

BIRDS (Other than Anatidæ) RECORDED AT THE NEW GROUNDS

THE following records refer to birds seen between 1st April, 1949 and 30th April, 1950. They do not purport to comprise a full list of the species of wild birds seen in the locality, such as was given in the Second Annual Report, but are restricted to the more unusual species, except where recent observations on familiar species are at variance with those previously recorded.

Principal contributors may be identified by their initials, as follows: H. J. B.—H. J. Boyd, S. T. J.—S. T. Johnstone, D. F. McK.—D. F. McKinney, P. S.—P. Scott.

JACKDAW (*Corvus monedula*).—Present throughout the year, though not plentiful October–December.

STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*).—No evidence of breeding. Seen in all months but in large numbers only from late January to March.

HAWFINCH (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*).—One near central pill-box 12th January (D. F. McK.), one in Decoy Wood 16th January (S. T. J.), and another 30th March (D. F. McK.).

GOLDFINCH (*Carduelis carduelis*).—One pair nested in Orchard. Only a few seen, at irregular intervals, at other times of year.

LESSER REDPOLL (*Carduelis flammea*).—One in Rushy Pen 13th February (S. T. J.).

LINNET (*Carduelis cannabina*).—Very few seen, and only one winter record: small flocks reappeared at the end of March.

BULLFINCH (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*).—Single birds often seen in Decoy Wood, and three 13th January, but no signs of nesting.

BRAMBLING (*Fringilla montifringilla*).—Four 28th November, nine 29th, five or more 30th, all near Goose House (H. J. B.), one 2nd December (H. J. B., M. J. Wotton), one in Big Pen 18th January (H. J. B.).

REED-BUNTING (*Emberiza schœniclus*).—Bred in Rushy Pen, and fairly numerous along nearby rhines, but not resident—only two seen in December and one in January.

TREE-SPARROW (*Passer montanus*).—Seen throughout year, but breeding still not proved.

MEADOW-PIPIT (*Anthus pratensis*).—Absent for most of December and January. Large passage movements apparent on several days in February and March.

[WATER-PIPIT (*Anthus spinoletta spinoletta*).—A pipit seen on the Dumbles 25th February was believed to be of this form (H. J. B., D. F. McK., D. Wood). Seen only at distances in excess of 30 yards, but in sunlight and with $\times 10$ and $\times 12$ binoculars and $\times 25$ telescope, it attracted attention by its larger size (about half an inch longer) as compared with nearby Meadow-Pipits and its Rock-Pipit-like stance. No streaking of the upper parts was evident: these were markedly greyer in tone than those of the Meadow-Pipits, especially on the nape. The breast was very pale with few (H. J. B.) or scarcely any (D. F. McK., D. W.) streaks, and the throat whitish. There was a pronounced whitish eye-stripe. In flight the outer tail-feathers appeared white. The colours of the soft parts could not be made out (H. J. B. thought the legs muddy), nor was a call-note distinguished.

- The bird was in view for only a few minutes and subsequent search was rewarded only by a brief glimpse obtained by H. J. B., which added nothing to the details previously noted.]
- ROCK-PIPIT (*Anthus spinoletta petrosus*).—One near Frampton Breakwater 15th January, two on Dumbles 3rd March (H. J. B.).
- GREY WAGTAIL (*Motacilla cinerea*).—One in decoy 11th October (S. T. J.)
One seen several times on canal during December (D. F. McK.).
- WHITE WAGTAIL (*Motacilla alba alba*).—Four on Dumbles 19th April, 1950 (H. J. B., D. F. McK.).
- PIED WAGTAIL (*Motacilla alba yarrellii*).—A nest with five young in Decoy Wood 16th May (S. T. J.). A few in pens during winter, much more plentiful on Dumbles (40 on 5th February the most noted).
- NUTHATCH (*Sitta europaea*).—One in Decoy Wood 29th March (D. F. McK.).
- MARSH-TIT (*Parus palustris*).—One seen in decoy 18th April (S. T. J.).
- LONG-TAILED TIT (*Aegithalos caudatus*).—At least one pair nesting in Decoy Wood 1949 and 1950. Small parties seen frequently in winter (c. 20th–29th November (P. S.) the largest).
- SPOTTED FLYCATCHER (*Muscicapa striata*).—Seven nests found in Decoy Wood (S. T. J.). First seen 16th May.
- GOLDCREST (*Regulus regulus*).—One 1st April, 1949 (S. T. J.).
- CHIFFCHAFF (*Phylloscopus collybita*).—Nested in Rushy Pen: first nest, with three eggs, found 30th April, 1949 (S. T. J.). First seen 7th April, 1949 and 21st March, 1950.
- GRASSHOPPER-WARBLER (*Locustella naevia*).—One seen in decoy 7th May, 1949 (S. T. J.) and 30th April, 1950 (H. J. B.).
- SEDGE-WARBLER (*Acrocephalus schænobænus*).—Nested in Decoy Wood (S. T. J.). First seen 7th May, 1949 and 30th April, 1950.
- BLACKCAP (*Sylvia atricapilla*).—Seen in decoy 30th April, 1950.
- WHITETHROAT (*Sylvia communis*).—A nest found in decoy 17th May (S. T. J.). First seen 26th April, 1949, 30th April, 1950.
- WHEATEAR (*Enanthe ananthe*).—Seen near Frampton Breakwater in breeding season, but no nest found. One on sea wall near Goose House 29th November (H. J. B., D. F. McK.). First seen in spring 17th March, 1950.
- WHINCHAT (*Saxicola rubetra*).—Present in Rushy Pen from 1st May through summer, but nest could not be found.
- STONECHAT (*Saxicola torquata*).—A female in the Big Pen from 27th November to 14th January.
- SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*).—One seen as late as 26th October (S. T. J.).
- HOUSE-MARTIN (*Delichon urbica*).—Latest record 18th October. Two seen 26th March (S. T. J.).
- SAND-MARTIN (*Riparia riparia*).—Last seen 18th October (S. T. J.).
- GREEN WOODPECKER (*Picus viridis*).—Not seen in winter.
- GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER (*Dendrocopos major*).—Seen occasionally in winter and spring.
- LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER (*Dendrocopos minor*).—One in Decoy Wood 26th April, 1950 (H. J. B.).
- BARN-OWL (*Tyto alba*).—At least two present throughout winter, persistently feeding in full daylight.
- PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*).—One, sometimes two, seen on Dumbles almost every day in winter.
- HOBBY (*Falco subbuteo*).—One seen 15th September (J. Knowles, R. Parkes).

- MERLIN (*Falco columbarius*).—One 10th October (S. T. J.).
- COMMON BUZZARD (*Buteo buteo*).—Single birds seen over New Grounds 9th October (S. T. J.), 31st October (S. T. J., P. S.), 4th November (S. T. J.), 25th January (M. Everitt), 29th January (P. S. *et al.*), and 19th February (P. S.).
- SPOONBILL (*Platalea leucorodia*).—One seen on mud in estuary 29th October (— Brown).
- BITTERN (*Botaurus stellaris*).—One flushed at close range from *Phragmites* west of Bottom New Piece 30th December (H. J. B.).
- Geese and Ducks: Details on pages 6 and 20, respectively.
- CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax carbo*).—Present on the estuary from August to April. The numbers in winter remained nearly constant at 12-16.
- LITTLE GREBE (*Podiceps ruficollis*).—Up to three in decoy during August. One 22nd March (D. F. McK.).
- STOCK-DOVE (*Columba anas*).—No evidence of nesting. Fairly numerous in early part of winter but very few seen from January onwards.
- BAR-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa lapponica*).—Fifty-two (eight in full breeding plumage) on Dumbles 14th May (M. J. Wotton).
- BLACK-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa limosa*).—One 17th August (M. J. Wotton), two 4th September (A. Pritchard), and 9th September (J. Knowles, R. Parkes).
- COMMON CURLEW (*Numenius arquata*).—A flock of 15 in Big Pen 2nd July (J. Yealland). Numerous throughout autumn and winter on the estuary, 390 20th February, the highest count (H. J. B.).
- WHIMBREL (*Numenius phaeopus*).—One heard 5th March (B. King).
- WOODCOCK (*Scolopax rusticola*).—One in lane 26th February (G. Percy).
- GREY PHALAROPE (*Phalaropus fulicarius*).—One on flash in Tack Piece 9th-17th November (G. Percy, C. P. A. Garnett, P. S. *et al.*).
- TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*).—Three 14th May (M. J. Wotton). Eight 8th September (J. Knowles, R. Parkes).
- KNOT (*Calidris canutus*).—Ten 17th August (M. J. Wotton), six 5th September (J. Knowles, R. Parkes), two 30th October (B. King).
- DUNLIN (*Calidris alpina*).—Present throughout winter, sometimes in large flocks, though biggest count only 350 6th February (H. J. B.).
- LITTLE STINT (*Calidris minuta*).—One 14th September (J. Knowles, R. Parkes).
- SANDERLING (*Crocethia alba*).—Twelve 14th May (M. J. Wotton). One 27th August (S. T. J.), one 5th September (J. Knowles, R. Parkes). Several among Golden Plover 13th December (D. F. McK.), five 22nd December (J. R. Justice).
- RUFF (*Philomachus pugnax*).—Two 4th September (A. Pritchard, S. T. J.), and 5th September (J. Knowles, R. Parkes). One 30th October (H. H. Davis, S. T. J., P. S.).
- COMMON SANDPIPER (*Actitis hypoleucos*).—One 14th August (S. T. J.), one 20th April, 1950, on canal (E. Overend), and two in decoy 26th and 27th April (S. T. J., D. F. McK.).
- GREEN SANDPIPER (*Tringa ochropus*).—One 21st August (S. T. J.).
- REDSHANK (*Tringa totanus*).—A flock of twenty settled in the Rushy Pen 21st August (S. T. J.). Seen infrequently on estuary in winter, no more than three at one time.
- GREENSHANK (*Tringa nebularia*).—Two 13th August (R. H. Poulding), three 21st August (H. H. Davis), two 14th September (E. Overend, A. Pritchard).

- RINGED PLOVER (*Charadrius hiaticula*).—Numerous on estuary in autumn, in small numbers at other times.
- GOLDEN PLOVER (*Pluvialis apricaria*).—Seen frequently from September to March. Largest flock recorded 142 in Tack Piece 28th February (D. F. McK.).
- GREY PLOVER (*Squatarola squatarola*).—One, in full spring plumage, 14th May (M. J. Wotton). Eight 5th September (J. Knowles, R. Parkes). One 23rd November, two 24th November (H. J. B.).
- OYSTER-CATCHER (*Haematopus ostralegus*).—One 5th September, 12th (J. Knowles R. Parkes), and 25th (S. T. J.).
- COMMON OR ARCTIC TERN (*Sterno hirundo* or *macrura*).—One 30th October (S. T. J.).
- COMMON GULL (*Larus canus*).—The large winter roost on Frampton Sands continues. On 2nd October B. King estimated not less than 20,000 present at dusk, with many still coming in from the Cotswolds.
- HERRING-GULL (*Larus argentatus*).—Only very few seen in winter.
- LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (*Larus fuscus*).—Seen irregularly through the winter: six 25th November (H. J. B.), but other mid-winter records of one to three birds only.
- GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL (*Larus marinus*).—An apparently static winter population of 25–30 on the Dumbles.
- GLAUCOUS GULL (*Larus hyperboreus*).—One, probably in third or fourth winter, seen on Dumbles 8th February (D. F. McK.), 12th February (K. Shackleton), 17th, 18th, 20th February (H. J. B., P. S.), 6th March (H. J. B., D. F. McK.), 22nd March (D. F. McK.), and 19th April (H. J. B., D. F. McK.). The specific identification is based on the large size, heavy bill, and thick-necked appearance in flight, and the mode of flying, in all of which it closely resembled a Great Black-backed Gull.
- WATER-RAIL (*Rallus aquaticus*).—One or two seen frequently in decoy and Rushy Pen during winter, and until mid-April.
- COOT (*Fulica atra*).—Single birds in decoy and Rushy Pen in December and early January. In the Rushy Pen the number increased to nine in February, but declined again in March.
- COMMON PARTRIDGE (*Perdix perdix*).—Coveys seen in autumn and winter in fields, behind sea wall, and once on the Dumbles.

RINGING OF BIRDS OTHER THAN ANATIDÆ

During the 13-month period covered by this Report 297 birds of 19 species were ringed, the majority of them being captured in a small portable trap. The numbers of each species were: 2 Starlings, 152 Greenfinches, 7 Chaffinches 1 Yellow Bunting, 6 Great Tits, 58 Blue Tits, 2 Willow-Warblers, 2 Mistle-Thrushes, 2 Song Thrushes, 13 Blackbirds, 21 Robins, 18 Hedge-Sparrows, 1 House-Martin, 1 Cuckoo, 1 Little Owl, 6 Herons, 1 Common Sandpiper, 2 Water-rails and 1 Coot.