

The Sussex Bird Report



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2010



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SUSSEX ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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Number Sixty-three, 2010



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Sussex Bird Report 2009 amendments and corrections

Very few errors in the 2009 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.

Photographs

Cover photograph: *Red-footed Falcon, Cuckmere Haven, June 2010 (Jacob Everitt)*

The Photographic Editor would like to thank those photographers who submitted photographs of Sussex birds taken in 2010, 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 or the Council of the Sussex Ornithological Society.

Editorial

Joanne Chattaway

It has been an honour to edit this report, my first and the 63rd Sussex Bird Report. Records for 2010 were again high, with over 170,000 records submitted, slightly fewer than in 2009, of 269 species, the highest number since 2000. Atlas records were also very high and tremendous thanks goes to all those people who continued to submit records, boosting the breeding statuses of their tetrads and seeking out those tetrads with few records. Atlas records and BBS records have continued to have a major impact on the quantity and quality of records to be analysed by the species account writers. Thanks are due to all the contributors who submitted records in 2010 and to all those who participated in the BBS, Atlas and other surveys. There were 36 individuals who each submitted over 1000 records. A full acknowledgment of contributors appears on pages 230-237. The accounts and figures do not include Garden Birdwatch data as records did not arrive in time for inclusion in this report.

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Submitting records	796	632	1207	962	952	986
Records received	87,586	96,595	148,292	191,788	176,388	170,113
Species recorded	263	253	253	266	257	269
Birds ringed	56,746	54,661	51,372	54,330	73,191	82,660
Species ringed	125	109	116	108	112	115
Species on county list	389	388	388	389	390	391

Observers are reminded that, unless records are submitted, they will not appear in the society's database and for those species for which descriptions are required, unless submitted and approved by the Society's Records Committee, the records will not appear in this and future reports. Observers are therefore urged to complete the brief but necessary form for those species requiring descriptions. Although the Atlas survey has now finished it is hoped that observers will continue recording breeding status and detailed grid references with their records as these are of importance for conservation purposes.

This year a new table of the Ashdown Forest Breeding Birds (page 228) has been introduced, and I am grateful to the Ashdown Bird Group for supplying the records and to Peter Johnson and Sue Phillips for analysing the data. The table demonstrates the importance of the Ashdown Forest, our largest heathland in Sussex, for breeding heathland species.

The statuses of species in Sussex have been reviewed this year and a number updated to reflect developing trends. Thanks are due to Adrian Thomas and John Newnham.

The species accounts were written by a large team of writers, namely C Ball, CJR Barfield, VP Bentley, D Boddington, C Brooks, DA Burt, P Carter, MJ Chattaway, WE Coleman, JR Cowser, J Curson, GD Evans, PJ Everitt, D Green, AC Gutteridge, WG Harvey, JA Hobson, A House, DH Howey, P James, ME Kalaher, SH Linnington, JA Newnham, G Osborne, TW Parmenter, RT Pepper, PJ Plant, AH Podmore, JP Pryor, CJ Reay, NJ Rutter, TJ Seabrook, MV Sennit, MD Shaw, SP Simpson, A Thomas, SF Walsh, LA Walther, AB Watson and JH Whitman. The initials at the end of each account identify the writer. I am grateful to each of you.

Thanks are also due to the team of proofreaders: Jacob Everitt, Dick Gilmore, John Hobson, Peter Hughes, Paul James, Phil Jones, Owen Mitchell, John Newnham, Nick Paul, Adrian Thomas and Barry Yates, who have patiently read through versions of the species accounts and

made recommendations for improvements, additions and amendments. As a result some of the draft species accounts have been edited to reflect the suggestions made, to include late records and to present the records in a uniform fashion for future researchers. I hope that this action has not offended any of the authors, but if it has done so, I offer my sincere apologies.

In addition, thanks go to the writers of the scientific papers: Sam Bayley, Richard Cowser, Helen Crabtree, David Howey and Barry Yates, and to Tony Cocks for editing them, to Paul James for writing the Review of the Year, Ian Barnard for selecting and processing the photographs, Helen Crabtree for typesetting, Robert Yarham for designing the cover, John Newnham for his database report and his meticulous attention to detail with the computerised records, my husband David for IT support and last but definitely not least to John Hobson for his patience and good will with this new editor.

Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used as standard practice:

BBRC	British Birds Records Committee	RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
BBS	Breeding Bird Survey	RBRG	Rye Bay Ringing Group
BTO	British Trust for Ornithology	PH	Public House
BOU	British Ornithologists Union	R	River
CBC	Common Birds Census	SF	Sewage Farm or Works
CP	Country Park	SP	Sand Pit
Fm	Farm	SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
GP	Gravel Pit	TTV	Timed Tetrad Visit
GC	Golf Course	WeBS	Wetland Bird Survey
Hbr	Harbour	WBBS	Waterways Breeding Bird Survey
IUCN	The World Conservation Union	WinGS	Winter Gull Roost Survey
MP	Mill Pond	WWT	Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust
MO	Many observers	ha	Hectare(s)
LNR	Local Nature Reserve	hr	Hour(s)
NR	Nature Reserve	km	Kilometre(s)
NNR	National Nature Reserve	m	Metre(s)
O/S	Offshore	nc	No count
Res	Reservoir		
N,E,S,W	As cardinal compass points		

Review of 2010

Paul James

As in previous years, this review of 2010 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/ departure dates and other interesting and unusual records. A total of 269 species was recorded in the county in 2010, which is 12 more than last year. Since 1997 the annual totals have varied between 250 and 269 (most recently in 2000).

The highlight of the year for most birders was undoubtedly the juvenile **White-tailed Sea-eagle** that spent two days in the Arun Valley in December and was the first recorded in Sussex since 1961. Other highlights included the county's earliest ever **Alpine Swift** in March, the fifth **Bonaparte's Gull** in April, the second **American Golden Plover** and the fourth **Paddyfield Warbler** in September, the second **Blackpoll Warbler** in October, the first **Red-flanked Bluetail** in November and an exceptional influx of geese in late December including a **Red-breasted Goose** and the first **Black Brant** for East Sussex. Also of note were record influxes of five **Buff-breasted Sandpipers** in September-October and seven **Great White Egrets** and about 70 **Lapland Buntings**, the largest influx since 1956. A pair of **Goshawks** bred for the second year running as did two pairs of **Stone-curlews**. Other notable breeding birds included at least seven pairs of **Honey-buzzards** (though the true county population may be twice that figure), two pairs of **Savi's Warblers** and two pairs of **Marsh Warblers**.

January

January was mostly unsettled, the first half being very cold with widespread snowfalls and some sharp frosts. After mid-month, temperatures rose to around normal before a return to colder conditions at the end of the month. Overall, it was a very cold month with mean temperatures 2.5 to 3.0°C below the 1971-2000 normal over England and Wales making it the coldest January in the UK since 1987 and equal eighth coldest since 1914.

The New Year opened with **Great Grey Shrikes** on Ashdown Forest and at Pett Level (intermittently until 17 and 12 Mar, respectively). Also on the 1st there was a **Goosander** at Ditchling Common, the **Black-necked Grebe** from 2009 was still in the moat of Bodiam Castle and the **Spoonbill** was still in Pagham Harbour while on the 2nd there were 26 **Bewick's Swans** on Henfield Levels, 15 **Purple Sandpipers** at Brighton Marina (with a further 12 at Newhaven on the 6th) and three wintering **Common Sandpipers** on the Adur at Upper Beeding. Four **Whooper Swans** at Ivy Lake on the 3rd were seen either here or at Pagham Harbour until 5 Feb and a **Snow Bunting** was at Thorney Island. On the 4th there were 328 **Great Crested Grebes** off Worthing and an inland **Red-throated Diver** at Ivy Lake. A first winter **Caspian Gull** at Brighton Marina on the 5th (eighth county record) had been ringed as a nestling in Poland in May 2009. Also on the 5th 50 **White-fronted Geese** flew over Earnley and a **Great Northern Diver** was off Worthing while on the 6th there was a **Great Skua** off Worthing and a **Waxwing** at Elmer. The snowy weather at the time resulted in **Wood Larks** being displaced with records from about 20 coastal locations involving a minimum of 55 and possibly as many as 90 birds. The highest counts were 15 at Climping on the 7th, 12 at Cliff End on the same date and the same number at Pett Level on the 11th, and up to ten by the River Adur at Shoreham between the 8th and the 13th. Some very large flocks of **Sky Larks** were recorded at the same time including 5000 at Atherington and 2000 at both Coombes and Church Norton. A **Great White Egret** past Climping Beach

on the 7th was later seen at Widewater and Pett Level. On the 8th five **Red-crested Pochards** flew east past Climping Beach and on the 10th the only **Long-tailed Duck** recorded in the first winter period flew west at Selsey Bill. On the 11th there was a **Willow Tit** at Arundel and **Red-crested Pochards** at Shinewater Lake (two) and Weir Wood Reservoir while on the 13th there were ten **Waxwings** at Southwater, four **Hen Harriers** at Church Norton and 42 **Woodcock** at Pett Level. Three **Common Sandpipers** were near Dallington on the 14th. On the 15th there were nine **Greater Scaups**, five **Velvet Scoters**, a **Smew** and six **Slavonian Grebes** off Glynne Gap and a **Black-necked Grebe** in Shoreham Harbour (the first of six recorded during the month) while on the 17th there were 20 **Common Goldeneye** and a **Black Brant** in Pagham Harbour (the latter until the 27th) and 31 **White-fronted Geese** at Scotney Court. Five **Red-crested Pochards** were at Chichester Gravel Pits on the 18th. An inland **Slavonian Grebe** was at Arlington Reservoir on the 23rd while on the 24th a different **Caspian Gull** (a second winter) was at Castle Water and nearby ten **Greater Scaup** and 689 **Great Crested Grebes** were off Pett Level. On the 25th there was a peak count for the first winter period of 200 **Siskins** at Horsham. Three **Sandwich Terns** at East Head on the 26th were probably those seen on several occasions at Selsey Bill in February. A **Smew** was at Burton Mill Pond on the 30th and ten at Rye Harbour the same day was the highest site count during the month. Wintering **Avocets** built up to a peak of 25 in Pagham Harbour at the end of January, significantly higher than in the last few years, with a further 12 in Chichester Harbour. Highlights of the January WeBS were 1263 **Shelduck** (the highest county total since 2004) and 9759 **Wigeon** (the second highest January count on record).

February

High pressure during the second week of February brought plenty of fine weather but the remainder of the month was unsettled. It was generally cold with some sharp frosts. Ten to 20 cm of snow fell in East Sussex and Kent on 10 and 11 Feb, resulting in road and rail delays and hundreds of school closures. Overall, mean temperatures were 1-2°C below the 1971-2000 average across England and Wales making it the coldest February in the UK since 1991.

On the 1st, there were three **Pale-bellied Brent Geese** in Fishbourne Channel, ten **Egyptian Geese** at Pulborough Brooks, a **Red-necked Grebe** in Chichester Harbour (the first of nine during the month) and 100 **Lesser Redpolls** at Horsham (the largest count in the first winter period). At Rye Harbour there were 43 **Ruff** on the 3rd while seawatching at Worthing produced a **Great Northern Diver** and a **Black-necked Grebe**. It was a good winter for **Eurasian Bitterns** with 12 recorded in January and 11 in February including up to four at Burton Mill Pond and a peak count of six at Rye Harbour on the 4th. On the 6th a **Cattle Egret** was seen from a train at Southease, and a lone **Waxwing** was at Littlehampton on the 9th while on the 10th a **Lesser Whitethroat** appeared in an East Preston garden visiting feeders there into April. Bird of the month for many people was a **Common Crane** that appeared in the Ouse Valley near Piddinghoe on the 11th remaining until the 20th, when it flew off strongly to the northeast.

On the 12th there was a **Red-crested Pochard** at Shinewater Lake. Three **Velvet Scoters** off Selsey Bill, a **Water Pipit** at Coldwaltham Sewage Farm and a **Snow Bunting** at The Midrips on the 14th were the only ones reported during the month while 68 **Bewick's Swans** at Arundel WWT on the 19th and 120 **White-fronted Geese** at Scotney Court on the 20th were the largest flocks of these species in the first winter period. On the 21st, two **Bewick's Swans** on Horse Eye Level were different to four seen there eight days previously. A count of 12 **Hawfinches** at West Dean Woods on the 22nd was the largest of the year. Four **Smew** at Rye Harbour on the 26th were the last of the winter while five **Black Redstarts** at Sovereign Harbour Marina on the 27th were most likely early migrants rather than over-wintering birds.

March

High pressure dominated the first two weeks of March, producing dry but unseasonably cold weather with night time frosts and winds from the north-east. The latter part of the month saw a return to more unsettled weather with Atlantic depressions bringing some heavy rain, but at least it was warmer! The very cold winter and a cold first half of March resulted in a late start to the growth of plants and trees, with spring flowering in most areas beginning several weeks later than in recent years.

The month opened with 20 **Slavonian Grebes** off Church Norton on the 2nd. On the 3rd an emaciated **Eurasian Bittern** was picked up in a ditch at Ditchling and taken to Mallydams RSPCA while at Rye Harbour there were two **Greater Scaup** which stayed until the 14th. On the 5th the first two **Garganey** were found near Piddinghoe, staying until the 8th, and there was an inland **Shag** at Wakehurst Place. Also on the 5th a first-year **Glaucous Gull** was seen near Litlington; further sightings at Crowlink on the 17th, the Ouse Estuary Project on the 20th and in the lower Cuckmere Valley on the 28th probably related to the same individual. On the 6th the first **White Wagtail** was at Selsey Bill. On the 10th the first **House Martin** was at Pagham Harbour while on the 12th there were still 30 **Bewick's Swans** at Warningcamp in the Arun Valley. The next day the first **Northern Wheatear** was seen at Seaford Head and three **Water Pipits** were at Sidlesham Sewage Farm. On the 14th an early **Osprey** was seen at Chilgrove (with two more the following day at Southwater Country Park and Weir Wood Reservoir) and the first **Little Ringed Plover** was at Cuckmere Haven.

On the 17th there were four **Black Redstarts** at Birling Gap and a **Great Northern Diver** was off Brighton Marina. The following day, the first **Barn Swallows** were at Pagham Harbour and Pulborough Brooks and five **Garganey** flew past Hastings. Also on this day there was a definite arrival of **Wheatears**, with a total of 37 recorded. On the 19th the first **Sand Martins** were at Pulborough Brooks and Thorney Island and the first **Willow Warblers** arrived in the Cuckmere Valley and Selsey Bill. On the 22nd the first **Common Terns** were at Chichester Gravel Pits, a female **European Serin** was found at Seaford Head and nine **Firecrests** were at Climping Gap. The wintering **Little Stint** from 2009 was last seen in Fishbourne Channel on the 23rd when a **Great Northern Diver** flew east past Worthing and the first **Yellow Wagtail** was at Applesham. On the 24th an **Alpine Swift** at Anchor Bottom was the county's earliest record and part of a national influx at the time, though it did not linger, and a **Hoopoe** was at nearby Coombes. On the 25th eight **Garganey** flew east past Climping Beach while the following day the first **Arctic Skuas** flew past Splash Point. On the 27th there were at least nine **Firecrests** at Climping. On the 28th the first **Sedge Warbler** arrived at Church Norton and there were 24 **Common Buzzards** in the air together near Newick. The month ended with 17 **Barnacle Geese** at East Head on the 30th.

April

The first few days of April were unsettled with frequent heavy rain and strong winds, and it was unseasonably cold (though Sussex escaped the heavy snow which blighted Scotland). After this, high pressure built with dry and bright weather through the middle of the month, though it was often rather cold with winds from the north-east. The last week was noticeably warmer with southerly or south-easterly winds dominating. Nationally it was the fourth sunniest April since 1929.

On the 2nd a **Great White Egret** was seen along Glynde Reach, 25 **Barnacle Geese** flew east past Worthing and a **Pale-bellied Brent Goose** flew east past Splash Point. The next day saw the first **Grasshopper Warbler** at Seaford Head, plus the first **Manx Shearwaters** at Selsey

Bill and Worthing. On the 4th there were 13 **Great Northern Divers** off Selsey Bill. **Egyptian Geese** now seem to be fairly well established in the county; nevertheless ten at Kneppmill Pond on the 5th was an unusually high count. Also on the 5th the first **Cuckoo** was at Newick, the first **Garden Warbler** at Barcombe, the first **Nightingale** at Hastings Country Park and the first **Common Whitethroat** at Seaford Head while additional firsts on the 6th were **Arctic Tern** at Selsey Bill and **Tree Pipit** on Ashdown Forest. On the 7th the first **Eurasian Reed Warbler** was at Pagham Harbour and two **Common Cranes** appeared at Pulborough Brooks, staying until the following day, while on the 8th a **Purple Heron** flew over Weir Wood Reservoir and the first of ten **Ring Ouzels** recorded during the spring was on Ashdown Forest. A **Little Tern** was at Pagham Harbour on the 10th and a **Hobby** at Saltdean on the 11th when another **Common Crane** dropped in at Pulborough Brooks (again staying until the following day). There was also a **Long-tailed Duck** offshore at Ferring, which remained until the 21st. On the 12th there was a **Spoonbill** at Rye Harbour which stayed until the following day while on the 13th a total of 13 **Great Northern Divers** flew west at Selsey Bill. Two **Whinchats** on Ashdown Forest on the 15th were the first for the year in what was another poor spring for this species with just 13 recorded. Rather more encouraging however was a very good count of 60 roosting **Yellow Wagtails** at Rye Harbour on the same date.

On the 17th there were six **Green Sandpipers** at Boxgrove and two **Long-tailed Ducks** off Church Norton. The following day the first **Common Swifts** were seen at Climping and Weir Wood Reservoir, the first **Wood Warbler** was at Sidlesham, a late **Goosander** flew west past Goring and the first **Pomarine Skua** of the year passed Seaford in what turned out to be a very poor spring for the species with a total of only 46 recorded. However, the star bird of the day (and probably the whole spring) was an adult summer **Bonaparte's Gull** found at Arlington Reservoir with up to 60 **Little Gulls** and present until the 22nd. On the 18th the only **Golden Oriole** of the year was at Wiggonholt Common and the last **Jack Snipe** at Pevensey Levels while on the 19th 12 **Great Skuas** and the first **Black Tern** of the year passed Seaford, a **Hoopoe** was heard calling at Pulborough Brooks where there was also a **Great White Egret**, continuing the rarity theme. The following day another **Great White Egret** was at Rye Harbour, there were ten **Common Sandpipers** at Sidlesham, the first **Pied Flycatcher** was seen at Laughton Common Wood and the last **Bramblings** and **Fieldfares** were at Beachy Head and Sidlesham respectively.

Four **Long-tailed Ducks** off Climping on the 20th to the 21st were rather unseasonal and would have been unusual even in mid-winter. In fact the 21st was a busy day, with two more **Common Cranes** at Pulborough Brooks, a **Spoonbill** at Thorney Deeps and **Pied Flycatchers** at Selsey and Pagham Harbour. The following day there was a **Spoonbill** at Cuckmere Haven, the only inland **Black Tern** of the spring at Weir Wood Reservoir, another **Hoopoe** at Pagham Harbour and the last **Redwings** at Rye Harbour while on the 23rd there was a **White Stork** near Fittleworth.

On the 24th there were two **Pomarine Skuas** past Splash Point (plus a **Pale-bellied Brent Goose**, 743 **Common Scoters**, 12 **Manx Shearwaters**, 405 **Little Gulls** and 2005 **Commic Terns** in what was the best seawatch of the spring). Also, two **Roseate Terns** passed Selsey Bill and the first **Turtle Dove** was at Brightling. On the 25th a **Common Crane** was seen circling near Eridge. The 28th was the best 'Pom' day of the spring with eight past Selsey Bill and 16 past Splash Point, but most of these were in the middle of the day and the Seaford ones were only seen by a couple of intrepid observers who sat it out all day. On the 29th there was a **Red-necked Grebe** resplendent in full summer plumage at Climping Gap (until 7 May), the last **Purple Sandpiper** at Hastings and the first **Wood Sandpiper** at Lewes Brooks. The month ended with an obvious arrival of **Common Swifts** including at least 150 at Weir Wood Reservoir where there was also a **Greenland Wheatear**.

May

May began with rather unsettled weather over the first few days, and the first proper rain for several weeks; it was also considerably cooler than it had been at the end of April. It then warmed up through the middle of the month, with temperatures in the late 20s by the 23rd. The last week was more unsettled and considerably cooler; though rainfall for the month overall was well below average.

The month began with an exceptional count of 180 **Common Crossbills** at Black Down on the 2nd while on the 3rd there was a **Black Kite** at Pett Level, a very early **Honey-buzzard** at an undisclosed location, ten **Common Sandpipers** at Weir Wood Reservoir and the only May **Ring Ouzel** at Beachy Head. On the 4th there were two **Common Cranes** over Ardingly Reservoir while at Rye Harbour there was the first **Curlew Sandpiper** of the spring and two **Red-rumped Swallows** over the Long Pit. The first **Spotted Flycatcher** was at Pulborough Brooks on the 5th while also of note was a **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** in the car park there which gave good views to many admirers over the following few days. On the 6th a late **Merlin** was at Pevensey Levels, a **Hoopoe** was reported at Cowfold, and there was a **White Stork** over both Bulverhythe and Hastings. Two more **Red-rumped Swallows** arrived at Arlington Reservoir on the 8th and showed intermittently though very well at times until the 12th, and a late **Short-eared Owl** was at Pevensey Levels. On the 9th there was a **Stonechat** showing characteristics of the continental race *rubicola* at Beachy Head while on the 11th a **Spoonbill** flew past Worthing, a **Temminck's Stint** arrived at Arlington Reservoir (staying until the 14th) and the first **Nightjar** was at Wiggonholt Common.

On the seawatching front a **Long-tailed Skua** was sat on the sea off Birling Gap on the 13th but this was trumped (at least in rarity terms) by a **Black Guillemot** past Selsey Bill, the first in the county since May 1996. **Arctic Skua** passage peaked on the 14th with 14 past Selsey Bill and 11 past Splash Point. On the 15th there were two **Spoonbills** at Rye Harbour (until the 17th) with another two the following day in Pagham Harbour. A **Willow Warbler** of the northern race *acredula* was at Telscombe Cliffs on the 17th. On the 18th two **Dotterels** arrived for a four-day stay at Steep Down (where the first two **Quail** of the year were heard singing on the 20th) and on the 21st four **Pomarine Skuas** that flew past Selsey Bill and later past Splash Point were the last of the spring for this enigmatic bird. On the 22nd 12 **Wood Sandpipers** at Pulborough Brooks was an exceptional spring count and there was also a **Roseate Tern** at Rye Harbour. The following day was even better at Pulborough, with a **Purple Heron**, three **Temminck's Stints** and 15 **Ruff** seen there; a **Honey-buzzard** was also seen over Southwick, a **Little Stint** at Pagham Harbour and a **European Serin** at Beachy Head. On the 24th a **Spoonbill** arrived for a six day stay at Rye Harbour and was observed nest building and a **Hoopoe** was reported at Aldwick. The following day presumably the same bird was seen at Angmering. The month closed with a very late **Hen Harrier** at Beachy Head on the 27th and the first **Balearic Shearwater** of the year past Worthing on the 29th.

June

The first week was of June was very warm and sunny, the second week was slightly cooler and cloudier, and the remainder very warm and sunny with high pressure dominating; the only significant rainfall was on the night of the 12th. It was the sunniest June over England since 1996.

The month kicked off with a **Common Crane** over Old Lodge and a flock of six **European Bee-eaters** for one lucky observer at Pett on the 2nd. On the 5th there was a **Wood Sandpiper** at Pulborough Brooks and a **Ruff** in full summer splendour at Sidlesham Ferry (until 2 Sep)

while on the 6th a late **Black Tern** was in Chichester Harbour and a female **Pied Flycatcher** was reported at Old Lodge – an unusual location and time of year for what is becoming an increasingly scarce migrant in Sussex. A late **Velvet Scoter** flew east past Telscombe Cliffs on the 13th, an **Osprey** appeared at Burton Mill Pond (one of four reported during the month), a **Little Stint** was at Pagham Harbour and a **Spotted Redshank** at Sidlesham Ferry. On the 18th there were two **Common Eiders** at Glyne Gap while on the 20th one of the birds of the year for many turned up at Seaford Head in the form of a male **Red-footed Falcon**. Extraordinarily tame at times it sat on fence posts within a few feet of observers, frequently flying down to the ground to chase invertebrate prey. It graced the lower Cuckmere Valley for four days before flying off to the east. Also on the 20th was a **Black-necked Grebe** at Scotney Pit. On the 25th there was a **Spoonbill** at Rye Harbour where there were also 12 **Green Sandpipers** on the 25th and a **Roseate Tern** on the 28th (until 11 Jul).

Once again our breeding birds had mixed fortunes with the inevitable ‘winners’ and ‘losers’. The pair of **Egyptian Geese** that bred at Petworth Park in 2006-9 relocated to nearby Benbow Pond and raised eight young, and a second pair at Roman Wood (Slinfold) had three young. A **Pintail** summered at Pagham Harbour but there was no suggestion of breeding. Up to four **Garganey** spent the summer at Rye Harbour and breeding may have occurred though this was not proven. One or two pairs of **Common Pochard** bred at Arundel WWT fledging at least two ducklings and a pair at Pett Level also fledged young. **Grey Partridge** was confirmed breeding at only five broad locations (nine in 2009) though the number of pairs on the Norfolk Estate increased from 56 to 262! Small numbers of **Common Quail** were heard singing at mainly downland locations but, as usual, there was no evidence of breeding. A **Eurasian Bittern** was heard booming at Rye Harbour from late March to mid-June suggesting that colonisation of the county may not be far away. The total of 36 nesting pairs of **Little Egrets** at four established sites was similar to, although a slight reduction on the last two year’s 40-43 pairs. There was also a reduction in the number of **Grey Heron** nests from 260 to 239 perhaps due to the previous hard winter. A **Spoonbill** was observed nest building at Rye Harbour in late May but there was no further evidence of breeding. For the second year running seven pairs of **Honey-buzzards** raised 14 young. Two pairs of **Red Kites** attempted breeding in West Sussex, though only one was successful, while another pair may have bred in central Sussex. **Marsh Harriers** were present at three sites in the breeding season but there was no confirmation of successful nesting. Last year’s breeding pair of **Goshawks** was again successful raising three young. The ever popular **Peregrine Falcons** at Chichester Cathedral and Sussex Heights (Brighton) both laid four eggs. Four young fledged at the former site and at least one at the latter. **Water Rail** was confirmed breeding at Arundel WWT and Pett Level and a pair of **Common Cranes** was observed displaying and mating at Pulborough Brooks for one day only in late April before departing.

Oystercatchers had another good year with the number of pairs up from 48 to 54 including 33 at Rye Harbour. **Avocets** increased from 29 to about 38 pairs (at five sites) but **Little Ringed Plovers** were down from 12 pairs at six sites in 2009 to seven pairs at four sites. **Ringed Plovers** too had a poor year with a decrease from 57 pairs in 2009 to 48 pairs and low breeding success at Rye Harbour. Two pairs of **Stone-curlews** again nested, one fledging one young. **Common Snipe** continues to cling on as a breeding bird with a total of nine drumming males located at three sites, a similar situation to 2009. The **Black-headed Gull** colony at Rye Harbour had a bumper year with an estimated 2600 nests and 4500–5000 young fledged; **Mediterranean Gulls** also had a record year with an estimated 185 pairs at Rye Harbour (more than double the 2009 total) and 74 fledged young. A pair of **Common Gulls** also nested at Rye Hbr and a chick was recorded in late June, the first in Sussex since 1963, though it did not survive long. The **Kittiwake** colonies at Splash Point and Newhaven held 830 and 45 nests respectively. **Little Terns** had a mixed year.

At Pagham Harbour there were only seven pairs (16 in 2009) and no young fledged while on North Stakes Island all four nests failed. However, at Rye Harbour at least seven pairs nested and seven young fledged. **Sandwich Terns** also did well at this site with an estimated 750 nests (450 in 2009), and in excess of 1000 young fledged. Numbers of **Common Terns** were down slightly at Rye Harbour from 352 nests in 2009 to 341 though in excess of 500 young probably fledged.

Turtle Dove is a bird that is becoming increasingly hard to find in Sussex though encouragingly breeding was confirmed in six tetrads (none in 2009) and probable in a further 16 tetrads. Despite the cold winter, numbers of **Barn Owls** stabilised with 69 breeding attempts reported in West Sussex (64 in 2009) and 35 in East Sussex (34 in 2009) though breeding success was down on last year. **Long-eared Owls** had a poor year with no breeding season records received at all as did **European Nightjars** on the West Sussex heaths (down from 30 territories in 2009 to 18) though a survey of Ashdown Forest identified 86 territories showing little change there since a 2004 survey. There were no reports of confirmed breeding by **Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers** though breeding was probable at eight sites. Sadly **Willow Tit** would appear to be on the verge of extinction in Sussex given that the only accepted breeding record was of two birds singing at West Dean Woods on one day in late March. **Bearded Tits** bred at three sites with at least 30 young fledged at Thorney Island. **Wood Larks** again decreased on the West Sussex heaths (down from 37 territories in 2008 to 26) but **Sky Larks** on the Norfolk Estate increased from 397 pairs in 2009 to 427 pairs. **Sand Martins** received more attention than in 2009 and were confirmed breeding at 11 locations, all in West Sussex. **Wood Warbler** is another species that is seemingly barely clinging on in Sussex with breeding confirmed in just one tetrad in 2010 and probable in two others. Two hard winters have taken their toll on the county's **Dartford Warblers** with no territories at all on the West Sussex heaths (61 in 2008) and just six territories on Ashdown Forest. Two pairs of **Savi's Warblers** bred at an undisclosed location as did two pairs of **Marsh Warblers**, the latter raising four young. **Spotted Flycatchers** were confirmed breeding in 17 tetrads, down slightly from 21 tetrads in 2009, and there was an intriguing report of a pair of **Pied Flycatchers** visiting a possible nest site at Chailey in late June. The **Tree Sparrow** situation showed no sign of improvement with just a handful of breeding season records for the far east of the county, an area which is also the stronghold for the county's rapidly declining **Yellow Wagtail** population, though even here there are now very few pairs with, for example, only one or two pairs at Rye Harbour in 2010. Another species that had a poor year was **Tree Pipit** with 57 territories identified on Ashdown Forest (125 in 2009) and 21 on the West Sussex heaths (47 in 2009). Amidst all this doom and gloom it is encouraging to finish by reporting an increase in the number of **Corn Buntings** on the Norfolk Estate from 45 singing males in 2009 to 64 in 2010.

July

July started off warm and dry, as June had finished. The heatwave continued until the 12th, followed by the first proper rain for weeks as unsettled conditions prevailed for the rest of the week, settling down again by the 16th. The latter part of the month was cooler and more unsettled as Sussex received the tail end of a succession of frontal systems; however, despite the cloudier conditions there was very little real rain.

July is generally a quiet month and little of note was recorded until the 8th when there was an **Osprey** at Pett Level and 1500 **Common Swifts** at Weir Wood Reservoir. Twelve **Ruff** were at Rye Harbour on the 9th, the first returning **Purple Sandpiper** at Pett Level on the 14th and an unseasonal **Hen Harrier** at Scotney Court on the 17th. A **Grasshopper Warbler** trapped and ringed in a Horsham garden on the 18th was most likely an early returning migrant as was a **Common Redstart** at Pagham Harbour on the 20th. Returning waders included four **Curlew**

Sandpipers at Arlington Reservoir on the 18th, three **Wood Sandpipers** at Rye Harbour on the 23rd and three more at Weir Wood Reservoir on the 25th when there was also a **Little Stint** at Rye Harbour and 781 **Black-tailed Godwits** were at Pagham Harbour. On the 26th a **Pied Flycatcher** was in a Pagham garden – again presumably an early returning bird – while on the 27th there was an early **Golden Plover** at The Burgh. On the 28th 22 **Yellow-legged Gulls** were at Bracklesham Bay with another 35 loafing in Pagham Harbour the following day. A quiet month concluded with the first two returning **Whinchats** at Pett Level on the 30th and a **Wood Warbler** at Malling Down on the 31st, the first of eight recorded on autumn passage.

August

After the fine settled weather of June and July, August was a bit of a washout, being unsettled all month with spectacular downpours on the 4th and the third week being particularly wet. Daytime temperatures were about 1°C below average over the whole of England and Wales and parts of Sussex had twice the normal rainfall for the month.

On the 2nd migration was in full swing at Whitbread Hollow with two **Pied Flycatchers**, four **Nightingales** and six **Grasshopper Warblers**. On the 3rd there were six **Wood Sandpipers** at Pett Level and the next day 62 **Mandarins** were at Weir Wood Reservoir. A **Stone-curlew** flew over a Birdham garden after dark on the 6th while on the 7th a total of six **Balearic Shearwaters** was seen, with another past Goring on the 10th. Things were relatively quiet until the 16th when there were five **Pied Flycatchers** among common migrants at Beachy Head and three **Hawfinches** at Pett Level. On the 20th the last **Common Quail** of the year was at Pett Level and 200 **Yellow Wagtails** were at Rye Harbour while on the 22nd a **Wryneck** (the first of 21 recorded during the autumn) was seen at Streat. An **Icterine Warbler** was trapped at Pett Level on the 25th, 26 **Black Terns** were at Rye Harbour on the 26th and a **Hoopoe** was at Merston on the 27th. On the 28th there were two **Garganey** at Rye Harbour, a very early **Jack Snipe** at Thorney Island, a well watched **Hoopoe** at Atherington (until the 30th), an **Aquatic Warbler** trapped at an undisclosed location and an impressive array of migrants at Seaford Head, including 139 **Yellow Wagtails**, 78 **Wheatears** and 11 **Whinchats**. On the 29th a **White-rumped Sandpiper** (12th county record) was at Castle Water, a **Pectoral Sandpiper** was at Church Norton for two days and a **Golden Pheasant** was near Birling Gap, while on the 30th a juvenile **Montagu's Harrier** was seen at Balsdean (until 9 Sep) and the first returning **Merlin** was seen at Climping.

September

After a settled first few days, the remainder of September was changeable with frequent Atlantic depressions bringing wet and windy weather though there were some warm and sunny interludes.

The month began with the first returning **Short-eared Owl** at Seaford Head and a **Honey-buzzard** at Pulborough Brooks on the 1st. The following day there was a very early **Coal Tit** of the continental race *ater* at Birling Gap while on the 3rd there was a **Dotterel** over Beachy Head and an exceptional 50 **Spotted Flycatchers** (plus 15 **Common Redstarts**) at Cissbury. **European Nightjars** at Woods Mill and Pett Level on the 6th and 7th respectively were the last for the year. On the 7th a **Black-necked Grebe** and the first coastal **Dartford Warbler** of the autumn were at Pagham Harbour and on the 8th eight **Little Stints** were at Pilsey Island (until the 11th). On the 9th there seemed to be common migrants everywhere, including 100 **Yellow Wagtails** at Climping, and 45 **Spotted Flycatchers** (and a **Wood Warbler**) at Cissbury, 500 **Blackcaps** in Whitbread Hollow plus a popular **Wryneck** at Pagham Harbour (until the 14th).

On the 10th there was a **Spoonbill** at Thorney Deepes (until the 12th) and the last two **Nightingales** at Pett Level, while the next day there was an **Ortolan Bunting** at Belle Tout (until the 12th) and the last **Turtle Dove** at Arlington Reservoir. Another **Honey-buzzard** was at Hope Gap on the 12th when there was also an elusive **Icterine Warbler** and the first two **Ring Ouzels** of the autumn were seen at Beachy Head. One of the features of the autumn was the unprecedented influx of **Lapland Buntings** with a minimum of 69 birds recorded. The first were four at Hastings Country Park and one at Beachy Head on the 12th with one inland the following day at the Devil's Dyke. The 16th was a good day with the county's second ever **American Golden Plover** (plus 17 **Curlew Sandpipers**) in Fishbourne Channel, and a **White Stork**, two **Lapland Buntings**, a **Ring Ouzel** and a **Pied Flycatcher** at Seaford Head though sadly the stork was found in a moribund state the next day and taken into care by the RSPCA.

On the 18th there were two **Pink-footed Geese** at Thorney Island and a **Common Crane** at Cuckmere Haven and on the 19th the last **Garganey** was at Bewl Water. On the 21st the first of a remarkable series of **Buff-breasted Sandpipers** was seen at Pilsey Island and an injured **Honey-buzzard** was found at Slaugham and taken into care. A total of 13 **Black Terns** flew west past Selsey Bill on the 23rd while on the 26th there were 30 very early **White-fronted Geese** at Pett Level and another **Honey-buzzard** at Ashington. A **Paddyfield Warbler** trapped at Pett Level on the 27th was the fourth county record, all of which have been at this location. Also here were the last two **Pied Flycatchers** of the year. On the 28th a **Great White Egret** graced Pilsey Island, a **Stone-curlew** flew over Brighton, two **Buff-breasted Sandpipers** were found at Scotney Court (remaining there until 10 Oct), a late **Wood Sandpiper** was at Earnley and the first returning **Redwings** were on Ashdown Forest. On the 29th an adult **Long-tailed Skua** flew past Splash Point and nearby there was a **Spoonbill** at Cuckmere Haven while the following day a very good month closed with two **Spoonbills** and 30 **Yellow-legged Gulls** at Pagham Harbour and a late **Cuckoo** at Clipping Gap.

October

The month had a very wet start with heavy rain over the first few days but after that it was remarkably dry until at least the 22nd and quite warm in mid-month, though with a colder spell arriving from the 18th and the return of rain from the Atlantic in the last few days. Arlington recorded 40.3 mm of rainfall in 24 hours on the 1st to the 2nd.

The month started with a **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** on the dam at Arlington Reservoir from the 1st to the 6th which showed very well during its stay; remarkably this was the fourth recorded in the county during the autumn. Also on the 1st a **Sooty Shearwater** flew east past Selsey Bill (with another past Seaford Head two days later) while on the 2nd there was a late **Little Tern** past Worthing, a migrant **Long-eared Owl** at Hastings and the first returning **Bramblings** at Pett Level. On the 3rd and 4th a **Red-breasted Goose** and a **Ruddy Shelduck** were seen at Thorney Island. The goose bore a red plastic ring and so was not the 'usual' returning bird of previous winters; perhaps the ring plus its 'partner in crime' gave a clue to its origins! On the 3rd there was the autumn's only **Pomarine Skua** past Splash Point and the next day a **Honey-buzzard** was at Coombes. The last **Garden Warbler** was at Pett Level on the 5th, the first **Fieldfare** at Pett Level on the 6th and the last **Lesser Whitethroat** at Weir Wood Reservoir on the 7th. On the 6th a third **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** appeared at Scotney Court (making a total of five for the autumn), a **Honey-buzzard** flew out to sea at Crowlink, two inland **Avocets** and a **Grey Plover** were at Arlington Reservoir, and the last **Arctic Terns** were seen at Shoreham and Worthing. On the 7th two **Honey-buzzards** flew out to sea in quick succession at Holywell, a **Bluethroat** (an increasingly rare bird in the UK) was trapped at Pett Level and eight **Lapland Buntings** over

Hastings Country Park was the peak count for the autumn. On the 8th a **Hoopoe** appeared at Pett Level, a **Snow Bunting** graced East Head (staying there until the 18th) and the last **Spotted Flycatcher** was at Arundel.

Great Grey Shrikes were seen at Ovingdean on the 10th and Seaford Head on the 11th though these were overshadowed by the discovery of an adult **Rose-coloured Starling** at Newhaven Heights on the latter date; it stayed in the area until the 25th but was looking decidedly worse for wear towards the end of its stay and was probably taken by a **Sparrowhawk**. Most regrettable was the discovery of a Swedish tagged young **Osprey** at Golden Cross about this time that had been shot. It was taken into care but died whilst being treated. The last **Sedge Warbler** was at Pett Level on the 12th while on the 13th the first **Bewick's Swans** returned to Pulborough Brooks and a **Snow Bunting** was on the Downs at Kithurst Hill (with presumably the same bird also being seen from the 21st to the 23rd). On the 14th an elusive **Pallas's Leaf Warbler** arrived for a three day stay at Horseshoe Plantation (Beachy Head) and the last **Grasshopper Warbler** of the year was at Pett Level where an astonishing 843 birds of this species were ringed during the autumn! The next day a **Great White Egret** flew west at Telscombe Cliffs and the last **Yellow Wagtail** was at Worthing but these were eclipsed by the county's second ever **Blackpoll Warbler** trapped at Pett Level. It's hard to believe nowadays that **Twite** was once a regular winter visitor to Sussex so the appearance of two birds at Selsey West Fields from the 16th to the 19th attracted quite a lot of interest, especially as one had been colour ringed in the Pennines earlier in the year. Also on the 16th the last **Common Redstart** was at Whitbread Hollow and eight **Ring Ouzels** graced Sheepcote Valley (the highest autumn count in 2010).

On the 17th a very confiding **Shore Lark** arrived for a week-long stay at Cuckmere Haven though it did have an annoying habit of flying across the river necessitating a long walk (or a wade across the Cuckmere) for anyone who happened to be on the wrong side! The only **Yellow-browed Warbler** of the year was trapped at Pett Level the following day which also saw a **White Stork** over Barnham, the last **Hobby** at Climping and last **Common Whitethroat** at Hastings Country Park and the first returning **Greater Scaup** at Cuckmere Haven. On the 19th the fourteenth **Little Bunting** for Sussex was photographed in an Eastbourne garden (until the 21st) and there were four **Goosanders** at Sidlesham. The run of good birds at Arlington Reservoir continued with the discovery of a **Pectoral Sandpiper** on the 20th (with two **Ruff**) which stayed there until the 25th. The next day there was the last **Whinchat** on Ashdown Forest and the county's earliest ever **Smew** at Castle Water while on the 22nd there was a **Grey Phalarope** in the mouth of the River Rother at Rye Harbour. On the 24th there was an inland **Fulmar** at Lewes and the last **Sand Martin** at Beachy Head. On the 25th the last **Curlew Sandpiper** was at Pagham Harbour, a **Great Grey Shrike** at Waltham Brooks and the first returning **Slavonian Grebes** off Church Norton with the first **Red-necked Grebe** the following day flying west past Selsey Bill. A **Common Redpoll** ringed at Pett Level on the 25th was the first of an exceptional 24 trapped there up until 24th November. Late departing migrants continued to trickle through till the end of the month, with the last **Common Tern** at Ifield Mill Pond on the 25th and, on the 30th, the last **Manx Shearwater** past Worthing, the last **Tree Pipit** at Hastings and 26 **Tree Sparrows** at Pett Level. Six **Waxwings** at Angmering on the 31st were a taste of things to come...

November

The first week was rather unsettled and windy, but unseasonably warm. Temperatures returned to normal during the middle of the month, along with drier and sunnier conditions, while the last week saw the first cold snap of the winter, with widespread night-time frosts and some heavy snow showers.

The month opened with an unusual record of a **Bearded Tit** at Birling Gap on the 1st that departed west. On the 3rd there was a late **Osprey** over Brighton and another downland **Snow Bunting** at Beeding Hill (until the 10th) while the 4th saw a **Long-tailed Duck** fly past Worthing (the only record for the latter part of the year). There were two **Water Pipits** at Thorney Deepes on the 5th while on the 7th Sussex finally got its first **Red-flanked Bluetail** – not unexpected in such a phenomenal autumn for this species - but it was well inland, at Stanley Common, and unfortunately few people got to see it. Also on the 7th there were three **Little Stints** at Pulborough Brooks and a **Great Grey Shrike** on Ashdown Forest which stayed until the end of the year though ranged widely. On the 8th there were 450 **Gannets** in Rye Bay and eight **Waxwings** over Warnham Mill Pond while on the 9th the last **House Martins** were at Selsey Bill. On the 11th a **Black Brant** appeared at Pagham Harbour, also staying for the winter, plus a very late **Willow Warbler**, while on the 13th a **Grey Phalarope** was found at Pett Pools (until the 25th), a female **Red-crested Pochard** at Ivy Lake (until the 15th), two **Snow Buntings** at Bracklesham Bay and an exceptional 1197 **Lesser Redpolls** at Pett Level.

On the 15th the last **Ring Ouzel** was at Pulborough Brooks while the following day the regular wintering **Little Stint** returned to Fishbourne Channel. Two **Eurasian Reed Warblers** at Pett Level on the 18th were the last of the year while on the 19th there was another **Pallas's Leaf Warbler** at Horseshoe Plantation (Beachy Head). On the 21st there was a flock of 16 **Velvet Scoters** off Pett Level and a **Black Brant** appeared at Climping (probably different to the Pagham bird). The last of an unusual number of November **Barn Swallows** was seen at Telscombe Cliffs on the 25th. The next day a **Great Grey Shrike** was at The Burgh while on the 27th there were 13 **Waxwings** at Chichester. The month closed with nine **Bewick's Swans** at Rye Harbour on the 30th.

December

The first cold snap of the winter in late November continued into December and heralded the start of the coldest and snowiest early winter period for some 40 years. Temperatures barely rose above freezing for most of the month (even during the day) and there was frequent snow, with significant accumulations for some. A thaw set in just after Christmas but it was cold again by New Year. In England mean temperatures were over 5°C below the 1971-2000 average in most areas, and it was the coldest December for over 100 years. It was also the coldest calendar month since February 1986. There were some severe frosts and the number of days with air frost was the highest in December for over 50 years.

The effect of the severe weather on birds was dramatic. **Common Snipe** and **Woodcock** became more obvious during the cold spell with reports of both from a number of gardens. On the 1st there were 18 **Goosanders** at Bewl Water which were possibly those seen later in the day flying over Warnham Mill Pond. The next day ten **Whooper Swans** flew NW over Climping Gap and three **Jack Snipe** flew west past Telscombe Cliffs while on the 3rd there were 30 **Velvet Scoters** off Pett Level, six **Jack Snipe** at Ferring Rife and a **Great Grey Shrike** at Black Down. The next day there was a **Smew** at Arundel WWT (until the 14th), 19 **Common Goldeneye** were in Chichester Harbour and an **Arctic Skua** flew west past Telscombe Cliffs. On the 5th a **Black-necked Grebe** was in Shoreham Harbour and another **Smew** at Chichester Gravel Pits (until the 27th) and, on the 6th, 42 **Barnacle Geese** flew west past Ferring. A flock of 150 **Siskins** at Brightling on the 7th was the largest reported in the second winter period.

Waxwings began to arrive in real numbers with over 300 recorded during the month including high counts of 60 at Pett Level on the 11th, 60 at Eastbourne on the 23rd, 50 at the Ouse Estuary

Project on the 24th and 57 at Worthing on the 31st. However, Waxwings were largely forgotten at around midday on the 11th when news broke of a juvenile **White-tailed Sea-eagle** at Amberley Wild Brooks! It appeared again the following morning, to the delight of those unable to get there the previous day, before departing to the south-west, passing over Arundel WWT and then being tracked well into Hampshire where it spent the remainder of the winter.

Waxwings apart, other avian highlights during the middle part of December included 25 **Ruff** at Rye Harbour and a **Water Pipit** at Coldwaltham Sewage Works on the 12th, a **Black Brant** at Thorney Island on 15th (until the 23rd), a flock of 28 **Snow Buntings** in flight over Runciton on the 18th and a peak count for the month of six **Eurasian Bitterns** at Rye Harbour on the 19th and three at Arundel WWT on the 21st. Also on the 21st a **Sandwich Tern** was off Selsey Bill and, despite the hard weather, three **Dartford Warblers** were still on Iping Common. Nine **Marsh Harriers** were at Pett Level on the 22nd while on the 24th 11 **Greater Scaup** flew east past Worthing (with a further seven east on the 26th).

Few birders seemed to be out on Christmas Day itself and, apart from the inevitable Waxwing sightings, the only notable report was of a **Water Pipit** at Pagham Harbour. More people were walking off Christmas dinner on Boxing Day and the most significant finds were a **Red-breasted Goose** (among 280 **White-fronted Geese**) at Pett Level which stayed into the New Year. Also seen on Boxing Day were 43 presumably wild **Barnacle Geese** at Cuckmere Haven, three **Greater Scaup** at Brooklands and three **Smew** at Scotney Court. The following day 20 **Barnacle Geese** were at Pagham Harbour and four **Pink-footed Geese** appeared among 350 **White-fronted Geese** at Scotney Court, increasing to six on the 31st. Eight **Rose-ringed Parakeets** were at Hookwood on the 29th and two confiding **Snow Buntings** on the sea wall at Prinstead that stayed into 2011. On the 30th there were 30 **Velvet Scoters** off Lancing, two **Great Skuas** off Shoreham, 498 **Great Crested Grebes** off Goring Gap, a **Black-throated Diver** on the Cuckmere meanders and 13 **Common Goldeneye** in Pagham Harbour. New Year's Eve provided the usual flurry of sightings, the most notable being a skein of up to 84 **Bewick's Swans** which was tracked from Ferring Rife in the west to Northpoint Pit in the east. Two **Whooper Swans** were identified with them as they flew over Worthing. There were also 360 **White-fronted Geese** at Rye Harbour, 132 **Barnacle Geese**, nine **Pale-bellied Brent Geese** and the first **Black Brant** for East Sussex at Pett Level, two female **Greater Scaup** at Widewater, a **Snow Bunting** at The Midrips and 35 **Bewick's Swans** (not part of the previously mentioned flock) at Offham.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to Jon Curson who wrote the quarterly Recent Reports for the Society's newsletter on which this Review is based.

Classified Records for 2010

This list covers all species in Categories A and C of the BOU checklist with records of Category D species listed separately. An index to all the Category A and C species included in the Systematic List is given on pages 278-281.

The Category A and C species are again listed in the new order announced by the BOU in October 2002 and include the further minor adjustments made by the BOU since that date. There have been no corresponding changes to Euring Numbers and these are only shown against each species listed in the index.

Status descriptions

Preceding each species account, there is a brief description of its status in the county. These have been amended this year 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

Seawatching records were received from several sites although at only five were daily logs maintained. The following table lists the hours watched in each month at the five locations for which this information was available:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Selsey Bill	20	22	58	180	165	3	6	33	33	18	14	13	563
Climping	8	5	38	21	9	0	2	4	15	14	19	27	122
Worthing Beach	32	27	34	69	49	13	34	25	21	26	16	24	368
Telscombe Cliffs	31	24	20	24	12	11	10	8	9	23	14	22	208
Splash Point (Seaford)	10	9	27	95	46	0	0	0	5	8	2	0	201

Wetland Bird Survey data

Many tables which are included in the accounts for wetland bird species refer to the monthly WeBS counts. Data were supplied by the Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS), a joint scheme of the British Trust for Ornithology, the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (the last on behalf of the Countryside Council for Wales, the Environment and Heritage Service, English Nature and Scottish Natural Heritage). These counts are undertaken on a fixed date each month during the winter, and sometimes during the summer months as well. During 2010 the priority core count dates were: 17 Jan, 21 Feb, 14 Mar, 18 Apr, 16 May, 20 Jun, 18 Jul, 15 Aug, 19 Sep, 10 Oct, 14 Nov and 19 Dec.

In the WeBS tables, “nc” signifies that the site was not visited, while “–” indicates that the site was visited but none of that species was seen. 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. However, the tables since the 2004 report show only sites where this figure is reached during the core (Sep–Mar) monthly counts.

Breeding Bird Survey data

Results from the Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) are presented as the totals of the maximum counts recorded from each square surveyed during the year, and the numbers of 1-km squares in which each species was recorded at least once during the year. The maximum count is calculated for each species separately and is based on all birds seen and heard, including those in flight. These figures provide a useful indication of the relative abundance of different species although they do not take account of differences in detectability between species. They do not provide a measure of absolute abundance because BBS surveys do not detect all of the birds present in a particular square. While these figures may provide a general indication of major changes in abundance and distributions over time, they do not provide a statistically robust measure of such changes because they do not take account of the BBS sampling strategy or of temporal variation in the sample of squares surveyed. The BBS is organised by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), and jointly funded by the BTO, the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC, the statutory adviser to Government on UK and international nature conservation, on behalf of the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside, the Countryside Council for Wales, Natural England and Scottish Natural Heritage) and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Database report

Each species account in the systematic list is written by an individual using the records abstracted from the Society’s CoBRA (County Bird Recording Application) database. As usual the dataset is a complex mixture of records received from the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), from a miscellany of recording systems used by various groups and nature reserves and from individual observers.

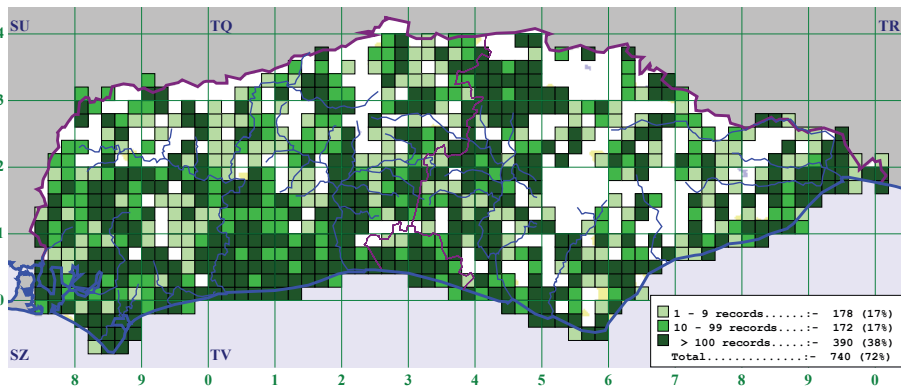
Atlas project (Timed Tetrad Visits and roving records)	35999	21%
BirdTrack records	54980	32%
Other BTO online surveys (Wetland Bird Survey and Breeding Bird Survey)	18105	11%
Reserve databases and seawatch datasets	39493	23%
Records captured from other recording groups	3199	2%
Individual observer record submissions	18337	11%

The total number of records for 2010 was 170,113, a figure marginally lower than the total for both 2008 and 2009 but considerably higher than any year prior to 2007 (see SxBR 62:17). Like the past few years this does not include any records from Garden BirdWatch which, in 2007, provided over 15,000 records. This was another full year of the Bird Atlas 2007-11 and Sussex tetrad atlas survey and the above table shows that 21% of the records come from this source. As this survey approaches its conclusion the numbers of records gathered and observers involved

are gradually declining. BirdTrack, an online recording system sponsored by the BTO, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), Birdwatch Ireland and the Scottish Ornithologists' Club, continued to develop and users of this excellent recording resource have provided almost a third of the year's dataset. Overall the records gleaned from online recording contributed nearly two thirds of the dataset and the remainder, with the exception of about 1000 paper records, were submitted in a suitable electronic format for importing into CoBRA.

Potentially the figures shown in the above table may have been considerably higher. Several of the large batches of records, particularly those from BirdTrack and Atlas roving records, contained considerable duplication thus steps have been taken to reduce this where possible. Likewise some of the datasets from well watched locations contained daily counts of common species which have been summarised before importing into the database. Furthermore, small numbers of common species from the seawatch logs and zero counts from both these logs and the WeBS were not uploaded into CoBRA. This has been the practice for several years. Great care has been used to ensure vital information is not lost and the original details, including all the zero counts, are kept outside CoBRA.

The number of people contributing to these data remained high with 986 observers ascribed at least one record in 2010, a figure comparable to that for the past two years. As usual contributions varied considerably but 36 birders provided over 1000 records. Although there were records from nearly 2000 sites it is clear that locations such as Pulborough Brooks, Ashdown Forest and Pagham and Rye Harbours remain attractive to birdwatchers as nearly 28% of the records in 2010 come from these four sites alone. Mapping the records also shows these recording hotspots along with the coastal strip, West Sussex commons and river valleys. The following figure, drawn with the same scales as previous years, is beginning to appear similar to maps drawn prior to the Atlas work with recording "holes" in large areas of East Sussex and along the northern boundary of the counties.



The number of records received for 2010 in each tetrad in Sussex. Dark green, >100 records; mid-green, 10-99 records; pale green, 1-9 records.

Other features of BirdTrack and the Atlas recording are shown by other facets of the year's dataset. In the past the more unusual species dominated the records but since the Atlas the top species recorded comprise common and widespread species; in 2010 Blackbird (4193 records), Chaffinch (4078), Blue Tit (4023), Robin (3767) and Wood Pigeon (3728) were the leading five

most recorded species. The Atlas work has markedly altered the monthly pattern of recording leaving the three autumn months without definite fieldwork as the leanest. This is clearly demonstrated in the following table which also suggests that the number of Atlas contributions has declined with successive seasons.

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2006	7876	7127	8554	13,675	11,554	9924	5824	6117	7228	7562	6511	5800	97,752
2007	9402	8444	10,159	17,415	13,789	12,029	8780	8478	9709	10,875	21,016	20,583	150,679
2008	19,756	22,753	12,871	28,121	30,519	29,683	11,818	6580	9384	8134	13,514	14,637	207,770
2009	16,846	17,132	12,301	27,696	25,316	26,790	10,357	8305	9910	9495	10,496	12,717	187,361
2010	15,667	13,087	12,085	25,367	21,987	22,219	9697	7597	9441	9937	11,623	11,404	170,111

For many years the Society has requested observers to provide details of breeding evidence using one of the recognised international breeding status codes and, during the period of Atlas fieldwork, reminders have been regularly published. The following table shows the numbers of each of the breeding status codes for 2010.

Confirmed		Probable		Possible		Non-breeding	
FL Fledged young	3821	P Pair	4817	S Singing male	10,401	X Unknown	108,564
FF Carrying food	1070	T Territory	6163	H In habitat	9922	No code	12,371
ON Occupied nest	1120	D Display	938	PS Possible	0	F Flying over	4603
NY Nest with young	488	N Nest site	1019			M Migrant	1621
NE Nest with eggs	169	B Nest building	502			W Wintering	1388
UN Used nest	93	A Agitation	592			U Summering	351
DD Distraction display	77	I Brood patch	19				
Total	6840	Total	14,050	Total	20,323	Total	128,898
Percentage	4	Percentage	8	Percentage	12	Percentage	76

Although the Atlas survey finishes in 2011 it is hoped that observers will continue recording breeding status and detailed grid references with their records as these are of great importance for conservation purposes. [John Newnham, Database Manager, July 2011]

Distribution maps

The distribution maps for certain species include a range of symbols:

Large red circle	Confirmed breeding
Medium red circle	Probable breeding
Small red circle	Seen in suitable breeding habitat
Small open circle	All other records with a grid reference

Mute Swan*Cygnus olor*

Fairly common resident.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	616	543	527	413	499	520	458	409	622	572	665	537
Chichester Hbr	108	76	65	60	136	124	136	101	85	9	90	124
Chichester GP	4	7	9	3	6	6	2	2	10	43	56	61
Climping	40	nc	35	68	nc	61	nc	94	63	61	32	27
Arun - South of Arundel	81	139	163	55	56	51	73	67	109	95	122	129
Arun Valley	65	37	29	51	67	61	36	30	85	75	69	22
Henfield Brooks	15	34	32	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	41	59
Ouse Levels	40	11	35	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	12	8	11	-
Eastbourne Lakes	22	7	21	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	24	23	20	47
Pevensey Levels	46	8	39	37	63	39	10	nc	31	53	55	14
Rye Bay	136	153	32	96	100	141	164	70	121	61	62	9

There were over 2000 records (including some duplication) from across the county. The sum of monthly totals was slightly higher than in 2009 and included six higher monthly totals, and four lower in only January, April, July and December. The highest concentrations were usually to be found in Chichester Hbr, the Arun Valley south of Arundel and Rye Bay. Significant counts additional to the WeBS included 80 at North Mundham on 25 Jan, 60 at Tortington (Arundel) on the 18 Jan, 96 at Winchelsea Marsh on 15 Feb, 95 at Pulborough Brooks on 30 Apr, 150 in Fishbourne Channel (Chichester Hbr) on 16 Jun, 200 at Tortington on 24 Oct and 137 at Rye Hbr on 20 Dec.

The earliest reports of establishing nest sites were from Southwater CP on 25 Feb, Shinewater Lake (Eastbourne) on 13 Mar, Warnham LNR on 16 Mar and Hampden Park (Eastbourne) on 27 Mar. Birds were also recorded as nesting at Wyckham Fm (Steyning) on 2 Apr, at Marsh Fm (Yapton) on 3 Apr and at four other sites by 9 Apr.

Breeding was confirmed at some 67 sites by at least 69 pairs and was probable at a further 20. The first record of cygnets was of a pair with one cygnet at Waltham Brooks on 9 Apr (one) followed by a report from Court Lodge Fm (Udimore) on 18 Apr (four) and Sidlesham Common on 13 May (three). Broods were also reported from Thorney Deeps (Chichester Hbr) on 25 May (five), Pagham Hbr on 6 Jun (six), Rye Hbr on 20 Jun (5 and 7) and Widewater (Lancing) on 21 Jun (six).

During the breeding season, there was a count of 17 at Ifield MP that remained there for the rest of the year and 25 at Laughton Place (Ringmer) on 5 Jun. During the BBS, a total of 53 was recorded from 16 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of 21 at Gate Court (Northiam) on 22 Apr.

During the summer, there were 26 on the R Adur (Shoreham) on 18 Jul of which 22 remained there until 1 Aug. In the autumn period, 27 were recorded at Steyning Levels on 10 Oct, 31 at Scotney Court GP remained there until 10 October and 18 were at Hove Lagoon on 2 Nov. The harsh winter weather that occurred later in November caused many birds to move inland: 41 counted at Henfield Levels on 14 Nov increased to 59 on 19 Dec, there were 24 at Steyning Levels on 17 Nov, 23 were at Brighthams Fm (Partridge Green) on 12 Dec and 18 at Shinewater Lake (Eastbourne) on 19 Dec moved to nearby Princes Park on the 26th. [WEC]

Bewick's Swan*Cygnus columbianus*

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

The monthly WeBS counts were again unrepresentative for this species. However, allowing for the birds' mobility, it is probably reasonable to postulate that the county totals, derived from the highest monthly counts, were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar		Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	91	78	60		4	14	110
Arun Valley	63	68	30		4	4	26
Adur Valley	28	4	30		-	-	-
Other sites	-	6	-		-	10	84

The Arun Valley between Arundel and Pulborough remains the county's most important area for this wintering species. Counts this year showed a marked increase on previous years. The peak count in January was the highest since the WeBS county total in 2000 and that in February since a similar total in 1998.

During the first winter quarter the weather was hard and cold. In the Arun Valley, 28 counted at Burpham on 2 Jan increased to 63 by the end of the month. Numbers during February then reached 66 at Burpham on the 16th, reportedly the largest group seen here for a long while, and a peak of 68 at Arundel WWT on the 19th, which included 17 juveniles and two with neck bands 071E and 078E.

At Henfield Levels 26 on 2 Jan remained there throughout the period increasing to 28 on 27 Jan and 30 on 6 Mar. The 17 at Partridge Green from 17 to 19 Jan were probably part of that herd. Numbers in the area dropped rapidly as birds departed for their breeding grounds as there were only four left at Henfield Levels on 8 Mar, including two juveniles and two adults with neck collars ringed in Holland on 28 Dec 2008. In the east, a family group of two juveniles and two adults, one with neck ring 004E, was seen at Pevensey Levels on 13 and 17 Feb followed by two different adults on the 21st. The last record for the period was of 30 at Warningcamp (Arundel) on 12 Mar.

In the autumn, four birds were noted at Pulborough Brooks on 13 Oct for one day. In the second winter period four were seen at Arundel WWT on 9 Nov, and one was seen at Pulborough Brooks from 22 Nov until 26 Nov. Numbers increased in the Arun Valley with three on 3 Dec increasing to 35 on 31 Dec at Offham. In the east, a group of nine, seen at Rye Hbr on 30 Nov, increased to ten on 3 Dec. A large and magnificent skein that flew E along the Sussex coast on 31 Dec was seen and reported by several observers, as c. 70 at Ferring Rife, 74 at both Worthing and Brighton, heard at Peacehaven, 62 at Lullington Court, c. 80 at Castle Water and 84 at Northpoint Pit suggesting that it picked up some additional birds 'en route'. [WEC]

Whooper Swan*Cygnus cygnus*

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

There were records from four sites. In the first winter period four adults, which had been first seen in 2009, were seen regularly at Ivy Lake (Chichester GP) and the North Wall (Pagham Hbr) from 3 Jan until 5 Feb.

In the second winter period, ten were seen arriving NW from the sea at Poole Place (Climping) on 2 Dec (OM) during the onset of cold weather and heavy snowfall and 2 E passed Worthing Beach with a large skein of Bewick's Swans on 31 Dec (JAN, DIS). [WEC]

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.

Two were at Thorney Deeps on 18 Sep (CBC) and one was seen at the same location, feeding near Canada Geese, during the WeBS on 15 Oct (CBC). More typically four were amongst the mixed flock of geese at Scotney Court GP on 27 Dec (DC, JFC) with six there on the 31st (CWM). In recent years, despite some harsh winter weather, very few have occurred; the nine during 2010 being the highest since 2003 when 14 were recorded. [JAN]

White-fronted Goose

Anser albifrons

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. European race (A. a. albifrons) is red listed species of high conservation concern.

During the first winter period small wintering flocks were to be found at Pett Level and occasionally at Scotney Court GP. Numbers were generally low, with ten on 1 Jan at Pett Level peaking at 30 on the 19th. The last record for the season was 12 there on 22 Feb. At Scotney Court GP, counts of 22 on 3 Jan and 31 on the 17th were exceeded on 20 Feb by a large count of 120, presumably of birds which had gathered before departing eastwards or had wintered elsewhere on the Dungeness peninsula. The only other reports were of a flock of 50 over Earnley on 5 Jan, five at The Midrips on 17 Jan (presumably part of the Pett Level/Scotney Court flocks) and a flock of 12 flying over Rye Hbr on 20 Feb.

Elsewhere there was a succession of reports of two birds: 2 W past Worthing Beach on 9 Jan, over Brighton Wild Park on the 23rd, on Lewes Brooks on 13 Feb, at White Dyke (Hailsham) two days later and at Lewes Brooks again on the 21st, all of which may well have referred to the same two birds.

The second winter period, by contrast, produced the largest influx into the county for many years. After an unusually early record of 30 birds on Pett Level on 27 Sep, no more were reported until the cold snap in late November when 18 birds (presumably the same) were recorded on the 28th and 29th at Pett Level and Rye Hbr respectively.

In December reports started to pick up with birds arriving at various suitable sites across the county from east to west. On the 9th, five were noted at Thorney Deeps (Chichester Hbr) (rising to 15 five days later) and four at Pulborough Brooks with ten at Pett Level on the 12th. There was then a big influx over the Christmas period, starting on the 21st with 85 at Amberley Wild Brooks which rose to 110 (including many juveniles) on the 23rd with 101 remaining on the 31st. Other counts included 18 behind the North Wall (Pagham Hbr) from the 21st to the 24th, 40 on Henfield Levels on the 22nd (and 20 on the 28th), 16 at Cuckmere Haven on the 21st but 76 there on the 29th, 28 (including nine juveniles) from the 29th at Thorney Deeps and 57 at Cradle Hill (Seaford) on the 31st. It was in the east, however, that the largest numbers were to be found: from 140 at Rye Hbr on the 22nd numbers rose through 280 at Pett Level on the 26th to 350 at Scotney Court on the 27th and a peak of 360 at Rye Hbr on the 31st. The total numbers of birds recorded in each day during the peak period, computed by summing the maximum at each site, were as follows:

Date in December	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Day totals	126	288	133	80	nc	423	350	100	76	70	531

By the end of the year at least 530 birds were in the county; many of them remained into 2011. This was a far cry from the previous year, when only a solitary record of four birds was received during the entire autumn period. [AH]

Greylag Goose

Anser anser

Increasingly common introduced resident and winter visitor; scarce passage migrant. (Native population in UK is 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	809	414	269	177	243	402	447	1139	1104	957	679	176
Chichester GP	12	3	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	25	20	33
Arun Valley	191	-	24	12	35	3	60	147	279	213	185	34
Henfield Brooks	128	103	6	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	90	19
Slaugham Mill Pond	4	1	16	5	7	64	6	-	-	-	-	-
Ardingly Res	nc	nc	6	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	160	180	-
St Georges Retreat	30	60	65	nc	22	26	31	46	66	54	23	48
Weir Wood Res	69	-	-	3	-	nc	34	237	358	10	91	nc
Ouse Levels	35	40	17	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	-
Barcombe Res	1	4	10	5	7	15	6	42	58	-	-	14
Pevensy Levels	-	-	16	8	6	-	-	nc	-	-	12	-
Bewl Water	-	2	-	nc	nc	nc	4	2	64	1	-	6
Rye Bay	319	177	95	106	112	164	226	665	278	491	56	13

The population of this now well-established species continues to increase. During the first winter period, totals exceeded 100 birds at about nine sites, with a peak count of 253 at Rye Hbr on 30 Jan. Records were received from almost 100 other locations. By comparison, the WeBS counts for early 1990 reached barely 100 birds for the county.

Records from seawatching sites were, as ever, sparse even if slightly better than recent years. Totals for the spring were only 7 E past Selsey Bill, 25 E past Climping, 1 E and 3 W past Worthing, and 2 E past Telscombe Cliffs (plus 1 W there in December).

Breeding records were received from across the county and were confirmed at c.29 sites and probable at a further c.23. The twelve pairs around Rye Hbr was the biggest count; there were three pairs at Chichester GP and two at Ardingly Res. The largest brood was of seven at Arundel WWT. By 31 Jul, flocks of 170 birds at Pulborough Brooks and 140 at Brighthams Fm (Partridge Green) signified the beginning of post-breeding gatherings, with peaks thereafter of 287 birds on 27 Sep at the former site, 300 on 30 Aug at the latter and 450 at Weir Wood Res on 8 Sep.

The species continued to be well reported in the latter third of the year, with the above WeBS counts fairly reflecting the bigger flocks in October and November, though December records of 203 bird at Warnham LNR on the 24th and 260 on Henfield Levels on the 28th suggest the above total for the county for this month was somewhat low. [AH]

Canada Goose

Branta canadensis

Common introduced resident and partial migrant.

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	2911	988	585	340	347	432	1106	2130	1480	3086	1966	1943
Chichester Hbr	76	24	20	33	12	31	24	155	19	60	126	63
Pagham Hbr	-	-	-	4	2	-	-	7	95	-	-	-
Forest Mere	-	9	33	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	35	39	-	-
Arun Valley	1040	45	56	67	70	9	42	197	275	1390	934	463
Henfield Brooks	116	2	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	148	4
St George's Retreat	45	152	60	nc	40	110	120	127	18	52	26	132
Weir Wood Res	77	1	41	22	11	nc	41	292	337	310	5	nc
Ouse Levels	90	41	12	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	175	-
Eastbourne Lakes	117	60	50	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	14	104	63	96
Pevensey Levels	111	10	35	37	36	12	23	nc	-	222	129	46
Bewl Water	1064	314	79	nc	nc	nc	612	310	350	456	150	1011
Rye Bay (all)	52	136	82	63	38	117	87	556	124	210	151	94

The biggest count for the first winter period was the WeBS total of 1064 at Bewl Water on 17 Jan, though some 22 other locations across the county held counts of over 100 birds in this period. Only three records were received from seawatching locations during the year, namely 2 E past Worthing on 11 Apr and 4 W past Splash Point (Seaford) the following day and 13 E past Telscombe Cliffs on 6 Nov. It is remarkable, given the extensive coverage of these sites and the diligence of the recorders, just how few birds are seen at such sites.

Breeding reports were received from the length of the county. Breeding was confirmed in some 68 tetrads, spread almost equally between West and East Sussex, and probable at a further 38. Only at Rye Hbr (five nests), Chichester GP (four families), Ifield MP (three families), Thorney Deeps (two pairs), Weir Wood Res (two nests) and Pett Level (two broods), were more than one pair present.

An early start to the build-up of moulting flocks was apparent at Bewl Water, where 240 were noted on 19 Jun, and at Pulborough Brooks where there were 150 on the 31st. By 18 Jul, 612 birds had congregated at the former site. The next big non-WeBS count, however, was not noted until 30 Aug when 750 were at Arlington Res; numbers then peaked at 2000 on 12 Sep, the biggest single site count for the year. The other two significant gatherings in September were at Pulborough Brooks, with a count of 600 on the 1st, and Weir Wood Res, with a count of 650 on the 12th. Other noteworthy counts during the month were 264 at Barcombe Res on 5 Sep, 300 at Pagham Hbr on the 14th, 229 at Rye Hbr on the 14th and 250 at Warnham LNR on the 19th.

The Arun Valley held almost half of the county population during the autumn months, with the highest counts being at Pulborough Brooks of 1155 on 18 Oct and 1348 on 1 Nov. Numbers declined in December, possibly due to the cold spell of weather, but peaked again at Bewl Water with 1011 birds counted on the 19th. [AH]

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.

After an almost barren year last year, there were a good number of potentially genuine wild birds in both winter periods.

The year started with a single, probably wild, bird with the Dark-bellied Brent Goose flock in Pagham Hbr on 3 and 17 Jan and then, presumably the same bird, in the Apuldram/Fishbourne area (Chichester Hbr) between 31 Jan and 2 Feb. There were further records in February, of a flock of three birds on Bracklesham Bay on the 21st and one in Pagham Hbr on the 27th. There were two later records of possible migrants: a flock of 17 on the mudflats at East Head (Chichester Hbr) on 30 Mar and 25 E past Worthing Beach on 2 Apr.

There was a scattering of probably feral birds reported during the year, but the only large counts were at Scotney Court GP and Barcombe Res, with peaks of 60 and 56 respectively on 17 Jan.

The cold weather and heavy snowfall in late November and early December produced an influx of presumably genuinely wild birds in December, starting with 2 W past Worthing Beach on the 3rd, five at Brighthams Fm (Partridge Green) on the 5th, and a flock of 42 W past Ferring on the 6th. It then went quiet until 18 Dec, when eight were seen on Bewl Water, and then five appeared with newly arrived White-fronted Geese in fields behind the North Wall (Pagham Hbr) on the 21st. This group increased over ensuing days to a peak of 20 on the 27th. Elsewhere, birds turned up at Cuckmere Haven, with 43 there on the 26th peaking three days later at 60; at Pett Level, where 40 were seen coming in off the sea on the 27th and a peak of 132 was recorded on the 31st; at Henfield Levels where there were four on the 28th; and at Amberley Wild Brooks where there were also four on the 31st. All these sites also held White-fronted Geese at this time, suggesting these records were of wild birds. [AH]

Dark-bellied Brent Goose*Branta bernicla bernicla*

Very common winter visitor and passage migrant; very scarce non-breeder in summer. 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	10189	11386	5147	86	20	17	2	-	19	2016	7066	7948
Chichester Hbr	7685	8354	4277	10	18	15	2	-	19	1887	5353	6665
Bracklesham Bay	-	-	-	-	-	-	Nc	-	-	22	325	925
Pagham Hbr	2419	3015	862	2	1	2	-	-	-	98	1387	109

As usual, the western harbours held the vast majority of the wintering population, as represented above, with numbers very similar to last year in the first winter period and up slightly in the second. At Climping 125 were feeding on fields on 7 Jan with 700 there on the 20th and 21st. Away from these sites records involved considerably fewer birds; the only counts greater than 30 were 32 at Scotney Court GP on 17 Jan, 43 at Pett Level on 24 Jan, 36 at Jury's Gap on 28 Jan and 34 at Rye Hbr on 25 Feb. Two at Arlington Res on 21 Feb were the only birds in the first winter period recorded inland.

Typically the first flocks heading east were recorded in late January with 100 E at Rye Bay on the 20th and, on the following day, 126 past Worthing, 295 birds past Telscombe Cliffs and 113 birds past Splash Point (Seaford). Thereafter passage was lighter until 18 Mar when there were 53 E at Selsey Bill, 350 E at Climping, 327 E at Worthing, 767 E at Splash Point, 540 E past Rock-a-Nore (Hastings) and 350 E at Rye Hbr. In the following days further large counts were noted with 830 E at Worthing and 814 E at Telscombe Cliffs on the 20th and between 800 and 1000 birds seen passing Pett Level the following day. Passage was light during April; 440 E past Splash Point on the 18th was the biggest count for the month.

Analysis of the daily figures from the seawatching logs suggested at least 6890 flew eastward between January and May comprising 558 in January, 779 in February, 4155 in March, 1335 in April and 33 in May. The monthly totals at the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan		Feb		Mar		Apr		May		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	41	18	29	33	1012	8	718	8	8	2	-	139	9	54	8	2	16	-
Climping Beach	-	72	372	19	1276	3	83	1	-	-	-	313	1	57	-	30	5	304
Worthing Beach	337	63	210	6	1745	6	499	14	3	-	-	167	9	320	21	34	31	27
Telscombe Cliffs	328	23	177	4	1675	2	361	-	-	-	1	18	4	14	3	-	53	2
Splash Point	247	10	122	1	2103	-	1103	-	25	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-

Singles at Pulborough Brooks on 9 and 21 Mar were the only inland records during the spring. A leucistic bird, last seen at West Wittering in 2009, was seen again in fields west of Selsey on 8 Apr. Predictably, a few stragglers remained throughout the summer: two birds remained in Pagham Hbr on 27 Jun and one to at least 14 Jul while, in Chichester Hbr, 15–20 birds summered until joined by new arrivals on 27 Sep.

An unusual record was of a single bird at Rye Hbr and The Midrips between 15 and 19 Sep, which, if a migrant (and not a wandering summering bird), preceded all other records of return migration, the first evidence of which was of a flock of 54 in Pagham Hbr on 21 Sep. The first big arrival was on the quite early date of 29 Sep, when 700 were seen at Thorney Deeps and seawatching totals of birds heading west included 250 past Rye Hbr, 311 past Climping and 189 past Selsey Bill.

As usual there was a wider scattering of coastal reports in the second winter period than the first. The only inland records were of eight on Bewl Water on 10 Oct, flocks of 20 on 24 Oct and 10 on 29 Oct flying up the Arun Valley, a single bird at Pulborough Brooks on 1 Nov, three in flight there on 3 Dec and, finally, two at Arlington Res the following day. The WeBS counts above reflect the numbers in the far west of the county but there were regular reports of a big flock at Climping which peaked at 1100 on 29 Nov and with 700 there on 10 Dec; in East Sussex 245 birds were counted at Pett Level on 19 Dec. [AH]

Pale-bellied Brent Goose

Branta bernicla hrota

Very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

As usual, a few birds of this subspecies wintered amongst their commoner relatives, with up to three seen in both Pagham and Chichester Harbours between 17 Jan and 25 March. There were only two records from seawatching sites, both in April and both amongst flocks of Dark-bellied Brent Geese: 1 E past Splash Point (Seaford) on 2 Apr and then, what was presumably the same bird, east past both Selsey Bill and Splash Point on the 24th.

In the second winter period only one bird was seen in Chichester Hbr, on several dates between 16 Nov and 23 Dec, but six birds seen at Pett Level on 12 Dec increased to nine by the 27th and remained until the year's end. [AH]

Black Brant

Branta bernicla nigricans

Very scarce winter visitor.

There were more accepted records this year. In January there were four records from Pagham Hbr, on the 17th (CRJ), the 21st (OM), the 26th (IML) and the 27th (OM), although these sightings could all relate to the same individual (or perhaps two).

There were further records of single birds there later in the year: on 11 Nov (BFF, DIS), 21 Nov (AH) and 29 Dec (DAN); and one from Pilsley and Thorney Islands on 15, 17 and 23 Dec (CBC). The other two records, probably of two birds, were from Climping on five dates between 21st and 29th Nov (OM) (the first date being the same date as one of the Pagham records) and it is possible that these birds moved between Pagham and Climping with part of the Brent flock to feed. One bird was present at Pett Level on 31 Dec and into the New Year (CWM). [AH]

Red-breasted Goose

Branta ruficollis

Very rare vagrant.

One, bearing a red ring, seen for a short period on Thorney Island during the afternoons of 3 and 4 Oct (CBC) departed on both days towards Hayling Island and was considered to have escaped from a wildfowl collection. However, an adult with other geese at Pett Level between 26 Dec and 1 Jan 2011 (NR, GS *et al.*) has been accepted by the BBRC. This was perhaps the fourth wild bird to visit Sussex and the first in East Sussex with previous individuals being seen at Amberley in February 1958, at Pagham Hbr in the first winter period of both 1986 and 1987 and at West Wittering (Chichester Hbr) during portions of the winters 2006/07 to 2008/09. [JAN]

Egyptian Goose

Alopochen aegyptiaca

Very scarce introduced resident; bred for first time in 2000.

The first record of the year was of a pair at the unusual location of Stapleash Fm (Chilgrove), on 3 Jan. During the first winter period, there were several records in the month from what is usually the county stronghold, Petworth Park and the surrounding area, but with a maximum of only four birds. This was eclipsed by ten at Pulborough Brooks on 1 Feb, just one short of the county record flock. The six at Partridge Green on 7 Mar and at Henfield Levels on 12 Mar could have been part of this group. One at Southease on 22 Feb was unusual, as was one at Southwater CP on 3-5 Mar.

As spring progressed, ten at the Knepp Estate on 5-6 Apr was unprecedented for the site and, with the Southwater record in March, marked the start of a run of records in the area around Horsham. This included a mating pair at Warnham LNR on 14 Apr.

However, the first breeding record was back in the core area around Petworth, although not in Petworth Park this year. Seven young were seen with their parents at Benbow Pond (Cowdray Park) on 28 April, with eight youngsters there on 2 May. Notable summer records included two adults on Henfield Levels on 16 May, and Lewes Brooks had its first record – a single – on 6 May.

However, the surprise was then a second successful breeding record for the year, this time from Roman Wood (Slinfold), with three flightless young seen on 30 Jun. Since the first confirmed breeding at Shipley in 2000, there had been only four other instances of successful breeding in the county, in 2006-9, all at Petworth Park. During the BBS, a total of four was recorded in two of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of two.

In the second half of the year, two at Bewl Water on 10 Jul marked the start of a series of records there, peaking at six on 19 Dec. One was back at Brooklands (Worthing), on 16 Jul and several times thereafter. Three at Mill Hill (Shoreham) on 22 Aug were unusual, as were four at Rock-a-Nore (Hastings) on 14 Sep. The Slinfold birds perhaps were those seen during the autumn at Warnham LNR, where there were three on 9 Sep and four on 20 Oct. Four were at Scotney Court GP on 10 Oct, one at Arlington Res on 31 Oct, one at Thorney Island (Chichester Hbr) from 5 Nov onwards, and two were at Pagham Hbr on 29 Nov. Finally, one at Hailsham on 24 Dec completed the most successful, and wide-ranging, year in the county for this species yet, which could prove to have been something of a breakthrough year for it in the county, ten years after breeding was first proven here. [AT]

Common Shelduck

Tadorna tadorna

Fairly common winter visitor and scarce passage migrant; scarce 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	1263	830	898	471	278	176	88	73	55	77	341	924
Chichester Hbr	833	623	524	174	56	58	21	47	12	7	80	626
Bracklesham Bay	80	41	38	-	-	-	nc	-	16	45	72	40
Pagham Hbr	243	82	159	155	90	25	15	13	25	10	87	175
Arun Valley	21	10	73	61	57	22	11	5	1	-	40	32
Rye Bay	77	52	86	75	69	70	41	8	-	15	53	50

With January temperatures up to 3°C lower than average, it is perhaps not surprising that Shelduck numbers were high, the highest since 2004, as more birds presumably came in from further east. The WeBS count in Chichester Hbr was particularly impressive. A total of 80 at Bracklesham Bay on 22 Jan was good for that site and the 52 at Scotney Court GP on 17 Jan was the year's high there. With temperatures warming somewhat in February, although still wintry, numbers dipped markedly and the county total fell to considerably less than the ten-year average for that month but then rallied in March to average numbers.

The monthly totals at the main sea-watching sites were as follows:

	Jan		Mar		Apr		May	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	3	9	3	7	47	16	16	11
Worthing Beach	24	30	-	14	41	26	8	5
Splash Point	3	-	17	-	73	-	23	4

Observed spring totals were relatively high and the trend for birds to be moving east in April was more noticeable in the west of the county than is sometimes the case. The peak count was 42 past Splash Point on 24 April in 15 hr.

Breeding was confirmed in just 13 tetrads and probable in another 15, well down on the previous year. It is not clear whether this is due to observer effort or to a real decline. The first confirmed breeding was not until 18 May when ducklings were seen at Arundel WWT. In West Sussex, Pagham Hbr was apparently the most successful site with four breeding pairs and 30 ducklings there on 6 Jun. Elsewhere, the peak count of ducklings at Arundel WWT was six on 31 May, seven fledglings were at Bracklesham Bay on 1 Jun, a pair with six downy young was at Sefter Fm (Rose Green) on 6 Jun, and seven juveniles were seen at Birdham and four at Fishbourne on 13 Aug. Of four pairs at Pulborough Brooks just one pair reared six young. In East Sussex, there were no breeding records from Cuckmere Haven and, indeed, no records there between 30 April and 22 November. On Pevensey Levels, two pairs were displaying on 20 Apr, but no breeding success was noted. At Rye Hbr, at least three pairs nested at Harbour Fm and a crèche of 31 juveniles was on Ternery Pool on 25 Jun. At The Midrips, a maximum of 22 fledged young was seen. During the BBS, a total of 61 was recorded from seven of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a high count of 29 at Thorney Island (Chichester Hbr) on 26 Apr.

During the second winter period, numbers built up slowly during October and November, but surged in December, presumably with the early onset of cold weather, to a relatively high total. Notable were 39 seen passing west at Worthing on 2 Dec in heavy snow, and a total of 87 passed west here during the month. [AT]

Mandarin

Aix galericulata

Scarce introduced resident.

Birds were recorded in 86 tetrads, a typical number during the Atlas period. As usual, records were mainly spread throughout the Weald, with very few from the Downs or coastal strip. Weir Wood Res remains the stronghold of the species in Sussex.

The peak count in the first winter period was 42 at Weir Wood Res on 25 Jan (cf. 55 in 2009). Apart from 35 at Warnham LNR on 8 Jan, the next highest count away from Weir Wood Res was disappointing: just 19 at Swanbourne Lake (Arundel) on 22 Feb. Nine at Five Ashes (Heathfield) on 10 Feb was, however, noteworthy. Away from the species' heartland, one was at Highdown (Worthing) on 17 Feb, but the behaviour of a single at Warners Lane (Selsey) on 11 Mar gives a good indication that these extralimital records may not necessarily be from the core wild population – it was on a cottage roof with three Mallards.

In the summer, breeding was confirmed in 18 tetrads, and probable in another 23, a similar number to recent years. The first eggs were found on 10 Apr at Weir Wood Res, and one was on eggs in an owl box at Byworth on 23 Apr. By 9 May, a female was with at least four small ducklings at Weir Wood Res. 'Many' juveniles were at Weir Wood Res by 28 Jul, although two nests failed, one with 23 eggs. Ducklings were also seen at Warnham LNR (eight on 12 May), Ardingly Res (two on 9 Jun), Swanbourne Lake (three on 10 Jun), Furnace Pond (Ebernoe) (11 on 3 Jul) and Wineham (Hickstead) (one on 12 Jul). One pair bred at Amberley Wild Brooks and three pairs raised 11 ducklings at Pulborough Brooks. Breeding was also proven at: Idehurst (Wisborough Green), Troutbeck (Eridge), Moat Mill Fm (Mayfield), Hadlow Down, Framfield, Ditchling Common and Blackham Highfields. A count of 21 birds at Bayham Abbey on 13 Jun was excellent, although the presence of young was not noted. A flock of 20, again not aged, was at Burton MP on 24 Jun. During the BBS, a total of ten was recorded from five of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of three at Balcombe on 1 May.

In the autumn, the year's peak count of 62 at Weir Wood Res on 4 Aug was presumably boosted by young birds. Away from this site, flocks were in short supply, although no counts were

received from what is usually a key location at Darwell Res throughout the whole year. Into the second winter period, 53 were still at Weir Wood Res on 12 Dec, with 17 at Warnham LNR on 31 Oct and 12 at Swanbourne Lake on 20 Dec. Eight at Powdermill Res on 13 Nov was the highest count there for the year.

In the coastal strip, one and then two males were at Pagham Hbr in mid-Oct, with a pair at Climping on 7 Nov and four at Birdham the same day. [AT]

Wigeon

Anas penelope

Common winter visitor, scarce on observed passage. Very scarce in summer; but does not breed. 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	13610	11449	4894	41	12	9	2	4	782	3637	6912	13848
Chichester Hbr	1662	1050	351	2	4	2	1	-	462	1107	2324	2962
Pagham Hbr	2738	2727	1083	27	1	-	-	2	222	642	1051	1125
Arun Valley	3377	3385	2250	6	6	1	-	-	42	1351	2310	506
Ouse Levels	285	647	285	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	2	121	415
Cuckmere Haven	-	nc	140	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	105	16	1000
Pevensey Levels	10	680	88	2	-	-	-	nc	-	-	66	800
Bewl Water	353	257	257	nc	nc	nc	1	1	4	29	35	302
Rye Bay	4323	2414	318	4	1	6	-	1	47	331	492	6349

The 10-year (2000-2009) WeBS monthly averages and previous county record counts are as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar		Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
10-yr average	9759	8501	4161*		1718	3573	5593	8834
County record	16314	10812	9204		1950	4046	7303	10984
Year of record	1985	2008	1996		1996	2009	2004	2000

*reduced by FMD restrictions in 2001

In January, during the extreme cold, the WeBS count was well in excess of the 10-year average for that month and was the second highest on record, the county record being 16,314 in January 1985, as is shown in the table above. The highest count for a single site was 2950 at Scotney Court GP on 17 Jan, with 2583 at Amberley Wild Brooks on 18 Jan. Also noteworthy were the 1000 at Arlington Res on 15 Jan, 700 at Partridge Green SF on 24 Jan, and 353 at Bewl Water on 17 Jan. Of particular interest were the counts at sites rarely mentioned in these reports, where a combination of hard-weather movements and Atlas survey visits turned up 974 at Methershams (on the northeast county border) on 18 Jan, 260 at Lidsey SF (Barnham) on 3 Jan and 250 at Five Watering Sewer (Iden) (also in the east) on 17 Jan. Wigeon tend to migrate by night unnoticed, but with so many birds moving into the county, some considerable daylight counts were made, including 150 E and 840 on the sea at Climping on 10 Jan and monthly totals of 28 E and 312 W noted at Worthing.

In February, the county total was a new record for the month, exceeding that for 2008. The 3000 estimated at Pagham Hbr on 3 Feb exceeded the WeBS count for that site, and 2945 at Amberley Wild Brooks on 22 Feb was the year's high there while there were 1000 at Cuckmere

Haven on 26 Feb and 610 at Lewes Brooks on 18 Feb. The highest count from Pevensey Levels in the first winter period was 480 at Hankham Level on 21 Feb.

By March, numbers were back to more normal levels, although the month's total exceeded the 10-year average, and the exodus was virtually complete by April. The last three figure count was 150 at Pulborough Brooks on 6 April, relatively late, and 20 at Pagham Hbr on 18 April was the last count in double figures apart from 11 at Pulborough Brooks on 17 May. Not one was noted in all the hours of seawatching at Splash Point (Seaford), in March, April or May.

In June and July, there were more non-breeding summering birds around than usual, although this was not reflected in the WeBS counts. Peak numbers were seven at The Midrips on 23 Jun and six at Pulborough Brooks the same day, six at Rye Hbr on 20 Jun and up to two at Thorney Island (Chichester Hbr). Single birds were also noted at Bewl Water, Pett Level and Pagham Hbr. During the BBS, only two birds were recorded in one of the 139 1-km squares surveyed.

Eight flying west off Worthing on 15 Aug marked the start of the return, with five in at Pilsley Sands (Chichester Hbr) and two at Pagham Hbr that day. Four at Weir Wood Res on 29 Aug were unusual, being only the ninth record there for August since 1989, but 30 at Pagham Hbr on the 31 was more normal, with 180 there by 4 Sep and 450 at Thorney Island on 9 Sep.

Some movement offshore was noted in September, notably 9 E and 105 W at Worthing during the month and, on 29 Sep, 71 W at Selsey Bill. WeBS counts in October and November were average, although 2000 at Thorney Deeps on 25 Oct was notable. However, the cold weather then struck again and the December WeBS count not only exceeded that for the preceding January but was a new record for the month, exceeding the 10,984 of 2000. The WeBS count of 6349 for Rye Bay was notable as were the 3880 at Scotney Court GP on 19 Dec, 3800 at Rye Hbr on the 25th and the estimated count of 5000 at Pett Level Pools on the 31st. The month also produced some excellent seawatching counts, with totals of 40 E and 1167 W at Climping, and 17 E and 820 W at Worthing, with a maximum there of 515 on 20 Dec.

It was a remarkable year for Wigeon when the value of the county for the species during hard weather was reaffirmed. [AT]

Gadwall

Anas strepera

Very scarce breeder and scarce summer non-breeder; fairly common winter visitor; scarce on observed passage. 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	714	467	304	110	82	42	9	42	231	252	292	1144
Chichester Hbr	24	15	14	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	91
Chichester GP	40	70	-	-	4	-	-	-	9	17	17	132
Forest Mere	-	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	1	14	-	-
Burton & Chingford Ponds	-	6	11	2	1	-	-	nc	18	13	14	nc
Arun Valley	84	33	117	55	34	6	3	-	17	35	24	56
Eastbourne Lakes	52	6	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	14	22	12	58
Bewl Water	264	40	-	nc	nc	nc	-	-	3	27	36	173
Powdermill Res	30	29	nc	nc	-	nc	-	nc	nc	4	7	2
Rye Bay	171	199	123	37	33	30	6	33	142	116	160	562

The 10-year (2000-2009) monthly averages are as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
10-yr average	723	518	223	73	60	29	38	53	172	271	391	612

Despite the freezing weather at the start of the year, numbers in the first winter period were unexceptional and, in January, were almost exactly the average for the last ten years. The highest single site count in the month was actually two weeks earlier than the WeBS count, with 345 at Rye Hbr on 5 Jan. The Chichester GP WeBS count was also exceeded by the 200 at Ivy Lake on 16 Jan. There were high counts of 70 at North Mundham on 25 Jan and 54 at Thorney Deeps on 4 Jan, and the 44 at Methersham (Beckley) was notable for a site rarely mentioned in these reports.

In February, the WeBS count was slightly lower than the 10-year average. On the first day of the month, 117 were at Swanbourne Lake (Arundel). The March tally was then rather higher than average, and the April count was the highest since before 1994 and probably a county record, helped by a count of 55 still in the Arun valley, 30 of which were still at Pulborough Brooks on 16 May, with 25 at Pett Level the same day, large tallies so late in the spring.

Breeding records were scarce with confirmed breeding in only three tetrads; there were 11 ducklings at Arundel WWT on 17 May, two days later a nest with eggs was found at Burpham and at least one pair bred at Rye Hbr where a female and chick were seen on two dates. Breeding was probable in five further tetrads. During the BBS, only four birds were recorded in two of the 139 1-km squares surveyed.

Indications of birds returning perhaps started with 28 at Rye Hbr on 15 Aug, but the main movement was probably underway a month later, with 25 seen at Sefter Fm (Rose Green) on 17 Sep, 94 at Pett Level and 48 at Rye Hbr on the 19th. By 28 Oct, 160 there were at Pett Level.

In November numbers were far less than the 10-year average. However, the harsh temperatures which came with December's cold weather boosted numbers to the highest WeBS total ever recorded in the county and the first count of over 1000 birds. Outside of the WeBS counts, the 347 at Bewl Water on 29 Dec was the highest on record for the site, just beating the 345 there on 31 December 2009. [AT]

Teal

Anas crecca

Rare breeder and scarce summering non-breeder; common winter visitor and fairly common on observed passage. 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	5600	2826	2726	196	18	49	15	220	1461	2526	3490	4947
Chichester Hbr	1187	726	404	20	-	-	-	5	449	425	639	1466
Bracklesham Bay	80	55	30	3	-	-	nc	15	22	140	80	275
Pagham Hbr	909	187	303	20	-	7	2	41	343	652	585	400
Wicks Farm Res	15	14	4	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	250
Arun Valley	2026	972	1507	61	18	34	2	33	337	920	1550	66
Arlington Res	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	383
Pevensy Levels	30	210	62	49	-	-	-	nc	-	-	-	35
Bewl Water	86	18	4	nc	nc	nc	6	8	51	29	38	482
Rye Bay	743	420	277	39	-	8	3	106	183	246	355	994

The 10-year (2000-2009) WeBS monthly averages are as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar		Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
10-yr average	5551	4154	1773*		1663	2395	3716	5389

*reduced by FMD restrictions in 2001

The January WeBS count was average, despite the cold weather. A count of 1250 at Amberley Wild Brooks on 18 Jan was the highest for a single site in the first winter period and away from the main sites there were 320 at Combe Haven on 30 Jan. Numbers then slumped in February to their lowest level for the month since 2005, although 450 were notable at Brightham's Fm (Partridge Green) on 7 Feb, as were 161 at the Ouse Estuary Project (Newhaven) on the 14th. Surprisingly then, numbers remained pretty much steady into March, the highest count for that month since 2002, and there were 1138 at Amberley Wild Brooks on the 15th.

At seawatching sites, after a smattering of sightings in the winter, the highest numbers passed in March, with observers at Splash Point (Seaford) recording the highest monthly total of 86 E while at Worthing the total was 26 E. A further 33 E passed Splash Point in April, with single figures elsewhere.

Most birds had departed by early April but 104 at Pulborough Brooks was the last three-figure count of the spring. There were still 55 at the Ouse Estuary Project on the 10th, 30 at Down Level (Pevensy) on the 18th and 30 at Pulborough Brooks on the 23rd. Numbers continued to wane into May but, as usual, some remained as non-breeders throughout the summer months, often in small flocks; there were 29 at Pulborough Brooks on 25 Jun, 20 at Sidlesham Ferry on 2 Jul and smaller numbers at Thorney Deep (Chichester Hbr), Arundel WWT, Bewl Water, Brede Valley, Pett Level and Rye Hbr. These were all presumably non-breeders as there were no indications of breeding attempts.

Identifying the first returning birds from among those summering is difficult. Perhaps the six at Weir Wood Res on 22 Jul were the vanguard, or maybe the 31 there on 7 Aug, but they could easily be wandering local birds searching for good, late-summer feeding. However, 90 at Rye Hbr on 15 Aug and 27 at Pilsey Sands (Chichester Hbr) the same day were certainly new arrivals and the first three-figure count was 150 at Pagham Hbr on 31 Aug. At seawatching sites, there were 24 W at Worthing during August. Numbers on WeBS counts throughout the last four months of the year were all around the average for the last ten years, and it is noticeable, from the data available, how predictable Teal numbers are in the county; there are none of the great variations seen in e.g. Wigeon, despite winter weather varying so dramatically from year to year. The apparent mobility of the birds is noticeable, with high numbers in the Arun Valley in November but far fewer in December, balanced out by increases at other sites.

Notable counts in the second winter period included 400 in the Doleham Valley on 12th Dec and 383 at Arlington Res and 482 at Bewl Water on 19th Dec. [AT]

Mallard

Anas platyrhynchos

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

The monthly WeBS counts from the principal sites were as shown in the table below. The peak county total of 4822 in December was the highest monthly total since November 1997. It was also well above the 5-year county average of maxima of 3833 for 2005-09 and coincided with a spell of cold weather. Across the year numbers were highest in the Arun Valley, where Arundel WWT and Swanbourne Lake held up to half Arun Valley's total. At Rye Hbr numbers were highest at

Castle Water, peaking at 800 during the December WeBS count. The December peak of 193 at Ifield MP was the highest number ever recorded at this site, whilst the 271 at Alexandra Park (Eastbourne) in December was the highest there since 1994.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	3517	2247	1868	1049	1205	1645	2032	2942	3524	3040	3758	4822
Chichester Hbr	314	170	143	48	20	54	70	108	188	163	170	342
Pagham Hbr	197	124	83	87	52	163	153	199	205	221	329	190
Arun Valley	704	325	595	418	635	890	411	543	989	819	860	708
Angmering Decoy Ponds	35	nc	26	16	4	4	nc	329	243	nc	123	nc
Ifield MP	178	92	nc	39	49	nc	nc	105	77	35	nc	193
Arlington Res	114	122	75	43	49	60	50	71	132	150	90	171
Eastbourne Lakes	97	11	43	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	46	-	119	269
Bewl Water	478	217	140	nc	nc	nc	469	432	192	99	64	704
Alexandra Park	154	94	70	nc	49	84	153	69	160	205	181	271
Rye Bay	484	509	212	166	112	143	187	672	563	277	613	1131

With another full year of Atlas activity, Mallards were recorded in at least 490 tetrads within fifty-four 10-km squares. During the BBS, a total of 500 birds was recorded from 80 of the 139 BBS 1-km squares, reflecting the usual widespread distribution of this species, with a highest count of 90 at Piper's Copse (Northchapel) on 18 Jun. In addition to the WeBS records above, 200 were recorded at Balcombe Lake on 15 Oct and 236 at Barcombe Res on 19 Dec despite "snow and it being 80% frozen over". At Angmering Decoy Ponds there were 400 eclipse birds loafing on 26 Jul.



Mallard, Weirwood Reservoir, April 2010 (Derek Washington)

Numbers from seawatching records were, as usual, fairly low. A total of 97 birds were recorded on coastal passage during the year with 40 W (of which 29 went past Telscombe Cliffs on 1 Dec), 39 E, and an interesting 9 N during both April and May at Selsey Bill, suggesting possible summer visitors.

There were 153 records of confirmed breeding from 137 tetrads and breeding was probable in a further 120. The earliest record of confirmed breeding was of a nesting bird with 12 eggs on 15 Mar at Wiggonholt Common (Pulborough Brooks), and the last was at Mewsbrook Park (Littlehampton) where nine ducklings, seven to ten days old, were recorded on 20 Sep. Also at Wiggonholt there was a nest with 15 eggs on 1 Jun, but the nest failed. More successful were two broods of 13 ducklings, at Barcombe Res on 20 Jun and at Mewsbrook Park on 25 Jun. At Bracklesham Bay five broods fledged 12 young; at Arundel WWT there were at least five broods with 22 ducklings on 25 Jun; at Pulborough Brooks 30 pairs fledged c.25 young and at Rye Hbr 32 nests/broods were recorded. [JRC]

Pintail

Anas acuta

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant; occasionally summers and has bred. 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	619	330	223	14	1	-	1	1	36	147	265	279
Chichester Hbr	188	120	65	4	-	-	-	-	8	17	45	172
Pagham Hbr	287	105	79	2	-	-	-	-	27	122	49	99
Arun Valley	134	101	71	6	-	-	-	-	-	7	164	2

This was a poor year for wintering Pintails. The peak WeBS count of 619 (in January) was the lowest yearly maximum since 1991 and was well below the 5-year county average of yearly maxima of 1062 for 2005-2009. The peak of 287 at Pagham Hbr was only just above the 1% national threshold of 279, whereas it is usually above the 1% international threshold of 600. Other significant numbers not in the WeBS totals above were all at Pulborough Brooks: 200 on 17 Jan, 255 on 1 Mar and 125 on 28 Oct.

Pintails were recorded in 49 tetrads within 21 10-km squares. As usual the majority of birds were at the western sites and the highest counts in Rye Bay were only 34 in January and 18 in February and March. In the first winter period birds had departed from all the major sites by the end of March, except at Pulborough Brooks where single figure numbers (except for 12 on 6 Apr) remained until 9 May. One bird summered at Pagham Hbr, but there was no suggestion of attempted breeding.

As usual, the build up of significant numbers of returning birds was first noted at Pagham Hbr; there were 17 on 31 Aug increasing to 45 on 7 Sep and 100 by 2 Oct. The build-up at other sites was much slower; one at Chichester Hbr on 1 Sep increased to 14 by 29 Sep, and three at Pulborough Brooks on 6 Sep increased to 12 on 29 Sep. The first returning individual in East Sussex was recorded at Pett Level on 6 Oct.

During the year coastal passages recorded at the principal seawatching sites were totals of 56 E and 24 W between January and April, and 15 E and 14 W between August and December. The main movements were 11 W and 14 E at Telscombe Cliffs on 7 Jan and 17 Nov respectively, and 17 E at Splash Point (Seaford) on 18 Mar.

A bird which showed characteristics of a male Pintail x Mallard hybrid was present at St Georges (Wivelsfield) for nine of the months between January and December. [JRC]

Garganey

Anas querquedula

Scarce passage migrant, very scarce summer non-breeder and rare breeder. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

The first record of the year was of two birds at Piddinghoe from 5 to 8 Mar, two days later than the 10-year average date. A total of 29 birds was recorded at eight coastal sites during March, with five at Rock-A-Nore (Hastings) on the 18th and 8 E past Climping Gap on the 25th. In April, a further 35 birds moved past coastal sites, including 5 E at Worthing Beach on the 11th. On 2 May one bird was recorded inland at Barcombe Res and during the month another 12 moved past coastal sites, including a late passage of 5 E at Worthing Beach on the 22nd and 2 E at Splash Point (Seaford) on the 23rd. A total of up to 76 birds was recorded moving through the county during spring passage.

Nine birds summered in the county. Two pairs were recorded at Pulborough Brooks on 10 May, but there was no sign of young, and 5 Jun was the last date a bird was recorded there. Up to four birds, including one female, were at Rye Hbr from Apr to early July. Although breeding was not proven, it was felt that it may have occurred. A singleton at Pett Level from 9 Jun through to 27 Jul was the only other summering bird.

Only four autumn passage birds were recorded; there were two at Rye Hbr on 28 Aug, followed by one at Pagham Hbr on 9 Sep and another, the last for the year, at Bewl Water on 19 Sep, two weeks earlier than the 10-year average date. [JRC]

Shoveler

Anas clypeata

Very scarce breeder and scarce summer non-breeder; common winter visitor; scarce on observed passage. 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	386	600	482	95	22	20	-	75	105	208	353	629
Bracklesham Bay	10	13	21	16	3	-	nc	-	3	15	10	22
Chichester GP	19	40	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	9	237
Arun Valley	63	156	197	12	3	2	-	-	9	60	123	13
Ouse Levels	29	28	21	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	7
Barcombe Res	-	8	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	13	15	39
Eastbourne Lakes	21	-	6	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	6	12	16	60
Pevensey Levels	-	15	45	16	-	-	-	nc	-	-	-	-
Rye Bay	208	310	162	45	14	16	-	75	79	94	172	213

The peak monthly WeBS count of 629 in Dec was very close to the 5-year average county maximum of 643 for 2005-2009. Other significant numbers, not reflected in the WeBS table above, were 304 at Rye Hbr on 5 Jan, 290 at Chichester GPs on 10 Jan, and 294 at Rye Hbr on 30 Jan. At Barcombe Res 44 were recorded on 2 Jan and 51 were there on 27 Nov. On 31 Jan 36 were at the Parham Estate and 40 were at Plashett Lakes (Isfield).

During the year 726 records were received from twenty-nine 10-km squares across the county. Most of the wintering birds departed between the mid-March and 18 Apr WeBS counts, and the first count of returning birds was at Rye Bay during the 15 Aug WeBS count. Numbers did not build up in the Arun Valley until early October, whilst no significant numbers were recorded at Chichester GPs until 40 were recorded at Ivy Lake on 30 Nov.

Movements were recorded from the seawatch sites as follows, with the peak daily movement being 37 birds east at Splash Point (Seaford) on 18 Mar:

	Jan			Mar		Apr		May		Jun	
	E	W	o/s	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	-	-	-	6	-	25	-	-	-	-	-
Worthing Beach	3	1	1	3	-	9	-	-	-	4	-
Telscombe Cliffs	-	-	-	4	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Splash Point	-	-	-	66	-	52	-	17	-	-	-

During the summer a pair was present at Bracklesham Bay, up to four birds were at Pagham Hbr, a singleton was at Arundel WWT, four males were present at Pulborough Brooks, up to 10 birds were present at Pett Level and up to seven males were present at Rye Hbr. However, breeding was not recorded at any of these sites. A pair was recorded at Weir Wood Res on 2 Jun, five birds were recorded at Cuckmere Haven on 3 Jun and two at Birdham on 17 Jun, but these were all probably passing through as there were no other summer records from these sites. Eclipse singletons were recorded at Warnham LNR on 18 Aug and at Pett Level on 19 Aug, and up to eight eclipse birds were recorded at Weir Wood Res on 23 Aug. [JRC]

Red-crested Pochard

Netta rufina

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

The first record of the year was from Climping Beach, where five birds (three males and two females) were recorded flying east on 8 Jan.

In the second half of the month up to five birds were present at Chichester GPs. The first was a single male at Ivy Lake on 12 Jan (which was also seen at Pagham Hbr on the same day). It was joined by a second male on the 16th and 17th. On the 18th and 19th Jan two pairs were at nearby Westhampnett Pit, but there was also a record of a single male at Ivy Lake on the 18th, and of a singleton at Pagham Hbr the same day, so this was probably a fifth bird. Interestingly, this combination of three males and two females was the same as seen at Climping earlier in the month. There were still three birds at Westhampnett on 23/24 January and a single male was at Ivy Lake on 25 and 30 January.

In the east of the county a male was at Weir Wood Res on 11 Jan and again on the 17th, and two were at Shinewater Lake on 11 Jan with one there on the 12th (sex not recorded) and again on 12 Feb.

Whilst it is not clear if any of these birds were truly wild, neither was anything reported to suggest that they weren't. Early January was very cold, and as a consequence many birds were on the move, which adds credence to the possibility that these birds were of wild origin. The more likely explanation however is that these birds had dispersed from the feral population at Cotswold Water Park as a result of the hard weather, where numbers fell from 230 in December to only 42 on 11 Jan. In the second winter period a female was at Ivy Lake from 13-15 Nov.

On 10 October a male was recorded in eclipse plumage at Alexandra Park (Hastings), but was thought to be a local escape, and at Cocking the pair recorded last year, on a farm pond with clipped wings, were recorded again on 28 Mar and 18 May. [JRC]

Common Pochard

Aythya ferina

Very scarce breeder and fairly 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	841	501	158	22	20	24	32	53	56	109	214	499
Chichester GP	66	123	40	-	-	-	-	2	14	8	53	104
Forest Mere	-	9	1	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	9	7	-
Burton & Chingford Ponds	14	27	7	-	-	-	-	nc	-	-	25	nc
Arun Valley	53	89	36	20	17	16	9	8	1	1	3	34
Warnham MP	4	nc	9	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	nc	7	-
Weir Wood Res	49	4	19	-	-	nc	-	-	-	1	-	nc
Barcombe Res	43	37	5	-	-	-	4	2	3	3	18	10
Eastbourne Lakes	29	21	21	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	6	2	30
Bewl Water	83	27	2	nc	nc	nc	-	-	1	4	14	30
Rye Bay	465	153	9	2	2	8	19	41	37	75	73	229

The maximum WeBS total of 841 birds in January was higher than the 5-year county average of yearly maxima of 734 for 2005-2009, and whilst this is the second consecutive year the maximum has increased, wintering numbers are still well below the average maximum of 1300 for 1999/2000 to 2003/04.

Records were received from 68 tetrads within 28 10-km squares. The strongholds of wintering Pochard were Chichester GP (particularly Ivy Lake), Rye Hbr (particularly the Long Pit) and Scotney Court GP, but there were also the usual numerous records of small numbers from suitable ponds and lakes across the county. Significant numbers not included in the WeBS table above included 83 at Weir Wood Res on 28 Jan, 52 at Barcombe Res on 30 Jan, 250 at Ivy Lake on 14 Feb, 231 at Rye Hbr on 18 Feb and 180 at Arlington Res on 9 Dec. Wintering birds started to depart from the middle of February; during April the only site where double-figure numbers were recorded was Arundel WWT where there were 13 on the 19th.

Breeding was only confirmed at Arundel WWT, where one or two pairs bred and at least two ducklings fledged, and at Pett Level, where one pair fledged young.

During the months of June to August, summering birds (with maximum counts in parentheses) were seen at Arundel WWT (9), Swanbourne Lake (Arundel) (14), Chichester GP (2), Yapton (3), Warnham LNR, Barcombe Res (4), Rye Hbr (6) and Scotney Court GP (18). At Pett Level there were two on 18 Jul but the increase to ten on the 20th and 17 on 15 Aug might have been early returning winter visitors. Numbers in the second winter period began to build up across the county from 19 Sep when there were 33 at Scotney Court GP, 30 at Pagham Hbr two days later and 14 at Chichester GP on the 25th.

Records from the principal seawatching sites from January to April involved no more than 6 E and 2 W. In December, there were some of the largest flocks recorded in recent years: at

Telscombe Cliffs, a monthly total of 17 E included 12 E on the 1st; but at Climping Beach a monthly total of 70 W included 45 W on the 2nd and 24 W on the 22nd. [JRC]

Tufted Duck

Aythya fuligula

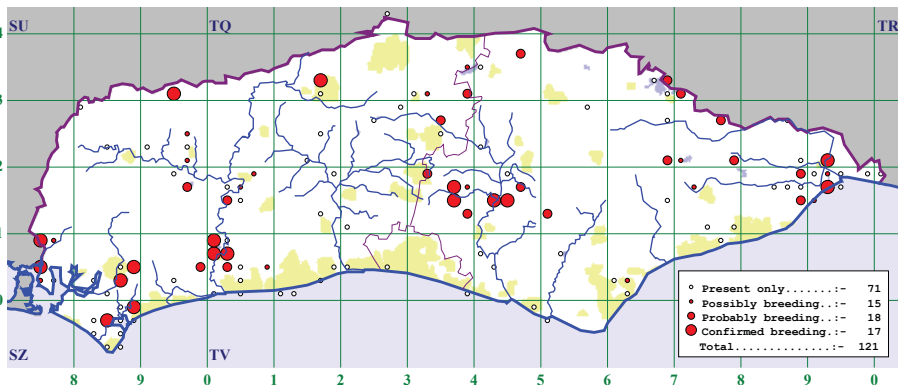
Fairly common resident and winter visitor; scarce breeder. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

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	1240	1047	851	468	388	293	412	326	293	417	723	844
Chichester Hbr	113	38	23	12	12	13	-	6	2	4	15	120
Pagham Hbr	26	28	24	37	24	18	26	6	16	44	10	24
Chichester GP	125	203	171	31	10	3	30	46	26	32	116	44
Wicks Farm Res	110	40	2	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	1	7	2
Arun Valley	220	102	92	116	107	71	24	21	33	43	75	173
Barcombe Res	46	61	26	42	20	32	96	60	12	23	63	49
Arlington Res	4	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	25	-	-
Eastbourne Lakes	143	66	70	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	6	6	28	41
Bewl Water	47	65	56	nc	nc	nc	72	21	45	10	20	48
Darwell Res	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	93	nc
Pett Level	34	70	30	51	57	51	21	10	10	21	30	-
Rye Bay	261	310	268	198	177	142	114	165	103	163	170	261

The peak WeBS total of 1240 in Jan was above the 5-year average maximum of 1148 for 2005-9. The continuing absence of WeBS counts at Darwell, except in November, should be noted as it is a significant site in the county for this species.

Records (1223) were received from 42 10-km squares, reflecting the usual widespread wintering distribution. Significant records not reflected in the WeBS tables above were 109 at Bewl Water on 9 Jan, 150 at Pagham Hbr on 25 Jan, 127 at Lidsey Sewage Works on 10 Feb, and 48 at Southwater Country Park on 19 Dec. As usual, most of the wintering birds in the Arun Valley were at Arundel WWT and Swanbourne Lake.



Wintering birds started to depart from early March, but about a third of the population remained to summer in the county.

The earliest record of confirmed breeding was at Rye Hbr where the first duckling was seen on 13 June. A total of ten broods were noted there during the breeding season. Other sites where successful breeding was recorded were Brickkiln Ponds (Stansted), Thorney Island, Pagham Hbr, Earnley (three broods of 3, 4 and 6 on a farm pond), Chichester GP (four broods of 1, 4, 7 and 8 at two pits), Swanbourne Lake (only one brood of 5 although up to 44 adults were present), Warnham LNR (one brood of 5), Plumpton Green, Barcombe Res (32 adults and 9 ducklings on 20 Jun) and Plashett Lakes (Isfield). The last successful record of breeding during the year was a brood of four at Chichester GP recorded on 15 Aug when they “were tiny”. As usual there were some quite high numbers of summering birds but relatively few records of breeding success.

On 11 Jun an apparent Tufted Duck x Scaup hybrid was recorded at Pagham Hbr and on 22 Jul there was an eclipse male at Lindfield Pond.

Significant numbers of wintering visitors started to build up in November, with the first three-figure count coming from Pett Level where there were 151 on the 4th.

Records of passage movements were higher than in recent years. Between January and May there were records of a total of 26 E past Selsey, Worthing Beach, Telescombe Cliffs and Splash Point, with the peak being 12 E past Selsey on 13 Mar. In November and December there were records of 35 W, 4 E and one out to sea past Selsey and Climping, with the peak being 32 W past Climping on 2 Dec, a day of severely cold weather and snowfall. [JRC]

Greater Scaup

Aythya marila

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant; rare non-breeder in summer. Red listed species of high conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

The minimum numbers recorded were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar		Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	21	12	2		2	1	29

The first record of the year was of a single bird at Rye Hbr on 2 and 3 Jan, probably the one last seen on 27 Dec in 2009. Other sightings in January were mostly from the east of the county: nine were recorded at Glyne Gap (Bexhill) on 15 Jan; ten on the sea seen from Pett Level on the 24th included five males; up to five at Rye Hbr from the 24th to 31st could have been from this group and a female at Cuckmere Haven from the 17th to 30th. The only record that month from the west was of a male at Pagham Lagoon from 12 Jan to 1 Feb. In February, up to five were noted at Rye Hbr between the 3rd and 22nd and two were recorded at a nocturnal roost at Glyne Gap on the 5th while in the west, at Chichester GP, up to four between the 2nd and 16th included at least one drake. March records were of two at Rye Hbr, including a first winter drake, from the 3rd to 14th, the final date for the season.

The first records for the autumn and second winter period were of a female at Cuckmere Haven from 18 to 20 Oct, a male at Rye Hbr on the 24th and one (possibly the same) at Pett Level on the 25th. The next sightings in the east were of one at Glyne Gap on 12 Nov and then two at Rye Hbr on 4 and 12 Dec, followed by four at Glyne Gap on the 17th and one at Wickham Manor (Winchelsea) on the 27th. The first records from the west of the county did not occur until 21 Dec when a female was noted at Brooklands (Worthing) until the 28th, with three birds there on the 26th. At nearby Widewater (Lancing), a female on the 22nd and two on the 31st into 2011 may

have commuted from Brooklands. At Worthing Beach there was a single on the 23rd, 11 E on the 24th (also seen passing Widewater) and 7 E on the 26th. A female at Pagham Hbr from the 27th remained into 2011. [DAB]



Greater Scaup, Cuckmere Haven, January 2010 (Darren Bird)

Common Eider

Somateria mollissima

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant; very scarce non-breeder in summer. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The approximate monthly totals of birds at the principal seawatching sites were as follows:

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	E	-	-	31	4	4	-	-	20	-	-	-	19
	W	9	-	5	4	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	-
	o/s	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
Worthing Beach	E	2	5	2	17	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	3
	W	1	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	4	3
	o/s	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	14
Splash Point	E	-	-	21	16	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	W	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	o/s	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Other sightings during the first quarter of the year were of only occasional small numbers. In January off Church Norton, six were seen on the 4th, one on the 6th, 2 W (females) on the 17th and another female on the 28th. One was found washed up dead at Sovereign Hbr (Eastbourne) on the

Once again the sea area off Glyne Gap (Bexhill) held the great majority of the wintering birds, although up to 80 were noted in Rye Bay on dates other than the WeBS days in both January and February. Up to 20 were seen at other sites, usually while making local feeding flights, so the maximum first winter period population was probably around 500. This is half the estimate for the same time in 2009 but it is often very difficult to count or even see feeding flocks, especially on winter seas, so the reduction may not be real. In the second winter period the numbers in Rye Bay were significantly higher than revealed by the WeBS counts with, for instance, 200 on 22 Dec. With perhaps up to 100 scattered in small flocks elsewhere along the coast the population in December was probably around 750.

Monthly sea watching totals, derived from the maximum recorded from either Selsey Bill, Worthing Beach, Telscombe or Splash Point (Seaford) on each day, are given below. Many of these were wintering and summering birds on local feeding flights. The usual marked spring migration began in the third week of March and continued until, effectively, 29 May but was followed by late stragglers in June with 26 E off Worthing Beach on the 8th and 19 E on the 12th. The autumn migration was much less marked as usual and difficult to distinguish from local movements.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
East	50	51	1336	4044	1629	68	91	67	96	122	74	141	7660
West	67	9	13	33	60	-	2	44	28	35	13	32	445

The above table suggests a minimum of 7009 birds was recorded flying east in the spring comprising 1336 in March, 4044 in April and 1629 in May. This is slightly lower than in 2009 but comparable with the average of 7252 for springs in 1985-2009. More detailed analysis of the daily counts of spring eastbound birds from each of the seawatching locations is tabulated below.

	Mar	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr in Mar-May	Peak movement
Selsey Bill	175	2196	1100	3471	8.6	235 on 28 Apr (13.5 hrs)
Climping	67	49	28	144	2.1	28 on 26 Mar (4.5 hrs)
Worthing Beach	147	998	391	1536	10.1	121 on 8 May (4hrs)
Telscombe Cliffs	73	205	0	278	5.0	42 on 24 Apr (2.5 hrs)
Splash Point	1130	3242	775	5147	30.6	743 on 24 Apr (15hrs)

There were six well spaced days when more than 300 eastbound birds were recorded at any site (time watched to nearest hour in brackets). Details of these are shown below:

	18 Mar	25 Mar	18 Apr	24 Apr	28 Apr	29 May
Selsey Bill	17(3)	0(1.5)	170(4)	218(14)	235(14)	6(3)
Worthing Beach	14(2)	25(2)	62(3)	37(5)	113(5)	15(2)
Telscombe Cliffs	27(2)	0(1)	nc	42(3)	19(1)	nc
Splash Point	312(4)	407(2)	567(9)	743(15)	365(14)	330(5)
Beachy Head	nc	nc	471(?)	413(?)	375(?)	236(?)
Hastings	nc	nc	nc	140(?)	195(?)	nc

A scattering of records of up to 20 birds in the summer and early autumn months suggests a rather mobile summering population of 40-50 birds, about half the number estimated for 2009. There were no inland records this year. [WGH]

Velvet Scoter*Melanitta fusca*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor offshore, exceptional inland. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

Continuing the pattern in recent winters, there were low numbers in the first winter period with one or two offshore or passing six sites between Selsey Bill and Pett Level. The maxima were five off Glyne Gap (Bexhill) on 15 Jan and three off Selsey Bill on 14 Feb. Odd birds were recorded moving east offshore in March into early April but were as likely to be on local feeding movements as passage migrants. A light easterly passage involving no more than 23 birds appeared to last from 5 Apr to 8 May with a maximum of 4 E on 12 Apr at Splash Point (Seaford) and again on the 28th at Selsey Bill. These were followed on 13 Jun by 1 E past Telscombe Cliffs, presumably a late straggler.

The seawatching totals for the main passage months from the principal watch sites of Selsey Bill, Worthing Beach, Telscombe Cliffs and Splash Point (Seaford), computed on the assumption that the highest number seen at a single site was the maximum in the county that day and that birds seen on subsequent days were different, were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May		Nov	Dec	Totals
East	3	17	6		-	2	28
West	-	-	1		2	4	7

In the second winter period the first birds were seen on 12 Nov with ones and twos between Selsey Bill and Pett Level until 21 Nov when a flock of 16 appeared off Pett Level. This built up to 25 on 26 Nov with a maximum of 30 recorded there on 3 Dec, constituting the largest flock recorded in the county since January 2006. Three to nine were recorded at six sites between Church Norton and Rye Bay in the last ten days of December with 30 off Widewater (Lancing) on 30 Dec and 20 there the next day, presumably the Pett Level flock having moved westwards. [WGH]

Common Goldeneye*Bucephala clangula*

Scarce winter visitor; rare non-breeder 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	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	28	15	15	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	37
Chichester Hbr	7	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19
Pagham Hbr	8	6	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
Cuckmere Haven	2	nc	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	1
Bewl Water	-	2	-	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	-	-	1
Rye Bay	9	5	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	8

Apart from Rye Bay, the WeBS counts this year are not very representative of the peak counts at the main sites perhaps because the freezing weather in both winter periods meant there was a lot of local movement between sites. They do however confirm that Chichester and Pagham Harbours and the Rye Bay area continue as the most favoured sites in Sussex. The peak counts at

Chichester Hbr were 18 on 19 Jan with 14, including five adult males, exactly a month later. The peak count at Pagham Hbr was 20 on both 17 Jan and 9 Feb. One or two were recorded at five inland sites in the first part of the year and occasional birds were also seen at an additional seven coastal sites, including 1 W off Worthing on 9 Jan and 2 E off Seaford on 4 Mar. The last record was of a male at Barcombe Res on 2 May.

An analysis of those records for which the sexes of the birds were recorded as either drakes or female/brownheads (presumably a mix of adult females and first winter birds) shows that the minimum numbers of each category were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		Oct	Nov	Dec
Drakes	10	8	5	1		-	4	9
Brownheads	29	11	7	1		-	9	12

The first returning bird was seen on 17 Oct at Rye Hbr LNR where numbers built up to a peak of ten on 9 Dec. The first three birds were recorded in Chichester Hbr on 8 Nov and had increased to nine on 21 Nov and 19 on 4 Dec which probably remained for the rest of the month. The first four arrived at Pagham Hbr on 12 Nov and had increased to ten by 26 Dec and 13 on 30 Dec. There were single birds at four traditional inland sites on various dates in the second winter period with one or two at additional coastal sites. These included 2 W off Worthing on 1 Dec with 3 W the next day and singles east on 27 and 28 Dec, 2 W off Climping on 7 Dec and 1 E there on the 8 Dec and 2 W off Widewater (Lancing) on 30 Dec. These were probably local movements by birds displaced from frozen fresh waters. [WGH]

Smew

Mergellus albellus

Very scarce winter visitor; mainly to the east of the county. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The minimum numbers recorded were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar		Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	24	15	-		1	2	8
Adult males	4	3	-		-	-	1
Redheads	6	7	-		1	-	7
Unsexed	14	5	-		-	2	-

A drake on Castle Water (Rye Hbr LNR) on New Year's Day and a pair there on 3 Jan were probably Dec 2009 arrivals. Rye Hbr remains the pre-eminent site in Sussex for the species although birds wander occasionally to other waters in the area. Numbers built up there through the first winter period from two pairs on 17 Jan to ten birds on 30 Jan (with only two adult drakes) with up to nine in February (three drakes on 4 Feb); the last birds here (and anywhere in Sussex) were four, including a drake, on 26 Feb.

Elsewhere, there was an unusual record of one off Glyne Gap (Bexhill) on 15 Jan, a male on various Chichester GPs from 16 Jan to 4 Feb, up to seven at Scotney GP from 16 Jan to 20 Feb, four at Pagham on 26 Jan and three on the Church Norton mudflats on 2 Feb (presumably the same birds). The only other inland record was of one at Burton MP on 30 Jan. The peak total for the county in the first winter period was probably around 22 in the last week of January, 16 of which were in the Rye Bay area (including Scotney).

The first bird in the second winter period was an exceptionally early redhead at Castle Water (Rye Hbr) on 22 Oct (SS). This pre-dates the earliest ever county record by a fortnight. There were two there on 27 Nov and three (including an adult drake) on 3 Dec. Up to three were recorded from waters in the Rye Bay area throughout December. Elsewhere, there was a redhead at Arundel WWT from 4 to 14 Dec, a male at Chichester GPs from 5 to 27 Dec and three redheads at Scotney Court GP on 26 Dec, one remaining until the 30th. Thus there were no more than seven in the county at the end of the year in spite of the very cold spell in December. [WGH]

Red-breasted Merganser

Mergus serrator

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant along the coast; rare non-breeder in summer. Rare inland.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	167	166	172	1		2	-	4	68	223
Chichester Hbr	143	147	159	-		-	-	4	58	199
Pagham Hbr	19	19	13	1		2	-	-	7	17

The above table illustrates, once again, that the majority of the wintering population was in Chichester Hbr with much smaller numbers in Pagham Hbr. While up to ten could be seen on the sea almost anywhere else along the coast, there was a noticeable concentration between Selsey Bill and Worthing. However, these are usually fairly static flocks at these sites, not passage birds and most of the same birds were probably involved through each month. The monthly maxima offshore at the principal seawatching sites were as follows:

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	Max	26	31	12	-		-	17	49
	Date	1 st	6 th	4 th	-		-	20 th	4 th
Climping Beach	Max	25	40	40	-		-	18	35
	Date	8 th	1 st	1 st	-		-	23 rd	26 th
Worthing Beach	Max	80	52	34	-		-	36	95
	Date	25 th	3 rd	5 th	-		-	30 th	26 th

The 78 off Goring on 4 Jan and 53 off Bognor Regis on 15 Feb were probably wanderers from Worthing as the numbers are close to the maxima there in those months. Records also indicate that there is considerable movement of feeding and resting birds up and down the coast although some might be passage birds. Monthly totals at the principal seawatching sites of birds flying by were as shown in the table below.

The birds in January and February were probably wintering birds on local feeding flights with the mainly easterly passage beginning in early March. More than 20 at any one site were recorded on only three days with maxima of 27 W and 22 E off Selsey Bill on 13 Mar. Passage continued throughout April but with lower numbers; the last moving birds being singletons on 1 and 10 May off Splash Point and Selsey Bill respectively. Two on the sea off Selsey Bill on 22 May and perhaps the same two off Church Norton on 26 May, the last spring record, were probably resting passage birds.

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May		Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	E	36	36	178	86	1		-	4	6	8
	W	52	38	91	26	-		-	5	4	44
Climping Beach	E	-	-	16	10	-		-	3	7	11
	W	-	-	8	12	-		4	-	21	-
Worthing Beach	E	-	-	28	40	-		-	2	-	62
	W	3	-	8	9	-		1	11	4	78
Splash Point	E	-	3	-	66	1		-	-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	2	-		-	-	-	-

Two birds in Pagham Hbr on 4 and 15 Aug were most likely summering non-breeding birds as the first obviously returning birds did not appear until late September with 1 W off Climping Beach on 21 Sep and 1 W off Worthing Beach on the 24th.

The mainly westerly return passage began in late September but was light; the peak counts at the principal seawatching sites during October were 3 E and 5 W and in November 2 E and 7 W. In early December, passage picked up with peaks of 44 W (and 5 E) off Selsey Bill on the 4th and 65 W (and 3 E) off Worthing Beach the following day in what was described as a “purposeful movement”. On 20 Dec there were 59 E off Worthing which may have been local feeding birds. Counts of 80 at Ferring on the 26th and 60 at Goring Gap on the 30th were probably parts of the Worthing offshore flock. There were no inland records during the year. [WGH]

Goosander

Mergus merganser

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

A wide scatter of records from both coastal and inland sites, boosted by unusually cold spells in both winter periods, made this an interesting year for the species. The minimum numbers recorded were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	20	4	4	2		4	4	49
Males	8	-	-	-		-	-	3
Redheads	5	4	2	1		1	2	34
Unsexed	7	-	2	1		3	2	12

One at Ditchling Common on New Year's Day was followed by a small influx from 7 to 10 Jan involving at least 15 birds at five sites. Up to five (including three adult males) at Rye Hbr, two males on the Adur at Shoreham, a pair at Pett Level, two birds at Bewl Water and four at Arlington Res on the 10th represent the spread of reports. Most did not linger but up to three, including a male, were reported from Arlington Res on five dates between 15 and 27 Jan.

There was a smaller influx around 17 Jan when a male was found at Chichester GP, two redheads arrived at Barcombe Res, two birds (possibly the same) were found at nearby Plashett Park while a male was noted at Rye Hbr on 19 Jan. The Barcombe Res and Plashett Park birds were present at the month's end and one was seen on the Rother near Northiam at the same time.

A small wintering population remained into February with up to two redheads throughout the month at Arlington Res until 3 Apr and two at Barcombe Res until 14 Mar. There was also a single bird at Scotney Court GP on that last date and the last of the first winter period flew west off Goring Beach on 18 Apr.

The first returning birds were rather early and all in the Pagham Hbr area. The first were four at Halsey's Fm (Sidlesham) on 19 Oct with up to two within the harbour from 24-29 Oct. Singles were off The Midrips on 14 Nov and at Icklesham on 19 Nov and two redheads on Bewl Water on 11 Nov were followed by a flock of 18 redheads there on 1 Dec. Possibly the same birds, now increased to c.20, flew over Warnham LNR on the same date. The following day eight flew over Pagham Hbr. During the rest of a very cold December up to four birds were widely scattered in at least 12 inland and coastal sites. Because icy conditions obliged them to move around it is impossible to determine the total number involved but it is unlikely to have exceeded 20. [WGH]

Ruddy Duck

Oxyura jamaicensis

Scarce and declining resident and winter visitor; subject to culling to reduce numbers.

The three most regular sites continued to be those shown below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	15	10	6	3	4	2	2	5	7	21	5	7
Chichester GP	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	5	7
Pett Level	-	1	3	1	2	1	2	3	3	17	-	-
Rye Hbr	7	4	3	1	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Other sites	4	3	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	3	-	-

This species is very much a winter visitor at Chichester GP, with at least one pair present generally but none there between 14 Feb and 26 Sep, and also at Rye Hbr where the peak count of seven in January reduced to one or two in April and May. In contrast, at Pett Level birds were recorded between 21 Feb and 10 Oct on which latter date there were an exceptional 17 (16 of which were in a flock on Pett Pools) but none were recorded thereafter and there was no proof of breeding there although a pair was seen displaying on 19 May. There were no more sightings away from the pools there after 1 Jun except for a single bird on 16 Oct.

Elsewhere, one was seen at Arundel WWT on 19 Apr, Pagham Hbr hosted up to three females in the first winter period and two (unsexed) on 15 Aug and, on 10 Oct, single birds were seen at Bewl Water, Eastbourne and Scotney Court GP from which it seems likely there was an influx that day from outside the county as the total was an unusual 21. [WGH]

Red-legged Partridge

Alectoris rufa

Common introduced resident; population augmented annually by captive-bred stock.

There were 81 records in the first winter period from 54 sites but no large gatherings, split roughly equally between the west and the east of the county (44 west and 37 east). The highest counts were 23 at Pangdean (Brighton) on 7 Feb and again on 10 Mar and 28 at West Dean (Cocking) also on 10 Mar. At High Cross Farm (Uckfield) up to four were feeding in the snow around garden feeders between 1 and 16 Jan.

Records were received from 133 sites from April to June. Breeding was considered possible in 44 of these, probable in a further 61 and confirmed in only six: pairs bred at Ferry Field (Pagham Hbr) and Yeoman's (Sidlesham), recently fledged young were seen at Singleton Forest (8) and at Burpham (2), and singles were seen at Iford (Lewes) and at Newick. Surveys carried out between 20 May and 9 Jul found 29 pairs on the Norfolk Estate. In addition, four recently fledged young

were seen at Pett Level on 31 Jul. During the BBS, a total of 57 birds was recorded from 23 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of six.

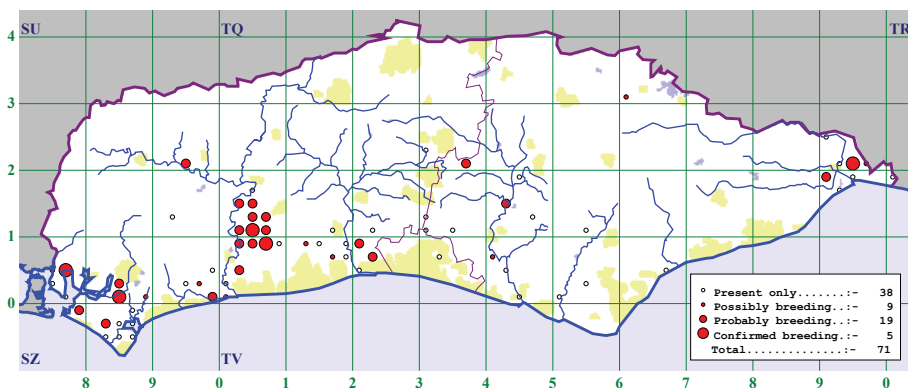
In the second half of the year there were many more records but this is a reflection of the number of released birds bred in captivity rather than natural breeding success. For example, 500 birds were released at Thorney Island (Chichester) on 1 Aug and 400 were seen at Five Lord's Burgh (Denton) on 17 Oct. There were several large gatherings in fields on the west side of Pagham Hbr with a maximum of 66 on 16 Oct and there were 42 at Lower Standean (Brighton) on 1 Sep. A covey of three near the Ashdown Forest Centre on 29 Sep were more probably wild birds. [RTP]

Grey Partridge

Perdix perdix

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

Forty five records were received from 32 different sites in the first winter period, mostly (20 sites) from the western half of the county. Conservation work on the Norfolk Estate has paid handsome dividends as 262 pairs were counted in early March. Counts of between 10 and 15 came from four other sites.



In the breeding season, confirmation or indications of breeding came from only five broad sites: four or five pairs nested at Southend Fm (Sitlesham Common) where an adult with fledged young was seen in July; two coveys of five and six were noted at Bracklesham Bay; pairs were recorded at two sites in Pagham Hbr; 262 pairs were counted in early March on the Norfolk Estate (taken as one, albeit large, site) and 2150 adults and young were counted there in early September. Breeding was probable at 17 other sites; fledged young were reported from Southbourne (Emsworth), Thorney Deepes (Chichester Hbr) and East Guldeford Level in August and at Rye Hbr at least four pairs were present but no young were observed. Birds were recorded in suitable breeding habitat at a further 22 sites but there was no evidence that breeding took place. In addition to the above, during the BBS, a total of only four birds were recorded from two of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of two.

During the autumn and second winter period, in addition to significant counts from the Norfolk Estate, lesser numbers were reported from a further 25 sites only eight of which were in the east of the county, with a maximum of 16 at Steyning Round Hill on 22 Oct. [RTP]

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. Schedule 1 species.

Between 16 and 19 singing birds were recorded from 12 sites, figures remarkably similar to those reported in 2009 (18 and 13 respectively). The first record of the year was two singing birds at Steep Down (Lancing) on 20 May, three days earlier than the previous year and within three days of the 10-year average. The next record came from the other end of the county only six days later when one was heard singing from a corn field at Gate Court (Northiam).

Further records came from Ringmer on 1 Jun, Ditchling Beacon on 9 Jun, Cissbury Ring on 12 Jun and Beachy Head on 25 Jun. In July records were received from The Burgh (Burpham) on the 17th and 25th, from Pea Down (East Dean) on the 18th and Coldwaltham on the 25th. On 1 Aug there was one at Wepham Down and at Chantry Hill there was one on the 11th and one on the 14th, possibly the same bird. The last records of the year came from Pett Level on 13 and 20 Aug, almost one month earlier than the 10-year average of 16 Sep.

Yet again there was no substantive evidence of breeding in the county although singing birds in suitable habitat does not rule out the possibility. More detailed notes on the type of habitat occupied would be a welcome addition to the records. [RTP]

Common Pheasant*Phasianus colchicus*

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

This species was recorded from 271 sites in the first winter period alone, with maxima of 47 at Heyshott on 24 Feb, 50 at Little Dean (Lavington) on 25 Feb and 60 at Pangdean (Brighton) on 14 Feb. Reports included male variants with white collars and the melanistic form '*tenebrosus*', probably partly the result of interbreeding with the Green Pheasant *P. versicolor* from Japan (*BWP*). More unusually, an all white bird was seen at Lord's Piece (Coates) on 22 Mar. There were also reports of birds making use of garden bird feeders, collecting crumbs dropped by the intended recipients.

There were 926 records received during the breeding season with confirmed breeding at 24 sites and probable breeding at a further 123. Many of the remaining records were of birds seen in suitable breeding habitat but this is unlikely to be significant as most captive bred birds are released into just such areas. During the BBS, a total of 774 was recorded from 111 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of 77.

There were only a few large numbers recorded in the autumn and second winter periods. At Thorney Island (Chichester Hbr) 600 were released in August, 59 were seen at Offham (Arun Valley) on 24 Oct, 35 at Wepham Down on 24 Oct and 30 at Warnham LNR on 12 Dec, 300 were released at Whiteman's Green (Cuckfield) on 18 Sep and 36 were seen at Ashburnham Place (Battle) on 30 Dec. [RTP]

Golden Pheasant*Chrysolophus pictus**Very scarce introduced resident.*

The only record received during the year was of a single bird in woods above Birling Gap (Beachy Head) on 29 Aug. [RTP]

Red-throated Diver*Gavia stellata*

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

In line with previous reports, estimates of monthly totals for this species (and the next two) have been made by combining the totals of birds recorded from coastal sites with those from inland after making allowance for duplication. For birds recorded at coastal sites the estimates have been made as follows: the largest counts of birds moving each day have been totalled and added to the largest number of birds recorded as 'offshore' or 'on the sea'. It is probable that the majority of birds recorded as 'Diver sp' are Red-throated Divers and the two species accounts should be read together. The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
590	399	143	69	19	-	-	-	1	12	44	860

The monthly totals of birds moving offshore at the principal seawatching sites together with the estimated totals for all seawatching records were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May		Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Monthly total*	361	169	125	67	18		1	8	35	725
Selsey Bill	110	68	30	49	11		-	1	10	97
Climping Beach	17	1	-	-	-		-	1	-	-
Worthing Beach	316	155	42	15	4		1	3	19	733
Telscombe Cliffs	86	30	7	2	-		-	1	9	95
Splash Point	12	12	88	17	6		-	-	-	-

*adjusted to compensate for duplication

The variation in numbers recorded at the various sites reflects not only the hours of seawatching undertaken but also the extent to which there were localized feeding movements. The estimated annual total of 2125 was below that of 2009 (2589) but close to the 10-year rolling average of 2159.

Numbers in the first winter quarter were low and this was particularly noticeable in January when the estimated total of 590 was almost 1000 lower than in January 2009. During this three-month period there were no three-figure counts at any of the main seawatching sites and the largest movement was of 76 E past Rock-a-Nore (Hastings) on 10th Jan. Observers at Worthing Beach recorded the only other counts in excess of 50 with 26 E and 40 W on 1 Jan, 2 E and 56 W on 15 Jan and 1 E and 57 W on 12 Feb. The largest offshore gatherings were in the east of the county with 223 off Glyne Gap (Bexhill) on 15 Jan and 230 off St Leonards on 10 Feb but only 16 remained in the area on 12 Mar. Offshore parties in the west were considerably lower with a maximum of 30 off Church Norton on 14 Jan. Spring passage was light with no double-figure counts during either April or May. The last spring records were of a single bird passing Splash Point (Seaford) and two past Birling Gap on 29 May, three days later than the 10-year average date.

The first returning bird was 1 W seen at Worthing Beach on 25 Sep, two days later than the 10-year average date but numbers remained low until the second half of December. Observers at Worthing Beach saw three-figure movements (probably feeding movements) during December with 25 E and 101 W on the 20th, 96 E and 9 W on the 24th, 47 E and 53 W on the 25th and 165 E and 87 W on the 26th. There were also 97 W past Lancing on 30 Dec bringing the estimated total for the month to 861 which is the highest December total since 2001. Offshore numbers in the second winter period included 123 at Glyne Gap (Bexhill) on 17 Dec and 25 off Worthing on 22 Dec.

Records of birds away from the open sea or tidal estuaries were: single birds at Ivy Lake (Chichester GP) on 4 Jan and at Long Pit (Rye Hbr SSSI) on five dates between 5 Jan and 17 Jan and three at Rye Bay on 17 Jan and two there on 14 Mar. [DHH]

Black-throated Diver

Gavia arctica

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May		Oct	Nov	Dec
13	11	5	25	16		4	5	13

The estimated annual total of 92 was not only well below that of 2009 (147) but also only two thirds of the 10-year rolling average and the lowest annual total since 1989. The monthly totals of birds moving offshore at the main seawatching sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May		Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>Monthly total*</i>	8	8	2	23	12		2	4	11
Selsey Bill	4	1	2	14	4		-	-	1
Climping Beach	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	1
Worthing Beach	3	3	-	4	2		2	3	8
Telscombe Cliffs	1	3	-	-	-		-	1	3
Splash Point	1	1	-	8	4		-	-	-

*adjusted to compensate for duplication

In the first winter period there was just one day on which more than a single bird was recorded moving off the coast: 2 E at Worthing Beach on 10 Jan. The maximum 'offshore' counts were five off Glyne Gap (Bexhill) on 15 Jan and three at both Church Norton (14 Jan) and Selsey Bill (23 Feb).

Numbers did increase slightly during spring passage with maxima of 7 E at Splash Point on 24 Apr and 6 E at Birling Gap on 14 May. The last spring record was of 1 E at Worthing Beach on 26 May, equal to the 10-year average.

The first returning birds were recorded on 23 Oct, two days later than the 10-year average when there was 1 W at Worthing Beach and possibly the same bird offshore at West Tarring. Numbers continued to be low in the second winter period with the only records of more than a single bird moving offshore all coming from Worthing Beach: 2 E on 18 Nov, 2 W on 20 Dec, 2 W on 26 Dec and 2E on 27 Dec. The maximum count of birds on the sea in this period was of two at Selsey Bill on 21 Dec. The only record away from the sea or tidal estuaries was of a single bird on the meanders at Cuckmere Haven on 30 Dec. [DHH]

Great Northern Diver*Gavia immer*

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		Oct	Nov	Dec
Monthly total*	5	7	9	13	5		1	2	9
Max. off Selsey Bill	4	6	7	13	5		1	2	7

*adjusted to compensate for duplication

The annual total of 51 was not only greater than the 45 recorded in 2009 but also the highest since 1999 and above the 10-year average of 40.

Selsey Bill was once more the principal site for this species and it is assumed that birds recorded there moving offshore were on feeding flights as these movements were not recorded elsewhere. It is also assumed that birds recorded between Chichester and Pagham Harbours were the result of such feeding flights.

During the first winter period there were four records of single birds away from Selsey Bill: offshore at Worthing Beach on 5 Jan and 3 Feb, off Brighton Marina on 17 Mar and 1 E at Worthing Beach on 23 Mar. Numbers off Selsey Bill varied from day to day with monthly maxima of four on 4, 14 and 17 Jan, six on 7 and 14 Feb and seven on 13 Mar. In spring all the records came from Selsey Bill with maxima of 13 on 28 Apr (the largest count since 4 Apr 2001 when there were also 13 off Selsey Bill) and five on 2 and 3 May. A total of 13 W off Selsey Bill on 10 Apr is assumed to refer to the birds wintering in the Selsey area.

The last spring record was of one offshore at Selsey Bill on 21 May, four days earlier than the 10-year average. The first returning bird was 1 W at Selsey Bill on 3 Oct, the same date as in 2009 and 17 days earlier than the 10-year average.

In the second winter period the first bird offshore at Selsey Bill was on 24 Oct after which the monthly maxima were two on 20 and 28 Nov and seven on 21 Dec.

There were no records during the year of this species away from the open sea or tidal estuaries. [DHH]

Diver species

The challenges of specific identification of divers in flight are well documented. As a result, one fifth of all divers seen in flight were recorded as 'Diver spp'. The numbers of these birds can be significant as shown by total counts of 155 E at Splash Point in the period January to April and a total of 51 W at Worthing Beach on 22 and 23 Dec.

The numbers of all divers recorded at the main seawatching sites during the periods January to May and October to December are shown in the table below:

	Diver spp.		R-t Diver		B-t Diver		Total*		No. per hour	
	J-M	O-D	J-M	O-D	J-M	O-D	J-M	O-D	J-M	O-D
Selsey Bill	122	7	291	118	43	4	456	129	1.0	2.9
Climping Beach	27	7	19	145	-	1	46	153	1.1	2.5
Worthing Beach	19	64	537	781	18	15	574	860	2.7	13.0
Telscombe Cliffs	36	46	107	125	4	4	175	147	1.6	2.5
Splash Point	208	-	152	2	14	-	374	2	2.0	0.5

The totals for each site have been calculated by adding the monthly totals of birds moving both east and west to the numbers of birds seen on the sea. No allowance has been made for duplication at sites or between sites. Neither has any allowance been made for birds which remained offshore for several days. For these reasons columns should not be totalled. The figures do not include records of Great Northern Diver but details are contained in the relevant species account. [DHH]

Fulmar

Fulmarus glacialis

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

During the first winter period the only movements of note were 42 (in 1 hr) off Hastings on 14 Jan and 54 E (1¼ hr) and 62 W (¾ hr) at Telscombe Cliffs on 26 and 31 Mar respectively.

During the spring what were probably feeding movements resulted in April totals of 84 E and 420 W at Selsey Bill and 36 E and 160 W at Worthing Beach. Although the long sea outfall at Telscombe Cliffs again proved a popular feeding area for this species, numbers were much reduced with a maximum of 140 on 11 Apr compared with maxima of 400-500 in each of the previous three years.

Counts of birds on the sea cliffs gave the following numbers of apparently occupied nests:

Brighton Marina–Rottingdean: 4; Rottingdean–Peacehaven: 9; Peacehaven–Newhaven: 19; Seaford Head: 3; Cuckmere Haven–Birling Gap: 8. At Birling Gap some birds were noted nesting not on the cliff ledges but in rabbit holes at the top of the cliff. The last birds left the breeding ledges at Telscombe Cliffs on 5th Sep, four days earlier than the 10-year average date. The first birds returned on 13 Nov, five days later than the 10-year average date.

Numbers were low for the remainder of the year with the largest movements being 62 E at Telscombe Cliffs on 15 Jun, 63 E at Splash Point on 20 Jun and 29 W at Rye Bay on 8 Nov.

There were four records of single birds away from the open sea: Brighton Wild Park on 5 Apr, Filsham on 19 May, Pett Level on 1 June and Southerham Fm (Lewes) on 24 Oct. [DHH]

Sooty Shearwater

Puffinus griseus

Very scarce autumn visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

2009: A total of six flew west past Birling Gap on 2 Sep (RHC).

2010: There were only two records this year. Single birds flew east past Selsey Bill on 1 Oct (AH) and past Seaford Head on 3 Oct (DIS *et al.*). These records bring the total for the county to 177 since 2000 of which 84 have been in October. [DHH]

Manx Shearwater

Puffinus puffinus

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

There were just twenty records received of this species involving a minimum total for the year of 63 (53 E, 10 W). This was the lowest annual total since 1995 and well below the 10-year average of 254. The minimum figure given includes birds flying both east and west and it is possible that double counting could have occurred as birds moved along the English Channel to

and from their breeding colonies. The monthly totals at the principal seawatching sites were as follows:

		Apr	May	Oct
County totals	E	20	31	2
	W	6	3	1
Selsey Bill	E	19	13	-
	W	5	3	-
Climping Beach	E	-	12	-
	W	-	-	-
Worthing Beach	E	13	-	2
	W	6	1	1
Splash Point	E	12	16	-
	W	-	1	-
Other Sites	E	-	-	-
	W	-	-	1

There were no records in the first three months of the year with the first sightings being 5 W at Selsey Bill and 6 W at Worthing Beach on 3 Apr. The total for April was very low with the only double-figure counts being on the 24th when easterly movement involved 16 at Selsey Bill and a flock of 12 past Ferring, Worthing Beach and Splash Point.

Numbers continued to be low in May with 12 E at both Selsey Bill and Climping Beach on the 10th, the only double-figure counts. Unusually there were no records in the period June to September. In October there was 1 E at Worthing Beach and 1 W at Rock-a-Nore (Hastings) on the 1st with the final record for the year being 1 E at Worthing Beach on the 30th. [DHH]

Balearic Shearwater

Puffinus mauretanicus

Very scarce spring to autumn visitor. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

This was another shearwater species which occurred in reduced numbers in the county with a minimum total of just six which is the lowest total since 2004. A single bird off Worthing Beach on 29 May was the first of the year (DIS, RAI). There were no further records until August with 2 W at Selsey Bill (BFF, DIS), 3 W at Lancing (RJJ) and 1 W at Birling Gap (DC, BK) all on the 7th and a single bird moving east past Goring on the 10th (BFF, DIS). The only other record was of one flying east at Selsey Bill on 19 Sep (JA, SH, IP). [DHH]

Gannet

Morus bassanus

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

Movements at the principal seawatching sites were as shown in the table below. In the first two months of the year movements recorded offshore were higher than last year in the east of the county but generally lower in the west. During this period there was little discernable pattern to the movements and of those involving three-figure counts four were in a westerly direction and three eastwards. The largest westerly movements occurred in January with 140 W at Worthing Beach on the 15th and 122 W at both Worthing Beach and Telscombe Cliffs on the 17th. The largest

easterly movement was 120 E at Splash Point on 16 Jan. Feeding concentrations offshore during this period included 135 in Rye Bay on 9 Jan, 100 off Worthing on 17 Jan and 220 off Splash Point (Seaford) on 9 Feb.

	Jan-Feb		Mar-May		Jun-Jul		Aug-Oct		Nov-Dec	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	66	45	1603	836	33	33	246	698	313	142
Climping Beach	-	54	46	55	-	-	32	73	13	26
Worthing Beach	78	250	367	228	210	111	321	1095	32	274
Telscombe Cliffs	658	532	33	225	224	58	624	496	87	453
Splash Point	196	111	928	56	-	-	547	25	-	-

Numbers in the period March to May were generally lower than last year and with no three-figure counts. This was also the case in June, July and August.

The major westerly movement which occurred in October 2009 was not repeated this year and consequently overall numbers were down on those of last year. There were, however, eleven counts of over one hundred birds moving offshore but again with no real pattern to the movements. The largest of these movements involved 265 W at Rock-a-Nore (Hastings) and 220 E at Splash Point on 1 Oct, 211 W off Worthing Beach on 30 Oct and 248 E at Telscombe Cliffs the following day.

On 1 Nov 128 were counted moving west off Worthing Beach but in December the movements were more predictably eastwards. This was particularly true on 27 Dec when there were 309 E at Selsey Bill, 130 E at Worthing Beach and 345 E at Telscombe Cliffs. Feeding parties recorded offshore at this time included 450 in Rye Bay on 8 Nov and 150 off Lancing on 30 Dec. [DHH]

Great Cormorant

Phalacrocorax carbo

Fairly common but localised resident and common winter visitor.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	460	443	466	388	404	422	723	565	580	571	596	622
Chichester Hbr	10	17	11	8	5	11	18	21	40	48	79	32
Pagham Hbr	135	72	68	63	47	37	130	98	50	120	20	137
Chichester GP	22	32	60	66	109	116	132	57	81	19	38	4
Climping	-	nc	2	-	nc	-	nc	1	12	4	3	45
Arun Valley	11	3	9	1	-	2	4	4	8	10	16	120
Weir Wood Res	6	6	25	12	11	nc	31	39	29	59	26	nc
Ouse Levels	10	25	24	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	2	-	10	-
Barcombe Res	20	3	8	-	1	-	5	11	70	33	12	27
Pevensey Levels	8	-	23	13	7	16	7	nc	16	39	23	1
Bewl Water	46	3	5	nc	nc	nc	52	42	54	31	54	35
Rye Bay	122	204	173	215	217	212	318	260	131	100	181	163

In the first winter period, three-figure counts additional to the WeBS counts involved 120 at Pagham Hbr on 4 Jan and 110 there on 17 Feb, 140 off Worthing Beach on 15 Jan, 109 at Upper Beeding on the 17th and 100 recorded flying E to W off Bognor Regis on 7 Feb.

Nocturnal roost counts in January recorded 32 flying to roost on the 19th at St. Michaels (Burton Park) and 51 seen at Chichester GP on the 31st, only 11 of which were in the usual location at New Lake which was 80% covered by ice, while the remaining birds were in trees overhanging the adjacent ice-free Runcton Lake. On 21 Feb, roosting numbers at Chichester GP had increased to 103, divided 49:54 between New Lake and Runcton Lake. In the Ouse Valley 54 were counted roosting on pylons at Lewes Brooks on the 7th, while further east the roost at Rye Hbr contained 107 birds at dusk.

Records from two of the county's regular seawatching sites were as follows:

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	E	43	-	-	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	W	-	-	4	55	-	-	-	-	17	-	-	54
	o/s	11	17	2	62	-	-	-	90	16	19	13	44
Worthing Beach	E	39	-	8	26	15	-	4	6	28	12	-	-
	W	2	-	12	5	4	-	15	42	23	38	-	148
	o/s	171	7	-	3	5	-	11	11	26	39	-	54

In the breeding season, 69 apparently occupied nests were recorded at Chichester GP, and 130 at Rye Hbr in two colonies. At Iford Brooks, a count of 26 nests may have been an under-estimate due to nests being very crowded on an island.

In the second winter period, the three figure count additional to the WeBS counts were 102 at Brooklands (Worthing) on 30 Dec and, inland, 150 at Arlington Res on 4 Dec and 118 at Weir Wood Res on the 5th. Counts at nocturnal roosts involved 108 at Chichester GP on 28 Nov (an increase on the 76 recorded there on 16 Oct) and 70 at Rye Hbr on 24 Nov. [NJR]

Shag

Phalacrocorax aristotelis

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant; rare away from coast. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

Sightings at the major seawatching sites were as follows:

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	E	-	-	1	9	1	-	-	-	39	2	-	2
	W	-	-	1	1	2	-	2	-	3	-	-	-
	o/s	-	2	3	7	2	-	-	-	1	5	-	-
Worthing Beach	E	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	1
	o/s	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-
Splash Point	E	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-
	W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	o/s	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-

During the first quarter of the year, occasional sightings at Brighton Marina included a maximum for January of eight on the 25th rising to nine on 5 Feb followed by up to six by 23 Mar and then two on 17 Apr. An unusual inland record was of one on the lake at Wakehurst Place on 5 Mar. Throughout the remainder of the year small numbers were seen occasionally at several coastal sites. The highest count in September at Selsey Bill was 1 W and 15 E on the 11th. A further inland sighting was one flying west at Arlington Res on 5 Dec. [NJR]

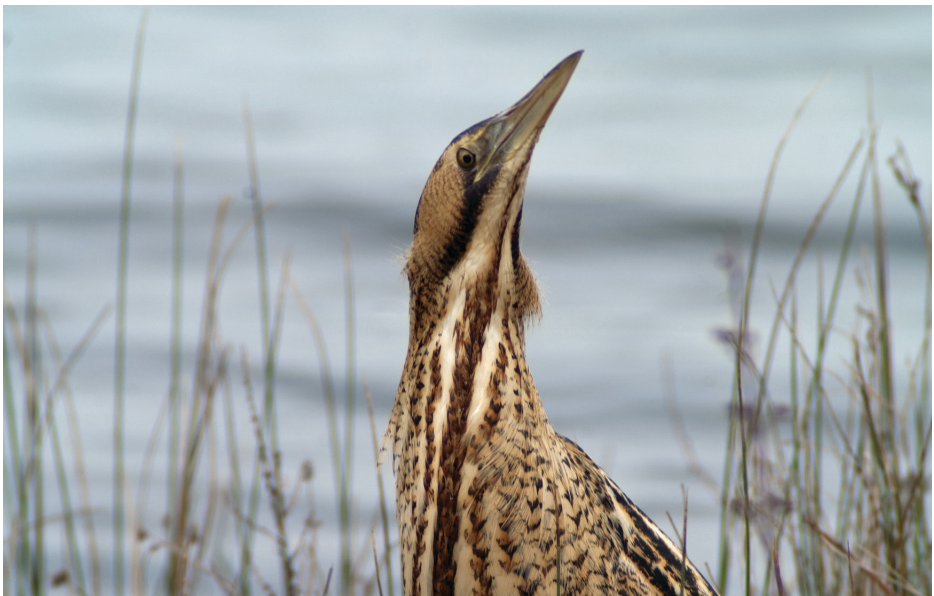
Eurasian Bittern*Botaurus stellaris*

Scarce winter visitor; rare outside winter months. Red listed species of high conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

The cold winter weather was associated with a greatly increased number of records (just over 300 compared to 126 in 2009). In the harshest winters of the past, e.g. 1978/9, the yearly total of birds barely reached double figures whereas this year those numbers were reached in January, February and December. The estimated minimum monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun		Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	12	11	7	2	1	1		1	4	16
Chichester GP	1	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	1
Pagham Hbr	-	-	1	-	-	-		-	1	1
Burton MP	4	4	4	-	-	-		-	-	2
Arundel WWT	1	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	3
R Adur valley	1	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	1
Weir Wood Res	-	1	-	-	-	-		-	-	-
Eastbourne	1	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	2
Rye Hbr & Pett Level	4	6	2	2	1	1		1	3	6
Other sites (one day)	2	5	4	-	-	-		-	-	10

The above numbers are for those broad sites where birds were recorded for more than one day in each month and on the assumption that birds that were recorded at any other site for only one day were wanderers moving between sites. In view of their mobility, some duplication might be involved.



Eurasian Bittern, Castle Water, February 2010 (Les Bird)

During the first winter period, Bitterns were seen at six broad sites, tabled above, and recorded for one day only at five further sites. The highest counts were of four birds regularly seen at Burton MP between 27 Jan and 2 Mar and at Rye Hbr from 5 Jan, increasing to six on 4 Feb of which only two remained by 6 Mar. Single birds, presumably wandering, were recorded during the period for single days only (but might have been there longer) at Ferring, Pulborough Brooks, Ditchling Common, Lewes Brooks and Hailsham.

Single birds were occasionally seen at other sites and Chichester GP, Arundel WWT and Shinewater Lake (Eastbourne) were the most frequently reported. Most wintering birds had left by the end of March.

On 3 March an emaciated Bittern was picked up from a roadside ditch near Ditchling, where it had been for at least a day, and taken to Mallydams RSPCA (Fairlight). It was subsequently released at Castle Water (Rye Hbr) on 30 Mar, having been ringed with a BTO ring and a black ring bearing the letters HT in white.

The only records in the breeding season were from Rye Hbr where a bird was heard booming regularly between 29 Mar and 14 Jun. Although two birds were seen on 19 and 20 Apr there was no evidence of breeding. There were no further records of Bitterns from here until a single one on 19 Oct, the first record for the autumn.

During the second winter period, birds were seen at seven broad sites, tabled above. Single birds, presumably wandering, were recorded during the period for single days only (but might have been there longer) at Chichester Hbr, Shermanbury, Weir Wood Res, Danehill, South Heighton, Charleston reedbed, Buxted, Cuckmere Haven, Pevensy Levels and Scotney Court GP, although at some of these sites birds may have been present for more than one day. The majority of records in this cold period were from Rye Hbr where a maximum of six birds were seen on 19 Dec. Elsewhere, reports were mainly of singles except for Arundel WWT (up to three by 21 Dec), Shinewater Lake (two on 19 Dec), and Burton MP (two on 30 and 31 Dec). [JPP]

Cattle Egret

Bubulcus ibis

Rare but increasing vagrant.

2009: The observers of the bird seen 24-25 May at Pevensy should read: (CRB, PCS *et al.*).

2010: A single bird was seen and identified from a train on 6 Feb (LC) near Southease (R Ouse). This was the 54th record since 1962 and the 47th this decade. Things have quietened down since the excitement of 17 individuals in 2008; what hopes of them breeding in Sussex now? [JAH]

Little Egret

Egretta garzetta

Formerly rare, but has bred since 2001 and is a scarce and increasing resident, and probably scarce autumn visitor; status as winter visitor uncertain. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

Little Egrets were seen throughout the county in 152 tetrads. The monthly WeBS counts at the principal sites were as shown in the table below. Lower numbers in the first winter period were to be expected given the hard winter and there is a suggestion therein that they remained lower during the breeding season. However, the WeBS counts do not give a complete picture of the numbers in the county as they are obtained on specific priority core count dates.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	19	37	62	49	37	53	123	136	248	294	165	25
Chichester Hbr	11	9	34	24	14	18	56	63	160	196	114	18
Bracklesham Bay	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	1	1
Pagham Hbr	-	1	6	11	7	17	41	54	45	70	13	1
Arun Valley (S of Arundel)	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	2	3	-	1
Arun Valley	-	6	2	5	14	4	3	2	4	-	-	-
Burton Mill Pond	-	1	3	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	1	-	nc
Lancing Widewater	-	-	2	3	2	3	13	4	4	2	1	1
Steyning Levels	-	5	3	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	nc
Ouse Valley	2	3	3	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	4	-	4	-
Cuckmere Haven	-	nc	4	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	10	13	7	-
Pevensey Levels	1	-	2	1	-	-	1	nc	-	-	11	-
Rye Bay	5	10	1	5	0	10	8	12	19	8	14	3

The following table, derived from a combination of the WeBS counts and the highest single monthly count at each site, gives a more realistic assessment of the minimum number of birds and the number of sites (tetrads) at which they were present:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	64	79	133	127	90	97	213	296	347	383	231	55
Chichester Hbr	11	11	34	24	14	18	56	63	160	196	125	18
Bracklesham Bay	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	3	1	1
Pagham Hbr	4	2	8	11	14	17	41	47	45	70	13	1
Arun Valley (S of Arundel)	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	2	3	1	1
Arun Valley	1	6	6	10	18	14	10	2	4	4	3	2
Burton Mill Pond	-	6	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Lancing Widewater	-	1	2	3	2	3	13	4	4	2	2	1
Steyning Levels	-	5	2	7	1	1	1	10	4	12	3	-
R Adur (Shoreham)	2	1	1	1	1	-	4	15	12	6	2	2
Ouse Valley	3	3	10	22	-	1	8	3	4	2	4	2
Cuckmere Haven	2	-	10	6	-	-	15	-	10	19	7	4
Pevensey Levels	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	8	-
Rye Bay	11	12	18	12	14	15	28	102	64	40	38	7
Other sites	30	30	32	31	24	27	36	49	38	25	24	16
No. of other sites	24	14	9	16	11	20	11	12	12	17	15	18

The other sites in the above table were spread right across the county from west to east mainly at the coast with just a few inland at suitable sites.

The total of 36 nesting pairs at four established sites was similar to, although a slight reduction on, the 40-43 pairs in the last two years, as shown in the table below:

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<i>Minimum total</i>	3	1	4	18	19	25	36	40	40-43	36
Old Park Wood (Bosham)	-	-	-	12	8	10	12	15	c.14	6
North Wall (Pagham Hbr)	-	-	-	1	3	7	15	17	13-14	16
Hoe Fm (Flansham)	-	-	3	3	3	2	3-4	4+	c.6	4
Wyckham Wood (Henfield)	-	-	-	3-4	4-6	3	3	0	3+	0*
Southeast (R Ouse)**	-	-	-	-	1	3	3	4	4-6	10
Glynleigh (Decoy Wood)	3	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	nc
Pebsham Wood	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	nc

*two birds present but no nests seen; **sites E and F have been combined

At Thorney Island, 167 Little Egrets roosted in September, a similar number to the 174 of 2009. Numbers leaving the roost at dawn at Rye Hbr in the second half of the year are shown below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar		Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2009	27	30	43		82	87	22	26	-
2010	11	2	18		102	64	40	38	-

As ever, numbers peaked in autumn before birds dispersed to warmer climes for the winter. [JPP]

Great White Egret

Ardea alba

Rare vagrant.

Possibly as many as six individuals were recorded this year, a marked increase and annual record in sightings of a bird which breeds not too far away in northern France and the Netherlands. The first one, seen initially at Climping Beach on the morning of 7 Jan (OM), was seen later at Widewater (Lancing) (BFF, DIS, DRM) and then Pett Level (CHD, AP) before the final sighting of it flying back west. The next was one in a ditch feeding with a Little Egret at Glynde Reach on 2 Apr (NAD). Later in April another was seen at Pulborough Brooks on the 19th (CP, PS) and, assuming a different bird, one was seen at Rye Hbr the next day (SS). In the autumn there were two sightings. One was found at Pilsey Island (Chichester Hbr) on 28 Sep (BFF, OM, DIS) and another was seen flying west at Telscombe Cliffs at 0930 hr on 15 Oct (DHH). Assuming these six were all different individuals they bring the county total to 35, all but four this century. [JAH]

Grey Heron

Ardea cineria

Fairly common resident.

The monthly WeBS counts at the principal sites were as shown in the table below. During the breeding season 241 nests were counted at 27 sites (260 nests in 2009). Counts for individual heronries, listed from west to east, were as follows:

Westbourne 1; Forest Mere 2; Fishbourne 8; Pagham Owl Copse 6; Church Norton 5; New Pond (Midhurst) 1; Flansham 13; Warningcamp 2; Parham 20; Angmering 0; Knepp 8; Warnham 28; Henfield 6; Burgess Hill 2; Ardingly 17; Weir Wood Res 24; Rodmell 3; Firlie 9; Hempstead Wood (Uckfield) 1; Charleston 10; Hadlow Down 11; Eridge 13; Hampden Park (Eastbourne) 4; Glynleigh nc; Wadhurst Park 3; Horsebridge Road (Wartling) 7; Burwash 11; Pebsham 0; Winchelsea 1; Leasam 25.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	65	48	106	62	63	54	87	101	113	117	107	49
Chichester Hbr	9	6	8	3	-	4	10	15	15	18	23	6
Pagham Hbr	4	2	9	4	2	2	7	7	6	7	5	4
Arun (S of Arundel)	-	-	2	1	2	4	2	-	3	3	3	3
Arun Valley	11	2	11	10	16	14	15	12	13	15	12	2
Kneppmill Pond	nc	6	3	nc	3	7	3	3	1	1	1	nc
Ifield MP	2	3	nc	-	1	nc	nc	1	1	-	nc	1
Fen Place Mill Ponds	-	-	6	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	2	-	nc
Weir Wood Res	2	6	26	31	28	nc	17	23	7	8	2	nc
Ouse Levels	2	3	17	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	1	1	3	1
Barcombe Res	2	-	-	-	1	4	3	3	10	6	1	-
Eastbourne Lakes	4	1	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	4	10	2	3
Pevensay Levels	9	-	3	6	3	2	1	nc	10	8	4	2
Bowl Water	-	-	-	nc	nc	nc	7	21	15	10	4	4
Rye Bay	11	10	6	6	6	7	15	10	8	10	19	16

The nests at New Pond, Burgess Hill and Hempstead Wood are new sites but there were no nests at Angmering or Pebsham. There was no access at Glynleigh, but allowing for this the county total is similar to that in 2009. Nationally the BTO has reported a slight decline in recent years.

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

Purple Heron

Ardea purpurea

Rare vagrant.

An adult was seen and photographed at Weir Wood Res on 8 Apr (NAD) and another adult remained in view from the Winpenny Hide at Pulborough Brooks for at least ten minutes before flying north on 23 May (GB). These two spring birds were the first since 2004 and only the 12th and 13th since 1995. [JAN]

White Stork

Ciconia ciconia

Rare vagrant, mainly in the spring.

With an average of just under two birds of considered wild origin per year (1995-2009) and a blank year in 2009 the four accepted records of single birds during 2010 was an improvement. During spring one was seen by a small pond at Douglaslake Fm near Fittleworth on 22 Apr (DAC, JH) and one was seen flying east over both Bulverhythe and Hastings on 6 May (ASG, SB). One seen and photographed at Cuckmere Haven on 16 Sep (PJ *et al.*) departed northwards and was generally assumed to be the same as that found moribund and taken into RSPCA care the following day. Finally one was seen and videoed whilst drifting east near Barnham on 18 Oct (JHW, AMW). [JAN]



White Stork, Cuckmere Haven, September 2010 (Pete Wilson)

Spoonbill

Platalea leucorodia

Very scarce visitor, most frequent in spring and autumn. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

This was an unexceptional year for this species; only 13 birds were recorded, as follows:

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

In April, single birds were reported from Rye Hbr on 12 and 13 Apr, Chichester Hbr on the 21st and Cuckmere Haven on the 22nd. In May, one seen at Worthing Beach on the 11th might have been the same as one of the two seen at Pagham Hbr on the 16th. Another bird stayed briefly at Rye Hbr from 15 to 17 May and was followed by another from the 24th to the 29th which was observed to be nest building amongst Cormorants, but there was no further evidence of breeding. Another bird was recorded at Rye Hbr for one day only on 25 Jun. In September, a single bird was seen in Chichester Hbr from the 10th to the 12th, another was at Cuckmere Haven on the 29th and two were in Pagham Hbr on the 30th. [JPP]

Little Grebe

Tachybaptus ruficollis

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

The monthly WeBS counts at the principal sites were as shown in the table below. Peak counts in the first winter period were 12 at Thorney Island on 29 and 30 Jan and 15 at Rye Hbr on 21

Feb, while 21 at Widewater (Lancing) on 3 Jan and 10 at Shoreham Airport on 18 Jan were not included in the WeBS counts below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	127	98	59	17	20	24	53	73	126	179	189	163
Chichester Hbr	50	21	17	-	-	6	8	8	17	35	42	62
Pagham Hbr	21	21	3	5	5	5	8	8	15	31	19	17
Arun Valley	4	-	-	2	1	2	-	2	8	1	1	2
Brooklands Worthing	2	2	-	-	1	-	-	4	7	6	2	3
Widewater Lancing	5	7	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	12
Cuckmere Haven	nc	nc	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	1	16	34	-
Bewl Water	7	4	11	nc	nc	nc	23	29	31	22	15	9
Rye Bay	21	35	15	9	6	8	10	20	32	45	38	44

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No of birds	195	160	109	87	58	60	69	112	141	219	247	249
No of sites	51	39	37	37	29	27	17	19	30	34	38	38

There was an increase in the number of reports of breeding compared with 2009. Breeding was confirmed at 18 sites by at least 19 pairs. Fledged young were seen at 15 sites. At two sites at South Chailey adults were seen entering or leaving apparently occupied nests while at Arundel WWT a nest was reported with eggs as late as 8 Aug. Breeding was probable at a further 11 sites. The annual breeding survey at Pulborough Brooks noted that one pair were present in April but had, apparently, failed. At Rye Hbr, the annual breeding summary reported that there was very little evidence of the species during the breeding season. During the BBS a total of seven was recorded in four of the 139 1-km squares surveyed with a highest count of three at Wiston Estate (Steining) on 1 May.

The largest counts in the autumn were at Bewl Water where 29 birds were recorded on 15 Aug, 31 on 19 Sep and 22 still remained on 10 Oct. Also in October, peak counts of 29 were recorded at Pagham Lagoon and 22 at Pett Level on the 10th, 18 in Chichester Hbr on the 9th and the 13th and 16 at Cuckmere Haven on the 17th. During the second winter period, the species was seen in at least 63 localities. The highest count was at Cuckmere Haven with 34 recorded on 22 Nov. In the Chichester Hbr area numbers were highest in December with 23 at Thorney Island on the 4th, 26 at Birdham on the 24th and 30 at Dell Quay on the 23rd. At Rye Hbr, 24 were noted on 9 Dec and a flock on Widewater (Lancing) was present for most of November and December peaking at 23 on 21 Nov. [SFW]

Great Crested Grebe

Tachybaptus ruficollis

Fairly common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

The monthly WeBS counts at the principal sites were as shown in the table below. The table shows that, during the first winter period, counts in January were comparable with the 10-year average (376) but in February were significantly lower (485). However, there were counts of large numbers on the sea, apparently resting, which were not included in the WeBS counts.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	359	308	310	137	118	62	422	406	422	386	331	304
Chichester Hbr	12	11	5	11	4	14	-	-	8	13	32	34
Pagham Hbr	2	5	6	11	7	5	7	10	9	20	20	6
Chichester GP	21	16	26	9	15	6	4	14	23	27	26	1
Weir Wood Res	16	15	22	37	44	nc	90	103	76	76	70	nc
Arlington Res	5	8	16	12	13	14	16	37	36	60	37	-
Bewl Water	25	56	112	nc	nc	nc	274	190	165	120	83	84
Glyne Gap	224	130	64	nc	-	2	nc	-	2	-	8	170
Rye Bay	44	52	25	39	5	13	23	34	52	29	20	7

Monthly totals from the principal seawatching sites were as follows:

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May		Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	E	2	2	1	6	11		-	-	-
	W	2	-	3	7	6		14	4	12
	o/s	5	25	24	17	-		-	8	8
Climping Beach	E	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	2	-		-	18	-
	o/s	5	19	49	43	15		73	65	10
Worthing Beach	E	-	-	5	1	3		-	1	15
	W	-	-	2	9	1		3	83	38
	o/s	1018	53	38	45	11		4	13	1467
Telscombe Cliffs	E	2	3	3	-	-		-	-	3
	W	5	7	4	2	-		-	-	1
	o/s	57	51	52	2	-		-	-	116
Splash Point	E	11	6	5	-	-		-	-	-
	W	1	18		-	-		-	-	-
	o/s	-	27	35	-	1		-	-	-

The above table illustrates that during the first winter period the area offshore at Worthing Beach was the most favoured site for this species in West Sussex. Birds were recorded on 13 days from 1 to 28 Jan with a peak count of 328 on 4 Jan. Additional counts in East Sussex not recorded by WeBS included 689 at Pett Level on 24 Jan, 150 in Rye Bay on the 15th and 180 there on the 31st and a record 142 at Rock-a-Nore (Hastings) on 3 Feb.

Monthly peak counts at the more favoured inland waters were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Ardingly Res	-	-	7	-	20	11	8	-	-	8	4	-
Weir Wood Res	16	18	50	44	46	43	90	103	76	76	75	41
Arlington Res	5	30	16	18	13	14	16	37	36	60	122	1
Bewl Water	25	56	112	12	-	16	274	190	165	120	83	84

Breeding was confirmed at 17 sites in the county by at least 25 pairs with three at Loder Valley (Ardingly) and four pairs at Rye Hbr. Breeding was probable at a further 16 sites. During the BBS a total of 14 was recorded in only two of the 139 1-km squares surveyed with a highest count of 11 at Weirwood Res on 27 Apr.

During the second winter period, while counts in November were comparable with the 10-year average (331) those in December were significantly higher (304). In East Sussex, 122 were counted at Arlington Res on 4 Nov. The sea area off Worthing Beach was again the most favoured site in West Sussex in December, with a peak count 416 on the 26th but the count of 498 offshore at Goring Gap on 30 Dec may well have included birds from nearby Worthing. [SFW]

Red-necked Grebe

Podiceps grisegena

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

There were 27 records for the year from ten localities. The monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May		Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	2	9	5	1	1		-	1	5	4
No of sites	2	5	2	1	1		-	1	3	4

In January, one bird was recorded at Glyne Gap on the 15th and another swam west past Worthing Beach on the 31st. In February, single birds were seen at Chichester Hbr on the 1st, departing on the 2nd, and another was seen at St Leonard's on the 3rd, possibly the same bird moving east. At Selsey Bill, 2 E were seen on the 6th and one was offshore on the 7th and again on the 13th. One was seen offshore at Worthing Beach on the 10th and again moving west on the 12th and two were at Peacehaven on the 14th. Singletons were observed at Pagham on the 21st and Worthing Beach on the 28th. In March, three birds were seen in the Pagham/Church Norton area on the 13th and the 14th. On the 18th a single bird was seen at Rottingdean and possibly the same bird was seen moving east at Splash Point. At Telscombe Cliffs, 1 E was recorded on 28th. One in full summer plumage was seen offshore at Climping on 29 Apr and remained there until 7 May, often coming close inshore.

In the autumn, 1 W was recorded at Selsey Bill on 26 Oct. In the second winter period, single birds were recorded offshore at Church Norton on 2 Nov and on several dates in Chichester Harbour between the 16th and the 28th. Another was seen at Church Norton on 23 Nov and at Scotney Court GP on the 24th. In December, two were seen at Glyne Gap on the 17th. Single birds were offshore at Church Norton on the 19th and at Selsey Bill on the 21st. At Worthing, single birds recorded on three dates between the 26th and the 30th, 1 W and two on the sea, could all have been the same bird. [SFW]

Slavonian Grebe

Podiceps auritus

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

The peak monthly counts at various sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		Oct	Nov	Dec
Chichester Hbr	3	-	-	-		-	6	1
Selsey Bill – Church Norton	7	10	20	3		2	6	11
Ferring – Worthing Beach	1	2	3	1		1	1	2
Bexhill – Hastings	6	-	-	-		-	1	1
Rye Bay (including Scotney Court GP)	9	2	1	-		-	4	-
Other sites	2	-	1	-		-	-	2

In January, numbers in the main area for this species, Selsey Bill to Church Norton, fluctuated from 1W on 1 Jan through five on the 2nd and four on the 23rd to a peak of seven on the 28th. The six at Glyne Gap noted on 15 Jan might have been part of the peak count of nine in the Rye Bay area (including Scotney Court GP) on 17 Jan. Inland, a single bird was seen at Arlington Res on 23 Jan. In February, numbers in the main area fluctuated between one and two in the first half of the month but then increased to five at Selsey Bill on the 14th, six on the 20th and a peak of ten on the 23rd. At Rye Bay, a single bird was seen between the 3rd and the 20th and two were seen on the 18th and the 21st. A single bird was observed at Worthing Beach on the 9th and 10th. In March, most counts were of between one and four birds throughout the month at the main area but with a flock of 20 at Church Norton on the 2nd, 12 there on the 12th and seven on the 24th. At Climping, three birds were seen offshore on the 1st, a single bird was seen at Scotney Court GP on the 14th and the 19th and a single bird was inland at Pulborough Brooks on the 19th. Most birds had left the main area by 8 Apr while the final spring records were from the Ferring to Worthing Beach area where single birds, including one in full summer plumage, were seen between 2 and 27 Apr.

The first birds recorded in the second winter period were two offshore at Church Norton on 25 Oct and singles at Selsey Bill on 26 Oct and Worthing Beach on 30 Oct. In November, one or two birds were seen at various coastal sites throughout the month with highs of four in Rye Bay on the 14th, six at East Head (Chichester Hbr) on the 16th and four to six at Church Norton on the 23rd and the 24th. In December, between one and five wintering birds were observed in the main area on various dates through the month with a high of 11 on the 26th. Elsewhere, one or two were observed offshore at Worthing Beach on four dates, two on the sea at Widewater (Lancing) on the 30th, and single birds on the 4th, 5th and 9th in Chichester Hbr and at Glyne Gap (Bexhill) on the 17th. The last birds of the year were three at St Leonard's on the 30th and one at Hastings the next day. [SFW]

Black-necked Grebe

Podiceps nigricollis

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

The approximate minimum monthly totals, ignoring birds seen 'on passage', were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	June	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	6	4	1	2-3	1	2	-	-	2
No. of sites	5	3	1	3	1	2	-	-	2

This year, eight birds were seen in four areas in West Sussex from Chichester Hbr to Shoreham and eight in four areas in East Sussex. In the first winter period, one bird was seen on the moat at Bodiam Castle on 1 Jan, a holdover from 2009. One was in Shoreham Hbr on 15 Jan and another at Scotney Court GP on various dates between 16 and 27 Jan. Two were recorded in Chichester Hbr in Thorney Channel on 24 Jan and also at East Head on the 26th and 27th and one, which could have been from the same group of two, in Thorney Channel again on the 30th. Also in January, a single bird was seen on the sea drifting west at Brighton Marina on the 28th and another at Winchelsea on the 31st. Single birds were recorded in Chichester Hbr on 3 Feb, from Worthing Beach on 3, 12, 21 and 28 Feb and at Scotney Court GP on 20 Feb. A single bird was seen at Shoreham Hbr on 13 Mar and another later that month on the 18th flying east at Splash Point. In April, one bird was recorded at Cuckmere Haven on the 9th and one offshore at Splash Point on the 24th.

In the summer, a single bird was observed at Scotney Court GP on 20 Jun, which could have been either a bird which spent the summer there, or a failed breeder which had returned early. Single birds (which could have been the same ones) were observed in Pagham Hbr on 7 and 15 Sep and then at Rye Hbr on the 18th. The final sightings of the year were single birds in the entrance to Shoreham Hbr on 5 Dec and at Pagham Hbr on 30 Dec. [SFW]



Black-necked Grebe, Bodiam Castle, January 2010 (David Cooper)

Honey-buzzard

Pernis apivorus

Very scarce breeding summer visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

There is no doubt that this species is doing very well in Sussex. The group who monitor the breeding pairs in the county located seven nests and ringed 14 juveniles, the same number as last year. The fieldworkers are not able to cover the whole of Sussex in any given year and if one takes into account the locations that have held breeding pairs in the recent past it is likely that the true county population is closer to 12-15 pairs.

In the spring and early summer there were six authenticated records. There was a very early record in East Sussex on 3 May (MS-H). There were no further records until 20 May when a bird was seen repeatedly wing clapping (SHL). Although it was not possible to gain any plumage details of this bird, given the date it was likely to be a male. Both sexes freely wing clap but the more extravagant display flights are generally executed by the male; they often fly in a huge loop around their territory intermittently wing clapping as they go, with the display becoming ever more frenetic if another male is spotted and encroaching on their 'patch'. The next record on 23 May was a newly arrived coastal migrant, which was seen directly over the observers' house at Southwick (BDJ, PJ); it was flying at rooftop height and had clearly come in off the sea, and

as is often the case on the Sussex coast it was the alarm calls of the local gulls that alerted the observers to the presence of this bird. At another location inland on 27 May there were a male and a female (BFF, DIS) and on the same day and in the same general area another observer recorded two Honey-buzzards (JMM); on 30 May there were further excellent views of this pair (RAI).

All sightings in June and July are likely to refer to breeding birds and given their very scarce breeding status the sites are not revealed. In East Sussex an un-sexed bird was seen several times in the late morning and early afternoon on 27 Jun (JSG, SHL). Although nominally un-sexed the description of 'pale patches on the primaries on both the upper and lower wings' is that of a female. In some females this plumage feature can be very prominent and can be seen at a considerable distance. Also in East Sussex, there was another sighting on 25 Jul (CRP).

There were nine autumn records. The first bird was seen thermalling above five Common Buzzards at Pulborough Brooks on 1 Sep before it broke away and drifted south-east (RT). The second sighting was an adult, probably a male, which was recorded on 12 Sep at Hope Gap (Seaford) (RCS), while just 30 minutes later one was seen flying north at Alfriston (MJR). In view of the timing and the proximity of the two locations it seems likely that these sightings were of the same bird. There was a dark phase juvenile at Pagham Hbr on 19 Sep (BFF, DIS, RT) while three days later on 22 Sep one was picked up injured at Slaugham and taken to the British Wildlife Centre at Newchapel (Surrey). A very close encounter was had, whilst driving, with another juvenile that drifted low across the road at Ashington on 26 Sep (RAI). At Ladywell (Coombes) on 4 Oct the observer was alerted when a commotion by local birds encouraged an upward gaze whereupon a probable adult male was seen being mobbed by a flock of hirundines (JAN). What was presumably a dark phase juvenile was seen on 6 Oct at Crowlink (East Dean), once again the local gulls and corvidae playing their part in alerting the observer to the presence of the bird (ARK); it was watched as it drifted out to sea on a SW course. Finally, there were two dark phase juveniles heading out to sea at 7.50 and 7.58 am at Holywell (Eastbourne) on 7 Oct (PJ *et al.*). [MEK]

Black Kite

Milvus migrans

Rare vagrant.

An adult was seen at Pett Level on 3 May (PWR). The bird came in from the east at 9.45 am, low down and losing height. It landed in a nearby field but was immediately harassed by several corvids. It then headed southwest towards Cliff End and went out of sight at 9.49 am. This record brings the county total since 2000 up to 30. Monthly totals also move forward to: April (eight), May (15), June (three), July (two), August and November (one each). [MEK]

Red Kite

Milvus milvus

Very scarce breeding resident (first bred in 2004) and scarce but increasing visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

In the West Sussex study area the regular pair suffered a breeding failure for the first time in seven years when the nest was blown out of the tree sometime in May. At the second 2009 breeding location with Sussex B2 and Sussex B3 as the pair, the former was no longer present but was replaced by Sussex G. Since successful pairs of Red Kites generally mate for life the presumption was that Sussex B2 had succumbed sometime during the previous winter. This new pairing raised one young. There was no suggestion of any other breeding pairs in the study area, which was surprising given the number of birds over-wintering.

Outside the West Sussex study area there were records for approximately 235 birds, more or less equally divided between West and East Sussex. The problem of possible double counting is ever present but the numbers do appear to be ever upwards with comparative figures for 2007, 2008, 2009 of 70+, 101 and 150+. Most of these records relate to wandering non-breeding birds taking advantage of fine weather in late spring and early summer. A tiny minority of the records from coastal localities may relate to cross channel movement but unless the birds are seen to come in off the sea it is difficult to say with any certainty.

Monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Study area	16	16	9	9	6	8	7	3	3	6	10	14
Elsewhere	4	14	25	41	87	21	7	10	5	6	10	5

It is apparent that multiple sightings away from the study area are becoming more common. In order to avoid a very long list only those records involving a minimum of three birds are included. There were three on Ashdown Forest on 21 Mar, seven at Cowbeech on 24 May, four at Hove on 25 May and three at Pett Level on the same date followed by an East Sussex county record of nine at that site on 28 May and three at Hailsham on the 31st. In the last week of May there were records from 20 localities involving a possible total of 53 different birds. A record of four birds seen in the Balcombe area on 24 Aug may have related to local breeding.

As is generally the case, the second half of the year was fairly quiet with approximately 40 birds reported from 25 different localities. [MEK & CBC]

White-tailed Sea-eagle

Haliaeetus albicilla

Formerly a rare vagrant (up to 50 old records) but only one recorded since 1929.

A juvenile, seen and photographed at Amberley Wild Brooks on 11 and 12 Dec (KM, PH *et al.*), was possibly present in the area from the 9th. This, a highlight for the year for many of the county birders, was the first in Sussex since one was watched fishing off Selsey Bill on 30 July 1961. The stay at Amberley was fairly brief as it was seen to depart the Arun Valley, escorted by numerous corvids, in the early afternoon of the 12th, passing over Arundel WWT at 12.30 pm, over Southsea (Hampshire) at 1.35 pm and over Titchfield Haven (Hampshire) at 2.00 pm. It spent much of the remainder of the winter in north Hampshire before relocating to Norfolk and Lincolnshire in the spring of 2011. [JAN]

Marsh Harrier

Circus aeruginosus

Scarce spring and autumn passage migrant and very scarce winter visitor; very scarce breeder since 2004. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

There were about 119 individuals seen during the year at 24 broad sites. The estimated monthly counts are summarised in the table below.

One pair built a nest at one site but failed. At the same site, a second pair appeared to be trying to nest. A food pass was seen in June between a pair at a second site though breeding was not noted. A pair was present at a third site but again no breeding was noted. These three sites were occupied during the 2009 breeding season.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>Monthly total</i>	20	16	12	17	17	14	9	18	21	20	18	31
Chichester Hbr	1	1	-	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	-	2
Pagham Hbr	-	1	3	2	1	-	1	2	3	3	1	2
Arun Valley	2	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	-	1	1
Beachy Head	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	3	1	-	-
Pevensley Levels	2	2	2	2	2	4	2	2	2	2	2	2
Hastings	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	-
Pett Level	5	5	-	5	4	3	3	2	4	5	7	9
Rye Hbr	4	5	3	4	3	3	2	2	2	3	4	5
Scotney GP area	2	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	3	1	7
Other sites	4	1	1	-	2	1	-	6	2	2	-	3

Autumn migrants included up to three juveniles hunting over Chantry Hill (Storrington) during 11 Aug–9 Sep and two at Harrow Hill (Patching) on 12 Aug. There was one offshore from Seaford Head on 15 Aug and a juvenile headed south at Beachy Head on 22 Sep. Interestingly, one flew east offshore from Hastings on 10 Nov and one arrived in off the sea at Climping on 8 Dec. Roosting was noted at a number of sites during the year but by far the largest roost was seven at Scotney Court GP on 28 Dec. This, plus seven recorded on 6 Nov and nine on 22 Dec at Pett Level, constituted the highest daily counts. [SHL]

Hen Harrier

Circus cyaneus

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Red listed species of high conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

One hundred and ninety records were received for this species from a smallish number of general areas. The minimum monthly total over 10 months of 68 was down on 2009 (78) but still more than recent previous years. The highest monthly total in the first winter period was of at least 13 in January. The minimum monthly totals are shown in the table below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	13	11	9	5	1	-	1	-	3	6	8	14
Chichester/Pagham Hbrs	4	1	2	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	2
W Sussex Downs	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
W Sussex Commons	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	1
Arun Valley	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
E Sussex Downs	2	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-
Ouse Valley	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ashdown Forest	1	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
Pevensley Levels	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Rye Bay	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Scotney Crt GP/Camber	1	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	1
Other sites	2	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	3

Throughout January Hen Harriers were regularly seen at Pagham Hbr, with four seen on 13 Jan at Church Norton. One was seen to knock a Buzzard off a post at Sidlesham Ferry Pool on

14 Jan and two males were seen hunting the mudflats on the West Side of Pagham Hbr on 10 Jan. The last first winter period report from Pagham Hbr was of a ringtail at the North Wall on 7 Apr. A ringtail was at Telscombe Cliffs on 9 Jan and a male was seen at Pevensy Levels between 17 Feb and 9 Mar. A male and a ringtail were seen on Ashdown Forest throughout the first winter period with the male remaining until 16 May. A ringtail was reported from the Arun Valley between 15 Mar and 23 Apr. Likely migrants were seen at Pett Level on 14 May and at Hodcombe (Beachy Head) on 27 May. There were no birds reported in June but there was a report of a male moving west at Scotney Court GP on 17 Jul.

The first autumn birds reported were of a ringtail on 4 Sep at Beachy Head and on the same day one was seen at Scotney Court GP followed by birds at Pagham Hbr on 10 and 30 Sep. The first bird seen at Ashdown Forest at the traditional roost was from 19 Oct.

During the second winter period most reports were of single birds but a male and a ringtail were seen at Stump Bottom (Steyning) on 6 Nov, one at Housedean Farm (Lewes) and two on Ashdown Forest on 28 Nov and 16 Dec. A ringtail was hunting Pett Level on 3 Dec and another hunting the salt marshes at Thorney Deeps (Chichester Hbr) and Pagham Hbr throughout December. On 19 Dec one bird was seen at Barcombe Mills and Barcombe Res, which was frozen over. A male was seen hunting The Wicks (Camber) on 28 Dec. Also on the 28th a bird was seen at Beckley Four Oaks and Kitchenham (Peasmarsh), probably the same bird. The last reports of the year were of a male at Pulborough Brooks, two at Amberley and a ringtail at Marsh Fm (Sidlesham), all on 31 Dec. [MJC]

Montagu's Harrier

Circus pygargus

Very scarce spring and autumn visitor; last bred successfully in 1962. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

There were two accepted records of Montagu's Harrier, both referring to the same bird, first seen on 30 Aug (IUA, ADB, IAW) at The Bostle (Balsdean). A juvenile, it remained until 9 Sep, covering a wide area, roosting at Balsdean in open stubble and on bales. [MJC]

Goshawk

Accipiter gentiles

Very scarce resident. Schedule 1 species.

Four reports were received but were deemed to be 'not proven'. Last year's breeding pair was once again successful, raising three young. It is an isolated pair and as far as is known the only pair in Sussex. With large tracts of suitable woodland available to this species it would not be at all surprising if there were other pairs in the county. This is a species that can be remarkably unobtrusive for much of the year and especially during the breeding season itself. Even the spring display flight is likely to be less evident if there are no near neighbours with which to compete. Quite why this Sussex pair has chosen where it has is intriguing for generally new pairs are established within a few miles of a known core population, which for southern England is the New Forest with its 12 breeding pairs in 2009. Perhaps this isolated pair will establish its own core population? [MEK]

Sparrowhawk*Accipiter nisus*

Common resident and passage migrant.

As in previous years, records were received from across the entire county with the majority relating to single birds. High counts in the first half of the year were four at Selsey Bill on 15 Apr, five at Chesworth Fm (Horsham) on 19 Apr and three at West Wittering on 6 May. One bird was seen to fly in off the sea at Birling Gap on 8 Apr.

The earliest report of probable breeding was of a displaying pair at Warnham LNR on 7 Jan and the next report was not until 1 Feb when another pair was seen displaying at Patcham (Brighton). Confirmed breeding was recorded at only ten sites, down on 2009 when confirmed breeding was reported at 17 sites. The earliest confirmed breeding was at Tarring (West Worthing), on 6 Jun. Probable breeding was recorded at a further 30 sites. During the BBS a total of 16 individuals was counted in 14 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed with a maximum of two.

In the latter half of the year, five birds were seen circling together, probably a family group, at High Cross Fm (Uckfield) on 2 Jul. Four were seen at Pett Level on 5 Aug, a family of four was seen at Ladywells (Coombes) on 14 Aug and four were at The Midrips on 19 Sep. Three each were seen at Warnham LNR between 9 and 21 Sep, Selsey on 12 Sep, Hastings on 23 Sep, Church Norton on 17 Oct and Cross Bush (Arundel) on 7 Dec. During the second winter period Sparrowhawks were seen in at least 145 locations.

Fifteen birds were recorded during the migration watch at Hastings between 1 Aug and 16 Nov but no birds were reported flying out to sea at this location or any other in the county.

Prey species reported were: Woodpigeon, Skylark, Blackbird, Song Thrush, Green Woodpecker, Starling, Pied Wagtail, House Sparrow, Greenfinch and Reed Bunting. [MJC]



Sparrowhawk, Bishopstone, September 2010 (Pete Wilson)

Common Buzzard

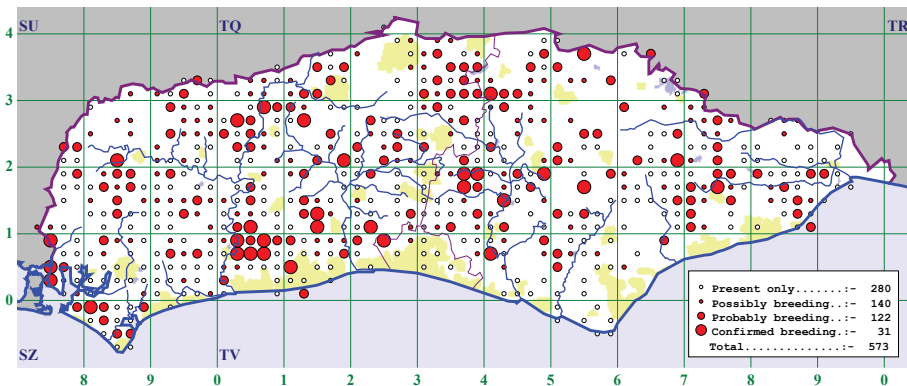
Buteo buteo

Fairly common and increasing resident; probably scarce passage migrant.

Buzzards were recorded in 570 tetrads. The minimum monthly totals of birds were as follows.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2010	186	284	296	539	294	295	173	217	222	170	77	86

During the first winter period there were only three reports of counts of ten or more. In February, ten birds were reported at West Dean on the 4th, and there were 12 there on the 5th and 10 were reported from Fairmile (Slindon) on 13 Mar.



Breeding was confirmed in 30 tetrads. The following breeding categories were recorded: six apparently occupied nests, eight nests with young, four adults carrying food and 12 with recently fledged or downy young. Breeding was recorded as probable in a further 127 tetrads. Breeding details, however, were rarely provided. A pair at Littleworth produced two young and on 12 Jun one was found sitting on a path. Three young were reported in a nest situated in a mature oak at Stanstead Park on 18 Jun. At Edburton a pair successfully fledged two young on 1 Jul. Two nests on Thorney Island both successfully fledged two young on 9 and 12 Jul respectively and a nest at Battle held a single young bird on the 12th. During the BBS, 74 birds were recorded from 48 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with two highest counts of four.

Double figure counts in the spring and summer included ten at West Dean Woods on 1 Apr, 11 at Offham Hanger (Arundel) on the 5th, ten over Washington on 9 May, 12 over Wiston Pond (Stevington) the same day (possibly some of the same birds), 12 over Harrow Hill (Patching) on 12 Aug and 11 at Stump Bottom (Stevington) on the 18th.

In September, observers recorded the highest counts of the year but it is unclear whether they relate to migrating birds or post breeding dispersal. The first count was of 13 at Chantry Hill on the 9th, and ten were reported at the North Wall (Pagham Hbr), while 20 were counted over the reporter's house at Edburton on the 12th, ten were counted at Hodcombe (Beachy Head) on the 21st, the year's highest count of 25 was seen over Pulborough Brooks on the 22nd and finally another ten were recorded at The Burgh (Burpham) on the 25th. Numbers in the second winter period were a lot lower with the highest counts being five at nine different dates and locations.

Interaction with others raptors was noted twice: on 10 Apr a Buzzard was in aerial combat with a Marsh Harrier on Pevensey Levels and on 9 Aug one was being hassled by a Sparrowhawk at Cissbury Ring. [LAW]



Common Buzzard, Climping, July 2010 (Bola Akinola)

Osprey

Pandion haliaetus

Scarce passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

An approximate total of 56 were seen during the year at 21 broad sites across the county. This compares to 58 recorded in 2009. The estimated monthly sightings are summarised as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Monthly total	3	12	1	4	5	11	16	8	1
Chichester Hbr	-	3	-	1	1	2	3	2	-
Pagham Hbr	-	-	-	1	-	1	2	1	-
Duncton & area	-	1	-	1	1	-	1	-	-
Weir Wood Res	1	1	-	-	1	2	2	-	-
Arlington Res	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	2	-
Bewl Water	-	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Other sites	2	5	-	1	2	6	5	3	1

The first arrivals in March were single birds at Chilgrove on the 14th and both Southwater CP and Weir Wood Res on the 15th, ten days earlier than the 10-year average first arrival date of 24 Mar. There were no reports of birds arriving in off the sea during the spring and, surprisingly, there was only one record for May.

During the summer, there were singles at Burton MP from 13 to 15 and 23 Jun, Pagham Hbr on 16 Jun, Chichester Hbr on 20 and 26 Jun, Sompting on 30 Jun and Pett Level on 8 Jul. Numbers increased from mid-July. As usual, by far the majority of autumnal sightings came from Chichester Hbr with up to three seen there in September and the last on 16 Oct. One that flew east past Climping on 3 Oct was presumably a departing bird. The October total includes a young Swedish-tagged Osprey that was regrettably found shot at Golden Cross early in the month. It was taken into care but subsequently died. The last for the year was one that flew over Brighton on 3 Nov, eight days later than the 10-year average last date. [SHL]

Kestrel

Falco tinnunculus

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

Kestrels were recorded in some 489 tetrads across the county. In over 2100 records there was only one in double figures, two of five, 25 of four and 46 of three. The minimum monthly totals for the past three years are as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2010	181	136	142	281	209	252	162	131	175	141	143	122
2009	166	152	96	214	154	260	101	85	108	87	59	64
2008	257	353	173	404	361	389	159	89	192	134	107	97

Breeding was confirmed in 40 tetrads and was probable in 44. Confirmed breeding involved the following categories: 11 for adults at apparently occupied nests, nine nests with young, three for adults carrying food, one used nest of the season and 11 for fledged young. During the BBS, a total of 36 birds was recorded from the 139 1-km squares surveyed (33 in 135 in 2008). Details of breeding success included the use of five owl boxes and four other nest boxes with 11 nests holding 23 young with numbers ranging from one to five nestlings.

The three highest counts of the year all occurred in the summer and early autumn with five in total around the Plumpton area on 30 Jun, five at Pett Level on 24 Jul and 12 seen at Standean Bottom (Balsdean) on 5 Sep.

Interesting behaviour noted included one seen diving on two Sparrowhawks at Malthouse Meadows (Sompting) on 10 Apr, three hawking for insects with three Hobbies on 9 Jul and one female being seen off by two Hobbies on 19 Aug at Twyford Lane (Ashdown Forest). Prey species recorded included one killing a rat at Bishopstone (Seaford) on 2 May and 6 Oct and rather surprisingly, one fly off with a Wood Pigeon at Lancing (College Drive) on 14 Feb. [LAW]

Red-footed Falcon

Falco vespertinus

Rare vagrant.

A single adult male, found at Seaford Head on 20 Jun and photographed (GR, TR *et al.*), wandered around the Cuckmere Valley as far as Charleston Reedbed until the 23rd and was enjoyed by many observers. This is the fourth county record this century and the 35th in total. [JAH]

Merlin*Falco columbarius*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

About 87 birds were recorded from 27 broad sites during the year. This compares with about 92 seen in 2009. Only five definite males were noted. The estimated monthly data are summarised as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Monthly total	11	6	15	3	1	-	-	1	15	14	15	12
Chichester Hbr	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	2
Pagham Hbr	1	1	3	1	-	-	-	-	1	2	2	1
Arun Valley	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1
Beachy Head	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	-	-
Pett & Icklesham	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	2
Rye Hbr	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	2
Scotney GP & Camber	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
Other sites	4	3	4	2	1	-	-	1	7	9	6	2

The last for the first part of the year was one on Pevensy Levels on 6 May. The first returning bird was on 30 Aug at Climping.

A number of birds arrived in over the coast during the autumn with singles at Ferring on 24 Sep, Selsey Bill on 26 Oct and Climping on 3 Nov. On 11 Oct, one flew east over the sea at Hastings. Nearly all daily site totals were of single birds but there were three at Beachy Head on 22 Sep and two at Pagham Hbr on both 25 Oct and 13 Nov. The only record more than 15 km from the coast was one at Weir Wood Res on 14 Sep.

A number of species were reported as prey or potential prey. However, a Red-legged Partridge chased and nearly caught on 22 Sep at Pagham Hbr by a female was by far the largest. [SHL]

Hobby*Falco subbuteo*

Scarce breeding summer visitor and passage migrant. Schedule 1 species.

2009: The breeding summary for this species in the 2009 report should read: Breeding was confirmed at only three locations with fledged young noted at all three. At one of these locations, a young bird fell from its nest in a Scots Pine but after being rested in a shed was able to fly off. Breeding was considered probable at a further 14 locations (including one where an adult was seen feeding a young bird on 6 Aug) and possible at a minimum of 20 additional ones. The breeding numbers are broadly in line with those for 2008.

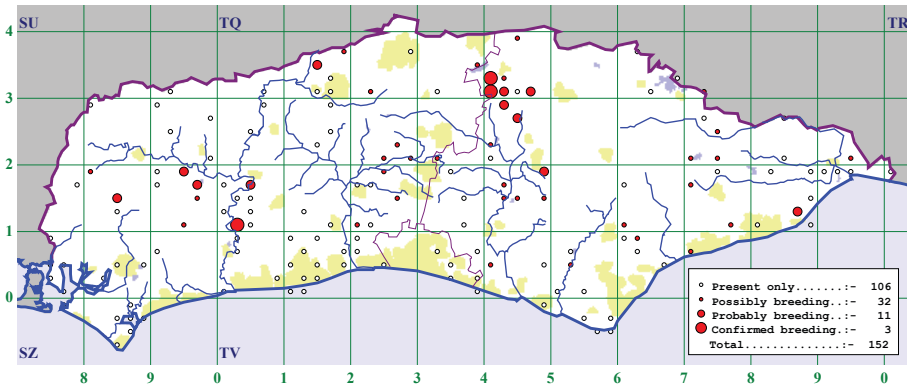
2010: This species was seen from 62 broad sites during the year. Estimated monthly site totals were as follows:

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
No. of sites	17	37	33	23	29	24	12

The first sightings in April were singles at Saltdean on the 11th, Horsham on the 12th, Iford on the 15th and Hurst Green on the 16th. The first arrival was six days later than the 10-year average date of 5 Apr. The main arrival is summarised below and is broadly similar to that in 2009:

Week	15-22 Apr	23-30 Apr	1-8 May	9-15 May
Sites	5	12	18	12
Daily max	3	7	13	14

A total of 12 individuals were noted arriving at Selsey Bill on eight dates between 24 Apr and 13 May including three on 30 Apr and two on both 6 and 11 May. By contrast, the only record from Splash Point (Seaford) was of two flying in on 30 Apr. At Worthing, there were two interesting records. One flew west at the comparatively late time of 7.00 pm on 24 Apr and two were tumbling and chasing one another there on 27 May. One also arrived there on 9 May. The largest spring gatherings were of seven at Pulborough Brooks on both 3 May and 2 Jun and at Pevensy Levels on 6 May. Sadly, one bird was found dead at Wadhurst on 3 Jun. On 15 Jun, one caught a juvenile Great Spotted Woodpecker at Warnham LNR. On 20 Jun, an adult and a first year bird were resting on top of the west wall of Barcombe Res and allowed a close approach.



Breeding was confirmed at two locations. At one, food was seen being carried to a nest site. At the other, two juveniles were seen with two adults. Breeding was considered probable at 13 locations and possible at 27 others. One of the probable breeding records relates to a party of five birds seen on 4 Sep. Although it is likely that they were a family party, unlike the confirmed family party record above, there was no evidence of birds being at the location earlier in the season and they may have arrived from elsewhere. Other probable records included one where a food pass took place and another where a juvenile was recorded on 27 Jul. Caution should be applied to the estimate of possible breeding records because some relate to single-day sightings in suitable breeding habitat of this very mobile species. The 42 specific locations where actual or potential breeding was recorded represent only 24 of the 62 broad sites from which the species was recorded during the year.

There were widespread records during the autumn passage including small gatherings of six at Rye Hbr on 6 Aug and at Pett Level on 18 Sep. Obvious migration included one bird that headed south at Belle Tout (Beachy Head) on 4 Aug and one flying east past Worthing on 11 Sep. The last for the year was one on 18 Oct at Climping. The 10-year average departure date is 22 Oct. [SHL]



Hobby, Hodcombe, May 2010 (Roger Charlwood)

Peregrine Falcon

Falco peregrinus

Scarce breeding resident. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

The number of records received this year (624) was considerably down on last year's highest ever total of 777 and is the lowest since 2007. Similarly the range of prey species that birds were seen hunting or taking was lower too; Wigeon, Teal, Mallard (duckling), Moorhen, Lapwing, Black-tailed Godwit, Black-headed Gull, Skylark and Wood Pigeon were recorded. However, there were more records than usual noting interesting interactions and behaviour. An observer in Barcombe was startled by a Peregrine that 'shot low over the next door garden'. A bird was seen bathing at Coombes (Shoreham); this is a daily activity for Peregrines but is not commonly observed in the field. An immature was seen 'standing on the ice of part of a frozen reservoir!' Several observers saw clashes between Peregrines involving up to three birds at a time. A number of records concerned birds interacting with other raptors: a Peregrine and Kestrel in aerial combat, a Peregrine circling with Buzzards, an adult female harassing a second calendar year Red Kite, an adult male harassing a male Marsh Harrier carrying prey, an adult male harassing a ringtail Hen Harrier and an adult female eating a fish stolen from an Osprey.

The records submitted suggest that there were at least eight 'confirmed' breeding attempts producing a minimum of 19 fledged young and at least four 'probable' breeding attempts. Successful breeding took place for the first time at an inland site where a pair had been on territory for several years and two young were fledged. At two more inland sites one pair fledged two and at least one young fledged at the other. At a long established coastal site two were fledged. At Shoreham, where for the first time last year two pairs bred in the same pit, they were successful again fledging clutches of two and four.

The nest box at Shoreham Power Station was removed this year as essential maintenance had to be undertaken on the chimney. However, webcams were operating again at the Chichester Cathedral and Sussex Heights (Brighton) nest boxes and Graham Roberts has provided details of the outcomes. The first egg at Chichester Cathedral was laid before dawn on 20 Mar and the clutch was completed with a fourth on the 27th. Hatching started on 27 Apr and all four chicks had emerged by 5.00 pm on the 28th. Two females and two males were ringed on 17 May. Fledging began with a male on 7 Jun, followed by the second male on the 9th, then the first female on the 12th and finally the second female flew on the 19th. At Sussex Heights the first egg was laid on the morning of 29 Mar and the clutch was completed with a fourth, extremely pale, egg on 7 Apr. Two eggs hatched on 7 May but the others failed. Two males were ringed on 27 May and a fully fledged youngster was seen flying with the adults on 23 Jun. [PJE]

Water Rail

Rallus aquaticus

Probably very scarce resident, scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

Birds were recorded from 61 tetrads. The monthly WeBS counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	27	15	9	-	-	-	--	2	-	6	25	26
Chichester Hbr	7	7	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	4	16
Pagham Hbr	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Chichester GP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Arun Valley (S of Arundel)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Arun Valley	4	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	1
Southwater CP	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Warnham MP	-	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	1
Ifield MP	-	1	nc	-	-	nc	nc	-	-	-	nc	-
Ouse Valley	2	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	-
Newhaven Hbr	1	2	-	-	-	nc	-	-	-	-	4	-
Pevensey Levels	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	nc	-	-	2	-
Alexandra Park (Hastings)	1	1	-	nc	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rye Bay	11	4	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	11	5

However, the WeBS counts do not give a complete picture of the numbers in the county as they are obtained on specific priority core count dates. The table below, derived from the highest single monthly count at each site and for the same WeBS sites, gives a more realistic assessment of the minimum number of birds present.

Numbers in the first winter period were the highest since 2006 but were still short of the highs of 2000 and 2003 of 140 and 135 respectively. Notable maximum counts were six at Thorney Deeps on 2 Jan and six at Bulverhythe (St Leonard's) on the 4th and 12 at Pett Level on the 5th. Birds were heard calling or vocalising at 11 broad localities right across the county in suitable habitat from Pagham Hbr in the west, where squealing was heard on 27 Jan and once in February, to Rye Hbr in the east where squealing birds were recorded from 7 Jan through to 29 Mar. The last spring record (apart from those obviously summering) was from Thorney Deeps on 20 Apr.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	63	35	25	5	6	3	2	6	18	25	46	67
Chichester Hbr	8	7	5	1	-	-	-	1	2	5	9	14
Pagham Hbr	6	2	2	-	-	-	-	1	2	2	3	3
Chichester GP	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Arun Valley (S of Arundel)	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Arun Valley	4	2	2	1	1	-	-	-	2	3	3	4
Southwater CP	1	1	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Warnham MP	2	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	4
Ifield MP	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ouse Valley	2	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Newhaven Hbr	1	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4	2
Pevensey Levels	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Alexandra Park (Hastings)	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rye Bay	14	11	7	3	2	3	2	4	11	10	12	9
Others sites	22	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	9	24

Breeding was confirmed at Arundel WWT, but without any details, and at Pett Level a fledged bird was recorded on 19 Jun. A breeding survey, notoriously difficult for this species, at Rye Hbr was hampered by breeding harriers and booming Bitterns; only a single bird was detected.

The first obviously returning bird was noted at Sidlesham Ferry Pool on 21 Aug followed by another heard at Thorney Deeps on the 31st and a third on 2 Sep at the Breech Pool (Pagham Hbr). Numbers then picked up from mid-September. At Pett Level Water Rails were recorded on 20 days with a maximum of ten on the 21st and four on four other days. Numbers in December were probably the highest since 2002 (109) with many identified by their calls.

During the year, no less than 42 birds were ringed by Rye Bay RG, including 41 full grown birds and one pullus (proving that it was bred there), and there were four retraps; it was the second best year ever for ringing this species. [JPP]

Moorhen

Gallinula chloropus

Very common resident, possibly fairly common winter visitor but status uncertain.

Records were from 382 tetrads, a reduction on the 429 for 2009 and 501 of 2008. 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	572	584	583	211	256	201	358	292	547	573	644	600
Chichester Hbr	56	36	41	10	3	8	5	11	7	9	33	20
Pagham Hbr	40	65	41	30	15	15	30	26	30	25	39	56
Chichester GP	6	7	11	2	5	4	8	11	4	37	17	17
Arun Valley	179	117	151	85	120	75	104	82	140	129	165	142
Brooklands Worthing	26	27	16	7	10	7	7	4	29	31	25	41
Weir Wood Res	2	3	8	2	3	nc	8	27	30	20	29	nc
Bewl Water	8	11	24	nc	nc	nc	79	60	63	41	26	6
Alexandra Park	67	62	53	nc	27	29	41	8	40	76	64	57
Rye Bay	65	104	106	33	23	14	30	34	62	57	103	124

Counts from regularly surveyed sites included the following:

	Tetrad	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Thorney Island	SU70R	6	7	12	8	2	6	5	7	2	10	18	2
Forest Mere Liphook*	SU82E	1	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	14	14	180
Fishbourne*	SU80H	22	10	7	1	1	1	-	1	-	4	-	-
Sefter Fm (Rose Green)	SZ89Z	16	17	6	5	7	5	4	6	5	5	6	5
Pagham Lagoon*	SZ89Y	5	6	4	10	3	8	5	6	6	9	5	2
Swanbourne Lake*	TQ00D	24	19	4	8	7	4	7	-	18	14	14	5
Arundel WWT*	TQ00J	94	74	78	48	70	46	64	44	64	68	98	72
Southwater CP*	TQ12M	19	19	16	9	12	16	19	-	22	21	25	24
St Georges Wivelsfield	TQ31J	15	22	20	-	10	10	8	12	10	20	20	20
Alexandra Pk (Hastings)	TQ81A	67	62	53	-	27	29	41	8	40	76	64	57
East Guldeford Level	TQ92K	29	12	12	9	3	3	13	17	7	17	10	4

“-” no records were received for that month; *the site appeared in a similar table in SxBR 2009

The above counts present a mixed picture when compared to those given for 2009; none are consistently higher or lower than in 2009, although at Forest Mere the impact of hard weather late in the year in concentrating birds seems to show, and similarly there were small declines in December at coastal sites. Breeding season numbers at Southwater CP were much reduced from 2009 but totals for the last three months of the year there were about 10% higher.

During the first winter period, there were 71 double-figure counts with c.100 on the North Fields (Pagham Hbr) on 3 Jan, 67 at Alexandra Park (Hastings) on the 16th and 94 at Arundel WWT on the 18th. A pair was mating at Southwater CP on 4 Feb. One, perhaps a migrant, was in gardens near Selsey Bill on 25 Mar. At Durfold (Warnham), a pair, which had been absent early in the year, returned to breed in May.

Breeding was confirmed in 140 tetrads and probable in 42, which represents a decline from the 2009 returns of 170 and 50. The first young were found at Elbourne House pond (Washington) on 18 Apr (ten days later than in 2009) and records of young were frequent from the 23rd. The latest report of very young birds was from Lidsey SF on 15 Aug (cf. 17 Sep 2009). Several pairs were double brooded. The resilience of the species was indicated at Hayleigh Fm (Streat) where a pair bred despite the clearance of vegetation around ‘their’ pond. At Rye Hbr, 32 nests and broods were found (cf. 29 in 2009; 42 in 2008). During the BBS, a total of 101 birds was found in 53 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed (cf. 115 in 57 of 135 squares in 2009).

In the hard weather at the end of the year, a few birds were found in some gardens while others sought to survive around frozen ponds or on largely frozen gravel pits. Twenty six were in horse paddocks and on the stream at Ferring Rife on 10 Dec but only 13 were there on the 13th. However, despite the weather, there were still 75 double-figure counts in the second winter period although few counts offered direct comment on the impact of the weather. [CBR]

Common Coot

Fulica atra

Fairly common resident and common winter visitor.

Records were received from 181 tetrads. During the first winter period, the combined monthly counts were some 20% higher than in 2009 and during the second winter period, affected by the cold which occurred, there was a significant (60%) increase in the combined monthly counts compared with 2009. 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	3583	2084	1498	512	387	611	1269	1540	2440	3989	4143	5002
Chichester Hbr	173	80	52	25	12	12	13	20	46	87	72	314
Pagham Hbr	112	99	121	30	54	24	81	68	125	83	61	48
Chichester GP	1196	484	190	48	29	82	159	129	325	1489	1802	1745
Arun Valley	197	100	168	123	112	106	91	120	141	103	133	27
Eastbourne Lakes	247	94	40	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	166	178	234	490
Bewl Water	243	190	137	nc	nc	nc	227	193	125	179	194	305
Rye Bay	1259	722	575	167	93	300	625	892	1302	1581	1311	1828

Notable flocks in the first winter period, additional to the WeBS counts, included 600 at Rye Hbr on 5 Jan, 490 at Scotney Court GP on the 17th, 459 at Chichester GP on 23 Jan, 1200 at North Mundham on the 25th and 650 at Chichester GP on 5 Feb.

Breeding was confirmed from 60 tetrads and was probable in a further 42. The first reported evidence of breeding was a pair nest building at Southwater CP on 21 Feb. The first young, less than one week old, were not noted until 15 Apr at Wepham Green Pond (Burpham) and then at Mewsbrook (Littlehampton) two chicks were seen on the 18th.

Numbers of Coots started increasing from May onwards. There were nine three-figure counts in August of which the highest were 297 at Pett Level and 360 at Rye Hbr on the 15th and 380 at Chichester GP on the 24th. Numbers showed a marked increase with the onset of the autumn when there were 21 counts in three figures, including 541 at Scotney Court GP on 10 Oct.

During the second winter period, numbers continued to increase, probably with the arrival of continental breeders, and peaked in December with a WeBS total of over 5000. For a comparison, the WeBS total for this period in 1994-2009 was relatively stable with an average of 3199, ranging from a low of 2199 in 1997 to a high of 4535 in 2001. Notable numbers in this second winter period included 958 at Chichester GP on 13 Nov, 800 at Rye Hbr on 19 Dec, 550 at Scotney Court GP on 19 Dec and 593 at Pett pools on 14 Nov. [JPP]

Common Crane

Grus grus

Rare vagrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

One was seen at various sites between Piddinghoe and Southease from 11 Feb until 20 Feb when it was watched flying away high and northward until out of view (RAI). There followed a series of sightings from Pulborough Brooks with two on 7 and 8 Apr (GB) and one on 11th and 12th which on the second day was watched departing to the NNE at 10.20 am, and on the 21st two were present on the South Brooks at 7.10 am and were reported displaying and mating before they too flew off to the north at 10.00 am. One flew over the A26 road between Boarshead and Eridge on 25 Apr (DMW) and two were watched circling over Ardingly Res before drifting eastward on 4 May (MM). On 2 Jun one was soaring over Old Lodge NR (Ashdown Forest) before drifting northwards at 10.25 am (TWP, SP). Later in the year one was seen and photographed at Cuckmere Haven on 18 Sep (MRE, SD) and two were photographed over Belle Tout (Beachy Head) on 24 Dec (DC, JFC, BK). With possibly ten birds involved this is a good start to the decade with previous decade totals from 1960 to 2009 being 220-230, 6, 16, 8 and 33. [JAN].



Common Crane, Piddinghoe, February 2010 (Les Bird)

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	1855	1657	1413	709	398	408	619	905	1712	1802	924	1965
Chichester Hbr	1331	1182	1011	418	188	260	390	465	1401	1605	436	1615
Pagham Hbr	179	167	170	119	95	61	94	152	138	119	238	156
Rye Bay	239	307	172	166	109	79	134	288	130	71	218	146

In addition to the WeBS counts, there were as usual large high tide roosts at Rye Hbr and Pilsley Island (Chichester Hbr), the monthly maxima for which are shown below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Pilsley Island	750	808	750	450	161	162	308	1000	1200	2000	1400	1019
Rye Hbr	500	500	157	212	94	59	120	285	1120	300	300	240

Between January and March, no other counts exceeded the WeBS totals, though smaller high tide roosts were noted along the coastline, the largest of these being 156 at The Midrips on 17 Jan, 70 at Climping on 1 Mar and 80 at Telscombe Cliffs on the 14th.

Small groups were noted passing seawatching points throughout the year with a peak in April, when the highest day totals were 45 E at Splash Point (Seaford) and 48 E at Selsey Bill.

Fifty four pairs were confirmed as breeding, with another five pairs recorded as holding territory, the highest number for some 20 years. There were 33 nests at Rye Hbr, where hatching and fledging success was high, and 17 pairs were counted at various locations in Pagham Hbr. Single pairs bred at Arundel WWT (raising three) and at Ella Nore (Chichester Hbr), a pair failed at Bracklesham Bay, and pairs were holding territory at The Midrips, Pilsey Island and Thorney Deeps (Chichester Hbr). At Shoreham a pair raised four young on a warehouse roof in the town.

During autumn, dispersal numbers increased as usual. Although totals at Pilsey Island are regularly more than 1000 at this time, the October count of 2000 is by far the highest for at least 20 years. In the second winter period, when no counts exceeded those from WeBS, the highest roost counts elsewhere were 100 at Telscombe Cliffs on 24 Oct, the same number at Rustington on 13 Nov and 70 at both Cuckmere Haven on 7 Oct and Climping on the 24th.

Inland, there was one at Weir Wood Res on 24 Mar, one at Pulborough Brooks for most of April and again on 22 Nov, one at Stanmer Down on 23 Apr, one at Bewl Water on 10 Jul and one at Weir Wood Res on 17 Aug. A bird described as partly leucistic was at Pagham Hbr on 24 Jan. [CJRB]

Avocet

Recurvirostra avosetta

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

The minimum monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
38	17	82	95	75	103	104	14	3	9	36	25

The wintering group in Pagham Hbr built up to a peak of 25 at the end of January, significantly higher than in the last few years, and in Chichester Hbr there was a consistent 12 in the Thorney Channel. Both these groups moved on in February, leaving none in Chichester Hbr and just three in Pagham Hbr at the end of the month. The only other sightings in the first two months of the year were of single birds at Pett Level on 9 Jan, Glyne Gap on 5 Feb and Rye Hbr from 19 to 26 Feb.

Numbers built up quickly in March as birds returned to their breeding sites, but offshore passage was extremely light, with a minimum total of only nine birds, a fraction of the usual number. The first to be noted was one past Worthing on 18 Mar, followed by another at Splash Point (Seaford) on the 26th, but none were recorded thereafter until three passed Splash Point on 22 Apr. Two days later, what must have been a very conspicuous group of four were seen passing Hove, Brighton Marina, Telscombe Cliffs, Splash Point and Birling Gap. This group was not seen at Selsey Bill though, where only one passage bird was recorded at all during the spring.

About 38 pairs bred at five sites (33 in 2009 and 43 in 2008). At the two main sites in the east there was a total of about 34 pairs, with another possible two pairs at a third site. In the west, two pairs bred at locations used in previous years, though both apparently failed.

During July to September the only record away from the breeding sites was one at Pilsey Island on 4 Sep. Two were at Arlington Res from 2 to 6 Oct and there was one at Cuckmere Haven from 17 to 25 Oct. The first apparently returning wintering bird was at Thorney Island on 25 Oct, and the first arrivals at Pagham Hbr were six on the 27th.

In Chichester Hbr, the wintering flock built up to 22 in late November but then declined to 13 on 11 Dec, after which none were recorded. At Pagham Hbr there were between 11 and 14 from 7 to 21 Nov, declining to three on 30 Dec. [CJRB]

Stone-curlew*Burhinus oedicnemus*

A rare passage migrant. Formerly a scarce breeding summer visitor, which since 2006 has tentatively started to recolonise the county. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

2009: A chick which was ringed in Sussex on 14 Jun 2009 was photographed in England later the same year on 6 Aug having flown 120 miles north-west from where it fledged.

2010: During 2010, the RSPB Sussex Stone-curlew Project continued to work with a small team of licensed volunteers to survey as much suitable habitat as possible and to work intensively with local landowners, farmers and gamekeepers to create the conditions needed to assist returning and passage birds to stay and breed.

During 2010, the RSPB Sussex project team again located two pairs in areas where habitat management and regular monitoring were possible. Through working closely with landowners, management of the breeding sites and surrounding area was adjusted to best suit the needs of the species. A detailed programme of monitoring established that one pair successfully fledged one young. The second pair was seen with one chick two days before its expected fledging date, but unfortunately the chick was not seen after this date; therefore successful fledging cannot be confirmed. Monitoring and habitat management was not possible at two further sites where birds were present during the summer and whether either of these pairs attempted to nest is unknown. With the support of the Wessex Stone-curlew team, at nest sites where access is possible, the project attempts to colour-ring the chicks to help monitor future populations.

At one of the above sites a third, un-paired, adult was again present during the summer and interacted with the resident pair. At least one migrant bird was recorded elsewhere in the spring in suitable nesting habitat. This individual had previously been colour ringed and from the combination it was wearing, it is believed that this bird originated from the Brecks population.

Presumed returning passage migrants were recorded calling in flight during the middle of the night at Birdham on 6 Aug and flying over Brighton hospital on 28 Sep.

The decision in 2009 to publish the details of this species' return to Sussex was prompted by the fact that the birds at one site suffered significant disturbance from a small number of birdwatchers, including trespass on private land. Such activity directly jeopardises breeding success and the project's relationship with farmers and gamekeepers. Unfortunately this disturbance continued in 2010 with individuals wilfully trespassing in order to watch the birds from a close perspective.

The RSPB Sussex Stone-curlew Project, actively supported by the Sussex Ornithological Society, remains indebted to the support of the landowners, farmers and gamekeepers whose efforts have allowed the breeding success we have seen so far.

There is a long way to go before the re-colonisation of Sussex is assured and the RSPB and SOS urge everyone to place the welfare of the birds first. Stone-curlews are specially protected under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and the EU Birds Directive, making it an offence to disturb or tape-lure them without a licence. At this stage it is recommended that birdwatchers do not go out purposely attempting to find Stone-curlews in Sussex, but if birds are stumbled upon by accident it would be greatly appreciated if records could be passed on to the project team at RSPB Brighton so that efforts can be made to ensure the maximum success of any breeding attempt. [DG]

Little Ringed Plover*Charadrius dubius**Scarce breeding summer visitor and passage migrant. Schedule 1 species.*

The minimum monthly totals were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
No. of sites	4	10	10	8	9	8	3
No. of birds	6	22	22	25	43	30	6

The first arrival reported was one at Cuckmere Haven on 14 Mar, an unusual location but typical date (10-year average is 16 Mar), followed by single birds at the more traditional sites of Chichester GP on the 18th and Pulborough Brooks on the 25th. In April and May the only records away from breeding sites were single birds in fields west of Selsey, at Thorney Island and Waltham Brooks, and one which lingered at Arlington Res from 18 to 21 April.

Seven pairs were confirmed breeding at four traditional sites. One coastal site held three pairs, though only two chicks were seen, and at a second coastal site there were two pairs, one nest was seen but no young were recorded. At a further four regular sites (three coastal and one inland) the number of records suggests that single pairs probably bred, and there was activity indicating possible breeding at another inland sandpit site.

Nearly all records from July onwards came from the breeding sites, maximum July counts of 14 at one site and 12 at another indicating that these locations are also important as staging posts. On single dates in July three were seen at Bewl Water and two at Waltham Brooks, and in August single birds were seen at Thorney Island and in fields west of Selsey, again for one day only.

There were just four records for September and the last bird was seen at Rye Hbr on the 7th, a very early last date (the 10-year average is 24 Sep). [CJRB]

Ringed Plover*Charadrius hiaticula**Scarce breeder, and 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	339	104	140	73	156	39	52	269	220	255	118	64
Chichester Hbr	109	32	27	3	86	5	13	47	205	126	77	13
Pagham Hbr	187	35	85	25	45	11	29	74	8	80	30	1
Climping	1	nc	2	4	nc	7	nc	47	-	2	11	8
Lower Adur Estuary	36	nc	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	17
Cuckmere Haven	-	nc	1	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	10
Rye Bay	4	37	23	35	18	14	6	82	6	46	-	15

Regular counts at Pilsley Island (Chichester Hbr) exceeded the above figures in most months, sometimes by a significant amount; the maximum numbers there are shown below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Pilsley Island	160	48	24	30	310	23	8	400	500	143	129	32

There were large counts at several other sites during the first winter period with a peak in February, when there were 195 at West Wittering on the 3rd, 130 at Brooklands (Worthing) on the 15th, 50 on the R Adur (Shoreham) on the 9th, and 36 at Rye Hbr on the 4th. The highest count at the regular roost at Brighton Marina was 60 on 2 Jan. The highest day count at seawatching points was 10 E on 9 May at Splash Point (Seaford).

A minimum of 48 pairs bred. At Rye Hbr there were at least 25 pairs, though hatching success was low and few fledged. There were 15 pairs in Pagham Hbr, three pairs at Bracklesham Bay, and single pairs at Ella Nore, Littlehampton West Beach, Climping Beach, Newhaven Tide Mills and Pett Level. Pairs also possibly bred at Pilsey Island, Langney and Brooklands (Worthing).

During the autumn, numbers were again significantly higher than the WeBS counts suggest. A large flock of 288 roosting in a field at Goring Gap on 24 Aug declined to 130 on 3 Oct, there were 200 at Pagham Hbr on 28 Aug and 100 there on 20 Sep, and there were 156 at Brooklands (Worthing) on 19 Oct and 100 at Camber Sands on the 2nd. Elsewhere, the maximum at Brighton Marina was 70 on 2 Oct and there were 50 on the R Adur (Shoreham) on the 31st and the same number at Worthing Beach on 24 Dec.

There were inland records from the traditional sites, though with slightly higher numbers than usual. At Arlington Res there was one on 9 May, two on 30 Aug and up to three from 2 to 7 Oct. At Pulborough Brooks there were up to two for most of April and an influx in May, with a maximum of 28 on the 8th. At Weir Wood Res birds were present from 29 Aug to 8 Sep, with a maximum of 11 on 30 Aug. [CJRB]



Dotterel, Balsdean, September 2010 (Jacob Everitt)

Dotterel*Charadrius morinellus*

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

The only two records were of two watched and photographed on a bare, flinty field at Steep Down (Lancing) between 18 and 21 May (DC, JAN *et al.*) and two which flew north calling over Hodcombe (Beachy Head) on 3 Sep (DC, RHC, BK). With the exception of 2006 the past few years have been fairly poor for this species; with an average of just under ten per year (1995-2009) the four in 2010 continues the recent lean trend. [JAN]

American Golden Plover*Pluvialis dominica*

Very rare vagrant.

An adult, probable female, was at Fishbourne Channel (Chichester Hbr) between 12:15 and 14:25 on 16 Sep (BFF, DIS). The observers were first alerted by a repeated, unfamiliar call being given by a long-winged, slim plover. The bird alighted out of view and disappeared, however, after a long wait it showed well for 35 minutes before being finally disturbed by a Peregrine. This was only the second Sussex record of this Nearctic plover following one which consorted with Golden Plovers in fields near Pagham Hbr between 14 and 17 Sep 1988. [JAN]

European Golden Plover*Pluvialis apricaria*

Common winter visitor and passage migrant, rare non-breeder 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	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	652	631	57	67	1	-	-	437	73	1533	3042	132
Chichester Hbr	276	190	22	-	1	-	-	-	18	291	143	43
Bracklesham Bay	-	25	1	-	-	-	nc	-	-	-	15	35
Pagham Hbr	33	310	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	41	470	-
Newhaven	-	-	-	-	-	nc	-	-	-	-	-	7
Ouse Levels	200	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	-
Pevensey Levels	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	nc	-	-	12	18
Rye Bay	142	106	34	67	-	-	-	437	49	1201	2402	29

In the first three months of the year numbers were generally low, and 600 at Thorney Island on 1 Jan was the largest flock recorded during this period. There were several counts higher than the WeBS counts, however, with a maximum at Pagham Hbr of 400 on 26 Feb, and 300 at W Wittering on the 3rd. The largest numbers in the east were 430 at East Guldeford on 18 Jan and 260 at Rye Hbr on the 8th. Several were noted well inland in early January, with 15 at Beckley on the 4th, five at Upper Beeding on the same day and one at Amberley Wild Brooks on the 2nd. In March, there were maxima of 237 at Pagham Hbr on the 2nd, 266 at Rye Hbr on the 24th and 250 in Chichester Hbr on the 7th.

In April, there were 400 at Rye Hbr on the 2nd and the last count there was 47 on the 23rd; only nine birds were recorded anywhere else with one at Thorney Island on the 9th noted as the last bird

there. In May, there were six in Pagham Hbr on the 13th and three individuals at other locations that month. There were no June records, but one flew over The Burgh (Amberley) on 25 Jul.

The first returning birds were seven at East Guldeford on 14 Aug and 200 flying high over Litlington from the NE on the same day, but the largest flock in the month was 400 at Scotney Court GP on the 19th. In September, the maximum at Rye Hbr was 380 on the 23rd, but 100 at Ella Nore (Chichester Hbr) on the 28th was the only 3-figure count in the west.

During October, one or two were noted at Beachy Head on four dates and there were 12 at Boxgrove on the 14th. The maximum at Pagham Hbr was 500 on the 27th and there were again high numbers at Scotney Court GP, with 1000 on the 2nd and 1200 on the 10th (included in the Rye Bay total in the WeBS table above). The highest counts of the year came in November, when numbers at Scotney Court GP had built up to 2000 on the 13th, and there were 2500 at Thorney Island on the 18th. In December, there were only three 3-figure counts: 600 at Rye Hbr on the 2nd, 250 in fields west of Selsey on the 19th and 100 at Thorney Island on the 22nd. Unusually, there were 80 at Bramber on the 22nd, 25 over Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) on the 1st, and 40 at Pevensey Levels on the 25th, the highest number recorded at this site for the year. [CJRB]

Grey Plover

Pluvialis squatarola

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

The WeBS counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	2040	1976	1514	189	95	24	27	160	1059	946	822	916
Chichester Hbr	668	789	958	43	6	7	26	25	897	607	404	498
Pagham Hbr	1329	1165	476	135	82	17	1	135	162	316	388	347
Climping	24	nc	63	-	nc	-	nc	-	-	11	12	58

In January and February numbers in Pagham Hbr were unusually much higher than at Chichester Hbr, though both sites held numbers exceeding the 1% threshold of 530 for sites of national importance. The highest counts at non-WeBS sites were 45 at Goring Beach on 28 Feb and 52 at Littlehampton West Beach on the 24th, while at Rye Hbr there were 36 on 4 Jan, 42 on 27 Feb and 62 on 1 Mar. At Selsey Bill there were interesting movements of 180 W on 31 Jan and 160 W on 7 Feb, both in only 2½ hr watching; otherwise small numbers were noted on passage between March and May as shown below:

		Mar	Apr	May	Total	Hrs watched
Selsey Bill	E	-	59	2	61	402
	W	2	-	11	13	
Worthing Beach	E	-	9	6	-	117
	W	-	1	-	-	
Splash Point	E	-	5	11	16	140
	W	-	-	-	-	

In addition to the WeBS counts, there were up to seven at Rye Hbr in April and up to ten there in May. In June, there were birds in Pagham Hbr all month, with a maximum of 27 on the 14th, and there were two at Rye Hbr on the 5th and 6th. There were still 12 at Pagham Hbr on 2 Jul, but thereafter the only records were of one on the 12th and 18th.

The August monthly maximum at Pilsey Island was 200 on the 25th, and at Rye Hbr it was 23. During the last months of the year, the only count to exceed the WeBS count was 500 at Pagham Hbr on 23 Oct. In November there were 200 at Chichester (West Itchenor) on 5 Nov and 180 at Pagham Hbr on the 10th. The maximum count in December was 58 at Climping on 23 Dec and there were small numbers at various coastal sites, the most being 18 at Rye Hbr on 27 Dec.

The only birds recorded inland were four at Arlington Res on 6 and 7 Oct. [CJRB]

Northern Lapwing

Vanellus vanellus

Scarce or fairly common, but declining, resident and very common winter visitor. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	8012	6310	1259	287	262	452	1439	1725	2350	3496	8941	3703
Chichester Hbr	1149	1197	36	24	23	79	86	137	307	365	762	277
Bracklesham Bay	450	100	15	22	16	11	nc	16	6	22	325	250
Pagham Hbr	820	1195	54	26	24	37	25	46	333	219	1221	308
Arun Valley	200	1081	503	44	81	94	103	71	51	576	676	507
Lower Adur Estuary	488	nc	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	17	74	216	-
Newhaven	519	305	-	2	-	nc	-	-	-	43	-	125
Ouse Levels	648	412	76	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	40	20	200	10
Cuckmere Haven	500	nc	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	5	10	nc
Pevensey Levels	387	56	236	70	45	53	-	nc	34	271	1966	189
Bewl Water	100	143	7	nc	nc	nc	121	44	235	39	59	119
Rye Bay	2303	1675	299	96	66	173	1079	1317	1238	1756	3295	1563

Overall records for the year were only slightly down compared with 2009. During the first winter period, there were 13 counts of a thousand individuals or more (excluding WeBS counts) compared with 23 in 2009. Cold weather with snow and ice was widely present from 7 Jan until 17 Jan. In the west of the county, 1000 were recorded at Shoreham Airport on 1 Jan and again on 5 Feb, 1500 were noted in Pagham Hbr on the 2nd and 21st increasing to 2000 on the 23rd, 3000 on the 26th and no less than 5200 on the 30th. In the east, 2500 were recorded at East Guldeford Level (Rye) on 18 Jan and there were counts at Rye Hbr of 1000 on 23 Jan and 2000 on the 30th. In February, the highest counts were 1000 at Shoreham Airport on the 5th and 2000 at Pagham Hbr on the 17th.

Breeding was confirmed from a minimum of 25 different tetrads and was probable at a further 44. Three pairs produced six young at Chichester Hbr, five nesting pairs were reported at Sidlesham Common on 1 May, followed by two almost fledged and three downy chicks on 26 May, and 16 pairs at Bracklesham Bay had 11 fledged young on 1 Jun. Further east, seven pairs produced at least four young at Lewes Brooks on 1 Jun and 33 pairs bred at Rye Hbr but fledging success was low.

The first gatherings of returning birds were in the east of the county with 458 reported at East Guldeford Level on 18 Jul increasing to 611 on 15 Aug. There were 1000 at Rye Hbr on 23 Aug and 2000 at Scotney Court GP from 4 until 29 Sep.

During the second winter period there were seven counts of a thousand or more compared with 16 in 2009. These included, in the west of the county, 1000 at Pagham Hbr on 13 Nov and 1625 at

Pulborough Brooks on 22 Nov, the largest count in the county for this period. Further east, there were 1000 at Scotney Court GP on 13 Nov, 1126 at Pevensey Bridge Level and 1111 at Rye Hbr on the 14th, while in December 1000 were recorded at Rye Hbr. [WEC]

Red Knot

Calidris canutus

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

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	2860	1164	1191	60	35	4	-	9	159	94	396	910
Chichester Hbr	2120	339	470	-	-	3	-	3	128	82	61	410
Pagham Hbr	646	798	711	60	31	-	-	1	19	6	325	500
Rye Bay	93	27	10	-	4	1	-	5	11	5	10	-

As usual there were records for every month. During the first winter period, notable counts additional to the WeBS included: in January, 800 at Pagham Hbr on the 26th and 2000 at Pilsey Island on the 30th; in February, 2000 still present at Pilsey Island on the 10th and 1500 at Church Norton on the 25th; and in March, 1100 at Pagham Hbr on the 2nd and 4000 at Pilsey Island on the 11th. The WeBS table shows that numbers were lower in East Sussex and all the highest counts were from Rye Hbr where monthly maxima were 134 on 2 Jan, 180 on 25 Feb and 180 on 18 Mar, this being one flock which paused briefly before departing east.

Coastal spring movement was poor and, apart from 80 W at Selsey Bill on 21 Mar, only small numbers were seen. This is clearly shown in the following table derived by summing the maximum count on each day from the regular seawatching locations. However, small flocks were regularly seen in Pagham Hbr with the monthly maxima being 100 on 24 Apr, 31 on 16 May and 12 on 15 Jun.

Counts at the principal seawatching sites, derived from the maximum count at either Selsey Bill, Worthing Beach or Telscombe Cliffs on any one day, were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Totals
E	-		-	3	7	5	-	-	-	15
W	120		80	-	-	-	-	14	2	216

Reports of birds in summer plumage were two at Pagham Hbr on 17 Apr, and three at Church Norton on 12 May increasing to 26 on the 15th. During June the species was noted on eight days at four sites and the only July records were two in Pagham Hbr on the 2nd and nine at Pilsey Sands on the 26th.

The frequency of sightings in August was slow from the 3rd but accelerated from the 10th. Numbers were usually in single figures but increased from the 23rd when 60 were at Rye Hbr. Birds were noted on 19 days in September with high counts of 108 at Pilsey Sands on the 11th and 150 at Ella Nore (Chichester Hbr) on the 28th.

During the second winter period numbers remained low initially but began to build up towards the end of October when 450 were counted at Pilsey Sands on the 29th, increasing to 2500 on 19th Dec. [WEC]

Sanderling*Calidris alba*

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant. Very rare away from coast.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	142	11	193	5	-	-	-	5	219	131	15	12
Chichester Hbr	76	1	165	2	-	-	-	-	212	48	-	3
Pagham Hbr	-	-	12	-	-	-	-	4	-	1	-	1
Climping	11	nc	5	-	nc	-	nc	-	7	81	10	2
Arun - S of Arundel	10	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Lower Adur Estuary	-	nc	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	1
Rye Bay	45	2	11	3	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	-

Birds were again noted throughout the year with most sites at or very near the coast. The only inland sighting was of a single bird at Arlington Res on 8 May which flew off east with a Dunlin and Ringed Plovers. The most notable counts, not included in the WeBS, during the first winter period were 170 at Ferring on 17 Jan, 165 at Pilsey Island on 20 Mar and, in the east, 144 at Rye Hbr on 19 Feb, 100 roosting on the beach at Brooklands (Worthing) on 4 Feb with 106 there on 14 Mar and 180 birds on sea defence rocks off Climping Beach on 1 Mar.

The most notable counts, not included in the WeBS, during the first winter period were 170 at Ferring on 17 Jan, 144 at Rye Hbr on 19 Feb, 100 roosting on the beach at Brooklands on 4 Feb with 106 there on 14 Mar and 180 birds on sea defence rocks off Climping on 1 Mar. Later in the spring the only three-figure counts came from Pilsey Sands where there were 254 on 25 Mar reducing to 169 on 19 Apr and 123 on 26 May as birds departed to their breeding grounds.

Eastbound spring coastal passage was unremarkable as demonstrated in the following table showing passage birds, and those presumably feeding on the beach, recorded at the principal seawatching sites. The largest day total was just 40 E at Worthing on 21 May.

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	E	-	-	-	35	63	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	o/b	-	-	3	-	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Climping Beach	E	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	30	-
	W	20	-	60	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	o/b	-	214	70	72	-	-	100	10	4	20	80	175
Worthing Beach	E	-	-	12	10	164	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
	W	-	-	5	12	30	-	-	3	-	-	-	-
	o/b	-	40	10	4	7	-	-	40	60	-	-	15
Splash Point	E	-	-	3	8	42	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	-4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	o/b	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Counts were generally low during the summer months. Presumably the first returning bird was one seen at Weir Wood Res on 12 Jul followed by the first four seen at Pilsey Sands the next day. Birds were recorded on 12 days in August with a maximum count of 350 at Pilsey Sands on the 20th and 100 roosting in a field at Goring Gap on the 24th. Numbers at the most favoured site,

Pilsey Sands, were 300 on 4 Sep and 3 Oct reducing to 218 on 6 Nov and a measly 38 on 15 Dec. The highest count in December was 115 at Camber on 7 Dec. [WEC]

Little Stint

Calidris minuta

Scarce passage migrant; very scarce in winter.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	3	1	-
Chichester Hbr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	2	1	-
Rye Bay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-

The approximate minimum monthly totals and 5-year and 10-year averages are as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	1	1	2	-	1	1	1	10	18	11	5	1
5-yr average	1	1	2	1	3	-	1	12	21	14	2	2
10-yr average	5	3	4	1	3	1	1	10	29	16	4	4

Once again numbers were low, particularly in the first half of the year when compared with what they were over five years ago. In the latter half of the year, however, they were average bearing in mind that the 10-year average for September may be higher than expected due to an exceptional 144 in 2001.

During the first winter period one bird was present in Chichester Hbr at Fishbourne Creek from 2009 until 23 Mar, and one in the North Fields (Pagham Hbr) on 4 Mar was probably different and an early migrant.

In the spring and summer period, one was seen in Pagham Hbr on 23 May and another, in summer plumage, at Church Norton on 13 and 14 Jun. The first returning migrant was noted at Rye Hbr on 25 Jul but it was not until 22 Aug that further birds appeared and nine were recorded at Rye Hbr and an adult was seen at Pilsey Sands on the 27th.

Occasional sightings continued into the autumn. One seen on Goring Beach on 1 Sep was flushed by a dog walker. At Rye Hbr one to two were present from 7 to 10 Sep. At Arlington Res one seen on 8 Sep was joined by another from the 11th to the 16th of which one remained until the 21st. Eight juveniles seen at Pilsey Sands from 8 to 11 Sep were followed by two more juveniles on the 20th. Single birds were also seen at three other sites during the month. The highest count in October was three at Pilsey Sands on the 4th, two were present at Scotney Court GP from the 2nd to the 7th and single birds were seen at five other sites.

In the second winter period, the one at Pulborough Brooks on 14 Oct increased to three on 7 Nov. One at Thorney Island on 5 and 6 Nov may have been the same bird recorded at Fishbourne Channel on 16 Nov which was last recorded on 23 Dec and into 2011 [WEC]

Temminck's Stint*Calidris temminckii*

Very scarce spring and autumn passage migrant. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

The accepted records conformed to the typical pattern for this species with one seen and photographed at Arlington Res from 11 to 14 May (RMB *et al.*) and three seen at Pulborough Brooks on 23 May (GB *et al.*). [JAN]



Temminck's Stint, Arlington Reservoir, May 2010 (Jacob Everitt)

White-rumped Sandpiper*Calidris fuscicollis*

Very rare vagrant.

One, considered to be an adult, was at Castle Water (Rye Hbr) on 29 Aug (MB, PFB,RRG). This was the first since August 1995 and only the 12th county record. All have been recorded in autumn with six arriving in August and two in each of September, October and November. [JAN]

Pectoral Sandpiper*Calidris melanotos*

Rare vagrant, mainly in autumn.

The two accepted records were one at Church Norton on 29 and 30 Aug (CHM, JM *et al.*) and a juvenile at Arlington Res between 20 and 25 Oct (ARK *et al.*). Since the publication of *Birds of Sussex* a total of 31 has been recorded in the county giving an average of approximately two per year and all, bar two, have been recorded in autumn. This year, therefore, was a very typical year. [JAN]

Curlew Sandpiper*Calidris ferruginea*

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

There were three spring records of single birds at Rye Hbr on 4 May and at Pagham Hbr on 14 and 23 May. The first returning birds were four at Arlington Res on 18 Jul followed by one at Pett Level on 31 Jul. The Pett Level bird remained until 1 Aug, and thereafter single birds were at Pagham Hbr on the 15th and daily between the 20th and 23rd with two there on the 31st. Most records were in September and involved mainly juvenile birds. The highest counts were at Fishbourne (Chichester Hbr) where the species was seen on at least 10 days between the 2nd and the 30th with a peak of 17 on the 16th. Elsewhere in Chichester Hbr seven were at Pilsey Sands between the 8th and the 11th and two were at Thorney Deeps on the 26th. Up to four were seen at various locations around Pagham Hbr on 12 days during the month. Four on the 7th was also the maximum count at Rye Hbr where observation occurred on seven different days until the 19th. Away from these main areas a single bird was seen at Goring on the 1st and 4th and two were at Shoreham Hbr on the 6th. Inland, there were up to two birds on ten dates between 3 and 20 Sep at Pulborough Brooks. During October there were singles at Pagham Hbr on the 5th, at Rye Saltings on the 10th, up to three at Arlington Res between the 13th and the 17th, and finally one at Pagham Hbr on the 25th.

With parties present for a long period in September it is difficult to assess how many birds were involved but the minimum monthly totals were as shown in the table below. [AHP]

Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
-	3	-	5	5	44	6



Curlew Sandpiper, Arlington Reservoir, October 2010 (Jacob Everitt)

Purple Sandpiper*Calidris maritima*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant, very rare 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	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	6	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-
Lower Adur Estuary	2	nc	3	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	-
Newhaven	3	-	4	-	-	nc	-	-	-	-	5	-
Glyne Gap	1	-	-	nc	-	-	nc	-	-	-	-	-

The WeBS counts do not provide a complete picture of the presence of this species. The highest monthly counts at all sites where the species was recorded were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	38	24	28	15	-	-	7	17	-	3	16	10
Church Norton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Shoreham Hbr & Lwr Adur	5	5	8	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-
Brighton Marina	15	4	6	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4
Newhaven	12	12	12	3	-	-	-	-	-	2	11	5
Glyne Gap & St. Leonards	2	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hastings	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pett Level	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	17	-	1	-	-
Other sites	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

For the first part of the year, the birds at Shoreham, Brighton and Newhaven were probably the same as those recorded at these sites in December 2009. The highest counts included 15 at Brighton Marina on 2 Jan, 12 at Newhaven on 6 Jan and several dates through to 11 on 19 Mar and eight at Shoreham Hbr on 29 Mar. The last bird was one seen roosting with Turnstones at Hastings on 29 Apr, 16 days earlier than the 10-year average date.

The first returning bird was seen on 14 Jul at Pett Level, somewhat earlier than the 10-year average date of 29 Jul, where the autumn's highest count of 17 was noted on 7 Aug with four still there on the 24th. Birds were not then recorded at the usual sites further west until 20 Oct, when one was at Newhaven, but were then seen to the end of the year but in rather low numbers. One seen at Hastings on 2 Nov flew west and was presumably recorded further west later in the month. The peak count was 11 at Newhaven on 23 Nov. [AHP]

Dunlin*Calidris alpina*

Very common passage migrant and winter visitor, scarce away from estuaries; scarce non-breeder in summer. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

The monthly WeBS counts at the principal sites were as shown in the table below. Numbers in January were well above 2009 levels, but in all subsequent months (except May and June) were lower. Numbers recorded in the December counts were below half those recorded in the comparable counts in 2009. Nevertheless, the numbers in Chichester Hbr in January, February and October to December exceeded the recently revised national 1% threshold of 3500, emphasising the importance of this site for this species whose international numbers have been falling.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	17335	12274	4551	189	116	19	169	228	1101	4315	5255	4751
Chichester Hbr	15439	9901	3357	83	22	4	30	71	1026	3770	4277	3664
Pagham Hbr	1602	2299	1126	78	84	-	51	84	61	438	942	642
Rye Bay	217	58	68	24	5	3	84	69	4	83	11	290

In the first winter period additional high counts from Pilsley Sands (Chichester Hbr) were 12,000 on 29 Jan and 10,000 on 25 Feb. Numbers at locations not shown in the table were considerably lower but 550 were roosting on the beach near Brooklands (Worthing) on 25 Jan with 800 there on 4 Feb and the maximum count on the R Adur at Shoreham was 200 on 9 Feb. As usual, and clearly shown in the table, numbers declined in March; the maximum count at Pilsley Sands of 3000 was on the 3rd but there were still 1500 there on the 20th.

In keeping with recent years and other wading species the spring passage was again unremarkable. The daily analysis of the main seawatching logs shows a mere 138 were recorded moving east comprising 12 in March, 30 in April and 96 in May. This compares with an average of 520 for the springs 1985–2009. The monthly totals and peak movements of eastbound birds from the main seawatching sites were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Peak movement.
Selsey Bill	12	20	81	57 E on 15 May (8¼ hr)
Worthing Beach	-	3	18	6 E on 1 May (2 hr)
Splash Point (Seaford)	-	13	5	8 E on 24 Apr (15 hr)

Seventy, moving westward at Selsey Bill on 4 May, was the highest spring day total from seawatching sites.

In the autumn and second winter period, the highest counts were again at Pilsley Island with monthly maximum counts of 1500 on 22 Aug, 2000 on 5 Sep, 7500 on 5 Oct, 15,000 on 29 Oct and 20,000 on 5 Nov all exceeding the regular WeBS count. Inland, records were typically of small numbers. High counts included 18 at Arlington Res on 2 Oct, 13 at Pulborough Brooks on 5 Sep and 25 there on 10 Nov. [NJR]

Buff-breasted Sandpiper

Tryngites subruficollis

Rare autumn vagrant.

The first of five individuals was located at Pilsley Island (Chichester Hbr) on the afternoon of 21 Sep (CBC, OPP) where it was photographed. However, in the evening, it was flushed by a helicopter and flew off west without being seen again. The next record was of two more obliging birds found and photographed at Scotney Court GP on 29 Sep (KH *et al.*) which stayed for the pleasure of many observers until last seen on 10 Oct; a third bird joined the two from 6 to 10 Oct. The third accepted record was of one at Arlington Res from 1 to 6 Oct (ADW *et al.*) which was also photographed. These bring the county records up to 15 though this is the first time that more than one has been recorded in a year. All the previous records have been in autumn, the dated ones between 21 Aug and 24 Oct. [JAH]



Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Arlington Reservoir, October 2010 (Matt Eade)

Ruff

Philomachus pugnax

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

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	-	13	-	-	-	1	1	2	3	1	-	-
<i>Arun Valley</i>	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Rye Bay</i>	-	4	-	-	-	-	1	2	3	1	-	-

Although not always present on WeBS count days, birds were present in every month. The peak counts in the first winter period were at Rye Hbr, with 42 on 5 Jan rising to 46 on 3 Feb. Elsewhere, six were at Amberley Wild Brooks on 28 Jan and nine there on 22 Feb. Three were at Pagham Hbr on 27 Feb with four at the North Fields there on 7 Mar.

Spring records included single birds at Pevensy Levels and in fields west of Selsey on only three dates in mid-April and, in May, up to two at Rye Hbr early in the month and 15 at Pulborough Brooks on the 23rd. Just two birds were recorded in the summer, a long staying summer plumaged male at Sidlesham Ferry Pool from 5 Jun until 2 Sep and one at Rye Hbr on 20 Jun.

The start of return passage was signalled in July by 12 at Rye Hbr on the 9th. Counts were then in single numbers until 31 were recorded at Scotney Court GP on 30 Sep which had reduced to ten on 2 Oct. In the second winter period, numbers were generally in single figures but with the main concentrations at Rye Hbr in December where, from a count of 17 on 7 Dec, numbers increased to a peak of 25 on the 12th only to reduce to 17 by the 30th. [NJR]

Jack Snipe*Lymnocyptes minimus*

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	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	5	-	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Chichester Hbr	4	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Henfield Brooks	-	-	2	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-
Ouse Levels	1	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	-
Pevensey Levels	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	nc	-	-	-	-

The minimum monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No of birds	32	5	10	2		1	1	3	7	18
No of sites	20	5	9	2		1	1	3	6	11



Jack Snipe, Cuckoo Corner, December 2010 (Dave Sadler)

Hard weather in early January brought many more records than usual, but in contrast very few were seen in February. The most reliable sites in the first winter period were Climping, where there were up to two on seven dates, Ferring Rife, where one showed on eight dates, and Fishbourne Channel (Chichester Hbr), where there were up to two. At Thorney Deeps (Chichester Hbr), usually the prime site in the county for this species, a maximum of only three was recorded, the lowest for many years. The largest group was five flushed at the Wader Pool at Rye Hbr on

28 Jan, and there were three at Church Norton on the 9th, two at Polegate on the 13th and two at Henfield Levels on 14 Mar. The last bird for the first part of the year was seen at Pevensey Levels on 18 Apr (the 10-yr average is 24 Apr).

The first returning bird was a very early one at Pilsey Island on 28 Aug, 24 days earlier than the 10-year average date of 21 Sep. Mild weather resulted in only ten birds being recorded until the second half of November, and again Ferring Rife was the most favoured site, with up to four throughout the first half of December and possibly more than six on the 13th. There was a clear arrival of birds in the first week of December in response to the hard weather, with two at Coombes, Fishbourne Channel, Pagham Hbr and Scaynes Hill (Freshfield) and an interesting sighting of three passing west at Telscombe Cliffs, two of which came in off the sea. At Thorney Deeps numbers were again low, the only records being of two on 5 and 6 Nov. [CJRB]

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 sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	434	338	393	49	2	-	2	10	25	110	314	195
Chichester Hbr	221	54	51	12	-	-	-	-	2	5	39	49
Bracklesham Bay	1	6	19	3	-	-	nc	-	-	9	5	1
Pagham Hbr	14	16	6	-	-	-	-	-	2	7	8	22
Arun Valley	51	63	102	8	2	-	-	1	16	60	40	4
Lower Adur Estuary	-	nc	1	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	2	5	44	-
Henfield Brooks	1	65	61	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	11	1
Ouse Levels	14	60	80	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	9	104	63
Pevensey Levels	21	21	8	5	-	-	1	nc	2	4	21	37
Rye Bay	87	24	44	21	-	-	1	9	-	11	32	12

In January, there were counts significantly higher than the WeBS counts at several sites, with 106 at the North Wall (Pagham Hbr) on the 30th, 97 at Pett Level on the 11th, 86 at Pulborough Brooks on the 4th and 35 at Henfield Brooks on the 2nd. At non-WeBS sites there were high counts of 70 at Udimore on the 27th, 35 at East Head (Wittering) on the 30th and 25 at Partridge Green on the 17th. In February the picture was similar to that shown in the WeBS table, but in March large numbers were being flushed at Rye Hbr by Marsh Harriers, with 110 on the 24th, 65 on the 25th and 80 on the 29th while at other sites there were 40 in the Brede Valley on the 14th and 17 at Weir Wood Res on the 2nd, a year maximum there. In April, there were no counts greater than the 16 in the Brede Valley on the 18th, and just six birds were recorded in May, with three at Thorney Island on the 4th being the last seen there.

Breeding surveys in the Arun Valley found two displaying males at Pulborough Brooks and six at Amberley Wild Brooks, a similar situation to 2009. Three birds were flushed on Ashdown Forest on 24 Jun and one was heard drumming there on 2 Jul, but there were no records of possible breeding from any other sites, and no other June records. In July, just 17 birds were recorded, including three at Beachy Head on the 29th, while in August the highest count was 15 at Rye Hbr on the 28th. During the autumn, single migrants were noted at Sheepcote Valley on 12 Sep and Beachy Head on the 26th, and the first returning bird at Thorney Island appeared on the 2 Sep.

In November, in addition to the WeBS counts there were 60 at Pagham Hbr on the 6th, and one was again seen at Sheepcote Valley on the 7th. On the 10th, 250 were flushed at Pulborough Brooks, this time by a light aircraft rather than by Marsh Harriers. In December, records higher than the WeBS counts were 70 at Rye Hbr and a maximum of 29 in the Arun Valley while there were 30 at Botolphs on the 7th and the same number at Partridge Green on the 8th. The hard weather of this month resulted in some interesting sightings: there were 15 at Sheepcote Valley on the 1st, six passing west off Telscombe Cliffs in 2½ hr on the 2nd, three in flight over central Hove on the 17th, and five records from observers' gardens at this time. [CJRB]

Woodcock

Scolopax rusticola

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

In the first three months of the year at least 171 birds were reported from some 79 locations. Hard weather in January resulted in a minimum of 142 birds reported, with consistently high numbers at Pett Level (maximum 42 on the 13th) and Rye Hbr (maximum eight on the 11th). In addition there were nine at Guestling Wood on the 12th and seven at Pulborough Brooks on the 2nd, with counts of between two and five at a further 17 sites.

Roding was first recorded on 1 May. A minimum of 43 territorial birds were recorded in the Ashdown Forest area, eight on the West Sussex commons and one at Broadwater Warren, but none at any other sites.

There were no records for August, only one in September and none in October. In November and December, reports came from 50 sites, involving at least 95 birds. The highest count was of 18 at Coombes, and there were again good numbers at Pett Level (maximum ten on 10 Dec) and Rye Hbr (maximum four on 20 Dec). Two were noted passing west off St Leonards on 16 Nov, and one at Worthing Beach on 2 Dec was also apparently making its way west. There were four reports from observers' gardens, including one in Ditchling which remained for four days. [CJRB]

Black-tailed Godwit

Limosa limosa

Fairly common but localised winter visitor and passage migrant; scarce non-breeder in summer. 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	1059	1095	404	183	27	78	132	350	290	376	1416	200
Chichester Hbr	234	151	177	163	13	42	78	287	199	307	564	192
Pagham Hbr	820	833	220	20	5	32	44	53	87	69	806	8
Arun Valley	-	110	5	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	46	-

The 1% national threshold level of 150 was exceeded at Chichester Hbr in nine months of the year (six in 2009 and seven in 2008) and at Pagham Hbr in four months. The 1% international threshold level of 470 was exceeded at Chichester Hbr in November and at Pagham Hbr in January, February and November.

In the first winter period, notable counts additional to the WeBS counts were recorded at Pagham Hbr where, from 1200 on 16 Jan numbers peaked at 1400 on the 24th and 30th, dropped to

1000 during February but peaked at 1400 again on 7 Mar. One observer commented “what a sight in the air!” Away from the western harbours the only other site where this species was recorded at all regularly was Pulborough Brooks where there were 35 on 10 Feb and 90 were counted at nearby Amberley Brooks on 11 Mar. In East Sussex, during this period, no more than two birds were recorded at any of six sites.

During spring numbers dropped off markedly as birds returned to their breeding grounds. To the end of June there were only 20 double-figure records, the highest being 300 in Pagham Hbr on 26 Mar and 158 at Fishbourne (Chichester Hbr) on 16 Apr. In the east, with the exception of single birds at Horse Eye Level (Pevensey) on 17 Apr and Arlington Res on 10 May, all other records were from Rye Bay where the highest count was 70 on 21 May, presumably a congregation of late migrants.

During the months of June and July, there were 83 reports of double-figure counts indicating that a not insignificant number of birds were late leaving the favoured sites. The highest count in Pagham Hbr was 71 on 25 July and at Thorney Deeps (Chichester Hbr) 55 on 14 Jul. The only other West Sussex site where birds were recorded was Pulborough Brooks where c.40 were noted on 11 Jun. The only site in East Sussex with birds was Pett Level where 18 on 8 Jun had reduced to ten by 14 Jul.

In the August to October period the first sign of possible returning migrants was of nine which flew over Weir Wood Res on 4 Aug, with ten there on the 15th. In Chichester Hbr, from a count of 15 at Fishbourne on 3 Aug, numbers rapidly escalated to 193 at Thorney Deeps on the 11th, 363 at Fishbourne on 16 Sep and 203 at Bosham on 19 Oct. However, in Pagham Hbr numbers grew much more slowly: from 20 on 1 Aug they had reached 48 by 11 Aug but did not reach 90 until 6 Oct and 116 on the 28th. Numbers at Pulborough Brooks reached only eight on 31 Oct with a similar number at Rye Hbr on 26 Aug. The first record from a seawatching site was of 11 E at Selsey Bill on 23 Aug.

In the second winter period there were 11 three-figure counts additional to the WeBS counts with peaks of 800 in Pagham Hbr on 15 Nov and 335 at Pulborough Brooks on the 21st, a site record. There were only four records from East Sussex with a maximum of two birds at Rye Hbr. [JAH]

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	821	1008	149	27	16	5	16	4	120	163	501	613
Chichester Hbr	815	1006	145	16	7	5	15	3	114	162	501	611

It is interesting to note that Pagham Hbr did not qualify for inclusion in the above WeBS table this year. Obviously Chichester Hbr is a much preferred site. The counts in both January and February exceeded the 1% national threshold level of 620.

During the first winter period, of 42 records only 13 were for ten or more birds and of them five exceeded 100 with peak counts of 700 at Pilsey Sands on 30 Jan and 1000 on 27 Feb. The only sightings away from the western harbours were single birds at Goring Gap and two at Rye

Hbr on 3 Jan. Observers at Worthing Beach noted 7 W on 26 Jan. An unusual inland record was from Pulborough Brooks on 20 Mar.

Counts from the principal seawatching sites during a poor spring migration were as follows:

		Apr	May	Total	Peak movement		Hrs watched peak days
Selsey Bill	E	94	158	252	51	17 Apr	9
	W	1	2	3			
Worthing Beach	E	100	46	146	55	24 Apr	5
	W	-	1	1			
Splash Point	E	354	27	381	306	24 Apr	15
	W	-	-	-			

In addition to the counts in the above table, observers at Hastings logged 140 E in three flocks on 7 May.

During the summer months, 75% of 58 records were of not more than five birds in the western harbours. The highest count of 28 at Cuckmere Haven on 10 May was probably of birds resting on passage; 8 E over the sea past Ferring on the 12th were obviously on passage; 16 at Pagham Hbr on the 11th (including one in breeding plumage) and ten at Rye Hbr on the 13th were all probably late migrants. From about 11 Aug numbers in Chichester Hbr at Pilsley Sands began to increase with returning migrants: 17 on 11 Aug increased to 112 on the 26th, 106 on 8 Sep, 208 on 4 Oct and 500 on the 29th. Conversely, at Pagham Hbr, there was only a single bird on 15 Aug, then a sudden influx of 120 on the 26th which must have passed through quickly, as by the 31st there was only one left. Thereafter, the highest counts were of fours on 15 and 28 Sep.

In the second winter period, Pilsley Island remained the stronghold of the species with non-WeBS counts of 600 on 3 Nov and 1000 on 23 Dec. Elsewhere, of the remaining 19 non-WeBS counts 77% were for no more than five birds mostly at sites in the western harbours; the exceptions were no more than three at Climping Beach or Goring Gap, and on 21 Nov one individual at Horse Eye Level (Pevensey). Counts at some of the principal seawatching locations in December produced totals of 11 E and 1 W during the month, presumably just local movements. [JAH]

Whimbrel

Numenius phaeopus

Common passage migrant, very scarce non-breeding summering and wintering species. Red listed species of high conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

The monthly WeBS counts at the principal locations were as shown in the table below. One was resident in the Fishbourne Channel (Chichester Hbr) from 12 Jan to at least 23 Mar, and there were up to two at Thorney Island from 1 to 21 Jan. In Pagham Hbr one was recorded from 24 to 26 Jan only, and there were two at Newhaven Tide Mills on 31 Jan.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	4	4	4	46	24	14	136	24	14	20	3	4
Chichester Hbr	4	3	3	10	9	14	132	17	12	7	3	4
Pagham Hbr	-	-	1	21	9	-	2	4	1	4	-	-
Newhaven	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	9	-	-
Cuckmere Haven	-	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	1	-	nc	nc
Rye Bay (all)	-	1	-	15	5	-	1	3	-	-	-	-

The first migrant passed Splash Point (Seaford) on 20 Mar; the totals recorded at seawatching sites are shown below:

		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Total	Peak movement		Hrs watched peak days
Selsey Bill	E	481	338	-	-	-	-	179	24 Apr	14.3
	W	30	2	-	1	5	-			
Climping Beach	E	58	-	-	-	-	-	46	20 Apr	2.0
	W	8	-	-	-	-	-			
Worthing Beach	E	377	173	-	4	-	-	83	17 Apr	2.8
	W	14	2	-	8	8	-			
Telscombe Cliffs	E	56	44	-	-	-	-	22	24 Apr	2.5
	W	-	-	1	-	1	-			
Splash Point	E	932	72	-	-	-	-	315	24 Apr	15.0
	W	-	-	-	-	-	-			
Beachy Head	E	91	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	-	-	-			

Birds passing close inshore were also noted elsewhere along the coast, the largest sighting being 35 at Hove on 24 Apr. Inland there were single birds at Arlington Res on 23 Apr and Pulborough Brooks on the 18th, and one flew south at Warnham LNR on the 22nd. The maximum at the Rye Hbr roost was 107 on the 26th, which is only a third of the numbers noted ten years ago. In May, there was another at Arlington on the 9th and two in the Arun Valley from the 6th to the 9th.

There were still five in Chichester Hbr on 17 Jun, but the first returning birds noted in the harbour were at Pilesey Island on 6 Jul, followed by the month's maximum there of 19 on the 16th. In August, one was seen at Pulborough Brooks on the 29th, and the maximum count at Thorney Island was 25 on the 9th.

A few lingered in Pagham and Chichester Harbours in the autumn, the maximum being seven in Fishbourne Channel on 2 Sep. There was one at Pagham Hbr from 1 to 26 Oct, then one on 25 Nov. One was recorded in Fishbourne Channel again from 21 Nov to 23 Dec, and there were up to three at Thorney Island from 9 Oct to 15 Dec. [CJRB]

Curlew

Numenius arquata

Common passage migrant and winter visitor; formerly a very scarce breeder. 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	2066	1722	1344	378	73	370	1236	673	1403	1779	1566	1041
Chichester Hbr	1446	1208	807	318	65	174	995	441	984	1254	1038	699
Pagham Hbr	355	451	331	57	8	192	202	220	200	359	467	243
Rye Bay	124	33	162	-	-	4	37	12	210	130	52	16

For the third year running, none of the counts at Chichester Hbr reached the 1% threshold of 1500 for a site of national importance for this species. The only numbers higher than the WeBS

counts in the west of the county were 100 at Pagham Hbr on 8 Apr and 14 there on 1 May, but the monthly maximum counts at Rye Hbr at the nocturnal roost were in most cases well in excess of the WeBS totals for Rye Bay and were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
661	515	270	50	3	15	60	85	260	440	260	230

The highest numbers at non-WeBS sites were all in January, with an unusually large flock of 94 at Newhaven Tide Mills on the 26th, 50 at Cuckmere Haven on the 17th, 26 at Climping Beach on the 26th, 13 at Pevensey Levels on the 17th and 11 at Southease on the 15th.

Only small numbers were recorded at seawatching points as shown in the table below, with peaks in March and April.

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	E	-	-	10	12	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	-	-
Climping Beach	E	-	-	15	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	W	-	-	93	3	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-
Worthing Beach	E	-	-	6	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	W	-	-	4	-	-	3	36	2	3	-	-	5
Telscombe Cliffs	E	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
	W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Splash Point	E	1	-	15	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	W	21	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

There were inland records of single birds at Pulborough Brooks on 17 Mar and 12 May (with four there on 11 Jun and two on 29 Aug), one was recorded at Crawley on 3 Jun, and one was at Weir Wood Res on 18 Jul and 19 Sep. Between 2 May and 16 Jun only single figures were noted. The first returning bird was noted at Pilsey Island on 2 Jun, and numbers there built up to 224 on 16 Jul.

From October to December there were no counts at WeBS sites any higher than in the table, and the largest flocks at other locations were 69 at Newhaven Tide Mills on 20 Nov, 35 at Bracklesham Bay on 27 Oct, 22 at Elmer (Middleton) on 16 Dec and 15 at Cuckmere Haven on 24 Oct. During the hard weather of December several were seen inland; one at Arlington Res on the 4th, five at Amberley Wild Brooks on the 12th, four at Lewes Brooks on the 16th, one at Pulborough Brooks from the 20th to the 27th, and one flying up Henfield High Street on the 11th.

Presumably the same bird variously described as albino or leucistic was seen at Pagham Hbr on 9 Jan, 9 Mar and 18 Aug. [CJRB]

Common Sandpiper

Actitis hypoleucos

Fairly common passage migrant; very scarce in winter. Has bred at least once. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

Birds were noted in 72 tetrads during the year. The monthly WeBS counts at principal sites were as shown in the table below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	2	-	-	4	6	6	53	74	18	8	5	4
Chichester Hbr	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	5	4	-	-	-
Pagham Hbr	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	1	-	1	-
Chichester GP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Arun - S of Arundel	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	5	3	-	2	3
Ardingly Res	nc	nc	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	2	-	-
Weir Wood Res	-	-	-	1	-	nc	3	2	-	1	-	nc
Ouse Levels	1	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	-
Bewl Water	-	-	-	nc	nc	nc	6	5	5	1	1	-
Rye Bay	1	-	-	3	3	2	30	39	4	3	1	1

The approximate minimum monthly totals in the county were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
10	4	3	36	49	20	116	114	61	18	13	10

Counts during January included three on the R Adur at Upper Beeding from the 2nd to the 5th, probably the same three near the Toll Bridge (Shoreham) on the 10th and three near Dallington on the 14th. Single birds were seen at five other locations during the first winter period. On 12 Apr two were at Piddinghoe and single birds were seen at Pulborough Brooks on the 14th and Sidlesham Ferry on the 15th. During the period from 18 Apr to 23 May birds were recorded in approximately 29 tetrads on an almost daily basis, mainly as ones to threes; the highest counts were ten at Southend Fm (Sidlesham) on 20 Apr and ten at Weir Wood Res on 3 May.

There were no breeding records. During the BBS, only one bird was recorded, at Barcombe on 26 Apr.

Numbers were generally low through spring into summer until failed breeders or post-breeding migrants returned. The first evidence of this was five at Climping Beach on 6 Jul followed by seven at Rye Hbr on the 14th increasing to 11 on the 18th. Numbers then began to increase, notably in East Sussex, with 19 at Weir Wood Res on 4 Aug, 12 at Arlington Res on the 14th, 15 at East Guldeford Level on the 15th, 12 at Scotney Court GP on the 19th and 11 at Cuckmere Haven on the 23rd. Twelve on the R Adur at Upper Beeding on 26 Aug was the highest count in West Sussex. Numbers decreased in the autumn period to mainly ones to threes widely spread with the highest count being six at Pulborough Brooks on 12 Sep. In the second winter period, numbers continued at typically low levels with mainly ones or twos widely, the highest count being three in the Arun valley on 18 Dec. [WEC]

Green Sandpiper

Tringa ochropus

Scarce spring and autumn passage migrant, more frequent in autumn; scarce in winter. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

The monthly WeBS counts for the principal sites were as shown in the table below. Numbers were generally down on the figures recorded in 2009, particularly over the autumn passage period (July excepted), but were otherwise generally in line with the 10-year average. Over the whole year, 70% of records were of one or two birds and less than 16% were of five or more, all (except one April record) occurring from 24 Jun onwards.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	6	-	4	4	-	2	25	51	11	4	4	1
Chichester Hbr	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-
Arun Valley	-	-	-	2	-	2	4	8	2	1	-	-
Weir Wood Res	-	-	-	-	-	nc	-	9	1	1	1	nc
Barcombe Res	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
Arlington Res	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Pevensey Levels	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	nc	-	-	-	-

Taking account of records away from WeBS sites, the approximate monthly totals, compared with the 10-year average, were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	21	12	15	34	3	26	56	86	38	14	18	19
10-yr average	17	15	15	20	4	22	7	106	48	20	17	18

Birds were recorded in every month except March at Pulborough Brooks and every month except October at Rye Hbr. In the first half of the year, the majority of sightings were of single birds, though four were seen in the Brede Valley on 17 Jan, with the same number in the Lower Ouse Valley on 6 Feb. On 17 Apr, six were seen at a small pond on a disused landfill site at Boxgrove and on that day three were seen at Sidlesham Ferry Pool, at Sefter Fm (Rose Green) and at Rye Hbr.

Although there were a few records of ones or twos in early June, the commencement of return passage was effectively signalled by three at Pulborough Brooks on 21 June and 12 at Rye Hbr on the 25th, growing to 14 there in August. Observers at Pett Level recorded maxima of 17 in July followed by 15 in August. At Weir Wood Res, six were noted on 31 Jul and 16 on 4 Aug. At Pulborough Brooks, 18 were recorded on 24 Aug, but in September the maximum was only two there. Thereafter, the highest numbers recorded were three at Icklesham on 2 Nov and three at Ferring Rife on both 29 Nov and 7 Dec. [NJR]

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	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	6	2	3	1	-	-	1	5	2	4	3	-
Chichester Hbr	5	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	3	-
Pagham Hbr	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	4	-	1	-	-

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

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
12	7	5	3	1	3	5	9	9	18	10	6

In the first winter period most of the wintering birds were in the Chichester and Pagham Harbour areas, and numbers were similar to last year with about seven in the former site and three in the latter. The only wintering birds reported away from these sites were singles at Rye Hbr and Pett Level.

The wintering birds dwindled in number through February and March and had all departed by the end of April. As usual, spring passage was not very marked, consisting of probably just two birds: these were singles at Rye Hbr on 18 Apr and Sidlesham Ferry on 9 May. Although similar to last year it is still quite a poor showing; by way of comparison there were 12 records for April 2008.

With a five week gap it seems reasonable to assume (and again as usual) that the next reported individual (at Sidlesham Ferry on 13 Jun) was the first returning bird, presumably a failed breeder. There were two other June records: at Pulborough Brooks from the 17th to the 20th and at Rye Hbr on the 22nd. There were five July records: at Pett Level on the 4th, at Rye Hbr on the 12th, at Pagham Hbr on the 18th, and singles at both Rye Hbr and Pett Level on the 23rd.

August was also relatively poor, with a total of nine birds seen, compared with last year's total of 22. Most were from the usual coastal sites but there was one inland, at Weir Wood Res, on the 30th. In September, there was a similar scattering of ones and twos from the Rye, Pagham and Chichester Harbour areas, with one additional record from The Midrips.

Unlike last year, numbers actually increased during October; 18 seen through the month was double the number seen in September, with the high count being seven at Pagham Hbr on the 27th. Other notable counts during the month included three at Sidlesham Ferry on the 10th, three at Nutbourne (Chichester Hbr) on the 30th and three at Pagham Hbr on the 31st. Numbers then dropped off towards the end of the year, with totals of 10 in November and six in December being typical for the time of year. Most were (typically) in the Chichester Hbr area, with a couple in Pagham Hbr plus singles at Rye Hbr during December, and inland at Pulborough Brooks on 17 Nov. [JC]

Greenshank

Tringa nebularia

Fairly common passage migrant; very scarce in 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	17	19	16	21	2	2	62	149	154	97	45	13
Chichester Hbr	16	19	16	20	1	2	58	103	139	76	45	12
Pagham Hbr	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	4	20	-	1
Rye Bay	-	-	-	1	1	-	4	33	9	1	-	-

During the first winter period the largest concentrations by far, as usual, were from Thorney Deeps (Chichester Hbr), with a peak there of 21 on 1 Feb. Smaller numbers were seen elsewhere in Chichester Hbr, including four at West Chidham on 20 Mar. Away from Chichester Hbr, the only records during the first winter period were single birds at Pagham Hbr, on various dates, and at Arundel WWT on 28 Mar.

Wintering birds lingered at the usual sites in Chichester Hbr into April making it difficult to determine exactly when spring passage started there. The first migrants away from Chichester Hbr were two at Pevensey Levels on 11 Apr, although it is possible that the bird at Arundel WWT

on 28 Mar mentioned above could have been an early migrant. Birds were recorded widely along the coast throughout April and May, with the high count being 18 at Thorney Deeps on 29 Apr; away from Chichester Hbr the highest spring count on the coast was four at Rye Hbr on 7 May. Inland, birds were seen regularly at Pulborough Brooks, with a high count there of seven on 22 May, and there were ones and twos at scattered locations elsewhere. Just four birds were seen on spring seawatches this year, all flying east; these were a single bird past Climping on 17 Apr, two past Worthing on 13 May and one past Seaford on 21 May. The last spring records were difficult to determine due to the presence of birds at several sites in early and mid-June; singles at Rye Hbr on the 8th, at Selsey West Fields on 11th, and at Pagham Hbr on the 13th were probably late spring migrants, while the status of two at Thorney Deeps on the 16th and the 17th, and of a single at Sidlesham Ferry on the 19th, is less clear.

The first clearly returning bird was one at Pett Level on 29 Jun, and there were three at Thorney Deeps the next day, presumably involving a returning migrant and the two mid-June birds that had been seen there earlier. Greenshanks are considerably more widespread in autumn than in winter and spring, but Chichester Hbr still holds the highest concentrations. At Thorney Deeps, numbers built to 56 by 14 Jul, 96 by 11 Aug and a county high count for the year of 107 on 9 Sep; this was 26 more than the high count last year (which was 81 in August). Numbers there dropped to 80 a week later. Elsewhere during autumn passage, double figures were regularly recorded at Pett Level, with a high count there of 19 on 15 Aug, and other notable counts included seven at Rye Hbr on both 27 Jul and 28 Aug, eight on East Guldeford Level on 15 Aug, and 12 at Fishbourne Channel (Chichester Hbr) on both 16 and 30 Sep. Numbers at Pulborough Brooks were lower than in recent years, with a maximum of just three on 15 Aug. Small numbers were also seen along much of the coast and at scattered locations inland, including Bewl Water, Greatham Bridge and Weir Wood Res, as well as Pulborough Brooks.

During the second winter period, numbers at Thorney Deeps decreased from 65 on 8 Oct to 43 on 6 Nov and 19 on 5 Dec. Away from there, wintering birds were recorded at various other sites in Chichester Hbr (including five at East Chidham and two at East Head), but the only birds reported away from Chichester Hbr were up to two birds at Rye Hbr in early November and single birds seen at Sidlesham Ferry on 18 Dec and Pagham Hbr the following day (probably involving the same bird). [JC]

Wood Sandpiper

Tringa glareola

Very scarce spring and autumn migrant: recorded once in winter. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

The minimum monthly totals were as follows:

Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
1	18	2	10	13	5

The first sighting was on 29 Apr at Lewes Brooks. In May two birds were at the North Fields (Pagham Hbr) on the 4th. Elsewhere, single birds were recorded at Weir Wood Res on the 11th, Houghton Green (Playden) and Rye Hbr both on the 13th and Pevensy Levels on the 24th. By far the biggest total for the year, however, was an exceptional 12 seen at Pulborough Brooks on 22 May. The last spring bird was one on 5 Jun, also at Pulborough Brooks.

A sighting of one bird at Pett Level on 25 Jun was presumably the start of autumn passage. Small numbers were seen during July, with three at Rye Hbr on the 23rd and three at Weir Wood

Res on the 25th. At Pett Level, small numbers were seen from 3 to 18 Aug with a peak count of six on the 3rd. After a further sighting of two at Pulborough Brooks on 23 Aug, numbers reduced during September. The last bird of the year was one at Earmley on 28 Sep. [NJR]

Redshank

Tringa totanus

Scarce resident and 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	2025	1861	1561	341	45	153	819	1187	1656	1910	1631	1334
Chichester Hbr	1506	1598	1194	204	5	42	746	853	1393	1449	1297	1123
Pagham Hbr	224	139	166	44	5	68	57	150	148	232	116	70
Lower Adur Estuary	29	nc	64	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	33	66	86	43
Rye Bay	164	79	91	77	18	25	11	183	79	157	43	54

As usual, the highest counts by far were in Chichester Hbr, where numbers exceeded the 1% national threshold number of 1200 during five of the autumn and winter months. The two winter months that missed the 1% threshold only did so by a fraction (with 1194 in March and 1123 in December); this once again reconfirms the huge importance of the area as a wintering site for this species, which is of national significance.

In the first winter period, significant counts not included in the WeBS table included 129 on East Guldeford Level on 17 Jan, 50 at Cuckmere Haven, also on 17 Jan, 44 at Newhaven Tide Mills on 4 Feb, and 35 at the Ouse Estuary Project (Newhaven) on 14 Mar. These are about average numbers, but very few were reported from Pulborough Brooks with the high count there being just five on 15 Mar.

Spring passage was not particularly noticeable and was generally indicated by the departure of wintering birds. An indication of the timing of this was seen at Thorney Deeps (Chichester Hbr), where numbers decreased from 362 on 17 Mar to 168 on 14 Apr and 18 by 5 May. Similarly at Pagham Hbr numbers dropped from 157 on 14 Mar to 36 on 18 Apr and just four (possibly all potentially breeding birds) by 13 May. Birds were seen at widely spread inland locations during the spring, but in very low numbers with the highest inland count for April being just four at Burpham Levels on the 7th.

Breeding, or attempted breeding, was recorded at a minimum of nine sites this year, with birds present during June at another two; this is very similar to the situation last year and notably better than in several recent years, which is encouraging. In Chichester Hbr there were nine pairs at Thorney Deeps, one pair at West Chidham and one or possibly two pairs at West Itchenor, although breeding success was not noted at any of these sites. The nine pairs at Thorney Deeps is very good news. At Rye Hbr there were a total of 13 pairs (three on the Beach Reserve, eight at Harbour Farm and two at Castle Water), which raised at least three young. This is six pairs fewer than bred there last year; the reasons for which are not known; it may simply be natural fluctuations but at least they were successful in raising some young. In the Arun Valley, six pairs raised at least four young at Pulborough Brooks (a slight increase on last year) and there were at least two pairs at Amberley Wild Brooks (but breeding success there is not known). Three birds, including a juvenile, were seen at Waltham Brooks in June, but it was not noted whether the juvenile was thought to have fledged from there. At Bracklesham Bay and Lewes Brooks

RSPB reserves there were seven and five pairs respectively, with a minimum of five young seen at the former site, and two at the latter. This further confirms the important contribution that these relatively new reserves are making to the success of breeding Redshanks in the county. Elsewhere, five pairs raised at least three young at Pagham Hbr and there was at least one pair noted at Pevensey Levels during a breeding bird survey there.

The first non-breeding birds started returning in late June with 230 at Thorney Deepes by the 30th. Numbers at this site then built to 570 by 14 Jul, 650 by 12 Aug, and 800 on 22 Sep, which was the peak count for the autumn/late winter period at this site. Autumn peaks are traditional at this site, and 800 is comparable to the high count of 1000 recorded there in August 2008. Other notable autumn/late winter counts (excluding the WeBS counts above) included 150 on the East Guldeford Level on 10 Oct, 63 at the Newhaven Ouse Estuary Project on 15 Nov, 42 at Newhaven Tide Mills on 14 Nov, 24 at Climping Beach on 2 Dec and 20 at Cuckmere Haven on 26 Dec. (JC)

Turnstone

Arenaria interpres

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant; scarce non-breeder in summer. Rare away from coast. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

Birds were recorded in 64 tetrads along the coast but predominantly in the west. 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	793	364	538	60	20	27	14	265	244	345	319	318
Chichester Hbr	201	127	247	-	-	10	-	51	45	109	115	174
Pagham Hbr	230	212	62	19	19	8	14	141	108	109	174	55
Climping	233	nc	4	6	nc	1	nc	28	55	66	23	48
Arun - S of Arundel	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	-	-
Lower Adur Estuary	7	nc	70	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	27	12	4	10
Glyne Gap	117	-	134	nc	-	3	nc	8	-	4	2	28
Rye Bay	5	24	18	35	1	5	-	36	9	17	1	3

The highest count in the first winter period, in addition to the WeBS counts, was 300 at Pagham Hbr on 20 Feb. Monthly totals recorded at the principal seawatching sites, including birds on the beach, were as shown in the table below. This shows the paucity of moving birds; the maximum day total was 51 E at Selsey Bill on 18 Apr.

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	E	2	-	2	145	28	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	W	8	-	-	-	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	o/b	-	14	25	279	36	-	2	152	90	46	14	4
Climping Beach	E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	o/b	130	160	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-
Worthing Beach	E	-	-	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	35	-	-	9	3	-	-	-	-
	o/b	7	12	-	56	2	-	-	-	45	-	-	15

Peak counts of birds on the beach were: at Selsey Bill 50 on 12 Apr, 66 on 27 Aug and 47 on 4 Sep; at Climping 130 on 26 Jan and 160 on 9 Feb; at Worthing 33 on 14 Apr and 45 on 22 Sep. At Goring Beach, there were 47 on 14 Mar increasing to 93 on 20 Mar.

High tide roosting behaviour was recorded at several sites, mainly in West Sussex during the first winter period: there were maxima of 75 at both Worthing Beach and Climping Beach (on sea defence rocks) on 1 Mar, 45 at Goring Beach on 14 Mar and 20 at Brooklands (Worthing) on 14 Apr.

During the spring, 90 were recorded at Pilsey Sands on 3 Apr but the last record there for the month was 72 on the 7th but 120 remained at Bexhill on the 29th. During the summer months the first sizeable count was 80 at Church Norton on 27 Jul increasing to 132 in Pagham Hbr on 15 Aug and 66 at Selsey Bill 27 Aug. In the east, at Rye Hbr, there were 26 on 7 Aug and numbers remained below this for the rest of the year.

In the autumn and second winter period counts were generally lower. However, there were 12 counts of 50 or more in the autumn months including 106 at Pagham Hbr on 19 Sep falling to 96 on 10 Oct. Numbers were similar in the last two months of the year with ten counts of 50 or more including 150 at West Itchenor (Chichester Hbr) on 5 Nov and 100 at Rustington on the 13th.

The only inland record was a single bird at Weir Wood Res on 7 Aug. [WEC]

Grey Phalarope

Phalaropus fulicarius

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

A single bird was photographed at the mouth of the River Rother at Rye Hbr on 22 Oct (JR). Another nearby at Pett Pools from 13 to 25 Nov (mo) attracted many admirers and was also photographed. These take the total since the start of 2000 to 41, with arrival dates in January (three), August (one), September (10), October (five), November (16) and December (six). [PJ]

Pomarine Skua

Stercorarius pomarinus

Passage migrant in variable numbers in spring, usually scarce, but very scarce in autumn; rare in winter.

In SxBR 2009 it was reported that the year had been the worst for sightings of this species during the past 22 years with a spring total of just 51. Unfortunately, 2010 was even worse with a total of just 46 in spring which was the lowest total since 1983. This low figure had the effect of reducing the 10-year rolling average from 166 to 153.

The monthly totals for eastward passage recorded at the main seawatching sites were as follows:

	Apr	May	Total
<i>Monthly minima</i>	27	19	46
Selsey Bill	14	14	28
Worthing Beach	3	4	7
Splash Point	23	7	30

The first record of the year was on 18 Apr when there was 1 E past both Splash Point (Seaford) and Birling Gap. There were only a further seven days in April on which the species was recorded with the peak occurring on the 28th with 8 E at Selsey Bill, 3 E at Worthing Beach and 16 E at

Splash Point. The only other records during the month, away from the three sites mentioned, were single birds off Bexhill on 19 Apr and off Birling Gap on 24 Apr.

The species was recorded on just nine days in May which is traditionally the peak month. The only dates on which more than two birds were recorded were 10 May with 6 E at Selsey Bill, and 21 May when there were 4 E at Selsey Bill, 1 E at Worthing Beach and 4 E at Splash Point. The totals for the two months are equivalent to just one every twelve hours of seawatching at Selsey Bill and one every five hours at Splash Point.

There were no records in June and the only autumn record was of a single bird past Splash Point on 3 Oct. [DHH]

Arctic Skua

Stercorarius parasiticus

Fairly common spring and scarce autumn passage migrant; very scarce in summer and rare in winter. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

The total numbers of birds shown in the following tables were computed on the assumption that the highest number of birds recorded at any coastal site on any day was the minimum in the county on that date and that birds seen on subsequent days were different. Only those birds for which a flight direction was recorded are included in the tables.

As with the previous species it was not a good year for Arctic Skuas with the spring total of 200 being the lowest since 1990. The overall total for the year was 259 compared with the 10-year rolling average of 447.

The approximate monthly totals for which a flight direction E or W was recorded were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
No. of birds	-	-	2	146	52	-	-	21	21	11	5	1	259
No. of days	0	0	1	17	15	0	0	9	8	7	2	1	
10-year averages	1	1	4	201	129	10	12	30	28	20	10	1	447

Monthly totals were noticeably low during the period of spring passage and this was particularly apparent in May. Given the long periods of westerly and northerly winds in April and May it is possible that both Pomarine and Arctic Skuas migrated along either the French coast or up the western side of Britain rather than along the Sussex coast.

The first record of the year was of 2 E at Splash Point on 26 Mar. This was followed on 2 Apr by 4 E at Selsey Bill, 8 E at Worthing Beach and 2 E at both Telscombe Cliffs and Splash Point. Unusually there was a gap from 5 Apr to 16 Apr inclusive when none was recorded but birds were then seen daily from 22 Apr until the end of the month as shown in the table below.

	April									
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
Selsey Bill	4	2	25	15	1	1	20	2	6	
Worthing Beach	-	-	11	2	-	-	4	-	-	
Telscombe Cliffs	-	-	7	1	-	-	-	-	-	
Splash Point	-	1	58	22	3	-	17	-	-	

Although spring passage continued until 29 May, when there were 4 E at Selsey Bill, the only notable movement occurred on 14 May with 14 E at Selsey Bill, 4 E at Worthing Beach and 11

E at Splash Point. There were no records in either June or July and it is the first time since 1988 that both months have been blank.

The monthly totals of passage birds at the principal seawatching sites were as follows:

		Mar	Apr	May	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Peak movement*
Selsey Bill	E	-	88	48	1	1	5	-	-	25 E in 14¼ hrs
	W	-	-	-	12	2	3	4	-	
Worthing Beach	E	-	30	7	1	3	1	-	-	11 E in 5 hrs
	W	-	-	-	5	2	2	1	-	
Telscombe Cliffs	E	-	10	1	-	1	-	-	-	7 E in 2 ½ hrs
	W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	
Splash Point	E	2	123	19	-	5	4	-	-	58 E in 15 hrs
	W	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	

*in each case the peak movement was on 24 Apr

Numbers in August and September were actually higher than those in 2009 and in each case were made up of birds moving both east and west. The clearest indications of returning migrants were 4 W at Worthing Beach on 27 Aug and 4 W at Rye on 14 Sept. Birds continued to move back and forth along the coast in small numbers during October and the early part of November. The last record of the year was of 1 W at Telscombe Cliffs on 4 Dec. [DHH]

Long-tailed Skua

Stercorarius longicaudus

Rare vagrant.

After two blank years there were two records during the year: an adult on the sea off Birling Gap on 13 May (TWP) and an adult passing Splash Point (Seaford) on 29 Sep (RCS). Although the species has only been recorded in seven years since the turn of the century, the current records bring the total since then to fourteen. [DHH]

Great Skua

Stercorarius skua

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

The estimated minimum total of just 116 was the lowest since 1999 and well below the 10-year rolling average of 187.

The minimum monthly totals of passage birds are shown below. These figures do not include records of birds lingering offshore or those for which no direction was recorded.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Monthly total	3	1	2	58	23	-	-	6	4	6	9	4	116
No. of days	3	1	2	19	13	0	0	6	4	3	4	3	

The first record of the year was of 1 E at Worthing Beach on 6 Jan with single birds recorded at the same site on 10 and 12 Jan. In February, the only record was of 1 W at Telscombe Cliffs on the 1st whilst in March there were no records of passage birds although single birds were recorded lingering offshore in Rye Bay and at Church Norton on the 12th and 14th respectively.

Spring passage started in earnest on 2 Apr and continued intermittently until the end of May. The vast majority of records involved just one or two birds and in April the only daily counts in

excess of five all came from Splash Point (Seaford) with 12 E on the 19th, 7 E on the 24th, 8 E on the 25th and 9 E on the 28th. The highest count in May was of 5 E at Selsey Bill on the 11th.

Monthly totals at the principal seawatching sites were as follows:

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	E	2	-	-	29	16	1	-	1	-	-
	W	2	-	-	1	-	-	1	2	-	-
Worthing Beach	E	-	-	-	6	3	2	1	2	-	1
	W	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	1
Telscombe Cliffs	E	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	1
	W	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Splash Point	E	-	-	-	45	1	-	-	4	-	-
	W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-

Only a single bird was recorded in June (one offshore at Worthing Beach on the 2nd) and there were no records in July. The August and September records all involved singletons with equal numbers of birds moving east and west. The trickle of one or two birds continued throughout the second winter period but 6 W at Rye on 8 Nov was unusual for the time of year. The final records of a disappointing year were of 1 E at Worthing Beach and 2 E at Shoreham on 30 Dec. [DHH]

Kittiwake

Rissa tridactyla

Common but very localised breeding species; fairly common or common winter visitor and passage migrant. Rare away from coast. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

Although birds were recorded along the coast in every month of the year most records were, as usual, of coastal movements. Monthly totals from the principal seawatching locations were as follows:

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	may	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	E	8	20	2	26	41	-	-	2	3	2	2	13
	W	1	5	-	32	17	-	-	10	7	9	2017	6
Worthing Beach	E	16	1	31	19	5	1	-	1	19	46	51	36
	W	149	32	1	11	-	-	1	1	3	120	69	13
Telscombe cliffs	E	1	27	27	127	19	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
	W	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	8

In the first winter period, the first large count was of 233 at Glyne Gap (Bexhill) on 15 Jan. However, counts at Splash Point (Seaford), of birds apparently returning to their nearby breeding site on Seaford Head, involved 200 on 24 Jan, 222 on the 31st, 400 on 5 Feb and 500 on the 27th. Breeding was reported only from the traditional colonies at Newhaven and Seaford Head cliffs. At Newhaven Cliffs there were 45 occupied nests in the June survey, and there were 830 occupied nests on the cliffs at Seaford Head. There were no details of breeding success at these colonies. One juvenile and one adult were seen at Brighton Marina on 4 Sep. The only significant movement during late autumn/early winter was a minimum of 2000 W at Selsey Bill during a 2½-hr watch. This was not detected at other sites in the county and was the highest number recorded in Sussex since 24 Jan 2002 when 5000 flew west past Selsey Bill. The only other three-figure count was 103 W at Worthing in 1¼ hr on 30 Oct. There were no inland records. [LAW]

Bonaparte's Gull*Chroicocephalus philadelphia*

Very rare vagrant.

An adult found at Arlington Res on 18 Apr remained until the 22nd (DGB *et al.*). This was one of five which occurred in Britain during the year and only the fifth record for Sussex with the last being at Pagham Lagoon in March 2002. The record has been accepted by the BBRC. [DHH]



Bonaparte's Gull, Arlington Reservoir, April 2010 (Roger Charlwood)

Black-headed Gull*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

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

2009: At Rye Hbr on 28 Apr 1246 nests were counted at Ternery Pool, and at least 146 pairs were counted on the quarry. After taking into account nests hidden by vegetation and pairs still nest building it was considered that the overall colony size was about 1600 pairs from which between 2000 and 2400 young fledged.

2010: Two nocturnal roost sites were regularly counted; the maximum monthly totals are shown below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Bewl Water	18,620	16,800	2700	-	564	11,150	-
Glyne Gap	-	3500	-	2100	3200	1200	-

In January and February, there were no other five-figure counts but six four-figure counts in addition to the above, the highest being 5000 at Felpham on 14 Feb, 2000 at Henfield Levels on

25 Jan and 1387 at E Chidham on 27 Feb. At Warnham LNR there were 1200 on 14 Jan rising to 2000 on 24 Feb, when there were also 1200 at Knepp MP, the largest number ever recorded there. During March, there were still 700 at Warnham LNR on the 9th and the same number at Lidsey Tip on the 14th. Numbers at coastal sites then began to build up, with monthly maxima of 2500 at Rye Hbr on the 29th and 1500 at Pett Level on the 30th.

Passage, as recorded at several seawatching points, was as shown below:

		Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Peak counts
Selsey Bill	E	27	228	95	-	-	-	-	-	45 E on 24 Apr
	W	15	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Worthing Beach	E	86	347	122	3	8	-	-	-	71 E on 8 Apr
	W	7	92	38	7	170	60	7	50	
Climping Gap	E	90	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	90 E on 21 Mar
	W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	

Between April and June only small numbers of non-breeding birds were recorded; the largest groups were 200 at Pagham Hbr on 1 May and 100 at Thorney Is on 17 Jun.

Breeding numbers at Rye Hbr, in the main colony and elsewhere, were estimated at 2600 nests, a record total at this site (where numbers have increased tenfold in ten years), and breeding success was high, with 4500-5000 young fledged. At New Lake (Chichester GP) there were about 30 nests on the tern rafts, though birds were being disturbed by loafing Cormorants. Records suggest that about 100 pairs bred at Pett Level, and single pairs were reported breeding at The Severals (Church Norton) and Arundel WWT.

During July to September good numbers were recorded offshore at Selsey Bill, with 250 on 24 Jul and 215 on 27 Aug, but the only counts over 500 were 3728 at East Chidham on 11 Sep and 2100 in the Glyne Gap roost on the 17th.

In the last three months of the year, there were no five-figure counts additional to those in the roost count table above, but there were four four-figure counts. The highest counts were 1500 at Pagham Hbr on 19 Oct, 1100 at Weir Wood Res on 7 Dec and 1000 at Brighton Bevendean on 25 Nov. Observers seawatching at Telscombe Cliffs recorded a series of large offshore gatherings, with 600 on 28 Nov rising to 1300 on the 30th. Regular counts at Warnham LNR showed monthly maxima of 400 on 26 Oct, 500 on 30 Nov and 1800 on 15 Dec. There were 950 at Henfield Levels on 14 Nov, 410 at Bognor Regis East on 3 Dec and 300 at both Barcombe and Arlington Reservoirs during the last week of November. [CJRB]

Little Gull

Hydrocoloeus minutus

Fairly common passage migrant, most numerous in spring. Scarce in summer and winter. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

After two low years, the total for the year returned to more usual levels with a minimum of 800 birds seen, though 75% of these were passage birds recorded in only three days in April. The monthly totals are shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Monthly total	5	1	19	719	10	2	-	6	5	14	16	2
No. of days	4	1	7	16	8	2	-	4	6	5	10	2
Inland total	-	-	7	62	-	-	-	3	1	-	2	-

The first reports of the year were of one at Goring Beach on 6 Jan and probably the same bird at Worthing Beach the same day. Single birds were noted along the coast in the first three months of the year but ten at Splash Point (Seaford) on 18 Mar was the first indication of passage. One was seen inland at Weir Wood Res on 24 and 25 Mar, and there were up to three at Chichester GP from the 26th to the 28th and three at Pulborough Brooks on the 29th.

The main passage period began abruptly on 18 Apr, when 112 passed Birling Gap and a maximum of 60 gathered at Arlington Res, an inland record for the county following the 47 seen there on 20 April 1999. Another wave passed on the 24th, when 405 logged at Splash Point in 15 hr was the second highest county day total after the 564 at Brighton Marina on 26 Apr 2003. In contrast, only ones and twos were seen in May, and the only bird in June was one at Rye Hbr on the 7th, 8th and 20th.

Totals recorded at the main seawatching points are shown below:

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May		Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	E	-	-	-	148	5		2	2	-
	W	-	-	-	-	-		3	3	-
Worthing Beach	E	-	-	-	12	1		-	2	-
	W	1	-	-	-	-		2	-	-
Telscombe Cliffs	E	-	-	-	26	-		-	-	1
	W	-	-	-	-	-		2	-	-
Beachy Head	E	-	-	-	164	-		-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-
Splash Point	E	2	-	11	591	3		6	-	-
	W	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-

None were recorded in July. During August and September most of the records came from Arlington Res, where there were up to two from 21 to 24 Aug and one on 11 and 12 Sep. There was one at Bewl Water on 23 Aug, and along the coast there were reports of single birds at Hastings, Cuckmere Haven, Shoreham, Worthing Beach and Pagham Hbr. Autumn passage was again low, as it has been for the past three years, the largest westerly movement being three at Selsey Bill on 3 Oct, though a total of six strangely flew east at Splash Point on the same day. All the records in October and November were coastal except for one at Pulborough Brooks on 20 Nov and one at Bewl Water on the 25th. The only December records were of one in the lower Cuckmere Valley on the 5th and one past Telscombe Cliffs on the 9th. [CJRB]

Mediterranean Gull

Larus melanocephalus

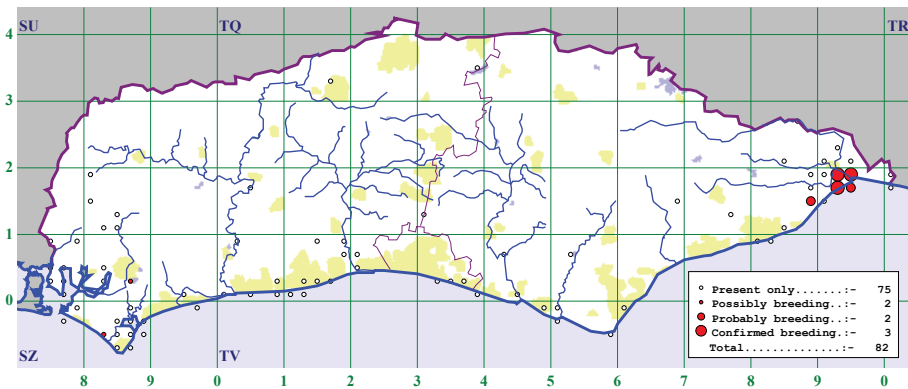
Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant; scarce but increasing breeder. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

The table below gives the estimated minimum monthly totals and, with the second table, illustrates the usual pattern for this species in the county: with the main wintering area being almost exclusively on the Selsey peninsula, large numbers pass through during March and April, and there is an increasing breeding population in the east.

The wintering population was as usual concentrated in Pagham Hbr, but single birds were also seen occasionally in Chichester Hbr and elsewhere along the West Sussex coast as far east as Littlehampton. The only sightings anywhere else in January were single birds at Hastings and at Warnham LNR on the 9th (and again at the latter site on the 31st), at Bexhill on the 15th, Brighton

Marina on the 17th and at Pett Level on the 24th. In February there were up to 11 at Pett Level and single birds on the R Adur (Shoreham) on the 6th, at Lewes Brooks on the 14th, and at Warnham LNR again on the 13th. At Bewl Water presumably the same three were recorded during counts of the gull roost in January, February and March, with eight there on 26 Feb.

	Total	Inland	Highest number recorded
Jan	160	2	113, Pagham Hbr, 17 th
Feb	205	11	120, Pagham Hbr, 2 nd
Mar	816	157	259, Pett Level, 29 th
Apr	1080	68	319, Rye Hbr, 29 th
May	421	1	352, Rye Hbr, 31 st
Jun	478	15	426, Rye Hbr, 1 st
Jul	246	4	65, Thorney Island, 22 nd
Aug	113	21	35, Pagham Hbr, 5 th
Sep	283	1	150, Fields west of Selsey, 16 th
Oct	155	1	84, Pagham Hbr, 24 th
Nov	137	2	108, Pagham Hbr, 20 th
Dec	105	2	55, Climping, 7 th



From late March numbers built up as birds passed through, including a notable 140 at Udimore on 29 Mar and 259 at Pett Level on the same day, 57 at Funtington on 5 Apr, 80 at Thorney Island on the 13th and a record 143 at Thorney Deepes on the 25th. Inland, there were two at Arundel WWT on 14 Mar. The totals recorded at seawatching points are shown in the table below.

The breeding population at Rye Harbour broke all records with an estimated minimum of 185 pairs, more than double the record 2009 total of 90 pairs, and 74 fledged young were counted. There were no records of breeding from any other site, although three pairs appeared to be prospecting at New Lake (Chichester GP) in April.

Autumn movements brought some high counts to locations outside the normal breeding and wintering areas, with 65 at Thorney Island on 22 Jul and 150 in fields west of Selsey on 16 Sep, whilst inland there were single birds at Pulborough Brooks on 9 Jul, Arlington Res on the 18th and at Weir Wood Res on 27 Jul, 19 to 20 Aug and 22 Sep.

In the second winter period, the only birds away from the wintering areas were a maximum of eight at Bexhill on the 28 Oct, single birds at Arlington Res on 7 Oct, Hastings from 12 to 18

Nov, Warnham LNR on the 12 and 28 Nov and Bewl Water on the 25 Nov, and two at Stanmer on 31 Dec.

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	E	5	2	9	14	4	-	-	3	3	4	3	5
	W	10	1	6	10	5	-	-	6	15	23	1	-
Climping	E	1	-	5	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	W	2	1	-	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Worthing Beach	E	7	-	12	100	7	3	10	-	-	4	-	5
	W	1	-	4	40	3	-	95	3	12	5	3	3
Telscombe Cliffs	E	-	1	2	31	-	3	2	-	-	2	-	-
	W	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	1	3	-	1
Splash Point	E	-	-	6	142	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	W	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Birds were occasionally reported from downland in West Sussex between March and July, with six at North Marden on 7 Mar and single birds at five other locations. [CJRB]

Common Gull

Larus canus

Very common winter visitor and passage migrant; scarce in summer; bred until 1963 and breeding attempted again since 2006. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

Nocturnal roost counts at Bewl Water provided the largest numbers during the first winter period, with 43,553 on 23 Jan, 52,000 on 26 Feb and 28,500 on 20 Mar. Elsewhere, 3394 were counted at East Chidham (Chichester Hbr) on 30 Jan with 1266 there on 27 Feb, 600 were found in the Thorney Channel (Chichester Hbr) on 17 Jan, 690 in the Goring Gap on 26 Feb with 720 there on 22 Mar, 700 feeding behind the plough at Mill Hill (Shoreham) on 3 Mar and 700 at Pett Level on 29 Mar.

Sea-watching records from Selsey, Climping, Worthing, Telscombe and Seaford showed a small easterly movement in spring with 80 E in March and 4 W and 142 E in April. At Ladywell (Coombes), 180 were counted on 24 Apr, most flying east. Five hundred were counted in the Adur Estuary (Shoreham) on 1 Apr, 250 were counted in the Tillingham Valley (Rye) on 16 Apr and 207 were at Pett Level on 28 Apr.

Records diminished as the breeding season progressed, five being seen at Bognor Regis on 12 May, six at Pulborough Brooks on 20 May, 13 at Ladywell (Coombes) on 10 May, five counted at Boars Head (Crowborough) on 12 Jun and 40 seen at Pett Level on 27 May. A pair nested at Rye Hbr and a chick was recorded on 22 Jun, the first in Sussex since 1963. However, the chick did not survive many days.

In the summer and autumn periods, although there was no discernible westerly movement detected, there was an increase in numbers recorded with 250 on Thorney Island on 22 Jul, 600 on Stakes Island (Chichester Hbr) on 14 Oct, 200 following a seed drill at Canada Bottom (Findon) on 20 Oct and 400 at Rye Hbr on 17 Oct.

With the return of winter, 3000 were seen roosting in the Thorney Channel on 29 Nov, 600 were on Pilsey Sands (Chichester Hbr) on 26 Dec, and 133 were on Weir Wood Res on 30 Nov with 155 there on 7 Dec and 1400 at Bewl Water on 4 Nov. [MVS]

Lesser Black-backed Gull*Larus fuscus*

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor; scarce (mainly immature) in summer and scarce breeder. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The largest gathering during the first winter period was at Glyne Gap (Bexhill) with 500 counted in a nocturnal roost on 13 Mar. Elsewhere, 21 were seen at Goring on 24 Feb, 30 at Braberry Lakes (Ashdown Forest) on 11 Jan, 50 at Cuckmere Haven on 10 Feb, 32 in a nocturnal roost at Bewl Water on 20 Mar, 40 at Pett Level on 4 Mar and 65 on Scotney Court GP on 14 Mar.

No evidence of spring migration was found from the seawatching records for Selsey, Climping, Worthing, Telscombe and Seaford, with only 9 W and 8 E noted for March. Counts during the breeding season were mainly coastal with ten in the Fishbourne Channel (Chichester Hbr) on 4 May, 30 at Pagham Hbr on 1 May, six at Glyne Gap (Bexhill) on 18 Jun, 12 at Pett Level on 16 Apr, seven at Rye Hbr on 22 Apr and 40 at Scotney Court GP on 16 May with nine there on 20 Jun. Inland, nine were seen at Pulborough Brooks on 12 Apr, 17 at Weir Wood Res on 24 Apr and nine at Great Noven Fm (Chailey) on 24 Jun. Nesting records were all coastal, mostly on industrial buildings. At Rustington, five nests were found on an industrial estate on 30 May. One pair was nesting at East Preston on 25 Jun, and two pairs nesting, one with flightless chicks, were seen on rooftops at Brooklands (Worthing) on 21 Jun. At Rye Hbr 22 pairs nested.

During the summer and autumn periods, only a small autumn movement of 27 W and 4 E in October was recorded at the principal seawatching sites. Twenty were recorded at Scotney Court GP on 19 Jul with 23 there on 19 Aug. At Rye Hbr 35 were counted on 7 Sep, and there were 150 at Glyne Gap (Bexhill) on 17 Sep, 24 at Pett Level on 12 Oct, 20 at Pagham Hbr on 25 Oct and 40 in Rye Hbr on 28 Oct. Inland, 11 were recorded at Warnham LNR on 12 Aug.

The only significant records during the second winter were 80 on Arlington Res on 2 Dec, 20 at Pett Level in 6 Dec and 54 in the Adur Estuary on 28 Dec. [MVS]

Herring Gull*Larus argentatus*

Very common resident, status uncertain as passage migrant, and winter visitor. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

During the first winter period most large gatherings of this species were seen at coastal sites. The nocturnal roost at Glyne Gap (Bexhill) again predominated, with 5500 on 7 Jan rising to 8500 on 5 Feb and 8200 on 14 Mar. Five hundred were seen at Scotney Court GP on 20 Feb with 1000 there on 14 Mar, 3000 were recorded on the shore at Rye Hbr on 14 Jan, and 850 were seen at Pett Level on 4 Feb, 500 at Lower Standean on 5 Feb, and the same figure at East Worthing on 10 Jan and also Felpham (Bognor Regis) on 14 Feb. Inland, 1280 were counted at Bewl Water on 26 Feb, 500 at Warnham LNR on 5 Feb and 800 at Chesworth Fm (Horsham) on 4 Jan. A further 31 three-figure counts were recorded during this period.

Thirty-four counts of three or more figures were recorded at the coast during the breeding season. The most notable of these were 659 off Selsey Bill on 17 Apr with 457 there on 27 May, two rafts totalling 1070 off Goring Beach on 5 Jun, some 250 on Worthing Beach on 14 Jun, 200 off Lancing Beach on 15 Jun, 500 following the plough at Steep Down (Lancing) on 19 Apr, 1030 at Glyne Gap (Bexhill) on 18 Jun, 200 at Pett Level on 16 May and 800 at Scotney Court GP on 16 Apr with 500 there on 16 May and 200 on 20 Jun. Inland, 150 were recorded at Warnham LNR on 15 May and 119 at Pestalozzi (Sedlescombe) on 23 Apr. Breeding, clearly considerably under recorded, was reported from 13 coastal localities with many birds using urban structures.

An adult carrying nest material was observed at Tarring (West Worthing) on 2 May and two pairs occupying rooftop sites were seen at Broadwater (Worthing) on 7 Apr. Adults were seen mating in Littlehampton on 9 Apr and four nests were recorded at different sites there on 5 May and 23 May. A nest in the centre of Chichester was recorded on 7 Jun. In Goring, eight nests with young birds were found on 20 Jun with four pairs raising 12 chicks from there on 9 Jul. In Bognor Regis, an adult with three chicks was reported on 10 Jul, another pair with three chicks was noted at a different site on 17 Jul and a pair was nesting on a house roof in Felpham on the 29 May. There were five nests on industrial buildings in Rustington on 30 May, five nesting pairs with young were on similar structures in East Preston on 25 Jun and 30 nesting birds with flightless young were seen on factory rooftops at Brooklands (Worthing) on 21 Jun. Forty birds were counted at Hastings beach on 30 May, several on nests and two with young.

Nests on natural substrates were also seen: one nest was recorded on Peacehaven Cliffs on 4 Jun; nests were noted on the cliffs at Cuckmere Haven on 20 Jun and 38 pairs nested at Rye Hbr. Inland evidence of breeding was sketchy: six apparently occupied nests were noted in Crawley on 11 Apr and a pair started to nest-build at Pulborough Brooks on 1 Jun.

During the summer and autumn months large coastal congregations were found: at Selsey Bill 750 were offshore on 24 Jul; 4200 were counted in the nocturnal roost at Glyne Gap (Bexhill) on 17 Sep (with 6500 there on 28 Oct); 500 were recorded in Worthing on 6 Oct; 1000 were at Rye Hbr and 500 at Scotney Court GP on 10 Oct; 500 were on mudflats at Pagham Harbour on 19 Oct; and 1200 were counted at Hastings CP on 30 Oct. Inland, 300 were at Warnham LNR on 5 Aug, 200 were following the seed drill at Canada Bottom (Findon) on 20 Oct and 400 were at Mountfield (Robertsbridge) on the 25th.

In the second winter period large gatherings continued to be found, mostly at coastal sites. On the R Adur at Shoreham, 350 were counted on 2 Nov, 6500 were present in the nocturnal roost at Glyne Gap (Bexhill) on 19 Nov, 900 were at Rye Hbr on 12 Nov and 500 were on Scotney Court GP on 12 Dec. Inland, 157 were at Chesworth Fm (Horsham) on 20 Nov, 150 at Southwater CP on 12 Nov, 383 at Warnham LNR on 21 Nov and 1400 at Bewl Water on 4 Dec. [MVS]

Yellow-legged Gull

Larus michahellis

Scarce to fairly common but localised visitor, mainly in late summer and autumn. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

Coastal records for the first winter period came from Pagham Hbr with two on mudflats on 29 Jan and two offshore on 21 Feb while at Glyne Gap there were two on 12 Mar. Inland, one was seen on 15 Jan at Warnham LNR and one was at Pulborough Brooks on 1 Mar.

The regular summer influx to the Selsey Peninsula included 22 in fields west of Selsey on 28 Jul and 35 at Pagham Hbr on 29 Jul and, later, 20 there on 23 Sep and 30 on 30 Sep. At Glyne Gap (Bexhill), nine were recorded on 18 Jul and eight on 8 Oct.

The minimum monthly totals at regular sites, illustrating the summer influx, were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	3	2	3	1	3	11	59	16	32	9	10	5
Selsey Peninsula	2	2	-	-	1		57	13	30	1	4	5
Glyne Gap	-	-	2	-	-	9	-	-	-	8	6	-
Other coastal sites	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	3	1	-	-	-
Inland sites	1	-	1	1	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	-

During the second winter period, four were seen in Pagham Hbr on 14 Nov, six at Glyne Gap (Bexhill) on 12 Nov and six at Church Norton on 2 Dec. [MVS]

Caspian Gull

Larus cachinnans

Very rare winter visitor.

The two accepted records this year were the first since 2005. A first winter bird at Brighton Marina on 5 Jan had been ringed as a nestling in Poland on 21 May 2009 (ADW, IJW). Another (a second winter) was at Rye Hbr on 24 Jan (DC, JFC). These records bring the county total to nine.

The separation of Caspian Gull from the closely related Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* and Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis* can be difficult. Acceptance of records of Caspian Gull will require a full and detailed description covering all the relevant plumage details together with photographs showing those details. [DHH]

Glaucous Gull

Larus hyperboreus

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

2008: A first winter bird was in Pagham Harbour on 26 Jan (DW).

2010: A first year bird was recorded in the Upper Cuckmere valley on 5 Mar (SD). Sightings at Crowlink on 17 Mar (GFJ), the Ouse Estuary Project (Newhaven) on 20 Mar (JC) and the Lower Cuckmere valley on 28 Mar (MDH, ARK) probably related to the same individual.

Annual totals since the turn of the century have varied from zero to six as shown below. [DHH]

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
3	2	3	2	2	3	0	2	6	2	1

Great Black-backed Gull

Larus marinus

Common winter visitor and passage migrant; scarce in summer, mostly non-breeders, but very scarce breeder since 2000. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

Throughout the year, this species was most regularly recorded at Chichester Hbr, Selsey Bill, Pagham Hbr and Rye Hbr. The maximum monthly counts at these sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Chichester Hbr	2	2	9	3	8	100	46	-	24	36	5	nc
Selsey Bill	3	55	2	80	203	6	4	183	209	-	16	-
Pagham Hbr	351	193	100	150	125	151	100	87	200	400	75	409
Rye Hbr	115	91	50	116	1	2	5	85	150	115	nc	28

During the first winter period the largest totals were 800 along the Lower Cuckmere Valley on 1 Feb and the nocturnal roost at Glyne Gap (Bexhill) which had counts of 450 on 7 Jan, and 750 on 5 Feb and 3 Mar. On the R Adur (Shoreham) two ringed birds were recorded during this period. The first, ringed with yellow 70E on a black band was hatched at La Poterie-cap-d'Autifer, Seine-

Maritime, Normandy on 31/05/09 and ringed there on 27/06/09, and was seen on 10 Jan. The second one, ringed green/white A26, was ringed on Causey Island, Normandy in June 2007, seen at Telscombe Cliffs in September 2008 and Ovingdean in September 2009, and was again seen on 6 Feb.

Breeding was confirmed at four sites and was probable at another. At Sidlesham a pair nested on a building next to Brent Lodge and produced two chicks. At Shoreham a pair with two chicks was nesting on a factory north of the railway in Dolphin Road in July with possibly another pair further west and another south of the railway. A pair nested again at the Martello Tower (Rye Hbr) producing two chicks and fledged birds were seen at Newhaven. Breeding was probable at Sovereign Harbour Marina (Eastbourne). During the BBS, a total of six birds was counted from six of the 139 1-km squares surveyed.

During the spring and summer the highest count, apart from the counts tabled above, was 220 in two large groups out-numbering Herring Gulls, at Newhaven Cliffs on 29 Aug. During the autumn, similar highest counts were of 220 at Glyne Gap on 30 Sep, 100 at South Stakes Island (Chichester Hbr) on 3 Oct, 200 at Rock-a-Nore (Hastings) on the 20th, and 100 at Cuckmere Haven on the 22nd and roosting at Glyne Gap on the 28th.

During the second winter period the highest counts were 130 at Shoreham on 12 Nov and 600 at both the roost at Glyne Gap on the 19th and Cuckmere Haven on the 22nd. Great Black-backed Gulls were occasionally recorded on larger, inland water bodies; examples included 67 and 68 at Chichester GP on 3 Jan and 19 Dec respectively, 25 and 60 on Arlington Res on 18 Jan and 9 Dec respectively, and smaller numbers at Swanbourne Lake (Arundel), Weir Wood Res, Barcombe Res and Bewl Water. [LAW]

Little Tern

Sternula albifrons

Scarce breeding summer visitor and fairly common passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

One was at Pagham Hbr on 10 Apr and singles were seen at both Pagham Hbr and Selsey Bill on the following day. Although the first was on the same date as in 2009 and only one day later than the 10-year average arrival date, a more general arrival was later this year as there were no further records until three were seen in Pagham Hbr on the 17th. After 19 Apr the species was recorded on most days during the spring and early summer.

Analysis of the daily counts from each of the seawatching locations suggests a minimum of 543 birds flew east during the spring comprising 218 in April and 325 in May. These figures are similar to those for 2009 and are close to the average of 635 recorded for the springs 1985-2009. As usual this passage was mostly recorded at Selsey Bill as shown in the following table of totals of eastbound birds at the principal seawatching sites.

	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr watched	Peak movement.
Selsey Bill	214	325	539	1.6	87 E on 10 May (13 hr)
Worthing Beach	24	5	29	0.2	9 E on 28 Apr (4½ hr)
Splash Point	67	11	78	0.6	42 E on 24 Apr (15 hr)

Despite regular watching from Climping and Telscombe Cliffs this species was not recorded passing during these months. In addition to those recorded passing eastwards at Selsey Bill on 10 May, a further 50 were feeding offshore and the other notable counts from this site were 70 E on 24 Apr (14¼ hr) and 60 E on 14 May (13½ hr). With the exception of Selsey Bill the spring counts were low with a maximum of 23 at Pagham Hbr on 3 Jun and 27 at Rye Hbr on 18 Jun.

On 18 May there were four apparently occupied nests on North Stakes Island (Chichester Hbr) but later visits showed these all failed. In Pagham Hbr seven pairs nested but there was no evidence of any successful fledging. For the second year running decoys and sound recording were used at Rye Hbr in an attempt to encourage nesting in this species. Despite the fact that the decoys were deployed to the east of their previous position on what was considered more suitable habitat, there was initially no success. Subsequently, however; the use of an alternative recording (at a reduced volume) was successful and at least seven pairs nested on Flat Beach ridges, producing eight chicks of which at least seven fledged.

Regular counts at Pilsley Sands during the summer produced the highest numbers with 40 on 26 Jul, 12 on 12 Aug, seven on 2 Sep and, lastly, five on 8 Sep. After this date there were just three single birds recorded at Pagham Hbr on 19 Sep, flying west at Selsey Bill on 23 Sep and flying east at Worthing on 2 Oct. The last, a few days later than the 10-year average departure date of 27 Sep, was the 24th Little Tern to be recorded in October in the past 20 years. [JAN]

Black Tern

Chlidonias niger

Scarce passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
11	28	1	1	43	35	8

The first, flying east at Splash Point (Seaford) on 19 Apr, was just three days later than the 10-year average arrival date. One at Weir Wood Res on 22 Apr was the next and only inland spring record. Analysis of the daily counts from each of the seawatching locations suggests a minimum of 36 birds flew east during the spring comprising 10 in April and 26 in May, this being well below the average of 93 recorded for the springs 1985-2009. The species was only recorded on 12 dates during a poor spring passage and 24 Apr was the only day it was recorded from six different coastal watch points. The only other notable movement, not shown in the following table of monthly totals, was 8 E in 13 hrs at Selsey Bill on 10 May. One in Chichester Hbr on 6 Jun was the last in the spring.

	Apr	May	Aug	Sep	Oct	Peak movement.
Selsey Bill	4	19	-	16	2	13 W on 23 Sep (1½ hr)
Worthing Beach	1	-	-	3	-	2 W on 11 Sep (1¼ hr)
Telscombe Cliffs	1	-	2	-	-	2 E on 30 Aug (¾ hr)
Splash Point	10	8	nc	1	3	8 E on 24 Apr (15 hr)

Single birds were at Rye Hbr on 7 Jul and at Chichester Hbr on 1 Aug but the main autumn passage did not commence until mid-August. Between 14 Aug and 7 Oct approximately 82 birds were recorded from mainly coastal locations on 31 different dates. Most records involved small numbers but at least 26 were at Rye Hbr on 26 Aug, there were 13 W at Selsey Bill on 23 Sep and up to five were at Shoreham Hbr between 29 Sep and 6 Oct. A maximum of three seen at Chichester GP between 11 and 13 Sep and one at Weir Wood Res on 7 Oct were the only autumn records from inland sites, the last being four days earlier than the 10-year average departure date. [JAN]

Sandwich Tern*Sterna sandvicensis*

Fairly common although localised breeding summer visitor and common passage migrant; very scarce winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

For the seventh successive winter birds were recorded in Chichester Hbr with three seen sitting on bouys at East Head during freezing weather conditions on 26 Jan. There were also several winter sightings from Selsey Bill where one flew west on 4 Jan, 3 E on 7 Feb, two on 9 Feb, three on 12 Feb and 1 E on 23 Feb. The first three arrived at Rye Hbr on 2 Mar, but larger numbers were not recorded until the middle of the month, thereafter increasing substantially with sample March counts being 17 on the 17th, 55 on the 20th, 200 on the 24th, 300 on the 26th and 250 on the 29th.

Analysis of the daily counts from each of the seawatching locations tabulated below suggests a minimum of 2841 birds flew east during the spring comprising 131 in March, 1997 in April and 813 in May. The total was notably lower than in 2009 and well below the average of 4282 for the springs 1985-2009, clearly reflective of the poor spring from the seawatcher's perspective. Details of the easterly spring passage totals at the principal seawatching sites were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr in Apr/May	Peak movement
Selsey Bill	28	1681	755	2464	7.1	444 on 24 Apr (14¼ hr)
Climping	52	39	24	115	2.1	25 on 2 Apr (3½ hr)
Worthing Beach	60	855	153	1068	8.5	252 on 24 Apr (5 hr)
Telscombe Cliffs	23	483	34	540	14.4	296 on 24 Apr (2½ hr)
Splash Point	64	1413	200	1677	11.3	480 on 28 Apr (14¼ hr)

All the peak counts of coastal passage occurred in April and, like 2009, with notably fewer birds than usual recorded in May. There were just three days when more than 150 eastbound birds were recorded at any site and details of these are shown in the table below (time to nearest hour watched in brackets).

	24 Apr	25 Apr	28 Apr
Selsey Bill	444 (14)	142 (12)	276 (14)
Worthing Beach	252 (5)	55 (3)	173 (5)
Telscombe Cliffs	296 (3)	41 (2)	27 (1)
Splash Point	297(15)	169 (6)	480 (14)
Beachy Head	311 (?)	32 (?)	217 (?)
Hastings	nc	101 (?)	nc

Breeding was again successful at Rye Hbr where a count at Ternery Pool on 30 Apr estimated 750 nests. Fledgling counts on 25 Jun and 7 Jul recorded 250 and 166 respectively, with total fledging probably in excess of 1000. There were no breeding attempts in either Chichester or Pagham Harbours.

Three-figure counts in July and August were from Rye and Pagham Harbours. At the former site there were 166 on 7 Jul, 200 on 16 Aug and 150 on 20 Aug whilst the high counts at Pagham Hbr were 134 on 18 Jul and 180 on 22 Jul. The regular small roost on the fields at Goring Gap reached a peak of 36 on 8 Sep. Like 2009, but unlike 2007 and 2008, there was no notable late summer or autumn coastal passage and numbers moving offshore were relatively low. The

monthly totals and peak movements from sites regularly recorded in autumn revealed no obvious patterns and are shown in the following table:

	Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Peak movement
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	
Selsey Bill	-	-	2	15	1	94	45	39	24	-	23 W on 11 Sep (5 hr)
Worthing Beach	57	25	18	121	78	94	87	41	19	30	45 W on 24 Jul (2 hr)
Telscombe Cliffs	7	2	14	18	5	9	33	33	3	7	23 E on 7 Sep (½ hr)

Up to eight were recorded in Chichester Hbr on at least five November dates and singles were recorded at Selsey Bill, flying west on 21 Dec and feeding offshore on the 27th. There were no records from inland locations. [JAN]

Common Tern

Sterna hirundo

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

2009: At Rye Hbr about 232 pairs nested on the Beach Reserve, comprising 102 pairs on Ternery Pool and 130 pairs on the quarry, producing an estimated 200+ fledged chicks.

2010: Two at Chichester GP on 22 Mar were the first arrivals and five days earlier than the 10-year average arrival date of 27 Mar. One was at Southwater CP on the 23rd and it was not until the 26th that the first was recorded from any coastal location. A total of eight was recorded in March but after 1 Apr the species was recorded on 52 different days until the end of May.

The detailed seawatching logs suggest a minimum of 842 flew east during spring comprising three in March, 786 in April and 53 in May. The largest movements were 389 E at Splash Point (Seaford) on 20 Apr (15 hr) and 200 E at Hastings on 20 Apr. The coastal passage, however, is better described under Common/Arctic Tern. Spring counts at Rye Hbr included 800 on 27 Apr, 400 on the 28th, 500 on the 29th, 450 on the 30th and 250 on 2 May.

At Rye Hbr about 341 pairs nested on the beach reserve; a count on 4 Jun revealed 112 pairs at Ternery Pool and at least 229 pairs on the quarry. A total of 153 fledglings were counted on 22 Jul, with the total fledging probably in excess of 500. The rafts at Weir Wood Res supported two pairs but the evidence suggests that no young fledged. There were no recorded nesting attempts at either Pett Level or Arlington Res. Although the species breeds in more sites in West Sussex the numbers are considerably lower. Ten apparently occupied nests were counted on South Stakes Island (Chichester Hbr) on 18 May but on 9 Jul there were only three nests and a solitary chick. The annual breeding survey in Pagham Hbr counted five pairs from which one bird fledged. At New Lake (Chichester GP) early nesting was, like recent years, thwarted by Black-headed Gulls but in July up to ten adults were seen returning to the raft with food although there was no count of nests. Likewise, Black-headed Gulls occupied the rafts at Arundel WWT and consequently no terns bred. At Warnham LNR two pairs nested and on 13 Jul three fledged young were seen. Finally at Ardingly Res a pair nested but no outcome was recorded and on 24 Apr two were on a raft on the lake at Wakehurst Place but there were no subsequent records suggesting breeding.

The highest counts at Rye Hbr during the summer and autumn were 73 on 18 Jul, 118 on 22 Jul and 70 offshore on 22 Sep. Regular counts at Pilsey Island (Chichester Hbr) produced monthly maxima of 12 on 20 Jun, 60 on 27 Jul, 100 on 14 Aug and 30 on 2 Sep. Elsewhere autumn counts were low with the exception of a notable overland passage observed on 22 Aug when 350 were noted passing over Weir Wood Res and 170 stayed for a short period in heavy rain at Arlington

Res. This passage was not observed at the coast which, as usual, was only recorded regularly from West Sussex; the details are shown in the following table.

	Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Total		Peak movement
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	
Selsey Bill	-	-	3	137	-	91	-	6	3	234	44 W on 10 Sep (5¼ hr)
Worthing Beach	6	14	41	31	19	10	7	6	63	71	36 E on 10 Aug (3½ hr)

The latest autumn birds were singles in the lower Adur valley on 23 Oct and at Ifield MP on the 25th, the last being just three days earlier than the 10-year average departure date. [JAN]

Roseate Tern

Sterna dougallii

Very scarce passage migrant and non-breeding summer visitor. Red listed species of high conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

Two flew east at Selsey Bill at 7.20 am on 24 Apr in the company of Common Terns (JA, IP, SH *et al.*). An adult was seen at Rye Hbr on 22 May (BJY) and on seven days between 28 Jun and 11 Jul (AJH, BGY, CB). Assuming no more than two birds were involved in the sightings at Rye Hbr the total of just four birds is well below the average of 12 for the years 1995-2009. [JAN]

Arctic Tern

Sterna paradisaea

Uncertain, but probably a fairly common spring and autumn passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

Records for this species are relatively few as the majority are counted as “Commic” Terns at the main seawatching localities. Two flying east at Selsey Bill on 6 Apr were the first and five days earlier than the 10-year average arrival date. Thereafter the species was recorded on 15 different days during April and May with notable coastal movements observed at Splash Point (Seaford) when 124 flew east on 24 Apr (15 hr) and 168 E on 15 May (5¾ hr).

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
157	178	3	6	5	13	9

Inland there were two at Weir Wood Res on both 17 Apr and 4 May.

The mid-summer records involved one at Rye Hbr on 20 Jun, two at Weir Wood Res on 23 Jun and 5 E at Worthing on 13 Jul. The above table shows few were seen in the autumn when no more than five birds were recorded on 18 dates between 31 Jul and 6 Oct. Most were at coastal sites but single birds were seen at Weir Wood Res on four days in August. The last were singles at Worthing and Shoreham Hbr on 6 Oct and, like 2009, a considerably earlier departure date than the 10-year average of 30 Oct. [JAN]

Common/Arctic Tern

Sterna hirundo/paradisaea

Most birds passing seawatching sites remain unidentified as “Commic” Terns. This summary does not include birds specifically identified as Common or Arctic Terns and therefore this needs to be read in conjunction with the accounts for these species.

Analysis of the counts from each of five locations where detailed daily logs are maintained suggests that a minimum of 6160 birds flew east during spring comprising none in March, 3479 in April, 2669 in May and 12 in June. With an average of 8003 for the springs 1985-2009 the figures suggest 2010 was not an unusual spring. In keeping with recent years, the early arriving birds were specifically identified as Common Terns and the first “commics” were singles flying east at both Selsey Bill and Telscombe Cliffs and 4 E at Splash Point (Seaford) on 2 Apr but only 25 were seen in the first half of April. The easterly spring passage totals at four of the principal seawatching sites were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total	No. per hr in Apr/May	Peak movement
Selsey Bill	-	3281	1419	-	4700	13.6	24 Apr (see below).
Worthing Beach	-	1499	47	12	1558	13.1	24 Apr (see below).
Telscombe Cliffs	-	319	-	-	319	8.9	24 Apr (see below)
Splash Point (Seaford)	-	2458	1866	nc	4324	30.7	24 Apr (see below)

Apart from uniformity in the peak passage date the table shows considerable variation with two sites seeing very few terns in May. Like 2009 there were just three days when more than 300 eastbound birds were recorded and details of these days are shown below (with hours watched, where known, in brackets).

	24 Apr	25Apr	14 May
Selsey Bill	1834 (14¼)	789 (12)	538 (13¼)
Worthing Beach	1316 (5)	80 (3)	1 (2)
Brighton Marina	480 (?)	nc	nc
Telscombe Cliffs	316 (2½)	- (1½)	- (1¼)
Splash Point (Seaford)	2005 (15)	273 (5½)	1736 (5¼)
Beachy Head	1050 (?)	13 (?)	2119 (?)

The only records for July were 3 W at Worthing on the 13th and 7 E at Telscombe Cliffs on the 29th. The autumn passage, between August and 21 Oct, was again very poor and is summarised in the following table:

	Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct		Total		Peak movement
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	
Selsey Bill	-	-	-	103	16	22	6	-	22	125	100 W on 23 Aug (3 hr)
Climping	-	-	-	-	-	2	4	-	2	4	4 E on 3 Oct (1 hr)
Worthing Beach	-	3	28	57	8	10	13	28	49	98	27 W & 6E on 4 Oct (1¼ hr)
Telscombe Cliffs	7	-	11	5	1	14	-	2	19	21	10 E on 30 Aug (¼ hr)
Splash Point (Seaford)	nc	nc	nc	nc	12	-	104	3	116	3	58 E on 3 Oct (3 hr)

The last, on 21 Oct at Telscombe Cliffs, was just four days earlier than the 10-year average departure date. All those seen at inland sites were specifically identified. [JAN]

Common Guillemot

Uria aalge

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

The annual minimum total for this species of 258 was only one fifth of the number recorded in 2009 but was similar to the totals in the three years 2006-2008. Annual numbers have varied

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widely over the past ten years as shown below but there does appear to be a downward trend with the average in the past five years being 455 against an average of 1192 for the 5-year period 2001-2005.

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Total	1611	1058	778	1189	1325	221	241	266	1291	258

The minimum monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
199	20	2	9	13	1	1	-	2	10	-	-

The totals at the main seawatching points are shown in the table below. Some duplication will have occurred with birds being seen at more than one site or recorded offshore at a site for more than one day so no attempt should be made to add the columns or rows.

	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	-	1	-	6	2	-	-	-	2	3	-	5	-	-	-
Worthing Beach	6	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-
Telscombe Cliffs	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Splash Point	3	3	1	14	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

In the first winter period numbers were boosted by 180 in Rye Bay on 9 Jan but there were never more than three recorded in a day at any of the main seawatching sites. This lack of numbers continued throughout the remainder of the year with the most disturbing aspect being the total lack of records in November and just one in December when there was a singleton at Holywell (Eastbourne) on the 30th.

There were seven records of six birds away from the open sea involving single birds in Chichester Hbr, Shoreham Hbr, Brighton Marina, Newhaven Hbr, East Head (Wittering) and in the Rother estuary at Rye Harbour. [DHH]

Razorbill

Alca torda

Common winter visitor and fairly common passage migrant; formerly bred. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The minimum monthly totals during the year were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
115	408	6	25	21	6	-	-	8	24	12	53

The minimum total for the year of 678 was less than half of that for 2009 but not dissimilar to those for the three years 2006-2008. As in the case of the previous species, the numbers of Razorbills have shown a great deal of fluctuation over the past ten years. There is certainly a downward trend with the annual average for the past five years being 893 compared with an average of 4883 during the period 2001-2005.

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Total	5882	1140	8608	738	8050	636	802	829	1520	678

The totals recorded at the main seawatching sites are shown below but no attempt should be made to add the columns or rows due to the duplication of sightings between locations.

	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	1	4	1	5	1	17	-	-	-	2	4	8	1	3	1
Worthing Beach	46	8	195	1	1	8	-	-	2	4	10	11	11	1	13
Telscombe Cliffs	16	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Splash Point	194	-	214	26	1	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	-

During the first winter period there were only three movements of any significance: 3 E and 49 W at Worthing Beach on 29 Jan, 15 E and 122 W also at Worthing Beach on 1 Feb and 180 E and 150 W at Splash Point (Seaford) on 9 Feb. The Splash Point movement is typical of a feeding movement at this time of year with the numbers moving east and west being similar. In this period the largest offshore gathering was of 25 at Lancing. There was very little in the way of spring passage with the highest daily count being just 8 E at Splash Point on 29 May. It was noticeable that the small numbers of birds recorded during the spring were moving mainly westwards at Selsey Bill and entirely eastwards at Splash Point.

Following 2 W at Worthing Beach on 8 Jun there were no records until 6 Sep when there was 1 E, also at Worthing Beach. Numbers remained low for the rest of the year with no movements of more than five birds at any of the principal seawatching sites. Numbers were boosted by counts of 10 offshore at Splash Point on 3 Oct and a loose party of 40 on the sea off Lancing on 30 Dec.

The seven records of birds away from the open sea involved one or two in Chichester, Pagham and Newhaven Harbours. [DHH]

Black Guillemot

Cephus grylle

Rare vagrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

An adult offshore at Selsey Bill on 13 May (PSB, OM *et al.*) departed east. It was the first recorded since May 1996 and only the fifteenth record for the county. [DHH]

Auk species

The annual total of 18,353 reported was only three quarters of the figure for 2009 and well under half of the 10-year average of 44,263. The table below shows the total numbers which include Common Guillemots, Razorbills and auks which were not identified to species. The peak figure is the largest number recorded in a day flying either east or west at any site in the county. The figures should not be taken as an accurate assessment of the true numbers of auks due to the inevitable duplication of sightings.

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Total	95,553	66,542	109,484	19,359	62,243	30,676	4,712	11,739	23,974	18,354
Peak	4040	5930	6000	11,500	12,000	4100	346	1515	3460	2000

The approximate totals recorded at the main seawatching sites were as shown in the table below.

	Jan-Feb			Mar-May			Jun-Jul			Aug-Oct			Nov-Dec		
	E	o/s	W	E	o/s	W	E	o/s	W	E	o/s	W	E	o/s	W
Selsey Bill	372	17	105	231	3	233	-	-	2	13	7	22	52	3	114
Worthing Beach	3277	8	2342	22	1	226	-	-	4	28	10	52	564	1	1311
Telscombe Cliffs	988	4	1680	-	-	6	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
Splash Point	1646	5	1843	193	8	4	-	-	-	5	10	2	-	-	-

During the first winter period what were assumed to be largely feeding movements were evident from mid-January to mid-February. In this period there were sixteen dates on which three-figure counts were recorded as shown in the table below. The peak was of 2000 W at Climping Beach in 3 hrs on 1 Feb but it was noticeable that the majority of birds recorded at Worthing Beach on that date were moving east and not west. There were several other instances of this which is typical of feeding movements but despite the numbers recorded there were no records of large feeding parties on the sea.

		Jan							Feb								
		15	24	25	26	28	29	30	1	4	5	6	9	10	12	13	14
Selsey Bill	E															210	101
	W															43	9
Climping Beach	E																
	W							2000									
Worthing Beach	E				27	37	525	1846		241	116		111	93	107		
	W				771	277	117	368		7			86	241	102		
Telscombe Cliffs	E		165	109	178		22	4							102		
	W			76	36	674	222	246							48		
Splash Point	E	292							131			1000		61	5		
	W	10							29			1050		192	414		
Rock-a-Nore	E				640												
	W																

Numbers fell dramatically after 14 Feb with maximum monthly totals of 20 E and 98 W at Worthing Beach in March and 23 E and 16 W at Selsey Bill in April. Numbers did increase slightly in May with 78 W at Selsey Bill on the 7th and 67 E and 70 E at Selsey Bill and Splash Point respectively on the 14th. The last spring record was of 2 W at Worthing Beach on 12 Jun with no further records until 6 Sep when there were 2 E at Worthing Beach. Numbers remained low until the latter part of December when observers at Worthing Beach recorded totals of 545 E and 1257 W between the 20th and the end of the year including 900 W on the 23rd.

Distant auks in flight are generally impossible to identify to species and as a result only 7% of all auks were specifically identified. Where specific identification was possible the ratio of Common Guillemots to Razorbills was 1:3.1. [DHH]

Feral Rock Dove

Columba livia

Common resident.

This species was recorded in approximately 200 tetrads across the county. In the first winter period, noteworthy records included 126 at Crawley on 17 Jan and 230 at Mile Oak (Portslade) on 23 Jan. The only significant count in spring was 146 at Crawley on 11 Apr.

Breeding was confirmed in only 11 tetrads, without any details. During the BBS, a total of 694 birds were recorded in 43 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed.

There were no significant high counts in the latter part of the year, with only 50 at Hove on 23 Jul and 50 at Arundel WWT on 1 Aug. In the second winter period there were only 17 records of ten or more and the highest counts were 58 at Hove on 5 Dec and 60 at Arundel WWT on 7 Dec. [AHP]

Stock Dove

Columba oenas

Common resident and possible winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

Records were received of birds in at least 359 tetrads throughout the county. In the first winter period, the largest concentrations were found at Pett Level: 150 on 7 and 8 Jan, 250 on 10 Jan, 200 on 11 Jan, 150 on 15 Feb, 170 on 17 Feb and 150 on the 23rd. Other notable flocks were 50 seen on the South Downs by the R Adur on 21 Jan and 150 at Thorney Island (Chichester Hbr) on 4 Feb. In March and April, sizeable flocks were seen again at Pett Level with a monthly maximum of 287 on 10 Mar and 150 on 7 Apr. At Edburton a flock of 180 was seen feeding on 6 Mar.

Birds were present at at least 305 sites during the breeding season. During the BBS, a total of 128 was recorded from 40 1-km squares of the 139 surveyed, with a maximum count of 12 at Chichester on 17 Apr. The first record of a calling male was on 3 Jan at Newbridge (Ashdown Forest) and display behaviour was also noted at Pulborough Brooks on the same date. Breeding was confirmed in 65 tetrads by at least 106 pairs. Records of probable breeding were received for 97 tetrads for at least 192 pairs (but some duplication is possible). At Weir Wood Res at least eight pairs reared 31 young, a record for this site. Seventy-two nests in owl boxes were reported. Out of 61 nests for which breeding details were given, two nests (out of six recorded at one site) contained four eggs and a second brood there contained two chicks and six eggs, one nest contained three eggs or chicks, 49 contained two and seven contained just one. On 2 Jun a pair was observed to be nesting on the cliffs between Saltdean and Portobello. On 21 Jul at Wineham two small chicks were found in an owl box along with eight infertile duck eggs. The last breeding record, on 18 Aug, was a single chick in a nest on a used jackdaw nest in an owl box at Black Barn Fm (Slinfold).

The first indication of the build up of flocks after the breeding season was a flock of 32 at Thorney Island on 28 Jun. In October, several notable movements were observed. A flock of 400 was observed flying NE at Crowlink (East Dean) on the 10th, 120 flew NW in several flocks in fields west of Selsey on the 12th, 100 flew E at Beachy Head on the 17th and 100 flew W with Wood Pigeons at Atherington on the 25th. The largest October day count was 345 from various sites in Hastings on the 11th. In November, a flock of 520 was seen at East Guldeford Level on the 22nd, and flocks of 200 were seen at Rye Hbr on the 12th and the 18th. In December, a flock of 300 was seen to take off out of a green manure kale crop at West Marden on the 14th, and flocks of 200 were seen at Rye Hbr on the 11th and at Pett Level on the 19th. The largest flock at Thorney Island in the second winter period was 150 on 15 Dec. Between 1 Aug and 16 Nov 1426 birds were recorded in the Hastings area on 91 days with a peak count of 345 on 11 Oct. [CJR]

Wood Pigeon*Columba palumbus**Abundant resident and winter visitor.*

In the first winter period, 107 records were for counts of 100 or more of which the highest included c.1000 at Pagham Hbr on 3 Jan, an estimated but noteworthy count of 20,000 at Warnham LNR on 7 Jan and 1640 at Pangdean (Brighton) on 7 Feb.

Early breeding evidence included a squab at Climping on 11 Jan and a juvenile at Southwater Country Park on 28 Jan. During the BBS, 4410 were recorded from 138 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, making it the most recorded species during BBS surveys, with a maximum count of 136 at Chichester on 16 May.

The first record indicating the commencement of autumn movement was of 700 W at Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) on 18 Oct. The next sizeable counts were 2000 at Brighton Wild Park on 25 Oct and 1600 at the North Fields (Pagham Hbr) on the 27th. However, the most significant autumn movement counts came from Climping Beach where the October total was 6150 W with a peak count of 5800 W in 1 hr on the 25th. The following month, the total recorded at Climping was 12,300 with a peak count of 4800 W in 1 hr on 1 Nov followed by 6500 W in 2 hr on the 7th. This proved to be the peak of an otherwise poor passage as the only other four figure movements were another 1000 W at Climping on 10 Nov and 2000 W at Hastings on the 16th during an extended migration watch which totalled 5298 between 11 Oct and 16 Nov, this latter count providing the last record of note for the year. [AHP]

Collared Dove*Streptopelia decaocto**Very common resident.*

During the first winter period there were only 24 records of counts of ten or more birds, averaging 24 each. The most notable counts were 38 at Mile Oak (Portslade) on 17 Jan, 31 at Crawley the same day and 95 at Three Bridges on the 19th. In the spring, a flock of 37 was seen at Portslade (Brighton) on 15 May and 47 at Three Bridges on 2 Jun.

Breeding was confirmed at 26 sites. The earliest evidence of probable breeding was recorded at Bexhill on 8 Jan, when a pair was seen carrying nesting material, and of confirmed breeding when a bird was seen sitting on a nest at South Malling on 22 Mar and adults were with one pullus at Bognor Regis on 19 Apr (where a fledgling was predated by a Carrion Crow on the 28th). During the BBS, 431 were recorded from 88 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of 23 at Portslade on 14 Apr. The latest breeding record involved a nest with two pulli at Partridge Green on 27 Aug.

In the autumn, the only significant flocks were 46 on telegraph lines at Henfield on 3 Oct and 25 at pheasant feeders at Thorney Deeps on 25 Oct. In the second winter period the largest flocks were 48 at Thorney Deeps on 5 Nov, 40 at Camber on 7 Dec and 33 at Portslade on 28 Dec. [AHP]

Turtle Dove*Streptopelia turtur**Scarce and declining summer visitor and passage migrant. Red listed species of high conservation concern.*

The species was recorded from 81 tetrads. The first arrival of the year was one at Brightling on 24 Apr, 15 days later than the 10-year average. This was followed by just another six records of

individuals between 27 and 30 April. Typically, sightings were then received on an almost daily basis for May and June with the highest counts of fours at Edburton on 4 May and Pett Level on 16 and 25 Jun.

Breeding was confirmed in just six tetrads with one pair at Pagham Hbr, two pairs at Edburton, one at Barcombe Res, at least three at Pett Level and four at Rye Hbr. Breeding was probable in at least 16 further tetrads. During the BBS, six birds were recorded from five of the 139 1-km squares surveyed. Two birds were ringed at Pett Level, one fully grown and one pullus.

The summer period was poor with a highest count of six at Pett Level on 27 Jul while the total recorded for the whole county in August was only 14. There were only three records for September, of single birds, including the last of the year at Arlington Res on 11 Sep, 23 days earlier than the 10-year average. [AHP]

Rose-ringed Parakeet

Psittacula krameri

Very scarce introduced resident.

The low number of records involved probably no more than 15 birds. Two were reported at Bewbush (Crawley) on 25 Jan, followed by two at Gatwick Airport on the 30th and one at nearby Hookwood the same day may well have been one of the same birds. Singles were then seen at Shoreham on 12 Apr, Lewes Race Course on 20 Jun, Bexhill on 5 Jul and Warnham LNR on 20 Aug. In December one was seen at Romany Ridge Common (Chailey) on the 19th and eight at Hookwood on the 29th. [AHP]

Common Cuckoo

Cuculus canorus

Fairly common but declining summer visitor. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

The first arrival was recorded on 5 Apr, one day later than the 10-year average date, at Newick, and then on 7 Apr three were found on Ashdown Forest. Birds were reported arriving daily from the 8th until the end of the month. By the end of April, 189 reports had been received relating to a total of 224 birds at 126 sites throughout the county (although it is likely that some duplication was involved), with a peak of 27 on 18 Apr. Although observers at Warbleton and Punnetts Town commented that this seemed to be a good year for the species, slightly fewer birds were reported at slightly fewer sites than in 2009.

Breeding was confirmed by four pairs, and was probable by an estimated 75 pairs, 40% of which were on Ashdown Forest. There were reports of birds present in suitable breeding habitat, i.e. possibly breeding, at an additional estimated 229 sites and there were approximately 302 reports of singing males. At Rye Hbr, about eight singing males were present at several localities in the SSSI throughout the breeding season, and eight birds were recorded by a single observer on 18 Jun. Survey counts on the Norfolk Estate between 20 May and 9 Jul recorded 14 birds, and records submitted from Pagham Hbr refer to 12 birds although some duplication is possible. On 31 May at Arundel WWT a chick was observed in a Reed Warbler's nest, and on 2 Jun in the Roman Road area (Ashdown Forest) observers noted a bird being mobbed by two meadow pipits. Juveniles were seen at four locations, three of which were coastal. During the BBS, a total of 64 were recorded in 45 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a maximum count of four at Town Littleworth (Chailey) on 8 May. Observers at Weir Wood Res recorded their last bird on 7 Jun and the last male at Thorney Deepes (Chichester Hbr) was recorded on 1 Jul.

A large majority of the reports of this species relate to the months April, May and June. Only ten reports were received for July, four for August and three for September. The last bird, a female, was seen at Climping Beach on 30 Sep which is slightly later than the 10-year average date of 25 Sep. [CJR]



Common Cuckoo, Warnham LNR, July 2010 (Jacob Everitt)

Barn Owl

Tyto alba

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

The monthly totals of casual sightings, excluding visits for ringing, were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Monthly total	65	30	31	37	32	44	21	19	15	17	47	38

The high number of sightings in January may be due to hungry birds forced to hunt in daylight in hard weather with snow on the ground for the first two weeks of the year. A Barn Owl was seen to catch a Wren from snow at Amberley Wild Brooks and a starving bird was picked up at Slindon. After the snow the remains of two Barn Owls were found on the ground at Amberley Wild Brooks.

In the breeding season some sites normally occupied had no owls, but at six sites Barn Owls bred for the first time. Not all known breeding sites were monitored in either West or East Sussex. In West Sussex, 69 breeding attempts were reported, three of which are known to have failed. Twenty four nests were in nest boxes on trees and 45 in boxes in barns. These resulted in 154 nestlings which were mostly about half grown when reported, plus a few which had fledged and gone before the monitoring visit. In East Sussex, 35 breeding attempts were reported, of which

three failed. Here four occupied boxes were on poles, 27 on trees and four in barns, and there was a nest in the roof space of a building. Nestlings reported numbered 85. Across the county as a whole there were two broods of six, six of five, 17 of four, 40 of three, 22 of two and 15 of one young alive at the time of monitoring.

Six Barn Owls were reported dead on roads during the year. In December one was found starving during very cold weather with snow. [ABW]

Little Owl

Athene noctua

Fairly common resident.

This introduced and sedentary resident was recorded from 98 tetrads during the year, with 56 in West Sussex and 42 in East Sussex, including many records of birds heard rather than seen.

The stronghold in the county is open farmland in the river valleys and on the Downs and territories are often consistently occupied for many years. During the first winter period records came from a wide variety of sites throughout the county and included many individuals continuing to occupy breeding territories. One unusual record concerned a bird recorded at two separate locations in the centre of Burgess Hill on 1 Mar.

Seven pairs were confirmed as breeding, which is slightly below the recent average of ten pairs, with probable breeding in a further nine tetrads. During the BBS, five birds were recorded from five of the 139 1-km squares surveyed. There was a nest site noted at Sompting where three young were present in an owl box within a barn.

Post-breeding dispersal is usually evident in Sussex, and in 2010 four river valleys, two coastal and one downland site had their first records of this species for the year from September onwards. Small numbers of birds continued to be reported to the end of the year with the only sighting of multiple birds in the second winter period being two at Boxgrove on 10 Nov. [DG]

Tawny Owl

Strix aluco

Fairly common or common resident.

Tawny Owls were recorded from 186 tetrads, 84 in West Sussex and 102 in East Sussex. The majority of records of this vocal nocturnal species were of individuals or pairs heard rather than seen. This sedentary species appears to be present in the county virtually wherever there is suitable nesting habitat and the lack of records in some areas may represent a dearth of night time observers rather than the absence of this species.

Breeding was confirmed at 12 sites, which is average for the last five years, and was probable at a further 28. Recorded nest sites included two purpose built nest boxes and two tree holes including one in Sycamore. Four calling males were recorded at Swanbourne Lake (Arundel) with the same number calling at Etchingham. During the BBS, single birds were recorded in nine of the 139 1-km squares surveyed. The highest numbers noted during the year were ten in a tetrad at Crowborough on 7 Jul and seven at Pett Level on 11 Aug.

Subsequent to the breeding season this species was recorded at some 49 localities with a concentration of records in the second winter period between mid-Oct and mid-Nov as territorial birds became more vocal. Birds were heard calling from exotic conifers and Scots Pine, and in Worthing one was seen calling from the roof tops. Reported roost sites included Silver Birch, Oak and Sweet Chestnut trees. Unfortunately, two birds were found dead during the year, one of

which drowned in a cattle water trough on downland. During the year, the Rye Bay RG ringed four birds: one full grown, two pullus and one from a previous year. Another bird was ringed at Ladywell (Coombes). [DG]

Long-eared Owl

Asio otus

Scarce resident and very scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

Only 17 records were received during the year from just five sites, compared to 44 records from 13 sites in 2009 and 77 records from 16 sites in 2008. Just three individuals were recorded during the first winter period, with two present in a winter roost at site A in the west of the county which, however, were not seen again after 5 Jan. The other record concerned a bird seen flying over a road at dusk beside suitable downland habitat in February.

No records were received of birds during the breeding season.

The only autumn migrant was seen at Hastings on 2 Oct. At roost site A a single bird was present from 21 Oct until at least 7 Dec. Elsewhere a bird was seen at one site in the east of the county on 27 Nov and 10 Dec, and in the west of the county a bird was present at a roost from 14 to 19 Dec. For the first time in at least eight years there were no records of this species from Rye Hbr. Although the Long-eared Owl Study Group carried out very little fieldwork in 2009 and 2010, the substantial drop in records appears to reflect a genuine decrease in abundance during this period which may be due to the extreme cold weather experienced in recent winters. However, this drop in the number of records received for this species, particularly away from known roost sites and in the breeding season, may also be a reflection of reduced observer effort. [DG]

Short-eared Owl

Asio flammeus

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

The approximate monthly totals, taking account of possible duplication, were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
12	1	-	2	1	9	13	1	2

During the first five months of the year 16 separate birds were recorded from eleven areas of the county but none lingered for any length of time. In January there was a significant influx of birds but the only site where birds were recorded on multiple dates was Thorney Island where there were two on the 1st of which one was present until the 4th. Elsewhere, a bird was seen coming in off the sea at Telscombe Cliffs at midday on 9 Jan, at The Burgh (Burpham) there were four on the 11th and at Rackham two on the 23rd. The only sighting in February was one at Pett Level on the 17th. In April, migrants were seen at Church Norton on the 17th and at Beachy Head on the 27th. The last sighting of the spring was on 8 May of a single bird at Pevensey Levels.

The first autumn migrant to be observed was seen at Hope Gap (Seaford) on 1 Sep, although it did not linger. During the period 12 Sep to 20 Nov a further 17 migrants were noted from widespread locations along the coast. Birds seen coming in off the sea included two at Ecclesbourne (Hastings) on 13 Sep and singles at Pilsey Sands on 9 Oct, at Telscombe Cliffs on the 10th and at Church Norton on 9 Dec. At Sheepcote Valley a bird was seen to gain height and fly south out to sea on 4 Oct.

At a number of sites birds were recorded on multiple dates during the autumn and second winter period. In Chichester Hbr single birds were seen at various sites on three dates in October from the 7th and four dates in November between the 5th and 29th, including two birds on the 14th. In the Pagham Hbr area up to two birds were present from 13 to 18 Oct and one from 7 to 14 Nov which might have been the bird seen the same day in fields west of Selsey. One was present at Pulborough Brooks from 7 Nov until the 27th. The only December records were of individuals seen at Church Norton on the 9th and at Rye Hbr on the 16th. [DG]



Short-eared Owl, Beachy Head, October 2010 (Roger Charlwood)

European Nightjar

Caprimulgus europaeus

Fairly common but localised summer visitor rarely seen on migration. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

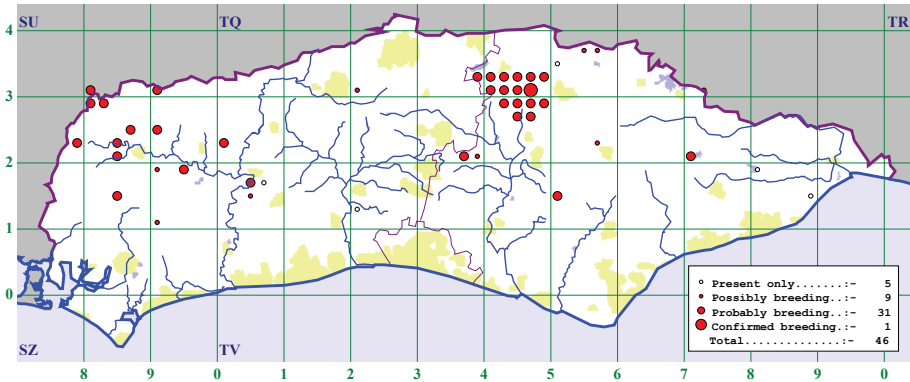
The first record of the year was at Wiggonholt Common (Pulborough Brooks) on 11 May, 10 days later than the 10-year average, with subsequent records from around this area on the 12th, 17th and 18th. Elsewhere in the county there was a churring male at West Chase (Ashdown Forest) on 17 May and two birds there on the 20th. There were also records from Leechpool and Owlbeech Woods (Horsham) on the 19th, 20th and 26th.

The annual Wealden Heaths Breeding Bird Survey (WHBBS) identified 18 pairs or territories, a significant reduction on the 30 identified in 2009 and 27 in 2008. The main concentration was at Iping Common where there were six territories and there were three territories at Woolbeding Common. At Iping Common four or five males were heard churring on 3 Jun with five or six churring there on the 15th.

Eighty-six churring males or territories were identified in the BTO Nightjar Survey undertaken on the Ashdown Forest between late April and late July 2010 (see page 255). This is very similar

to the 85 territories identified in a BTO survey in 2004. Territories were well distributed across the whole of Ashdown Forest where suitable habitat occurs.

There were a number of records across the county away from the above two areas which may indicate around 18 territories including records from West Dean Woods on 6 Jul, Flexham Park (Fittleworth) on 3 Jun, Chailey Commons on 5 Jul, Broadwater Forest on 16 Jun, Darwell Res in June and Steephill Wood (Brede) on 9 Jul. There were a number of sightings in the area of Wiggonholt Common. Combining these with the total for the WHBBS and Ashdown Forest provides an estimated total of 124 territories for the county.



The only record of confirmed breeding was from Kings Standing (Ashdown Forest) on 26 Jun. Breeding was probable in 30 tetrads with possible breeding in a further ten. The last Ashdown Forest record was from Wrens Warren on 12 Aug. The final records of the year were at Woods Mill (Henfield) on 6 Sep, when one was flushed from a post in the early morning, and Pett Level on 7 Sep. This was later than 2009, when none were seen in September, but still more than two weeks earlier than the 10-year average departure date of 23 Sep. [SPS]

Common Swift

Apus apus

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

The first were singles at Climping and Weir Wood Res on 18 Apr, five days later than the 10-year average. Through the remainder of April sightings were made on every day except one, with the highest one-day count being an unseasonal high of 151 at Weir Wood Res on the 30th. A further nine double-figure counts were received during the month including 40 at Rye Hbr and 60 at Chichester GP also on the 30th.

Spring migration occurred principally in early May, when increasingly large numbers of birds were recorded, followed by a drop in numbers during the second half of the month but peaking again at the end. Seventeen three-figure counts were made during May, with observers at Barcombe Res logging four of these (max. 200 on the 2nd); other notable counts came from Weir Wood Res (500 on the 3rd), Pulborough Brooks (300 on the 4th and 200 on the 9th), Chichester GP (200 on the 9th, 170 on the 11th) and Rye Hbr (300 on the 31st). Forty three double-figure counts were received, ten of these between 50 and 100.

During the first half of June only two three-figure counts were received: 400 on the 10th and 500 on the 11th, both from Rye Hbr. Two counts from Barcombe Res on the 20th, of 1000 and 500 birds, may involve duplication but represented high counts for this time of year. Four further three-figure counts during June were of 100-200 birds, with one of 500 at Plashett Park on the 20th.

By mid- to late May birds were back at nest sites and screaming parties were widely reported throughout June. Young birds were recorded in nests by mid-July, with seven nest boxes containing young at a farm in South Harting on the 14th. Breeding was confirmed from 11 tetrads, whilst probable breeding was recorded from 146 tetrads. Clearly, more confirmed breeding pairs are highly likely, but for this species this is not easy to ascertain. During the BBS, a total of 213 birds was recorded from 42 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of 32 at West Worthing on 22 May.

Only four counts of 100 or over were received during July, although one of these was of 1500 at Weir Wood Res on the 8th. During August there were only five double-figure counts and of these the maximum was of 20 birds, at Selsey Bill on the 10th and Warnham LNR on the 25th.

During an extended migration watch at Hastings, 70 birds were recorded between 1 Aug and 17 Sep. Fourteen, mostly singles, were recorded in September with the last seen flying west at Telscombe Cliffs on the 24th. Although five days later than the last recorded in 2009 this was considerably earlier than the 10-year average departure date of 16 Oct. [DB]

Alpine Swift

Apus melba

Rare vagrant.

One seen and photographed near Anchor Bottom (Upper Beeding) on 24 Mar (BFF, CHW) was part of a national influx at the time. This brings the county total to 40, five since the turn of this century and the total for March to four with this one being the earliest. [JAH]

Common Kingfisher

Alcedo atthis

Scarce to fairly common resident and possibly very scarce winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

A total of 508 records were received for 2010, slightly fewer than in both 2008 and 2009, as was the number of sites at which the species was recorded. Observations during the winter months were as follows:

	Jan	Feb		Nov	Dec
No. of birds	47	23		46	35
No. of inland sites	23	13		22	14
No. of coastal sites	17	8		18	17

The January and February records show decreases in the numbers of both birds and sites from the previous year, perhaps reflecting the hard weather at the start of 2010. In January little more than half the number of birds was seen as in January 2009.

Display behaviour was first noted at Warnham LNR on 9 Feb. Breeding was confirmed at six mostly inland locations, and probable at a further 12 locations. Reports were received of possible breeding at 22 additional sites where birds were observed in suitable habitat. Birds were seen at

40 different locations throughout the county during the breeding season. Only three reports were received of juveniles. At Warnham LNR an adult was seen feeding a juvenile on several occasions in August. At Strivens Reed Bed (Steyning) four birds were ringed, of which three were juveniles, and at Ladywell (Coombes) two juveniles were ringed. The largest concentration of the year was four birds at Weir Wood Res on 22 Aug.

From September, reports showed birds returning to coastal locations. In November 50% more birds were reported than in 2009, at a greater number of sites. However, in December fewer birds were reported at fewer sites than in the previous year, again reflecting the hard weather during this month. [CJR]

European Bee-eater

Merops apiaster

Rare vagrant; bred once in 1955.

A flock of six at Pett on 2 Jun (CHD) was the largest group seen since five in May 1991 and six in May 1989 but they did not stay. The county totals rise to 31 since the turn of the century and 13 for May. The only year this century when none was recorded was 2007. [JAH]

Hoopoe

Upupa epops

Very scarce spring and even scarcer autumn passage migrant; has bred.

There were six spring birds, although some duplication is possible. The first was seen on 24 Mar at Applesham (Coombes) (ABW). Another was heard at Pulborough Brooks on 19 Apr and one was seen near Halseys Fm (Sidlesham) in fields along the north side of Pagham Hbr on 22 Apr (JDW). One was reported from Cowfold on 6 May. There was a bird seen at Aldwick on 24 May (DH) and one on 25 May at Angmering (TJ) was possibly the same.

One was seen at Merston on 27 Aug (MP) pecking at peanuts on a garden lawn and a bird was observed at Atherington between 28 and 30 Aug (AH, OM *et al.*) which could have been the same. The last bird seen was at Pett Level on 8 Oct (CHD).

Compared to the decade totals quoted in previous bird reports from the 1960s to the 2000s of 104, 96, 63, 47 and 41 respectively, a total of nine in one year suggests the decline may be beginning to be reversed. [MJC]

Wryneck

Jynx torquilla

Very scarce passage migrant, most in autumn; last bred in 1944. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

There were no spring records.

In the autumn there was a minimum of 21 birds recorded (compared with nine in 2009 and 21 in 2008). The first record was of one at Streat on 22 Aug, which may have been the same bird seen at Plumpton on 4 Sep. The next arrival was one at Thorney Deepes from 30 Aug to 1 Sep. Between 3 and 16 Sep up to three birds were recorded on seven different days at Pett Level; the number of birds involved is unclear but six were ringed. During the same period singles were recorded at Sheepcote Valley (Brighton), Cissbury Ring, Cuckmere Haven and possibly two at Beachy Head. A well watched bird at the North Wall (Pagham Harbour) was present from 9 to 14 Sep at least when one was recorded at Sidlesham Ferry. Elsewhere, between 12 and 19 Sep further

birds were noted on single days at Brighton Wild Park, Birling Gap (which might have been the same as that seen there on the 5th), Bosham (Chichester Hbr) and at Thorney Island from the 17th to the 18th and Newhaven Cliffs from the 18th to the 19th. The last record was of one at Thorney Island on 5 Oct. [PJP]



Wryneck, Pagham North Wall, September 2010 (Mick Davis)

Green Woodpecker

Picus viridis

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

During the year, birds were recorded in 489 tetrads. During the first winter period the highest count was eight at Petworth on 28 Mar but there were six counts of five and four counts of five birds elsewhere.

Breeding was confirmed in 44 tetrads and was probable in 26. Of the confirmed breeding records, 77% were by observation of fledged or downy young birds, 7% of carrying food to a nest, and the remainder from occupied nests or nests with young. There was one report of “a chick in the nest being watched by a jay and two tawny owls”. During the BBS, a total of 196 birds was noted in 92 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of eight at Bosham on 9 Apr.

During 37 ringing sessions at Strivens Reed Bed (Steyning) three birds were handled of which two were new (one young and one adult). At Ladywell (Coombes) during 34 sessions seven birds were handled of which four were new, two had been ringed in previous years (three young and three adults). During the year, the Rye Bay RG ringed four birds and also retrapped three from previous years.

During the second winter period the highest counts were eight at Pulborough Brooks on 10 Dec and six at Rye Hbr on 30 Dec. [PJP]

Great Spotted Woodpecker*Dendrocopos major**Common resident.*

The species was reported from 500 tetrads. During the first winter period the highest counts were of seven at Broxmead (Bolney) on 24 Jan and at Summersbrook (Horam) on 17 Feb and there were eight other counts of six birds.

Breeding was confirmed in 93 tetrads and was probable at a further 75. Of the confirmed breeding records, 64% were by observation of fledged or downy young birds, 13% of carrying food to a nest, and the remainder from occupied nests or nests with young. During the BBS, a total of 250 birds was recorded in 94 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed (68%), compared with 235 birds in 82 out of 135 squares in 2009 (60%), with a highest count of nine at Sutton End on 11 Apr.

During the second winter period the most notable counts of seven birds were at Pulborough Brooks on several dates in December. [PJP]

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker*Dendrocopos minor*

Scarce, possibly now very scarce, and declining, resident. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

The species was recorded in probably 31 tetrads, 15 in West Sussex and 16 in East Sussex. The numbers of birds and sites in which they were recorded and their distribution was as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	4	1	10/12	9	6	4	4/5	1	4	1	4	4/5
No. of sites	3	1	6/8	7	5	4	4/5	1	2	1	4	3/4

Breeding was not confirmed anywhere but was probable at eight sites. There were two pairs at Wiggonholt Common (Pulborough Brooks) and one pair at Rackham Plantation (Amberley Wildbrooks). The species was not recorded during the BBS.

Drumming was reported at Rackham Woods on 2 Mar, at Chesworth Fm (Horsham) on the 22nd, at Etchingam on 4 Apr and at Wiggonholt Common (Pulborough Brooks) on the 15th. There were no reports of this species from Burton MP this year, hitherto a fairly reliable site. The most reliable site for seeing the species was in areas near to Pulborough Brooks where two males were heard and seen regularly from 15 Apr to 1 Jun and then singly to 13 Jul and then again on 30 Sep and 7 Oct. At Byworth (Petworth) a bird was seen regularly from 5 to 16 Aug on a peanut feeder in a garden.

As this is a species of high conservation concern, all sightings should be reported with 4-fig or preferably 6-fig grid references, especially if territorial behaviour or other evidence of breeding is observed. [JAH]

Golden Oriole*Oriolus oriolus*

Very scarce passage migrant and rare summer visitor; may have bred in 1965. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

An adult male was seen well at Wiggonholt Common (Pulborough Brooks) on 18 Apr (AB, AEH) as it flew across Wiggonholt Lane in front of the observers' car not to be seen again. This

is the 15th record in the county this century. Since 1962 there have been only six records for April and this was the second earliest, the others being on the 17th, 27th (2), 28th and 30th; the majority of records are for May. [JAH]

Great Grey Shrike

Lanius excubitor

Very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

There were probably eight individuals recorded during the year.

During the first winter period there were two long-staying birds. An adult was seen at the Isle of Thorns (Ashdown Forest) from 1 to 4 Jan but this bird would then appear to have ranged widely as it was not seen again until 5 Feb, then frequently to the 20th but not again until the final sighting on 17 Mar. Could this have been the bird previously reported from Ashdown Forest on 7 Nov 2009? Another bird at Pett Level, recorded on 1 Jan, was most probably the same bird seen there in December 2009; it also ranged widely and was seen frequently to 1 Feb then on the 15th and finally the 12 Mar.

During the second winter period there were probably six individuals reported. The first bird was seen at Ovingdean on only 10 Oct. The next day one was seen at Hope Gap (Seaford), also for only one day. At Waltham Brooks another was seen briefly on 25 Oct. At the regular site on Ashdown Forest an adult bird, first seen on 7 Nov, ranged between Greenwood Gate, Wrens Warren and West Chase until 30 Dec. In the west, one bird was seen at The Burgh (Burpham) on 26 Nov and another at Black Down (Fernhurst) was being mobbed by small birds on 3 Dec. [LAW]

Magpie

Pica pica

Very common resident.

During the first winter period there were 22 counts of more than 20 birds, the highest of which were 55 at Earnley on 20 Feb, 45 at Warnham LNR on 12 Mar, 42 at Southwater CP on 4 Feb, 40 at Goose Green (Thakeham) on 31 Jan, 37 at Maidenbower (Three Bridges) on 4 Jan, 36 at Three Bridges on 19 Jan, 35 at Portslade on 17 Jan and the same number at Crawley on the same day.

Breeding was confirmed in 117 tetrads and probable in a further 133. However, there were only seven records of breeding success mentioning the presence of fledged young. During the BBS, 624 birds (a significant reduction on the 1549 in 2009) were recorded from 123 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed with a maximum count of 17 at Lidsey Lodge on 13 Jun. During the breeding and summer period, there were 24 counts in excess of 20 including 39 at Southwater CP on 7 May, and 35 at Mile Oak (Portslade) on 15 May and also at Hangleton (Hove) on 13 Jun.

Numbers recorded during the two autumn months were considerably lower as there were only two counts of over 20, involving 29 at Hangleton (Hove) on 26 Sep and a flock of 29 flying east at Hastings on 12 Oct, part of the 41 recorded there during migration watching between 10 and 12 Oct. During the second winter period there were only nine counts of more than 20 birds, the highest being 41 at Warnham LNR on 21 Nov followed by 25 there on 1 Dec and 31 on the 12th. Elsewhere, 30 were noted at Mile Oak (Portslade) on 28 Dec, 29 at Chesworth Fm (Horsham) on 2 Nov, 25 at Halseys Fm (Sidlesham) on 30 Nov and 21 at Whitehawk (Brighton) on 18 Nov, at Easthill Park (Portslade) on 31 Dec and also at Stanmer Down the same day. [TJS]

Jay***Garrulus glandarius***

Very common resident.

During the first winter period, the highest counts were of 20 at Walberton (Arundel) on 25 Jan and 12 at Goose Green (Thakeham) on the 31st. Other significant counts in January included nine at Crawley on 17 Jan and at Bolney on the 24th. In February, nine were noted at Stone Cross (Lindfield) on the 1st, and eight at High Cross Fm (Uckfield) on the 13th and at Songhurst (Loxwood) on the 17th. Otherwise, 75% of records were of one to three birds.

During the spring, high counts included 14 at Sunnyside (East Grinstead) on 13 Apr and ten at Brighton Wild Park on 1 May. Breeding was confirmed at 32 sites and probable at a further 35 but single juveniles were noted at only two sites. During the BBS, a total of 126 was recorded from 68 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with maximum counts of six at Pipers Copse (Northchapel) on 18 Jun and Hargate Forest (Frant) on 2 Jul.

Summer sightings included 11 at both Weir Wood Res on 4 Jul and Newtimber Hill (Poynings) on 22 Aug. During the autumn, the highest count was 11 at Weir Wood Res on 10 Oct and there were ten records of more than five. During the second winter period, 75% of sightings were of one to three birds with occasional counts of up to ten, the highest being at Parrock (Hartfield) on 23 Nov. [TS]

Jackdaw***Corvus monedula***

Very common resident.

During the first winter period there were 29 counts of 100 or more individuals. The highest totals recorded were c.1000 birds (accompanied by a small number of Rooks) observed over Lavington Common on 17 Jan, flying south to roost at Seaford College, and c.550 at the same site flying to roost on 22 Feb. Elsewhere, high counts during this period included 500 at Harsfold (Wisborough Green) on 6 Jan, 400 in the Plumpton area on 5 Feb, 366 at Rackham on 23 Jan and 350 at Coombes on 7 Feb.

The first report of probable breeding came from Chesworth Fm (Horsham) on 8 Feb. Breeding was confirmed in 136 tetrads and probable in a further 115. Fourteen owl boxes and five Kestrel boxes were reported to have been used for nesting. During the BBS a total of 1490 birds was recorded from 109 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with the highest count of 111 at Petworth Park on 2 Jul. The highest counts during the summer period were 400 at Bentley (Halland) on 1 Aug and, at Pett Level, 300 on 29 Jul, 280 on the 14th and 225 on the 16th. There were three other counts of 100 or more during this period.

During the autumn and second winter period the first large gathering was 200 recorded at Ladywell (Coombes) on 3 Sep. In October, 385 were seen flying west at Hastings on the 10th and a count of 474 was made at Pulborough Brooks on the 18th. The largest count of the period was again recorded at Lavington Common, where 2000 were observed flying to the Seaford College roost on 20 Nov. Three further counts of 1000 or more were recorded, with 1200 at Tottington (Small Dole) on 23 Nov, 1000 at Pulborough Brooks on 2 Dec and 1000 flying east at dusk on 18 Dec at Horsham. [GNO]

Rook*Corvus frugilegus**Very common resident.*

During the first winter period 17 counts of 100 or more birds were reported. The highest count was 290 at Tilton (Selmeston) on 24 Jan, with three records of 200 birds, at Southwater CP on 3 Jan, at Pulborough Brooks on 17 Jan and at West Dean Woods on 11 Feb.

There were two records of nest building in January, the first at Ladywell (Coombes) on the 18th and the second at Easton Fm (Earnley) on the 30th. Breeding was confirmed in 136 tetrads, with more than 2000 nests, and probable in a further 26. There were 14 rookeries with 30 or more nests and these included 63 at Wilmington, 51 at Linch Fm (Bepton), 48 at Tilton (Selmeston), 45 at Northlands (Bodiam) and 43 at Somerley (East Wittering). During the BBS, 2151 birds were recorded from 77 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of 353 at East Ashling on 14 Jun. During the summer period the largest counts were 245 at Stanes Fm (Funtington) on 8 Jul, 200 at Bentley (Halland) on 1 August and 200 at Lidsey Old Canal and Landfill on 6 Aug.

In the autumn and second winter period records were submitted from 172 tetrads, with only three counts of 200 or more. A monthly maximum of 500 birds was observed at Pulborough Brooks on 21 Sep, a roost of 300 was recorded at Tottington (Small Dole) on 23 Nov and there were 250 at Pett Level on 30 Oct. [GNO]

Carrion Crow*Corvus corone**Very common resident.*

This year there were six counts of 100 or more (two more than last year) in the first winter period, the highest counts being 150 at Bulverhythe (St. Leonards) and 135 at Bathurst Fm (Warbleton) on 1 Feb, 112 on Worthing Beach on 27 Feb and 100 on Lancing Beach on 12 Jan.

Spring started with counts of 100 at Pulborough Brooks on 21 Mar while, on the 26th, there were 125 birds at Round Hill (Devils Dyke). Later, during the spring and summer period other three-figure counts were of 100 birds at Beachy Head on 3 Apr and also at The Burgh (Burpham) on 12 Jun, 112 at Mill Hill (Shoreham) on 20 Jun and, two days later, a large count of 431 at East Ashling followed by 100 at Cuckmere Haven on 14 Jul and 200 at Pulborough Brooks on 22 Aug.

There were 132 reports of confirmed breeding and 145 of probable breeding. During the BBS, a total of 1712 birds was recorded from 135 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a maximum count of 140 at Firlie Beacon on 24 Jun.

In the autumn and second winter period there were at least six reports of counts of 100 or more, mostly at Pulborough Brooks where there were 102 on 6 Sep, 200 on the 16th, 258 on the 21st, 118 on 18 Oct and 100 on 8 Nov. At Pagham Hbr 202 were counted at the North Wall on 5 Oct and at least 100 on 12 Dec. [TS]

Raven*Corvus corax**Scarce and increasing breeding resident; first bred in modern era in 2001.*

In excess of 420 records were received, mostly for the sea cliffs of East Sussex and various locations along the length and breadth of the South Downs. The data suggests somewhere in the region of ten pairs inland and four or five pairs on the coast. In contrast to recent years there were few reports of confirmed breeding but on 14 Apr there was a record of four juveniles at

Beachy Head (site A), on 22 Apr three juveniles at site C and on 26 Apr three juveniles at the Shoreham site (site B). Breeding was also confirmed on the cliffs at Friar's Bay though the nest was destroyed by a cliff fall before the young fledged. In 2009 there was evidence to support the view that there were 'at least 11 active breeding pairs and possibly 16 or more'. Given the overall increase in records in 2010 it is reasonable to assume that the number of pairs has remained roughly the same or perhaps increased slightly but with little data as regards breeding success.

Ravens start their breeding cycle early in the year and by late winter can be very noisy, with their spectacular tumbling display readily catching the eye but during the breeding season they are often unobtrusive and easily overlooked, especially in quiet woodland habitat. In late summer they keep together in family parties and successful pairs ought to be evident enough but interestingly there were no such records for last year. However, what is quite clear is that there is a burgeoning population to the west with Hampshire reporting a possible 50+ pairs in 2009 and with an abundance of suitable nesting habitat available in the county this species is surely set to flourish over the next few years. There were no significant gatherings in the winter and no roosts were reported. [MEK]

Goldcrest

Regulus regulus

Very common breeding resident, common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Records involving over 2100 individuals were received for 450 sites. The approximate minimum monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Monthly total	120	170	111	306	285	359	111	72	94	252	168	96

During the period January to March records were received from a wide variety of habitats across the county with many small groups of wintering birds. Of 294 records, almost 57% were of single birds and only 8.5% were of four or more. The highest count during this period was of 20 at Warnham LNR on 26 Jan with other double-figure counts of 12 at Washington on 26 Jan, 15 at Leechpool and Owlbeech Woods (Horsham) on 5 Feb and 16 at Graffham Common on 8 Feb. At least one individual was seen in Henfield feeding on a fat ball and other scraps put out during the period 14 Feb to 1 Mar.

The approximate minimum numbers recorded at coastal sites during the migration periods March to May and September to November were as follows:

	Spring	Autumn
Seasonal total	52	264
Pagham Hbr	6	35
Climping	-	3
Seaford/Hope Gap	-	-
Beachy Head	-	36
Pett Level	2	37
Other sites	44	153

The numbers recorded at coastal locations in spring compare very poorly with those for Firecrest; it is surprising that none were recorded at Seaford during spring or autumn.

Breeding was confirmed in 38 tetrads with probable breeding in a further 85. Breeding behaviour was first noted on 26 Mar at Scobells Fm (Barcombe), with a pair "wing fluttering",

and a nest was found on the 28 Mar in Norway spruce at Lavington. The first juvenile was noted at Woods Mill (Henfield) on 9 May and four just-fledged young were seen on the 18th at Punnetts Town (Heathfield). The latest record concerning an individual probably hatched in the county related to a juvenile trapped and ringed at Ladywell near Coombes on 28 Sep. During the BBS, a total of 123 birds was recorded from 47 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of 12 at Tilgate Forest on 14 Apr, an improvement on last year's figures but fewer than in 2008.

For the second consecutive year, numbers in the autumn were remarked upon as being extremely poor. During the autumn and second winter period there were only ten counts of ten or more birds. The highest count during the period was 30, which may have included migrants, at Hastings CP on 2 Oct, followed by 26 there on the 13th and 22 at Pett Level on the 26th. The highest count in November was 15 at Belle Tout (Beachy Head) on the 1st.

The highest number that the Beachy Head RG recorded during ringing activities was six on 7 Oct, reportedly a very poor autumn for this species there. Ringers at Ladywell (Coombes) ringed 25 new birds with a maximum of seven on 18 Oct and 6 Nov. The Steyning RG ringed 34 new birds at Cissbury with a maximum of 11 on 2 Nov and eight at Strivens Reedbed. The Rye Bay RG ringed 235 birds during the year. [CBa]



Goldcrest, Heyshott Common, April 2010 (Nick Bond)

Firecrest

Regulus ignicapilla

Scarce or possibly fairly common breeding resident, passage migrant, and winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

During the year a minimum of 364 individuals were recorded from 133 sites with confirmed breeding in four tetrads and probable breeding in two. The approximate minimum monthly totals were as follows:

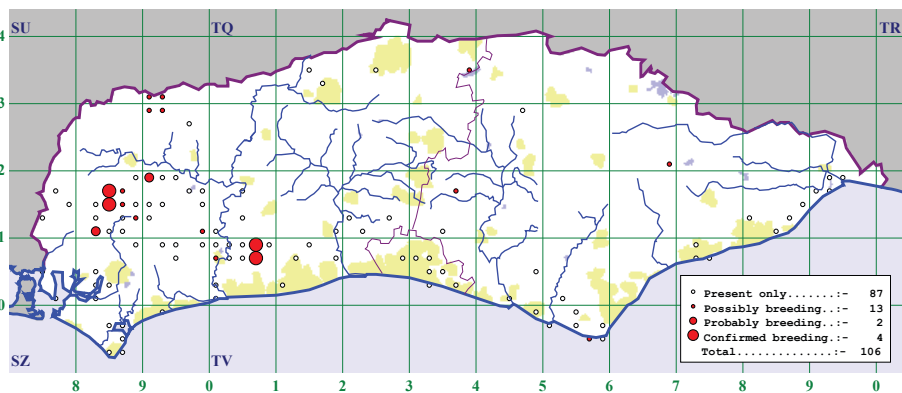
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Monthly total	47	43	100	22	11	12	1	1	23	46	46	12

Numbers in spring and autumn at coastal sites are traditionally swollen by migrants. During the year, autumn migration was noticeably better than in spring with approximately 40% more birds recorded at coastal sites over the three months September to November compared with the period March to June. The approximate minimum seasonal numbers at coastal sites were as follows:

	Spring	Autumn
Seasonal total	50	70
Pagham Hbr	7	6
Climping	11	9
Seaford/Hope Gap	8	-
Beachy Head	10	18
Pett Level	1	15
Other sites	13	22

Of note is the absence of autumn records from Seaford/Hope Gap in contrast to Pett Level where only a single bird was recorded during the spring period. Birds were recorded in every month of the year with numbers peaking in March with a minimum of 100 individuals at 49 sites. The highest numbers recorded at any one site were the nine recorded at Climping on 22 and 29 Mar and eight at Pett Level on 18 Sep.

The number of birds present in the county during January through to March, a minimum of 41, was significantly higher than that for the same period in 2009. This increase in wintering birds helps to explain the peak total for March, swollen by early passage migrants at coastal sites. Wintering birds began to demonstrate territorial behaviour; six singing males were reported from one site in the west of the county on 16 Mar, there were three singing males at another site and other singing males were recorded at a further four sites during the month.



During the breeding season, confirmed breeding was recorded at four sites, it was probable at a further three and birds were present in suitable habitat at a further 20 sites. The only reports

of fledged juveniles were of two at West Dean Woods on 22 Jun and one at Duncton Common on 11 Sep. During the BBS, a total of only two was recorded from two of the 139 1-km squares surveyed.

The only summer records were of singles: one at Beachy Head on 29 Jul, where observers reported that very few birds were seen during the autumn, and another at Firle Beacon on 30 Aug. However, observers at Hastings recorded 11 birds during a migration watch from 1 Aug to 16 Nov. Autumn migration peaked between 25 Oct and 1 Nov with daily maxima of seven on 25 Oct and nine on both the 30th and 31st and seven on 1 Nov.

Ringers at Ladywell (Coombes) ringed four new birds while the Steyning RG ringed six new birds at Cissbury and three new birds at Strivens Reedbed. The Rye Bay RG ringed 17, 16 of which were new birds, between 4 Oct and 26 Nov, and one was retrapped from a previous year. Seventeen is a site record. [CBa]

Blue Tit

Cyanistes caeruleus

Abundant resident.

Blue Tits were recorded from 684 tetrads across the county, illustrating their relative abundance. Highest counts during the first winter period came from Atlas surveys, the highest five being 84 at Three Bridges on 19 Jan, 82 at Sunnyside (East Grinstead), 66 at Rosers Cross (Waldron) on 24 Jan, and 63 each at Waldron on 24 Jan and Copsale on 2 Feb. There were eight further counts of over 50, demonstrating the value of the Atlas in determining abundance of common species.

During the BBS, a total of 1935 birds was recorded in 131 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a maximum of 53 at Southleigh Forest (Emsworth) on 23 Apr. Breeding was confirmed from 288 tetrads and was probable in a further 101. The earliest report of confirmed breeding came from Pulborough Brooks on 22 Mar and the first report of fledged youngsters came from Lewes Race Course on 30 May. There were 292 records of fledged young between 30 May and 28 Aug. High counts during the breeding season, all from Atlas surveys, were 64 on 13 Apr at Sunnyside and 60 each at Linch Fm (Bepton) and Rosers Cross on 26 Apr. There were a further six counts of 50 or more.

Post-breeding counts were also high, the highest being 42 each at Pett Level on 14 Sep, Hastings on 17 Sep and Hope Gap (Seaford Head) on 22 Sep, and 40 at St Leonard's on 28 Aug. Hastings Migration Watch reported 634 counted on 34 days between 1 Aug and 16 Nov, with many moving west. At Beachy Head there were 226 on 18 Sep, the majority of which moved quickly west in flocks of 8-29 and at Pagham spit a party of 14 flew west on 23 Sep.

The five highest counts during the second winter period were 100 at Broadbridge Heath on 16 Nov, 77 at Northlands (Warnham) on 1 Nov, 67 at Blackboys on 31 Dec and 52 each at Ditchling on 13 Nov and Warnham LNR on 20 Nov. [MJC]

Great Tit

Parus major

Abundant resident.

During the first winter period, the highest counts were 54 at Sunnyside (East Grinstead) on 7 Feb, 53 at Pulborough on 11 Feb and 48 each at Broxmead (Bolney) on 24 Jan and Itchingfield on 19 Feb, all reported during Atlas surveys, demonstrating the importance of the Atlas surveys in determining abundance for common species. Great Tits were recorded from 676 tetrads across the county which represents 70% of the 964 tetrads.

During the BBS, a total of 1014 birds was recorded in 129 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a maximum count of 25 at Partridge Green on 24 Apr. Breeding was confirmed from 227 tetrads and was probable in a further 135. The earliest date for confirmed breeding was 24 Mar at Markstakes Common (Chailey) and the first fledged youngsters were seen on 10 Apr at Romany Ridge Common (Chailey). There were 250 reports of fledged young between 10 Apr and 11 Aug. During the breeding season the largest counts were 38 at Bookers Fm (Bolney) on 24 Jun, 32 at Broxmead on 4 Jul and 31 at Northlands (Warnham) on 24 Jun.

The highest post-breeding count was 30 at Ditchling on 4 Sept and 25 each at Pulborough Brooks on 2 Aug and at Leechpool and Owlbeech Woods (Horsham) on 30 Aug. During the second winter period there were 48 at Framfield on 13 Dec and 40 each at Warnham LNR on 20 Nov and at Blackboys on 31 Dec and 35 at Uppark (South Harting) on 11 Dec. [MJC]

Coal Tit

Periparus ater

Very common resident.

Coal Tits were recorded in 376 tetrads across the county illustrating the relative abundance of the species. During the first winter period the highest counts were 18 at Stansted Forest on 23 Jan, 17 at Monkey Wood (Heathfield), 14 at Graffham Common on 8 Feb, 11 at Broomham (Golden Cross) and ten each at Maplehurst (Hastings) on 19 Jan and South Harting on 20 Feb.

During the BBS, a total of 117 Coal Tits was recorded from 39 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed with a maximum count of 21 at Tilgate Forest (Crawley) on 14 Apr. High breeding season counts were of 21 each at Tilgate Forest on 14 Apr and at Graffham Common on 19 Apr. There were 17 at Ambersham Common on 7 Jun but 37 there on 9 Jun. Nest building was first reported at Pulborough Brooks on 12 Apr and at Slinfold on the 20th. The earliest confirmed breeding was on 17 May at Rowlands Castle and the first fledglings were seen at Tarring (West Worthing) on the 24th. Breeding was confirmed from 35 tetrads and probable in a further 63. At West Worthing a pair successfully nested in a hole in the brickwork of the observer's house.

Post-breeding high counts were lower than in 2009 with the highest being 28 at Graffham Common on 16 Nov. There was only one other high count, of 20 at Ambersham Common on 15 Nov.

A bird showing characteristics of the nominate continental race *P.a. ater* (the insular British race is *P.a. britannicus*) was recorded and photographed at Birling Gap (Beachy Head) on 2 Sep (MRE), the earliest date this century by almost three weeks. There have now been at least 35 birds recorded since 1 Jan 2000 as follows: September (3), October (29), November (2) and December (1). [MJC]

Willow Tit

Poecile montana

Very scarce and declining resident. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

In January 2010 Willow Tit was added to the list of species for which a description is required for consideration by the SOSRC for acceptance and publication in the SxBR. This follows evidence of its decline in numbers, so it is not surprising that fewer records have been received than in previous years. Separating British Willow Tits and Marsh Tits remains difficult and many of the published identification criteria have been shown to be unreliable or highly subjective (*British Birds* 102: 604-616). Voice remains the most reliable distinguishing feature in the field. Only three records have been accepted, all from the far west of the county; the first, a single bird

on 11 Jan (MDS) at Arundel, then at West Dean Woods one on 8 Mar (OM), and on 21 Mar (PJ) two males were heard singing in dense hazel coppice. Sadly, no breeding evidence has been reported.

As this is a species of high conservation concern, all sightings should be reported with 4-fig or preferably 6-fig grid references, especially if territorial behaviour or other evidence of breeding is observed. [MJC]

Marsh Tit

Poecile palustris

Scarce resident. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

Much the more common of our two “brown tits”, Marsh Tits were recorded from 231 tetrads from across the county where suitable damp woods occur. Most records were of only one or two birds but high counts from the first winter period were: six at West Dean Woods on 17 Jan; six at Malecombe (Upwaltham) on 15 Feb; five at Weir Wood Res on 18 Feb; five at Linchball Wood (West Dean) on 19 Feb; seven at West Dean Woods on 9 Mar and six at Rackham Woods on 22 Mar.

During the breeding season records were received from 134 sites but as Marsh Tit is a sedentary species, most sightings are probably from potential breeders regardless of the date. Breeding was confirmed in 22 tetrads and probable in a further 35. During the BBS, a total of 15 birds was recorded in ten of the 139 1-km squares surveyed. The earliest date of confirmed breeding was 4 May at Weir Wood Res with young in the nest, followed by Pulborough Brooks on 10 May. The earliest fledged young were reported on 4 Jun at Lodsworth Common and two days later at Weir Wood Res. The highest breeding season counts were 11 at Church Hill (Ashdown Forest) on 9 Jun, six at Woods Corner (Dallington) on 13 Jun and six at Hawkins Pond (St Leonard’s Forest) on 19 Jun.

During the second winter period the species was seen at 101 locations. There was only one two-figure count and that was 10 at Uppark (South Harting) on 11 Dec. There were five at Kiln Copse (Ebernoe) on 15 Dec and four each at Ebernoe Common on 2 Nov, Burton Park (Duncton) on 4 Nov, Skippers Hill (Five Ashes) on 29 Nov and East Dean on 11 Dec.

During the season, RBRG ringed 31 new birds, including eight pulli, and the Steyning RG ringed two new birds at Cissbury North Scarp. [MJC]

Bearded Tit

Panurus biarmicus

Scarce breeding resident, and very scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

Most records came from two coastal areas at opposite ends of the county: between Chichester and Pagham Hbr in the west and between Pett Level and Rye Hbr in the east. During the first winter period there were only three records outside of these areas; four on 3 Jan at the Ouse Estuary Project (Newhaven), six on 5 Jan in TQ60 (Eastbourne/Pevensey) (only the 10-km grid reference was noted), and two at Shinewater Lakes (Eastbourne) on 20 Jan, possibly some of the same birds.

Counts outside the breeding season for the nine sites where the species was recorded were as shown in the table below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar		Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	32	13	4		50	50	90	48	24
Thorney Deepes	10	1	-		34	34	30	20	12
Thorney Island	-	-	-		-	-	9	-	-
Nutbourne (Chichester Hbr)	-	-	-		-	-	2	-	-
Pagham Hbr	1	-	-		-	-	10	4	1
Newhaven Ouse Estuary Project	4	-	-		-	-	9	4	-
Rodmell Brooks	-	-	-		-	-	-	2	-
Eastbourne/Pevensy	6	-	-		-	-	-	-	2
Pett Level	9	2	2		6	9	12	13	6
Rye Hbr	2	10	2		10	7	18	5	3

During the BBS no birds were recorded. Breeding was confirmed at Thorney Deepes, Pett Level and Rye Hbr where fledged young were seen, the first on 28 May. Breeding success is difficult to evaluate but at Thorney Deepes 30 young were reported and there were at least six pairs at Rye Hbr.



Bearded Tit, Southease, November 2010 (Jacob Everitt)

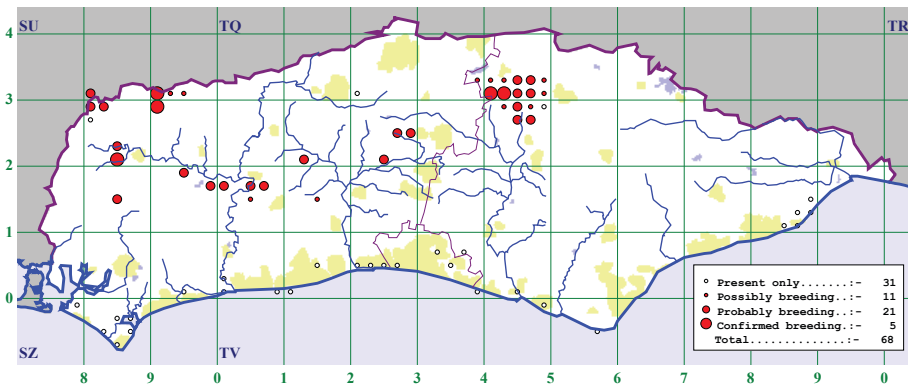
Distinctive “high flying” behaviour, which is associated with dispersal, was noted at Thorney Deepes between 30 Sep and 19 Nov and at the Newhaven site on 24 Oct. An unusual record came from Birling Gap (Beachy Head) on 1 Nov where a bird was “seen on top of a bush, then flew west calling”. [MJC]

Wood Lark*Lullula arborea*

Scarce resident and possibly very scarce passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

In the first winter period the first sighting was of seven birds at Lavington Plantation on 3 Jan. Elsewhere, at the beginning of January during the cold spell, there were a number of exceptional sightings from the coast. There were six at Church Norton with Sky Larks on 6 Jan and three with Sky Larks in fields west of Selsey on the same date. On 7 Jan there was a flock of 15 at Atherington (Climping) which was the largest of the year, four at Widewater (Lancing), two at Goring Beach and 12 at Cliff End (Pett) and, from 8 to 13 Jan, up to 12 beside the Adur at Shoreham.

During harsh weather at the beginning of the year there were records from about 20 coastal locations involving a minimum of 55 and possibly as many as 90 birds. The highest counts were 15 at Climping on 7 Jan, 12 at Cliff End on the same date and the same number at Pett Level on the 11th, and up to 10 by the R Adur (Shoreham) between 8 and 13 Jan. Between 6 and 11 Jan smaller parties of 4-6 birds were seen with Sky Larks near Church Norton, at Widewater (Lancing), near the Shoreham power station and at Hastings CP. Other records were of one or two birds. The only inland record during January was of seven at Lavington Plantation on the 3rd.



The annual Wealden Heaths Breeding Bird Survey identified 26 territories in the west of the county including five at Iping Common and five at Weavers Down (Liss); this was fewer than the totals of 30 territories in 2009 and 37 in 2008. A minimum of 17 pairs or territories was identified on Ashdown Forest. Outside these two survey areas the species was recorded at 17 other locations during the spring and, if each held a single territory, this would bring the county total to about 60 territories. During the BBS, a total of five were recorded from three of the 139 1-km squares surveyed.

Breeding was confirmed at four sites. Adults carrying food were observed at Black Down on 18 Apr, on Ashdown Forest at the Old Airstrip on 31 May and at Isle of Thorns on 17 Jun. Adults with fledged young were recorded at Black Down on 10 May, Stedham Common on 10 Jun and Isle of Thorns on 7 Jul. There was probable breeding in 22 tetrads and possible breeding in a further 11. Family parties recorded after the breeding season included flocks of 14 birds at Lord's Piece (Coates Common) on 26 Aug and ten at Millbrook (Ashdown Forest) on 6 Sep. Singing

males were found in October at Iping Common on the 8th and Stedham Common on the 24th. The final records of the year were of one bird at Portobello (Telscombe Cliffs) on 2 Dec and two birds at West Wittering on 3 Dec. [SPS]



Wood Lark, Shoreham, January 2010 (Dave Sadler)

Sky Lark

Alauda arvensis

Very common but declining resident, and probably common passage migrant and winter visitor. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

Sky Larks were recorded from 392 tetrads across the county. Some very large flocks were recorded in early January. At Atherington (Climping) on 7 Jan 5000 were counted in kale fields with 2000 at the same site on the 10th following the onset of very cold weather and heavy snowfall. On the same date similar sized flocks of 2000 were reported from Cuckoo Corner (Coombes) and at The Severals (Church Norton) and at least 1000 were recorded nearby at Greenlease Fm (Church Norton) on the 13th.

The first singing males were at Misbourne (Ashdown Forest) on 5 Feb and New Barn (Hassocks) and Pulborough Brooks the following day.

A minimum of 62 pairs or territories was identified on Ashdown Forest. The annual Wealden Heaths Breeding Bird Survey (WHBBS) identified five territories. During the BBS, a total of 280 birds was recorded from 74 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of 22 at Thorney Island on 2 Jun.

There were an estimated 427 pairs breeding in eight tetrads on the Norfolk Estate (on the eastern side of the R Arun near Arundel), up slightly from the estimated 397 pairs in 2009 with 136 of these pairs in the Burpham tetrad and 185 pairs to the north in the Wepham Down tetrad.

Breeding was confirmed in 26 tetrads. Adults carrying food were seen at Cuckfield Park on 25 May, Wilmington on 31 May, Belle Tout (Beachy Head) on 4 Jun, Steep Down (Lancing) on 7 Jun, Ferring and Durrington (Worthing) on 8 Jun and Wickham Manor (Winchelsea) on 2 Jul. Fledged young were seen at Emsworth Channel on 7 Jun, Pallingham (Pulborough) on 4 Jul and Petsalls Copse (Kirdford) on 6 Jun. Probable breeding was recorded in 145 tetrads with possible breeding in a further 115.

Some large flocks were seen towards the end of the second winter period but not on the scale of the beginning of the year. At Worthing Beach, 316 were counted flying west following the onset of cold weather on 2 Dec and there were 870 W at Telscombe Cliffs the same day. On 21 Dec 350 W were seen at Climping Beach. A flock of 300 was seen at fields west of Selsey on 19 Dec and 280 were feeding in a stubble field at Thorney Island the same day. During a TTV at East Guldeford (Collyers Fm) on 28 Dec, 198 were counted. A minimum of 150 was seen feeding in stubble at Steep Down (Lancing) on the 31st [SPS]



Shore Lark, Cuckmere Haven, October 2010 (Les Bird)

Shore Lark

Eremophila alpestris

Rare vagrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

An individual was seen at Cuckmere Haven from 17 to 24 Oct and photographed (MO). This was welcomed as the first to be seen in Sussex since the one at Rye Hbr on 23 Dec 2007 and departed on 1 Mar 2008. The county total since the start of 2000 moves on to six. [JAH]

Sand Martin*Riparia riparia*

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

The first birds of the year were five at Pulborough Brooks and one at Thorney Deeps, both on 19 Mar, eight days later than the 10-year average and almost three weeks later than the record set last year (27 Feb). The following day, 20 Mar, 12 were recorded from Pulborough Brooks. During the remainder of March, double-figure counts came from Pulborough Brooks of 25 on the 23rd, ten on the 29th and 20 on the 31st, whilst observers at Chichester GP recorded 40 on the 30th. A further 15 records during March were of single-figure counts of birds.

Spring migration continued with records for most days in April, barring six, mainly towards the latter part of the month. The highest count during April was 40 on the 1st at Pulborough Brooks; no other count exceeded the 30 logged flying north in 7 hr at Selsey Bill, this being one of only 13 double-figure counts through the month.

The bulk of spring migrants arrived in the first half of May; some large numbers were recorded with 17 double-figure counts, mostly between 20 and 40. Higher counts, however, came from Barcombe Res (100 on the 1st), Chichester GP (200 on the 2nd and 300 on the 4th), Weir Wood Res (100 on the 3rd) and Chichester GP (200 on the 4th).

Breeding was confirmed from 11 locations (an improvement in recording on last year), all in West Sussex. At West Heath SP there were 10 nests; at Stedham SP there were 13 nests but 40 holes; at Valdoe Wood (East Lavant) 80 nests were counted; at Pendean SP 130 nests and c.250 holes; at Heath End (Burton) 15 birds and c.100 holes, not all fresh; at Coates Common one site had 3-6 active nests and 40 holes and another site had 20 nests; at Sandgate Park (Storrington) three colonies had 32, 44 and 22 nests. No nesting was recorded at Rye Hbr and the artificial nesting bank created at Arundel WWT in 2010 was not used. During the BBS, only three birds were recorded from one of the 139 1-km squares surveyed.

Significant numbers of birds moving along the coast on return migration began to be recorded by the middle of July. Two hundred were noted heading out to sea at Selsey Bill on the 10th and a further 200 there on the 21st, whilst 100 were logged moving west at Pagham Hbr on the 18th with another 100 on the 24th. Altogether ten three-figure counts were made during July, the same number, incidentally, as during August. Numbers rose towards the end of July and into August, with 500 at Pagham on 11 August, but eclipsed by 2016 at Pett Level on the 16th, the largest single count of the year. Other significant counts in the latter part of the month included 500 at Chichester GP on the 23rd and 550 at Weir Wood Res on the 29th.

During September, when there was a nearly continuous movement of birds, nineteen three-figure counts were received. Of these the most significant were 809 (on the 2nd) and 807 (on the 4th) from Pett Level, 750 (6th), 500 (10th) and 400 (12th) at Rye Hbr, 550 W at Selsey on the 12th, and 400 from both Weir Wood on the 14th and Pett Level on the 18th.

Most of the few records for October were in single figures and in the first half of the month; the exceptions were 14 W on the 2nd and 40 W on the 4th at Pett Level. In the second half of the month, observers at Church Norton recorded one on the 17th and one at Beachy Head on the 24th, the last of the year, just three days later than the 10-year average. [DB]

Barn Swallow*Hirundo rustica*

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

The first two sightings of the year came on 18 Mar, eight days later than the 10-year average, comprising one at Pagham Hbr and one at Pulborough Brooks. After a single bird on the 20th at Cuckmere Haven, records came from each subsequent day throughout March, mostly involving single birds, but with six at Rye Hbr on the 26th, 11 at Pagham Hbr on the 27th, ten at Pulborough Brooks on the 29th (with 15 on the 30th and 20 on the 31st) and, on the 30th, two high counts of 42 at Waltham Brooks and 40 at Chichester GP.

Further spring migration was recorded daily throughout April, with 41 double-figure counts, and a notable count at Selsey Bill of 244 birds heading north on the 18th. During early May, three-figure counts were received from Sidlesham SF (200 on the 1st), Chichester GP (300 on the 2nd), Rye Hbr (500 on the 3rd), Pagham Hbr (200 on the 4th) and Warnham LNR (200 on the 9th). A further seven three-figure counts under 200 came during the month but, more significant, were 1000 at Barcombe Res on the 2nd and 1500 at Weir Wood Res on the 3rd.

The first returning breeding bird was noted at Edburton on 27 Mar and young were noted in a nest by the end of May at Byworth (Petworth). Confirmed breeding was recorded from 87 tetrads and probable breeding in a further 123. Of the confirmed breeders there were 14 occupied nests at a site in Findon on 31 May, three pairs at Keymer, four pairs at Clearview Fm (Burgess Hill), two successful pairs at Nuthurst, and at Durfold (Warnham) a second brood was recorded on 30 Aug. During the BBS, 454 birds were recorded from 25 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of 25 at Cowfold on 3 May.

Flocks roosting in reed beds were recorded at Thorney Deeps (400 on 27th Aug and 200 on 2 Sep) and Lancing on 31 Aug (500-1000).

Autumn migration was mainly concentrated between 10 Sep and early October. On 12 Sep 3500 W were noted at Rye Hbr but the highest single count during this period was approximately 10,000 from Pett Level on 18 Sep. During an extended migration watch at Hastings from 14 Aug to 1 Nov, a total of 15,607 birds was recorded, including 4445 W on 10 Sep and 1700 (including 1500 W) on the 26th. Four further counts of 1000-1450 were noted during this autumn period.

Twenty nine, involving mostly singles, were seen in November with a maximum of three at both Jury's Gap on the 1st and at Rye Hbr on the 4th. The last bird of the year was recorded at Telscombe Cliffs on 25 Nov, equalling the 10-year average.

A curious record involved either an apparently hybrid Swallow x House Martin or aberrant individual from Arlington Res on 9 May. [DB]

House Martin*Delichon urbicum*

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

The first bird of the year was recorded on the coast at Pagham Hbr on 10 Mar, four days earlier than the 10-year average. The next sighting was five days later on the 15th at Pulborough Brooks, followed by six more records by the month's end involving one or two birds.

Arriving migrants were recorded on seven of the first ten days of April in ones or twos, the only exception being 20 at Pagham Hbr on the 5th. However, from 10 Apr they were recorded

daily with increasing party sizes. In the first four days of May nine counts of over 100 birds were received, the most significant of which were 300 at Chichester GP and 500 at Barcombe Res on the 2nd and, by far the highest, 750 at Weir Wood Res on the 3rd. The next count of over 100 was not made until 27 Jul when 200 were observed at Ardingly Res.

Confirmed breeding was recorded from 54 tetrads, with probable breeding at a further 63; these figures are slightly up from 2009. The first birds to be prospecting nest sites were at Hartfield on 18 Apr, whilst nesting was being recorded well into August, with a second brood on the 19th and three almost fledged young at Arundel on the 24th. A second brood was reported from Oreham Common on 19 Aug and three artificial nests at Okehurst Farmhouse (Billingshurst) were with third broods on 28 Jul. During the BBS, 194 birds were recorded from 32 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of 23 at Slinfold on 23 Jun.

Twenty six double-figure counts were received during August. By the middle of the month post-breeding flocks were increasing in size, with two counts in three figures. However, it was near the end of the month before the biggest flock of the year so far, 1200, was recorded at Weir Wood Res on the 28th. Also notable were 300 at Arundel on the 29th.

The largest and most significant movements of birds came during September when there were 25 double-figure counts and 15 over 1000. This latter group included nine counts of up to 1500 but also 7900 W in 4 hr at Selsey Bill and 2000 feeding and moving out to sea at Pagham Hbr on the 12th; 3000 at Pagham Hbr the following day (considered to be a low estimate); 1650 at Bewl Water on the 19th; 6000 W at Hastings on the 24th; and a further 4500 (3700 W, 800 E) at Hastings two days later. In total over 40,000 birds moved through the county during September, largely moving west; this compares favourably with the 35,600 (mostly east) recorded in 2009 during the same time period. During an extended migration watch at Hastings, 21,059 birds were recorded between 13 Aug and 1 Nov.



Red-rumped Swallows, Arlington Reservoir, May 2010 (Pete Wilson)

A few large counts were recorded into early October, with 300 from Ladywell (Coombes) on the 7th and 300 at Climping Beach on the 8th, and 1600 moving SE in six hours at Washington were observed the same day. Twenty at Fletching was the last double-figure count of the year. The next highest count to the year-end was 5 E at Climping on the 18th. There were three records in November, the last birds of the year being 2 S from Selsey Bill on 9 Nov, three days earlier than the 10-year average of 12 Nov. [DB]

Red-rumped Swallow

Cecropis daurica

Rare vagrant.

There were two sightings this year, both of two birds. The first to arrive were over the Long Pits at Rye Hbr on 4 May (BJY) where they were seen feeding with Barn Swallows. Four days later two more were recorded at Arlington Res on 8 May (NMG *et al.*) which were well watched and last seen on the 12th. One bird from each pair was photographed. There have been only two previous occasions when two birds have apparently arrived together: 28 Apr 2007 and 7 Nov 2009; all other records have been of single individuals. The total this century moves on to 11 and overall, since the first record of 23 Apr 1967, to 28. [JAH]

Cetti's Warbler

Cettia cetti

Scarce but increasing resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

During January and February there were reports from 11 different sites near the coast, with the majority coming from Rye Hbr, Pett Level, Pagham Hbr and Thorney Island (Chichester Hbr) where there were maxima of four, nine, eight and four respectively, similar concentrations to those of the first two months of 2009. Four were at Bulverhythe (St Leonards) on 7 Jan, singles were reported at Willingdon on 24 Jan and on three occasions in February, at White Dyke (Hailsham) on 15 Feb, at Southease on the 17th and at Pevensey on the 23rd. During March, this species was noted at several other sites, including Sefter Fm (Rose Green) on the 1st and 28th, the Ouse Estuary Project (Newhaven) on the 3rd and 14th, Waltham Brooks on the 9th and 18th, Wicks Fm (Yapton) on the 10th, Ladywell (Coombes) on the 13th and Arundel WWT on the 14th.

Despite the very cold weather at the beginning of the year, the number of breeding pairs remained fairly stable; 29 at Pagham Hbr represented an increase of one over the previous year, while a total of 15 singing males at Rye Hbr was identical to 2009. Three pairs were resident at Horse Eye Level (Pevensey), four singing males were at Filsham LNR in May and nine were holding territory at Thorney Deepes (Chichester Hbr), where approximately 24 young fledged. Three fledged young were noted at Arundel WWT on 6 Jun. Inland sightings were of two at Coldwaltham on 22 and 30 Apr, two at Beeding Brooks on the 24th, and singles at Polegate on 16 May, at Sakeham Fm (Shermanbury) on the 23rd and at Warnham LNR on the 25th. A singing male was heard throughout May at Edburton, and a pair with two fledged young was also seen there on 1 Aug; this is 100 yards from where the species first bred in Sussex in 1975 (TJW). During the BBS, a total of 12 was recorded from five of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with highest counts of four at Thorney Island on 26 Apr and 2 Jun and at Lidsey Lodge (Bognor Regis) on 10 May and 13 Jun.

Autumn and winter records were mostly from the regular sites, though two were heard at Ladywell (Coombes) in October and one at Iford Brooks on 10 Oct, and the monthly maximum at Pett Level was 20 on the 17th. At Thorney Deepes and Pett Level the November maxima were

ten and 12 respectively. In December there were reports from seven sites, representing at least 13 individuals. [VPB]

Long-tailed Tit

Aegithalos caudatus

Very common resident.

During the first winter period the largest count was 30 at Paghams Hbr on 2 Jan. Atlas TTVs were particularly significant in boosting Long-tailed Tit records and numbers during this period included 27 counted at Maplehurst Wood (Hastings) on 19 Jan, 25 at Waldron on 24 Jan, 25 at the Parham Estate on 31 Jan, 29 at Constantia Manor (Isfield) on 2 Feb and 28 at Mill Fm (Redgate) on 13 Feb. There were 12 further counts of 20 or more during this period. In gardens, birds were reported using feeders in Whatlington, Ferring Rife, Cuckfield, Danehill and Lewes on peanuts and fat balls.

As is usual for this species, flocks disband in early spring and birds begin breeding. The first nest building was noted at Broadbridge Heath on 3 March and at Church Norton on the 7th. The earliest confirmed breeding was on 14 Mar at Southwater CP where an active nest was seen, followed by birds on nests at Sutton on 9 Apr and at Pulborough Brooks on 12 Apr. The earliest date of young in the nest was at Tilement Fm (Warbleton) on 22 Apr and then at Sedlescombe the following day. Fledglings were first seen at Romany Ridge Common (Chailey) on 24 Apr, two weeks earlier than in 2009. Many nests are destroyed by predators; the failed breeders usually re-nest early in the season but by late April switch to helping to feed nestlings at relatives' nests. The last record of nest building was on 1 May at Malling Down (Lewes).

During the BBS, a total of 218 birds was recorded in 72 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a maximum count of 12 at Westergate on 13 Jun. Breeding was confirmed in 122 tetrads and probable in a further 127. The highest breeding season counts were 22 at Hastings on 23 May, 58 at Pett Level on 25 Jun, 27 there on 17 Jul and 32 at Ambersham Common on 23 Jul.

The highest post-breeding counts were 23 at Chichester GP on 17 Aug, 20 at Nymans (Handcross) on 12 Sep and 20 at Paghams Hbr on 27 Sep. During the second winter period the species was seen at some 200 locations. The largest counts during this period were 26 at Old Lodge NR (Ashdown Forest) on 17 Oct, 30 at Horseshoe Plantation (Beachy Head) on 28 Oct, 34 at Pett Level on 30 Oct, 34 at Horsted Keynes on 22 Nov, 30 each at Billingshurst on 11 Dec, Knowlands Wood (Barcombe) and Balneath Wood (South Chailey) on 12 Dec and 28 at Warnham LNR on the same day. [MJC]

Pallas's Leaf Warbler

Phylloscopus proregulus

Very scarce visitor; mostly in late autumn.

Two widely separated individuals were recorded. The first was found and photographed in the Horseshoe Plantation at Belle Tout (Beachy Head) on 14 and 15 Oct (ASC *et al.*), feeding in association with Goldcrests and Firecrests. It was a relatively early arrival, equalling the fourth earliest date after 1 Oct 1998, 4 Oct 2007 and 11 Oct 1987. The second was, in contrast, relatively late; it was found on 19 Nov (MN, PJN) also in the Horseshoe Plantation but was not located the following day; there have been only seven later records to the end of the year. These bring the total this century to 21 and overall to 80 since the first record of October 1968. [JAH]

Yellow-browed Warbler*Phylloscopus inornatus*

Very scarce visitor; mostly in late autumn.

One was trapped, ringed and photographed at Pett Level on 17 Oct (RBRG), a typical date. This brings the totals for this century to 57 and October to 44. It was a disappointing year after 21 over the previous three years. [JAH]

Wood Warbler*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Very scarce and declining summer resident and passage migrant. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

There were 34 records received relating to some 19-20 individuals, a reduction from the 2009 figure of 27. The earliest record was from Sidlesham SF of one bird on 18 Apr, one day earlier than the 10-year county average. This was followed by a single bird at Brighton Wild Park on the 20th and two at West Dean Woods on the 30th.

In May, all records came from Ashdown Forest, Black Down (Fernhurst) and Weir Wood Res. The species was recorded in 16 tetrads while breeding was confirmed in one and probable in a further two. During the BBS only one was recorded in one of the 139 1-km squares surveyed.

A single returning bird was recorded on 31 Jul at Malling Down (Lewes). In August, single birds were noted at Halsey's Fm (Sidlesham) on the 11th, at Cissbury Ring on the 14th and at Pett Level on the 28th. In September, one was at Weir Wood Res on the 4th and then single birds were at Cissbury Ring and Pagham Hbr on the 9th. Finally, one was seen at Pulborough Brooks on the 16th, nine days later than the 10-year county average. [TWP]

Common Chiffchaff*Phylloscopus collybita*

Very common summer visitor and passage migrant; small numbers winter.

In January records included 14 at Thorney SF on the 4th and five at Ladywell (Coombes) on the 18th. In February the only record was five at Ladywell on the 25th. During March, when immigration was in full swing, the only significant numbers were a minimum of ten at Pagham Hbr on the 18th, 16 at Ladywell on the 23rd, 16 at Ditchling on the 28th, and finally 15 at Warnham LNR on the 30th. In March, single-figure numbers were reported widely across the county.

In April, there was a real rise in reported numbers with many counts in double figures of birds in breeding territory and they were recorded from 539 tetrads (94 fewer than in 2009). Breeding was confirmed in 56 tetrads (three more than in 2009) and probable breeding in a further 189. A pair was seen with newly fledged young on 18 May at Warnham LNR. At Pagham Hbr, the annual breeding survey total was only 27 pairs, down from 40 in 2009. During the BBS a total of 573 was recorded in 123 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed with a highest count of 18 at Ripe on 24 Apr.

In early autumn, there were 20 at Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) on 28 and 29 Jul. At the end of August, there were 30 at Cissbury Ring on the 30th while there were 25 at Pett Level on the 31st. September started with 50 at Cissbury Ring on the 3rd, 80 at Climping Gap on the 8th and a minimum of 100 at Cissbury Ring on the 9th. Observers at Whitbread Hollow recorded 150 on the 13th and 200 on the 16th and 120 were counted at Hastings on the 17th. Back at Whitbread Hollow, 400 were there on the 19th and 300 plus at Pett Level, also on the 19th. Numbers then tailed off until the 30th when there was another influx at Hastings with 111 recorded.

In October there were 100 at Whitbread Hollow on the 2nd and 70 at Cissbury Ring on the 5th and on the 7th there were 150 at Weir Wood Res and 180 were trapped at Pett Level. Numbers then fell away with 30 at Whitbread Hollow on the 18th being the last significant total. During the Migration Watch at Hastings 1736 birds were counted in 91 days of observation between 1 Aug and 16 Nov. There was a trickle of records for November and December with 46 birds reported, including 18 recorded during Atlas TTVs. The maximum together was four at Coldwaltham SF. [TWP]

Willow Warbler

Phylloscopus trochilus

Common but declining summer visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The first records were of single birds at Selsey Bill and the Lower Cuckmere Valley on 20 Mar, one day earlier than in 2009 but four days later than the 10-year county average. Observers at Selsey Bill then recorded six on the 21st and singles were reported widely in the county until the month's end. Arrivals in April started slowly but 11 were at Paddockhurst Place (Worth) on the 9th and 12 at Ambersham Common on the 10th. Birds appeared to go straight inland on arrival, as there were no falls on the coast to speak of until the 18th when 22 were counted at Pagham and 15 at Ferring Rife. There was another fall on the 20th with 50 in the Pagham/Church Norton area and 20 at Belle Tout (Beachy Head). On the 23rd 17 were counted at Crowborough GC and 13 at Pippingford Park (Ashdown Forest).



Willow Warbler, Climbing, July 2010 (Bola Akinola)

In the breeding season birds were recorded from 273 tetrads (28 less than in 2009). Breeding was confirmed in 18 tetrads, double that of 2009 and breeding was probable in a further 65. During the BBS a total of 69 was recorded in 26 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed with the

highest count of 16 at Blackham on 12 Jun. As has been the case for many years, Ashdown Forest is the major breeding area in the county for this species and at one small site 14 were counted in song on 14 Jun.

Return passage seemed to start on 18 Jul at Pett Level with two birds present. On 28 Jul five were present at Sidlesham. These were followed by 18 at Climping and 217 at Pett Level on the 29th. August started with 40 at Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) on the 1st and 60 on the 2nd. At Pett Level 187 were trapped on the 1st, 183 on the 2nd, 178 on the 3rd and 179 on the 6th; migration was truly under way. At Whitbread Hollow there were 120 on the 8th, 100 on the 9th and 150 on the 18th. Towards the end of the month 45 were at Climping Gap on the 28th and 20 at Brighton Wild Park on the 30th. September started with 15 at Sheepcote Valley (Brighton), ten at Brighton Wild Park and 11 at Pett Level on the 1st. The monthly maximum at the latter site was 27 on the 9th. There were still many single-figure counts from Ashdown Forest during the month and also into October when there were also records from a further seven sites. During the Migration Watch at Hastings 556 birds were counted in 91 days of observation between 1 Aug and 16 Nov. The last record was of a single bird at Pagham on 11 Nov, 15 days later than the 10-year county average. [TWP]

A bird accepted as showing characteristics of the Scandinavian and eastern European form *P.t. acredula* was seen (but not heard to call) in a garden at Telscombe Cliffs on 17 May (DHH, JRH), presumably an off-course spring migrant. There have been records of the northern form of Willow Warbler in five previous years this century involving 12 birds (4x2, 4x1) all trapped in August by the Beachy Head RG, so this is the first spring record since 2000. [JAH]

Blackcap

Sylvia atricapilla

Very common summer visitor and passage migrant; small numbers winter.

Although not quite reaching the exceptional numbers of 2007, the first two months of 2010 saw an increase in wintering birds over the same period in 2009 with a minimum of 68 different individuals from 51 sites. Most reports were of single birds, but two were seen together at Bognor Regis, Littlehampton, West Tarring, West Chiltington, two different areas of Henfield, Plumpton Green, Crowborough GC, Pett Level and Rye, where on 31 Jan two males were in an area with ivy covered walls together with three Redwings, two Song Thrushes and some Blackbirds. Three were recorded at Blacklands (Hastings) on 3 Jan, Reigate Road (Brighton) on the 15th and at Findon on the 29th. Many of these wintering birds were faithful to the same sites; one at Preston Park (Brighton) was a daily visitor for four weeks from mid-January, and those at Bognor Regis were seen on nine occasions in January.

The first singing male was heard at Southwater Country Park on 14 Mar, while the first at Brighton Wild Park was four days later. Two birds at Church Norton on 26 Mar may have been the first returning migrants. On 18 Apr, 17 were counted in an hour's early season Atlas survey near Crowborough, and on the same day 26 were found at Weir Wood Res. Eleven were singing in Clapham Wood on the 29th. A male heard mimicking Sedge Warbler song was seen carrying nesting material at Scobells Farm (Barcombe) on 2 May. The first fledged young were noted at Angmering Decoy ponds on 21 Jun. Breeding counts at Pulborough Brooks and Thorney Island (Chichester Hbr) produced a total of 22 and nine pairs respectively, slightly fewer than in 2009 at both sites. However, a survey on the Norfolk Estate from late May to early July found 80 pairs, an increase of 33 over the previous year. During the BBS, a total of 490 were recorded from 111 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with highest counts of 12 at Sutton End on 24 May and Southleigh Forest (Emsworth) on 6 Jun.

The number of this species trapped for ringing by the Steyning RG at Steyning and Cissbury was lower than in 2009, at 616, though still comprised 20% of the total annual catch (23% in 2009) (*Steyning RG data*). At Pett Level, the monthly maxima ringed were 220 on 31 Aug, 469 on 13 Sep and 247 on 7 Oct, after which date daily catches declined to less than 30. At Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) high numbers passed through in autumn with a total of 1243 ringed and 500 were reported as present at the site on both 9 and 16 Sep.

During November there were reports from only nine sites with the final birds at both Thorney Island and Beachy Head on the 1st. In December, records were of at least 25 individuals at 20 different sites; two males were at Bognor Regis on the 12th and at Lancing on the 19th. Food items taken in gardens included apples, honeysuckle, spindle and *Callicarpa* berries. [VPB]

Garden Warbler

Sylvia borin

Very common summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first bird of the year was seen at Barcombe on 5 Apr, two days later than the 10-year average date. The next report was not until the 14th, when one was singing at Chesworth Fm (Horsham), and another was at Burwash the following day. Sightings became more widespread across the county from 19 Apr.

During the breeding season, there were three pairs at Pulborough Brooks, four pairs at Pagham Hbr and seven pairs on the Norfolk Estate. An adult was seen feeding young at Leechpool and Owlbeech Woods (Horsham) on 5 Jun. During the BBS, a total of 47 was recorded from 30 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of five at Weir Wood Res on 29 May.

While numbers ringed at Strivens Reed Bed (Steyning) were half that of 2009, 13 different individuals were trapped at Cissbury, compared with only seven the previous year. One of these was a migrant which had returned each year since being ringed as an adult female in May 2007, while at Steyning a retrapped bird ringed as an adult in 2006 had not been recorded during the intervening years (*Steyning RG data*). At Pett Level, the monthly maxima trapped and ringed were 40 on 2 Aug and 26 on 3 Sep, while at Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) ten seen on 18 Aug was the highest number passing through and a poor autumn was reported there.

After 16 Sep the only records were of an individual at Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) on 2 Oct, and four at Pett Level in October, with the final record there on the 5th, eight days earlier than the 10-year average date. [VPB]

Lesser Whitethroat

Sylvia curruca

Common summer visitor and passage migrant.

Besides one bird seen visiting feeders in an East Preston (Brighton) garden between 10 Feb and 4 Apr, presumably an over-wintering bird, the first returning migrant of the year was recorded during an Atlas survey at Pevensey on 11 Apr, a day earlier than the 10-year average date, while the first arrival in the west of the county was singing at Waltham Brooks on the 13th, in the same bush where the observer had noted his first the previous year. Two were reported on the 14th at Sidlesham and Brighton Wild Park, and the next day another was seen at Woods Mill. The main arrival commenced on 17 Apr, with more reported in locations away from the coast from the 25th.

During the breeding season, four pairs were recorded on the Norfolk Estate, four pairs at Pulborough Brooks, ten pairs at Thorney Island (Chichester Hbr), an increase of four over the previous year, and 12 pairs at both Pagham and Rye Harbours, compared with eight and 20

respectively in 2009. Four singing males were in Brighton Wild Park from April through to May. During the BBS, a total of 27 was recorded from 17 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of three at Partridge Green on 24 Apr. Fifteen different individuals were trapped at Cissbury, where the ratio of adult to first year birds was a very disappointing 10:5, compared with 5:11 in 2009. However, at Strivens Reed Bed (Steyning) all eight birds ringed were first years. Monthly maxima ringed at Pett Level were 14 on 31 Aug and 20 on 1 Sep, with the 19th being the final date. Beachy Head RG reported a very poor autumn with a total of only 36 birds ringed. In 91 days of migration watches at Hastings between 1 Aug and 16 Nov a total of 204 individuals was logged.

There were only two October records, of single birds at Church Norton on the 1st and Weir Wood Res on the 7th, this final report being five days earlier than the 10-year average date. [VPB]

Common Whitethroat

Sylvia communis

Very common summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first report came from Seaford on 5 Apr, a week later than in 2009, and four days later than the 10-year average date. By the following days birds had arrived at Thorney Island (Chichester Hbr), Pulborough Brooks, Woods Mill, Barcombe and Pett Level. On 14 Apr eight individuals were found in a 2-hr Atlas survey walk at Isfield, four pairs were seen at Ferring Rife on the 1st and 28 were among a fall of migrants at Climping Gap on the 20th. On the 26th a total of 24 was counted at Devil's Dyke, most of which were singing or songflighting, and 14 were located in a 2-hr Atlas survey at Apuldram on 5 May.



Common Whitethroat, Hodcombe, September 2010 (Roger Charlwood)

During the breeding season there were 37 pairs at Thorney Island, eight fewer than in 2009 and a decrease of 16 compared to 2008; 14 pairs were at Pulborough Brooks, 53 at Rye Hbr, 63

at Pagham Hbr and 192 pairs on the Norfolk Estate, the latter figure being an increase of 48 over the previous year. During the BBS, a total of 326 was recorded from 83 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of 15 at the Knepp Estate on 22 Jun. The first fledglings were three noted at Mile Oak on 12 Jun. On 25 Jul at least 50 birds were moving through crops at The Burgh and on 8 Aug another 50 were reported at Five Lords Burgh (Denton).

At Cissbury 88 different individuals were handled, of which 57 were young and 31 adult birds, while at Strivens Reed Bed (Steining) of 46 birds trapped only six were adults. Monthly maxima trapped at Pett Level were 107 on 28 Aug and 71 on 1 Sep. Beachy Head RG ringed 274 individuals and noted good numbers moving through during the autumn, with 250 on 9 Sep being the highest daily total. At various Hastings locations 186 were logged during migration watches on 91 days between 1 Aug and 16 Nov.

There were reports from eight different locations in October; the final sighting in the west of the county was a single bird at Thorney Island on the 6th and in the east the last sighting was at Hastings CP on the 18th, three days earlier than the 10-year average date. [VPB]

Dartford Warbler

Sylvia undata

Scarce to fairly common but localised resident. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

In the first winter period the first sighting of the year was on 1 Jan at Ambersham Common with three birds seen there on 3 Jan and one at Lords Piece (Coates) on the 4th. A single bird was seen in deep snow at Lavington Common on 8 Jan. Two birds were seen at West Chase (Ashdown Forest) on 12 Jan. During the period there were a number of sightings of single birds at sites around Pagham Hbr between 17 Jan and 21 Mar. From 8 Mar there were increasingly frequent sightings in Ashdown Forest, at West Chase, Old Airstrip, Ellisons Pond and Friends. A single bird was seen at Heyshott Common on 17 Mar.

The annual Wealden Heaths Breeding Bird Survey (WHBBS) did not identify any territories at all in the west of the county (whereas there had been 29 in 2009 and 61 in 2008), despite the sightings recorded above for the first winter period. A minimum of six territories were identified on Ashdown Forest. Singing males were first noted on 16 Mar and then on numerous dates during the subsequent four months; adults were seen carrying food at Greenwood Gate on three dates in Apr and May and at Kings Standing on 30 May. Breeding was confirmed in one tetrad, was probable in a further four and possible in another four. During the breeding season the only sightings away from Ashdown Forest were of single birds at Rye Hbr on 5 May and singing at Hastings CP on 13 May.

Although it is difficult to make an accurate assessment it is likely that there was a continuation of the serious decline in this species, from a possible 67 pairs in 2009 and 98 pairs in 2008, due of course to two hard winters. While sightings continued in Ashdown Forest, a single bird was found on Iping Common on 17 Jul and a singing bird was noted at Hastings CP on 10 and 14 Jul.

During the autumn months sightings of presumably dispersing birds were noted at several sites. In the west, the first sighting at Pagham Hbr was of one on 7 Sep with two at Church Norton on 24 and 25 Oct. The first two birds to return to Thorney Island were seen on 12 Oct of which one was still there on the 22nd, and one was seen near Cissbury Ring on the 21st. In the east, single birds were recorded at Beachy Head on 17 and 31 Oct, one was trapped at Pett Level on 24 Oct and another was seen at Rye Hbr on the 27th. During an extended migration watch at Hastings single birds were seen on 12 days between 23 Sep and 25 Nov.

During the second winter period there were sightings from various sites on Ashdown Forest and at approximately 14 sites elsewhere. Inland there were records of single birds from Black Down (Fernhurst) on three dates in November, and one was seen at Lavington Common on 4 Nov. Elsewhere in the west, single birds were seen at Cissbury Ring on 21 Oct and Climping Gap on 10 Nov. In the east, two were at Rye Hbr on 7 Nov, one was at Beachy Head on the 15th but two were there on the 22nd when one was also at East Guldeford Level, and on the 24th one was at Crowlink (East Dean). There was one at Rye Hbr on 10 Dec and the final sighting of the year was three at Iping Common 21 Dec. [SPS]

Grasshopper Warbler

Locustella naevia

Very scarce and declining summer visitor and fairly common passage migrant. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

The first sighting was at Seaford on 3 Apr, only one day later than the earliest recorded date, and eight days earlier than the 10-year average date. The next report was of a singing male at Ferring Rife on 8 Apr, which was also heard on the 18th and 21st and a reeling male was heard and seen near the Hanger at Pulborough Brooks on the 13th. Other April reports came from Pagham Hbr, Brighton Wild Park and Eastbourne on the 18th, Pett on the 20th, Southwick Hill on the 24th, Shinewater (Eastbourne), Coleman's Hatch (Ashdown Forest) and Rye Hbr on the 26th, Winchelsea Marsh on the 29th and Coldwaltham on the 30th.



Grasshopper Warbler, Birling Gap, July 2010 (David Cooper)

A singing male was present at Rye Harbour Farm from late April to mid-June, with two heard on one occasion, though breeding was not confirmed. Another was calling at Woods Mill on 3 May, and June records were of singles at Amberley Wild Brooks on the 1st and Waltham Brooks

on the 10th (possibly of the same bird), at Gate Court (Northiam) on the 26th and at Thorney Island on the 26th.

Autumn return passage at Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) was noted as better than recent years, with six on 2 Aug. At Pett Level birds were trapped for ringing on most days in August and September, with totals of 436 and 395 new birds ringed each month respectively, higher numbers than in 2009. Monthly maxima were 79 on 28 Aug and 60 on 1 Sep. Single birds were recorded at Jevington on 2 Sep, Brighton Wild Park on the 4th and 5th and Climping Gap on the 9th. Two were at Sheepcote Valley on the 8th and a single bird was at the same site on 7 Oct. During October, 12 birds were ringed at Pett Level, the last on the 14th, three days earlier than the 10-year average date. [VPB]

Savi's Warbler

Locustella luscinioides

Rare visitor, has bred. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

Following on from the successful breeding in 2009, two pairs bred at an undisclosed location. Discounting birds of the year, the county total since the first record of 10 Apr 1961 is now 30 of which ten have occurred this century. In addition, 14 juveniles have been ringed in the county. [JAH]

Icterine Warbler

Hippolais icterina

Very scarce visitor.

A bird was trapped, ringed and photographed at Pett Level on 25 Aug (RBRG) and a juvenile bird was found and photographed at Birling Gap (Beachy Head) on 12 Sep (JSG, SHL *et al.*). These bring the county total to 41, since the first record of 5 Sep 1965, and six this century. Birds have been recorded in all months from May to September, the earliest being 7 May 1968 and the latest 28 Sep 1999. Monthly counts (for the 33 records with a date) have been May (5), June (1), July (2), August (14) and September (11). This species is a typical one-day wonder as there have been only two instances of it being recorded for more than one day. [JAH]

Aquatic Warbler

Acrocephalus paludicola

Very scarce autumn visitor. Red listed species of high conservation concern. Considered vulnerable by IUCN.

One bird of the year was trapped, ringed and photographed on 28 Aug at an undisclosed locality. The trend for no more than five birds a year since the start of 2000 continues (average 2.5/year) and is probably a reflection of reduced abundance on its eastern European breeding grounds. The total for this century moves on to 28 and overall since the first record in 1853 to 185. [JAH]

Sedge Warbler

Acrocephalus schoenobaenus

Fairly common summer visitor and common passage migrant.

The first bird was recorded at The Severals (Church Norton) on 28 Mar, one day earlier than the 10-year county average and five days earlier than in 2009. This was followed by single birds at Rye Hbr on the 29th and 30th. In April, single birds were at Thorney Deeps on the 2nd, Pett

Level on the 3rd, Arundel WWT on the 6th and Lewes Brooks on the 7th, and then there were nine at Waltham Brooks on the 9th. Numbers remained low until the 17th when 11 were counted at Shinewater Lake (Eastbourne) and 16 at the Ouse Estuary Project (Newhaven) on the 18th. An unusual location for this species was Lullington Heath where there were two on the 29th.

During May, 27 pairs were counted on Thorney Deeps with a further 11 pairs elsewhere on Thorney Island. Counts of breeding surveys in June included 42 at Rye Hbr and 32 at Pagham Hbr. The species was recorded from 108 tetrads while confirmation of breeding came from only eight and probable breeding from a further 29. During the BBS a total of 16 was recorded in seven of the 139 1-km squares surveyed with a highest count of four at both Gate Court (Northiam) on 22 Apr and Rye Hbr LNR on the 23rd.

The first recognisable returning migrants were five at Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) on 2 Aug but migration was well underway by the 11th when 527 were trapped at Pett Level. In September, 120 were trapped there on the 2nd and 213 on the 12th, but numbers then dwindled to 45 on the 18th. The only October records were from Thorney Deeps, Warnham LNR and Pett Level where the last for the year was recorded on the 12th, spot-on for the 10-year county average. [TWP]

Paddyfield Warbler

Acrocephalus agricola

Very rare vagrant.

A bird of the year was trapped, ringed and photographed at Pett Level on 27 Sep (RBRG). This is the fourth county record and follows others similarly trapped at this site on 13 Oct 1992, 28 Sep 2003 and 7 Oct 2007. There were four others in Shetland in 2010; perhaps that is the place to go to be more certain of seeing one! [JAH]

Marsh Warbler

Acrocephalus palustris

Very scarce summer visitor and passage migrant; has bred. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

Two pairs were reported to have bred at an undisclosed location in the county; at least four young were present. [JAH]

Eurasian Reed Warbler

Acrocephalus scirpaceus

Common summer visitor and very common passage migrant.

The first record of this species was at Breech Pool (Pagham Hbr) where two were seen on 7 Apr, the same site as in 2009 but a day later. These were closely followed by single birds at Rye Hbr on the 8th, Horse-Eye Level (Pevensey) and Sefter Fm (Rose Green) on the 10th, and Iford Brooks and the Mill Pond Marsh (Pagham) on the 11th. A steady trickle followed with a monthly maximum at Pett Level of six on the 18th but 29 were singing along Lidsey Rife (Bognor Regis) on the 21st, 20 at Arundel WWT on the 27th and 30 at the North Fields (Pagham Hbr) on the 29th.

As in 2009 May started with 22 at Sefter Fm (Rose Green) on the 1st, 13 were counted at The Severals (Church Norton) on the 4th, there were 30 birds singing at Warnham LNR on the 13th and 66 were recorded at Lidsey Rife (Barnham) on the 17th. During the breeding season 48 pairs were counted at Thorney Deeps with a further six pairs elsewhere on Thorney Island, 167 pairs were

counted at Rye Hbr SSSI although it was thought that the total was nearer 250 pairs for the whole of Rye Hbr, and 153 pairs was the total for Pagham Hbr. The species was recorded from a total of 123 tetrads, 31 less than in 2009, and breeding was confirmed from 33 (only 24 in 2009) and was probable in a further 27. During the BBS, a total of 56 was recorded in 12 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed with a high count of 17 at Thorney Island (Chichester Hbr) on the 2 Jun.

At Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) six birds on the 28 Jul qualified as returning migrants and 222 trapped at Pett Level on the 30th were surely on the move. At this site the monthly maximum for August was 410 trapped on the 19th whilst at Whitbread Hollow 30 were recorded on the 25th. On 1 Sep 298 were trapped at Pett level and at Whitbread Hollow 25 were recorded on the 9th. The species was recorded from five sites in October with a monthly maximum of 41 at Pett level on the 7th and the last for the year were two at this site on 18 Nov. [TWP]

Waxwing

Bombycilla garrulus

Rare winter visitor.

A single bird was observed on 6 Jan at Elmer (Middleton) followed by ten at Southwater on 13 Jan. One was at Littlehampton on 9 Feb, which was the last bird seen in the county during the first winter period.

During the second winter period there was much more Waxwing activity with the first six being seen at Angmering on 31 Oct followed by 8 E at Warnham LNR on 5 Nov. On 27 Nov three were seen at Rye Hbr and 13 were at Chichester on the same day. Sightings increased in December with birds seen in at least 48 locations throughout the county. High counts were 60 at Pett Level on 11 Dec, 60 at Eastbourne on 23 Dec, 50 at the Ouse Estuary Project (Newhaven) on 24 Dec and 57 at Worthing on 31 Dec.

The following table gives the minimum weekly totals by area during the second winter period:

	November					December			
<i>County total</i>	14	-	-	49	-	115	171	337	174
Week number	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52
Dates	31-6	7-13	14-20	21-27	28-4	5-11	12-18	19-25	26-30
Pagham/Sidlesham	-	-	-	-	-	9	-	35	-
Chichester area	-	-	-	13	-	-	10	-	-
Angmering/L'hampton/Rackham	6	-	-	-	-	-	51	35	-
Worthing/Shoreham	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	24	57
Horsham/Warnham/Crawley	8	-	-	-	-	-	17	39	20
Brighton/Hove	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	14	3
Lindfield	-	-	-	-	-	30	-	-	-
Lewes/Newhaven/Seaford	-	-	-	-	-	-	25	50	39
Uckfield/Ashdown Forest	-	-	-	-	-	7	10	-	-
Hailsham	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	10	15
Eastbourne/Shinewater/Pevensay	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	60	40
Friston Forest	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	-
Pett Level/Rye	-	-	-	36	-	62	8	35	-

From this analysis it would appear that the peak number in the county was at least 337 birds between 19 and 25 Dec.

To compare with previous irruption years, 2005 was the most recent in Sussex, with the first winter period of that year having up to 2000 birds at its peak in February, which was the largest number ever recorded in the county. The majority of the birds were seen in East Sussex, as was the case in the 1996 irruption. In 2010 more birds were seen in East Sussex than in West Sussex but as can be seen from the above table they were seen across the whole of the county. [MJC]

Nuthatch

Sitta europaea

Common resident.

Nuthatches were recorded in 482 tetrads right across the county. In the first winter period there were five records for counts in excess of six with the highest being 11 at Colworth Park (Bolney) on 19 Jan, ten at Woodmans Green (Sedlescombe) on 5 Jan and ten at Lodsworth Common on 27 Jan. Some 67% of records were for ones or twos only, a proportion which lasted through the year. Several birds were heard calling during January, a pair was prospecting a nest site on the 17th, several were reported feeding on garden bird feeders, sometimes with tits, and one was singing on the 31st.

In spring, there was an increase in the number of counts above five with the highest being 16 at Warninglid on 25 Mar, 16 at Woodmans Green on 21 Jun, 13 at Sunnyside (East Grinstead) on 13 Apr and 11 at Skippers Hill (Five Ashes) on 21 Apr. During the BBS, a total of 190 birds was recorded from 66 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a maximum count of 12 at Rake on 27 Jun. Breeding was confirmed in 90 tetrads and was probable in a further 97. The first reported signs of breeding activity involved birds visiting a nest site at Wiggonholt Common (Pulborough Brooks) and occupying one at Chesworth Fm (Horsham) on 22 Mar; a pair was occupying a box at Weir Wood Res on 8 Apr. The earliest report of adults carrying food or faecal sacs came from Blakehurst (Arundel) on 30 Apr and of a nest with young from Burwash Weald on 14 May. Recently fledged young were first noted at Fairlight Glen on 31 May and the latest was at Cuckfield on 25 Aug.

Records in the summer were again dominated by counts in small numbers. However, 23 were noted at The Mens (Wisborough Green) on 27 Jun, 17 at Black Down (Fernhurst) on 10 Jul, 15 at Broxmead (Bolney) on 4 Jul, 13 at Crabtree (Lower Beeding) on 25 Jun and 12 at Rake on the 27th. There was a marked reduction in the reporting rate during the autumn, probably because there were no Atlas surveys to do during the period. There were only five counts above five and the highest counts were tens at Ditchling on 4 Sep and Pulborough Brooks on the 27th. Although the reporting rate increased in the second winter period consequent upon the restarting of Atlas surveys, there were still no more than seven counts above five with maxima of ten at Skippers Hill on 29 Nov, Framfield on 13 Dec and Pulborough Brooks on the 30th

During the ringing season, RBRG ringed 24 new birds and retrapped two from previous years; Steyning RG at Strivens Reedbed ringed two new young birds; at Ladywell (Coombes) three new birds ringed were the first for some while and included the first to be trapped there in June (on the 30th). [JAH]

Eurasian Treecreeper

Certhia familiaris

Common resident.

This rather shy and retiring, difficult to see (or for some, to hear), woodland species was recorded in 360 tetrads, some 37% of those totally within the county boundaries. In the first winter

period only 13% of records were for more than two birds, as might be expected for this elusive species. The highest tetrad counts were eight at Burton MP on 28 Jan and sixes at Maplehurst Wood (Hastings) on the 19th, Parham Estate on the 31st and Warnham LNR on 11 Mar.

During the BBS, a total of 53 was recorded from 30 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of six at Burwash Weald on 19 Jun. Breeding was confirmed from 41 tetrads and was probable in a further 51. The earliest signs of breeding activity involved adults entering a nest at Pulborough Brooks on 15 Mar, a nest with eggs at Weir Wood Res on 3 Apr and adults noted carrying food or faecal sac at Abbotsford (Burgess Hill) 23 Apr. A nest containing young birds was recorded at Maynards Green on 12 May and fledged young were first noted at Chesworth Fm (Horsham) on 19 May and finally at Wivelsfield on 31 Jul. During this period the proportions of records were much the same as earlier; the highest counts during Atlas surveys were 11 at Framfield on 5 Jun, eight at Black Down (Fernhurst) on 2 May and sixes at seven other sites.

During the summer and autumn months the highest counts were seven at Rudgwick on 1 Jul and Pulborough Brooks on 13 Sep and only two other counts over four. With the resumption of Atlas activity in the second winter period the proportion of records for less than three rose to almost 90% but there was only one record in double figures: ten at Brightling Down on 25 Nov.

There were several interesting records during the year from near-coastal sites showing that Treecreepers are not just restricted to inland woodlands. Individuals were noted at Apuldram, on the banks of Fishbourne Channel (Chichester Hbr), on 17 May, 2 Sep and 17 Oct. Two were noted at East Guldeford Level on 7 Jun, another two were two at Church Norton on 23 Sep and there was one at Horseshoe Plantation (Beachy Head) on 16 Oct.

During the ringing season, RBRG ringed 64 new birds and trapped three from previous years. Steyning RG ringed ten new birds and trapped two from previous years at Strivens Reedbed and at Cissbury North Scarp ringed five new birds. Ringers at Ladywell (Coombes) ringed 11 new birds and two from previous years. [JAH]

Wren

Troglodytes troglodytes

Abundant resident.

Wren was the seventh most common species recorded during the year in Sussex. In the first winter period to 28 Feb, there were only eight double-figure counts (*cf.* 19 in 2009), possibly affected by the hard weather. Only one was seen or heard on a count at Patcham on 5 Jan. The peak count of birds roosting under the eaves of a house in Edburton was 35 on 9 Jan. One was found under a caravan at Ford on the 10th. On the 12th, one was on a *Cotoneaster* cleared of snow in a garden at Chelwood Common; the next day birds were found perched at the top of gorse bushes at snow covered West Chase (Ashdown Forest). No doubt others hunkered down.

At a number of sites Wrens were counted throughout the year, as shown in the table below. The spring peaks at both Lidsey SF and Chesworth Fm were not as pronounced as they had been in 2009.

Breeding was confirmed from 92 tetrads and was probable in a further 229. Nest building was first recorded on 12 Apr at Chesworth Fm (Horsham). An occupied nest was found at Constantia Manor (Isfield) on 14 Apr. The first fledged young were reported from Horncastle Wood (Sharpthorne) on 22 Apr.

During the BBS, a total of 1117 birds was recorded from 132 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of 23 at Five Hundred Acre (Ashdown Forest) on 26 Jun. The comparable figures for 2009 were 1156 birds in 126 of 135 1-km squares. The annual breeding survey at

Pagham Hbr identified a total of 67 birds and a survey of the Norfolk Estate between 20 May and 9 Jul identified 42 pairs. At Rye Hbr 40 territories were mapped.

	Tetrad	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sefter Fm (Rose Green)*	SU80V/SZ89Z	13	10	18	19	21	23	15	5	4	12	11	6
Hotham Pk Bognor*	SZ99J	1	-	3	8	2	7	7	3	6	-	2	-
Lidsey SF*	SU90L	1	2	6	11	4	5	-	4	2	-	3	1
Fontwell	SU90N	-	-	7	4	18	25	1	-	1	-	3	-
Broadbridge Heath	TQ13K	2	-	7	11	7	9	10	2	11	1	13	5
Chesworth Fm (Horsham)*	TQ12U	5	3	3	7	5	3	-	-	-	4	3	1
Brighton/Hove	TQ20Y	-	12	17	31	28	41	-	21	7	9	8	13
Poynings-Newtimber	TQ21R	4	4	7	26	20	21	16	10	12	15	8	13
Lewes Race Course*	TQ31V	2	3	6	10	7	3	4	7	5	3	5	4
King's Standing (Ashdown)*	TQ42U/TQ43Q	1	-	5	4	3	5	1	3	1	6	6	-

“-” no records were received for that month; *the site appeared in similar table in SxBR 2009

The highest counts during Atlas tetrad surveys were 48 at both Crawley (TQ23T) and Three Bridges (TQ23Y) in early June and 43 in April and 40 in June at East Grinstead (TQ33Y). The last dependent young were noted at Warningcamp on 22 June. On 27 Oct, two birds at Wivelsfield Green were very vocally defending territory. During the second winter period there were 20 counts of ten or more with highest counts during Atlas tetrad surveys of 20 at West Blatchington (Hove) (TQ20Y) and 15 at Gatwick (TQ24Q) on 1 Nov and 15 at Ambersham Common (SU91E) on 15 Nov. During the year, Rye Bay RG trapped 290 birds of which 255 were new fully grown birds and three were pulli. The Steyning RG at Strivens Reedbed ringed 41 new birds (14 adults, 29 young) and at Cissbury ringed 21 new birds (five adults, 17 young). Ringers at Ladywell (Coombes) ringed 43 new birds (14 adults, 29 young). [CBR]

Common Starling

Sturnus vulgaris

Common but declining resident, and very common to abundant winter visitor. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

The roost at the Brighton piers declined in late 2009 from 33,100 on 19 Dec 2009 to 23,000 on the Palace Pier with another 1500 on the West Pier on 3 Jan. Two weeks later the two piers held only 15,600 but on 27 Feb a roost of 50,000 was reported from the Palace Pier. No reports for this period were received from the traditional roost site on Eastbourne Pier. Other large flocks were 3400 at Pagham Hbr on 17 Feb, 2000 at Ferring on 2 Feb, 2500 at Brighthams Fm (Partridge Green) on 15 Feb and 1000 at Rodmell Brooks on 17 Jan with 850 at nearby Lewes Brooks the following day. Other three-figure flocks were reported from c.30 sites during the first winter period with c.800 on vegetated shingle at The Midrips on 21 Mar and 600 going to roost in conifers in a caravan park at Rye Hbr three days later. On 20 Mar a movement of 350 S in 30 min and 100 E in 10 min was noted at Ferring Rife and at the same site a movement of 312 S was noted ten days later. Flocks were observed into April with 400 at Thorney Island on the 3rd and 181 at Rye Hbr the following day.

Breeding was confirmed in 182 tetrads and probable in a further 47. During the BBS, a total of 1658 was recorded from 92 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of 183 on Thorney Island on 2 Jun. The first reports of nesting were at Punnetts Town and Iford on 6 Apr. The first fledglings were reported at Horsted Keynes on 17 Apr.

By mid-June post-breeding flocks were apparent with 400 at Thorney Island on 16 Jun rising to 500 on 22 Jul, 630 at Pett Level on 15 Jul, 700 feeding on shingle at Rye Hbr the same day, and two days later 3000 leaving their roost at the caravan site and flying over Rye Hbr SSSI. On 6 Aug 5000 were counted at the same location and on 23 Aug 700 roosted on Eastbourne Pier.

Over 3600 were counted on 91 days between August and mid-November during migration watches at sites around Hastings and over 250 were counted at Pett Level during migration watches on 20 days in August with a maximum of 20 on 28 Aug.

In the second winter period numbers began to build again at Brighton Palace Pier reaching 12,000 on 21 Nov but dropping to 8400 with a further 300 on the West Pier on 9 Dec, possibly because of the hard weather. Other substantial flocks were 3000 feeding in sand dunes at Pilsey Sands on 8 Oct with 5000 roosting in a reed bed at Thorney Deeps ten days later. Pett Level held 2000 on 6 Sep and at least 1000 were seen at Partridge Green on 21 Dec. Movement was noted throughout the period at various sites with 1200 W or NW at Hastings on 25 Oct, 800 W or NW there on 9 Nov and 500 W at Climping Beach on 7 Nov. The cold weather in December may be responsible for some of these lower counts. [ACG]



Rose-coloured Starling, Newhaven Heights, October 2010 (Les Bird)

Rose-coloured Starling

Sturnus roseus

Rare vagrant.

An adult was at Newhaven Heights west of the town from 11 to 25 Oct (ADW) when it may have been taken by a Sparrowhawk. This is the 34th record for the county, the majority of which have been adults but this is the first record of an adult in October for 40 years. Autumn records are usually of juveniles. Records since 1970 are as given in the table below. [ACG]

	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Adult	6	1	1	1	1	-	-
Juvenile	-	-	-	1	3	-	1

Ring Ouzel

Turdus torquatus

Passage migrant, very scarce in spring, scarce in autumn. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

It was a very poor spring for this species and it was followed by a below average autumn passage. The estimated minimum monthly totals, after allowing for possible duplication, were as follows:

Apr	May		Sep	Oct	Nov
9	1		18	84	3

Spring migration was, again, late and short, starting with a single female at Garden of Eden (Ashdown Forest) on 8 Apr, twelve days later than the 10-year average, followed by a male on the 17th at Beachy Head and two birds at Seaford Head a day later. Thereafter, only single birds were seen, at Birling Gap (Beachy Head) on the 22nd, at Hastings CP, Isfield and Pett Level on the 24th and at Belle Tout (Beachy Head) on the 28th. A final sighting at Beachy Head on 3 May completed the spring observations just three days earlier than the 10-year average and the estimate of ten birds for spring was barely half the 10-year average of 18.

Autumn migration commenced with two or three birds at Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) on 12 Sep, the 10-year average date, followed by one at Seaford on the 16th and another at Church Norton the next day. Single birds were noted along the coastal fringe for the rest of September until main passage burgeoned with three birds at Beachy Head on the 28th. During an extended migration watch at Hastings, a total of 15 birds was recorded between 22 Sep and 22 Oct with a highest count of six at Hastings CP on 29 Sep. During October, there were reports of two or three birds at many sites across the county though one at Crowborough was the only inland sighting more than 10 km from the coast. The only high counts during the month were of four birds at Cissbury Ring on 15 Oct and eight at Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) on the 16th, reflecting a rather poor autumn passage which ended with one last bird at Pulborough Brooks on 15 Nov, three days later than the 10-year average. The autumn total of 105 birds was less than 80% of the 10-year average. [JHW]

Blackbird

Turdus merula

Abundant breeding resident; very common or abundant winter visitor; status uncertain as passage migrant.

The widespread distribution and abundance of Blackbirds is reflected not only in the number of records received (in excess of 5600, including some duplicates) but also in the fact that this was the most commonly recorded species in Sussex in 2010. This is due in large measure to the degree of detailed recording engendered by Atlas surveys when such common species have been recorded in the county in numbers not seen pre-Atlas. In 1998 this species did not even feature in the top 40 most commonly recorded species. Another illustration of the abundance comes from the BBS returns.

During the BBS, a total of 1874 birds was recorded from every one of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, a similar result to 2009. Six squares held 30 or more birds, the highest being 41 at Hempstead (Uckfield) on 2 Jun with the other high counts coming from Southleigh Forest (Emsworth), Warnham, Ripe, Westergate and Sutton. For comparison, the highest count for the Atlas was 68 at Three Bridges on 2 Jun, similar to last year, and 26 tetrads out of the 601 (a similar fraction to the six in the BBS) yielded 33 or more birds. Other high counts from the 8700 total for the Atlas include 52 at Copsale and 51 at Northlands (Warnham) and just eight other counts above 40 birds, much lower than in 2009 which covered fewer tetrads.

A pair in Cuckfield was nest building on 25 Feb and adults were carrying nest material at South Malling on 2 Mar, Upper Beeding on 6 Apr and Warnham on the 8th while the first eggs were reported at Chesworth Fm (Horsham) on 12 Apr and chicks were seen at Warnham LNR on the 15th. Fledged young were noted at Chelwood Common (Daneshill) on 18 Apr and at Forest Row and Partridge Green on 30 Apr by which time a pair in Barnham had lost three sets of eggs to predation, probably by Magpies. Activity appears to have been much later than in 2009 and there were few explicit reports. Several regular breeding summaries were absent, notably from Brighton Wild Park and Bewl Water (which together had contributed 218 pairs) but the Norfolk Estate accounted for 155 pairs, seven short of last year's total, including 46 at Wepham Down, 38 at North Stoke and 33 at Burpham while 41 pairs were reported from Pagham Hbr, down from 65, and 32 from Rye Hbr, an increase of six.

During an extended migration watch at Hastings, 149 birds were recorded between 28 Sep and 14 Nov, with a highest count of 15. Elsewhere, the highest count in October was 23 at Pett Level on the 26th and in November 45 at Ditchling on the 13th and 30 at Robertsbridge on the 16th. High counts in December were of 47 at Pulborough Brooks on the 10th, 45 and 42 in parts of Pett Level on the 12th and 39 at Withdean (Brighton) on the 26th.

The Steyning RG ringed 50 new birds, including 39 young, and controlled eight others at Strivens Reedbed and ringed another 33 new birds, including 13 young, and controlled 14 others at Cissbury. Another 58 new birds, including 23 young, were ringed at Ladywell (Coombes) and 25 others were controlled. The Rye Bay RG ringed 588 new birds, nearly double last year's 297; trappings peaked at 206 in October and 158 in November (60% of their year's total). The total of 729 new birds ringed was 50% more than last year but the number of young birds ringed dropped by a third. [JHW]

Fieldfare

Turdus pilaris

Common, occasionally very common, passage migrant and winter visitor. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

It was an exceptional year, undoubtedly due to the hard winter, as the January count was nine times that from the preceding December. The first-winter count exceeded 22,000, one of the highest ever, while the second-winter count of 7960 exceeded the 8-year average by 700. The total of 30,784 birds was 37% more than in any other year since 1993.

Fieldfares were recorded from 404 tetrads across the county. The approximate monthly totals in the three E-W bands of the county (only the easting grid numbers are given) were as given in the table below. The average number of birds per record exceeded 33 compared to last year's 25, indicating large gatherings, and the mobility of some hungry flocks may have duplicated sightings more than usual.

Eastings	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	11,885	9370	1351	23		1420	2761	3766
SU/SZ70-99	1233	758	172	3		83	429	678
TQ/TV00-49	5186	4469	830	4		1011	1719	1050
TQ/TV50+	5466	4143	349	16		326	613	2038

In the first winter period there were sixteen reports of 300 or more birds and another 49 of 100 plus, together comprising two-thirds of the total count for this period. On New Year's Day at least 300 were seen at Ticehurst while hard weather brought 1000 to Climping on 7 Jan, many heading west. On 9 Jan 600 birds were counted at Pett Level, 500 at Goring Gap and 375 at Telscombe Cliffs followed by up to 1000 near Bramber and 300 at Camber Dunes far to the east on the 15th and 2000 at Pett Level on the 17th. Another 300 birds were seen at Rye Hbr on 21 Jan rising to over 400 on 1 Feb when 650 were also seen at Pett Level. In mid-February there were 400 birds at Lewes Brooks, Sharphorne (E Grinstead), Plumpton and Wivelsfield Green and 300 birds were still at Pett Level on the 23rd. Five more counts of 100 or so up to 21 Mar were spread well across the county but thereafter numbers tumbled and the last birds were one at Horsham on 11 Apr and three at Sidlesham on the 20th, a week earlier than the 10-year average date. The total count for this period was 2.6 times the average of 8500.



Fieldfare, Hodcombe, January 2010 (Roger Charlwood)

The second winter period started on 6 Oct with one at Pett Level, nine days later than the 10-year average, but numbers approaching 100 were seen across the county two weeks later. Gatherings of 100 birds were seen from Ashdown Forest to Littlehampton from late October into November, rising to 200 at Sidlesham by 25 Nov and 300 at Steyning Levels and 200 at Rye Hbr a few days later. Similar flocks remained in those areas and were joined by 250 birds at Bramber

on 7 Dec while at Rye Hbr numbers reached 300 by the 14th and 1000 birds appeared at Pett Level on the 20th. At Pett Level 193 birds were ringed during the first winter period and seven during the autumn. [JHW]

Song Thrush

Turdus philomelos

Very common but decreasing resident and partial migrant; common passage migrant and winter visitor. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

Records received fell by 5% and validated sightings in the first half-year fell by 22% compared to 2009 but rose by 10% in the second half-year. The unduplicated count from 2614 records was 6932 birds, a drop of 1300 from 2009, and there seem to be 3356 different birds in the county, a 19% drop and much worse than the decrease in records.

Song Thrushes were recorded in 636 tetrads across the county. The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	700	605	286	1174	1112	1426	248	173	175	240	368	425

Sightings in the first winter period included only four records of 20 or more birds, including 20 at Pagham Hbr on 6 Jan and 30 at Climping the next day with another 20 at Selsey Bill on the 9th. This westerly bias was balanced by 30 birds seen at Seaford on 14 Jan and flocks of a dozen or so were recorded across the width of the county, though not many to the north. The pattern continued into spring with the highest count being 20 at Brightling on 24 Apr.

During the breeding season, breeding was confirmed from 89 tetrads and was probable in a further 150. There were 44 pairs on the Norfolk estate (including 13 at both North Stoke and Wepham Down), a dozen at Pagham Hbr (down from 21), ten at Pulborough Brooks and six at Thorney Island but there were no reports from Bewl Water or Brighton Wild Park which contributed 67 pairs in 2009. Fifty further pairs were reported making a total of 122 pairs, well short of last year's 236. Fledged young were seen at 42 sites and food/faecal carrying at another 66, both slightly lower than in 2009. During the BBS, a total of 556 birds was recorded in 123 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, essentially unchanged, with a highest count of 16 at Bearhurst Fm (Stonegate) on 20 May.

During an extended autumn migration watch at Hastings 443 birds were recorded, with a high count of 32 on 10 Oct, while Pagham Hbr held 25 in Oct, Pett Level 32 and Patcham (Brighton) 21 with 15 at nearby Sheepcote Valley. After a quiet November, there were up to 70 at Pett Level, 22 at Sidlesham SF, 16 at Pulborough Brooks and a total of 31 at Climping, all in December.

Ringers at Ladywell (Coombes) ringed 19 new birds and handled two retraps, of which ten were adults and ten young. The Steyning RG ringed 27 new birds, of which 16 were young, and retrapped three at Cissbury and ringed another 34 new birds and retrapped two at Strivens Reedbed, of which 15 were adult and 21 young. The Rye Bay RG trapped 236 birds in the year (216 full grown, four pulli and 16 retraps) with 54 in October and 46 in November illustrating migration. The Beachy Head RG ringed nine birds of the continental race between 17 Oct and 6 Nov. [JHW]

Redwing*Turdus iliacus*

Common, occasionally very common, passage migrant and winter visitor. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

In the first winter period sightings were 50% higher than last year's already high level, and three times the 10-year average, but the second-winter sightings were disappointing with barely half the average count. The total count of 16,470 was 57% above the 10-year average and only exceeded recently by that of 2004 (with its October fall of 15,000 birds). The approximate monthly totals in the three E-W bands of the county are shown below (easting grid numbers only).

Eastings	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	8717	2960	1563	16		13	500	1287	2678
SU/SZ70-99	1646	275	129	-		-	3	267	529
TQ/TV00-49	3960	1774	1065	14		12	458	646	993
TQ/TV50-99	3111	911	369	2		1	39	374	1156



Redwing, Hodcombe, January 2010 (Roger Charlwood)

Despite the poor preceding December, sightings in January involved 20 counts of 100 or more, including five of at least 300 birds. On 7 Jan, there were 400 at Climping, 135 at Rye Hbr and 100 in Brighton; two days later 700 were seen at Hastings CP, 275 at Telscombe Cliffs and another 100 at Goring Gap. There was a flock of 500 at Ferring on 15 Jan and 370 at Wicks Fm (Yapton) the same day while; the next day 100 more were seen near Bramber. The end of January was marked by 200 at Linsford Cross (Ninfield) on the 27th followed by 175 at Splash Point (Seaford) and 450 at Climping Beach on the 31st. Sightings in February were modest at 110 on the 4th at Tidebrook, 150 at Pulborough Brooks on the 13th and 140 at Bewl Water on the 23rd. In mid-March there were

100 birds at Wisborough Green and 300 occupying Rackham Woods and another 100 at Tinkers Marsh (Bewl Water) on the 26th. Barely a dozen birds stayed into April, the last sighting being of four birds at Rye Hbr on the 22nd, 11 days later than the 10-year average.

Five returning hbr birds on Ashdown Forest on 28 Sep were only two days later than the 10-year average date and one reached the coast at Pett Level the next day. By 9 Oct there were 26 at Washington and, next day, 35 at Weir Wood Res and 20 on Ashdown Forest, rising to 36 two days later. On the 13th two birds were as far west as Pagham Hbr. On 20 Oct 150 birds were counted at Uckfield while in November the highest reports were 100 at Frant on the 20th and 80 at Rye Hbr on the 30th. Up to 125 birds were moving around Sidlesham all December and 150 or so around Partridge Green and Bramber in the same period. Further east 170 birds were reported at Pett Level from 12 Dec to the end of the year and 100 could be found at Pevensey Levels.

During the year, Rye Bay RG trapped 86 full grown birds (33 in the first winter, 53 in the autumn/second winter), the second best year there. The Steyning RG ringed 11 new birds at Strivens Reedbed and ten at Cissbury. Ringers at Ladywell (Coombes) ringed seven new birds during the year. [JHW]

Mistle Thrush

Turdus viscivorus

Common resident and partial migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The number of records and birds reported fell again from their 2009 figures and the high proportion of first half-year records continued. It is estimated from the data that there were 1043 birds recorded in the county compared to last year's estimate of 1190 recorded and this reduction follows the fall in the number of records submitted.

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	167	180	95	247	218	260	85	118	63	135	105	85

For once there were no large gatherings during the first five months of the year and there was a paucity of records from the west of the county. Six birds seen at Washington on 11 Jan, five at the Parham Estate on 31 Jan, seven at Beckley on 15 Feb, nine at Worth on 9 Apr and five at Ambersham Common on 22 Apr were the highlights.

During the breeding season, breeding was confirmed in 48 tetrads and was probable in a further 56. During the BBS, a total of 74 birds was recorded from 46 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of four. Although nest building was observed in Hastings on 22 Mar, early breeding reports came from western sites including food or faecal carrying on 3 Apr at Somerley (East Wittering), two weeks before similar behaviour was reported from Arundel. The earliest fledglings were three at Winchelsea Marsh on 28 Apr followed by one at Pulborough Brooks on 12 May and three more at both Staplefield and Itchenor (Chichester Hbr) on the following days. A total of 22 was reported from ten sites, an astonishing six of them being fed by a pair of adults on Ashdown Forest GC in mid-June and another four at Lyminster. A second brood was reported from Shoreham on 23 Jul while the last juvenile was noted at Boxgrove on 5 Aug.

Summer flocks included 25 birds flying over Wakehurst Place on 6 Aug and 20 over Lavington Common on the 15th while 14 birds were counted at Pulborough Brooks on the 16th. A passage of 20 birds flying north over Hope Gap (Seaford) on 11 Oct and ten birds on Ashdown Forest on the 17th concluded the double-figure counts for the year.

The Rye Bay RG ringed only three birds during the year (both full grown) and ringers at Ladywell (Coombes) ringed one adult and one young. The Beachy Head RG reported they had seen only two birds during the autumn. [JHW]

Spotted Flycatcher

Muscicapa striata

Fairly common but declining summer visitor; scarce passage migrant in spring and fairly common in autumn. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

The first arrival of spring was not until 5 May at Pulborough Brooks. This was nineteen days later than the previous year and nine days later than the 10-year average date of 27 Apr. Throughout May there was a steady influx of birds with three seen at Woodmans Green (Sedlescombe) on 13 May and four seen at Pippingford Park (Ashdown Forest) on the 23rd. Three were seen at Church Norton on 16 May. A total of 52 was recorded during the month at various locations.

During the BBS, five birds were recorded from four of the 139 1-km squares surveyed with a highest count of two, slightly down on 2009. Breeding was confirmed in 17 sites (tetrads), fewer than the previous year (21 sites), and was probable at a further 21 sites, which was an increase on 2009. Observers at Etchingham recorded two breeding pairs and young were seen there in late June. A nest with eggs was seen at Hesworth Common and another was recorded in *Clematis* in a garden in Shermanbury where three young were being fed. At Scaynes Hill there was a report of chicks in the nest on 3 Jul. Fledglings were seen being fed as late as 20 Jul at Marlpost Wood (Southwater). Other sites where fledglings were seen were the Old Airstrip (Ashdown Forest) and Wiggonholt Common (Pulborough Brooks).

Autumn migration numbers were up on previous years with approximately 352 birds recorded at various sites across Sussex in September. At Cissbury Ring on 3 Sep an exceptional 50 were recorded, the largest count of this species during the migration period. On 9 Sep a large count of 45 birds was again made at Cissbury Ring with 35 moving together. Smaller counts of ten were made at Edburton and Beachy Head on 4 Sep. During an extended migration watch at Hastings a total of 59 birds was recorded on 13 dates between 1 Aug and 16 Nov, with a highest count of 25 on 28 Aug. There were four sightings reported in October: singles were seen at Pagham Hbr on the 2nd and 4th, Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) on the 4th and finally Arundel WWT on the 8th, six days earlier than the 10-year average date of 13 Oct.

The ringing group at Beachy Head reported that it had been a better year for the species than previous years. The Rye Bay RG ringed 45 full grown birds, a record for the site. Ringers at Ladywell (Coombes) ringed two new birds as did the Steyning RG at Cissbury. [PC]

Robin

Erithacus rubecula

Abundant resident, probably common passage migrant, mainly in autumn; status uncertain as winter visitor.

Robin was the fourth most commonly recorded species during the year. However, the indications are, from the number of records and from the BBS returns, that there has been a fall in numbers compared with the two previous years. Some 72% of records were from the first six months of the year, similar to the c.70% of 2009.

During the first winter period, there were 39 counts in excess of 20, the highest of which were from Atlas TTVs of 68 at Three Bridges on 19 Jan, 61 at Crawley on the 17th and, on 25 Feb, 51 around Bolney. Monthly counts from sites which were regularly surveyed included the following:

	Tetrad	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Summersdale (Chichester)	SU80N	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	1	-	1	1
Lidsey SF	SU90L	5	3	5	6	3	1	-	2	6	5	4	3
Hotham Park (Bognor)*	SZ99J	3	1	6	1	3	1	1	3	9	2	3	2
Broadbridge Heath	TQ13K	7	6	4	4	3	1	1	7	9	6	11	8
Chesworth Fm (Horsham)	TQ12U	6	10	7	13	10	4	-	-	-	8	8	4
Warnham LNR	TQ13R	4	7	7	8	2	4	2	4	10	5	10	14
Ditchling - Westmeston	TQ31G	41	-	24	57	29	24	12	8	48	40	18	25
Lewes Race Course*	TQ31V	5	2	4	8	9	3	1	4	10	9	5	3
Newhaven Tide Mills*	TQ40K	4	2	-	3	-	-	-	-	12	17	12	8
Newhaven OEP	TQ40K	5	4	5	4	2	-	-	-	33	32	21	3
King's Standing (Ashdown)*	TQ43Q	4	5	8	9	7	1	3	3	5	4	8	-

"-" no records were received for that month; *the site appeared in a similar table in SxBR 2009

The population levels at King's Standing (Ashdown Forest) and Lewes Race Course appear to have dropped slightly from 2009, possibly during the recent hard winter weather.

Breeding was confirmed from 209 tetrads and was probable in a further 140. During the BBS, a total of 1121 birds were recorded from 135 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed. This represents a reduction on the two previous years: in 2008, 1308 birds were logged in 130 of the 136 squares surveyed; in 2009, 1310 in 132 of 135 squares. As in 2009, Southleigh Forest (Emsworth) (SU7408) led the way with 43 on 23 Apr (*cf.* 38 in 2009, 47 in 2008); there were also three counts of 27 elsewhere. As in 2009, just a single bird was found in 26 of the surveyed squares.

In the autumn, nearly 23% of records with a count number were in double figures and 38% of ones or twos. The highest counts were 48 at Ditchling on 4 Sep, 43 at Saddlescombe (Poynings) on the 22nd and 53 at Patcham on 12 Oct. A count of 30 at Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) on 25 Aug was judged as a 'very early movement', but it did not presage further and larger numbers. Subsequent counts there were only of 20 on 16 Sep and 2 Oct. An unusual density of birds was found along the old canal at Lidsey (SU90G) on 13 Oct: all of the 19 birds along a 1.2-km stretch were singing. During an extended migration watch at Hastings a total of 771 birds were recorded between 25 Aug and 3 Nov, with a highest count of 47.

In the second winter period, less than 15% of records were in double figures and 46% were of ones or twos. The highest counts were recorded during Atlas surveys of 31 at Robertsbridge (TQ72G) on 16 Nov and 33 at Bexhill (TQ70N) on the 22nd. At Hove Lagoon, a Christmas decoration in the form of a Robin was attacked and destroyed by the real thing on 20 Dec. By contrast, in a South Malling garden, four birds co-existed during hard weather in early December, one of which had an abnormal cinnamon-coloured right wing.

The Rye Bay RG experienced their second best year with this species; 586 birds were trapped. The Steyning RG at Strivens Reedbed handled 66 birds, at Cissbury 51 birds were ringed and ringers at Ladywell (Coombes) handled 53. [CBBr]

Common Nightingale

Luscinia megarhynchos

Fairly common summer visitor and infrequently seen passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The first recorded arrival was one at Hastings CP on 5 Apr, one day earlier than in 2009, but slightly later than the 10-year average arrival date of 3 Apr. The next birds were noted at

Climping, Wisborough Green and Woods Mill (Henfield) on 10 Apr followed by one at Hurston Warren (Parham) on the 13th. There then followed a gap until 18 Apr but from then until 10 Jun records were for every day except two. A few birds appeared to linger near the coast as one was at Pett Level on 10 and 18 May. Singing males were first heard on 10 Apr at Climping and Woods Mill (Henfield) although there was no report of even probable breeding of the latter bird. One singing at Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) on 12 May was present all summer. One at Marline Valley (Crowhurst) on 20 May was the first the observer had heard there. The species was noted at West End (Burgess Hill) after being absent in 2009.



Common Nighthingale, Pulborough Brooks, May 2010 (Gareth Hughes)

Breeding was confirmed at only eight sites and was probable at a further 22, mostly on the basis of holding territory for a period. Birds heard singing at 13 further sites were possible breeders. During the BBS, a total of 18 was recorded from 11 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of three at Slinfold on 3 Jun. There were six pairs at Pulborough Brooks, two at Amberley Wildbrooks, at least one pair and a male holding territory at Pett Level and single pairs at five other sites. Occupied nests were found at South Stoke (Arun Valley) and at Park Fm (Laughton), adults carrying food or faecal sacs were noted at Kirdford and fledged young were recorded at Pallingham (Pulborough) and Furnace Meadow (Ebernoe). The last record of a bird in song was at Darwell Res on 8 Jun (*cf.* 16 Jun 2009 and 21 Jun 2008).

Comments on habitat included “one singing from damp woodland” by the R Ouse near Slaugham MP on 6 May, and three were singing from regenerating scrub at North Cocking on 5 Jun. One singing bird was being pestered by one or two others at Wilbees Fm (Arlington) on 3 Jun.

The first indication of possible migration was an individual ringed at Cissbury on 3 Jul (followed by another on the 24th). The next was at Leechpool and Owlbeech Woods (Horsham)

on 10 Jul. The first migrant at Pett Level was not noted until 23 Jul but there followed a steady stream until 12 Aug involving at least 35 birds. A final flurry from 28 Aug of some eight birds finished with the final record of two at Pett Level on 10 Sep, two days earlier than the 10-year average date.

Rye Bay RG had their best year with this species since 1993; 11 full-grown birds were trapped, including two birds from 23 to 31 Jul and a further nine between 3 and 25 Aug. [CBr]

Bluethroat

Luscinia svecica

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

One bird, a juvenile male, was trapped, ringed and photographed on 7 Oct (RBRG) and takes the totals recorded in the county since the beginning of 2000 to nine and 25 since the beginning of 1990. [JAH]

Red-flanked Bluetail

Tarsiger cyanurus

Very rare vagrant.

A probable first winter female discovered at Stanley Common on 7 Nov and subsequently photographed (AMD *et al.*) has been accepted by the BBRC and is a first for the county. It was seen for only one day between 8.45 am and 3.30 pm by a fortunate few. It was, unfortunately for the bird, blind in the left eye. This is a most welcome addition to the county list, moving it on to 391. The breeding range of this species is slowly expanding westwards through Finland. It is a rare but increasing vagrant to Western Europe, mainly to Great Britain, and sightings have definitely been on the increase this century. [JAH]

Black Redstart

Phoenicurus ochruros

Rare resident, scarce passage migrant and very scarce winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The minimum monthly totals and 5-year monthly averages for 2005 to 2009 were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	17	19	26	5	2	1	-	3	3	15	23	6
5-yr average	7	8	27	11	3	2	1	1	4	33	27	16

Monthly totals for the first winter period were considerably higher than the 5-year average. Wintering Black Redstarts were recorded almost daily from 1 Jan, almost invariably as single birds at coastal or near-coastal sites. In the Selsey Bill area there were records of single birds from 5 Jan to 25 Mar. Between 28 Jan and 21 Mar there were sightings of two at this site indicating that one overwintering bird had been joined by another. Elsewhere in West Sussex there were records on or near the beach at Pagham, Bognor, Littlehampton, Ferring, Goring, Worthing, Lancing and Southwick.

There were fewer records from the east of the county. One was at Sovereign Harbour Marina (Eastbourne) on 1 Jan, two on 13 Jan and five on 27 Feb, which was the highest total in the year. Two were at Brighton Marina on 17 Jan with single birds then recorded to 6 Feb.

Sightings in March, suggesting birds on migration, included singles at Thorney Island on the 2nd, Middleton-on-Sea on the 19th, Michelgrove (Patching) on the 27th and Pett Level on the 29th. Four birds were seen at Birling Gap (Beachy Head) on 17 Mar and another four at Selsey Bill on the 19th. There were further records of singles from sites at Beachy Head up to 6 Jun.

During the later spring, there were records from a few coastal sites including two at Exceat Bridge (Cuckmere) on 28 Apr and singletons at Portobello (Telscombe Cliffs) on 2 Apr, at Newhaven Tide Mills on 4 May and at Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) on 16 May. The species was not found during the BBS and there were no records indicative of breeding in the county.

As in previous years there were few records in summer apart from one at Hodcombe (Beachy Head) on 4 and 6 Jun. The earliest possible migrant was noted at Birling Gap on 4 Aug and the next at Church Norton on the 22nd.

There were three records in September, including one inland at Wivelsfield on the 12th. Migration was indicated in October by an increase in sightings at the coast and also at inland sites including Steep Down (Lancing), Crawley, Arlington Res, Heathfield, Fernhurst, Gatwick, Burgess Hill, Southwater and Weir Wood Res. Records generally in October were fewer than the 5-year average but included three at Birling Gap on the 19th and a total count of five during an extended migration watch at Hastings between 30 Oct and 16 Nov.

In the second winter period, most records were of single birds but there were three at East Dean (East Sussex) on 1 Nov and five records of twos and a highest count of four at Belle Tout (Beachy Head) on the 30th. In December there were seven records including two (or possibly three) at Splash Point (Seaford) on 22 Dec and from Lancing on 31 Dec. The total for the month was below the 5-year average presumably reflecting the very cold conditions at the time. [SPS]



Black Redstart, Lancing, January 2010 (Dave Sadler)

Common Redstart*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Scarce and declining summer visitor and fairly common passage migrant. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The first sighting of the year was a male on 4 Apr at Malthouse Meadows (Sompting), a week later than the 10-year average arrival date. There were sightings at Seaford on 8 and 9 Apr and, on Ashdown Forest, of singing males at West Chase on the 7th, Old Lodge on the 8th and Wrens Warren on the 10th. The peak dates for sightings of returning birds were from 18 Apr to 20 Apr across the county including coastal sites at Pagham Hbr, Ferring Rife, Goring Gap and Beachy Head and also inland at Black Down (Fernhurst), Chesworth Farm (Horsham) and sites at Ashdown Forest. The final coastal sighting was at Rye Hbr on 3 May.

In the west of the county a pair was seen at Linchmere (Fernhurst) on 5 Jun. The annual Wealden Heaths Breeding Bird Survey identified four territories including two at Weavers Down (Liss) as in 2009 but also at Black Down and Chapel Common (Liphook) where there had been territories in 2008. Eight territories were identified on Ashdown Forest with breeding confirmed in three tetrads on Ashdown Forest involving a nest with young at Pippingford Park on 15 May and adults with juveniles at Old Lodge on 13 Jun and the Old Airstrip on 26 Jul. Probable breeding was identified at Braberry Hatch and Lakes, the Forest Centre, Friends, Tabell Ghyll and West Chase. Overall in the county probable breeding was recorded in 11 tetrads and possible breeding in a further seven; two of these last were records from Graffham Common on 19 Apr and Ambersham Common on the 22nd. During the BBS, only three birds were recorded in two of the 139 1-km squares surveyed.

The first return migration sightings were at Sidlesham Tramway on 20 Jul and Pett Level on 22 Jul while the final record at Kings Standing (Ashdown Forest) was on 8 Sep. There were records all along the coast from sites including Thorney Deeps, Church Norton, Climping, Cissbury Ring, Hope Gap (Seaford), Beachy Head, Hastings CP and Rye Hbr. Nine birds were at Climping on 28 Aug and at Cissbury Ring there were 15 birds on 3 Sep and 10 the next day. At the end of the migration period singletons were at Seaford on 8 Oct and Church Norton on the 13th. An analysis of the autumn records suggested c 90 birds were recorded in August, c 120 in September and 9 in October.

The final sightings of the year were a female at Beachy Head and a male at Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head), both on 16 Oct. This was almost two weeks earlier than the 10-year average departure date of 29 Oct.

The Rye Bay RG ringed 18 birds during the season; Steyning RG ringed one young bird at Strivens Reedbed in 37 sessions and another at Cissbury Ring in 32 sessions. The Beachy Head RG recorded 15 birds between 17 Aug and 16 Oct but reported a poor year for this species there. [SPS]

Whinchat*Saxicola rubetra*

Fairly common passage migrant. Rare summer visitor, last bred in 1999. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The monthly minimum number of birds compared with the 5-year average 2005-2009 and the number of days on which they were recorded were as shown in the table below.

	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct
No. of birds	4	9	-	4	185	342	21
5-yr average	16	13	0	2	162	295	25
No. of days	4	6	-	2	21	28	9

The first record for the year was of two at Ashdown Forest on 15 Apr. Unusually, the first and last records for 2010 were both inland. All the April records, except the first, were of single birds as were all the records for May. The last spring record was at Pagham Hbr on 31 May.

There were no records for June. The earliest returning birds were two at Pett Level on 30 Jul and two at Stump Bottom (Steyning) on the 31st. The number of birds recorded for August was significantly higher than last year and well above the four-year average. Numbers were steady throughout the month with an increase in the number of daily records as the month progressed. The highest counts were 14 at Pett Level and 11 at Climping and Seaford, all on the 28th, culminating in ten at Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) on the 31st.

It was in September that most migrants passed through with numbers well above the four-year average. The overwhelming majority (86%) had passed by the middle of the month. As last year, the highest count in a day of 25 was in Sheepcote Valley on the 12th. There were counts of 14, nine and eight at Beachy Head and 10 at Thorney Deeps. The totals for August and September were the highest since 2005.

The highest counts for October were four at the Ouse-Glynde confluence on the 4th and at Hankham Level (Pevensey) on the 10th. The final record was of one on 21 Oct on Ashdown Forest where the first birds of the year had been recorded. [GDE]

Stonechat

Saxicola torquatus

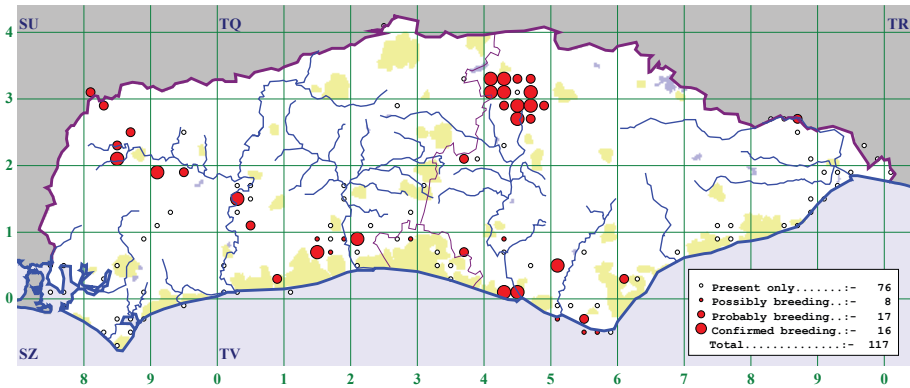
Fairly common resident and partial migrant.

The minimum monthly totals and number of days on which they were recorded were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	79	44	97	159	250	257	275	208	283	208	80	9
5-yr average	212	149	133	140	192	190	132	162	268	396	184	135
No. of days	20	18	25	24	29	27	28	23	24	25	19	6

Birds were recorded on 265 days of the year, a decline from last year (299) and 2008 (322) but this may be down to the severe weather in January, February and December. However the number of birds recorded in July was more than double the five-year (2005-2009) average and, in May and August, there were also big increases. Conversely the numbers for the second winter period were far below the average even allowing for the exceptional count in Nov 2006 of 2122 birds.

The highest count in the first winter period was of nine on Ashdown Forest on 22 Mar followed by counts of only four at Thorney Deeps on 1 Jan, Friston Forest on 3 Jan and Climping Beach on 13 Feb. During the spring months the highest count was eight at Ambersham Common on 10 Apr followed by six the following day and seven on Ashdown Forest on 23 May. There were further counts of six at Newhaven Tide Mills on 18 Apr and again on Ashdown Forest on 8 May.



During the BBS, a total of only three birds was recorded in two of the 139 1-km squares surveyed. The estimated numbers of pairs or territories on Ashdown Forest and the number of pairs confirmed, probably or possibly breeding (i.e. seen in suitable habitat) in the rest of the county is shown in the following table:

	Confirmed	Probable	Possible
Ashdown Forest	*	148	*
Other sites	11	20	8

*Ashdown Forest figure is minimum number of pairs or territories

The earliest sign of migration was a record of three at Newhaven Tide Mills in July on the 4th and six at Beachy Head on the 14th. In September, the highest daily counts were 14 at East Dean on the 12th, 12 at Steep Down (Lancing) on the 25th and eight at Beachy Head on the 22nd. There were several counts of more than five on Ashdown Forest during the month, probably family parties, the highest being nine on the 6th.

During the second winter period, the highest daily records were seven at Climping in October on the 16th and eight at Pett Level on the 17th. There were no other significant daily records and only one bird was recorded at Beachy Head during this period. A total of 64 birds was recorded at Pett Level during October (50) and November (14). In December, there were only five records of four birds. Given that the total number recorded for October and November were significantly down on the five-year average and those for August and September were high it is possible that whatever migration and dispersal took place happened earlier than usual.

During the year, 40 birds were ringed by Rye Bay RG.

A male bird showing characteristics of the continental race, *S.t. rubicola*, was seen and photographed at Shooter's Bottom (Beachy Head) on 9 May (DC, BK) where it appeared to be holding territory. [GDE]

Northern Wheatear

Oenanthe oenanthe

Very scarce breeding summer visitor and common passage migrant; very rare in mid-winter. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The minimum monthly totals and numbers of days on which birds were recorded are shown in the table below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	-	-	333	457	94	29	30	767	1348	181	3	-
No. of days	-	-	15	22	20	8	11	28	26	24	3	-

Spring arrival was relatively late, with two records of probably the same bird on 13 Mar at Seaford and 11 days later than the 10-year average arrival date. This is a full month later than the earliest county record (13 Feb 2007). Three birds were then seen at coastal sites of Rye Hbr (2) and Newhaven Tide Mills and one inland at Steyning on 15 Mar. On the following day one was seen, well inland, at Chuck Hatch (Ashdown Forest). A larger influx occurred on 18 Mar when 37 birds, including five at both Climping and Southwick, were recorded from 13 widespread locations. During the rest of March and throughout April and May there were records on most days, generally in small numbers, although ten or more birds were recorded on twelve occasions. Highest numbers were 22 at Climping on 20 Apr and three counts of 20 birds, at Climping and also at Ovingdean on 21 Mar and at Newhaven Tide Mills on 22 Apr.

Breeding was confirmed at five locations. At Rye Hbr five pairs nested but very few fledglings were noted. Elsewhere in the east, up to three fledged young were seen at each of three sites: Newhaven Tide Mills, Bishopstone (Seaford) and Cliff End (Cuckmere Haven). In addition, nest building was recorded at Findon and paired birds were seen in at least three other locations. During the BBS, five birds were recorded from three of the 139 1-km squares surveyed.

The first returning migrants were recorded in the early part of July and a lone bird was seen on Ashdown Forest on the 10th. In the second half of the month up to five birds were observed at The Midrips on the 18th, and another single bird at Lewes Racecourse on the 27th. Also on the 27th there were three birds at Thorney Island, the first autumn record in the west of the county. Another two were seen at Stump Bottom (Steyning) on the 31st. Records were made almost daily during August and September. In August there were ten records of ten or more birds on seven days, the earliest of which was 15 at Climping on the 12th. The highest August counts were 31 at Hastings on the 28th and 30 at Church Norton on the 25th. At Climping, 45 birds were recorded between the 12th and 28th with a maximum of 24 on the 28th. In September there were a number of major falls, with 34 double-figure counts on thirteen days. During an extended migration watch at Hastings, 229 birds were recorded between 1 Aug and 8 Oct with a highest count of 63 on 12 Sep. There were counts of 55 at Climping on 9 Sep and 50 at Crowlink (East Dean) on the 12th. At Climping on ten dates between 1 and 30 Sep 185 birds were recorded. Peak counts and dates during August and September were as shown in the following table:

Date	28 Aug	7 Sep	8 Sep	9 Sep	12 Sep	15 Sep	16 Sep
No. of birds	131	66	114	160	275	90	44

Migration continued throughout October but at a slower rate, with only one double figure record of ten birds at Thorney Island on the 8th. There were three records in November, all of single birds, at Rye Hbr on the 3rd, at The Midrips on the 7th, and finally at Sheepcote Valley (Brighton) on the 21st, 10 days later than the 10-year average departure date. [GNO]

Greenland Wheatear

Oenanthe oenanthe leucorhoa

Passage migrant; true status unclear.

There was just one record of a Wheatear showing the characteristics of the Greenland form: a male was seen at Weir Wood Res on 30 Apr. There have now been 38 spring records for this subspecies during the past 22 years but only 15 autumn records. [GNO]

Pied Flycatcher*Ficedula hypoleuca*

Scarce passage migrant, more numerous in autumn than spring; has bred. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Total
3	-	3	1	25	10	43

Numbers were up on the previous year's 30 birds with a maximum of 43 recorded, a low figure compared with the 10-year and 5-year averages of 57 and 38 respectively which continues the longer term trend for falling numbers.

Spring migration numbers were, once again, light. The first bird was reported on 20 Apr at Laughton Common Wood, eight days later than the previous year and eleven days later than the 10-year average. The following day, single males were at North Common Fm (Selsey) and Pagham Hbr.

There were no reports in May and it was not until 6 Jun that one was reported on Ashdown Forest. Two were also recorded at Great Noven Fm (Chailey) on 24 Jun, visiting a possible nesting site. Only one bird was reported in July, probably an early autumn migrant, on the 26th at Pagham Hbr.

Autumn migration numbers were, as usual, higher than in spring. One at Pagham Hbr on 26 Jul was the first, followed by two at Whitbread Hollow on 2 Aug. There were 23 further sightings in August including one landing in a garden in Rye. Five different birds were noted in three areas of Beachy Head on 16 Aug but, apart from two at Church Norton on 21 and 24 Aug, the other autumn records were of single birds. The last birds of the year were two recorded at Pett Level and one at Beachy Head on 27 Sep, four days earlier than the 10-year average departure date. [PC]

Dunnock*Prunella modularis*

Very common resident. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

Birds were reported from 520 tetrads. Dunnock was the 13th most commonly recorded species during the year. During the first winter there were ten counts in double figures from Atlas tetrad surveys, the highest of which were 24 at Mile Oak (Portslade) (TQ20N) on 17 Jan, 24 at Three Bridges (TQ23Y) on the 19th and 22 at Patcham (TQ30E) on 1 Feb.

Maximum counts at regularly surveyed sites were as follows:

	Tetrad	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Summersdale (Chichester)	SU80N&T	3	3	3	4	3	4	2	2	2	-	-	1
Sefter Fm (Rose Green)	SZ89Z	9	6	7	14	6	5	2*	2*	1*	4	6*	5*
Pulborough Brooks	TQ01M	4	5	4	6	3	2	2	1	2	2	4	6
Warnham LNR	TQ13R	4	6	6	4	6	5	6	6	2	2	3	6
Patcham	TQ30E	21	22	14	23	25	18	9	3	5	15	2	18
Lewes Race Course	TQ31V	5	8	6	3	8	3	3	2	1	4	1	3
Newhaven Tide Mills	TQ40K	3	6	-	6	7	4	9	-	7	2	4	4
West Chase (Ashdown)	TQ43F	1	5	13	3	-	1	1	1	2	2	2	2
Pett Level	TQ81X	4	6	2	3	8	11	6	8	12	34	14	4

“-” no records were received for that month; *partial count

Breeding was confirmed in 59 tetrads and was probable in a further 185. The first signs of breeding intent were five singing males on Ashdown Forest (West Chase) on 14 Mar but the first record of breeding was for 15 Mar, when a nest was found in ivy at Warnham LNR. A nest with young was found at Broadbridge (Chichester) on 13 Apr (*cf.* 12 Apr in 2009). An adult was still on the nest at Boars Head (Crowborough) on 12 June. The last report of dependent young was at Chelwood Common on 12 Aug (*cf.* 4 Aug 2009).

During the BBS, a total of 396 birds was recorded from 113 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with highest counts of 12 at three sites in April, viz. Knepp Estate (9th), Toads Hole Valley (Hove) (10th) and Peacehaven (17th). The comparable figures for 2009 were 420 birds in 109 of 135 1-km squares and 473 birds in 115 of 136 squares for 2008, figures which suggest a slight decline over the last few years. There were 37 territories at Rye Hbr and the same number at Pagham Hbr, very similar to 2009 when there were 33 and 39 respectively, and 36 pairs on the Norfolk Estate.



Dunnock, Arundel, January 2010 (Nick Bond)

The closing months of the year passed with no exceptional observations. A bird ringed in Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) in August 2004 was retrapped there on 19 Sep. Otherwise there was little indication of autumn migration other than a count of 34 at Pett Level and 20 at Beachy Head on 17 Oct. During an extended migration watch at Hastings a total of 81 birds was recorded between 17 Sep and 31 Oct. The highest counts in the second winter period came from Atlas surveys and included 14 at the Round Hill (Devils Dyke) on 20 Nov and 18 at Patcham on 13 Dec. Some 62% of records in the latter period were of ones or twos.

During the year, the Rye Bay RG had a record year with this species: 389 birds were trapped involving 315 full grown birds, 14 pulli and 60 from previous years. The Steyning RG at Strivens Reedbed handled 65 different birds, involving 49 new and 16 from previous years (41 young, 22 adult) and, at Cissbury, 38 different birds involving 35 new and three from previous years (41

young, 22 adult). Ringers at Ladywell (Coombes) handled 57 different birds, involving 38 new and 19 from previous years (27 young, 30 adult). [CBr]

House Sparrow

Passer domesticus

Very common but possibly declining resident. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

House Sparrows were recorded from 601 tetrads. In the first winter period 2227 birds were recorded in 138 2-hr Atlas TTV surveys, an average of 16.1 per occupied tetrad with 12 tetrads holding over 40. The highest counts were 79 at Selsey Bill on 11 Jan, 57 at Punnetts Town on 3 Jan, 56 at Eastergate on 25 Feb and 55 at West Wittering on 6 Feb. At the beginning of the year up to 30 were roosting in eight nest boxes in a garden in Henfield and a roost of 50 was reported from Worthing Beach on 13 Jan. On the last day of the month 50 were reported at Hookwood (Gatwick) and the following day 11 were noted roosting in a Swift nest box at Henfield. An observer in Hurst Green reported that numbers were greatly reduced during the cold weather in the second half of January. On 9 Feb 50 were present in Rye Hbr village. An interesting behavioural observation from Uckfield was of a House Sparrow pursuing a Collared Dove at speed on at least three occasions during January.



House Sparrow, Birling Gap, November 2010 (Pete Wilson)

Breeding was confirmed in 203 tetrads and was probable in a further 133. The first reports of nest building were from Chelwood Common (Danehill) on 28 Feb and the first mention of a nest containing young was at Bishopstone GC on 22 Apr and a parent carrying food was seen at Wantley (Storrington) on 1 May with fledglings out of the nest on 10 May at Portslade. Abundance was particularly noted in tetrads with only small areas of land at Lancing Beach and

Selsey Beach. At Durfold (Warnham) a fledgling with parents on 19 May was the first evidence of breeding there for many years.

During the BBS, a total of 1576 birds was recorded from 102 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, an average of 11.3 per square and 15.5 per occupied square continuing last year's improvement, with a highest count of 58 at Burwash on 23 May. In 2-hr breeding season Atlas TTV counts 11 tetrads held over 50 birds with 111 in a tetrad at Burgess Hill. The largest summer flocks were 110 at Pulborough Brooks on 13 Aug and 100 leaving a roost at Rye Hbr the following day.

The largest counts in the second winter period were 64 at Pulborough Brooks on 25 Oct, 80 at Hundred Acre Fm (Compton) on 28 Nov and 65 at Mile Oak (Portslade). [ACG]

Tree Sparrow

Passer montanus

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

Only 18 records were received from nine tetrads. In the first winter period there were four at Stoddard Fm (Beckley) on 15 Feb and three reports from Pevensy Levels with a highest count of ten at Manxey Level on 14 Mar.

During the breeding season all reports were from the marshes east of Rye with 16 on the Kent/Sussex border at Lower Agney in Walland Marsh on 3 May, and up to ten around East Guldeford on four dates in May and June. Two were trapped at Pett Level in late August and during October there was a small influx with two at Hastings CP on the 13th, and two at Cuckmere Haven the next day when two were also at Pett Level. On 30 Oct 26 were at Pett Level and the last sightings of the year were of single birds on 6 and 19 Nov, also at Pett Level.

It is clear that Tree Sparrow numbers continue to decline with very small numbers breeding in the extreme east of the county and a few probably moving in from elsewhere in the autumn. [ACG]

Yellow Wagtail

Motacilla flava

Scarce and localised summer visitor, scarce passage migrant in spring and fairly common in autumn. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

The first bird was recorded at Applesham (Coombes) on 23 Mar, one day earlier than the 10-year average date and was followed by three at Rye Hbr on 4 Apr. Spring reports were dominated by the presence of a substantial roost, this year at Rye Hbr, which involved 20 on 7 Apr, 45 on the 8th and 60 on the 15th following which date numbers there reduced as birds dispersed. Almost all spring records were from coastal sites, the exceptions being two at Weir Wood Res on the 11th, and a male at Old Lodge NR (Ashdown Forest) on the 29th. In 345 hrs of observation in April and May only eight birds were logged at Selsey Bill while at Worthing Beach the total was only eleven in 118 hrs. The number of Yellow Wagtails recorded in April, conservatively c.160, was greater than for several years. Most May records were from wetland areas near the coast, although one was at Warnham LNR on 12 May.

Breeding was confirmed at five sites: White Dyke (Hailsham), Wickham Manor (Winchelsea), Winchelsea Marsh, Rye Hbr (only one or two pairs) and Barn Fm (East Guldeford). Breeding was probable at a further six sites, all in East Sussex. There were no records of breeding productivity. The species was not recorded during the BBS.

In May, there were records from 18 sites, six in West Sussex and 12 in East Sussex. Ten were on Pevensey Levels on 6 May and 12 at East Guldeford on 13 May and 8 Jun. Other June records included two at Lewes Brooks on the 1st, two at Great Noven Fm (Chailey) on the 24th and nine at Winchelsea Marsh on the 25th.

The first concerted sign of return migration was a count of 40 at Rye Hbr on 4 Aug. There were 21 double figure counts in August (cf. 16 in 2009) and 46 in September (cf. 40 in 2009). The most notable counts during these months were from Rye Hbr, as follows:

Date	August								September		
	4	8	13	20	21	22	24	31	10	11	13
Count	40	60	14	200	50	37	300	50	50	40	60

From late August observers further west, particularly at Climping Beach, recorded increased numbers of usually flying birds: 80 W on 28 Aug, 70 on the 30th, 100 on 8 Sep, 100 in nearby fields on the 9th, 40 on the 14th and 70 on the 16th with a final count of five on the 21st for a total of 466 during September. At Thorney Deepes, 38 roosted on 3 Sep, 50 fed around cattle on the 9th, 30 roosted on the 25th while 30 remained there on 3 Oct, the last double figure count of the year. In the area around Sidlesham and Pagham Hbr, there were 37 at Halseys Fm on 1 Sep and 25 on the 9th, 22 at Keynor Fm on the 5th and, at the North Wall, 20 on the 9th and 30 on the 14th. During an extended migration watch at Hastings, a total of 607 birds was recorded between 12 Aug and 14 Oct with peak counts of 69 on 24 Aug and 127 on the 28th.

In September, there were four counts in double figures at Rye Hbr between the 7th and 13th with a peak of 60 on the 13th but no further records until one on 9 Oct. Elsewhere, there were 33 double figure counts from some 21 sites, 17 of which were in West Sussex indicating that there appears to be a shift to the west of the county as autumn migration proceeds.

In October, 11 records were for a total of 50 birds, 30 of which were seen at Thorney Deepes on the 3rd. The last record for the year was 1 E at Worthing Beach on the 15th, 13 days earlier than the 10-year average date of the 28th.

During the year, Rye Bay RG trapped 241 full grown birds, one a control and one a retrap from a previous year. [CBr]

Grey Wagtail

Motacilla cinerea

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

Records were received from 196 tetrads, divided 83:113 between West and East Sussex (cf. 231 in 2009). There were records from Weir Wood Res for every month of the year but none from Alexandra Park (Hastings) in April or from Warnham LNR in December.

In the first winter period, 80% of records (excluding duplicates) were for single birds; the only double figure counts were from Alexandra Park (Hastings) of 13 on 16 Jan and 11 on 21 Feb. As usual, sewage farms and filter beds proved particularly attractive to Grey Wagtails so a slightly unusual record was of one at Stapleash Fm (Chilgrove) on 11 Feb.

Although birds were seen in March at Thorney Deepes, Piddinghoe (Newhaven) and Rye Hbr, it is difficult to distinguish possible migrants from those that have wintered, but a couple of April records may have referred to migrants: one flew over central Brighton on the 2nd and two were at Shinewater Lake (Eastbourne) on the 17th. Seven birds remained in Alexandra Park on 7 Mar.

Breeding was confirmed from 22 tetrads (six west, 16 east) and was probable in a further 28. The first indications of breeding were of a pair mating in Crawley on 9 Mar. A pair had eggs in a nest at Warnham LNR on 16 Apr and four young duly fledged. Young were being fed at Bells Yew Green on 3 May, at Cuckfield Park on the 12th and at Balcombe on the 15th. Another occupied nest was found at Framfield on 6 May. This year's breeding figures suggest strongly that there has been a marked reduction in abundance so it will be interesting to see the final results from the Sussex Atlas surveys. During the BBS, a total of nine birds were recorded in seven of the 139 1-km squares surveyed.

There may have been some movement back to the coast early in July: birds were seen at Newhaven Tide Mills on the 4th, Ferring Rife on the 6th and Pett Level on the 7th where singles were also noted on the 18th, 24th and 30th; the first autumn record at Beachy Head was of three on the 29th. At coastal sites in August, two birds were noted at Thorney Deeps on the 28th and three at Climping on the 28th and 31st while, at Pett Level, only two singles were seen in the month.

In the autumn further movements were noted: numbers at Pett Level totalled 19 in September, 17 were observed flying south over Warnham LNR on nine dates in the month and ten at Hastings and 10 W in 4 hrs at Selsey Bill on the 12th were the autumn's highest counts. To have peak counts from both ends of the county on the same day suggests movement on a broad front. The highest count at Alexandra Park was 18 birds on 10 Oct. During an extended migration watch at Hastings a total of 85 birds was recorded between 24 Aug and 18 Oct.

In the second winter period the highest counts came, again, from Alexandra Park where there were six on 14 Nov but 11 on 19 Dec. Five at Telscombe Cliffs on 2 Dec was the other notable count. Just over 80% of records for the period were of single birds.

During the year, both Steyning RG and ringers at Ladywell (Coombes) ringed one new young bird each. [CBr]

White Wagtail

Motacilla alba alba

Probably a scarce spring and autumn passage migrant; both pure and mixed pairs have bred.

Spring brought 23 records of probably 28 birds, 18 in March, nine in April and just two in May. The first was a very early bird at Selsey Bill on 6 Mar; on the 12th there were three at Rye Hbr; the following day another three were at Climping and on the 24th at least six were consorting with a large group of Pied Wagtails at Sidlesham SF. Only one was seen at Pulborough Brooks between 28 Mar and 15 Apr, from which date another six individuals were noted to the 21st followed by further singles on 29 Apr, 5 May and finally 9 May. Records came from such other sites as Selsey Bill, Brighton Wild Park, Arlington Res, Weir Wood Res, High Cross Fm (Uckfield), Pett Level and Rye Hbr.

The first possibly returning migrant was noted at Pulborough Brooks on 19 Jul. In the autumn, during an extended migration watch at Hastings from 8 to 17 Oct a total of 15 birds were recorded with a highest count of 12 on the 12th at White Rock. Elsewhere, only eight individuals were recorded: at Bewl Water on 28 Aug, Weir Wood Res on 4 Sep, Pulborough Brooks on the 7th and Telscombe Cliffs on the 27th. There were four birds in October: at Climping and Weir Wood Res on the 7th, Sidlesham SF on the 14th and, finally, a probable at Cissbury Ring on the 19th.

Observers are reminded of the difficulty of establishing the identity of White Wagtails in the autumn. The latest report from ringing activities at Slapton Ley is particularly cautious: a bird ringed at Slapton on 22 Sep 2009 as a 'possible' *alba* was identified at Dungeness on 8 Oct of the

same year as *yarrellii*. Slapton ringers use the rump colour of trapped birds to differentiate *alba* from *yarrellii* and acknowledge that there is a substantial overlap between the two races: ‘where it is unclear which race is involved, the bird is labelled as ‘possibly’ *M.a. alba*... but always treated as *M.a. yarrellii* (the most likely) in any analysis’ (D. Elphick in *Devon Birds*, April 2011). Information from Sussex ringing records and from the BTO confirms that no definite White Wagtails have been handled in Sussex in the autumn; nor have there been any from Hampshire or Kent. [CBr]

Pied Wagtail

Motacilla alba yarrellii

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Of the records received, 60% were for the first six months of the year. During the first winter period there were 38 records for counts of ten or more with the highest being 43 at Sefter Fm (Rose Green) on 1 Jan, 50 at Thorney SF on the 4th, 44 at Five Ashes Village on the 31st, 44 at Bishopstone (Seaford) on 2 Feb, 52 at Ringmer on the 14th and 50 at Wyckham Fm (Steyning) on the 15th. The only sewage works which featured was Lidsey where numbers fluctuated from 11 on 2 Jan through 31 on 20 Feb to 15 on 11 Mar.

Records for the end of the period suggest movements: there were 31 at the North Fields (Pagham Hbr) on 28 Feb, 20 at Broadbridge Heath from the 5 to 8 Mar, 26 at Roedean on the coast on the 6th, and 20 at Crowhurst on the 8th and also at Robertsbridge Station on the 9th. A large gathering of c.80 birds at Sidlesham SF on 24 Mar was accompanied by some White Wagtails, obviously migrants.

Breeding was confirmed from 89 tetrads and was probable in a further 53. The first young were found at Roedean on 4 May, at West Dean two days later and at East Chiltonton on the 10th. There was one pair at the west side of Pagham Hbr, two pairs at Pulborough Brooks, three pairs at Pett Level and ‘several pairs’ along the industrial strip by Rye Harbour Road. Young were still in a nest at Ashurst on 2 Jul and a nest with three eggs was found in a garden centre at West Grinstead on 4 Aug. During the BBS, a total of 95 birds was recorded from 52 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of eight at Hartfield on 24 Jun.

The first gathering of family groups noticed was at Weir Wood Res, where 20 were found on 6 Jun. There were no other double figure counts until 12 were noted at Pulborough Brooks on 23 Jul. There were five double figure counts in August, including 15 at Holedean Fm (Henfield) on the 20th.

In the autumn, there were nine double figure counts in September including 30 at Bewl Water on the 2nd, 25 at Cuckmere Haven on the 16th, 21 found leaving a roost at Stonehill (Ashdown Forest) on the 22nd and the largest count for the period of 120 at Weir Wood Res the next day.

During the period from 7 to 18 Oct there was a sustained easterly passage observed at several coastal sites, as follows:

October dates	7	8	9	11	12	14	15	16	17	18	Monthly total
Selsey Bill	-	-	-	-	11(4)	-	-	-	-	-	11(4)
Climping Beach	25 (1)	10 (1)	-	60 (1)	25 (1)	20 (-)	-	-	-	15 (1½)	155 (13½)
Goring Gap	-	-	-	-	-	-	50(-)	-	-	-	-
Worthing Beach	-	24 (1½)	80 (1¼)	-	-	-	-	-	40 (2)	-	160 (25½)
Beachy Head	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25 (-)	-	-
Hastings	-	-	-	108 (-)	101 (-)	-	-	92 (-)	-	-	-

Note: figures in parentheses indicate hours watched

Other sizeable counts during October included 25 at Weir Wood Res on the 10th and 60 flying over Rye Hbr on the 11th, probably part of the number recorded at Climping Beach and Hastings. The next morning, 20 left a roost in gorse at West Chase (Ashdown Forest), soon after sunrise.

In the second winter period, Pied Wagtails were recorded from 200 tetrads. Notable counts included 13 in a newly cultivated field at Mountfield on 2 Nov, 38 W at Crow and Gate (Ashdown Forest) on the 4th and 20 feeding on scraped ground there on the 13th. The highest count in November was 50 in horse paddocks at New Barn Fm (Portslade) on the 20th.

It seems that substantial urban roosts of Pied Wagtails are no longer characteristic of the Sussex winter: reports confirming absence from previously used sites (e.g. Worthing, Brighton Marina and Haywards Heath) would be welcome. [CBR]

Tree Pipit

Anthus trivialis

Fairly common but local summer visitor; fairly common passage migrant. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

During the year, almost 65% of records were from Ashdown Forest and 77% from there and the Wealden Heathlands.

The earliest record was of a male singing on Ashdown Forest on 6 Apr, eight days later than the 10-year average. Over the following several days more birds arrived as either singles or twos and there were then daily sightings throughout the month. There were no spring migration records from coastal sites.

During the breeding season, 57 pairs or territories were identified on Ashdown Forest and 21 were identified during the Thames Basin and Wealden Heaths Breeding Bird Survey. Elsewhere, breeding was confirmed at East Dean (West Sussex) and was probable at a further 12 sites, eight in East Sussex and four in West Sussex. Assuming all these latter 'probables' were holding territories then a county total of 90 pairs or territories is possible. This is the first year that a concerted effort has been made by the Ashdown Forest Bird Group to conduct a structured analysis of the area's breeding birds and so this data should not be compared with the estimates of previous years. During the BBS, only two birds were recorded in two of the 139 1-km squares surveyed.

During August, birds were recorded at four coastal sites in West Sussex, and in East Sussex at seven coastal and six inland sites although five of these latter were on Ashdown Forest so these birds may not have been actively migrating. The highest counts were 15 at Pett Level on 17 Aug and seven at Brighton Wild Park on 30 Aug. Observers at Climping Beach recorded two migrants during August.

Migration continued at a similar rate through September, with highest counts of eight at Brighton Wild Park and ten at Hastings on the 12th, before tailing off during the early part of October. At Hastings, during an extended migration watch, 78 birds were recorded between 18 Aug and 30 Oct. The final record of the year was on 30 Oct, 16 days later than the 10-year average.

The annual ringing total at Pett Level by RBRG was 44 birds, the third best year there. [MDS]

Meadow Pipit

Anthus pratensis

Common but declining resident, very common passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

The approximate minimum number of birds by month is summarized below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	1188	382	591	316	217	189	124	95	12185	4175	651	1003

During the first winter period large counts included, on 7 Jan, 200 at Climping Beach and 79 at Splash Point (Seaford); on 8 Jan 100 at Climping Beach; on 12 Jan 60 at Rye Hbr; on 5 Feb two groups of 50 and 30 on Ashdown Forest; on 12 Feb 60 at Chilgrove; from 14 to 27 Feb 50 at Sefter Fm (Rose Green); on 8 Mar 40 at Crowhurst; on 18 Mar 40 at Henfield Woods and on 19 Mar 50 at Chesworth Fm (Horsham). There were 40 at Rye Hbr on 22 Mar and 100 on 24 Mar at Sidlesham Ferry Pool.

During the spring and summer months there were seven counts of 20 between 7 Apr and 25 Jul, 25 were noted at Cockroost Hill (Mile Oak) on 25 Apr and, the highest count for the period, 40 were at Sidlesham Ferry on 15 Aug.



Meadow Pipit, Cuckmere Haven, April 2010 (Pete Wilson)

Breeding was confirmed in only seven tetrads (three in West Sussex, four in East Sussex) and probable in 34 (14 west and 20 east). There were a minimum of 20 territories or pairs on Ashdown Forest. At Bracklesham Bay 12 singing or displaying males were recorded, and there were nine territories at Pagham Hbr and a similar number at Rye Hbr. The earliest record of a singing male was at East Chidham on 3 Mar and the first record of an established territory was on Ashdown Forest on 8 Mar. The first evidence of confirmed breeding was a nesting bird on 26 Apr at Pevensey Level; the latest record was of six fledglings at Iping Common on 17 Jul. During the BBS, a total of 29 birds were recorded from nine of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of 14 at Thorney Island on 26 Apr.

During the autumn there were 37 counts of 100 or more as birds migrated from breeding to wintering grounds. The highest counts were 1055 W at Selsey Bill and 1000 at Crowlink (East

Dean) on 12 Sep and at least 1000 at Brighton on the 17th and 18th. Also on the 18th, observers at Newhaven Cliffs recorded 470 W/NW, considered to be only a small proportion of the birds passing through on a broad front. At Climping Beach numbers recorded on seven dates in September totaled 720 (with some duplication possible). At Worthing Beach the month's total was 266, including 24 N and 242 W with a highest count of 117 on 17 Sep. Numbers were lower in October and birds were noted flying both east and west. On the 9th 200 W were noted at Pagham Spit, on the 19th and 11th 105 E and 170 E passed Telscombe Cliffs, on the 12th 400 E passed Church Norton and on the 15th 377 W were recorded at Brighton Wild Park. During an extended migration watch at Hastings, 7549 birds were recorded from 27 Aug to 16 Nov.

Notable numbers during the second winter period included, in November, 100 at Stump Bottom (Steyning) on the 6th, 45 at Lavington Common on the 7th, 30 at Climping Beach on the 19th and 40 at Edburton on the 28th. In December, large counts included 200 at Climping, 93 at Worthing Beach, 200 at Climping Beach and 210 at Telscombe Cliffs on 2 Dec and 30 at Cuckmere Haven on 26 Dec.

The annual ringing total at Pett Level by RBRG was the second best year there with 935 birds ringed. [MDS]

Rock Pipit

Anthus petrosus

Scarce resident and scarce winter visitor; very rare away from the coast.

There were 199 records which is a significant increase on the 147 received in 2009 and closer to the 227 received in 2008. The majority of the records (87%) related to fewer than five birds and 48% were of singles. Sites (1-km squares) were dived roughly equally between West (31) and East Sussex (26). The approximate minimum monthly totals, the numbers of days and the numbers of sites at which birds were recorded were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	91	25	29	6	3	47	11	15	13	84	82	53

The higher number of birds recorded during the winter is indicative of a large wintering population in the county.

During the first winter period, the highest counts were 12 at both Newhaven Hbr on 30 Jan and Fishbourne Channel (Chichester Hbr) on 31 Jan and eight at Splash Point (Seaford) on 11 Jan. Following a count of six at Roedean (Brighton) on 6 Mar the next highest spring count was three. However, on 15 Jun, an observer conducted two transects for this species: along Newhaven Cliffs 16 birds (including some pairs) were recorded and a further ten (including one pair) along cliffs at Seaford Head. During a similar transect on 20 Jun from the cliff end at Cuckmere Haven to Birling Gap (Beachy Head) nine birds (including a displaying pair) were recorded.

During June sections of the chalk cliffs between Brighton and Birling Gap were surveyed when 49 individuals were found. However, breeding was confirmed at only three sites continuing the recent decline (11 sites in 2008 and six sites in 2009). An adult was recorded as carrying food at Roedean on 4 May, an occupied nest was observed at Saltdean on 2 Jun, and an adult carrying food was observed at Telscombe Cliffs on 3 Jun. In addition, breeding was probable at seven other sites.

In the autumn, the first returning bird at Shoreham Hbr was recorded on 8 Sep (three weeks earlier than last year) while the first bird at Thorney Island (Chichester Hbr) was not noted until 27 Sep. Nine birds were recorded at Hastings between 25 Sep and 10 Nov during a migration watch.

During the second winter period, ten site-faithful birds were recorded at Fishbourne Channel on 12 Oct, 21 Nov and 9 Dec. Further east, the only double figure count was 16 in the Cuckmere Lower Valley on 21 Nov.

At Pett Level, RBRG trapped only their second ever bird of this species on 27 Sep. [MDS]



Rock Pipit, Shoreham Beach, February 2010 (Nick Bond)

Water Pipit

Anthus spinoletta

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

The minimum number of accepted records was as follows:

	Mar		Nov	Dec
No. of birds	3		2	2

The first record of the year was on 13 Mar; three individuals were found and photographed at Pagham SF (DC, BK).

In the second winter period, two were at Thorney Deeps on 5 Nov (CBC). On 12 Dec one was at Coldwaltham SF (GB) which was presumably the same seen on the 14th (BFF, DIS). The final bird was seen on Christmas Day along the west side of Pagham Hbr as the observer was enjoying a pre-dinner walk (AH).

The minimum number of individuals, seven, is two less than in 2009 while the number of locations is down from seven to four. [MDS]

Chaffinch*Fringilla coelebs*

Abundant resident, and probably very common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Chaffinches were recorded in 702 tetrads across the county. Unfortunately, some 18% of all records were for 'present only' birds, i.e. with no count of numbers. In the first winter period there were 18 counts in excess of 50 including nine over 100. The highest concentrations were 250 at Binderton (West Dean) on 19 Jan and 120 at Preston Fm (West Dean) the same day, 149 at Rackham on 23 Jan, 200 at Brantridge Forest on 7 Feb and 400 the same day at Stapleash Fm (Chilgrove), 150 at Pett Level on the 11th, 350 at Coates Broad Halfpenny on the 20th and 200 at Burton MP on the 27th.

During the BBS, a total of 1572 birds was recorded from 136 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of 39 at Heyshott on 11 May. Breeding was confirmed in 113 tetrads and was probable in a further 242. There was a marked paucity of notes on territorial or breeding activity in the spring; the only record of nest building in April was at Hunston (Chichester) on the 4th. The earliest records of recently fledged or downy young were dated 24 Apr at Markstakes Common (Chailey) and 27 Apr at Horsted Keynes and Latchetts (Danehill); the latest report was dated 30 Jul. A survey on the Norfolk Estate east of the R Arun identified 123 pairs; at Pagham Hbr a total of 53 was recorded (presumably territories/pairs), at Pett Level 12 pairs bred and at Rye Hbr 20 singing males held territories.

During the breeding season the highest counts were 56 at Streat on 22 Mar, 68 at Paddockhurst Place (Worth) on 9 Apr and 58 there on 3 Jun, 50 at Pulborough Brooks on 20 May, 54 at Linch Fm (Bepton) on 9 Jun, 89 at Northlands (Warnham) on 24 Jun and 66 at Copsale on 28 Jun. However, there were an additional 196 counts of 20 to 50 during this period. The largest counts during the two summer months were 30 at both Wakehurst Place and Balcombe on 18 Jul and 37 at Pulborough Brooks the next day.

During an extended migration watch at Hastings from 12 Sep to 16 Nov a total of 2167 Chaffinches was recorded with peak counts of 297 E on 7 Oct and 178 E on the 11th. Elsewhere during the autumn there were only 14 counts in excess of 20 including 52 at Scobells Fm (Barcombe) on 23 Sep and 120 at Weir Wood Res on 29 Oct. In the second winter period numbers picked up as birds flocked and the number of counts in excess of 20 increased to 38. These included 307 at Pett Level on 7 Nov and 216 there on 12 Dec, 250 at Devil's Dyke on 20 Nov and 165 there on 12 Dec, a winter peak of 600 at Monkton (Chilgrove) on 21 Nov, 250 at Binderton on 30 Nov and, the same day, 100 at Colworth Down (Chilgrove).

During the season, 298 new birds were ringed by RBRG (including four pulli) plus 30 retraps for their second best year ever. Steyning RG at Strivens Reedbed ringed 73 new birds and trapped two from a previous year and ten new birds (including five young) at Cissbury North Scarp. Ringers at Ladywell (Coombes) ringed 31 new birds and trapped five from previous years.

At Mountfield, a male Chaffinch was seen on 3 Jun with pale warts on the right leg and another male (or the same?) on the 9th had pale warts on both legs but especially the left one. [JAH]

Brambling*Fringilla montifringilla*

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant. Schedule 1 species.

The approximate minimum monthly totals were as given in the table below. In the first winter period, numbers were significantly lower than in 2009, possibly due to the hard weather that had followed them from their breeding grounds.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr		Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	17	79	8	12		146	36	49
No. of sites	13	8	2	2		27	14	20*

*there were a further nine records with no count provided

Distribution was markedly westerly in the ratio 20:5. All records in January, except one, were for single individuals, but in February, with presumably a commencement of a return eastwards, there were three separate counts in the Chilgrove/West Dean Woods area of 20. The final records in April were of ten at West Dean Woods on the 4th and, finally, two at Belle Tout (Beachy Head) on the 20th.

The first autumn bird was logged at Pett Level on 2 Oct followed by seven at Hastings on the 7th. Numbers remained in single figures until 12 at Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) on the 17th, 60 at East Head (Chichester Hbr) on the 21st, which flew west calling in small parties, and 22 W over Hastings on the 24th. But to where did they then go? From 34 reports in October there were only 15 in November and all were for no more than two birds except for seven at Stump Bottom on 6 Nov and 10 at Pett Level on the 20th. One bird at Pett Level was heard singing on 7 Nov! Bramblings were only slightly more numerous in December due mainly to a monthly peak count at Hastings CP of 15 on the 19th and a monthly total at Pett Level of 15 with a peak of five on the 22nd. [JAH]

European Serin

Serinus serinus

Very scarce passage migrant; has bred. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern.

Two birds were recorded during spring. A female was heard calling at Hope Gap (Seaford Head) on the fairly early but not untypical date of 22 Mar (MRE, MR, RCS). It was watched briefly but well before flying off southwards and disappearing. A second bird, a probable female, was seen briefly on 23 May (DC, BK) in the vicinity of Horseshoe Plantation (Beachy Head) before flying out of sight not to be found again. [JAH]

Greenfinch

Carduelis chloris

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

Greenfinches were recorded in 611 tetrads across the county. Unfortunately, some 17% of records were for 'present only' birds, i.e. with no count. In the first winter period there were 31 counts in excess of 20, including 80 at Chesworth Fm (Horsham) on 1 Jan (and four further counts of 20+ in January), 30 at Coghurst Wood (Hastings) on 4 Jan and at Northlands (Warnham) on the 6th, 33 at Bexhill on 28 Jan, 75 at Lower Standean on 5 Feb, 33 at West Blachington (Hove) on the 12th and 30 at Pett Level on the 22nd.

During the BBS, a total of 556 birds was recorded from 111 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a peak count of 21 at Peacehaven on 17 Apr. Breeding was confirmed in 79 tetrads and was probable in a further 188. As with Chaffinch, there was a marked paucity of notes on territorial or breeding activity in the spring; the only two reports of nesting involved a nest with five eggs at Coombes (Shoreham) on 16 Apr and nest building at Climping on 21 Apr. There were 90 reports of recently fledged or downy young, the earliest of which were noted on 26 Apr at Littleton Down (Lavington), 29 Apr at Scobells Fm (Barcombe) and 12 May at Sandgate Park (Storrington) and

Partridge Green (Littleworth); the latest report was dated 26 Aug. Breeding surveys included: on the Norfolk estate east of the R Arun 36 pairs; at Pagham Hbr 40 (presumably territories/pairs); at Rye Hbr nine territories. Elsewhere, birds were reported to have bred at Amberley Wild Brooks, Rackham, Pulborough Brooks and Pett Level but there were no details.

Notable counts during the breeding season involved 20 counts in excess of 20 and included no more than a high of 40 at Chesworth Fm (Horsham) on 7 Jun. Other counts were of 35 at Telscombe on 17 Apr, 39 at Patcham (Brighton) on the 18th, 34 at Bishopstone GC on 22 Apr (and 30 on 3 Jun) and 31 at Pett Level on 5 Jun. In the two summer months after the breeding season there were no more than six counts above 20, but these included a peak of 60 at Byworth (Petworth) on 24 Aug. Other counts were of 31 at Black Down (Fernhurst) on 10 Jul, 30 at Pagham Hbr on the 25th and 35 at Warnham LNR on 8 Aug.

Numbers in the two autumn months showed only a small increase to 17 counts above 20 but numbers were still lower than should be expected. These included 46 at Pulborough Brooks on 21 Sep, the highest count for the period of 85 at Newhaven Tide Mills on 2 Oct (with 45 having been counted on 26 Sep), 60 at Pagham Hbr on 5 Oct and 70 at Rye Hbr on the 21st (and 50 on the 24th). During an extended migration watch at Hastings from 4 Oct to 16 Nov a total of 209 birds was recorded with a peak count of 90 E on 12 Oct.

In the second winter period numbers were still unremarkable with only ten counts in excess of 20: the highest count was 50 at Pagham Hbr on 4 Nov. Other notable counts in the circumstances were 30 at Rye Hbr on 7 Nov, 36 at Goring Gap on the 14th, 32 at Park Fm (Bognor) on the 23rd and 32 at Herons Ghyll (Ashdown Forest) on the last day of the year. An observer commented that numbers had dropped this winter due to the effects of the infectious disease trichomonosis on the species. The reduction in the minimum monthly numbers of Greenfinches shown in the following table may well be attributable at least partly to trichomonosis:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	1266	1177	749	2013	1334	1989	651	453	328	773	650	528
No. of records	282	259	316	607	486	512	234	124	84	91	155	166

This indicates that there was a marked drop in the number of birds recorded during July, at the end of the breeding season, when the population should be at its peak. Numbers remained low for the rest of the year and, for the second winter period in particular, suffered by comparison with those for the first winter, December's total being only 42% of January's.

A total of 229 new birds, plus 25 from a previous year, was ringed by RBRG. Steyning RG ringed 66 new birds (including two young) plus seven from a previous year at Strivens Reedbed and three new birds (two young) at Cissbury North Scarp. Ringers at Ladywell (Coombes) ringed 20 new birds (five young). [JAH]

Goldfinch

Carduelis carduelis

Probably fairly common resident, common summer visitor and passage migrant and fairly common winter visitor.

Goldfinches were recorded in 623 tetrads but some 16.5% of records were for 'present only' birds with no counts. In the first winter period there were 22 reports of numbers in excess of 20 including 140 at Pett Level on 1 Jan, 130 at Bewl Water on 21 Feb and 75 at Crow and Gate (Ashdown Forest) on 31 Jan. Some 40% of records for the period were of either one or two birds. Seawatchers at Climping Beach recorded 30 birds (with no further details) on 23 Feb.

In the spring, after birds had largely dispersed to breeding grounds, there were only five counts above 20; 50 were recorded at Chesworth Fm (Horsham) on 22 Mar, 27 at Slaugham on 3 Apr, 24 at East Grinstead on the 13th, 21 at Brightling on 12 Jun and 24 at Northlands (Warnham) on the 24th. During the BBS, a total of 414 birds was recorded from 100 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of 13 at West Worthing on 11 Apr. Breeding was confirmed in 64 tetrads and was probable in a further 181. The only reports of nesting were from South Malling on 2 Apr and Broadbridge Heath on the 5th while nest building was still ongoing at Arundel WWT on 29 Apr and 13 May. There were 78 records of recently fledged or downy young, the earliest being on 8 May at Bognor Regis and the latest on 5 Sep at Northlands. A few pairs bred at both Pett Level and Rye Hbr but there were no further details. A survey of the Norfolk Estate identified 65 individuals.

In the two summer months, post-breeding, there was an increase to 30 in the number of counts in excess of 20 with notable counts of 80 at Pagham Hbr on 24 Jul (and 60 on 4 Aug), 65 at Black Ditch (Poling) on 15 Aug, a peak monthly count of 130 at Pulborough Brooks on the 25th and 55 at Broadbridge Heath on the 30th. More large flocks were noted through September away from Pulborough Brooks with 100 at Pagham Hbr on the 8th, 64 at Newhaven Tide Mills on the 12th, 115 at Pett Level on the 18th and 800 at Burpham on the 25th. Eastwards passage at coastal sites was first noted at Widewater (Lancing) on 4 Oct when 300 E were noted there. The monthly totals at two of the principal coastal sites were as follows:

		Oct	Nov	Peak movement		Hrs watched peak days
Climping Beach	E	4680	540	1200	7 Oct	13½
	W	-	-			
Worthing Beach	E	1417	-	723	12 Oct	26½
	W	-	-			

During an extended migration watch at Hastings 9672 birds were recorded between 13 Sep and 16 Nov including high counts of 853 E on 7 Oct, 907 E on the 10th and a peak of 990 E on the 14th. However, assuming that the highest number seen at any coastal site from Climping to Hastings on any day was the minimum that day and that birds seen on subsequent days were different, at least 6560 birds were recorded migrating eastwards during October. During the month there were some 40 records of counts greater than 50 of which all but two were at coastal or near coastal sites; the exceptions were 100 at Fletching on the 9th and 60 at Steep Down (Lancing) on the 12th. Notable counts from other inland sites included 50 at Lavington on the 5th and at High Cross Fm (Uckfield) on the 12th.

In the second winter period, movements eastwards were still being recorded at Climping Beach during November, but in decreasing numbers, and counts in excess of 30 were recorded at a number of other coastal sites. From inland sites, however, there were over 60 counts in double figures, the highest of which was 150 at The Burgh (Burpham) on 28 Nov. There was a noticeable paucity of behavioural notes throughout the year.

During the season, the RBRG ringed 529 new birds plus 13 from previous years and two controls. Steyning RG at Strivens Reedbed ringed 190 new birds plus 17 from a previous year and at Ladywell (Coombes) seven new birds were ringed. [JAH]

Siskin*Carduelis spinus*

Common winter visitor and passage migrant; very scarce breeder.

Siskins were recorded in 177 tetrads through the year. In the first winter period they were found in 73 tetrads. There were 40 records of double figure counts and ten of counts of 50 or more including 200 at Chesworth Fm (Horsham) on 25 Jan and 1 Feb, 100 at Bewl Water on 17 Jan and 100 also at Burton Park (Duncton) on 7 Feb. A pair was observed displaying on 25 Feb at Southwater CP.

During the spring Siskins were noted in 35 tetrads and 80% of the counts were of ones or twos; the highest counts were 20 at Vinehall (Mountfield) on 27 Mar, 13 at Tilgate Forest (Crawley) on 14 Apr and ten at Black Down (Fernhurst) on 2 May. Breeding was considered probable at 11 sites; two pairs were reported from Lavington Common on 1 Jun. There were no other details of territorial or probable breeding behaviour. During the BBS, a total of 21 birds was recorded from three of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with the highest count the 13 at Tilgate Forest.

There were few records for the summer months, the only notable counts being 16 at Iping Common on 17 Jul and ten at Wych Cross (Ashdown Forest) on 26 Aug. However, numbers began to pick up from late September: there were counts of 35 at Pett Level on the 25th and at Cissbury Ring on the 27th and 16 at Chelwood Common (Daneshill) on the 30th. During an extended migration watch at Hastings from 17 Sep to 16 Nov a total of 1957 Siskins was recorded with a highest count of 255 on 7 Oct. At Climping Beach the total count for the month was 447 with a maximum of 170 E also on 7 Oct. Elsewhere there were six counts of 50 or more including 50 at Brighton Wild Park on 4 Oct, mostly flying east, 100 at Pett Level on the 5th, 130 at Rye Hbr on the 11th and 50 at Birling Gap on the 17th. In addition, there were a further 35 records in double figures.

During the second winter period Siskins were recorded in 78 tetrads. There were 49 counts of ones or twos, nine in excess of 50 and a further 22 in double figures. The highest counts were 70 at Chesworth Fm on 18 Nov, 70 at Weir Wood Res on 7 Dec, 70 at Redgate Mill Fm (Rotherfield) on 17 Dec, 150 (the highest count for the period) at Brightling Hall on 7 Dec and 130 at Bells Yew Green on 28 Dec. Coastal movements noted at Climping Beach in November totalled 73 with a peak count of 20 on 1 Nov, but only two birds were recorded in December.

During the season, only 17 Siskins were ringed by RBRG. [JAH]

Linnet*Carduelis cannabina*

Common but decreasing resident and partial migrant. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

In the first winter period there were some 65 reports in double figures, including 11 of 100 or more divided equally between West and East Sussex. The largest concentration was 1000 at the Slipe Field (Pagham Hbr) on 9 Jan. Other substantial counts involved 800 at Pett Level on 11 Jan, 300 at Coombes (Shoreham) on 13 Jan, 250 at The Burgh (Burpham) on 6 Feb, 140 at Thorney Island (Chichester Hbr) on 4 Jan, 130 at Bewl Water on 17 Jan and 110 at Rackham on 23 Jan. The only evidence of coastal movements during the period was 65 W at Worthing Beach on 6 Jan.

In spring, with birds having largely returned to their breeding grounds and more birders in the field, in addition to 100 counts in double figures there were three treble figure counts: 100 at the Slipe Field on 26 Mar, 100 at Thorney Island on 8 Apr and 120 at Rye Hbr on 22 May. Signs of spring migration were limited. Monthly totals for April at the principal seawatching sites (with

hours watched in parentheses) included 27 N at Selsey Bill (180 hrs), including a peak count of 11 on 17 Apr, 43 E at Worthing Beach (69 hrs), including a peak of 11 on 22 Apr, and 7 N and 6 W at Splash Point (95 hrs).

During the BBS, a total of 340 birds was recorded from 44 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a peak count of 56 at Westfield on 10 Apr. Excluding Ashdown Forest but including the other Sussex Heathlands, breeding was confirmed in 29 tetrads and was probable in a further 139. An analysis of records for Ashdown Forest indicated that there were 76 territories or pairs. There was no record of the earliest date for nest building. Only 15 reports (all from Ashdown Forest) mentioned juveniles, from the first on 21 Apr to the last on 28 Aug. A survey of the Norfolk Estate east of the R Arun between 20 May and 9 Jul identified 174 individuals.

During the summer months, June to August, there were c.400 records from sites outside Ashdown Forest of which only c.80 were in double figures and only five in excess of 50; there were 100 at The Severals (Church Norton) on 31 Jul and also at the nearby shingle spit on 15 Aug.

In the autumn numbers increased significantly, particularly in October. Counts of 50 or more, of which there were 34, included 150 at Picker's Hill (Balsdean) on 27 Sep, 300 at Cissbury Ring on 4 Oct and then 250 at each of Rye Hbr on the 13th, the Slipe Field on the 15th and Climping Beach on the 18th. A peak count of 234 at Hastings on 7 Oct occurred during an extended migration watch from 16 Sep to 14 Nov during which a total of 851 birds was recorded. That many birds were on the move during October was illustrated by a monthly total at Worthing Beach of 130 E (in 25½ hrs watching) with a peak of 56 on the 2nd while at Climping Beach the total was 685 (in 13½ hrs) with a peak of 250 on the 18th. Only 12 birds were ringed by RBRG during the season.

In the second winter period, 34 reports involving double figure counts included 80 at Stump Bottom (Steyning) on 10 Nov, 100 at Pett Level on 17 Dec, 300 at Hastings CP in a bird crop field and, finally, 350 at Steep Down (Lancing) on 31 Dec feeding on stubble. [JAH]

Twite

Carduelis flavirostris

Very scarce winter visitor. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

Although only two birds were recorded this was a pleasant find after a gap of six years since 2005. Two birds were found at Bracklesham Bay on 16 Oct (AH) one of which carried blue above pink rings on the right leg having been ringed as a fledgling on Rishworth Moor (West Yorkshire) earlier in the year on 2 Jun 2010. These birds were last seen on the 19th. One bird, which might have been one of the above two (any ring was not noticed), was seen in the same area associating with Linnets on the 18th (DAN). [JAH]

Lesser Redpoll

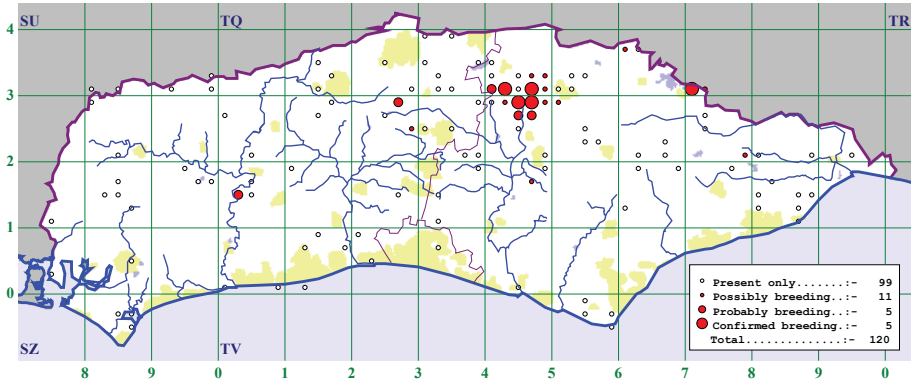
Carduelis cabaret

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

This species was recorded from 125 tetrads split 47:78 between West and East Sussex. In the first winter period there were 13 counts in double figures including the highest counts of 100 at Chesworth Fm (Horsham) on 1 Feb and 46 at Duddleswell (Ashdown Forest) on 3 Feb.

During the spring and summer months Lesser Redpolls were recorded at 23 sites. The highest counts, away from Ashdown Forest, were 20 at Leechpool and Owlbeech Woods (Horsham) on 4 Apr and six at Warnham LNR on 27 Mar. On Ashdown Forest, the species was recorded on 67

days between 22 Mar and 30 Jun; there were at least six double figure counts including 15 at the Isle of Thorns on 6 Apr, 16 at Old Lodge on the 12th, ten at Kings Standing on the 13th and 12 at West Chase on the 16th.



Away from Ashdown Forest, breeding was confirmed at only two sites and was probable at only one: at Flimwell (Ticehurst) fledged young were recorded on 3 Jun and at Leechpool and Owlbeech Woods a newly fledged family was recorded on the 4th; at Waltham Brooks on 23 Apr a bird was noted in song flight. On Ashdown Forest, 41 pairs or territories were identified. Obviously, Ashdown Forest is the species' stronghold in Sussex. During the BBS, the species was encountered in only one of the 139 1-km squares surveyed; one bird was noted in Chichester on 17 Apr, a much poorer result than in 2009 when eight were recorded in four 1-km squares.

During the late summer into autumn period the species was recorded at 25 sites away from Ashdown Forest with 14 counts in double figures including 576 at Pett Level on 24 Oct, 80 at Whitbread Hollow (Beachy Head) on the 24th, 80 at Chelwood Common (Danehill) on the 29th and 90 at Poundgate (Crowborough) on the 31st. On Ashdown Forest, Lesser Redpolls were recorded on 56 days between 1 Jul and 31 Oct with at least 15 counts in double figures including 200 at the Reservoir on 28 Oct and 250 at Braberry Hatch on 29 Oct. During an extended migration watch at Hastings a total of 510 birds was recorded between 24 Sep and 16 Nov with a highest count of 106 on 1 Nov. There was no marked eastwards migration during the autumn. In October there were only occasional reports of small numbers from two sites: at Climping Beach a total of 22 E was recorded on five dates with a highest count of 12 on the 25th; at Worthing Beach only four were noted on the 25th; and at Beachy Head 20 W were noted on the 24th but 20 E on the 31st (were they the same birds re-orientating?). In November the only movement recorded was from Climping Beach where a total of 6 E included a high of three on the 10th.

In the second winter period there were 44 double figure counts, including seven of 50 or more; the highest counts were 1197 at Pett Level on 13 Nov and 200 at Kings Standing (Ashdown Forest) on 7 Nov.

The Steyning RG ringed 12 new birds, including eight young, while the RBRG had a record year by ringed no less than 2175 birds including two retraps and 20 controls.

As a species recently elevated to the red list of high conservation concern it is important that all sightings are recorded and submitted, particularly if there is evidence of territorial or breeding activity, with at least a 4-figure and preferably a 6-figure grid reference. [JAH]

Common Redpoll*Carduelis flammea**Rare winter visitor.*

An influx of this rare visitor from Fenno-Scandia resulted in a total of 24 being recorded in the east of the county during October and November.

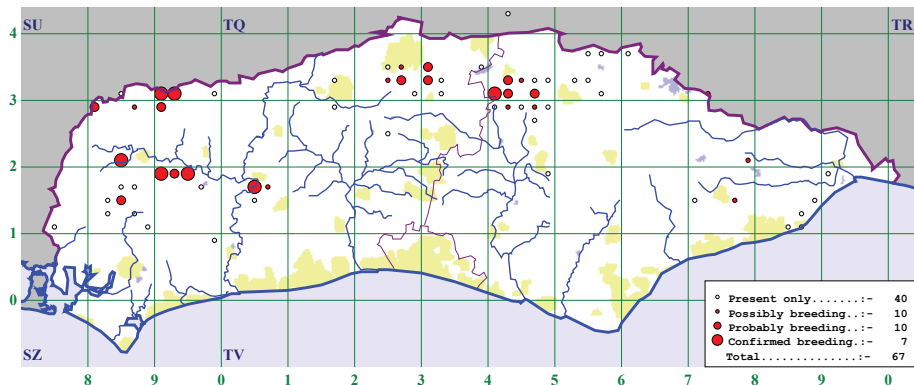
The first, an adult, was trapped at Pett Level on 25 Oct (RBRG). A further 23 were then trapped in the period 28 Oct to 24 Nov, a record for the site. The peak occurred on 20 Nov when six were trapped. There have only been eight other Sussex records this century with six in 2006 and two in 2009.

It will be noted that all the birds recorded this year were trapped for ringing. In the field it can be difficult to separate this species from Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis cabaret* resident in Britain. For that reason detailed and precise descriptions (and preferably photographs) will normally be required by the Records Committee to verify identification. [DHH]

Common Crossbill*Loxia curvirostra*

Irruptive species, usually scarce visitor but fairly common in some years. Very scarce breeder in some years.

Numbers reported for this early breeding species during the first four months of the year showed a further significant increase over the previous year. Sightings of 20 or more birds were reported on 19 occasions from 13 tetrads. However, the most notable record was of an exceptional 180 birds at Black Down (Fernhurst) on 2 May, including a mix of males, females and juveniles.



Breeding was confirmed at seven tetrads (only one in 2009) and was probable at a further 11. Four pairs or territories were identified on Ashdown Forest. Adults were carrying food for young on Ashdown Forest on 28 Mar and a female was feeding fledged young at Wiggonholt Common (Pulborough Brooks) on 5 Apr. In May fledged young were also recorded at Ambersham Common on the 3rd, at Lavington Plantation on the 15th, at Iping Common on the 16th and at Black Down on the 23rd. During the BBS, a total of four was recorded from two of the 139 1-km squares surveyed.

A total of 30 was recorded on four dates between 18 Sep and 21 Oct from autumn migration counts in the Hastings area. The only other double figure counts in the second half of the year

were 15 at Wakehurst Place on 6 Jul, 15 at Black Down on 21 Sep and 12 at Rewell Wood (Arundel) on 13 Nov. [PJP]

Bullfinch

Pyrrhula pyrrhula

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

This species was recorded in some 414 tetrads from right across the county, demonstrating its widespread status. During the first winter period the highest counts were 11 at Weir Wood Res on 19 Feb and nine at Pett Level on 14 Jan and also at Ringles Cross (Uckfield) on 26 Jan. Some 70% of records were of ones or twos and less than 10% were of five or more.

Breeding was confirmed in 25 tetrads, mostly (70%) involving sightings of juveniles with adults, and was probable in a further 104. During the BBS, a total of 55 was recorded in 25 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, slightly down from 2009 (32/135) and 2008 (33/136), with a highest count of six at Bayham on 13 Jun. During the second half-year, the largest count was of 20 at Bewl Water on 19 Dec. Again, 74% of records were of ones or twos. [PJP]



Bullfinch, Pulborough Brooks, June 2010 (Mick Davis)

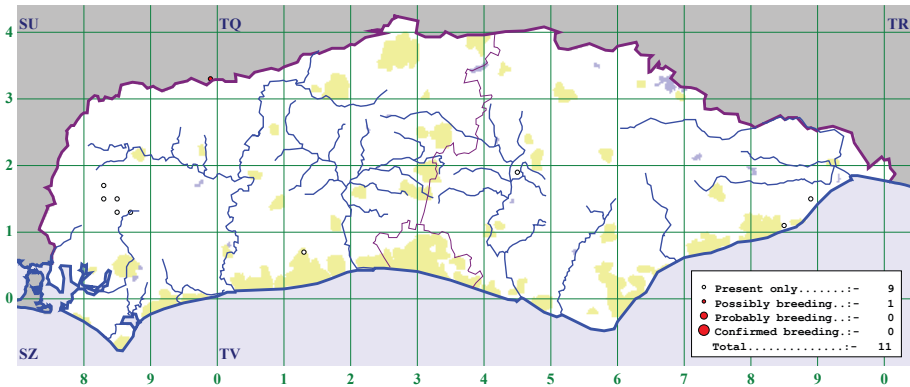
Hawfinch

Coccothraustes coccothraustes

Scarce or possibly very scarce breeding resident and very scarce passage migrant. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

Compared with 2009, there was a significant reduction in the number of reports: there were only 24 (*cf.*44) day-sightings from six (*cf.*13) localities, one of which, the extensive area of Chilgrove/West Dean Woods, included parts of five tetrads. Indeed, 70% of all sightings

(excluding duplicates) came from this latter area, which is obviously the major stronghold of the species in Sussex, and 66% were for the first winter period. Numbers at West Dean Woods fluctuated from five on 2 Jan through six on the 31st to a highest count of 12 on 22 Feb.



There were no reports of even possible breeding and no other reports from any of the sites listed for 2009, with the exception of Hastings.

Following isolated summer sightings of one at Shortland Copse (Plaistow) on 27 Jun and three at Pett Level on 16 Aug, the next report was not until October. During the autumn and second winter period three individual sightings were reported from Hastings between 2 Oct and 1 Nov, one was reported from High Salvington (Worthing) on 7 Oct, the highest count of the period was four at West Dean Woods on 14 Nov and the final record was one at Isfield churchyard on 28 Dec.

As one of the more interesting and scarce birds in Sussex, and of high conservation concern, it is regretted that there were relatively so few reports. All sightings should be reported with, if possible, at least a 4-figure and preferably a 6-figure grid reference, especially if territorial behaviour or evidence of breeding is observed. [JAH]

Snow Bunting

Plectrophenax nivalis

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber listed species of medium conservation concern. Schedule 1 species.

After two years with only seven birds seen in each, 2010 returned to higher levels including several inland sightings. In the first winter period only two were reported: at Thorney Island (Chichester Hbr) on 3 Jan and at The Midrips on 14 Feb.

In the autumn, the first sighting was at East Head (Chichester Hbr) on 8 Oct followed by one inland on the Downs at Kithurst Hill on the 13th. The East Head bird was seen again on the 16th and 18th and the Kithurst bird from the 21st to 23rd while in the east of the county there was one at Pett Level on the 17th and 19th. Migration watchers at various Hastings locations between 1 Aug and 16 Nov recorded only one bird, on 3 Nov.

In the second winter period, the cold and snow, which started in the last week of November and continued into December, produced many more sightings, some against an appropriately snowy background. Prior to the onset of this cold period, however, a single bird was recorded at

Beeding Hill, near Shoreham from 3 to 10 Nov. Elsewhere, singles were seen at East Wittering on the 13th and at East Head on the 21st and two in fields to the west of Selsey on the 13th to 14th. The only sighting at this time from the east of the county was of one on the sea wall at Cliff End (Pett) on the 20th and 21st. During the cold and snowy period up to three were recorded at Camber Sands on 7 and 8 Dec. However, the highlight of the year, albeit fleeting, occurred on 18 Dec. A lucky observer (CN) reported “At about 11.10 a flock of 28 Snow Buntings flew low over fields to the south of Runcton heading south to south east... A very nice sight.” Until the early 1970s large flocks were a regular occurrence, particularly on the coast in the east of the county, but this is certainly much the largest flock reported in Sussex for many years. Later, one was seen at Hastings CP on the 19th, two in fields west of Selsey on the 22nd, one at East Head again on the 26th, two on the seawall at Prinsted from the 29th into 2011 and, finally, one at The Midrips on the 31st. [ACG]



Snow Bunting, Kithurst Hill, October 2010 (Chris Brown)

Lapland Bunting

Calcarius lapponicus

Very scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

An exceptional and early influx into Britain occurred towards the end of August and continued throughout September. Good numbers were recorded at many sites throughout Britain with over 150 on both South Uist, Outer Hebrides and Fair Isle (Shetland) (*Birding World* 23). Closer to home, Dungeness Bird Observatory recorded about 100 between early September and the end of the year.

In Sussex, 78 were reported involving an estimated minimum of 69 birds. The first birds arrived on 12 Sep with four at Hastings CP and one at Beachy Head. The last record for the year was of two at Selsey Bill on 21 Dec.

The greatest numbers were recorded in the east of the county due largely to the Hastings Autumn Migration Watch at Hastings CP. Between 12 Sep and 16 Nov (when the watch ended) birds were observed coming in off the sea or moving along the coast on 15 dates and totalled 32 with a peak count of eight on 7 Oct. In addition, a total of ten flew over East Guldeford Levels during an Atlas survey on 22 Oct.

At Beachy Head a minimum of 12 birds moved through between 12 Sep and 9 Oct with a maximum of five on 26 Sep. One to two birds were also recorded at Seaford Head on four dates in September. Numbers were considerably lower in the west of the county with 1-2 recorded at various scattered coastal locations between West Wittering and Climping Beach on seven dates from 15 Oct to 21 Dec. The only record of a bird any distance from the coast was of one at Devil's Dyke on 13 Sep.

The estimated minimum totals in three areas of the county in 10-day periods were as follows:

	September		October			November			December		
	12-21	22-01	02-11	12-21	22-31	1-10	11-20	21-30	1-10	11-20	21-30
Climping – West Wittering	-	-	-	2	1	1	1	-	1	1	1
Beachy Head – Seaford Head	9	7	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hastings - Rye area	6	7	-	1	13	11	5	-	-	-	-

Prior to this year there had been only seven records since 2000. The last major influx was in 1986/87 when 38 birds were recorded. The only year with numbers comparable to those of 2010 was back in 1956 when 60-80 were seen. [DHH]

Yellowhammer

Emberiza citrinella

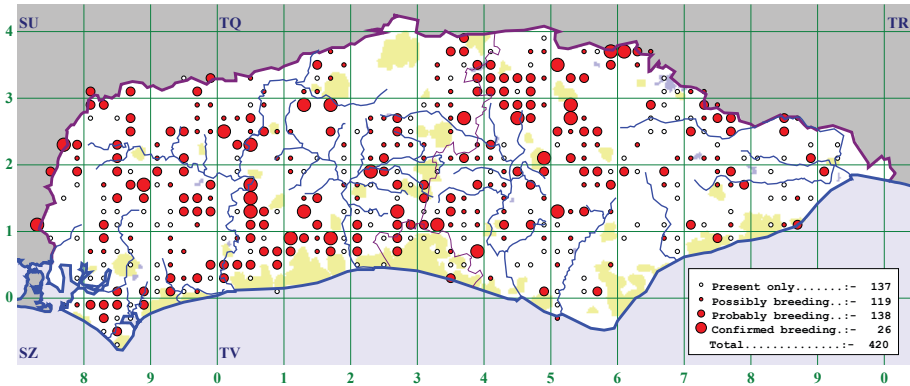
Fairly common resident. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

Yellowhammers were recorded in 420 tetrads during the year. In the first winter period there were six flocks of 50 and above with 90 on stubble in deep snow at Beeding Hill on 10 Jan and 90 there on 3 Feb. During 2-hr Atlas TTV winter counts only 79 Yellowhammers were found in 32 tetrads. The cold weather clearly led to a change in habits as observers commented on the lack of Yellowhammers, while one in a garden at Littleworth (Partridge Green) on 18 Jan was the first seen there and at Fishbourne a count of 20 the following day was regarded as unusually high. Of 60 records received from Ashdown Forest all but two were of one or two birds with the highest count being seven.

Song was first reported on 15 Jan in Leechpool and Owlbeech Woods (Horsham). At High Cross Fm (Uckfield) a flock of 20 on 17 Feb steadily increased to 43 by 1 Mar, and 40 were also noted there on 3 Apr. Flocks were noted at various other sites, the latest being 12 at Round Hill (Devils Dyke) on 26 Apr and 13 on ploughed game cover at Clapham Wood (Patching) three days later.

Breeding was confirmed in 27 tetrads and probable in a further 137. The first report of nesting activity was on 14 Apr at Chesworth Fm (Horsham) and the earliest report of adults carrying food was at Middle Heath (Horsham) on 3 Jun. During the BBS a total of 163 was recorded from 65 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, continuing the slight increase noted in 2009, with a highest count of 16 at Heyshott on 20 Jun. An estimated 41 breeding pairs were found during the annual Wealden Heaths Breeding Bird Survey with a maximum of six on Ambersham Common. At least 76 territories were located on Ashdown Forest. In the breeding season Atlas TTV surveys nine tetrads held ten or more Yellowhammers, the highest count being 18 in TQ41T. On the Norfolk

Estate, east of the R Arun, an estimated 31 pairs bred, up from 17 the previous year. A minimum 17 pairs held territory at South End Fm (Sidlesham Common) and eight at Pagham Hbr. Although reports from the breeding season are mixed they seem overall to indicate a slight increase in numbers.



The first indication of autumn flocks was 20 at Kingston (Lewes) on 12 Sep and 41 at Round Hill (Devils Dyke) on 17 Sep. Six flying high east at Hastings on 9 Oct and 4 W and 2 N on 24 Oct may indicate passage.

In the second winter period reports were received from c.50 sites, only six of which were to the east of the R Cuckmere. Double figure counts were received from six sites with 100 at Stump Bottom (Steyning) on 6 Nov, 80 at Old Erringham Fm (Shoreham) two days later, at least 100 at nearby Beeding Hill the next day increasing to at least 150 on 19 Nov and, on 12 Dec, 90 at Round Hill (Devils Dyke). These flocks are much larger than in previous years but as usual the Yellowhammer seems to be scarce in the far east of the county during this period. [ACG]

Ortolan Bunting

Emberiza hortulana

Very scarce, mainly autumn, visitor.

An influx into Britain in September resulted in some 40 birds being recorded from Shetland to Scilly (*Birding World* 23). The only one to reach Sussex was at Belle Tout (Beachy Head) on 11 and 12 Sep (DC, BK *et al.*). The bird remained fairly elusive on the 11th but was more obliging the following day and was enjoyed by a number of observers. This was only the seventh Sussex record since the turn of the century and the first since 2003. Three of those records have been in spring and four in autumn. [DHH]

Little Bunting

Emberiza pusilla

Rare vagrant.

One visited a bird feeding station in an Eastbourne garden on a number of occasions between 19 and 21 Oct (MJ). It was photographed. This is the fourteenth record for Sussex but only the sixth since the turn of the century. [DHH]



Ortolan Bunting, Beachy Head, September 2010 (Jacob Everitt)

Reed Bunting

Emberiza schoeniclus

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

Reed Buntings were recorded as present from 215 tetrads. During the first winter period the largest flocks were at Pett Level, rising from 120 on 7 Jan to 210 on 24 Jan and then reducing to 40 on 22 Feb. Elsewhere a flock of 70 at Pagham on 16 Jan declined to 20 on 4 Mar. A flock present at Chesworth Fm (Horsham) held 30 on 4 Jan reducing to 15 on 15 Jan. On 11 Feb 40 Reed Buntings were amongst a mixed bunting flock at Ashcombe Bottom (Lewes). Aside from 15 feeding on purple moorgrass at Braberry Hatch and Lakes (Chelwood) on 8 Jan, very small numbers were reported from Ashdown Forest. Small numbers were reported throughout the county in gardens and amongst large mixed farmland flocks.

During the breeding season, breeding was confirmed in 21 tetrads and was probable in a further 50. During the BBS, a total of 163 was recorded from 65 of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, a slight increase from the previous year, with a highest count of 16 at Heyshott on 20 Jun. A minimum of 17 territories was identified on Ashdown Forest. At Rye Hbr 54 pairs were mapped and at Pagham Hbr 25 breeding pairs were counted. Other larger counts were 20 at Lewes Brooks on 7 Apr, 16 at Pevensey Castle on 14 Jun and 17 at Barn Fm (East Guldeford) on 13 May. Records away from usual Reed Bunting haunts include small numbers regularly visiting a garden in Keymer throughout April and May.

During the autumn, almost 350 Reed Buntings were counted at Hastings between 12 Sep and 16 Nov during an extended migration watch, including 19 W on 20 Sep and 34 W on 2 Oct. Observers at Brighton Wild Park reported a poor autumn migration with only two on 24 Sep and four on 4 Oct. Significant numbers began to appear at Pett Level with 47 on 24 Sep with a peak

of 113 on 7 Nov. Later, other larger flocks were 60 at Pagham Hbr on 16 Dec, 38 at West Chase (Ashdown Forest) on 22 Dec and at least 30 and possibly 50 with Yellowhammers on barley stubble at Golden Cross (Herstmonceux).

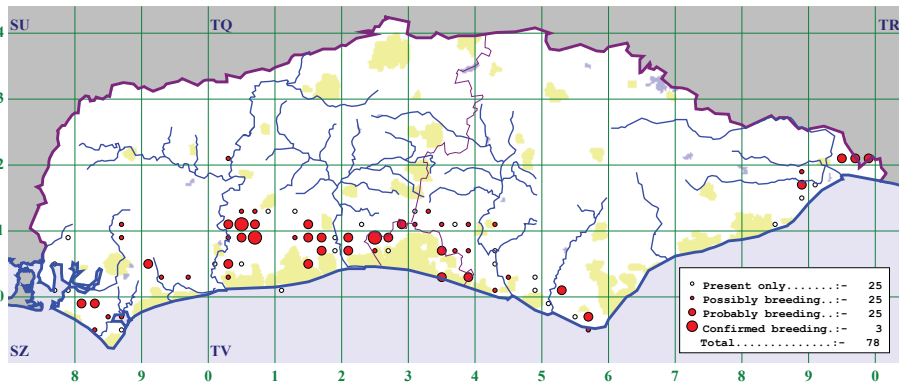
The Rye Bay RG had their third best ever year with this species: 1279 full grown birds were ringed, including 146 retraps from previous years and three controls. The Steyning RG handled 157 Reed Buntings involving 131 new birds, 26 from previous years and 31 juveniles at Strivens Reedbed with a maximum of 31 on 20 Feb. [ACG]

Corn Bunting

Emberiza calandra

Fairly common but decreasing resident. Red listed species of high conservation concern.

The number of records received continues to decline. In 2010 there were 190 records from 70 tetrads compared with 250 records from 79 tetrads in the previous year. However, in the first winter period eleven double figure flocks were reported, the largest being 400 in deep snow in a mixed flock at Beeding Hill on 10 Jan, but only 30 were present at this site on 3 Feb. On 17 Jan, 15 were at Amberley Mount and 20, probably the same flock, nearby at The Burgh. Four days later, observers in the Shoreham area reported 20 between the R Adur and the A24, 80 in the early morning at Truleigh Hill and later, in February, a flock of 60 were noted at Old Erringham Fm on the 9th. Elsewhere, 34, including three singing males, were noted in the Round Hill area between Hove and Devils Dyke on 21 Jan. In the east of the county, 20 Corn Buntings were amongst a mixed bunting flock at Ashcombe Bottom (Lewes) on 11 Jan. The only record at Rodmell Brooks, which held large numbers in 2009, was of three on 31 Jan. Otherwise there were no reports from east of the R Ouse except one in the lower Cuckmere valley on 20 Mar and 30 at Winchelsea on 30 Mar, both of which could indicate passage.



In the spring, an unusual sighting was one at Goring-by-Sea on 24 Apr, also possibly indicative of passage. During the breeding season 64 singing males were counted on the Norfolk Estate east of the R Arun between Wepham and Rackham, an increase from 45 in 2009 and 54 the previous year. As was described at the SOS Conference in January 2011, the management of this estate to increase numbers of Grey Partridge has benefitted other forms of wildlife, not least the Corn Bunting, so it is pleasing to report this increase.

During the BBS, a total of ten was recorded from five of the 139 1-km squares surveyed, with a highest count of five at Oving on 22 Jun, compared with totals of 16 in 2009 and eight in 2008.

Breeding was confirmed in three tetrads and possible or probable in a further 50. Small numbers continue to be found north of Chichester and around the western harbours with nine in a tetrad at Somerley (East Wittering), a pleasing find. Apart from the five seen at Oving on 22 Jun, there were small numbers elsewhere on the western coastal plain extending east to Worthing where song and display flight was noted on 28 May. Aside from the Norfolk Estate, there were fewer records than usual between the R Arun and the R Adur with a maximum of six seen at fewer than ten sites. Further east along the Downs there were records of small numbers at almost 30 sites with a maximum of ten at Cockroost Hill (Fulking) on 24 Apr and again on 12 Jun when young birds were present. East of Eastbourne, Corn Buntings were only reported from five sites with four on the extreme eastern levels holding a maximum of 11 on 8 Jun.

During the post-breeding period small numbers continued to be reported from the same areas but the largest flocks were 20 on 3 Jul and 15 on 17 Jul at The Burgh (Burpham) on the Norfolk Estate. In the second winter period double figure flocks occurred at eight sites, with a flock at Stump Bottom (Steining) reaching 50 on 6 Nov, a flock of 11 at Round Hill (Hove) on 17 Sep rising to 36 including two singing on 12 Dec, and 20 at Denton Hill (Alfriston) on 17 Oct. The Beeding Hill area had a maximum of 25 on 19 Nov and there were 25 on 23 Nov at East Guldeford Level. [ACG]

Blackpoll Warbler

Dendroica striata

Very rare vagrant.

A first winter bird trapped at Pett Level on 15 Oct (RBRG) was the second Sussex record of this New World warbler (RBRG). The previous county record was a well-watched bird at Bewl Water from 10 to 21 Dec 1994.

The species breeds widely in Alaska, throughout Canada and also in the north-eastern United States. In autumn it migrates through the eastern USA to winter in north-eastern South America.

Although there have been 41 previous records in Britain, the Sussex bird was the only British record in 2010. The record has been accepted by the BBRC. [DHH]

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, but not those clearly in 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.

The following escaped or feral birds, other than those Category C species in the main list, were recorded in the county in 2010 (unless stated otherwise). It should be noted that the identity of these birds is largely unchecked. ***In order to track records, particularly those involving wildfowl which are prone to wander between sites, observers are reminded to include the age, sex and where appropriate colour morph of individuals when submitting records.*** A list of useful references can be found in the SxBR 62 (2009). List compiled by John Hobson unless indicated otherwise.

Black Swan

Cygnus atratus

Common resident throughout much of Australia and New Zealand. Commonly kept in wildfowl collections and on ornamental lakes. Full winged birds are liable to wander. Has bred.

Two were recorded at either Cowdray Park GC (Midhurst) or nearby Benbow Lake on various dates from 25 Jan to 10 Jun and probably bred. A lone bird was recorded in Pagham Hbr on 20 Sep and also at various sites on various dates in Chichester Hbr from 30 Sep to 9 Dec. The largest collection was six at West Ashling on 27 Apr and 21 Jun when fledged young were recorded. In East Sussex, the species was present at Hellingly on 4 Dec.

Swan Goose

Anser cygnoides

Breeds in southern Siberia from the R Ob eastwards to Kamchatka including northern Mongolia and Sakhalin. Migratory within the Asiatic continent but not in the extreme north. Winters in north-east China and in Japan on Hokkaido and Honshu. Has been domesticated for at least 2000 years and, in this form, is known as the Chinese Goose; its body shape changes, it stands upright, it becomes too heavy to fly and the bill shortens and acquires a knob similar to that of a Mute Swan. Often found in wildfowl collections.

One was recorded at Lewes Brooks on 21 Feb and another at West Ashling on 27 Apr and 21 Jun. It was not stated if these birds were of the domesticated or wild forms.

Bar-headed Goose

Anser indicus

Breeds in central Asia; migrates south to northern India for winter. Commonly kept in wildfowl collections. Free flying individuals are liable to wander.

One bird was recorded at three sites in Eastbourne on 15 Feb and 15 Mar, mingling with Canada Geese. In April, one was seen in the Henfield Levels area on the 5th and 7th with Greylag Geese, another was seen flying with Canada Geese over Charleston Reedbed on the 8th and one

was seen at Sidlesham Ferry Pool on the 11th. At Pulborough Brooks, one was present from 21 Nov to 10 Dec. It is possible that all these sightings were of the same wandering individual.

Snow Goose

Anser caerulescens

Breeds in arctic North America, winters in southern USA and Mexico. Presumed vagrants often occur in the UK in winter, usually in association with other arctic breeding geese, but are generally outnumbered by escapes and feral birds. There has been no accepted record of a wild bird in Sussex.

A single bird was recorded at Bewl Water on 13 Jan. The next record was of two at Weir Wood Res on 9 Apr followed by two at Pulborough Brooks the next day, which were probably the same two. They were recorded frequently until 14 May, were often feeding with Canada and Greylag Geese and were described as full winged white morphs. No more were recorded until 1 Sep when one was at Pulborough Brooks and the final record was of one at Pett level on 21 Oct.

Ruddy Shelduck

Tadorna ferruginea

Breeds from Turkey across central Asia, generally wintering further south. There are isolated populations in North Africa. Controversially, no officially acceptable British records since 1940 but seems certain that some late summer influxes originate from E. Europe (British Birds 95:398-99).

One was at Barcombe Res on 18 Jul and again on 15 Aug. One at Pilsey Sands (Chichester Hbr) with Brent Geese on 2-3 Oct was the first in a run of sightings in the western harbours. Two were at Pagham Hbr from 13-20 Nov, and again on 27 Nov, although there was some suggestion that they were unusually marked; there are some rather similar species held in collections, such as South African Shelduck, and hybrids do occur. A definite Ruddy Shelduck with Brent Geese at West Wittering on 16 and 24 Nov, at Earnley on 23 Dec and at the North Wall (Pagham Hbr) on 27 Dec was almost certainly the Thorney bird which also ventured into Hampshire after its departure. [AT]

Paradise Shelduck

Tadorna variegata

Very common resident in New Zealand.

A single bird was recorded at Pulborough Brooks on 23 Aug and again on 11 Oct. [JAH]

Muscovy Duck

Cairina moschata

Locally common resident in forest lakes of Central and South America. Widespread in its domesticated form.

One was at Widewater (Lancing) on 8 Apr. Four were recorded at Swanbourne Lake (Arundel) on 8 Oct.

Australian Shoveler*Anas rhynchotis*

A rare species confined to Australia and Tasmania where it has never been numerous; usually unobtrusive and wary preferring thick cover and densely vegetated swamps.

A male was recorded at Brooklands (Worthing) on 9 Jan and, presumably the same bird, on 3 Apr.

Red-tailed Hawk*Buteo jamaicensis*

Breeds commonly throughout much of North America and the Caribbean; some move south to winter in Central America. Possibly the most commonly kept Buteo in captivity but observers should be aware of the occasional pale, rufous-tailed Common Buzzard.

A bird was recorded during the BBS in the Cocking area on 6 May and on 12 and 18 Jun for the third year at this site; obviously a falconer's bird.

Golden Eagle*Aquila chrysaetos*

Mainly resident in Europe, North Africa, northern and central Asia and northern North America. The closest breeding population to Sussex is in the Lake District.

The adult which has been recorded in East Sussex during 2008 (SxBR 61:219) and 2009 (SxBR 62:215) was again seen near Ashburnham Place on several dates during 2010. [MJC]

Golden Pheasant*Chrysolophus pictus*

Very scarce introduced resident.

The only record was of one, unsexed, in woods above and west of Birling Gap (Beachy Head) on 29 Aug.

Indian Peafowl*Pavo cristatus*

Wild birds are restricted to the Indian subcontinent. A traditional favourite in ornamental gardens.

Singles were noted at West Ashling on 27 Apr and 1 Jun, at Elmers Marsh on 19 May, at Palehouse Common (Uckfield) on 9 Apr and 1 Jun, at Red House Common (Chailey) on 12 Jun, at Chesworth Fm (Horsham) on the 14th and at Lodsworth on 20 Jul. Four were seen in Angmering Park on 14 Jul.

Helmeted Guineafowl*Numida meleagris*

Common resident throughout much of Africa. Kept domestically elsewhere.

This species was recorded at nine different sites, all but one record being in the first half of the year and in West Sussex. The only report from East Sussex was that birds were present at Catsfield on 17 Feb. The highest count was nine at Upwaltham Hill on 25 Feb. Three were seen on various dates from 25 Feb to 20 May at Applesham (Coombes). Twos were at Chilgrove on

28 Mar, Sutton End on 11 Apr, Elmers Marsh on 15 May and at Freshfield (Scaynes Hill) on 11 May but singly there on 25 Jun and 13 Dec. A report of two at Great Noven Fm (Chailey) on 24 Jun stated that fledged young were present, and one was heard at Plumpton Blackcap on 25 and 29 Jun. [JAH]

Cockatiel

Nymphicus hollandicus

Common Australian nomad. One of the commonest aviary birds.

One was recorded at Seaford on 15 Jun.

Barrabands Parakeet

Polytelis swainsonii

Also known as Superb Parrot, is a native to southeastern Australia.

One was recorded at Tilgate Park (Crawley) on 7 Jan.

White-headed Black Bulbul

Hypsipetes leucocephalus

The white headed morph of the Himalayan or Asian Black Bulbul found in southern Asia from India east to southern China.

One was seen at Mount Harry (Offham) on 1 and 8 Jan.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE DATES OF SUMMER VISITORS, 2010

	First recorded date			Last recorded date		
	2010	1960 to 2009	10-yr average (\pm SD in days)	2010	1960 to 2009	10-yr average (\pm SD in days)
Garganey	8 Mar	2 Feb	4 Mar (\pm 15)	19 Sep	13 Dec	1 Oct (\pm 20)
Quail	20 May	6 Feb	15 May (\pm 15)	14 Aug	15 Nov ²	13 Sep (\pm 33)
Osprey	14 Mar	7 Mar	23 Mar (\pm 10)	3 Nov	9 Dec	24 Oct (\pm 11)
Hobby	11 Apr	21 Mar	4 Apr (\pm 6)	18 Oct	9 Nov	23 Oct (\pm 15)
Little Ringed Plover	14 Mar	6 Mar	17 Mar (\pm 5)	7 Sep	8 Oct	24 Sep (\pm 10)
Wood Sandpiper	29 Apr	11 Feb	3 May (\pm 23)	28 Sep	16 Nov	29 Sep (\pm 16)
Pomarine Skua	18 Apr	10 Mar	24 Apr (\pm 17)	3 Oct	31 Dec	29 Sep (\pm 87)
Little Tern	10 Apr	1 Apr	10 Apr (\pm 4)	2 Oct	4 Nov	25 Sep (\pm 15)
Black Tern	19 Apr	2 Apr	17 Apr (\pm 6)	7 Oct	16 Nov ³	9 Oct (\pm 16)
Common Tern	22 Mar	17 Mar	26 Mar (\pm 6)	25 Oct	26 Nov	25 Oct (\pm 13)
Roseate Tern		17 Apr	5 May (\pm 17)		5 Oct	11 Aug (\pm 33)
Arctic Tern	6 Apr	2 Apr	12 Apr (\pm 5)	6 Oct	31 Dec	26 Oct (\pm 12)
Common/Arctic Tern	2 Apr	10 Mar	2 Apr (\pm 12)	21 Oct	31 Dec	25 Oct (\pm 15)
Turtle Dove	24 Apr	5 Feb	8 Apr (\pm 13)	11 Sep	18 Dec	1 Oct (\pm 09)
Common Cuckoo	5 Apr	21 Mar ⁴	3 Apr (\pm 4)	11 Sep	23 Oct ⁵	21 Sep (\pm 14)
Nightjar	11 May	8 Apr	2 May (\pm 8)	7 Sep	5 Nov	19 Sep (\pm 11)
Swift	13 Apr	7 Apr	13 Apr (\pm 4)	24 Sep	24 Nov	16 Oct (\pm 21)
Wryneck	¹	9 Mar	19 Apr (\pm 15)	5 Oct	2 Nov ⁶	1 Oct (\pm 8)
Sand Martin	19 Mar	27 Feb	9 Mar (\pm 7)	26 Oct	1 Dec ⁷	20 Oct (\pm 16)
Barn Swallow	18 Mar	4 Feb	9 Mar (\pm 13)	25 Nov	28 Dec	27 Nov (\pm 12)
House Martin	10 Mar	1 Feb	13 Mar (\pm 13)	9 Nov	18 Dec ⁸	13 Nov (\pm 10)
Wood Warbler	18 Apr	7 Apr	18 Apr (\pm 7)	16 Sep	7 Oct	10 Sep (\pm 15)
Willow Warbler	20 Mar	4 Mar	17 Mar (\pm 7)	11 Nov	27 Nov ⁹	27 Oct (\pm 12)
Garden Warbler	6 Apr	28 Mar	4 Apr (\pm 5)	5 Oct	16 Nov	12 Oct (\pm 8)
Lesser Whitethroat	11 Apr ¹⁴	4 Apr	12 Apr (\pm 6)	7 Oct	18 Nov ¹⁰	11 Oct (\pm 11)
Common Whitethroat	5 Apr	19 Mar	31 Mar (\pm 5)	18 Oct	17 Dec	23 Oct (\pm 14)
Grasshopper Warbler	3 Apr	2 Apr	9 Apr (\pm 6)	14 Oct	1 Nov	17 Oct (\pm 7)
Sedge Warbler	28 Mar	23 Mar	29 Mar (\pm 5)	12 Oct	29 Oct	13 Oct (\pm 13)
Reed Warbler	7 Apr	4 Apr	7 Apr (\pm 4)	18 Nov	1 Dec	2 Nov (\pm 14)
Ring Ouzel	8 Apr	9 Feb ¹¹	26 Mar (\pm 7)	15 Nov	26 Dec	13 Nov (\pm 6)
Spotted Flycatcher	5 May	8 Apr	25 Apr (\pm 8)	8 Oct	18 Nov	15 Oct (\pm 9)
Nightingale	5 Apr	21 Mar	5 Apr (\pm 6)	30 Sep	1 Oct ¹²	14 Sep (\pm 10)
Common Redstart	4 Apr	13 Mar	29 Mar (\pm 7)	16 Oct	11 Dec	30 Oct (\pm 17)
Whinchat	15 Apr	18 Feb	8 Apr (\pm 15)	21 Oct	2 Dec	1 Nov (\pm 9)
Wheatear	13 Mar	13 Feb	2 Mar (\pm 9)	21 Nov	31 Dec	11 Nov (\pm 8)
Pied Flycatcher	21 Apr	1 Apr	9 Apr (\pm 5)	27 Sep	1 Nov	30 Sep (\pm 8)
Yellow Wagtail	4 Apr	12 Feb	25 Mar (\pm 8)	15 Oct	23 Nov ¹³	28 Oct (\pm 10)
Tree Pipit	6 Apr	17 Mar	30 Mar (\pm 3)	30 Oct	9 Nov	14 Oct (\pm 10)

Notes: ¹no spring records; ²excludes historic December records; ³excludes one in Cuckmere Valley 13-21 Nov 1954; ⁴excludes one at Fairlight Cove on 15 Mar 1936; ⁵excludes one at Goodwood on 11 Nov 1928; ⁶excludes one at The Crumbles on 5 Nov 1947; ⁷excludes record from unknown location on 5 Dec 1911;

⁸excludes three at Fishbourne on 22 December 1894; ⁹excludes two historic records on 26 Dec 1892 and 1949; ¹⁰excludes one at Burgess Hill on 21 Nov 1957 and known wintering birds; ¹¹excludes one at Mannings Heath on 2 Feb 1905; ¹²excludes one at North Bersted on 19 Oct 1943; ¹³excludes one at Sidlesham between 11 Dec 1960 and 14 Jan 1961; ¹⁴excludes one at East Preston (Brighton) between February and April 2010.

DEPARTURE AND ARRIVAL DATES OF WINTER VISITORS, 2010

	Last recorded date			First recorded date		
	2010	1960 to 2009	10-yr average (± SD in days)	2010	1960 to 2009	10-yr average (± SD in days)
Bewick's Swan	12 Mar	26 Apr	6 Mar (± 10)	13 Oct	6 Oct	16 Nov (± 13)
White-fronted Goose	22 Feb	25 May	22 Mar (± 29)	27 Sep	12 Sep	27 Oct (± 23)
Long-tailed Duck	21 Apr	14 Jun	13 May (± 24)	4 Nov	12 Aug	30 Oct (± 14)
Velvet Scoter	13 Jun	15 Jun	11 May (± 11)	12 Nov	2 Aug	21 Oct (± 18)
Goldeneye	2 May	31 May	18 Apr (± 17)	17 Oct	6 Aug	2 Oct (± 25)
Smew	26 Feb	24 Apr	7 Mar (± 12)	22 Oct ¹	3 Nov	4 Dec (± 11)
Goosander	18 Apr	22 May	7 Apr (± 25)	19 Oct	12 Sep	7 Nov (± 20)
Black-throated Diver	26 May	21 Jun	24 May (± 13)	23 Oct	3 Aug	19 Oct (± 19)
Great Northern Diver	21 May	21 Jun	25 May (± 11)	3 Oct	16 Sep	15 Oct (± 21)
Red-necked Grebe	7 May	19 Jun	15 Apr (± 21)	26 Oct	13 Aug ²	16 Sep (± 19)
Hen Harrier	27 May	19 Jun	12 May (± 16)	4 Sep	4 Aug	1 Sep (± 20)
Purple Sandpiper	29 Apr	4 Jun	13 May (± 7)	14 Jul	1 Jul	1 Aug (± 28)
Jack Snipe	18 Apr	19 May	20 Apr (± 16)	28 Aug	24 Aug	19 Sep (± 15)
Great Grey Shrike	17 Mar	5 May ⁴	2 Apr (± 19)	11 Oct	26 Sep ³	17 Oct (± 8)
Fieldfare	20 Apr	5 Jun	28 Apr (± 10)	6 Oct	6 Aug	29 Sep (± 13)
Redwing	22 Apr	26 May ⁵	16 Apr (± 9)	28 Sep	14 Aug	26 Sep (± 6)
Water Pipit	13 Mar	28 May	30 Mar (± 22)	5 Nov	1 Sep	28 Oct (± 7)
Brambling	20 Apr	12 May	21 Apr (± 7)	2 Oct	3 Sep	27 Sep (± 9)

Notes: ¹earliest county record; ²excludes one off Brighton on 3 Aug 1872; ³excludes one at The Crumbles on 7 Sep 1899; ⁴excludes one at Rye Hbr on 14 May 1950; ⁵excludes two undated historic records of birds found dead in June.

Arrival and Departure Dates

The tables include information from 1960 with earlier notable records in notes. 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 Sandpipers, which regularly return to their winter grounds in July. Any 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 quoted is unusual and is calculated from the 10 years prior to the current one. 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.

SUMMARY OF HEATHLAND BREEDING BIRD COUNTS

Thames Basin and Wealden Heaths Breeding Bird Survey 2010, West Sussex

	AC	BD	CC	CL	IC	LC	SC	WC	WD	WH
Hobby	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Woodcock	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	1	-
Stock Dove	1	-	2	1	-	1	1	-	4	1
Turtle Dove	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nightjar	nc	1	2	-	6	2	1	3	2	1
Green Woodpecker	3	-	7	3	2	4	2	4	5	2
Great Sp. Woodpecker	5	-	4	2	3	7	3	4	5	2
Wood Lark	-	4	4	4	5	3	1	-	5	-
Sky Lark	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	1	1
Tree Pipit	5	4	-	-	5	4	1	1	1	-
Meadow Pipit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Common Redstart	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Stonechat	5	-	1	-	3	3	-	1	1	-
Dartford Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Common Whitethroat	-	2	6	-	-	2	1	9	3	1
Siskin	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Linnet	7	2	3	-	9	3	1	2	1	1
Lesser Redpoll	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Common Crossbill	2	1	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Yellowhammer	10	-	4	1	4	7	2	7	3	3
Reed Bunting	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Figures relate to pairs or territories. The small hyphen (-) indicates that no territories were identified; (nc) indicates that no survey was made for these species.

Key to sites:

AC: Ambersham and Heyshott Commons

BD: Blackdown (Fernhurst)

CC: Chapel Common (Liphook)

CL: Coates Common and Lords Piece (Fittleworth)

IC: Iping Common

LC: Lavington and Duncton Commons and Lavington Plantation

SC: Stedham Common

WC: Woolbeding Common

WD: Weavers Down (Liss)

WH: West Heath Common

The above heathland sites were the only ones surveyed this year.

SUMMARY OF ASHDOWN FOREST BREEDING BIRDS 2010

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	Total
Hobby	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	3
Woodcock	2	7	2	13	2	-	7	5	5	43
Stock Dove	3	-	1	6	1	1	-	-	2	14
Turtle Dove	6	1	-	3	2	-	-	-	-	12
Nightjar	2	14	16	19	7	-	5	12	11	86
Green Woodpecker	8	7	3	-	4	2	1	-	4	29
Great Sp. Woodpecker	9	6	-	11	6	2	-	-	1	35
Wood Lark	6	-	1	3	3	2	-	2	-	17
Sky Lark	14	13	4	4	5	-	1	2	19	62
Tree Pipit	8	5	1	15	3	1	6	9	9	57
Meadow Pipit	7	4	-	3	2	-	-	-	4	20
Common Redstart	-	1	-	1	3	-	-	1	2	8
Stonechat	38	17	15	15	14	1	5	15	28	148
Dartford Warbler	2	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	6
Common Whitethroat	17	10	4	14	8	2	6	7	11	79
Siskin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Linnet	14	13	2	16	12	1	1	6	11	76
Lesser Redpoll	9	3	2	11	-	-	-	3	13	41
Common Crossbill	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	1	-	4
Yellowhammer	19	5	3	5	7	2	8	12	15	76
Reed Bunting	6	1	1	3	1	-	2	1	2	17

Figures relate to the minimum numbers of pairs or territories. The (-) indicates no pairs or territories identified. Old Lodge NR is excluded due to absence of data. Data provided by the Ashdown Bird Group, analysis by PJ Johnson and SM Phillips.

Key to sites:

A: Airmans Grave, Cackle Street, Duddleswell area, Misbourne, Hollies, Barnsden

B: Box, Camp Hill, Ellisons Pond, Friends, Millbrook East, Nutley Windmill

C: Kingstanding area, Poundgate area, Pylons, Crow & Gate, St Johns Common area

D: Black Hill, Church Hill, Greenwood Gate, Wrens Warren, Five Hundred Acre

E: Gills Lap area, Chuck Hatch, Piglets, Jumpers Town

F: Forest Centre to Colmans Hatch (Ridge Road area)

G: Beeches, Goat, Hindleap, Lavender Platt, Kidbrook Park, Lumbston Stone, Cherry Orchard

H: Airstrip, Chelwood Vachery and Gate, Isle of Thorns, Millbrook West, Trees, West Chase

I: Beggars Bush Clump, Bushy Willows, Four Counties, Lodge, Pines, Roman Road, Smugglers

Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) population trends 1994-2010

Sussex population trends for 32 common species for the period 1994-2010, calculated from the results of the Breeding Bird Survey (BBS), are presented in the table below. Also presented are population trends for the period 2009-2010. Those trends that are considered statistically significant are indicated by asterisks. The size of the difference between the upper 95% confidence limit (UCL) and the lower 95% confidence limit (LCL) for each 1994-2010 trend gives an indication of the accuracy of the population trend. The sample size is the mean number of squares per year in which each species was recorded during 1994-2010.

Species	Change 1994-2010 (%)	UCL	LCL	Change 2009-2010 (%)	Sample size
Mallard	268*	511	121	-41	38
Pheasant	56*	87	30	27	56
Woodpigeon	31*	50	16	2	71
Collared Dove	15	43	-7	-39*	45
Green Woodpecker	11	50	-18	13	49
Great Spotted Woodpecker	388*	649	219	26	45
Skylark	-26	1	-46	6	40
Swallow	6	51	-25	-87*	47
Pied Wagtail	-29	0	-49	-35	32
Wren	-36*	-26	-45	-4	67
Dunnock	-39*	-24	-50	-30	61
Robin	-22*	-7	-35	-27	68
Blackbird	6	19	-6	-35*	70
Song Thrush	13	36	-6	-14	64
Blackcap	29	69	-1	2	54
Whitethroat	368*	604	211	25	41
Chiffchaff	23	61	-6	37	59
Long-tailed Tit	-40*	-12	-60	-39	33
Blue Tit	42*	70	20	12	69
Great Tit	11	33	-7	-9	67
Nuthatch	-21	20	-48	-21	32
Jay	-31*	-2	-52	165*	33
Magpie	2	32	-21	29	63
Jackdaw	46*	92	11	-13	54
Rook	85*	127	51	-28	38
Carrion Crow	137*	213	80	4	69
Starling	-63*	-46	-75	-18	54
House Sparrow	23*	45	4	37	53
Chaffinch	-34*	-25	-42	3	69
Greenfinch	-32*	-14	-47	-7	57
Goldfinch	78*	139	33	-46*	42
Yellowhammer	-41*	-19	-56	55	34

For further information about how these trends are calculated and used see Crabtree, H. (2009). Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) population trends in Sussex 1994-2009. *Sussex Bird Report* 62:251.

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S. Rodemark ^T	C. Sims ^A	WIE Tagg ^T	
BM Rogers ^E	A. Sker ^{TW}	PL Tarrant ^T	H. Vaughan ^A
DP Rogers ^{ABT}	AJ Skinner ^{BW}	C. Taylor ^T	FB Venn ^B
C. Roper ^X	A. Slade	KP Taylor ^A	A. Vine ^T
G. Rose	E. Slade ^X	L. Taylor ^X	C. Vine ^{AW}
T. Rose ^T	G. Slade ^X	SR Taylor ^{ABTWN}	GJ Vine ^T
H. Rouse	J. Smallwood ^T	CR Tazzyman	
P. Rouse	AW Smith	RC Theobald ^T	B. Wadge ^X
E. Rowsell ^{AW}	DI Smith	A. Thomas ^A	A. Walker ^T
I. Ruffles ^A	KW Smith ^A	A. Thomas ^B	D. Walker ^W
SJR Rumsey	PA Smith ^A	H. Thomas	N. Walker
MG Russell ^X	R. Smith ^T	S. Thomas	S. Walker ^T
MJ Russell	S. Smith ^{W (SS)}	T. Thomas ^T	L. Wallace
ND Rutherford ^{AB}	AC Smither ^{AB}	M. Thompson ^T	BG Walter
A. Rutland ^T	D. Sneller	PS Thompson	M. Walter ^A
NJ Rutter ^B	MA Snelling ^{AB}	G. Tickler ^X	S. Walters ^T
CMP Ryland ^X	TG Snow ^{AB}	JE Tilbury ^B	LA Walther ^{ATX}
	E. Soden ^A	PA Tinning ^X	HM Warne ^T
RF Sanderson ^T	S. Solly	PC Tinning ^X	N. Warne ^B
HGJ Saunders ^T	A. Spendiff ^X	GA Tocher	M. Warren
S. Savage ^X	P. Spiers ^{W (PS)}	R. Tofts	D. Washington
J. Scarfebeck	G. Spinks (GS)	M. Tomlins ^W	T. Waters ^A
M. Scott-ham ^{ABH}	T. Stachnicki	MP Toms ^T	J. Watkin
TJ Scragg ^T	DL Stainton ^T	S. Topham	AB Watson ^{HX}
T. Seabrook ^{ABW}	M. Stanbridge	S. Trenerry ^T	S. Watts ^T
J. Searle ^B	I. Standivan ^{HW}	C. Trew	R. Webb ^T
EW Sears	MP Stanyer ^{AT}	G. Trew	PJ Webster
CM Seaton	A. Stead	A. Tring	DJ Wedd ^{AB}
RC Self	MJ Stenning ^{BT}	CE Trollope ^{AT}	J. Wedd ^B
RJ Senior	L. Stevens	D. Trott ^T	M. Welcome ^W
MV Sennitt ^{AB}	PC Stevens ^W	JE Trowell ^W	SM Wellman ^T
M. Shaft ^{AH}	RJ Stevens ^H	WH Truckle ^{AT}	R. Wells ^X

TJ Wells ^T	K. White ^X	PJ Wilson	SA Woolfries ^A
P. Welton	M. White	TJ Wilson	I. Woolsey ^A
AJ Wende ^T	AM Whitman	D. Wiltshire ^T (DW)	S. Wootton
T. Wenham	JH Whitman	I. Wiltshire ^{AB}	JA Worrall ^B
C. West	K. Whitton ^W	JS Winder	JM Worthington Wilde ^B
DR West ^{ABT}	Wildcall Recorder ^X	BJ Winter	N. Wretham
P. West ^X	P. Wilde	LF Winter ^T	CH Wright
E. Weston ^T	D. Wilkinson ^A	J. Wood ^X	CMV Wright ^{AB}
JD Weston ^W	J. Wilks	TJ Wood ^A	DM Wright
M. Weston	G. Williams ^T	V. Wood ^B	J. Wright ^W
MJ Whitaker ^B	P. Williams ^A	CW Woodburn ^W	KJ Wright ^W
AD Whitcomb	R. Williamson ^W	I. Woodburn ^W	M. Wright ^T
IJ Whitcomb	RLC Williamson ^W	J. Woodford	L. Wyness
PJ Whitcomb ^{ATX}	KB Wills ^W	AEL Woods ^T	
A. White ^A	AR Wilson ^T	C. Woodward ^{AW}	BJ Yates ^W
C. White ^T	G. Wilson ^T	J. Woolcock ^X	S. Younger ^W

The superscripts in the above table indicate the particular survey(s) in which contributors participated, as follows:

- A Bird Atlas 2007-11
- B Breeding Bird Survey (BBS)
- E Thames Basin and Wealden Heaths Breeding Bird Survey
- H Heronries Census
- N Ashdown Forest Nightjar Survey
- S Sussex Ornithological Society species surveys
- T Contributors via *BirdTrack*
- W Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS)
- X Contributors via Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre

ASSISTANCE TO RECORDER

The Recorder is especially grateful to Dr JA Newnham and the following team of helpers for coding and inputting the records onto the computer or providing computerised records: J Atkinson, CF Ball, Mrs VP Bentley, CJR Barfield, DJ Burges, T Callaway, Ms MJ Chattaway, BR Clay, CB Collins, JR Cowser, DE Crawley, RDM Edgar, J Everitt, BF Forbes, MG Freeman, BR Gilmore, Ms H Gordon, JS Gowers, Mrs P Green, AC Gutteridge, RS Hoad, JA Hobson, CE Hope, A House, T Howard-Jones, DH Howey, P Hughes, AM Hutson, RA Ives, P James, P Johnson, PE Jones, JC Kelsall, Rex Knight, Richard Knight, IM Lang, S Linington, CW Melgar, O Mitchell, Mrs BM Mortlock, Ms A. Parfitt, A Parker, RT Pepper, A Perry, GCM Roberts, Ms H Rouse, E Rowsell, MV Sennitt, Mrs IM Simpson, DI Smith, P Stevens, Dr AB Watson, Mrs AJ Wende, PJ Whitcomb, JH Whitman, TJ Wilson, I Woolsey and BJ 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.

Bird Atlas 2007-11: This national BTO survey to map Britain and Ireland's birds is organised in Sussex by Dr Helen Crabtree, 3 Myrtle Cottages, Ardingly Road, Cuckfield, West Sussex, RH17 5HD, and Richard Cowser, Beaver's Brook, The Thatchway, Angmering, West Sussex, BN16 4HJ. The 278 contributors to this survey in 2010 are indicated by ^A in the above table.

Breeding Bird Survey (BBS): This national BTO annual breeding survey, based on selected 1-km squares, is organised in Sussex by Dr Helen Crabtree, 3 Myrtle Cottages, Ardingly Road, Cuckfield, West Sussex, RH17 5HD. Thanks are due to the 114 observers involved who are indicated by ^B in the above table.

Thames Basin and Wealden Heaths Breeding Bird Survey: This continuing survey of heaths and heath woodlands (see table on page 220) 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 eight observers involved who are indicated by ^E in the above table.

Heronries Census: This long-standing BTO 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. Thanks are due to the 24 contributors who are indicated by ^H in the above table.

Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS): Monthly counts were carried out for this BTO/WWT/RSPB/JNCC survey, organised in Sussex by R Bown, 49 Long Beach View, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN23 5NB. Coordinating the counts in large areas has been undertaken by local reserve wardens as shown below. Thanks are due to these and the 141 counters who are indicated by ^W in the above table.

Ashdown Forest Nightjar Survey: This BTO survey of nightjars in the Ashdown Forest area in 2010 was commissioned by Natural England and was organised by Dr Helen Crabtree, 3 Myrtle Cottages, Ardingly Road, Cuckfield, West Sussex, RH17 5HD. Thanks are due to the 31 observers involved who are indicated by ^N in the above table.

Sussex Ornithological Society Surveys: Three breeding season surveys were undertaken on Sand Martins, Great Cormorants and the birds on the sea cliffs. These studies were organised by Richard Cowser, Beaver's Brook, The Thatchway, Angmering, West Sussex, BN16 4HJ and the 15 participants are indicated by ^S in the list of contributors.

Co-ordination of Spring Seawatching Records: The annual co-ordination of these records for the Society is carried out by Dr JA Newnham, 61 Grand Avenue, Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 5BA.

SUMMARIES OF OBSERVATIONS

We are grateful for summaries of detailed observations at: Chichester Harbour from E Rowsell; Thorney and Pilsey Islands from CB and Mrs MA Collins; Selsey Bill from J Atkinson; Pagham Harbour from IM Lang; Arundel WWT from P Stevens; Norfolk Estate from GR Potts; Pulborough Brooks and the Arun Valley from P Hughes; Worthing from Dr JA Newnham; Shoreham District O.S. from CE Hope; Horsham District Council reserves from J Everitt; Weir

Wood Reservoir from Mrs BM Mortlock; Ashdown Forest from P Johnson; Telscombe Cliffs from DH Howey; Splash Point (Seaford) from BR Gilmore; Beachy Head from RDM Edgar; Bewl Water from MG Freeman; Pannel Valley NR from Rye Bay Ringing Group and Rye Harbour from Dr BJ Yates. We also thank the Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre for providing ornithological records from 67 observers (marked ^x in the above table). The online recording of the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) surveys provided a plethora of records; the 288 Sussex contributors to BirdTrack are marked with a ^T in the above table. The records from Birdguides for 2010 were channelled through BirdTrack. Thanks are due to the BTO for the county BirdTrack records, as well as county records for the Atlas 2007-11, the Breeding Bird Survey and the Wetland Bird Survey.

RINGING

Thanks are due to S Bayley for maintaining detailed records of ringing in the county and to all ringers who contributed data.

Descriptive Species Considered Not Proven

In addition to the records detailed in the Systematic List, a number of records were submitted to either SOSRC or BBRC which the relevant Committee considered to be “Not Proven”. These are summarised in the table below:

Both SOSRC and BBRC have the responsibility to be certain that, on the basis of the description supplied, the bird could not have been any other species. In cases where a record is considered “Not Proven” this does not necessarily imply that the bird reported has been misidentified but, in the vast majority of cases, simply that the description provided did not eliminate the possibility of other species. Sometimes this lack of a detailed description is inevitable when the bird is seen only very briefly. Raptor species again feature prominently in the table and account for 40% of the “Not Proven” record submissions.

If other observers saw any of the birds listed, SOSRC would be very happy to consider further submissions to help substantiate the original sightings. Any such submissions must be received by mid-2012 otherwise the records will not be entered into the SOS database and will be lost to the county avifauna. [David Howey, Assistant Recorder]

Species	Location	Date	No.	Committee
Cory's Shearwater	Goring Beach	11/06/10	1	SOSRC
Balearic Shearwater	Selsey Bill	07/08/10	2	SOSRC
Balearic Shearwater	Splash Point	23/08/10	1	SOSRC
Great White Egret	Redbridge	24/05/10	1	SOSRC
Purple Heron	Ferring Rife	27/04/10	1	SOSRC
Honey-buzzard	Southwater	04/04/10	1	SOSRC
Honey-buzzard	Pagham Harbour	12/05/10	1	SOSRC
Honey-buzzard	Worthing GC	13/05/10	1	SOSRC
Honey-buzzard	Pagham Harbour	13/05/10	1	SOSRC
Honey-buzzard	Blackdown	30/05/10	2	SOSRC
Honey-buzzard	Ashdown Forest	25/07/10	1	SOSRC
Honey-buzzard	Location withheld	01/08/10	1	SOSRC
Honey-buzzard	Pagham Harbour	02/09/10	1	SOSRC
Honey-buzzard	Pagham Harbour	19/09/10	1	SOSRC
Honey-buzzard	Adur Estuary	19/09/10	1	SOSRC
Goshawk	Coates Common	31/01/10	1	SOSRC
Goshawk	Stopham Bridge	23/05/10	1	SOSRC
Goshawk	Five Lords Burgh	17/10/10	1	SOSRC
Rough-legged Buzzard	Iping Common	06/03/10	1	SOSRC
Temminck's Stint	Rye Harbour	15/05/10	1	SOSRC
Caspian Gull	Shoreham Harbour	09/03/10	1	SOSRC
Kumlein's Gull	Selsey Bill	12/05/10	1	SOSRC
European Bee-eater	Worthing	14/07/10	1	SOSRC
Water Pipit	Cuckmere Haven	04/04/10	1	SOSRC
Water Pipit	Coldwaltham STW	15/10/10	1	SOSRC
Aquatic Warbler	Birling Gap	07/07/10	1	SOSRC
Yellow-browed Warbler	Robertsbridge	28/09/10	1	SOSRC
Siberian Chiffchaff	Robertsbridge	02/12/10	1	SOSRC
Willow Tit	West Dean Woods	30/04/10	1	SOSRC
Crested Tit	Sharpthorne	21/06/10	1	SOSRC
Lapland Bunting	Crowlink	10/10/10	1	SOSRC
Lapland Bunting	Five Lords Burgh	17/10/10	1	SOSRC

The Sussex Ringing Report for 2010

Sam Bayley

6, Northlands Cottages, Northlands Road, Warnham, West Sussex, RH12 3SQ

This year saw the highest number of birds ever ringed in the county, which also corresponded with the national total reaching over one million for the first time. The total of 82,660 birds ringed in Sussex was 12.7% more than in 2009 and 12.5% more than the previous highest total in 1990. Sussex was again the county with the most birds ringed in Britain and Ireland. As a comparison with neighbouring counties, Table 1 shows the totals for the last five years. (N.B. *All numbers, including those in tables, have been adjusted to reflect birds ringed in previous years, but only recently notified to the author.*) A total of 26 active individual ringers and groups sent in reports (Tables 2 and 3).

Table 1. *A summary of ringing totals in the counties of south-east England for 2006-2010.*

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Sussex	54,655	51,373	54,331	73,326	82,660
Surrey	12,021	12,200	15,342	17,241	18,406
Kent	21,314	23,936	26,691	25,747	29,324
Hampshire	11,513	8,888	11,788	12,875	18,824

Table 2. *A summary of ringing activity by individuals in Sussex in 2010. Individuals named are those responsible for the rings issued and may not be those who actually ringed the birds.*

Ringing source	Number ringed		
	Full grown	Nestlings	Totals
W. Attridge and S. Bayley	4236	537	4773
A.M. Davis	576	120	696
G. Dunlop	2375	5	2380
R.D.M. Edgar	7	0	7
J. Forss	0	56	56
J. Gates	0	5	5
C. Hamilton	648	0	648
D. King	377	86	463
R. Lanaway	2547	720	3267
M. Love	27	97	124
D. Madgin	47	26	73
A. Martin	1	30	31
J.A. Newnham	1510	93	1603
J. Pritchard	114	7	121
G.C.M. Roberts	99	28	127
R. Sanderson	879	55	934
C. Shawyer	6	69	75
K.S. Smith	161	0	161
I. Standivan	820	8	828
A.B. Watson	66	350	416
Unknown	0	20	20

Table 3. *A summary of ringing activity by groups in Sussex in 2010.*

Ringing source	Number ringed		
	Full grown	Nestlings	Totals
Beachy Head Ringing Station	3103	27	3130
Cuckmere Ringing Group	521	0	521
RSPB	0	2	2
Rye Bay Ringing Group	58,602	597	59,199
Steaying Ringing Group	2975	5	2980

The Rye Bay Ringing Group (RBRG) ringed 72% of the annual total which was one percent more than in 2009 and three percent more than in 2008 and equated to 59,199 birds of 102 species. A total of 115 species were ringed this year in Sussex, compared to 112 in 2009 and 108 in 2008.

Table 4. *Sussex totals from 1979 to 2010 for notable species ringed in 2010, set against the 2010 Britain and Ireland totals for these species.*

Species	Sussex 2010	Sussex 1979-2010	Britain & Ireland 2010
Mandarin Duck	3	12	55
Little Egret	1	7	199
Honey-buzzard	20	77	47
Stone-curlew	2	7	274
Wood Sandpiper	1	16	2
Turtle Dove	2	97	28
Common Cuckoo	3	76	55
Wryneck	6	44	27
Rock Pipit	1	2	527
Bluethroat	1	17	9
Savi's Warbler	9	27	10
Aquatic Warbler	1	112	6
Paddyfield Warbler	1	4	1
Marsh Warbler	7	72	22
Icterine Warbler	1	7	9
Yellow-browed Warbler	1	20	59
Pied Flycatcher	6	244	11,950
Blackpoll Warbler	1	1	1
Common Redpoll	23	36	543

The highlights of the county rarities ringed this year were a Blackpoll Warbler, which was ringed at Pett Level, and two Stone-curlew nestlings. The Blackpoll Warbler was only the second seen in the county after one was seen at Bewl Water in 1994, and was the first bird of this species to be ringed in the county. The Stone-curlews on the other hand were the sixth and seventh for the county in recent decades after singles were ringed in 2007 and 2008 and three in 2009. This species has only recently started breeding in the county and hopefully this will continue. Other county rarities ringed this year were singles of Bluethroat, Aquatic Warbler, Paddyfield Warbler, Icterine Warbler and Yellow-browed Warbler, seven Marsh Warblers, nine Savi's Warblers and 23 Common Redpolls. Also of interest were 20 nestling Honey-buzzards, six Wrynecks, two Turtle Doves, three Common Cuckoos and six Pied Flycatchers. Other notable Sussex captures included three Mandarin Ducks, an adult Little Egret, a Wood Sandpiper and a Rock Pipit (the

second for the county). To put these all into context, the comparison with the county tally and the 2010 totals for Britain and Ireland is shown in Table 4. The most notable species ringed in a national context were Honey-buzzard (43%), Wood Sandpiper (50%), Yellow Wagtail (47%), Grasshopper Warbler (51%), Savi's Warbler (90%), Paddyfield Warbler (100%) and Blackpoll Warbler (100%).

The total number of species ringed in Sussex since 1979 has now risen by three to 208. In addition to Stone-curlew and Blackpoll Warbler, another species came to light after trying to recover lost records for the year 1999. The BTO was very helpful and supplied a list of numbers ringed of each species for that year and a new species emerged: a single Red Kite ringed in 1999. However, published recoveries suggest Red Kites were ringed in the county prior to 1999.

Ringing totals

Table 5 lists the 20 most ringed species during 2010 including the totals for RBRG to demonstrate the considerable contribution this group makes to Sussex ringing. The 20 species listed in Table 5 account for 89% of all birds ringed in Sussex during 2010, compared to 90% in 2009. The first six species are the same as last year with the only change being that Common Chiffchaff significantly dropped in numbers ringed from 2009 whilst Eurasian Reed Warbler and Blue Tit significantly increased. Willow Warbler and Sand Martin switched places at seven and eight and Great Tit, Common Whitethroat and Goldfinch stayed at positions ten, eleven and twelve, respectively, while Lesser Redpoll jumped four places to make its debut in the top ten being the ninth most ringed species. The huge invasion of this species over late autumn and winter obviously helped to create a new record, over 1000 birds more than in any previous year.

Table 5. *Sussex ringing totals for the 20 most ringed species in 2010.*

No.	Species (with position in 2009)	2010		2009
		Total	RBRG	
1.	Blackcap (1)	11019	8571	11088
2.	Sedge Warbler (2)	9879	9761	8172
3.	Eurasian Reed Warbler (4)	8739	8238	6761
4.	Blue Tit (5)	7381	1754	4832
5.	Common Chiffchaff (3)	5899	4398	6772
6.	Barn Swallow (6)	4603	4250	4374
7.	Willow Warbler (8)	4100	3299	3149
8.	Sand Martin (7)	3035	3033	3518
9.	Lesser Redpoll (13)	2678	2153	1337
10.	Great Tit (10)	2625	674	2340
11.	Common Whitethroat (11)	2282	1648	2185
12.	Goldfinch (12)	2061	529	1483
13.	Reed Bunting (15)	1472	1279	1008
14.	House Martin (9)	1257	1169	3121
15.	Grasshopper Warbler (16)	1238	1215	915
16.	Robin (14)	1165	550	1129
17.	Blackbird (18)	1154	477	902
18.	Chaffinch (20)	1069	298	747
19.	Greenfinch (19)	1054	229	896
20.	Meadow Pipit (25)	1009	935	548

Reed Bunting climbed a couple of places to thirteenth whilst House Martin had an even more dramatic fall than the rise of Lesser Redpoll, down to fourteenth from ninth with almost 2000 fewer ringed than in 2009. Grasshopper Warbler and Blackbird climbed up one to fifteenth and seventeenth, respectively, while Robin dropped two to sixteenth, Chaffinch climbed two to eighteenth and Greenfinch stayed at nineteenth. Meadow Pipit entered the top 20 again at twentieth, whilst Garden Warbler dropped off from seventeenth to twenty-first.

A total of 23 species reached new record totals for the county during 2010; these included 14 resident breeders, five summer visitors (although Meadow Pipit is usually ringed as a passage migrant), three winter visitors and one passage migrant. There were also two species that matched previous records which were both resident breeders. The biggest leaps were made by Wryneck (doubling from three to six), Redwing (204 to 483), Jackdaw (172 to 526) and Common Redpoll (four to 23, nearly six times more). In addition, 12 species achieved second or third highest totals which involved eight resident breeders, three summer visitors and one winter visitor.

Although 2010 was a record high year, the single Black-headed Gull ringed was the lowest total on record for this species; Little Owl is continuing its decreasing numbers with just three ringed; and this was another blank year for Lesser Spotted Woodpecker. Whilst Stonechat dropped to its lowest total since 1999, no Willow Tits were ringed (four blank years in a row), just two Tree Sparrows were ringed (lowest total since 2001), and this was yet another blank year for Corn Bunting.

Nestlings

The 2941 nestlings ringed in 2010 was an increase on the 2698 ringed in 2009 and represented 3.6% of the birds ringed in Sussex. Nestlings were ringed of a total of 59 species and of those 17 had 40% or more of their totals ringed as nestlings (Table 6), compared with 14 in 2009 and 16 in 2008; 12 of these species are of conservation concern.

Table 6. Nestlings ringed in Sussex during 2010, where they number more than 40% of the total ringed. Birds of conservation concern: **red-listed, *amber-listed.

Species	Total ringed	Total nestlings	% nestlings
Grey Heron	35	35	100
Honey-buzzard*	20	20	100
Peregrine Falcon	6	6	100
Common Tern*	5	5	100
Little Owl	3	3	100
Stone-curlew*	2	2	100
Little Ringed Plover**	2	2	100
Black-headed Gull*	1	1	100
Barn Owl*	254	236	93
Herring Gull**	49	45	92
Common Kestrel*	54	43	80
Grey Wagtail*	15	10	67
Stock Dove*	70	44	63
Tawny Owl	9	5	56
Turtle Dove**	2	1	50
Pied Wagtail	57	26	46
Marsh Tit**	80	33	41

Particular mention should be made of concentrated efforts by certain groups or individuals whose efforts included:

- RBRG (32 species): one Water Rail, two Little Ringed Plovers, one Turtle Dove, one Common Cuckoo, one Cetti's Warbler, three Bearded Tits and eight Marsh Tits.
- R. Lanaway (20 species): 245 Barn Swallows, 36 Common Whitethroats, 37 Blackcaps, 43 Common Chiffchaffs, four Linnets and two Yellowhammers.
- Dr. A.B. Watson (13 species): 16 Kestrels, two Common Terns, 111 Barn Owls, three Little Owls and 17 Marsh Tits.
- A.M. Davis (11 species): six Tree Pipits, seven Common Redstarts, five Stonechats, 54 Willow Warblers, eight Marsh Tits and six Eurasian Treecreepers.
- W. Attridge and S. Bayley (28 species): 35 Grey Herons, seven Mallards, three Common Terns, six Grey Wagtails, four Goldcrests, nine Spotted Flycatchers, six Long-tailed Tits, five Eurasian Treecreepers and two Rooks.

Notable absentees this year were Lapwing, Wood Lark and Mistle Thrush.

Recoveries

Below is a selection of the more interesting recoveries that were reported during 2010 which does also include a number of late entries from previous years. As usual there have been many reports of colour-ringed or tagged birds, which have mainly been reported by non-ringers who are thanked for their contributions.

A pair of **Bewick's Swans**, 001E and 078E, had neck-collars fitted in The Netherlands, as part of a wintering population from Russia, on 28 Dec 2008. These birds have been well tracked since. They stayed in The Netherlands for the rest of the winter until Feb 2009, but had returned to the same area by 30 Oct 2009, this time accompanied by two offspring. They stayed here until at least 7 Jan 2010 before crossing the English Channel and being first seen at Henfield Levels 20 days later still with their two young. In early February they moved to Burpham, but were not recorded again until early March, when they were back at Henfield Levels, last being seen on the 8th.

Two **Brent Geese** were ringed along the River Pyasina in Russia and recovered in Sussex. The first was ringed as an adult male on 30 Jul 1995 and was found at Pagham Harbour on 11 Oct 2006, a distance of 4946 km away and 11 years and 73 days later. The second bird was ringed as a second-year male on 31 Jul 2006 and was found at Fishbourne (Chichester) on 31 Jan 2007.

The first recovery of an **Egyptian Goose** in Sussex was a first-year bird that was ringed on 9 Jul 2009 at Laleham (Surrey). The ring was read in the field on 13 Mar 2010 at Mewsbrook Park (Littlehampton) and then at Brooklands (Worthing) on 27 Aug 2010. Interestingly, this coincided with a large increase of sightings of this species in the county. These birds may well have come from the increasing populations in Surrey, and certainly there will be more recoveries soon.

A first-year male **Shelduck** ringed on Thorney Island on 8 Sep 2005 was found dead after a storm on 25 Jan 2009 at Keyhaven Marshes (Hampshire).

A **Teal** ringed on Iken Marsh (Suffolk) as a first-year male on 16 Nov 2003 was shot at Lewes on 9 Jan 2010.

Three juvenile **Mallards** were all ringed at Warnham LNR on 6 Jun 2010. Two of these were shot six months later on 31 Dec, just 3 km away in Warnham village. The third managed to get a bit further to Pulborough (18 km) before also being shot, but on the slightly earlier date of 15 Dec.

Continuing the duck theme, a **Pintail** shot at Runcton on 11 Jan 2006 was originally ringed 154 km away as a first-year female at Slimbridge (Gloucestershire) on 19 Dec 2002.

Two **Common Pochards** fitted with nasal shields were seen this year at Burton Mill Pond. AB3 was ringed in western France on 26 Nov 2005 and seen here on 14 Feb 2010, whilst A3H had a much more extended history. Being ringed at this same site on 26 Oct 2006, A3H was then seen at a nearby site during the following April before moving to Carsington Water (Derbyshire) where it was seen on 1 Aug 2007. The next sighting came on 2 Mar 2010 at Burton Mill Pond, while the following two sightings were also here on 14 Dec 2010 and 25 Feb 2011 (BFF, DIS). A possible explanation of these movements is that this bird spends the winter in France then migrates through Sussex in early spring and early winter to and from central or northern Britain where it possibly breeds. A third much older record was also received this year involving a second-year male ringed at Pett Level on 26 Dec 1989 and found dead on 1 Oct 1993 in Wolin (Poland), a distance of 999 km away.

Two late reports of **Gannets** ringed on Alderney (Channel Islands) involved one ringed in the summer of 1983 which was found dead in Lancing on 6 Mar 2007, and a bird found dead at Eastbourne on 14 May 2007 which had been ringed on 4 Jun 1977. This last bird was just shy of 30 years old and one of the oldest recorded in Britain and Europe. Two further recoveries came in 2010, also of birds ringed on Alderney, of a nestling from 1993 found dead at Eastbourne on 27 Mar and a nestling from 2005 which was found sick at Worthing on 29 May but was able to be released again.

There were four recoveries reported in Sussex during this year of **Great Cormorants** which all except one originated from British west-coast colonies. One nestling was ringed in Anglesey in 1994 and found dead at East Wittering in 2007, one was ringed in Cumbria in the summer of 2010 and found dead in Bognor Regis three months later, and one was ringed in Dyfed in 2008 and had its ring read in the field at Wakehurst Place in 2010. The fourth recovery was a Dutch bird colour-ringed in 1997 which was first seen at Weir Wood Res in autumn 2009 and which was seen there again in Sep 2010.

An interesting **Shag** record is that of a nestling that was ringed on 1 Jul 2007 on the Isle of May and that was recovered dead in Bognor Regis on 7 Nov 2007 having been hit by a car.

The first five sightings from the new **Grey Heron** colour-ringing scheme at Warnham LNR have displayed varied juvenile dispersal. Two local sightings from Capel (Surrey) and Weir Wood Res were not identified to individuals. One was seen at Rainham Marshes (Essex) throughout June, one was found dead at Burton MP on 30 Oct and the fifth had been taken by an animal on 4 Oct in Westbury (Wiltshire).

Two **Honey-buzzards** that were ringed in Sussex as nestlings were reported, showing the hazards that these birds face during migration. The closest recovery was one ringed on 10 Aug 2010 and found sick just 18 km away at Slaugham on 21 Sep 2010, and the other one was ringed in 2007 and found dead in a trap in Juaboso (Ghana) on 10 May 2009, 4787 km away.

Four **Red Kite** recoveries were reported this year. Two of these were birds ringed as nestlings in Sussex in 1997; the first one was hit by a car in Oxfordshire in June 2008 and the other was noted in Bedfordshire in March 2009. The other two reports were a bird ringed as a nestling in Northamptonshire in 2005 and seen at West Dean in November 2006, and a female ringed as a nestling in the Highlands (Scotland) in 2007 and seen at Singleton in January 2008.

Probably one of the most disturbing recoveries of the year was of an **Osprey** that had been ringed as a nestling in Sweden on 8 Jul 2010 and which was found shot dead in Golden Cross (Hailsham) on 13 Sep 2010, a distance of 1489 km away. Unfortunately, this was actually one of three juvenile Ospreys which were found shot dead in England during the autumn of 2010, and a fourth was killed in Scotland. The other two shot birds were found in Lincolnshire on 2 Oct (also having been ringed that year in Sweden), and one of these which was found at Spurn Point had

half of its wing missing. Although large rewards were offered for information to find the people responsible for these incidents no one was arrested.

An unusual recovery was of a **Water Rail** ringed in Calais (France) as an immature male on 23 Oct 2009 and found dead having been hit by a car by the Adur Bridge at Bramber on 4 Mar 2010.

Two colour-ringed **Avocets** were reported this year which had both been ringed in France. The first was ringed on the west coast near Nantes on 27 May 2008 as a nestling and was then seen at Pagham Harbour from 17 to 27 Mar 2009 and then near Zeeland on the south-west coast of The Netherlands on 20 Mar 2010. The second was also ringed on the north-west coast of France as a nestling on 20 Jun 2007 and was seen 17 times in the same area of France regularly until 10 Jul 2009. The next sighting was on 6 Jun 2010 when it was seen at Rye Harbour.

The **Stone-curlew** project has got off to a flying start with the first recovery coming from a bird seen on a private site at Defford (Worcestershire) on 6 Aug 2010 having been ringed as a chick less than two months before on 14 Jun at a confidential site in Sussex. Interestingly, this was also only the fifth modern-day record of this species in Worcestershire.

Another unusual recovery, because of its unusual finding location, was an adult female **Dunlin** ringed in Sweden on 28 Jul 2004 and found sick/injured in Herstmonceux on 4 Dec 2010.



Dunlin, Arlington Reservoir, May 2010 (Roger Charlwood)

There was a single recovery of a colour-ringed **Ruff** which had been ringed in The Netherlands on 5 Apr 2010 and which was seen at RSPB Pulborough Brooks on 2 Nov 2010.

Many movements of **Black-headed Gulls** between Sussex and different Baltic and north-European countries were reported this year. These included: a bird ringed as a nestling in Finland in the summer of 2010 and seen nearly 2000 km away at Warnham LNR on 8 Dec 2010; two birds from Lithuania which were seen at Warnham LNR on 8 Dec 2010 having been originally

ringed one as an adult on 3 Apr 2010 and the other as a nestling on 12 Jun 2001; an adult ringed at Sompting Refuse Tip on 8 Nov 1980 which was seen in Latvia on 13 Apr 2006 at an age of 25 years and 5 months; and another bird ringed at Sompting Refuse Tip that has beaten this age having been ringed on 25 Jan 1984 and which was seen just 26 km away at Warnham LNR 26 years and 11 months later on 8 Dec 2010.

Of the 37 recoveries of **Mediterranean Gulls** reported this year, all were of foreign origin and most were recorded at Pett Level. These involved 19 from Belgium, seven from France, six from Germany, two from Poland and singles from The Netherlands, Italy and Hungary. The latter two were unusual; the Italian bird was ringed as a nestling in the summer of 2002 and was seen at Pett Level on 10 Apr 2007, whilst the Hungarian bird was ringed as a nestling in the summer of 2008 and was seen at Pett Level during April 2010.

Common Gulls are not regularly recovered in the county and this made the long-distance recovery of a Norwegian bird even more notable. The bird was ringed as a nestling in the summer of 2009 and was seen on the River Arun at Shoreham on 17 Apr 2010.

The first ringing recovery of a **Caspian Gull** in the county was a bird ringed as a nestling near Krakow (Poland) on 21 May 2009 and that was seen at Brighton Marina on 5 Jan 2010 (ADW).

Six interesting movements of **Great Black-backed Gulls** have been recorded by a dedicated effort to read ring numbers at Shoreham during 2010 (RJF). All birds were ringed as nestlings, four in Norway, one in France and one in the Channel Islands, and only the last was older than a year having been ringed in 2007 and subsequently seen at Telscombe Cliffs on 26 Sep 2008, Ovingdean on 3 Sep 2009 and then Shoreham on 9 Feb 2010.

Two **Common Terns** and a **Little Tern** were recovered this year, or rather their rings were recovered from the Peregrine nest on Chichester Cathedral. The Common Terns were both ringed as nestlings, one just 2 km away in 1995, and the other in Essex in the summer of 2008. The Little Tern had also been ringed as a nestling in Great Yarmouth (Norfolk) in the summer of 2006.

There was a late report of an adult **Razorbill** that was ringed on the Isle of Canna (Highlands) on 2 Jul 1985 and which was found freshly dead at Littlehampton on 20 Jan 2007, at an age of at least 23 years.

After the harsh winter conditions at either end of 2010 there were ten ringed **Barn Owls** found dead, the oldest being seven years old and having been ringed on the River Rother just over the border in Kent on 6 Jun 2003 and found in Rye, whilst the youngest was just nine months old and had only moved 3 km around Yapton.

Wood Pigeons do not get reported often, but a first-year ringed in Shoreham in September 2005 was shot 219 km away in Berville-La-Campagne (France) on 10 Jan 2007.

Some unorthodox movements of **Great Spotted Woodpeckers** were noted in 2010. There were two unusually large juvenile dispersal movements recorded with one from Bromhey Farm (Kent) moving 69 km to Bexhill where it hit a window, whilst the other was ringed in Horsham and five months later was found dead in Ivychurch (Kent) 86 km away. An adult male ringed at Pett Level on 1 Jul was caught again at Sandwich Bay 65 km away just three months later. Juvenile dispersal is known, but for an adult to move that far when it has settled in an area is very unusual and the reasons for this are not understood.

The two most interesting recoveries of **Sand Martins** involved a juvenile ringed in Errol (Scotland) on 5 Aug 2006 and caught at Pett Level four years and 11 days later on 16 Aug 2010, and an immature bird ringed at Pett Level on 9 Sep 2007 and caught in Norfolk on 11 Jul 2009 and then again in Oxfordshire on 10 Jun 2010. The latter bird, interestingly, had changed its breeding site over those two years.

During the invasion of **Waxwings** into Britain during the latter part of 2010 and into 2011, two colour-ringed birds were seen in the Horsham area on 23 Dec (JE). These had been ringed in Scotland on 30 Oct and 19 Nov, and had been seen elsewhere in the south-east as shown in Table 7. It is interesting to see how mobile this species is and it was noted by the team that do the colour-ringing in Scotland that this was the highest number of sightings there have ever been in the south-east of England in one year.

Table 7. *Sightings of colour-ringed Waxwings in the south-east of England in 2010.*

Ring number		Date	Location	Distance	Direction
NW49422	ringed	30/10/10	Ballaster, Deeside		
	sighted	09/12/10	Broadstairs, Kent	683 km	SSE
	sighted	23/12/10	Horsham, West Sussex	127 km	WSW
NW50473	ringed	19/11/10	Nellfield, Aberdeen		
	sighted	17/12/10	Isle of Wight	722 km	S
	sighted	23/12/10	Horsham, West Sussex	83 km	NE
	sighted	30/12/10	Sandwich, Kent	118 km	ENE

Some interesting recoveries of **Barn Swallows** came to light this year involving three that had been ringed in Spain (two in 2005 and one in 2006) which were all found in the county during the following season. However, the most interesting international recovery was of a bird ringed at Pett Level as an immature bird on 6 Oct 2005 which was shot just over 5000 km away in Nigeria on 1 Dec 2007. To add to these an adult male ringed on 31 May 2006 was found dead in the same stable nest in Plumpton where it was ringed, 1500 days later on 9 Jul 2010, showing how faithful these birds can be to breeding sites. The last record of interest was of an immature bird ringed at Pett Level in 2002 which was found dead in Rackham in 2010, seven years and seven months later, having travelled at least 64,000 km in its lifetime going to and from Africa each season.

International recoveries of **Robins** are almost annual in the county, but there have recently been four reported from different countries: an old report of a Dutch bird ringed on 1 Oct 2007 which was killed by a cat in Eastbourne on 17 Nov 2008; an immature bird ringed at Pett Level on 6 Oct 2008 which was then shot 1500 km away in Spain on 15 Jan 2010; another bird ringed at Pett Level on 19 Sep 2009 and found dead in Guernsey on 19 Feb 2010; and a Danish bird ringed on 26 Sep 2010 and found dead 24 days later in Chichester on 20 Oct 2010. In addition to these there was an exceptionally quick movement of an adult ringed in Barrow-in-Furness (Cumbria) on 12 Oct 2010 and caught just six days later at Pett Level, a distance of 436 km away.

There were only four notable reports of **Blackbirds**. Two adult males ringed at Pett Level in 2006 and 2007 were found dead in Denmark the following year; an adult male ringed in Sweden in 2006 was taken by cat in Coldean (Brighton) in 2007; and a juvenile male ringed at Pett Level in 2008 was found in Sweden in 2010.

A **Fieldfare** ringed at Northiam in late winter 2005 was recovered dead in Finland in the summer of 2006, whilst an interesting movement was noted of a bird that was ringed at Lundy Island (Devon) on 21 Oct 2007 and found dead in Littlehampton on 12 Nov 2007. This species rarely comes back to winter in the same area, so three birds which reappeared at Ockford Farm in Northiam after having been ringed there in previous winters was unusual.

Just two recoveries of note of **Song Thrushes** came through which involved a first-year bird ringed in Norway on 13 Oct 2001 and found dead near Brighton on 25 Mar 2006 and an immature bird ringed at Beachy Head on 9 Oct 2010 which was shot in Portugal just 12 days later on 21 Oct 2010. Both of these records are exceptional.

Highlights of recoveries of **Sedge Warblers** ringed at Pett Level included a first-year bird that was ringed on 26 Jul 2009 and found dead in Casablanca (Morocco) on 28 Mar 2010, and two birds which were caught at the same site in Portugal on 26 and 29 Aug 2010 after being ringed at Pett Level on 26 Jul and 12 Aug 2010, respectively.

Recoveries of **Eurasian Reed Warblers** at Pett Level included individuals ringed in Spain (4), The Netherlands (1), Portugal (1), Belgium (1) and Norway (1). The bird from Belgium was caught at Pett Level the day after it was ringed, after flying a distance of 272 km. The bird from Norway was ringed on 10 Aug 2010 and was caught at Pett Level on 4 Sep 2010, a distance of 1141 km in just 25 days. Four birds ringed in Sussex were recovered overseas in Morocco (1), Portugal (2) and Spain (1); these included a bird ringed at Litlington on 15 Sep 2007 and caught 1578 km SSW in Portugal just 13 days later. The only other record of note was of a bird ringed as an adult female in Hertfordshire on 26 May 2003 which was caught at Pett Level seven years and 66 days later on 31 Jul 2010.

There were a good number of continental recoveries of **Blackcaps** in Portugal (2), France (1), Spain (1), Gibraltar (1) and Algeria (1). All of these birds were ringed at Pett Level except the ones recovered in France and Gibraltar which were ringed at Beachy Head. The bird found in Algeria was a few years old being originally ringed in September 2006 and found dead in January 2010. The oldest bird recorded was a bird ringed at Pett Level on 19 Sep 2005 which was found dead at Westbere Marshes (Kent) on 19 Jul 2010 making it four years and 293 days old. The quickest movement noted was by a female ringed at Beachy Head on 27 Sep 2010 and caught 99 km away at Sandwich Bay (Kent) the following day.

There were very few notable recoveries of **Willow Warblers** received this year with just one foreign recovery which was ringed at Pett Level in August 2009 and caught in Madrid (Spain) in April 2010. A couple of other interesting records included a quick movement of a bird ringed at Dalchork (Scotland) on 8 Aug 2010 and caught 843 km away at Bognor Regis just 23 days later on 31 Aug 2010, and a bird which was ringed as a nestling in Capel (Surrey) on 10 Jun 2010 and caught 11 km south in Horsham on 10 Jul 2010. This latter bird was interesting as it had moved this distance in such a short period from its birth site and had only just started post-juvenile moult.

A juvenile **Common Chiffchaff** ringed at Warnham LNR on 3 Jul 2010 was caught 3 km away seven days later on the other side of Horsham although having still not started post-juvenile moult. A bird ringed at Beachy Head on 8 Sep 2009 and caught in Dorset on 11 Apr 2010 would possibly suggest that this bird chose to migrate out on the south-east coast, but arrived on the south-west coast, indicating the need for speed on spring migration to get to the best breeding grounds. Other highlights were two birds caught in Spain and another in Portugal of which only one was ringed at Pett Level.

Just a single recovery of a **Goldcrest** was of note which was an immature female ringed at Ockford Farm (Northiam) on 19 Nov 2008 and found dead at Saint Sauveur le Vicomte in France 76 days later and 233 km away on 3 Feb 2009.

Blue Tits do not generally move much further than about 3 km, so an immature bird ringed at Pett Level on 27 Sep 2010 and caught on 24 Dec 2010 in Southampton (145 km to the west) was very unusual.

A **Penduline Tit** seen at the ARC pit at Dungeness RSPB between 23 and 27 Oct and again on 4 Dec 2010 had its ring read and was originally ringed as a first-year bird at Pett Level on 9 Nov 2009. Obviously this bird was returning to the same area to spend the winter, but where had it been spending the summer?

A first-year female **Starling** that was ringed in Plumpton on 28 Dec 1984 was found long-dead

on 17 Mar 2010 just 2 km away and 25 years and four months later.

Two recoveries of **Chaffinches** from previous years were received in 2010, both of immature females. One was ringed in northern France in March 2006 and found dead in Broad Oak (Heathfield) in July 2007, and the other was ringed at Pett Level in November 2008 and found dead in the Loire region of France in April 2009. A second-year male ringed in the Highlands of Scotland in June 2009 was found dead in Crowborough in January 2010 having travelled 758 km.

There were some long-distance recoveries of **Goldfinches** involving birds migrating to or from as far away as North Yorkshire (377 km in 31 days), Merseyside (382 km in 2.5 years), Cleveland (413 km in 1.5 years), Colwyn Bay (349 km in 4.5 years), Gwynedd (355 km in 2 months) and Donegal (Ireland) (654 km in 40 days). This last recovery at Inch Island in Donegal was the fifth longest migration to be recorded within Britain ever, but in the shortest time and one of very few to involve crossing open water.

There were two late reports of **Siskins** ringed in East Grinstead in early 2006 being caught in April 2006 in Belgium and The Netherlands, about 400 km away. Returning winter visitors were noted with two birds ringed in February 2009 being caught again almost exactly a year later. A fast-moving migrant was a first-year male ringed in East Grinstead on 3 Apr 2009 and caught in Scotland on 25 Apr 2009, 587 km away and just 22 days later. A total of 61 Siskins ringed in Sussex have been found in Scotland, and the last cited was the 26th of these that had been ringed by a single East Grinstead ringer (RJS). The only other highlight was a juvenile female which was ringed on 25 May 2009 in Crowborough and which was found dead on 17 Jan 2010 in Glamorgan (Wales). This suggests that this potentially Sussex-bred bird was wintering in Wales.

The increased winter population of **Lesser Redpolls** in recent years has revealed a number of rapid movements from the north to the south of England, such as two immature birds ringed in Blackburn on 5 Sep 2010 and caught at Pett Level in mid- to late October 2010, although we are still waiting for a bird breeding in Sussex to get recovered anywhere. The only other interesting record was of an adult male ringed at Pett Level on 31 Oct 2004 and caught nearly four years and six months later on 25 Apr 2009 in Warrington (Cheshire).

A colour-ringed **Twite** was seen at Selsey Bill on 19 Oct 2010 (AH) having been ringed as a nestling on Rishworth Moor (West Yorkshire) in June 2010.

Gannets off the Sussex coast: their occurrence and origins

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Introduction

In the British Isles there are 21 colonies of Northern Gannet *Morus bassanus* (hereafter Gannet) with an estimated breeding population of 370,000 pairs which equates to 70% of the world population (Nelson 2002, Wanless *et al.* 2004, 2005). Gannets have never bred in Sussex, or indeed anywhere else along the south coast of England. The Gannet colonies closest to Sussex are at Ortac and Les Etecs, Alderney, Channel Islands which lie 200 km southwest of Brighton. Despite this, Gannets are recorded off the Sussex coast throughout the year. Shrubbs (1979) gave the status of Gannets as “common spring to autumn visitor offshore; rare in winter”. By 1996 the Gannet’s status had changed sufficiently for James (1996) to re-classify it as “a fairly common passage migrant and summer visitor; once scarce but now increasingly common in winter”. So where are the Gannets that we see coming from and going to? In order to attempt to answer those questions it is necessary to look briefly at the Gannet’s life cycle.

A Gannet’s life

Gannets live for an average of over 15 years. Immature birds obtain adult plumage in their fourth year but do not breed until their fifth or sixth year (Nelson 1978).

Gannets spend the winter to the south of their colonies with young birds in particular moving as far south as the coast of Mauritania (Wanless 2002). Older birds do not move as far south and some adults winter in British waters. Surveys by Skov *et al.* (1995) suggest that some 17,000 Gannets winter in the English Channel although half of those were off the French coast. Adult Gannets return to the British and Irish colonies from early January onwards but at least a month later at the most northerly colonies. Non-breeding birds return later, normally from mid-March onwards, and also depart again earlier than either adult or juvenile birds.

When juvenile Gannets leave the nest they disperse widely and frequently move north before migrating southwards (Sharrock 1965, Nelson 2002). Breeding birds remain at the colonies for several weeks after the young have fledged. As a result of the various departure times of immature, juvenile and adult birds, the southerly migration of Gannets can last from mid-July to late November.

Gannets off the Sussex coast through the year

Table 1 shows the average number of Gannets recorded during the year at four sea-watching points in Sussex in the period 2000-2009. As the total hours of observer coverage influence the numbers, the average number per hour is also given. It is noticeable that during each period of the year the number of Gannets moving westwards is higher in the west of the county with easterly movements being more pronounced in the east.

As mentioned earlier, Gannets return to the British colonies from early January onwards and Newnham (1987) suggested that the easterly movements of birds off the Sussex coast in the early part of the year were adults returning to breed. The fact that nearly 99% of Gannets recorded in January are adults supports that theory (see Figure 1). Although vast numbers of Gannets return to their colonies at this time, no large movements are recorded in Sussex with maximum daily counts exceeding 200 on only twelve occasions in the past ten years with more than 300 birds

just five times. However, feeding movements can result in sizeable parties building up during the period December-February with counts of 200 or more on twelve occasions including 1500 off Brighton Marina in early January 2002 and 2500 off Worthing in late December 2005. These are most likely to be birds that are feeding prior to moving to the more northerly colonies.

Table 1. *The average numbers of Gannets recorded during the year at four seawatching points in Sussex in the period 2000-2009.*

		Jan-Feb		Mar-May		Jun-Jul		Aug-Oct		Nov-Dec	
		E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	Average no.	128	566	787	983	401	1025	420	2911	83	717
	No per hour	2.3	1.0	2.1	2.6	2.9	7.4	2.8	19.6	1.0	8.8
Worthing Beach	Average no.	187	233	379	335	106	163	254	903	137	686
	No per hour	6.5	8.1	2.7	2.4	3.9	6.0	4.5	15.9	3.1	15.3
Telscombe Cliffs	Average no.	540	209	517	115	450	144	598	993	171	464
	No per hour	11.5	4.5	6.4	1.4	17.7	5.8	15.3	25.5	5.9	16.1
Splash Point, Seaford	Average no.	448	115	1903	268	226	17	164	29	351	92
	No per hour	10.4	3.6	8.4	1.2	30.5	2.4	14.6	2.6	14.9	3.9

Easterly movements continue to be noted during March, April and May, particularly in the east of the county. In contrast to those earlier in the year the movements contain many more immature birds. Counts at Telscombe Cliffs during the period 2000-2009 show that the percentage rises from just 3% in February to 40% in May. Many of these immature birds will be returning to their natal colonies as non-breeding birds.

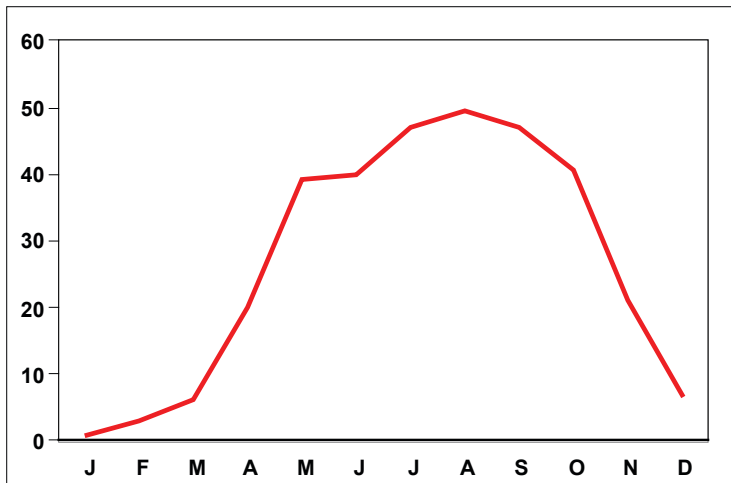


Figure 1. *The monthly percentages of immature birds seen amongst Gannets off the Sussex coast.*

Feeding parties are noted more frequently during the summer months but do not reach the size of those recorded in the early part of the year. Some of the birds involved probably originate from the nearest breeding colonies but also include immature birds (almost 50% of the total) which are summering in the English Channel (Newnham 1987, James 1996). The Sussex coast is certainly within the feeding range of the Gannet colonies off Alderney. Ringing recoveries led Cramp and Simmons (1977) to suggest a feeding range of possibly up to 640 km but Nelson (1978,1997) pointed out that the Gannets recovered were not proven to be breeding birds and suggested a range of 320-480 km from a breeding colony. Satellite tracking of Gannets by Hamer *et al.* (2000) showed that breeding Gannets flew almost directly to their feeding grounds. This being the case, Gannets from the Alderney colonies could reach as far as the Voordelta area of the southern North Sea from where there have been several recoveries of birds ringed on Alderney (Veron 1988). Non-breeding birds with no parental duties are free to forage over a much wider area and the percentage of immature birds increases with distance from the breeding colonies (Camphuysen 2005, 2011) with some visiting other colonies (Votier *et al.* 2010). During the summer months there are almost equal numbers of adult and immature Gannets off the Sussex coast.

At the end of the breeding season Gannets disperse widely before migrating southwards. Ringing recoveries show that juveniles from the Alderney colonies move eastwards to the Dover Straits (Veron 1988) with one immature bird reaching the coast of Northumberland. There have been recoveries in Sussex of birds ringed as chicks at not only the Alderney colonies but also from Scottish and Welsh gannetries.

Autumn migration from mid-September onwards is the time when the largest movements of Gannets are noted off the coast of Sussex. In the past ten years there have been seven daily counts of over 1000 birds moving west and a further twenty three days on which numbers have exceeded 500. With immature birds migrating earlier than breeding adults the percentage of immatures falls sharply after mid-October and continues to drop through to the end of the year.

Why are relatively low numbers recorded?

In excess of half a million Gannets from British and other eastern Atlantic colonies move south each autumn and north again each spring. Given such a high figure it does appear that the numbers recorded off the Sussex coast are relatively low. In the absence of satellite tracking the precise migration routes of Gannets are not known but evidence from ringing recoveries and land-based observations does provide a fairly clear picture.

Many more birds migrate via the Irish Sea than do through the English Channel. In addition, many (mainly adults) from the more northerly colonies may winter to the north of the Channel. It is also clear that the location of the Isle of Wight is a major influence on the routes taken by Gannets moving through the English Channel. Although large numbers of Gannets do build up to the west of the Isle of Wight on occasions they rarely pass through the Solent, preferring instead to move south of the Isle of Wight (Robin Attrill and Keith Batten *pers. comm.*). The majority of Gannets moving off the south coast of the Isle of Wight are likely to be out of sight of land-based observers in Sussex. A clear indication of this occurred on 15 August 2007 when 4848 Gannets moved east past St Catherine's Point, Isle of Wight but only 80 were recorded at Selsey Bill. Birds moving eastwards in spring appear to come closer to land after passing the Sussex coast. At Dungeness, Kent, daily counts of over 500 birds are a regular occurrence (but never in Sussex) and exceed 1500 on occasions (Andrew Henderson *pers. comm.*). Even more Gannets appear to move eastwards along the southern side of the Channel with daily counts in spring at Cap Gris-Nez, Nord-Pas-de-Calais regularly exceeding 3000 and over 11,000 on one occasion.

A similar situation occurs in the autumn with Dungeness, Kent, recording over 1000 Gannets

moving west on up to four days in a single month and sometimes exceeding 2000 in a day. The bias towards the southern side of the Channel is even more pronounced in autumn. Ringing recoveries show that Gannets from both British and other eastern Atlantic colonies take this route (Barret 1988, Wanless 2002). Even more conclusive evidence comes from Cap Gris-Nez where peak day counts regularly exceed 10,000 with over 16,000 on at least three occasions. To put those figures into perspective, 16,000 in a single day is greater than that ever recorded in an entire year at any Sussex sea-watching site!

The future for Gannets

The breeding population of Gannets at British and Irish colonies rose at a mean rate of 2% per annum during the past thirty years. The only limits on further increases appear to be the availability of nest sites and of food supplies.

Some of the colonies on the Scottish islands have probably reached their capacity in terms of available nest sites while others, such as Bempton, Humberside, continue to grow (Moss *et al.* 2002). In addition, new colonies have been founded elsewhere in the eastern Atlantic in northern Norway and northwest Russia.

Gannets feed on a wide variety of fish species. Cramp and Simmons (1977) list twenty species of which the commonest prey appear to be Mackerel *Scomber scombrus*, Herring *Clupea harengus*, Sandeel *Ammodytes tobianus* and Sprat *Sprattus sprattus*. Species such as Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla* and Common Guillemot *Uria aalge* which rely heavily on sandeels have suffered some disastrous breeding seasons in recent years due to the lack of their main prey. However, studies by Martin (1989) showed that Gannets were able to vary the prey brought to their chicks depending on availability with no detrimental effect on breeding success. Hamer *et al.* (2007) attribute the continued breeding success of Gannets to this flexibility in the species of prey consumed coupled with the duration and range of foraging trips.

With no natural predators, an ability to forage over large areas and adaptability in the prey consumed, the future for Gannets appears healthy. This in turn should see a continued increase in the numbers recorded off the Sussex coast.

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Ashdown Forest Nightjar survey 2010

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Introduction

In 2010 Natural England commissioned a survey of Nightjar populations in specific areas including the Ashdown Forest as part of their statutory responsibility to monitor Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), and the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) was awarded the contract to organise the survey work using volunteers and to analyse the resulting data. This Nightjar survey was not a comprehensive national survey of the species, but a national survey of all SSSIs where the species is a notified feature. The results of the survey of the Ashdown Forest are presented here, and compared with previous survey results for the same area.

Method

The only area to be surveyed in Sussex was the Ashdown Forest SSSI. All 1-km grid squares that contain any part of the SSSI were allocated to volunteers, and for each square volunteers were provided with a recording form which included a map showing the extent of the SSSI within that grid square. Within each SSSI area the volunteers identified areas of potentially suitable Nightjar habitat, and then carried out the survey in those areas, according to instructions provided.

A minimum of two visits were required to each 1-km square, either at dawn or dusk, and all potentially suitable habitat within each square was checked for the presence of churring male Nightjars. Surveys were carried out between the end of May and mid-July, with visits at least two weeks apart and with at least one visit in June. On each visit, the locations of churring male Nightjars were marked as accurately as possible on the map provided. When the visits to a square were completed, volunteers were asked to review their map and make an estimate of the number of males present in the 1-km square. Volunteers were also asked to mark the locations of any Nightjars heard outside the 1-km square on the borders of the map, or on a larger map on the back of the recording form, but not to include these Nightjars in the population estimate for the 1-km square.

The maps produced by the volunteers were analysed by BTO staff. All mapped Nightjar registrations were plotted digitally and individual territories were identified using a consistent approach across the entire survey area (Conway *et al.* 2007). Nightjar registrations were considered to represent separate territories where (1) volunteers identified different individuals on maps, such as simultaneously churring males; (2) churring male registrations were over 350 m apart; or (3) groups of registrations, from sequential visits, indicated discrete territories. Nightjars that were heard in May only were considered to be passage birds and were excluded from the population calculation.

Results

There are 72 1-km squares which contain some part of the Ashdown Forest SSSI, and 11 of these were judged by the volunteers to have no suitable habitat for breeding Nightjars. The remaining 61 squares were all surveyed. In 20 of these squares, some of which have very small areas of suitable habitat, no Nightjars were seen or heard during the survey visits. In the 41 squares where Nightjars were recorded, volunteers provided widely varying population estimates, the variation being partly dependent on the varying areas of the SSSI and varying areas of suitable habitat within each square.

Using the analysis method outlined above, a population estimate of 83 territories within the Ashdown Forest SSSI was determined from the survey data. A further three territories were identified outside the area of the SSSI and there were two registrations of presumed passage birds. Figure 1 shows the extent of the SSSI, the 1-km squares surveyed, and the centres of the 86 territories identified.

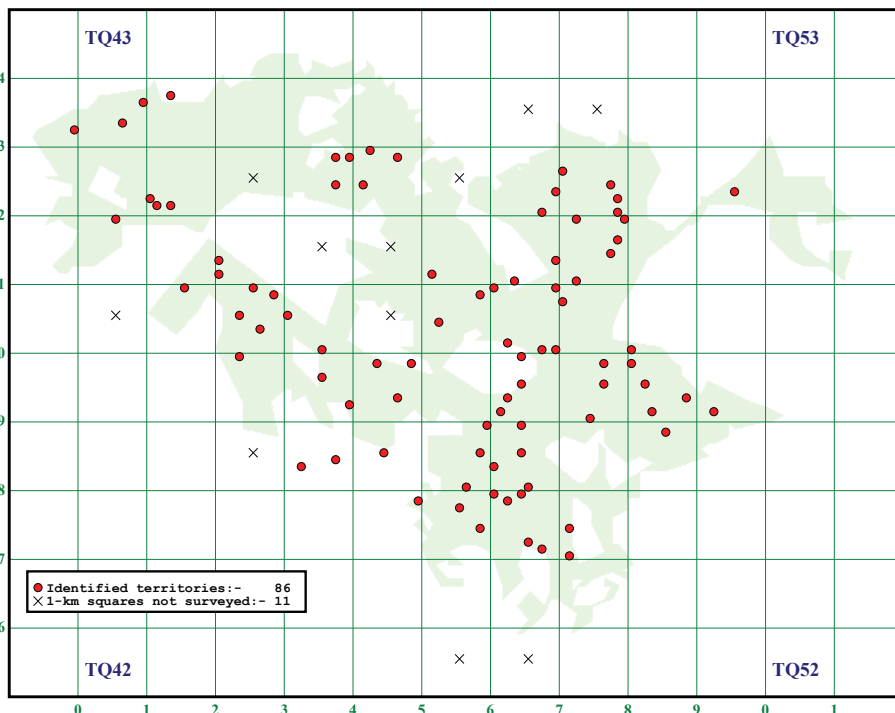


Figure 1. Nightjar territories in the Ashdown Forest area identified through the 2010 survey. The extent of the Ashdown Forest SSSI is indicated by the pale green shading, and the 1-km squares indicated (x) were not surveyed because they were judged to contain no suitable habitat. All other squares containing any part of the Ashdown Forest SSSI were surveyed. Territory centres are indicated by red symbols.

Discussion

The population estimate derived from this survey can be compared with the results of previous surveys of Nightjars within the Ashdown Forest area. In 2004 a national Nightjar survey was organised by the BTO, with the intention of locating all breeding Nightjars at known and potentially suitable sites. The survey methods used nationally were identical to those used in the current survey, but in the Ashdown Forest area Nightjar recording was not carried out according to this recommended survey methodology. However, using all of the available information and using exactly the same analysis method as outlined above, 85 territories were identified by the BTO within the Ashdown Forest SSSI area. The population estimate of 83 territories within the SSSI in 2010 is only 2% lower than the estimate of 85 territories in 2004, and the Ashdown Forest Nightjar population can therefore be considered to have remained more or less stable since 2004.

The total of 85 territories within the SSSI in 2004 is the population estimate determined by the BTO using their standard analysis methods (Conway *et al.* 2007). However, a population estimate of only 67 territories was reported by Perry (2004), apparently determined from the same records received from within the Ashdown Forest area. It seems that this difference in estimates can partly be explained by some surveys of private land having been conducted by the BTO in 2005, with the territories identified from these surveys having been included in the BTO estimate but not within the estimate reported within the county. Some of the difference between the two conclusions might also be explained by differences in interpretation. The population estimate of 67 territories in 2004 reported by Perry (2004) was determined by analysis of the records received by the Sussex Ornithological Society. These records lacked any information on how registrations related to each other, such as whether birds were heard churring simultaneously, and the analysis used different criteria to identify separate territories, so clearly this population estimate would be expected to differ from that derived using the standard BTO method described above. The key point, however, is that the population estimate of 85 territories in 2004 was determined using the same method of analysis as that used to determine the population estimate of 83 territories in 2010, and the survey coverage was similar even though there were some differences in the recording methods, so these two population estimates can be directly compared.

An earlier national Nightjar survey in 1992 used the same two-visit survey method as both the 2004 survey and the current survey, although the analysis methods were different and observer estimates were used to determine population estimates (Morris *et al.* 1994). In Sussex, most of the fieldwork for this survey was carried out in 1991 as part of a pilot study for the national survey. Halls (1992) reported that 47 territories were identified within the Ashdown Forest area in 1991, but suggested that only 23 1-km squares were surveyed, so it is difficult to make any comparisons between these results and the results of either the 2004 survey or the current survey. Conway *et al.* (2007) reported that the number of territories identified in Sussex increased from 175 in 1991-1992 to 243 in 2004, but from the information available it is impossible to determine whether an increase in the Ashdown Forest population contributed to this apparent increase in the Sussex population, especially as the survey coverage and analysis methods were not comparable between the two surveys.

Population estimates derived from the 1992 survey data were adjusted to compensate for a potential underestimate due to the use of a two-visit rather than a more intensive survey method (Morris *et al.* 1994). However, because of the standard analysis method used in both the 2004 national survey and the current survey, with the application of the 350-m threshold to distinguish between different males, no adjustment was made to the 2004 or 2010 population estimates to compensate for the use of a two-visit method (Conway *et al.* 2007). The 350-m threshold used to distinguish between different males was designed to be applied in all habitats including forestry plantations, and is thought to be conservative for heathland habitats where densities may be higher than in plantations (Lake 2004), so the population estimate of 83 territories in the Ashdown Forest SSSI in 2010 is likely to be a conservative underestimate.

The next national survey is due to take place in 2016. With the use of exactly the same survey and analysis methods as those outlined above, the survey in 2016 will provide an updated population estimate for the Ashdown Forest SSSI, and also for the first time a population estimate for Sussex which will be directly comparable with that derived from the 2004 survey results.

Conclusion

This survey has provided Natural England with information about the current numbers of nightjars within the Ashdown Forest SSSI. A population estimate of 83 territories within the

Ashdown Forest SSSI in 2010 was determined from the survey data, and a further three territories were identified outside the area of the SSSI. This compares with 85 territories identified in the Ashdown Forest area in 2004, and the population can therefore be considered to have remained stable since 2004, no doubt due to habitat protection within the SSSI area. This information will be important in helping to ensure that the status of the Ashdown Forest as an SSSI is retained.

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Breeding Cormorant survey 2010

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Introduction

In 2010 a survey was carried out to establish how many Great Cormorants *Phalacrocorax carbo*, hereafter referred to as Cormorants, were nesting in Sussex. A survey of breeding seabirds on the cliffs of Sussex in 1984 (Prater 1985) did not record any breeding Cormorants, and the first record of breeding Cormorants in Sussex in the twentieth century was of a single pair at Fairlight Cliffs in 1985 (Watson 1996). In 1999 a survey of breeding Cormorants in the county was conducted as part of the Seabird 2000 survey (Newnham *et al.* 2001). The 2010 survey updates the 1999 results.

Method

All records of breeding and roosting Cormorants for the years 2005 to 2009 were extracted from the SOS database. These records included any Atlas records captured during 2008 and 2009.

All sites for which the SOS had records of Cormorants nesting, or of wintering Cormorants roosting in trees, were surveyed. There were a handful of cases where the records were of roosting Cormorants, but it was unclear whether the roost was in a tree or on a pylon. These sites were also visited. The many roosting sites where Cormorants were specifically recorded as roosting on pylons, were, however, not inspected. In all a total of 12 sites were surveyed.

The survey was carried out between mid-April and mid-June 2010, as the majority of the breeding records were dated between early May and early June. The surveyors were asked to count the number of Apparently Occupied Nests (AONs), which was the same methodology used in the Seabird 2000 survey. Since only 12 sites were involved the surveyors were selected on the basis of their familiarity with the sites concerned and all sites were successfully surveyed.

In 2011 the 2010 Cormorant records were reviewed and it was confirmed that the SOS had received no additional records of breeding birds to those recorded in the 2010 survey. Also, on 19 May 2011 a survey from the sea of the chalk cliffs between Newhaven and Beachy Head established that neither breeding Cormorants nor suitable nesting locations existed at this site, which can only be comprehensively surveyed from the sea.

Results

A minimum of 225 AONs were counted at four sites in the county as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. *The number of Apparently Occupied Nests at four sites in Sussex.*

Location	Grid reference	Number of AONs
County total	-	225
Chichester GP, New Lake	SU877027	69 ± 2
Iford Brooks, Lewes	TQ419077	26 (minimum)
Carter's Pit, Rye Hbr	TQ930190	37
Castle Water, Rye Hbr	TQ925187	93

The nesting sites at Iford Brooks were at two adjacent locations, one in trees on the bank of the lake with eight nests and the other in broken down trees on a nearby island on the lake. The latter

were difficult to count accurately. The observer recorded 18 nests in the trees on the island, but stated that this was a minimum count. Eight other sites were also visited, but no nests were found at any of them, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. *The eight sites visited with no evidence of Cormorant nests. One nest was recorded at the Knepp Estate in 2009.*

Location	Grid reference
Chingford Pond	SU9612/SU9712
Burton MP	SU9712
North Stoke, Arun Valley	TQ0110
Knepp Estate	TQ1521
Wiston Pond, near Steyning	TQ1612
Warnham LNR	TQ1732
Ardingly Res	TQ3329
Bewl Water	TQ6733

Discussion

The Seabird 2000 survey of nesting sea birds counted nesting Cormorants at four sites: Iford Brooks, Fairlight Cliff and the two Rye Hbr sites. This was believed to cover the county breeding population at that time. This survey included New Lake, where no breeding Cormorants were recorded. (The first record of breeding at New Lake dates from 2008.)

The number of AONs recorded in the 1999 and 2010 surveys are compared in Table 3.

Table 3. *The number of Apparently Occupied Nests counted in 1999 and 2010.*

Location	AONs 1999	AONs 2010
Chichester GP, New Lake	0	69
Iford Brooks	2 or 3	26
Fairlight Cliffs	2	0
Rye Hbr	107	130
County total	111/112	225

The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) *Seabird Monitoring Programme* (JNCC 2011) states that historically Cormorant was almost exclusively a coastal breeding species in England. In 1986 there were only 151 inland nests at a single site in England, whereas the latest estimate (JNCC) is that the English population of 2896 breeding pairs is split between 1581 inland AONs in trees and 1315 coastal AONs. The inland breeding is thought to have been fuelled by the immigration of birds of the continental race *sinensis* from Denmark and the Netherlands. The 2011 JNCC report indicates that between 1985-88 and 1998-2002 the national Cormorant population increased by 10%, but that in the period 2000-10 it has decreased by 7%. Because of concerns about damage to fish stocks the Department for the Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) now permit culling where damage to fish stocks demonstrably justifies this, and such licensed culling may contribute to the recent decline in the national population.

The Seabird 2000 survey did not record any nests at Beachy Head and no survey from the sea was attempted, but it did record two nests on the cliffs at Fairlight, down from 28 in 1992 (Watson 1996). There are no records of breeding Cormorants at Fairlight Cliffs during the period 2005-10.

It would therefore appear that the number of Cormorant AONs, and by inference the number of breeding pairs, has increased in the county from nil in 1984 to 111-112 in 1999 and to 225 in 2010, a 101% increase over the last 11 years, with New Lake having rapidly become established as a major breeding site in the west of the county, substantial expansion of the Iford Brooks site and continued growth at the two Rye Hbr sites. However, Fairlight Cliffs appear to no longer be in use as a breeding site. With 225 AONs in 2010 the Sussex breeding population is 7.7% of the English breeding population.

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Breeding Sand Martin survey 2010

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Introduction

In 2010 a survey was carried out to establish how many Sand Martins *Riparia riparia* were nesting in Sussex. The only previous survey in the county was carried out in 1985-86 (Edgar 1986) and was in response to a perceived serious decline in breeding numbers, which Shrubbs (1979) had estimated may have peaked as high as just under 4000 pairs between 1965 and 1972. The 1985-86 survey showed that numbers had indeed declined, by 95%, with an average of only 150 burrows in use. Nationally a population crash was evident over the same period, due to droughts in the west African wintering areas, which also affected other trans-Saharan migrants (Edgar 1986). However, the 1988-92 Sussex Breeding Tetrad Atlas indicated that numbers had recovered to about 700-750 active burrows (Edgar 1996).

Method

All records of breeding Sand Martins for the last 15 years (1995 to 2009) were extracted from the SOS database. These included records from the first two seasons of the 2007-11 Wintering and Breeding Bird Atlas. From this, 12 sites, 11 in the west of the county, were identified where nesting colonies had been recorded since 1995. Arrangements were made to survey these using

people familiar with the sites. It is believed that all the major colonies were counted, but as in the 1985-86 survey it is “possible that some small colonies on river banks, cliffs or holes in masonry” (Edgar 1986) may have been missed.

Counting the number of nests in a Sand Martin colony is not straightforward, and judgement needs to be applied to estimate the number of burrows actively being used as nests. All sites contained considerable numbers of unoccupied nest holes from previous years, so surveyors had to spend some time at each site and judge the number of holes that were currently being used as nest burrows. Where young had hatched and were watching the world from the entrance to the burrow it was easy to record that that burrow was in use. Other burrows had to be judged to be in use by noting birds entering or leaving them. Sand Martins tend to forage for food close to their nests but have been recorded foraging up to 6 km away (BWPI) so at least an hour had to be spent at each colony to make a reasonable estimate of occupied nesting burrows. Surveyors also had to be aware of the tendency of newly fledged juveniles to make exploratory visits to other burrows. The resulting counts are therefore best estimates, rather than certainties. The surveys were all conducted between mid-May and mid-June.

Results

The numbers of estimated nests at the seven occupied sites totalled 391, as shown in Table 1. The low, but vertical, north face of the Stedham/Minsted pit collapsed over the winter of 2010/11. In 2011 the Sand Martins created a new colony on the south face of the pit. This is a recently cut face and new regulations mean that it is cut with a face which is angled at c.70 degrees rather than being vertical. All the young were predated by Carrion Crows *Corvus corone* who according to site workmen were able to get to the entrances of the burrows on this face. Such new regulations could have increasing implications for nesting success in future years as new faces are cut at sand pits.

Five other sites were also visited, but no nests were found at any of them, as shown in Table 2. In 2010 Arundel WWT remodelled the Peter Scott hide to add 300 artificial burrows for Sand Martins. No Sand Martins nested in them in 2010 or 2011, although two pairs started to nest-build in 2011, but abandoned the attempt after one was predated by a Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*.

Discussion

The estimated numbers of nests recorded in the 1985-86 and 2010 surveys are compared in Table 3.

Table 1. *The estimated numbers of Sand Martin nests at seven sites in Sussex.*

Location	Grid reference	Nests	Comments
<i>County total</i>	-	391	
West Heath sand pit	SU7822	10	NW corner; old colony abandoned
Stedham/Minsted sand pit	SU8521	13	N. side; collapsed winter 2010/11
E. Lavant, Valdoe Wood	SU8708	80	
Pendean sand pit	SU8919	130	Non-working pit; over 250 burrows
Heath End/Duncton sand pit	SU9618	40	E side; colony on S face abandoned
Coates Common	TQ0017	20	
Storrington, Sandgate	TQ1014	98	In three colonies

Table 2. Five sites visited with no evidence of Sand Martin nests.

Location	Grid reference	Notes
Nyewood	SU8022	Collapsed faces are now heavily vegetated
Eartham	SU9309	
Arundel WWT	TQ0208	Artificial nest bank opened in 2010
Washington, Rock Common	TQ1213	Last used in 2008
Rye Hbr	TQ91	No nests

Table 3. The estimated numbers of nests counted in 1985-86 (averaged) and 2010.

Location	Average nests 1985-86	Nests 2010
Sandhills/Nyewood	4	01
West Heath sand pit	7	10
Stedham/Minsted sand pit	0	13
E. Lavant, Valdoe Wood	Pit did not exist	80
Pendean sand pit	30	130
Heath End sand pit	12	40
Bognor Common	2	0
Coates Common	40	20
Storrington, Sandgate	27	98
Washington, Rock Common	9	0
Streat	6	nc
Rye Hbr	1	0
East Guldeford	12	nc
County total	150	391

It can be seen in Table 3 that in 2010 the number of nests had more than doubled from the low point of the 1985-86 survey. What is also noticeable in Table 3 is that in 2010 no Sand Martins were recorded nesting in the east of the county. In 2011 the BTO Atlas database and the SOS database were also checked to see whether any additional sites had been recorded with breeding colonies in the period 2008-11. The former identified records of two breeding sites in the east of the county. The first was at TQ61V where at least three pairs were recorded nesting in the bank of Waller's Haven in 2008. This site was not checked in 2010. The second was a small colony in the bank of the R Brede (TQ9117) in 2011. It was confirmed that the latter site was not used in 2010 (P. Jones *pers. comm.*). The SOS has no other records of Sand Martins breeding in the east of the county since 1995.

The BTO website (2010) notes that nationally Sand Martin numbers fluctuate significantly from year to year with no long-term trend discernable. Survival rates are heavily dependent on rainfall levels in both breeding and wintering grounds. Heavy rainfall in the breeding grounds adversely affects winter survival rates (Cowley and Siriwardena 2005). Minimum monthly rainfall in the wet season in the wintering grounds improves survival, and therefore abundance in the UK (Robinson *et al.* 2008), as does heavy rainfall there prior to migration to the UK (Szép 1995).

In comparing the results of the 1985-86 and 2010 surveys it should be noted that 1985 was the year that nationally Sand Martins reached their lowest population after severe Sahel droughts in 1983-84 (Jones 1994), so it is probable, given the annual fluctuations in the national population, that the Sussex population in any survey year will be strongly influenced by what has happened

to the national population in that year. At the time of writing (September 2011) it is not yet clear whether 2010 was a “good” or “poor” year nationally for Sand Martins, but it will be important to assess this over the next few years.

The British population was estimated to be between 63,000 and 211,000 pairs in 2000, so the Sussex population is only about 0.5% of the national total. Sand Martin is an amber-listed species because of concerns about its European rather than its British status.

Summary

The Sussex population of breeding Sand Martins has recovered from the low point of the mid-1980s, but remains well below the levels seen in the 1960s before the national crash in the population brought about by drought problems in the west African wintering area. The population of this species fluctuates markedly from year to year both nationally and locally, so it is worthy of periodic survey in order to better understand long-term trends in the county’s breeding population, and to assess whether the chosen survey years are good or bad ones for Sand Martins nationally, as this will heavily influence Sussex survey results. Such surveys need to also ensure that sufficient time is spent at the nesting sites to obtain the best possible estimates of the breeding numbers of these birds.

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Terns of Rye Bay

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Introduction

Rye Bay provides several safe nesting sites for large numbers of terns to breed and usually has the good supply of small fish required for successful breeding. Six species of tern have been recorded nesting along the coast of Rye Bay and this paper describes the changes in fortunes of the populations and several factors that influence their numbers and distribution.

These noisy terneries provide an attraction for passing rarer species and a further eight species of tern have been recorded in Rye Bay making it one of the top tern sites in the UK.

Location

Rye Bay is a large area, about 57 km², of shallow sea with a sandy and muddy bed between the headlands of Fairlight and Dungeness, 22 km apart. The bay straddles the Kent/East Sussex border and along its coast there are many discrete sites that offer nesting opportunities for terns (Figure 1). All of the current nesting sites are contained within the 9137-ha Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay SSSI and include Dungeness RSPB, Rye Harbour Nature Reserve and Pett Level. Rye Bay has a long history as an inshore fishery and a small fishing fleet still survives. There is a large tidal range and a falling tide often strands fish in shallow waters that lead to a feeding frenzy of seabirds. During the winter when the terns are in Africa the fish resource is exploited by large numbers of Great Crested Grebes and Red-throated Divers.

Breeding Terns

The breeding tern data was extracted from several sources: annual county bird reports and avifaunas, annual reports of the Hastings and East Sussex Naturalists (HESN), annual reports of Rye Harbour Nature Reserve, several site managers, the notebooks of John Ashbee and two books by Axell (1992) and Alexander (1974). Reading both of these latter two books to give a good background into the status of many other breeding birds in the early twentieth century is highly recommended.

Little Tern

At Dungeness (Kent) nesting has been reported at several sites: along the west beach, the east beach, Greatstone, Holmstone, Brooks, Galloways and Denge Marsh, and in Sussex at The Midrips, Wicks, Northpoint Beach, Camber Beach Bank, Nook Beach, Rye Harbour and Pett Level (Figure 2). However, since 1978 nesting has occurred almost entirely at Rye Harbour with the exceptions of 2000 when the colony moved to The Midrips, and 2008 and 2009 when none nested. This current very limited choice of suitable nesting sites makes the Rye Bay population of Little Terns vulnerable to long-lived predators who can learn how to prey on them, especially Kestrels. At Rye Harbour the success of the Little Tern colony has varied greatly (Figure 3). It is in only 16 out of 38 years that the colony has produced the 0.65 fledged chicks per pair that is considered the level of productivity necessary to maintain the population (Ratcliffe 2000). Much of the loss during the last 25 years has been due to Kestrels preying on chicks.

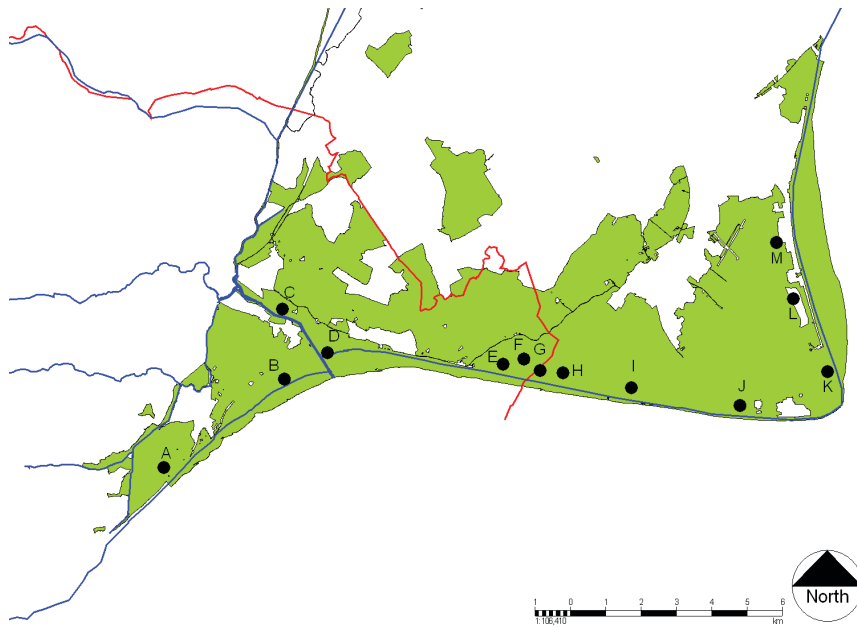


Figure 1. Map of tern breeding sites in Rye Bay. Red line, Kent/Sussex border; green shaded area, SSSI; A, Pett Level; B, Rye Harbour; C, Northpoint Pit; D, Camber shingle bank; E, The Midrips; F, Wicks; G, Holmstone; H, Brooks; I, Denge Marsh; J, West Beach; K, East Beach; L, Water Tower; M, Greatstone.

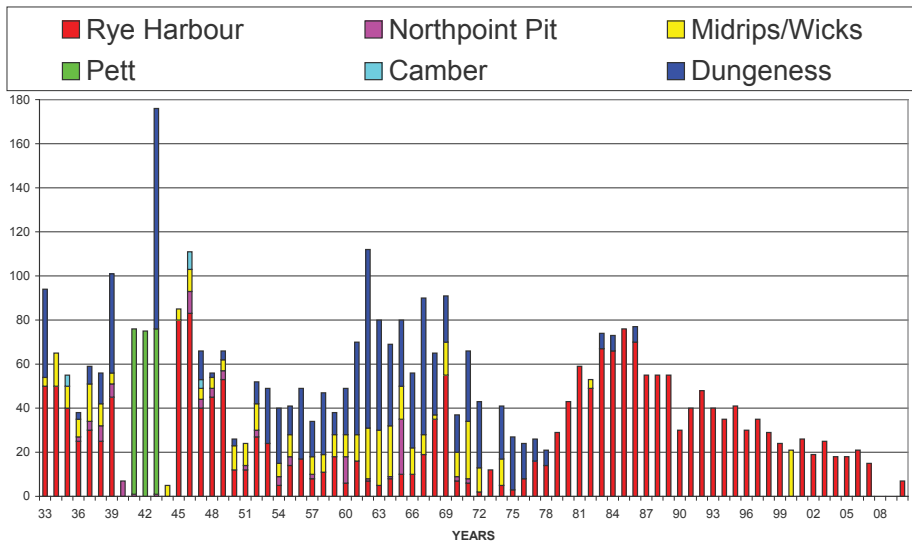


Figure 2. Little Tern breeding numbers (pairs) in Rye Bay.

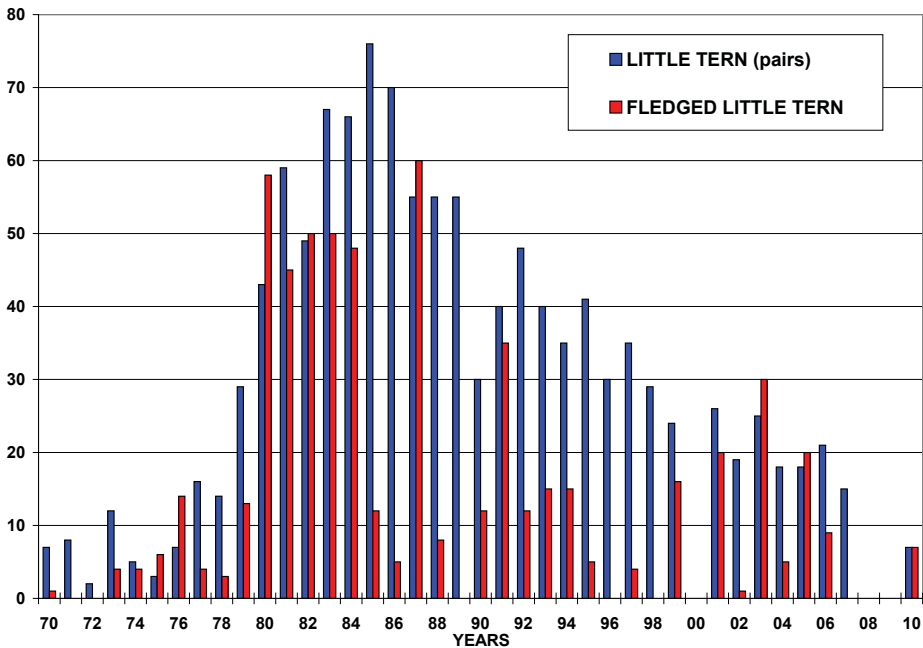


Figure 3. Little Tern population and productivity at Rye Harbour.

The persistence of this vulnerable beach-nesting bird at a site that has in excess of 150,000 visitors a year and many foxes and badgers is mainly down to the development of electric fencing since 1978 (see Appendix 1).

The re-colonisation of Rye Bay in 2010, after two blank years, was encouraged by the use of decoys and a sound recording at Rye Harbour Nature Reserve which were positioned at an historic nesting site within the protection of electric fencing.

Common Tern

In 1915 and 1933 there were 1000 pairs reported as nesting on the west beach at Dungeness (and probably did so in the intervening years) (HESN). During the 1940s and 1950s there were repeated reports (HESN) of the declining colony being persecuted by the collection of eggs and an increase in predation. Nesting has been widespread (Figure 4), including at sites up to 2 km inland, and individuals feed at least 8 km inland along the river Rother.

Sandwich Tern

It is thought that Sandwich Terns nested regularly at Dungeness until 1847, but then only single pairs nested in 1896, 1935 and 1939 (Taylor *et al.* 1981). In 1978 seven pairs settled at Dungeness and the colony reached a maximum of 350 by 1985. In 1984 the first two pairs nested at Rye Harbour, but none nested the following year. During the next decade the Rye Bay population moved between the two sites. In 1987 none nested at Dungeness, but 125 did so at Rye Harbour raising at least 50 young, and in the following year the pattern was reversed.

These birds last nested at Dungeness in 1997 and since 2001 there has been a steady increase in the population at Rye Harbour reaching an all-time peak of 750 pairs in 2010 (Figure 5). This represents about 7% of the UK population (Mitchell 2004). During the period 1996-2001 the Rye Bay population was very small and many pairs may have relocated to the adjacent French coast at La Reserve Naturelle du Platier d'Oye (established in 1987), just east of Calais about 80 km east of Dungeness. Since 1996 more than 200 pairs have nested at this French site.

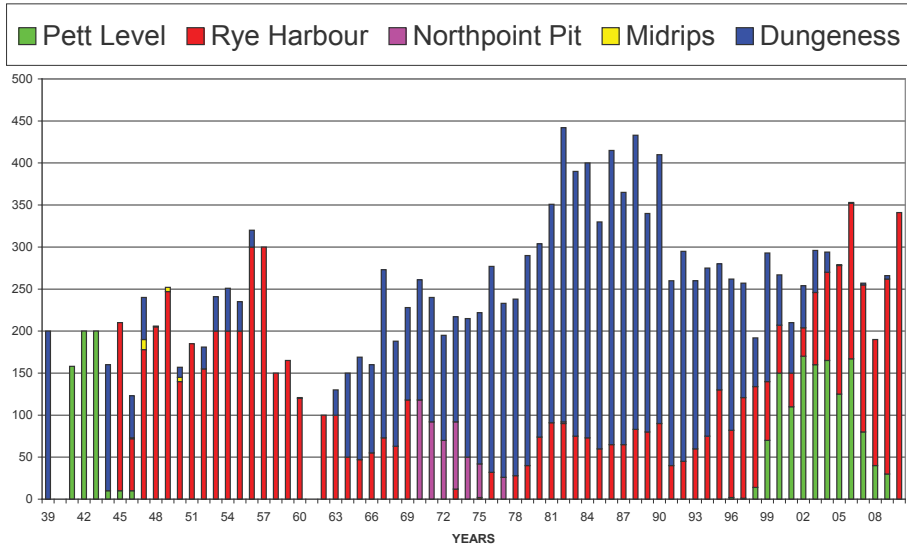


Figure 4. Common Tern breeding numbers (pairs) in Rye Bay.

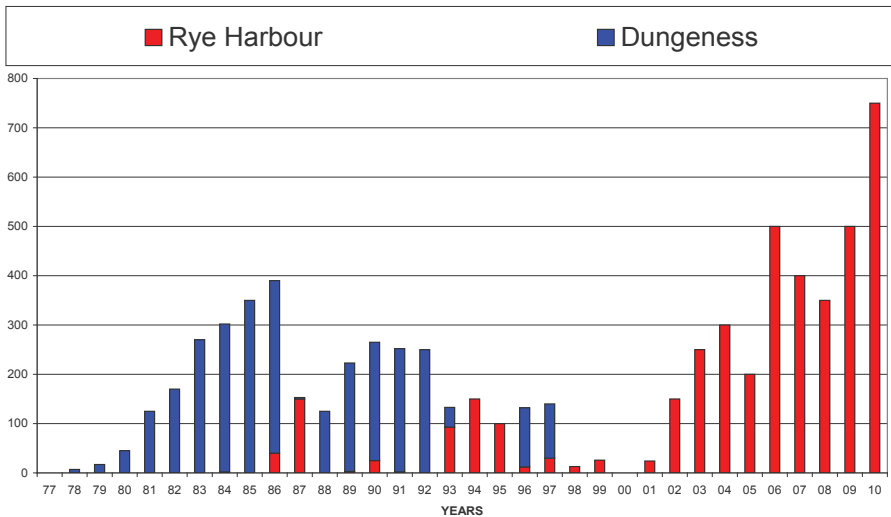


Figure 5. Sandwich Tern breeding numbers (pairs) in Rye Bay.

The decline of the Dungeness population may be related to increasing populations of fox, badger and Herring Gull. The rise of the Rye Harbour colony is related to electric fencing controlling foxes and badgers and the control of breeding Herring Gulls by oiling their eggs (under licence).

Sandwich Terns have a large feeding range when breeding and can bring back a single large food item. In 2009 adults were seen fishing east of Dungeness point and heading back with food to the Rye Harbour colony 15 km away.

Arctic Tern

Ticehurst was unable to accept any breeding records of Arctic Tern in Rye Bay, while Harrison (1953) refers to nesting in 1923-28 and again in 1937, but all with some element of doubt (Taylor *et al.* 1981). However, Alexander (1974) also reported and believed these observations of Jack Tart, the RSPB “looker” at Dungeness.

Roseate Tern

Alexander (1974) reported and believed the observations of Jack Tart of Roseate Tern possibly nesting at Dungeness in 1931, 1934, 1935 and 1937. Harrison (1953) reports summering pairs at Dungeness in 1935-37, but with no proof of breeding. Then a pair bred among the Common Terns there in 1976 (Taylor *et al.* 1981). At Rye Harbour there are regular summering birds and occasionally apparent pairs prospecting within the Common Tern colony, so this is a candidate for a new Sussex breeding species!

Black Tern

This tern is not a marine fish feeder, but requires marshy areas with high invertebrate productivity. Ticehurst makes reference to breeding on Romney Marsh until around 1840, with five or six pairs at the Woolpack Fleet in 1883 (Taylor *et al.* 1981).

Des Forges and Harber (1963) stated: “There is no evidence that Black Terns bred in the county [Sussex], though they may well have done so. Nor is there satisfactory evidence that they have done so more recently, though they are said to have bred at Pett Level in 1941 and 1942.” From 1941 to 1943 Pett Level was flooded to hamper the threat of military invasion and this created nesting opportunities for Little, Common and Black Terns.

In the 1946 HESN Ticehurst reported: “Mr R. Cooke traced the birds late in May 1941 to a small island in the flood formed by pieces of wood, dead grass and other debris, drifted by the wind and stranded in shallow water. On this the nests were built, eight of them, each containing three eggs. In early June the young were out and later on were seen on the wing until mid-August... In 1942 five pairs returned and nested at the same place... In 1943 seven birds returned again in May but did not stay, probably owing to the great increase in numbers of Black-headed Gulls, which occupied every square foot of the available nesting place. By the spring of 1944 the floods had gone and so any chance of the Black Tern’s return had vanished”. This was originally reported in *British Birds* by Cooke (1946) following a BBC broadcast in January 1945. In the two latest Sussex avifaunas, Shrubbs (1979) and James (1996), there is no mention of these possible breeding records.

Non-breeding Terns

The various terneries in Rye Bay provide an attraction for passing rarer terns and a further eight species have been recorded. Many of these records have been at dusk when all terns come ashore to seek a safe roost.

- Bridled Tern: one found dead at Dungeness on 19 Nov 1931, one at Rye Harbour 16-17 May 1993.
- Caspian Tern: very rare vagrant.
- Gull-billed Tern: scarce passage migrant.
- Least Tern: one recorded at Rye Harbour every summer from 1983 to 1992 (Yates 2010).
- Lesser Crested Tern: one at Rye Harbour on 13 May 1986 and 4 May 1998.
- Sooty Tern: one at Rye Harbour and Dungeness on 9 Jul 1984.
- Whiskered Tern: very rare vagrant.
- White-winged Black Tern: scarce passage migrant May-October.

Factors that influence the breeding terns

Food Availability There is no direct measure of the availability of suitable fish (sandeels and other small fish) for the breeding terns, despite this being a major factor in their success. In some years Common and Little Terns have difficulty in finding enough “good” fish and resort to feeding shrimps, prawns and flat fish to their young. Small chicks of Common Terns are often unable to eat the small flat fish that are offered to them by their parents and Little Tern chicks have even been seen begging to a hovering Kestrel at times when food was considered to be scarce (*pers. obs.*). Hungry chicks grow slower and are not so good at hiding, so their chances of fledging are reduced.

Flooding of Pett Level Figures 2 and 4 show significant numbers of Little and Common Terns nesting at Pett Level in 1941-43 and this was enabled by the intentional flooding of the area to deter military invasion, so that the whole area had restricted access. It was at this time that Black Terns were reported nesting there.

Predators In the early 20th century there were fewer tern predators in the Rye Bay area. Ticehurst reported finding a Carrion Crow nest on 3 May 1919, “built near the top of a tall willow by a ditch side in Romney Marsh, a good view being obtained of the bird. This is quite a rare breeding species everywhere in our district...”. A second pair on Romney Marsh was noted in 1928! In 1951 Ticehurst summarised the increase of Carrion Crows: “Prior to 1919 it had always been a scarce breeding bird... their numbers were kept under control by keepers and game preservers” (HESN).

Ticehurst also reported that badger records “from Pett, Guestling and Westfield came to our knowledge during 1933” (no mention of any in Rye Bay) (HESN). In 1992 stronger legislation protecting badgers came into force and the number of setts in the Rye Harbour area increased from two to more than 20 by 2010. In the 1990s badgers were known to swim out to islands with nesting terns at Dungeness and Rye Harbour and cause total failure.

Ticehurst reported a fox footprint in snow in Hastings in February 1947! In 1955 “seabird eggs and nestlings have been taken from the shingle along the SE coast” (HESN). In the 1960s organised fox shoots across Dungeness must have contributed to the success of the terneries there. Since the value of a fox pelt declined due to the collapse of the fur industry in the late 1980s, fox populations have increased (*pers. obs.*). In the 1990s at Dungeness, Pett Level and Rye Harbour foxes regularly swam/foxed out to islands with nesting terns and caused total failure. Local sheep farmers shoot foxes during the winter and early spring as does the management of Rye Harbour Nature Reserve.

Little Terns are particularly susceptible to Kestrels and it seems that these long-lived predators are able to specialise in catching Little Tern chicks in June and July. This factor is made worse

because there now appear to be very few nesting sites suitable for this tern, not only in Rye Bay, but along the whole of the Kent and Sussex coast. Another raptor that has occasionally taken breeding adults at Rye Harbour is the Hobby, but this has not been annual. In addition, the non-native Little Owl has in some years killed incubating adult and juvenile Little Terns and it is important not to provide nesting sites for owls close to terneries.

Gull Colonies Some birdwatchers consider the very large number of nesting Black-headed Gulls at Rye Harbour (2,600 pairs in 2010) to be a negative factor for the terns, but this is not the case. At Rye Harbour there is a strong correlation between the annual numbers of nesting Sandwich Terns and Black-headed Gulls (coefficient of determination $R^2 = 0.85$, see Figure 6). The corresponding value of R^2 for Common Terns and Black-headed Gulls is 0.81.

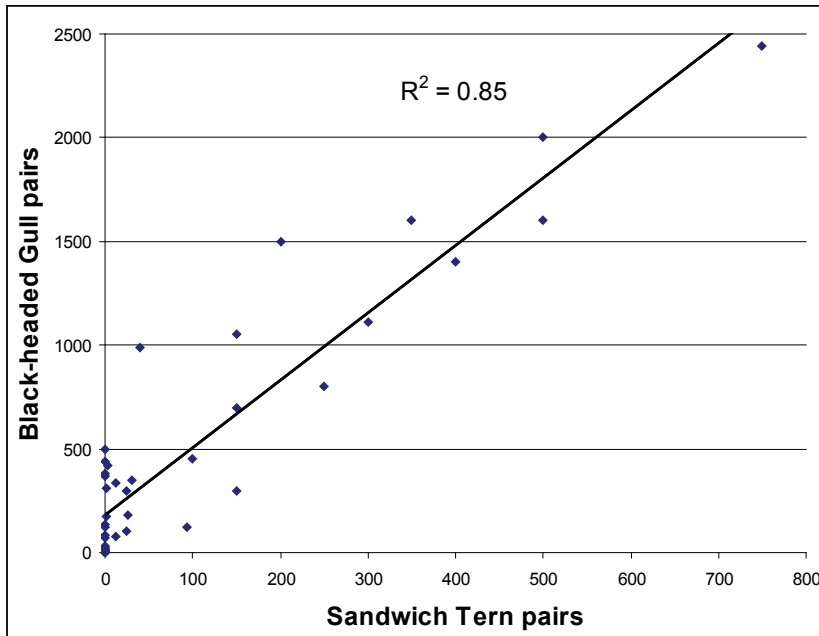


Figure 6. Correlation between Sandwich Tern and Black-headed Gull populations at Rye Harbour:

From many years of observing these colonies it is clear that both Common and Sandwich Terns benefit from the protection afforded by Black-headed Gull colonies. When a land or aerial predator approaches there is mass mobbing by the small gulls, which distracts and/or deters the predator. There is some predation of tern eggs or small chicks by the Black-headed Gulls, but this seems to be more than offset by the benefit.

In contrast to this the breeding Herring and Lesser Black-backed Gulls are a real threat to the productivity and survival of the terneries. For example, a Herring Gull nesting close to, or on a Common Tern nesting island will repeatedly remove tern eggs and young, causing total failure of an island after several days (*pers. obs.*). It is worth noting here that at Rye Harbour and Dungeness, the years in which there were large numbers of nesting Herring Gulls were also the years when no or few Common Terns nested. At Rye Harbour the population of these large gulls is controlled under licence from Natural England.

During the last ten years the population of Mediterranean Gulls has increased at Rye Harbour (185 pairs in 2010) and it is becoming clear that these birds do eat eggs and small chicks of both Common and Sandwich Terns (*pers. obs.*). This is more significant than the predation by Black-headed Gulls and it remains to be seen if this becomes a large factor for the tern populations.

When the Sandwich Terns have just fledged, they form groups close to their colony waiting for their parents to bring fish to them. Among these groups there are often adult Black-headed and especially Mediterranean Gulls that wait to ambush the terns and steal the fish (*pers. obs.*).

Establishment of Nature Reserves Nature reserves were established at Dungeness in 1930, Rye Harbour in 1970 and Pett Level in 1986. At these sites the impact of public disturbance and ground predators was reduced by creating islands and/or building fences, controlling some predators and establishing a team of paid and volunteer wardens. Without these efforts it is unlikely that there would have been many breeding terns in Rye Bay during the last forty years.

The Future

With limited tern nesting locations in Kent and Sussex, the Rye Bay area remains nationally important and the tern populations feature in the SSSI and Special Protection Area citations. Assuming that the two main sites remain as nature reserves with undisturbed islands with sparse vegetation, then the future of the Sandwich and Common Tern populations will also depend on:

- The ability to limit the impact of foxes and badgers with islands, fencing and fox shooting.
- There being continued suitable fish stocks in the adjacent sea.
- The formal licensing to limit the numbers of Herring and Great and Lesser Black-backed Gulls nesting successfully in the immediate vicinity of the terneries.

The future of Little Terns does not look so promising. The impact of Kestrels on the very small and localised population has resulted in few years when enough chicks are produced to maintain the population. It would not be surprising if Little Terns no longer nest regularly in Rye Bay by 2020.

However, in the much longer term the coastline of Rye Bay will be changing as the sea level rises. This will threaten the current tern nesting sites at Rye Harbour, but there may also be considerable opportunity for large-scale habitat creation that will benefit the breeding populations of the three main breeding tern species in Rye Bay. The latest Shoreline Management Plan for this coast (Halcrow 2006) makes interesting reading and one only has to consider the great changes that took place at Pett Level during the intentional flooding of the 1940s to see what might happen.

Scientific names of avian species quoted in this paper can be sourced in the Systematic List.

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Appendix 1: Electric Fencing at Rye Harbour

Starting in 1977, the electric fencing on the Beach Reserve was designed to exclude foxes from areas used by ground-nesting birds, especially Little Terns. The original fencing was low budget and consisted of up to 13 horizontal wires powered by battery units, whereas the new fencing includes wire mesh and is powered by a more powerful mains powered unit. This fencing now effectively protects against disturbance and predation from foxes, badgers, people and dogs. Although no fence can be 100% effective against these threats the early fences reduced the pressure and the latest design is more effective. In 2003 and 2004 all of the electric fencing was replaced through the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund (Project IW-2002-09) with 7 km of new fence protecting 65 ha of vegetated shingle habitat.

The new fence specification is as follows: Tornado Horse Fencing (HT 13/122/8 = 13 horizontal wires, 122 cm high, 8 cm vertical spacing). Two live wires at the top of the fence bring the height of the fence to 150 cm, and an offset live wire 20 cm out and 10 cm off the ground deters digging. This is supported by posts at 3-m spacings (c.2,300 posts) and each post provides an ideal perch for predatory birds, so each has a 15-cm spike to deter these. The cost was about £7 per metre in 2004.

With this new fencing all ground nesting birds have had greater success and the nesting of Herring and Lesser Black-backed Gulls started away from the islands. There is also permanent electric fencing at Castle Water and Rye Harbour Farm. The electric fencing also encourages high-tide, daytime and nocturnal roosts of several species, including Golden Plover, Curlew, Whimbrel, Oystercatcher, gulls and terns.

UNUSUAL RECORDS

All records of the unusual species listed below are required to be considered by the Records Committee and it may be assumed that those published in the Annual Bird Report have been fully authenticated. Such records should be submitted on (or in the same format as) the special forms available from the Recorder or the SOS website and should be emailed to the Recorder (postal submissions are also accepted). Reports of national rarities as defined by the *British Birds Rarities Committee* should be submitted to the Recorder (not direct to *BBRC*) either in the same format as above, or on forms available from the Secretary of the *BBRC*.

Photographic submissions will be accepted only when they are accompanied by full details of the sighting (location, time, observers, etc as on the first page of the SOS record form) and the identification can be assessed by the relevant committee on the details supplied. All records submitted in whatever format may require additional details to be supplied by the observer to the Recorder and/or the Committee.

The following are the unusual species in Sussex (as at 1st January 2010) for which descriptions are required:

Whooper Swan	Temminck's Stint	Icterine Warbler
Bean Goose (both races)	White-rumped Sandpiper	Melodious Warbler
Pink-footed Goose	Pectoral Sandpiper	Barred Warbler
American Wigeon	Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Subalpine Warbler
Green-winged Teal	Grey Phalarope	Greenish Warbler
Ring-necked Duck	Red-necked Phalarope	Pallas's Warbler
Ferruginous Duck	Pomarine Skua (except in spring)	Yellow-browed Warbler
Surf Scoter	Long-tailed Skua	Radde's Warbler
All pheasants (except Common)	Sabine's Gull	Dusky Warbler
White-billed Diver	Ring-billed Gull	Red-breasted Flycatcher
Great Northern Diver (ex. Selsey)	Caspian Gull	Willow Tit
All shearwaters (except Manx)	Iceland Gull	Crested Tit
All petrels (except Fulmar)	Glaucous Gull	Golden Oriole
Cattle Egret	White-winged Black Tern	Red-backed Shrike
Great White Egret	Roseate Tern	Woodchat Shrike
Purple Heron	Black Guillemot	Chough
White Stork	Little Auk	Hooded Crow
Honey-buzzard	Puffin	Rosy Starling
Black Kite	Alpine Swift	Serin
White-tailed Eagle	European Bee-eater	Twite
Montagu's Harrier	Short-toed Lark	Common (ex-Mealy) Redpoll
Goshawk	Shore Lark	Arctic Redpoll
Rough-legged Buzzard	Red-rumped Swallow	Parrot Crossbill
Red-footed Falcon	Richard's Pipit	Common Rosefinch
Spotted Crake	Tawny Pipit	Lapland Bunting
Corn Crake	Red-throated Pipit	Cirl Bunting
Common Crane	Water Pipit	Ortolan Bunting
Stone-curlew	Dipper	Rustic Bunting
Kentish Plover	Bluethroat	Little Bunting
Dotterel	Aquatic Warbler	
American Golden Plover	Marsh Warbler	

In addition, descriptions are required for **all** races other than the normally occurring one including: Black Brant, Baltic Gull, *argentatus* Herring Gull (exc. Rye Bay area) Kumlien's Iceland Gull, Scandinavian Rock Pipit, Yellow Wagtail (except 'Blue-headed') and 'Continental' *ater* Coal Tit but excluding Pale-bellied Brent Goose, *intermedius* Lesser Black-backed Gull, White Wagtail and Greenland Wheatear. Descriptions are also required for **any** species seen on a date outside the range of historic first and last dates for migrants as published yearly in the SOS Bird Report and on the SOS website.

It also 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.

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The Society was formed in 1962 to promote the recording, study, conservation and enjoyment of birds in Sussex.

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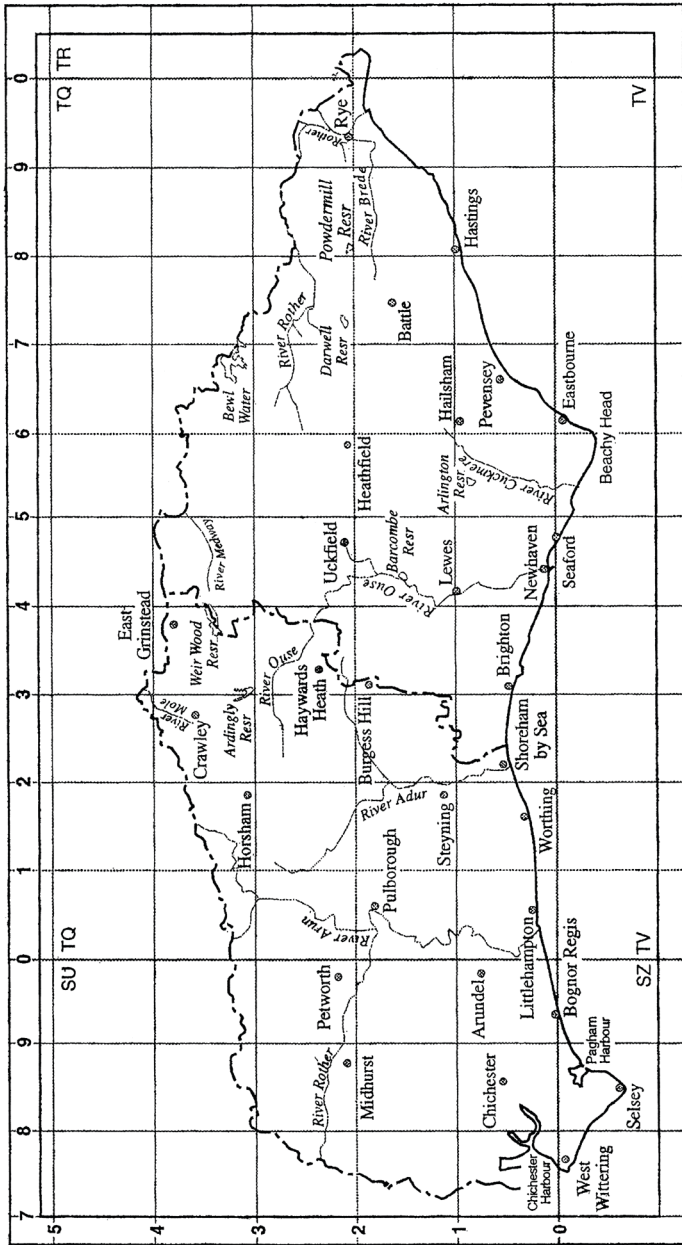
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GAZETTEER

Alexandra Park, Hastings	TQ8010	Charleston Reedbed	TQ5100	Hertfield Levels	TQ1914	Northpoint Pit, Rye	TQ9319	Sidlesham Ferry & Fields	SZ8596
Amberley Wild Brooks	TQ0314	Chelwood Vachery	TQ4330	Hollies, Ashdown	TQ4528	Old Airstrip, Ashdown	TQ4231	Smopting 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
Apuldram Manor Farm	SU8301	Church Norton	SZ8795	Horseshoe Plantation	TV5695	Pagham Lagoon	SZ8896	Splash Point, Seaford	TV4898
Ardingly Reservoir	TQ3229	Cissbury Ring	TQ1408	Hotham Park, Bognor	SZ9399	Pannel Sewer	TQ8715	St Leonard's Forest	TQ2231
Arlington Reservoir	TQ0307	Climping	TQ0001	Hurstpierpoint	TQ2716	Parham Estate	TQ0614	Stakes Island	SU7801
Arundel Park	TQ0108	Cobnor Point & Farm	SU7902	Ifield Mill Pond	TQ2436	Partridge Green	TQ1919	Stansted Forest	SU7511
Arundel WWT.	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	Streete Farm Billingshurst	TQ0624
Atherington	TQ0000	Cuckmere Haven	TV5197	Kingley Vale NNR	SU8110	Pevensey Bay	TQ6503	Swanbourne Lake	TQ0107
Balsdean	TQ3704	Darwell Reservoir	TQ7121	Kneppmill Pond	TQ1521	Pevensey Bridge Level	TQ6504	The Goat, Ashdown	TQ4032
Barcombe Reservoir	TQ4314	East Guldeford Level	TQ9421	Lancing Clump	TQ1806	Pevensey 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
Bowl Water	TQ6733	Elms Farm, Icklesham	TQ8815	Lewes Brooks	TQ4207	Portfield Gravel Pit	SU8805	Thorney Island	SU7602
Billingshurst	TQ0825	Eridge Park	TQ0535	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	TQ0932
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	TV5499	Marsh Farm, Yapton	SU9804	Scotney Court Gravel Pits	TR0119	Warmham L.N.R. & M.P.	TQ1732
Broadwater, Worthing	TQ1404	Gills Lap, Ashdown	TQ4632	Maynards Green	TQ5818	Seaford Head	TV4997	Weir Wood Res	TQ3834
Brooklands, Worthing	TQ1703	Glynde Levels	TQ4609	Mill Hill, Shoreham	TQ2107	Selsey Bill	SZ8592	West Beach L'hampton	TQ0201
Broomhill Level	TQ9818	Glyne Gap, Bexhill	TQ7607	Millbrook, Ashdown	TQ4428	Selsey West Fields	SZ8594	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	Willington	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
Chailley 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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