breeding season there were seven pairs on Duncton Common, 11 on Thorney Island, 15 at Darwell Res, 17 at Warnham LNR where a further increase was noted, and probably over 50 on Ashdown Forest. Four young birds were seen in a rape crop on Wilbees Fm (Arlington) on 19 Jun and recently fledged birds in elms at the same site on 27 Jul. Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas can be found on pages 189 - 190.

A good autumn passage was reported at Beachy Head where 150 were noted on 19 and 25 Sep and 8 Oct, on which date 45 were seen with Long-tailed Tits along the cliff path. At Ovingdean the first autumn record was on 10 Aug and the last report, of 34 birds, was on 26 Sep. On 7 Oct one was seen at Cissbury catching flies in company with a Yellow-browed Warbler.

Three, possibly four, were seen on 12 Nov feeding on aphids in osiers at the Sanctuary, and at least one was still present at the site on 5 Dec. Birds which were definitely over-wintering birds were two at Bewl Water seen on 20 Dec, seven at Coldwaltham SF on the 28th and 14 at Thorney SF on the 6th. [VPB]

1311.01 EASTERN/SIBERIAN CHIFFCHAFF

P. c. abietinus/tristis

Very scarce winter visitor and autumn passage migrant.

An individual showing characteristics of one of the currently recognised 'eastern' races (*abietinus/tristis*) was seen (and heard calling) at Steyping SF on 27 Mar (ARK). It was considered most likely to have been an *abietinus*, which one might expect to be the most frequently occurring eastern race Chiffchaff in the county, even if it isn't the most frequently reported!

The publication of the Association of European Records and Rarities Committee (AERC) taxonomic report for 2003 suggested that identification of individuals from well within the eastern part of the range of *abietinus*, even using vocalisations, was not clear cut, although research was ongoing. This led to a cautious approach being adopted by SOSRC with all current and previously published records better ascribed "as showing characteristics of one of the currently recognised 'eastern' races *abietinus* or *tristis*", at least until the situation was clarified. Since then a very comprehensive and authoritative paper has been published in *British Birds* (Dean, A.R. & Svensson, L. 2005. 'Siberian Chiffchaff' revisited. *British Birds*. **98**: 396-410) along with a related note (Conway, G. 2005. Population composition of wintering Common Chiffchaffs in southern England. *British Birds*. **98**: 427-8). These, and particularly the former, are essential references for those interested in this subject, although it is acknowledged that some fundamental questions remain unanswered.

The origin of the 'grey and white' chiffchaffs with atypical calls, often reported as

tristis, remain something of a mystery but they seem most likely to be pale *abietinus* from European Russia while Dean and Svensson state that “the approach to identification [of *tristis*] must address the full suite of plumage and vocal characteristics, aided at a minimum by high-quality photographs and preferably by trapping (the latter also providing subsidiary if not conclusive biometric data)”. It is unlikely that many, if any, previous county records published at the time as *tristis* would meet these criteria, and the suspicion must be that most, if not all, relate to *abietinus*. *SOSRC* was right to be cautious! [RJF]

1312. WILLOW WARBLER

Phylloscopus trochilus

Common summer visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

Weir Wood Res provided the first 2004 record on 18 Mar, five days later than the previous year. One singing at Ivy Lake (Chichester GP) on 2 Apr was the first heard at the western end of the county. The peak spring count at Ovingdean was 34 on 28 Apr and a day later there were 20 in bushes at Brighton Marina.

Breeding records were of four pairs at Stanmer Park, the same number at Pulborough Brooks and five at Amberley Wild Brooks. Eight singing birds were heard on a walk through Sheffield Forest on 23 May and also in Tilgate Forest on the same day. Numbers at Liphook Forest doubled from two to four pairs, and there were five pairs at Darwell Res and a maximum of eight at Hesworth Common. Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas can be found on pages 189 - 190.

The first returning migrant at Pett Level was noted on 18 Jul and at Goring Gap on the 23rd. An unusually early movement, of 150, was seen on the 31st at Beachy Head, where good passage was noted though most had moved through by the end of August. An individual considered to be of the continental *acredula* race was ringed there on 15 Aug and another noted on the 31st. On 21 Aug five were seen at a birdbath at Deanlane End (Rowland’s Castle).

Only small numbers moved through in September; 20 at Beachy Head on the 1st, ten at Cissbury Ring on the 3rd and seven at Pagham Hbr on the 27th. There were three records in November, of singles at Pagham Hbr Information Centre on the 4th, Church Norton on the 9th and again on the 24th, a month later than the ten-year average. There have since been reports that some have wintered in the UK. [VPB]

1314. GOLDCREST

Regulus regulus

Very common breeding resident, common passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

A total of 533 records was received from 182 locations across the county (70 of the sites in the breeding season). Lower numbers than normal were reported early in the year with eight recorded on Thorney Island on the 9th being the only January count above three. February was slightly better with 12 at Thorney SF on the 10th and ten found at West Dean Woods on the 11th. The maximum count in March was of seven at Offham (Arun Valley) on the 30th and small numbers of birds were found at coastal sites indicating a light passage with the peak spring count at Ovingdean being five birds on 1 Apr.

Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas are shown on pages 189 - 190. In addition to these records a minimum of ten pairs was found at Pulborough Brooks, and 49 singing males were found throughout Ashdown Forest.

On 12 Sep, 20 were at Sidlesham Ferry marking the start of what turned out to be a fairly heavy autumn passage. Twenty birds were at Beachy Head on the 24th and in October 40 were at Cissbury Ring on the 3rd with 20 at Church Norton on the same day. On the 13th, 40 were at Sheepcote Valley (Brighton), and 20 were at the Rope Walk (Littlehampton). A total of 60 were found the following day at Pett Level and passage continued to increase along the coast until the end of the month when 220 birds were recorded from 7 sites on the 30th. Passage continued into November, with four sites holding between 20 and 50 birds on the 4th and up to 20 at Church Norton until the middle of the month. Records were widespread during the winter with the maximum counts being nine at Bedelands Fm (Burgess Hill) on 20 Nov, and 15 at Old Lodge NR (Ashdown Forest) on 4 Dec. [DG]

1315. FIRECREST

Regulus ignicapillus

Scarce breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber list species of medium conservation concern.

The total of 98 reported for the first four months of the year (57 in 2003) was higher than the previous 10-year average, as was the autumn and winter total of 170 (184 in 2003). The approximate monthly totals, including the few breeding season records, were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
14	21	22	41	3	13	-	2	11	94	51	12

Following the large numbers recorded wintering in the county at the end of 2003, birds were very widespread in the first three months of 2004. The majority of records came from areas near the coast, but individuals were also recorded at sewage farms at Coldwaltham, Steyning and Thorney. Birds were also recorded in 13 other areas including the breeding sites used in 2004. The only sites holding more than one bird during this period were West Wittering, Arundel WWT, Thorney SF, Church Norton and Sheepcote Valley (Brighton).

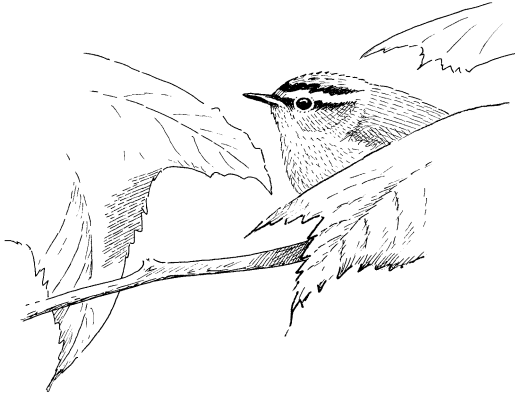
A male was reported to be holding territory at Mardens Hill (Ashdown Forest) in April, but the only records of birds singing or displaying during the breeding season were of 12 in West Dean Woods (23 in 2003), where a full survey was not completed, and of two from separate sites in Ashdown Forest.

There were two early records of presumed autumn migrants, with singles at Barcombe on 1 Aug and Birling Gap on the 29th, before the main passage period which started with two on the 15 Sep at Birling Gap. The approximate totals recorded at the main sites during the autumn and early winter were as follows:

	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Pagham Hbr	6	9	19	4
Beachy Head	4	31	11	-
Rye Hbr LNR	1	4	2	1
Other Sites	-	50	19	7

Passage birds increased in number until 12 Oct when seven birds were recorded at Belle Tout (Beachy Head), with small numbers at numerous other coastal locations. A second peak in passage occurred on 3 and 4 Nov, with seven at Beachy Head, five at Whitehawk (Brighton), five at Climping and three at Sidlesham Ferry.

Wintering birds were again recorded throughout the county including, for the third year running, an individual wintering in Hove. The only records of more than one bird during this period were two at Lavington Common and a further two at Church Norton in December. [DG]



1335. SPOTTED FLYCATCHER

Muscicapa striata

Scarce summer visitor and fairly common passage migrant. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

As with 2003, the first spring arrival was on 29 Apr at Church Norton, when four were present. There was then a single at Selsey Bill the next day, with two at Ovingdean on 1 May. There were then ones and twos recorded throughout the county until the end of the month, with the highest count during this period being of ten in the Sidlesham area on 10 and 11 May.

The first record received from a breeding area was of a single at Ambersham Common on 6 May. Probable breeding was reported from 25 sites in the county (28 in 2003), and was confirmed at 15 of these (9 in 2003). Four juveniles fledged from an old Barn Swallow's nest at Bury and four young also fledged at the Ashdown Forest Centre. All other records related to three young or less.

Migrants began to appear in small numbers at the beginning of August, but it was not until the 19th that the first double figure count was made when ten were present at Pulborough Brooks. Groups of up to seven birds were then reported from many sites, with 20 being present at Beachy Head on the 28th.

Unlike many other species, migrant Spotted Flycatchers are recorded widely throughout the county and are not restricted to the coastal strip, with many post breeding groups being found inland. During the autumn this was illustrated by groups of ten at

Deanlane End (Rowland's Castle) on 31 Aug, and during September by 35 at Cissbury Ring on the 3rd, 12 at Chanctonbury Ring on the 2nd, and 12 at Peasmarsh also on the 2nd. Thirty recorded at Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) on the 6th was the final double figure count for the year and numbers started to fall steeply from the middle of the month. The only October records were of a single at Southwick Hill on the 5th, two in the wood at Rye Hbr on the 8th with the last record of the year being an individual at Pagham Hbr on the 9th, slightly earlier than the 10-year average date of 13th Oct. [DG]

1349. **PIED FLYCATCHER**

Ficedula hypoleuca

Scarce passage migrant, more numerous in autumn than spring; has bred.

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
11	1	1	1	43	16	2

Spring passage was fairly light but autumn passage was much heavier. The minimum number of birds recorded was 73, rather less than the 124 in an exceptional 2003.

The first spring migrant was at Old Lodge Reserve (Ashdown Forest) on 14 April. Records of ten further birds were received in the following two weeks, including two males at Church Norton on the 23rd. Passage ended on the 29th with singles at Brighton Marina and Selsey Bill.

No records of passage birds were received for May, although a single bird at West Chiltington Common on 4 Jul was reported as having been present for two months. No other reports were received during the breeding season.

Autumn passage commenced on 3 Aug with a single at Sidlesham Ferry. Individuals were then recorded virtually daily for the next two weeks from a variety of coastal sites. There was a maximum of 12 at Beachy Head on the 21st, with the highest total elsewhere being three at Sheepcote Valley on the 10th. The only inland records during the month were from Barcombe, Cissbury Ring and Chanctonbury Ring. Birds were recorded in good numbers into September with two at Cissbury Ring on the 1st, and two at Peasmarsh on the 2nd. The remaining records for the month were mainly from the coast, with Beachy Head and Sidlesham Ferry being the main sites. There were far fewer inland records for September compared with the influx of 2003, with the only records in 2004 being from Iping Common, Scobells Fm (Barcombe), and Lewes.

The only October records were of an individual at Sidlesham Ferry Long Pool on the 11th, and of an individual which remained in St Anne's Well Gardens (Hove) from at least the 8th to the 14th. These dates compare with the 10-year average departure date of 3 Oct. [DG]

1364. **BEARDED TIT**

Panurus biarmicus

Scarce breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

2003: Breeding was also confirmed in June by six pairs at Pett Level.

2004: The peak counts outside the breeding season at the seven sites where the species was recorded were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Thorney Deeps	18	14	14	60	50	60	21	26
The Severals (Church Norton)	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	-
Breech Pool (Pagham Hbr)	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Piddinghoe Pond	4	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Filsham LNR	-	-	1	-	-	6	8	-
Pett Level	4	-	9	-	4	20	5	1
Rye Hbr	3	4	-	-	5	7	15	5

Numbers were broadly similar to those in 2003 with the usual peak in October as the breeding population is augmented by an influx of birds from outside the county.

Breeding was confirmed at Thorney Deeps, where six males and four females fledged at least 50 young, and at Glyne Gap Marsh, where several juveniles were seen on 15 June. At Thorney the first young fledged on 9 May. Elsewhere, there were five pairs at Pett Level during the breeding season and two individuals at The Severals (Church Norton) for one day only on 2 May.

'High flying' behaviour was again noted on a number of occasions at Thorney Deeps. Eight flew east there on 7 Apr while in the autumn there were 13 'high flying' on 16 Sep and 20 on 7 Oct. [PJ]

1437. LONG-TAILED TIT

Aegithalos caudatus rosaceus

Very common resident.

In the early months the largest concentrations reported were 20 at Stansted Forest on 10 Jan and Burton MP on 24 Jan, 24 at Darwell Res on 25 Jan, 30 and 20 at Coldwaltham SF on 1 and 18 Feb respectively, and 20 at Chelwood Common (Danehill) on 1 Mar. The regular winter censuses at Hotham Park (Bognor) and Sefter Fm (Pagham) produced totals of seven and one respectively in January and six and four in February.

Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas are shown on pages 189 - 190. Post-breeding flocks of 20 were seen at Blackcap (Plumpton) and Cow Gap (Beachy Head) on 1 and 4 Aug respectively though the only concentrations exceeding these up until the end of the year were of 38 at Pett Level on 9 Oct, 40 at Woodvale Cemetery (Brighton) on 4 Nov, 23 at Marsh Fm (Yapton) on 15 Nov, and 24 at both Bedelands Fm (Burgess Hill) and Binsted on 20 and 21 Nov respectively. The censuses at Hotham Park and Sefter Fm produced totals of 13 and seven in November and 18 and 12 in December. At a garden in Angmering, where the species was present in 22 of the 45 weeks in which garden birds were recorded, the maximum count was 12 on 14 Nov.

At Shoreham Sanctuary, 17 birds (all new) were ringed in 24 sessions between 19 June and 6 Nov, a reduction compared with 36 in 2003, 31 in 2002 and 46 in 2001.

Birds were noted on peanut feeders at Isfield (5) and Southwick (2). [PJ]

1437.01 NORTHERN LONG-TAILED TIT

A. c. caudatus

Very rare vagrant.

Up to four were seen in the Cockshut Road area of Lewes from at least 24 Jan to mid-Feb (DC, JWK, KK *et al*), with one still present on 17 Feb, and at least one likely to have been present since at least 19 Dec (KN) (see Plate No. 15). At times they associated with

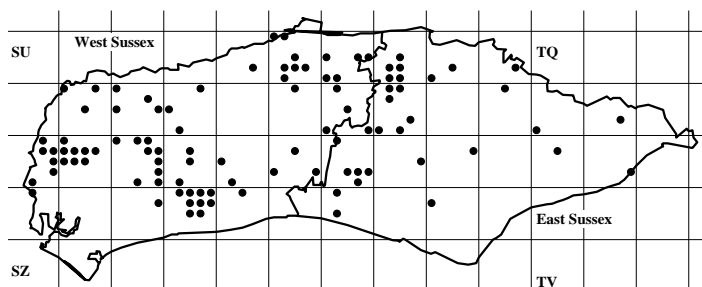
roving Long-tailed Tits (of the British race *rosaceus*), ranging as far as Lewes Station and beyond, but they were also often to be found on their own in the scrub adjacent to the by-pass. They were ‘bird of the year’ (at least in Sussex) for many observers and a full account of this exciting occurrence appeared in *Birding World* **17**: 60-61, with another photograph in **17**: 515) which clearly demonstrates that a *caudatus* Long-tailed Tit is more than just a Long-tailed Tit with a white head.

The *Birds of Sussex* includes seven previous records of ‘white-headed’ Long-tailed Tits in the county, considered to be either *europaeus* or *caudatus*, and there have been two records since (both in 1997, see *SxBR* 50:144 & 51:130) but most previous records are undocumented and refer to *europaeus/caudatus*. However, one of the 1997 records was considered to include a *caudatus* and an *europaeus/caudatus* intergrade, although the presence of the latter perhaps throws some doubt onto the purity of the former. This was not a concern with the Lewes birds. [RJF]

1440. MARSH TIT

Parus palustris

Fairly common but decreasing resident. Red listed species of high conservation concern.



The map shows the 100 tetrads in which the species was reported in 2004 (103 in 2003). As usual most of the records were for the western Downs and adjacent wooded areas to the north, the Horsham and Crawley area, and Ashdown Forest. Whether the map reflects the species’ true status in the county or merely the recording activities of observers is open to conjecture. The coastal records were of singles at Brighton College on 26 and 28 Apr and up to two intermittently at Cliff End (Pett) from 10 Mar to 27 Apr.

In the early part of the year the largest concentrations reported were five at Patching Hill on 25 Feb and six (three pairs) at Westburton Hill on 7 Mar.

Counts of common breeding pairs in defined areas are shown on pages 189 - 190. Sample counts from elsewhere included an estimated ten pairs in Tilgate Wood (Wakehurst Place), four pairs at Pulborough Brooks, three pairs at each of Bayham, Darwell Res and Troutbeck (Eridge), and two pairs in Rackham Plantation. Nest boxes at Ardingly Res and the nearby Loder Valley reserve both held eight young.

The largest post breeding concentrations reported were ten at the Wadhurst Park Estate on 26 Jun, six at Pulborough Brooks on 19 Dec and 14 at Eartham Woods in a short circular walk on 23 Dec.

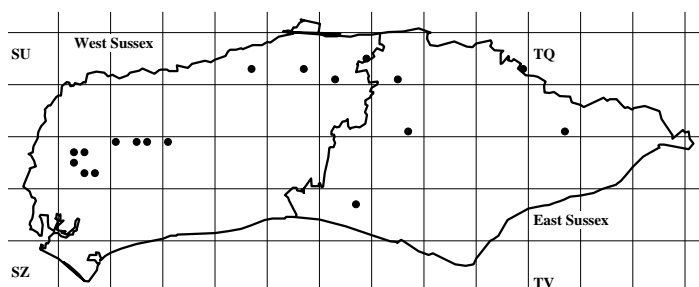
Birds were reported on feeders at Pippingford Park, Pulborough Brooks and Weir Wood Res while two at Darwell Res on 28 Aug were observed feeding on thistle heads.

Two aberrant birds were noted during the year, the first with a white rump and tail at Burton MP on 5 Feb and the second with a whitish grey cap at Woods Mill on 2 June. [PJ]

1442. **WILLOW TIT**

Parus montanus

Scarce resident. Red listed species of high conservation concern.



The decline in this species continues with birds recorded in just 17 tetrads in 2004 compared with 22 in 2003. Once again the map shows a concentration of tetrads on the Downs in West Sussex in the West Dean Woods complex. Elsewhere there were scattered records from the Greensand Ridges (Ambersham, Duncton and Hesworth Commons) and the north of the county (Warnham LNR, Tilgate Forest, Wakehurst Place, Weir Wood Res, Pippingford Park, and Bewl Water) with isolated sightings of one at Footland Wood (Vinehall Street) on 9 Feb and three on the Downs at Cold Combes (near Lewes) on 9 May. The only confirmation of breeding was at an undisclosed site where a brood was raised in a nest box.

Although the future for this species looks bleak, a glimmer of hope is offered by the situation at West Dean Woods where three pairs were found in dense larch and pine plantations where there is perhaps less competition from Blue and Great Tits. Given its unobtrusive nature, there is a likelihood that field work in similar habitats in the west of the county will reveal the presence of other pairs. [PJ]

1461. **COAL TIT**

Parus ater

Very common resident.

Few large concentrations were reported during the year, the largest being 12 in Stansted Forest on 10 Jan, 13 in Stanmer Park (Brighton) on 10 Apr and 16 there on 3

May. At a garden in Angmering, where the species was present in 20 of the 45 weeks in which garden birds were recorded, the maximum count was only two.

Counts of common breeding pairs in defined areas are shown on pages 189 - 190. Elsewhere there were four territories at both Forest Mere (Liphook) and Stedham Common and two pairs at Warnham LNR. Two pairs at Deanlane End (Rowland's Castle) fledged 16 young.

The usual handful of records for coastal areas included twos at Broadwater (Worthing) on 7 Feb and at Cliff End (Pett) intermittently from April to October, and singles at Climping on 4 Jan, Goring on 1 Feb, Church Norton on 30 Mar and 10-11 Apr, Aldwick on 4 Apr, Telscombe Tye on 5 Jun, and Lancing Clump on 2 Nov. A pair with two fledged young was at Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) on 31 May.

There were no records this year of birds showing characteristics of the continental race *ater*. [PJ]

1462. BLUE TIT

Parus caeruleus

Abundant resident.

The monthly maxima at regularly counted sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sefter Fm, Pagham	21	15				15					18	15
Hotham Pk (Bognor)	12	11	11	11	16	12	7	3	5	7	7	13
Marsh Fm (Yapton)	10	13				11					13	10
Parham Estate		1	1	3							10	2
Warren Hill (Washington)	11	1	39								11	30
Bedelands Fm (Burgess Hill)	35	41	69	65	38	22	17	23	21	5	16	51
Patcham (Brighton)		5	5	4	4	4				7		
Tegdown Hill (Brighton)				6	15	17						7
Stanmer Park		29	32	31	32	24			39	48		29
Weir Wood Res	15	10	10	16	1	1						
Scobells Fm (Barcombe)			10	2	6							
Ouse Estuary Project (Newhaven)		2								18	10	11
Newhaven Tide Mills	4	6	4	4		1	4	6	7	7	4	3
Wilbees Fm (Arlington)		9	5	8	6	5			5	6	5	12
Darwell Res	21	19		32	20	31	7		5		8	

At a garden in Angmering, where the species was present in each of the 45 weeks in which garden birds were recorded, the maximum count was seven on 2 Aug.

Counts of common breeding pairs in defined areas are shown on pages 189 - 190. A much better breeding season than 2003 was reported at Hotham Park (Bognor) where an inspection of 19 nest boxes showed that probably 17 had been successful. At Ardingly Res 27 boxes were occupied, of which 21 were successful producing 165 juveniles. Two pairs in nest boxes at Thorney Deeps fledged 20 young. [PJ]

1464. **GREAT TIT**

Parus major

Abundant resident.

The monthly maxima at regularly counted sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sefter Fm (Pagham)	9	11				11					8	5
Hotham Pk (Bognor)	5	6	5	8	5		3	1	2	4	4	7
Marsh Fm (Yapton)	5	8				8					5	5
Parham Estate		1	1								20	
Warren Hill (Washington)	4	1	7								5	7
Bedelands Fm (Burgess Hill)	25	33	35	40	15	20	22	13	5	10	15	24
Patcham, Brighton		4	3	3	3	2				3		
Tegdown Hill (Brighton)			0	3	12	11						4
Stanmer Park		24	26	23	22	14			22	27		24
Weir Wood Res	5	10	8	9							4	0
Ouse Estuary Project (Newhaven)				2							1	2
Newhaven Tide Mills	1	1	4	4		2	3	2	3	6	1	2
Wilbees Fm (Arlington)		11	11	7	3	4			3	4	2	3
Darwell Res	17	12	20	19	5	26	6	16	7	7		

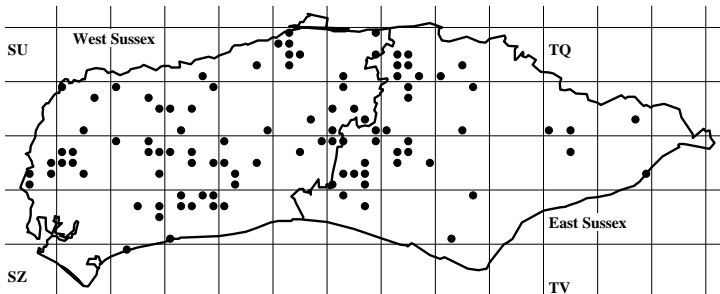
At a garden in Angmering, where the species was present in each of the 45 weeks in which garden birds were recorded, the maximum count was eight on 22 Aug.

Counts of common breeding pairs in defined areas are shown on pages 189 - 190. At Ardingly Res 15 boxes were occupied, of which 12 were successful producing 76 juveniles. [PJ]

1479. **NUTHATCH**

Sitta europea

Common resident.



The map shows the 101 tetrads in which the species was recorded in 2004 (83 in 2003 and 77 in 2002).

In the first winter period the largest counts reported were six at Burton MP on 12 Feb, 12 at Ambersham Common on 18 Mar and nine between Arundel and South Stoke on 30 Mar.

Counts of common breeding pairs in defined areas are shown on pages 189 - 190. Other breeding records included 3-4 pairs at Pulborough Brooks and at least two pairs at Amberley Wild Brooks. The nest box at Hotham Park (Bognor) from which a pair fledged young was an unusual coastal location for this species. At Ardingly Res 13 young were fledged from two nest boxes compared with 21 young from three boxes in 2003.

There were fewer post-breeding records for coastal areas than in 2003 comprising four at Cliff End (Pett) on 27 June, one there on 17 Oct, and one at Charleston Reedbed on 28 Aug, the latter the first record for this site.

The largest concentrations reported in the latter part of the year were similar to those in the early months including 12 at Wakehurst Place on 1 Oct and eight at Rackham Woods on 5 Dec. [PJ]

1486. EURASIAN TREECREEPER

Certhia familiaris

Common resident.



The map shows the 96 tetrads in which the species was recorded in 2004 (83 in 2003 and 61 in 2002).

Although widely reported in both winter periods there were no records of more than three birds at any site.

Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas are shown on pages 189 - 190.

There was the usual spread of coastal sightings with records in ten months of the year as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
4	2	3	2	1	1	-	-	3	5	3	4

These included one in Hove Park on 6 Mar (where the species was regular before the 1987 storm), three at Rye Hbr on 10 Sep, two there on 16 Oct, up to two at Carter's Fm (Pett) from 18 Oct into December, and two at Cliff End (Pett) on 2 Dec. [PJ]

1520. **GREAT GREY SHRIKE**

Lanius excubitor

Very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

Records were again few with three, possibly six, in the first winter period and two, possibly three, in the second winter period.

The bird first located at Ashdown Forest on 25 Oct 2003 was seen until 7 Mar (MO) while the bird seen at Ambersham Common on 28 Dec 2003 remained until 9 Jan (MO). The latter, or possibly another, was then seen at Iping Common on 7 Feb (BMR) and it, or possibly even another, was present at the same location from 13-23 Mar (DHH *et al*). Elsewhere in the first winter period, a singleton was seen at Weir Wood Res on 11 Feb (JW) and an unconfirmed report was received from a visiting birdwatcher of an individual at The Severals (Church Norton) on 23 Apr.

In the second winter period, the first record was of a possibly returning bird at Ashdown Forest on 11 Oct (RH) which was then seen by many observers until 23 Nov. In the same area there was also a report of an individual with no tail on 19 and 28 Oct (JMB). The only migrant seen was at West Hove GC on 15 Oct (IJW, TJW). [PNP]

1539. **JAY**

Garrulus glandarius

Very common resident.

The highest counts in the first winter period were seven at Darwell Res on 25 Jan (with six there on 21 Mar) and six at Stopham Woods on 9 Feb. Eleven at Brighton Wild Park on 16 Apr was a good spring number and there were several reports of urban sightings during the summer months. Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas are shown on pages 189 - 190.

Maximum counts during the autumn and second winter period included a site record of 13 at Brighton Wild Park on 22 Sep, six at Bedelands Fm (Burgess Hill) on 6 Oct, eight at Darwell Res on 19 Oct, six at Goring Gap on 30 Oct, seven at Bedelands Fm on 20 Nov and six still at Darwell Res on 12 Dec. [PNP]

1549. **MAGPIE**

Pica pica

Very common resident.

The highest roost count in the first winter period was 255 at Brighton Wild Park on 8 Feb. The next highest counts were 22 at Arundel WWT on 10 Feb, 25 at Lewes Priory on 21 Feb and 21 at Pickers Hill (Balsdean) on 31 Mar. There were also several other double figure counts at other locations across the county.

There were reports of confirmed or probable breeding from sites throughout the county with the highest count being 40 pairs at Brighton Wild Park, slightly down on last year's figure of 45. Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas are shown on pages 189 - 190.

There were no autumn/winter counts from Brighton Wild Park, where traditionally the highest concentrations are found, but elsewhere there were 16 at Bedelands Fm (Burgess Hill) on 6 Oct, 20 at Lancing Clump on 4 Nov, a similar number at Pulborough Brooks on the same date and 16 at Sefter Fm (Pagham) on 8 Dec. [PNP]

1560. **JACKDAW**

Corvus monedula

Very common resident.

Throughout the year there were several reports of large numbers of birds flying to roost but only two instances when an estimate of the roost size was made. These were at Wyckham Wood (Henfield), where 400 birds roosted on 11 May, and at Longmans/Tottington Woods (Small Dole), where at least 1000 roosted in November. There must be a number of other sites in the county where equally large roost counts occur.

The highest counts in the first quarter were 230 at Rye Hbr SSSI on 1 Jan, 120 at Lavington Common on 15 Feb and 120 at Forest Mere (Liphook) on 24 Feb with 130 at the latter site on 26 Mar.

Breeding was reported from sites across the whole county and Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas can be found on pages 189 - 190.

In the second half of the year there were 240 birds at Southerham Fm (Lewes) on 17 Oct, 300 at Wisborough Green on 31 Oct, 250 at Rye on 27 Nov and 250 again at Wisborough Green on 5 Dec. [PNP]

1563. **ROOK**

Corvus frugilegus

Very common resident.

The highest counts in the first winter period were higher than in 2003 with 250 on the Henfield Levels on 9 Jan, 132 at Marsh Fm (Yapton) on 28 Jan, with 185 there on 11 Feb, 120 at Myrtle Grove Fm (Clapham) and 100 at Plumpton on 30 Mar.

The highest rookery counts were 69 nests at Stantons Fm (East Chiltington), 49 at Plumpton Place, 120 at Myrtle Grove Fm (Clapham), 45 at Castletown (Upper Beeding) and 136 at Findon, a small decline on 2003.

A count of 200 at Pagham Hbr on 2 May was a good summer number as was 400 at Iford (Lewes) on 15 Aug. In the second winter period, 400 were recorded at Rye Hbr SSSI on 21 Oct with 300 there on 5 Nov, a similar number on 12 Nov and 250 on 27 Nov, and 300 at Chantry Hill on 12 Dec. [PNP]

1567. **CARRION CROW**

Corvus corone corone

Very common resident.

The highest concentrations in the first winter period were 110 at Forest Mere (Liphook) on 21 Jan, 250 at Poynings on 22 Feb with 94 at Camber Sands the following day, 300 at Lord's Piece (Coates) on 8 Mar, 150 at Forest Mere on 26 Mar and 100 at Adams Fm (St Leonards Forest or on Sea?) on 30 Mar.

During the spring and summer months the number and size of large concentrations reduced but 90 at West Worthing on 7 Apr, 100 at Angmering on 12 Apr and 130 at Forest Mere on 19 Jun (with 100 there on 22 Jul) were noteworthy. Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas are shown on pages 189 - 190.

During the second winter period there were 127 at Camber Sands on 6 Nov and 150 at Racton on 23 Nov with 100 at the latter site on 8 Dec.

It is interesting to note that, in early June, a pair attempted to nest on top of a channel marker near the mouth of the River Rother while in September a bird was seen trying to eat an eel at Pulborough Brooks. [PNP]

1567.01 HOODED CROW

C. c. cornix

Rare winter visitor and passage migrant.

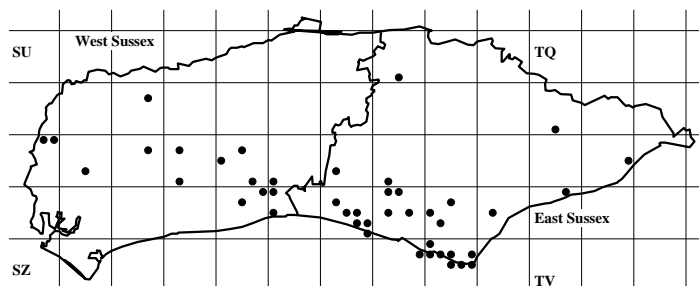
2003: The only record for the year was a single bird at Pebsham Refuse Tip on 5 Mar (KMJ).

2004: The first bird for many years to remain for more than a day or two frequented the area between Camber Sands and Rye Hbr LNR from 21 Jan to 22 Mar (VPB *et al*). These are the eighth and ninth county records since 1990. [PNP]

1572. RAVEN

Corvus corax

Scarce resident.



The distribution map shows the locations of sightings throughout the year. Although it seems that birds could appear almost anywhere in the county, the vast majority of the records are of singles or pairs along the line of the South Downs, particularly in the east of the county.

At least one pair bred at Beachy Head and raised two young. Another pair bred at the regular site near Shoreham hatching five chicks, of which four fledged and one was taken by a fox. [PNP]

1582. COMMON STARLING

Sturnus vulgaris

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

The largest flocks in the first winter period were 10,000 leaving the roost at Brighton West Pier on 30 Jan and an estimated 4000 carried by a Peregrine Falcon at Eastbourne Pier on 13 Feb. In February flocks of 200 at Constantia Manor (Isfield) and 600 at

Scobells Fm, Barcombe were recorded in the company of thrushes and 150 were attracted to food provided at Goring. On 22 Apr 200 roosted in a reedbed at Rye Hbr LNR.

A flock of 70 on 15 Mar at Beachy Head may indicate passage.

Very few records of breeding were received. Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas are shown on pages 189 - 190. Of these, the ten territories at Brighton Wild Park represented a major reduction from 29 in 2003. In addition, five pairs nested on 19ha at West Wantley Fm (Storrington). One adult feeding young was taken by a Sparrowhawk at Troutbeck (Eridge). The BBS results for Sussex show the number of 1-km squares occupied by Starlings to have reduced from 94% of 36 squares surveyed in 1997 to under 70% of 42 squares surveyed in 2004. The average of 17.6 Starlings per 1-km square is the lowest since the BBS began in 1994. Breeding Starlings are seriously under recorded, particularly those nesting in urban sites, but it seems probable that numbers are still declining.

Post breeding dispersal began at Warnham LNR when 30 'arrived from Horsham' on 15 May and remained throughout the month feeding locally. By the end of May flocks of mainly juveniles were being reported from the coast, the Downs and farmland with 250 at Hurst Green on 31 May and 600 at Sidlesham Ferry the following day. Larger roosts were reported with 800 in reeds at Thorney Deepes on 24 Jul, 1500 at Pett Level Pools on 6 Aug and up to 3000 in trees at Rye Hbr village from August to October. On 18 Sep 2000 were feeding on the airfield at Thorney.

Evidence of autumn movement came from several sites. At the West Park (Hastings) ca.1300 flew west in 2 hr on 26 Oct; at Warnham LNR 350 flew west at dusk on 8 Nov, although this could have been a roosting movement; at Hove Lagoon 2500 flew west at dawn on the same date, presumably from the Brighton West Pier roost; and at Brighton Marina 400 were seen to fly in off the sea on 9 Nov.

The only very large flocks reported in the second winter period was an estimated 10,000 at New Erringham Fm (Shoreham) flying east to roost on 9 Dec but 1000 at Upper Beeding on 16 and 17 Dec flying south/southeast were presumably heading for the same roost. Other roosting movements involved 1100 gathering at South Stoke (Arun Valley) prior to roosting on 21 Nov; several hundred at Troutbeck (Eridge) flying southeast in the early morning on 8 and 9 Dec and 200 which dropped in at West Blatchington (Hove) on 22 Dec prior to roosting.

The only reported roost was at Warnham LNR where 50 roosted in a *Leylandii* hedge on 24 Nov. Although it is known that the traditional roosting sites at Eastbourne and Brighton Piers were still in use, no reports of numbers or activities were received. This is unfortunate since the Society has received enquiries from Ecological Consultants about the size and status of these roosts. [ACG]

1591. HOUSE SPARROW

Passer domesticus

Very common but possibly declining resident. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

In the first winter period double figure flocks were reported from 15 sites. These included up to 40 coming to seed provided at Goring in Feb/Mar, 50 at Manor Fm (Cocking) on 29 Feb and a maximum of 37 at the East Beach (Selsey) on 15 Mar with 30 still present on 5 Apr and 38 on 31 May. Winter censuses on mixed farmland at Marsh Fm (Yapton) (67ha) and at Sefter Fm (Pagham) (95ha) yielded only four on each. A female

visiting a seed feeder at Constantia Manor (Isfield) on 2 Jan was the first seen there in four years and a male visiting a bird table at Durfold (Warnham) for three days from 27 Feb was the first there for five years.

The earliest evidence of breeding reported was of one carrying nest material at Scrase Valley LNR (Lindfield) from 20 Feb. Altogether breeding was recorded at 27 sites with approximately 110 pairs counted. In addition to this many observers commented on increased numbers of juveniles this year and increased size of post breeding flocks. Leucistic juveniles were seen being fed at Kirdford in June.

The largest post breeding flocks were 100 at Nyewood on 20 June; 300 at Newhaven Tide Mills on 1 Jul with 200 on barley stubble there on 31 Jul, 400 on two dates in August and over 460 on 3 Sep; 100 at Rye Hbr SSSI on 14 Jul; 200 at Hardham the following day; 120 at Hove Lagoon on 26 Jul and 120 at Gatwick Airport on 28 Sep.

In the second winter period, as in 2002, flocks of over 20 were recorded at 14 sites, compared with only four in 2003. Of these the largest were over 40 at Newhaven Tide Mills on 1 Oct, 47 roosting at Rye Hbr on 11 Oct, and up to 36 at Burgess Hill from October to December.

There were a few reports of absence or lower numbers. The BBS results for Sussex show a continuing steady decline in the percentage of 1-km squares with House Sparrows from 86% of 36 squares surveyed in 1997 to 67% of 42 squares surveyed in 2004. The figure of 10.5 House Sparrows per 1-km square in 2004 is the lowest since the scheme started in 1994. However, there is some evidence that generally higher numbers than previously in the early part of the year were followed by a relatively productive breeding season. [ACG]

1598. TREE SPARROW

Passer montanus

Scarce resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

2003: Reports of this species from the Barns Green/Possession House Fm area in the north of the county have, unfortunately, not been substantiated and these records have been withdrawn.

2004: As in 2003 there were encouragingly large flocks in the first winter period. There were monthly maxima in the Pett Level of 20 on 20 Jan, 80 on 13 Feb and 80 on 4 Mar. Further east, a flock of 50 at Playden on 6 Feb was noted as 'fewer than in 2002/03'. Many flocks were reported at various sites at Rye Hbr SSSI of which the largest were 28 on 28 Jan, 25 on 22 Feb and 40 on 23 Mar (all at Pea Beach Field), 25 on 15 Feb and 48 on 23 Mar. There were also 32 at Scotney Court GP on 24 Jan. West of Hastings the only double figure flocks were at Peacehaven where a regular flock reached a maximum of 20 on 21 Mar (see Plate No. 16). Sightings elsewhere during this period were one at Kithurst Hill (Storrington) on 2 Jan, two at Ditchling Beacon on 15 Feb, six on Tegdown Hill (Brighton) on 20 Mar and one at Weavers Dow (Liss), possibly from the small northeast Hampshire flock.

The only evidence of spring movement was one at Belle Tout (Beachy Head) on 24 Apr.

Twelve pairs bred in the Brede Valley, mainly in nest boxes, and one pair bred successfully at Pett Level, also in a nestbox, but there are no other reports of breeding. At Rye Hbr SSSI, one was present throughout May and on Pevensy Levels, where four pairs

bred in 2003, one was seen on 5 Jul but there was no evidence of breeding. No reports of breeding were received from Playden where they bred in 2003 but it is hoped that they are still active in the area.

Autumn passage is indicated by 19 flying west in 2hrs at West Hill (Hastings) on 26 Oct and two calling overhead at Birling Gap on 1 Nov and possibly by one at Barcombe Res on 10 Oct and 14 at Durrington on 4 Nov.

The first post-breeding flock was 50 at Bullock Hill (Brighton) on 24 Aug. The flock of 70 feeding on setaside at Pett Level on 30 Oct rose to 185 on 17 Nov and a most impressive 270 on 14 Dec. Elsewhere, in a garden in Hailsham there was a flock of 25 on 5 Sep and 16 on 20 Oct and six to eight were present at Burgess Hill from 7 to 11 Dec.

Until 2003 no flock of more than 100 had been recorded since 1987. The dramatic increase in winter flocks suggests successful breeding somewhere and, even allowing for movements from outside the county, it seems likely that Tree Sparrows are currently under recorded during the breeding season. [ACG]

1636. CHAFFINCH

Fringila coelebs

Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

During the first winter period, flocks numbered in three figures were recorded at only eight sites. In January, 400 were counted on the 3rd and 250 on the 14th in the general area of Chantry Hill (Storrington) and Lee Fm (Patching) where they were feeding in maize grown as game cover with other finches. In February, *ca.*1000, the largest flock of the period, was noted at Stapleash Fm (Chilgrove) on the 1st. Large flocks were also noted at Burton MP between the 7th and 29th, peaking at 400 on the 12th, and 100 were counted both on the Downs at Cocking and at nearby Manor Fm on the 29th. In March, the highest count was of 300 at West Dean Woods on the 13th.

The only significant movements noted during the early spring were of 76 E at Brighton Wild Park on 7 Mar and 180 E at Pett Level the same day.

The numbers of pairs breeding or holding territory was very poorly reported when compared with not only previous years but also the estimated county population of over 100,000 pairs (*Birds of Sussex*). Breeding was confirmed at only seven sites involving a minimum of 103 pairs. Although breeding was thought probable at a further 16 sites only for two was any sensible data provided: ten territories were counted at Forest Mere (Liphook) and six at Darwell Res, although at this latter site there were 33 singing males on 23 May. In addition, there were 35 singing males/territories at the Wild Park, 19 territories at Stedham Common and five at the High Chimneys Estate (Battle). Counts of common breeding birds from defined areas can be found on pages 189 - 190.

The only significant movement noted during the autumn was of 85 W at West Hill (Hastings) on 26 Oct.

In the autumn/second winter period, there were only two flocks numbered in three figures: *ca.*500 were counted at Lodge Hill Fm (West Dean) on 23 Nov and 200 at Eartham Woods on 23 Dec. [JAH]

1638. **BRAMBLING***Fringilla montifringilla***Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant.**

The following table of approximate monthly totals shows that, during the first three months, numbers were very much higher than in any of the previous three years. This may, of course, be a reflection of a reduced food supply in either their breeding or more usual wintering grounds. There was the usual marked reduction through March into April as birds departed to their breeding grounds.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	813	769	217	46		40	244	191
No. of sites	12	18	25	12		17*	17	15

* including 13 coastal/near coastal sites.

The BTO Migration Watch/Bird Track survey contributed 16 records and 12 new sites to the above data.

Numbers in January showed a marked jump from the 437 at six sites of December 2003 due, presumably, to a migratory influx. The first winter period differed from 2003 in that birds were not concentrated in Ashdown Forest but were to be seen in many other areas. A particularly favoured area was on the Downs between Kithurst/Chantry Hills (Storrington) and Lee Fm (Patching). A flock of 50, first seen on 1 Jan at Chantry Hill, increased gradually during January to 250 at Lee Fm on the 14th. Numbers in the general area of Chantry Hill/Kithurst Hill/Lee Fm eventually peaked at 400 on 21 Feb and then gradually diminished; the final record was of ten on 6 Mar. These birds were often seen with large numbers of other birds, e.g. Chaffinches, Yellowhammers and Reed Buntings feeding in maize grown as game cover. At Stapleash Fm (Chilgrove) a flock of 60 on 1 Jan had increased to 125 by 22 Feb and was still 63 strong on 16 Mar. The only coastal sightings, presumably of returning migrants, were of single birds at Beachy Head on four dates from 3 to 14 Apr and at Church Norton also on the 14th. The last sighting was of a singleton at Pippingford Park (Ashdown) on 27 Apr.

The first autumn record was inland of a single bird at Crowborough Warren on 4 Oct. Thereafter there was a steady trickle of mainly single birds through the month. It was noticeable that, as for Siskins, of the 17 sites where Bramblings were recorded in October no less than 13 were coastal. The largest numbers counted were 7 E past Selsey Bill on the 11th and ten at Sidlesham Ferry on the 26th. In November, the only count in excess of ten was 100 on the 23rd in the West Dean Woods area (where there were still 50 on 19 Dec). In Ashdown Forest numbers built up slowly from ten on 11 Nov to 30 on 6 Dec. Elsewhere the only significant count was of 40 at Eartham Woods on 23 Dec. [JAH]

1640. **SERIN***Serinus serinus***Very scarce passage migrant; has bred. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.**

One was heard singing from a large enclosed garden in Ferring on 18 Mar (DIS) while a female or first-summer male was seen briefly at Selsey Bill on 14 May before flying off north (OM *et al*). The Ferring record, which was heard over a prolonged period but could not be seen from any angle, was particularly frustrating for a species that as often as not only gives flight views. Forty have been recorded since 2000, although one has to go back

to the blank years of 1989-90 for fewer records in a year, and 1991 also only recorded two. Three of the recent records have been in March, 11 in April and 15 in May. [RJF]

1649. GREENFINCH

Carduelis chloris

Very common resident, scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

During the first winter period, there were only seven records of numbers in excess of 20. In January, there was a flock of *ca.*100 at Shoreham Fort on the 1st, 40 at Newhaven Tide Mills on the 15th, up to 38 at Rye Hbr LNR on the 5th to 9th and 25 at Ferring Rife on the 4th. In February, a minimum count of 100, with Goldfinches, was made at Burton MP on the 5th, the flock at Tide Mills was still 33 (with two birds singing on the 24th) and Rye Hbr held 25 on the 7th. The highest count in March was of 50 at Wilbees Fm (Arlington) on the 24th but there was a count of 30 at Brooklands (Worthing). No migrating flocks were reported during the early part of the year.

Reports of confirmed or probable breeding left much to be desired when compared with the estimated county population of over 17,000 pairs (*Birds of Sussex*). Breeding was confirmed at only eight sites by at least 34 pairs and was probable at a further 11 sites by at least 23 pairs. Counts of common breeding birds from defined areas can be found on pages 189 - 190.

The only flock of any size in August was 80 counted at Sidlesham. Although at four sites groups of 20-23 were counted during September the highest count was of 80 at a feeding station at Warnham LNR on the 5th. October, however, was the month when the first migratory or dispersal movements were noted. At Rye Hbr, birds noted in flight were 35 on the 12th and 50 on the 31st. Reports from Beachy Head involved 50 E on the 11th and 30 E on the 30th. In November, 40 E were counted at Beachy Head on the 1st and a flight of 30 was reported from Rye Hbr LNR.

During the last three months of the year flocks in excess of 50 noted at a number of sites. There was a count of *ca.*100 at Tide Mills on both 1 Oct and 1 Nov. A flock of 60 at Thorney Deepes on 8 Oct was still in the area on 16 Nov roosting in evergreen trees in the churchyard. There was a count of 150 at Pagham Beach on 26 Oct and a monthly maximum of 50 at Crowborough on the 28th. The highest count for October was of 250 at Shoreham Fort on the 30th; 200 were still in the area on 9 Nov feeding on seeding plants on the shingle beach of which 100 remained on the 20th. In December, a pre-roost count of 100 was made at an Industrial Estate in Crawley on the 5th, 200 went to roost at East Marden on the 15th and 80 came to a feeding station at the Stud Farm House (Angmering Park) on the 26th.

Like so many common resident species, this one is significantly under reported. [JAH]

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

The total number of records received for the year was 507 but of these no less than 215 (42.4%) came via the BTO Migration Watch/Birdtrack project. These figures illustrate the considerable value of this project to county Recorders in its ability to capture and provide records which would, in all probability, not otherwise be received. The following table shows the distribution of these records through the year:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
16	32	52	61	46	43	9	22	47	95	51	33

In January, the sizeable flocks were 36 at Constantia Manor (Isfield) on the 15th, 32 at Sefter Fm (Pagham) on the 26th and 25 at Widewater (Lancing) on the 20th. In contrast to 2003, the largest groups counted were in the following month: a minimum count of 100 was made at Burton MP on 5 Feb and 100 – the aggregate of two flocks – were counted at Constantia Manor on the 24th. The only other count in excess of 30 was of 50 at Beachy Head on 11 Mar.

Although birds were widely reported during the spring, there were no records of observed migration – a poor year, as in the previous three. In April, there were only three records of double figure counts: at Beachy Head counts of ten and 12 on the 10th and 23rd respectively, and at Stanmer Park (Brighton) 16 on the 25th. Otherwise the only coastal watching point to submit a month's total for April was Worthing Beach – a meagre 12.

Breeding was again poorly reported. Records indicating that it was either confirmed or probable were received for only 17 sites involving a minimum of 34 pairs or territories. Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas can be found on pages 189 - 190. The only other site where more than one territorial pair was noted was West Wantley (Storrington) with five.

Birds began to form sizeable groups from early in August, many of them in preparation for migration as up to 80% of the British breeding population winters overseas in, mainly, western France and Spain (*Migration Atlas 2002*). The largest counts were of 60 at Thorney Deeps (as in 2003) on the 11th, 70 at Weir Wood Res on the 26th and 65 of mixed adults and juveniles at Warnham LNR through the month. In September, there were eight counts (nine in 2003) of 40 or more: 40 at Ditchling Beacon on the 3rd, 150 in one large flock at Pagham Hbr on the 12th, 80 at Pett Level on the 18th, 75 at Pulborough North Brooks on the 23rd, 60 at Mill Hill (Shoreham) on the 26th, 47 at Darwell Res on the 26th, 40 at the Ouse Estuary Project (Newhaven) on the 28th and finally 200 at Thorney Island on the 30th. The only passage movement reported was of 45 E at Beachy Head on the 25th.

Peak movements occurred in October – as in previous years. An aggregation of the numbers reported – ca.4670 - indicates that many fewer were noted moving this year than in the previous three years. The main movements occurred between the 11th and 14th and again between the 26th and 31st. The following table summarises the monthly totals recorded:

	Sep	Oct	Nov	Peak movements	
				Number	Date
Selsey Bill	-	670	80	200*	14 Oct
Sidlesham	-	450	-	450E	9 Oct
Littlehampton	-	100	-	100E	13 Oct
Goring	-	120	-	70E	13 Oct
Worthing Beach	-	713	105	634E	11 Oct
Widewater	-	220	-	220E	30 Oct
Shoreham	-	222	-	222E	30 Oct
Splash Point (Seaford)	-	-	54		
Beachy Head	45	2130	260	200W	7 Oct
				750E	11 Oct
				600E	30 Oct
Hastings	-	62	-	62W	26 Oct

*direction not stated.

Most movements were easterly, consistent with a traditional migration southeastwards into the Low Countries (where some may stay) via the short sea crossing before turning south or southwest (*Migration Atlas 2002*).

Other high counts in October, with no indications of movement, were from coastal sites of 200 at Shoreham on the 10th, 300 at Selsey Bill on the 11th, and 400 at Newhaven Tide Mills also on the 11th – dates which coincide with one of the peak movement periods. Notable counts from inland sites in November were of 200 noted at Deanlane End (Rowland’s Castle) on 3 Nov, 50 at Tilgate Lake (Crawley) on the 8th, 32 at Kings Barn (Stevington) on the 20th and 40 at Crowborough on the 29th. [JAH]

1654. SISKIN

Carduelis spinus

Common winter visitor and passage migrant; very scarce breeder.

The following table of approximate monthly totals shows that, during the first three months, numbers were rather lower than in any of the previous three years. This may, of course, be a reflection of a warmer winter (due, perhaps, to global warming?) and a better food supply on or nearer to their breeding grounds. Again, there was the usual marked reduction in April following the departure of birds to their breeding grounds.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	254	425	207	71	15	7	-	23	6	83	67	114
No. of sites	17	22	22	16	5	6	-	4	1	17*	5	8

* including 12 coastal/near coastal sites.

The largest flocks in the first winter period occurred in February. There were 100 in Buchan Park on the 22nd, 70 at Burton MP on the 1st (but only 50 were counted there on the 12th) and another 70 at Pett Level on the 10th. There were counts of 50 from Graffham Common on 1 Jan and at Millbrook (Ashdown Forest) on several days between 15 Feb and 1 Mar.

Breeding was confirmed at only one site this year (three in 2003): a single pair bred at Lavington Common (as in 2003) and breeding was thought probable at three other sites, two in Ashdown Forest and one at Kirdford.

The autumn influx, after a barren September, was again most marked in October. Of the 17 sites at which Siskins were recorded no less than 12 were coastal. The first migrant at such a site was sighted at Middleton-on-Sea on the 2nd. Thereafter, there was only a steady trickle at the coast of anything from one to a maximum of seven on the 11th, again at Middleton, and passage at Brighton was described as very poor. This is confirmed by a comparison of this year's October total with the 1709 of 2003! The only significant count during the month was inland with 20 at Warnham LNR on the 7th. The situation did not change much in November. Birds were noted at only one coastal site and the highest inland count was of 50 at Deanlane End (Rowland's Castle) on the 3rd. The highest counts in December were of 35 at Millbrook on the 7th and 55 at Cedar Fm (Hurst Green) on the 18th. Again, these numbers are significantly down on last year's.

All in all, a disappointingly quiet year for this species. [JAH]

1660. LINNET

Carduelis cannabina

Common but decreasing resident and partial migrant. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

The total number of records received for the year was 671 of which 161 (24%) came via the BTO Migration Watch/Birdtrack project. The following table is a conservative estimate of the numbers recorded during the year:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of sites	18	22	44	61	65	46	19	30	31	41	26	14
No. of birds	983	716	1329	1444	477	294	212	794	1884	7461	1267	494

Significant numbers in the first three months included 250 feeding on sunflowers at Wepham Down on 4 Jan, 220 in the North Fields (Pagham Hbr) on 14 Jan, 100 at Burton MP on 11 to 14 Feb, 110 at Lidsey Old Canal and Tip on weedy stubbles on 8 Mar and 60 on 3 Mar at Harrow Hill (Patching) feeding on kale and setaside. In addition, there were from 150 to 400 at Rye Hbr SSSI during the period but otherwise the increase during March was not generally noticeable at the coast.

During April, however, large numbers were seen at some coastal sites, particularly in the east at Rye Hbr and Beachy Head, indicative of the arrival of returning migrants. At Rye Hbr, 120 to 200 were seen in flight on several dates between the 2nd and 11th, some of which may have wintered there, while at Beachy Head small parties of from 10 to 50 were often seen between the 9th and 23rd. The only significant count in the west of the county was of 150 at Thorney Island on the 10th.

Away from Ashdown Forest, breeding was confirmed in 18 1-km squares by 49 pairs and was probable in a further nine 1-km squares by a minimum of 11 pairs. Counts of common breeding birds in defined areas can be found on pages 189 - 190. It is estimated that on Ashdown Forest there were not less than ten confirmed breeding pairs and probably a minimum of a further 18. These figures suggest, however, that breeding activity of this species is significantly under-recorded.

Some of the British breeding population migrates from mid-August southwards via the short sea crossing to winter in a narrow longitudinal band from western France through Spain and into Morocco (*Migration Atlas 2002*). The following table separates numbers seen at coastal sites from those inland:

	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Monthly totals						
Number of sites	40	52	54	66	38	15
Number of birds	349	2247	4487	10356	1451	506
Coastal sites						
Number of sites	10	23	31	47	19	5
Number of birds	237	1959	3687	9768	950	223
Inland sites						
Number of sites	30	29	23	19	19	10
Number of birds	112	288	800	588	501	283

Significant numbers were recorded at coastal sites from 1 Aug onwards, when 80 were counted at Newhaven Tide Mills. Counts in excess of 100 during the month involved 150 at Beachy Head on the 10th, 130 there on the 26th and 300 at Rye Hbr SSSI on the 12th and 23rd – an easterly bias again being apparent. In September, counts of 250-300 were recorded at Beachy Head on six dates between the 5th and 26th. The highest count at Selsey Bill was 200 on the 5th. Inland, a count of 300 was recorded between Chantry and Harrow Hills on the Downs on the 15th, 100 were counted at Itford Fm (Southeast) on the 6th and also at Steep Down (Lancing) on the 26th, and 120 were noted at Alciston on the 30th.

October, however, was the month when the largest numbers were recorded. The highest single counts were recorded at Selsey Bill with 1500 on the 10th and 2000 next day. The highest count at Beachy Head was 1500 on the 28th while at Rye Hbr SSSI the highest count was of 500 on the 7th. Only two coastal sites reported their monthly totals: at Worthing Beach the October total was 20 but at Selsey Bill it was 3650 in October and 400 in November. At inland sites, the highest counts were of 150 at Chanctonbury Ring on 5 Oct and 100 at Deanlane End (Rowland's Castle) on 3 Nov.

The only records which indicated movement direction were in October: 20 E at Worthing Beach on the 9th, 17 W at Hastings on the 26th and 40 E at Goring on the 30th. It would be useful if observers would record flight direction for obviously migrating flocks and the time of day or hours of observation. [JAH]

1662. TWITE

Carduelis flavirostris

Very scarce winter visitor. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

Two were present at East Head (West Wittering) from 3 Nov into 2005 (RFW *et al*). These two, which could be very elusive at times, follow a blank year and take the total since 2000 to just 12. Most records are from, or near, areas of saltmarsh during October-January and in that respect this record is typical, although the marked decline in records appears to be continuing. As recently as 1994 there were eight records of this species in the county involving 37 individuals and included flocks of nine at this location, eight at Pulborough Brooks, seven at Pagham Hbr and six at Shoreham-by-Sea. [RJF]



1663. **LESSER REDPOLL**

Carduelis cabaret

Scarce breeder and fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The following table shows the approximate maximum numbers seen each month and the number of sites at which the species was recorded. Records covered 96 different sites of which 30 were in the Ashdown Forest area – obviously a favoured area. Of the 292 records received, only 24 (8.2%) came via the BTO Migration Watch/Birdtrack project, a very low figure compared with some other species. Does this imply that this species inhabits locations not frequented by Birdtrackers, or is it a species more difficult to locate and/or identify?

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	65	36	47	124	56	17	36	27	18	404	522	256
No. of sites	7	7	14	20	24	9	8	4	4	24	22	16

Numbers in the first half of the year were down on 2003 but higher in the last two months. Counts in all months through to September rarely exceeded ten. The largest group in the first three months was 20 at Pulborough Brooks on 16 Feb and this figure was not exceeded anywhere until they had arrived on their favoured breeding grounds in Ashdown Forest in April. Counts were then made of 30 at Ashdown Five Ways on the 16th and at the Old Lodge LNR (Ashdown Forest) on the 25th.

Breeding was confirmed at only four sites (eight in 2003) by six pairs (ten), three in Ashdown Forest and one at Lavington Common (but there were no reports of events at Woolbeding and Ambersham Commons this year). Breeding probably occurred at at least five other sites by not less than five pairs.

This species breeds, in Britain, chiefly in the north, west and southeast. Its wintering range lies predominantly in southern Britain, Belgium and northern France (*Migration Atlas 2002*). It would be expected, therefore, that numbers in the county would increase considerably in the autumn and that there would be some evidence of migratory movements.

With the single exception of a count of 15 at Five Ways on 22 Aug, it was not until 16 Oct that the first autumn passage migrants were identified at Pett Level with a count of 15, followed by 46 on the 18th. Coastal passage could be inferred by a count of 40 in Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) on the 30th. Otherwise, numbers began to build up inland at favoured wintering sites, most particularly in Ashdown Forest where counts of

65, 150 and 40 were made at three locations between the 25th and 30th. This pattern continued in November with the largest flock of the autumn – of presumably coastal migrants - at Pett Level of 50 on the 1st and further counts of 50, 60 and 120 at sites within Ashdown Forest between the 5th and 13th – presumably birds taking up their wintering quarters. The only similar sized counts from anywhere else were 40 on 18 Nov at Lavington Plantation and 70 there on 12 Dec and 40 at Colgate (St. Leonard’s Forest) on 19 Dec. [JAH]

1660. COMMON CROSSBILL

Loxia curvirostra

Scarce visitor occurring in large numbers in irruption years; breeds occasionally.

The small numbers present during the second half of 2003 following the previous irruption remained so through the year, as the following table of approximate maximum monthly numbers shows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	73	27	31	11	37	23	2	32	19	4	-	-
No. of sites	6	5	3	4	5	7	2	2	4	1	-	-

Data from the BTO Migration Watch/Bird Track surveys contributed seven additional sites and records to the above table.

Birds were recorded in 20 different 1-km squares (of which three were new sites from the BTO surveys) of which *ca.* 11 (55%) were associated with mature conifer forest such as Ashdown Forest and the West Sussex Commons. Of the 60 records received (a significant reduction on the 330 of 2003) *ca.* 85% were associated with this type of habitat.

During the first winter period, the only counts in excess of ten were of 20 at Ambersham Common on 9 Jan and 22 on 7 Mar and 17 at Coates Common on 1 Jan.

Breeding was confirmed by seven pairs at four sites with two pairs at each of Ambersham and Lavington Commons and one pair at Coates Common. Single birds were seen in suitable breeding habitat at three other sites late in the breeding season.

The largest party noted during the summer was 17 at Blackdown (Fernhurst) on 15 May. The only other large group was of ten, comprising two adult pairs and six juveniles, seen drinking from a garden pond at Deanlane End (Rowland’s Castle) on 12 Jun.

As the table above indicates, there were only seven records for the last five months of the year. This relative dearth of Crossbills continued into 2005 with several observers commenting on their absence from regular sites. [JAH]

1710. BULLFINCH

Pyrrhula pyrrhula

Fairly common resident. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

The following table shows, conservatively, the pattern of recorded occurrence during the year and the additional contribution made by the BTO Migration Watch/Bird Track survey. Sites are 1-km squares and numbers are monthly maxima.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County totals												
No. of birds	72	75	64	108	59	62	30	40	20	35	65	163
No. of sites	24	26	23	37	28	32	19	18	9	20	26	68
BTO Migration Watch/Bird Track												
No. of birds	1	9	19	23	15	7	-	-	10	18	7	15
No. new sites	1	5	8	11	6	3	-	-	3	9	3	9
Non-BTO Migration Watch/Bird Track												
No. of birds	71	66	45	85	44	55	30	40	10	17	59	148
No. of sites	23	21	15	26	22	29	19	18	6	11	23	59

Breeding records were roughly comparable with 2003 but, again, were a reduction on the three previous years, as shown in the following table. Numbers refer to breeding pairs.

Breeding Status	2004		2003		2002		2001		2000	
	Prs	Sites	Prs	Sites	Prs	Sites	Prs	Sites	Prs	Sites
Confirmed	13	9	16	8	37	18	15	7	32	13
Probable	21	15	15	12	25	20	30	25	25	19
Totals	34	24	31	20	62	38	45	32	57	32

There were only seven pairs in Ashdown Forest (*ca.* 10 in 2003), five pairs at Cissbury Ring (3), three pairs again at Troutbeck (Eridge), and two at Cedar Fm (Hurst Green). Elsewhere only single pairs were recorded. In addition, there were 38 single birds or pairs in suitable breeding habitat at 32 further sites. There were no breeding records from Pulborough Brooks - surprisingly - nor, again, from Footland Wood (Vinehall Street), Weir Wood Res or Marline Wood (Hastings). Counts of common breeding birds from defined areas can be found on pages 189 - 190.

Outside the breeding season, the only double figure counts were of ten at Pulborough Brooks on 1 Jan and 14 in Earham Woods on 23 Dec. These numbers are significantly down on last year. [JAH]

1717. HAWFINCH

Coccothraustes coccothraustes

Scarce breeding resident and very scarce passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The number of records received this year was a disappointing 13 compared with the 24, 18, 25 and 21 received for the four preceding years. These came from only seven sites, compared with at least ten in the four previous years. Of these sites, only three were in the east of the county and were single day sightings of single birds at Darwell Res on 25 Jan and in the Brede Valley on 1 Feb and of two birds in a Lewes garden on 26 Feb. Two sites in the west provided multiple day sightings. The area of West Dean Woods seems to be a stronghold of the species although six of the seven day-records were in January and February possibly reflecting observer attendance rather than bird behaviour. Birds were found for the second year running in Earham Woods in December.

There were no reports of even suspected breeding. The largest counts were of six birds on 4 Jan in West Dean Woods and eight in Earham Woods on 19 Dec. The species remains scarce and probably under-recorded so all records will be welcomed. [JAH]

1850. **SNOW BUNTING***Plectophenas nivalis*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar		Oct	Nov	Dec
Monthly totals	3	4	1		3	19	7
Rye Bay	3	3	-		-	8	3
Chichester Hbr	-	-	-		-	7	3
Church Norton	-	1	-		-	2	-
Other	-	-	1		3	2	1

In the first winter period, three birds at Pett Level remained from 2003 and were seen regularly until 21 Feb. An individual was seen on the sea defences at Selsey West Fields on 14 and 18 Feb and the last record for the period was a single female in the Lower Cuckmere Valley on 15 Mar.

In the second winter period, the first bird was recorded, unusually inland, by a dewpond on the Downs at Kingston (Lewes) on 18 Oct. This was followed on 26 Oct by one on the Downs at Truleigh Hill (Edburton) and another at Aldwick (Bognor). Two birds were seen on the beach at Church Norton on 13 Nov and one was seen on the 23rd flying towards Selsey Bill where it was last recorded on 25 Nov. Meanwhile, at East Head (Chichester Hbr), two first seen on 11 Nov had increased to seven by the 15th. This group remained fairly faithful to the spit but presumably wandered on occasions: one was seen at Nutbourne and six on Pilsey Island on 13 Nov. The last sighting there was of three on 29 Dec but presumably they stayed into 2005. It is, of course, feasible for the Church Norton/Selsey birds to be part of the East Head flock.

In the east, in the Rye Bay area, four birds were at the Beach Reserve (Rye Hbr LNR) on 6 Nov but a maximum of eight was counted at Pett Level on the 11th. Thereafter, one to five birds were noted in the Rye Bay area – variously between Pett Level and Camber Dunes - up to 12 Dec. Single birds were spotted at Seven Sisters CP on 13 Nov and at Newhaven Tide Mills on the 25th.

Overall numbers were low, as they have been for the past 15 years (*Birds of Sussex*). [JAH]

1857. **YELLOWHAMMER***Emberiza citrinella*

Fairly common resident. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

In the early part of the year there were double figure counts at 20 locations starting on New Year's Day with 30 at Steyning Levels. Other substantial flocks in the Adur Valley include 40 at Botolphs (Bramber) on 26 Jan, 70 at Annington (Bramber) on 15 Feb and 30 in the Lower Adur Valley and another ten at Beeding Cement Works on 3 Jan. In the Lower Cuckmere Valley 25 were feeding on barley stubble at Cradle Hill on 11 Jan, 30 were at Chyngton Fm on 24 Feb and 35 at Litlington on 15 Mar. Elsewhere, there were 70 at Chantry Hill (Storrington) on 3 Jan and at nearby Kithurst Hill 20 Yellowhammers were with Bramblings and Corn Buntings on 9 Jan while 30 were present there on 29 Feb. At Wepham Down 12 were feeding on sunflowers on 4 Jan. On 9 and 25 Feb 50 were on stubble at Wantley (Storrington). At Stanmer Park (Brighton) monthly maxima of 14 were counted on 25 Feb and 23 on 10 Mar. Ditchling Beacon and Tegdown Hill (Brighton) had

monthly maxima of 14 on 20 Mar and 17 on 28 Mar respectively. In the west 20 were on weedy maize game crop at Rookwood (West Wittering) with Reed and Corn Buntings and 15 were at Colworth Down (Chilgrove) on 12 Feb, and 40 at nearby Stapleash Fm on 22 Feb while 15 were at Tower Hill (South Harting) on 28 March. No double figure flocks were reported in the first winter period east of the Cuckmere.

Three at Beachy Head on 9 Apr may indicate spring passage as may two flying northwest at Gills Lap (Ashdown Forest) on 20 Apr, a pair flying high northwest from Belle Tout lighthouse on the same day and two at Birling Gap three days later.

The first recorded song was one at Lidsey (Bognor Regis) on 13 Feb. Allowing for duplicate records approximately 170 pairs/territorial males were recorded from 56 sites. This is a considerable reduction on 2003. With the same proviso around 50 pairs/singing males were recorded in Ashdown Forest, compared with 63 in 2003. Pulborough Brooks RSPB reported eight to 12 pairs, much reduced from 23 in 2002 and 15 in 2003. On the other hand, there were 26 Yellowhammers at Plumpton Plain on 29 May, ten pairs remained at Brighton Wild Park, there were an estimated 20 pairs at Constantia Manor (Isfield) and 12 pairs at Deanlane End (Rowland's Castle) where only three bred in 2002. BBS results for Sussex show presence in only 51% of 45 1-km squares surveyed but a very slight improvement in density to an average of 1.44 per 1-km square.

Several observers reported an apparent female singing in the Millbrook area of Ashdown Forest from late April to late July. There were three records of singing birds in August, the last at East Chiltington on the 15th.

Two birds at Beachy Head on 19 Oct, ten in a hedge in Bognor Regis on the same day and three flying west at West Hill (Hastings) in 2hr on 26 Oct may indicate autumn passage. On that date 90 were present on a 3km stretch of the Downs between Chantry Hill and Springhead Hill.

Other significant flocks in the later months were 30 on 9 Nov at East Head, over 50 on 6 Dec at The Lydds (Henfield), 30 with Corn Buntings preparing to roost at Beeding Cement Works on 9 Dec, 17 at Tegdown Hill on 14 Dec and in the north of the county 22 on 24 Dec at Pease Pottage and 60 at Carylls Fm (Faygate) on 29 Dec when 10 roosted at Burton MP. Again no double figure flocks were recorded east of the Cuckmere.

Flock sizes and breeding records do not seem to show any increase on 2003, if anything the reverse. A significant number of nil returns were received indicating that this picture is not the result of lack of observer coverage. [ACG]

1877. REED BUNTING

Emberiza schoeniclus

Fairly common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

In the early part of the year there were double figure counts at 21 locations. Notable flocks were 50 at Lee Farm (Patching) on 14 Jan, 100 feeding on crops planted for birds on 30 Jan and 11 Feb at Pett Level, 110 on a weedy maize game crop at Rookwood (West Wittering) on 9 Feb and 120 the following day at Arundel WWT. On 7 Feb, 27 were counted at a traditional roost site at Alciston while at Lidsey (Bognor Regis) 38 were feeding in reeds on 13 Feb and 21 on weedy stubble on 8 Mar. Small flocks were reported associating with Yellowhammers, Corn Buntings Bramblings and Tree Sparrows. Only single birds were reported from the Ashdown Forest sites where large winter flocks have previously been reported. A pair was found on Iping Common on 15 Jan and a female on

26 Feb. At Cliff End (Pett) there were 16 on 11 Apr with 17 on 18 May and 22 on 27 Jun while at Manor Fm (Apuldram) 11 were present from 11 Apr to 14 Jun. The presence of resident birds at many coastal sites makes it difficult to distinguish resident from passage records, however two at East Head on 6 Apr may indicate spring passage as may ten at Coldwaltham SF on 19 Apr and 12 at Sidlesham Ferry on 24 Apr.

The first singing males noted were one near Bognor Regis on 16 Feb and one in the Brede Valley on 23 Feb.

Over 250 singing males/possible territories were reported from 68 sites. Rye Harbour SSSI maintained its good numbers with 66 territories counted and Pulborough Brooks increased from 16 to 22 territories while Thorney Island maintained its nine pairs of the previous year. A *WBBS* at Aldingbourne Rife (Bognor Regis) recorded 11 territories in 4 km but there were no records to indicate the success of the large population at Combe Haven, which totalled 40 pairs in 2003.

Less expected sightings during May were four in the Weald at Shipley on the 3rd, one at Chapel Common (Liphook), two at Lavington Common on the 16th, one singing in rape at Climping on the 18th and a pair at Pendean Sand Pit (Midhurst) on the 30th. The last to be recorded singing were at Millbrook (Ashdown Forest) and Ifield on 21 Jul.

Autumn movements lasted into November. The first major influx of autumn was noted at Pett Level, with 33 on 24 Sep, while 27 were at Alciston on 28 Sep. On 27 Sep 22 were at Sidlesham Ferry and again on 9 Oct. At Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) 33 flew east on that date. A good flock of 35 was at Southease on 17 Oct and at Newhaven Tide Mills there were 15 on the same date. On 26 Oct 27 flew west in two hours at West Hill (Hastings). On the same date 30 were at Chantry Hill. On 30 Oct 15 flew east and on 5 Nov 14 flew west at Sidlesham Ferry. At Beachy Head 26 were recorded between 24 Sep and 5 Nov when four were seen.

Double figure counts were made at 16 sites in the second winter period. The only very large flocks were in the east where a regular flock on setaside at Pett Level reached 300 on 14 Dec. The highest count in the Rye area, however, was a mere 13 at Harbour Fm on 15 Oct. Elsewhere, in November, there was a flock of up to 20 birds at East Head (Chichester Hbr) and the highest count at Thorney Island was 12 on 8 Dec. There were up to 25 at Warnham LNR throughout December and 30 at Chesworth Fm (Horsham) on the last day of the year. The largest flocks in Ashdown Forest were 15 on 14 Oct at Wren's Warren and 15 on 5 Nov at Five Ways. Pulborough Brooks had a highest count of just three on 27 Nov.

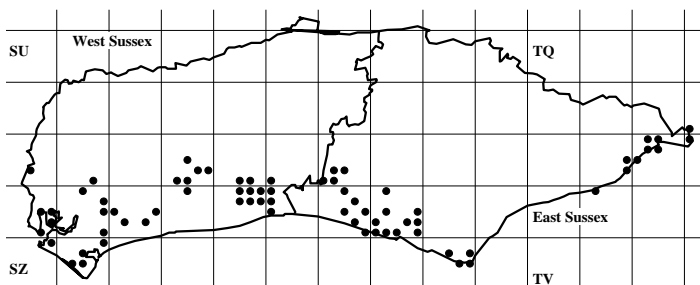
A single individual was seen at Iping Common throughout this period as in the first winter period. Up to six fed regularly at a bird table in Chichester from 16 Nov to the year-end. [ACG]

1882. CORN BUNTING

Miliaria calandra

Fairly common but decreasing resident. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

The following map illustrates the distribution of the 317 records received for c.83 1-km squares



There were larger flocks than for some time in the early part of the year lingering in some cases until late May. The largest such flock was 110 at Scotney Court Fm on 18 Jan. At Rye Hbr there were monthly maxima of 82 on 2 Jan, 80 on 21 Feb, 60 on 27 Mar, 55 on 2 Apr with a flock of 28 still present near Lime Kiln Cottage (Rye Hbr) on 7 May. Twelve were present at Newhaven on 8 Mar and 70 on the Downs nearby at Poverty Bottom on 21 Mar. Larger flocks on the Downs behind Brighton include 40 at High Park Fm near Ditchling Beacon on 25 Jan, 20 nearby at Tegdown Hill (Brighton) on 20 Mar where 17 were still present on 3 May, 22 at Plumpton Plain on 18 May with 18 still present on 29 May, and a May monthly maximum of 19 at Pickers Hill (Balsdean). Further west, in a wet setaside field at Annington (Bramber) there were 25 on 4 Jan while on the same date 50 were feeding on sunflowers at Wepham Down. On 29 Feb, 25 were in maize at Kithurst Hill. On the coastal plain in the west eight were with Reed Buntings and Yellowhammers on a weedy maize game crop at Rookwood (West Wittering), 17 roosted in reeds at Sidlesham SF on 29 Feb with 28 on the adjacent Ferry Field the next day and in Chichester Hbr 36 roosted in reeds at the Deeps on 18 Jan with 13 at Pilsey on 2 Mar.

The first singing males were two at Kithurst Hill (Storrington) on 2 Jan. From 29 Mar to 27 Jul a minimum of 55 singing males were recorded from 22 sites, a considerable reduction on last year. The species was reported to be no longer breeding at Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) and three singing males at Ovingdean was regarded as 'very low'. On the other hand, one seen on the Hampshire border near Rowland's Castle was reported as the first seen in the area since 1989. The lack of records from late April to late October on the Downs between the Arun and the A24 presumably reflects a lack of observers. Away from the Downs, in the west one male held a territory at Thorney Island and two at West Chidham. Singing birds were present at several sites south and east of Chichester including three on 23 May at Oving although those found on breeding surveys at Pagham and Yapton were not thought to be holding territory. In the east at Rye Hbr SSSI five territories were counted with a fledgling being fed on 14 Aug.

Three flew west on 26 Oct at West Hill (Hastings). Post breeding flocks in the Rye area rose from 12 on 6 Sep to monthly maxima of 18 on 27 Sep, 84 on 30 Oct, 165 on 30 Nov peaking at 204 on 9 Dec. Elsewhere, there were double figure flocks at 13 sites with Sidlesham SF attracting 90 on 14 Nov and Beeding Cement Works 70 on 9 Dec where two were singing on Christmas Eve.

It is to be hoped that the winter flock sizes are a truer reflection of the species' fortunes than the breeding season reports. [ACG]

ESCAPES and FERAL BIRDS

All records of BOU Category 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. In order to track records, particularly those involving wildfowl which are prone to wander between sites, observers are requested to include the sex and age of individuals on record forms.

The following escaped or feral birds, other than those Category C species in the main list, were recorded in the county in 2004 (unless stated otherwise). It should be noted that the identity of these birds is largely unchecked. Birds that can not be ascribed to species, or group of species are excluded. Systematic order, nomenclature and taxonomy follows Dickinson (2003). 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.
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Ogilvie, M A *et al* 2004. Non-native birds breeding in the United Kingdom in 2002. *Brit. Birds* 97:633-637.
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LESSER RHEA

Pterocnemia pennata

Flightless South American resident.

One reported at Blackstone (Henfield) on 5 May had escaped from a nearby property where a number are kept as pets.

SILVER PHEASANT

Lophura nycthemera

Resident in montane forests of China and SE Asia. Fifteen races occur, the most stunning are understandably popular in captivity.

A male was seen at Venus Wood (West Dean) on 31 May and, presumably the same, at nearby Cocking Stead Combe on 3 June. This is the second year running that one has been seen in this general area (SxBR 56:187).

FULVOUS WHISTLING DUCK

Dendrocygna bicolor

Mainly restricted to the tropics in the Americas, Africa and the Indian subcontinent. Recorded as a vagrant in Spain and France.

Three were seen in February, one on the Pells (Lewes) on 19th which stayed for about a week and two at Thorney Deeps on 20th. The coincidence of arrival dates might leave

one uneasy even if the former location does not, given that the species has wandered to southwestern Europe.

BAR-HEADED GOOSE

Anser indicus

Breeds central Asia, migrates south to northern India for winter. A favourite bird at wildfowl collections, individuals or even small groups wander on occasions. Up to five escaped pairs bred in UK in 2002 (Ogilvie et al (2004)), c.f. one in 2001.

Young birds were again seen in the west of the county during the second half of year suggesting that breeding occurred nearby. In Chichester Hbr three flew west at Apuldram on 7 Apr with one at Thorney Deeps on 22nd, four adults on 8 Aug, seven adults on 10th and six adults and two juveniles on 16th. Numbers peaked at Thorney Deeps with nine adults and two juveniles from 25 Aug-21 Sep when they all departed, although eight at Ivy Lake (Chichester GP) on 14 Nov were probably related. Away from Chichester, one seen at Scotney Court GP on 7 Jan was presumably that present in Dec 2003 (SxBR 56:188) while it or another was there during at least 23 Aug-10 Sep. One took up residence at Brighthams Farm (Partridge Green) during 12 Apr-10 Aug, while singles were seen at Pulborough Brooks on at least 18-22 Apr, 6 Jun and 29 Jul, Wiston Pond (Steyning) on 9 May, Warnham LNR during 9 Sep-19 Nov and Ifield Mill Pond on 19 Sep.

EMPEROR GOOSE

Anser canagicus

Breeding mainly confined to Alaska, winters Aleutian Islands. Present in many wildfowl collections.

One was seen on Widewater (Lancing) on 2 Apr.

SNOW GOOSE

Anser caerulescens

Breeds arctic North America, winters southern USA and Mexico. Presumed vagrants in UK most winters but greatly outnumbered by escapes. Three or four escaped pairs bred in the UK in 2002 (Ogilvie et al (2004)).

The individual present at Scotney Court GP in Dec 2003 (SxBR 56:188) remained to at least 22 Mar with one over Etchingham on 14 Apr. Two returned to Scotney Court GP on 23 Aug and remained to mid November with one on 18 Nov, the last to be recorded during the year. All were white morphs and all most likely relate to escapes from captivity. A flock of seven presumably hybrid geese were seen at Darwell Reservoir in mid Sep.

ACKLING CANADA GOOSE

Branta canadensis minima

Breeds in Alaska and winters in California.

One of this small race Canada Goose was seen at Thorney Deeps on 15 Aug and 30 Dec and at Pagham Hbr on 12 Sep.

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. Only two escaped pairs bred in UK in 2002 (Ogilvie et al (2004)), c.f. nine in 2001.

There was no evidence of breeding in the county, following three productive years. Two at Scotney Court GP in early January had been present since May 2003 (SxBR 56:189) and were joined by a third during 18-23rd, while the long staying individual returned to the Adur for its third summer on 31 May although it was seen most regularly during 6 July-23 Aug. Two were in the Burpham and Offam area of the Arun Valley in January, with one ranging between Coldwaltham and Ford during 20 Sep and 13 Dec. Other records were singles at Widewater (Lancing) on 15 Jan, Loftbridge Lake (Eastbourne) on 26 Jan, Benbow Pond (Cowdray) on 20 Jul, Brighton Marina on 31 Aug and on Henfield Levels on 16 Dec.

RUDDY SHELDUCK

Tadorna ferruginea

Breeds from Turkey across central Asia, generally wintering further south. There are isolated populations in north Africa. Perhaps controversially there have been no acceptable British records of this species since 1940. Records during 2002-03 were erroneously omitted from previous reports (and none were recorded in 2001).

2002: A drake on the River Adur at Shoreham-by-Sea on 28 Jan moved to nearby Widewater (Lancing) on 30th and remained there until at least 22 Mar. During this period it visited Brooklands (Worthing) on 3 Mar and returned there on 22 Nov, remaining until the end of the year, being seen back at Widewater on 1 Dec. One was also seen at Rye Hbr on 31 Dec.

2003: The drake at Brooklands (Worthing) remained there to 15 Feb after which it was seen at Widewater (Lancing) and the River Adur at Shoreham before finally being seen back at Brooklands on 13 Mar. One was on the roof of a barn at Alfriston on 6 May.

2004: One was at Rye Hbr LNR from 12-14 Apr while a Ruddy Shelduck x Shelduck hybrid was seen at Thorney Island during 9-23 March and on 20 Dec.

MUSCOVY DUCK

Cairina moschata

Locally common resident in forest lakes of Central and South America. Widespread in its domesticated form. Two escaped pairs bred in UK in 2002 (Ogilvie et al (2004)).

An adult and four juveniles were seen on Swanbourne Lake (Arundel) on 7 Nov.

WOOD DUCK

Aix sponsa

Breeds N USA, winters S USA. Common in wildfowl collections. Not recorded in the UK as a vagrant although some individuals seen in the southwest of the country might conceivably be. Two escaped pairs bred in UK in 2002 (Ogilvie et al (2004)).

A male was seen at Shipley on 28 Apr, a pair were with the Mandarins on Parham House Lake on 26 Sep and up to two males were recorded at Pulborough Brooks during 14 Oct-15 Nov.

CHILOE WIGEON

Anas sibilatrix

Common resident in southern South America. Commonly kept in wildfowl collections.

One, presumably a male, was seen at Greatham Bridge on 18 Sep, Sidlesham Ferry Long Pool on 5 Nov and Drayton GP (Chichester) on 28 Nov.

CINNAMON TEAL

Anas cyanoptera

Populations in western North and South America breed in higher latitudes and winter mainly in the tropics.

A male was seen at Udimore on 4 Jul and at Rye Hbr LNR on 14 Aug (by which time it was in eclipse plumage).

SPECKLED TEAL

Anas flavirostris

Common in Andes and southern South America.

One considered to be of the central Andean race oxyptera, known as Sharp-billed Teal, was seen at Barcombe Res on 12 Dec. This is the third year running this species has been recorded in the county; the record in 2002 was also at Barcombe Res while that in 2003 was on Steyning Levels.

LANNER FALCON

Falco biarmicus

Mainly resident in southeast Europe, Africa and west Asia.

Singles were seen in West Dean Woods during 9-19 Aug and 23 Dec, Pagham Hbr on 17 Oct and at Beachy Head on 6 Nov. The West Dean Woods and Beachy Head individuals were considered to be of the North African race *erlangeri*. The former was a juvenile (then first-winter) while the latter was a male and presumably that seen there in 2003 (SxBR 56:190).

SAKER FALCON

Falco cherrug

Mainly scarce resident from central Europe to N India, common on the Tibetan plateau. Popular with falconers.

Singles were seen at Beachy Head on 1 May, West Dean Woods on 6 Jun and Amberley Wild Brooks on 26 Dec. Three were also seen in 2003 including one at Amberley (SxBR 56:191).

HARRIS'S HAWK

Parabuteo unicinctus

Widespread but patchily distributed from the southern USA to Patagonia. Popular with falconers and often flown at public displays.

One was seen at Deanlane End (Rowlands Castle) from at least 2-11 Oct.

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.

A pale morph was seen over West Dean Woods on 9 May and it, or another, at Singleton Forest on 12-16 Jun.

DIAMOND DOVE

Geopelia cuneata

Common in the arid interior of Australia. Widespread in captivity where they apparently enjoy sunbathing.

One was seen in a garden in Chichester on 15 Jun.

COCKATIEL

Nymphicus hollandicus

Common Australian nomad. One of the commonest aviary birds.

Just one was recorded during the year, in Broadwater (Worthing) on 30 Jul. Recent years have produced between 5-9 records per annum.

YELLOW-CROWNED PARROT

Amazona ochrocephala

Generally common in northern South America. This is one of the most widespread members of the Amazona genus.

One was recorded at Pagham Hbr Information Centre on 28 Aug.

SPANGLED COTINGA

Cotinga cayana

Resident in the humid forest canopy of the Amazon basin. One of the most unexpected escapes of all time?

One was seen in a garden in Billingshurst on 2 and 13 Jul. The bird was photographed sitting on a lawn which, being an arboreal species, makes the record even more unusual.

RED-BILLED LEIOTHRIX

Leiothrix lutea

Montane resident from the central Himalayas to eastern China. As well as beautiful plumage this species has a delightful song.

One was trapped in Whitebread Hollow (Beachy Head) on 3 Sep.

PURPLE GLOSSY STARLING

Lamprolanius purpureus

Common in the more open areas of West Africa.

One was seen and photographed in a garden in Southwick on 17-18 Feb.

ZEBRA FINCH

Poephila guttata

Common resident or nomad in E Indonesia and Australia. One of the commonest cage birds and a prolific breeder.

One was recorded at Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) on 21 Apr.

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.

A pair were seen at Offham (Lewes) on 12 Sep. This is the fourth year in succession that the species has been recorded in the county.

YELLOW-CROWNED BISHOP

Euplectes afer

Widespread in sub-Saharan Africa.

One was recorded in Southwater on 29 Jun.

NORTHERN/SOUTHERN RED BISHOP

Euplectes franciscanus/orix

Widespread in sub-Saharan Africa, either north (franciscanus) or south (orix) of the Equator.

A male was seen visiting a garden on Thorney Island from 4 Sep to early Oct.

Arrival and departure dates of summer visitors, 2004

	First recorded date			Last recorded date		
	2004	Prior to 2004	10yr average (± SD in days)	2004	Prior to 2004	10yr average (±SD in days)
Garganey	15 Mar	02 Feb	28 Feb (± 16)	29 Sep	13 Dec	30 Sep (± 13)
Quail	22 May	08 Feb	14 May (± 23)	08 Aug	31 Oct	18 Sep (± 32)
Osprey	01 Apr	07 Mar	24 Mar (± 11)	17 Oct	09 Dec	19 Oct (± 15)
Hobby	21 Mar ²	03 Apr	10 Apr (± 9)	16 Sep	06 Nov	21 Oct (± 14)
Little Ringed Plover	14 Mar	06 Mar	18 Mar (±4)	08 Oct ¹	08 Oct	21 Sep (± 11)
Wood Sandpiper	18 Apr	10 Apr	24 Apr (± 11)	21 Sep	16 Nov	29 Sep (± 23)
Pomarine Skua	15 Apr	10 Mar	22 Apr (±1 8)	30 Jun	31 Dec	21 Sep (± 85)
Roseate Tern	15 May	17 Apr	30 Apr (± 9)	04 Jul	30 Sep	31 Jul (± 27)
Common Tern	01 Apr	21 Mar	28 Mar (± 5)	31 Oct	26 Nov	30 Oct (± 14)
Arctic Tern	09 Apr	05 Apr	11 Apr (± 4)	31 Oct	23 Nov	29 Oct (± 19)
Common/Arctic Tern	02 Apr	10 Mar	31 Mar (± 12)	13 Oct	31 Dec	26 Oct (± 20)
Little Tern	10 Apr	02 Apr	10 Apr (± 5)	29 Oct	04 Nov	29 Sep (± 15)
Black Tern	02 Apr ²	04 Apr	13 Apr (± 7)	23 Oct	21 Nov	06 Oct (± 10)
Turtle Dove	08 Mar ²	22 Mar	08 Apr (± 15)	19 Oct	18 Dec	12 Oct (± 8)
Cuckoo	07 Apr	15 Mar	03 Apr (± 6)	22 Sep	11 Nov	26 Sep (± 15)
Nightjar	01 May	08 Apr	28 Apr (± 9)	08 Sep	05 Nov	22 Sep (± 20)
Swift	16 Apr ³	07 Apr	14 Apr (± 5)	23 Sep	24 Nov	15 Oct (± 21)
Wryneck	13 Apr	09 Mar	10 Apr (± 15)	16 Oct	02 Nov	05 Oct (± 12)
Sand Martin	13 Mar	04 Mar	10 Mar (± 5)	01 Dec	05 Dec	27 Oct (± 15)
Swallow	18 Feb	04 Feb	07 Mar (± 15)	30 Nov	28 Dec	30 Nov (± 9)
House Martin	09 Feb	01 Feb	14 Mar (± 16)	07 Nov	18 Dec	13 Nov (± 9)
Tree Pipit	29 Mar	17 Mar	29 Mar (± 5)	09 Oct	09 Nov	21 Oct (± 7)
Yellow Wagtail	31 Mar	10 Mar	22 Mar (± 8)	26 Oct	23 Nov	0 Nov (± 15)
Nightingale	14 Apr	21 Mar	05 Apr (± 5)	04 Sep	19 Oct	14 Sep (± 9)
Redstart	21 Mar	13 Mar	27 Mar (± 6)	17 Oct	11 Dec	26 Oct (± 18)
Whinchat	16 Apr	18 Feb	27 Mar (± 23)	06 Nov	02 Dec	05 Nov (± 6)
Wheatear	01 Mar	13 Feb	02 Mar (± 7)	01 Nov	19 Dec	12 Nov (± 15)
Ring Ouzel	27 Mar	02 Feb	15 Mar (± 16)	12 Nov	26 Dec	17 Nov (± 10)
Grasshopper Warbler	20 Apr	02 Apr	10 Apr (± 6)	30 Oct	01 Nov	17 Oct (± 10)
Sedge Warbler	23 Mar ²	24 Mar	30 Mar (± 5)	09 Oct	29 Oct	12 Oct (± 13)
Reed Warbler	07 Apr	04 Apr	08 Apr (± 3)	30 Oct	13 Nov	31 Oct (± 9)
Garden Warbler	09 Apr	30 Mar	06 Apr (± 7)	17 Oct	16 Nov	20 Oct (± 13)
Lesser Whitethroat	16 Apr	04 Apr	12 Apr (± 7)	13 Oct	21 Nov	14 Oct (± 13)
Whitethroat	06 Apr	19 Mar	01 Apr (± 5)	15 Nov	17 Dec	18 Oct (± 15)
Wood Warbler	01 May	07 Apr	20 Apr (± 7)	07 Oct ⁴	01 Oct	08 Sep (± 14)
Willow Warbler	18 Mar	04 Mar	14 Mar (± 6)	24 Nov	26 Dec	26 Oct (± 15)
Spotted Flycatcher	29 Apr	08 Apr	23 Apr (± 10)	09 Oct	18 Nov	13 Oct (± 8)
Pied Flycatcher	14 Apr	01 Apr	08 Apr (± 6)	14 Oct	01 Nov	03 Oct (± 8)

Departure and arrival dates of winter visitors, 2004

	Last recorded date			First recorded date		
	2004	Prior to 2004	10 yr average (\pm SD) in days	2004	Prior to 2004	10 yr average (\pm SD) in days
Bewick's Swan	09 Mar	26 Apr	10 Mar (\pm 8)	01 Nov	15 Oct	06 Nov (\pm 12)
White-fronted Goose	22 Mar	17 Apr	18 Mar (\pm 19)	6 Nov	12 Sep	13 Oct (\pm 48)
Long-tailed Duck	13 Jun	14 Jun	07 May (\pm 34)	26 Oct	23 Aug	23 Oct (\pm 24)
Velvet Scoter	05 May	15 Jun	16 May (\pm 14)	02 Oct	12 Aug	16 Oct (\pm 20)
Goldeneye	30 Apr	23 May	22 Apr (\pm 19)	11 Oct	06 Aug	07 Oct (\pm 18)
Smew	13 Mar	24 Apr	10 Mar (\pm 23)	27 Nov	03 Nov	02 Dec (\pm 23)
Goosander	16 Apr	22 May	03 Apr (\pm 35)	13 Nov	12 Sep	05 Nov (\pm 25)
Black-throated Diver	26 May	21 Jun	30 May (\pm 12)	06 Nov	03 Aug	15 Oct (\pm 28)
Great Northern Diver	18 May	21 Jun	12 May (\pm 24)	26 Sep	16 Sep	25 Oct (\pm 25)
Red-necked Grebe	20 Apr	19 Jun	08 May (\pm 14)	15 Sep	18 Aug	08 Sep (\pm 10)
Hen Harrier	01 May	19 Jun	15 May (\pm 18)	14 Sep	04 Aug	04 Sep (\pm 19)
Purple Sandpiper	02 May	26 May	11 May (\pm 8)	21 Jul	01 Jul	27 Jul (\pm 33)
Jack Snipe	02 Apr	19 May	29 Apr (\pm 14)	29 Aug	24 Aug	19 Sep (\pm 17)
Water Pipit	20 Mar	28 May	05 Apr (\pm 22)	25 Oct	01 Sep	26 Oct (\pm 8)
Fieldfare	03 May	05 Jun	27 Apr (\pm 12)	08 Sep	13 Aug	24 Sep (\pm 20)
Redwing	07 Apr	26 May	14 Apr (\pm 17)	26 Sep	06 Aug	19 Sep (\pm 15)
Great Grey Shrike	23 Apr	14 May	03 Apr (\pm 20)	11 Oct	26 Sep	18 Oct (\pm 7)
Brambling	27 Apr	12 May	21 Apr (\pm 6)	04 Oct	13 Sep	30 Sep (\pm 7)

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 five years. The January and July dates are to be found as footnotes. The large numbers of terns seen at seawatches 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 2002 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 ± 7 means that 64% of the dates fall within 7 days of that average.

1. Equals the earliest county record.
2. Earliest county record.
3. In addition, a Swift, 'believed to be of this species', was seen on the very early date of 2 Mar.
4. Latest county record.
5. Equals the latest county record.

SUMMARY OF SOME COMMON BREEDING BIRD COUNTS.

Figures relate to pairs or territories. The use of a small hyphen (-) does not necessarily mean that the species was absent. nc = breeding confirmed but no count made. ® = present during the breeding season but no territories identified. np = confirmed as not present. + indicates a minimum count. p = probable breeding.

SPECIES	AL	AN	AW	AY	BC	BP	DR	HC	HO	HP	MF	PB	RH	SC	SF	SP	WP
Mute Swan	2	-	®	-	-	1	®	-	-	-	1	3+	3	-	-	3	-
Mallard	5	-	®	-	np	-	2+	®	-	®	7	®	27+	1	-	15	-
Sparrowhawk	-	-	®	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	®	-	-	1
Kestrel	-	-	1+	-	-	-	-	®	-	-	1	®	3	1	-	1	1
Gr Partridge	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	4+	-	-	2	-
Pheasant	-	-	®	-	2	-	nc	®	-	-	9	®	12+	-	-	10	2
Moorhen	8	-	®	-	1	-	2+	2	-	-	6	®	45	-	-	10	-
Coot	-	-	-	-	-	7	1	-	-	-	1	®	46	-	-	13	-
Woodcock	-	-	-	-	-	-	1+	®	-	-	-	1+	-	-	-	-	-
Redshank	®	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7+	13	-	-	-	-
Stock Dove	-	-	®	-	1	-	1+	2	-	nc	p	®	®	-	-	1	1
Woodpigeon	-	-	®	-	3	-	6+	-	-	nc	12	®	nc	®	nc	7	73
Col Dove	-	-	-	-	np	-	-	1	-	nc	2	-	nc	-	®	2	39
Turtle Dove	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	®	-	-	-	np	6+	-	-	-	-
Cuckoo	-	-	®	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	1	®	4	®	-	-	-
Tawny Owl	-	-	®	-	-	-	1+	®	-	-	-	2+	-	-	-	-	-
Grn Wdpcker	-	-	2+	-	1	-	3+	1	-	p	2	4	1+	2*	-	4	2
G S Wdpcker	-	-	2+	-	1	-	2+	3	-	p	1	3	®	1*	®	1	2
Sky Lark	-	-	®	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	®	32	-	-	8	12
Swallow	-	®	-	-	-	-	nc	1	-	-	2	1+	-	-	-	-	-
Meadow Pipit	-	-	®	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22	21	-	-	-	-
Tree Pipit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
Pied Wagtail	-	-	-	-	-	-	nc	®	-	-	1	®	-	-	-	1	-
Wren	-	-	®	1	8	-	8+	9	-	nc	40	®	35	19	13	28	102
Dunnock	-	-	®	-	1	-	3+	2	-	nc	20	®	39	®	6	7	58
Robin	-	-	®	-	20	-	20	25	-	nc	35	®	5+	28	9	16	125
Nightingale	-	®	3+	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	5+	-	-	-	-	-
Blackbird	-	-	®	-	6	22	13	10	27	nc	21	6	31+	6	7	22	113
Song Thrush	-	-	3+	-	2	12	5+	4	13	1+	5	9+	6	2	3	2	16
Mistle Thrush	-	-	®	-	-	-	1	®	-	-	-	2+	-	®	-	-	-
Sedge Wblr	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	11	104	-	-	2	-
Reed Warbler	63	-	2+	-	-	-	2+	-	-	-	20	1+	168	-	-	49	-
L hitethroat	®	-	2+	-	-	-	1+	-	-	-	1	4+	7	-	®	1	2
Whitethroat	8	-	5+	-	1	-	nc	-	-	-	8	15	69	-	1	5	24
Garden Wblr	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	3+	®	-	-	-	1
Blackcap	-	-	4+	-	3	-	4	4	-	p	6	6+	2+	3	4	5	17
Chiffchaff	-	-	5	-	3	-	18	8	-	1	5	®	2+	3	9	8	21
Willow Wblr	-	-	5	-	np	-	5	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	-
Goldcrest	-	-	4	-	np	-	1	1	-	1	1	10	-	5	-	-	-
Sp. Flycatcher	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	®	-	-	-
L-tailed Tit	-	-	-	-	1	-	2+	1	-	1+	1	®	-	-	-	-	8
Marsh Tit	-	-	2	1	1	-	2	1	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-

SPECIES																		
Coal Tit	-	-	®	-	np	-	-	®	-	-	-	®	-	4	-	-	-	-
Blue Tit	-	4	®	27	15	-	8+	13	3	nc	11	®	nc	14	6	15	61	
Great Tit	-	1	®	15	6	-	9+	12	1	nc	8	®	nc	9	6	11	52	
Nuthatch	-	-	2	2	2	-	5	1	-	1	-	3+	-	1	®	-	-	-
Treecreeper	-	-	®	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	®	-	2	-	-	-	-
Jay	-	-	®	-	1	-	-	nc	1	-	-	1	4	-	1	®	1	2
Magpie	-	-	®	-	np	-	2+	-	-	1	6	6	p	1	®	6	40	
Jackdaw	-	-	®	-	-	-	-	®	-	-	3	-	20	®	-	-	-	1
Carriion Crow	-	-	®	-	2	-	2+	-	-	nc	5	7+	1	4	-	6	16	
Starling	-	-	®	-	-	-	nc	®	-	-	2	®	2	-	1+	2	10	
Hse Sparrow	-	2	-	-	-	-	1+	1	-	-	3	p	-	-	1+	1	15	
Chaffinch	-	-	®	-	10	-	33	5	-	1+	43	®	15+	19	11	36	35	
Greenfinch	-	-	®	-	1	13	1+	2	6	1+	7	6	10+	2	1	13	38	
Goldfinch	-	-	®	-	np	-	2+	®	-	-	5	8	nc	-	-	1	2	
Linnet	-	-	®	-	np	-	1+	-	-	-	3	10	15+	-	®	2	13	
Bullfinch	-	-	®	-	np	-	1+	1	-	-	1	4+	-	-	1	-	3	
Yell-hammer	-	-	®	-	1	-	1+	-	-	-	6	8+	-	-	®	2	10	
Reed Bunting	11	-	20	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	3	22	66	-	-	4	-	

* = additional to the Summary of Heathland Breeding Bird Counts (page 191)

Key to Sites:

- AL Aldingbourne & Lidsey Rife (Bognor). 4 km of Water Bird Survey.
- AN Arlington Reservoir.
- AW Amberley Wildbrooks (including Rackham Plantation)
- AY Ardingly Reservoir.
- BC Barns Copse (Binstead). 16.1 ha mixed deciduous woodland.
- BP Brooklands Park (Lancing).
- DR Darwell Reservoir.
- HC High Chimneys Estate (Battle). 24 ha of deciduous woodland with some grassland.
- HO Three Corner Copse & Hove Park (Hove).
- HP Hotham Park (Bognor).
- MF Marsh Farm (Binstead). 67 ha mixed farmland.
- PB Pulborough Brooks RSPB Reserve.
- RH Rye Harbour LNR & SSSI recording area.
- SC Stedham Common. 39.7 ha heathland with some woodland.
- SF Scobell's Farm (Barcombe). 10.4 ha grass farm with some woodland.
- SP Sefter Farm (Pagham). 95 ha mixed farm.
- WP Brighton Wild Park (including Hollingbury Camp and Golf Course and parts of nature reserve). Downland scrub, farmland and setaside.

The following site was new for 2004:

- SC Stedham Common

Details of breeding bird surveys were from: TPR Crane, RG Harris, JC & CA Holt, L & R Knight, Dr. JA Newnham, RT Pepper, JF Smitherman, D Thurgood, PJ Whitcomb, PJ Wilson and Dr. B Yates.

SUMMARY OF HEATHLAND BREEDING BIRD COUNTS.

Thames Basin & Wealden Heaths Breeding Bird Survey 2004 – West Sussex.

Species	Site	AC	B	CC	CL	DG	HC	IC	LS	SC	WC	WD	WH
Hobby		1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Woodcock		7	-	-	-	4	-	5	4	3	1	1	-
Stock Dove		-	-	-	1	-	-	1	2	1	-	2	-
Turtle Dove		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Nightjar		18	1	2	-	10	1	6	2	2	6	2	1
Green Woodpecker		4	-	-	2	4	3	2	3	2	4	5	2
Great Sp. Woodpecker		2	-	-	4	10	4	3	5	2	2	3	1
Wood Lark		5	1	-	2	2	-	4	5	2	4	4	1
Sky Lark		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1
Tree pipit		10	5	-	1	5	-	10	11	1	11	2	1
Redstart		-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	-
Stonechat		10	2	-	1	4	-	7	1	1	8	7	2
Dartford Warbler		22	1	-	-	4	-	13	2	6	3	6	-
Whitethroat		11	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	6	1
Siskin		-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Linnet		15	2	-	-	2	-	10	-	1	3	4	3
Lesser Redpoll		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Crossbill		2	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Yellowhammer		22	-	-	2	12	5	7	-	1	6	4	-
Reed Bunting		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Figures relate to pairs or territories. The small hyphen (-) indicates that no territories were identified or no survey was made for these species.

Key to Sites:

- AC Ambersham & Heyshott Commons.
- B Blackdown.
- CC Chapel Common (Liphook)
- CL Coates Common & Lords Piece (Fittleworth).
- DG Duncton & Graffham Commons (Lavington)
- HC Hesworth Common.
- IC Iping Common.
- LS Linchmere & Stanley Commons.
- SC Stedham Common
- WC Woolbeding Common.
- WD Weavers Down (Liss).
- WH West Heath.

The following sites were not surveyed in 2004:

- MC Midhurst Common
- SW Sullington Warren
- HC Heath Common
- WnC Washington Common

Details of breeding bird surveys were from: JTA Bagley, P James, HJA Lee, JL Nobbs, A Perry, Dr. BM Rogers.

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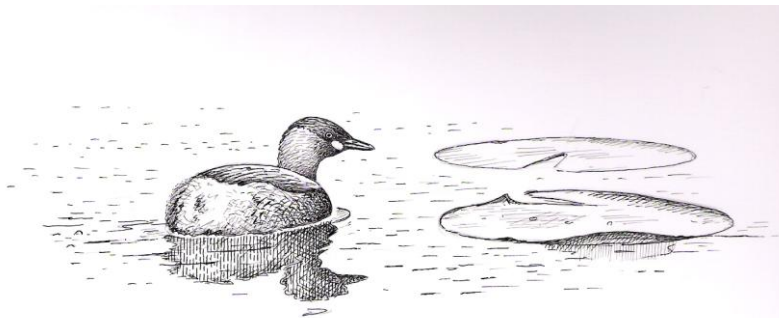
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AC Armitage	PJ Biggs	J. Chattaway	C. Davis
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PT Atkey	JM Birdsey	K. Clark	CH Dean
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W. Attridge	S. Blackman	BR Clay	A. Deleiros (ADE)
M. Attwood	W. Blake	PJ Clay	MN Denness
MF Austin	M. Blencowe	C. Cockburn	MJH Denny
G. Avison	M. Boella	GA Cockburn	RH Dexter
	B. Boize	M. Collier	B. Dickeson
JTA Bagley	R. Borwick (RB)	CB Collins	A. Dinsdale
GR Bagnell	JF Boulcott	CF Collins	S. Diserens
J. Bailey	J. Bozic	M. Collins	C. Dixon
JL Baker	RC Bradbury	MA Collins	K. Downer
CF Ball	CLG Brand	HM Colmer	RK Dray
C. Ballard	MN Brayshaw	J. Colton	E. Drewett
BC Baltera	PM Brayshaw	AS Cook	NA Driver
PC Bance	D. Bridges	DC Cooke	S. Duffin
MI Banks	C. Brooks	C. Cooper	DP Dunk
S. Banks	D. Brothwell	D. Cooper (DC)	S. Dunsmore-Rouse
MJ Bannerman	P. Brown	DR Cooper	N. Durrance
DG Barber	SJ Brown	I. Cooper	
W. Barber	S. Bryson	J. Cooper	M. Eade
CJR Barfield	MR Buchanan	JF Cooper	B. Easlea
G. Barker	D. Buckingham (DBu)	KA Cooper	SD Eden
J. Barker	PW Bulfield	N. Cooper	RDM Edgar
J. Barker	KR Burch	C. Corrigan	PJ Edmonds
IT Barnard	M. Burnside	AP Cotton	R. Edwards
R. Barnett		D. Cousins	SRJ Edwards
PH Bateup	T. Callaway	JR Cowser	TJ Edwards
GS Batho	IK Callister	B. Cox	L. English
S. Bayley (SB)	J. Carey	D. Cracroft	P. Etheridge
N. Bayly (NB)	A. Carter	TPR Crane	GM Evans
R. Beal	BJ Carter	AD Crawford	J. Evans
K. Beckett	HM Carter	PR Cullen	RD Evans
PA Beckett	RG Carter	J. Curson (JC)	SJ Evans
S. Bedford	D. Cary	SPM Curson	M. Eveleigh
PR Belchamber	T. Castle-Stuart	S. Cutt	
P. Bennett (PB)	M. Cattell	W. Cutting	RJ Fairbank
C. Bentley	I. Cattermole		JA Feest
VP Bentley	AG Chalcraft	RC Dalrymple	BJ Fellows
K. Benyon-Tinker	GL Champion	J. Darke	I. Ferguson
M. Berridge	C. Chapman	J. Davies	D. Fletcher

G. Flinn	S. Hackett	T. Howard-Jones	AR Kitson
BF Forbes	RK Hagggar	DH Howey	SJ Knapp
T. Forbes	MP Hall	DG Hughes	L. Knight
A. Ford	R. Hamblett	M. Hughes (MHu)	R. Knight (Rex)
M. Ford	CH Hamilton	P. Hughes (PHu)	Dr. R. Knight (RK)
P. Ford	J. Hamilton (JHa)	PH Hughes	RW Knight (RWK)
P. Forsdick (PFo)	M. Hampton	N. Humphrys	M. Kohn
TJ Forward	M. Hanson	J. Hunt	K. Kraaijeveld
CJ Fox	R. Harman (RH)	J. Hunt	
D. Francis (DF)	D. Harper	I. Hunter	M. Lacey
D. Frankland	NG Harris	AM Hutson	M. Lambert
MG Freeman	RG Harris		MP Lanaway
PG Friston	M. Harvey	RA Ives	DC Lang
	WG Harvey		D. Larkin
SM Gamble	JR Havers	BS Jackson	O. Laugharne
S. Gardiner	MJ Hawkins	DI Jackson	M. Lea
RDJ Gardner	KC Hearne	RA Jackson	HJA Lee
S. Gardner	MJ Helps	B. James	M. Leggatt
D. Garrard	A. Heneghan	P. James	MP LeGrys
S. Garrard	R. Henning (RHe)	G. Jarvis	DE Lester
DT Gasson	P. Henry	G. Jenner	J. Lewin
L. Gates	PKW Herbert	DJ Jode	K. Lewis
A. Giacomelli	J. Heyes	PJ Johnson	SJ Lewis
BR Gilmore	M. Hibbard	RJ Johnson	TJ Lincoln
CW Glanfield	Al Hillman	A. Johnston	SH Linington
DJ Golds	DA Hilton	I. Johnston	D. Linksted
DJ Goldsmith	JA Hobson	KM Johnston	D. Loftus
J. Goodridge	AJ Holcombe	PE Jones	M. Love
S. Goodsall	BJ Holcombe	RJ Jones	CN Lowe
H. Gordon	AM Holden	J. Joyce	RE Lowe
SR Goss	R. Hollins		CD Lowmass
N. Goulden	D. Hollow	ME Kalaher	H. Lucking
J. Gowen	LG Holloway	B. Kelley	PJ Luffingham
JS Gowers	M. Holmes	RS Kelly	C. Lutman
GW Gowlett	RG Holmes	G. Kennett	J. Lynch
AS Grace	CA Holt	R. Kent	
D. Green	JC Holt	DE Killick	DW MacDonald
P. Green	CA Holter	D. King	T. MacPherson
NM Greenaway	C. Hooker	JW King	D. Madgin (DM)
RR Greenhalf	CE Hope	M. King	M. Manns
DW Gritt	H. Horne	RJ King	C. Marchant
AJ Guest	A. Horton	AR Kingston	R. Marchant (RM)
AC Gutteridge	J. Houlden	J. Kirk	C. Marrable
	A. House (AH)	M. Kirk	R. Marriott
K. Hackett	M. Howard (MHo)	RM & M Kirk	PC Marston

PF Marten	E. Otter	M. Pugh	M. Shaft
G. Martin	E. Outhwaite	J. Pullen	JP Shaughnessey
J. Martin	RA Owen		MJ Silk
JM Maskell	RC Owen	B. Rackstraw	J. Simons (JSI)
SP Maskell		TK Rackstraw	A. Simpson
R. Mason	J. Pace	PN Ray	IM Simpson
DW Mawford	JM Page	CJ Raymond	K. Simpson
D. Maxwell	MI Page	M. Reader	RN Simpson
K. May	A. Parfitt	J. Redmond	R. Slater
IV Maynard-smith	J. Parker	RH Relph	M. Smart (MSm)
A. Mayo	TW Parmenter	JE Richardson	D. Smith
Mr McIntyre	R. Parsons	SI Robathan	DI Smith
Y. McIntyre	RA Pask (Bob)	G. Roberts	DJ Smith
SE Mckenzie	SJ Patton	GCM Roberts	PA Smith
JN McLaren	PN Paul	R. Robinson	RF Smith
N. Merchant	R. Pawley	S. Robinson	RJ Smith
M. Meredith	M. Payne	SJ Robinson	S. Smith (SS)
B. Metcalfe	D. Penfold	BM Rogers	SJ Smith
B. Michie	B. Pennock	L. Rolfe	JF Smitherman
JR Miles	RF Penticost	M. Rolfe	MA Snelling
NB Mitchell	A. Pepper	R. Ronaldson	G. Solle
O. Mitchell	RT Pepper	C. Roper	P. Spiers
P. Moon	A. Perry	PP Roper	I. Standivan
M. Mordaunt	DM Perry	J. Ross	JC Steedman
G. Morgan	CB Peverett	MK Rossor	JM Steedman
R. Moriss	AP Phillips	G. Rottner	P. Stent
D. Morrison	MJ Phillips	C. Rowney	D. Stevens
BM Mortlock	SM Phillips	R. Rowsby	P. Stevens
DC Mortlock	PJ Plant	J. Rowsby	PJ Strangeman
R. Moynihan	A. Podmore	SJR Rumsey	P. Streatfield
I. Muldoon	D. Pomeroy	M. Runchman	S. Strudwick
D. Mutters	C. Poole	MG Russell	C. Sutton
	D. Pooley	Rye Bay RG	S. Sutton (SSu)
C. Naylor	M. Pooley		
DK Newnham	NJN Pope	I. Sandell	WIE Tagg
JA Newnham	DA Potter	RF Sanderson	JB Tatum
JL Nobbs	A. Powell	RJ Sandison	CA Taylor
K. Noble (KN)	HDV Prendergast	JM Saunders	M. Taylor
K. Noble (Ken)	R. Price	RJ Saunders	R. Taylor
R. Norman	C. Prince	M. Scampion	R. Taylor
	MG Prince	J. Scates	R. Taylor
JF O Driscoll	RW Prior	RE Scott	SR Taylor
M. O Shea	D. Pritty	M. Scott-ham	CR Tazzyman
G. Osborne	S. Prosser	CM Seaton	A. Thomas
N. Ostler	H. Pugh	MV Sennitt	PP Thompson

PS Thompson	C. Vince	PJ Wells	RLC Williamson
RJ Thorne		P. Wells	R. Willows
D. Thurgood	JE Wakeling	AJ Wende	J. Willsher
R. Thurlow	CA Walker	R. Wergan	JR Willsher
R. Ticehurst	D. Walker	DR West	AR Wilson
R. Tofts	W. Wallis	JD Weston	J. Wilson (JW)
CE Trollope	JP Walmsley	S. Wheatley	PJ Wilson (PJW)
JE Trowell	BG Walter	IJ Whitcomb	TJ Wilson
WH Truckle	S. Walters	PJ Whitcomb (PJWh)	I. Wiltshire
M. Tucker	JC Walton	I. White	CW Woodburn
	N. Ward	AM Whitman	C. Woollard
ST Underdown	C. Watkins	JH Whitman	RJ Woollard
MC Upstone	P. Watkins	S. Whittaker	SK Woolley
C. Upton	AB Watson	MF Wildridge	C. Wright (CW)
ED Urquhart	AE Watson	DC Williams	E. Wright
	P. Watson	JA Williams	
P. Varkala	RF Watson	T. Williams	BJ Yates
MF Verrall	P. Webster	R. Williamson	M. Yates



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, BN43 5UD. Counts of known heronries are given in the systematic list, contributors in 2004 were: M Baggs, CJR Barfield, S. Bayley, D Buckingham, R Henning, RG Holmes, R Knight, DC Lang, PJ Luffingham, DJ Madgin, Mrs BM Mortlock, Dr JA Newnham, M Scott-ham, I Standivan, S Sutton, M Turner, 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, BN25 3EW. 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: P. Atkey, Mrs B. Atkey, J Badley, D Ball, PC Bance, C Barfield, J Barnard, G. Bentley, Mrs J. Bentley, K Benyon-Tinker, Dr C Brooks, T Callaway, D Carey, R Carver, Dr J Chapman, T Clements, GA Cockburn, Mrs S Cocker, CB Collins, C Cook, I Cooper, T Dalrymple, R Davison, Ms A de Potier, G Durey, AR Eales, P Edwards, S Evans, Dr B Fellows, M Freeman, R French, D Fry, R Gardner, S. Gilbert, J Glover, DJ Golds, J Gowen, NM Greenaway, RR Greenhalf, G Griffin, RG Harris, JL Herring, R Hill, DA & Mrs SR Hilton, M. Holmes, J Houlden, P Hughes, Mrs B James, P Jones, R Kent, A Kirkwood, R Knight, DC Lang, HJA Lee, P Lees, M Love, CD Lowmass, N Mitchell, R Morris, Mrs BM Mortlock, Dr JA Newnham, Ms A Parfitt, Ms S Patton, RT Pepper, J Phillips, M Phillips, B Puttock, T Quittenden, Mrs P Ramsey, S Richardson, H Roberts, R Robinson, S Robinson, R. Satchell, P Selby, J Sharpe, A and Mrs IM Simpson, Ms C Skinner, DI Smith, M Smith, P Smith, S Smith, Miss CA Taylor, S Taylor, JE Trowell, P Twine, S Underdown, ED Urquhart, Ms C Vince, D Walker, M Welcome, J Weston, B Williams, RLC Williamson, J Willsher, PJ Wilson, R Wingfield, H Wingfield-Hayes, K and Mrs J Wright, Dr BJ Yates and S Younger.

Winter Gull Roost Survey (WinGS): The organisation of this national survey was arranged by Dr JA Cocks; participants were:- Ms JL Baker, PC Bance, C Bentley, BR Clay, CB Collins, JR Cowser, J Curson, Ms A de Potier, RDM Edgar, Dr BJ Fellows, M Ford, Mrs P Ford, P Forsdick, J Gowen, NM Greenaway, RG Harris, LG Holloway, M Holmes, CE Hope, Miss L Knight, R Knight, DC Lang, HJA Lee, PJ Luffingham, M McKeand, D Madgin, JM Maskell, Mrs SP Maskell, Dr JA Newnham, RT Pepper, MV Sennitt, DI Smith, S Smith, I Standivan, SR Taylor, Dr AB Watson, PJ Whitcomb, RLC Williamson, CW Woodburn and Dr BJ Yates.

Breeding Bird Survey: This BTO annual national breeding survey, based on selected one km squares, was organised in Sussex for 2004 by Dr AB Watson. In 2005 the survey in Sussex was expanded and is now coordinated by Mrs Helen Crabtree, 3 Myrtle Cottages, Ardingly Road, Cuckfield, West Sussex, RH17 5HD.

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, GU28 0HR. Thanks are due to the following observers, JTA Bagley, P James, HJA Lee, JL Nobbs, A Perry and Dr. BM Rogers.

Nightjar Survey: This national survey was co-ordinated in Sussex by Dr JA Cocks with the assistance of the 10 km stewards. Thanks go to the following for their participation:- PT Atkey, JTA Bagley, DG Barber, PR Belchamber, Mrs VP Bentley, PJ Biggs, Ms JM Birdsey, CLG Brand, D Bridges, Dr P Callaway, T Callaway, T Castle-Stuart, Dr JA Cocks, AP Cotton, JR Cowser, A Davis, Miss A de Potier, MN Denness, S Dunsmore-Rouse, RDM Edgar, Ms J Evans, SJ Evans, Mrs SM Gamble, D Garrard, Ms S Garrard, DT Gasson, Ms A Giacomelli, JS Gowers, AJ Guest, AC Gutteridge, J Hall, R Harman, RG Harris, WG Harvey, JR Havers, Mrs M Hibbard, JA Hobson, AJ Holcombe, D Hollow, P Hughes, RJ Johnson, J Joyce, D King, Ms G King, M King, M Kirk, Miss L Knight, R Knight, HJA Lee, RE Lowe, PJ Luffingham, DW MacDonald, D Madgin, C Marrable, Ms R Marriott, Dr JA Newnham, JL Nobbs, R Owen, Ms L Owen, RA Pask, Ms A Parfitt, J Parker, RF Penticost, A Perry, Mrs SM Phillips, D Pomeroy, HDV Prendergast, Ms J Redmond, R Robinson, Dr BM Rogers, M Scott-ham, A Simpson, Mrs IM Simpson, K Simpson, JF Smitherman, C Sutton, Ms CA Taylor, SR Taylor, Ms C Temple, R Thurlow, CA Walker, JP Walmsley, N Ward, S Wheatley, JH Whitman, RLC Williamson and M Yates.

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, BN11 5BA.

Cormorant roost counts: Counts were carried out monthly from September to March at Chichester Gravel Pits and South Stoke, West Sussex, by 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; Pagham Harbour from IM Lang, BE Williams and Mrs S Patton; Pulborough Brooks from P Hughes; Worthing from Dr JA Newnham; Weir Wood Reservoir from Mrs BM Mortlock; Brighton Marina from IJ Whitcomb; Ashdown Forest from D King; Beachy Head from D Cooper and RDM Edgar; Splash Point (Seaford) from BR Gilmore; Filsham & Combe Haven from KM Johnston, Pett Level from PE Jones and J Willshire and 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:, CJR Barfield, IT Barnard, PM Brayshaw, D. Brothwell, BR Clay, C Cockburn, CB Collins, D Cooper, JR Cowser, DE Crawley, Ms A de Potier, RDM Edgar, RJ Fairbank, BR Gilmore, DJ Goldsmith, JS Gowers, JA Hobson, AM Holden, CE Hope, A House, T Howard-Jones, P Hughes, RA Ives, P James, A Johnstone, D King, R Knight, IM Lang, J Lewin, S Linington, Ms SE McKenzie, L Manns, O Mitchell, Mrs BM Mortlock, G Osborne, RT Pepper, A Perry, CB Peverell, GCM Roberts, M Scott-ham, MV Sennitt, Mrs IM Simpson, DI Smith, JC Steedman, Dr AB Watson, AJ Wende, IJ Whitcomb, PJ Whitcomb, JH Whitman, BE Williams, J Willsher, and Dr BJ Yates.

THE SUSSEX RINGING REPORT FOR 2004

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Introduction

Figures from the British Trust for Ornithology (pers. comm.) show that 881,889 birds were ringed in Britain and Ireland in 2004 by approximately 1900 ringers. This total comprised 712,894 (81%) adults and 168,995 (19%) nestlings of 268 species.

The total number of birds ringed in Sussex was 57,538, 7% of the total for Britain and Ireland. This was an increase of 5,089 (10%) on the 52,449 ringed in 2003 and was the highest since 1996 when 63,676 birds were ringed. Reports were received from 18 individual active ringers or groups (Table 1), an increase of five on last year. The Rye Bay Ringing Group (RBRG) ringed 37,323 birds, which was 65% of the Sussex total. One hundred and nineteen species were ringed in the County in 2004 compared to 113 in 2003. The ringing activity for 2004 is summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. A summary of Ringing Activity in Sussex. Individuals named are those responsible for the rings issued and may not be those who actually ringed the birds. A Ringing Group may comprise a number of individuals.

Ringing Source	Number Ringed		
	Adults	Nestlings	Totals
Individuals			
K. Arthur	0	106	106
A.M. Davis	1151	32	1183
J.A.G. Dunlop	5021	17	5038
R.D.M. Edgar	0	6	6
D. King	1619	282	1901
R. Lanaway	1135	826	1961
D.M. Love	424	45	469
A. Martin	528	33	561
J.A. Newnham	775	13	788
G.C.M. Roberts	3	56	59
R. Sanderson	1114	28	1142
T. Walker	81	0	81
A.B. Watson	340	790	1130
Groups			
Beachy Head Ringing Station	2741	38	2779
Cuckmere Ringing Group	1025	0	1025
Farlington Ringing Group	47	0	47
Rye Bay Ringing Group	36836	487	37323
Steyning Ringing Group	1913	26	1939
County Total	54753	2785	57538

County rarities ringed were one Eurasian Bittern and one Corn Crake at Icklesham, two Wrynecks each at both Icklesham and Beachy Head, one Aquatic and one Marsh Warbler at Icklesham, one Pallas's and one Yellow-Browed Warbler at Beachy Head and one Penduline Tit at Icklesham. By comparison seven Corn Crakes, 31 Wrynecks, seven

Aquatic, 23 Marsh, 30 Pallas's and 21 Yellow-Browed Warblers and five Penduline Tits were ringed in Britain and Ireland in 2004. The Icklesham Eurasian Bittern was the only one ringed in 2004.

The only new species ringed in the County was Eurasian Bittern, bringing our species total to 200 since 1979. Other unusual ringing results include 19 Great Cormorants (only six had been ringed in Sussex before), two Avocets (only four had been ringed previously in the County), one Red Knot (only one had been ringed before), and one Spotted Redshank (only three had been ringed before). Ninety seven Cetti's Warblers were ringed which is more than the cumulative total from 1979 to 2002 and considerably exceeds the 64 ringed in 2003. In 2004, 82 Bearded Tits were ringed, twice the 2003 total.

Ringling Totals

Table 2 lists the 20 most regularly trapped species during 2004 in descending order of magnitude compared with similar data from 2003 and including the totals for RBRG to demonstrate the considerable contribution this group makes to Sussex ringing.

Table 2. *Sussex Ringing Totals for the 20 most ringed species in 2004. Birds of Conservation Concern (Gregory et al, 2002), ** Red listed, * Amber listed.*

	2003 Total	2004			2003 Total	2004	
		Total	RBRG			Total	RBRG
Sedge Warbler	6664	9282	8667	Great Tit	1369	1521	275
Eurasian Reed Warbler	5028	6451	5313	House Martin*	1823	1219	1108
Blackcap	5476	6290	4455	Greenfinch	909	1077	96
Common Chiffchaff	4266	5074	2667	Robin	874	1004	391
Barn Swallow *	4986	3336	3070	Meadow Pipit*	692	830	578
Blue Tit	3030	3188	617	Goldcrest*	468	819	420
Sand Martin *	4136	2810	2807	Grasshopper Warbler**	548	781	736
Willow Warbler *	2022	1729	880	Blackbird	856	778	207
Reed Bunting**	576	1712	1605	Chaffinch	431	632	159
Common Whitethroat	825	1556	795	Wren	667	576	195

The 20 species listed in Table 2 account for 88% of all birds ringed in Sussex during 2004, comparable to a similar, but not identical list of 20 species that accounted also for 88% of birds ringed in 2003. Goldcrest and Chaffinch replaced House Sparrow and Goldfinch. The 'top ten' (six warblers, two hirundines, one tit and one bunting) accounted for 72% of all birds ringed. RBRG ringed 61% of the County total (67% in 2003) and a high proportion of ten of the species in Table 2. Their highest proportions were almost 100% of the Sand Martins, 94% of the Reed Buntings and Grasshopper Warblers, 93% of the Sedge Warblers, 92% Barn Swallows and 91% of the House Martins.

As mentioned in previous reports, interpretation of year-on-year changes has to be treated with caution. Weather, opportunity and ringing effort may be as much responsible for a difference in numbers ringed, as a genuine population change. Notable increases

occurred, however, in the numbers ringed of several commoner species, particularly Reed Bunting, Common Whitethroat (a recovery after last year's apparent setback), Sedge Warbler, Goldcrest and Meadow Pipit. Decreases occurred in all three hirundines and in Willow Warbler, the latter being part of a noticeable trend.

Other interesting changes, due to increased ringing effort, include 42 Greenshanks (none in 2003) and 92 Fieldfares (28 in 2003). More likely an indication of changing fortunes was a decrease in Pied Flycatchers ringed, down to six from the previous year's 15. This year, 184 Tree Sparrows were ringed compared to 73 last year and six in 2002.

The 10 most commonly ringed species nationally in descending order of magnitude compared to the 10 most commonly ringed species in Sussex, are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Comparison of the ten most commonly ringed species nationally and in Sussex

National	Sussex
1. Blue Tit	Sedge Warbler
2. Greenfinch	Eurasian Reed Warbler
3. Great Tit	Blackcap
4. Swallow	Common Chiffchaff
5. Chaffinch	Barn Swallow
6. Blackbird	Blue Tit
7. Blackcap	Sand Martin
8. Sedge Warbler	Willow Warbler
9. Eurasian Reed Warbler	Reed Bunting
10. Common Chiffchaff	Common Whitethroat

Nestlings

The 2,785 nestlings ringed in 2004 is a slight increase on the 2,589 ringed in 2003 and was 5% of the birds ringed during the year.

Table 4. Nestlings ringed in Sussex during 2004, where they number more than 40% of the total ringed. Birds of Conservation Concern (Gregory et al, 2002), ** Red listed, * Amber listed.

	Total Ringed	Total Nestlings	% Nestlings		Total Ringed	Total Nestlings	% Nestlings
Common Tern	128	128	100	Tawny Owl	18	16	89
Northern Lapwing*	17	17	100	Common Kestrel*	24	19	79
Peregrine Falcon*	6	6	100	Stock Dove*	28	19	68
Little Owl	5	5	100	Common Redshank*	6	4	67
Avocet*	2	2	100	Nuthatch	101	61	60
Oystercatcher*	1	1	100	Ringed Plover*	5	3	60
Turtle Dove**	1	1	100	Common Redstart*	37	22	59
Great Cormorant	19	18	95	Mistle Thrush*	9	5	55
Grey Wagtail*	19	18	95	Spotted Flycatcher**	24	11	46
Black-headed Gull*	38	35	92	Yellowhammer**	20	9	45
Barn Owl*	211	187	89				

Twenty-one species had over 40% of their total ringed as nestlings (Table 4) compared with 14 in 2003, and 16 of these species were of Conservation Concern (Gregory *et al*, 2002). The number of Barn Owl nestlings ringed increased from 119 last year to 187. The number of Common Tern chicks ringed increased from 94 in 2003 to 128 this year.

Particularly notable individual efforts include the 128 nestling Barn Swallows, 40 nestling Common Whitethroats, 324 Blue and Great Tit nestlings ringed by R. Lanaway and the 16 nestling Common Redstarts and 18 nestling Grey Wagtails ringed by D.King. No less than 138 nestling Barn Owls were ringed by Dr A.B. Watson and his helpers.

Recoveries

A wide range of recoveries were reported and a selection of the more interesting ones is presented below.

Observation of large colour-ringed birds is becoming quite a sport in its own right and this section of the Ringing Report would be much poorer without the many reports, of which a sample is given here.

It is remarkable to be able to commence a Sussex Ringing recoveries section for the second year running with a **Great White Egret**. This year's bird was colour-ringed as a nestling at Lac de Grand-Lieu (Loire-Atlantique) in north-western France in May (the same place as last year's bird). It is apparently the fifth from this site to come to the United Kingdom. It was observed first at Cliffe Pools (Kent) on 1 September (newly arrived?) then quickly transferred to Old Moors RSPB Reserve in South Yorkshire on 2 September, where it remained until the 22nd. It was then seen at Rye Harbour from 26 September until 12 October.

A **Bewick's Swan** seen in the Arun valley on 28 December (and again on 2 January 2005) had been ringed in Arctic Russia in the summer of 2003 and this was the first re-sighting of this bird. As these swans can be very long lived (the record is over 20 years) there is hope that it will be reported many times in the future.

One of the most exciting colour-ring sightings was of an **Osprey** which was roosting on the old landing lights near Pilsey Sands (Chichester Harbour) on 17 September 2004. This bird had been ringed as a female nestling, the oldest of a brood of three at Loch Garten (Highlands). It had left Loch Garten in mid-August and was obviously making a leisurely journey south.

There have been a particularly high number of reports of ringed waders this year. The **Black-tailed Godwit**, subspecies *Limosa l. islandica*, is known to winter in Britain and Ireland south to Iberia (Wernham *et al*, 2002). It is nice to have multiple confirmations of this race's occurrence in Sussex. One was ringed on 24 April 2000 in south-west Iceland (presumably newly arrived) and seen at Rye Harbour on 12 April 2004. Another ringed in Iceland in 2003 was observed in Eire in late summer 2003 and encountered in Pagham Harbour on 14 March 2004. A third, ringed in July 2000 on the Wash (Norfolk), was subsequently seen in Chichester Harbour and in May 2001 in north Iceland. In 2002 it wintered in Chichester and Langstone (Hampshire) Harbours and again in 2004. A fourth was ringed in east Iceland in spring 2000 and was seen in autumn 2004 in Pagham Harbour. The remains of a Black-tailed Godwit (race unknown), which was ringed on 4 September 1986 on the North Slob (Wexford, Eire), was found on 27 February 2004 at the base of the spire, 40 metres up Chichester Cathedral, having been carried there by a Peregrine Falcon!

Observations of colour-ringed **Bar-tailed Godwits** are much rarer in Sussex. One ringed in August 2001 at Scheirmonnikoog (Waddensee, Netherlands) was seen in Chichester Harbour in November 2003. About 1,000 Bar-tailed Godwits have been ringed at this Dutch site, so we should expect future sightings.

A **Greenshank** which was ringed at Farlington Marshes (Hampshire) in August 2001 arrives in the eastern Solent each year, in late July or early August. It then winters in the Harbours until December before moving to northern Spain for the rest of the winter. This is exemplified by a sighting of it on 28 December 2003 at Thorney Deeps and then 6 days later in Galicia/Asturias (Spain) where it remained until early April. Particularly remarkable is the Greenshank that was ringed in 1991 at Farlington Marshes and re-caught at Thorney Island in 2002. In May 2004 it was shot near Chupa (north-west Russia) on the White Sea, near the border with Finland. It was not previously known that Greenshanks seen in Western Europe bred in that area. This is the sort of information that can only be learned through marking birds.

Mediterranean Gulls seem to be particularly peripatetic. One colour-ringed on 26 June 2002 as a chick near Csongrád (south-east Hungary) was subsequently sighted in France, Langstone Harbour (Hampshire), Chichester Harbour (in April 2004), on the Isle of Wight and again in Chichester Harbour in the winter of 2004/2005. Another travelled less far, having been ringed as a chick in June 2001 in Pas-de-Calais (France) and seen at Thorney Island in April 2004.

A **Black-headed Gull**, ringed near Washington on 27 November 1993, was subsequently sighted 16 times, of which two were in Weymouth (Dorset) and 14 in Denmark but not again in this County. Perhaps Sussex, with its now more controlled rubbish tips, is no longer to its taste? Another Black-headed Gull, ringed in December 1984 at Sompting, has only just been reported despite having been killed in June 1993 in Finland. Perhaps the fact that it was “poisoned for crop protection at fur farm” has something to do with the delay!

A selection of other notable recoveries (not colour-ringed) follows. A **Red Knot**, ringed on 15 October 1989 at Holme (Norfolk), was found dead at Chichester Harbour on 4 February 2004. As it was ringed as an adult, it was at least 15 years old when reported (the record is 24 years old).

The **Gadwall** is a scarce breeding bird in the County, so the report of one ringed as a duckling at Icklesham on 3 August 2000 and shot at Oare (Kent) in February 2004 is interesting. **Mallard** are often considered as ‘boring’ ducks by birders but they do perform interesting movements. A first-year drake ringed at Icklesham in September 1994 was shot in September 2004 in the north-west European part of Russia near Leningrad, a distance of 2,149 km.

Our **Common Terns** winter off West Africa (Wernham *et al*, 2002) and we have three recoveries to prove it. Three chicks ringed at Icklesham (one in 2002 and two in 2004) were recovered in Senegal and Gambia. Two of them were caught and released by ringers in January and November, the third was found dead in October.

Water tanks seem to be a particular danger for birds of prey, particularly owls. Two **Common Kestrels** from the same brood in Plumpton, ringed on 22 June 2004, had a brush with this hazard. One unfortunately drowned on 7 September at Sevenoaks (Kent). The second got stuck beneath a water tank at East Grinstead and was released on 9 August.

Most of the many nestling **Barn Owls** ringed in Sussex lead rather short lives. It is heartening, therefore, to be able to report one that was ringed in the nest on 17 July 1993 near Kirdford, was caught and released at Wisborough Green on 24 January 2004, 10 ½

years later. Another, coincidentally ringed on the same day near Ebernoe, was alive and well in a nest box at Bepton on 14 June 2004 almost 11 years later. The British longevity record is 13 ¼ years, so these two birds are doing very well. Neither had moved very far, as is the norm for breeding birds, with long movements generally only being found amongst young birds (Toms in Wernham *et al*, 2002).

Our increasingly mild weather is leading to **Kingfishers** lingering well inland in winter. This is demonstrated by one ringed on 19 July 2003 at Friars Gate which was found on Ashdown Forest, only four km away, on 28 February 2004.

Last year we mentioned a **Barn Swallow** ringed at Icklesham which travelled to Natal (South Africa). This year one ringed at the same place on 9 September 2003 was killed in January 2004 in Vosper (Cape Province, South Africa). A particularly interesting Barn Swallow recovery was of one, also ringed at Icklesham, in September 2002 found in June 2004 (and therefore presumably breeding) at Athy (Kildare, Eire). This seems very far west for a bird travelling through Sussex. However, Mead in Wernham *et al*, 2002 states that 'Irish birds probably all move to Wales and southern England during the autumn'. This Swallow must have read the book!

The **Scandinavian Rock Pipit** is a very scarce spring passage migrant with a distinctive plumage. Unfortunately in autumn and winter it is extremely similar in appearance to our local Rock Pipits, when it is thought to be present in Sussex but there is little conclusive evidence. Ringing has provided that missing information, when one became a road casualty at Bosham on 15 November 2004 having been ringed on 20 July 2003 at Onsala (Halland, near Gothenburg in south-west Sweden). This is well within the range of the Scandinavian subspecies.

The ringing of all those **Cetti's Warblers** (see earlier) is producing results. One ringed on 21 September 2003 at Filsham Reedbed was controlled (recaptured by another ringer) at Pitsea Marsh (Essex) in June 2004 indicating continued dispersal of this species northwards to find new breeding areas.

As mentioned last year, with a large number of **Sedge Warblers** ringed in Sussex, it is not surprising that we get many recoveries. Amongst those this year is a very rapid movement by one ringed at 0700 hrs on 7 August 2004 at Icklesham and controlled 24 hours and 10 minutes later at Charleston Reedbed (Litlington). In that time the bird had lost 0.5gm in weight in covering 39 km. Rather difficult to explain is the Sedge Warbler ringed, also at Icklesham, on 8 August 2004 and controlled at Llangorse Lake (Powys) five days later, having flown 295 km WNW in the wrong direction. Another ringed near Yougal (Cork, Eire) on 23 July 2004 was controlled at Icklesham 9 days later. This is 605 km due east and nicely demonstrates that birds may orientate for the shortest channel crossing, towards feeding sites in northern France.

A **Eurasian Reed Warbler** ringed at the same Irish site on 1 August 2003 was controlled, also at Icklesham, on 9 August 2004 perhaps having taken the same route. What is particularly interesting is that this species is a recent coloniser in Eire and first bred at Youghal as recently as 1984 (Hutchinson, 1989). A first-year Eurasian Reed Warbler was ringed at Nouakchott, on the coast of Mauritania (West Africa), on 29 September 2003 and controlled at Icklesham the following August. The ringing site is almost 4,000 km south of Sussex and seems an extraordinary distance for a young bird to have flown so early in its first autumn.

Another nice West African journey is the **Common Chiffchaff** ringed at Djoudj (Senegal) in January 1991 and controlled at Charleston Reedbed (Litlington) in September 1992 (but only just reported to the ringer). Even if this Chiffchaff only bred here on the south coast this is a distance of over 4,000 km. Ringing expeditions to Senegal have

shown this to be an important wintering area for British and Irish Chiffchaffs (Wernham *et al.*, 2002). Migrants can be very faithful to a breeding territory and this is shown by a Chiffchaff ringed in March 2002 at Milton Hide and re-caught there in the breeding seasons of 2003 and 2004. As it was an adult when ringed this must have been at least its third return visit.

By far the majority of **Great Tit** movements are less than 50 km, usually much less (Wernham *et al.*, 2002). So particularly intriguing is one ringed on March 2004 at Plumpton and controlled at Sandwich Bay (Kent) 23 days later. This is 111 km ENE and gives rise to speculation that this may have been a returning continental bird. There have been no recoveries of a British ringed Great Tit abroad since the 1970s (Wernham *et al.*, 2002).

One hundred and sixty six **Bramblings** were ringed in Sussex in 2004, the vast majority by A.M.Davis. Just reward was one of his birds ringed on 7 March at Marley Common and, unfortunately, taken by a cat at Kristianstad (southern Sweden). There have been few recoveries of British ringed Bramblings in Sweden. Not received in time for last year's Report was another Brambling, ringed at Romsey (Hampshire) on 10 February 2002 and controlled near Nutley on 2 February 2003. To record a winterer returning to this country is most unusual.

Acknowledgements

Our grateful thanks to the Secretaries of the Groups and the individual ringers named in Table 1 for submitting information and to the observers who reported colour- ringed birds which make this Report possible. We are particularly obliged to the Ringing Office of the British Trust for Ornithology for kindly allowing us to use national ringing figures prior to publication.

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The Decline of the Wood Warbler in Sussex

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Introduction

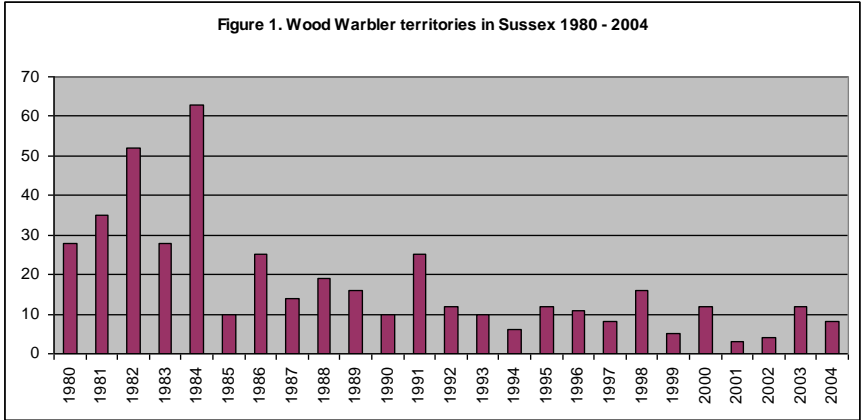
There can be few more evocative spring sounds than the trilling song of the Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*. Sadly however this is a species in decline especially in southeast England where BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) data has shown a rapid and significant decline since 1994, so much so that it has recently been moved from the green to the amber list of species of conservation concern (Gregory *et al* 2002). Wood Warblers have however never been common in Sussex being found mainly on the sandstone ridges and in association with birch, beech and oak woodland, especially in Ashdown Forest (Scott-Ham 1996). Shrubbs (1979) suggested a county population of some 150 pairs for the period 1965-69 based on the available records, a figure that would be unthinkable today. The main breeding areas at the time were the commons and woodlands from Midhurst north and west to the county boundary, the forests from Horsham to Worth Priory, and from Ashdown Forest east to the county boundary north of Wadhurst. He also noted that a few pairs nested on the Downs west of the River Arun. More recently, survey work in 1982 and 1983 found only 44 and 42 pairs respectively (Bealey & Sutherland 1983, Prater 1986). Subsequent records held in the Sussex Ornithological Society's database point to a further decline, to the extent that it can now be considered one of the county's scarcest breeding birds. This short paper attempts to summarise the more recent records held by the Society for this species and offer possible reasons for its marked decline in the county.

Method

In order to assess the size of the Wood Warbler breeding population in Sussex, a search was made of the Society's database for records of pairs and singing males in suitable breeding habitat back to 1980. Singing males that were present for only a day or two in areas considered unsuitable for nesting were most likely migrants and were thus excluded from the totals. The records of breeding pairs and singing males were then used to generate tetrad maps showing the distribution of the species in the county in the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s.

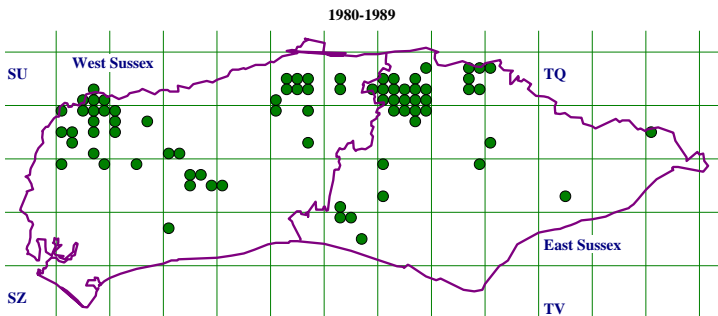
Number and distribution of territories

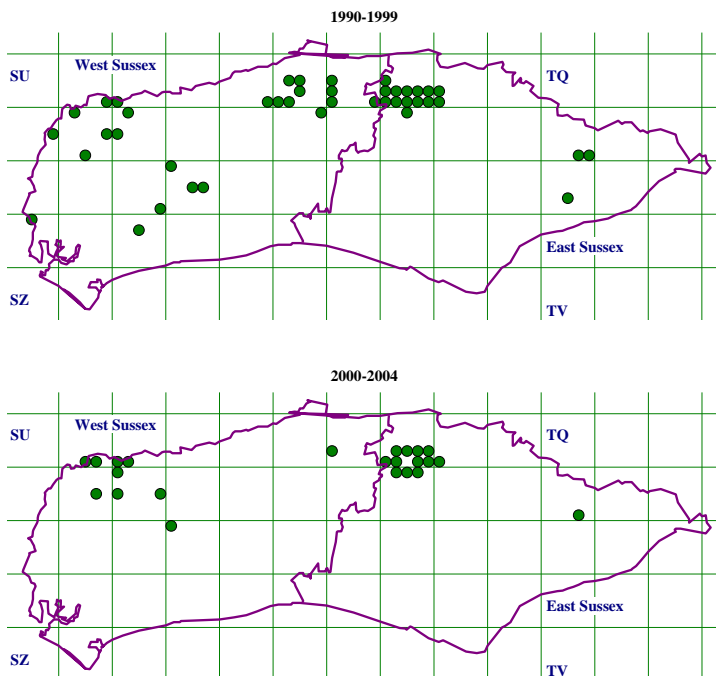
The records in the Society's database show clearly that the Wood Warbler breeding population in Sussex has declined markedly since a peak in 1984 (a national Wood Warbler survey year) when there were some 64 territories in the county (fig. 1). There have however been occasional good years since, for example 1991 and 1998 when 25 and 16 territories respectively were identified. Following a low of just three territories in 2001, numbers appear to have increased slightly since, although this is perhaps attributable to more extensive coverage in the far northwest of the county.



The maps (fig. 2) demonstrate a contraction in range over the past 25 years to the extent that Wood Warblers are now almost entirely restricted to two areas of the county, namely Ashdown Forest in East Sussex and the far northwest of West Sussex. The previous strongholds between Horsham and Worth Priory and east of Ashdown Forest to the county boundary north of Wadhurst appear now to have been largely deserted. Furthermore two of the registrations shown on the map for the 2000s away from the main areas relate to birds that were heard singing on one day only and were most likely migrants. Although both des Forges & Harber (1963) and Shrubbs (1979) refer to nesting in wooded areas on the western Downs, the only recent such records were of a singing male in Houghton Forest (SU 9910) on 16 May 1992 and two singing males in Southleigh Forest (SU 7409) on 29-31 May 1998.

Figure 2. Wood Warbler tetrad maps 1980s, 1990s and 2000s.





Discussion

The records held by the Sussex Ornithological Society show clearly that there has been a significant decline in the county's Wood Warbler population since the last survey in 1983. There is however evidence to suggest that the decline has now halted and that numbers have stabilised, albeit at a very low level. This decline has been mirrored nationally. Wood Warblers, which have a westerly distribution in Britain, were not monitored well until the inception of the British Trust for Ornithology's Breeding Bird Survey (BBS). The species' range varied little between the two breeding atlas periods (Gibbons *et al* 1993) but has subsequently shown further retreat from southeast England. BBS data have shown a 68% decline since 1994 and, with declines evident across north and west Europe, this previously 'secure' species is now provisionally categorised as 'declining'. In neighbouring Hampshire, where the county population in the early 1990s was an estimated 500 males (Clark & Eyre 1993), numbers in the New Forest in 2001 were reported to be 20% down on 1999 and 2000 (*Hampshire Bird Report* 2001). Intensive field work in 1980-83 suggested that there were around 450 territorial males in the whole of the New Forest but in 2003 the figure was only 66 (*Hampshire Bird Report* 2003).

The reasons for the decline in Sussex are unclear though it is evident from the tetrad maps that there has been a marked contraction in range with the species now almost entirely restricted to its traditional strongholds in the northwest of the county and Ashdown Forest. It is perhaps significant that the sites that have continued to hold Wood Warblers regularly in the last five years are all at least 140 m above sea level, indeed Black Down (280 m) in the northwest of the county is the highest point in Sussex. It is possible

therefore that the reasons for the decline are climatic with a retreat to the cooler and damper parts of the county in response to warmer and drier summers, conditions similar to those encountered in the species' stronghold in western Britain. Range expansions in southwest Wales, northwest England and Ireland (Gibbons *et al* 1993) could also perhaps be attributable to climate change with a northward and westward shift in range in response to warmer summers further south and east.

Although the trilling song of the Wood Warbler is hard to miss, there is a possibility that it is under-recorded in Sussex especially in the northwest of the county where there is plenty of seemingly suitable habitat but relatively few birdwatchers. Survey work by the author at Stanley Common (SU 8530) over the past three summers has indicated that the species exhibits a high degree of site fidelity returning year on year to the same patch of woodland. This would suggest that it has quite specific habitat requirements which may well exist at other sites in the immediate area.

Conclusions

The Wood Warbler breeding population in Sussex has shown a marked decline over the past 20 years from a high of 63 territories in 1984. This decline has been accompanied by a contraction in range with the species now largely restricted to areas above 140 m in altitude in the northwest of the county and Ashdown Forest, both traditional Wood Warbler strongholds. The reasons for the decline remain unclear though climate change is a possible factor.

Acknowledgements

My grateful thanks go to John Newnham who produced the maps and to Richard Fairbank who produced the graph, both of whom also kindly commented on the first draft of this paper.

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Breeding Red Kites, 2004

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Introduction

In Sussex, the Red Kite *Milvus milvus* is recorded in all months of the year and hitherto has been classified as a scarce visitor. In 2004 the status changed when a pair of Red Kites bred in West Sussex raising two young. The following text includes a brief review of the county records prior to 2004 and then describes the breeding cycle in some detail as a celebration of such a momentous event.

History

The Red Kite ceased breeding in Sussex sometime before 1825 (Hope 1996) and for the next 140 years or so there were just 21 casual records. In the 31 years between 1962 and 1993 a further 57 records were added. In 1993 there was just a single authenticated record of an autumn migrant over Balsdean near Brighton but in 2003, just ten years later, approximately 30 different birds were reported.

Red Kites were re-introduced to the Chilterns in the early 1990s and such has been their breeding success that by 2004 the Southern England Kite Group found 215 nesting pairs of which 205 successfully reared approximately 383 chicks. An over-wintering population approaching 1000 birds was estimated to be present. With such numbers present just two to three hours flying time away, it should not be surprising if more than a trickle of birds find their way to Sussex.

In November 2002 there were two un-tagged juveniles holding winter territories in the west of the county and both remained on their respective territories until the following spring. Red Kites do not usually breed until their third calendar year but with adult Kites visiting the area throughout the winter of 2002/03 there was a small possibility that a pairing might occur. Interest mounted when in late March 2003 one of the young Kites spiralled up and began to display. Within minutes it was joined by two adult Kites, which resulted in a prolonged exhibition of aerial jousting. Three weeks later a pair of Red Kites was seen displaying over suitable woodland and disputing territory with Common Buzzards *Buteo buteo*. Unfortunately, there was no further evidence of breeding intent and no more records for this pair of Kites after mid-summer. As for the two young untagged birds, one left in March 2003 and the other left in August.

The Summer of 2004

Rather surprisingly, there was a complete absence of records for West Sussex downland during the autumn and winter months of 2003 but on 9 March 2004 two Red Kites were actively hunting in the study area. On 13 March a passage migrant flew purposefully to the north but in the late afternoon there were two Kites flying together and one of them was carrying a long thin stick. From this location they flew several kilometres to the west and in rapidly fading light they were observed flying into a clump of Douglas Fir *Pseudotsuga menziesii* where they roosted for the night. Further observations over the following two weeks confirmed that they had adopted this piece of woodland. On 26 March the pair flew over the wood calling to each other and there was additional evidence

of nest building when one of the birds flew into the wood carrying a stick. On 28 March mating was observed for the first time. It seemed that the nest was nearing completion as on three occasions the male brought in huge amounts of sheep's wool, dangling from its bill. There was one comical moment when the female inspected the delivery and bit-by-bit proceeded to drop the lot. Presumably the nest was now lined to her satisfaction and she was dropping hints that enough was enough.

The male spent a great deal of time patrolling the nesting wood and on 30 March drove off four Common Buzzards, talon grappling with one of them, the two birds falling 10 metres or so before disengaging. There was one further talon clash before the Buzzards decided to move away. By mid-morning the Kites had the wood to themselves and the male spent the next three to four hours provisioning the female and bringing in sticks. During a four hour period of observation mating took place on three occasions. On 31 March both Kites were less visible and no mating or provisioning was observed, although the male did bring in sticks on three occasions. At midday there was some prolonged sparring with two intrusive Common Buzzards, the dispute finishing when the male Kite grabbed one of the Buzzards by the breast resulting in a large number of feathers scattered to the wind.

On 2 April the male was very active, bringing in food at regular intervals. By contrast the female did not leave the nesting wood during this period of observation and the lack of activity suggested that she was probably going to lay her eggs within the next few days. It was no great surprise, therefore, when only the male was seen on 12 and 17 April.

On 20 June a team from the Red Kite group in the Chilterns came to Sussex to wing-tag and radio-tag the two chicks. Two well developed chicks were brought down from the nest, weighed and measured. They both weighed one kilogramme and the wing length measured from the carpal joint to the tip of the outer primary (the hand) aged the chicks at 44 and 45 days old. They were ringed and had yellow wing-tags fitted marked 'Y' and 'Z', and, both were fitted with radio-tags.

On 3 July juvenile 'Z' was observed flying above the wood for approximately one minute. Not only was it apparently an accomplished flier but it also had the ability to land elegantly. Juvenile 'Y' was also located, perched in one of the Douglas Firs, 30-40 metres away from the nesting tree and so it too had fledged but it was not, as yet, quite so adventurous. Later that day, all four Kites were flying above the nesting wood and once again it was striking just how accomplished in flight the juveniles appeared to be. It all seemed quite effortless.

Over the next three weeks the juveniles were probably more-or-less confined to the nesting wood but by 25 July they were very active a few hundred metres to the south of the wood with lots of mock talon clashing and general cavorting. Somewhat surprisingly, by 28 July the nesting wood was no longer the main focal point for this family of Kites, although it may well have continued as the preferred night roost. Daytime activity was now centred on an isolated piece of woodland approximately three kilometres away from the nesting wood. This second woodland was undoubtedly more central to the main hunting area which may have prompted the move. By 7 August the juveniles were foraging for themselves, although for the most part they seemed quite content to tag behind an adult, no doubt hoping to be fed or at least taken to carrion and a meal that they might share. By late August there was less aerial activity and visual contact became more difficult. It seemed that finding their daily food requirements was all too easy and unless the mood took them they were happy enough to spend most of the day loafing about.

The study area was visited every two to three weeks for the rest of the year to check for the presence of the juveniles. Both were present on 30 October but by 21 November juvenile 'Y' could not be located and for the rest of the year there was no further visual or radio contact. By contrast there was never any difficulty in locating Juvenile 'Z'. In November it adopted a different wood in which to roost and remained faithful to this new location until the end of the year. The behaviour of both of these young Kites was somewhat unusual since juvenile Red Kites tend to disperse considerable distances from their natal area within a few weeks of fledging.

Conclusion

It is quite likely that both juveniles will breed close to their natal area in their third calendar year but in the interim whether they mostly stay in the area or mostly stay away remains to be seen. If the breeding pair remains faithful to the locality and other Kites are attracted to the area then the breeding population may expand fairly rapidly. In 2004, there were other isolated pairs in southern England with a pair in Hampshire breeding for the second consecutive year, two pairs in Wiltshire (two and three chicks reared) and a pair in Devon, which had a failed breeding attempt.

Summary

For all raptor enthusiasts 2004 was a momentous year when a pair of Red Kites bred in Sussex for the first time since at least 1825. The breeding pair adopted an attractive piece of mature woodland on or around 13 March. A Larch *Larix decidua* was chosen as the nesting tree, the nest was lined on 28 March and incubation began on 4 or 5 April. The juveniles were fully fledged by 3 July and were independently foraging on 7 August. The future of the Red Kite in Sussex remains to be seen but the portents appear to be good.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to the owner for allowing access to his land. My thanks also go to Ian Carter and English Nature for providing the radio tags and to Pete Stevens and the team from the Chilterns for tagging the juveniles.

This study was carried out principally by Martin Kalaher and Colin Law, with assistance from Barry Collins.

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Subalpine Warbler at Pagham Harbour

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The 26th of October 2004 was a bright, mild day for the time of year, with a light WSW wind blowing. We decided to go to Pagham Harbour.

On arrival mid to late morning at Church Norton, the tide was high enough to cover the path to the seafront, so we took the longer route through Greenlease Farm. We stopped to talk to two birders who told us that they had seen a “strange Lesser Whitethroat” in scrub by the Severals, so we hurried onwards speculating that this late date may perhaps have brought an ‘eastern race’ Lesser Whitethroat. On arrival at the Severals, the original finders (Tim Edwards, John Dodds and Dave Francis) were still ‘on site’. The bird was in an area of stunted oaks and predominately bramble scrub bordering the Severals on its seaward side. It soon showed well and our initial impressions were in favour of Lesser Whitethroat due to its ‘grey and white’ appearance. Given closer and more prolonged views we all doubted the original diagnosis, as the bird displayed no hint of a darker ear covert patch but more significantly, if a Lesser Whitethroat, then it should show black legs. The legs and feet on this bird were straw yellow-brown in sunlight.

So, what was it? We all debated its various features and came to the conclusion that, although it displayed little in the way of warmer plumage tones, it could be a female or juvenile Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans*. We walked back to the car park with Tim to consult field guides and luckily Tim had one to hand showing illustrations of different age and sex Subalpine Warblers. The one plate that caught our collective eye showed a juvenile of the eastern *race albistriata*, which looked much like our bird. Additionally, we telephoned Owen Mitchell who luckily was at home and provided us with much assistance from his ‘bookcase’.

We were now confident of identification as Subalpine Warbler so we phoned the details in to Birdline Southeast.

We stayed until 3.45pm during which time the bird was very active, disappearing for only short periods, avidly feeding on blackberries, and was viewed down to 25 feet. At one stage a late Common Whitethroat joined it and, in the same field of view, not only was it significantly larger than the ‘Subalpine’ but it also showed a much brighter and more extensive area of rufous in the closed wing. During the long process of identification other species (including Spectacled Warbler) were eliminated. By the time we left, a small group of birders had gathered and Ian Barnard obtained a number of excellent images which were viewable on his website that evening.

Due to space constraints, the full descriptions are not reproduced here. However a condensed version containing details which are not included above is as follows:-

A small *Sylvia* warbler, appeared slim in flight but when perched or feeding often looked quite plump and round-bellied. Closed wing rather short, with ‘bunched’ primaries. Tail quite long and held ‘half-cocked’ at times, and showed a small terminal notch. Round-headed, bill dark and short at distance although looked longer at close range. Crown, ear coverts, mantle, back, rump and uppertail a pale, cold grey with a faint brownish suffusion;

at times a very faint thin paler grey collar could be made out. Eye black through binoculars (x10) but through telescope (x32) iris was dull red, and surrounded by a prominent white eye-ring. Greater and primary wing coverts showed a dull rufous patch, whereas (broad) tertial fringes were slightly brighter rufous, tertial centres being dark brown. Exposed primaries showed very thin dull rust fringes and dark centres. Underparts white, with a very light greyish suffusion. Tail showed conspicuous white outer tail feathers, undertail dark, charcoal, and contrasted heavily with white undertail coverts. Did not call”.

Although feeding well and appearing settled, it was not present on the following day. We each prepared a full description for the SOS Records Committee. At the time of writing (early July 2005) we learn that the record has been accepted to species, but as yet have no details of BBRC’s opinion (if any) on the birds sex, age, or race. We believe that this is only the second accepted record of Subalpine Warbler for West Sussex, the first being a juvenile male near Sidlesham Quay from 9 to 16 October 1993. Otherwise Beachy Head has dominated records of this rare vagrant in the county.

The Breeding Nightjar Survey 2004

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Introduction

The Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus* is a breeding visitor to the United Kingdom, arriving on its Sussex breeding grounds from wintering quarters in eastern and southern Africa throughout the month of May, although a small number are reported in April. Return migration commences in July and by the end of that month and into early August, reports reduce substantially with most of the last ones being noted in September with occasional stragglers in early October.

A crepuscular species, it was alternatively known in the past as Fern Owl or Goatsucker. The former name has resonance with its habits and nature; unfortunately however it is the latter “Old Wives Tale” name that seems to be remembered. It was said, in the 19th century, that its voice replicated precisely the noise of a spinning wheel (Borrer 1891); a comparison, which in this modern age, is no longer a helpful analogy. Walpole-Bond (1938) described the males as emitting a skirling sound (a shrill tone) but churring is the generally understood term today.

Historically it was a locally abundant bird; Knox (1849) stated that it is “partially distributed, being very common during summer in the weald, as on open heaths and gorse-covered commons”. Later in that century William Borrer (1891) found it in “all the wooded districts, as well as on open downland and heaths”. Walpole-Bond (1938) commented that “the chief reproductive resorts are north of the South Downs and elsewhere in the interior and north of the county particularly in the real forest-areas and on commons, other ‘barrens’ abounding in heath and bracken,” going on to say that “the birds favourite woodland breeding-resorts are those of mixed oak and hazel”.

The previous county surveys, conducted in 1977 (Hughes *et al* 1977), 1979 (Houghton 1979), 1981 (Houghton 1981) and 1991/92 (Halls 1992), showed that the Sussex population correlates with the distribution of the sandy or chalk, free draining soils. These areas comprised the Wealden Greensands, the High Weald, particularly Ashdown Forest, and the mainly west Sussex South Downs. There are now very few “barrens” left and although Hughes *et al* (1977) commented that this term was probably ascribed to Ashdown Forest it could equally be attributed to the many areas subsequently lost to the plough, forestry or development.

Population and Conservation Status

The population in the United Kingdom (UK) is a small proportion of the European total. Turkey, Russia, Belarus and some of the other former Soviet states are considered to contain approximately two thirds of the European total, (estimated at 470,000-1,000,000 pairs), whilst, within Western Europe, Spain with 82,000-112,000 pairs holds the greatest numbers followed by France with an estimated 40,000-160,000 pairs (BirdLife International 2004). The last national survey in 1992 found 3400 pairs in the UK (Morris *et al* 1994); compare this figure with an estimated Sussex population of 1000-2000 pairs in 1946 (Houghton 1981).

After the healthy population levels of the 1940’s, county surveys indicated a decline, which was reflected nationally and continued until a 50% increase was demonstrated between the 1981 and 1992 national surveys. In Sussex the reversal was less pronounced

with 88 occupied sites holding 155 birds in 1981 and 66 sites holding 163 churring males in 1991/92. In 1981, Sussex held approximately 10% of the national population, which fell to less than 5% by 1992. However, differences in survey techniques and the number of sites visited made further direct comparisons of these data impossible.

The county status of the species is described as a “fairly common summer visitor rarely seen on migration” that is between 101-1000 breeding birds. Nationally, the species is Red listed of Conservation Concern, reflecting a rapid 50% or more contraction of UK breeding range over the previous 25 years. It is a Category 2 Species of European Conservation Concern (SPEC 2) indicating that more than 50% of the global population or range is in Europe and the species has an unfavourable conservation status in Europe (Gregory *et al* 2002).

Method

The National Nightjar Survey 2004 was sponsored by English Nature (EN), the Forestry Commission (FC) and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), and, organised by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO). A proposed survey in 2001 was cancelled due to the outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease but it was felt timely, by the national organisers, to reassess national numbers particularly in view of :-

1. The requirements of the Biodiversity Action Plan for conservation management and recreation of lowland heathland.
2. The need for baseline information of open access under The Countryside & Right of Way Act 2000 (CROW).
3. It being a species for which adequate information cannot be obtained from regular monitoring such as the Breeding Bird Survey (BBS).

The purpose of the survey was to locate all the churring Nightjars in Britain on known and potentially suitable sites in order to update and expand the data collected from all previous surveys. At least two visits to each site were required between late May and early August spaced three weeks apart with one visit in June. All male birds were logged on each visit and at the end of the survey the surveyors were asked to estimate the number of males deemed to be holding territory in each 1-km square.

Survey forms, based on 1-km squares in which Nightjars had been recorded since 1992, were produced by the BTO. Nationally, approximately 3500 of these were printed and 1481 (42%) of them were distributed between the following five counties; Dorset (350), Hampshire (528), Kent (120), Surrey (180) and Sussex (303). The BTO county allocations pragmatically followed the nearest 10-km boundaries and not the familiar administrative ones. The Sussex survey forms, after editing to 226 potential breeding territories, were distributed to approximately 30, 10-km square stewards. None were sent to observers or 10-km stewards in areas of the county where Nightjars had not been recorded since 1992.

Results & Discussion

Two hundred and sixteen survey forms (96% of those distributed) were returned surveyed; the remainder were not completed, either because access was not granted due to private or Ministry of Defence ownership of land, or the habitat was believed to be unsuitable for Nightjars. A total of 228 males were estimated to occupy 109, 1-km squares.

Table 1 shows the numbers of males found in each 1-km square ranged from one to nine with the highest densities being within the Wealden Greensand area, Ashdown Forest and the western chalk downs. Other smaller populations were found on the forest ridges in the extreme north (much of this area was noted as being unsuitable due to the maturing of forests), and in sandstone areas within the High Weald.

Table 1. The estimated number of male Nightjars in the surveyed 1-km squares

Number of Nightjars recorded.	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Number of 1-km squares.	107	52	28	14	8	2	3	0	0	2

The distribution of the surveyed areas is shown in Figure 1 and demonstrates, as clusters of coloured symbols based on 1-km squares, the main population centres in the county.

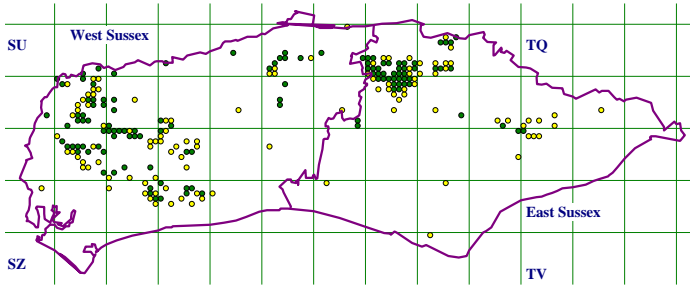


Figure 1 Distribution map of the 1-km squares surveyed for Nightjars in 2004. Green symbols Nightjars found and yellow symbols Nightjars not found.

The distribution indicated by the 2004 survey shows a strong correlation with the Tetrad Atlas map suggested by Scott-Ham (1996).

The sites covered by the annual Wealden Heaths Breeding Birds Survey (WHBBS, page 191) contained 51 birds on 10 sites (30 surveyed 1-km squares) whilst observers on Ashdown Forest reported 67 churring males (49 surveyed 1-km squares). These two areas, supporting 50% of the county population, are those most closely monitored, albeit unevenly in non-survey years. The regular recording in these key areas ensures, in part, that annual records are a useful guide to the wellbeing of this species in the county and that counts of both occupied areas and estimated numbers do not vary greatly between years as shown in Figure 2. The same figure also suggests a small rise in both the number of 1-km squares supporting Nightjars and the recorded population.

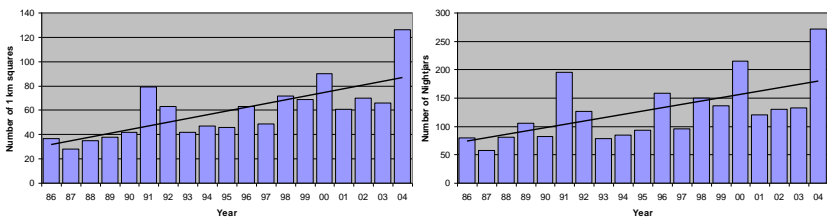


Figure 2. The number of 1-km squares in which Nightjars were recorded and the sum of the maximum count in each 1-km square for the years 1986 to 2004.

The diagonal line represents the mean trend line

Unsurprisingly the number of birds found away from the two main centres increased substantially from 36 in 2003 (Perry 2003) to 118, revealing in particular populations at Buriton Hanger (eight), Broadwater Forest (eight), Angmering Park Estate (seven), Rewell Wood (six) and Parham Park / Rackham (six).

Of the 382 timed visits by the surveyors, most were at dusk and the vast majority logged as commencing between 21.00 and 22.00 hr with only six after 23.00 hr and two after 24.00 hr. There were only two dawn visits. A minimum of 450 hr in the field was logged; there were 20 visits of 30 minutes or less but most were between 45 minutes to 90 minutes. Light precipitation was only reported on six occasions. Of 192 reports, 32 recorded a wind force of three or more. The mean temperature, where noted during visits, was 15-16°C.

Habitat

Participants in the 2004 survey were requested to complete habitat details. These were divided into three main sections; Forestry, Heathland and Woodland with additional information requested about the use of Rides and Edges. This element was poorly recorded with results relating to only 75 1-km squares and, of the 241 site visits when Nightjars were recorded, only 88 (37%) had habitat notes attached. These 88 habitat records related to 98 individual birds. There were no habitat records received from Ashdown Forest. The sparse data show that 50% of churring males were found in forestry, mostly coniferous, 30% on heathland and 20% in woodland.

The categories listed were not mutually exclusive as birds were recorded churring from within and from the boundaries of different habitat types and this led to a certain amount of overlapping in the reporting, particularly from the Wealden Heaths where the three habitat types can often be found in close proximity and merging together on their boundaries. Edges and Rides featured in all three habitats and were logged on 34% and 27% respectively of habitat descriptions.

The 1991/92 survey occurred after the destructive winds in 1987 and 1990, when many previously heavy wooded areas became wind-blown particularly on the South Downs and became suitable for breeding after clearance and replanting. Identified as a result of the 1991/92 survey some sites were considered on inspection to be unsuitable for the 2004 survey. It should, however, be noted that at least one conifer plantation site rejected as unsuitable held a Nightjar nest, suggesting that the species may be rather more resilient than anticipated in its habitat requirements and consequently some birds may have been missed. Equally it is likely that other possible suitable habitat may not have been identified or surveyed.

Halls (1992) commented that the Nightjars favoured habitat is bare, free draining land, surrounded by low growing shrubs, open ground for hunting its prey (mainly large moths), scattered trees for use as song posts and daytime roosts, and finally woodland to act as a shelter belt. This mosaic of habitat is typically found on the heaths of Sussex but is also replicated in forestry plantations within which the majority of territories were identified. A typical example of a favoured site is Duncton Common, a naturally regenerated conifer plantation with wide glades and some open areas with the additional benefit of adjoining the open heath of Lavington Common.

Forestry



Figure 3. The distribution of Nightjar records in the various categories allocated by the survey form in Forestry and the height of trees within these plantations.

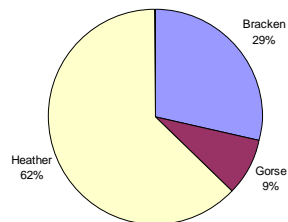
Forestry and woodland cover some 70,490ha (174,184 acres) of Sussex (West Sussex County Council and The Forestry Commission), but much of this will have been unsuitable territory or, in some cases, not surveyed due to the distribution method of the survey forms. Fifty percent (125 sightings) of habitat records related to Forestry. Figure 3 shows that 41% of the records from Forestry were in coniferous and 32% in broadleaf. Except for a small area of chestnut coppice in the far northwest of Sussex most of the broadleaf records were in the deciduous plantations on the South Downs, particularly around Arundel, and west to Selhurst Park. Seventeen per cent were recorded in unplanted and 10% in mixed .

Figure 3 also shows that 56% of the birds recorded in Forestry were situated in growths greater than four metres, 70% in conifer and 30% in broadleaf. The apparent preference for conifers most likely indicates the availability of conifer as a habitat compared with broadleaf and is not necessarily a reflection of choice.

Heathland

Thirty percent (73 sightings) of the records related to dry and wet heathland. Over the past two centuries there has been a steady decline in West Sussex, from some 7505 ha in 1813 to 671 ha in 1981 (Rose 1991), representing more than a 90% loss. By 1996 only 640 ha remained (J. Mycock *pers. comm.*). In East Sussex approximately 50% has been lost and most of the remaining *ca* 2000 ha occurs on Ashdown Forest in the High Weald, the single most important site for the species in Sussex and the largest area of heathland remaining in SE England (Sussex Biodiversity Partnership 1998).

Figure 4. The distribution of Nightjar records in the various categories of Heathland, covered by more than 50% of heather, bracken and gorse.



One wet heath habitat was recorded while the remaining 72 reports were from dry heaths. Although no habitat records were received from Ashdown Forest it was reported that the vast majority of records from the Forest's heath related to dry heath. (D. King pers. comm.). Within these heaths surveyors were asked to estimate whether the survey areas were covered by more than 50% heather, bracken or gorse (Figure 4). Noting incursion by pine and bracken was also requested and this occurred on 45% of the heaths, most commonly on the Wealden Greensand heaths. Where heaths such as Ambersham & Heyshott, Iping & Stedham and Woolbeding are managed for the wildlife interest, removal of pine and birch succession is not necessarily undertaken annually but they are, as invasive plants, eventually controlled. With heathland being the subject of a Sussex Habitat Action Plan (HAP), restoration and management have become more intense and inevitably this has encouraged more recreational use by walkers, dog owners and horse riders. The disturbance caused is likely to affect the number of successful broods raised in what is otherwise a prime and currently expanding habitat.

Woodland

Twenty per cent (49 sightings) of the records related to woodland. Of these 43% were in broadleaf woodland, 37% in mixed and 20% in coniferous. All but eight of the records referred to areas within or abutting the Wealden Heaths Breeding Birds Survey. The majority of this recorded habitat can best be described as heathy woodland and tends to occur as a woodland margin adjoining heathland and forestry plantations.

Climate

Holzinger (1987) indicated that Nightjars breed in areas where the average May-June temperatures are over 15°C with precipitation less than 260 mm in those months. With the birds arriving in Sussex at their breeding sites during May and the main breeding activity occurring through June and July, the mean monthly average statistics from the Meteorological Office for England and Wales, May to August and from 1961 to 2004 indicated :-

1. The mean rainfall was well below 260mm, and slightly decreasing over the period.
2. The mean temperatures steadily increased.
3. The mean monthly for sunshine gradually increased.

Figure 5 shows the temperature and rainfall for England & Wales with a trendline indicating a rise in mean temperature, interestingly correlating with a similar trend shown in Figure 2.

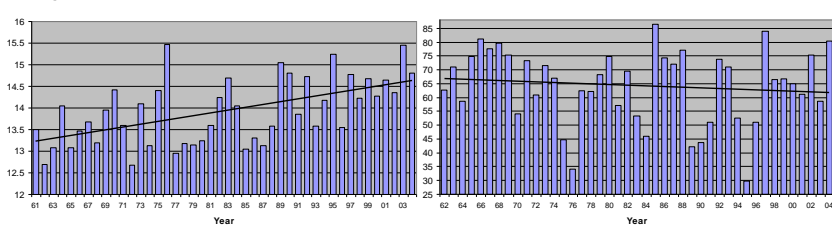


Figure 5. Mean monthly average temperatures and rainfall for May to August 1961-2004. (Data from Meteorological Office for England and Wales).

Although Sussex is near the north and western edge of the Nightjar's breeding range, the warmer and dryer developing climate shown in Figure 5 may produce, subject to there being continued efforts to maintain suitable breeding habitat and feeding opportunities, a chance for this species to increase its county population.

Additional information supplied with the Nightjar Survey compiled by Jerry Whitman

As an adjunct to the Nightjar Survey the standard reporting form included a table for noting the presence and number of six species: Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*, Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*, Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*, Wood Lark *Lullula arborea*, Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos* and Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*. There were two spare columns for spurious sightings of other species.

Only eighty four sites were claimed to hold any of these species and in many other cases that particular sheet of the survey was not returned, included most of those covering Ashdown Forest. However, as only seventy five sites responded to the habitat section of the form, this could be considered a good return and, in fact, includes some sites without Nightjars present. The numbers reported have been grouped according to lateral location.

Table 2 *The East-West distribution of additional species. (Figures in parenthesis are the number of sites reporting the species).*

	Woodcock	Tawny Owl	L e Owl	Wood Lark	Song Thrush	Grasshopper Warbler
W Sussex	47 (28)	76 (46)	0	20 (8)	135 (51)	0
E Sussex	27 (13)	22 (12)	0	0	52 (16)	1 (1)
Totals:	74 (41)	98 (58)	0	20 (8)	187 (67)	1 (1)

The East Sussex figures would have been enhanced by records from Ashdown Forest and in that light the distribution across the county appears fairly even, apart from that of the Wood Lark. The Grasshopper Warbler was in Arundel Park. The low number of the latter and the absence of Long-eared Owls reflect the county's holding of both species.

Iping Common supported four pairs of Woodlarks while four or more Woodcocks were reported from four sites, four Tawny Owls from two others and 18 sites held four or more Song Thrushes, three of them holding ten.

Gratuitous notes of extra species, mainly general woodland and heath species, were provided by just four observers of whom D.T. Gasson, reporting on Darwell Woods, named 26 of the 31 extra species including Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*, Turtle Dove *Streptopelia decaoto* and Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*. The latter, seen on 16 July, may have been the bird frequently seen at Arlington Reservoir in that month and sometimes at Bewl Water. At Broadwater Forest, M. Scott-Ham identified five Tree Pipit territories.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my thanks to the band of observers who have undertaken the survey work; a full list of contributors can be found on page 192. County wide surveys are

dependent on the 10-km stewards arranging cover, often at short notice, and my thanks are extended to these. Dr JA Cocks and L Manns sorted and distributed the survey forms, Jerry Whitman computerised the results, advised on the text and statistics and also compiled the additional species information. Dr JA Newnham provided invaluable and extensive advice on the drafting and produced the graphs and tables. Thanks are also extended to land-owners, gamekeepers and foresters for allowing access to private estates to conduct this survey and in particular Donald McDonald, Head Forester of the Cowdray Estate, who provided information about Nightjars on this estate.

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Spotted Sandpiper at Darwell Reservoir

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I have been the “Wildfowl Counter” at Darwell Reservoir since 1976 and went to the reservoir on 19th September 2004 to carry out the monthly WeBS’ core count. Soon after starting, I stopped to talk to an angler on the bank of the reservoir at the beginning of the eastern side of what I refer to as the South Arm. While we were talking, a fairly small wader flew low across the water from the eastern side to the western side. It had been hidden from view, about 30 metres away, by the curvature of the bank. My immediate thought was Common Sandpiper, but I made a mental note to check it out when I reached the western side.

A few minutes later I reached the western side and, as is usual at this time of year, there were several metres of gently sloping bank between the water’s edge and the row of small willows. From the cover of the small trees, I set up my telescope and checked along the waterline. I found the sandpiper quickly about 50 meters away, very near to where I had seen it land. I was amazed to see that it had very clear, dark spots on its otherwise white breast. My first thought was “Does a Common Sandpiper ever have a plumage like this?”, followed almost immediately by “No, of course it doesn’t”. A look in Collins’ ‘Bird Guide’ convinced me that I was looking at an adult Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularia* in near breeding plumage. I made some notes, concentrating on the areas of plumage where the spots occurred, because in other respects the bird was very similar to a Common Sandpiper.

The spots were reminiscent of those on a Song Thrush, but they were arranged differently and were on a whiter breast than that species displays. The chin was dirty white and, below it, there was a narrow grey-brown bib, narrower in the centre than at the sides. Below this the spots began. They were most numerous where they met the bib, spreading right across the breast. As they went down the breast they became restricted to the sides, leaving a narrow pyramid shape of white in the centre of the breast, especially noticeable when the bird was seen head on. The spots continued in a narrow line along the flanks, getting smaller as they went under the tail. Seen from the side, the bird showed a fairly narrow white area between the folded wing and the spotting.

What should I do? I just don’t find rare birds, certainly as rare as this. Anyway, I am meant to be doing a WeBS’ count but I needed someone else to see this bird. I telephoned my wife to see if she could contact somebody, but no sooner had she answered the telephone than my mobile ran out of puff. I had thought that it was fully charged before I set out that morning. I decided to do the “professional” thing. I completed my count, albeit a bit quicker than usual and then hurried home. After a couple of telephone calls, I was able to return to the reservoir later in the afternoon with John Willsher and Phil Jones. We relocated the bird and the identification was confirmed. John was able to get a few “record” photographs.

The bird remained at the reservoir until at least 3rd October 2004, generally being found along the same area of muddy water’s edge and I was able to make arrangements for a few local birdwatchers to see it. Sadly, several difficulties with regard to access to the site made it impossible to publicise the bird at the time.

In *Birds of Sussex 1996* (ed. Paul James) there are four previous records of the species in Sussex involving five or six individuals, the most recent a juvenile in November 1977.

Interestingly, an immature Red-necked Grebe arrived at the reservoir on 15th September 2005, four days before the Spotted Sandpiper was found.

The Winter Gull Roost Survey 2004

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Introduction.

Since 1953 the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) has organised regular counts of wintering gull roosts. Initially this enquiry only involved inland roost sites but in 1983 the counts were extended to include coastal locations. The complete exercise, usually completed in January, was repeated in 1993 and the sixth national survey was planned for the three winters 2003/04 – 2005/06; the main effort intended for January 2004. Over 2.5 million gulls were counted in Great Britain in the 1993 census (Burton *et al* 2003) and the survey showed that all five of the regularly occurring gull species had increased at English inland sites since the first survey in 1953. No similar long run of data are available in Sussex as the first organised counts were conducted between 1977 and 1979 (Porter 1979) when, in January 1979, a total of 125,287 gulls were counted. A further count in January 1983, as part of the national survey, produced a total of 148,607 gulls (Newnham 1984) and ten years later the total was 140,630 gulls (de Potier and Yates 1994), then approximating to 5.4% of the total counted in Great Britain.

Aims and method.

The aims of the national survey were twofold; firstly to look at changes from the previous surveys but also to produce the first total non-breeding population estimate for the five main gull species which winter in the United Kingdom. The methodology, therefore, differed from previous surveys and comprised of roost counts at “key” coastal and inland sites combined with roost counts at a number of randomly selected tetrads. In previous surveys coverage of the entire coastline and relevant inland sites was arranged but for this survey the BTO produced forms and maps for specific “key” sites which did not involve the entire coastline. The plan was for all “key” sites to be counted in January 2004. The BTO randomly selected nine tetrads to be surveyed for roosting gulls in Sussex; those at Ardingly Reservoir and Holywell (Eastbourne) were counted but the other seven were known not to hold gull roosts and were not visited. The count methods were similar to those employed in previous surveys and described by de Potier and Yates (1994).

Results and Discussion.

Twenty three sites were counted on Saturday 17 Jan with a further seven sites counted on either the 16th or 18th and a few locations were visited later in the month. Overall 98,476 gulls were counted, 74,536 (79%) small and 19,998 (21%) large. They were distributed as 19,430 (20%) on the six reservoirs, 14,462 (15%) in Chichester and Pagham Harbours and 64,584 (65%) on the sea. Table 1, which has been constructed similarly to those displaying the results from both 1983 and 1993, shows these results in more detail and reveals the roosts at Chichester Hbr and Bewl Water to be the largest in the county.

Table 1. Counts of roosting gulls in Sussex in January 2004.

	BhG	CG	Small	LBBG	HG	GBBG	Large	Gull Spp	Total
Chichester Hbr	7716	3160	2907	2	44	1	2	0	13,832
Pagham Hbr	450	15		0	15	150			630
Aldwick	290		610		20	10	110	1840	2880
Littlehampton – Rustington	439	4	1579	4	308	1			2335
Angmering - Kingston Gorse	20	77	6002	0	33	1	1400		7533
Ferring	140	165	3944	1	150	0			4400
Worthing	1234	294	4721	3	2360	33	60		8705
Lancing – Shoreham	745	16	370	1	279	0			1411
Southwick – Hove	4311	239	508	0	837	0	797	1870	8562
Cuckmere to Birling Gap	540	2503		0	80	33			3156
Eastbourne	150		550		10				710
Bexhill – Hastings	2100	24	200	1	5700	520	400	25	8970
Pett	280	4300			1750	29	36		6395
Rye – Camber	390	4300		30	4100	295		80	9195
Ardingly Res	629	12			5		2		648
Weir Wood Res	2100	122			5				2227
Barcombe Res	713	20			3				736
Arlington Res	2000	1500	1500	1	100	150			5251
Bewl Water	8000	2000		1	36	2			10,039
Darwell Res			524				5		529

Key to Tables 1 and 2	Small – Unidentified small gull spp.	GBBG – Great Black-backed Gull
BhG – Black-headed Gull	LBBG – Lesser Black-backed Gull	Large – Unidentified large gull spp.
CG – Common Gull	HG – Herring Gull	Gull spp – Unidentified gull spp.

Table 2 compares the overall county totals for the 2004 survey with those for the previous two national gull roost surveys and divides the counts into coastal (including the harbours) and inland reservoirs.

Table 2. Total counts of roosting gulls in Sussex, January 1983, 1993 and 2004.

Coastal	BhG	CG	Small	LBBG	HG	GBBG	Large	Gull Spp	Total
2004	18,805	15,097	21,391	42	15,686	1073	2805	3815	78,714
1993	54,870	8639	17,361	742	12,797	2199	6026		102,634
1983	66,488	7315	36,454	110	15,259	814	3285		129,725
Reservoirs									
2004	13,442	3654	2024	2	149	152	7		19,430
1993	30,036	4840	2550	7	71	215	277		37,996
1983	18,253	505		5	109	10			18,882
Total									
2004	32,247	18,751	23,415	44	15,835	1225	2812	3815	98,144
1993	84,906	13,479	19,911	749	12,868	2414	6303		140,630
1983	84,741	7820	36,454	115	15,368	824	3285		148,607

Considerable care needs to be taken before drawing any major conclusions from the figures in the above tables. Bance (2003) has clearly shown the effects of weather conditions on the numbers of roosting gulls at inland sites. The light northerly winds on 17 Jan 2004 were not conditions for producing large roosts at inland sites whereas on the 16th, during strong SW winds, counters at Bewl Water recorded 18,000 Black-headed Gulls *Larus ridibundus* and 23,000 Common Gulls *Larus canus*, nearly four times the number recorded on the 17th. Conversely coastal observers at Pett and Rye also conducted

a count during the inclement weather on the 16th and recorded only 1239 gulls whereas in calmer weather later in January the total of 15,590 birds were counted. The weather conditions for the counts in 1983 were, like 2004, ideal for coastal roosts whereas on 23 Jan 1993 the weather conditions were of strong winds and light rain.

The other major differences in each survey has been the coverage; in both the previous surveys the coverage was described as good but, in part related to the different methodology, the coastal coverage in January 2004 was patchy. Figure 1 not only shows the main concentrations of roosting gulls at coastal locations but starkly shows the extensive tracts of Sussex coastline where no counting was done. It is likely, due to the good weather, that gulls were roosting along the entire coastline during the weekend of 17/18 Jan but unfortunately only about 50% of the approximate 120 km of shoreline was counted. Coastal coverage was only good between Bognor and Hove and eastwards of Bexhill with, significantly, no coastal counts west of Bognor and between Brighton and Cuckmere Haven.

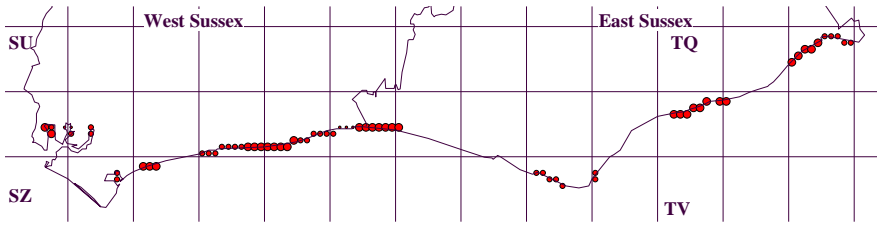


Figure 1 The one km distribution of gulls roosting on the Sussex coast, January 2004. Small symbol - <100 gulls; Medium symbol - 100-999 gulls; Large symbol - 1000+ gulls.

Counts in Pagham Harbour were very low with only 630 gulls compared with 31,209 in 1993 and 10,998 in 1983; the observer concluded the gulls were roosting offshore and, presumably, on a portion of uncounted coastline. This conclusion gained support from notes from other observers who recorded that most gulls on 17 and 18 Jan were already roosting on the sea by mid-afternoon with few flying from inland near dusk. This lack of cover on the coast undoubtedly contributes to the low overall count in January 2004. If the total counted for the 58 km surveyed is extrapolated to the entire coastline a figure nearer 135,000 gulls roosting on the sea would have been achieved.

De Potier and Yates (1994) compared the numbers and proportions of the commonest species of gulls. They estimated the roosting population by using the ratio of identified gulls and assumed those unidentified fitted this ratio. Table 3 shows these figures for the past two counts and similar extrapolations for the 2004 survey. Although the total numbers are difficult to compare the proportions of each species show some interesting changes.

Table 3 Approximate numbers and percentages of the total of the commonest five species of gulls counted roosting in Sussex, January 1983, 1993 and 2004.

	1983	%	1993	%	2004	%
Black-headed Gull	129,000	86	102,029	73	47,053	50
Common Gull	11,900	8	16,267	12	27,360	29
Lesser Black-backed Gull	200	0	1,064	1	51	0
Herring Gull	6,060	4	17,910	13	18,438	20
Great Black-backed Gull	1,400	1	3,359	2	1,426	2

In all surveys the Black-headed Gull has been the most numerous but the figures suggest this species is roosting in smaller numbers than hitherto. The latest count recorded less than half of the previous counts and with a marked decline in the proportion to less than 50%. At Bewl Water alone roosts of 63,000 Black-headed Gulls have been recorded in stormy weather on 29 Dec 2002 (Bance 2003).

Common Gulls however, have not only been counted in larger numbers but the proportion in each count has risen notably. Again massive roosts have been described by Bance (2003) at Bewl Water, particularly in the early spring when 63,000 roosted on 5 Mar 2002 and 52,000 on 9 Mar 2003. Mid-winter roosts of Common Gulls have tended to be slightly smaller but there were 26,000, nearly equal to the entire county, on 20 Jan 2003 and 23,000 on 16 Jan 2004.

The Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus* remains the least numerous species, consistently producing < 1% of the county's roosting gulls and the highest count at any site was only 30. On two previous occasions have large numbers been counted roosting these being 1000 on Shoreham Airport on 28 Jan 1978 and 715 in Pagham Hbr on 23 Jan 1993 (Newnham 1996).

The tables show both counts and the percentage of Herring Gulls *Larus argentatus* roosting in winter in Sussex to be rising. Table 1 also shows this species roosts mainly on the coast with fewer than 1% occurring on inland reservoirs. Several of the larger roost sites were offshore at coastal towns where the population of this species has been increasing as a roof-top nester (Newnham *et al* 2003).

Great Black-backed Gulls *Larus marinus* have, in the past, been recorded in larger numbers during stormy weather so it is not surprising that the figures for Jan 2004 were very similar to those for Jan 1983 and less than Jan 1993. Two recent roost counts in Pagham Hbr of 2300 on 11 Jan 2001 and 3000 on 17 Jan 2002 are the highest numbers recorded for this species in Sussex. The Great Black-backed Gull remains the fourth most numerous wintering gull with counts comprising 1 - 2.4% of the county gull roosting population, figures similar to the national figure of 1.7% found in 1993 (Burton *et al* 2003).

The current 1% threshold values used for identifying sites of national importance for gulls are 19,000 for Black-headed Gull, 9000 for Common Gull., 500 for Lesser Black-backed Gull, 4500 for Herring Gull and 400 for Great Black-backed Gull (Burton *et al* 2003). Clearly these levels are currently being reached for both Black-headed Gull and Common Gull during stormy weather at Bewl Water. However, during the 2004 count these thresholds were only exceeded on the coast between Bexhill / Hastings and Rye / Camber for Herring Gull and at Bexhill / Hastings for Great Black-backed Gull.

The only other gulls reported during the survey were one Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*, two Yellow-legged Gulls *Larus argentatus michahellis* and 22 Kittiwakes *Rissa tridactyla*.

Acknowledgements.

My thanks are extended to the 41 observers who took part in this survey and who are fully acknowledged on page 196, the 10-km square stewards who organised the coverage and to Dr JA Cocks who acted as the society's link with the BTO and distributed the survey forms.

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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	Dotterel	Bluethroat
All shearwaters (except Manx)	Temminck's Stint	Aquatic Warbler
All petrels (except Fulmar)	Pectoral Sandpiper	Marsh Warbler
Purple Heron	Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Icterine Warbler
White Stork	Grey Phalarope	Melodious Warbler
Whooper Swan	Red-necked Phalarope	Barred Warbler
Bean Goose (both races)	Pomarine Skua (except in spring)	Pallas's Warbler
Pink-footed Goose	Long-tailed Skua	Yellow-browed Warbler
American Wigeon	Sabine's Gull	Red-breasted Flycatcher
Green-winged Teal	Ring-billed Gull	Crested Tit
Ring-necked Duck	Iceland Gull	Golden Oriole
Surf Scoter	Glaucous Gull	Red-backed Shrike
Honey Buzzard	Roseate Tern	Woodchat Shrike
White-tailed Eagle	Black Guillemot	Chough
Montagu's Harrier	Little Auk	Rosy Starling
Goshawk	Puffin	Serin
Rough-legged Buzzard	Bee-eater	Twite
All Pheasants (except Common)	Short-toed Lark	Common (ex-Mealy) Redpoll
Spotted Crake	Shore Lark	Common Rosefinch
Corncrake	Richard's Pipit	Lapland Bunting
Crane	Tawny Pipit	Cirl Bunting
Stone-curlew	Water Pipit	Ortolan Bunting
Kentish Plover	Dipper	Little Bunting

In addition, **all** races other than the normally occurring one, including Baltic Gull, Caspian Gull, Kumlien's Iceland Gull, Scandinavian Rock Pipit, Yellow Wagtail (except 'Blue-headed'), Hooded Crow, but excluding Pale-bellied Brent Goose, *intermedius* Lesser Black-backed Gull, *michahellis* Yellow-legged (Herring) Gull, White Wagtail and Greenland Wheatear. Also any species seen on an unusual date outside the accepted range of first and last dates for migrants (See pages 187-188)

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 (inland records), Black-necked Grebe, Manx Shearwater, Shag (inland records), Bittern, Spoonbill, Egyptian Goose, Ruddy Shelduck, Red-crested Pochard, Hoopoe, Wryneck, Waxwing, Cetti's Warbler, Great Grey Shrike and Raven.

THE SUSSEX ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Who are we and what do we do?

The Society was formed in 1962 to promote the recording, study, conservation and enjoyment of birds in Sussex.

We encourage our members to keep records of birds seen in Sussex, and to submit these to our County Recorder.

We carry out bird surveys, often as part of our partnerships with the BTO, RSPB and WWT. The county is divided into 10 Km squares, each of which has a steward. If you are good at bird identification help is always needed with surveys.

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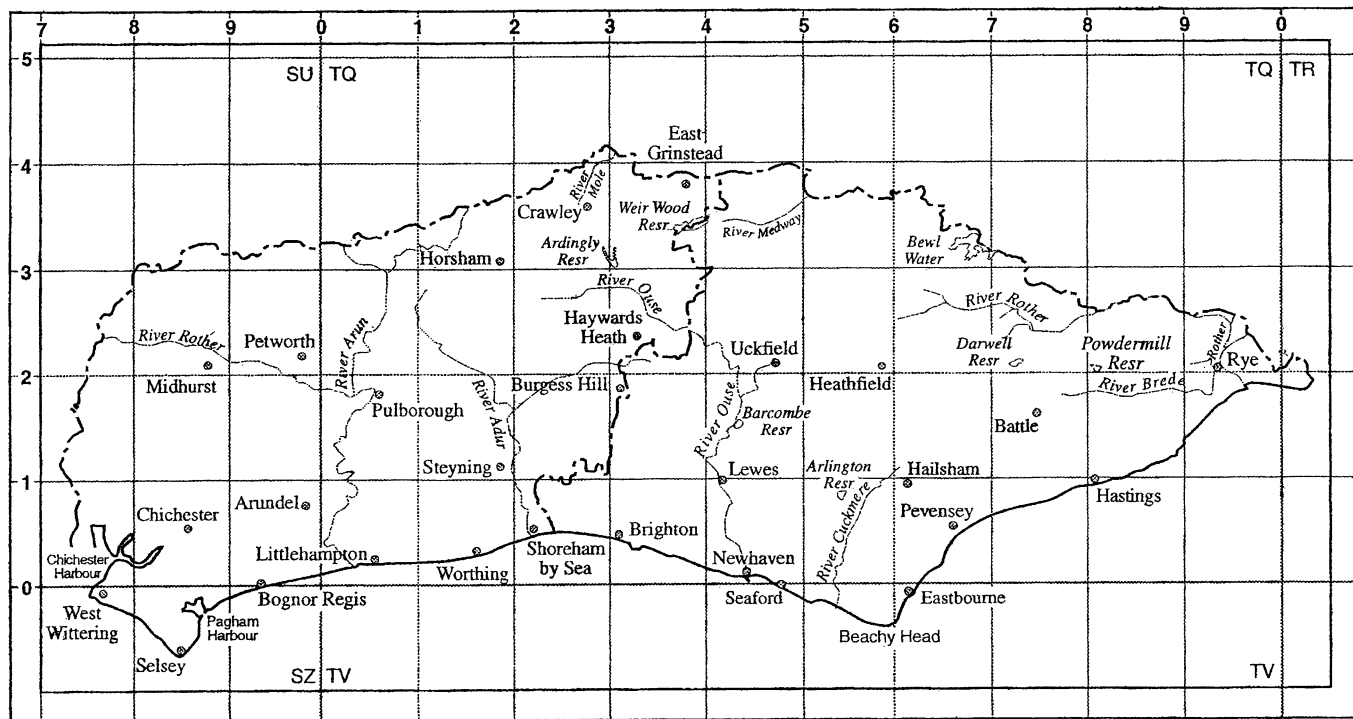
The annual Sussex Bird Report (which is free to members). This contains a number of well-researched papers and a full systematic list of birds seen in our county. These records are assessed by the Recorder and a Records Committee, to ensure that each entry portrays the true current status of the birds in Sussex.

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Alexandra Park, Hastings	TQ8010	Charleston Reedbed	TQ5100	Henfield Levels	TQ1914	Northpoint Pit, Rye	TQ9319	Sidlesham Ferry & Fields	SZ8596
Amberley Wild Brooks	TQ0314	Chelwood Vachery	TQ4330	Hollies, Ashdown	TQ4528	Old Airstrip, Ashdown	TQ4231	Sompting Brooks	TQ1604
Ambersham Common	SU9119	Chichester Gravel Pits	SU8703	Hollingbury Camp	TQ3207	Old Lodge Reserve	TQ4630	South Stoke	TQ0210
Angmering Park Estate	TQ0506	Chichester Harbour	SU7600	Horse Eye Level	TQ6208	Pagham Harbour	SZ8596	Sovereign Hbr Marina	TQ6403
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Arundel Park	TQ0108	Cobnor Point & Farm	SU7902	Ifield Mill Pond	TQ2436	Partridge Green	TQ1919	Stansted Forest	SU7511
Arundel W.W.T.	TQ0208	Combe Haven	TQ7609	Iping Common	SU8421	Pett Level Pools	TQ9014	Stedham Common	SU8521
Ashdown Forest	TQ4332	Crows Nest, Ashdown	TQ4728	Ivy Lake, Chichester	SU8703	Petworth Park	SU9721	Streele Farm Billingshurst	TQ0624
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Balsdean	TQ3704	Darwell Reservoir	TQ7121	Kneppmill Pond	TQ1521	Pevensay Bridge Level	TQ6504	The Goat, Ashdown	TQ4032
Barcombe Reservoir	TQ4314	East Guldeford Level	TQ9421	Lancing Clump	TQ1806	Pevensay Levels	TQ6605	The Mens	TQ0223
Beachy Head	TV5895	East Head	SZ7698	Langney Point	TQ6401	Pilsey Island & Sands	SU7600	The Severals	SZ8794
Belle Tout	TV5695	Ebernoe Common	SU9726	Lavington Common	SU9418	Pippingford Park	TQ4430	Thorney Deepes	SU7503
Bewl Water	TQ6733	Elms Farm, Icklesham	TQ8815	Lewes Brooks	TQ4207	Portfield Gravel Pit	SU8805	Thorney Island	SU7602
Billingshurst	TQ0825	Eridge Park	TQ5635	Littlehampton G.C.	TQ0101	Powdermill Reservoir	TQ7919	Tilgate Park	TQ2734
Birling Gap	TV5596	Fairlight	TQ8611	Long/Narrow Pits, Rye	TQ9217	Pulborough Brooks	TQ0516	Union Canal, E.Guldeford	TQ9322
Bluebell Railway	TQ4023	Fishbourne Channel	SU8303	Lullington Heath	TQ5401	Rackham Woods	TQ0414	Upper Adur Levels	TQ1914
Brede Levels	TQ8417	Fore Wood, Crowhurst	TQ7513	Lurgashall Mill Pond	SU9325	Roman Road, Ashdown	TQ4729	Wakehurst Place	TQ3331
Bremere Rife	SZ8798	Forest Mere	SU8129	Manxey Levels	TQ6306	Rye Bay Wood	TQ9217	Walland Marsh	TQ92
Brighton Marina	TQ3302	Four Counties, Ashdown	TQ4631	Marline Wood	TQ7812	Rye Harbour LNR	TQ9216	Waltham Brooks	TQ0215
Brighton Wild Park	TQ3207	Friston Forest	TV 5499	Marsh Farm, Yapton	SU9804	Scotney Court Gravel Pits	TR0119	Warnham L.N.R.& M.P.	TQ1732
Broadwater, Worthing	TQ1404	Gills Lap, Ashdown	TQ4632	Maynards Green	TQ5818	Seaford Head	TV4997	Weir Wood Reservoir	TQ3834
Brooklands, Worthing	TQ1703	Glynde Levels	TQ4609	Mill Hill, Shoreham	TQ2107	Selsey Bill	SZ8592	West Beach Littleh'mpton	TQ0201
Broomhill Level	TQ9818	Glyne Gap, Bexhill	TQ7607	Millbrook, Ashdown	TQ4428	Selsey West Fields	SZ8394	Westdean Woods	SU8515
Buchan Park	TQ2434	Goring Gap	TQ1001	New Salts Farm	TQ2004	Seven Sisters Country Pk	TV5197	Whitbread Hollow	TV5996
Burton Mill Pond	SU9617	Gossops Green	TQ2535	Newhaven Harbour	TV4499	Sheepcote Valley	TQ3404	Widewater, Lancing	TQ2004
Camp Hill, Ashdown	TQ4629	Gravetye Lakes	TQ3634	Newhaven Tide Mills	TQ4500	Shillinglee Lake	SU9631	Willingdon	TQ5802
Castle Water & Farm	TQ9118	Greenwood Clump	TQ4731	Nook Meadows, Rye	TQ9217	Shooters Bottom	TV5795	Woods Mill	TQ2113
Cattlestone Farm	TQ1020	Halsey's Farm	SZ8697	Normans Bay	TQ6805	Shoreham Airport	TQ2005	Woolbeding Common	SU8625
Chailey Common	TQ3821	Harbour Farm, Rye	TQ9317	North Wall Pagham Hbr	SZ8797	Shoreham Harbour	TQ2304	Worth Forest	TQ3034

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

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*Editorial Team: PN Paul, Dr JA Cocks, RJ Fairbank, JA Hobson,
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Reed Bunting at Weirwood Reservoir, March 2004.

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