

LINCOLNSHIRE BIRD REPORT 1988

Including the Gibraltar Point Observatory Report



**Ornithological Events in Lincolnshire
during 1988**

Accounts of Lincolnshire Rarities

Ring-billed Gull
Red-flanked Bluetail
Radde's Warbler
Northern Waterthrush

**Observations of a breeding pair of
Hobbies in Lincolnshire 1988**

**The Woodlark (*Lullula arborea*) in
Lincolnshire and South Humberside**

**Birds of Estuaries Enquiry
December 1987–February 1988**

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Ornithological Events in Lincolnshire during 1988

Exceptional 'falls' of migrant birds during October 1988

A personal view of the scene at Crook Bank, Saltfleetby – Theddlethorpe Dunes NNR in October 1988.

There have been a variety of descriptions for this October's falls of birds, like "the best this century", "nothing like it in the last thirty years", and so on, from experienced ornithologists all along the east coast. The following extract from the "Visit Diary for Crook Bank" highlights the falls from a bird-ringer's point of view, rather than from that of a bird-watcher, who would have covered a greater length of coastline. Also, there is no record at all for the 13th, 17th – 20th, or any of the five days after 23rd October. By the 29th October, when we were next at Crook Bank, there were only normal numbers of birds around. However, it was obvious that there had been many thrushes about during the week commencing 24th, as most hawthorn bushes had been stripped of berries.

Wednesday, 12th October: The latest in a series of depressions came in from the south, through Cornwall. With high pressure over central Europe, the result was strong south-easterly winds across the North Sea yesterday evening, and overnight. A belt of heavy rain passed northwards overnight, so that conditions were ideal for a "fall" of migrants. The rain started at 21.30 last night, and the overcast and low cloud remained at 04.00 this morning, but the gale force south easterly wind had eased down to about force four. Half-an-hour later, the sky was totally clear, and the wind had dropped further, and moved more southerly. After dawn, patchy cloud arrived, so that netting conditions were good throughout the day. We realised whilst we were erecting the nets before dawn, that many thrushes were arriving and dropping on to the dunes, or passing on inland. This passage continued throughout the morning, and we saw several large parties of thrushes drop down from a height – in fact it was one of the most spectacular arrivals we have seen. What we did not see was the arrival of large numbers of smaller birds, particularly Robins and Goldcrests. We ringed 205 birds (more than twice our previous highest total for a day in 1988) and retrapped 38. The catch of 68 Robins was by far our biggest ever single-day total for the species. We also captured 39 Goldcrests, 31 Song Thrushes, 23 Blackbirds, 16 Redwings, 11 Blackcaps and other birds including 2 Redstarts and single Reed Warbler, Garden Warbler and Chiffchaff. The Chiffchaff was an extraordinary bird, having a wing-length of 67 mm, well above the normal maximum of 63 mm. It could not, however, be turned into anything more "exotic"! It didn't need to be in the event, because there were better things to come. These were Yellow-browed Warbler, not unexpected any more in autumn; and a real rarity, a Red-flanked Bluetail – a bird of the imagination! Both were in the same net, in consecutive visits, and both were photographed for the record. The Red-flanked Bluetail is perhaps only the fifth ever ringed in Britain. Other birds recorded today included several Bramblings, two Long-eared Owls at dawn, two Sparrowhawks and a Woodcock.

Friday, 14th October: The depression split in two, and remained over Britain with the northern section filling rapidly, so that the country was covered in slack air. The weak southern depression was being pushed back southwards by high pressure building over Scandinavia, generating light easterly winds, and clear skies, across the North Sea. Mist formed just before dawn, and remained for a couple of hours afterwards, lacing the nets with water. However, there were so many birds about – particularly thrushes, which were roosting in large numbers in the hawthorns – that the nets caught extremely well. Later in the morning, a very light breeze drifted in from

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the sea, and the sun became slightly hazy. The netting conditions were really good throughout the day, and we had another tremendous catch of 182 birds to ring, and 49 retraps. There were less Robins about than on Wednesday, but we still ringed 29 – and retrapped 10. Goldcrests were also slightly down, at 28 ringed – with 13 retraps; but Redwings (21 ringed) and Blackbirds (36 ringed) had increased; whilst Song Thrushes (29 ringed) and Blackcaps (14 ringed) were about the same. We also ringed another male Sparrowhawk, our first Firecrest of the year, and 3 Ring Ouzels! Only one Ring Ouzel had previously been ringed at Crook Bank, and that was in 1968. All three were in one line of nets (the firebreak), at the same time – two males, and a female. There was no diurnal north-south passage of any note, and no birds were seen arriving from the sea. A lot of “feeding” movements did take place, particularly of Redwings and Song Thrushes flying up and down the line of the dunes. There must have been several hundreds of each, within a relatively short distance of our netting sites, though only one Fieldfare was seen. At least two more Sparrowhawks, and a single Woodcock were seen.

Saturday, 15th October: The sky was still clear after dark yesterday evening, and there was no wind. By 04.30, there was thick, low cloud with a light easterly blowing – and it remained that way all day. We disturbed few birds as we erected the nets, unlike yesterday when there were Redwings and Blackbirds fluttering around in all the hawthorns. We found it hard to believe that there were so few birds about, after the huge numbers we had seen yesterday, and on Wednesday. But they had definitely nearly all continued their migration – we ringed just 39 birds (including 8 Goldcrests, 7 Blackbirds, 4 each Redwings, Blackcaps and Bullfinches, and 3 each Robins and Song Thrushes) and retrapped 25. Migration was, in fact, taking place overhead, with parties of mainly Redwings and Blackbirds flying high inland – largely, it appears, above the low cloud. Just a small number dropped down to the dunes – with some contributing to the ringing total.

Sunday, 16th October: The low cloud persisted right through last night, and all day today, accompanied by mist. There was only a very light SE breeze, and for lengthy periods it was calm. There were few birds on the dunes at dawn, though there was a very heavy overhead passage pre-dawn, with large numbers of thrushes moving inland. However, there must have been some difference in the conditions today, because quite large numbers of Blackbirds, Redwings, and Song Thrushes started descending down on to the dunes – we must have seen several hundred birds do so, in flocks of up to 70 or 80. So from 09.00 onwards, we started to catch more birds, and instead of the 30 or 40 we had anticipated after several “rounds” of the nets, we ended with 104 birds to ring, and 52 retraps. The major species ringed were 22 Robins, 21 Goldcrests, 18 Blackbirds, 15 Redwings, 12 Song Thrushes, and 4 each Blackcaps and Greenfinches – so it was apparent that the smaller passerines were also arriving from the Continent. A Chiffchaff was not unexpected, but a very late Spotted Flycatcher certainly was. Even that did not compare with our first-ever Radde’s Warbler, a first-year bird with a brownish-olive back and bright yellow, and yellowy-orange, underparts – a beautiful bird, quite unlike any British “*Phylloscopus*” warblers. To add to the excitement of the past few days, we then caught a female Merlin, only our second-ever of the species at Crook Bank. So in four days netting, over the past five days, we have ringed 530, and retrapped more than 170 birds. There were a lot of Bramblings arriving from the east – at least 100 were seen descending from high level flight. Starlings were flying south in good numbers for the first time – perhaps 400 or so. There were more Fieldfares recorded today, but most flew on inland, and we still have not caught one this autumn.

Friday, 21st October: The high pressure persisted over Scandinavia and central Europe, with easterly winds during the week. Cloud cover over eastern England was total, and there was heavy rain on Wednesday night and Thursday morning. More birds must have been arriving during this period, and “accumulating” on the Reserve – being unable to progress because of the dense cloud cover, preventing night navigation. On Thursday afternoon there were apparently “thousands” of birds on our netting area. Certainly, when we arrived before dawn today there were probably more thrushes roosting than we have previously encountered – wherever we went we flushed birds out of the bushes. There was still complete overcast, with some mist,

and it was calm and very mild. The sky cleared late in the day, but it remained near calm. We caught huge numbers of birds, soon realising that we could not possibly "weigh and measure" more than a few. There was no real let-up during the day, and after the dusk catch, we discovered that we had ringed 507 birds, and retrapped 45! Nearly all birds were at good weights, presumably having been present on the dunes for at least a day. Goldcrests were the major species, with 175 ringed, followed by 107 Blackbirds, 87 Robins, 54 Redwings, 26 Song Thrushes and 17 Blackcaps. Other birds ringed included 4 Chiffchaffs, 3 Reed Warblers and a Firecrest. There were also 3 Woodcocks (the first time we have ringed more than a single bird in a day), our first Fieldfare of the autumn, and a Siskin. There was only a moderate arrival of thrushes around dawn, but some 200 Bramblings seemed to be "arriving" in the first few hours of light, and 100 or so Siskins moved mainly north. About a dozen – perhaps more – Woodcock were seen; one party of about five flew up, leaving one in the net in the firebreak, giving the impression, in the half-light of dawn, of a covey of Partridges! There were probably around six Sparrowhawks about, though the only one we caught had been ringed by Birklands R.G. here in September.

Saturday, 22nd October: There was no basic change in the weather conditions. Clear skies yesterday evening allowed many birds to continue their migration – some presumably redirected back to the Continent, after being drifted off-course by the easterly winds. There seemed to be few thrushes roosting this morning, when we reopened the nets – certainly when compared with yesterday morning – and there was only a small dawn "arrival". The sky had clouded-up, and there was a light southerly breeze. Late in the morning, the sky cleared completely, and we had a spell of bright, warm sun – with the wind having dropped calm again. Though most thrushes had left, there were still very good numbers of birds around. We ringed 158 by mid-afternoon, and retrapped 40. The main species ringed were again 58 Goldcrest, 34 Robins, 29 Blackbirds, 7 Song Thrushes and 5 Redwings. Most surprising – and matching yesterday's Woodcocks – were 3 Sparrowhawks to ring, two males and a female – again the first time we had caught more than one in a day. There was quite a lot of finch passage southwards – perhaps 150 Greenfinches, 40 Siskins and 30 Linnets, Chaffinches, and Bramblings.

Sunday, 23rd October: The weather pattern remained virtually the same, and the morning was misty, overcast, and calm – though for an hour or so, there was a moderate south-easterly breeze, and the sun came out in the afternoon. No new birds appeared to have arrived, and there were very few thrushes about. In a total of 70 birds ringed (and 50 retraps) there were just 12 Blackbirds, 6 Song Thrushes and a single Redwing and Fieldfare. There were also 25 Goldcrests (and 31 retraps), 8 Robins, 6 Song Thrushes and 4 Blackcaps. Yet another Sparrowhawk was ringed (the fifth individual we have handled in the past three days), and best of all was a Stonechat – the first ever ringed at Crook Bank. No passage occurred, and only a few finches (Bramblings, Siskins, Greenfinches, Redpolls, and Chaffinches) were seen.

Mike and Frances Boddy

Exceptional numbers of Long-tailed Skuas in Lincolnshire in 1988

The Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus* has always been a great rarity in Lincolnshire with a total of only 87 records (excluding "at sea" records from the Inner Dowsing tower), to the end of 1987, 67 of which were recorded from 1970-87. Many factors are involved in this generally low total, for an east coast County, which include the generally unproductive seawatching on our gently shelving coast, the lack of good raised observation points and headlands, a general lack of experience in identifying all but the closest of skuas in the best conditions amongst the majority of observers and the lack of any systematic seawatching at any locality on the coast.

Adult Long-tailed Skuas are not too difficult to identify in close views but distant birds can cause problems and only the most experienced observers are likely to identify juveniles in anything but the closest views. Analysis of the age structure of past records is therefore heavily biased but for the record of the 55 out of 67 birds for which age was stipulated in the Bird reports for 1970-87, 29 were adults and 26 juveniles.

Long-tails like Pomarine Skuas are known to be heavily dependent upon the population of Lemmings in their breeding areas with most successful breeding and hence highest numbers following the 3-4 year Lemming cycle. Thus in Lincolnshire there were on average 1-4 records per annum during 1970-87 with peaks of 13 in 1976, 10 in 1979 and 12 in 1985 (high numbers in 1982 were noted on other east coast watch points). Thus the high numbers in 1988 followed in the seemingly regular 3 year pattern but the actual scale of the influx was totally unprecedented.

In Lincolnshire there were a minimum of 67 birds recorded from August 20th – October 12th all of which are given below.

The total of 67 records in 1988 equals the combined records for the previous 18 years and was part of a huge passage around all the coasts of Britain which looks set to total 1000+ records. The Lincolnshire total was made up largely from restricted seawatches of 1-5 hours with only one all day watch of 10 hours at Huttoft on September 24th and no seawatching being carried out on many days during the autumn.

At Flamborough Head where systematic seawatching is carried out on most days during the autumn there were a total of 374 Long-tailed, Skuas recorded from August 2nd – November 3rd (P.A. Lassey pers comm.) Peak days on the Lincolnshire coast mirrored those at Flamborough:

Date	Lincs	Flamborough
September 24th	18	32
September 29th	9	43
October 1st	5	33
October 2nd	13	15
October 11th	6	6

Other peak days at Flamborough September 23rd 41, 25th 12, 30th 30, October 8th 25, 18th 22 and 30th 16 failed to produce any seawatching on the Lincs coast. What the Lincolnshire total would have been with more systematic watching it is impossible to tell but quite possibly three to four times the number recorded.

Of the 67 birds noted 43 or 64% were adult the rest being juveniles and no immatures identified. A similar ratio occurred at Flamborough with 58% up to October 15th being adult and the pattern of a very high proportion of adults amongst those recorded was the same around the whole coastline of Britain.

Juvenile Long-tails occur in three broad phases with pale, intermediate and dark plumaged birds although all adults are pale phase (Harrison 1983, Malling Olsen 1989). Pale phase birds are quite scarce and most identified are intermediate phase with a perhaps under recorded number of dark birds. The only juveniles noted by colour phase in Lincolnshire in 1988 were the 17 noted overleaf of which 13 were intermediate and 4 dark. Identification of the smaller skuas has recently been the subject of a useful Paper in British Birds (BB 1989).

Aug 20th	2	Huttoft	(adult & juvenile)	(SK,CRC)
Sep 13th	1	Chapel Point	(juvenile flew south)	(WPB)
Sep 14th	1	Witham Mouth	(juvenile)	(WHe,KM)
Sep 14th	1	Huttoft	(dark juvenile)	(GPC)
Sep 24th	1	Gibraltar Point	(adult)	(RJS)
Sep 24th	17	Huttoft	(10 adult,6 int. juveniles, 1 dark juv.)	(GPC)
Sep 26th	1	New Holland	(int. juvenile)	(GPC,SR)
Sep 27th	1	Chapel Point	(adult)	(RR)
Sep 29th	9	Huttoft	(8 adult, 1 juvenile)	(RG,DHu,SR)
Oct 1st	5	Huttoft	(5 adult south)	(KA, NAC)
Oct 2nd	3	Saltfleetby	(3 adults)	(HB)
Oct 2nd	1	Donna Nook	(dark juvenile south)	(GPC,SR)
Oct 2nd	9	Mablethorpe	(3 adult 5 int juvs) 1 dark juv) all pm.	(GPC)
Oct 4th	1	Saltfleetby	(adult)	(JRC)
Oct 4th	4	Huttoft	(3 adult 1 juvenile)	(HB)
Oct 5th	3	Huttoft	(2 adult 1 int. juvenile)	(GPC)
Oct 8th	1	Huttoft	(juvenile)	(SK)
Oct 11th	6	Huttoft	(2 adult 4 juvenile)	(CRC)
Oct 12th	2	Huttoft	(2 adults)	(AGB, CRC)

Acknowledgements:

I wish to thank all observers who submitted details of their observations of Long-tailed Skuas in 1988; particular thanks to Andrew Lassey and Flamborough Ornithological Group for permission to quote from their records for 1988 and to the observers who enjoyed some memorable seawatches with me during autumn 1988.

References:

Harrison P. *Seabirds an Identification Guide* C.Helm 1983
Malling Olsen K. *Identification of the smaller Skuas* BB 1989

Graham P Catley.

Accounts of Lincolnshire Rarities

Ring-billed Gull at Bagmoor July 24th – August 3rd

On July 24th 1988 a joint family day-out led Andy Sims and myself to Bagmoor in a search for two yellow-legged Herring Gulls which John Harriman had seen there earlier the same week. During the summer and early autumn large numbers of Lesser Black-backed Gulls regularly use the flooded area at Bagmoor for bathing and loafing and small numbers of Herring Gulls and Great Black-backs join them with large numbers of Black-headed and rather fewer Common Gulls, both of the latter mostly first-summer individuals.

Arriving at Bagmoor late morning on a fine and sunny day we began to scan through the assembled Gull flocks in search of the yellow-legged Herrings. Whilst looking through a small party of Lesser Black-backs with my 27 x 60 scope I came across a smaller gull with pale grey mantle, white head and neck mottled with brown, old faded brown wing feathers but instantly striking was the deep and prominent bill, a dull horn-yellow with a well marked black subterminal band.

Since 1975 searching for, but seldom finding, scarce gull species has been one of my major interests in the County, mostly in the winter months. With the increasing numbers of Ring-billed Gulls being recorded in Britain from the mid 1970's I began a regular scrutiny of the thousands of Common Gulls which frequent the Grimsby Docks-Cleethorpes foreshore every winter. I can thus claim some extensive experience with all ages, plumages, and variations in plumages and bare part patterns in Common Gulls at all times of the year. Thus having seen three Ring-billed Gulls in other areas of the country and with my experience of Common Gulls I immediately suspected that the Bagmoor bird was a Ring-billed. The fact that it was in faded first-summer plumage, in midsummer and more to the point in Lincolnshire! however, made me look rather closely before even suggesting the possibility to ACS. He quickly located the bird in question and by pure coincidence John Harriman arrived as we were beginning to put together a full description. JH and one other fortunate visitor to the site that morning also saw the bird. The Ring-billed Gull stood with the Lesser Black-backs for some time before flying further away and landing next to a Common Gull, of the same age for a useful comparison, and several Black-headed Gulls. When it sat down amongst them it was invisible and when we left it was still present but could not be found later that afternoon. It was however, reported again on a few dates during the next week and I saw it again on August 3rd which as far as I am aware was the last occasion on which it was seen.

Description:

Size: obviously larger and more bulky than Black-headed Gulls and slightly more so than Common Gulls most notably about the head; only about 20% smaller than some Lesser Black-backed Gulls.

Head profile similar to Lesser Black-back with a sloping forehead and thick-set neck; head usually held hunched on neck but when alarmed

was stretched up high and then looked rather long-necked in contrast to Common Gull. Bill: much thicker/deeper than any Common Gull (first-winter and summer birds often have a deeper looking bill than adults due to the dark tipped pattern of Glaucous Gull) and also showed pronounced gonys. Usually looked dull horn coloured but in sunlight had a distinct yellowish-ochre tinge – a prominent wide black band crossed the bill near the tip extending back along the cutting edges of the mandibles – extreme tip was horn/ochre.

The eye looked dark with obvious whitish crescents above and below but in good light the iris already looked paler, an indication of the change to second winter. A dark brown furrow or eyebrow extended over the eye. Head and neck whitish but ear-coverts, crown and nape all washed with buffy-brown and with darker brown streaking on the crown and old brown blotches on the nape and round the lower neck forming a half collar when seen from in front – rest of underparts white.

Mantle, back and scapulars all pale grey of similar tone to Black-headed Gull, with a thin whitish line along the edge of the lower scapulars. Amongst the wing feathers, one old faded pale brown tertial was present with a very narrow paler tip – greater coverts also old faded brown centred with broad pale creamy bleached edges. Rest of flight feathers all faded pale brown (all remnants of first winter plumage). Tail whitish with a broken, broad faded subterminal band and some central tail feathers were missing through moult.

Legs looked long in direct comparison to Common and Black-headed Gulls – dull greyish in colour seen to be slightly tinged with yellowish in good light.

By August 3rd it was further advanced in moult to second winter plumage with more missing tail feathers and flight feathers and more obvious pale grey scapulars. On both occasions the Ring-billed Gull was fairly inactive roosting with the other gulls but it did make aggressive gestures to Black-headed Gulls with neck raised and bill wide open.

The Ring-billed Gull breeds in North America, wintering south to Mexico and was first recorded in Britain in 1973. This is the first fully acceptable record of the Ring-billed Gull in Lincolnshire and is not unexpected with the rapid increase in records in Britain since 1980 in particular. There is however, still a very obvious west and south coast bias to the records and there have been few Yorkshire records and as yet not a single one in the heavily watched neighbouring county of Norfolk.

Graham P Catley

Red-flanked Bluetail at Theddlethorpe October 12th 1988

This bird was captured during a mist-netting session at about 12.00 hours, in the same net as a Yellow-browed Warbler had been caught less than one hour earlier. My wife (FEB) extracted the bird and put it in a "carrying bag", describing it to me as being Robin-like, but with a blue tail, and orange on the flanks.

It was immediately apparent that this bird was a Red-flanked Bluetail, so that only a brief description was taken to accompany the photographs.

Description

Upperparts: olive-brown.

Flanks: orange-red.

Throat: white.

Rectrices: outer webs blue; pointed tips.

Upper tail coverts: blue.

Bill: inside of upper mandible whitish grey.

Supercilium: showed trace of blue in bright sun.

Wing-length: 80 mm.

Weight: 12.2 g, at 12.00hrs.

The bird was then released in the hawthorn bushes and was not seen subsequently. Weather conditions and migrant bird populations present: There had been near-gale force south-easterly winds overnight, as a result of a depression to the south, and high



pressure over central Europe. A belt of heavy rain moved northwards through Lincolnshire overnight, with dense overcast still remaining at 04.00. By 04.30, the sky was clear, and the wind eased down rapidly. Many thrushes were passing overhead, or dropping on to the dunes, whilst we erected the mist nets before dawn. This passage continued through the morning, with many birds dropping from a considerable height – we described it as one of the most memorable arrivals we had seen. We did not see the arrival of the smaller passerines, but these appeared in our nets in good numbers. For example, we ringed 68 Robins and 39 Goldcrests, as well as smaller, but substantial, numbers of Blackbirds, Song Thrushes, Redwings, and Blackcaps.

The Red-flanked Bluetail breeds from Finland eastwards to Japan and winters in south-east Asia. This is the eleventh record of Red-flanked Bluetail in Britain (all but one in September/October) and the third for Lincolnshire. The previous county records were in 1903 (the first for Britain) and in 1978.

Mike Boddy

Radde's Warbler at Theddlethorpe October 16th 1988

My wife (FEB) also extracted this bird from the mist-net, and told me that it was a *Phylloscopus* type warbler, but rather heavy-looking, bright yellow underneath, with "orangy" under-tail coverts. My reaction, even before handling the bird myself, was that it was probably a Radde's Warbler, and that was confirmed by careful examination, and critical comparison with Svensson (3rd ed.), Williamson (1962), Madge (1987), and the letter by Round (1988) – all of which I had to hand.



Description

The following description is based on details recorded in my ringing log:

Upperparts: brownish-olive; uppertail coverts and rectrices slightly more brown.

Underparts: belly bright yellow; chin dusky-white, with buff throat, and pale brownish chest band; undertail coverts rufous-yellow; flanks

buffy brown; underwing coverts light buff, lighter on carpal joint. Undertail covert colour contrasts strongly with flanks and belly.

Head markings: supercilium long, wide and buff in front of eye, narrower and white-buff behind; darker bands above and below supercilium; mottled cheeks.

Wing-bars: none.

General state of plumage: all fresh, including remiges and rectrices, with no active moult. Rectrices sharply pointed, suggesting first-year bird.

Legs and claws: legs stout and of a very pale straw colour behind, with a reddish tinge at the front of the legs; strong claws, straw coloured, pale-yellowish underneath.

Bill: pale tip, darker upper mandible, orange base to lower mandible. Stout and broadly based bill. Bill width (rear end of nostrils) 4.1mm; bill depth (at same point) 3.3mm.

Wing formula: wing length 61mm; wing point = primaries 4 and 5.

a) p1 = 10mm > primary coverts

b) p2 = p10/s1

c) p3 = 2 mm < p4 & 5: p6 = 1 mm < p4 & 5.

d) emargination not recorded.

Weight: 10.1 g, at 10.00hrs

Weather conditions and migrant bird populations present: The high pressure system had built over northern Europe, and there had been slack air or light easterlies over Britain and the North Sea, with low cloud and mist above the Lincolnshire coast. This morning saw another large arrival of thrushes, Robins and Goldcrests, though less than on Wednesday 12 October.

The Radde's Warbler breeds from south-central Siberia eastwards to the Pacific coast and winters in south-east Asia. This is only the second record of Radde's Warbler in Lincolnshire. The previous county record in 1898 remained the only British record until 1961 but it is now recorded almost annually and to date there have been over 50 records, all in late autumn.

Mike Boddy

Northern Waterthrush at Gibraltar Point October 22nd – 23rd 1988

October 1988, saw the arrival of some of the best falls of autumn migrants for many years on the east coast of Britain (Baker 1989). Gibraltar Point Bird Observatory was one of many sites which saw mass arrivals of birds with 1600 Goldcrests, 800 Blackbirds, 100 Song Thrushes and 50 Robins being recorded on the 22nd. Over 650 birds were ringed on that day, most of which were Goldcrests, Thrushes and Robins. At approximately 10.00 hrs, a bird was mist-netted in the East Dunes, which could not immediately be identified by any of the observers present, although with the help of a suitable American field guide, the bird was quickly identified as a Northern Waterthrush.

Description

The general impression was of a small Redwing-like bird with a large supercilium, about the size of a plump pipit.

Upperparts : Dark, chocolate-brown from the tail to the top of the head with paler, cream edges to the tertials and a broad, cream supercilium extending from the nostril to 18mm behind the eye. Eye-stripe and cheeks as other upperparts. Tail square at end. Underparts : Breast and belly creamy-buff streaked dark brown, more heavily on the flanks. Throat cream with very fine brown flecking. Under-tail coverts pale buff-cream, large central feathers grey-brown towards base, with a pale cream distal half.

Soft Parts : Upper mandible dark horn with paler cutting edge. Lower mandible dark horn at tip, pinker at base. Eye very dark brown. Legs pink with some dark horn scaling on the toes.

Biometrics : Wing 76mm, Tail 51mm, Tarsus 21mm, Hind claw 6mm, Weight 16.1g.

Wing formula, measurements (in mm), from wing point (WP), or longest primary covert (pc). E = emargination.

ss	10	9	8	7	6	5	4(E)	3(E)	2	1
-19	-17	-15	-12.5	-10.5	-7	-3	-1	WP	-1.5	-9.5pc

Subsequent field sightings of the bird were infrequent, although it was seen in the East Dunes a few times over the next 24 hours and was occasionally heard to give a distinctive "chink" call, (reminiscent of Great Spotted Woodpecker). Bobbing behaviour, similar to that of a Common Sandpiper, was also observed.

The Northern Waterthrush is a common summer migrant to much of North America and winters from Central America south to Peru. The only other species which could cause identification problems is the Louisiana Waterthrush, which is a less common summer migrant to central America and has not been recorded on this side of the Atlantic. Northern Waterthrush is finely streaked on the throat and has a creamy

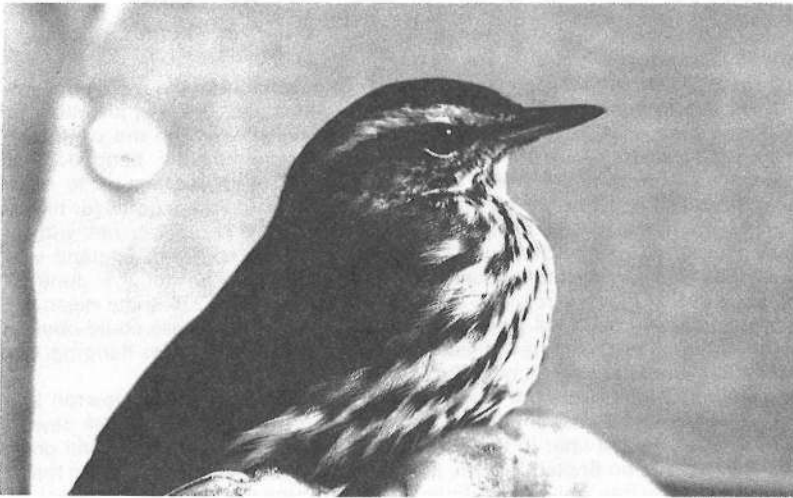
supercilium, whereas the Louisiana Waterthrush has a plain, white throat and supercilium. Other identification features are discussed more fully in a paper by Wallace (1976) and a report by Woodcock (1984).

This bird constitutes the first record of Northern Waterthrush for the county and the fifth record for Britain and Ireland, the previous birds being on the Scillies (3) and in Ireland (1). The occurrence of North American passerines in Britain usually coincides with westerly winds. It seems strange, therefore, that this bird's arrival coincided with a mass arrival of North European migrants from the east. However, interestingly, two other North American species also turned up on the British east coast in the same two day period:- an Indigo Bunting in Norfolk on 22nd and a Cliff Swallow in Cleveland on 23rd. (British Birds – March 89)

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Ian Hartley & Ken Winfield



Observations of a breeding pair of Hobbies in Lincolnshire 1988

From late July to mid-September 1988, thanks to the generosity of the finders, I was privileged to be able to study a nesting pair of Hobbies *Falco subbuteo* in Lincolnshire. The following notes, although far from exhaustive, are the most detailed account yet of the breeding of this beautiful little falcon in the County.

Habitat and nest site

The nest site was located in a wide, open river valley with alluvial clay soils under intensive cereal cultivation. In the immediate vicinity all fields were growing either wheat or barley with the former predominating. There are a few scattered oak trees in the short flailed hawthorn hedges surrounding the fields, a few mature willows on the river banks and more oak and ash trees along the sides of nearby roads and tracks. The actual nest site was the abandoned nest of a Carrion Crow, about 40 feet up in a fork of a mature ash tree which is one of a row of ashes and oaks lining both sides of a regularly used farm track. The river is approximately 400-500 yards from the nest site. Fiuczynski and Nethersole-Thompson (1980) noted that most nests in Southern England were in pines (227 of 281 nests studied between 1896-1976) with only 4 in ash. They give 13.7m (46 feet) as the average height above the ground for a sample of 140 nests; Brown (1976) gives 30-50 feet.

Timing of Breeding

The breeding pair were first seen by me on July 21st, when both the male and female were flying around calling in close proximity to the nest site. The first juvenile out of the nest was seen on August 12th, and all three juveniles were on the wing on the 14th, two quite strong but the third obviously having recently fledged. Taking published data from Gensbol (1984) and Brown (1976) of an average of 30 days to hatching, from 2nd egg, and 31 days to fledging gives approximate dates for this nest of July 14th for hatching and June 14th for full clutch. This compares well with data given by Fiuczynski and Nethersole-Thompson (1980) for southern England where 44.4% of 153 clutches were laid between June 11th-15th and a further 26% June 16th-20th. They give first clutch size of 2-4 eggs (514 clutches, mean 2.9) and a mean of 2.0 young per successful pair (144 pairs). Clutch size in the present case could obviously not be determined, but must have been at least three, three juveniles fledging, and a brood of three would appear to be good.

Opinion seems to vary upon the length of juvenile dependence with Newton (1979) giving 2-3 weeks, but Gensbol (1984) 30-40 days and Brown (1976) 33-34 days. My visits were less frequent later in the season, but all three juveniles were still present close to the nest site on September 5th, and at least 2 juveniles were there on the 16th when the adult male brought in food, thus indicating some degree of dependence even at 36 days after fledging. On my next visit on September 20th there were no Hobbies in the vicinity of the nest site.

Defence of nest site

Brown (1976) describes the Hobby as regularly being noisy and aggressive in defence of the nest site and Cramp and Simmons (1979) give a radius of 200 yards around the nest as that defended. I became aware of this behaviour on my first visit to the site on July 22nd when, before seeing any Hobbies, I felt and heard a bump on the driver's side window of my car as I approached the reported nest area. The aggression of the female made the location of the nest rather too easy!

Observation of her behaviour towards vehicles using the track showed a set pattern. Sitting on one of three lookout perches near the nest, upon the approach of a vehicle along the track she would first start to call loudly, a high-pitched "kikikikikik" repeated throughout her attacks. When the vehicle came within range she would sometimes drop down low and fly rapidly towards it about 3-4 feet off the ground, either veering off to the side or rising over it when within 6-10 feet, or more regularly she would

climb to a height of 30-40 feet above the target and stoop down vertically at the windscreen, only veering off over the bonnet when within inches. These stoops were repeated until the vehicle was out of range, when she would return to the lookout perch. Occasionally she would fly off round the side of one of the trees and appear diving through the branches at high speed again towards the target. In the event of a vehicle stopping and any of the occupants getting out in the danger zone, the female would attack them rather less closely and then usually fly off to perch in a tree, still calling loudly, and return to the attack immediately the vehicle moved again. On July 22nd the male landed with prey in a dead oak about 66 yards away and the female flew towards him calling but as a vehicle approached she turned and came back to attack it first.

On my first visit the female attacked my vehicle when 150 yards from the nest, but by the 29th she had increased the distance to 250-300 yards. She remained close to the nest site until August 20th, when she was still mobbing vehicles on the track, despite all the fledged young being in trees 300 yards away, but on August 22nd she was seen to fly off into the distance and did not return in 2 hours watching. Even when present near the nest site, the male never joined in attacks and usually "hung off" about 300-500 yards away.

Food and feeding

The female Hobby is dependent on the male for food from laying to after fledging and thus the male does all the hunting, bringing mostly small birds to the incubating female and young (Brown 1976).

The only birds seen as prey at this nest site were all Swifts, which were regularly feeding over the cereal fields around the nest site during late July and August. On July 22nd the male was seen carrying a Swift which it brought to an oak a field away from the nest. On July 23rd the male was seen to chase three different Swifts persistently but was lost to sight each time without making a kill. After his last reappearance he flew off towards a group of feeding Swifts, but instead of chasing them, appeared to feed on flying insects before again being lost. On August 22nd, after the young had fledged, the remains of two Swifts were found on the track about 30 yards from the nest tree.

Post Fledging Behaviour of juveniles

My first visit after the juveniles fledged was made on August 14th. The day was rough with a strong westerly wind but two juveniles were flying over the wheatfields to the south. However, as one attempted to land in a small oak, it obviously had some difficulty scrambling up a branch to perch. A third juvenile was seen to be noticeably younger than the other two, with a short tail and downy head, but even so when it flew it looked very confident in flight. All juveniles called loudly in flight, a chattering call similar to that of the female.

On all subsequent visits the juveniles were flying strongly and often playing together even in strong winds and rain showers. On most visits two of the juveniles were often together and the third alone. They were seen to take flying insects on all visits (from 6-8 days post fledging) passing them from foot to bill in flight from August 20th. On 22nd they were seen to land on stubble, then fly up to take insects at 20-40 feet off the ground by short bursts of speed followed by a quick snatch with the foot. They were never seen attempting to take birds and showed no aggression towards a juvenile Cuckoo feeding in the tree on which they were perched on 22nd, though on August 25th two chased a party of 4-5 Carrion Crows for some minutes. On one occasion, one juvenile flew at a Kestrel, calling loudly, and later all three chased after a Kestrel which was carrying prey. The female was regularly in attendance during August, one juvenile appearing to take food from her feet on 25th, and the male brought in food on September 16th.

Graham P. Catley

PLEASE NOTE:

The Hobby is listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981. It is an offence carrying special penalties for anyone to wilfully disturb this species while it is building a nest, or is in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young, or to disturb the dependent young of such a bird, unless licensed to do so by the Nature Conservancy Council for the purpose of nest recording or ringing.

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The Woodlark (*Lullula arborea*) in Lincolnshire and South Humberside

Distribution and Status

In Southern Britain the Woodlark is on the north-western edge of its range. In recent times the species seems to have been at its most widespread in the early part of the nineteenth century when it was said to breed in most counties of England and Wales. There then followed a steep decline in numbers and area of distribution to 1920, when an increase in numbers began with the population peaking again in the late 1940s and early 1950s. This was followed by another steep decline and further contraction of breeding range from the mid-1950s. (Sharrock 1976). Yeatman (1971) also noted a similar decline over most of the species north European range from the early 1950s, and the losses of habitat to agriculture and of rabbits through myxomatosis were suggested as implicated factors. So severe was the decline in the British population that Parslow estimated the total of breeding birds may have been less than 100 pairs in the mid 1960s (Parslow 1971). Sitters (1986) then noted an increase to 160-180 pairs in 1975 and 400-430 pairs in 1981, reduced to 210-230 pairs in 1983 following two severe winters.

In Lincolnshire the Woodlark has probably never been anything other than scarce as a breeding bird, due to its rather precise habitat requirements. Smith and Cornwallis (1955) described it as "a very scarce resident breeding in the heath district in the north-west of the County and probably in similar country near Market Rasen and west of Lincoln". In the north-west a pair were proved to have bred in 1921, after singles were seen in Normanby Park in March 1919 and April 1921, and birds regularly bred in one area nearby until 1937. The discovery of 5 birds at Manton in 1946 led to proved breeding in that area from 1948-1959, with up to 4-5 pairs at 5 different sites. Away from the north-west there had also been breeding season records near Woodhall Spa in 1898, at Haverholme Park near Sleaford where it bred in 1902, Market Rasen in 1951 and Skellingthorpe where it bred from 1951-1956.

From 1959 to 1984 there were no breeding season records in the County but my chance discovery of 3 Woodlarks in July 1984 led to further investigations and proved breeding by 2 pairs that year. Up to 3 pairs (see Table I) have probably/definitely bred in the same locality every year since. Another chance discovery in Spring 1988 produced one of the most exciting developments in the recent studies of British Woodlarks. A male found breeding at a totally new locality had been colour-ringed as a juvenile in the Breckland area of East Anglia the previous year. It was the first such recorded movement of a ringed bird in the breeding season away from the area of origin and perhaps points to the source of our present breeding population.

Away from breeding sites there have been a number of coastal records of Woodlarks in the county. Writing in the early 1950s, Smith and Cornwallis (1955) recorded that birds had been seen occasionally at Gibraltar Point in March/April and October/November, but from 1953-68 the species was described as "only rarely recorded on passage" (Atkin & Townsend 1969). Since 1969 there has been a total of 18 coastal records, mainly singles but with 2 north at Huttoft Bank on November 3rd 1976, 3 at Gibraltar Point on November 17th 1976, and 5 at Donna Nook on October 23rd 1977, one of them staying to the 28th. All coastal spring records fall between March 19th and April 4th, with autumn birds from October 9th to November 17th. Inland, 2 were seen over Morkery Wood on October 22nd 1981, and one flew south-east at South Witham on October 21st 1983 with another single at Swallow on May 1st 1984.

With no definite data to prove whether birds found on the east coast are of British or Continental origin, any further suggestions are purely speculative. The population in Northern Europe is huge compared to that of Britain (Cramp & Simmons 1988), and as there are extensive south-westerly orientated autumn movements by birds in northern Europe, it is not unlikely that some birds from this stock should reach the east coast, and indeed it is surprising that more do not do so.

Sitters (1986) suggested that British breeding Woodlarks may well be partial migrants, accounting for the better winter survival of the Breckland population as opposed to that of the more sedentary southern birds following the 1981-2 hard winters. Records of first appearance at breeding sites vary from January to mid-March in East Anglia, the most obvious explanation being that adults return earlier to take up the best territories while young birds arrive later, and either do not breed or establish new but less viable territories, a phenomenon seen in many species of migratory birds.

In Lincolnshire, although early works described the species as resident, there are only a few definite winter records: Grainsby, December 27th-31st 1893, 4 present, 1 shot; near Crowland, end of December 1920, 1 shot; Grainsby, 6th-9th December 1923, 8 present, 1 shot; Cleethorpes 24th December 1946, 1 sighted; Donna Nook 11th October 1976-8th January 1977, 1 sighted; and again one recorded at Donna Nook on the 17th February 1979.

Between 1984 and 1987, no great effort was put into proving the length of breeding site occupancy, and birds were only noted on the breeding site from late March to late August. Observations in 1988 were more detailed. No birds could be found on February 14th, but birds located in late March were later shown to have had eggs by then, and must have been present well before this date. Visits late in the season were more sporadic, and birds rather hard to find after mid-July, but a total of at least 9 birds were still present on September 21st. No visits were possible in October, but no birds could be found on November 14th. In 1989 the first birds back on Lincolnshire territories were 2 males and a female, which were occupying territories used in 1988. All three were first noted on February 23rd at a time when many of the Breckland sites were being re-occupied (C. Bowden pers comm.). It would appear, therefore, that in common with the Breckland population, Lincolnshire birds desert their breeding sites from October or November to at least January or February. Where these birds go in winter is still a mystery, and will remain so until there are winter sightings or recoveries. They may simply move out on to fields beyond the breeding areas, where they would be virtually impossible to find given their retiring habits and the huge areas of suitable farmland involved; or alternatively they may migrate to other areas in the south of Britain, or even abroad.

Habitat

To quote from Sitters (1986) "prime habitat is open country with bare soil or short turf (for feeding), scattered trees (for song posts) and some areas or tufts of taller ground cover, such as grass or heather (for nesting and roosting)". He then goes on to point out that many such areas are not occupied, and suggests that "the species has other more subtle requirements", but also that "recent success in areas where particularly suitable habitat has suddenly become available, clearly implies that availability of habitat is the key factor which will determine the future of the species in Britain".

In the Brecklands, Woodlarks breeding on natural/semi-natural sites outnumbered those on forestry clear-fells up to 1972, with 5:3 pairs respectively. The rapid increase in numbers of breeding pairs in that area from 1972 onwards was associated with the spread into the growing number of suitable forestry clear-fells. By 1978 no Woodlarks were found on natural sites, despite some apparently suitable sites still being available (R. Hoblyn in Sitters 1986). This choice would therefore suggest that forestry clear-fells are in some way more productive than that which we regard as their natural habitat.

The Woodlarks which bred at Scawby/Manton and Skellingthorpe in the 1950s were all on "natural" heathland type of sites in areas adjacent to warrens, where the turf was kept grazed extremely short by the huge number of rabbits. Indeed, the loss of rabbits following the introduction of myxomatosis, and the subsequent growth of ground vegetation has already been suggested as a major factor in the loss of birds from many such sites in Britain from the early 1950s.

All of the Lincolnshire breeding records from 1984 onwards have been on forestry clear-fell sites, again despite apparently suitable-looking natural sites existing nearby. The chosen sites have light, sandy, well-drained soils and in many cases have been on a gentle slope. Clear-fells with peaty soils seem to be avoided, even in the first stages of re-growth of vegetation. These sites often seem to be quickly invaded by

low-growing brambles and dense mat-forming grasses. Woodlarks obtain all their food by ground feeding, the bulk being made up of spiders, caterpillars and other small invertebrates. In addition to open feeding areas, birds need some longer ground cover to give concealment, for the nest, for recently fledged juveniles and for all the birds during the moult period. Song posts, (usually isolated or small groups of trees) also appear to be essential to site tenancy. For these three requirements forestry clear-fells often fit the bill precisely. Newly-cleared areas, usually cleared in late autumn/winter and replanted the following spring after blanket spraying with herbicides, provide perfect feeding sites with large areas of disturbed open sandy soil, and a mass of spiders and invertebrates in the brush left over from felling. By 3-4 years after planting, the young trees are able to compete with the ground cover and by 8-10 years are shading it out. As the forests were planted over a period of years, blocks of trees reach maturity and are cleared and replanted in rotation. This produces a mosaic of clear-fells with replanted trees of different ages. The ideal situation for Woodlarks is where a newly-cleared site lies adjacent to a replanted area with trees about 3-5 years old; the former area provides open feeding while the latter provides nest and roost sites. The exact age at which sites become unsuitable, however, depends upon the speed of re-growth of ground cover and its type. Most breeding territories in Lincolnshire appear to have been in use for 3-4 years, after which birds are forced to move, but one site has been in use annually from 1984-88 at least, and still looks suitable in 1989. Incursion of ground cover here has been very slow, and the replanted conifers have failed to get away. Apparently suitable sites do however exist in areas not occupied by Woodlarks during 1984-88, which produces two possible explanations. Either they have much more precise requirements than we appreciate or, given the very small number of birds at present, there may simply not be enough Woodlarks available to fill all suitable sites; they are simply adopting the most suitable and productive territories available. Possible support for the latter theory is suggested by the fact that Tree Pipits, which often share the same clear-fell sites for breeding, reach their highest density in the clear-fells used by Woodlarks, although they also occupy sites not used by Woodlarks.

Territory Size

At the main breeding location, the size of the four territories in 1988 was estimated from the area defended by the singing males. Territory boundaries often fall at the edge of clear-fells where blocks of older woodland form a natural boundary. The territory which has been occupied each year from 1984, at least (see later discussion) is only 8-9 hectares in extent, but provides all the breeding requirements within this area; the pair on this site reared three young in 1987 and five in 1988. The other two breeding territories at this location in 1988 were of 14-15 and 13-14 hectares respectively, while an unpaired male defended a territory of 7 hectares in extent. The new breeding locality in 1988 was a clear-fell of only 5 hectares. This area was used by the Woodlarks for nesting and for a limited amount of feeding, but for most of the nesting period the adults were flying up to 500m away from the clear-fell to feed on two open sandy fields. This behaviour continued while feeding young in the nest and out of it after fledging, and suggests that the clear-fell alone did not provide a sufficient area for all the pairs' needs

Breeding Data 1988

Through detailed study of the four pairs which bred in 1988, and by using average periods from full clutch to hatching of 13 days and hatching to fledging of 11-13 days, (C. Bowden (pers comm)), it was possible to calculate the timing of most of the 1988 breeding attempts.

At the main locality three pairs bred with full clutch dates of April 2nd, 3rd and 14th, fledging respectively two, one and five juveniles. Two pairs certainly reared second broods, the first of four or five juveniles from a clutch completed about May 22nd, with a fledging to fledging period of only 50 days. Chris Bowden (pers comm) has suggested that this period is rather short and the first brood juveniles may have been predated post fledging. The second pair reared a second brood of 2 from a full clutch on June 16th, giving a fledging to fledging period of 74 days. It was not possible to

determine whether the third pair reared a second brood. At the new 1988 site the pair reared two broods, the first of 3 from a clutch completed on April 14th and the second of 2 from a clutch completed on June 18th, a fledging to fledging period of 66 days. There was no suggestion of any pair attempting a third brood and by early August all the adults seen were in moult. From the limited data available, it seems that the present Lincolnshire Woodlark population are usually double brooded and that timing of breeding accords well with that for other areas of Britain.

The Recent Past, Present and Future of the Woodlark in Lincolnshire

A summary of the recent breeding population is given in Table 1. There are, however, reasons for suspecting that there may have been Woodlarks breeding in Lincolnshire prior to their discovery in 1984. At the main locality extensive clear-felling began in 1977 following the 1976 winter gales. In the Breckland area the population underwent a marked increase from 1974-75, 14 to 26 pairs and again from 1976 to 1977 with 29 to 45 pairs (R. A. Hoblyn in Sitter 86 (Table 2)); a pair bred in Nottinghamshire in 1977 with breeding season records there again in 1978 and 1979 (Sitter 86). One of the territories occupied in Lincolnshire in 1985 was on an area clear-felled in 1979-80, and as this site would have been eminently suitable from 1980 onwards, there is reason to suspect that it would have been occupied if birds had been available.

The present breeding population is entirely restricted to forestry sites, and obviously continuity of breeding in these areas depends upon the continued clearing and replanting of the woodlands involved. Once the whole forest has reached maturity and been felled and replanted, it will be another 35-40 years before it is felled again! At the main site there is still a significant area to be felled, but whether it will all prove suitable for Woodlarks only time will tell. The events of 1988, however, with breeding at a small recently-cleared locality show that there may well be Woodlarks prospecting for future breeding localities and as other sites become available there could be sporadic breeding attempts in the years to come. The health of the Breckland population may well be implicated if, as suspected, at least part of our breeding nucleus originated from that area.

The Woodlark is not particularly obtrusive as a breeding bird and, especially at low densities, can be rather quiet, but observers are requested to keep a look out for any newly-cleared forestry areas and listen for the beautiful fluting song of the Woodlark, so that we can monitor its progress in the County over the coming years.

Atkin and Townsend (1970) documenting the loss of the Woodlark as a breeding bird since 1959 stated that, "it seems unlikely to nest in the County again". Thankfully that prophesy has not been borne out and hopefully we shall have these delightful birds breeding in the County for some years to come.

Finally, I wish to record my thanks to the following: to Chris Bowden, a continual source of information and inspiration, to Keith Atkin for supplying details of winter records, to the Forestry Commission for all their assistance, and to various observers, who must remain nameless, for assistance in field work.

Graham P. Catley

Table 1. Breeding Woodlarks in Lincolnshire 1984-1988

	<i>Sites</i>	<i>Breeding Pairs</i>			<i>Total</i>	<i>Young Reared</i>
		<i>Possible</i>	<i>Probable</i>	<i>Confirmed</i>		
1984	1	0	0	2	2	?
1985	1	0	1	2	3	?
1986	1	0	2	1	3	?
1987	1	1	0	2	3	3+
1988	2	0	0	4	4	19+

[Post-script. In 1989, 5 pairs and 2 additional unmated males were recorded]

PLEASE NOTE:

The Woodlark is listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981. It is an offence carrying special penalties for anyone to wilfully disturb this species while it is building a nest, or is in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young, or to disturb the dependent young of such a bird, unless licensed to do so by the Nature Conservancy Council for the purpose of nest recording or ringing.

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Waterbird Counts 1987-88

Twenty-four waters were counted by 22 observers during the winter of 1987-8, compared with 39 waters being counted by 35 observers in 1986-7. Unfortunately forms were only received from two sites in South Humberside for this latest period, and there was a reduction in the number of sites counted in the Lincoln area. Gross monthly counts for each species are shown in Table 1, and the locations are listed in Table 2 together with the maximum monthly counts for each site. Note that sites on the Humber estuary and North East coast, previously included in this report, will in future be covered by the Estuary Report.

During the period under review, counts were resumed at Ancaster Gravel Pits after a lapse of several years. Recording was discontinued at Deeping Mere and Birchwood Skellingthorpe, due to difficulty of access and disturbance, and thanks are due to Mrs S L Doxey and Mr R Bennett for carrying out trial counts on these waters. It is only by carrying out trial counts on less popular waters that we can establish their value for wintering wildfowl.

Generally the winter of 1987-88 was exceptionally mild with warm to cool south-westerly winds. The main highlights were the very strong gales on 15th/16th October 1987, and sleet on 22nd January 1988, which was followed by heavy snow on the 23rd. There was a rapid thaw on 24th which produced high level flows in some rivers and also caused shallow flooding on some low-lying fields. No doubt this mild weather was responsible for the lower than normal numbers of wildfowl in the southern half of the County (see Table 2).

For the first time in several years numbers of Mute Swans on the River Welland between Spalding and Borough Fen failed to reach 180, which is the qualifying level of sites of national importance for this species. This section of the river has always been good for Mute Swans, and in medieval times the swans were jointly owned by the Abbey and the town of Crowland, and classed as "the Common Game of the towne". Some birds were also marked by the Guild of Corpus Christi in Crowland. Marking was carried out on the first Monday in June ("the first Monday after Trinity Sunday"). (Anon). During the 1950s winter numbers on the River Welland were usually under 100, with a maximum of 280 in February, 1955 (Redshaw 1959). In recent years the highest numbers have usually occurred on November or December and Table 3 shows the maximum counts, and month of maximum count, since September 1979.

**Table 3 – Mute Swan counts on R. Welland -
Maximum Winter Numbers**

79/80	80/81	81/82	82/83	83/84	84/85	85/86	86/87	87/88
245	249	243	269	307	316	305	254	164
Nov	Nov	Oct	Dec	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov

Wildfowl which are probably or possibly escapes continue to turn up, such as the regular "Ferruginous type" Ducks at Grimsthorpe Lake each September/October, and the inevitable Snow Geese and Barnacle Geese which sometimes appear in single numbers with flocks of Canada Geese. A new escape for the record during 1987/88 was the presence of a Cape Shelduck at Gibraltar Point Mere in September 1987 and January 1988.

Thanks are due to the following counters who took part in the 1987/88 National Wildfowl Counts Scheme.

G Catley	Barton (Far Ings to Barrow Haven)
J Clarke	Brickyard Pond Sutton on Sea
P G Collins	South Forty Foot Drain
C Dobson	Brayford Pool
Ms J Eastmead	R. Witham Branston
Mrs A Goodall	Toft Newton Reservoir
G Hardy	Ancaster Pits
M E Harrison	West Ashby Pits
B Hather	Hackthorn Hall Lake and Woodlands Pits, Market Rasen
Mrs K Heath	R. Welland
Miss J Knibb	Fillingham Lake
Miss R Nickerson	Riseholme Lake
J Nowlan	Coronation Channel
E J Redshaw	Baston Fen. N.R.
R Russell	Kirkby-on-Bain
I E H Shepherd	Denton Reservoir
I D Smith	Culverthorpe Lake, Sleaford Ballast Pits
J Walker	Seabank Pits
P N Watts	Langtoft West End Pits, and Langtoft Common Pits
K Wilson	Covenham Reservoir
K Winfield	Gibraltar Point Mere

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John Redshaw



Table 1 – Monthly Waterbird Totals 1987-88

<i>Species</i>	<i>Sept</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>
Little Grebe	18	27	18	13	9	15	20
Great-crested Grebe	56	79	66	33	35	59	95
Cormorant	7	21	30	41	22	24	39
Mute Swan	140	269	313	211	218	254	166
Bewick's Swan	—	—	2	—	—	—	—
Whooper Swan	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Pink-footed Goose	—	—	120	—	—	—	1
White-fronted Goose	—	—	—	50	—	—	—
Greylag Goose	82	28	60	33	226	153	137
Snow Goose*	1	—	—	—	1	—	—
Canada Goose	847	566	713	493	573	250	152
Barnacle Goose*	—	—	—	1	1	—	—
Shelduck	1	2	—	—	20	26	30
Wigeon	101	310	119	34	126	292	10
Gadwall	36	20	71	14	53	69	18
Teal	388	211	146	71	184	189	142
Mallard	781	1948	1895	2848	2000	1471	592
Pintail	1	2	—	—	2	—	—
Shoveler	2	48	28	14	10	13	17
Pochard	5	223	279	302	272	676	1375
Tufted Duck	160	269	667	674	557	649	571
Scaup	—	35	35	98	—	—	—
Long-tailed Duck	—	2	2	2	2	2	2
Goldeneye	—	513	—	12	78	66	60
Smew	—	—	—	—	1	6	—
Red-breasted Merganser	—	—	2	—	—	—	—
Goosander	—	—	—	20	25	33	21
Ruddy Duck	8	10	12	6	15	13	11
Moorhen	31	12	33	43	17	36	9
Coot	746	1108	1915	1547	1635	1304	593
Waters Counted	16	21	23	22	23	21	22

* Denotes some birds which are definitely or probably escapes. Moorhen figures may not be representative as this species does not appear to be counted at all sites.
(Scientific names of species are given in the Systematic List)



Table 2 - Waters Counted in 1987-88

Grid Square	Location	Months Counted	Max. Month 87/88	88/89
North:				
TA 02	Barton/Barrow Pits	S O N D J F M	1734 M	828 J
TF 39	Covenham Reservoir	S O N D J F M	1129 D	953 J
West:				
SK 98	Fillingham Lake	S O N D J F M	633 S	414 O
SK 49	Ancaster Gravel Pits	S O N D J F M	378 D	—
TF 08	Toft Newton Reservoir	S — N D — —	364 D	164 F
TF 07	R.Witham, Fiskerton—Bardney	S O N D J F M	236 D	168 F
TF 04	Sleaford Ballast Pit	S O N D J F M	185 J	419 D
SK 97	Riseholme Lake	S O N D J F M	152 J	95 N
SK 97	Brayford Pool	S O N D J F M	122 F	110 F
SK 98	Woodlands Pit, Market Rasen	S O N D J — M	118 D	30 F
SK 98	Hackthorne Hall Lake	S O N D J — —	58 S/D	19 J
East:				
TF 26	Kirkby on Bain Pits	S O N D J F M	1022 N	1182 J
TF 57/58	Sea Bank Clay Pits	— O N D J F M	794 O	1132 S
TF 55	Gibraltar Point Mere	S O N D J F M	504 S	700 S
TF 57	West Ashby Pits	— O N D J F M	329 J	383 N
TF 58	Brickyard Pond Sutton—on—Sea	— O N D J F M	94 F	44 D
South:				
TF 11	Langtoft West End Pits	— — N — J F M	770 N	1029 D
SK 83	Denton Reservoir	— O N D J F M	598 N	637 N
TF 03	Culverthorpe Lake	S O N D J F M	520 O	296 S
TF 11	Baston Fen	— O N D J F M	510 F	560 F
TF 22	Coronation Channel Spalding	S O N D J F M	397 O	586 N
TF 10/22	R.Welland Spalding—Boro Fen	S O N D J F M	319 D	439 M
TF 11	Langtoft Common Pits	— — — — J F M	250 M	188 F
TF 24/34	South Forty—Foot Drain Boston	— O N D J F M	135 N	657 J

BIRDS OF ESTUARIES ENQUIRY DECEMBER 1987- FEBRUARY 1988

THE WASH

The table shows the total number of each species from all counting sections of the Wash in the three mid-winter priority counts. For each month the full Wash total is given, preceded by the total in the Lincolnshire section only. The counting team is now almost 40 strong with one or two being 'in reserve'. Counting any estuary is difficult, perhaps more so on the Wash because of its sheer size, area of high saltmarsh and the annoying fact that eleven out of twelve tides don't reach the sea wall! Despite these obstacles, counting is undertaken year round by a willing and enthusiastic team. Both the Norfolk organiser James Cadbury, and I are grateful for their continued support and enthusiasm.

The winter of 1987/88 was notable for its above normal temperatures and remained, apart from a cold snap in mid-late February, frost and snow free. Figures for December are slightly misleading because of an incomplete count. However, the peak month for wildfowl and wader numbers is February and notable highlights were the 7,715 Pintail, for which the Wash has become increasingly important in the last 2-3 years, and 23,000 Brent Geese. Despite a poor breeding season, the number of Brent Geese was only slightly less than the record 24,500 in January 1983, following the most successful breeding season on record in 1982. In contrast, Eider seem to have almost vacated the Wash in the last few years, but the general trend of both Long-tailed Duck and Red-breasted Merganser seems to be upward.

The most abundant species, Knot, had numbers slightly less than the record 117,880 of December, 1985. Amongst other waders, Grey Plover at over 8,000 was a record, the Wash holding in the region of 25% of the United Kingdom total in February. The mild weather caused both Golden Plover and Lapwing to remain locally, and the number of Bar-tailed Godwit at 10,600 was only slightly less than the record 10,900 in February, 1981.

Contributors

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Bob Lord

Table 1

THE WASH COUNTS 1987/88 Totals of Birds using The Wash

Species	DECEMBER 1987		JANUARY 1988		FEBRUARY 1988	
	LINCS. ONLY	WASH TOTAL	LINCS. ONLY	WASH TOTAL	LINCS. ONLY	WASH TOTAL
Red-throated Diver	—	2	2	15	—	3
Black-throated Diver	—	—	1	2	—	—
Diver sp.	2	2	—	1	10	10
Little Grebe	—	—	—	10	—	7
Great Crested Grebe	4	14	2	19	23	66
Red-necked Grebe	—	—	—	1	—	—
Slavonian Grebe	—	—	—	2	—	—
Cormorant	169	188	136	148	166	198
Shag	—	5	—	1	1	1

continued

Species	DECEMBER 1987		JANUARY 1988		FEBRUARY 1988	
	LINCS. ONLY	WASH TOTAL	LINCS. ONLY	WASH TOTAL	LINCS. ONLY	WASH TOTAL
Grey Heron	3	6	8	9	17	19
Mute Swan	—	15	1	7	4	26
Bewick's Swan	—	4	—	70	—	106
Whooper Swan	—	8	—	5	—	5
Bean Goose	—	—	2	2	—	—
Pink-footed Goose	3	6621	11	2658	271	5029
White-fronted Goose	—	—	—	—	—	4
Greylag Goose	—	82	2	65	—	80
Canada Goose	—	2	—	89	—	82
Barnacle Goose	—	—	—	—	1	2
Brent Goose	13944	16721	19041	22283	19636	23166
Egyptian Goose	—	—	—	9	—	—
Shelduck	7459	15459	5145	16332	5457	14176
Wigeon	1080	2036	409	1429	171	773
Gadwall	—	132	—	54	—	57
Teal	230	714	83	1117	40	399
Mallard	1373	4319	1167	5448	1167	5233
Pintail	1101	4378	838	6291	2580	7715
Shoveler	—	17	—	20	—	26
Pochard	—	36	1	34	—	43
Tufted Duck	—	80	—	32	2	38
Scaup	2	6	1	17	—	20
Eider	31	46	5	31	9	28
Long-tailed Duck	—	—	—	37	—	18
Common Scoter	—	530	2	327	—	85
Velvet Scoter	—	—	—	2	1	1
Goldeneye	31	93	51	151	65	150
Red-breasted Merganser	2	33	24	41	91	138
Goosander	—	—	—	1	1	2
Coot	—	112	—	89	—	98
Oystercatcher	14071	15223	10986	24966	19775	35421
Avocet	—	—	—	1	—	2
Ringed Plover	68	75	12	46	143	190
Golden Plover	643	1528	966	1058	922	2124
Grey Plover	4839	5411	5455	7170	6467	8385
Lapwing	1267	1632	878	1484	4299	5013
Knot	34765	51918	48049	72352	39085	93666
Sanderling	54	63	180	572	95	477
Purple Sandpiper	—	—	—	19	—	28
Dunlin	8445	9735	15711	29200	24085	46239
Snipe	2	3	2	23	3	162
Black-tailed Godwit	40	45	85	85	—	16
Bar-tailed Godwit	1624	1667	2400	7988	2837	10691
Whimbrel	1	1	—	—	—	—
Curlew	1049	1346	895	1933	2952	4814
Redshank	1857	2005	1432	2661	2919	7501
Green Sandpiper	—	—	—	—	1	1
Common Sandpiper	—	—	—	—	—	1
Turnstone	216	418	146	608	1130	1995

Note: For details of raptors, gulls and passerines, see the Systematic List.

BIRDS OF ESTUARIES ENQUIRY

DECEMBER 1987 –

FEBRUARY 1988

THE HUMBER

Tables 1 and 2 show the total numbers of each species counted on the Humber in the three mid-winter priority counts. It has not proved possible to give simple South bank/ North bank sub-totals for wildfowl because the Humber Wildfowl Refuge, which spans the upstream end of the estuary, is counted as a single site. A sub-total for the Refuge is therefore given in Table 1, followed by sub-totals for the remainder of the North bank, the remainder of the South bank and the whole estuary total. Table 2 gives the whole estuary total of each wader species followed by the total for the South bank only.

It should be noted that complete coverage of all wader and wildfowl count sites was not achieved in any of the three months represented, and totals given should therefore be regarded as minima. In particular, the wildfowl between Barrow and New Holland were only counted in January, this explaining the very low Tufted Duck, Pochard and Goldeneye totals given for December and February in Table 1.

In this mild winter, without even a brief spell of severe weather until mid-February, very high numbers of Lapwing and Golden Plover stayed around the estuary throughout the winter. Around 7% of the United Kingdom's wintering population of Golden Plover were on the Humber in December 1987, with around 5% still present in February. The peak count of Knot was slightly down despite the national index being 7% higher than that for the previous season, but the Humber peak still represented around 10% of the U.K. population and 5% of the European wintering population. For Mallard, the December 1987 total of 10,058 was the largest ever count of the species at a single site in the United Kingdom.

The sheer size of the Humber, together with a relatively small human population around much of its 80 miles of shoreline and spring high tides (providing optimum count conditions) regularly occurring only before dawn and after dusk in mid-winter combine to make the estuary a far from easy site to count. Many thanks are due from myself to the inner and mid-estuary South Bank count teams, and from North Bank count organiser Steve Lister and outer South Bank organiser Graham Weaver to their teams for their continuing efforts to document the Humber's bird populations. New recruits to the cause are always welcome; additional counters for inner and outer South Bank sites are especially needed.

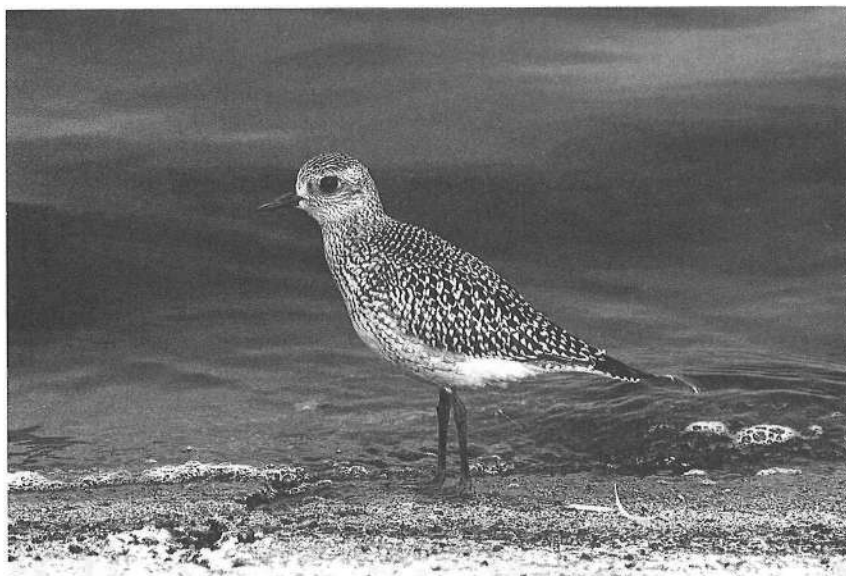
Ian Shepherd

**TABLE 1 BoEE/NATIONAL WILDFOWL COUNT TOTALS FOR MID-WINTER 1987-88
HUMBER ESTUARY**

	DECEMBER 1987				JANUARY 1988				FEBRUARY 1988			
	Humber Wildfowl Refuge	Rest of North Bank	Rest of South Bank	Humber Total	Humber Wildfowl Refuge	Rest of North Bank	Rest of South Bank	Humber Total	Humber Wildfowl Refuge	Rest of North Bank	Rest of South Bank	Humber Total
Great Crested Grebe	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2	—	3	—	3
Cormorant	—	29	54	83	—	11	62	73	—	20	34	54
Mute Swan	—	3	7	10	—	39	31	70	—	12	23	35
Bewick's Swan	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	22	22
Whooper Swan	—	5	—	5	—	—	1	1	—	—	1	1
Pink-footed Goose	—	—	920	920	—	70	73	143	—	—	35	35
White-fronted Goose	—	15	—	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Greylag Goose	8	—	—	8	55	—	3	58	30	28	7	65
Canada Goose	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	62	65
Barnacle Goose	4	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Brent Goose	—	263	1123	1386	—	88	1245	1333	—	88	443	510
Shelduck	825	1301	1267	3393	150	464	1300	1914	525	588	1742	2855
Wigeon	1200	216	945	2361	1500	192	468	2160	1400	224	218	1842
Gadwall	—	—	—	—	—	7	—	7	—	9	—	9
Teal	100	537	376	1013	140	641	404	1185	10	471	174	655
Mallard	1300	6231	2527	10058	1250	4339	1128	6717	650	3042	287	3979
Pintail	—	—	8	8	2	1	1	4	—	17	1	18
Shoveler	—	2	3	5	—	5	—	5	—	4	—	4
Pochard	2	39	—	41	—	18	300	318	—	80	13	93
Tufted Duck	—	31	—	31	1	1	313	315	—	53	10	63
Scaup	—	28	—	28	—	—	6	6	—	—	—	—
Eider	—	7	—	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Common Scoter	—	—	—	—	—	—	18	18	—	—	—	—
Goldeneye	—	11	1	12	—	2	51	53	—	5	2	7
Smew	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	1	—	1
Red-breasted Merganser	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	34	—	34
Goosander	—	4	—	4	5	—	—	5	7	15	—	22

TABLE 2
BoEE wader count totals for mid-winter 1987-88 for
whole Humber Estuary and South Bank only

	DECEMBER 1987		JANUARY 1988		FEBRUARY 1988	
	Whole Estuary	South Bank	Whole Estuary	South Bank	Whole Estuary	South Bank
Oystercatcher	3522	567	2436	542	1522	813
Lapwing	12771	4010	12176	6052	13165	1823
Ringed Plover	249	181	391	332	395	326
Grey Plover	365	308	274	204	189	188
Golden Plover	14219	2222	11983	5445	10710	3380
Turnstone	366	246	376	212	324	145
Common Snipe	84	13	95	9	268	10
Jack Snipe	2	2	—	—	3	2
Curlew	1917	676	2736	1182	4107	947
Black-tailed Godwit	10	—	1	—	2	—
Bar-tailed Godwit	419	192	657	531	659	622
Redshank	4295	2090	3172	1753	3110	1627
Spotted Redshank	1	1	1	1	1	1
Knot	18086	3327	22438	11603	10064	10063
Dunlin	16090	6192	14415	9000	11396	8077
Sanderling	393	393	322	320	461	457
Ruff	2	1	30	30	17	16
Avocet	—	—	1	—	—	—



Systematic List 1988

Compiled and edited by Alan Ball

Species accounts written by:

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INTRODUCTION

The increase in the number of records submitted is quite encouraging and helps to produce a more comprehensive annual Report. All of the records were submitted in Vooos order except for two observers but many descriptions, required for certain species, are still not being automatically submitted, even for records of birds which are considered by 'British Birds'. Preferably a written description should be submitted as soon as possible after the sighting and not left to the end of the year. Generally though, a continued improvement and my thanks go to all the observers. I would also like to thank Graham Catley for his invaluable comments on the text.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

With the general increase in birdwatching in the county coupled with the fact that more and more observers are regularly submitting records for the Report it is expected that each year should produce a good variety of records. The year, 1988, was no exception and two new species were added to the county list – Ring-billed Gull and Northern Waterthrush.

January – March

The beginning of the year was relatively mild and also very wet which is not a good combination for producing the more interesting birds. The highlights were a handful of Bean Geese, a couple of fine drake Mandarin, a Rough-legged Buzzard and the Little Egret at Frampton Marsh. A Red Kite was found dead near Kirton Lindsey in mid February, which is now preserved in Scunthorpe Museum, and there were three more records in March. A Black-bellied Dipper frequented the "Splash" at Little Cawthorpe for a few days early in March and cold weather produced a Great Northern Diver at Covenham Reservoir on 15th. Late in the month there was an interesting minor eruption/invasion of 7 Ring-necked Parakeets throughout the county.

April – June

April was very dry with mainly easterly winds. The Little Egret at Frampton/Holbeach was seen regularly in the first half of the month, an early Osprey was at Lincoln on 4th, and there were yet 5 more Red Kites making this a record year for them in the county. As if this wasn't enough, a Black Kite, only the second county record, was seen at Gibraltar Point and surrounding area occasionally from mid April for a month. Two Temminck's Stints at Bardney and two Crane records rounded off the month. Good weather and south easterly winds on May 1st provided one of the years best birdwatching days generally and brought a Serin to Donna Nook and another Crane to Gibraltar Point and there was to be yet another there on 16th. There were another dozen or so Ospreys and with others late in the year this too became a record year. Other highlights were two Caspian Tern records early in the month, Purple Heron, Ortolan Bunting and a Bee-eater. June continued dry and fine but not too warm with winds mainly from a northerly quarter and produced few birds of interest. The exceptions were an adult Night Heron, Honey Buzzard, three more Osprey records and a Ring-necked Duck.

July – September

July brought about a change to the weather with a very wet month producing few interesting birds except for a Stone Curlew at Gibraltar Point on 16th, a Ring-billed Gull – the first for Lincolnshire – at Bagmoor at the end of the month and a Bee-eater at Friskney on 31st. Crossbills, present at Laughton Forest for a few months peaked

at 33 and may have bred there. Other breeding records included 2 pairs of Montagu's Harriers, 4 pairs of Marsh Harriers and 4 pairs of Hobbies. In August another Bee-eater appeared, this time at Kexby on 7th and highlights late in the month included Corncrake, Cory's Shearwater – the second county record, and the Little Egret once more back at Frampton Marsh for the winter. September was dominated by a south westerly airflow which does not produce much in the way of the more unusual passage migrants. In fact there were only two records of Icterine Warblers, one record of Barred Warbler and three Wrynecks. Sea-watching, however, proved very rewarding with reasonable numbers of shearwaters, a few Leach's Petrels and exceptional numbers of Skuas. There were about 350 records of Pomarine Skua, good numbers of Arctic Skuas and, late in the month and into October unprecedented numbers of Long-tailed Skuas with a minimum of 67 birds. This species was considered as a national rarity by British Birds until 1980! Mid September produced the county's first autumn Scarlet Rosefinch and the start of a very pronounced Siskin arrival.

October – December

October proved to be the most exciting month of the year for birdwatching. The well established south-westerlies ended with a spell of easterlies around mid month producing some quite spectacular east coast falls of migrants. Highlights included 7 Richard's Pipits, a Red-flanked Bluetail, Dusky Warbler, Radde's Warbler and after a major fall on 20th – 21st when huge numbers of Goldcrests, Robins and Thrushes arrived there were at least 3 Pallas's Warblers, record numbers (about 25) of Yellow-browed Warblers and single Marsh Warbler, Serin and a south/eastern race of Black Redstart. Amongst these eastern migrants, an American bird at Gibraltar Point, a Northern Waterthrush – new for Lincolnshire – was most unexpected. Other birds in the month of interest included single Red-necked and Grey Phalaropes, Rough-legged Buzzard and two late Ospreys to round off a record year for Ospreys in Lincolnshire. The month ended with a single Shorelark, the only record of the year but the start of a Waxwing invasion. Waxwings continued to be a major feature of November which proved to be a somewhat disappointing month after one of the "best" Octobers on record. Apart from up to 2 Red-rumped Swallows mid month, duck were the main feature especially towards the end of the month. There were good numbers of Long-tailed Duck and Scaup with a Ring-necked Duck and Green-winged Teal. A Rough-legged Buzzard was found on the Wolds late in the month which obligingly stayed right through December. December was rather mild and produced few surprises. There was a Great Northern Diver early in the month in the Humber, good numbers of Scaup, with 65 at New Holland and 50 at the Witham Mouth, and Long-tailed Duck with 62 at the Witham Mouth and up to 12 at Covenham Reservoir. There were still some Waxwings around and the year ended with yet another sighting of the Little Egret at Holbeach Marsh on 31st.

Alan Ball.

Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Gibraltar Point	64	5	12	–	–	–	–	–	2	2	75	14
Witham Mouth	2	2	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	7	2

In January there was a notable movement on 10th with 30 at Saltfleet and 57 at Huttoft. On 24th there were 3 at Tetney and 15 at Trusthorpe and 32 were seen heading north at Saltfleet on March 13th, the last early year record was of 2 at Gibraltar Point on 27th. First in autumn were singles at Huttoft on August 20th and 27th with 2 there on September 4th and 12 there on 29th.

Black-throated Diver *Gavia arctica*

At Gibraltar Point, singles were observed on January 24th, February 14th and 16th. One was in the River Welland at the Witham Mouth on March 6th and one paid a brief visit to Covenham Reservoir on March 12th. Late in the year there were 2 south at Huttoft on September 13th, another there on October 7th and 2 at Gibraltar Point on 30th. There were singles at Tetney on November 13th, Huttoft on 15th and at Gibraltar Point on December 7th.

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

Early in the year a single first winter bird made an obliging long stay at Covenham Reservoir from March 13th to April 25th (PCr,KEW et al.). Late in the year there was an adult at Barrow Haven on December 6th – 8th (GPC,SR,AC)

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Recorded at over 20 sites throughout the county all year. There were generally low numbers until late autumn when maxima were 15 at Barton/Barrow Haven in September increasing to 20+ in December, 20 at Tetney on November 5th, 6 at the Hobhole outfall on December 10th with 11 at Holbeach Marsh on the next day. Breeding was confirmed at Baston Fen, Thorpe/Whisby Pits, Burton Pits, Messingham SQ, Barton/Barrow Haven and at Bagmoor where 6 pairs bred.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Covenham Reservoir	6	5	13	10	8	–	–	–	6	–	7	7
Witham Mouth	8	6	4	5	4	–	10	33	71	15	39	18

Recorded throughout the county with maxima, other than those above, of 24 at Cadney Reservoir in April, 28 at the Nene Mouth on August 13th and 17 at Denton throughout the year. At the South Humber Bank Pits 13 pairs raised a minimum of 14 juveniles and other breeding pairs were recorded at the South Fortyfoot at Boston (10), Bagmoor/Thealby Pits (7), Burton Pits (6), Denton (3) and 1 – 2 pairs at Ancaster Pits, West Ashby Pits, Whisby Pits, Lincoln Ballast Pit, Tattershall Pits, Kirkby on Bain Pits, Caythorpe, Syston, River Glen at Baston, Twigmoor and North Somercotes with mixed breeding successes.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

The only early year record was a single bird at Tattershall Pits on January 30th. First in autumn was one at the Witham Mouth on September 14th followed by a juvenile on the Mill Pond at Gibraltar Point on 15th – 16th with another juvenile at Covenham Reservoir from September 15th – October 30th. Other records were singles at Ashbyville on October 29th and November 5th, Humberston Yacht Club on November 26th, 3 at the Witham Mouth on November 27th and the last there on December 11th.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

Early year records were singles on the sea at Gibraltar Point on January 5th, at Covenham Reservoir from January 14th – February 16th and at the Witham Mouth on March 5th. Late in the year there were singles at Gibraltar Point on October 30th and Covenham Reservoir on November 10th, 2 at the Witham Mouth on November 14th with singles there on November 27th and December 27th.



Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

The only early year record was of one in full summer plumage off Benington Marsh on April 17th. A juvenile was at Covenham Reservoir from August 16th with another there from 21st both staying to October 17th and one was at the Welland Mouth on September 28th.

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

At the beginning of the year one was found dead at Donna Nook on January 9th. Three flew north at Gibraltar Point on April 1st and there were other singles there throughout April with 2 at the Witham Mouth on April 16th – 17th and 6 there on 30th. There were few records during May – July; maximum numbers being 11 at Gibraltar Point on May 28th and 8 at the Witham Mouth on June 4th. Birds were more widespread from August onwards mainly in small numbers but with a major movement of 30 at Gibraltar Point on 21st with 99 south and 5 north at Huttoft on the same day. Similarly in September numbers were generally small until mid month when 109 were recorded at Huttoft on 14th, 8 at the Witham Mouth on the same day and 51 at Gibraltar Point on 15th. There were no records from October onwards.

Cory's Shearwater *Calonectris diomedea*

One was seen heading northwards at Huttoft on August 20th (CRC,SK). This is only the second acceptable county record; the previous one being in August 1985 also at Huttoft.

Sooty Shearwater *Puffinus griseus*

First was at Huttoft on August 20th. There were good numbers in mid September with 2 north at Chapel Point on 13th, 25 north at Huttoft on 14th, 8 at the Witham Mouth also on 14th, 3 north at Huttoft on 24th, singles at the Witham Mouth and at Gibraltar Point on 24th and finally in October 5 south and 4 north at Huttoft on 7th with the last at Gibraltar Point on 8th.

Manx Shearwater *Puffinus puffinus*

At Gibraltar Point 2 were recorded going north on June 4th and there were singles at the Witham Mouth on July 16th and at Gibraltar Point the next day and on August 16th and 19th. Four were off Huttoft on August 13th and there was a heavy southerly passage on 21st with 88 off Huttoft following which 6 were found 'wrecked' around Lincoln and 4 were later released. There were small numbers until mid September when there were 11 north at Gibraltar Point on 13th, 18 north there and 50 south at Huttoft in two hours on 14th, then 26 north at Gibraltar Point, 16 north at Huttoft and up to 200 past the Witham Mouth on 24th. The last records were in early October with 1 at Huttoft on 1st and 2 at Mablethorpe on 2nd.

Petrel sp. *Hydrobates/Oceanodroma*

One north at Sandilands on September 13th (WPB).

Leach's Petrel *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*

There were singles at the Witham Mouth on September 14th (RH,KH), 23rd and 24th (SK), 3 at Huttoft on October 11th (CRC) and 2 there on 12th (DH,PW).

Gannet *Sula bassana*

The first records were in March with 10 south at Huttoft on 12th and singles at Gibraltar Point on 4th and 31st where there were also singles on April 7th and May 25th. The only other record early in the year concerned an adult found grounded inland at Pinchbeck on April 9th which died later. There were 1 – 8 from June onwards at several coastal sites with a large movement of 67 at Gibraltar Point and 148 mainly north at Huttoft on August 21st and 50 at Gibraltar Point the next day. There were smaller numbers until mid-September when there were 134 north and 46 south off Sandilands on 13th, 405 at the Witham Mouth, 201 at Gibraltar Point, 232 at Huttoft all on 14th, 122 north and 125 south at Huttoft on 18th, 220 north there on 24th and 80 north at Gibraltar Point also on 24th. In the Humber there were 3 juveniles at Goxhill on September 2nd with 1 – 3 recorded there until the end of the month including a peak of 63 there on 15th and 1 at Barton on 23rd. Birds were recorded in small numbers at Gibraltar Point throughout October with the last record of 4 south on November 20th.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Gibraltar Point	32	31	29	15	13	4	12	15	36	50	35	36
Witham Mouth	45	42	27	17	25	6	36	80	50	37	45	54
Covenham Reservoir	8	42	42	23	20	—	—	—	13	—	23	28
Barton	36	36	23	—	13	—	—	—	—	9	—	—

Birds were recorded inland early in the year at Tattershall Pits, Whartons Wharf on the River Trent, Cadney Reservoir and at Whisby/Thorpe Pits with maxima of 7 on the Witham at Tattershall on March 5th and 7 at Metheringham Delph on April 12th. Birds were recorded occasionally in summer at Whisby Pits and Bardney SBF and were more widespread from October onwards being recorded at Cadney reservoir, South Witham, Baston Fen, Ancaster Pits, Whisby Pits with maxima of 7 at Brocklesby Park on November 22nd and 17 at West Deeping Pits on December 15th. Maximum coastal movements were 25 south at Huttoft on September 24th, 26 south there on October 8th and 11 south at Mablethorpe on October 22nd.

Birds showing characteristics of the continental race *P.c.sinensis* were recorded early in the year with singles at Covenham Reservoir from February 19th to March 28th, 2 there on March 5th, 5 on 14th and 4 on 24th. Elsewhere there were singles at Read's Island on February 17th and March 7th, Cadney Reservoir on April 9th, Trent Falls on April 13th and 2 at Frampton Marsh on the same day.

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

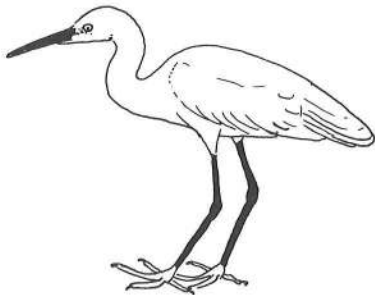
In the early part of the year there was one at Grimsby Docks on January 24th and an immature at the Witham Mouth on February 2nd. There were exceptional numbers during the second half of March beginning with 1 at Huttoft on 12th, 4 at Covenham Reservoir on 18th, with 5 there, 1 at Gibraltar Point and a southerly movement of 26 at Saltfleetby all on 20th. One was found dead at Mablethorpe on March 21st and numbers at Covenham Reservoir decreased gradually with the last there on April 2nd. One was at the Witham Mouth from March 29th to April 5th and 3 (plus another dead bird) were found at Spalding on April 9th staying for some time with one still present on May 14th. Other records at this time were 2 at Cleethorpes on April 10th, 1 dead at Gibraltar Point on 11th, 1 there on May 3rd – 8th and 1 up the Witham at Boston Town Centre on May 7th. Late in the year there were 2 immatures at the Witham Mouth on October 16th and singles at Cleethorpes on 29th, Witham Mouth on November 12th and Cleethorpes on 13th.

Bittern *Botaurus stellaris*

The only records were singles at Lincoln Ballast Pit on January 13th, North Killingholme Pits on March 19th and 22nd, Bulby on August 28th and finally at Messingham SQ from December 15th into 1989.

Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

An adult was observed at close range in bushes on the sea bank at Wainfleet on June 1st (L.Mather, A.McShea). Accepted by British Birds and is the 8th county record.



Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Presumably the same individual, first seen in August 1987, was at Frampton Marsh on January 26th (RNo) and April 1st – 16th (RNo, JWh, SK et al.). One was then seen there on August 31st (RNo), then intermittently at the Witham Mouth on September 7th – 18th (RW et al.), roosting at the Hobhole bank on 26th/27th (SK), Frampton Marsh on October 1st and 5th (JWh), flying over the Boston Tip on October 22nd (AGB, CRC) and finally at Holbeach Marsh on December 31st into 1989 (PT).

All records accepted by British Birds.

• **Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

Counts at heronries revealed the following nest totals:

Abbey Wood	37	Muckton Wood	27
Howsham Wood	7	Gatecliff Wood	4
Laughton Forest/Tuetoos Wood	9	Old Hag Wood	21
Laughton Forest/Village	17	Troy Wood	73
Kingerby Wood	3	Evedon Wood	23
Warren Wood	2	Deeping St James–The Mere	79
Willoughby Wood	27	Holbeach–Hospital Wood	11

The total number of nests was 338 which is slightly up (6%) on the previous years figures, showing a steady increase following the low numbers after the cold weather of the 1985/86 winter.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*

One alighted briefly on the Old Saltmarsh at Gibraltar Point before flying off southwest on May 10th (PMT,GWA). This is the 18th individual (17 records) for the county, 10 of which have been in May.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

An immature was seen flying south at Huttoft on the morning of September 10th which arrived later that day at Gibraltar Point where it frequented the Mere until 19th.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

	J	F	M	S	O	N	D
Barton/Barrow Haven	7	25	15	27	21	27	22
Brayford Pool, Lincoln	108	116	91	75	97	90	96
Kirkby-on-Bain Pits	13	16	11	31	9	14	21
Deeping High Bank	47	47	15	192	241	200	200

The maximum numbers at other sites were 34 at Messingham SQ in April and 52 on the River Witham at Tattershall in November.

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

In January there were 2 at Skidbrooke on 1st, 2 at Lincoln Ballast Pit also on 1st with 1 there on 3rd, 18 at Lea Marsh on 2nd increasing to 48 on 10th – 24th decreasing to 15 by 27th and 5 at Alkborough Flats on 24th. In February 5 remained at Alkborough Flats up to 24th and there were 22 at Skidbrooke on 21st and the last in the early part of the year were 36 at Kirton Marsh on March 17th. The first returning birds were in October with one at Donna Nook on 15th followed by 5 at Messingham SQ from 27th – 29th, 3 at the Witham Mouth on 29th and 10 at Messingham SQ on 30th. In November there were 22 at Messingham SQ on 1st, 10 there until 4th, 3 at Sleaford Ballast Pit on 3rd, 6 at Baston Fen on 4th, 7 at Donna Nook on 6th, 17 there on 7th, 5 at Whisby Pit on 21st, 3 at Brocklesby Park on 27th and 1 at Messingham SQ on 29th. In December 5 flew south west at Messingham SQ on 3rd and there were 2 immatures at Bardney on 27th.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

In the early part of the year there were records of a single immature between Skidbrooke and Humberston between January 9th – February 18th, 4 south-east at Grainthorpe on January 16th, 16 at Tetney on 24th, and 2 at Denton Reservoir on 29th – 31st. There were 3 at Gibraltar Point on February 10th and 9 north there on March 9th with other March records of 39 at Covenham Reservoir on 14th, 23 west at East Halton Skitter on 17th, 7 at Goxhill on 24th and the last at Donna Nook on April 3rd. The first returning birds were in late October with one at Ingoldmells on 21st, then 5 at Barton on 27th, 7 south at the Witham Mouth on 28th and 3 there on 29th, 8 at Gibraltar Point also on 28th, 2 there on 29th, 1 south there on 30th and 2 at Frampton Marsh on 30th. In November there were 2 at Frampton Marsh on 6th, 18 south at Cleethorpes on 7th, 5 north west at Denton Reservoir on 13th, 4 at Deeping High Bank on 14th, 1 at Whisby Pits on 21st and the last record of 2 at Covenham Reservoir on December 12th.

Bean Goose *Anser fabalis*

At the beginning of the year there were 4 at Covenham Reservoir on January 14th (KA), 6 at Wrangle Marsh on 22nd – 23rd (AGB, A White), 2 at Butterwick on 24th (AGB), 1 at Wrangle Marsh on 30th (A White), 2 at Huttoft on February 11th (WPB) and a late record of 2 at Butterwick Marsh on April 20th (AGB). The only record late in the year was of one leading a party of 85 Pink-footed Geese east over Butterwick Marsh on November 26th (AGB, BJH).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Most records early in the year were from the south of the county with 200 at the Welland Mouth on January 7th, 150 over Wyberton on 12th and 13th, 250 west at Sleaford on 14th, 75 at Holbeach Marsh on 17th increasing to 140 by late February, 715 at Terrington on January 19th, 115 northeast at Spalding on February 17th and 172 at the Witham Mouth on March 5th. In the north of the county there were over 600 at Read's Island on January 7th decreasing to 119 by 22nd, 50 at Tetney on 10th, 25 there on 16th, 100 south at Theddlethorpe on 19th, 60 north there on February 20th, 100 west at Thornton Abbey on February 13th and 80 west at Barton on February 21st. At Gibraltar Point up to 100 were recorded throughout January with a maximum of 220 on 21st and 24th and 13 there on February 14th, 16 on March 9th, 10 on 13th and a single among Canada Geese to May 15th. Other late birds included 1 at the Welland Mouth on April 3rd, 3 northeast at Tetney on 30th, and 3 at West Ashby Pits to May 14th.

First returning birds in autumn were recorded in late September with 13 at Winteringham on 26th, 4 at Gibraltar Point on 29th and 15 at Donna Nook also on 29th. Numbers built up in October when 54 birds were recorded flying south at Gibraltar Point on 8th, 75 south at Anderby Creek on 9th, 120 at Cleethorpes on 12th, 12 at Huttoft on 16th, 100 west at Boston on 20th, 350 north west at Wilsford and Haverholme, 100 at Barton and 34 at Nocton Fen all on 21st. Flocks were then widely reported to the end of the year with maxima of 250 at Gibraltar Point on November 11th, 200 at Lincoln on 12th, 230 west at Barton on 15th, 400 at Winteringham from early November to end of December, 240 north at Skidbrooke and 273 at Frampton Marsh both on December 15th, 435 south at Huttoft on 28th, 530 at Holbeach Hurn on 30th and 300 at Wilsford Heath on 31st.

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

There were 2 at the Witham Mouth on October 28th (RH & KH) and 3 south at Saltfleet on November 6th (WPB). A presumed escapee was around the Sudbrook/Ancaster area during the summer.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Coastal records during the year included 7 at Donna Nook in mid January, 200 north at Gibraltar Point on February 20th, 6 at Humberston Fitties on 25th, 2 at Tetney Lock on April 3rd, 3 at the Witham Mouth on 17th, 2 at Kirton Marsh on 27th, 8 at Goxhill on May 4th, 1 at Frampton Marsh on 12th and up to 5 at Gibraltar Point up to 19th. Late in the year there were 22 at Gibraltar Point on September 30th, 12 there on October 8th, 8 off the sea at Somercotes Haven on 19th, 14 at the Witham Mouth on December 14th and 45 at Whitton on 20th. Maximum numbers of mainly resident birds on inland waters during the year were 130 at Messingham SQ, 60 at Revesby Reservoir, 60 at Kirkby on Bain Pits, 100 at Tattershall Pits, 120 at West Ashby Pits, 74 at Whisby/Thorpe Pits, 70 at Dowsby and 114 at Baston Pits.

Snow Goose *Anser caerulescens*

Single birds of 'doubtful' origin were at Denton Reservoir flying south east with Greylag Geese on February 15th and at Goxhill Haven with Canada Geese on September 27th.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

There were 210 at West Ashby Pits in January and late summer maxima included 75 at Burton Pits, 100 at Hollywell Lake, 300 at Messingham SQ, 200 at Denton Reservoir, 250 at Ancaster, 250 at Culverthorpe Lane, 90 at Whisby Pits. Largest flock sizes occurred in October with 650 at Denton Reservoir, 500 at Culverthorpe Lake, 124 at Whisby, 168 at Barton and 240 at Gibraltar Point.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Probable 'wild' birds were 2 west at New Holland on March 1st, 1 in the Gibraltar Point/Wainfleet Brent Goose flock from March 2nd – May 11th, 5 east at Barton on April 2, 1 at New Holland on May 17th, 1 at Wrangle Marsh on October 20th, 9 at nearby Friskney Marsh on 23rd with 2 at Luton Outmarsh on the same day, 1 west at Barton on October 28th and 5 north at Gibraltar Point on November 8th. There were 1 – 2 'feral' birds in the Lincoln/Messingham SQ area, up to 6 at Cleethorpes, Mablethorpe, Chapel St Leonards area during the year and a bird of 'doubtful' origin flew west at Goxhill on August 20th.

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Tetney	50	—	—	9	2	—	—	—	—	85	75	158
Donna Nook/Saltfleetby	1100	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	300	1700	2450
Gibraltar Point/Wainfleet	2038	728	—	25	12	7	1	1	10	217	804	907
Friskney	1150	8500	30	—	—	—	1	—	—	200	500	800
Wrangle	2345	1270	2600	385	125	—	—	—	—	712	1254	2396
Benington/Butterwick	2936	2057	743	1250	237	—	3	—	—	1306	4974	3733
Witham Mouth	1600	1000	1300	800	—	10	1	5	506	1010	800	2800
Frampton/Kirton	3950	3600	2400	2414	705	2	1	1	1	342	1687	4094
Welland Estuary	3250	890	1480	1360	2900	—	2	1	—	240	1950	4300
Holbeach	1470	1280	1610	1720	1381	5	3	—	—	648	630	1528
Gedney/Terrington	132	310	776	1347	983	—	—	—	3	58	770	782

The peak month for the 1987/88 winter in the Wash was February with just over 23,000 recorded. The majority of spring/summer birds were within the southwest Wash, however there were 5 at Grainthorpe on May 14th and 2 at Tetney on 17th. The first returning birds were 10 at Gibraltar Point on September 2nd with 506 at the Witham Mouth on 11th. The main influx took place at the end of October and it became evident that, after almost complete breeding failure during the previous two summers, 1988 had been a success with around 34% juveniles in the flocks. This caused some problems around the Wash as birds soon turned their attentions to cereal fields behind the sea wall. On the Humber there were 21 at Barton on October 17th, 7 at Goxhill on 21st, 230 at Cleethorpes at the end of the month and 1 at Winteringham on November 10th. Also in November there were 300 at Humberston Fitties on 6th. December was the peak month for the Wash with over 27,000 recorded, 21,000 of which were in Lincolnshire. In addition there were 1,000 at Donna Nook on 27th and 25 feeding 5 miles inland at South Cockerington on 31st.

Records of birds showing the characteristics of Pale-bellied Brent *B.b.hrota* were of singles at Grainthorpe on January 10th and February 4th and in the southwest Wash from mid March to the end of May; a party of 10 was recorded at Tetney on September 25th, 2 at Humberston Fitties on October 16th, 1 at Kirton Marsh on December 15th and up to 12 at Donna Nook during December.

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiacus*

Two flew south east along the Branston Delph on the River Witham on March 30th, 2 at Holbeach Marsh on April 4th and 1 at Gibraltar Point on April 10th. Later in the year one was at Grimsthorpe Park on September 20th and one was at Tattershall Pits throughout the year.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Upper Humber	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	776	2086	—	807
Tetney	277	—	—	126	52	31	25	12	—	—	—	205
Gibraltar Point/Wainfleet	188	273	47	86	62	69	7	2	5	50	200	117
Friskney	150	1060	52	13	26	—	—	—	22	200	200	100
Wrangle	527	120	89	20	66	—	1	1	—	53	249	497
Benington/Butterwick	653	248	72	107	8	—	—	—	10	89	917	1621
Witham Mouth	300	500	500	220	10	—	3	—	37	388	400	790
Frampton/Kirton	405	279	156	119	52	—	9	—	37	283	86	187
Welland Estuary	1350	1330	770	240	110	—	55	55	45	900	1680	2650
Holbeach	485	338	50	58	44	31	17	3	22	275	332	602
Gedney	267	580	357	194	93	—	125	24	38	326	357	516
Terrington	820	729	328	402	89	—	157	29	204	1287	1328	268

Other early year records included 34 at Barrow Haven on January 9th and 400 at Read's Island on 11th. Inland during January there were records from Whisby Pits, 2 at Lea Marsh on 10th, 2 at Baston fen on 17th, 4 at Kirkby-on-Bain Pits on 21st and 34 at Messingham SQ on 27th. The only coastal breeding records received were of 24 pairs at Frampton Marsh and 5 pairs at Tetney, but other birds were present in the breeding season at Goxhill, where there were 41 on June 30th. Inland breeding successes were at Brigg (1 pair), Covenham Reservoir (3), Thealby Pits (1), Langtoft GP (1) and Crowland (1) with small concentrations of birds elsewhere including 25 at Bardney SBF on June 16th and 23 at Spalding on August 27th. The Wash is assuming a greater importance as a moulting site for Shelduck and a high proportion of 2600 birds recorded in July at the Ouse Mouth (Norfolk) were adults.

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

At Rauceby Warren there was a male on January 21st, two males on February 6th, one there next day and a male on March 5th. A male flew up river at the Witham Mouth on September 24th and there was a party of 4 at Tallington Pits on October 29th and 1 at Fillingham Lake on November 13th.

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Upper Humber	103	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	130	300	—	480
Tetney	55	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	500	160	—	223
Gibraltar Point	1085	430	12	80	2	4	—	5	700	1500	1000	1000
Burton Pits	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	1	40	36	93	104
Baston Fen	200	270	23	—	—	—	—	—	—	26	50	160

There were few records of large numbers early in the year other than those above. Birds in spring/summer included a male at Messingham SQ to May 3rd, 3 males and 1 female at Read's Island on May 4th, a pair at Gibraltar Point on 7th – 8th, a pair at Messingham SQ from 15th onwards, 2 males and 1 female at Grainthorpe on 28th, a pair at Gibraltar Point on 29th – 30th, 1 at Whisby/Thorpe Pits during June, 1 at Gibraltar Point on June 3rd and 4 there on 12th. In late autumn, maxima, other than those above, were 75 south at Huttoft on September 14th, 90 at Goxhill on October 3rd, 218 at Cleethorpes on 12th, 400 at Nocton Fen on 21st, 100 at Barton also on 21st and 75 at Covenham Reservoir on November 11th – 12th.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Barton/Barrow Haven	—	—	3	2	—	—	—	—	4	4	2	6
Gibraltar Point	2	2	2	—	3	5	1	4	4	3	—	—
Messingham SQ	14	19	20	7	4	—	5	5	20	20	—	6
Thorpe/Whisby Pits	21	2	1	9	—	—	—	3	16	9	9	6
Kirkby-on-Bain Pits	16	—	26	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	1	—
Tattershall Pits	32	50	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Langtoft West End Pits	26	44	56	—	—	—	—	—	—	26	97	129

Pairs in spring were recorded at Saltfleetby, Covenham Reservoir, Coningsby, Kirkby-

on-Bain Pits, Messingham SQ and on the River Glen at Guthram but the only recorded proved breeding was at Burton Pits where a pair raised 4 young.

Teal *Anas crecca*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Upper Humber	600	—	150	—	—	—	—	400	1830	1474	400	200
Gibraltar Point	78	150	95	41	2	6	8	190	850	600	400	450
Thorpe/Whisby Pits	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	5	155	68	48	75
Kirkby-on-Bain Pits	60	73	9	—	2	2	—	—	2	2	30	100
Witham Mouth	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20	47	2	120	6
Baston Fen	79	54	39	2	—	—	—	—	2	10	30	100

Other significant records early in the year were 81 at Langworth on January 3rd, 52 at Barton on February 15th and 30 at Lea Marsh on March 26th. Two pairs were recorded at Tattershall Pits in mid April and other pairs were recorded at Kirkby-on-Bain in May – June and at Denton Reservoir, Whisby Pits and Messingham SQ in June. Later in the year there were 250 at Donna Nook on October 5th increasing to 1000 by 15th, 220 west at Goxhill on November 20th, 120 north at Huttoft on the same day and 300 at Bardney SBF on November 27th increasing to 500 by mid December.

A male of the American race, *A.c.carolinensis*, Green-winged Teal, was at Messingham SQ from November 29th – December 5th and again on December 10th (C.Nimick,CJ et al.). Accepted by British Birds.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Upper Humber	1500	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	740	454	—	980
Barton/Barrow Haven	340	370	140	—	—	104	—	146	213	255	320	354
Covenham Reservoir	451	193	80	—	—	—	—	—	118	315	610	394
Thorpe/Whisby Pits	—	—	—	—	—	—	33	200	365	94	156	—
Gibraltar Point	450	295	60	37	32	63	24	100	145	1000	800	800
Witham Mouth	100	100	8	—	—	—	105	2	220	120	50	50
Kirkby-on-Bain Pits	180	220	38	—	—	—	—	—	103	189	325	573
Baston Fen	11	183	18	—	—	—	—	38	38	367	29	200
Holbeach Marsh	52	116	22	4	5	16	1	21	35	44	22	270
Spalding Coronation Canal	269	199	98	—	—	—	—	—	508	268	358	294

In addition to the above maxima at selected sites was a concentration of 3,000 at Bardney/Nocton Fen during October and early November.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Gibraltar Point	2	4	—	2	6	—	—	—	3	32	15	4
Welland Mouth	320	60	35	—	—	—	—	22	1	—	4	40
Terrington Marsh	3000	2520	31	—	—	—	—	26	5	550	85	266

In addition there were 10 at Messingham SQ on January 10th, 7 at Lea Marsh on March 26th and 1 – 3 from January – March at Baston Fen, Tattershall Pits, South Cockerington, Covenham Reservoir and Cleethorpes Shore. After September there were again 1 – 3 birds at several sites throughout the county.

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

In April there were pairs at South Killingholme on 14th and at Kirton Marsh on 17th and single males at Barton on 29th and Theddlethorpe on 30th. Two males were present at Gibraltar Point on May 1st and elsewhere in May there were males at Ferriby Cement Works on 9th and Tetney on 14th, two males at South Killingholme on 15th and a pair on the River Trent at Dunham Bridge on 21st. In summer there was a pair at Messingham SQ on June 19th, a female at Gibraltar Point on July 24th – 31st, a juvenile at Covenham Reservoir from August 4th – 14th, 2 again at Messingham SQ from August 10th – 19th with 1 remaining to September 2nd. At Gibraltar Point there was 1 on August 12th, 2 on 13th – 14th and 1 on 29th – September 12th with another there on September 1st.

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Early in the year there were up to 6 at several sites with no larger numbers recorded. Breeding season records included pairs at Barton, Messingham SQ, Metheringham Delph, Whisby Pits, Kirkby-on-Bain Pits, Tattershall Pits and at Baston Fen where there were 3 broods from 4 pairs. Maximum numbers in autumn were 38 at Barrow Haven on August 9th, 22 at Messingham SQ on 17th, 20 at Covenham Reservoir on 22nd, 41 at Messingham SQ on September 10th, 10 west at Barton on 29th and up to 10 at Gibraltar Point during September. Late year maxima included 10 at Whisby on October 9th, 15 at Gibraltar Point on 16th, 23 at Bardney on 21st, 19 at Messingham SQ during October and 10 each at Chapel Pit and Huttoft Pit in late December.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

A female at Langtoft Pits on February 7th, November 13th and December 18th (PNW) and a female at Bardney SBF on December 20th and 27th (ADT).

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Barton/Barrow Haven	138	344	1180	—	—	—	—	—	24	6	300	300
Langtoft Pits	66	107	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	85	95	59

In January there were up to 75 at Tattershall GP, 68 at Sleaford GP and 150 at Toft Newton Reservoir. There were 7 – 8 pairs at Lincoln Ballast Pit in April and pairs bred at Laughton, Dunsby Fen, Messingham SQ (3 pairs) and at Barton/Barrow Haven (3 pairs). In October maxima were 161 at Baston GP on 17th and 110 at Messingham SQ on 23rd. Numbers built up in the Humber at New Holland in November with 100 on 6th, 300 on 15th and 1000 on 26th. Elsewhere in the month there were 123 at Baston GP and 66 at Ancaster both on 13th. December maxima were 150 at Covenham Reservoir on 10th, 168 at Baston GP on 18th and 65 at Denton Reservoir on 30th.

Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris*

A male was at Barton/Barrow Haven on June 17th – 18th (GPC,SR,M.Tartellin) and probably the same bird was off New Holland from November 24th – December 3rd (GPC,SR et al.). Accepted by British Birds.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Barton/Barrow Haven	68	106	156	—	—	—	—	—	55	41	300	250
Covenham Reservoir	70	120	0	—	—	—	—	20	105	110	90	300
Gibraltar Point	19	21	22	17	4	4	10	4	7	19	—	—
Kirkby-on-Bain Pits	46	108	81	—	—	—	—	—	43	33	47	14
Deeping High Bank	95	57	58	—	—	—	—	—	47	17	50	70
Tallington Pits	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	35	57	68	194

Other notable numbers included 150 at Toft Newton Reservoir on January 3rd, 300 at New Holland on 17th and 130 at Burton Pits in February. Breeding records received were of 6 pairs at Biscathorpe Lake, 5 on the River Glen at Guthram, 4 at Thorpe/Whisby Pits, 2 at Thealby Pits, Barrow Haven and the River Witham at Branston and single pairs at Burton Pits, Messingham SQ, Kirkby-on-Bain Pits, Nocton, Holme near Scunthorpe, Newsham Lake, Tetney, Deeping High Bank and Sudbrook. Numbers late in the year included up to 70 at Cadney Reservoir in October, 62 at Ancaster GP on October 16th, 300 off New Holland on November 15th increasing to 400 there on 20th and 120 at Thorpe/Whisby Pits in December.

'Aythya' Hybrid

One at Barrow Haven on February 16th – 23rd (GPC).

Scaup *Aythya marila*

In January there were 2 at the Witham Mouth on 9th, an immature male at Lea Marsh, a female at North Somercotes Warren and 2 at Langtoft GP all on 10th. On the Humber there was a male at Barton/Barrow Haven on January 7th, a female there on 26th, 3 off New Holland on 16th and 6 there on 17th. There was 1 at Barton/Barrow Haven on February 23rd increasing to 4 by 27th and an impressive 43 on March 4th before decreasing again to 4 by 22nd and 1 on April 3rd. Elsewhere there was 1 at Scupholme Pit on February 20th, 20 at the Witham Mouth on March 19th, 1 at North Somercotes Warren from March 31st to April 2nd, a female at Cadney Reservoir from March 31st to April 13th, 8 at Benington Marsh on April 17th and 4 at Tetney on 19th. In May there was a male and 2 females at Barrow Haven from 8th – 15th, a male at Grainthorpe on 14th and a pair there on 21st. There were 2 males and 1 female at Covenham Reservoir on July 5th, a female at Barrow Haven on August 9th, a male at Tetney on 15th, 4 off Gibraltar Point on September 12th and a male at Goxhill on 24th. In October there were 5 south at Huttoft on 2nd, a male at Saltfleet on 21st, 3 males and 2 females at Barton on 24th and a female at Chapel Pit on 29th. At the end of the year at the Witham Mouth there were 5 on November 20th, increasing to 31 by December 10th and 50 on 11th whilst in the Humber there were 25 off New Holland on November 24th increasing to 50 by 26th and 65 by December 3rd.

Eider *Somateria mollissima*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Gibraltar Point	7	1	1	7	—	1	—	3	—	4	26	7
Benington/Witham Mouth	2	8	5	12	18	—	43	—	51	105	145	30

Elsewhere in the early part of the year there were 1 – 3 off Tetney, Mablethorpe, Trusthorpe and Huttoft. Later in the year there were 2 at Goxhill on October 3rd, 6 at Anderby on 5th, 1 at Goxhill on 21st, 6 there on November 20th, 3 at Barrow Haven on December 6th, 1 there on 10th and 28 at North Cotes on 31st

Long-tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

In the early part of the year there was a female at Goxhill on January 20th, 2 females at Covenham Reservoir from January 1st to March 24th, and 4 at Huttoft on March 12th. The first returning birds were recorded in October with a male at Tetney on 14th, 4 at the Witham Mouth on 29th and 1 at Saltfleet Haven on 30th. In early November there was a female at Covenham Reservoir from 5th, 4 at Tetney from 6th and a first winter female at Barrow Haven from 7th – 12th. There was then an exceptional influx during mid November with 2 females at Humberston on 11th, 1 at Gibraltar Point 1 at South Ferriby on 12th, 1 at Kirton Marsh and 6 at Moulton Marsh on 13th, 5 at Gibraltar Point and 36 at Witham Mouth on 14th increasing to 59 there by 20th on which date 3 flew north at Huttoft and 7 west at Goxhill. In December the Witham Mouth numbers peaked at 62 on 12th and elsewhere there were 10 – 12 at Covenham Reservoir from 3rd, 2 at Barrow Haven from 6th to the end of the year, 2 at Humberston Fitties on 7th and 4 inland at Kirkby-on-Bain Pits on 30th.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Goxhill – New Holland	—	—	—	—	26	—	—	90	—	40	250	130
Saltfleetby – Theddlethorpe	49	40	120	1	—	8	32	—	—	50	—	—
Huttoft	—	3	83	—	—	—	—	—	139	100	200	—
Gibraltar Point	80	11	19	10	1	130	41	37	25	200	64	1
Witham Mouth	—	—	—	20	—	—	20	40	120	42	50	—

Records of birds on inland waters were of a male at Thealby Pits on June 30th, 1 at Covenham Reservoir on August 10th and 1 there on October 28th. There were 4 at Cadney Reservoir on November 3rd – 18th and at Covenham Reservoir there were 2 on November 11th – 13th then 1 to the end of the year except for 16 on November 20th.

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

The only records in the first half of the year were at Gibraltar Point when 7 flew south on March 8th, 5 north on May 2nd and 2 south on May 29th. Later in the year on the coast there were 2 north at Huttoft and 1 at Gibraltar Point both on October 30th. In the Humber there were 5 west at Goxhill on November 20th, 2 females at New Holland from 20th – 23rd, 3 there from 24th to the end of the year and 3 at Cleethorpes on November 21st. There were 2 at the Nene Mouth on December 24th and 5 at Huttoft on 28th. Inland, at Covenham Reservoir, there was 1 from October 15th joined by 4 more on November 24th – 26th after which there were up to 7 daily until December 10th with 1 remaining to the end of the year.

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Goxhill – New Holland	45	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	60	80
Barton – Barrow Haven	3	2	4	9	3	2	2	2	5	11	8	11
Covenham Reservoir	100	90	72	5	2	1	1	26	1	21	46	200
Messingham SQ	3	11	17	7	–	–	–	–	–	2	7	9
Whisby Pits	–	–	9	24	–	–	–	–	–	3	14	20
Langtoft Common Pits	11	1	42	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	5	7
Witham Mouth	6	–	21	6	–	–	–	–	–	–	20	3

Other significant numbers were 26 at Holbeach Marsh in January, 54 there in February and 11 at Tattershall Pits in March with 1 – 5 at other sites until May. There were up to 9 at Gibraltar Point and Whitton in November and 12 at Tallington in December with only up to 5 elsewhere from October to December.

Smew *Mergus albellus*

A poor year, the only records were of 1 'redhead' at Tattershall Pits on January 3rd, 6 including 3 males at Langtoft Pits on February 7th and late in the year single 'redheads' at Denton Reservoir on November 24th and at Covenham Reservoir on December 18th.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

In January – March there were up to 6 at many sites within the Wash with peaks recorded on the February 21st BOEE counts of 26 at Wrangle, 19 at Benington, and 26 at Gedney Drove End. In April birds were recorded in small numbers around the Wash and also 2 males at Tetney on 4th and 1 at Cadney Reservoir on 19th. Three flew north at Gibraltar Point on June 26th and there was a female at Tetney on 30th. There were up to 3 at Gibraltar Point and Tetney during July – September after which birds were regular at coastal sites. At Goxhill there was a juvenile on September 13th, 2 there on 30th, 4 west on November 20th and a female on 22nd and there was a pair at Bardney Ponds on November 27th.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

	J	F	M	A		O	N	D
Deeping High Bank	17	21	16	–		–	–	12
Tallington Pits	20	4	–	–		–	–	–
Boston Fen	–	6	4	–		–	–	3
Whisby Pits	14	–	2	–		–	7	8
Branston Delph	8	3	3	–		–	–	10

Other maxima early in the year were 9 at Denton on January 8th and 17 at Wharton's Wharf on the River Trent on February 3rd, 7 at Lea Marsh on March 10th and up to 4 at other sites. Late in the year there were up to 3 at many sites from late October onwards and a maximum of 19 at Burton Pits in December.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

At the beginning of the year in the South Humber Bank Pits there were 7 at Barrow Haven on January 1st increasing to 14 by 15th – 26th and 10 at Barton on 9th. Elsewhere there were single females in January at Culverthorpe on 2nd, Tattershall

on 3rd and Denton Reservoir on 15th. There was one at Sleaford GP on February 14th and a female at Tattershall from February 19th – March 23rd. By early April birds had dispersed to their breeding pits at Barrow Haven where there were 7 males on 3rd. In summer there were three broods there of 2, 2 and 3 and nearby at Barton there were 2 pairs, one of which reared 3 young. Elsewhere there were 2 males at Whisby Pits on March 28th – May 31st, 2 females there on April 16th, a pair there on June 2nd, 1 female and 4 males on 13th – July 9th but no proof of breeding. At Messingham SQ there was a male on April 18th increasing to 3 males by 27th – May 8th, 2 males to 15th and 1 to 16th and a female from July 11th – August 10th. At Caythorpe Lake there was a pair from May 1st-end of September but again there was no proof of breeding. At Burton Pits there was a pair in spring, a female and 2 young on June 23rd but only one young remained after 25th which constitutes only the second pair in the county to have bred away from the Humber. Elsewhere in spring/summer there were 2 males at Killingholme Pits on April 19th, 1 at Twigmoor on May 17th, a male at Newsham Lake on July 16th, a male at Kirkby-on-Bain Pits also on 16th, with 2 males there on August 2nd. Later in the year there were maxima of 18 at Barrow Haven in September, 26 there in October, one at Gibraltar Point on October 26th, a male at Covenham Reservoir from 30th – November 15th, maxima of 15 at Barrow Haven, 8 at Barton and 3 at Whisby in November, 10 at Barrow Haven and 3 at Whisby in December.

Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

There was just one record of one flying in off the sea at Gibraltar Point on June 2nd (PMT,PMG).

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*

One was seen at Burgh-le-Marsh on April 14th (B.A.Wright) and presumably the same bird was seen at Gibraltar Point and later at Croft on 17th (TB,DRB et al.) and at Gibraltar Point on 25th. (PFF,CM) It was then seen at Gibraltar Point on May 12th (DRB,GWA) and later that day at Wainfleet (AGB, CRC) and again at Gibraltar Point at first light on 13th (AJB,PMT). Accepted by British Birds and is the second county record.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

A record year with a remarkable series of spring records, beginning with a dead one found at Grayingham near Kirton Lindsey in mid February (per CJ). Singles were seen at Covenham Reservoir on March 19th (JRM,JdeL), Reepham on 21st (per PH) and Goxhill on 31st (SR). In April singles were seen at Tetney on 2nd (JW) and south at Gibraltar Point on 3rd (TMCg) with the same bird later that day at Frampton Marsh still going south (RNo). One was at Laughton on April 11th (JTH) and another at Frampton Marsh on 21st (RNo).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

The year was virtually a repeat of 1987 with again 3 pairs, possibly 4, breeding. The season was again marred by the disappearance of a full clutch of four eggs though other pairs raised 4 young and 2 young respectively. At another site birds were seen throughout the summer and 4 flying young were seen there later. The first record in spring involved a breeding immature male which arrived on April 3rd. Birds were seen fairly widespread from mid May onwards to early September and, to indicate how strong the county population now is, at least 13 different birds frequented Frampton Marsh during the year and one immature bird there overwintered into 1989.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

In January there were up to 10 in a south Wash roost, 6 at the Frampton roost, 7 at Tetney and 1 – 2 at mainly coastal locations. There were fewer from February onwards and the south Wash roost split into two separate roosts of 3 and 5 during March. There were a few early April records and the last in spring were a female at Gibraltar Point on April 21st and a male at Frampton on the same date. First in autumn were singles at Gibraltar Point on August 13th and 27th – 28th and a female at Frampton Marsh on September 24th. Birds were fairly widespread from mid October onwards with 1 – 3 birds at mainly coastal locations, the maximum numbers recorded were in the Wash roosts with 4 at Frampton Marsh in October, 5 there in November and 8 there in December whilst the south Wash roost held 4 in November and 11 in December.

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*

Another successful year with two pairs breeding in the county and raising broods of 2 and 5 respectively. In addition a female was seen at Kirton Lindsey Airfield on June 11th (CJ), an immature male at Tetney on June 13th and 24th (GFH) and an immature male at Wainfleet from July 30th – August 1st (BJH,RML). At Frampton Marsh between May 11th and August 16th at least 6 different birds were seen involving 2 adult males, 2 adult females, 1 immature male and 1 immature female (RNo,AGB,SK).

**Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis***

The only 'acceptable' record was an adult male flying west over Frampton Marsh on September 29th (RNo).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

The increase continues with over 1000 sightings throughout the year by over 60 observers, including information on some 30 breeding pairs which suggests that there are now probably around 100 pairs in the county. During October there were good numbers at coastal locations and a Norwegian ringed bird amongst 8 trapped at Gibraltar Point on October 23rd suggests that many birds at this time may have been of continental origin.

Buzzard sp.

There were several 'claimed' records of various buzzards, none of which, except those shown below, were acceptable. Please note that all Buzzard species records must have supporting details and description!

Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus*

The 'accepted' records were of singles at Frampton Marsh on January 26th (JDM), west over Grimsby on October 28th (HB) and an obligingly long-staying first winter individual at Thoresway from November 27th into 1989 (PTG,GPC et al.).

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

The best year on record with possibly up to 20 individuals. The first was an early bird seen fishing at Burton Pits on April 4th (WAT). In May there were singles at Tetney on 1st (DJB,GFH), probably same heading northwest over Cleethorpes on 2nd (RKN), another at Nettleton Moor also on 2nd (CJ), Covenham Reservoir on 3rd (KEW), south at Gibraltar Point on 5th and probably the same bird at Frampton Marsh (RNo) and later again at Gibraltar Point on 6th. One at Swineshead on the Fortyfoot Drain on 6th (SN) was almost certainly the same individual on the Witham at Brothertoft on 7th – 8th (SK,F.Kirk). Two stayed at Fillingham Lake from 7th – 12th at least (AGB,BJH) and singles were at Tetney on 12th (DW,GFH), Barton on 15th (KEW), Stainton-le-Vale on 25th (PTG) and at Binbrook on 29th (W.Betts). In June there was one at Gibraltar Point on 1st – 2nd, Goxhill on 1st (R.B.Watson,R.Firth) and one at North Cotes also on 1st (JdeL) which was probably the same bird reported from the North Thoresby/ Marshchapel/North Cotes area from 8th – 12th (AJH et al.). Records in summer were from Tetney on July 12th (GFH), Bourne Wood on July 31st (IPM,RCS), Caistor on September 6th (WPB) and at Holbeach Marsh on September 24th (J.Stobart). There were two late records in October of singles at Kenwick Quarry near Louth on 11th (AGB,KA) and found exhausted on the beach at Donna Nook on 20th (RAF per GPC).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

There were no unusual records of this common and widespread breeding bird throughout the county. The maximum numbers reported were 8 at Rippingale Fen on July 6th, 8 at Nocton Fen on July 18th, 8 at Gibraltar Point on October 28th and 7 at Thoresway on December 5th.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Another good year with just over 200 records received from nearly 50 observers. Most records were of 1 – 2 birds at coastal locations from January to early May and from mid August onwards with a few inland records including birds in August at Swayfield and North Witham. Unusually, an adult female was seen at Leverton Marsh on May 27th and during July.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

An exceptional year with about 100 records, though obviously many refer to the same birds. Very encouragingly four known pairs raised at least 10 young and there was possibly another pair. One pair raised 3 and others 'at least 3', 2 and 'at least 2'. Fledging dates of three pairs were known to be between August 12th and 17th whilst the last pair had flying young in early September. First in the year was at Bagmoor on May 3rd followed by others at Bourne Wood on 16th, Tetney on 25th and Metheringham Delph on 30th. There were two very late records of singles at Fishtoft on October 17th and at Seacroft on 23rd.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

In the early part of the year there were singles at Gibraltar Point on January 23rd (AJB), Saltfleet on February 7th (KD) and a male at Butterwick on the same day (AGB), Skidbrook on 21st (JW), an immature at the Witham Mouth on March 6th (RW,SK) and one at Saltfleet on March 23rd (WJM,SJM,WRM). There was one at Gibraltar Point on May 4th-5th (GWA et al.). Late in the year there was an immature at Saltfleet on November 3rd (DH,WJM et al.), one at Read's Island on 4th (RNH), an immature male at Barton on 12th (GPC), one at Tetney on 13th (DJB), an adult at Covenham Reservoir on December 4th (PCr), one at Cuxwold on 5th (WJM et al.), an immature at Saltfleet on 10th (JW), an immature at Bardney on 11th (ADT), a sub-adult at Kirton Marsh on 14th (RML) and one at Fiskerton Airfield on 24th (PB).

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

The largest numbers reported during the year were over 40 at Beelsby on November 27th and 23 at Baston GP on December 18th.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Generally small numbers were reported, the maximum numbers being 30 at Normanby Park on August 28th and over 20 at Goxhill during November.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

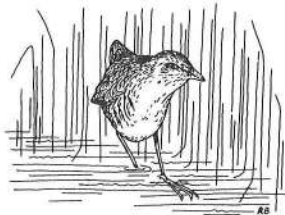
A migrant was heard calling at Frampton Marsh on May 13th. Most records in summer were of singing males along, or near, the Lincoln Edge which were (from south to north) as follows: 1 at Thurlby Fen from early June – mid July, 1 at South Witham on July 2nd, 1 at Hungerton Quarry on June 12th and 19th, 1 at Threakeingham on June 7th, a pair at Cranwell in mid July, 2 at Brauncewell Grange on July 16th, 2 at nearby Temple Bruer on July 19th, up to 4 at Nocton Fen from late June to late July, up to 3 at Scotter in late July and 3 at Burton on Stather on June 14th. The only other record outside of this area was of 2 males along the Witham near Boston on June 22nd.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

The only significant record was a maximum of 90 at Gibraltar Point during November.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Up to 4 birds were widespread from January – April with up to 10 at Lincoln Ballast Pit. There were many coastal records in March, April including 5 – 6 at Saltfleetby then no summer coastal records suggesting that most spring birds were pre-emigration birds. Inland, in summer, pairs bred at Messingham SQ, 1 pair at Barton and there were 2 – 3 pairs present at Baston Fen during the breeding season. Birds were more widespread again from August onwards and the maximum number was over 20 at Barton from October – December.



Spotted Crake *Porzana porzana*

A good year with three records. In spring one was flushed at Baston Fen on April 16th (EJR). In autumn there was an immature at Messingham SQ from August 13th – September 5th (CN,CJ et al.) and one at Gibraltar Point on October 27th at least.

Corncrake *Crex crex*

One was seen at close range (three feet!) whilst trying to dazzle waders at night at Marston SF on August 16th (AGB)

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Maxima recorded during the year were over 80 at Barton during November, 130 at Thealby Pits on December 16th and 67 at Haverholme on 19th.

Coot *Fulica atra*

	J	F	M	S	O	N	D
Barton/Barrow Haven	440	304	131	152	185	-	350
Covenham Reservoir	41	48	65	180	260	260	23
Sea Bank Pits	161	41	23	118	296	260	225
Kirkby on Bain Pits	227	200	83	146	153	186	166
Langtoft West End Pits	330	180	3	-	375	600	724
Baston Gravel Pits	-	-	-	-	486	811	1023

Other large numbers included 240 at Messingham SQ in January and October, 430 at Thorpe/Whisby Pits in September and 344 at Tallington GP in November.

Crane *Grus grus*

A good year with singles at Tetney on April 26th (GFH) south at Huttoft on 30th (JW), Gibraltar Point on May 1st (PMS,PMT) and there on 16th (PMG). Prior to these there have only been 13 county records, 10 of these since the mid 60's.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Tetney	750	-	-	430	79	60	300	290	1250	-	4600	-
Gibraltar Point/Wainfleet	1281	47	1850	50	294	19	1418	12750	4	1154	1525	297
Friskney	600	-	1500	1000	1007	-	2000	10000	425	2000	12000	850
Wrangle	1252	900	3300	248	48	-	1442	213	-	2513	555	386
Benington/Butterwick	2377	3253	601	548	130	-	307	154	285	1900	1456	2577
Witham Mouth	100	101	150	100	20	-	257	96	700	117	400	950
Holbeach	2600	9950	5550	860	596	23	2587	5290	6480	5880	7065	7780
Terrington	1500	5050	3033	565	14	-	1343	1000	6000	-	4684	3010

Inland in January there were 4 at Covenham Reservoir on 16th and 3 at Baston Fen on 17th. In the Upper Humber a single bird was recorded on February 27th. In March Messingham SQ held up to 3 birds and there was a single bird at Tattershall Pits on 26th. A huge concentration of 17,600 was recorded at Gibraltar Point on March 18th. Later there were 2 – 3 at Thorpe/Whisby Pits on April 10th to May 1st, with one at Bardney SBF on the latter date. Breeding pairs were recorded from Messingham SQ (1 pair), Tetney (1) Frampton (29) and Terrington (c10). Other breeding season records were of 2 at Thealby Pits throughout May and single birds in June at Kirkby on Bain Pits and Whisby with 7 at Goxhill during the month. A huge influx occurred in the autumn and Wash counts peaked at around 45,000 birds in both August and November. Also of note was a concentration of 4,600 at Tetney on November 13th.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

The first record for the year was a single bird at Holbeach Marsh on April 3rd (RH,KH) followed by a single at Frampton Marsh on 13th (RNo). Thereafter, a single bird was at Tetney on May 1st – 2nd (DJB,AD) and 2 were seen at the Witham Mouth on June 4th (SM). Small parties were again recorded in August with 12 south at Gibraltar Point on 7th and 9 at Read's Island from 15th – 20th (RNH,CJ,GPC). The last record for the year was a single bird at Read's Island on October 30th (CJ).

Stone Curlew *Burhinus oedipnemos*

A single bird was recorded near the Warden's hut at Gibraltar Point on July 16th (RBW et al.).

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

The first of the year were 2 at Messingham SQ on April 9th followed by arrivals of 1 – 2 birds at Langtoft GP, Spalding SBF and 4 at West Ashby Pits all on 11th. There was also a pair at Harmston Quarry on 14th, up to 5 at Langtoft GP on 17th, 2 pairs at Digby Pits on 24th, 2 at Covenham Reservoir on 25th and a single bird at Apex Pit on 29th. There were singles at Moulton Marsh on May 2nd, Thealby Pits on 16th – 19th and flying east at Guthrums on 20th. Up to 3 pairs during the May – July period were recorded at Langtoft Pits and RAF Digby Quarry, but the only proved breeding recorded was from Spalding SBF (2 pairs), Kirkby-on-Bain Pits (1 – 2) and West Ashby Pits (1). A pair probably bred at Killingholme and an attempt at Whisby Nature Park was thought to have suffered due to disturbance. During July and August there were singles at Bardney SBF and Cleethorpes Country Park, 2 at Covenham Reservoir, Skidbrooke and Read's Island, 3 at Cadney Reservoir and Messingham SQ, 4 at Gibraltar Point, 6 at Donna Nook and 10 at Kirkby on Bain Pits. The last records, both in September, were of 2 at Gibraltar Point on 1st and a single at Bardney SBF on 4th.

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Read's Island	50	-	-	-	180	-	-	-	250	-	-	-
Gibraltar Point	5	35	34	31	46	39	53	125	100	27	10	6
Witham Mouth	30	11	1000	150	250	-	40	220	21	175	85	30
Holbeach Marsh	3	15	10	2	40	66	5	300	3	19	22	14

Records from coastal sites away from those above early in the year were few. In January Tetney recorded 13 birds on 24th, and in March there were 100 at Ferriby

Cement Works on 5th. Other March records were scattered with 2 at Tattershall GP also on 5th and 4 at Messingham SQ on 17th. Witham Mouth recorded a staggering 1000 on March 29th. Inland, smaller numbers were present with 5 at West Ashby Pits on April 9th, 3 at Bardney SBF on 13th, a pair at Harmston Quarry on 14th, 4 at Messingham on 17th and a single at Thealby Pits on 23rd. In May, apart from the Read's Island and Witham Mouth concentrations, there were 57 at Goxhill Haven on 22nd and 100 at South Ferriby on 24th. Breeding was fairly well recorded; Tetney (27 – 28 pairs), Gibraltar Point (8 – 14), Kirkby on Bain Pits (6), Messingham SQ (1) and Thealby Pits (1). There were 2 birds at West Ashby Pits from May 21st – June 13th and two juveniles were seen at Digby Pits on June 13th. Small numbers were present at most inland sites during July with notably 4 at Cadney Reservoir and 8 at Thealby Pits. An influx occurred during August with 50 at Saltfleetby and 60 rising to 139 in the Goxhill/North Killingholme area between 14th – 20th, 250 at Cleethorpes on 16th and 340 in the Welland Estuary on 28th. However, one of the largest flocks of the year occurred at Cleethorpes with 480 on September 16th. Also 90 were at Frampton on 11th and Barton on Humber recorded 50 on October 17th.

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*

All were spring records and all were from the area between North Cotes and North Somercotes where there were 5 on May 8th rising to 8 on 9th and dropping to 3 by 18th.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Winteringham/Reads Island	1000	—	—	90	2	—	800	610	800	—	1000	—
New Holland/Goxhill	500	1200	—	—	—	—	—	—	200	—	500	—
Cleethorpes/Tetney	3500	—	200	310	6	8	572	500	—	500	2000	—
Huttoft	6000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	30	1100	7500
Butterwick	451	—	—	—	2	—	40	200	—	—	720	290
Witham Mouth	120	500	200	—	—	—	100	220	200	57	150	6
Welland Estuary	—	450	480	170	—	—	320	380	520	—	250	—

Many large flocks were scattered throughout the county in January including 1000 at Snareford on 3rd, 200 at Lea Marsh on 24th and 1500 at Cherry Willingham from the end of the month into February. There were few records for February – March with up to 500 occurring at Covenham, Baston Fen, Bourne South Fen and Holbeach Hurn. April passage was particularly noticed inland with 150 east at Colsterworth on 1st, 400 at Cadney Reservoir on 4th, 80 at Faldingworth and 200 at Crowland on 6th, 200 in full summer plumage at Cherry Willingham on 12th, 150 at Baston Fen, 200 at Withcall and 250 at Nocton Fen all on 13th, 369 at East Halton Skitter on 14th and a few elsewhere later. The last spring records were of 2 at Fosdyke on May 7th, 2 at Frampton Marsh on 14th and 1 at Rothwell on 27th.

Autumn passage was, in general, later than 1987 with large flocks, other than those above, recorded from mid August to mid September, most notable being 300 at Covenham on August 17th, 100 at Cadney Reservoir on September 5th, 200 near Alford on 6th, 300 at Grainthorpe on 10th, 1000 at Holbeach and 400 at Frampton Marsh on 11th. Records were widely scattered during the rest of the year and October records included 2000 at Spittlegate Airfield on 13th, but generally flock sizes of less than 50 were recorded. Later in the year larger numbers were recorded, maxima being 500 at Gibraltar Point on November 11th, 1000 at Wold Newton and 200 at Langtoft Pits on 13th, 1200 at Hogsthorpe on December 20th, 180 at Apex Pit on 24th and a very large concentration of 7500 in the Huttoft to Sutton-on-Sea area on 28th.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Tetney	100	—	—	1150	260	35	43	170	—	—	970	—
Gibraltar Point	4	600	340	700	4	70	6	600	2000	150	260	35
Wrangle Marsh	830	1500	380	720	110	3	18	100	440	375	170	1470
Butterwick Marsh	1500	470	800	900	600	—	34	690	390	760	550	770
Welland Estuary	780	350	1100	1100	830	—	80	1050	1400	600	1000	500
Holbeach Marsh	1200	1565	885	1065	400	8	80	780	950	750	1180	365
Terrington Marsh	300	800	200	560	210	—	53	650	50	24	480	54

During March, 2500 were recorded at Gibraltar Point on 18th and 465 at Gedney Drove End on 20th. Other spring records were received from Cleethorpes where there were 150 during April and May and 5 at South Ferriby up to May 24th. Exceptional numbers of juvenile birds were recorded from the Humber in autumn when there were 12 at Read's Island on September 14th, 27 at Goxhill from 17th with 33 there from late October into December. The Wash total of over 9000 in October was the highest ever. Inland, singles were reported from Whisby Pits on September 7th, Covenham Reservoir on October 15th – 16th and Baston GP on 17th.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

No large movements were recorded during the early part of the year and sizes of flocks present at the end of 1987 increased during January and there were 1000 in the Witheringham area, 3000 at Grainthorpe, 1000 at Cleethorpes, 4000 at in the Saltfleetby/Manby area and, inland, 1000 – 3000 at Lea Marsh, Cherry Willingham, Foston and Baston Fen. In February there were over 1000 birds at the Witham Mouth, New Holland, Scupholme and Covenham Reservoir. Few breeding records were received except for Kirkby-on-Bain Pits (5 pairs), Temple Wood (4), Gibraltar Point (3), South Witham (3) and smaller numbers at Saltfleetby, Kirton Marsh, Colsterworth, Bulwell and Horncastle. Returning birds began arriving from mid June when there were over 100 at Tetney increasing to 500 by mid July when there were over 1000 at Witheringham/Read's Island. Largest numbers in autumn onwards were 2000 at Nocton Fen on September 25th increasing to 3000 during October and 3000 at Spittlegate also in August. There were larger numbers by early December including, 2000 at Nocton Fen, 2500 at Tongue End, 2000 at Baston Fen, 4750 at Covenham Reservoir, 5000 at Manby and up to 10000 east of Sleaford.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Cleethorpes	—	2500	3000	—	50	—	—	256	1000	—	2000	1000
Tetney	—	—	—	640	110	140	712	550	—	—	6400	—
Gibraltar Point	—	700	10150	11000	—	4000	1050	16000	200	4	250	300
Friskney	—	2500	—	—	—	—	2000	—	199	200	10000	5000
Welland Estuary	5600	11000	4000	—	4	—	—	42	800	8000	8000	3500
Holbeach Marsh	11600	10500	5250	1435	—	—	—	2000	550	6600	10600	9400

Major concentrations are shown but the data is incomplete with few records received for the Humber. Counts additional to the co-ordinated BOEE counts included 12000 at Gibraltar Point on January 21st and 3440 at Grainthorpe Haven on 23rd. In February 350 were at Humberston on 4th, 1500 at Donna Nook on 20th and up to 10000 at the Gibraltar Point roost at high tide. The peak spring count was 25000 at Gibraltar Point on April 15th. Single birds were recorded inland at Kirkby on Bain Pits during May and at Messingham SQ in June. Late in the year the peak autumn count at Gibraltar Point was 30,000 on October 27th and there were 200 at Goxhill on November 6th.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Monthly peaks at sites were:-

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Tetney	—	—	—	610	1150	300	300	600	—	—	—	—
Gibraltar Point	170	120	109	230	500	536	300	200	450	66	230	65
Welland/Holbeach Marsh	—	—	—	—	150	—	14	2	—	15	—	—

The only other early year record was of 51 at Huttoft on February 28th. In May single birds were recorded at Frampton Marsh, Thealby Pits, Kirkby on Bain Pits, Cadney

Reservoir and Goxhill with 5 at Read's Island on 25th. In autumn there were 5 at Goxhill Haven on August 20th, 5 at Covenham Reservoir on 23rd, 100 at Huttoft on 27th and a single bird at the Witham Mouth on 31st. A large flock of 450 was recorded at Cleethorpes on September 16th and a late inland bird was at Bardney SBF on November 10th.

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

The approximate county totals were:-

M	J	J	A	S	O	N
5	3	2	31	52	11	1

The first records of the year in spring were singles at Kirkby on Bain Pits on May 14th – 20th, Thealby Pits on 21st, South Ferriby on 23rd and Read's Island on 24th – 25th. The last in spring were a single at Gibraltar Point on June 1st – 3rd and 2 at Kirkby on Bain Pits on 13th. First in autumn were 2 at Tetney on July 24th – 27th followed by birds at several localities in August with maxima of 9 at Gibraltar Point, 8 at Kirton Marsh, 4 at Moulton Marsh and 4 at Kirkby on Bain Pits. September maxima were 8 at Covenham Reservoir and 6 at Goxhill early in the month, 12 between Winteringham and South Ferriby on 14th, 7 at Gibraltar Point on 17th and up to 2 at Kirkby on Bain Pits and Messingham SQ. There were 1 – 2 birds at a few locations through to October 9th with a late bird at Bardney SBF on November 10th.

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

All records were in spring with 2 at Bardney SBF on April 23rd (KDD) and one at Bagmoor from May 12th – 23rd (CJ et al.) with possibly the same bird at South Ferriby from 23rd – 27th (RNH,CJ,JTH).

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

There was just one acceptable record of a juvenile at Gibraltar Point briefly on September 21st (AGB,NV).

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

The approximate county totals were:-

M	J	J	A	S	O
1	–	5	182	239	8

The year was virtually a repeat of 1985 with a single spring record and a remarkable autumn. The single spring record was at Kirkby on Bain Pits on May 15th – 31st. First in autumn was 1 at Tetney on July 20th with others there and singles at Gibraltar Point, Welland Estuary and the only adult reported of the autumn at Kirkby on Bain Pits by the end of the month. The Kirkby on Bain adult remained to mid August and late in the month there were maxima of 14 at Kirton Marsh, 41 at the Welland Mouth, 26 at Wrangle Marsh, 30 at Cleethorpes and 50 at Saltfleet Haven. The peak occurred early in September with 34 at Saltfleetby on 3rd, 73 at Holbeach Marsh on 4th, 10 at Goxhill also on 4th and 35 at Frampton Marsh on 7th. Inland there were 2 at South Ferriby on 3rd, 1 at Messingham SQ on 9th and 10th then 2 there until 12th and 2 at Covenham Reservoir on 15th – 16th. In October there was 1 at Goxhill on 3rd, 1 – 2 at Gibraltar Point on 4th – 8th, 1 – 2 at Bagmoor on 8th – 11th, 1 at Grainthorpe on 12th, 1 at Cadney Reservoir on 14th and the last at Holbeach Marsh on 16th.

Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima*

The only early year records were of single birds at the Witham Mouth intermittently from February 7th – March 20th. In autumn singles were at Huttoft on August 28th, Witham Mouth also on 28th – 31st and at Gibraltar Point on September 23rd. Late in the year 4 were seen flying north at Saltfleet on November 6th, 4 were at Trusthorpe on 13th and singles were seen at the Witham Mouth on November 26th and 29th.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Tetney	890	—	—	3150	2550	97	1005	1350	—	—	2600	—
Gibraltar Point	200	1000	2000	1000	100	52	2000	750	3000	420	1500	535
Witham Mouth	300	4500	1150	1500	800	—	695	720	862	3300	2600	4400
Welland Estuary	5500	3000	1000	6000	2200	—	1300	950	2200	1500	2500	1500
Holbeach Marsh	3000	7600	7000	3950	2610	80	3800	1470	2640	2856	5400	7300

Other significant early year records included 400 at Read's Island on January 11th, 3 at Baston Fen on 24th and 16 at West Pinchbeck on 30th. The main spring passage, only detectable at inland sites, was from early April to mid May when there were maxima of 30 at Thealby Pits, 17 at Kirkby on Bain Pits, 6 at Messingham SQ, 6 at Cadney Reservoir and also up to 600 at Read's Island. There were small numbers at many inland sites during the autumn with maxima of 54 at Covenham Reservoir on September 13th and 25 at Messingham SQ on 14th. Late in the year the only significant number, other than those in the table above, was a flock of up to 7000 at Cleethorpes in mid November.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

The approximate county totals were

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
30	4	13	11	17	4	17	43	70	21	2	—

The small flock in the Grainthorpe – Tetney area at the end of 1987 increased to 30 by January 17th and the only February record was of 4 at Thealby Pits from 23rd onwards. March – April records were few, most involving 1 – 2 birds but 4 remained at Thealby Pits until April 20th. Male birds were recorded during May – July at Kirkby on Bain Pits, Messingham SQ and Read's Island where there were up to 5. Late summer records were fairly widespread maxima being 10 at Marston SF during late August, 10 at Read's Island on September 3rd, 16 at Frampton Marsh on 7th, 19 at Covenham Reservoir on 18th and 10 at Holbeach Marsh on 26th. The last records of the year were 18 at Tetney on October 15th and 2 at Wainfleet on November 13th.

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Apparently a poor year with all records received listed. Early in the year, there were singles at North Killingholme on January 1st and Tetney on 10th, 2 – 3 birds at Messingham SQ on February 7th, 1 at Denton Reservoir on March 19th and 3 at Saltfleetby on March 25th. In April there were singles at Baston Fen on 11th, Frampton Marsh on 24th and Kettlethorpe on 30th with the last of spring at Saltfleetby on May 1st. First in autumn was at Donna Nook on September 28th with one trapped at Theddlethorpe on 30th. Singles were then recorded at Gibraltar Point from October 10th – 24th and at Saltfleetby from 16th – 24th. In November there were 2 at Saltfleetby on 3rd, 2 at Gibraltar Point on 12th, 2 at Baston Fen from 12th – 22nd, 1 at Tetney on 20th and 1 at Goxhill Haven on 24th with the last records of up to 2 at Marston SF in early December and singles at Killingholme on 11th and Messingham SQ on 31st.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Largest concentrations in January were 12 at Baston Fen, 40 at Denton Reservoir, 44 at Spalding and 91 at Huttoft Pit. There were still 90 at Huttoft Pit at the end of February and 30 and 35 birds remained at Denton Reservoir and Baston Fen respectively until the end of March. Breeding season records of single birds were received for Gibraltar Point, Wrangle Marsh, Frampton Marsh and Holbeach Marsh with 2 at Wainfleet in June. Displaying "drumming" birds were recorded from along the River Glen between West Pinchbeck and Twenty (Guthram) where there were 9 males, Baston Fen (6), Alkborough Flats (4), Messingham (2), Bagmoor (2), Ancaster (2), Moor Farm (1) and Denton Reservoir (1). In autumn there were 30 at Gibraltar Point on August 9th and 12 there on September 7th. Elsewhere small numbers were reported with maxima of 30 at Marston SF throughout August – September and 20 at Baston Fen in mid September. Late in the year maximum numbers were 12 at Kirton Marsh on November 19th, 28 at East Halton Pit on 24th, 32 at Huttoft Pit on December 11th and 30 at Messingham SQ on 26th.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

There were few records early in the year with the maximum number received of 4 at Theddlethorpe on March 20th. Roding birds in summer included 6 at Stapleford Wood, 5 at Loughton Forest, 3 at Bourne Wood and 2 each at Skellingthorpe Wood and Temple Wood. In autumn on the coast there was one at Humberston on October 1st with most records from mid October with maxima of 5 at Gibraltar Point on 20th, 4 at Donna Nook and 15 at Theddlethorpe on 21st and there were 5 – 7 at Gibraltar Point and Theddlethorpe until mid December.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Apart from occasional sightings at other coastal sites, most records were from the Wash between the Witham and Nene Mouths; maxima being 85 in January decreasing to 42 by late March with up to 380 there from late July decreasing to 130 by mid December. The peak at Tetney of 17 also occurred in late July. A pair were displaying at one site on the northeast coast in late May but there was no evidence of breeding. Inland records were of singles at Bagmoor and Messingham SQ in late April and at Kirkby on Bain on August 21st.

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Winteringham – Barton	–	–	–	–	27	–	–	10	50	20	–	–
Tetney	212	–	–	94	135	38	23	165	82	–	310	–
Gibraltar Point	1300	870	65	25	150	40	300	5000	5000	2500	1000	80
Wainfleet – Wrangle	950	1300	–	–	–	–	1564	–	–	535	700	454
Holbeach Marsh	–	–	235	67	67	–	552	1320	300	–	–	434

Inland in spring there were singles at Messingham SQ on April 29th and Covenham Reservoir on 30th. There was another at Messingham on May 6th with 3 there on 16th, 1 at Kirkby-on-Bain Pits 7th – 24th and 7 at Tallington GP on June 18th. In the River Humber there were 27 in the Read's Island area in early May and exceptional numbers in autumn with 10 there on August 19th, 20 on September 3rd, 81 at Goxhill on 8th, 62 there on 16th and 55 at Barton on 22nd decreasing to 20 by October 3rd. Birds inland were heard calling at night at South Witham on October 28th.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

The first records of the year were at Gibraltar Point on April 1st and at Tetney on 6th. By the end of the month there were 3 at Goxhill, 22 at East Halton and smaller numbers elsewhere. In May there were 4 at Washingborough on 5th, 40 at Tetney on 8th and a single at Messingham SQ from 16th – 18th. In June there were 2 at Grainthorpe on 4th and 7 at Covenham Reservoir on 27th. Returning birds were recorded from mid July with 3 at Kexby on 15th, 4 at Winteringham on 19th, 113 at Tetney on 29th and 40 at the Witham Mouth on 30th. Later, 150 moved southwest over Kirton Marsh on August 2nd and there were 20 at Grainthorpe on 6th, 1 inland at Marston SF on 16th. The last records of the year were of a single at Grainthorpe on October 12th and one heard at Holbeach Marsh on 28th.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Wash (including Norfolk) monthly figures were

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
1987	1196	2265	1591	–	417	–	2476	4781	3740	2454	2687	1346
1988	1933	4814	4813	3242	630	–	6188	4967	4789	1894	3156	1593

As can be seen from the above figures the 1988 totals average slightly more than in the previous year. Nationally, the winter population has decreased over the last five years and the above increase thus reflects a higher proportion of the national total using the Wash. Away from the Wash during March there were about 200 birds each at Winteringham, Goxhill – East Halton with 750 at Grimsby Pyewipes on 17th. Inland there was a single at Messingham SQ on 17th and 4 at Lea Marsh on 26th. Displaying birds were seen at Claypole and at Hungerton Quarry and breeding was successful at

Fulbeck Airfield for at least the third year running. Up to 6 remained at Whisby Nature Park and 1 at Messingham SQ throughout June. In July, 100 were recorded at Tetney on 29th and inland there were 35 at Marston SF throughout August and September, 10 at Messingham SQ on September 22nd, 21 at Whisby NP in October and 7 at Hagworthingham on November 27th.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Early year records were of singles at Humberston Fitties on January 1st and Holbeach Marsh on February 14th. Spring records, mainly in mid April, were of singles at Grimsby Pyewipes, Cleethorpes, Tetney, Grainthorpe and Bagmoor, 3 at Messingham SQ and up to 25 at Frampton Marsh. There were 3 at Tetney in mid June and 34 in the Welland Estuary at the end of the month. August to October records were scattered with up to 32 throughout in the Welland Estuary, 4 at Gibraltar Point, 3 at Covenham Reservoir, 2 at Saltfleet and single birds at Goxhill, Cleethorpes Country Park, Humberston, Somercotes Haven and Huttoft. Last of the year were singles at Gibraltar Point on November 7th and Benington on 13th, 3 at Donna Nook on 17th and 2 which wintered on Frampton Marsh.

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Tetney	250	—	—	155	—	60	80	292	—	—	840	—
Gibraltar Point	23	45	65	21	3	—	4	150	55	30	65	55
Friskney	126	300	160	200	72	77	78	7	122	200	900	500
Witham Mouth	100	480	150	135	15	—	170	314	75	275	210	405
Welland Estuary	185	490	430	45	18	—	80	115	560	240	70	200
Holbeach Marsh	224	297	186	226	68	40	657	800	276	174	96	118
Terrington Marsh	127	662	344	440	40	—	407	526	403	46	122	12

Concentrations early in the year included 150 at Winteringham on January 11th, and 750 at the Witham Mouth on February 21st. Inland there were 16 at Baston Fen on January 24th, up to 16 at Lea Marsh in March and others at Cadney Reservoir, Coleby, Messingham SQ, Bardney SBF and Thealby Pits in March – April. Inland breeding records were received for Thealby Pits, Kirkby on Bain Pits and a pair were seen displaying at Bassingham Fen. A census at Frampton Marsh on the RSPB reserve revealed over 400 pairs. An albino bird was at Gedney Drove End on August 29th and large concentrations late in the year included 329 at Cleethorpes on October 24th and 840 at Tetney on November 13th. Birds inland included singles at Saxilby on August 20th, and Bardney SBF on 21st, 3 at Cadney Reservoir on October 29th, up to 12 at Thealby Pits during October – December and 2 at Bardney SBF in December.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

The approximate county totals were

M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
—	6	23	3	143	102	62	9	6	—

The first records in spring were a single at Holbeach Marsh on April 16th, 3 at Gedney Drove End on 17th, singles at Gibraltar Point on 21st and Killingholme on 24th and elsewhere from May onwards, with a maximum of 9 at Tetney on May 8th. Inland there were up to 3 at Bagmoor/Thealby Pits and up to 2 at Messingham SQ throughout May. There were a few June records of singles at Gibraltar Point and 2 in the Welland Estuary at the end of the month. Birds were widespread during July – August with maxima of 80 at Holbeach Marsh on July 16th, 76 there on 31st, 37 at Butterwick also on 31st and 15 at Saltfleetby on August 6th. Late birds were recorded in November when there were 4 at the Witham Mouth on 12th and singles at Tetney on 13th and Gibraltar Point on 17th.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Approximate county totals were

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
6	3	12	7	2	11	39	79	27	7	6	21

January records were from Tetney (2), Washingborough, Lea Marsh, Baston Fen and Frampton Marsh and birds in February were again recorded at Baston Fen and Frampton Marsh and also at Goxhill. Spring passage peaked in late March with 2 – 3 birds at Baston Fen, Goxhill, Whisby Pits and Cherry Willingham and singles at other sites. June records included 3 at Whisby Pits, 2 at Thealby Pits and 2 at Kirkby on Bain Pits. Records were received from all over the county during July – September. The largest concentrations being 15 at Kettlethorpe on July 25th and 12 at Frampton Marsh in August. Although there were few records for October and November there were many reports of December birds most noteworthy being up to 10 at Bardney at the end of the month.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Approximate county totals were

A	M	J	J	A	S	D
–	8	1	1	8	1	–

In May there were 2 at Kirkby on Bain Pits on 6th – 7th and singles at Covenham Reservoir from 13th – 15th, Gibraltar Point from 13th – 17th, Tetney on 15th, Messingham SQ on 17th and at Kirkby on Bain Pits on 20th. One was at Tetney on June 20th and the first in autumn was there on July 31st. In August there were 2 at Frampton Marsh on 3rd with 1 there on 5th, singles at Gibraltar Point on 9th, Tetney on 13th, Skidbrooke on 14th, Kirton Marsh on 16th, 1 – 2 at Marston SF on 17th and 1 at Gibraltar Point from 30th – September 3rd.

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Approximate county totals were

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
1	–	1	10	35	4	184	130	44	5	6	1

The January and March individual was an overwintering bird from November 1987 at Apex Pit. In spring, birds were fairly widespread and May maxima were up to 7 at Tetney, 6 at Apex Pit and 4 at Gedney Drove End with the last in spring at Gibraltar Point on June 2nd. Returning birds were recorded from late June when there were singles at Baston Fen on 23rd, Messingham SQ on 29th and Gibraltar Point on 30th. Numbers increased rapidly during July when birds were recorded from 25 sites and the most notable concentrations were around the Wash where there were 100 – 120 birds. In September there were 14 at Gibraltar Point on 2nd and, as elsewhere, numbers dropped quickly during the month. There were two November records, both on 13th, of 5 at the South Fortyfoot near Boston and of one at Tetney. The single December bird was recorded on 27th again at Apex Pit.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Cleethorpes -Tetney	–	–	270	25	200	7	14	21	–	–	75	–
Gibraltar Point	4	–	2	4	8	2	12	4	2	1	1	5
Benington/Butterwick	2	262	215	277	81	–	459	104	342	222	410	90
Witham Mouth	30	117	39	130	20	–	231	113	56	125	180	182
Welland Estuary	3	8	140	160	63	–	800	360	40	2	40	5
Holbeach Marsh	23	13	48	35	29	1	150	5	45	26	54	11

Away from the coast there was a single at Covenham Reservoir on April 25th, 23 at Goxhill on May 4th, 2 at Thealby Pits from 9th – 21st and 1 at Kirkby on Bain Pits on May 20th. In autumn there were 2 at Cadney Reservoir in mid August, 1 at Read's Island on 17th with 10 there on October 3rd and 1 on November 21st.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

There was just one record of a first winter bird at Covenham Reservoir from October 22nd – 28th (RN,WJM et al.).

Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicarius*

There was just one record of a first winter bird at Wrangle Marsh on October 16th (PAH).

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

The approximate county totals were:-

J	A	S	O	N	D
—	7	206	121	18	—

An exceptional year with just over 350 records. The first of the year were 2 at Tetney on August 7th, followed by an immature at Grimsby Docks on 14th, and singles at Tetney and Gibraltar Point during late August. After a few records up to mid September there was a heavy movement late in the month when on 24th, 54 pale adults, 8 dark adults, 2 sub-adults and 10 juveniles went past Huttoft and there were 2 at Gibraltar Point and 9 at the Witham Mouth on the same date. There were 2 up the Humber at Goxhill Haven on 27th and a total of 85 adults and 7 juveniles went past Huttoft on 29th. There were 4 at Holbeach Marsh on September 30th and 1 at Barton on October 1st. Also on October 1st heavy passage was observed at Huttoft when 35 went south in one and a half hours in the morning and another 20 went south in one and half hours in the evening. The following day a total of 28 went past Huttoft and 8 at Mablethorpe comprised 4 adults, 3 sub-adults and 1 juvenile. There were a few records for the remainder of October most notable being 9 at Huttoft on 11th and 1 at the Witham Mouth on 15th. All the November birds were recorded on 20th with 12 at Huttoft, 2 at Tetney and 4 west at Goxhill Haven.

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*

The totals reported were:-

A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
—	5	3	8	414	929	179	6	—

In spring there were 2 north at Gibraltar Point on May 1st and 30th and singles at Tetney on May 17th and June 8th – 11th. There were then singles occasionally at Tetney, Gibraltar Point and the Witham Mouth in late June through to the end of July. In August numbers increased with maxima of 21 at Tetney on 14th and 15 at Holbeach Marsh on 15th and later in the month maxima were 114 at Huttoft on 20th, 92 there and 40 at Tetney the next day. One at Frampton Marsh on 28th was seen to kill and eat a Starling. September numbers were higher with peaks of 65 south at Donna Nook on 11th, 125 south and 18 north at Sandilands on 13th, 94 at the Witham Mouth on 14th and 134 north at Huttoft on 24th. There were also good numbers in the Humber, presumed to have been attracted by large numbers of Kittiwakes, with a maximum of 33 on September 1st between Barton and Killingholme. There were up to 50 at coastal sites in early October and late records were 2 at the Witham Mouth on October 29th, 2 at Gibraltar Point on 30th, 1 there on November 3rd, 3 at the Witham Mouth on November 9th and 2 there on 14th.

Long-tailed Skua *Stercorarius longicaudus*

An exceptional autumn with unprecedented numbers. A minimum of 67 birds were observed whereas the previous grand total for the county was only 87. See the article by Graham Catley at the front of this report for a complete breakdown of records.

Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*

Approximate county totals were:

J	A	S	O	N	D
—	36	191	77	1	—

A good autumn with at least 300 individuals. The first records were in autumn with the first at Gibraltar Point on August 15th, followed by 3 south there the next day, 2 there and 7 at Huttoft on 20th. Peak passage occurred in September with 9 at Huttoft

on 12th, up to 28 at Sandilands on 13th, 61 at the Witham Mouth on 14th, 3 there and 23 at Huttoft on 24th and 20 – 30 at Huttoft on 29th. In October there were 20 at Huttoft on 1st, 13 at Mablethorpe on 2nd and 12 at Huttoft on 7th. The only November record was of one heading north off Huttoft on 21st.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

One was at Tetney on January 31st (DJW). In March there were second winter birds at North Killingholme on 12th (GPC), Covenham Reservoir on 19th and 23rd (AN) and Apex Pit on 31st (SPB) and 2 adults at Covenham Reservoir from 26th – April 9th (KA,HB,KEW et al). There was a first summer bird at Read's Island on May 7th (GPC) and possibly the same there on June 29th (GPC). Elsewhere in summer there were 2 second summer birds at Saltfleetby on May 28th (JW) and an adult at Gibraltar Point on June 24th. In August there was an adult at Bagmoor on 8th – 10th (GPC,CJ,JTH), a second winter at Gibraltar Point on 14th, Covenham Reservoir on 16th (HB) and Gibraltar Point on 17th – September 3rd. Also in September there was a juvenile at Donna Nook on 11th (GPC) and a second summer at Anderby on 13th (WPB). There was an adult at Huttoft on October 1st (KA,PAH,GMO), a first winter there on 9th (CJ), a second winter at Covenham Reservoir on 8th (HB), a first winter at Apex Pit on November 5th (KDD) and finally, an adult at Boston Tip on December 3rd (CRC).

Little Gull *Larus minutus*

Approximate county totals were:

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	ND
4	1	–	4	3	1	1	25	31	63	4–

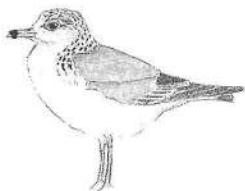
In January, 3 flew south at Gibraltar Point on 2nd and there was a single at Tetney on 24th and an adult at Saltfleetby on February 3rd. In April there were single adults at Tetney and Barrow Haven both on 17th, an immature at Apex Pit on 20th – 25th and an immature at Saltfleetby on 28th. Singles were at Frampton Marsh on May 9th, Barrow Haven on 21st, Bagmoor on 23rd and at Frampton Marsh on June 3rd. The single July record was an adult at Messingham SQ in mid month. There was an immature at Thorpe/Whisby Pits on August 28th and all other records in the month were from coastal sites from 18th onwards, the maximum being 10 south at Butterwick Marsh on 25th. The September records, all coastal, were spread throughout the month. In October there were some larger numbers around including 6 north at Donna Nook, 13 north at Mablethorpe both on 2nd, 12 at Gibraltar Point on 16th and 25 south in one hour at Chapel Point on 23rd. The only November record was of 4 south at Gibraltar Point on 9th.

Sabine's Gull *Larus sabini*

In autumn adults were seen at Huttoft on September 18th (WPB), Gibraltar Point on 21st, 24th and 26th (DRB) and at Huttoft on October 12th (AGB). A juvenile was seen from a boat four miles off Friskney on September 29th (GWA,DRB).

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*

The highest numbers reported in the early part of the year were 2500 at Covenham Reservoir in early January and up to 5000 at Boston Tip during January and February. There were over 500 at Lea Marsh on March 20th and 500 at Gibraltar Point during April. In summer 1308 nests were counted on Frampton Marsh and about 160 pairs bred at Messingham SQ and 20 at Kirkby-on-Bain Pits. Over 1800 were present at Tetney during July. Numbers increased during August and there were up to 4000 at Tetney during the month and 10,000 at roost at Gibraltar Point on 19th. Later there were 7500 roosting on Covenham Reservoir on September 6th, 10,000 at Gibraltar Point to late September, 10,000 at Covenham Reservoir on December 10th and 2000 at Gibraltar Point on 21st.



Ring-billed Gull *Larus delawarensis*

A first summer/second winter bird was at Bagmoor on July 24th – August 3rd (GPC,ACS et al.). This is the first accepted record for Lincolnshire.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Largest numbers reported during the year were 1000 at Gibraltar Point in March, 500 at Tetney during April, 3000 at Gibraltar Point on August 19th, 2700 at Tetney on August 21st, 1500 at Gibraltar Point in September, 1000 at North Cotes in late October and 1500 at Gibraltar Point in December.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

In January singles were reported at Gibraltar Point on 1st, Haverholme Park on 7th and Goxhill on 20th and in February, 2 at North Killingholme on 1st and singles at Gibraltar Point on 10th and 21st. There were more around during March with 11 at Swallow on 2nd, up to 4 at Gibraltar Point and 1 of *L.f.fuscus* race at Saltfleetby on 20th. Two at Huttoft Pit on April 9th showed characteristics of *L.f.intermedius* race. The May maximum was 50 at Apex Pit on 6th and that of June was 40 at Messingham SQ on 29th. In July there were several large numbers reported including 125 at Messingham SQ on 6th, 136 at the Witham Mouth on 28th and 95 judged to be *L.f.intermedius* at Immingham Tip on 31st. There were up to 400 at Bagmoor in early August, 3 *L.f.fuscus* at North Killingholme on 9th, 35 at Gibraltar Point on 28th and 30 at the Witham Mouth on 30th. In September there were 49 at Goxhill on 4th, 30 at Gibraltar Point on 24th – October 3rd. Singles were then recorded at Denton Reservoir on October 2nd, Immingham Tip on 26th and singles of the race *L.f.fuscus* at New Holland on November 5th and Bardney SBF on December 17th.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

The few large numbers received included up to 2,000 at Boston Tip in January, over 500 at Huttoft on February 28th, 400 at Cleethorpes Shore on October 12th, 2,000 at Boston Tip in October increasing to 5,000 in December and 500 at Moulton Tip in November. Adults of one of the yellow-legged races of the “cachinnans” Group probably *L.a.michahellis* were recorded at Messingham SQ on July 6th and 9th with 2 at Bagmoor on August 3rd and 1 there on 21st.

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoideus*

Birds in first winter plumage were recorded at Barton on February 4th – 5th (GPC), northeast at Huttoft on 28th (RN), North Killingholme Tip on March 9th – 16th with another there on 12th (GPC) and at Tetney on April 10th (DJB,MS,DW,GFH).

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

In January there were first winter birds at Covenham Reservoir on 9th, Cleethorpes on 10th, South Killingholme on 21st with probably the same at North Killingholme Tip from 30th and an adult at Cleethorpes on 24th. At Killingholme Tip the first winter bird was joined by a second winter bird on February 10th and by March 9th there were up to 4 birds there regularly comprising 1 first winter, 2 first summer and 1 third summer birds. Elsewhere there were first year birds at Barton on February 4th, Winterton Tip on 14th, Bagmoor from 27th – March 6th, Gibraltar Point on February 21st and March 24th and Moulton Tip on March 19th – April 3rd and a third year bird at Saltfleet Haven on March 7th. A second year bird summered at Bagmoor from at least May 10th – July 29th and it is interesting to speculate whether this was the same bird as the one which summered there the previous year. In autumn a second winter was at Frampton on September 7th, and one was at Bagmoor on October 5th. In November a first winter bird was at Saltfleet Haven on 3rd and an adult was seen there on 8th and finally a first winter flew west at New Holland on December 10th. An adult Glaucous/Herring hybrid was at Butterwick on June 2nd.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

The only records of more than 100 were 450 at the Witham Mouth on March 19th, 100 there on April 4th, 170 at Tetney on August 1st and 150 at Gibraltar Point in mid August. Larger numbers were recorded in September onwards with over 1,000 at Boston Tip until the end of the year, 620 at Cleethorpes Shore on September 9th, 400 at Gibraltar Point on 12th, 756 at Cleethorpes Shore on October 24th, 200 at Gibraltar Point on 30th, 1,000 at Moulton Marsh, 500 at Witham Mouth and 250 at Gibraltar Point all on November 12th, 817 at Cleethorpes Shore on 23rd and 250 at Apex Pit on December 25th.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

There were generally few in the early part of the year but a large number of 1620 went south at Huttoft on February 28th. There were 25 – 30 at Gibraltar Point on several dates in March, 300 at Huttoft on 12th and 120 north at Saltfleet on 13th with 3 inland at Covenham Reservoir on the same date. There were few records in summer except for up to 35 at Gibraltar Point throughout and 41 at Saltfleetby on May 28th but movement was recorded in August when exceptional numbers of adults were present in the Humber. There were 30 at North Killingholme on August 9th increasing to 290 by 14th, 100 at Goxhill on 18th, over 150 there on 21st, 400 there on 27th, 130 at Barton on 24th and 100 at North Killingholme at the end of the month. Numbers of adults in the Humber decreased in early September and none were present by 13th when 19 immature and juveniles went west at Goxhill. Elsewhere in autumn there were 250 at Grimsby/Cleethorpes on August 16th, 81 at Tetney also on 16th, 107 there on 17th and smaller numbers elsewhere including 70 at Huttoft on September 14th. There were very few records in October but in November there were 16 north at Gibraltar Point on 14th, 186 south there and 46 at North Cotes on 18th, 12 north at Gibraltar Point on 20th and 230 south at Tetney and 350 south at Saltfleetby also on 20th. The only December records were of 1 at Gibraltar Point on 1st and 3 there on 7th.

Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia*

In spring an adult spent a whole evening fishing in the Coronation Canal in Spalding on May 5th (W.J.O.Nowlan). An adult went to roost at Apex Pit on May 8th (KDD,ACS). All records accepted by British Birds. There have been five previous county records.

Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*

First record in spring were singles at Tetney on April 16th and at the Witham Mouth on 17th. Twelve flew north at Gibraltar Point on April 23rd and the spring maximum there was 150 north on May 6th. Smaller numbers were reported from elsewhere though there were 91 at Tetney on June 30th. Returning birds on passage were noted from the end of July with 50 at Gibraltar Point on 30th and 310 at Tetney on 31st. The main passage occurred in mid August with maxima of 400 at Tetney on 9th, 800 there on 11th, 400 – 500 at Gibraltar Point daily from 12th – 17th. Inland there were 4 adults at Messingham SQ on 10th and in the Humber 8 at Killingholme on 14th and up to 6 at Goxhill from 20th – 28th. There were smaller numbers in September with maxima of 100 south at Chapel Point on 6th, 400 south at Gibraltar Point on 7th, 180 at Tetney on 11th and up to 100 at Gibraltar Point until 25th. In October there were 2 at Gibraltar Point on 8th, 25 at Huttoft and 25 at the Witham Mouth on 9th and the last at Frampton Marsh on 24th.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

First in spring were 4 at the Witham Mouth and 3 at Whisby Pits on April 16th followed by 1 at Covenham Reservoir on 17th, 2 at Frampton Marsh on 18th and others from 24th onwards. Maximum spring numbers were 25 at Whisby Pits on May 7th and 24 at Covenham Reservoir on 10th. The only breeding data received was of 2 pairs attempting at Tetney, 3 pairs successful at Kirkby-on-Bain Pits and around 30 pairs at Frampton Marsh with mixed success. Peak passage in autumn occurred in August with maxima of 100 in the Humber at Killingholme on 14th, over 100 at Cleethorpes on 16th and 548 at Tetney on 18th. Smaller numbers were recorded in September and in October 100 were at the Witham Mouth on 9th with the last record of 7 there on 28th.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

The first record in spring were 8 at Covenham Reservoir on April 24th with 25 there and 7 east over Laughton Forest the next day. There were then small numbers throughout early May at coastal sites and singles at South Ferriby on 7th, Barton on 8th and at Denton Reservoir on 14th. Return passage was first noted at Tetney where there were 14 on July 31st then throughout August – September with maxima of 15 at Gibraltar Point on August 6th – 10th, 43 at Huttoft on 28th, 50 south at North Cotes on September 9th and 12 at Huttoft on September 24th. The last recorded were singles at the Witham Mouth on September 27th and 28th.

Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*

First in spring were singles at Tetney on April 16th and at Gibraltar Point on 23rd. At Gibraltar Point some 7 pairs established themselves but all failed and at Tetney, where there were 76 pairs, a maximum of only 26 young fledged due to tides and predation by foxes and corvids. Autumn maxima were 25 at Holbeach Marsh on August 1st, 18 at Frampton Marsh mid month and 10 at the Witham Mouth on 28th, with the last records of 4 at Holbeach Marsh on September 11th and 2 there on 29th.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

The first in spring were 2 at Messingham SQ and 2 at Thorpe/Whisby Pits both on April 23rd with no more recorded until May 1st when there were 2 at Covenham Reservoir. In May one was at East Halton Pit on 4th and a large arrival occurred on 7th when there were 9 at Covenham Reservoir, 6 at Kirkby-on-Bain Pits, 9 at Messingham SQ, 2 at Denton Reservoir, 5 at Barton, 4 at Ashbyville, 2 on the River Trent at Dunham Bridge and 1 at Gibraltar Point with similar numbers still present on 8th. Numbers then dropped during the rest of May and June records were 10 at Covenham Reservoir on 14th – 15th with 7 there on 16th, 1 at Deeping High Bank on 16th and 1 at Whisby Pits on 28th. First in autumn was 1 at Holbeach Marsh on August 1st followed by 2 south at Barton and 2 south at Gibraltar Point, both on 6th, and 1 – 3 at six sites until early September. Autumn maxima were 10 at Covenham Reservoir on September 14th and 6 at Whisby Pit on 22nd with only 1 – 2 elsewhere and the last were 2 at Holbeach Marsh on September 28th – 29th.

Guillemot *Uria aalge*

In the early part of the year 2 flew south at Gibraltar Point on January 1st and there were singles there on 4th, March 14th and June 15th. In autumn there were singles at Gibraltar Point on August 21st and 23rd, 3 at Huttoft on September 4th, 2 at Gibraltar Point on 11th, 13 at Huttoft and 2 at the Witham Mouth on 14th. During October there were 1 – 3 at several coastal sites and numbers increased during November with 1 – 2 early in the month then 6 at Holbeach Marsh on 13th, 7 north at Gibraltar Point on 18th and 3 north there on 20th. There was a single December record of 1 at the Witham Mouth on 12th.

Razorbill *Alca torda*

At the beginning of the year there was 1 at Gibraltar Point on January 1st – 2nd and 2 flew north there on May 17th. In autumn 2 were at Gibraltar Point on August 26th and there were singles at Huttoft on September 4th, 16th and October 1st, 2 there on 2nd, 1 south on 30th and 1 north on December 10th.

Little Auk *Alle alle*

All records in the early part of the year were tide-line corpses! Dead birds were found at Anderby on January 10th, 3 at Chapel Point also on 10th, 4 at Freiston – Wrangle on 31st and 4 at Wrangle – Friskney on February 28th. Late in the year there was 1 at Huttoft on October 1st and the highest number of the year of 40 north there on 12th. A northerly movement occurred on October 30th when there were 8 at Gibraltar Point, 14 at Huttoft, 15 at Mablethorpe and 16 at Saltfleetby following which “wrecked” birds were found on 31st at Branston and Kirton the latter of which survived and was released. Two flew north at Gibraltar Point on November 3rd and another minor influx occurred later in the month starting with 1 north at North Cotes on 18th, 2 south at

Saltfleetby and 29 north at Huttoft on 20th, 5 west up the Humber at Goxhill also on 20th, 2 west at Tetney on 22nd and 2 north at Gibraltar Point on 26th. The only December records were 4 south at Sandilands on 4th and 1 found dead at Tetney on 18th.

Puffin *Fratercula arctica*

A poor year for this species, which is seldom recorded in any numbers, with just three records. The first involved an immature picked up exhausted at Spalding on March 5th and released a few days later at Hunstanton. Late in the year singles were recorded in the Humber at Barton on November 3rd and at Goxhill Haven on 14th.

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

The only significant numbers were up to 400 at Boston, Lincoln and New Holland all year and 800 at Barton Wold on December 23rd.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Concentrations in January included 20 at East Halton Pit, 25 at Parson Drove, 50 at Lea Marsh, 50 at Winteringham and 70 at Risby Warren. Apart from 62 at Thornton Abbey in March, significant numbers were not noted until late in the year when there 20 at Thoresway, 50 at Gibraltar Point and over 60 at Barton Wold in December.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Largest counts during the year were 1000 at Manby on January 11th, 1000 at Skellingthorpe on February 14th, 2500 at Thoresway on November 25th and over 1000 at Swallow during mid December.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Over 100 were noted at Boston and Haverholme throughout January, 560 at New Holland on January 17th and 100 at Skellingthorpe during August.

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

Early birds in April were at Messingham SQ on 16th, Theddlethorpe on 20th and Barton on 21st. There were at least 3 at Temple Wood on 23rd and birds were recorded at Scotterthorpe, RAF Digby, and Goxhill on 24th. Maximum numbers in summer were 25 at Nene Mouth on July 24th and over 20 at Whisby Pit during August and September. Latest records received were at Gibraltar Point on September 20th, Ashbyville and Whisby Pit on 22nd with the last at Donna Nook on October 1st.

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

This species has been promoted from the 'escapes section' to the systematic list for 1988 as records suggest that spring records may have been attributable to the British feral population.

In March one flew north at Tumby, Mareham-le-Fen on 20th (TW), a male was in a Boston garden on 21st (KC,CRC) and other singles were at New Holland on 22nd (GPC), Bourne on 28th (per AGB), Rauceby on 29th (AGP), Bourne Wood on April 2nd (RCS) and at Sibsey on the same date (per AGB). In August one was at Cleethorpes on 15th (RKN).

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

The first arrivals were in April beginning with a very early record at West Ashby Pits on 4th, followed by singles at Hanthorpe on 10th and Great Coates on 12th, a pair at Ruskington on 13th, singles at Whisby Pits and Scunthorpe on 14th and more widespread records from mid-month onwards. There was only one record in September involving a late bird at Gibraltar Point on September 17th.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

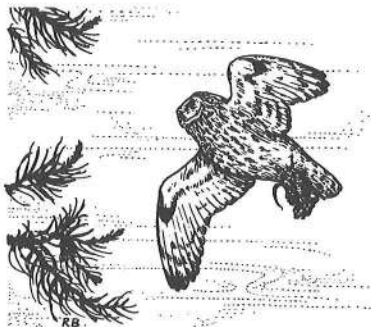
There were no unusual records during the year in what appeared to be a good breeding year with several records of two broods being attempted. Breeding records were received for 28 sites additional to those reported in the Barn Owl paper in the 1987 Report.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

There were no unusual records during the year. Breeding records were received for Ravendale Quarry, Thornton-le-Fen, Frithville, Swineshead, Tongue End, Thurlby Fen and Bicker Fen. At Gibraltar Point two were in the west dunes on October 28th with one there on November 9th.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

There were no significant records.



Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Surprisingly, early in the year there were no roosts of more than two birds though birds were fairly widespread. Breeding records included Gibraltar Point area (4 pairs), Laughton Forest (3 pairs) and single pairs at Doddington, Appleby Station, Branston Delph, Whisby and possibly at Theddlethorpe. In autumn one was seen to fly in off the sea at Donna Nook on October 12th. Late in the year there were two roosts of 2 and 4 at East Halton, 3 at the Brant/Witham confluence and up to 4 at the Hobhole.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

During January – March there were 1 – 3 birds at many coastal locations, with up to 6 at Alkborough and 1 – 3 inland at Billingham, Boston, Deeping High Bank, Cowbit, Baston Fen, Messingham and Fulstow. One was observed 'wing-clapping' at Lutton Outmarsh NNR on March 8th and a pair were observed at Holbeach Marsh during March – May but there were no definite breeding records. A few birds were reported again from mid-August and one was observed flying in off the sea at Saltfleetby on October 30th after which birds were widespread but with generally low numbers reported. Maxima were up to 3 at Gibraltar Point during November – December and 6 at Nettleton Moor on December 12th.

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

At Laughton Forest, which is the stronghold for Nightjar in the county, the first arrival was on May 16th with the last seen there on July 29th and there were at least 19 singing males during the breeding season. Other records were 2 at Broughton Wood/Appleby Station, singles at Nettleton Wood and at Scotton Common. At Stapleford Wood only one bird was seen throughout the summer and breeding may not have occurred at this former traditional site.

Swift *Apus apus*

The first in spring was at Barrow Haven on April 23rd followed by singles at Denton on April 30th, Covenham Reservoir, Donna Nook, Messingham, Gibraltar Point and 2 at Cleethorpes all on May 1st, Butterwick Marsh and Theddlethorpe on 2nd with a more general arrival from 3rd onwards. Peak spring number was 400 at Barrow Haven on May 14th and there were several peaks of southerly moving birds during July of up to 600 at several coastal localities. There were a few early September records and the last was a late bird at Gibraltar Point on 29th.

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Birds were fairly widespread during January – March and more so during August onwards. Breeding was recorded at Edenham, Barrow Haven, Brocklesby, Messingham, Ancaster, Coningsby, Kirkby-on-Bain, Whisby Pits (2 pairs), and at Baston Fen. In addition at Haverholme Park a nest site was destroyed by bank work and a pair possibly bred at West Ashby. A male was seen presenting a fish to its mate at Louth.

Bee-eater *Merops apiaster*

Single birds were seen at Tetney on May 26th (SL,VL), Friskney on July 31st (BJH,WWRG) and at Kexby on August 7th (SH). All records accepted by British Birds and are the 10th, 11th and 12th county records.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

In spring singles were at Saltfleetby on May 15th (RNe,KEW et al.), Fishtoft on June 12th (G.Beasley) and at Walton on June 21st (M.Taylor). In autumn a longer staying individual was at Cherry Willingham from August 24th to September 3rd (CAIG et al.).

**Wryneck *Jynx torquilla***

Another poor year. The only records were of singles in September, at Gibraltar Point on 13th, Saltfleetby on 19th and inland at Swineshead on 27th.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Records of resident pairs were received from Twigmoor, Kirkby Moor, Messingham SQ, Brumby Wood, Bagmoor, Rauceby, Whisby Pits, Burton Pits, Linwood Warren where breeding was confirmed, Laughton Forest where there were at least 3 pairs, Bourne Wood, Twyford Wood, Morkery Wood, Temple Wood, Irnham and Bulby Wood. Away from the more usual areas there was a pair at Boston Cemetery on March 10th and singles at Gibraltar Point on April 21st and 30th and August 10th.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Birds were widely reported in small numbers throughout the year. Breeding records were received from Bourne Wood, Temple Wood, Aswardby, Ancaster GP, Haverholme Park, Wilsford Heath Quarry, Bradley Woods, Weelsby Wood, Walesby and up to 15 pairs at Laughton Forest. Other records in June were received from Boston, Louth, Green Man Wood and Twyford Wood. Coastal records included 1 – 2 at Gibraltar Point from January to May 1st and from July 14th to November 1st, and singles in October at Saltfleetby, Donna Nook, Grainthorpe and Humberstone and 2 at Barrow Haven on December 6th.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor*

In January there were 3 at Woodhall Spa on 12th and all other records throughout the year were of single birds or pairs. Pairs all year were noted at Boultham Park, Whisby Pits and Temple Wood with possible breeding at Tumby Woods and confirmed breeding at Haverholme Park. Away from the more usual areas, singles were seen at Bradley Woods on February 14th, Horkstow on March 14th, Louth on April 21st and May 1st. One trapped at Gibraltar Point on August 10th was a new reserve record and there were subsequent sightings there on October 5th and 9th.

Woodlark *Lullula arborea*

At the breeding site, where breeding has taken place since 1984, there were 3 pairs and an additional male. At least 14 young fledged from 5 broods. In addition at another site a pair was found on April 10th including a colour-ringed male, which was found to have been ringed as a nestling in the previous year in the brecklands of East Anglia. This pair raised two broods of 3 and 2 respectively.

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Largest numbers early in the year included 200 at Saltfleet on January 10th, up to 200 at Tetney during January – February with a maximum there of 320 on January 23rd and 200 at Holbeach Marsh also on January 23rd. Southerly passage in autumn was most noticeable in October with over 100 at Gibraltar Point and 'moderate' south-westerly passage over Lincoln both on 8th, 'strong' south-westerly passage at both Burton Pits and at South Witham on 12th, 40 at Cadney Carrs on 14th, 313 south in one hour and forty minutes at Chapel Point on 22nd and over 100 at the Witham Mouth on 28th. At Butterwick Marsh movement peaked between October 22nd – November 5th during which time over 300 birds were caught and ringed. Other notable numbers included 150 south at Donna Nook on November 11th, 100 south at Gibraltar Point also on 11th, 90 at Cleethorpes on 29th and finally in December 44 at Goxhill and 110 at Gibraltar Point both on 22nd.

Shore Lark *Eremophila alpestris*

The poorest year on record with just one single bird recorded at Gibraltar Point on October 29th. Records have declined from a total of nearly 200 per winter in the early seventies – see 1984 Report.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

The first arrivals were in late March with the first at East Halton Pit on 24th followed by 5 at Denton Reservoir on 26th and one at North Somercotes on 27th. Later there was one at Lincoln Ballast Pit on April 1st, 2 at Gibraltar Point on 3rd, 4 at Apex Pits on 3rd and a more general arrival after that date. Little breeding information was received except for Hagworthingham Garage (80 pairs), Kirkby-on-Bain (80), South Thoresby Landfill Site (25), Ancaster GP (46) and Spalding (400). Southerly passage was noted on the coast from late July onwards with a peak of 100 at the Witham Mouth on 30th, 220 at Gibraltar Point on 31st and 300 at Theddlethorpe on the same day. Largest numbers in autumn roosts were at Barrow Haven with 700 on August 6th, 1000 on 9th, 2000 on 23rd and 3000 on September 6th. There were few records from mid-September onwards and the last records were one at Gibraltar Point on October 6th and 11 at Pinchbeck on 9th.

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

First in spring were singles at Gibraltar Point on March 20th, Cleethorpes on 30th, North Cotes and Laughton village on April 3rd, West Ashby Pits on 4th, Gunby and Baston Fen on 7th, 2 at Burton Pits on 10th, Ashbyville, Spalding and Walesby on 11th and a fairly widespread arrival from 12th onwards. Southerly passage was noted at the end of July with over 500 at the Witham Mouth on 30th and 350 at Theddlethorpe on 31st. There were up to 1000 at Barrow Haven during late August with a similar number at Gibraltar Point. In early September there were 5000 south at Gibraltar Point on 5th, 5000 at Barrow Haven on 6th and up to 1000 south at Gibraltar Point on several dates up to 17th. There were many October records with late records in November of singles at Lincoln West Common on 5th, Gibraltar Point on 6th and Hanthorpe on 10th, 2 at Gibraltar Point on 11th with the last there on 13th.

Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica*

There was a record of two birds at Gibraltar Point on November 14th (MC,JPS). Under consideration by British Birds.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

The first birds arrived in April with the first at Boston on 2nd, with no more recorded until singles at South Elkington and Messingham on 11th, 2 more at Messingham and 3 at Lincoln Ballast Pit on 12th, 2 at Covenham and 2 at Donna Nook on 13th, 2 at Burton Pits and 1 at New Holland on 14th, Gibraltar Point on 15th and others after this date. Returning southerly birds were recorded at Gibraltar Point in August when there were 300 on 15th and 120 on 28th increasing to 800 on September 5th and 11th with up to 400 there during the rest of the month. There were many October records including one at a nest in Lincoln on 23rd. There were two November records, both of singles, at Gibraltar Point on 14th and Kirton Marsh on 19th.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus novaeseelandiae*

There were several records in mid to late October. First was at Grainthorpe Haven on 12th (SR) and the next was, unusually inland, at Cadney Reservoir on 14th (RNH,CJ,JTH et al.). Others were at Gibraltar Point on 15th – 16th (GWA et al.), Pye's Hall, Donna Nook on 15th (DH,PW,AW) with the same bird there on 21st (GPC,DH,PW), Theddlethorpe on 22nd (KA) and at Humberstone Fitties on 29th (GPC).

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

The first arrivals recorded were singles at Walesby on April 11th, Gedney Drove End on 17th, Tetney on 19th, Kirkby Moor on 24th and at Gibraltar Point on 29th. Breeding pairs reported were 30+ at Laughton Forest, 7 at Walesby, 7 at Twigmoor, 3 at South Witham, 2 at Stapleford Wood and 1 at Bourne Wood with other singing males on territory noted at Twyford Wood, Gunby, Osgodby and Kirkby Moor. Passage birds were noted in September at Frampton Marsh on 10th and regularly at Gibraltar Point up to 17th with up to 3 birds there between 1st and 6th.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

There were few records involving large numbers in the early part of the year although birds were generally more numerous from late March onwards. Over 30 pairs bred at Gibraltar Point and 95 at Frampton Marsh. Southerly passage was first noted during September with 100 at Bardney Ponds on 6th, south-westerly passage over Lincoln on 9th, 100 south-west at Covenham on 10th, over 200 at Theddlethorpe also on 10th with up to 100 there for the rest of the month, 100 south at Gibraltar Point on 11th, 150 there next day and nearly 200 there on 15th. There were smaller numbers in October though 117 were recorded flying south at Chapel Point in a 90 minute period on 22nd and there were over 50 at the Witham Mouth on 28th.

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Between January to March 1 – 3 birds were recorded at most coastal locations and at Covenham Reservoir. Maximum numbers were 7 at Tetney in January and February, 9 at the Nene Mouth on February 7th, 10 at Goxhill – East Halton also on February 7th, 7 there on 26th and 4 at Mablethorpe on March 21st. First in the autumn were 3 at the Witham Mouth on August 30th, 1 at Gibraltar Point on September 15th and 2 at Huttoft on 29th. There were good numbers at some sites during October including 7 at Covenham Reservoir on 2nd, 27 at the Witham Mouth on 9th, 5 at Huttoft also on 9th, 6 at Covenham Reservoir on 15th, 5 at Cadney Reservoir on 16th, 23 at Saltfleetby on 30th with up to 3 at other coastal locations. There were generally fewer in November though Gibraltar Point recorded 23 on 10th and 12 south on 11th and there were 5 at Saltfleetby on 12th, 7 at Covenham Reservoir on 23rd and 1 – 4 at coastal locations until the end of the year.

There was one record of a single bird showing characteristics of the Scandinavian race, *A.p.littoralis*, at East Halton Skitter on February 26th (GPC).

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

First records were in April with the first at Covenham Reservoir on 9th, Grimsby Pyewipes on 11th, Ashbyville and Cadney Reservoir and 19 at Covenham Reservoir on 12th and the first at Bardney on 13th. Maximum numbers in spring were at Covenham Reservoir where there were 57 on April 16th and 140 on 27th, with up to

40 elsewhere. Southerly movement was recorded in late August with 40 at South Ferriby on 17th, 140 at Covenham on 18th, 150 at Huttoft on 20th and smaller numbers elsewhere. Movement continued into early September with Gibraltar Point's maximum of 50 south occurring on 3rd, 65 at Covenham on 6th, 150 there on 10th and 30 at Goxhill on 8th. Numbers decreased during September and late records in October were 1 at Covenham Reservoir on 1st, 1 – 2 at Gibraltar Point until 8th and 1 at the Witham Mouth on 9th.

M.f. flava. Birds showing characteristics of the Blue-headed race which occurs in Central Europe and Southern Scandinavia were at Cadney Reservoir on April 18th – 25th, Ashbyville on 25th, Barton on 26th, East Halton on 27th, Kirton Marsh on 29th, Covenham Reservoir from April 23rd – June 18th with 2 there from May 11th – 26th and 1 at Kellingthorpe on May 7th.

M.f. thunbergi. Birds showing some characteristics of the Grey-headed race, occurring in Northern Scandinavia and Russia, were males at Covenham Reservoir on May 6th (RN) and at Gibraltar Point on May 14th (ST).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

In the early part of the year birds were fairly scarce with 1 at Spalding SBF and 2 at Sleaford throughout January – March and singles at Lincoln on February 6th, Cleethorpes CP on 7th, Nettleham on 12th, Covenham Reservoir on 14th, Skellingthorpe on 27th, Osbournby on March 11th, Wyber's Wood on 21st and a pair displaying at Haverholme Park during March. One was at Ashbyville on April 30th and one flew west at Gibraltar Point on May 1st. At least one pair was known to have bred successfully at Tealby in May and other summer records were singles at Grimsby's Town Holt on June 6th, Ancaster on 12th, 2 at Louth during late June with one there on July 5th, Graby Ford on 7th, Gibraltar Point on 18th and at Elsham Hall on 24th. In August there were 2 at Tumbly on 19th and singles at Grimsby Fish Docks on 14th, Messingham on 20th, Wyber's Wood on 28th and at Gibraltar Point on 28th. Birds were fairly widespread during September onwards from 24 sites. All records were of singles except for 5 at the Witham Mouth on October 9th, 7 over South Witham on 13th, 2 at Thurlby Fen on 16th, up to 2 at New Waltham during October and 2 at Sleaford from October into 1989.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Generally small numbers were reported with the maximum numbers of 15 at Lincoln on January 7th, 15 at Sleaford on January 9th, 60 at Cadney Reservoir on July 7th, 25 there on August 22nd, 30 at Covenham Reservoir on September 6th, 50 at Grantham on 14th, 80 at Baston Fen on October 29th, 32 at Messingham SQ on December 15th and 31 at Lincoln Ballast Pit on 31st.

M.a. alba. The first White Wagtail in spring was at Covenham Reservoir on March 29th where birds were recorded up to April 21st with a maximum of 6 on April 17th. There were 9 at Tetney on April 17th which slowly decreased with the last there on May 3rd. At Donna Nook the first was recorded on April 2nd increasing to 4 from April 17th – May 1st. Elsewhere in April there were 5 at Ashbyville on 4th and 1 – 2 birds were recorded at Cadney Reservoir, Thealby Pits, Gibraltar Point, Barrow Haven, East Halton, Goxhill, Grimsby Docks with singles at Gibraltar point on May 2nd, Goxhill also on May 2nd and Lincoln on May 10th. In autumn 1 was at Leasingham on August 18th, 2 at Grimsby Docks on September 11th and 1 there on October 3rd.

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

There were no early year records but there was an exceptional influx in late autumn. The first were of single birds inland at Candlesby near Spilsby and on the coast at Gibraltar Point on October 29th with 1 at Gibraltar Point, 5 at North Somercotes and 2 at Whisby Pits on 30th and 5 flying west at Barton on 31st. In early November there were records of 1 at Donna Nook on 1st, 4 at Goxhill on 1st – 2nd, 2 at Ashbyville and 2 at Waddingham on 3rd. A party of 12 and a single bird flew over at Anderby on 3rd and the next day there were 4 at Grimsby, 1 at Baston Fen and 3 at Winteringham Haven with 3 at Barton on 5th. There was then a short interlude before the second influx which began with 1 at Gibraltar Point on 9th, 2 there on 10th, 1 there, 5 at

Covenham Reservoir, 3 at Ashbyville, 2 at Saltfleetby and singles at Barton and Barrow Haven on 12th. There were 10 at Gibraltar Point and 1 at Lincoln on 13th, 1 at Goxhill and 4 at Frampton Fen on 15th and 2 at Lincoln on 15th – 17th. There were 2 at Gibraltar Point on 16th, 1 there and 2 at Marshchapel on 17th, 7 at Barton on 18th and 3 at Washingborough and 1 at Louth on 19th. Apart from 2 at Gibraltar Point on 24th with singles there on 26th and 27th there were no more records until early December when there were 20 at Grimsby on 4th. At Barton there were 5 on 6th increasing to 9 on 9th decreasing to just 1 by 12th with 1 there on 20th. One was at Immingham on 8th, 6 at Cleethorpes on 15th and another was found dead at Humberston on 17th. Elsewhere in mid December there were records of 1 at Lincoln on 10th, 20 at South Cockerington on 11th, 2 at Boston also on 11th, 5 at Donna Nook on 17th and the last 4 at Melton Ross on 20th. Although some records probably refer to the same birds, at least 160 birds were involved.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

An individual of the black-bellied continental race, *C.c.cinclus*, was present at Little Cawthorpe from March 5th – 7th at least (KA). The first county record of Dipper since the winter of 1980/1981.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Recorded throughout with a general increase again reported following the dramatic fall of 1986. At Theddlethorpe 247 were ringed during the year compared with 164 in 1987 and 93 in 1986. At Gibraltar Point 29 pairs bred.

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Recorded throughout and again an increase in numbers following the cold weather of the 1985/86 winter. At Theddlethorpe 378 were ringed indicating a good breeding season. The highest number reported was 115 at Gibraltar Point in late October.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Recorded throughout and there was a notable series of falls on the coast in late autumn. The first influx occurred from October 12th – 16th with up to 40 at Gibraltar Point during this period, 25 at Donna Nook on 12th, 25 at Theddlethorpe on 13th, 50 at Saltfleet, 75 at Donna Nook and 30 at Grainthorpe all on 16th. The second and much larger influx occurred from October 20th – 24th with up to 90 at Gibraltar Point during this period, over 200 at Seacroft and 68 at Pyes Hall on 21st with smaller numbers elsewhere. A smaller late influx was noted in early November when there were up to 70 at Gibraltar Point on 12th.

Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos*

The first birds arrived in April with a singing male at Whisby Pits on 19th, one at Humberston Fitties on 20th, 2 at Whisby on 22nd, Bourne Wood on 24th, a pair at Kirkby Moor also on 24th followed by others after this date. Maximum number of singing males were up to 10 at Bourne and Temple Woods, 5 at Baston GP, 3 – 4 at Whisby Pits and 2 – 4 at Wilsford Heath. There was one at Gibraltar Point on June 18th and the only late summer record was of a male, still singing, at Seacroft on August 14th and 18th.

Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus*

An immature/female was trapped at Theddlethorpe on October 12th (MEB). Accepted by British Birds and is the third county record, the others being recorded in 1903 and 1978.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

The first records during the year were singles at Tetney on April 1st – 3rd, Donna Nook on 2nd – 3rd, Humberston on 2nd, Gibraltar Point on 5th – 7th and 15th – 17th, Tetney on 17th and a female inland at Ashbyville from 6th – May 1st. In May there were singles at Gibraltar Point on 1st, Humberston on 2nd, New Holland on 7th, Gibraltar Point on 12th – 16th with another also there on 13th, Saltfleetby on 14th and Donna Nook also

on 14th. Breeding records were of 2 pairs at Spalding SBF, 2 pairs at Grimsby Docks rearing broods of 2 and 3 and another pair at Grimsby Pyewipe possibly breeding. Two males were holding territory at Scunthorpe Steelworks during May and June and a male was seen at the Ruston Works at Lincoln from May 6th to June 16th with a female also seen there on June 16th. At South Ferriby recently fledged young were seen on July 27th. Most returning passage birds occurred in October with the first at Huttoft on 3rd followed by 3 at Donna Nook and 1 at South Ferriby on 5th, 1 at Wrangle Marsh on 6th and singles at Donna Nook and Gibraltar Point on 12th. Birds were then more widespread at coastal locations and maxima were 6 at Donna Nook on 20th and 4 at Gibraltar Point on 20th – 23rd. The last records were singles at Boston on November 4th and at Gibraltar Point on 9th – 10th. A male showing characteristics of one of the southern/eastern races “closest to *P.o. ochrurus*” was at Donna Nook on October 21st (GPC,DH,PW). Accepted by British Birds and is only the second county record.

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

First in spring were singles at Bradley Wood, Grimsby on April 3rd and at Gibraltar Point on 7th, followed by a male at Scotterthorpe on 13th, Gibraltar Point on 16th – 18th, Whisby Pit on 19th, Saltfleetby also on 19th, Tetney on 21st, 2 at Saltfleetby on 24th and singles at Tetney on 26th and at Gibraltar Point on 30th. On the coast in May there were singles at Donna Nook on 8th, Saltfleetby on 15th, Gibraltar Point on 17th – 20th and 26th. Inland, a pair bred at Laughton Forest fledging young in June. At Twigmoor there were 2 males on May 7th and 3 males holding territory from May 12th though no breeding information was received and there was a singing male at Neville Wood on May 15th. Early birds in autumn were at Gibraltar Point on July 9th and at Bourne South Fen on August 8th. There were up to 3 at Gibraltar Point virtually daily from early August through September with a few other coastal records. More were recorded in October with maxima of 6 at Donna Nook on 15th, 4 at Gibraltar Point on 16th, where the last was on 28th. There was just one inland late autumn bird at Pinchbeck on October 15th.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

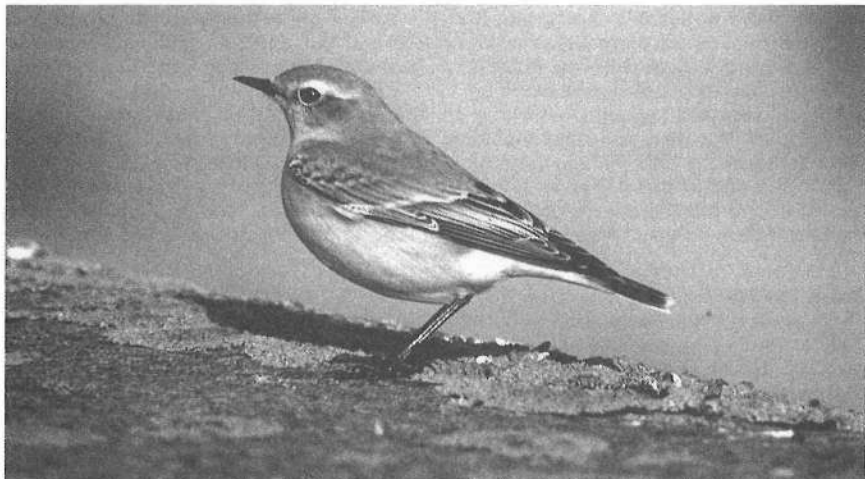
The early arrivals in spring were males at Ashbyville on April 18th – 24th, Frampton Marsh on 22nd, Laughton Forest on 23rd, Walsby on 24th with others at mainly coastal locations after this date, maxima being 5 at Tetney on May 8th and 6 at Saltfleetby on 15th. The last spring record was a female at Ashbyville on May 28th. Apart from one at Cadney Reservoir on July 22nd the first in autumn were in August with 3 males at Humberston on 3rd and maxima of 22 at Frampton Marsh on 15th, 6 at Gibraltar Point on 21st and 6 at Cadney Reservoir on 31st. Most records were in September with usually up to 6 birds at mainly coastal locations with 10 at Gibraltar Point from 15th – 18th and 15 there on 17th. The last records were in October with one at Saltfleet on 4th, 2 at Anderby and 3 at Chapel Marshes on 5th, Saltfleetby on 16th, Donna Nook on 21st and 1 – 2 at Gibraltar Point where the last was recorded on 28th.

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

Early in the year there was a female at Humberston on January 1st, a male at Wrangle on 3rd, a pair at Barton from 7th – February 15th, a pair at Wolla Bank from January 13th – February 14th, one at Moulton Marsh on January 17th and a pair there from 30th – February 20th, a male at Saltfleetby on March 11th, and a female at Gibraltar Point on 17th. In spring there was a female at Tetney on April 11th and another female at Saltfleetby on May 1st. There was an unusual record of 1 at Covenham Reservoir on July 12th otherwise all latter half of the year records were during October with 1 – 5 at Gibraltar Point and up to 2 at other coastal locations. Inland records during October were at Haverholme Park on 4th, Winteringham on 22nd, Binbrook on 25th and at Cadney Reservoir on 28th. November records were a pair at Barton from 5th – 23rd with the female staying into 1989, 1 at Gibraltar Point also on 5th, 2 there on 11th, and single females at Fosdyke on 12th, Grimsby on 14th and at Baston Fen from 12th – 27th. The only December record other than the Barton bird above was 1 at Cleethorpes on 24th.

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

The first arrivals were in late March with 2 at Ashbyville and 1 at Covenham Reservoir from 22nd – 24th, 1 at Goxhill Haven on 24th, 1 at Gibraltar Point from 24th – 26th, 1 at Haverholme and 4 at Ashbyville on 25th, 1 at Frampton Fen on 26th and others after this date. Peak spring numbers were 8 at Tetney on April 3rd and 12 at Ashbyville on 19th, 9 at Goxhill Marsh on 21st, and 11 at Tetney on May 4th, with passage lasting into June. At Friskney there was a male on June 12th and 3 including 2 juveniles were there on July 31st. Main autumn passage occurred in August with maxima of 40 at Gibraltar Point on 13th, 11 at Tetney on 17th, 14 at Tetney and 18 at Gibraltar Point on 21st and 12 at the Witham Mouth on 25th. Passage continued with smaller numbers through September and October with late records of singles at Gibraltar Point on November 4th and at Grimsby Docks and at Tetney on 5th.



Ring Ousel *Turdus torquatus*

In April there was a male at Humberston Fitties from 6th – 20th, 1 at Scotterthorpe on 11th, a male at Gibraltar Point on 14th, a male at Roxton Wood from 15th – 26th, single males at Barton and Barrow on 17th, a pair at Tetney on 17th – 19th, a female at Weelsby Wood on 18th, a male at Grimsby Fish Docks and 2 at Cleethorpes on 19th, 2 males at Donna Nook on 20th, 1 at Mareham on the Hill on 21st, 2 at Covenham Reservoir and a male at Butterwick on 23rd, a female at Gibraltar Point on 23rd – 26th, 3 at Saltfleetby on 24th and singles at Tetney and Covenham Reservoir on 25th. There was just one May record of a female at Gibraltar Point on 1st.



The first returning bird was an immature male at Wrangle Marsh on October 6th and there were 5 at Saltfleetby from 12th – 20th and 1 – 3 at Donna Nook, Theddlethorpe, Mablethorpe, Huttoft, Seacroft, Gibraltar Point between 13th – 26th with 1 at Lutton Outmarsh on 23rd. There was one November record, on 11th, at Gibraltar Point.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Recorded throughout with good numbers arriving on the coast during October. The first influx occurred from 11th onwards when there were up to 150 at Gibraltar Point, over 1000 at Saltfleetby on 12th, 135 at Cleethorpes and well in excess of 1000 at Seacroft on 13th and 125 at Saltfleetby on 15th. The next influx began on 20th with up to 200 at Gibraltar Point, 50 at Cleethorpes on 20th, over 300 at Donna Nook on 21st, over 1000 at Theddlethorpe on 21st and up to 800 at Gibraltar Point until the end of the month. There were fewer birds recorded in November and December.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

In the early part of the year, during January to early March, there were up to 100 at many sites with up to 230 at Gibraltar Point. By far the largest number was an estimated 5000 moving south during the day at South Witham on January 24th. Birds became more noticeable during late March – early April with stragglers into May at Gibraltar Point where there were singles on 12th and 13th and 2 on 15th. First returning bird in autumn was at Gibraltar Point on August 26th followed by 1 at Theddlethorpe on September 1st, 1 at Donna Nook on 13th, 3 at Gibraltar Point on 14th – 15th with 2 there on 18th and 1 on 24th. In October there were few until 11th when large numbers arrived over the next few days including 81 inland at Haverholme on 11th, 300 at Theddlethorpe on 12th, 1000 at Seacroft on 13th and over 1000 at Gibraltar Point from 11th to the end of the month with 2000 there on 25th. Birds then decreased as they moved inland but there were up to 8000 newly arrived birds feeding on hawthorn in the East Halton – Barton area between December 6th – 10th with up to 500 elsewhere.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

There were no significant records until the big falls of mid October, when there were 1000 at Saltfleetby and 400 at Theddlethorpe on 12th, over 1000 arriving at Seacroft on 13th, 400 at Theddlethorpe on 14th, 1000 at Saltfleetby on 12th and 19th with a maximum at Gibraltar Point of 400 on 25th.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Early in the year there were 200 at Horkstow on January 1st and 50 at Winteringham on February 17th. An easterly passage at dawn on March 20th was observed at Theddlethorpe when 80 were seen flying out to sea and there were 70 at Goxhill on the same date. There were a few April records up to the 10th when there were 15 at Burton Pits then there were singles at Burton Pits on 16th, Ancaster Valley on 19th and the last at Gibraltar Point on 21st. First in Autumn were in September with 1 at Theddlethorpe on 10th and 8 at Gibraltar Point on 14th. Birds were still scarce until the “falls” in October with 100 at Donna Nook and 150 at Cleethorpes on 12th, 500 at Theddlethorpe and 1000 at Seacroft and 1000 inland at South Witham on 13th, 400 at Theddlethorpe on 14th, 320 at Cleethorpes arriving in under two hours on 16th and 500 at Saltfleet on the same day. There was another influx on 20th with 430 grounded at Cleethorpes and 250 at Gibraltar Point where there were 800 on 25th and 600 on 30th. There were generally smaller numbers from November with maxima of 150 at Gibraltar Point on 4th, 100 at Baston on 18th where there were 100 on December 7th and 300 on 8th and 200 at Stallingborough on 15th.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

The largest numbers reported were in late summer and autumn with 20 at Osgodby on July 21st, 22 at Laughton Forest on 27th, 25 at Gibraltar Point on August 20th and 25 at Walesby on September 5th.



Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

The first in spring was at Messingham SQ on April 16th. The following day birds were reported at Barrow Haven, Seacroft, Bourne Wood and Denton. There were singles at Swanpool and at Saltfleetby on 18th, Gibraltar Point on 19th and at Theddlethorpe and Humberston Fitties on 20th. Breeding pairs were successful at Tetney and Branston Delph and the most reported were 8 pairs from Gibraltar Point – Seacroft. Autumn records are always scarce as birds are difficult to detect when not singing and the last records were singles at Gibraltar Point on August 28th – 29th and at Theddlethorpe on September 3rd.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

The first bird was at Messingham SQ on April 10th with the next at Goxhill on 14th. Birds were then recorded at Barton and Whisby Pits on 16th, Frampton Marsh and Spalding on 19th, Gibraltar Point, Burton Pits and Theddlethorpe on 20th and elsewhere after this date. A good breeding season was reported by several observers and the last records were in September with the last at Gibraltar Point on 28th.

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*

One was seen at Chapel Point on October 22nd – 23rd (DH,AW,PW et al.)

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

The first was at Messingham SQ on April 18th followed by birds at Barton on 19th, Lincoln Ballast Pit and Humberston on 20th, Goxhill on 21st and 2 at Gibraltar Point and 5 at Barton on 23rd. Very little breeding data or summer numbers were received and the last records were in October when there were singles at Gibraltar Point on 2nd and Goxhill on 4th, Barton-on-Humber and 2 at Anderby on 5th, Donna Nook/Pyes Hall on 15th and 21st and the last at Trusthorpe Vicarage on 23rd.

Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina*

Another poor year with just two records of singles at Grimsby Docks on September 10th (DJB,KEW) and trapped at Theddlethorpe on September 18th (MEB).

Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria*

Another very poor year with one record at North Cotes on September 18th (HB).

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

The first was at Lincoln Ballast Pit on April 19th with the next at Barton on 21st followed by 3 at Lincoln Ballast Pit, 1 at Denton and 1 at Goxhill the next day. Other early records were at Bagmoor on 23rd, 3 there on 25th, and singles at Saltfleetby on 24th and Gibraltar Point on 25th. Birds were present until mid October after which very late records were singles at Burton Pits on November 5th and at Whisby Pits on November 13th. Birds showing characteristics of the Siberian race *S.c. blythi* were trapped at Theddlethorpe with 4 on September 16th, 3 on 17th and 1 on October 9th (MEB) – the latter bird being very fat suggesting that it had been present for some time. Another record was at Anderby Creek on October 12th (PW,DM). A bird at Pye's Hall on October 21st (GPC,KA et al.) showed characteristics closest to *S.c. marginalica*.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

First in spring was an unusually early bird at Bourne Wood on April 4th two weeks before the next at Ashbyville on 19th. Birds were then recorded at Theddlethorpe and Whisby Pits on 20th, Moorby and 2 at Huttoft and 2 at Gibraltar Point on 21st and others from 22nd onwards. There were at least 44 pairs at Gibraltar Point in the summer and the maximum number recorded during the year of over 100 occurred there on September 3rd. Birds were fairly regular to the end of September and the only October records were a single at Gibraltar Point on 14th and 2 at Benington Marsh on 16th.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Early birds in April were singles at East Halton on 24th, Laughton Forest on 26th and Gibraltar Point on 28th – 29th. Many observers reported lower numbers than usual; the maximum number in autumn being 12 at Gibraltar Point on September 3rd. Birds were fairly widespread up to mid September and there was one October record of a late individual trapped at Gibraltar Point on 22nd.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

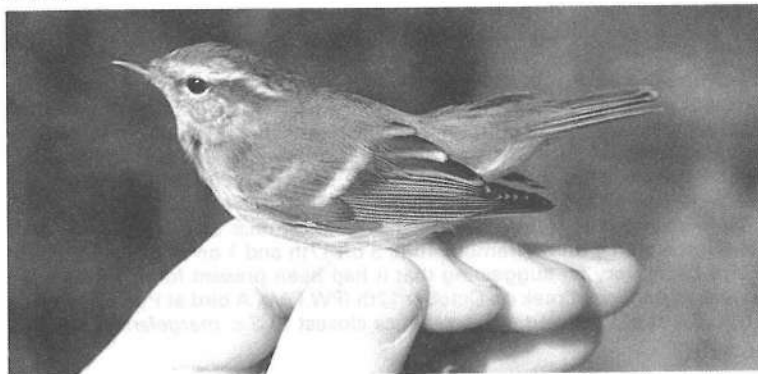
There were 2 males at North Somercotes Warren on January 1st and the only other early year records were at Gibraltar Point with a male on February 21st and 1 on March 10th. Early spring records of 2 at Gibraltar Point on March 24th with one there on 31st and of 1 at Denton on April 3rd may have been passage birds rather than wintering individuals, otherwise birds were fairly widely reported from April 11th onwards. There were many October records and in November singles were at Barton on 5th, Gibraltar Point on 11th and 14th, Saltfleetby on 12th, two trapped at Theddlethorpe on 19th, one seen at Wilsford Heath on 26th with the last at Theddlethorpe on December 17th.

Pallas's Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus*

At Pye's Hall, Donna Nook in October there were 2 on 20th (SJM,WJM,JRM), 3 on 21st (GPC,KA) and 1 on 22nd (HB). Under consideration by British Birds.

Yellow-browed Warbler *Phylloscopus inornatus*

A record autumn with about 25 different birds. First was trapped at Gibraltar Point on October 2nd (KWW) followed by 1 at Saltfleet and 3 at Saltfleetby on 4th (CJ), 1 at Chapel Pit and 3 at Anderby Creek on 5th (GPC,DH,AW) and another at Donna Nook on the same day (KA,KEW). One was at North Cotes on 11th – 13th (HM,SR), 1 trapped at Theddlethorpe on 12th (MEB), 1 at Marshchapel on 12th (SR), 1 unusually in the south of the county at Frampton Marsh on 14th (JWh), 1 at Gibraltar Point on 15th, 2 there on 16th, 3 on 17th (G.Crossley,RJB,PMG et al.), 1 at Donna Nook on 15th (DH,AW,PW), 2 there on 16th (AMJ,WPB) and 1 at Grainthorpe Haven on 16th (PCr). Later there was 1 at Cleethorpes on 20th (RKN), 2 at Donna Nook on 21st (HB,GPC), 1 at Saltfleetby also on 21st (KA,GPC,CJ) staying to 22nd (DH,AW,PW) with another at Chapel St Leonards also on 22nd – 23rd (DH,AW,PW,GPC) and the last at Donna Nook on 26th (SL).



Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi*

One was trapped and ringed at Theddlethorpe on October 16th (MEB,FEB). The second county record; the previous one being in 1898. Accepted by British Birds.

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus*

One was at Pye's Hall, Donna Nook on October 12th and 13th (WPB, WJM, SJM). Under consideration by British Birds which, if accepted, will become the 3rd county record.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Records in spring, mainly referring to males in song, were singles at North Somercotes Warren on April 29th (GPC) Humberston Fitties on May 5th (JN), Donna Nook on 8th (WPB), Callan's Lane Wood on 9th (RL), Bradley Woods on 12th (GPC), Gibraltar Point on 12th – 13th (PMT), Linwood Warren on 16th – 22nd (SAB,HB) and at Rauceby Warren on 21st (GH). In autumn there were singles at Immingham Dock on July 31st (WPB), Gibraltar Point on August 30th, Donna Nook on September 3rd (SK,CRC), Gibraltar Point on September 16th – 17th (PAH,CRC) and a late bird at North Cotes on October 23rd (HB).

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

In January there were 1 – 2 at Gibraltar Point from 1st – 4th, 1 at Covenham Reservoir on 8th, 1 at Bottesford on 25th and 1 at Kirton from end of 1987 to the end of February. Other winter records were 2 at Twiggmoor on February 13th and 1 at Covenham Reservoir on 22nd. There was another record at Covenham Reservoir on March 7th and 1 at Witham on the Hill on 10th then birds were widely reported from late March onwards. It would appear that it was a good year as three ringers reported their best ever years at regularly used sites. Birds were widespread until the last week of October and late records were at Messingham SQ on November 3rd, 2 at North Somercotes Warren on 8th. 2 at Burton Pits and 1 at Normanby Park on 24th, regularly at Gibraltar Point from 23rd – December 17th and up to 3 at Ancaster GP into 1989.

Siberian/Eastern races:- A bird showing characteristics of *P.c. tristis* was at Donna Nook on October 21st (GPC) and another showing characteristics of *P.c. abietinus* was at Louth on October 20th – 21st (KA).

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

The first was at Ashbyville on March 30th and there was a marked arrival in early April when there were singles at Gibraltar Point from 1st, Kirton Hall Weir, Messingham SQ, Denton Reservoir, Saltfleetby and South Thoresby on 3rd, Barton on 4th, Lincoln and Theddlethorpe on 5th with maximum spring numbers reported after early May. Mixed breeding success was reported and autumn passage peaked on September 3rd when there were over 200 at Gibraltar Point. Passage continued until the end of the month and late records in October were 1 at Gibraltar Point on 2nd, 2 there on 15th, and singles there on 16th, Saltfleetby on 19th and at Donna Nook on 24th.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

There were generally small numbers reported in the early part of the year; maximum numbers were 31 ringed at Market Rasen on January 5th, over 30 at Bradley Woods on February 14th, 25 at Laughton on 17th and 31 ringed at Theddlethorpe on April 3rd. The autumn passage on the coast was phenomenal with small numbers throughout August increasing through September and early October to excellent numbers in the latter half of the month. There were 40 at Saltfleet and 50 at Donna Nook on October 16th, 70 at Cleethorpes on 17th, 110 there and 100 at Donna Nook on 20th, 100 at Gibraltar Point, 200 at Seacroft, 175 at Theddlethorpe and 300 at Donna Nook on 21st and an incredible 1600 at Gibraltar Point on 22nd when over 400 were ringed during the day. Numbers then decreased very quickly as birds spread inland.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*

There were two winter records of singles at Gibraltar Point on January 16th and Laughton Forest on February 14th. In spring there were singles at Saltfleetby on March

29th, Friskney Decoy Woods on April 4th, Saltfleetby on 7th and Gibraltar Point on 17th and 29th. In autumn there were singles at Saltfleet on October 4th, Gibraltar Point on 5th, Theddlethorpe on 14th, 2 at Cleethorpes on 20th, singles at Saltfleetby and Theddlethorpe on 21st, 2 at Saltfleetby on 22nd, and singles at Gibraltar Point also on 22nd, 30th, November 9th and 20th.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

First in spring were singles in May at Messingham SQ on 3rd, Gibraltar Point on 6th, Theddlethorpe on 7th and Tetney, Donna Nook, Elsham Hall and Scopwick on 8th with others elsewhere after this date. Autumn maxima were 7 at Lincoln Ballast Pit on August 26th and 12 at Gibraltar Point on 28th where they were regularly recorded up to September 20th. The only record later was a late bird at Theddlethorpe on October 16th.

Red-breasted Flycatcher *Ficedula parva*

In autumn there was one at Gibraltar Point on September 15th (RR et al.) followed by singles in October at Donna Nook on 10th (SL) and 12th (KA,KEW et al.) with another there on 16th (PCr,AJM), Anderby on 12th (DH,PW) and at Saltfleetby on 21st (KA,GPC).

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

In spring one was at Tetney on April 25th, followed by a male at Humberston Fitties on May 2nd, Tetney on 8th, Theddlethorpe on 14th, a female at Donna Nook on 14th – 15th, male at Gibraltar Point on 15th – 16th and a female at Saltfleetby on 16th. First in autumn were singles at Gibraltar Point from August 13th intermittently until 23rd with no other records until September. Maximum numbers in September were 6 at Saltfleetby on 7th – 8th, up to 3 at Donna Nook on 7th – 18th, and 3 at Gibraltar Point on 17th with 1 – 2 elsewhere along the coast. The only inland record during the year was one at Pinchbeck on September 8th. Late records in October were singles at Humberston on 1st, Saltfleetby on 1st – 2nd, Gibraltar Point on 3rd, Anderby on 5th, Gibraltar Point on 15th – 16th and Grainthorpe on 16th.

Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus*

There were 2 at Thurlby Fen NR on January 30th. Some 7 – 8 pairs bred at the South Humber Bank Pits. Birds were recorded away from the Humber from autumn onwards with 10 at Gibraltar Point on October 2nd, 1 at Chapel Pits on 9th, 3 at Gibraltar Point on 12th, 2 at Thurlby Fen NR on 17th, 2 – 4 at Gibraltar Point from 28th – 30th and singles at Tetney and Huttoft Pits on 30th. There were 2 – 3 at Lincoln Ballast Pit on December 27th – 31st.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

The maximum numbers reported during the year were 20 at Thurlby Fen on January 30th, 27 at North Rauceby on July 10th, 20 at Barton on 20th, 20 at Messingham SQ on September 19th, 50 at Twigmoor on November 18th, 24 at Barton on 29th and 22 at Hoplands Wood on December 31st. On the coast at Gibraltar Point the only records were of 1 in August and 4 in October and at Theddlethorpe only 1 was ringed during the year compared with over 100 five years ago.

Marsh Tit *Parus palustris*

Records received were, as usual, mainly from the southwest of the county with breeding records from Denton Reservoir, Morkery Wood, Bourne Wood, Temple Wood and Haverholme Park and other records from Little Ponton, Osgodby and Rauceby Warren. Further north there was one at Green Man Wood on May 15th and 3 at nearby Neville Wood on the same date. Away from the more usual areas were singles at Cleethorpes on October 22nd and at Kexby on 27th.

Willow Tit *Parus montanus*

There were widespread records of up to 4 birds throughout the year.

Coal Tit *Parus ater*

The maximum numbers reported were 50 at Laughton Forest in February and 25 at Messingham SQ in late October. There were several coastal records during October with 1 – 5 birds at Goxhill, Humberston Fitties, Donna Nook, Saltfleetby and Gibraltar Point.

Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*

Apart from 200 at Weelsby Woods on February 9th records were of less than 50 from throughout the county during the year.

Great Tit *Parus major*

The only records involving more than 20 birds were at Gibraltar Point where 22 were recorded during January and a maximum of 30 in October.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Records were received from many wooded locations in the southwest of the county as far north as Haverholme Park where a pair bred. Away from this area single birds were seen at Hoplands Wood on April 10th, at Burton Pits on June 2nd and October 29th and at Hatton Wood, Bardney on September 7th. A bird at Roxton Wood near Keelby from January 10th into February was well outside the normal range.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Birds, numbering 1 – 3, were recorded from many suitable locations throughout the year. Coastal records were of singles at Gibraltar Point on April 1st, Theddlethorpe on July 6th and at Gibraltar Point throughout August and September.

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

The only records were of single males at Gibraltar Point on June 1st and at Sandilands on 4th.

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

In spring there was a female at Gibraltar Point on May 17th – 21st and a male at Theddlethorpe on June 16th – 18th. (I.Saville, JW). In September there was a juvenile at Donna Nook from 11th – 21st (GPC et al.), one at East Halton on 16th (SR), a juvenile at Gibraltar Point on 16th – 24th and an immature at Saltfleetby on October 14th (AJM).

**Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor***

The overwintering individual from 1987 at Rauceby Warren NR was last seen there on April 8th and it (or another) returned again on October 29th and stayed into 1989. The only other records were 1 trapped at Theddlethorpe on April 3rd and singles seen at Donna Nook on October 17th and at Bourne Wood on November 15th.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Away from the more usual areas pairs bred at Boston and Goxhill. At Gibraltar Point there were 2 on May 4th – 5th then singles there until June 4th and then on August 16th and September 29th. The maximum number recorded was 12 at Goxhill Haven on September 15th.

Magpie *Pica pica*

Concentrations of more than 20 during the year were 61 at roost at Lincoln Ballast Pit in January, 56 at Goxhill in February, 45 there in March and over 50 there in November – December, 22 at Scotterthorpe on November 24th and over 40 at Barton during November December. At Gibraltar Point 10 – 40 birds were recorded throughout the year.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

Very few records of large numbers were received. There were over 200 at Denton Reservoir for most of the year. Over 1000 were recorded at the Aswarby Thorns roost during the winter but an impressive 7,500 was recorded at Willoughby on December 31st.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Largest roost numbers in November – December were 650 at Middle Rasen, 950 at Kingerby, over 1000 at Aswarby Thorns and 2,500 at Willoughby.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*

The majority of records, as usual, were from the northern and eastern half of the county where maxima were 60 at Goxhill in February 46 at Saltfleetby also in February, 56 at Goxhill in April with up to 40 there in September.

Hooded Crow *C.c. cornix*: In the early part of the year there were singles at Tetney throughout January and at Saltfleetby throughout January – February. Inland there were singles at Walesby on January 7th and at Killingholme Tip on February 10th. Late in the year there were singles at Gibraltar Point on October 28th, Theddlethorpe on 30th, inland at Kirkby Underwood on November 6th, Immingham Tip on 10th, Grainthorpe on 12th and at Saltfleetby on December 17th and 28th.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

There was an albino bird at Immingham on September 9th and the only large numbers received were 40,000 at roost at Scunthorpe and 105,000 at Thoresway in November – December.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

No significant records

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

The decline since the early eighties continues. At Theddlethorpe, for instance, the number ringed of 6 was the lowest yet; numbers have been 1983 – 92, 1984 – 58, 1985 – 61, 1986 – 17, 1987 – 14, 1988 – 6. At Gibraltar Point birds were very scarce and the first was not recorded until March 17th! Maximum numbers were 70 at Fulstow on February 3rd, 50 at Brandy Wharf on the River Ancholme on April 13th, 50 at Whisby Pits on December 24th and over 50 at Laughton on December 26th. There was some passage noted at Gibraltar Point from October 22nd – November 13th and at Chapel Point 28 flew south in 1 hour and 40 minutes also on October 22nd.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Maximum numbers early in the year were 150 at Walesby on January 11th, 40 at Weelsby Woods on February 9th, 75 at Bourne South Fen on March 20th and 120 at Gibraltar Point on March 26th. In summer a large flock of 120 containing mostly juveniles was at Laughton Forest on July 7th. Passage was noted in October with 52 south at Cleethorpes and 61 south at Chapel Point both in under 2 hours on 22nd, 30 south at Gibraltar Point also on 22nd, 100 south there on 28th and 30th with over 100 south there on November 11th and 12th.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Early in the year there were 30 at Louth on February 11th, 180 at South Ormsby on 27th, 20 at Weelsby Woods on March 2nd – 3rd with 1 – 6 at other locations. There were a few April records including 8 at Theddlethorpe on 3rd with the last there on

20th. Other late spring records were 2 at Walesby on April 25th and 1 at Gibraltar Point on May 3rd. First in autumn was at Gibraltar Point on October 1st and birds were then there daily with a maximum of 64 on 16th and there were 55 at Saltfleetby on 13th. Birds were seen arriving off the sea at Theddlethorpe including 100 on 16th and 200 on 21st with smaller numbers elsewhere. There were fewer birds in November, although a good passage occurred on 12th when southerly heading birds numbered 70 at Theddlethorpe and 55 at Gibraltar Point. By December birds were relatively scarce although 46 were at Thoresway on 11th.

Serin *Serinus serinus*

Single males were at Donna Nook on May 1st (WPB) and at North Cotes on October 23rd (HB).

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

Largest numbers early in the year were 90 at Gibraltar Point on January 1st, 120 at Covenham Reservoir on 15th, up to 100 at Gibraltar Point in February with 200 there on 21st and 90 there in early March. No large numbers were then reported until large southerly movements of birds in mid October especially on 22nd when there were 150 south at Theddlethorpe and 158 were counted south in 1 hour 40 minutes at Chapel Point. There were 100 – 150 at Gibraltar Point in mid November and 100 at Walesby on 25th.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Largest numbers reported early in the year were 38 at Gibraltar Point on January 16th, 20 at Barton on 29th, 50 at Denton Reservoir on March 27th and 70 at Laughton on April 30th. In August there were 100 at Grimsby on 28th and 50 at Cadney Reservoir on 31st where there were 70 during the first half of September. Also in September at Gibraltar Point there were 80 on 3rd and 57 on 28th and there were good numbers there in October peaking at 130 on 5th with 100 south there on 8th. Elsewhere 62 were counted moving south at Chapel Point on October 22nd and 75 were at Walesby on November 25th.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

In the early part of the year there were 2 at Rauceby Warren in January and 12 at Twigmoor on 31st. Records in February were 8 at Laughton Forest on 14th, 10 there on 17th and singles at Gibraltar Point on 20th and Raithby Pond on 27th. There were 6 at Temple Wood on March 4th, 1 at Denton on 5th, 2 there on 6th, 1 at Messingham SQ on April 1st, 1 at Gibraltar Point on 2nd, 8 at Theddlethorpe on 3rd and 30 north at Gibraltar Point on 7th. At Laughton Forest there were up to 16 during April and there were odd ones seen throughout the summer but there was no actual proof of breeding. At Market Rasen a juvenile was trapped on July 26th. There was a very marked autumn passage lasting from mid September through to mid November with maximum numbers of 180 south at Theddlethorpe on September 17th, 70 at Gibraltar Point on 18th, 80 south at Seacroft on October 13th, 100 at Theddlethorpe on 21st, 95 south in 1 hour 40 minutes at Chapel Point on 22nd, 130 south at Gibraltar Point on November 10th with 80 south on 11th, 70 south on 12th and 60 south on 14th. Winter records included up to 50 at the parks in Lincoln during November and December, up to 10 at Messingham in December and 8 at Humberston Fitties from December 13th – 22nd.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Maximum numbers early in the year were 150 at Donna Nook on January 10th, 50 at Messingham SQ on March 11th, 50 at Covenham Reservoir in early April and 100 at Gibraltar Point on April 2nd with 180 south there on 17th. In late summer flocks formed on seeding plants including 100 at Cadney Carrs during mid July, 400 at Frampton Marsh during August, up to 100 at Gibraltar Point, 200 at Goxhill, 240 at Cleethorpes CP and 400 at Grimsby Docks during September. In October there were 200 at Grimsby Docks on 4th then southerly moving birds were recorded mid month with over 100 at Gibraltar Point on several dates and over 100 south at Chapel Point in 1 hour 40 minutes on 22nd.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A
Tetney	110	80	-	22	-	-	23	-
Donna Nook	150	300	-	-	-	50	30	120
Gibraltar Point	30	45	9	0	3	400	200	80
Butterwick Marsh	1000	500	300	6	-	500	800	500
Witham Mouth	800	200	180	25	-	75	175	100
Holbeach Marsh	330	250	4	-	-	7	5	200

Last in spring were 15 at Saltfleet on April 4th and 3 at Frampton Marsh on 13th. First in autumn were 5 at Cadney Reservoir from August 15th to October 26th. Other records included 4 at Winteringham on October 22nd and 1 at East Halton Pit on November 22nd.

Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*

Maximum numbers recorded early in the year were 20 at Messingham SQ on January 22nd, 20 at Twigmoor on 31st and 30 at Linwood Warren on February 10th. Fourteen pairs bred at Gibraltar Point where the maximum number was 50 during August – September. Late in the year there were 150 at Linwood Warren on November 16th and 50 at Whisby Pits on December 24th. No Mealy Redpolls, *C.f. flammea*, were reported.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

At Laughton Forest there were 10 on May 22nd increasing to a maximum of 33 on July 13th. A male, female and 3 'fresh' juveniles were seen there on August 17th suggesting that breeding may have occurred and there were 10 there on September 21st and 14 there on November 14th. Elsewhere there were records in June at Gibraltar Point with 1 on 7th and 15th and 14 and 19th. Passage birds later were 2 at Gibraltar Point on August 3rd, 1 there on 11th, 4 on 30th, 1 on September 3rd, 2 at Donna Nook on 8th and 1 at Gibraltar Point on 18th. At Bourne Wood there were 7 on August 26th quickly increasing to 29 on 27th and 40 on 30th slowly decreasing to 10 by the end of the year. Elsewhere there was 1 at Weelsby Woods on November 1st, 1 at Gibraltar Point on 6th, 17 at Holywell Wood on 10th and 2 at Messingham SQ from November 22nd – December 26th.

Scarlet Rosefinch *Carpodacus erythrurus*

A female/immature trapped at Gibraltar Point on September 18th (KWW,AWP et al.) is the 4th County Record, all since 1979, and the first in autumn.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Records were received for up to 10 birds throughout the county during the year.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

The only records were 2 at Brumby Woods on March 18th and single birds at Twigmoor on April 28th and at Normanby Park on November 21st.

Northern Waterthrush *Sieurus noveboracensis*

One was trapped and ringed at Gibraltar Point on October 22nd and seen the following day (KWW, IH et al.). The first record of this North American vagrant for Lincolnshire and only the 5th for Britain. Accepted by British Birds.

Lapland Bunting *Calcarus lapponicus*

In the north of the county early in the year there were singles at Saltfleet on January 10th and at Saltfleetby on 17th. At Tetney the maximum number in January was 14 on 17th and there were up to 2 there until the end of February though there was a late record of 2 on April 10th. Around the Wash birds were fairly widespread in small numbers; maxima being 20 at Frampton Marsh on January 1st and up to 15 at Butterwick throughout January and February. There were 6 at Butterwick on March 13th and 1 at the Witham Mouth on April 4th. First in autumn was 1 at Tetney on

September 25th and there were 1 – 2 birds at Cleethorpes, Tetney, Donna Nook, Saltfleet, Saltfleetby and Theddlethorpe and 1 – 5 at sites around the Wash during October. There were 17 at Goxhill on November 22nd and 2 there on December 9th. In the Wash there were up to 10 birds at several sites during November – December; the maximum number recorded being 15 at the Witham Mouth on December 12th.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

There were up to 75 at Gibraltar Point in January and 12 there in February, 8 at Huttoft on February 8th, 158 at Donna Nook in January and over 200 there in early February and 1 – 2 at other coastal sites between Donna Nook and Grimsby. In the Humber there were 12 at Winteringham on January 21st, 1 at Goxhill on 28th and 35 at Whitton on February 7th. Last in spring were singles at Gibraltar Point on March 30th and at Cleethorpes on April 10th. There was an unusual summer record of a male in full summer plumage at Gibraltar Point on June 6th. First in autumn was at Gibraltar Point on September 16th and in October there were singles at Humberston on 19th – 20th and at Donna Nook on 28th, 14 at Gibraltar Point on 29th, 14 at Mablethorpe and 2 inland at Covenham Reservoir on 30th. In November the 2 at Covenham stayed until 11th and birds were more regular on the coast; the maximum numbers being up to 35 at Gibraltar Point, 30 at Humberston on 6th, 45 at Tetney on 13th, 60 at North Cotes on 17th and 22 at Cleethorpes on 27th with smaller numbers at these sites during December. In the Humber 3 flew west at East Halton on November 6th and 1 west at Goxhill Haven on 11th where there were 33 on 14th and 2 on December 9th. In the Wash the only records during the year were singles in November at Butterwick Marsh on 4th – 12th and at Kirton Marsh on 19th.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

The maximum numbers recorded involving figures of over 50 were 60 at Horseshoe Point on January 10th, over 60 at Covenham Reservoir on February 22nd and 70 at East Halton Skitter on February 26th. Late in the year there were 86 at Cleethorpes CP on November 29th, 80 at Swallow on December 21st, 70 at Goxhill on 24th and, finally, 72 at New Holland on 29th.

Ortolan Bunting *Emberiza hortulana*

An immature male was at Tetney on May 8th and 10th (DW,DJB,GFH).

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

The only record involving a three figure number was 150 at the Witham Mouth roost during November – December. Maximum breeding numbers were 70 pairs on Frampton Marsh and 25 pairs at Gibraltar Point.

Corn Bunting *Miliaria calandra*

There were few counts of 20 or more birds during the year. There were 23 at Tetney on January 16th, over 50 at Holbeach Marsh on February 14th, 20 at the Witham Mouth on March 6th, 20 at Frampton Marsh on April 3rd and 70 at Goxhill on April 14th. Late in the year there were 23 at Scopwick on October 2nd, 42 at Brocklesby Park on November 27th and 50 at Holbeach Marsh on December 31st.

Escapes etc 1988

Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

A juvenile was present at Boston Golf Course from November 1st to at least the end of the year (AGB,BJH et al.). It was wearing colour rings which enabled it to be identified as having originated from a nest in April in Edinburgh Zoological Park.

Chilean Flamingo *Phoenicopterus ruber chilensis*

One was at Apex Pit in late April (SPB,KD,SJH) and subsequently at Winteringham – Reads Island in May (JTH,CJ) where it was occasional all year and for the last 2 – 3 years (GPC).

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

A female (unringed) at Kirkby-on-Bain Pits on April 17th (RJFC,TW).

Cape Shelduck *Tadorna cana*

One at Gibraltar Point from August 1987 to May 11th and again from October 29th to the end of the year.

Chukar *Alectoris chukar*

Records of birds resembling Chukar (now regularly released in Britain) were of 1 at New Bollingbroke on May 21st (KA), a pair in Laughton Forest in June (GPC) and 1 at Dunsby Fen on November 9th (PNW).

Golden Pheasant *Chrysolophus pictus*

A male at Swineshead from July to December (PCo).

Additions / Corrections to the 1987 Report.

Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Additional record: An adult was at Barrow Haven on June 3rd (AJ + EC Walsh). Accepted by British Birds.

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

An adult of the race *B.b.nigricans*, or 'Black Brant' at Kirton Marsh on February 19th (D.Smallshire) – Accepted by British Birds.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Additional record: Two at Kirkby-on-Bain Pits on May 26th (TW).

Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*

Additional record: One at Donna Nook on October 29th (SL).

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

The correct date for the Goxhill record was August 21st not April as stated.

Wilson's Phalarope *Phalaropus tricolor*

Additional Record: A first-winter at Chapel St Leonards on September 26th and probably since 24th (J.Upton). Accepted by British Birds.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

Correction:- there were 3 first-winter and 1 second-winter birds at North Killingholme on March 17th – 20th.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor*

Additional record: A male at Dixon's Wood, Grimsby on February 4th and a pair bred at Kirkby Moor (KEW).

Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica*

Gibraltar Point, 2 on October 24th, 4 on 27th and 2 on 28th accepted by British Birds.

Pallas's Warbler *Phylloscopus proregulus*

Additional record: Donna Nook, 2 on October 20th (SL). Accepted by British Birds.

Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi*

Donna Nook, October 3rd and 5th rejected by British Birds.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*

Additional record: One at Snipe Dales on March 10th (SL).

Rose-coloured Starling *Sturnus roseus*

Immature at South Witham on August 23rd (ES) accepted by British Birds.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Additional record: One at Snipe Dales on April 18th (SL).

Additions to the 1986 Report

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Additional Record: a female at Donna Nook on January 4th (SL).

Gibraltar Point Bird Observatory Report 1988

**Compiled by G.W.Allison, D.R.Bromwich, P.Davey
and P.Gosling for the Lincolnshire and South Hum-
berside Trust for Nature Conservation.**

This year proved to be an excellent one for the Observatory. A total of 215 species were recorded and four of these – Black Kite, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Scarlet Rosefinch and Northern Waterthrush – were new to the Observatory list. There were also five additions to the ringing list, the latter three species named above together with Arctic Tern and Black-tailed Godwit. The autumn passage was particularly impressive, with some major falls of migrants in October.

Fifty-one species bred on the Reserve though unfortunately Little Terns failed to produce any young and Tree Sparrows continued their dramatic decline with only one breeding pair this year.

Thanks are due to Gordon Allison for the upkeep of the daily log throughout the year, and to all the birders who contributed records. Visitors to the Reserve are invited to fill in field sheets with their observations. These are available free from the Visitor Centre or by contacting the Wardens.

January – March

Early 1988 continued where late 1987 had left off, mild and wet with predominantly south-westerly winds. Occasional north-westerlies dropped the temperature below zero, but never for more than a few days.

Sea-birds were generally scarce in January although Little Gulls were seen on 1st and 2nd with up to 64 Red-throated Divers, mainly moving south, also on 2nd, and there was a Slavonian Grebe on the 5th. Sea duck records were restricted to occasional sightings of Common Scoter (up to 80), Eider and Red-breasted Merganser.

Of the passerines, a flock of up to 250 Fieldfares was present throughout the month, although Redwings were very scarce until mid-March. Chiffchaffs were recorded on 1st – 4th, single Coal Tits on the 3rd and 21st and, most notably, a Firecrest on the 16th. The mild conditions kept the wintering flocks of finches and buntings low in numbers; Twite were scarce (a maximum of 30 on the 2nd and 3rd), and Bramblings were absent altogether. Snow Buntings, while down on recent years (maximum of 75), were present throughout most of January. Bird numbers were high enough however to keep raptors in attendance and 1-2 each of Hen Harrier, Merlin, Sparrowhawk and Kestrel were regular throughout the month.

As a result of the higher than average January rains, the Freshwater Marsh flooded extensively and this proved very attractive to wildfowl; Teal, Mallard, Pochard and Tufted Duck were present in good numbers throughout February, Wigeon, Shoveler, Goldeneye and Gadwall were all regular and Pintails dropped in occasionally. A flock of up to 30 Stock Doves also frequented this area.

Other February records were 3 Whooper Swans on 10th and a flock of 1500 Brent Geese in the river mouth. The first Little Grebe of the year was seen on the River Steeping on the 14th, a Glaucous Gull was amongst the wader roost on the 21st and the most notably sea record of the month was the movement of 180 Kittiwakes heading south on the 28th.

High spring tides over the weekend 19th-21st flooded large areas of foreshore and saltmarsh, producing a spectacular wader roost on the exposed shingle ridges to the east of the Tern Hut. Maximum counts included over 7000 Oystercatcher, 2500 Grey Plover, 10,000 Knot, and 1000 Dunlin.

There were continuing high counts of Fieldfares, a single Rock Pipit was by Main Creek on the 18th and there was an over-wintering male Blackcap near Shovelers Pool on the 21st. February also saw increased numbers of finches with up to 200 Greenfinch and 45 Twite and the year's first records of Brambling and Siskin (both on the 20th). Snow Buntings numbers declined, with only 4 records and a maximum flock of 12 birds, but up to 15 Corn Buntings fed on the Old Saltmarsh.

Warmer weather in March heralded the dispersal of wintering birds. A dramatic drop in Fieldfare numbers culminated in a flock of 60 flying north on the 8th, and the previously absent Redwings began to pass through in increasing numbers (eg 30 on the 16th). The last record of Twite was of 12 on the 10th and a Snow Bunting on the beach on the 30th was the sixth latest ever for the Reserve. March also brought the arrival of the first spring migrants, with Pied Wagtail on the 11th, White Wagtail on the 18th and a Swallow, the third earliest ever, on the 20th. The 24th saw the arrival of the first Wheatear, with 5 more on the New Saltmarsh on the 29th. Other spring movements brought the first records of the year for Stonechat and Tree Sparrow, both on 17th.

Sea-birds, while still remaining low in numbers, increased in variety. Sea-watching highlights included the first Gannets, single birds flying north on the 4th and 31st, the first Velvet Scoter, 7 south on 8th, and another Glaucous Gull on the 24th.

There was still a considerable amount of standing floodwater on the Freshwater Marsh but, with exception of an influx of Shoveler at the end of the month (maximum of 6), duck numbers declined steadily. Other wildfowl records included 9 Whooper Swans flying north along the beach on the 9th and several records of Pink-footed Geese (including 2 which settled on the Mere on the 27th). The wader roosts this month surpassed those of February, with 18,000 Oystercatcher, 2500 Grey Plover, 13,200 Knot and 2000 Dunlin. A flock of 750 Curlew was recorded on the 4th and Snipe numbers on the Mere began to increase, with a maximum of 8 on the 13th.

April – June

A remarkably dry spring, with winds generally in the eastern quarter. This was favourable to the arrival of migrant birds and a good range of species occurred although there was little evidence of major falls.

Several migrants were notably early this year. A Willow Warbler on April 1st was the earliest ever, a Marsh Harrier on the 7th was the second earliest ever, and Grasshopper Warbler on the 19th and Common Sandpiper on the 21st were both the third earliest ever. Other typical early spring arrivals in the first week of the month were 15 Whimbrel on the 1st, two Sand Martins and a Black-tailed Godwit on the 3rd and a singing Black Redstart on the 5th. A less typical migrant was the Treecreeper which was ringed on the 1st.

Three Brambling and Gibraltar Point's third ever Egyptian Goose were notable records from the 10th and the 14th saw the arrival of the first Yellow Wagtail and Ring Ouzel of the year. Thereafter new migrants were arriving on an almost daily basis. A House Martin arrived on the 15th, Green Sandpiper on the 16th, a Cuckoo and the first spring Firecrest on the 17th. The 20th saw the first Sedge Warbler, the 21st, Greenshank and Whitethroat, as well as the last record of Redwing. The first terns appeared on the 23rd with a Little and 12 Sandwich, and 2 Reed Warblers were also seen. Lesser Whitethroat arrived on the 25th. The 28th, 29th and 30th produced the first Garden Warbler, Tree Pipit and Turtle Dove respectively. The most unusual migrant during this period was Green Woodpecker, with singles flying south on the 21st and 30th. Three raptor records were particularly interesting. The Reserves 3rd ever Red Kite flew south on the 3rd, on the 17th a Peregrine over the beach upset the wader flocks and, most notably, Gibraltar Point's first Black Kite flew over heading south on the same date. The same bird was recorded again on the 25th.

Conditions on May 1st, combining good weather with south-easterly winds, produced one of the best days birdwatching of 1988. New arrivals were Swift, Whinchat, Spotted Redshank, two Arctic Skuas, and two drake Garganey on the Mere. A Black Redstart

was seen at the Field Station, a Grey Wagtail flew in off the sea, and to round it all off, the Reserve's sixth record of Crane flew over at dusk. The expected spring Osprey duly appeared on the 5th and 6th, single Black Terns were present on the 7th and 17th, and a Red-backed Shrike frequented the East Dunes between the 17th and 21st, where it made inroads into the bumble-bee population. A Purple Heron found on the Old Saltmarsh on the 10th was the second Reserve record. A single male Wood Warbler stopped in the Plantation on the 12th and 13th, the Black Kite appeared again on both days, and on the 16th the second Crane of the month flew in off the sea, circled the Mere for 15 minutes and then flew off eastwards.

Maximum counts for the month included 150 Sandwich Terns on the 6th, 42 Whimbrel on the 8th, 130 Swallows south on the 10th and 26 Little Terns on the 15th. Moderate high tides mid-month pushed up the last of the departing winter waders with 500 Sanderling being a particularly important record. Other maxima included 3500 Knot and 400 Curlew.

June is traditionally a quiet month on the Reserve with spring migration over and resident birds either on eggs or feeding young. However, the first week provided an Osprey on the 1st, Hobby, Osprey again and the Reserve's ninth Honey Buzzard on the 2nd, three Marsh Harriers on the 4th and another Hobby on the 6th. Other early June "rarities" included a Little Stint amongst over 500 Sanderlings from the 1st to the 3rd, only the twelfth ever spring record of the species, and a male summer plumaged Snow Bunting on the 4th, the first June record since 1950. The second half of June also provided notable records, with 14 Crossbills on the 19th, the first June Siskin since 1973 and on the 24th another Hobby, and the Reserve's 5th record of Mediterranean Gull.

A variety of sea-birds were recorded with two Manx Shearwaters and 20 Kittiwakes on the 4th, followed by another 30 Kittiwakes on the 5th, eight Gannets on the 29th, three Red-breasted Mergansers on the 24th, an impressive maximum of 130 Common Scoter on the 26th and two Velvet Scoter on the 30th. Unfortunately, a combination of weather and predation meant that for the second year, the Little Terns failed to hatch even one egg; foxes also drastically reduced the breeding success of the Ringed Plovers.

July – September

With prevailing south-westerly winds and low pressure systems constantly tracking through, conditions during July were mild and wet; the wettest July since records began in 1973.

Passage wader migration got underway with a Spotted Redshank on the 2nd, and another on the 5th. A single Snipe flew south on the 7th and there were 13 Whimbrel and a Black-tailed Godwit on the 9th. A Green Sandpiper was present on the 16th and 17th and there were seven Black-tailed Godwits and a Ruff on the 24th. But pride of place goes to the Stone Curlew seen on the New Saltmarsh on the 16th, the tenth Reserve record and only the third County record this decade.

Noteworthy migrant passerine records included the second earliest ever autumn Redstart on the 9th, the first Willow Tit of the year on the 12th and an early Corn Bunting on the 14th. The first returning Wheatear and Yellow Wagtails (three) were recorded on the 16th. Swift passage peaked with 5000 south on the 11th and 4000 on the 22nd. The fourth Hobby of the year was seen briefly on the 3rd and returning Marsh Harriers were present on the 13th and 27th.

The first week of August was quiet with four Little Ringed Plovers on the 1st, five Green Sandpipers on the 2nd, two Black Terns on the 6th and 12 Avocets (the only record of the year) on the 7th, comprising the best of the records. Altogether 26 species of waders were recorded during August including 30 Snipe on the 9th, up to 11 Greenshank, 7 Curlew Sandpiper and Spotted Redshank and three Little Stint. A Wood Sandpiper was present on three days, and numbers of shore waders increased dramatically; 1500 Bar-tailed Godwit on the 27th and 16,000 Knot and 11,000 Oystercatcher on the 28th.

Sandwich Tern numbers peaked mid-month with 400 and 500 on the 13th and 14th respectively, and other high counts for terns were 50 Commons on the 6th and 21st, 15 Arctics on the 6th and 10th and 200 "Comemics" on the 14th and 27th. Occasional Little and Black Terns were also recorded during the month. With the terns came the skuas, the majority of which were Arctic, up to 13 were recorded on any one day. There were smaller numbers of Great Skuas (three on the 16th and two on the 20th) and single Pomarine Skuas on the 22nd and 25th.

Other migrants were moving south through the Reserve in good numbers. Particularly noticeable were the hirundines with up to 600 Swallows, 300 House Martins and 50 Sand Martins daily. Swifts were still moving through with up to 200 on some days. Other migrants included a maximum of 30 Yellow Wagtails two Pied Flycatchers, three Redstarts, six Whinchats and 40 Wheatears. A Wood Warbler was caught and ringed on the 30th and other passerine records included up to 25 Mistle Thrushes, the first Long-tailed Tit of the year on the 19th and an early Fieldfare on the 26th. Six or seven Marsh Harriers passed through the Reserve during the month and there was an early Hen Harrier on the 13th, but the most remarkable record for August occurred on the 10th, when all three species of Woodpecker were on the Reserve, Lesser Spotted being the first record for the Observatory.

September was a very dry month, once again dominated by south-westerlies. The 2nd-6th saw large numbers of birds moving through the Reserve, most notably hirundines, with over 10,000 Swallows and 1000 House Martins south during these four days. This period also saw the tail-end of the Swift passage, with daily maxima of 40 birds south and on the 3rd an estimated 200 Willow Warblers, 100 Whitethroats and smaller numbers of the other common warblers were on the Reserve.

The autumn wader passage was still at its peak and monthly maxima included 20 Whimbrel (1st) 14 Common Sandpiper (2nd), eight Ruff and seven Curlew Sandpipers (3rd), 15 Black-tailed Godwits (6th) and eight Little Stints (19th). A Wood Sandpiper was present on the 1st and 3rd, a Purple Sandpiper was seen on the 23rd and the Reserve's fourth ever Pectoral Sandpiper was recorded on the 21st.

Maximum counts on the sea accompanied a brief spell of northerlies mid-month, with 200+ Gannets, 46 Arctic Skuas, 18 Manx Shearwaters and six Great Skuas on the 14th, 51 Fulmars on the 15th. Sandwich Terns (maximum 400) and Common Terns (maximum 80) were present all month, with a few Arctic Terns (up to 10) and two single Black Terns. Notable gull records were a Mediterranean Gull on the 3rd, a summer-plumaged adult Sabine's Gull on the 21st, 24th and 26th, and seven Little Gulls (22nd).

Finch numbers began to build up during the second half of the month, with excellent Siskin numbers (maximum of 70 on the 18th), and Linnet flocks of over 100 were seen on two occasions. Highlights were a Crossbill flying over on the 18th, and an early Snow Bunting on the 16th. Other rarities for the month were the Observatory's first record of Scarlet Rosefinch (a female or immature) caught and ringed on the 18th, an immature Spoonbill present on the Mere from the 10th to the 19th, a Wryneck in the West Dunes (13th), a Red-Breasted Flycatcher at Shoveler's (15th), an immature Red-necked Grebe on Mill Pond (15th and 16th), Red-backed Shrike at Mead's Outpost (16th-19th and 24th) with a Jay (29th) completed an excellent months records.

October – December

October began mild and dry with predominantly south-westerly winds. A spell of easterlies accompanied by foggy conditions mid-month resulted in a series of major falls.

The most numerous migrants were the thrushes with 600 Fieldfares, 200 Redwings and 100 Song Thrushes on the 12th with Redwing numbers increasing to 500 by the 16th. On the 21st-22nd, 500 redwings and 200 Blackbirds were recorded along with a major influx of Goldcrests with an estimated 1600 present. The largest falls occurred on the 24th-25th with maximum counts of 2000 Fieldfares, 800 each of Blackbirds and

Redwings and 400 Song Thrushes.

Other winter visitors arriving at this time included over 300 Twite and 60 Brambling (16th), three Lapland Buntings and 14 Snow Buntings (21st) and 63 Siskins (24th). Other migrants present included Redstart, Ring Ouzel and Pied Flycatcher and a variety of warblers including three Yellow-browed Warblers on the 17th. Bearded Tits were recorded on several dates and a maximum of ten on 2nd more than doubled the previous highest daily total of four.

Seabirds were present in small numbers with highlights of 12 Little Gulls on 16th and two Black-throated Divers and eight Little Auks on 30th. All five common owl species were recorded and other raptor records included Marsh Harrier on 1st and Peregrine on 16th. A few passage waders, like Spotted Redshank, Curlew Sandpiper and Little Stint were still around but commoner waders were present in large numbers, such as Knot (30,000), Grey Plover (4,000) and Dunlin (3,000). Wildfowl numbers also increased with 1,500 each of Brent Geese and Wigeon and 1000 Mallard as well as smaller, but no less impressive, totals of Pintail (30) and Shoveler (15). The first Whooper Swans arrived on 28th but the most unusual wildfowl record was the Reserve's second Ruddy Duck, which stopped briefly on the Mere on 26th.

October is often a month when the unexpected turns up and 1988 was no exception. The most unusual was the Reserve's first (and only Britain's fifth) Northern Waterthrush. This skulking American vagrant was trapped in the East Dunes on the 22nd and was the first appearance of this species on the British mainland. On the 15th-16th the Reserve played host to its fourth ever Richard's Pipit and its sixth Spotted Crake appeared briefly on the 27th. Other scarce visitors were the Reserve's second Lesser Spotted Woodpecker (5th-9th), Shorelark (29th), Slavonian Grebe (30th) and single Waxwings on 29th and 30th.

Westerly winds dominated November but, rather surprisingly, resulted in a monthly rainfall of only half the November mean. Temperatures remained mild until a cold spell at the end of the month.

One of the main features of November was the marked southerly passage of larks, pipits and buntings. Maximum counts included 134 Siskins (10th), 100 Skylarks, 70 Meadow Pipits, 12 Rock Pipits, 100 Chaffinches and 45 Reed Buntings (11th) and 55 Bramblings and 100 Greenfinches (12th). Also recorded during this period were Lapland Buntings (maximum of four on 14th) and Snow Buntings (18 on 12th) Waxwings were also a feature with one or two recorded on nine days with at least ten birds on the 13th. Late migrants included Crossbill (on the 6th), Black Redstart (9th-10th), two Stonechats and a Ring Ouzel (11th) and single Firecrests (9th and 20th).

Interesting wader records included up to six Woodcock, two Jack Snipe and a late Greenshank (17th). Winter wildfowl included Whooper Swans on several dates, five Barnacle Geese flying north on the 8th and up to 250 Pink-footed Geese. Raptors were well represented with all five common owl species, up to three Merlin and two Hen Harriers. Sea-watching produced regular sightings of Eider, Long-tailed Duck, Common Scoter, Red-breasted Merganser and Red-throated Divers and other species included Gannets, Little Gulls, Kittiwakes (186 on the 8th), two Little Auks (3rd and 26th) and late Arctic Skuas (3rd and 14th).

During December, high pressure systems moving in off the Atlantic brought continuing mild and dry conditions. With only 17.9mm of rain, this was the driest December since records began in 1973 and the overnight temperature only dropped twice below freezing. The sea provided some interest with regular Red-throated Divers, a single Black-throated Diver (7th), small numbers of Eider, Long-tailed Duck, Common Scoter and Red-breasted Merganser.

Wildfowl numbers remained fairly high, however, with 1,500 Brent Geese and 1,000 Mallard and Wigeon regularly seen out on the mudflats with smaller numbers of Pink-footed Geese.

The generally mild conditions did not concentrate the feeding flocks of passerines. Sixty or so Twite were present for most of the month and there were up to 15 Corn Buntings and 120 Greenfinches. Scarce passerine visitors were Siskin (maximum of five on 10th), Snow Buntings (26 on 4th) and Lapland Buntings (2 on 15th and 3 on

16th). Low passerine numbers probably accounted for few raptor records. Most of the Waxwings had moved on and the only records for the month were of singles on the 11th and 17th



Gibraltar Point Observatory Ringing Report 1988

Compiled by A W Paul

On reflection, ringing in 1988 can be divided into three distinct periods. The first five months of the year produced low numbers of birds ringed (215), followed by five months of high numbers (3816), and the year ending again with low numbers (78) during the last two months. The reason for the low numbers during the early and late parts of the year may be, to some degree, the mild winters that we have experienced over the last two seasons. This mild weather has allowed birds to continue to find food inland for most of the winter and so large concentrations of birds have not been found on coastal sites. This was reflected in the number of finches ringed during 1988. Only Redpoll numbers showed an increase of any significant size over the 1987 totals, while the most notable decrease was found in Greenfinch numbers, which showed a drop of 76% on the 1987 total. Although many factors go to make up the fluctuations within wintering populations of birds, it is apparent that these milder winters are, to some extent, responsible for the lower numbers of birds trapped along the coastal strip.

The total number of seventy species caught in 1988 is one more than the 1987 total, and it is interesting to compare the differences. Fifteen species caught in 1987 did not appear in the 1988 ringing totals, while fourteen species ringed in 1988 were not caught during 1987. Most noticeable of the ones missing in 1988 is Skylark, where neither adult nor pullus was ringed.

The highlights of the year must be the five new species that were added to the Observatory ringing list. Two of these species were ringed on the BTO ringing course, a Black-tailed Godwit and an Arctic Tern. Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Scarlet Rosefinch and Northern Waterthrush were the other new species, the latter being the fifth British record and the first on the British mainland. It has been stressed before how important it is to have visiting ringers at the Observatory and these last three species were all trapped by visitors.

Ringing is often a means of checking the rise or decline of certain species. This has been shown by the dramatic changes in the Tree Sparrow population at Gibraltar Point. Over a period of ten years there has been a decrease of 97% in the number of Tree Sparrows ringed here. This seems to be in line with the national trend and indeed, after talking to a German ringer, it appears to be a European trend. It would be interesting to discover if a real loss in numbers has taken place or whether birds have moved into new areas with more suitable habitats.

To end my report I must make my usual statement in thanking all visiting ringers in 1988. During the year sixty-five ringers helped boost the total number of birds ringed by 14% over the 1987 total. This total includes the participants in the BTO ringing course, two of whose members came from Italy, so maintaining our record of visiting ringers from overseas.

Gibraltar Point Bird Observatory Ringing Totals for 1988

SPECIES	RINGED			RECOVERED		
	FG Total	Pull Total	1988 Total	Grand Total	1988	Grand
Sparrowhawk	4	—	4	47	—	5
Ringed Plover	7	—	7	623	—	8
Knot	15	—	15	131	—	1
Dunlin	68	—	68	693	—	10
Woodcock	1	—	1	48	—	2
Black-tailed Godwit	1	—	1	1*	—	—
Bar-tailed Godwit	10	—	10	10	—	—
Black-headed Gull	1	—	1	86	—	3
Arctic Tern	1	—	1	1*	—	—
Woodpigeon	7	2	9	202	—	7
Turtle Dove	1	—	1	102	—	1
Cuckoo	6	—	6	224	—	10
Long-eared Owl	2	—	2	23	—	2
Kingfisher	1	—	1	36	—	1
Green Woodpecker	1	—	1	5	—	—
Great Spotted Woodpecker	2	—	2	36	—	1
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	1	—	1	1*	—	—
Sand Martin	2	—	2	36	—	—
Swallow	152	28	180	5892	—	35

continued
SPECIES

	<i>RINGED</i>			<i>RECOVERED</i>		
	<i>FG</i>	<i>Pull</i>	<i>1988</i>	<i>Grand</i>	<i>1988</i>	<i>Grand</i>
	<i>Total</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Total</i>		
House Martin	1	—	1	38	—	—
Meadow Pipit	29	—	29	1406	2	14
Yellow Wagtail	1	—	1	31	—	—
Wren	228	—	228	2748	1	19
Dunnock	409	—	409	10642	—	86
Robin	169	—	169	3093	—	32
Nightingale	1	—	1	14	—	1
Redstart	14	—	14	1419	—	10
Whinchat	13	—	13	372	—	—
Stonechat	2	—	2	34	—	—
Wheatear	8	—	8	285	—	2
Blackbird	306	—	306	12156	2	272
Fieldfare	7	—	7	851	—	23
Song Thrush	134	—	134	4584	1	70
Redwing	43	—	43	1495	—	16
Mistle Thrush	4	—	4	202	—	10
Grasshopper Warbler	2	—	2	16	—	—
Sedge Warbler	49	—	49	1015	—	6
Reed Warbler	63	—	63	1303	—	12
Lesser Whitethroat	131	—	131	1869	—	1
Whitethroat	202	—	202	6790	—	27
Garden Warbler	50	—	50	1382	—	2
Blackcap	165	—	165	2363	1	11
Yellow-browed Warbler	1	—	1	9	—	—
Wood Warbler	1	—	1	43	—	—
Chiffchaff	68	—	68	685	—	5
Willow Warbler	384	—	384	11745	—	22
Goldcrest	660	—	660	4076	4	23
Firecrest	1	—	1	46	—	—
Spotted Flycatcher	21	—	21	469	—	3
Pied Flycatcher	3	—	3	1387	—	14
Coal Tit	10	—	10	101	—	—
Blue Tit	176	63	239	4264	3	72
Great Tit	68	22	90	1385	1	22
Treecreeper	3	—	3	40	—	—
Magpie	1	—	1	93	—	12
Starling	38	—	38	3639	1	107
House Sparrow	11	—	11	7687	—	89
Tree Sparrow	2	3	5	4500	—	23
Chaffinch	23	—	23	1700	—	16
Brambling	1	—	1	593	—	1
Greenfinch	19	—	19	3418	—	40
Goldfinch	30	—	30	2594	—	23
Siskin	7	—	7	93	—	2
Linnet	27	—	27	3102	—	15
Redpoll	83	—	83	2934	—	37
Scarlet Rosefinch	1	—	1	1*	—	—
Bullfinch	24	—	24	769	1	17
Northern Waterthrush	1	—	1	1*	—	—
Yellowhammer	6	—	6	755	—	7
Reed Bunting	37	—	37	3356	—	14
Totals	3991	118	4109	125833	17	1323

Notes: Only species ringed or recovered in 1988 are included within the table

COUNTY RINGING REPORT 1988

Compiled by K. Winfield

1988 was an average year with 24,288 birds ringed (21,958 full grown, 2,330 pulli) of 130 species. Six of these were new species since 1979, when this series of reports began. The new species were Arctic Tern, Woodlark, Red-flanked Bluetail, Radde's Warbler, Scarlet Rosefinch and Northern Waterthrush, making a total of 185 species ringed over the period. Some species showed an increase in the number ringed, but on the whole this reflects an increase in ringing effort rather than in the populations. Examples of this are Gulls, Skylarks, and Sand Martins. Gulls are now regularly cannon-netted on Boston tip; most Skylarks are caught by drag-netting and the number of ringers braving the dark and cold nights of winter to do this have increased; and most of the known colonies of Sand Martins are again now ringed on a regular basis. However, there are now four sites in the County taking part in the B.T.O. Constant Effort Sites Survey, and the results from these sites do indicate true increases and decreases within populations. Hopefully more ringers will begin working Constant Effort Sites in 1989.

1988 was a good year for autumn migration, and anyone who was involved in the fall of migrants on the East Coast in October will not be able to forget this exciting time. At two coastal sites, Theddlethorpe Dunes and Gibraltar Point, over 1,500 birds were ringed in the three-day period 21st to 23rd October. These included 7 Sparrowhawks, plus 1 with a Norwegian ring (awaiting details), 186 Robins, 237 Blackbirds, 70 Song Thrushes, 84 Redwings and 710 Goldcrests.

Particularly interesting recoveries of ringed birds include a Cormorant from The Netherlands to Skegness, which is only the third from The Netherlands to Britain, a Knot ringed at Wainfleet which was found in Canada, two Barn Owls which moved distances of 93 km and 107 km, and a long distance Wren which travelled 169 km from Kent.

Note that the Grand Total column contains amended figures for birds ringed since 1979, thanks to S. Britton who supplied totals of birds ringed by the Mid-Lincs. Ringing Group in earlier years. If any other ringer or group has totals since 1979 which they know have not been included, I would be very pleased to receive them so that these tables are as accurate as we can make them.

Once again, I thank all the ringers who supplied their totals for this year and also all the people who sent in details of ringed birds they had found. This is particularly useful because, as yet, there is no other way we can get this information.



COUNTY RINGING TOTALS IN 1988

SPECIES	1988 FG	1988 PULL	1988 TOTAL	1979-88 GRAND TOTAL	SPECIES	1988 FG	1988 PULL	1988 TOTAL	1979-88 GRAND TOTAL
Little Grebe	-	-	-	6	*Tree Pipit	4	-	4	78
Great Crested Grebe	-	-	-	13	Meadow Pipit	34	23	57	1156
Manx Shearwater	4	-	4	17	Rock Pipit	-	-	-	7
Loach's Petrel	-	-	-	5	Yellow Wagtail	4	-	4	90
Shag	-	-	-	1	Grey Wagtail	2	1	3	544
Grey Heron	-	61	61	417	Pied Wagtail	7	15	22	54
Mute Swan	11	-	11	151	Wren	860	2	862	5727
Greylag Goose	-	-	-	19	Duncock	1280	37	1317	13903
Canada Goose	-	-	-	59	Robin	957	7	964	7495
Brent Goose	4	-	4	18	Nightingale	7	-	7	75
Shelduck	-	-	-	10	Thrush Nightingale	-	-	-	1
Wigeon	-	-	-	32	Bluethroat	-	-	-	2
Gadwall	-	-	-	22	Red-flanked Bluetail	1	-	1	11
Teal	1	-	1	53	Black Redstart	-	-	-	-
Mallard	2	-	2	2,046	Redstart	23	-	23	507
Pintail	-	-	-	2	Whinchat	13	-	13	196
Shoveler	-	-	-	9	Stonechat	3	-	3	10
Pochard	-	-	-	40	Wheatear	9	-	9	114
Tufted Duck	-	-	-	478	Ring Ouzel	3	-	3	22
Scaup	-	-	-	1	Blackbird	1697	116	1813	24640
Marsh Harrier	-	-	-	7	Fieldfare	14	-	14	903
Montagu's Harrier	-	7	7	9	Song Thrush	526	24	550	8235
Sparrowhawk	32	2	34	85	Redwing	214	-	214	2659
Kestrel	22	24	46	262	Mistle Thrush	11	3	14	224
Merlin	1	-	1	3	Cetti's Warbler	-	-	-	1
Hobby	-	-	-	1	Grasshopper Warbler	8	-	8	132
Red-legged Partridge	-	-	-	25	Sedge Warbler	174	-	174	2372
Grey Partridge	-	-	-	1	Marsh Warbler	-	-	-	2
Pheasant	-	-	-	28	Reed Warbler	216	28	244	3844
Water Rail	-	-	-	9	Booted Warbler	-	-	-	1
Moorhen	5	-	5	113	Icterine Warbler	1	-	1	14
Coot	-	-	-	464	Sardinian Warbler	-	-	-	2
Oystercatcher	282	-	282	4163	Subalpine Warbler	-	-	-	1
Little Ringed Plover	3	-	3	55	Barred Warbler	-	-	-	31
Ringed Plover	14	6	20	582	Lesser Whitethroat	257	-	257	2842
Golden Plover	5	-	5	15	Whitethroat	557	-	557	7099
Grey Plover	60	-	60	1041	Garden Warbler	156	-	156	1677
Lapwing	9	5	14	114	Blackcap	586	14	600	5242
Knot	1890	-	1890	4140	Greenish Warbler	-	-	-	2
Sanderling	1	-	1	20	Arctic Warbler	-	-	-	3
Little Stint	1	-	1	11	Pallas's Warbler	-	-	-	2
Curlew Sandpiper	-	-	-	4	Yellow-browed Warbler	2	-	2	16
Purple Sandpiper	-	-	-	4	Radde's Warbler	1	-	1	1
Dunlin	827	-	827	11181	Wood Warbler	1	-	1	26
Ruff	1	-	1	69	Chiffchaff	218	12	230	1342
Jack Snipe	4	-	4	24	Willow Warbler	1115	63	1178	15401
Snipe	16	-	16	158	Goldcrest	1545	-	1545	7478
Woodcock	10	-	10	81	Firecrest	3	-	3	85
Black-tailed Godwit	5	-	5	7	Spotted Flycatcher	48	6	54	769
Bar-tailed Godwit	236	-	236	1355	Red-breasted Flycatcher	-	-	-	6
Whimbrel	3	-	3	6	Pied Flycatcher	8	-	8	412
Spotted Redshank	56	-	56	167	Bearded Tit	-	-	-	19
Redshank	147	-	147	1289	Long-tailed Tit	178	-	178	2169
Greenshank	-	-	-	15	Marsh Tit	12	-	12	87
Green Sandpiper	5	-	5	15	Willow Tit	48	-	48	748
Wood Sandpiper	-	-	-	2	Coal Tit	128	40	168	1118
Common Sandpiper	-	-	-	46	Blue Tit	1362	695	2057	18261
Turnstone	40	-	40	445	Great Tit	749	332	1141	9045
Black-headed Gull	306	41	347	4003	Nuthatch	4	-	4	12
Common Gull	16	-	16	288	Treecreeper	57	-	57	410
Herring Gull	249	-	249	466	Golden Oriole	-	-	-	1
Lesser Black-backed Gull	-	-	-	2	Red-backed Shrike	1	-	1	6
Great Black-backed Gull	44	-	44	76	Great Grey Shrike	1	-	1	4
Sandwich Tern	-	-	-	38	Jay	9	-	9	134
Common Tern	-	27	27	337	Maggie	2	-	2	90
Arctic Tern	1	-	1	1	Jackdaw	1	-	1	65
Little Tern	-	7	7	34	Rook	2	211	213	1173
Guillemot	-	-	-	3	Carion Crow	-	1	1	18
Razorbill	-	-	-	3	Starling	755	4	759	21006
Little Auk	1	-	1	8	House Sparrow	229	-	229	2203
Puffin	-	-	-	1	Tree Sparrow	76	20	96	4644
Stock Dove	1	10	11	370	Chaffinch	346	3	349	4562
Wood Pigeon	13	19	32	374	Brambling	4	-	4	940
Collared Dove	4	9	13	255	Greenfinch	720	-	720	13248
Turtle Dove	4	2	6	253	Goldfinch	71	5	76	2207
Cuckoo	8	-	8	122	Siskin	15	-	15	194
Barn Owl	8	70	78	174	Linnet	169	8	177	5384
Little Owl	2	4	6	77	Twite	48	-	48	648
Tawny Owl	9	1	10	161	Redpoll	190	-	190	5065
Long-eared Owl	4	-	4	49	Crossbill	2	-	2	22
Short-eared Owl	1	-	1	10	Scarlet Rosefinch	1	-	1	1
Nightjar	-	-	-	2	Bullfinch	277	4	281	3860
Swift	21	29	50	222	Hawfinch	-	-	-	1
Kingfisher	11	-	11	113	American Redstart	-	-	-	1
Wryneck	-	-	-	13	Northern Waterthrush	1	-	1	1
Green Woodpecker	1	-	1	15	Lapland Bunting	16	-	16	317
Great Spotted Woodpecker	4	2	6	64	Snow Bunting	-	-	-	59
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	1	-	1	13	Yellowhammer	85	-	85	3247
Woodlark	-	-	-	3	Reed Bunting	253	-	253	3904
Skyllark	458	3	461	1919	Red-headed Bunting	-	-	-	1
Sand Martin	335	-	335	3606	Corn Bunting	-	-	-	259
Swallow	257	263	520	15310					
House Martin	125	-	125	841					
					TOTALS	21958	2330	24288	280838

SELECTED RINGING RECOVERIES RECEIVED DURING 1988

Key to the symbols and terms used in the following list of recoveries:

Arrangement of entry: Recoveries are arranged by species. The ringing details are given on the first line and the recovery date on the second.

Age when ringed: This is given according to the "EURING" code. The figures DO NOT represent age in years.

- 1 = Pullus, nestling or chick.
- 2 = Full grown, but year of hatching unknown
- 3 = Hatched during calendar year of ringing
- 4 = Hatched before current year, exact age unknown
- 5 = Hatched during previous calendar year
- 6 = Hatched 2 or more calendar years before, exact age unknown
- 8 = Hatched 3 or more calendar years before, exact age unknown
- 12 = Hatched more than 5 calendar years before, exact age unknown

J = Still in juvenile plumage when ringed

Sex: M = Male F = Female

Manner of recovery:

v = caught or trapped

vv = ring number read in the field

+ = shot or killed by man

x = found dead or dying

? = manner of recovery unknown

Movements:

Where given, distances and directions are approximate

KNOT

4M 10. 9.83 Wainfleet
+ 2. 7.88 Borup Fiord,
Ellesmere Island,
North West Territory,
Canada

Wash-ringed Knot: 1 to France 1 to Denmark
Wash-caught Knot: 1 from Iceland 10 from Scotland 2 from Cleveland

DUNLIN

Lincs.-ringed birds include 1 to East Germany 1 to Iceland and 3 to Sweden
Birds to Lincs. 1 from Finland

BAR-TAILED GODWIT

6F 14. 2.86 Slikken van Dortsman,
Netherlands
v 14. 8.87 Wainfleet

GREEN SANDPIPER

4 23. 8.82 Wisbech S.F.
x 19. 8.87 Hameau du Rivage,
France

BLACK-HEADED GULL

Lincs.-ringed birds include 5 to Denmark
Birds to Lincs. include 1 from East Germany

COMMON GULL

5 14. 1.87 Boston
x 20. 1.88 Jylland, Denmark 608 km WNW
8 23. 1.88 Boston
v 26. 7.88 Nord-Trøndelag,
Norway 1492 km NWN

HERRING GULL

Birds caught on Boston Tip include 3 from Scotland, 2 from Suffolk and 1 from Yorkshire

SANDWICH TERN

4 10. 9.87 Leverton
+ 15. 3.88 Albreda, Gambia

GUILLEMOT

4 12.11.84 Gibraltar Point
x 11. 1.88 Deal, Kent 219 km

BARN OWL

1 11. 6.88 Hathersage,
Derbyshire
x 8.10.88 Thurlby, Bourne 107 km
1 19. 6.88 Sleaford
x 8.11.88 Milton Keynes,
Buckinghamshire 93 km

SAND MARTIN

3J 31. 7.88 Hagworthingham
v 21. 8.88 Icklesham, Sussex 258 km
4 6. 8.87 Hagworthingham
v 27. 8.88 Isle of Grain, Kent 198 km
4 1. 8.88 Spalding
v 27. 8.88 Isle of Grain, Kent 161 km
4 12. 6.88 Radley, Oxfordshire
v 23. 7.88 Spalding 143 km

MEADOW PIPIT

4 10. 9.88 Gibraltar Point
x 11.11.88 Cadiz, Spain 1888 km
3 25. 9.87 Gibraltar Point
v 20. 9.88 Arnhem, Netherlands 294 km WREN
4 3. 4.88 Dartford, Kent
v 16.10.88 Benington Marsh 69 km

CORMORANT

1 4. 6.85 Oostvaardersplassen,
Netherlands
x 31. 1.87 Skegness 345 km WNW

GREY HERON

1 8. 5.87 Laughton Forest
x 30. 7.87 Blencogo, Cumbria 220 km
1 8. 5.87 Laughton Forest
x 30. 3.88 Preston, Lancashire 125 km

SPARROWHAWK

1 7. 7.81 Alesund, Norway
x 18. 2.87 Lincoln 1099 km SSW
3M 7.10.87 Zeeland, Netherlands
v 27.10.87 Theddlethorpe
Dunes 302 km NW

MERLIN

1 19. 6.88 Stanhope, Durham
x 1.12.88 West Pinchbeck 244 km NE

OYSTERCATCHER

4 19.10.85 Leverton
x 20. 2.88 Somme, France 325 km
8 09. 2.86 Friskney
x 10.11.87 Wieringen,
Netherlands 314 km
6 20. 2.88 Friskney
x 22. 8.88 More Og, Romsdal,
Norway 1129 km

GREY PLOVER

3 10. 9.87 Leverton
+ 3.11.87 Baie de Lancieux,
France

BLACKBIRD

Lincs.-ringed birds include 1 each to Denmark, West Germany and Finland, 2 to Sweden
Birds to Lincs. include 1 from Sweden

REDWING

4 9.8.84 Gibraltar Point
x 8.7.88 Helsinki, Finland 1844 km

SEDGE WARBLER

4M 14.8.86 Finisterre, France
v 11.7.87 Donington on Bain 669 km
3J 16.9.87 Theddlethorpe Dunes
x 29.9.87 Loiret, France 623 km SSE

WHITETHROAT

3 31.8.86 Beachy Head,
East Sussex
v 24.4.88 Theddlethorpe Dunes 293 km S

BLACKCAP

3F 27.9.87 Beachy Head,
East Sussex
v 29.8.88 Temple Wood, Bourne 238 km S

WILLOW WARBLER

4F 6.8.87 Stock, Essex
v 21.5.88 Claxby 203 km
3 22.8.87 Skegness
v 28.4.88 Hamsterley Forest,
Durham 225 km
3 30.8.85 Gibraltar Point
v 2.5.88 Knapdale, Strathclyde 500 km

GOLDCREST

4M 21.10.88 Theddlethorpe Dunes
v 22.10.88 Gibraltar Point 30 km (1 day)
3 21.10.88 Spurn Point
v 22.10.88 Gibraltar Point 56 km (1 day)
3M 22.10.88 Theddlethorpe Dunes
v 30.10.88 Widmerpool,
Nottinghamshire 104 km (8 days)
3 22.10.88 Gibraltar Point
x 31.10.88 Surrey 193 km (9 days)
3 23.10.88 Northumberland
v 24.10.88 Gibraltar Point 275 km (1 day)
3 23.10.88 Gibraltar Point
v 25.10.88 Norfolk 60 km (2 days)

The above birds were part of the fall of Goldcrests on the East Coast in October and are included to show how far and fast they can move in a few days.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER

3 15.9.84 Beachy Head,
East Sussex
x 15.7.88 Pinchbeck 233 km

STARLING

Lincs.-ringed birds include 1 each to Denmark, France, Holland, Poland, Russia and Sweden
Birds to Lincs. 1 from Belgium

CHAFFINCH

4F 15.2.87 Ancaster
v 1.5.88 Hedmark, Norway 1207 km
4F 27.10.87 Theddlethorpe Dunes
x 31.4.88 Schles-Holstein,
West Germany 646 km E

REDPOLL

3JM 25.8.86 Theddlethorpe Dunes
x 8.1.88 Liege, Belgium 463 km SE

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