



BIRDS (Other than Anatidæ) RECORDED AT THE NEW GROUNDS

THE following list is confined to observations made between 1st May, 1950, and 30th April, 1951, and includes notes on the common species only where of especial interest.

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

RAVEN (*Corvus corax*).—Two on Dumbles 20th December (H. B.).

HOODED CROW (*Corvus cornix*).—One on Dumbles 4th and 11th, two 12th, one 19th November; one 27th and 30th December; one 8th April (H. B., D. F. McK.).

JAY (*Garrulus glandarius*).—Two flying south over pens 9th May (P. S.).

SISKIN (*Carduelis spinus*).—One near the Patch 21st December (P. S.).

BULLFINCH (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*).—Not less than thirty in area 28th December (A. Shaw); otherwise only a few scattered records of single birds.

TREE-SPARROW (*Passer montanus*).—One pair certainly nested in Decoy Wood and at least three others believed to have done so in Decoy and Rushy Pen. A flock of about forty near headquarters in February.

TREE-PIPIT (*Anthus trivialis*).—Three 13th May (D. F. McK.). Two identified in a flock of pipits on Dumbles 19th April (D. F. McK.).

WHITE WAGTAIL (*Motacilla a. alba*).—Two on Dumbles with Yellow Wagtails 23rd April (D. F. McK.).

REED-WARBLER (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*).—One Bottom New Piece 22nd May (H. B., D. F. McK.).

SEDGE-WARBLER (*Acrocephalus schænobænus*).—Two singing in Decoy Wood and seven singing in reed-bed Bottom New Piece 22nd May (H. B., D. F. McK.), but number of breeding pairs not known.

- LESSER WHITETHROAT (*Sylvia curruca*).—One near Headquarters Cottage 8th August (H. B., D. F. McK.), one Top New Piece 31st August, and four in same place 1st September (H. B.).
- FIELDFARE (*Turdus pilaris*) and REDWING (*T. musicus*).—Seen on passage on many days in winter, largest numbers 4th November (Fieldfares predominating) and 2nd and 4th January (Redwings more plentiful).
- WHINCHAT (*Saxicola rubetra*).—One near Goose House 10th May (D. F. McK.), two same place 23rd July (H. B.), and three (adult females and two juveniles) 1st September (H. B.). One in Rushy Pen 29th April (J. Y.).
- STONECHAT (*Saxicola torquata*).—One near Patch 25th September (H. B.), the only record for the area.
- RED-SPOTTED BLUETHROAT (*Luscinia svecica svecica*).—A male seen in hawthorns near main pillbox 15th April (M. Everitt). Described as 'a robin with a blue breast with a red spot in the middle'. Seen at close range, though without binoculars. Could not be found subsequently.
- MERLIN (*Falco columbarius*).—One on Dumbles 10th May (H. B., D. F. McK.); a male 12th April (D. F. McK.).
- BUZZARD (*Buteo buteo*).—One over pens 4th June (H. B.).
- NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*).—An adult 4th September (F. R. H. Brian, E. J. B. Langhorne, H. B., P. S.), seen flying past Rushy Pen by all four observers. In flight appeared as a small heron with a short neck and rather short wings, underparts white, black of crown merging with black on mantle, wings and tail grey. The first two observers twice saw the bird at rest alongside the rhine east of the pens, once at c.30 yds. for some minutes, and were impressed by the whiteness of the underparts and the markedly yellow legs. This appears to be only the second record for the county.
- GEESE AND DUCKS.—Details on pages 7 and 21.
- MANX SHEARWATER (*Puffinus puffinus*).—One flying over river 12th September after south-westerly gale (H. B.). It was being harried by Black-headed Gulls, which repeatedly forced it down to the water and made it dive. Another, found at Uley, Glos., on 11th, was released on the river on 12th but was taken by a Peregrine within 10 minutes.
- GREATCRESTED GREBE (*Podiceps cristatus*).—One off Purton breakwater 29th October (J. Field).
- LITTLE GREBE (*Podiceps ruficollis*).—Single birds seen in Decoy on seventeen days between 8th September and 12th November, two on 15th September.
- STOCK-DOVE (*Columba oenas*).—A pair nested successfully in the Decoy Wood. Two nestlings ringed.
- TURTLE-DOVE (*Streptopelia turtur*).—Three pairs nested in Decoy Wood. Three juveniles and 2 nestlings ringed. A flock of 20 seen on Dumbles 10th May.
- BAR-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa lapponica*).—One 13th (J. P. Paige, S. T. J.), three 28th August, one 2nd September (H. B.), one 29th December to 3rd January (J. D. Powne).
- BLACK-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa limosa*).—In August: four on 13th (H. B.), nineteen 18th (J. H. P. Allan, C. N. Mallinson), three 26th (L. W. Hayward, Mrs. M. J. Morgan), twenty-three 27th, eight 28th, three 29th and

- 31st (H. B.). Five on 1st, two 2nd, one 7th September (H. B.). One 8th, five 12th April (D. F. McK.).
- CURLEW (*Numenius arquata*).—Largest flocks counted 312 31st August, c. 400 26th January (H. B.).
- WHIMBREL (*Numenius phaeopus*).—One or two seen on many days in May, July, August and September. Twenty-two, including sixteen juveniles, 10th August (H. B.).
- JACK SNIFE (*Lymnocyptes minimus*).—One 19th November (P. S.).
- TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*).—Single birds 23rd May (H. B., D. F. McK.) and 15th August (J. P. Paige, S. T. J.).
- KNOT (*Calidris canutus*).—One 26th August (L. W. Hayward, Mrs. M. J. Morgan).
- DUNLIN (*Calidris alpina*).—Most numerous in May, when c.800 present 10th and 23rd; winter numbers small.
- LITTLE STINT (*Calidris minuta*).—Two 13th (J. P. Paige, S. T. J.), one 28th August (H. B.).
- SANDERLING (*Crocethia alba*).—A flock of 40 22nd May (H. B., D. F. McK.), and more 23rd but good count impracticable; one 26th August (L. W. Hayward, Mrs. M. J. Morgan), two or three 3rd September (R. Kidwell); three 28th March (Miss M. S. van Oostveen).
- RUFF (*Philomachus pugnax*).—One 28th August (Salim Ali, H. B., P. S.), 7th September (R. Kidwell) and 29th September (H. B.).
- COMMON SANDPIPER (*Actitis hypoleucos*).—Ten 14th July, the most seen. One caught in decoy 26th April.
- GREEN SANDPIPER (*Tringa ochropus*).—One on Dumbles 14th and 27th June (H. B., D. F. McK.), one flying over Rushy Pen 15th August (J. P. Paige, S. T. J.), three Dumbles 24th April (B. King).
- REDSHANK (*Tringa totanus*).—Present throughout year, but eight 27th June the most recorded.
- GREENSHANK (*Tringa nebularia*).—Two Dumbles 13th May (D. F. McK.), single birds 18th May (L. W. Hayward), 14th July (H. B.), 13th August (J. P. Paige, S. T. J.), 1st September (H. B.), two over Rushy Pen 5th September (R. Kidwell), single birds on river 6th to 9th September (R. Kidwell).
- GOLDEN PLOVER (*Pluvialis apricaria*).—Seen frequently during winter but two 23rd May (D. F. McK.), the only indication of late spring passage.
- GREY PLOVER (*Squatarola squatarola*).—Recorded only in October; nineteen 12th, eight 13th, seven 14th (D. F. McK.).
- OYSTER-CATCHER (*Hæmotopus ostralegus*).—Two on river 13th August (J. P. Paige, S. T. J.).
- BLACK TERN (*Chlidonias niger*).—Sixteen over river 13th May (D. F. McK.). One 7th August (L. W. Hayward, Mrs. M. J. Morgan).
- COMMON OR ARCTIC TERN (*Sterna hirundo* or *macrura*).—About thirty 13th May (D. F. McK.). One, apparently *macrura*, 21st September (L. W. Hayward, Mrs. M. J. Morgan), two 23rd, one 27th, 29th September (H. B.), one 11th, 12th, 13th, two or more 14th October (D. F. McK.).

LITTLE TERN (*Sterna albifrons*).—One 5th October and a juvenile tern thought to be of this species 14th October (D. F. McK.).

BLACK-HEADED GULL (*Larus ridibundus*).—A gull seen with several Black-headed on the Dumbles 11th November must presumably be ascribed to this species though quite abnormally coloured. In size, shape and mode of flight the bird resembled its companions, but the whole of its plumage was a brilliant white except for black tips to the primaries (appearing more extensive below than above). The bill was bright coral-red with a black tip and the legs also bright red, not crimson.

COMMON GULL (*Larus canus*).—An estimate of about 20,000 roosting on mud 26th February (D. F. McK.).

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (*Larus fuscus*).—One frequented Patch throughout winter; a few other records of single birds in winter.

LITTLE CRAKE (*Porzana parva*).—An adult male frequented the decoy from 22nd to 29th April, when it was found dead with an injured head. It was very tame and was watched on many occasions by at least ten observers. The general colouring resembled that of a Water-Rail, though the back was a paler brown with quite large white spots on the mantle feathers (visible only at very close range). The under tail-coverts were white flecked with black. The bird was very much smaller than *Rallus aquaticus*. Its overall length was the same as that of a Hedge Sparrow, *Prunella modularis*, which at one time was feeding beside it. The bill was yellowish-green with red at the gape (same on the lower mandible, though more on the upper); the red was not often apparent in the field. The legs and feet were green.

This appears to be the first record of this species for the county. The specimen is now in the British Museum (Natural History).

COOT (*Fulica atra*).—A juvenile, not yet full-grown, in Rushy Pen 6th and 7th August. Winter population in pens at maximum of eleven in late January and early February.

