

Lincolnshire Bird Report 1979



**Including the
Gibraltar Point
Observatory Report**

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OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE, 1979-81

Discussions on the desirability and possible viability of a county Bird Club began early in 1979, culminating in a meeting in September at which the following were elected to form a Steering Committee. They will hold office until the Club's first AGM, in March 1981.

Chairman: C. Whittles M.B.O.U.

Secretary: R.N. Goodall, 3, Kettleby View, Brigg (Brigg 54682)

Treasurer/Membership Secretary: J.D.W. Owen, B.Sc. 3, Field View, Doncaster Road, Whitley, Goole, S. Yorks.

Committee: K. Atkin (County Recorder, ex officio); P. Boyer; W. Brooking; R. Lambert; E.J. Redshaw; R. Sheppard (Vice-Chairman).

Editorial Board: K. Atkin; A.L. Goodall; R. Lambert

Membership details and application forms may be obtained from the Membership Secretary; copies of the draught Constitution and all other matters relating to the Club from the Secretary.

INTRODUCTION

The Lincolnshire Bird Club was formed in the autumn of 1979 to serve the interests of, and provide a forum for, the birdwatchers and ornithologists of Lincolnshire and South Humberside. The Club's constitution lists its aims as:

- to encourage and further an interest in the birdlife of the counties of Lincolnshire and South Humberside;
- to collect and publish information on bird movements and populations;
- to encourage conservation of the wildlife of the two counties; and
- to provide sound information on which conservation policies can be based.

This Report is our first attempt to fulfill the second of these aims, and in one way it comes a year early. The steering committee had originally envisaged publishing the Club's first Report in 1981, for 1980, but thanks to the very heartening enthusiasm from members throughout the county and the solid efforts of the contributors, it was encouraged to bring publication forward a year. We are particularly pleased to include a report on the year at Gibraltar Point Bird Observatory, and hope with the Observatory Committee that the association will be a long and happy one. Since as a county we have the very good fortune to "own" a Bird Observatory it behoves us all to support it as much as we can.

The major part of this Report is occupied by the Systematic List, but other contributions include a Ringing Report for 1979 and two short papers. We hope very much that future issues will see both these sections increased, with space devoted to analysis of the results of ringing effort in the county, and further general and specific papers on its birdlife.

BIRDS, BIRD-WATCHING AND THE COLD WINTER OF 1978-79

by P.A. Hyde and R. Sheppard

The winter of 1978-79 proved to be a remarkable one in many senses and brought the most severe weather since that of 1962-63. It was one of two contrasting halves with dry, mild weather right up to the last few days of December 1978. The first three months of 1979 however saw some exceptionally severe, almost "arctic", weather with heavy snowfalls causing havoc throughout the country. January and February temperatures were some 3° C below the winter average, but despite this the period was punctuated with brief mild spells and thaws — a factor of vital importance to our resident birds and one which meant many species fared much better than during the 1962-63 winter.

For those bird-watchers willing to forgo the comforts of the home fire and risk serious frost damage to the appendages, the early part of 1979 provided some excellent bird-watching, particularly from mid-February when one of the most spectacular influxes seen in recent



years of the scarcer winter water birds and raptors occurred. Red-necked Grebes, (scientific names of birds mentioned in the text can be found in the systematic list) Slavonian Grebes, divers, Smew and other saw-bills were especially prominent on inland waters, and by the end of the month there were well over 80 Red-necked Grebes in Lincolnshire alone — a bonanza indeed. Bean Geese, normally a rare winter visitor, were also involved and small flocks appeared in many more places than is usual on the

east and south coasts. Raptorial birds such as Hen Harrier and Short-eared Owl were particularly numerous, and nationally Rough-legged Buzzards were better represented than for several years. These exceptional events early in the New Year stood out at the time because they involved the rarer, and thus more noticeable species.

Movements by birds in response to severe weather is a well-documented phenomenon in commoner species as well e.g. Lapwing and Golden Plover but what of other common and normally more sedentary residents? How did they weather the storm? Two of the British Trust for Ornithology's long-standing schemes have provided useful and interesting data on the fate of resident birds during and after the 1978-79 winter. The Garden Bird Feeding Survey has looked at the number and variety of species taking food put out by man, while the Common Birds Census has monitored the progress of fifty-nine of our common breeding birds. The 1979 CBC results are, as yet, provisional but give a useful pointer to most of the major changes.

The Common Birds Census is a mapping census of birds carried out during the breeding season by over 300 volunteer observers country-wide on (mainly) farmland and woodland areas. The plots are chosen by each observer in consultation with BTO populations staff and normally cover 80-200 acres each on farmland, and 25-75 acres in woodland. About ten visits are made to the plots from mid-April to early July and all contacts with birds are plotted on 25" maps of the area. A fresh map is used for each visit and a standard field recording method employed. All observations are transferred to a "master" map for each species and returned to the BTO for analysis. The final tally gives the number of territories (not necessarily the number of breeding pairs) for each species on that plot. By summarising these results for all farmland and woodland areas and comparing them with those of the previous year on each plot, an index of population change can be calculated. In Lincolnshire, current CBC plots are few in number: an area of about 78 ha. of dune-land and salt-marsh at Gibraltar Point is censused by Dick Lambert, while 57 ha. of farmland at Scott Willoughby are covered by Geoff Atkin and another 9 ha. of salt-marsh at Saltfleetby by the Warden.

The Garden Bird Feeding Survey also relies on an enthusiastic volunteer force and is designed to gather information about the variety and number of birds currently being fed by man and the foods they consume. Participants are restricted in number and selected by the BTO to ensure a country-wide distribution. The basic requirement for sites included in the GBFS is that birds should be coming to food put out for them within a defined area which can be watched regularly i.e. it is not solely a bird-table survey.

So what of the 1979 results from these scheme? Species we normally expect to be hard-hit by severe weather are smaller species, such as Wren, Long-tailed Tit, Coal Tit, Tree-creeper and Goldcrest. The first four of these average 8-10 gms. apiece while Goldcrests are our smallest resident at 5-6 gms. These tiny birds can lose weight rapidly, particularly during cold weather, since their bodies quickly metabolise food to generate energy — heat loss is rapid because of their large surface area/volume ratio (this ratio decreases with increasing size). Indeed Wren and Long-tailed Tits often form communal roosts at such times, huddling together to keep warm. Small birds need to spend most of the day feeding, and numbers recorded feeding at GBFS stations were unprecedented. Redwing, Fieldfare and Brambling

were very prominent as were other commoner residents, including some not normally seen taking food in any numbers e.g. Wren, Long-tailed Tit, Yellowhammer, Moorhen and Pheasant. Garden feeding stations were undoubtedly of tremendous value during early 1979 to hundreds of thousands of birds.

For changes in the breeding populations of our common birds we must turn to the CBC. The provisional results for 1979 show the extent to which these species suffered following the harsh weather of the 1978-79 winter. Farmland birds were generally affected to a greater degree than those in woodland — perhaps a reflection of the more exposed conditions there in the winter months? The 1978-79 winter did not kill birds in such vast numbers as in that of 1962-63 though. All resident species which have shown a statistically significant change in at least one population index are shown in Table 1.

Immediately obvious are the large decreases seen for Wren, Goldcrest, Long-tailed Tit and Treecreeper, though the last named species shows a particularly large difference between habitat types. Woodland Treecreepers do not appear to have suffered the mortality of those on farmland. In contrast populations of the other three were more or less equally affected in different habitats. Treecreepers on CBC woodland plots have shown much less variation in population level (Figure 1) than those on farmland. This suggests that woodlands have been more or less saturated and that there has been a fairly large surplus of Treecreepers on farmland. Some of these probably moved into woodlands following the winter mortality. This would have contributed to the large "crash" on farmland and have masked the decrease in woodland.

Wrens decreased by about 41% on average in all habitats, which means that if the estimate of 10,000,000 breeding pairs given in the BTO Atlas of Breeding Birds is reasonably accurate, the adults and young from over 4,000,000 of these pairs perished during the early months of 1979. The decreases seen on two of the Lincolnshire CBC plots were even more drastic than this: an estimated 26 territories on the Gibraltar Point plot in 1978 fell to 3 in 1979 and the Scott Willoughby plot held 5 in 1978 but none at all in 1979. In 1962-63 the overall Wren mortality was even greater at 75-80%, but like other small birds producing large broods of young, Wrens soon bounced back and on farmland had exceeded their 1962 population level only four years later.

Pied Wagtails also felt the full weight of the 1978-79 winter, showing a decrease of roughly a third. This compared with one almost twice as severe after the 1962-63 winter. Ringing recoveries of these birds during the first three months of 1979 also reveal this mortality, with the 59 reported up to 31st March well up on those in the same period of 1978 (32) and 1977 (24), with similar numbers having been ringed in the year prior to each of these winters. The total for January — March 1963 was a massive 118, and these figures tie in rather neatly with the picture from CBC results. Pied Wagtails tend not to leave the British Isles during cold weather, but move within Britain and concentrate in towns and on the coast. Consequently rather few are recovered abroad, compared with say Lapwings, which are renowned for their mass emigrations to the south and west at such times. British-ringed Lapwings provided 17 recoveries from France and Spain during the first two months of 1979 alone, compared with 3 in the same period in 1977 and none in 1978. The recorded change on farmland CBC areas is an increase of 15%, but is based on a small sample and is not statistically significant. However, this may well indicate the better fortunes of British Lapwings during the 1978-79 winter compared to a 56% "crash" on CBC areas in 1963.

The small song birds like Dunnock, Robin and Blackbird all showed significant decreases, while Song Thrushes, a species very hard hit in 1962-63, were down by nearly a fifth. Skylarks, Tree Sparrows, Yellowhammers and Reed Buntings are characteristic birds of open countryside and in winter normally feed in large flocks on stubble, waste-land or salt-marshes where they can find plenty of seeds and other vegetable food. All four have decreased significantly, and it is interesting to note that they were recorded at more GBFS stations in 1978-79 than in previous years. Of the larger birds, those two crafty corvids, the Jackdaw and Carrion Crow, actually increased and although the final figures may not be as high as shown in Table 1, they obviously survived the winter in good numbers.

Other interesting points are emerging from the CBC results such as differences in the regional mortality of species such as Long-tailed Tit. These decreased massively in the north of England and Scotland, but only marginally in the southern third of England. A similar story is true for Song Thrushes, while Treecreepers fared the worse with increasing altitude. Several other species fared remarkably well and showed little change. These included both Great and Blue Tits, most of the finches, and others such as Mistle Thrush and Moorhen which suffered a high mortality in 1962-63.

These results are provisional and will be reported on fully in the BTO journal *Bird Study*. Lincolnshire with its wide variety of habitat has produced some interesting reports. In one 500 + acre wood in the south of the County which is regularly ringed, the first Wrens and Treecreepers weren't caught until the middle of July, but totals soon climbed later in the summer as these species had an exceptional breeding season.

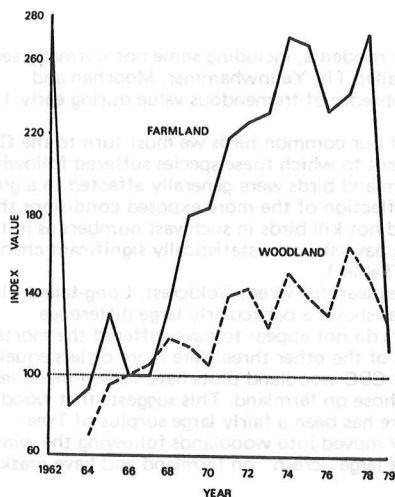


Fig. 1. Variation in Treecreeper population levels

On the coast, Wrens were decimated. At Donna Nook and Saltfleetby where in 1978 there were 8 pairs and 3 pairs respectively, there were no birds in 1979. Inland they fared just as badly. At Peakirk in the Wildfowl Trust Gardens, 10 pairs were reduced to one pair, and at Baston Fen, Bourne Woods and Weelsby Woods they were very scarce.

Dunnocks, Tree Sparrows, Song Thrushes and Long-tailed Tits all showed a marked decrease locally, similar to the National CBC findings.

It is now apparent that the winter of 1978-79, while being the worst for sixteen years, did not decimate resident bird populations to the extent anticipated, largely due to the brief and so vital, mild spells which punctuated the severest weather in January and February.

TABLE 1 Provisional changes in some common farmland and woodland species derived from CBC data; where available the figures for 1963 are shown, in parentheses. All 1978-79 changes are significant with 95% confidence, except those marked with an asterisk.

Species	Percentage changes in 1979		
	Farmland	Woodland	All habitats
Skylark	- 15.3 (- 18.2)	-	- 10.1
Pied Wagtail	- 34.4 (- 64.4)	-	- 19.8
Wren	- 40.6 (- 77.9)	- 44.7	- 40.7
Dunnock	- 14.2 (- 5.1)	- 5.2 *	- 10.1
Robin	- 10.9 (- 11.7)	- 6.1 *	- 7.1
Blackbird	- 12.6 (- 17.4)	- 4.9 *	- 9.2
Song Thrush	- 18.5 (- 57.1)	- 0.6 *	- 8.7
Goldcrest	-	- 45.5	- 37.1 (- 79.8)
Long-tailed Tit	- 45.2 (- 44.9)	- 35.3	- 33.8
Coal Tit	-	- 19.2	- 20.0 (- 37.9)
Treecreeper	- 58.3 (- 69.2)	- 16.4 *	- 29.0
Jackdaw	+ 30.4 (+ 22.4)	-	+ 58.4
Carriion Crow	+ 12.8 (+ 1.3)	+ 11.6 *	+ 12.2
Tree Sparrow	- 26.7 (- 4.9)	-	- 19.9
Chaffinch	- 4.1 *(+ 10.1)	+ 7.2	+ 1.1 *
Yellowhammer	- 15.9 (0.0)	+ 4.2 *	- 7.1 *
Reed Bunting	- 20.1 (- 36.8)	-	- 12.3

Footnote: These figures are derived from 53 Farmland, 64 Woodland and 92 plots in the "All habitats" column.

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J. McMeeking for helpful draft comments on the text.
Also, J.H. Marchant, Liz Murray and Margaret Putterill.

Phil Hyde . . . is on the staff of the B.T.O. at Tring. He has retained his links with Lincolnshire ornithology through frequent visits to his native Boston and membership of the L.B.C.
Bob Sheppard . . . is Vice-chairman of the L.B.C.

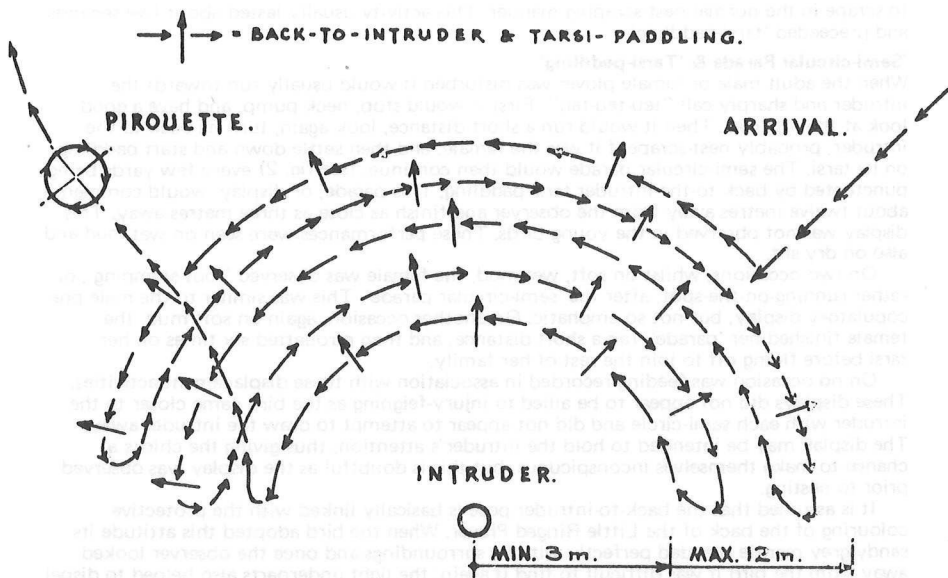


Fig. 2. Diagram to show semi-circular parade & back-to-intruder tarsi-paddling.

BEHAVIOUR IN LITTLE RINGED PLOVER (*Charadrius dubius*)

By E.J. Redshaw

In *British Birds* in 1961 Simmons discussed the 'foot-trembling' habit of the Little Ringed Plover (*Charadrius dubius*) and identified it with the 'leg-shaking' of Sluifers (1938) and the 'foot-tapping' of Coleman (1960). It was shown by Tinbergen (1962) that 'foot-trembling' and 'foot-paddling' are functional activities whereby food matter in the moist material disturbed is brought to the surface by increasing the water content of that material. Reference was also made by Simmons to the two-footed movements used in nest-scraping by the female and in pre-copulatory display by the male.

In the summer of 1962 I made notes on the habits and behaviour of a pair of Little Ringed Plover which bred and successfully reared four young at Spalding Beet Sugar Factory settling ponds which at that time were used as an inland Observation Point for the B.T.O.'s migration recording network.

'Foot-trembling'

'Foot-trembling' was recorded in both sexes, (the sexes being identified by the size of the breast band — see Ledlie & Pedler, 1938) and both feet were seen to be used although it was observed that the male used the left foot more frequently than the right. This method of feeding was used by both parents and young, but it was not observed whether the activity was innate in the young, or taught to them by the adults. All the birds appeared to feed from the surface of the disturbed material.

Nest-scraping

Nest-scraping was observed in the adult female as a frequent displacement, as well as purely functional activity before, during and after incubation. If the female did not like the nearness of an intruder, at any time, whether feeding or incubating she would run around the intruder in a semi-circle, as described later, and every few yards she would stop in a shallow depression, look at the intruder, and then turn and with her back to the intruder commence

to scrape in the normal nest-scraping manner. This activity usually lasted about five seconds and preceeded 'tarsi-paddling'.

'Semi-circular Parade & 'Tarsi-paddling'

When the adult male or female plover was disturbed it would usually run towards the intruder and sharply call "teu-teu-teu". First it would stop, neck-pump, and have a good look at the intruder. Then it would run a short distance, look again, turn its back to the intruder, probably nest-scrape if it was the female, and then settle down and start paddling on its tarsi. The semi-circular parade would then continue, (see fig. 2) every few yards being punctuated by back-to-the-intruder tarsi-paddling. This parade, or display, would commence about twelve metres away from the observer and finish as close as three metres away. This display was not observed in the young birds. These performances were seen on wet mud and also on dry silt.

On two occasions, whilst on soft, wet mud, the female was observed 'foot-stamping', or rather running-on-the-spot, after the 'semi-circular parade'. This was similar to the male pre-copulatory display, but not so emphatic. On another occasion, again on soft mud, the female finished her 'parade', ran a short distance, and then pirouetted six times on her tarsi before flying off to join the rest of her family.

On no occasion was feeding recorded in association with these displacement activities. These displays did not appear to be allied to injury-feigning as the bird came closer to the intruder with each semi-circle and did not appear to attempt to draw the intruder away. The display may be intended to hold the intruder's attention, thus giving the chicks a chance to make themselves inconspicuous, but this is doubtful as the display was observed prior to nesting.

It is assumed that the back-to-intruder pose is basically linked with the protective colouring of the back of the Little Ringed Plover. When the bird adopted this attitude its sandy-grey mantle blended perfectly with its surroundings and once the observer looked away from the bird it was difficult to find it again; the light underparts also helped to dispel any shadow.

Throughout these displays the birds used the anxiety call "teu-teu-teu", sometimes loud and scolding, and other times quite soft.

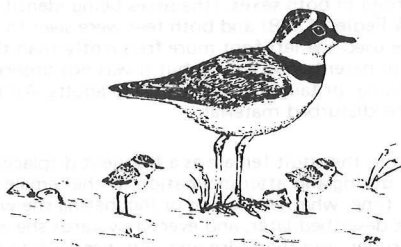
Distraction

Prior to the early departure of the adult male, and whilst the family party was still together, he would detach himself from the group and run to greet (?) me as I approached the feeding area. Running parallel to and just ahead of me he frequently called using the anxiety note "teu". This continued until I was about 150 metres away from the rest of the family, then the male returned to the others. If I went towards the group the female sharply called "teu" whereon the chicks immediately crouched in shallow depressions in the semi-wet mud. As I withdrew the hen softly called "tlee-tlee-tlee" to collect the brood.

Territorial

One evening before the young had fledged a party of five Little Ringed Plovers arrived from the north-east. These were sexed as four females and one male. The females were allowed to rest but the strange male was persistently harried by the resident hen which called "teuka-teuka-teuka". The call rose and fell in volume and the last syllable was explosive and slightly nasal. This call was also heard from the young after they had fledged. During the evening they would hawk insects over the breeding ground and almost continually called "teuka-teuka-teuka", the notes still being nasal and explosive but rather softer and more musical. Another note heard on these evening flights was a soft "too-too-too" or "du-du-du" which sounded more like a song than a territorial call.

Most ground-feeding species that used the area were harried by the Little Ringed Plovers; the most notable exceptions were the above-mentioned female Little Ringed Plovers and the Ringed Plovers (*Charadrius hiaticula*) which occasionally visited the site.



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SYSTEMATIC LIST 1979

Compiled by K. Atkin

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

In the early part of the year, generally small numbers were present on the coast between Donna Nook and the Witham Mouth, although there were 40 at Huttoft on 5th February and 16 at Theddlethorpe on 6th. One or two were seen occasionally in the Humber from January to April at Killingholme and Barrow Haven. More than usual appeared inland in the hard weather, with one at Susworth on 3rd-4th February, two at Spalding from 20th-24th and two on the Witham at Chapel Hill from 26th to 3rd March. Between 2nd February and 31st March Covenham Reservoir was visited by at least eight different birds, two of which were found dead. In spring, an unusual concentration of 105 occurred close inshore at Saltfleetby on 2nd April and one was seen there on 24th June. In autumn, small numbers were seen fairly regularly from mid-September at Gibraltar Point, Trusthorpe, Donna Nook and Saltfleetby, with 17 N there on 21st October. Regular northerly movements occurred at Donna Nook in late December, with a peak of 49 on 23rd, although many others were unidentified such as the maximum movement of 85 on 20th.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

In January, three flew E at Barrow Haven on 22nd and one was seen at Donna Nook on 28th. Singles were present at Gibraltar Point on 16th February, North Somercotes Lido on 24th and Grimsby Docks on 14th, with a different bird present from 27th to 6th March. Birds found dead included three at Gibraltar Point on 10th February, singles at Chapel Point on 24th and the Nene Mouth on 27th, Humberston on 4th March and North Coates on 11th. This species is normally rare inland, but one at Covenham Reservoir on 20th January was found dead on 21st and another was on the Welland between Spalding and Deeping on 27th. In February, there were singles at Trent Falls on 16th and probably the same bird W on 22nd, with others at Covenham Reservoir from 17th-25th, Cadney Reservoir from 22nd-24th and Tattershall gravel pits on 24th. In autumn, one or two were seen occasionally from mid-September to December at Donna Nook, Saltfleetby and Gibraltar Point, with singles at Barrow Haven on 6th November and Huttoft on 2nd December.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

In February, two flew W at Barrow Haven on 19th and one was found dead at the Nene Mouth on 27th. One was seen at Gibraltar Point on 22nd February, with one dead on 24th March and another south on 23rd April. One flew N at Donna Nook on 3rd May. In autumn, one was seen at Saltfleetby on 21st September and two flew N at Donna Nook on 18th November, with singles N there on 1st and 23rd December.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Concentrations in the early part of the year included 13 at Barrow Haven on 2nd January, eight at Tetney on 14th and five at Grimsby Docks on 18th. There were five on the Welland between Spalding and Deeping on 17th February and six at Ashbyville, Scunthorpe, on 26th, with six at the Hobhole on 18th March. Unusual breeding sites included a pair on the River Glen at Baston Fen and three pairs on tidal flashes at Donna Nook. Birds were present for most of the year at Gibraltar Point, with up to nine in July. In autumn, there were 29 at Immingham on 15th September, eight at Barrow Haven on 14th November, with four at Covenham Reservoir on 22nd and six at West Deeping gravel pits on 24th.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Maximum numbers in the early part of the year included 15 at the Witham Mouth on 7th January and 30 at Covenham Reservoir on 24th, with 22 at Tallington gravel pits on 25th February. Migrants in spring included four at Toft Newton Reservoir on 23rd April and eight at Cadney Reservoir on 25th May. Only nine young were reared at the South Humber Pits, although 17 pairs were present in April. Other breeding reports included pairs with young at Messingham, Winterton Road Scunthorpe, Burton Stather and Chapel Pit. In autumn, birds were seen fairly regularly on the coast from the Humber to the Wash, with up to five recorded. Inland, there were 20 at West Deeping gravel pits on 24th November and numbers built up at Covenham Reservoir to 19 on 28th December.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

More than usual were present in the hard weather in January and early February, with up to four at Covenham Reservoir and singles at North Coates, East Halton, Killingholme, Cadney Reservoir and Whisby gravel pits. Following blizzards, there was an unprecedented influx in the second half of February and early March, when over 100 were located. Several were found dead and some remained throughout March, with stragglers into April and the last at Huttoft Pit on 11th. The distribution and approximate number of individual birds in the period January to April was as follows: Grimsby Docks 3, Cleethorpes 2, Immingham 1, New Holland 1, Killingholme 4, East Halton 2, Barton-on-Humber 3, Barrow Haven 4, Cadney Reservoir 3, Scunthorpe-Ashbyville 5, Scunthorpe-Winterton Road 3, Torksey 2, Whisby gravel pits 2, Riseholme 1, Tetney Haven 1, Tetney Lock pit 2, Grainthorpe 1 dead,

Louth Canal 3, Fulstow Pit 1, Covenham Reservoir 10+2 dead, Louth 1, North Coates 2, Donna Nook 4, North Somercotes Lido 3, Saltfleet 1 dead, Saltfleet Haven 4, Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe 6+3 dead, Mablethorpe 2, Well Vale 2, Sandilands 1 dead, Huttoft Bank 1 dead, Huttoft Pit 3, Chapel Point 1 dead, Wolla Bank pit 1, Sutton brick pit 1, Seacroft 1, Skegness-Gibraltar Point 2 dead, Gibraltar Point 2, Sleaford 1, Southrey 1, Chapel Hill 3, Tattershall gravel pits 7, Hobhole 1, Witham Mouth 1, Spalding 2, Spalding-Deeping 2, Baston Fen 1, Tallington gravel pits 1. In autumn, one was seen at Benington on 9th September and two flew S at Donna Nook on 23rd October. Singles were present at Covenham Reservoir on 11th November and from 8th-31st December. Altogether, there were about 120 records.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

A good year with about 17 records. One was seen at Barrow Haven on 8th January and another at Killingholme from 23rd-25th. In February, there were singles at Great Coates on 1st-2nd, Barton-on-Humber on 16th, Torksey on 24th and Tallington gravel pits on 25th. One was seen on the Welland between Spalding and Deeping on 11th February and there were one or two there from 22nd to 7th March. One or two were present at Grimsby Docks from 28th February to 11th March. Singles in March were recorded at Cleethorpes on 1st, Chapel Hill from 2nd-3rd and Holbeach Marsh from 3rd-4th. In autumn, one was seen at Donna Nook on 23rd September, with singles at Covenham Reservoir from 19th-21st September, 22nd November and from 5th-31st December.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

In February, there were singles at Tetney Haven on 17th and on the Welland between Spalding and Deeping on 17th-18th, with two there on 2nd-3rd March. Two in summer plumage were present at Barrow Haven on 25th March. In autumn, one was at Covenham Reservoir on 20th August, with another there from 15th September to 5th October.

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Birds were recorded on the coast from February to December, with one well up the Humber at Barrow Haven on 25th April. Peak spring movements were at Donna Nook, with 75 N and 7 S on 26th April and 33 S on 1st June. Up to 20 were recorded there in August and there were 15 at Saltfleetby on 15th September. Maximum northerly movements at Gibraltar Point were 20 on 26th August and 30 on 22nd September. Small numbers in December included 11 N at Donna Nook on 21st.

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

On 26th August, one flew N at Huttoft (GPC), one was seen at Donna Nook (SL) and eight flew N at Saltfleetby (GPC), with two N there on 15th September (BMC, GPC) and one N on 21st (BMC). A very late bird flew N at Donna Nook on 21st December (SL, RLo).

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

A few occurred in spring, with three N at Gibraltar Point on 22nd April and three N on 27th and also 11 S at Donna Nook on 25th. One was well up the Humber flying W at Barrow Haven on 16th May. Birds were seen regularly on the coast from late June to October, usually in parties of up to 15. In September, there were singles in the Humber at Trent Falls on 15th, Barrow Haven on 18th and 22nd and Grimsby on 22nd. Birds were seen regularly at Donna Nook, Saltfleetby and Gibraltar Point, with occasional records at Saltfleet, Trusthorpe, Huttoft, Chapel St Leonards and Benington. Maximum number was 38 S at Donna Nook on 27th August and the last was seen at Saltfleetby on 14th October.

Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*

In September, one flew N at Saltfleetby on 15th (GPC, BMC) and one was seen at Trusthorpe Point on 22nd (JRW).

Gannet *Sula bassana*

Wintering birds included one at Gibraltar Point on 2nd January and four S at Chapel Point on 11th February. Small numbers were seen regularly from April onwards until large scale movements began with 86 N at Donna Nook on 1st July. On 26th August, 50 flew N at Gibraltar Point and 80 N at Saltfleetby. Peak movements in September included 50 N at Gibraltar Point and Saltfleetby on 15th, 63 N at Saltfleetby on 21st, with 158 N at Donna Nook on 22nd and 168 S there on 30th. In the Wash, 37 flew N at Benington on 9th September and 103 were seen at the Witham Mouth on 22nd. A few entered the Humber, with 3 W at Cleethorpes on 26th August, one W at Trent Falls on 2nd September and three at Barrow Haven on 18th, with one there on 13th November. Only small numbers were seen on the coast in December.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Large numbers present in the early part of the year included 130 over Boston on 7th January, with 42 at Tetney on 4th February and 75 at Covenham Reservoir on 20th, then 62 at the Witham Mouth on 3rd March. Some birds were present in summer, including 16 at Gibraltar Point on 10th June, with an autumn peak there of 28 on 23rd November. Other flocks included up to 45 at Covenham Reservoir in November and December and 51 at the Witham Mouth on 23rd December. Others inland were one or two occasionally at Cadney Reservoir from January to April and November to December, with singles at Donington on 5th April,

Cowbit from mid-September to mid-November and Bardney on 21st October. Birds showing characters of the continental race, *P.c. sinensis*, were seen at Covenham Reservoir on 1st March and Grimsby on 3rd March and 28th May.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

In the early part of the year, there were singles at Donna Nook on 2nd January, and Barrow Haven and the Witham Mouth on 3rd February. One was at Saltfleetby on 29th September, with singles at Donna Nook on 23rd October and found dead on 31st December, and another seen at the Witham Mouth on 29th December.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

Wintering birds included one at Burton gravel pits on 8th January and others found dead at Barton-on-Humber in mid-February and seen at Barrow Haven on 21st. Booming was heard at two sites on South Humberside in April and May, but there was no evidence of successful breeding. Singles were seen at Burton pits on 11th August and from mid-November to mid-December and at Barrow Haven in November and December.

Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

An immature was seen at Skegness brick pit on 30th-31st December (PMB, JHR, MH et al). Under consideration by *British Birds*.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

One found dead at the Welland Mouth on 15th September had been ringed as a nestling in the Netherlands, two months earlier (BTO).

Great White Egret *Egretta alba*

One was present at Messingham on 7th-8th August (JH, DS, GPC et al). Accepted by *British Birds* and the first authenticated county record.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Nest counts totalled 289 in the county, distributed as follows: Deeping 77, Troy Wood 65, Muckton 30, Doddington 29, Willoughby 18, Thorton Curtis 18, Newball 17, Laughton Forest 15, Howsham 12 and Evedon 8. Birds were present all year on the coast, with peaks of 19 at Killingholme in mid-June, nine at Donna Nook on 3rd July and 16 at Grainthorpe on 10th, and up to five at Gibraltar Point and nine at Frampton.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

One was seen at Trent Falls on 22nd September (DIMW). Under consideration by *British Birds*.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

One was seen at Gibraltar Point on 16th April (RLa, NG et al) and presumably the same bird at Wainfleet on 21st (BJD). In May, one flew N at Saltfleetby on 3rd (BW) and singles were present at Killingholme on 5th-11th and 21st-23rd (GPC, AW, WPB, DS, JH, KH).

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Peak numbers in the early part of the year included 23 at Covenham on 1st January, 114 at Guthram on 2nd February and 65 at Killingholme on 8th, with 42 at Immingham on 7th May. Small number were seen at Gibraltar Point and Donna Nook for most of the year, with 13 at the latter site in mid-March. Large numbers were present in autumn on the Welland between Spalding and Deeping, with 245 on 19th November.

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

Birds were widespread in the early part of the year, with maximum numbers of 16 at Covenham Reservoir on 4th January, 11 at Tetney from 11th-25th February, 16 at Wrangle on 3rd March and 12 at Friskney on 9th. Smaller numbers were seen at the Welland Mouth, Spalding, Wainfleet, Gibraltar Point, Donna Nook, North Coates, South Ferriby, Trent Falls, Knaith (one dead) and the last at Susworth on 19th March. In autumn, nine flew E at Barrow Haven on 23rd October and there were 18 at Covenham Reservoir on 12th-13th December, with 13 at Goxhill on 13th. Smaller numbers occurred at North Coates, Donna Nook, Huttoft Pit, Gibraltar Point, the Witham Mouth and Wyberton.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Birds were more widespread than usual in the early part of the year, with 24 on the Witham at Chapel Hill from 27th February to 2nd March and 45 NE at Donington on 24th March. Up to seven were recorded at the Witham Mouth, Spalding, Pinchbeck, Langrick, Stickford, Wainfleet, Friskney, Gibraltar Point, Bracebridge, Chapel Pit, Anderby, Huttoft, Covenham Reservoir, Immingham and the last at Trent Falls on 3rd May. Birds returned to Gibraltar Point from 19th October to late November, with a maximum of 15 on 8th November. One stayed at Killingholme from 20th November to the end of the year. In December, there were 11 at Messingham on 13th and two at Pinchbeck on 16th.

Bean Goose *Anser fabalis*

In January, one at Covenham Reservoir on 1st (KA, BMC, JRC), flying south at Donna Nook on 2nd (SL) and present at Anderby from 6th-8th (MF) was perhaps the same individual. Two were seen at Huttoft Pit on 3rd February (DW, HB) and there were ten there on 24th-25th (MM, GPC et al). Nine of these showed characters of the race *A.f. rossicus*. In the same period, there were two at Cowbit from 18th-22nd February (EJR, DJR, WAC, RH, KH, FB), three at Marshchapel on 22nd (SL) and one at Cleethorpes on 19th (WM) and again on 13th

April (RKN). Four showing characters of *A.f. fabalis* and one *A.f. rossicus* were at Donna Nook from 4th-5th March (SL, VL), with four at Chapel Pit on 10th (DW). In autumn, four were seen at Barrow Haven on 19th November (GPC) and one was in the Pinkfeet flock at Holbeach in November and December (PRB).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

In January, peak numbers on the Wash were 1,000 at Holbeach and 215 at Benington on 27th. Gibraltar Point had 600 on 4th February. In the north-west, there were 300 at Appleby on 4th February, with 350 at Winterton on 5th and 1,200 at Trent Falls on 24th. Smaller numbers were seen at many other localities, with the last at Saltfleetby on 13th April. Birds returned to Trent Falls from 14th September, increasing to 640 there on 21st October. Up to 2,000 were present at Holbeach in November and December. Movements on the coast included 230 S at Gibraltar Point on 1st December and 162 S at Saltfleetby on 2nd. Smaller numbers were recorded elsewhere.

White-fronted goose *Anser albifrons*

In January, there were 17 at Anderby from 6th-8th, with one on 28th, ten at Killingholme on 13th, then one at the Witham Mouth and six at Kirton Marsh on 27th. Up to 23 on the north-east coast from mid-January to early February were seen at Tetney, North Coates, Marshchapel, Grainthorpe and Donna Nook. In February, seven were seen at Whisby gravel pits on 22nd and one at Goxhill on 24th. Late birds in May were one at Barrow Haven on 15th and two at Gibraltar Point on 18th. The only bird in autumn was eight south at Chapel St Leonards on 25th November.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Birds were present all year, with up to 40 at Baston Common gravel pits and 40 at Kirkby-on-Bain gravel pits on 3rd February, then 90 on 30th December. Smaller numbers were seen at many other localities. Several pairs bred at Deeping Lake and one pair at Messingham.

Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens*

Two or three different birds were seen at Barton-on-Humber and Barrow Haven from 17th-25th March and 10th-16th May (GPC, BMC, JRC). One was at Trent Falls on 7th June (AG) and one at Baston Common gravel pits occasionally from 19th August to the end of the year (JO). All seem likely to have escaped from wildfowl collections.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Up to 35 were present at Covenham Reservoir from mid-January to early February and there was a maximum of 142 at Burton gravel pits on 9th February. On the coast, there were occasional records of small numbers from January to June and in October at North Coates, Donna Nook, Saltfleetby, Gibraltar Point, Wainfleet and the Welland Mouth. Three flew W at Trent Falls on 6th March and up to 31 were present in early June. Peak numbers in autumn included 75 at Messingham in early September and 100 at West Deeping gravel pits in late November.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

In February, one was at the Witham Mouth on 5th and one at Burton gravel pits from 9th to 4th March. Singles were present at Messingham from 31st March to 6th June and summering birds at Donna Nook on 23rd June and Grainthorpe on 21st July. More obviously wild birds were seven at Donna Nook on 27th October and five at Cadney Reservoir on 29th-30th November. Four were present from 1st-3rd December, then two on 6th and one found dead on 28th. One was present at Burton gravel pits from 1st December to the end of the year.

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

Counts between Gibraltar Point and the Norfolk border totalled 7,100 on 27th January, 6,500 on 3rd March and 4,300 on 28th April. There was a concentration of 5,000 at the Witham Mouth on 4th February. On the north-east coast, there were up to 550 at Donna Nook in January and February, with 450 at North Coates on 5th January, 500 at Saltfleet on 3rd February and 600 at Grainthorpe on 25th. Birds were well up the Humber in January, with up to eight at Goxhill early in the month and later one or two at Barrow Haven. Three flew E at Trent Falls on 7th February. Up to six birds were present at Gibraltar Point in late June and there was an early return there, with eight S on 20th August. Large numbers were present in late October and early November, with 3,000 on 9th. Up to 5,000 were seen in the south Wash in November and December. Numbers continue to increase on the north-east coast and the maximum was 1,460 at Donna Nook on 19th December. An unusual record was one inland at Covenham Reservoir on 13th-14th September.

In the period January to early March, there was an exceptional influx of pale-bellied birds, *B.b. hrota*, with one at Killingholme, three at Gibraltar Point, four at Terrington, six at Grainthorpe, up to seven at Saltfleetby, nine at Saltfleet and 20 at Donna Nook.

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiacus*

Four were present at Ingoldmells from January to early February and one was seen at Kirkby-on-Bain gravel pits on 25th June.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

A pair was seen at Cowbridge near Boston on 14th April (AGP) and one was present at Trent Falls and Whitton Sands in early September (AG). Under consideration by *British Birds*, but records of this species seem rather unlikely to involve wild birds.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Counts between Gibraltar Point and the Norfolk border totalled 12,500 on 27th January and 5,900 on 3rd March. On the north-east coast, there were 600 at North Coates on 5th January and 500 at Saltfleetby on 7th, with 456 at Grimsby on 9th September. Peak numbers at Trent Falls were 110 on 11th May and 210 W on 13th December. Birds were present at Covenham Reservoir for most of the year, with a peak of 19 on 6th May and breeding recorded for the first time when two pairs were seen with young. Other inland breeding sites reported were Lea, Brigg, Twigmoor, Kirkby-on-Bain gravel pits and Surfleet Seas End.

Mandarin Aix *galericulata*

A pair was present on the Welland at Stamford in May.

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Large numbers in January included 800 at Saltfleetby from 5th-14th, 1,000 at Tetney on 6th and 4,700 between Gibraltar Point and the Norfolk border on 27th. There was a peak of 1,600 at Trent Falls on 24th February and birds were present there to 25th May and from 8th August. In autumn, peak numbers included up to 315 at Gibraltar Point from September to early November, 113 at Covenham Reservoir on 13th November and 450 at Read's Island on 19th December.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Birds were present all year in small numbers, including a pair at Messingham in May and June. Maximum numbers were eight at Baston Fen on 8th March, nine at Gibraltar Point on 26th August, nine at Covenham Reservoir on 27th October and ten at West Deeping gravel pits on 24th November. Other records were at Trent Falls, Killingholme, Goxhill, Barrow Haven, Toft Newton Reservoir, Tetney, Grainthorpe, Fulstow Pit, Saltfleetby, Huttoft Pit, Chapel Pit, Burton gravel pits, Tattershall gravel pits and Cowbit.

Teal *Anas crecca*

Peak numbers in January included 250 at Trent Falls on 1st, 75 at Gibraltar Point on 3rd, 50 at Killingholme on 25th, with 58 at the Witham Mouth and 75 at Holbeach on 27th. There were 48 at Baston Fen on 3rd March, 75 at Susworth on 4th and 140 at East Butterwick on 19th, with 50 at Donna Nook on 28th April. The only breeding report was of two broods at Twigmoor in early June. Peaks in autumn were 200 at Gibraltar Point on 26th August and 5th November, 120 at Killingholme on 2nd September, 1,000 at Trent Falls on 12th October, 100 at Twigmoor on 15th December, with 180 at Baston Fen on 16th, then 100 at Spalding and 200 at Read's Island on 19th.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

In January, there were up to 650 at Covenham Reservoir and 530 at Gibraltar Point on 1st. Peaks in autumn included 1,300 at Trent Falls on 12th September, 943 at Covenham Reservoir on 13th November and 600 at Gibraltar Point on 24th, with up to 500 at Huttoft Pit in November and December.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Birds were fairly widespread in small numbers from January to early April and late July to December. Peak numbers occurred in autumn, including 14 at the Witham Mouth on 23rd September. In October, there were 21 at Trent Falls on 7th, 14 at Gibraltar Point on 13th and 22 S at Donna Nook on 22nd. Others were seen at South Ferriby, Barrow Haven, Goxhill, Killingholme, Immingham, Cleethorpes, Humberston, Tetney, North Coates, Covenham Reservoir, Saltfleet, Saltfleetby, Huttoft Pit, Chapel Point and the Welland Mouth.

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

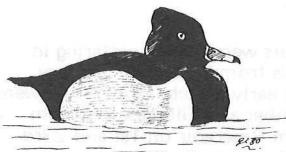
First record was a pair at Donna Nook on 25th March, with one or two there from 11th-19th May. One or two were seen at Gibraltar Point on 28th-29th April, with a pair at Torksey on 29th. A pair was present at Killingholme on 8th May, with a male from 5th-7th June and one at Barrow Haven on 11th May and 23rd June. Others were seen at Saltfleetby on 16th May and Trent Falls on 11th and 30th May and 29th June. At Huttoft, a pair was present from 8th April, then a male throughout May and a female on 9th June, the records suggesting a breeding attempt. The only autumn records were in July, with singles at Huttoft and Anderby on 28th and Killingholme on 29th.

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Birds were present all year, with more wintering than usual. In January, there were ten at Covenham Reservoir on 3rd and 17 at Kirton Marsh on 27th, then 12 at Gibraltar Point on 4th March and 20 at Baston Fen on 8th. Maximum numbers in autumn included 55 at Killingholme in the second half of August and 28 at Gibraltar Point on 22nd, with 48 at Immingham on 27th October. Numbers at Messingham increased towards the end of the year, with a maximum of 44 on 13th December.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Large numbers in the early part of the year included 280 at Killingholme on 27th January. In February, there were 100 at Barrow Haven and 180 at Covenham Reservoir on 3rd, 120 at Trent Falls and 200 between Goxhill and East Halton on 4th, 330 at Scunthorpe on 22nd and 110 at Whisby gravel pits on 28th. Others in March included 93 at Immingham on 3rd and 88 at Kirkby-on-Bain gravel pits on 4th. Pairs bred at Barrow Haven and Barton-on-Humber, with two at Messingham. Peak autumn counts were 100 at Sleaford on 20th November and 100 at West Deeping gravel pits on 24th.



Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris* (illustrated)

A male was present at Messingham from 3rd-23rd June (DS, JH et al). In October, a male was again present at Messingham from 6th-20th (DS, JH), then a male at Barrow Haven from 24th to 3rd November (GPC). It seems likely that only one bird was involved in all three records. Accepted by *British Birds* and the first authenticated county record.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Large numbers in the early part of the year included 110 at Killingholme on 27th January. In February, there were 456 at Covenham Reservoir on 4th, 264 at Burton gravel pits on 9th and 300 on the Welland between Spalding and Deeping on 22nd. Breeding pairs included one at South Ferriby, three at Scunthorpe and the South Humber side pits and five at Messingham and Baston Fen. Peak autumn counts were 203 at Bardney on 9th October and 163 at Covenham Reservoir on 15th. In December, there were 250 at Fulstow Pit on 15th and 220 at Burton gravel pits on 16th.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Small numbers were present at Covenham Reservoir from January to 17th April and 27th September to December, with seven on 27th October. Others inland were one at Southrey on 28th February, up to three on the Welland between Spalding and Deeping from mid-February to early March, with singles at Fulstow Pit in March and up to three in late November and early December. Maximum numbers on the coast were in January, with 32 at Barrow Haven on 3rd, 20 at Tetney on 7th, 16 at Killingholme on 25th, 22 at Trusthorpe on 28th and 20 at Grimsby Docks on 29th. Smaller numbers were recorded at Barton-on-Humber, Goxhill, East Halton, Immingham, North Coates, Donna Nook, Saltfleetby, Huttoft, Anderby, Gibraltar Point and the Witham Mouth.

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

Some birds were present all year, with regular records in the Humber and the Wash, although a small flock was also present on the North Sea coast at Trusthorpe from January to March. Summering birds included up to 28 at Killingholme in June. Peak numbers in the early part of the year were 30 at Grimsby Docks on 1st January, 90 at the Witham Mouth on 3rd February and 32 at Killingholme on 8th March. In September, there were 90 at Benington and 31 at Butterwick on 9th, with 70 S at Gibraltar Point on 12th. At the Witham Mouth, 45 were seen on 7th October. Smaller numbers were recorded at Barrow Haven, Goxhill, Tetney, North Coates, Cleethorpes, Grainthorpe, Saltfleet, Saltfleetby, Donna Nook, Huttoft and Ingoldmells.

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

Singles at Donna Nook on 13th January and Barrow Haven from 16th-24th February were the only records until five early autumn birds at Gibraltar Point on 5th September. In October, there were singles at Saltfleetby on 14th and Ingoldmells on 19th, with two S at Trusthorpe on 22nd. Two were present at Goxhill on 12th November, with two S at Donna Nook on 26th and another present from 26th to 4th December. Two were seen at Benington on 8th December.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Birds were present all year, with peaks of 320 at Donna Nook on 16th February, 160 at Gibraltar Point on 26th July, 128 W at Barrow Haven on 7th August and 150 at Trusthorpe on 10th November. Inland, one was at Trent Falls on 27th January, with three on 25th February and there were four on the Welland between Crowland and Deeping on 7th April. Up to six were seen occasionally at Covenham Reservoir from January to April, with one on 28th June.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

In the early part of the year, one was at Saltfleetby on 5th January, with singles at Donna Nook on 2nd and 7th, then two on 16th February and three on 3rd March. One was present at North Somercotes Lido from 24th February to 18th March and birds were found dead at Huttoft on 25th February, with two at Benington on 3rd March. Two flew E at Barrow Haven on 19th February. Up to three were present at Covenham Reservoir during January, then four on 22nd February. Others inland were singles in late February at Riseholme, Cadney Reservoir on 17th and found dead at Tattershall gravel pits on 24th. One was seen at

Grimsby Docks on 2nd April and another at North Coates on 7th June. Up to six were present at Gibraltar Point from 20th August to 7th September. Four flew S at Chapel Point on 8th September, with one at Saltfleetby on 19th, and two on 22nd October and 10th November. Two were seen at Barrow Haven on 11th November and three flew N and four S at Huttoft on 9th December, with one at Trusthorpe on 30th.

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Birds were present to 13th May at Covenham Reservoir and from 6th October at Saltfleetby, with widespread reports on the coast and inland. Maximum numbers were up to 40 at Barrow Haven from January to March, 50 at the Witham Mouth on 4th February, with 40 at Covenham Reservoir on 1st January and 81 on 16th December.

Smew *Mergus albellus*

In the hard weather from January to early March, small numbers were found wintering in the county. In the Humber, there were up to four at Trent Falls from 24th-27th January and up to three occasionally at Barrow Haven from January to early March. One or two were at Goxhill in mid-February, with up to three at Barton-on-Humber and Killingholme from late February to 10th March. Singles were present at Covenham Reservoir on 1st and 23rd January and 9th and 25th February, involving at least two birds. Up to five were present on the Welland between Spalding and Deeping from January to early March. Singles were seen at Tetney on 9th January, Burton gravel pits on 4th February and Gibraltar Point on 8th. The only other record was one N at Donna Nook on 21st December. Although normally scarce, adult males were in about equal numbers with redheads and occurred at all the above localities except Burton.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Birds were widespread and present in larger numbers than usual in the early part of the year. Maximum numbers in February were 25 at the Hobhole on 11th, 45 at the Witham Mouth on 18th and 25 at Boston Docks on 22nd. Up to 15 were present at Grimsby Docks in late February and early March and there were 58 at the Nene Mouth on 3rd March. After blizzards in mid-February many were found inland, some remaining there during March. There were up to 14 at Covenham Reservoir, 13 at Spalding, ten on the Welland between Spalding and Deeping, five at Fulstow Pit, five on the Witham at Southrey and three at Chapel Hill, four at Scunthorpe, three at Cadney Reservoir, two on the Louth canal at Grainthorpe and singles at Brigg, Bardney and Tattershall. Small numbers were also recorded in the Humber from Trent Falls to Killingholme. There were singles in June at Donna Nook on 2nd and Barrow Haven on 30th, with three there on 10th July. More normal numbers occurred from autumn onwards, with one inland at Bardney on 9th October, a maximum of six at Gibraltar Point in late November and smaller numbers elsewhere on the coast.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Birds were very widespread in the hard weather from January to March. Numbers were generally small, but there were 23 at Cadney Reservoir on 5th January, 52 at Trent Falls on 9th February and 60 at Tallington gravel pits on 25th, with up to 35 on the Welland between Spalding and Deeping from mid-February to early March. A few occurred in spring and one flew west at Trent Falls on 17th June. Only small numbers were recorded on the coast and inland from mid-October to December.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Two adult males were present on the Welland between Spalding and Deeping on 27th January. Covenham Reservoir had an adult male from 2nd-7th February, an immature male on 13th May and an immature or adult female from 21st-23rd November.

Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

One flew west at Trent Falls on 3rd September (AG).

Black Kite *Milvus migrans* (illustrated)

One soaring over East Halton pit on 18th May eventually flew off south-west (GPC). Accepted by *British Birds* and the first county record.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

One flew south-west at Saltfleetby on 19th April (PC, BW, TC).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Wintering birds were seen at the Welland Mouth on 27th January, Chapel Hill on 2nd March and Trent Falls in late February and early March. There was a good spring passage on the coast, with several different single birds at Gibraltar Point from mid-April to the end of June. One or two birds were seen on several occasions at Saltfleetby and Donna Nook from mid-April to mid-June and one or two at Tetney and Grainthorpe in the first half of May. Singles were seen in May at Killingholme on 7th, East Halton on 15th, with a different bird at Barrow Haven on the same day, and

Chapel Pit on 27th. Several birds were seen occasionally at Trent Falls from April to October and one or two at Frampton from May to early September. There was an autumn influx



in August, with singles at Stickford on 16th, Tetney on 20th, up to three at Nocton Fen from 21st to 28th, four at Wisbech sewage farm on 29th and singles at Gibraltar Point on 22nd and 31st to 1st September. Singles were seen at Winteringham on 15th September and Holbeach on 16th, with one or two at Donna Nook and Saltfleetby between 13th and early October.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Birds were more widespread than usual from January to May, including up to seven at Saltfleetby, six at Gibraltar Point, five at Donna Nook, three at Tetney, Kirkby Moor, the Witham Mouth, Holbeach, Gedney, Dawsmere and several at Trent Falls. Last of the spring was at Saltfleetby on 31st May. Early autumn birds were seen at Gibraltar Point on 13th August and the Witham Mouth on 9th September, but the main influx was in October to December, with up to five at Saltfleetby and Donna Nook, three at Gibraltar Point and several at Trent Falls. One or two were also recorded in the early part of the year at Barrow Haven, Goxhill, Cleethorpes, Humberston, North Coates, Grainthorpe, Fulstow, Covenham Reservoir, Huttoft, Anderby, Chapel Pit, Langworth, Bardney, Marshchapel, Wainfleet, Scrane End, Baston Fen, Crowland, the Welland Mouth, the Nene Mouth and Temple Wood Aslackby. Birds were also widespread from October to December, with one or two at South Ferriby, Barton-on-Humber, Barrow Haven, Epworth, Fulstow, Covenham Reservoir, Tetney, Kirkby Moor, Beckingham, Frampton, Baston Fen, Bourne Fen, Pinchbeck, Crowland, Deeping St Nicholas and Holbeach.

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*

There was a small influx in May, with a sub-adult male at Donna Nook on 11th (SL, Rlo), probably the same bird at Tetney on 12th and a ring-tail there on 20th (MWL). A ring-tail flew N at Grainthorpe on 13th (MM, GPC) and there were singles at Fotherby on 17th (CRM) and Trent Falls from 24th-27th (AG). A female was seen at Gibraltar Point on 1st July (AM, MG) and an adult male at Crowland on 31st August (WAC).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

An immature female was seen at close range near South Thoresby on 16th December. It was not wearing jesses and was thought to be wild (REMP, WH).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

One was seen at Risby Warren on 16th January and two at Laughton Common on 27th, with singles at Burton gravel pits on 8th February and Burgh-on-Bain on 23rd. There was some coastal passage in April, with one at Killingholme on 2nd and Saltfleetby on 11th-12th, then three N there on 29th. Three flew S at Donna Nook on 12th and one SW on 13th and singles were seen at Gibraltar Point on 1st, 9th-11th, 13th-14th, 21st and 2nd May. Singles were also seen at Bourne Wood on 19th April, Broughton Woods on 11th May and Elsham on 29th. The only summer record was a male at Newball Wood on 10th June. Early autumn birds were seen at Laughton Common on 29th July, Messingham on 8th August and Gibraltar Point on 19th July and 10th September. Birds were widespread from October to December, with regular records of up to three at Gibraltar Point, one or two at Donna Nook and Saltfleetby and several at Ailby Wood near Alford. There were three at Broughton Woods on 23rd November and other singles in the period at Trent Falls, Belton, Epworth, Barrow Haven, Killingholme, Twigmoor, Cleethorpes, South Cockerington, Louth, Theddlethorpe, Trusthorpe and Skegness.

Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

A few occurred in winter, with singles at Louth on 21st January, found dead at Gibraltar Point on 25th and present at Kirkby Moor on 31st. In February, a bird was seen at North Coates on 3rd, Tetney on 4th and Grainthorpe Fen on 5th, with one at Fulstow on 23rd March. One flew W at Gibraltar Point on 31st March and another S on 13th April. An unusual record was one seen at Weelsby Woods, Grimsby, on 28th June. One was present at Twigmoor from 8th-15th December.

Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus*

One was present at Grainthorpe and Marshchapel from 17th January to 2nd February (SL), with probably the same bird at Tetney on 21st January (GPC). Another was seen at Trent Falls on 19th April (AG).

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

One at Well Vale on 16th April (JMB) was perhaps the bird reported at Tattershall in mid-April (JIM). One was seen at Tetney Blow Wells on 16th June (HB) and there were early autumn records in July, with one S at Burton gravel pits on 16th (RJF) and another at Tetney Lock on 18th (RLo), then one at Gibraltar Point on 8th September (BW, PW).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Spring passage on the coast reached a peak in May, with five at Saltfleetby on 6th, six S at Donna Nook on 14th and 15th and two NE out to sea there on 6th June. Maximum numbers on the coast in autumn were five at Huttoft Pit on 28th July, 13 at Gibraltar Point on 6th August, ten S at Donna Nook on 7th October and six at Saltfleetby on 1st November.

Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus*

An immature at Donna Nook on 2nd November eventually flew off SW (SL). Accepted by *British Birds*.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Birds were widespread from January to April, with one or two seen regularly at Donna Nook and the Witham Mouth and others occasionally at Worlaby, Goxhill, Barton-on-Humber, Saltfleetby, Tetney, Scotter, Fulstow, Risby Warren, North Thoresby, Gibraltar Point, Scrane End, Holland Fen, Hagworthingham and Trent Falls, with the last of the spring there on 20th April. An early bird returned to Trent Falls on 17th August and from September to December one or two were seen regularly at Donna Nook, with others occasionally at North Coates, the Witham Mouth, Goxhill, Barrow Haven, Saltfleetby, Thornton Curtis, Tetney, Anderby, Mablethorpe, Messingham, Twigmoor, Sandtoft, Huttoft Pit, Trent Falls, Cleethorpes, Gibraltar Point, Epworth, Benington and Holbeach.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

A pair bred in the county and reared three young, remaining in the nesting area until early September. There was also a good number of records of single birds at Donna Nook on 15th May, 31st August and 1st September (RLo, CRM), Grainthorpe Marsh on 12th May (MM), Weelsby Woods on 16th June (GPC), Barrow Haven on 28th June and 18th July (GPC), Gibraltar Point on 18th and 22nd June and 13th September (DG, RLa, WMP), Dawsmere on 14th September (GT), Deeping St. Nicholas on 22nd September (PNW) and Trent Falls on 17th and 29th August (AG).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

In the early part of the year, one flew south-east at Barrow Haven on 10th March (GPC, MM) and one was seen at Tetney on 13th May (MM). In September, one flew west at Barrow Haven on 13th (GPC) and one south at Lacey on 25th (GKB). One flew south at Grimsby on 6th October (RKN) and one north at Tetney on 20th November (SL).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

At Donna Nook, 12 pairs bred, but birds were only seen occasionally in autumn after a poor breeding season. Birds were present all year at Gibraltar Point, with up to 20 from September to December.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

At Donna Nook, where four pairs bred, up to 17 were seen in spring and 18 in autumn, but birds were largely absent after early November. Gibraltar Point had occasional records of up to seven from January to May and September to December.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

The only record was one calling at Covenham Reservoir from 7th-9th June (GPC, BMC).

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

At Donna Nook, where three pairs bred, birds were present all year, with up to 11 in autumn. Birds were present all year at Gibraltar Point, with up to 15 from January to February and an increase in autumn, when up to 40 were recorded from October to December.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

In the period January to April, there were occasional records of up to three birds at Tetney, Donna Nook, Saltfleetby, Biscathorpe Lake, Burton Gravel Pits, Huttoft Pit, Wolla Bank, Anderby, Chapel Pit, Kirkby-on-Bain pits, Gibraltar Point and Baston Fen. Birds were heard in summer and may have bred at Saltfleetby and Baston Fen. Only one or two were seen in autumn from September to December at Lindholme Lake, Donna Nook, Saltfleetby, Huttoft Pit, Chapel Pit, Gibraltar Point, Burton gravel pits and Baston Fen.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

In February, there were 86 on the Welland between Spalding and Deeping on 24th. At Donna Nook, where four pairs bred, up to 20 were present in autumn. Birds were present all year at Gibraltar Point, with up to ten in January, then smaller numbers until an increase in mid-August to 18 and a maximum of 22 on 16th November. Concentrations in December included 45 at Messingham rubbish tip on 8th and 60 at Barton-on-Humber on 19th.

Coot *Fulica atra*

Large numbers were present in the Humber in January, with 338 from Chowder to Barton on 7th and 575 from Goxhill to East Halton on the same day. At Goxhill, 195 on 10th included at albino bird. Others included 21 at North Coates on 4th and up to seven at Grimsby Docks. On the coast, there were six at Saltfleet Haven on 13th January and up to eight at the Welland Mouth and 14 at the Witham Mouth from January to March. A peak of 500 occurred at Covenham Reservoir on 6th January and there were 254 at Killingholme on 27th February. At Donna Nook, where three pairs bred, birds were present from late March to July, with one in November. Gibraltar Point had occasional singles from January to March apart from six on 13th January and up to ten from April to mid-November. Two pairs bred on the fresh-water marsh at Saltfleetby. There was an early build-up at Covenham Reservoir, with 231 on 27th September and 100 were present at Sleaford Pit on 20th November. In December, there were 287 at Immingham on 5th, 100 at Barton-on-Humber on 19th, then 144 at Fulstow Pit and 145 at Toft Newton Reservoir on 31st.

Crane *Grus grus*

An immature present at the end of 1978 in the Scotter area, stayed until 19th March (MM, JH et al). In May, singles were seen at Gibraltar Point on 12th (RLa, DP) and 20th (RW, PK, PG) and Anderby on 26th (HB, DW). Another was seen at Gibraltar Point on 13th-14th September (SD, GWS, IS et al) and an immature was present at Kirton near Boston on 24th November (MIE). Scotter and Anderby birds accepted, others under consideration by

British Birds.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Largest number in the early part of the year was 6,100 at Friskney on 27th January, with over 1,000 at Benington on the same day. Breeding pairs included four at Donna Nook, 25 at Tetney and one at Killingholme. Autumn peaks included 9,500 at Wainfleet on 9th September and 1,200 at Tetney on 22nd. Gibraltar Point had 5,000 on 10th-11th August, increasing to 11,000 on 7th September and 15,000 on 7th October, with 2,000 after mid-October. Donna Nook had a peak of 700 on 8th September and there were 3,000 between Tetney and Grainthorpe on 30th December. At Trent Falls, small numbers moved west in April and May and more regularly from late July to early September, totalling 1,186 on 22 days, with a peak of 352 on 3rd August, when 105 also flew west at Barrow Haven. Inland, there were singles at Baston Fen on 30th May, 15th July and 17th September, Guthram on 1st June and 15th July and Thurlby gravel pit on 5th August. Covenham Reservoir had singles on 28th February and 10th May, with seven on 23rd July and one on 22nd August.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

There was an interesting wintering record of two at Grimsby from 12th January to 4th February, roosting at Tetney on the latter date (BMC, MT, ALG, RNG). In April, one was at Covenham Reservoir on 4th (BMC), with three at Gibraltar Point on 27th (DP, RLa). Two flew SW at Trent Falls on 8th July and two were seen there on 2nd and 7th September (AG). Also in September, there were two at Killingholme on 2nd and one on 10th (GPC), one flew S at Donna Nook on 8th (CRM) and another was present at Covenham Reservoir on 9th (DH).

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

First was at Barrow Haven on 4th April. Breeding records included two pairs at Elsham and Spalding and others at Scunthorpe and Killingholme. Small numbers were recorded in spring at Goxhill, Cadney Reservoir, Messingham, North Coates, Whisby gravel pits, Gibraltar Point, Metheringham and Saltfleetby. There were seven at Bardney on 11th July, but peak numbers were in August, with seven at Killingholme and 12 at Trent Falls on 2nd, then 12 at Messingham on 9th. Smaller numbers were seen at the Welland Mouth, Barrow Haven, Barton-on-Humber, East Halton, Immingham, Covenham Reservoir, Cadney Reservoir, Donna Nook, Brigg, Grimsby and Gibraltar Point, with the last at Brigg on 17th September.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

In the early part of the year, there were up to 70 at Cleethorpes in January and February and 250 between Humberston and Tetney on 4th February. Peak spring passage was in May, with 25 at the Witham Mouth on 12th, 27 at Trent Falls on 17th, 55 at Donna Nook and 85 at Saltfleetby on 16th, 90 at Gibraltar Point on 26th, then 81 at Donna Nook on 1st June. Breeding records included five pairs at Donna Nook, 40 at Tetney and several at Killingholme. Peak autumn passage was in September, with 316 at Gibraltar Point on 6th, 300 at Saltfleetby on 8th and 450 at Frampton on 9th. In the Humber, there were 150 at Killingholme on 11th August and small numbers were widespread at inland sites.

Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*

A female was found incubating two eggs on 30th June (KA, PH). Later the pair and two small young were seen, but it is not known whether they were reared successfully. This is the first authentic breeding record for the county and quite unexpected. In addition, a male was present at Gibraltar Point in June and July (SD, RLa, PRB et al).

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*

In May, five flew NW at Donna Nook on 8th and seven were present there from 11th-13th, increasing to 15 on 14th, then down to six on 15th-16th (SL, RLo, BMC et al). Two were seen at Tetney on 11th (GPC).

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

In the early part of the year, flocks included 300 at Goxhill on 2nd January and 400 at East Halton on 19th April. A few birds were seen in summer and flocks began returning from mid-July. By September, there were 350 at Tetney, 400 at Whitton on 8th and 400 at Donna Nook late in the month and in October, Goxhill had up to 1,000 in October and November. Some large flocks were present in December, with 500 near Faldingworth on 13th, 600 at East Halton from 12th-22nd, 400 at Pinchbeck on 16th, 450 at Huttoft on 23rd and 800 at Grainthorpe on 30th.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

In the early part of the year, there were 1,000 between Gibraltar Point and the Norfolk border on 27th January and 1,450 on 3rd March, with 500 at Grimsby Docks on 15th

January. Peak numbers in September were 1,040 at Wainfleet on 9th and 520 at Tetney on 12th. In October, there were 500 at Gibraltar Point on 7th and 350 at Donna Nook on 10th. At Trent Falls, singles flew W on 27th and 29th March and 14th April, with two W on 8th August and singles on 9th and 12th September. The only other inland record was at West Deeping gravel pits on 29th September.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

In early January, 1,000 were present at Gibraltar Point on 1st and some southerly movements occurred, and 460 flew W at Barrow Haven on 2nd. Up to 600 moved N and W at Trent Falls on several days in late February. In early March, there were 600 at Covenham Reservoir on 2nd, with 220 SW at Donna Nook and 500 S at Gibraltar Point on 3rd. Regular NW movements occurred at Donna Nook from mid-May to November, with 474 on 28th June. In October, 1,500 arrived off the sea at Grainthorpe on 7th and 600 were at the Witham Mouth on 27th. November counts included 1,000 at Trent Falls on 6th and 600 at Ingoldmells on 30th. Large numbers appeared in mid-December, with 2,000 W at Raithby near Louth on 11th, 1,500 at Covenham Reservoir on 12th, 5,000 between East Halton and Barrow Haven on 12th-13th, 3,500 near Faldingworth and 2,000 at Trent Falls on 13th, 1,500 between Holme and Messingham on 14th and 1,600 in the Ancholme valley south of Brigg on 16th.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

In the early part of the year, there were 13,100 between Gibraltar Point and the Norfolk border on 27th January and 12,100 on 3rd March, with up to 8,500 at Cleethorpes in early January and 4,500 at Donna Nook on 16th February. There was a spring peak of 2,500 at Gibraltar Point on 13th April and autumn counts there included 10,000 on 10th August, 30,000 on 7th September and 5,000 on 7th and 22nd October. Other large flocks were 20,000 at Wainfleet on 9th September and in December, 10,000 at Friskney on 22nd, 10,200 between Tetney and Grainthorpe on 30th and 4,000 at Donna Nook on 30th-31st. Inland, there were three at Covenham Reservoir on 13th April, singles at Messingham on 4th August and Kirkby-on-Bain gravel pits on 12th, with 50 W at Trent Falls on 3rd.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

In the early part of the year, there were 165 at Cleethorpes on 31st January and 150 at Gibraltar Point on 21st February. Peak spring passage was in late May, with 400 at Gibraltar Point from 24th-29th and 850 at Tetney on 27th. Autumn peaks included 500 at Gibraltar Point on 25th July and 450 at Cleethorpes on 9th September. Inland, there were singles at Cadney Reservoir on 25th May and Messingham on 17th July, with occasional records of one or two at Trent Falls and Covenham Reservoir from May to September.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

In spring, there were up to three at Trent Falls from 15th-20th May, with singles at Saltfleetby on 16th and Donna Nook on 20th, then one at Messingham on 5th June. Occasional birds were recorded from mid-June, but main arrivals were from late August, with peaks in October of 15 at Trent Falls on 7th, ten at Messingham on 8th and 22 at Saltfleetby on 12th. Smaller numbers were recorded at Gibraltar Point, the Witham Mouth, Bardney, Kirkby-on-Bain gravel pits, Donna Nook, Tetney, Grainthorpe, Cleethorpes, Covenham Reservoir and Killingholme, with the last there on 3rd November.

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

In May, there were singles at Trent Falls on 19th (AG), Donna Nook on 19th (SL, CRM) and Covenham Reservoir on 19th-20th (KA, BMC). In autumn, one was at Donna Nook from 24th-31st August, with a second bird from 29th-31st (SL, RLO, CRM) and one was present at Killingholme from 31st August to 2nd September (GPC, RB).



Baird's Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii* (illustrated)

One was present at Killingholme on 19th-20th September (GPC, DAR et al). Accepted by *British Birds* and the third county record.

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

A good autumn, with singles at Donna Nook on 30th July (SL), Killingholme on 19th-20th September (GPC) and Saltfleetby on 3rd October (JRW, EJM).

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

None occurred in spring, but there was an unusual record of one in winter plumage at Frampton Marsh on 23rd-24th June. Autumn passage began in mid-July, with peaks in September of 20 at Gibraltar Point on 7th, 40 at Trent Falls on 9th and 18 at Holbeach on 16th. Smaller numbers were recorded at Grainthorpe, Tetney, Saltfleet, Saltfleetby, North Coates, Donna Nook, Grimsby, the Witham Mouth, the Welland Mouth, Bardney, Covenham Reservoir, Messingham and Killingholme, where the last was seen on 1st November.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

Up to three were seen occasionally at Grimsby Docks from January to early April. In February, there were two at Anderby on 4th, with singles at Sandilands on 24th and Killingholme on 28th, then one at the Witham Mouth on 31st March. A wintering flock at

Trusthorpe from January reached a new peak, with six in March, and the last was seen there on 17th April. In autumn, there were four at Saltfleetby on 27th August and singles at the Witham Mouth on 8th and 22nd September, with two at Gibraltar Point on 10th and one on 12th-13th and 23rd. Two were seen at Donna Nook on 15th November.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

In the early part of the year, there were 16,000 between Gibraltar Point and the Norfolk border on 27th January and 16,500 on 3rd March. There were 2,000 at Donna Nook and 4,000 at Gibraltar Point on 2nd January and 5,420 between Humberston and Tetney on 4th February. Autumn peaks included 1,450 at Frampton on 9th September and 1,200 at Tetney on 26th, 2,000 at Grimsby on 6th October and 3,500 at Donna Nook on 7th November. Gibraltar Point had 2,000 on 20th October and 4th-5th November and there were 6,000 between Tetney and Grainthorpe on 30th December, with 3,000 at Kirton on 23rd. Inland numbers were small but fairly widespread, with a maximum of 39 at Bardney on 30th November.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

A flock wintering at Killingholme from January to March reached a peak of 66 on 8th February and up to 19 were present at Grimsby in January, with one at Donna Nook on 10th February and six at Baston Fen on 3rd March. Spring passage was more widespread than usual in April and May, with up to 22 at Tetney, ten at Kirton Marsh, six at Trent Falls, nine at Grimsby, and small numbers at the Witham Mouth, Covenham Reservoir, Donna Nook, Saltfleetby, Grainthorpe, Barrow Haven and Killingholme. At one site, several males and females were seen from late May to late June, with some lekking and the possibility of an unsuccessful breeding attempt. Birds were widespread in autumn, with peaks of 40 at Donna Nook from 16th August to 1st September, 20 at the Welland Mouth on 26th August and 42 at Killingholme on 29th, 22 at Trent Falls on 20th September and 18 at Immingham on 2nd October. In December, there were up to 12 at Trent Falls and small numbers at Killingholme and Messingham.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

In the early part of the year, there were occasional records of up to three at Barrow Haven, Barton-on-Humber, Saltfleetby, Donna Nook, Louth, Messingham, Anderby, Frampton, Threkingham, Boston, Kirkby-on-Bain gravel pits and Gibraltar Point, where the last was seen on 12th May. Birds were more regular in autumn, with up to four recorded after one at Gibraltar Point on 24th September and others at Stickney, Saltfleetby, Donna Nook, Huttoft, Chapel Pit and Messingham.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Up to 35 were recorded at Gibraltar Point in January, with 13 at Saltfleetby on 1st and 12 at Gedney on 27th, then 25 at Raithby on 19th February. In March, there were 80 at Baston Fen on 3rd and 100 at Goxhill on 17th. Smaller numbers in April included 15 at Huttoft pit on 1st and 35 at East Butterwick on 5th. Breeding was recorded at Twigmoor, with about ten pairs at Baston Fen. Autumn peaks included 50 at Trent Falls on 9th September, 40 at Killingholme in October and 50 at Messingham on 20th, then there were 60 at South Ferriby on 19th December.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Birds were widespread in the early part of the year after an influx in early January, when maximum numbers were 18 at Gibraltar Point on 1st, 19 at Saltfleetby on 2nd, 9 at Donna Nook on 2nd and up to seven at Grimsby and Cleethorpes. Birds arrived on the coast in autumn from October, with up to five at Gibraltar Point and Saltfleetby and smaller numbers elsewhere.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

The only winter record was one at Donna Nook on 2nd January. In spring, one was at Winteringham on 29th April, with three at the Witham Mouth on 8th April and 9th May and two at Gibraltar Point on 15th May. A pair bred successfully in the county and two half-grown young were seen. In autumn, one was at Spalding on 4th July, with five at Kirton Marsh on 15th and 120 there on 11th August. Seven were seen at the Witham Mouth on 12th August and one or two at Killingholme from mid-August to early September. Gibraltar Point had 24 on 28th July, then smaller numbers occasionally until mid-November. Up to three were present at Tetney in the first half of July and one flew W at Trent Falls on 26th. One flew north at Donna Nook on 22nd December.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

On 27th January, there were 7,800 between Gibraltar Point and the Norfolk border. Autumn peaks included 8,500 at Gibraltar Point on 7th September and 6,000 on 6th October, with 2,200 on 23rd December. Westerly movements at Barrow Haven in July and August reached a peak of 95 on 10th July and there were 42 at Winteringham on 29th September. One flew E at Trent Falls on 4th June and westerly movements from mid-June to early September totalled 213 on 23 days. Up to 60 were present in early September, with a few to mid-October. Other inland records were one at Cadney Reservoir on 22nd February and one south at Marton on 9th September.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

First was at Gibraltar Point on 11th April, with a spring peak there of 19 N on 13th May and 15 at Donna Nook on 10th, with smaller numbers elsewhere until early June. Autumn passage began in late June, with a rapid increase from late July, when there were 400 at Gibraltar Point on 24th, then 250 on 15th August. Other large numbers included 30 at Tetney on 24th July, 25 at East Halton on 10th August, with 100 at the Witham Mouth on 12th and 30 at Saltfleetby on 24th, then 42 at Frampton on 9th September. Last was at Gibraltar Point on 4th November.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

In the early part of the year, there were up to 1,000 at Grimsby Docks from January to March, with 400 at Wrangle on 27th January and 420 at Terrington on 3rd March. Birds were moving NW at Donna Nook from late June to mid-August, with a maximum of 80 on 3rd July. At Trent Falls, westerly passage from mid-June to mid-September totalled 1,544 on 60 days, with over 200 on some days. At Gibraltar Point, there were 1,600 on 22nd July, with up to 1,000 in August and 700 in early September. There were 350 at Friskney Marsh on 27th August and 575 at Grimsby on 23rd September.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

One or two birds wintered at Tetney and North Coates in January and February and one was at Killingholme in March, with one at Cleethorpes on 18th February. There were up to five at Killingholme and singles at Donna Nook from mid-April to mid-May and one at Tetney from 3rd-7th May. Birds occurred on autumn passage from late June, with up to 11 at Killingholme in July and 18 in August, then peaks of 12 at Gibraltar Point on 6th September and ten at Donna Nook on 13th. Smaller numbers were recorded at Trent Falls, Whitton, Barrow Haven, Messingham, Covenham Reservoir, Tetney, Cleethorpes, Saltfleetby, Spalding, the Witham Mouth, the Welland Mouth, with the last at Killingholme on 15th November.

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

In the early part of the year, there were 500 at Cleethorpes on 3rd January and 1,000 at Gibraltar Point on 20th, with 1,100 between Gibraltar Point and the Norfolk border on 3rd March. A total of 45 pairs bred at Tetney. Autumn peaks included 520 at Wainfleet on 9th September and 450 at Gibraltar Point on 22nd. In October, there were 850 at Grimsby on 6th and 320 at Cleethorpes on 10th, then 350 at Gibraltar Point on 9th November.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

First were at Saltfleetby on 11th April, with up to four in spring until early June there and at Trent Falls, Killingholme, Tetney, Donna Nook, Covenham Reservoir, Trusthorpe, Cadney Reservoir, Gibraltar Point and the Welland Mouth. Birds were widespread in autumn from late June, with peaks of 17 at the Witham Mouth on 30th July, 20 at Killingholme on 6th August, with 15 at Trent Falls on 18th, and 15 at Tetney and 18 at Gibraltar Point on 24th, then 15 at Holbeach on 15th September. Late birds were seen at Gibraltar Point on 8th December and the Witham Mouth on 29th.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

One was seen at Kirkby-on-Bain gravel pits on 4th March and there were occasional records of one or two in April and May at Cadney Reservoir, East Halton, Tetney, New Waltham, Donna Nook, Skidbrooke, Saltfleetby, Huttoft, Gibraltar Point and Wisbech sewage farm. Birds were widespread in autumn from late June, with 18 at Trent Falls on 27th July and ten at Bardney on 7th August. A late bird was seen at Hartsholme Park, Lincoln on 31st December.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

In May, there were singles at Immingham on 7th, Gibraltar Point on 11th-12th and 16th, Huttoft on 12th and Killingholme on 18th. Four were present at Donna Nook on 16th, with one on 20th, and there were two at Saltfleetby from 13th to 2nd June. In August, there were one or two at Gibraltar Point, singles at Killingholme from 6th-13th, East Halton from 7th-10th, Spalding on 26th and Saltfleetby from 26th-28th. Up to six were present at Donna Nook from 20th August to 18th September. In October, one was at Kirkby-on-Bain gravel pits on 7th and one at Saltfleetby from 12th-20th.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

First was at Barton-on-Humber on 16th April and small numbers were widespread in spring until early June. A pair was seen with downy young at Scunthorpe in mid-June (JH), the first authentic breeding record for the county. Peak numbers occurred in August, with 36 at Tetney on 3rd and 32 on 24th, 25 at Bardney on 6th, 16 at Trent Falls on 8th, 17 at Killingholme on 18th, 45 at Covenham Reservoir on 24th and 19 at Gibraltar Point on 28th. There were 13 at Frampton on 9th September and the last was at Gibraltar Point on 20th October.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

In the early part of the year, there were 120 at Cleethorpes on 31st January and 109 at Terrington on 3rd March. Peak numbers in autumn included 150 at Gibraltar Point on 8th August and 123 at Cleethorpes on 10th October, then there were 100 between Cleethorpes

and Humberston on 30th December. Inland, there were up to three at Covenham Reservoir in May and up to six from late August to October. Three flew west at Trent Falls on 13th July and two on 20th August. Two were at Cadney Reservoir on 6th August and two at Bardney from 12th-14th.

Wilson's Phalarope *Phalaropus tricolor*

Two were present at Wisbech sewage farm on 29th August (JL, SS). Under consideration by *British Birds*.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

One was seen at Gibraltar Point on 12th May (SD, PRB).

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

One was present at Trusthorpe Point on 1st March (JRW, BW). In September, there was an early influx on 22nd, with singles found at Donna Nook (CRM), Saltfleet (HB) and the Witham Mouth (FB, RH, KH). Another was present at Tetney on 29th December (RLo).

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

A wintering bird was seen at Barrow Haven on 3rd and 12-13th January (GPC). In September, one was seen at Chapel Point on 21st (KA), with one at Donna Nook on 15th and four on 30th, then two on 13th October (SL, RLo, DW, PH). At Saltfleetby, there was one on 22nd and two on 29th September, then two on 1st and 21st October and one on 26th (GPC, MM, BMC, JRC). In October, two flew E at Barrow Haven on 13th and one on 23rd (GPC) and one was seen at Gibraltar Point on 20th (DH, WPB). A late bird was seen at Huttoft on 30th December (MM).

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

A wintering bird was seen at Donna Nook on 2nd January and the only spring record was one at Gibraltar Point on 2nd June. Autumn passage began in early July, but relatively small numbers were seen. Peaks were 33 S at Huttoft on 19th August and in September, 50 at Gibraltar Point on 13th, with 59 S at Saltfleetby and 35 S at Chapel Point on 21st. In the Humber, there were occasional records of up to six at Barrow Haven from July to October and one at Whitton on 15th September. At Trent Falls, four flew W on 10th August and three on 19th September. Last were at Donna Nook and Saltfleetby on 22nd October.

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

An adult was seen at the Welland Mouth on 26th August (RH, KH) and a juvenile at Saltfleetby on 15th September (GPC, BMC), with two on 21st October (MM, GPC). Adults were seen at Donna Nook on 30th September (SL) and 13th October (RLo) and a juvenile at Anderby on 4th October (HB, KA). Gibraltar Point had singles on 6th September (CJM), 13th September (IS, WAV) and 28th October (RAH, BS). Birds at the Welland Mouth and Saltfleetby on 15th September accepted, others under consideration by *British Birds*.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

In winter, there were singles at Gibraltar Point on 2nd January, Donna Nook on 16th February and the Witham Mouth on 25th, with one at Wainfleet Marsh on 3rd March. Autumn passage began in early July and birds were regular on the coast until early November. Peaks were 14 S at Donna Nook on 15th September, 18 S at Saltfleetby on 21st, then 20 N on 22nd and 15 S on 29th, with 18 N on 21st October. Smaller numbers were seen at Cleethorpes, Saltfleet, Trusthorpe, Chapel Point, North Coates, Tetney, Huttoft, Gibraltar Point and the Welland Mouth. In the Humber, one flew W at Barrow Haven on 27th August, with one on 12th September and three on 17th, then one E on 13th October. One flew W at Trent Falls on 14th September. Late birds were seen in December at Donna Nook on 1st and 21st and Gibraltar Point on 29th. Altogether there were over 200 records.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

An excellent year with about ten records. Donna Nook had a first winter bird on 18th March (CRM), an adult on 2nd April (SL), a sub-adult on 25th May (BMC), an adult on 15th September (RLo) and second winter birds on 22nd September (GKB, CS) and 4th November (KA, SL). Adults were seen at Saltfleetby on 15th April (MM, GPC), Huttoft on 23rd August (CLO, RHH), Trusthorpe on 25th October (EJM) and Barrow Haven on 31st (GPC). A sub-adult was seen at Covenham Reservoir on 5th August (BMC).

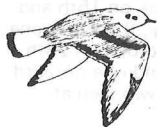
Laughing Gull *Larus atricilla*

A second winter bird was seen at Donna Nook on 24th February (SL) and a first winter bird at Huttoft on 6th October (EJM). Donna Nook bird accepted by *British Birds* and the first county record. Other record under consideration.

Little Gull *Larus minutus*

In winter, one flew N at Gibraltar Point on 2nd January, another was found dead on 10th February and one was seen on 15th. Singles were present at Killingholme and Trusthorpe on 20th January and two flew S at Donna Nook on 16th February, with one on 17th. In spring, there were up to three at Messingham from 21st April to mid-May and others in May included occasional records of one or two at Trent Falls, Cadney Reservoir, Donna Nook, Barrow Haven, Saltfleetby and Covenham Reservoir. There was an influx late in the month, with six at Donna Nook on 26th and three at Grainthorpe on 29th. Seven arrived at Coven-

ham Reservoir on 26th, increasing to 14 from 30th to 1st June, then gradually reducing to eight by 9th, then two or three for the rest of the month. Five were seen at Donna Nook on 1st June and the Covenham flock was relocated on nearby farmland, with 12 at Fulstow on 16th and up to 18 at Marshchapel on 18th-19th. Singles were also seen at Gibraltar Point on 27th and 29th and Seacroft on 30th. In autumn, there were singles at Tetney on 19th July and Killingholme on 29th August, with one or two at Barrow Haven in August and one on 23rd October. There were occasional records of up to five from July to September at Covenham Reservoir and up to three at Saltfleetby from July to October. Donna Nook had records from July to October, with six on 23rd July. Birds were seen at Gibraltar Point from July to November, with six on 28th October. Singles were at Anderby on 11th August and Trent Falls on 12th, with six at Huttoft on 19th. In October one was at Trusthorpe on 23rd and five at the Witham Mouth on 26th. Late birds in December were seen at Grimsby on 2nd and Trusthorpe on 28th.



Sabine's Gull *Larus sabini*

An adult flew N at Donna Nook on 30th September (SL) and one flew S at Saltfleetby on 5th October (JRW, EJM). Perhaps the same individual.

Bonaparte's Gull *Larus philadelphia* (illustrated)

An immature was seen at Grimsby Docks on 17th March (MM, GPC).

Accepted by *British Birds* and the first county record.

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*

In spring, 1,200 were feeding on insects at Covenham Reservoir on 3rd May. Peak numbers in September included 60,000 at Gibraltar Point on 12th and 25,000 at Trent Falls on 15th. There were 3,000 between Cleethorpes and Humberston on 30th December.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

In January, there were 7,000 at North Coates on 3rd, 1,000 at Trent Falls on 18th, 1,500 at Covenham Reservoir on 25th and 1,000 at Gibraltar Point on 27th. After blizzards in mid-February, 23,000 were counted on the shore at Donna Nook on 16th. In December, 2,000 flew west at Raithby near Louth on 11th and 1,000 were present at Trent Falls on 30th.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

In the early part of the year, only small numbers were seen, with a small regular northerly passage at Donna Nook in April and May. Birds were present in summer and there were 272 at Trent Falls on 26th June. Autumn peaks included 240 at Scunthorpe on 1st August and 60 at Gibraltar Point on 9th. In September, there were 1,740 at Trent Falls on 20th and 70 at Croxton on 24th. Up to 30 were present at Killingholme rubbish tip from October to December.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

In the early part of the year, there were 2,000 at Killingholme in January and February, with 2,800 at Donna Nook on 4th February and 2,000 at Gibraltar Point on 2nd March. Autumn peak at Gibraltar Point was 2,000 on 12th September and there were 2,000 at Killingholme in December, with 1,000 at Trent Falls on 30th.

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucooides*

An adult was seen at Saltfleetby on 11th February (MM). In March, there were immatures at Killingholme rubbish tip on 16th-17th (GPC, DW) and another on 30th (GPC), the latter perhaps the individual seen at Grimsby Docks on 29th (HB).

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

A good year with about 30 records, all immatures unless stated otherwise. In the early part of the year, there were occasional records from January to early April involving two or three birds at Grimsby Docks, with a hybrid Glaucous/Herring on 1st January (GPC, BMC, HB, DW et al). One was present at Killingholme on 25th January and there were four different birds between 13th-31st March (GPC et al). Singles were seen at the Witham Mouth on 28th January (GPC, MM) and Huttoft Pit on 28th February (KH, PH), with an adult at Barrow Haven on 19th February and an immature on 7th March (GPC). In March, there was one at Messingham on 4th (DS), with three south at Donna Nook on 18th (CRM) and one or two at Saltfleetby from 11th-25th (HB, DW, MM). At Trent Falls, singles flew E on 29th March and 4th May (AG). In autumn, one was seen at Grimsby Docks on 9th September (WPB) and another on 22nd December (MM). In October, there was an immature at Cleethorpes on 22nd (RKN) and an adult at Donna Nook on the same day (RLo), with an immature on 12th November (SL) and three N on 21st December (SL, RLo). In late November and December, there were occasional records of one at Messingham and two different birds at Killingholme (GPC et al). One was seen at Ashbyville, Scunthorpe on 3rd December (ALG, RNG).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

In the early part of the year, there were 500 between Cleethorpes and Humberston on 7th January, up to 400 at Killingholme in January and February, 1,000 at Donna Nook on 16th February and 330 at Wainfleet on 3rd March. Spring passage at Donna Nook in April and early May reached a peak of 150 N on 26th April. There was an autumn peak at Gibraltar



Black-headed Gull; currently the subject of ringing studies. (Grainthorpe, B. Lillycrapp)

Pomarine Skua at Donna Nook (K. Atkin)





*Robin; large coastal fall
in early October (Cleethorpes,
B. Lillycrapp)*

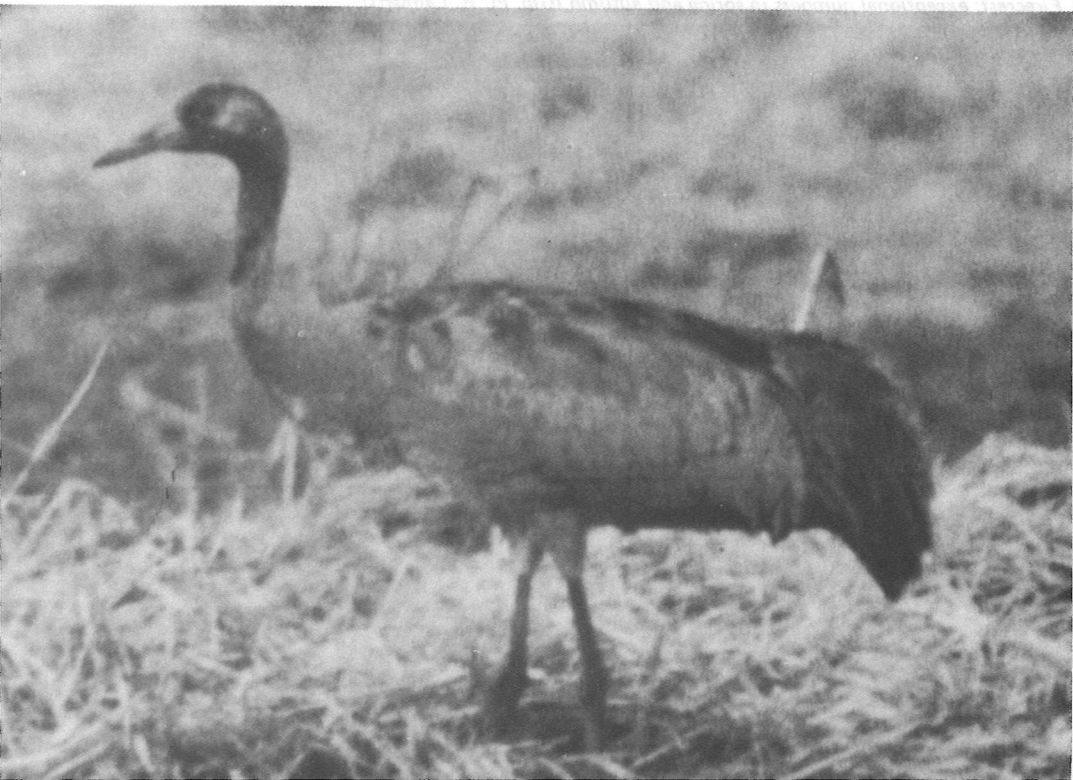


*Kingfisher; hit by hard
weather in early 1979
(Cleethorpes,
B. Lillycrapp)*



Red-necked Grebe, record numbers in February (Grimsby Docks K. Atkin)

Immature Crane at Scotter (G.P. Catley)





Sardinian Warbler trapped at Gibraltar Point (R. Lambert)

Firecrest; exceptional numbers in spring and autumn (Gib. Pt. R. Lambert)



Point of 500 on 4th September, and on 30th December there were 1,000 at Trent Falls, 450 at Killingholme and 500 between Cleethorpes and Humberston.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Unusual numbers in the early part of the year included 208 N at Gibraltar Point and 60 S at Donna Nook on 2nd January, with 60 S at Chapel Point on 11th February, then 1,200 S at Donna Nook on 16th and 40 E at Barrow Haven on 22nd. In spring, up to 100 were seen occasionally at Trent Falls from mid-April to the end of May. The only other inland records were at Covenham Reservoir, with singles dead on 3rd May and present on 19th August. Birds were relatively scarce in autumn, with peaks of 53 S at Saltfleetby on 19th September and 100 N at Saltfleet on 21st October. Late movements in December included 90 S at Gibraltar Point on 28th, with 240 S at Donna Nook on the same day and 81 N there on 29th.

Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia*

In July, an adult was present at Messingham on 4th (JH, DS) and one flew north at Donna Nook on 14th (SL). Both accepted by *British Birds*.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

First were at Gibraltar Point on 22nd April and there were up to 35 there in May and June. In the Humber, there were two at Goxhill on 3rd June and three flew west at Trent Falls on 17th. There was an early autumn influx in July, with 350 at Donna Nook from 5th-7th and 1,000 at Gibraltar Point on 28th, increasing to 2,000 on 11th August, then 1,000 until early September. Numbers at Tetney reached a maximum of 500 on 24th August and the last were seen at Saltfleetby on 21st October.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*

One was seen at Tetney on 25th July (MWL).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

First were at the Witham Mouth on 11th April and only small numbers were recorded on the coast in spring. Inland passage birds included two at Baston Fen on 6th May, up to three at Covenham Reservoir from late April to August, one or two at Cadney Reservoir and up to five at Bardney in July and August. At Barrow Haven, 36 flew west on 14th August and there were peaks of 40 at Tetney and 150 at Grimsby in the second half of the month, with 50 at Saltfleetby on 13th. Last was at Gibraltar Point on 21st October.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

First was at Gibraltar Point on 28th April and small numbers were seen there occasionally in summer. Spring passage in May included seven at Barrow Haven on 4th, 13 W at Trent Falls on 7th, four at Messingham on 11th and five at Cadney Reservoir on 21st. Singles were seen occasionally at Covenham Reservoir in May, June and September. Maximum numbers in autumn were ten at Saltfleetby on 8th August, with 24 at Barrow Haven on 17th and up to 13 at Gibraltar Point from late July to September, where the last was seen on 27th.

Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*

First were at Gibraltar Point and Donna Nook on 13th April. Breeding pairs were 90 at Tetney, 30 at Donna Nook, 18 at Gibraltar Point, six at Seacroft, four at the Witham Mouth and two at Saltfleetby. Despite heavy predation about 50 young were reared. Inland, one was at Covenham Reservoir on 13th May, with two on 6th July and there were two at Messingham on 19th June. In the Humber, there were two at Killingholme on 27th July and one flew east at Trent Falls on 20th August. Peak numbers in autumn included up to 25 at Saltfleetby in July, with 66 at Gibraltar Point on 21st, and 30 at the Witham Mouth on 12th August. Last was at Tetney on 29th September.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

An early bird was at Wolla Bank pits on 14th-15th April, but the main spring passage was between mid-May and early June. There were nine at Messingham on 13th May, with smaller numbers until 11th June. Up to three were seen occasionally at Covenham Reservoir from 15th May to 10th June. Others in May were five at Toft Newton Reservoir on 13th and singles at Grainthorpe on 13th and Killingholme on 15th. Four flew N at Donna Nook on 1st June and one was at Saltfleetby on 24th. Birds were more numerous from early August to September, with peaks in August of 18 N at Donna Nook on 17th and 76 at Barrow Haven on the same day, 36 at Grimsby on 24th and 19 at Covenham Reservoir on 31st. Up to 15 were present at the Witham Mouth from late August to early September, with smaller numbers at Saltfleet Saltfleetby, Huttoft, Chapel Pit, Tetney, Sutton brick pit, Whitton, Trent Falls, Gibraltar Point, the Welland Mouth, Benington and Baston Fen, with the last at Donna Nook on 30th September.

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

In January, there were two at Donna Nook on 6th and two at Humberston on 18th. Singles were seen at Gibraltar Point on 6th January and 11th March. In the period January to early May, a total of at least 30 birds were found oiled/dead at Cleethorpes, Tetney, North Coates, Donna Nook, Saltfleet, Theddlethorpe, Skidbrooke, Huttoft, Anderby, Ingoldmells and

Gibraltar Point. Birds were more numerous than usual from June onwards, with 17 at Saltfleetby on 23rd, then smaller numbers occasionally until October. Birds were seen occasionally at Donna Nook from June to December, with peaks of 585 on 13th October and 13 N on 20th December. Gibraltar Point had up to four occasionally in September, with one found dead on 23rd December. One was seen at Trusthorpe on 27th October and two at Huttoft on 9th December.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

In the early part of the year, dead birds included singles at Anderby on 27th January, Theddlethorpe on 1st March, Saltfleet on 10th April and Tetney on 2nd May, with two at Gibraltar Point on 10th February and one on 17th March. Birds were present from June onwards, with occasional records of up to three at Saltfleetby from June to October. Donna Nook had occasional records from June to September, with eight N and six S on 1st July. Singles were seen at Huttoft on 6th October and 30th December and at Gibraltar Point on 26th August and 22nd September, with one or two on 3rd-4th November. One was found dead at Tetney on 17th November.

Little Auk *Alle alle*

In the early part of the year, one flew north at Donna Nook on 13th January (SL, CRM), with dead birds found at Seacroft on 6th and 27th (PMB, RLa), Mablethorpe on 29th (RSPB) and inland at Ackthorpe Top, Louth on 20th February (CLO). In autumn, there were singles at Saltfleetby on 29th September (BMC) and 21st October (MM, GPC), then one at Trusthorpe on 27th (BMC). In November, there were nine at Barrow Haven on 10th (GPC) and three flew N at Donna Nook on 15th, with one N on 20th December and two S on 29th (SL, RLo, VL). One was found dead at North Coates on 24th December (RLo).

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

In the early part of the year, one was found dead at Huttoft on 24th February and one at Donna Nook on 4th March. In June, 38 flew S at Saltfleetby on 23rd, with one present on 24th, then eight on 8th July. Singles were seen at Barrow Haven on 24th July and 22nd December and Saltfleet on 21st October. In September, there were two at Donna Nook on 17th and singles N on 21st and 22nd, with five N on 13th October. One was present on 24th December, with two S on 28th.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Peak numbers in January included 200 at Risby Warren on 16th and 120 at Trent Falls on 27th. Donna Nook had a maximum of 40 on 2nd March and six pairs remained to breed. Small numbers were present all year at Gibraltar Point, with a maximum of 21 on 26th June. In December, there were 65 at Trent Falls on 20th.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

In January, there were westerly movements at Barrow Haven of 840 on 2nd and 670 on 3rd, with 450 E at Gibraltar Point on 11th and 1,000 present at the Witham Mouth on 27th. In spring, 330 flew S at Saltfleetby on 13th April and 300 S at Donna Nook on 17th May. In October, 1,065 flew SE at Gibraltar Point on 30th and 1,000 were present on 31st. Peak movements in November included 630 W at Barrow Haven on 24th and 600 S at Donna Nook on 27th. In December, there were 1,000 at Bourne on 16th and 8,000 flew E from a roost at North Thoresby on 26th.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

On the coast, Donna Nook had up to three from late April to early June and one or two from late July to mid-August and occasionally to December. Gibraltar Point had occasional records throughout the year, with up to seven in spring and a maximum of 13 on 25th August. A count of birds in Louth in spring totalled 225. In autumn, there were 50 at Brumby Common on 27th October and 50 at Barrow Haven on 12th November.

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

First was at Saltfleetby on 11th April, with regular coastal passage in May and early June. Peaks were 101 W at Barrow Haven on 8th May, 150 S at Gibraltar Point on 23rd and 70 W at the Witham Mouth on 26th, then 74 N at Saltfleetby and 138 N at Donna Nook on 1st June. Only small numbers were seen on the coast in autumn, with up to 12 at Saltfleetby and 25 at Gibraltar Point in August and the last at Donna Nook on 7th November.

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

First was at Gibraltar Point on 16th April and there were up to five there until September. Peak numbers occurred in May, with up to six at Donna Nook, including a rufous-phase female, and there were eight at Saltfleetby on 12th and five at Messingham on 15th. Up to nine were present at Donna Nook in August and a late bird was seen at Saltfleetby on 14th October.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

On the coast, there were one or two at Donna Nook from January to May, with occasional records in autumn. Singles were seen occasionally at Saltfleetby throughout the year, but more frequently in late September and October. Gibraltar Point had occasional records from late March to early July and in October. Birds showing characters of the dark-breasted race, *T. a. guttata*, were seen at Donna Nook on 19th March and Tetney on 12th April.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

On the coast, one was seen at Donna Nook on 21st February and 12th March and a pair present from late April to early August reared one young, the first breeding record there since 1966. Singles were recorded at Gibraltar Point on 7th and 21st October.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

On the coast, there were occasional singles at Donna Nook in January, February and October. One or two were present at Gibraltar Point all year, with three on 17th April and a pair recorded breeding.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Wintering birds from January to March included up to 16 at the Hobhole, 13 at Gibraltar Point, four at Bourne Wood, three at Goxhill, two at Saltfleetby and singles at Humberston, Grainthorpe, North Coates and Donna Nook. Migrants on the coast in April were singles at Tetney on 5th, Chapel Pit on 11th, Saltfleetby on 14th and 15th and Theddlethorpe on 15th, with two at Humberston on 11th and Donna Nook on 12th. Others in May were at the Hobhole and North Somercotes Warren on 6th, Donna Nook on 15th and 22nd, Saltfleet on 19th and Gibraltar Point on 26th. Three pairs bred in the Bourne area and a juvenile was seen at Risby Warren in early August. An early autumn bird was at Donna Nook from 7th-24th August, but the main influx was in October, with two at Humberston on 23rd, one at Chapel Pit and three at Mablethorpe on 24th and up to four at Gibraltar Point from 24th-27th. Up to three were seen there occasionally in November and December. One arrived off the sea at Donna Nook on 13th December. Bourne Wood had up to four from late October to December and there were up to ten at the Hobhole in November and December.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Birds were widespread on the coast and inland in the first half of the year, with five at Gedney and seven at the Witham Mouth on 27th January, five at Saltfleet Haven on 18th February and five in the East Fen near Friskney on 17th March. One arrived off the sea at Trusthorpe on 23rd October, but birds were much scarcer from autumn onwards and mainly confined to the coast, with small numbers regular at Donna Nook and Gibraltar Point.

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

The only reports received were from usual breeding sites at Twigmoor, Woodhall Spa and Stapleford Woods, where there were at least two pairs.

Swift *Apus apus*

First were at Covenham Reservoir and Barrow Haven on 4th May. Later in the month, 155 flew west at Barrow Haven on 8th and 600 were present on 16th, with 1,000 at Covenham Reservoir on 26th. Southerly movements at Gibraltar Point reached a peak in late June, with 1,300 on 21st, 22,000 on 28th and 5,000 on 29th. Smaller numbers were noted at Donna Nook, with 1,000 S on 14th, 500 N on 26th, 800 N on 27th and 500 S on 28th, when 1,000 were present at Barrow Haven. In July, there were 3,000 N at Donna Nook on 17th, 587 W at Barrow Haven on 18th and 5,000 S at Gibraltar Point on 19th. Another 5,000 flew south at Gibraltar Point on 13th August and the last was seen at Roughton Moor on 7th October.

Alpine Swift *Apus melba*

One flew west at Messingham on 16th June (DS). Under consideration by *British Birds*.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

The only breeding records reported were single pairs at the south Humber Bank pits and Burton gravel pits. Birds were scarce on the coast, with singles at Cleethorpes on 5th January and Anderby on 6th, Donna Nook on 4th March, Gibraltar Point on 7th and 15th April and Grainthorpe on 17th November.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

One was present at Bourne Woods on 18th and 19th April (DCW).

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

In September, one was trapped at Theddlethorpe on 4th (GT) and others were seen at Gibraltar Point from 12th-16th (GPC, LNC) and Saltfleetby on 9th (GPC, MM), with another there on 5th October (BMC).

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

On the coast, one flew south at Saltfleetby on 15th April and one was trapped at Gibraltar Point on 9th May, with another present there on 17th August.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

The only coastal birds were at Donna Nook on 30th August and Gibraltar Point from 14th-15th September.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor*

Single birds were seen occasionally at Burton gravel pits throughout the year, although both males and females were identified. One was present at Woodhall Spa from 28th June to 2nd July and several were seen in Casewick Park, near Stamford, during August and September.

Woodlark *Lullula arborea*

The only records were at Donna Nook, with one on 17th February and two on 9th November (SL).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

In January, 300 were present at Gibraltar Point on 1st and another 450 flew south, then there were westerly movements at Barrow Haven of 141 on 9th and 117 on 24th. In February, 500 were present at Donna Nook on 16th and 17th and 530 were seen at South Ferryby on 18th, with 550 E at Trent Falls. Peak autumn passage occurred in October, with up to 500 at Donna Nook and 400 S on 23rd. Easterly passage at Barrow Haven included 50 on 22nd and 100 on 23rd. At Saltfleetby, 81 flew SW on 24th and 200 were present at Mablethorpe on 27th. Gibraltar Point had 800 S on 27th and 200 S on 28th and another 200 flew S on 18th November. A total of 1,500 were counted at Grainthorpe on 30th December.

Shore Lark *Eremophila alpestris*

In the early part of the year, there were up to seven at Gibraltar Point from 12th-20th January and one on 18th March. Birds were very scarce in autumn, with up to three at Donna Nook from 27th October to 9th November and singles at Skegness on 2nd and 24th November.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

First was at Burton gravel pits on 27th March. Coastal passage lasted from mid-April to early June, with peaks in May of 41 N at Donna Nook on 11th and southerly movements at Gibraltar Point of 20 on 16th and 15 on 29th. Roosts in August at Barrow Haven included 1,230 on 6th, 2,800 on 16th, 1,500 on 17th and 2,000 on 23rd. Regular coastal passage began in late July, with 42 N on 22nd at Donna Nook. Gibraltar Point had southerly movements of up to 35 a day in late July and early August and peaks of 60 on 7th September and 100 on 8th. The last was recorded there on 14th October.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

First were at Baston Fen, Saltfleetby and Burton Stather on 11th April. Peak coastal passage was in May, with 100 N at Saltfleetby and 300 N at Donna Nook on 11th, then southerly movements of 500 at Gibraltar Point on 12th and 16th. Autumn passage began in mid-July, but the first significant numbers were in late August, with 400 at Saltfleetby on 21st-22nd, 300 at Barrow Haven on 21st and 330 W on 29th. Donna Nook had 3,000 N on 22nd, 1,000 S on 23rd, 1,000 N on 28th and 2,500 N on 29th. Peak numbers occurred in September, with 1,500 N and 1,000 S at Donna Nook on 1st, then 3,000 N on 8th. There were southerly movements at Saltfleetby of 650 on 7th and 700 on 18th and 2,000 were roosting in the Huttoft area on 13th and 23rd. Gibraltar Point had southerly movements of 3,000 on 2nd, 8,000 on 3rd, 2,500 on 4th, 1,000 on 7th, 1,500 on 8th, 10,000 on 9th-10th and 3,000 on 11th. In the Wash, there were 400 S at Benington and 300 at the Witham Mouth on 9th, then 1,000 W at Holbeach on 14th. Several lingered on the coast in November, with the last at Boston on 30th.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

The first birds were at Spalding on 11th April, but the main spring passage did not occur until late May, when there were 250 at Covenham Reservoir on 28th. Gibraltar Point had 250 S on 29th and Donna Nook 141 N on 31st. Early autumn movements occurred from late July and there were 300 W at Barrow Haven on 21st August, with 50 W on 12th September. Peak coastal passage was in September, with 40 S at Donna Nook on 1st and 59 at Saltfleetby on 20th. There were several hundred at the Witham Mouth on 16th and Cleethorpes on 19th. Southerly movements at Gibraltar Point included 150 on 7th, 100 on 8th, 500 on 10th, 100 on 25th, all in September, then 100 on 16th October. A few very late birds were seen in December, with two south at Huttoft on 2nd and singles south at Gibraltar Point on 2nd and 8th.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae*

All records were at Donna Nook, with one on 30th September, then four on 1st October and another on 27th (SL, RLo, CRM, KA, PH). Accepted by *British Birds*.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

First was at Saltfleetby on 15th April and one flew north there on 11th May. Other passage birds in May included singles west at Barrow Haven on 5th, 7th and 8th and others at Barton-on-Humber on 7th and East Halton on 18th. Gibraltar Point had one or two in the first half of the month and Donna Nook one or two in May and early June. Birds on autumn passage included singles at Goxhill on 20th August and Saltfleetby on 28th and Barrow Haven on 10th September. Gibraltar Point had one on 2nd August, then up to four from mid-August to mid-September. In September, one was seen at Donna Nook on 6th and 26th and the last was at Saltfleetby on 1st October.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

In spring, 46 flew west at Barrow Haven on 31st March. Donna Nook had regular southerly passage of small numbers from late March to mid-April, then northerly movements of up to 55 a day until 9th May. Up to 200 were present at Donna Nook in late July and early August and movements to N or S occurred on many days from late August to the end of October, involving up to 60 birds. A total of 300 arrived on 30th September, with 1,000 present on 1st October and 800 on 2nd. At Tetney, 60 arrived from N on 19th September and there

were 50 at Killingholme on 24th September and 9th October. Gibraltar Point had generally small numbers until September, when there was a peak of 300 on 29th.

Rock Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

Only small numbers were reported in the early part of the year, with a maximum of four at Donna Nook from January and the last of the spring there on 12th April. First of the autumn was at Donna Nook on 18th September and there were up to eight there until the end of the year. In October, there were eight at Gibraltar Point and 12 at Humberston on 15th, then eight at East Halton on 29th. On 16th December, there were eight at Tetney and 15 at North Coates. The only inland records were at Covenham Reservoir, with singles in March and early April and up to four from late September to December.

Birds showing characters of the Scandanavian race, *A.s. littoralis*, were seen in March at Barrow Haven on 2nd and Goxhill on 27th, with one or two at Donna Nook from 19th-31st. One or two were also present at Covenham Reservoir from 19th March to 7th April. The only autumn records were singles at Barrow Haven on 3rd and 19th November.

There were two records of birds showing characters of Water Pipits, *A.s. spinoletta*. One wintering at Barrow Haven was present from 1st January to 28th March (GPC) and another was seen at Covenham Reservoir on 1st November (BMC).

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

First was at Donna Nook on 11th April, with a spring peak there of 15 on 11th and 13th May. In April, there were 16 at Wisbech sewage farm on 13th and 20 at Barton-on-Humber on 27th. Covenham Reservoir had 21 on 24th April and 32 on 8th May and there were 15 at East Halton on 7th May. Donna Nook had an early autumn peak of 20 on 24th July, but largest numbers were in September, with ten at Cadney Reservoir and 100 at Covenham Reservoir on 7th, then 30 at the Witham Mouth and 50 at Gibraltar Point on 9th. Last of the autumn was at Covenham Reservoir on 4th October.

Birds showing characters of the Blue-headed race, *M.f. flava*, were fairly widespread. In April, there were singles at Wisbech sewage farm on 13th and Saltfleetby from 26th-28th. Others were at Barton-on-Humber on 27th April and 7th May, with one at East Halton on 19th April, then one or two in the first week of May and another in late June. In May, there were one or two at Tetney from 22nd-29th, with two at Covenham Reservoir on 6th-7th and one on 15th, then singles in June on 16th and 30th. One was present at Barrow Haven on 19th May. Donna Nook had one on 14th-15th April, then up to three during May, with two on 16th June and one on 1st September.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

In the early part of the year, the only wintering birds reported were at Louth, with up to three from January to 8th May. There were singles in April at Gibraltar Point on 1st, Scunthorpe on 2nd and Donna Nook on 25th, then one at Barrow Haven on 4th May. Gibraltar Point had an unusual record of one on 30th June to 1st July and in August one was present on 4th, with two on 31st. Six were seen on 9th September, then two on 4th October and one on 5th. Singles were recorded at Barrow Haven on 31st August, Cleethorpes on 28th August, 3rd-4th and 24th October, Donna Nook on 9th September, 3rd and 11th October and the Witham Mouth on 9th September. Inland, there were singles at Trent Falls on 5th and Melton Ross on 24th September, in October at New Waltham from 5th-16th, Fulstow on 19th and Brumby Common on 27th. One was present at Louth from September to December, one or two at Lincoln during November and one at Twigmoor on 15th December.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Up to four were recorded on passage at Donna Nook from late March to the end of May and there was aspring peak of 75 at Covenham Reservoir on 24th April. Autumn peaks at Donna Nook were 13 on 13th August and 11 on 13th September and there were eight at Gibraltar Point on 14th October. Thirty were present at Baston Fen on 16th December.

Birds showing characters of White Wagtails, *M.a. alba*, were more numerous than usual. In the period from 19th March to the end of May, there were occasional records of up to three at Barrow Haven, Killingholme, Gibraltar Point, Tetney, East Halton, Cleethorpes, Donna Nook, Saltfleetby and Theddlethorpe. Larger numbers were six at Barton-on-Humber on 27th April and 18 at Covenham Reservoir on 3rd-4th May, where birds were seen regularly from late March to mid-May. In autumn, there were singles at Gibraltar Point on 23rd and 31st July, Tetney on 30th September and Donna Nook on 5th October.

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

In the early part of the year, there were singles at Scunthorpe from 21st-30th January (per SM) and Grimsby from 7th-10th February (NMW). The only other record was one at Marsh-chapel on 5th December (RLo).

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

After blizzards in mid-February, 16 were counted along the river between Louth and Raithby on 19th. However, many must have succumbed as breeding numbers were drastically reduced. Some occurred on the coast in autumn, especially in October, when there were up to five at Donna Nook, and seven at Saltfleetby and Gibraltar Point.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Relatively small numbers were recorded on the coast, with up to 50 at Gibraltar Point all year and a maximum of 30 at Saltfleetby on 1st October. Larger numbers were at Donna Nook, with up to 80 in September and October and up to 12 south on several days.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Only small numbers were recorded on the coast in the early part of the year and there was no noticeable spring passage. In autumn, birds began arriving off the sea on 30th September and maximum numbers were present on 1st October. On this day, there were 100 at North Coates, 250 at Donna Nook, at least 1,000 at Saltfleetby and 200 at Gibraltar Point. Smaller numbers in the next few days included 20 at Cleethorpes and 25 at Humberston on 2nd, 30 at Saltfleet on 3rd and 25 at Anderby on 4th. There were fresh influxes later in the month, with 50 at Donna Nook on 14th and 23rd, 50 at Saltfleetby on 27th and up to 35 at Gibraltar Point from 25th-28th.

Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos*

First was at Twigmoor on 16th April and breeding was recorded there. Passage birds included singles at Barrow Haven on 8th May, Goxhill from 14th May to 1st June, Donna Nook on 2nd and 6th June, with two at Gibraltar Point on 29th April and one on 9th May. Breeding season records included up to four singing males at Austacre Wood Bardney and five at Bourne Wood, with others at Temple Wood Aslackby, Kirkby Moor and Stapleford Woods. None were reported after the end of July.

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*

One trapped at Gibraltar Point on 27th September stayed until 30th (AC, YC, WMP) and a late bird was seen there on 29th October (KH). In October, one was trapped at Saltfleetby on 1st (PC, BW, JRW) and others were seen at Donna Nook on the same day (SL) and at Theddlethorpe on 2nd (EJM).

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

First was at Saltfleetby on 24th March, with one or two there from 10th-15th April. Gibraltar Point had three or four birds between 31st March and 14th May. At Donna Nook, there were singles on 9th-10th, 14th and 19th April and 16th-17th May. Other singles in April were at Saltfleet on 1st, Skegness on 5th, Anderby on 8th, Humberston on 10th-11th and Grainthorpe on 14th. One was inland at Covenham Reservoir on 1st May. In autumn, there was an early bird at Gibraltar Point on 9th September, with up to three there from 13th to 28th October. Donna Nook had birds from 1st-15th October, with a maximum of seven on 13th. Others in October included one or two at Saltfleetby on 13th-14th, two at Grainthorpe on 13th, with singles at Killingholme on 9th, Stickney and Tetney on 13th, Saltfleet from 15th-17th and Humberston on 24th.

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

First was at Saltfleetby on 10th April, where there were occasional singles until the end of May and at Elsham, East Halton, Donna Nook, Tetney and Gibraltar Point. A pair was feeding young in Grimsthorpe Park on 1st July. Peak numbers in autumn were in October, with ten at Saltfleetby on 1st, 15 at Donna Nook on 1st and 2nd, seven at Saltfleet on 3rd and six at Anderby on 4th. Gibraltar Point had up to five in September and the last was seen at Goxhill on 28th October.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

First was at Gibraltar Point on 28th April, but only small numbers occurred on passage in May, with up to three at Donna Nook and mainly singles elsewhere. Several singing males were present at Crowle Waste in May. Autumn peaks included 15 at Donna Nook on 30th and seven at Killingholme on 31st August. In September, there were 21 at Gibraltar Point on 1st and 15 on 7th, with eight at Saltfleetby and 11 at Saltfleet on 8th. Last was at Donna Nook on 14th October.

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

Birds were scarce in the early part of the year, with singles at Barrow Haven on 3rd and North Coates on 6th January, Baston Fen during February and Tetney on 6th. Two were seen near Scunthorpe on 11th March and one at Goxhill on 27th. Donna Nook had singles on 18th-19th and 24th March and 11th April. Last was at Saltfleetby on 13th April. One or two early autumn birds were at Gibraltar Point from 20th-28th August and one on 15th September. Birds were present at Donna Nook from October to December, with a maximum of six on 14th October. Baston Fen had one on 14th October, two in November and four in December. Other singles were at Saltfleetby on 19th October and 29th December and Goxhill on 13th November.

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

First was at Covenham Reservoir on 23rd March, but peak spring passage did not occur until May. There were 20 at Surfleet Seas End on 8th, then on 9th, 25 at Donna Nook, 64 at Covenham Reservoir and 100 at Tetney, with 25 at Saltfleet on 12th and ten at Gibraltar Point on 14th. Birds were present to early June at Scunthorpe on 1st, Gibraltar Point on 3rd and Donna Nook on 7th. Returning birds were seen from early July at Goxhill on 10th,

Donna Nook on 11th and Gibraltar Point on 13th. Numbers were low, with a maximum of 15 at Gibraltar Point on 6th September and the last at Covenham Reservoir on 29th October.

Birds showing characters of the Greenland race, *O.o. leucorhoa*, were seen at Donna Nook on 6th and 13th May and Saltfleetby on 14th-15th October.

A bird at Killingholme on 15th August had been colour-ringed near Hawick, Northumberland in mid-June.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

First was at Donna Nook on 10th April, with one or two there in spring and at Saltfleetby, Barrow Haven, Theddlethorpe, Huttoft and Gibraltar Point, where recorded until 26th May. First of the autumn were at Donna Nook and Gibraltar Point on 30th September, with peaks in October of ten at Gibraltar Point on 4th and 13th and 16 at Donna Nook on 13th. Smaller numbers were recorded at Saltfleet, Saltfleetby, North Coates, Cleethorpes, Ingoldmells and Anderby, with the last at Saltfleetby and Gibraltar Point on 29th October.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Up to 500 were present at Gibraltar Point on 1st and 2nd January and there were up to 30 on spring passage in March and April there and at Donna Nook, with over 50 at Saltfleetby on 1st April. Peak autumn numbers were in October, with 40 at Ashbyville Scunthorpe on 1st and Brumby Common on 20th, then 30 at Barrow Haven and 80 at Saltfleetby on 24th. Donna Nook had 100 on 17th and 150 on 24th. Gibraltar Point recorded 500 on 22nd, reducing to 150 on 24th, then 100 in fresh influxes on 16th and 24th November.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Up to 1,600 were present at Gibraltar Point in early January and 2,000 flew south on 6th. Last of the spring was at Saltfleetby on 13th May. First of the autumn were at Saltfleetby on 27th August, but numbers were lower than usual. Peak movements were in mid-November, with 821 W at Barrow Haven on 10th and several flocks of 200 NW at Pinchbeck on the same day, then 400 W at Trent Falls on 12th. Numbers built up in December, with 600 NW per hour at Baston Fen on 7th, 1,000 at Wyberton on 12th and 600 at Gibraltar Point on 30th.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Up to 75 were present in early January at Gibraltar Point, then small numbers until 100 on 30th September. Large numbers were present in early October, with maximum numbers on 1st, when there were 150 at North Coates, 500 at Donna Nook, 1,000 at Saltfleetby and 250 at Gibraltar Point. On 4th, 100 were inland at Twiggmoor. Later in the month, there were further influxes at Donna Nook, with 150 on 13th and 120 on 17th.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Up to 1,500 were recorded at Gibraltar Point in early January, with southerly movements of 400 on 1st and 1,000 on 6th, then only small numbers were seen until up to 50 in spring. Last was at Beesby on 13th May. An early bird was trapped at Seacroft golf course on 31st August, but may have been present for some time as it was moulting heavily. Peak influxes were in October, with 300 at Saltfleetby and 750 at Donna Nook on 13th and 1,300 there on 17th, then 500 from E at Gibraltar Point on 22nd. Westerly movements at Barrow Haven increased in late November, with a maximum of 315 on 7th December. In November, there were 500 at the Witham Mouth on 4th and 11th, with 150 at Twiggmoor on 13th and 200 at Broughton Woods on 23rd. There were 300 at Wyberton on 12th December.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

On the coast, there were occasional singles at Donna Nook from January to March, then up to three from late June to mid-August and singles occasionally in October and December. At Saltfleetby, there were occasional singles in January and birds were regular from late June to October, with a maximum of 19 on 13th August. Birds were present all year at Gibraltar Point, with up to five apart from an increase in September, when there was a maximum of 18 on 11th. Other concentrations were 11 at Risby Warren on 19th July and 19 at Greetwell, near Scunthorpe on 18th September.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

First recorded at Barrow Haven on 14th April, where several present in spring and early summer. On the coast, there were six at Gibraltar Point on 6th May, with breeding recorded there, at Donna Nook and Weelsby Woods. Several were present in spring and summer at Saltfleetby and Chapel Pit. Others were reported from Crowle Waste, Messingham, Killingholme, Burwell Wood, Burton Pits, Lincoln, Bourne Wood, Temple Wood Aslackby, with ten at Little Scrubs Bardney in late June. Last was at Donna Nook on 31st August.

Aquatic Warbler *Acrocephalus paludicola*

One was seen at Saltfleetby on 29th October (EJM). Under consideration by *British Birds*. Only one previous county record.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

First was at Chapel Pit on 14th April. Spring peak at Gibraltar Point was 25 on 16th May and there were 25 there on 14th July. Birds were common around Boston in early June, but no significant numbers were reported in autumn. A late bird was seen at Saltfleetby on 4th October.

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*

One was trapped at Saltfleetby on 5th June (PC, BW) and a singing male trapped at Donna Nook on the same day, stayed until 7th (SL, CRM, KA et al).

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Early birds were at Messingham on 17th April and Gibraltar Point on 21st, but the main arrivals were not until early May. There were 12 at Gibraltar Point on 12th June and eight pairs bred at Donna Nook. Passage birds were recorded on the coast from August onwards at Donna Nook and Saltfleetby, with a maximum of ten at Gibraltar Point on 15th September. Late birds were still present in mid-October, at Gibraltar Point on 14th, and East Halton and Donna Nook on 16th.

Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*

A singing male was present at Burton gravel pits from 6th-22nd July (JRC, ACS et al).

Accepted by *British Birds*.

Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina*

An interesting record was a singing male seen at Donna Nook on 20th May (WPB). Apart from this it was a poor year with only one seen in autumn, at Seacroft golf course on 18th August (AB).

Sardinian Warbler *Sylvia melanocephala*

A remarkable record was a male trapped at Gibraltar Point on 30th June, retrapped on 28th July (in heavy primary moult) and again on 6th September (RLa, SD, PRB et al). It was extremely skulking, remaining undetected in the intervening periods, although seen and heard singing by several other observers in September, until 15th. Accepted by *British Birds* and the first county record.

Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria*

Single birds were seen at Saltfleetby on 20th August (JRW), trapped at Theddlethorpe on 10th September (GT) and present at Gibraltar Point on 22nd September (SD, PRB) and 6th October (MG). Donna Nook had about four birds, with singles trapped on 1st September (CRM), present on 3rd and 10th (RLa, SL) and trapped on 29th (DW). Another was trapped on 14th October (HB).

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

First birds were at Barrow Haven and Baston Fen on 28th April. On the coast, there were up to seven in May at Gibraltar Point and five at Donna Nook, with one pair staying to nest. In autumn, there were seven at Saltfleetby on 31st August and unusual numbers at Gibraltar Point from late August to mid-September, with a maximum of 40 on 8th September. Last was at Donna Nook on 1st October.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

An early bird was at Gibraltar Point on 15th April and there was a spring maximum there of 25 on 15th May. Fifty were counted at Saltfleetby on 12th May, 34 were ringed there on 3rd July and 40 were present on 22nd August. At Donna Nook, where 13 pairs bred, there were up to 60 in August and other large numbers were 100 at Gibraltar Point on 28th July and 150 at Mablethorpe on 5th August. Nine in a Pinchbeck garden on 18th August were also indicative of the good autumn passage. Last was at Gibraltar Point on 12th October.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

First was at Saltfleetby on 28th April, with occasional singles there in spring, one or two at Donna Nook and up to three at Gibraltar Point. Generally small numbers occurred on autumn passage, with five at Saltfleetby on 29th August, ten at Gibraltar Point on 7th September and five at Donna Nook on 1st October. Last was at Gibraltar Point on 24th October.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

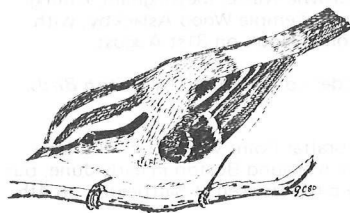
A wintering bird was at Gibraltar Point on 3rd January, but the first of the spring was at Cleethorpes on 9th April. Other spring migrants included a maximum of seven at Gibraltar Point on 8th May and small numbers at Barrow Haven, Donna Nook and Saltfleetby. There was an early autumn peak at Gibraltar Point of 30 on 7th September, with eight at Saltfleetby on 4th October and up to 15 at Donna Nook from 1st-3rd, then 12 on 24th. In December, there were singles at Moulton early in the month, Boston on 22nd and Donna Nook on 29th. One or two birds were present at Gibraltar Point all month, involving at least five birds.

Pallas's Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus* (illust.)

One arrived off the sea at Trusthorpe on 22nd October (EJM) and another trapped at Saltfleetby on 27th, was still present on 28th (PC, BW, JRW, MM, GPC et al). Under consideration by *British Birds*.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

A good autumn with six records, all in October. One was present at Saltfleetby from 1st-5th (PC, JRW, ACS, DW et al), with a second bird on 4th and 5th (EJM, BMC). One was trapped and another



seen at Theddlethorpe on 2nd (GT, EJM), with one trapped at Gibraltar Point on 3rd (SD). One at Cleethorpes from 23rd-26th (RKN) was obviously associated with the above occurrences of Pallas's Warblers.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

In May, there was a singing male at Burton gravel pits from 9th-14th (JRC, ACS, RB, KH, PH) and singles at Donna Nook on 9th (RLo, SL) and Saltfleetby on 10th (RHH, CLO). Gibraltar Point had about four spring birds, with two on 9th May, singles on 19th and 29th and singing on 1st June (RLa et al). One was singing at Croxby Pond from 12th May to 2nd June (GPC) and another was present at Broughton Woods on 11th June (JH). The only autumn records were at Gibraltar Point, with singles on 8th, 19th and 21st August and 10th September (IS, GCJ et al)..

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

First was at Saltfleetby on 12th March and coastal migrants included up to four at Gibraltar Point in May and one or two at Saltfleetby and up to four at Donna Nook until early June. Birds at Twigmoor included eight on 7th May and several were still singing there on 24th September. Autumn migrants included up to four at Donna Nook and five at Gibraltar Point. In December, there were one or two at Donna Nook from 8th-21st, one at Saltfleetby on 9th and one or two at Gibraltar Point from 8th-30th.

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

First was at Temple Wood Aslackby on 10th April, but birds were more widespread next day, with records at Baston Fen, Gibraltar Point, Doddington and Twigmoor. Spring passage on the coast reached a peak in May, with 80 at Donna Nook and up to 400 at Gibraltar Point on 9th. Autumn numbers were highest in mid-August, with 50 at Saltfleetby and 80 at Donna Nook on 19th and up to 300 at Gibraltar Point from 19th-21st. A late bird was trapped at Cleethorpes on 23rd October.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Small numbers wintered on the coast in January and February at Donna Nook, Saltfleetby and Gibraltar Point. A few were seen on passage in April, with up to three at Gibraltar Point, five at Donna Nook and eight at Saltfleetby. Autumn passage from September to November was not very well marked, with up to ten at Saltfleetby and Gibraltar Point in October. Donna Nook had up to 30 on several days, with a maximum of 50 on 23rd and 24th October.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*

A remarkable year, with over 30 records about equally divided between spring and autumn. Most spring records were in April, with a singing male at Saltfleetby on 1st (ACS, GPC, MM) and three or four there from 11th-15th (PC, BW, BMC, JRC, RB). Singles were at Humberston on 12th (DW) and Cleethorpes on 12th and 13th (RKN), with two at Theddlethorpe on 16th (GT) and one or two at Donna Nook from 14th-19th (SL). Gibraltar Point had up to three from 18th April to 10th May, involving about seven birds and including two singing males on 21st April (RLa, PAH et al). In autumn, Gibraltar Point had up to four from 7th October to 9th November, involving about eight birds (RLa et al) and Donna Nook had up to three from 15th October to 10th November, involving about five birds (RLo, SL, CRM, DW, HB, DH et al). Singles were recorded at Theddlethorpe on 14th October (GT), North Coates on 27th (HB) and Saltfleetby on 27th (PC, JRW, BW), with two there on 25th November (BW).

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

First was at Grainthorpe on 26th April. One or two appeared on the coast in spring at Donna Nook and Saltfleetby and there were 12 at Gibraltar Point on 19th May. Autumn migrants in August and September included one or two at Barrow Haven, Cleethorpes, Saltfleet, Saltfleetby and Theddlethorpe, with up to four at Donna Nook and a maximum of eight at Gibraltar Point on 9th September. Last was at Cleethorpes on 7th October.

Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*

One was seen at Saltfleetby on 9th September (JRW) and two were present there from 1st-4th October (PC, BW, BMC, DW et al). One was trapped at Donna Nook on 27th October (CRM et al).

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

In May, there were two or three at Gibraltar Point on 8th and 9th and singles at Donna Nook on 9th, Tetney on 14th-15th and Elsham from 26th-29th. An unusual record was a male at Covenham Reservoir on 21st June. Birds were scarcer than usual in autumn from mid-August to October, with up to five at Donna Nook, a maximum of nine at Gibraltar Point on 10th September, ten at Saltfleetby on 2nd October and smaller numbers at Saltfleet and Theddlethorpe. A late bird was at Seacroft golf course on 27th October.

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

Wintering birds included ten at Barrow Haven on 4th January and one at Saltfleetby on 4th February. Only about six pairs bred at the South Humber Bank pits. A few occurred on the coast in October, with singles at Saltfleetby on 24th, North Coates on 28th and Donna Nook on 31st. There were two at Chapel Pit on 24th and four at Gibraltar Point on 27th. Some

birds on South Humberside may have been involved in this movement, with two at East Halton on 16th and one at Killingholme on 18th, then two at Goxhill on 13th November.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caedatus*

There were up to eight at Donna Nook and four at Gibraltar Point in the first half of January. In autumn, birds were present at Gibraltar Point from mid-September, with a maximum of 12 on 14th October, some remaining into December. In October, there was a peak of 20 at Saltfleetby on 1st and 15 at Barrow Haven on 10th. Other concentrations were 40 at Twigmoor on 4th October and 31st December and 30 at Broughton Woods on 23rd November.

Marsh Tit *Parus palustris*

The only birds reported were one or two at Twigmoor from September to December and singles at Broughton Woods in November. There was also a migrant at North Coates on 14th May.

Willow Tit *Parus montanus*

Coastal records included singles occasionally at Gibraltar Point in April, June, August and September. Birds were seen fairly regularly at Saltfleetby from February to October, with up to three recorded. Donna Nook had one or two from late August to mid-November.

Coal Tit *Parus ater*

A few birds occurred on the coast in winter, with occasional singles at Cleethorpes in January and one at Gibraltar Point on 27th, then one at Goxhill on 4th and 5th February. There was a small movement in April, with singles at Humberston on 6th and 7th, Barrow Haven on 19th, Saltfleetby on 22nd and one or two at Gibraltar Point from 18th-26th. The only autumn records were at Gibraltar Point, with singles on 1st July, 30th August and 14th and 16th October, and one at Cleethorpes on 6th October and 15th November. There was an unusually large flock of 70 in Broughton Woods on 23rd November.

Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*

Regular southerly movements at Donna Nook occurred from September to early October, with peaks of 16 on 4th, 14 on 5th, 13 on 25th and 37 on 26th September. There were 25 at Saltfleetby on 22nd August and 20 at North Coates on 27th October. Numbers at Gibraltar Point increased in autumn, reaching a peak of 40 on 1st September.

Great Tit *Parus major*

At Donna Nook, there was one on 4th February and two north on 14th April, then up to five from late August. Up to five were recorded at Saltfleetby irregularly from January to September. Birds were present all year at Gibraltar Point, increasing in autumn to a maximum of ten on 14th October.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

A pair was seen closing up a nest hole at Tortoiseshell Wood, Castle Bytham, on 29th April. The only other bird reported was at Temple Wood, Aslackby on 12th August.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

One was seen in Grainthorpe village on 29th January. On the coast, one was trapped at Theddlethorpe on 16th April and another seen at Saltfleetby on 29th August.

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

In May, there were singles at Goxhill on 17th (GPC) and Saltfleetby from 20th to 25th (GPC, PC, JRW). Both these were probably immature males. A singing male was present at Gibraltar Point from 19th May to 13th June (RLa, SD) and there was another at Donna Nook on 4th June (RLo).

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

The only spring record was one at Gibraltar Point on 10th June (RW). In autumn, there were singles at Saltfleetby on 26th August, 9th September and 1st October (MM, GPC, JRW). Gibraltar Point had one on 27th August and four on 9th September (RLa, SD, IW). At Donna Nook there was one on 11th August, with up to three from 27th to 2nd September, then one or two others from 8th-18th (SL, GPC et al). One was seen at Tetney on 25th August (MWL).

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*

The only spring records were singles at Saltfleetby on 31st March and North Coates on 3rd May. Birds were again scarce in autumn, with all records in October. Singles were at North Coates on 1st, Donna Nook on 1st and 5th, Saltfleetby from 2nd-4th, Theddlethorpe on 2nd and Seacroft on 24th.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

On the coast, there were two at Saltfleetby on 13th October and one at Gibraltar Point on 28th.

Maggie *Pica pica*

At Donna Nook, where three pairs bred, there were up to nine in spring and 14 in autumn. Up to 12 were present at Gibraltar Point in the first half of the year, increasing in autumn to 25 in late September and a maximum of 28 on 27th October. The only other concentration reported was 30 at Killingholme on 17th November.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

At Donna Nook, a bird showing characters of the Scandinavian race, *C.m. monedula*, was seen on 1st April. Three birds flew NE out to sea on 11th April and one on 1st May. Three pairs bred and numbers reached a maximum of ten on 30th October. Gibraltar Point had small numbers occasionally in the first half of the year, increasing and becoming more regular in autumn. Southerly movements of up to ten south occurred in late October and early November. Small numbers moved north at Saltfleetby in late October.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Migrants at Donna Nook occurred from late March to late May with a maximum of 130 on 6th April. Four arrived from E on 27th April and four flew NE on 1st May. Birds were regular in autumn from September to mid-November, with a maximum of 150 on 14th November. Thirty three arrived from E on 27th October. At Gibraltar Point, birds occurred only occasionally from January to April and from late October to November, with a maximum of 17 S on 1st November.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

At Donna Nook, 80 were present on 1st January. Migrants in spring from mid-March to the end of April reached a peak of 14 south on 13th April. Three pairs bred and up to 15 were present in September and October. At Gibraltar Point, there were up to 12 from January to September. Numbers increased in October and November with some southerly movements and a peak of 20 S on 27th October. Elsewhere, there were 50 at Saltfleet on 8th October, and on 24th, 13 flew W at Barrow Haven and 49 were present at Saltfleetby. At Theddlethorpe, 150 were counted on 11th November.

Hooded Crows, *C.c. cornix*, were fairly scarce, with occasional records of one or two from January to April at Cleethorpes, Humberston, Tetney, Donna Nook, Saltfleetby and Gibraltar Point. Last of the spring was one at Tetney on 23rd April. In autumn, there were one or two from 26th October to December irregularly at Gibraltar Point, Saltfleetby, Barrow Haven and Killingholme.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Over 1,000 were present at Gibraltar Point on 1st January. In February, roosting flights included 120,000 E then N over the Humber at Barrow Haven on 24th and 2,500 S at Butterwick on 28th. Some spring passage was noted on the coast in April, with 500 at Gibraltar Point and 726 N at Saltfleetby on 1st and peaks at Donna Nook of 470 S on 12th, then 400 S and 200 E on 14th. In June, 600 were present at Gibraltar Point on 22nd and 1,500 flew N at Saltfleetby on 26th. Up to 1,000 juveniles were present at Donna Nook in late June and July. In October, there were 2,500 at Crowle on 2nd and 3,000 at Barrow Haven on 15th. Donna Nook had over 1,000 on many days from October to December, with a peak of 16,300 N on 22nd October, when 1,230 flew north at Saltfleetby. Numbers at Gibraltar Point reached a maximum of 2,000 on 23rd and 24th November and, also in November, 25,000 flew W at Riseholme on 8th. At Gibraltar Point, 1,600 were present on 30th December.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Gibraltar Point had up to 200 in January, then smaller numbers until increases in autumn reached a peak of 250 on 13th October. Southerly movements in November included 100 on 18th, 140 on 28th and 40 on 29th. Donna Nook had up to 400 in autumn, with only irregular movements and a maximum of 55 S on 8th October. Westerly movements at Barrow Haven included 42 on 9th October and 84 on 11th, 90 on 19th November and 50 on 8th December. A roosting flock of 500 was recorded on 4th November.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Breeding numbers at Donna Nook were halved compared with 1978. Up to 100 were present in October, with some passage noted from late September to mid-November and a maximum of 65 S on 5th October. Only small numbers were recorded at Gibraltar Point, with a maximum of 50 on 11th April. Up to 40 were present in autumn, with some southerly movements of up to 25 on several days in late November. At Goxhill, there were 120 on 12th October and 400 on 13th December. A roost in Broughton Woods contained 250 on 23rd November.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

In January, up to 50 were present at Gibraltar Point and 100 at Donna Nook. Southerly passage in late March and April included over 100 on several days at Gibraltar Point and a maximum of 240 on 1st April. Also in April, 250 flew south at Cleethorpes on 12th and 13th and there was a maximum of 104 S at Donna Nook on 12th. Autumn passage occurred from late September to November. At Donna Nook, there were often over 100 present, with a peak of 120 W on 7th October. Up to 100 were present at Gibraltar Point in late October and November, with southerly movements reaching a peak of 90 on 18th November. A roost at Broughton Woods contained 250 on 23rd November. In December, there were 220 at Donna Nook on 12th and 120 at Grainthorpe on 30th.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Up to 130 were present at Gibraltar Point in January. In February, there were 42 at Barrow Haven on 8th, 100 at Barton-on-Humber on 11th and up to 150 at Spalding from 19th-21st. Smaller numbers were widespread until spring, with many at Bourne Wood in April. Last of the spring were at Donna Nook and Gibraltar Point on 9th May. Birds returned to Gibraltar Point from 24th September, increasing in October to a maximum of 100 on 24th and 26th, and 90 were present on 22nd December. At Donna Nook, southerly movements included 38 on 30th September and 35 on 13th October. In November, there were 25 at Twigmoor on 13th and 200 in Broughton Woods on 23rd. Smaller numbers were recorded elsewhere from October to December.

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

In January, 250 flew south at Gibraltar Point on 1st and up to 200 were present for the rest of the month. Small numbers of up to 25 a day moved north at Donna Nook in April and May. In autumn, peak numbers occurred in October, with up to 2,000 near Weelsby Woods in mid-month and 300 at Covenham Reservoir on 15th. Peak movements at Donna Nook were 111 S on 8th, 126 N on 16th and 115 S on 27th. In addition, up to 300 were present, increasing to 450 on 28th November. At Gibraltar Point, there were up to 200 in October, with peak movements of 200 S on 30th October, 150 S on 24th November and 280 S on 28th. Up to 120 were present in late December. In November, there were roosts of 400 at Twigmoor on 13th and 800 in Broughton Woods on 23rd. A total of 150 were present at Killingholme on 18th December and 250 at Twigmoor on 31st.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Up to 30 were present at Gibraltar Point in the early part of the year and spring passage reached a peak in mid-May, with 130 there on 13th and a maximum of 43 N at Donna Nook on 12th. Numbers increased in autumn at Gibraltar Point to 130 on 4th September and a maximum of 250 on 4th October. Up to 150 were present to the end of November. Only small numbers were recorded at Donna Nook in autumn.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Small numbers were recorded in April at Barrow Haven, Donna Nook and Saltfleetby, although many at Bourne Wood included a singing male on 19th. Single birds were seen in May at Gibraltar Point on 9th and Brumby Common on 13th. First of the autumn were on 1st October at Donna Nook, Saltfleetby, Theddlethorpe and Gibraltar Point. Up to 12 were present at Gibraltar Point in October and November and other coastal maxima were 14 S at Donna Nook on 11th October and 14 S at Saltfleetby on 12th. Small numbers of passage birds were recorded in October and November at Trent Falls, Barrow Haven, Cleethorpes and Friskney Decoy. Wintering flocks included a maximum of 25 at Twigmoor on 11th November, up to ten at Brumby Common in late October and five in Hartsholme Park, Lincoln on 24th December.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

In January, there were up to 50 at Gibraltar Point and 150 at Grimsby. Spring passage occurred from late March to early June, with 114 at Saltfleetby on 1st April and up to 60 in May. There were up to 70 at Gibraltar Point in April and May and northerly movements in May at Donna Nook reached a peak of 100 on 9th and 120 on 12th. At Barrow Haven, 88 flew west on 31st March. Early autumn movements at Saltfleetby included 150 S on 4th August and 200 were present on 10th November. Up to 500 were present at Donna Nook in September and October, with peak movements of 200 N on 24th September and 200 S on 8th October. Gibraltar Point had 300 on 7th September and 400 on 29th, with up to 250 in October. Southerly movements in November peaked at 135 on 28th and 150 were present on 23rd December. There was a flock of 1,000 near Weelsby Woods in mid-October and 120 at Killingholme on 20th. In November, there were 100 at Covenham Reservoir on 9th and 100 roosting in Broughton Woods on 23rd.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

Large numbers were counted in the Wash on 27th January, with 250 at Gibraltar Point, 1,000 at Friskney, 950 at Frampton and 250 at Dawsmere. In February, there were 400 at Tetney on 4th and seven inland at Fulstow on 28th. Last of the spring was at Donna Nook on 16th May. Birds had returned to Gibraltar Point by 16th September and up to 150 were present from October onwards, increasing to 200 by the end of the year. Up to 50 were present at Tetney and Donna Nook from October to December and there were 300 at Saltfleetby on 18th November. At the Witham Mouth, there were 400 on 27th October, increasing to 600 by the end of the year.

Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*

Small numbers were recorded on the coast in April and May, with up to 30 at Gibraltar Point, 20 at Saltfleetby and ten at Donna Nook. A large increase in breeding pairs was noted at Weelsby Woods. In autumn, there were up to 50 at Gibraltar Point from late August, apart from 210 on 4th September. Only small numbers were noted elsewhere on the coast. Inland, there were 50 at Brumby Common on 20th October and 150 at Twigmoor on

18th September.

Birds showing characters of Mealy Redpolls, *C.f. flammea*, were seen at Donna Nook in spring, with five on 3rd April and one or two until mid-May. One was trapped there on 5th October, with others seen at Barrow Haven on 9th and two on 12th, then two at Barton-on-Humber on 5th November.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

One was seen at Twigmoor on 4th October, with 12 on 11th November and two on 13th (GT). Six were present in Broughton Woods on 23rd November (GT). Also in November, a male was seen at Gibraltar Point on 1st and females on 4th and 10th (RLa et al).

Scarlet Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrinus*

A female or immature male was seen at Donna Nook on 21st May (SL). Accepted by *British Birds* and the first county record.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

At Gibraltar Point, there were up to ten in January, then less than five until an increase in autumn, with eight on 22nd October and ten on 15th December. Small numbers were present at Saltfleetby for most of the year, with eight on 8th September. A pair bred at Donna Nook for the first time, but otherwise there were only one or two in January and from October to December.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

In spring, three were seen at Gibraltar Point on 14th April (JHC, DB) and one on 14th May (RLa). In September, one was seen at Twigmoor on 18th (GT) and two on 24th (JH). One was trapped at Temple Wood, Aslackby on 31st December (RS).

Lapland Bunting *Calcarius lapponicus*

In the early part of the year, birds were only present in January and February, with a maximum of 30 at North Coates on 17th February. There were up to 11 at Tetney, eight at Cleethorpes, four at Donna Nook, three at Humberston and singles at Goxhill and Saltfleetby. First of the autumn was at North Coates on 11th September and there were up to three there in December. Up to six were present at Saltfleetby from late September to November and at Tetney from October to December. Birds were recorded at Donna Nook from mid-September, with up to 37 in mid-October and 11 in December. Up to three were recorded occasionally from October to December at Goxhill, Cleethorpes, Saltfleet, Gibraltar Point, Wrangle and the Witham Mouth.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

In the period January to March, there were up to 44 at Gibraltar Point and 25 at Tetney in January, with smaller numbers at Cleethorpes, North Coates, Grainthorpe, Donna Nook, Saltfleetby, Theddlethorpe, Truethorpe, Chapel Point, Benington, Gedney and Terrington. Inland, one was at Covenham Reservoir on 1st January and two on 18th February. There were four at Welton-le-Wold on 20th January and 24 at Utterby on 18th February. The only April records were one at Goxhill on 7th and the last of the spring at North Coates on 22nd. First of the autumn arrived off the sea at Saltfleetby on 9th September and there were 47 there on 1st October, with up to 30 for the rest of the year. Small numbers were widespread on the coast in autumn, increasing in December, when there were 50 at Donna Nook on 8th, 45 at Tetney on 9th, 200 at Seacroft on 11th, 100 at Skegness on 16th and up to 162 at Gibraltar Point during the last ten days of the month. Some passage was noted at Barrow Haven, with one W on 6th November and six W on 12th, then 27 E on 21st December. Single birds were inland at Fulstow on 16th November and Kirton in Lindsey on 3rd December, with up to nine at Covenham Reservoir from mid-November to the end of the year. Three flew west at Trent Falls on 10th November.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

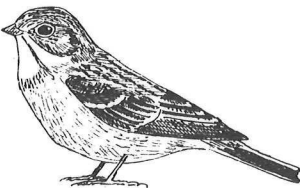
In the early part of the year, there were up to 14 at Donna Nook in January, with 25 at Hallington on 30th and up to 40 at Gibraltar Point in early February. At Donna Nook, up to 15 were present in autumn and southerly movements included 14 on 19th September. In October, there were 20 at Saltfleetby on 12th and 20 at Mablethorpe on 27th. Numbers at Gibraltar Point increased in late November to 15 on 26th and there were 28 on 29th December.

Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana* (female illustrated)

Females were present in May at Donna Nook on 16th (SL) and Saltfleet on 19th and 20th (HB, DW, GPC). An immature was seen at Donna Nook on 30th August (SL).

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Up to 65 were present at Donna Nook in the early part of the year and 40 pairs bred. In October, 200 were present on several days and some southerly movements of up to 35 occurred. There were 100 at Saltfleetby on 12th October and 20 flew west at Barrow Haven on 5th November. Only small numbers were recorded at Gibraltar Point, with a maximum of 30 in autumn. A total of 120



were present at Grainthorpe on 30th December.

Corn Bunting *Miliaria calandra*

There were up to 150 at Gibraltar Point in January and 35 flew north at Saltfleetby on 24th, with 76 present on 27th. Numbers at Donna Nook increased from 14 on 3rd January to 40 in mid February. Only small numbers were seen on the coast in autumn, with a slight southerly movement at Donna Nook in October. Up to eight were present at Gibraltar Point from mid-November to December.

ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS TO THE 1978 REPORT

Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens*

A juvenile ringed in a wildfowl collection near Oslo, Norway on 20th July 1976 escaped and was shot at Dawsmere on 2nd December 1978.

Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors*

One or two at Wisbech sewage farm from 11th September to 8th October. Accepted by **British Birds**.

Crane *Grus grus*

An immature at Scotter from early December into 1979. Accepted by **British Birds**.



GIBRALTAR POINT BIRD OBSERVATORY REPORT 1979

by R. Lambert

The publication of this Annual Report by the Lincolnshire Bird Club marks another milestone in the history of the Gibraltar Point Bird Observatory Report. In the early days of the Observatory's existence the Report was published by the, then, Lincolnshire Naturalists' Trust. The first Report, covering 1949, was published in 1950, and in the intervening thirty years many changes have taken place. After five years the Trust decided to forgo an independent Report from 1954 until 1964 co-operated with the Lincolnshire Naturalists Union, incorporating the Gibraltar Point Report and in the Transactions of the Union. An attempt to produce a separate Report was again made by the, now, Lincolnshire Trust for Nature Conservation from 1965 until 1969 before returning to a further period of successful co-operation with the Union. Unfortunately the problems of producing an annual report in the months immediately following the period to which it related became too difficult, and in recent years a number of attempts have been made to resolve some of these problems. In 1979, at the invitation of the Lincolnshire Bird Club, the Trust, now retitled the Lincolnshire and South Humberside Trust for Nature Conservation, welcomed the opportunity to contribute this section on Gibraltar Point. It is to be sincerely hoped that the association will prove to be a profitable one in many ways, and that the next enforced change of title for the Trust will not mean yet another rethink of this arrangement.

1979, despite some quiet periods in the year, produced some interesting records. Though only one new species was added to the Gibraltar Point list, a male *Sardinian Warbler* which stayed for the whole of the summer, several other species which have occurred less than 10 times were recorded. These are: *Red-necked Grebe* — 7th and 8th records; *Smew* — 4th; *Crane* — 2nd, 3rd; *Red-necked Phalarope* — 6th; *Golden Oriole* — 4th.

Apart from the observations of the many visiting bird-watchers, especially the small band of regulars, several other investigations are currently being carried out. An on-going study of the Skylark, a species which breeds in large numbers on the Reserve, has been running for two years and the initial results will hopefully be published soon. The early work of Kenneth Williamson and Robert Morgan, using Common Bird Census techniques to establish the numbers of birds attempting to breed on the Reserve, has been continued during 1978 and 1979 and some of the results are quoted in this report.

Also later in the report is a plea for more help with the daily censusing of birds on the Reserve, but a general request for added assistance with all the work of the Observatory is obviously in order at this point. If the work is to continue, let alone become more effective, increased manpower is required and anyone interested would be welcomed. Please contact the Observatory Secretary, Gibraltar Point, Skegness.

Lastly the Observatory does encourage the use of the residential facilities provided by the Trust at Gibraltar Point. The Field Station currently offers self-catering facilities all year, with the main block providing full-catering from March to October. Parties and individuals are welcome and should contact the Resident Warden, Gibraltar Point Field Station, for further details.

SEASONAL SUMMARY OF 1979 RECORDS

January — March

The year began with a period of weather conditions that were almost as severe as those of 1963. The marked, and important, difference between the two years was the occurrence in 1979 of brief mild spells throughout the period. All but the smallest of birds seem able to survive better in this situation than in prolonged periods of sub-zero conditions; snow cover and icing on trees and the ground being the main problems.

Anticyclonic conditions predominated in January and February, with a long period of easterly winds in the middle of February. Apart from some heavy snow falls between February 14th and 16th the first two months were fairly dry. March saw a reversal to mainly cyclonic, and therefore wet and windy, conditions for almost the whole of the month. Below average temperatures continued until the end of March producing yet another late spring and very little to recommend to visitors to the Reserve in this later period.

The most significant records received for this period are all affected by the nature of the weather, with surprisingly large numbers early in the period followed by a marked scarcity thereafter. Easterly winds on January 5th, at a time when conditions were even more severe on the continent than in Britain, produced a large movement of thrushes across the North Sea. Over 2000 *Fieldfares* and 1000 *Redwings* were counted from the ringing laboratory during the course of the day on the 6th, and several thousand more of both species evidently passed through. After a brief pause to strip the Sea Buckthorn of the last remaining berries the birds moved inland, leaving the scrub devoid of birds for the rest of the winter. Winter records of *Coot* are not unusual but undoubtedly reflect periods of cold weather, and 1979 followed the expected pattern with 10 bird-days over the period before they took up

residence again on the Mere in early March. It was also an exceptional winter for *Woodcock* and *Long-eared Owls*, very high numbers of the former being present until March and a roost of the latter, with a peak count of 13 birds, adjacent to the Reserve. Other movements involved *Skylark*, with a peak of 450 south on January 1st, and *Lapwing*, with movement observed on several days especially from 1st-9th January, 22nd February and in early March.

The second effect of the conditions is shown by the virtual absence of the three smallest species normally recorded regularly through the winter, *Wren*, *Goldcrest* and *Long-tailed Tit*. Wren numbers were as low as in 1963, and subsequent Common Bird Census records indicate only three pairs held territory in 1979 compared with 26 pairs in 1978. (See also the paper by Hyde and Sheppard in this issue).

The cold weather also brought some more unusual records: a *Red-necked Grebe* was first seen on the Mere on February 15th, and two were present from the 16th to the 24th (unfortunately both were later found dead); a male *Smew* provided the first, though brief, record of this species for the Mere when it flew in on February 8th, rested on the bank for a moment, then flew off out to sea again.

To ornithologists the coast can often be a rather bleak place to watch birds in February and March as the weather is generally unencouraging and the numbers of birds are often at their lowest. This is certainly true of Gibraltar Point, though there is almost always something to see. Regular sightings of some species did entice observers into the field and they were rewarded for their effort. At least six different *Hen Harriers* frequented the area with up to three per day until mid-March; *Shorelarks*, though only seen on four days, with 7 present on January 12th; *Snow Buntings*, rather low numbers this year with a maximum of 44 on January 13th but present until March 24th; and *Twite*, once again peaking in January with 250 on the 27th. *Corn Buntings* also featured strongly in reports, 150 were feeding on the Old Marsh in January and numbers stayed high until late February.

One aspect of bird-watching which is rarely practised at Gibraltar Point is sea-watching. There seem to be two main reasons for this, both geographical in nature. Firstly the structure of the shore produces very distant low water and reasonably high tides only at the times of spring tides. Secondly the curvature of the shore south of Skegness and the position of the Norfolk coast causes birds to move further offshore as they approach the Point. However it is interesting to speculate on the likely results which might be obtained from increased coverage as records can be very interesting when sea-watching is attempted. For example, three quarters of an hour spent on the shore on January 2nd produced the following: 23 *Pochard*, 8 *Red-breasted Mergansers*, a *Pomarine/Arctic Skua*, a *Great Skua*, a *Little Gull* and 208 *Kittiwakes* moving north.

Signs of spring did not occur until the very end of March, and there were no early migrants. The *Little Grebes* took up residence in the Mere in mid-March and the only promise of spring was borne by a female *Black Redstart* which just edged into March on the 31st.

April – May

After a week of variable weather conditions the winds swung to the east-south-east from the 8th to 11th April and triggered the first influx of spring migrants over the next few days. The first hirundines arrived on the 12th (*Swallow*), 13th (*Sand Martin*) and 15th (*House Martin*). Warblers were seen from the 10th with a willow/chiff on this date, and *Willow Warbler* and *Chiffchaff* on the 11th. The first *Whitethroat* was seen on the 15th and *Sedge Warbler*, the equal earliest ever, on the 16th. Other early arrivals were of *Little Tern* on the 13th, *Cuckoo* on the 16th, *Reed Warbler* on the 21st and *Spotted Flycatcher* on the 30th. In the second half of the month all the warblers (except *Lesser Whitethroat* which arrived on May 2nd) were present, numbers of all but *Blackcap*, which was scarce, were normal.

In the last week of April, after cool conditions and northerly winds for five days from the 24th, a further influx occurred involving small numbers of warblers and chats, the latter including the first *Redstart* and *Whinchat*, and two *Nightingales* on the 29th.

Wader arrivals followed a similar pattern, with the first *Whimbrel* on the 11th and a *Little Ringed Plover* on the 15th, followed by *Greenshank* on the 28th, *Common Sandpiper* and *Avocet* on the 27th.

Other interesting records included a *Marsh Harrier* on the 15th, a *Kingfisher* on the 7th and 15th (only the 4th spring record), a *Firecrest* on the 18/19th, 3 on the 21st and 2 on the 29th, 3 *Hawfinches* on the 14th and a *Spoonbill* on the 16th.

Conditions in early May, traditionally the best time for birds on passage, did not appear to be spectacularly conducive to migration with a number of wet days with south-westerly winds. However, on the 9th the sky cleared as a cold front moved south just after dawn and the wind veered from the south-west to north. This brought one of the best spring days for birds in recent years. Willow/chiff numbers increased from 12 on the 8th to well in excess of 400, the majority of these being Willow Warblers. Fair numbers of Whitethroats, Lesser Whitethroats and Sedge Warblers also arrived, along with Nightingales, Whinchats, Wood Warblers, Pied Flycatchers and Firecrests. The first *Green Sandpiper* of the year was seen and a *Green Woodpecker* was caught, the fourth to be ringed at the Observatory, and a

rare visitor in recent years. In addition both *Bramblings* and *Siskins* were recorded, these being the latest ever spring records of both species.



The rest of May was rather an anticlimax with no further influxes of birds but a steady procession south of Swifts, Turtle Doves, Swallows and House Martins during the second half of the month. Interest was provided by a second spring record of *Hawfinch* on the 14th, a *Red-necked Phalarope* on the shore on the 12th, a *Golden Oriole* on the 19th and a *Crane* on the 12th and 20th.

Despite the rather brief period of migration some species did remain on the Reserve to establish territories in higher numbers than in recent years. These included *Little Tern*, *Lesser Whitethroat* and *Grasshopper*

Warbler, this last species being present in record numbers with 63 bird-days in the month.

June – July

After the poor summers in 1977 and 1978, when this period was both wetter and windier than normal, 1979 saw a return to more amenable conditions with light winds and very little rain. In July less than 1 mm fell until the 28th, then 25 mms (1 inch) fell in two days! This allowed a far more successful season for many of the species breeding on the Reserve. Some showed no, or a marginal, increase in numbers but produced a higher proportion of fledged young, the best example being *Little Tern* with at least 15 young fledged from circa 20 pairs. Most other species showed an increase in the number of territories held, the exceptions being *Wren* and *Turtle Dove* both of which decreased in number. *Whitethroats* continue to increase slowly, holding 23 territories in the Common Bird Census area compared with 17 in 1978. *Lesser Whitethroats* also increased, and in some respects have filled the gap left by the *Whitethroat*. Several of the commoner warblers are recorded as breeding irregularly on the Reserve, and in a 'good' year records of *Garden Warbler*, *Blackcap*, *Chiffchaff* and *Willow Warbler* breeding are obtained. 1979 proved to be just such a year since 1, 3, 4 and 6 pairs respectively held territory and bred successfully.

Finch numbers have shown little change over the last two years, though *Goldfinch*, *Linnet* and *Redpoll* are all well below the peak numbers recorded in 1974; eg. *Redpoll*: 1974 = 46 pairs, 1978 = 10 pairs, 1979 = 9 pairs.

The two outstanding breeding records are of *Tawny Owl* and *Grasshopper Warbler*. The former species bred for the second successive year, the first breeding record being last year, and the latter followed a record spring by establishing three territories. Breeding was confirmed for the first time in one of them.

The highlights of the rest of the period were rather few but this was compensated for, to some degree, by the quality. *Hobbies* were seen on June 18th and 22nd; a spectacular southward movement of *Swifts* occurred on June 28th with at least 22000 birds involved; a *Red-backed shrike* was present on June 10th; a *Golden Oriole* on June 7th and 13th, a *Kentish Plover* on four days in June; and, finally, the most interesting record of all was of a male *Sardinian Warbler* which was caught in the East Dunes on June 30th and again on July 28th. On the second occasion it was in full moult so was evidently well established in this scrub habitat.

The first half of July brought the first autumn migrants, waders arriving from as early as the 7th, *Greenshank* and *Green Sandpiper*, and the first *Wheatear* on the 13th. Two skua species put in 'earliest ever' autumn appearances, *Arctic* on the 5th and *Great* on the 28th, though few birds were involved.

August – October

Many bird-watchers make the journey to the coast at sometime during this period in the hope that they will be on site when huge numbers of birds fall out of the sky at dawn, or that the elusive rarity will at last show itself. It is to be hoped that those who came in 1979 were not dissuaded from ever returning because neither of these events happened. Not that there was any great shortage of birds, but the pattern of migration just did not fit into the neat categories described. Each autumn is, of course, unique and largely dependent upon the vagaries of the weather and this year the conditions produced a protracted movement of several species so that, at the end of the autumn the total number of birds which had passed through was possibly higher than it would have been had there been a large scale movement on a few days. When the data is examined this certainly holds true for many of the commoner warblers.

August, as befits an English summer, started wet and windy, and south-westerly winds predominated for the remainder of the month. North-easterly winds on the 18th and 25th did trigger small influxes of birds. Normally early August days bring the main passage of *Sedge* and *Willow Warblers*. This year *Sedge Warblers* evidently had a mediocre season, or left the area early and quickly, as numbers tailed-off very quickly. *Willow Warblers*, conversely, had an exceptional year with some of the largest counts and the highest total ever ringed (722). The highest daily totals for Willows followed the suitable weather on the 18th.

Whinchat numbers also began to build encouragingly towards the end of the month,

this being a species which has shown a decline in numbers on the coast in recent autumns. *Pied Flycatcher* and *Cuckoo* continued to show poorly, but the most notable absences were of Wryneck and Barred Warbler, two species which can normally be relied upon to turn up in the last week of August. Waders were also rather reduced in number, there being few records of Little Stint, Curlew Sandpiper and Ruff, though both *Green* and *Wood Sandpipers* were present all month. High-tide roosts were not too productive but a maximum count of 10,000 *Knot* as early as the 10th warrants a mention.

'Rarities' in the period included a very early *Hen Harrier* on the 13th, a *Green Woodpecker* on the 17th and a single *Red-backed Shrike* on the 27th.

If August's winds were unco-operative September's were downright unhelpful with south-westerlies virtually all month. The first thrushes were helped by easterly winds on the 29th and 30th but September was over by then and it was too late for many species. Numbers of Ruff and Little Stint remained low, other migrant waders being present in near normal strength. An exceptional flock of 30,000 *Knot* were on the high-tide roost on the 7th along with over 8,000 *Bar-tailed Godwits*. This early-September spring tide period attracts the highest numbers of waders and is the best time to visit the Point to watch the birds assemble since there is still sufficient daylight at both ends of the day. Many visitors leave the Reserve, having often travelled a long distance to get here, disappointed to have missed the high tide roosts, and it would possibly be useful to point out that the spring tides always occur between 6 o'clock and 8 o'clock, morning and evening, and observers need to be in position at least an hour before the forecast high tide time.

The main passage of hirundines took place during the first fifteen days with the highest counts of *Swallows* on the 3rd: 8,000, and the 10th: 10,000. House Martin and Sand Martin were seen in rather smaller numbers. Warblers continued to move through steadily, again with no marked peaks.

The period at the end of the month and the beginning of October saw the arrivals of *Fieldfares* and *Redwings* for the winter, together with an influx of *Song Thrushes*. *Robins* arrived on the 1st October, the 200 on this date being the only large movement of the autumn of this species. An early *Black Redstart* on September 9th proved to be the only one in the month, unlike *Whinchat* which fulfilled its early promise, giving 111 bird-days before the last record on the 16th. Finch flocks also increased at the end of the month with the first *Brambling* seen on the 24th, the first *Twite* being a little earlier on the 16th.

It proved to be a poor autumn for two species, *Pied Flycatchers* continuing to be scarce and *Goldcrests* virtually non-existent. Despite excellent easterly winds in early and late October bringing fair numbers of other continental migrants the highest daily counts of Goldcrests were only in the order of 10 birds. This last month of the autumn proved a little more rewarding with more well-marked movements of birds, especially towards the end of the month. The first *Whooper* and *Bewick's Swans* were seen gracing the Mere on the 19th and 28th respectively, *Hen Harrier* sightings became a regular feature of each day and the first *Long-eared Owls* arrived on the 24th. Migrating thrushes included unusually high numbers of *Ring Ouzels*, a fair movement of *Blackbirds* and *Redwings* off the sea on the 22nd and only small numbers of *Fieldfares* — maximum 100 on the 27th. This last species was relatively scarce compared to recent years when four-figure counts were common. Though Goldcrests proved also to be scarcer than normal the situation was reversed for the *Firecrest*. 1979 was one of the best for autumn records after a very good spring also.

October is unique in the migration calendar with many species leaving for warmer climes and others arriving to escape the continental winter. Interest is constantly elevated by the possibility of recording the first of the latter or the last of the former. Unusually late departures this year include a *Reed Warbler* on the 14th, a *Turtle Dove* on the 22nd and a *Pied Flycatcher* on the 27th (admittedly not quite on the Reserve — but near enough!). Of the October arrivals only four species, apart from the swans, can qualify, some winter visitors having arrived in September. The first *Siskin* was seen on the 1st, a *Snow Bunting* on the 21st, a *Lapland Bunting* on the 30th and a *Hooded Crow* on the 26th. This last species was among a small movement of corvids in late October which also included *Jackdaw* and *Rook* on the 27th and *Jay* on the 28th.

Rounding off the period once again with the more unusual records from September and October one can detect a sparseness of real rarities but sufficient to indicate that there is further potential if coverage can be increased. Single *Wrynecks* were recorded on three days in September and a *Great-spotted Woodpecker* on the 14th/15th. *Bluethroats* were seen on the 27th and 30th and *Barred Warblers* on the 22nd and on October 6th. *Wood Warbler*, *Yellow-browed Warbler* and *Sardinian Warbler* added to the list, this last the same bird as before; completing its moult in early September it stayed until the 15th before finally disappearing. Birds of prey occur regularly in most Octobers and this year include *Buzzard* sp. *Sparrowhawk* and *Merlin*. Sea birds also provided some interesting records despite the small amount of time spent sea-watching, with three sightings of *Long-tailed Skua*, *Pomarine Skua* and five very early *Long-tailed Duck* on 5th September. Other species involved were Crane

on September 13th/14th, *Osprey* on the 8th and *Little Owl* on the 7th and 21st of October.

November — December

Credit must go to those observers who provided the records in November as it produced weather that would dampen anyone's enthusiasm. There were only four days in the month when it failed to rain. December was better weather-wise. It was fairly mild until the last three days, when winter arrived with a rush.

Most of the expected birds were present throughout the period, the main exceptions being *Shorelark*, only two records of single birds both from Skegness, and *Great Grey Shrike* which was not recorded at all! A few species were very numerous. Counts of 3,000 *Brent Geese* on November 9th, and 2,000 on the 10th are exceptional. *Pinkfooted Geese* were also recorded, but the maximum count on December 1st was only of 230 birds flying into the Wash. Raptors provided interest with the usual crop of *Hen Harrier* records, and *Long-eared Owl* present through the period.

Many species, as in earlier months, were well below normal strength, thrushes and finches in particular appeared in very small numbers. Maximum counts for *Blackbird*, *Fieldfare* and *Redwing* were 100, 600 and 30 respectively. Late departures included a *Greenshank* and the latest ever record of *House Martin* on December 8th. *Blackcap* and *Chiffchaff* no longer fit into this category and, as has now become common practice, both stayed well into December, and the former into the New Year. The *Snow Buntings* arrived in strength at Seacroft on November 23rd and soon moved down the shore to feed on the area of the Spit, rising to 162 birds on December 22nd. A second record of an under-recorded species, *Lapland Bunting*, was obtained on December 23rd and a series of *Crossbill* sightings covers the period from November 1st — 10th.

The year thus drew to a close with a rather lethargic wag of the ornithological tail. A vast range of talents and a great deal of effort was applied to the task of producing records during the year, and many observers were well rewarded especially during the spring and summer. Increasing the amount of coverage will produce two effects; more unusual birds will be seen, and the data will be more consistent and better suited for analysis work. Many thousands of people visit the Reserve each year and a large proportion are bird-watchers. Unfortunately many of their records are lost as a list of numbers of birds seen is not received by the Observatory. Field sheets are available from the Visitor Centre for this purpose, and can be left there on completion or returned to the Observatory Secretary, Gibraltar Point. Please do help if you can.

GIBRALTAR POINT BIRD OBSERVATORY RINGING REPORT

by R. Lambert

The activity of catching and ringing birds at Gibraltar Point is only a small part of the many activities which form the work of the Observatory. It is, of course, a fairly important part, and does provide a focal point of interest for many, who are often then weaned onto the other aspects of the work, paperwork *not* excepted! As with any organisation the achievements reflect the commitment and effort of those involved, and if the number of birds ringed in a year is any measure of these two factors then 1979 was a very successful year, 6,944 birds being the highest ringing total in the Observatory's thirty year history. The future, as ever, continues to be uncertain, and ever more volunteers are required to strengthen the 'workforce', and it is hoped that this report will encourage you to join us.

1979 produced a rather shorter list of species than in previous years, but two new species were added to the ringing list, *Curlew* and *Sardinian Warbler*, and many species were ringed in record numbers. These are shown below:



Willow Warbler	722
Greenfinch	394
Whitethroat	346
Song Thrush	331
Starling	294
Redwing	254
Blackcap	238
Fieldfare	177
Lesser Whitethroat	141
Reed Warbler	87
Brambling	68
Firecrest	9
Grasshopper Warbler	8
Long-eared Owl	4

The totals include some amendments to those previously published as the data has been updated. The species marked * were ringed at sites away from the Reserve, as were a small proportion

of some other species. Also included are some of the more interesting recoveries from 1978 and 1979.

GIBRALTAR POINT BIRD OBSERVATORY RINGING TOTALS

Species	1979		Total		Species	1979		Total	
	FG	Pull	Total	1949-79		FG	Pull	Total	1949-79
Little Grebe	—	—	—	2	Robin	229	3	232	1820
Gannet	—	—	—	1	Nightingale	1	—	1	9
Shag	—	—	—	1	Bluethroat	1	—	1	10
Grey Heron	—	—	—	1	Black Redstart	1	—	1	20
Shelduck	—	—	—	2	Redstart	18	—	18	1263
Wigeon	—	—	—	1	Whinchat	17	—	17	247
Teal	—	—	—	1	Stonechat	—	—	—	27
*Montagu's Harrier	—	—	—	2	Wheatear	8	—	8	209
Sparrowhawk	—	—	—	30	Ring Ouzel	7	—	7	54
Kestrel	3	—	3	23	Blackbird	610	—	610	7895
Merlin	—	—	—	1	Fieldfare	177	—	177	540
Red-legged Partridge	4	—	4	32	Song Thrush	327	4	331	2827
Grey Partridge	—	—	—	24	Redwing	254	—	254	815
Pheasant	2	—	2	14	Mistle Thrush	6	3	9	131
Water Rail	—	—	—	13	Grasshopper Warbler	1	7	8	14
Corncrake	—	—	—	1	Sedge Warbler	94	19	113	702
Moorhen	1	—	1	7	Reed Warbler	71	16	87	579
Coot	—	—	—	1	Icterine Warbler	—	—	—	19
Oystercatcher	—	—	—	596	Sardinian Warbler	1	—	1	1
Little Ringed Plover	—	—	—	4	Barred Warbler	—	—	—	39
Ringed Plover	7	30	37	238	Lesser Whitethroat	141	—	141	712
Grey Plover	1	—	1	12	Whitethroat	328	18	346	4617
Lapwing	—	—	—	18	Garden Warbler	61	—	61	906
Knot	—	—	—	104	Blackcap	238	—	238	1097
Sanderling	—	—	—	124	Greenish Warbler	—	—	—	1
Little Stint	—	—	—	15	Pallas's Warbler	—	—	—	1
Curlew Sandpiper	1	—	1	22	Yellow-browed Warbler	1	—	1	5
Dunlin	28	—	28	454	Wood Warbler	4	—	4	30
Ruff	—	—	—	1	Chiffchaff	41	—	41	372
Jack Snipe	4	—	4	9	Willow Warbler	722	—	722	6477
Snipe	3	—	3	24	Goldcrest	30	—	30	1540
Woodcock	5	—	5	22	Firecrest	9	—	9	20
Bar-tailed Godwit	—	—	—	1	Spotted Flycatcher	18	—	18	337
Whimbrel	—	—	—	1	Red-breasted Flycatcher	—	—	—	7
Curlew	1	—	1	1	Pied Flycatcher	14	—	14	1231
Spotted Redshank	—	—	—	4	Bearded Tit	—	—	—	2
Redshank	—	—	—	55	Long-tailed Tit	—	—	—	444
Greenshank	—	—	—	3	Marsh Tit	—	—	—	5
Green Sandpiper	—	—	—	4	Willow Tit	2	—	2	85
Wood Sandpiper	—	—	—	1	Coal Tit	4	—	4	68
Common Sandpiper	—	—	—	20	Blue Tit	223	—	223	2120
Turnstone	—	—	—	4	Great Tit	46	—	46	580
Black-headed Gull	—	—	—	40	Treecreeper	—	—	—	13
Common Gull	—	—	—	1	Red-backed Shrike	1	—	1	8
Little Tern	—	18	18	41	Great Grey Shrike	—	—	—	6
Puffin	—	—	—	1	Jay	—	—	—	1
Stock Dove	—	5	5	51	Magpie	8	—	8	59
Woodpigeon	9	2	11	104	Jackdaw	—	—	—	12
Collared Dove	—	—	—	10	Hooded Crow	—	—	—	1
Turtle Dove	6	—	6	61	Starling	294	—	294	1713
Cuckoo	6	—	6	168	*Rose-coloured Starling	—	—	—	1
Barn Owl	—	—	—	9	House Sparrow	156	—	156	6530
Little Owl	—	—	—	8	Tree Sparrow	108	46	154	3112
Tawny Owl	—	—	—	2	Chaffinch	101	—	101	1120
Long-eared Owl	4	—	4	12	Brambling	68	—	68	260
Short-eared Owl	—	—	—	8	Greenfinch	394	—	394	1661
Nightjar	—	—	—	2	Goldfinch	161	—	161	1589
Kingfisher	—	—	—	19	Siskin	4	—	4	32
Wryneck	—	—	—	47	Linnet	185	10	195	1916
Green Woodpecker	1	—	1	4	Twite	—	—	—	58
Gt. Spotted Woodpecker	—	—	—	18	Redpoll	185	—	185	1855
Skylark	91	123	214	585	Crossbill	—	—	—	12
Shorelark	—	—	—	11	Bullfinch	32	—	32	433
Sand Martin	—	—	—	15	Hawfinch	—	—	—	1
Swallow	172	48	220	2050	Snow Bunting	—	—	—	161
House Martin	3	—	3	23	Yellowhammer	43	5	48	438
Tree Pipit	1	—	1	58	Rustic Bunting	—	—	—	1
Meadow Pipit	78	3	81	725	Reed Bunting	103	21	124	2439
Rock Pipit	—	—	—	10	Corn Bunting	1	—	1	31
Yellow Wagtail	3	—	3	27	TOTALS	6563	381	6944	75793
Pied Wagtail	—	—	—	41	Species	76	144		
Waxwing	—	—	—	2					
Wren	38	—	38	1424					
Duncock	543	—	543	6981					
*Rufous Bush Robin	—	—	—	1					

Notable recoveries and controls 1978/1979

Kestrel Ringed 18.6.78 Appleby, Westmorland
Found dead 4.4.79 G.P. 245 km SE

Grey Plover Ringed 28.10.73 G.P.
Found dead 13.1.79 G.P. (after cold weather)

Dunlin Ringed 16.10.76 G.P.
Controlled 15.7.78 Ujście Wisły, Poland
Ringed 10.4.74 Spurn Point
Controlled 6.9.78 G.P. 58 km S
Ringed 22.7.78 Torham, Sweden
Dead on shore 25.2.79 G.P.

Ruff Ringed 31.8.73 G.P.
Shot 7.1.78 Mopti, Mali

Common Gull Ringed 28.6.77 Inkoo, Finland
Found long dead 0.2.78 Skegness

Common Tern Ringed 16.6.76 Grosser Knechtsand, W. Germany
Dead on shore 19.9.78 G.P.

Wren Ringed 28.9.76 G.P.
Killed by cat, early 1.79 Petersfield, Hants. 245 km SSW
Ringed 27.7.77 G.P.
Found dead 5.8.79 Clarborough, Retford, Notts 85 km WNW

Robin Ringed 10.5.78 G.P.
Dead on oil rig 8.8.78 North Sea 110ml NE Aberdeen 600 km N

Redstart Ringed 18.9.77 G.P.
23.5.78 Kerzaz, Algeria

Blackbird Ringed 20.11.76 G.P.
Found dead 1.11.79 Skodborg, Jylland, Denmark
Ringed 25.11.78 G.P.
Found dead 19.11.79 Alvoen, Nesttun, Hordaland, Norway.
Ringed 22.10.79 G.P.
Found dead 17.11.79 Greater Manchester 191 km WNW

Song Thrush Ringed 1.10.78 G.P.
Killed 25.11.79 St Jean de Luz, France

Reed Warbler Ringed 18.9.78 G.P.
Caught 12.3.79 Ouragahio, Ivory Coast
Ringed 13.8.78 G.P.
Controlled 27.8.78 Radipole Lake, Dorset 340 km SW

Whitethroat Ringed 20.8.72 G.P.
Controlled 22.6.79 G.P.
Ringed 22.5.77 Grimley Marsh, Worcester
Controlled 21.7.79 G.P. 198 km ENE

Chiffchaff Ringed 24.4.79 Calf of Man
Controlled 22.6.79 G.P.
Controlled 18.7.79 G.P.

Willow Warbler Ringed 17.7.78 Blackmoorfoot, Huddersfield, W. Yorks
Controlled 9.5.79 G.P. 155 km ESE
Ringed 29.8.78 G.P.
Found dead 24.5.79 Cropwell Bishop, Notts. 88 km W

Goldcrest Ringed 6.10.77 G.P.
Ring found in owl pellet 4.4.78 South Woodford, Essex 160 km S

Blue Tit Ringed 8.9.79 G.P.
Controlled 13.9.79 Theddlethorpe, Lincs. 32 km N

Willow Tit Ringed 21.8.78 Anderby Creek
Controlled 4.9.78 G.P. 18 km S

Long-tailed Tit Ringed 24.10.78 G.P.
Controlled 20.3.79 Syston, Leics. 105 km WSW

Starling Ringed 26.8.75 G.P.
Found dead 29.4.78 Guildford, Surrey 212 km SSW
Ringed 7.9.77 G.P.
Shot 5.4.78 Reading, Berks. 195 km SSW

House Sparrow Ringed 23.10.77 G.P.
Found dead 23.8.79 Hagworthingham, Lincs. 25 km WNW

Chaffinch Ringed 26.9.72 Kennemerduinen, Holland
Controlled 18.9.78 G.P.

Brambling Ringed 1.2.78 Redcar, N. Yorks
Controlled 13.1.79 G.P. 185 km SSE

Greenfinch Ringed 1.10.78 Grimston Wood, Withernsea, Humberside

Controlled 25.1.79 G.P. 82 km SSE

Ringed 1.11.78 G.P.

Controlled 4.3.79 Deeping St. Nicholas, Lincs. 54 km SSW

Ringed 28.1.79 G.P.

Controlled 31.5.79 Cuxwold, Caistor, Lincs. 57 km NNW

Goldfinch Ringed 3.12.77 Wanstead, Essex

Controlled 10.5.78 G.P. 170 km N

Redpoll Ringed 28.7.77 G.P.

Found dead on road 17.2.78 Bedarieux, France

Notes G.P. = Gibraltar Point

Controlled = caught by a ringer and released with ring.

RINGING REPORT 1979

compiled by P. Boyer

In this first report of the Lincolnshire Bird Club the ringing data consists of a totals list and a selection of the recoveries of ringed birds. It has not been possible to carry out any comparative analysis since figures for previous years are not available but we hope to be able to do so in future years.

32055 birds of 125 species were ringed in 1979 as the result of the activities of 29 individuals or groups of ringers operating throughout Lincolnshire and South Humberside. All birds ringed at Gibraltar Point Bird Observatory are included in the figures to give as full a picture as possible.

Little Grebe	1	Cuckoo	12	Whitethroat	774
Wigeon	1	Barn Owl	1	Garden Warbler	199
Gadwall	1	Little Owl	3	Blackcap	656
Teal	22	Tawny Owl	3	Pallas's Warbler	1
Mallard	588	Long-eared Owl	9	Yellow-browed Warbler	2
Shoveller	3	Short-eared Owl	2	Wood Warbler	4
Pochard	1	Swift	2	Chiffchaff	133
Tufted Duck	53	Kingfisher	2	Willow Warbler	1661
Sparrowhawk	2	Wryneck	1	Goldcrest	222
Kestrel	10	Green Woodpecker	4	Firecrest	19
Red-legged Partridge	5	Gt. Spotted Woodpecker	3	Spotted Flycatcher	64
Pheasant	2	Skylark	232	Red-breasted Flycatcher	1
Moorhen	11	Sand Martin	6	Pied Flycatcher	49
Coot	35	Swallow	1821	Long-tailed Tit	147
Oystercatcher	96	House Martin	31	Marsh Tit	19
Little Ringed Plover	7	Tree Pipit	11	Willow Tit	74
Ringed Plover	42	Meadow Pipit	129	Coal Tit	50
Grey Plover	23	Rock Pipit	1	Blue Tit	1474
Lapwing	3	Yellow Wagtail	11	Great Tit	452
Knot	91	Pied Wagtail	92	Treecreeper	24
Curlew Sandpiper	1	Wren	234	Red-backed Shrike	3
Dunlin	871	Duncock	1550	Great Grey Shrike	1
Ruff	1	Robin	1136	Jay	11
Jack Snipe	4	Nightingale	3	Magpie	9
Snipe	12	Bluethroat	2	Rook	9
Woodcock	11	Black Redstart	1	Starling	4872
Bar-tailed Godwit	18	Redstart	59	House Sparrow	417
Curlew	8	Whinchat	18	Tree Sparrow	497
Redshank	175	Wheatear	11	Chaffinch	495
Greenshank	1	Ring Ouzel	10	Brambling	206
Green Sandpiper	1	Blackbird	3018	Greenfinch	2164
Common Sandpiper	1	Fieldfare	204	Goldfinch	324
Turnstone	71	Song Thrush	1255	Siskin	15
Black-headed Gull	892	Redwing	417	Linnnet	646
Common Gull	19	Mistle Thrush	31	Twite	94
Sandwich Tern	1	Grasshopper Warbler	33	Redpoll	580
Common Tern	73	Sedge Warbler	330	Bullfinch	339
Little Tern	18	Marsh Warbler	2	Hawfinch	1
Stock Dove	10	Reed Warbler	452	Yellowhammer	240
Woodpigeon	35	Sardinian Warbler	1	Reed Bunting	393
Collared Dove	19	Barred Warbler	4	Corn Bunting	7
Turtle Dove	28	Lesser Whitethroat	289		

Mallard Ringed 28.8.79 Sonderho Fuglekoje (Fano) Denmark 52° 23'N 08° 27'E
 Shot 5.10.79 Tetney

Moorhen Ringed 01.79 Deeping St. James
 Found dead 06.79 Denmark

Lapwing Ringed 28.12.77 Wainfleet
 Killed 3.1.79 St. Gilles Croix de Vie France 46° 41'N 01° 56'W

Dunlin Ringed 13.11.77 North Killingholme 53° 40'N 0° 14'W
 Controlled 12.8.79 Terrington Kings Lynn Norfolk 52° 48'N 0° 18'E (103 km SSE)
 Ringed 13.10.78 Wisbech S.F.
 Controlled 26.11.79 Weston Super Mare
 Ringed 13.10.78 Wisbech S.F.
 Controlled 26.5.79 Schleswig Holstein W. Germany
 Ringed 23.2.77 Kirton Marsh
 Controlled 24.9.79 Schiermonnikog Holland 53° 29'N 6° 12'E 417 km E
 Ringed 14.10.78 Makkevika, Giske, Norway 62° 30'N 6° 02'E
 Found dead 27.2.79 Sutton Bridge (Nene Outfall) 52° 48'N 0° 12'E

Snipe Ringed 11.3.78 Wainfleet
 Found 17.4.79 North York Moors 54° 25'N 0° 50'W (155 km NNW)

Black-headed Gull Ringed 14.6.78 (pull) Messingham (Scunthorpe)
 Sick, unable to fly 10.8.79 Walton, Liverpool (150 km W)
 Ringed 3.6.79 (pull) Messingham
 Found dead 16.8.79 Barnard Castle, Durham (136 km NW)
 Ringed 29.6.76 Boston
 Injured 27.9.79 Cleveleys, Blackpool 53° 53'N 3° 3'W
 Ringed 11.66 Deeping St. James
 Shot 07.79 Poland

Common Gull Ringed 13.2.78 Boston 52° 59'N 0° 01'W
 Found 15.7.79 Ostfold Norway 59° 21'N 10° 51'E (974 km NE)
 Ringed 1.2.76 Boston
 Found dead 30.8.79 Gvootegart, Netherlands 53° 13'N 6° 16'E
 Ringed 7.6.75 (pull) Paljarahu Reserve Estonia U.S.S.R. 58° 48'N 23° 27'E
 Controlled 17.2.79 Boston 52° 59'N 0° 01'W

Swallow Ringed 20.9.77 Corby Northants
 Found dead 14.5.79 Mablethorpe (113 km NNE)
 Ringed 4.9.79 Aldridge W. Midlands
 Controlled 10.9.79 Theddlethorpe (171 km ENE) 6 days
 Ringed 1.9.79 Gibraltar Point (ex Thorpe Culvert)
 Controlled 12.9.79 Theddlethorpe (33km N)

Robin Ringed 31.8.76 Theddlethorpe
 Controlled 16.6.79 Leigh, Greater Manchester (179 km W)
 Ringed 1.7.78 Gibraltar Point
 Controlled 19.9.79 Cleethorpes

Blackbird Ringed 31.1.79 Boston
 Found dead 15.11.79 Rogaland, Norway 58° 21'N 6° 17'E (715km NE)
 Ringed 21.10.78 Skegness
 Controlled 17.4.79 Heligoland W. Germany 54° 11'N 7° 55'E
 Ringed 3.4.79 Cleethorpes
 14.4.79 Heligoland W. Germany

Song Thrush Ringed 2.10.79 Theddlethorpe
 Found dead 25.11.79 Soustons, Lordres, France 43° 45'N 1° 19'W (1076 km S)

Redwing Ringed 29.12.76 Boston
 Killed 13.11.78 Campagne Lupia (Venice) Italy 45° 21'N 12° 06'E
 Ringed 21.10.78 Skegness
 Shot 15.4.79 Ponte de Barca, Minho, Portugal 41° 48'N 8° 25'W

Mistle Thrush Ringed 8.5.77 Boston
 Controlled 18.8.79 Skegness (28 km NE)

Sedge Warbler Ringed 11.5.78 L'Eree, Guernsey, Channel Islands 49° 28'N 2° 37'W
 Controlled 12.5.79 Saltfleetby, Theddlethorpe (477 km NNE)

Whitethroat Ringed 12.5.79 Sheringham, Norfolk
 Controlled 1.6.79 Saltfleetby, Theddlethorpe (81 km NE)

Lesser Whitethroat Ringed 5.9.76 Theddlethorpe
 Found dead 25.7.78 Grafton Regis, Northants (160 km SSW)
 Ringed 4.8.77 Gibraltar Point
 Controlled 9.9.78 Theddlethorpe (33 km N)

Blackcap Ringed Autumn '79 Heligoland, 54° 11'N 7° 55'E
 Controlled 10.79 Theddlethorpe (Full details not yet available)

Willow Warbler Ringed 14.7.79 Temple Wood
Controlled 10.8.79 Regents Park, London (173 km S)
Blue Tit Ringed 1.7.78 Ingoldsby
Controlled 13.5.79 Packington Park, Warwicks (86 km WSW)
Ringed 20.11.77 Barrow-on-Humber
Controlled (B) 29.5.79 Elsham, Brigg
Controlled 31.12.79 Barrow-on-Humber (10 km SW/NE)

Starling

	Ringed in Lincs Rec/Controlled Abroad	Ringed Abroad/Controlled Lincs
UK outside Lincs	5	
N. Ireland	1	
Netherlands	5	
France	1	
Norway	1	
Sweden	1	
W. Germany	1	1
E. Germany	2	
U.S.S.R.	2	1

Chaffinch Ringed 18.11.76 Hock Van Holland 51° 59'N 4° 00'E

Controlled 18.3.79 Skegness 53° 07'N 0° 21'E

Greenfinch Ringed 24.3.79 Casewick, Stamford

Found dead 10.79 Hampshire

Redpoll Ringed 12.5.79 Skegness

Controlled 21.12.79 Ascot, Berkshire 51° 25'N 0° 39'W (204 km)

Note "Controlled" = re-caught by another ringer and released with ring.

List of Contributors

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