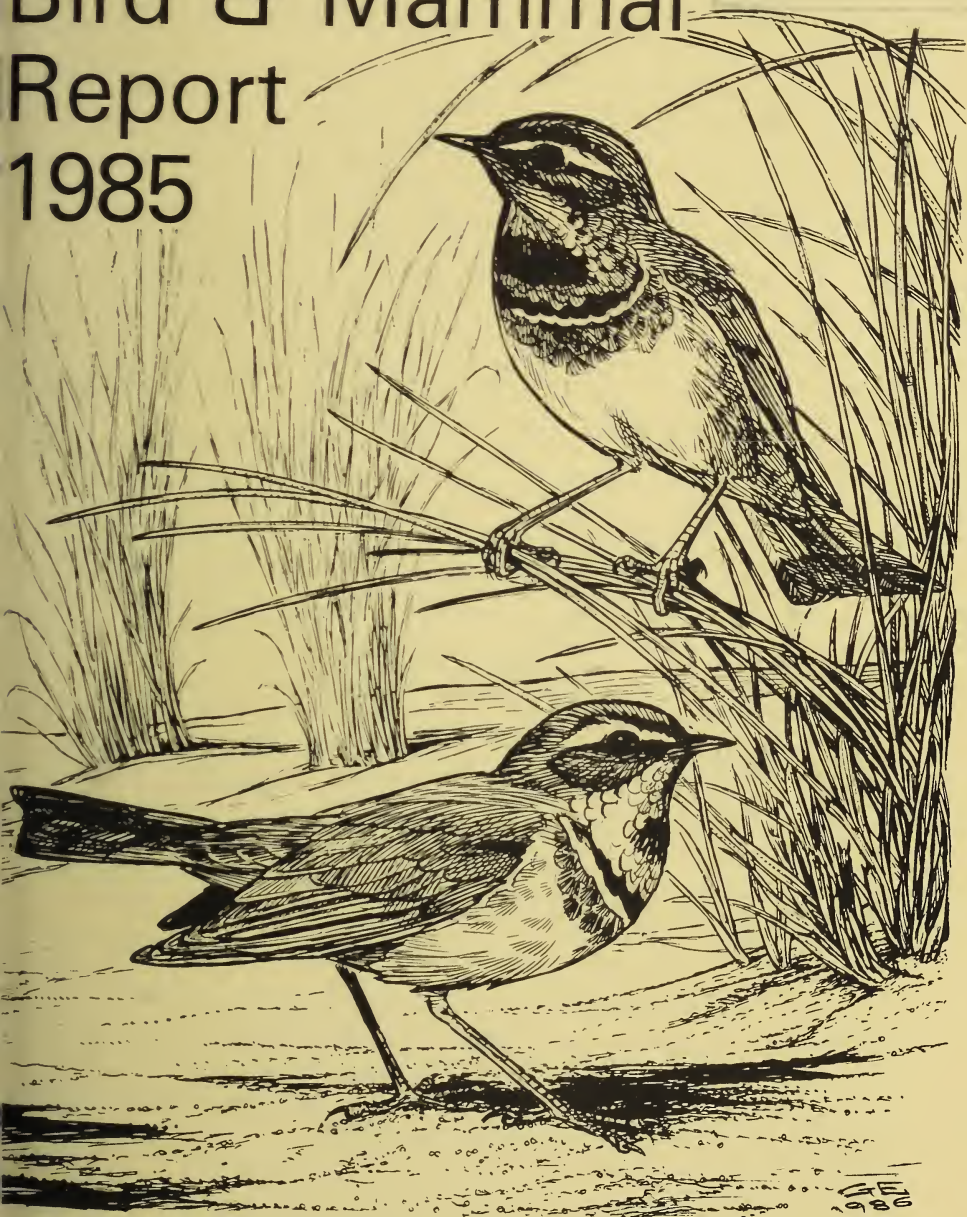


# Norfolk Bird & Mammal Report 1985



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# Norfolk Bird Report - 1985

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# Norfolk Mammal Report - 1985

**Editor:** REX HANCY

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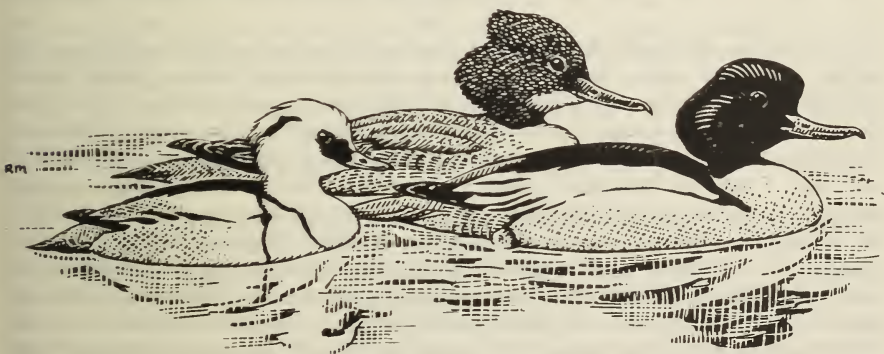
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# NORFOLK BIRD REPORT 1985

## Editorial

The Council of the Norfolk & Norwich Naturalists Society, in association with Norfolk Ornithologists Association, is pleased to present the annual report on the birds of Norfolk.

**Review of the Year:** Extremes of weather made 1985 a year to remember. The opening months were colder than normal resulting in extensive areas of frozen water and a substantial influx of sawbills from the Continent which was similarly experiencing severe conditions. Sizeable ice-floes appeared in the port of Yarmouth. A record 5,227 Bewick's Swans assembled on the Ouse Washes while other significant wildfowl concentrations included 375 Bean Geese and 140 White-fronts in the Yare Valley, 220 White-fronts at Holkham and 1,000 Pintail, 250 Scaup and 100 Velvet Scoter in the Wash. A few Waxwings appeared and some wintering Blackcaps were seen despite severe conditions which finally caused the death of a wintering Lesser Whitethroat at Welney. Shore Larks were again mainly confined to the bleak shingle ridges of Blakeney Point. A large flock of Mealy Redpolls at Wells received intense scrutiny as it contained up to four potential Arctic Redpolls. Late winter produced few surprises although there were 240 Whooper Swans at Welney in March with a further 48 in the Martham/Horsey area.



Early April brought a spell of very mild weather and an associated influx of summer migrants including Redstarts, Pied Flycatcher and Swifts which coincided with the appearance of migrant Painted Lady Butterflies. A roaming Alpine Swift was a great attraction for about a week while a singing male Serin at Wells lingered until August. A cloudy, wet and cold May with frequent north-easterly winds was similar to that of 1984 and produced the same blend of species with a few additional surprises. One of these was the county's first spring Barred Warbler at Caister and only the second Collared Flycatcher: an immature male at Holkham. It was the Bluethroats, however, which captured observer's imagination. A county total of 54 red-spotted Scandinavian bound birds drifted onto the coast, many allowing splen-



did views and others giving snatches of song. Norfolk did not have a monopoly on the species as 70 were grounded on Fair Isle and 100 on the Isle of May during the same period. Other highlights during this exciting spell included male Rustic Bunting at Salthouse, Subalpine Warbler at Holkham Meads, several Pied Flycatchers, Red-backed Shrikes, Ortonian Buntings, Wrynecks and Golden Orioles, 3 Hoopoes, Red-breasted Flycatcher, Red-throated Pipit, Icterine Warbler, another Alpine Swift, 2 Red-footed Falcons, 2 Broad-billed Sandpipers together at Breydon and single Marsh and Pectoral Sandpipers. It was pleasing to record a passage of 1,300 Turtle Doves at Snettisham May 24th as large-scale spring movements had become infrequent recently.



The beaches remained clear of deck-chairs during June when rainfall was the highest on record and temperatures and sunshine levels well below normal. North coast breeding Common and Little Terns had poor success and flooding on the Ouse Washes allowed only a single pair of Black-tailed Godwits to raise young at Welney. Yet all was not gloom and there were several successful breeding pairs of Marsh Harriers; also 2 pairs of Montagu's Harriers. A special Stone Curlew survey revealed over 60 pairs in the Norfolk/Suffolk breck, a large proportion on arable land. Wells was again the venue for successful Parrot Crossbill breeding before a packed audience of observers. Thirty-two Cetti's Warblers were singing in the east of the county and Black Redstarts were more numerous than normal. The month saw a few rarities: Cory's Shearwaters off Horsey and Winterton, White-winged Black Tern at Welney, the county's third and fourth Marsh Warblers at Cley and Holme and Great Reed Warbler at Holkham.

July produced a number of red-letter days in what can be a rather dull time of year. Single Great White Egret and Purple Heron were in the Horsey/Hickling area, a wandering Black Kite in north Norfolk, the county's second Greater Sandplover at Cley/Blakeney harbour lingering for over three weeks into August and both Pectoral and Broad-billed Sandpipers at Cley. A Crossbill irruption commencing in June was still evident and reports suggest it may have originated in Russia and reached as far north as Iceland.

Much of August was cool and showery and conditions were generally unsuitable for the typical falls of drift migrants associated with haze and easterly winds. Consequently there were few Wrynecks, Icterine or Barred Warblers although one of the



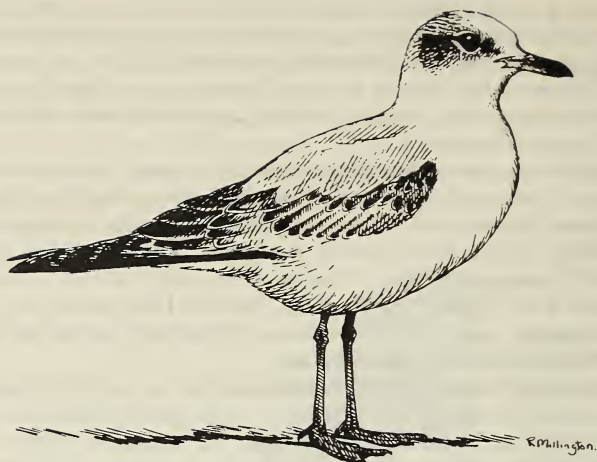
latter was found at an inland site. The first Aquatic Warbler since 1977 arrived on Blakeney Point, but bird of the month was the county's first Little Whimbrel feeding in meadows between Blakeney and Salthouse over a week. Other unusual waders included Wilson's Phalarope at Cley and a spate of White-rumped Sandpipers. By now juvenile Curlew Sandpipers were building up making it a memorable autumn passage for these long distance travellers.

September enjoyed the distinction of being the driest since 1959 with very warm temperatures late in the month. Sea-bird movements were generally disappointing especially for Sooty Shearwaters; however several reasonable passages of Arctic Skuas were observed. Single Buff-breasted Sandpipers were identified at Wisbech Sewage Farm and Cromer golf course. Passerine movement was not on a large scale, but included Tawny Pipit on Blakeney Point and Serin at Hunstanton; also an influx of those energetic eastern 'peepers' (Yellow-browed Warblers) was becoming evident late in the month and continuing into October.

Dry weather with high sunshine and temperature levels remained into October. Anticipated eastern rarities arrived with suitable north-easterly winds. Sightings included 3 Richard's Pipits, Tawny Pipit, 2 Siberian Stonechats, 4 Pallas's Warblers and a co-operative Radde's Warbler at Wells — a pleasant change from what can be an extremely frustrating species. Mid-month saw the beginning of a Rough-legged Buzzard influx while an inland Sabine's Gull at Strumpshaw was a surprise find as was a late Serin at Holkham. Towards the end of the month it was becoming obvious that more Pomarine Skuas than normal were off-shore and during the first fortnight of November the big movements took place. The month was the coldest on record with several sharp frosts, but sunshine levels were high. November saw many winter visitors settling in. Brent Geese with 30% young had had a good breeding season in contrast to that other high Arctic breeder the Bewick's Swan with 8%. The Pink-foot skeins wandering inland between their roosts on the Wash and Scolt Head contained an adult Greater Snow Goose for some time. At sea a number of Grey Phalaropes and Little Auks were observed. Passerines included Waxwings, a long staying Siberian Stonechat at Winterton and incredibly a Pied Wheatear only a stone's throw from the last beach-haunting individual in 1983. A huge immature White-tailed Eagle spent a few days in mid-month frustrating bird-watchers along the north coast. What was presumably the same bird later took up residence at Benacre in Suffolk.

December was mostly cloudy, mild and wet, temperatures not dropping sharply until Christmas. These conditions no doubt favoured the survival of the bird of the year: Black-and-White Warbler at How Hill. Probably one of the most unexpected vagrants to appear in the county especially so late in the season. Special thanks are due to staff of the How Hill Trust for their unscheduled opening of the reserve and their friendly co-operation with an army of visitors including Continental birders. A few late Pomarine Skuas were noted while wildfowl counts produced 10,300 Pink-feet in north-west Norfolk, 235 Bean Geese in the Yare Valley and 234 Whooper Swans at Welney. A selection of sea ducks close in at Hunstanton included Scaup, Velvet Scoter and 60 Long-tailed Ducks. A wintering Great Grey Shrike on Salthouse Heath remained until the following spring.

Looking back on 1985 it is surprising how the ornithological scene has changed from only a decade ago. Cetti's Warbler, Avocet and Marsh Harrier are all now well established as breeding species while the winter scene has produced a massive increase in Pink-feet even surpassing the totals attained in pre-war days. Large increases in both Bewick's and Whooper Swans have taken place on the Washes while a partial recovery of Bean Goose numbers has occurred. All these gains are genuine



and not merely due to the explosive increase of ornithology as a hobby resulting for example in many more Mediterranean Gulls being reported nowadays. Probably not too much has been lost in the last ten years in Norfolk at least, but looking a similar period ahead will almost certainly see the extinction of the Red-backed Shrike as a breeding species. (JBK).

**Recording:** Records for the 1986 Report should be sent *by the end of January* to Michael J. Seago, 33 Acacia Road, Thorpe St. Andrew, Norwich NR7 0PP. *Late arrivals are not guaranteed inclusion in the current Report.* All observations should be submitted in the order followed by Dr. K. H. Voous's *List of Recent Holarctic Bird Species* (1977) and *not* in diary form which creates very time-consuming situations. In order to minimise the work involved, records will not normally be acknowledged. The names of all contributors will be included in the Report.

Field descriptions of semi-rarities as listed in the 1983 Report (page 337) should also be submitted as such records are considered by the County Records Committee prior to publication. Records of rarities considered by British Birds Rarities Committee should be submitted with full details as soon as possible after observation and not left until the end of the year. Several observations remain outstanding for this reason. Record forms for the submission of national rarities are available either from the Editor or from G. E. Dunmore (49 The Avenues, Norwich NR2 3QR).

**Acknowledgements:** Thanks are due to the following photographers and artists: N. Arlott, N. Borrow, D. M. Cottridge, G. M. S. Easy, M. Elliott, R. A. Hume, J. B. Kemp, C. R. Knights, I. Lewington, T. Loseby, T. Lubbock, R. Millington, P. Morris, J. Reed, R. Tidman, B. J. Wingrove and S. Young. Among the vignettes is a further selection by the late R. A. Richardson.

Thanks are also due to Holme Bird Observatory/Norfolk Ornithologists Association; to Norfolk Naturalists Trust Wardens; to the National Trust; to the Nature Conservancy Council, to the R.S.P.B.; to Nar Valley Ornithological Society; to *British Birds* ('Bird Illustrator of the Year' competition); to G. E. Dunmore (for liaising with British Birds Rarities Committee and acting as Secretary/Chairman of the local Records Committee); to Mrs. M. Dorling, Mrs. S. F. Seago and to all other contributors.

# Welney Wash

*Johny Revett & John B. Kemp*



A winter's day in the flat desolation of the fens may not seem a very exciting prospect. Nevertheless, despite its apparent bleakness there is an area which acts like a giant magnet, drawing in a noisy, thriving community of wildfowl from the surrounding landscape. The scene of course is the Ouse Washes, and more specifically the Wildfowl Trust Reserve at Welney, just inside the Norfolk boundary. Here amongst many other delights visitors can watch splendid formations of Bewick's swans arrowing in from the adjacent arable to gather for their nightly roost before the main hide system.

The 850 acre Reserve is situated towards the northern end of the Ouse Washes, a long man-made flood plain which scythes north-eastwards through twenty miles of fenland from Earith near Huntingdon in the south to near Denver Sluice in Norfolk. The washes are half-a-mile wide for most of their length and bounded by two parallel rivers on their western edge and one tidal river on their eastern side.

The washes date back to the seventeenth century when the fens were largely an inhospitable wilderness of marshland. Countless rivers carved chaotic courses resulting in frequent widespread and uncontrollable flooding. The sparse human population inhabited the higher land which escaped winter flooding and eked out a meagre existence fishing and fowling. The first major drainage attempt occurred when the Dutch engineer Cornelius Vermuyden shortened the course of the River Ouse by excavating by hand a new straight cut for twenty miles from Earith to Denver. This new river which was completed in 1630 is now known as the Old Bedford River. However, the results were not satisfactory and flooding still took place. Further drainage attempts began after the Civil War in 1640 when the Hundred Foot or New Bedford River was excavated parallel to and half-a-mile distant from the Old Bedford River. The result of this was a large 5,000 acre flood plain created between the two rivers: the Ouse Washes almost as we know it today. When the fen rivers became swollen after heavy rain, surplus water could be diverted onto this flood plain through sluice gates at Earith. It could then be stored until river levels fell, being finally released into the tidal Hundred Foot River at Wellmore Lake Sluice at the northern tip of the Washes. The only major change since Vermuyden's work has been the cutting of the River Delph alongside the Old Bedford River. This connects with the River Ouse at Earith and surplus flood water is sent down its length, spilling



over from its unbanked eastern edge to flood the Washes. The Old Bedford River is now principally used as a drainage dyke for the adjacent fenland.

The R.S.P.B. was the first conservation body to purchase land on the Washes in 1964. Together with the Cambridgeshire & Isle of Ely Naturalists Trust they now own over 2,000 acres of washland scattered in blocks all to the south of the A1101 wash road. The Wildfowl Trust acquired its first 100 acres in 1967 and a large observatory was added in 1970, together with a footbridge over the Hundred Foot River. The member's hide at Welney is well known for its combination of carpets, heating system, giant mounted binoculars and picture windows. A series of small hides have since been added. 1983 saw the opening of the 'summer walk' — an extension of the existing walkway — allowing access along a footpath across the width of the washes to the River Delph.

One of the Wildfowl Trust's main aims was to build up the numbers of wintering Bewick's Swans. Following the success of a similar project at Slimbridge, waste potatoes were scattered around the edge of the specially created lagoon to encourage swans close to the hides. A twice daily token feed of grain was introduced, thrown in the water from a wheelbarrow. Since those early days the number of Bewick's has increased annually so that up to 3,500 are now regular. The severe 1984/5 winter saw a peak of 5,200 during February along the entire washes. This increase over the years is probably also due to the relatively recent habit of feeding on the readily available arable by-products such as waste potatoes and sugar-beet tops.

The wintering swans normally fly out at dawn to surrounding fenland, feeding especially on potatoes when they first arrive before turning to sugar-beet tops and then winter cereals. Most farmers tolerate swans on cereals, a light grazing causing no harm. It actually encourages tillering and a more vigorous growth, hence the former practice of grazing sheep for a while on winter wheat during the winter. In very wet weather some puddling could occur, but as swans do not pack together very tightly (as do Brent Geese) generally little or no harm is done. Early in the winter feeding flocks are close to the washes, but with the ploughing-up of old potato and sugar-beet fields the swans often travel up to 10 or 15 miles as winter progresses.

During the swans twice daily flights some birds strike overhead power lines, part of the web-like system covering the fens. This happens particularly in wet weather when mud clings to the swan's feet, weighing them down and reducing their manoeuvrability. Forty or more corpses are retrieved each winter. Other fatalities occasionally take place when swans eat freshly drilled wheat containing toxic dressing. This happened in November 1985 when one field was direct drilled into a previous sugar-beet crop. The swans attracted to this field by beet debris and tops remaining on the surface, soon discovered the freshly sown grain. This resulted in the death of eight birds before hastily erected bird scarers solved the problem. It should be stressed that most farmers are sympathetic towards the swans. The Trust receives tons of waste potatoes annually delivered direct to the door as well as a significant amount of the grain that is fed. Lead poisoning occurs each winter but fortunately only a few birds are involved. The culprit is spent lead shot from wildfowlers: parts of the washes are heavily shot during the season.

A swan trap was constructed in 1980 and one or more catches are attempted each year. So far 146 Bewick's Swans and 20 Whooper Swans have been ringed using a yellow or white plastic ring as well as the standard metal B.T.O. ring. A similar project at Slimbridge has resulted in nearly 1,500 Bewick's being ringed in fifteen years. Some Slimbridge swans visit Welney during the autumn or spring migration; others change allegiance between one site and the other. Ringing has helped to age the swans and Welney's regular old-timer is an eighteen-year old male called Spice (ring

number ABF). An older swan from Slimbridge: Rachel (638) occasionally spends a little time at Welney. She is now 22.

Welney's increasing herd of Whooper Swans is of national importance reaching 320 during February 1986 — the largest and most southerly assembly in England with only one or two larger concentrations in the whole of the British Isles. Unlike the Bewick's they do not distribute themselves down the length of the washes, but remain on the Welney Reserve, mostly in front of the main hide. Ringing has shown they belong to the Icelandic population. It is possible some Continental birds may also appear in severe weather.

A special attraction for visitors is floodlighting of the main lagoon from November to the end of February. This was first introduced in 1975. Floodlights automatically switch on at dusk, slowly building up to full power over a half-hour period and gradually fading out again at 2000 hours. The floodlit scene is one of breathtaking beauty as the dazzling white swans glide around the darkened lagoon. Up to 1,000 swans may be present under the lights and usually at least 500 are present. A further thousand or more will also be roosting elsewhere on the reserve away from the lights. Dusk is always exciting as groups of swans arrive from the fields calling continuously as they fly over the hide system before lowering paddles and dropping into the lagoon.

Known mainly for its swans, Welney has much more to offer, the Ouse Washes being second to none when it comes to concentrations of ducks. Up to 10,000 Wigeon may be on view — depending on the state of the winter flood. If levels become too deep, covering the birds' grazing they will tend to disperse together with the other dabbling ducks. Fresh shallow flooding in early winter sees acres of land smothered with ducks: often 1,000 Teal, 300 Pintail and 200 Shoveler. The Pochard flock, often 1,000 strong, with the Mallard are unable to resist daily grain feeds. In contrast, other surface feeders fail to attend.

Welney's Cormorant roost is another fascinating winter feature with up to 120 of these seemingly ungainly prehistoric-looking birds clinging to the electric wires crossing the washes. They disperse during daytime to feed in the fish-rich fenland drains and rivers. The winter scene may also include up to 200 Ruffs if the area is not frozen. These birds often feed on arable land using the washes as a roost. At other times scores may be visible on shallow floods close to the A1101 wash road. Variety is added by the occasional Sparrowhawk, Merlin, Hen Harrier and Peregrine. Although flooding on the washes discourages any large numbers of geese (they are essentially grazers), small numbers of most species occur during the course of each winter, including odd parties of Bean Geese.

As spring-time approaches, wildfowl numbers diminish leaving breeding Shelduck, Gadwall, Shoveler, Tufted Duck and a few pairs of Teal. At this season an impressive gathering of up to 2,000 Golden Plover collect on the short grassland prior to their northward migration. These flocks are a delight to watch as they perform rapid aerial evolutions to the accompaniment of plaintive whistling. Later, in late April/May small numbers of Common, Green and Curlew Sandpipers, Little Stint, Temminck's Stint, Whimbrel, Bar-tailed Godwit and other waders may be expected on their way north. A reasonable selection of rarities has appeared over the years including Pied-billed Grebe, Sociable Plover, Citrine Wagtail, Blue-winged Teal, Green-winged Teal, Crane, White-winged Black Tern and Pectoral Sandpiper.

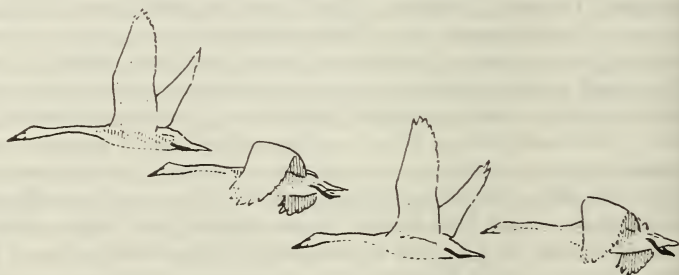
In spring the air is full of the sounds of Snipe, Redshank and Black-tailed Godwits; Reed and Sedge Warblers rasp away in the ditches and scrubby areas. Flycatching Yellow Wagtails and Meadow Pipits strut around the edges of the pools. An exploration along the summer walk will reveal a host of botanical delights.

Part of the traditional management of the washes involves summer-time grazing with cattle and sheep. It is partly this 'topping' of the otherwise rank growth which encourages winter wildfowl to the area. The grazing season extends from the beginning of May until the end of October. There can be up to 500 cattle and 3,000 sheep on the Trust land. The grazing is leased to half a dozen farmers. The rental is a useful source of income to the Trust which employs a shepherd to look after these animals while on the washes. The twice daily round of livestock is carried out on a trials motorcycle crossing many strategically placed bridges over countless dykes. By this method disturbance to wildlife is minimised and there is no need for each farmer to visit his animals at various times each day. It also allows grazing to be carried out with wildlife in mind, stock being moved from one wash to another when appropriate.

An unusual phenomenon which has been noted during the last two years (but has probably taken place for centuries) is that of swan-killing by herds of cattle. Cows seem to be attracted by the prominent white plumage as a swan crosses a wash. At first one individual cow is attracted and moves towards the swan before there is an outburst of roaring with mouth wide open and tongue extended. An immediate reaction is created amongst other cattle in the vicinity which rush forward bellowing in a similar fashion before finally trampling the swan. The victim is then tossed around for up to fifteen minutes before peace returns. Other birds displaying white occasionally attract similar reaction including Shelduck escorting broods.

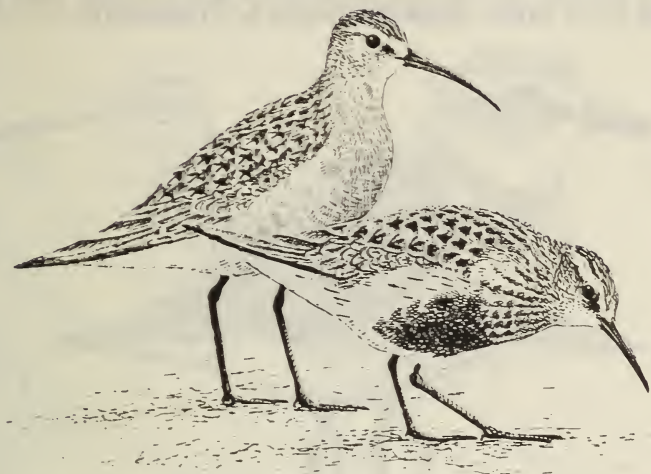
Welney has a fairly predictable mammal list including Fox, Stoat, Weasel, Water Vole, Brown Rat, Field Vole, Hare, Rabbit and Mole. No Coypu has been observed for two years. The Mink has a foothold, four having been caught locally in eel nets in 1985. Common Seals at times penetrate this far up the tidal Hundred Foot River. 1985 saw the first sightings of Grey Squirrel.

Welney reserve receives over 22,000 visitors annually, mostly in the winter to view the swans. More people are beginning to appreciate the peaceful summer scene which has been enhanced by the opening of the summer walk. The reserve is open every day (except Christmas Eve and Christmas Day) from 10am to 5pm. Access is by permit obtainable from the reception centre on arrival. A display hall and gift shop is open daily. Evening floodlit visits from November to the end of February need to be booked in advance. Any enquiries to: The Wildfowl Trust, Pintail House, Hundred Foot Bank, Welney, Wisbech PE14 9TN (Ely 860711).





# Curlew Sandpiper Influx



An exceptional autumn migration of juvenile Curlew Sandpipers appeared on the East Coast in September providing great interest for observers not familiar with this attractive wader from high Arctic breeding grounds far behind the Iron Curtain.

Most breeding Curlew Sandpipers are found on the Taimyr Peninsular in northern Siberia. Here the birds nest in association with Grey Plovers, Lesser Golden Plovers and Pectoral Sandpipers. In view of the distance from western Europe it would not be surprising if they were of uncommon occurrence here. However, the Curlew Sandpiper is a regular passage migrant to Norfolk. Occasionally, quite large invasions take place.

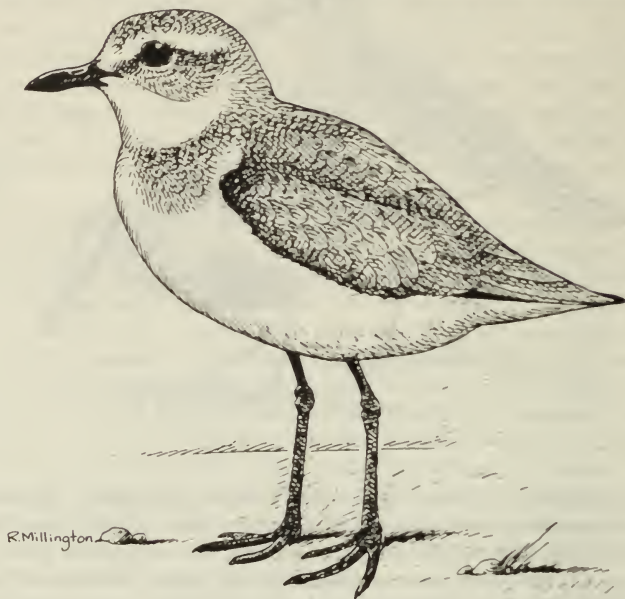
The previous large-scale autumn arrival of juveniles was during late August and early September 1969 when local assemblies included peaks of 400 at Wisbech Sewage Farm, 80 off Lynn Point, 74 on Brancaster golf course, 39 at Cley and 32 at Breydon. The probable cause of the movement in that year was a particularly persistent and complex low pressure weather system over northern Europe coinciding with the main migration of juveniles. In overcast conditions large numbers were deflected west over the Baltic and northern Scandinavia and then south-west across the North Sea into Britain.

A similar weather pattern took place in the first week of September 1985 when depressions were centred on Scandinavia and the Baltic. The 1985 autumn passage started in the 'normal' way with small parties of adults in faded breeding dress appearing from mid-July. Small groups of adults were recorded at their usual haunts throughout August.

The first very early juvenile put in an appearance August 8th with numbers building up during the last week of the month. During the following ten days a massive arrival took place. A county total of over 1,300 was present at that time.

The settling ponds at Cantley sugar beet factory attracted up to 69, whilst at Rush Hills Hickling a peak of 66 was attained. None remained locally after the end of October, all having departed for wintering quarters in the Mediterranean and in Africa south of the Sahara.

# Greater Sandplover, vagrant from Southern Russia



The Greater Sandplover was added to the county list on 17th April 1981 when one was identified on Breydon muds — a famous locality for rarities since the days of the Victorian collectors. Only four years after the first county occurrence Cley played host to another individual which remained between 30th July and 21st August with a final high-tide appearance at Blakeney 2nd September.

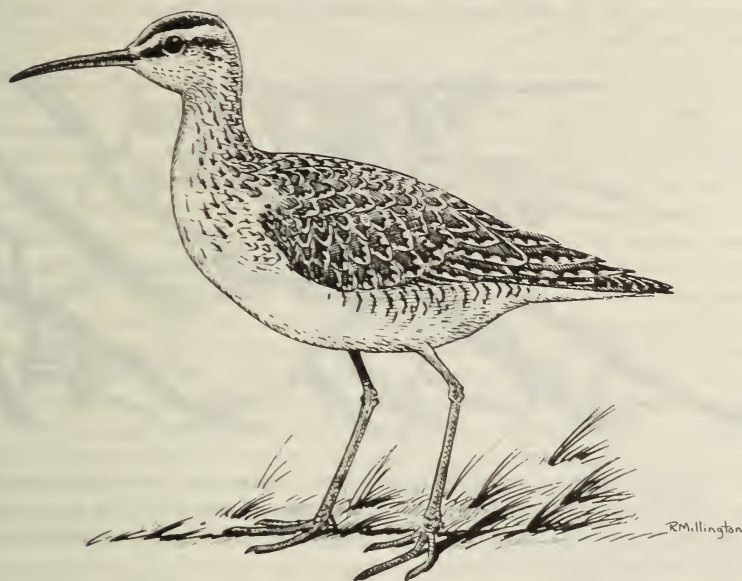
For a period of three weeks after discovery by John Hampshire the Cley observation hides were bursting at the seams to accommodate an endless succession of observers. Not all were initially successful: Blakeney muds provided increasingly attractive feeding opportunities at low tide. In the estuary the sandplover showed great site-fidelity, almost always frequenting the same creek at the north-east corner.

Unkindly described as having 'a body too small for its legs, a head too large for its body and a bill too large for its head' this first-summer vagrant displayed the same actions as a Grey Plover, 'pointing' at prey and often standing motionless for moments on end with rather long legs held bowed. The plumage and structure recalled a giant winter-plumaged Kentish Plover, having a similar 'chick-like' shape due to a short looking rear end. Most obvious single feature was the large, thick, black bill. Feeding companions included Dunlin, Ringed Plover and Curlew Sandpiper.

Quite recently this oddly shaped plover has begun breeding in Turkey suggesting a possible south-westerly expansion of range. Otherwise the summer distribution includes the dry steppes of Southern Russia east to Mongolia. Wintering range is very extensive including the shores of north-east Africa and the Red Sea. The bird was added to the British/Irish List as recently as 1978 when one remained at Pagham Harbour from 9th December until 1st January 1979. In the past it may have been grossly overlooked and could well become an annual vagrant to this country.

# Little Whimbrel:

## A Bird New to England in Norfolk



Among the host of waders identified on Cley Reserve during 1985 autumn migration one of the greatest surprises which really stood out was the Little Whimbrel. First identified 24th August at Blakeney Eye this exotic vagrant remained in the area until 2nd September being observed by hundreds of birders during its ten-day stay. No-one would ever have dreamt of seeing this tiny short-billed curlew with delicate carriage tripping through cattle in a Norfolk meadow among Golden Plover, Lapwing and Whimbrel. By comparison it was slightly smaller than the Lapwing and only half the height of and a quarter the bulk of a Curlew.

During the following days the stranger also visited Cley Eye and Salthouse Marshes where at times it was clearly visible from the main coast road. The world's tiniest Curlew, this little-known wader was first recorded in western Europe in Norway in 1969, followed by another in South Wales in 1982.

The Little Whimbrel's central Siberian nesting places are in open burnt areas or grassy clearings in the valleys of small rivers among low hills and mountains. A colony consists of from three to thirty pairs. "Breeding localities so far discovered account for only a fraction of the known population. The male has a remarkable high display flight in which he sings, then dives steeply producing a whistling sound apparently from wings and tail" (*Shorebirds* published 1986). Typical nesting companions include Wood Sandpipers, Little Buntings, Siberian Jays and Golden Eagles.

Little Whimbrel migrate as far as northern Australia reaching wintering grounds by mid-September. The flocks contain several hundred and sometimes thousands of birds. For one to appear as far west as Norfolk at a time of year when most are still travelling through Mongolia certainly provided the opportunity of a lifetime.



# Black and White Warbler: A Bird New to Norfolk

*M. R. McDonnell, Assistant, How Hill Trust*



Working at a nature reserve in Norfolk can be very rewarding. In my case the reserve is at How Hill Environmental Centre near Ludham. Away from the busy summer months the reserve is quiet, disturbed only by children and adults on one of the many courses run by the How Hill Trust.

The 3rd December 1985 was one of the quiet days and just before dusk I decided to walk around the reedbeds; however there was no boat available to cross the river so I was restricted to the nature trail. Whilst walking along the edge of Crome's Broad I came across a mixed flock of tits and finches, mainly Long-tailed Tits. On this occasion I checked through them — something done all too infrequently — when I was startled by a glimpse of a small bird boldly patterned in zebra stripes. I quickly noted a white crown stripe bordered by two further black stripes. Centre of the belly was white contrasting with bold black streaking on the flanks. Unfortunately, after a minute the flock moved across a dyke disappearing into alder carr and I was unable to relocate them that day. Having caught only a tantalising glimpse I was unsure of the stranger's identity knowing only that I had seen nothing like it before. I returned the following morning with M. I. Eldridge. After some hours searching we were greatly relieved to relocate the bird and studied it for thirty minutes thus confirming its identity as a Black and White Warbler — a bird new to Norfolk.

It was a very active bird and its treecreeeping habits most striking. It shuffled around trunks and branches pecking and probing into crevices, and often removing loose bark and lichen to extract prey. It was noted hanging up side down and also hovering. On occasions it worked down to the base of the alders. A particular liking was shown for searching among small twigs at the end of broken branches. During the early part of the bird's stay in Pigeon Wood, most views were brief. However, on 12th December it was observed over an hour feeding in an open area of alder and birch each side of the track. This provided opportunities for P. Morris to obtain his excellent photographs.

The following description was obtained by M.I.E.: Approximately Blackcap-sized warbler. Central crown stripe and supercillia white. Lateral crown stripes black. Lores dusky. Black

eye-stripe extending backwards from each eye. Black beady eye bordered by white crescent below. Ear coverts pale grey. Mantle striped black and white. Wing coverts black with white tips to the median and greater coverts forming two wing-bars, the latter more prominent. Primary coverts black. Secondaries black with fine whitish fringes suggesting a grey appearance at longer ranges. Primaries black also with whitish fringes. Tertiaries black, the uppermost feather with broad white lower edge. Tail blackish and square ended showing some white when spread. Underparts white with a few very small dark marks at the bottom of the throat forming a partial gorget but only visible at close range. A few short dark streaks marked the sides of the breast. Two long black stripes closer to the wing extended back along the flanks. Another less well marked and broken stripe disappeared under the wing. Under-tail coverts revealed small dark marks becoming larger towards the rear. Bill long and strong looking, slightly decurved at the tip. Upper mandible and tip of lower mandible blackish; remainder of lower mandible brownish. Legs dull orange-brown with yellowish feet. The call heard on several occasions in flight was a weak *si* reminiscent of a Goldcrest.

This New World visitor was found in a wooded part of the reserve owned and managed by the Broads Authority. Access is normally limited to field courses run by the How Hill Trust, but it was decided to make special staffing arrangements to allow visitors to the reserve's nature trail enclosing the area frequented by the bird. During the following eleven days and until 15th December almost 2,000 visitors came to the reserve most of whom eventually obtained excellent views of this rare American vagrant. Extraordinarily patterned it was usually in company with a Long-tailed Tit flock making its location a comparatively easy process. On wetter days it was rather a frustrating creature providing only one or two brief tantalising glimpses as it moved from tree to tree like a black and white striped tree creeper.

Despite appalling wet conditions at How Hill large numbers of cars and visitors caused minimal disturbance to the reserve and to neighbouring landowners. Watchers kept strictly to the path leaving virtually no litter and reflecting great credit on the bird-watching community.

Once described as the ultimate American Wood Warbler this delightful traveller was added to the British and Irish List in October 1936 when one was found dead in Shetland. Next occurrence was forty years later in Scilly. There have been less than a dozen subsequent accepted records including one on the remarkable date of 3rd March 1978 in Devon. Another individual after successfully flying the Atlantic sadly became a casualty striking a window in Falmouth.

The Black and White Warbler is one of the commonest, most widespread and best known American Wood Warblers. Breeding range extends from Hudson Bay in the north of Canada, south to Louisiana and Texas. A long distance migrant, it winters in the states bordering the Gulf of Mexico, the West Indies, Mexico and Central America south to Colombia and Venezuela. In spring it is one of the earliest warblers to arrive. This is probably related to its habit of feeding on tree trunks and branches, which it can do at a time when most other warblers would have difficulty in obtaining food.



# The County List

*P. R. Allard*



The present county list totals 387 full species. This excludes two category D birds: White Pelican and Red-headed Bunting. Since 1970 thirty-six new species have been fully identified and added to the county avifauna. Additions have been made annually since 1970 (excepting 1972). Most rewarding years have been 1975 (5 new species) and 1981 (4 new species). The seven newcomers added in 1977 included three category C birds: Mandarin, Ruddy Duck and Ring-necked Parakeet.

Long distance travellers are a regular feature. North America provided Blue-winged Teal 1971, Lesser Golden Plover 1974 (the first record did not determine which race was involved, but a subsequent 1976 occurrence was referred to the American race), Greater Yellowlegs 1975 and the totally unexpected Black-and-White Warbler 1985. From the high Arctic came an immature Ivory Gull 1978 and a spectacular Ross's Gull 1983. Beyond the Tropic of Capricorn an Albatross of unknown species appeared in 1977. Still subject to official acceptance, a Lesser Crested Tern 1983 came from North Africa.

Tropical Africa was the home of the 1902 Hopton Allen's Gallinule accepted by the B.O.U. as category B in 1974. This vagrant was adopted by Norfolk following county boundary changes! Cetti's Warbler arrived from across the North Sea 1973 and Fantailed Warbler 1976. Five years later, in 1981, southern Europe provided Rock Sparrow and Orphean Warbler although following re-consideration the latter record has recently been withdrawn. Bonelli's Warbler from central Europe arrived 1970. From south-east Europe came Isabelline Wheatear 1977, Pied Wheatear 1978 followed by Great White Egret and Black-headed Bunting 1979. The first delightful Terek Sandpipers from north-east Europe were identified 1975. Eastern Europe extending into Asia provided Thrush Nightingale 1977, Marsh Sandpiper 1979, Citrine Wagtail 1980, River Warbler 1981 and Booted Warbler 1982. Distant South/Central Asia was the home of Isabelline Shrike and Black-throated Thrush 1975, Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler 1976 and Siberian Thrush Christmas Day 1977. Greater Sand-plovers (first in 1981 followed by another four years later) journeyed here from southern Asia. Western Asia produced Olive-backed Pipit 1975 and Sociable Plover 1977. From Siberia came a totally unexpected Little Whimbrel in 1985 which should have been heading for wintering grounds in northern Australia.

Since 1970 four category C species have been added to the county list: Lady



Amherst's Pheasant 1973 then Mandarin, Ruddy Duck and Ring-necked Parakeet. In addition the following eastern races have been accepted: Siberian Stonechat 1972 (the 1904 record has been rejected, Kirghiz Steppe Wagtail from north-east Russia 1979 and the East Siberian/North American race of Brent Goose known as the Black Brant 1983.

North Sea rig platforms provide refuges for many migrants and it is of interest to note two offshore rarities both within thirty miles of the Norfolk coast-line. In 1980 a Slate-coloured Junco (*J. hyemalis*) from North America was brought ashore and released at Holme. The next year a Fork-tailed Swift (*A. pacificus*) from eastern Asia was captured off Bacton and taken to Ellough in Suffolk for release.

Producing a list of anticipated accidentals is extremely hazardous. Both the 1985 Little Whimbrel and Black-and-White Warbler were complete surprises. However, future additions could well include Least Sandpiper, Ring-billed Gull, Laughing Gull, Franklin's Gull (the 1976 Sheringham record has been withdrawn), Killdeer, Upland Sandpiper, Desert Warbler and Paddyfield Warbler.

Within a decade the total is expected to exceed 400 species confirming that Norfolk remains the leading county for birds and bird-watchers.

*Note:* Category B relates to species recorded at least once, but not within the last 50 years. Category C covers species originally introduced, but which have since established a regular feral breeding stock. Category D so far as the Norfolk List is concerned relates to birds where there are doubts that they have occurred in a fully wild state.

## Wisbech Sewage Farm — the final chapter

*J. A. W. Moyes*

The feature covering ornithological events at Wisbech Sewage Farm (straddling the Lincolnshire/Norfolk boundary) appearing in the 1983 Report was somewhat premature. However, during December 1985 work began draining the remaining water and levelling the banks thus bringing to an end its 110 year history.

The final autumn passage movements were at times on a spectacular scale commencing in July with a company of 57 Black-tailed Godwits, numerous Ruffs, Greenshank, Green Sandpipers and Spotted Redshanks still in superb breeding plumage. Pumping operations ceased in September. The resulting exposure of mud saw a dramatic build-up in numbers. Peaks of 200 Curlew Sandpipers and 36 Little Stints were attained with many other waders in support. Among the last highlights were Buff-breasted and Pectoral Sandpipers.

These final records illustrate the great loss to ornithology following the disappearance of the once extensive lagoons. Thanks to Agricultural Authority nothing but the name is left: its acres merge with those of the surrounding fens to grow their quotas of potatoes, wheat and sugar-beet.

Gone for ever are the flights of Curlew Sandpipers, Little Stints, Black-tailed Godwits, Spotted Redshanks and Wood Sandpipers. No more the likely encounter with rarities from places beyond our experience. We are all the poorer for its passing. The records speak for themselves. Yet observers fortunate enough to have known the farm during the most productive period of its life will always retain memories.

# Nesting Parrot Crossbills at Wells



For the second year in succession a pair of Parrot Crossbills bred successfully at Wells. This article which highlights the main aspects of the birds' breeding behaviour has been compiled from the Wardens' summaries. Reg Land prepared the first brood report; Paul Lewis produced the second brood summary.

## THE FIRST BROOD

### Nest Site and Situation

The nest tree was in a similar position to that used for the first brood in 1984: on the south face of a narrow dune system planted with Corsican Pines and adjacent to a busy footpath. It was about 100m east of the 1984 first brood site and even nearer to the car park. The nest was located at a height of about 10m from the ground and about 5m out along a horizontal branch at a point where it divided and many small twigs arose. The branch was the lowest one in the crown and was open to the elements to the south and above. From all other directions it was screened by other pines. However, it was above the height of the dune crest and exposed to cold northerly winds.

### Nest Building and Nest Material

The nest had already been completed when wardening commenced Feb 28th. The female was in fact observed collecting nest material for a second nest April 3rd. She took dead twigs from Privet, Larch and Corsican Pine from within 50m of the new nest site between 0800 and 1200 hours. This activity was interrupted by courtship and copulation and several visits to the first nest which still contained young. The male did not participate in material collection, but kept in the vicinity of the new nest accompanying the female when she flew several hundred metres to collect nest material in a nearby reedbed.

Nethersole-Thompson and Davidson found that nest building activity occurred in spasms peaking in late morning. They do not say whether nest building was interrupted by courtship or copulation. Davidson also noted the tendency of the male to escort the female away from the nest during the collection of material.

### **Incubation**

The exact date of commencement of incubation is unknown, but it was thought the female was sitting March 1st. The first definite siting was three days later. Observations on the duration of the brooding sessions by the female, the frequency with which the male fed the female and the variation of these during the course of incubation were insufficient to compare with events at Wells in 1984. It is assumed that the male did feed the female whilst she was brooding as she was only recorded off the nest for a maximum of five minutes — and usually about two — when it was known she visited nearby puddles to drink.

Davidson describes one episode when the male apparently attempted incubating the eggs after returning to the nest and finding the female absent. Nethersole Thompson also records similar instances. Two such episodes were observed at the nest under observation. On one occasion the male returned to the nest and the female departed: the male then attempted to settle on the eggs, but after several seconds gave up and departed. The female arrived back several minutes later. On the second occasion the female again left as the male arrived and he proceeded to clumsily settle over the eggs. For over a minute he moved around until the female returned and moved him off.

The exact date of hatching was not positively ascertained. The pair was standing on the nest rim March 15th inspecting the contents, but it was not until the 18th that outstretched heads of at least three young could be seen. Assuming the first egg was laid March 1st the incubation period for this nest was 15 days. Hatching may have been spread over 2-3 days.

### **Fledging Period**

Observations on brooding sessions and feeding routines were again limited. For the first week the male and female fed the young, with the male occasionally feeding the female who in turn would feed the young. The female appeared to be contributing less food initially, although she would feed the young during brooding sessions. After the first week it appears that both parents collected food equally, returning to feed the young together at 40-60 minute intervals. The male was not seen to pass food via the female at this stage.

During the first few days after hatching the female brooded for long periods and was only seen away from the nest for periods up to 30 minutes. After the first week she was not seen to brood the young. Indeed on a number of occasions the young were left untended during continuous rain and even light snow. Assuming the young hatched from March 15th the fledging period was 20 days. The number of young was initially considered to be five and was certainly no fewer than four which were observed May 2nd in company with the male and feeding 200m from the nest. The same day the young left the nest, the adults were again courting and the female building a new nest. The parents flew to the first nest, calling excitedly, on a number of occasions presumably attempting to encourage the young to fly. Eventually at 0955 the adults flew to the nest and within seconds the young departed, dispersing into the surrounding pines. Prior to this the young had only taken short jumps to nearby twigs for short periods.

## **THE SECOND BROOD**

### **Nest Site and Situation**

The nest, situated in the same belt of south facing Corsican Pines used for the first



brood earlier in the year was some 60m to the east. The nest itself was positioned about 2m along a bough branching out from the main trunk at a height of about 15m. Although surrounded by many small twigs it was poorly sheltered from the seaward side and readily rocked in strong winds. The site was certainly less well sheltered than the previous sites used, though the nest itself appeared securely positioned. The close proximity of drinking water, available from puddles in the car park, was clearly an important factor in the choice of nest location.

### **Incubation**

Soon after the first brood fledged it was noted that the female was only occasionally accompanying the family party and by April 10th she was no longer in evidence. The female was first discovered sitting on the new nest April 22nd. Wardening of the site began on 25th. Due to the difficulty of obtaining a clear view of the nest and the undesirability of disclosing its precise location, observations on both the brooding and fledging periods were insufficient to enable comparisons with previous data to be made.

The female was noted standing at the edge of the nest looking down into it April 25th. Next morning she was watched 'chewing' on her return to the nest after an absence of four minutes, then 'yawning' several times before standing up with her head down in the nest. Observations April 27th/28th were limited by snow, hail and rain showers accompanying near gale-force NW winds which resulted in the nest being almost constantly obscured by swaying branches. First positive evidence of hatching was obtained April 29th when the female left the nest for seven minutes, sat 'chewing' for two minutes on her return, and then stood up at the edge of the nest regurgitating food. Two small beaks were just visible over the rim of the nest. Assuming the hatching date as April 26th and the commencement of incubation as around April 10th gives an incubation period of approximately 16 days.

### **Fledging Period**

For the first week after hatching, the female was not seen to be away from the nest for longer than 15 minutes. The male was watched sitting at the nest ten minutes April 28th with no sign of his mate in the vicinity. During this period only the female was observed passing food to the young. When the male approached the nest he would feed his mate and she in turn would regurgitate this food to the nestlings. The female would also leave the nest and feed herself, then return and regurgitate food to the young. Despite the pressure of attending to the first brood juveniles, the male appeared to provide more food than the female during the first week to ten days.

The male was first noted to directly feed the young May 5th. There would seem to be no fixed pattern regarding the commencement and division of feeding duties by parent birds in the early stages of the fledging period. After the first seven to ten days the task appears to be more or less equally shared in most instances. Once the young were ten days old they were increasingly left untended and the female usually accompanied her mate and the surviving three first brood juveniles on feeding excursions, normally to an area 300m west of the nest site. On the evening of May 7th and again the following morning the family party was seen to fly in from their feeding area and drink at the car park puddle and then fly away without approaching the nest tree. The young were apparently left unfed for at least four hours in cold, misty conditions May 7th.

It was not until May 14th that further evidence was obtained of the number of young in the nest. On this date an apparently fully feathered wing was seen fluttering over the edge of the nest and a fully developed tail belonging to a separate individual

was visible over the opposite side of the nest. At no time was the nest itself examined and there was no point from which a view into the nest itself could be obtained. Both parents and the first brood juveniles were observed in the nest tree May 16th, but none was seen to approach the nest itself. Next day there was no activity at the nest tree and the male and female were observed perched at the rear of a belt of pines behind the car park about 100m east of the nest. On May 18th the parent birds were seen feeding two young birds in this area. These appeared to be newly fledged birds giving the typical begging *chittoo* call which the first brood young had ceased using several days previously. Assuming the probable dates of hatching and fledging to be April 26th and May 17th respectively the fledging period was 22 days compared with 20 days for the first brood and 21 days for the 1984 nest.

### Observations of First Brood Juveniles

Four birds fledged from the first nest April 3rd. The last occasion all four juveniles were seen was May 2nd. Subsequently only three first brood young were regularly observed. Young Parrot Crossbills remain dependent on their parents for food for a considerable time after leaving the nest. The male alone took responsibility for feeding the first brood juveniles and they would accompany him almost constantly begging for food. On two occasions he was seen to shoo away a begging juvenile and also to brush bills with juveniles without food being passed. The juveniles would usually fly up to the nest tree when the male went to feed the second brood, and sometimes a first brood juvenile would beg in vain for food at the side of the nest whilst the male or female fed the nestlings. The juveniles would also join the male in drinking and bathing at the car park puddles.

It was not until May 1st (four weeks after leaving the nest) that the juveniles were first clearly seen to have crossed bills. Next day they were watched attempting to pull off cones and to prise open or extract seed from ripened cones. The male attempted to prevent one juvenile from feeding itself. After initial clumsy attempts at feeding, the juveniles slowly became more proficient but still relied on the male to provide most of their food. Once they were over five weeks old they were regularly seen further afield, not always with the male and on May 12th were over 2km from the nest area. On May 17th when it is assumed that the second brood fledged, there was no sign of the three first brood juveniles in the car park area and indeed over the preceding three days they had been regularly sighted unaccompanied in an area over 2km away.

It is possible that all five juveniles and the parents subsequently re-united. Early in June a party of seven Parrot Crossbills was reported in the vicinity of Walsey Hills 15km east of Wells.

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# Little Gulls in Norfolk

Compared with records published in the first edition of *Birds of Norfolk* (1967), Little Gulls visiting the county have considerably increased in the frequency of records and in the occurrence of much larger parties. Up to 1967 the largest groups did not exceed 22 apart from 30 off Heacham in November 1965; in the previous fourteen years there were only three inland observations. A decade later, the first instance of over-summering were on record: at Hickling and at Wisbech Sewage Farm. In addition, the first large assembly had been recorded: 110 off Holme 15th October 1972.

Since 1976 spectacular autumn movements have become an annual event between late September and during October/November with some into December. This dispersal from breeding grounds is associated with strong or gale-force winds between north-west and south-east driving the birds closer inshore on their journey through the Baltic into the North Sea and the English Channel. North-west, north and north-east winds result in birds normally heading north; east, south-east and even southerly winds cause them to head east along the north Norfolk coast and to move south along the east coast. The most impressive observations appear below:

1976: Total of 238 east off Sheringham 30th October in NE gale.

1977: Remarkable numbers passing off-shore 12th/13th November during very strong NW winds including 213 south in 3½ hours off Winterton; smaller totals off Holme (60), Cley (100) and Sheringham (118).

1978: Most impressive movement 2nd October when 274 NNE at Winterton during 3½ hour watch following strong NE wind from the Baltic. Prior to this year, December observations quite unusual, but on 6th 102 off Yarmouth and 43 east off Sheringham during strong SE winds.

1979: Off Winterton 92 north 16th September after 48 hours of strong NW winds. An easterly movement 26th/27th October when wind strong SE: Holme 87 + 78; Cley 40 + 115; Sheringham 100 + 219; Happisburgh 100; Walcott 145 and Winterton 185 (3½ hours watch).

1980: 154 east at Paston and 47 south at Gorleston 1st November; 46 east at Paston next day when 55 east at Cley and 23 east at Cley 3rd November (strong SE winds). 52 south off Winterton 9th November (strong ENE winds).

1981: 98 off Holme 23rd October, 33 off Cley 26th October (moderate NW winds) and 62 there 1st November (N wind).

1982: 50 off Salthouse 6th/7th October. 12 off Lynn Point, 61 off Titchwell and 24 off Sheringham all 9th November; 50 off Titchwell and 81 off Horsey 13th November (westerly winds with severe NW gales further north).

1983: 87 at Horsey 24th October (fresh NE wind).

1984: Smaller than usual scale October/November movements with maximum of 38 off Snettisham 12th November. In addition, a very late passage 31st December when 30 off Hunstanton and 40 off Scolt Head.

1985: 53 off Cley 30th October with over 100 east there next day and a further 30 east 2nd November.

Little Gulls normally remain very scarce here during the opening months of the year. Most observations then relate to singles. However in 1983 unprecedented

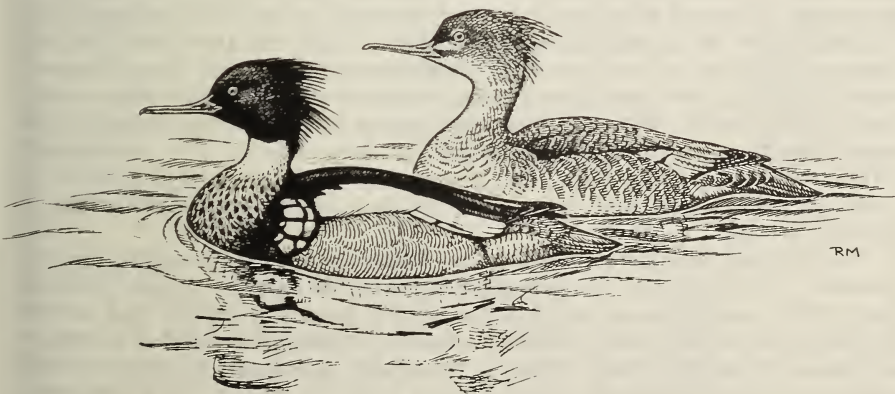


numbers put in an appearance following a week of very strong north to north easterly winds over the North Sea which caused the auk 'wreck' (see 1983 Report p.360). Monthly totals were 142 in January, 102 in February and 39 in March. The following year a number appeared again including 43 off Yarmouth 23rd January during strong southerlies which also produced 4 adult Mediterranean Gulls. At the same time 23 Little Gulls were off Paston.

Little Gull spring migration locally is on a small scale compared with autumn passage due to the majority returning to breeding areas by overland routes. Even so passage extends from mid-April until mid-May. Interesting observations include up to 7 at Pentney GP, 14 at Colney GP, 15 (all adults in breeding plumage) at Hillington and 25 at Titchwell. Most exceptional was a tight flock of 80 heading east over Santon Downham 29th April 1981 following two days exceptionally heavy rain accompanied by strong NE winds (see 1981 Report p.88).

Shortly after departure of the last migrants, non-breeding Little Gulls content to over-summer here begin arriving. Up to 29 have lingered at Titchwell, 24 at Cley and Salthouse and threes and fours in The Wash at Lynn Point and at Snettisham. In the Broads area Hickling attracts up to a dozen on occasions. The scene again changes during the second week in August when the first juvenile Little Gulls arrive.

West of the main breeding range in Northern Russia and the Baltic, Little Gulls have bred sporadically in the Netherlands and in Denmark. In Norfolk hopes were high in 1964 that a pair might breed at Salthouse. The birds arrived towards the end of April and stayed well over a month in a gull colony, frequently mobbing intruders. Much courtship was recorded including aerial chases similar to those of the Black-headed Gull. In addition, tern-like postures on the ground were observed. Unfortunately, no eggs were laid. In 1975 a pair attempted nesting on the Ouse Washes in Cambridgeshire. Sadly this ended in disaster: two of the three eggs were found broken and the female was dead. Three years later a pair in full breeding plumage arrived at Hickling during the third week of May. Day after day their display could be observed accompanied by toy trumpet-like calls. By 1st June a nest could be detected in a rush clump. Half a dozen immature Little Gulls present on the shallowly flooded marsh became highly aggressive towards the nesting birds. As late as 24th June when the clutch of three eggs was thought to be on the point of hatching a nest change-over was observed, but a few days later only one adult remained and the nest was found to be empty. No further nesting attempts are on record.



# Hen Harrier Winter Roost Survey

Roger Clarke



This report and its predecessor, *Wild Bird Protection in Norfolk*, record the gathering momentum of a remarkable increase in wintering Hen Harriers. At Scolt Head in 1930, it was declared a 'not very uncommon visitor during the winter' and subsequent reports indicated at least two present. In 1939, it was 'commonly noted between Salthouse and Scolt Head throughout the winter months'. By the mid-1960's, gatherings of three birds were mentioned more and more. In 1975, it was 'apparently increasing as a winter visitor in coastal localities' and numbers seen together were soon up to seven. The harsh 1978/79 winter brought 'unique numbers' seen at 'over 140 localities'. Numbers since have been good, but overall not as high.

Ringling recoveries in England as a whole indicate a mixture of origins. The few ringed birds recovered recently in Norfolk originated from Orkney, North Wales, Belgium and the Netherlands. Breeding in Belgium is sporadic and Welsh numbers are moderate. In view of a high proportion of internal recoveries, it seems that many Scottish birds are resident, although a number of recoveries have occurred widely over Britain, Ireland and the rest of Western Europe. The Dutch population is closer to Norfolk. A peak of 100-130 pairs in the Netherlands in the 1970's (Schipper 1979) has since fallen off (recent estimate 81-96 pairs — Guus van Duin pers com), but doubtless a number of those and their offspring cross the Channel. More, however, must filter south, where they form a large proportion of ringling recoveries in northern France (Tombal 1982). The most likely source of cold weather influxes is the population from northern Sweden, which has been reported as a considerable 1,000-2,000 pairs (Nillson 1981). This is supported by the presence of numbers of birds in East Anglia in April, when more southerly populations are displaying on breeding grounds.

The 1972 issue was the first *Norfolk Bird Report* to mention communal roosting. However, Jim Vincent at Hickling clearly knew of the habit by the late 1930's or early 1940's, when he wrote that 'they may be seen together as they fly back to their roosting marsh of thick sedge and reeds'. The 1979 report gave a total of 45 birds at six roosts (3 North, 2 North-West, 1 Broadland) and David Davenport (1982) calculated a Norfolk maximum of 90 for early 1979. The biggest 1980's roost count

## CO-ORDINATED COUNTS AT HEN HARRIER ROOSTS IN NORFOLK — 1983/84 &amp; 1984/85

Site	27.11.83	15.1.84	18.3.84	21.10.84	25.11.84	16.12.84	13.1.85	17.2.85	17.3.85
	Ring- tails	Grey- tails	Ring- tails	Grey- tails	Ring- tails	Grey- tails	Ring- tails	Grey- tails	Ring- tails
<b>NORTH COAST</b>									
A Saltmarsh/Dunes	3	4	4	3	2	3	1	7	5
B Saltmarsh Dunes	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	2	1
C Reedbed	2	0	5	0	7	3	—	5	1
D Reedbed	+	+	+	+	+	+	—	—	—
E Lowland Heath	3	1	3	1	1	1	0	1	1
<b>NORTH WEST</b>									
F Bog	4	2	3	3	1	2	—	0	1
G Bog	2	1	2	1	0	0	1	2	2
H Reedbed	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	3	1
<b>BROADLAND</b>									
I Reed/Sedge Bed	3	1	3	0	1	0	+	2	0
J Reed/Sedge Bed	4	1	5	3	3	2	1	0	2
K Reedbed	2	0	—	—	—	—	0	0	1
L Reedbed	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	2	0
M Reedbed	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	1	0
N Reedbed	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	1	0
<b>BRECKLAND</b>									
O Lowland Heath	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	23	9	25	12	16	10	5	2	25
Ratio of Ringtails to each Grey	2.56	2.08	1.60	2.50	2.08	3.50	2.64	3.80	5.50
Mean No. of Total Harriers	4.00	5.28	3.71	1.40	3.08	5.00	3.64	5.11	3.17
per site counted									
<i>Key</i>									
—	No count received								
*	Site unknown to Survey								
+	Site presumed unoccupied from casual observation								
'Ringtails'	Females of all ages and first winter males								
<i>Dates of Counts</i>									
On the exact dates	63								
On next or previous day	10								
Within one week	13								
Within two weeks	1								
Total	87								

One further reedbed site (Breckland) is known to have been used as a roost in 1984/85, maximum at least 3 birds, precise dates not available.



known for Norfolk is of 22 at site 'C' (see table for lettering) on 5th March 1982.

The results given in the table are part of the survey of Britain and Ireland begun in 1983 by Tim Bennett, Donald Watson and myself. The figures must give a reasonable basis to estimate the current complement for the county during relatively mild winters. Of all the English counties favoured by Hen Harriers, Norfolk has consistently produced the highest number of birds on the Survey co-ordinated counts (except Suffolk on 15.1.84). The counts in Norfolk have regularly produced 20-25% of the total counted in England as a whole and on 16th December 1984 the proportion was as high as 30%. However, coverage has been more difficult in some other parts of the country and so the actual proportion of the country's winter population held by Norfolk is probably more like 15%.

Numbers peak reasonably regularly at some Norfolk coastal roosts in November and again in March. (John Brown & Andrew Warren pers comm), at the usual Hen Harrier migration times. Numbers also peak dramatically at individual roosts as a result of cold weather movements. Such peaks have, however, proved rather short-lived and difficult to capture on survey count dates set for national purposes. In common with most other English counties occupied, Norfolk holds its largest sustained numbers during the mid-winter months.

1983/84 and 1984/85 were not winters notable for any exceptional influx of Hen Harriers on a national scale. The most notable spells of weather were the heavy snowfalls in January/February 1985. The mean number per roost in Norfolk fell in mid-January, after the first heavy snow, but peaked after the February snowfall, although the proportion of grey males dropped. This is in marked contrast to the rising proportion of greys throughout 1983/84, but is consistent with an exodus of smaller birds in conditions of snow, especially open-country species favoured as prey by the agile male Hen Harrier. The heavier female is equipped to deal with larger mammals and birds. Her lesser manoeuvrability shows in a tendency to hunt over taller vegetation where opportunities for surprise strikes are greater. This may give her an advantage in snowy weather, when prey species are finding food of their own more readily in such cover.

Certain sites or areas may attract varying proportions of males and females, but further co-ordinated counts are required to make much sense of statistical tests on this aspect. Also, the data is affected by largely unknown numbers of first-year males amongst the ringtails. One example of such a difference shown by the table is the low proportion of greys at site 'B' compared to similar site 'A' not far away. Statistical testing so far gives no indication that the difference is due to anything other than chance ( $\chi^2$  test result:  $0.2 > p > 0.1$  on the basis of just the five pairs of counts shown).

The Survey is continuing — on an international basis from 1985/6. It is hoped that future Norfolk results will appear in this Report. Behavioural data collected by observers is intended for a national paper.

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Over-summering Little Gulls have become a regular feature. Up to 29 have lingered at Titchwell and 24 at Cley pools.





***Above: Red-breasted Flycatcher and Red-backed Shrike photographed on Blakeney Point in May. Centre: Dotterel at Blakeney Point and Pectoral Sandpiper at Titchwell both in September. Below: The Little Whimbrel at Blakeney Eye the first county occurrence.***





An unprecedented arrival of displaced migrant Bluethroats took place in May. The county total exceeded fifty birds all of the Scandinavian red-spotted race.



*Above:* This Alpine Swift 'overshot' during a warm spell early in April and entertained North coast observers almost a week. *Below:* Bird of the year, this Black-and-White Warbler attracted hundreds of birders to How Hill.





Vincent J. The Marsh and Hen-Harriers. In Pitt F. *The Romance of Nature*. 1313-1322. Country Life.

*Wild Bird Protection in Norfolk (1926-1952).*

*Acknowledgements: The data is provided by a team of 24 observers. Their names are listed amongst Contributors to the Bird Report to help preserve the anonymity of sensitive roost locations. Their hard work in all weathers is greatly appreciated. I also thank the B.T.O. for ringing recovery information and their initial financial assistance.*

## Ringling Report

*Moss Taylor*



1985 was another successful year for ringers operating within Norfolk, with more than thirteen thousand birds ringed, in addition to the Wash Wader Ringing Group total. A promising new development was the start of a ringing programme at Cantley beet factory, where ten species of waders were ringed, including 27 Snipe, 25 Curlew Sandpiper and 24 Ruff. Continuing progress was made with the county Reed Warbler study and nearly 700 were ringed during the year. The most commonly ringed species was Greenfinch (1,683) with Blackbird (1,078) and Swallow (1,071) also exceeding one thousand. A record number of recoveries affecting Norfolk were reported in 1985, including multiple recoveries of both Bewick's and Whooper Swans, an interesting series of Stone Curlew recoveries and no less than six species recovered south of the Sahara (including Swift, Blackcap and Willow Warbler). The great value of colour ringing non-passerines, is shown by several of the recoveries, and all observers are urged to send any sightings of colour-marked birds to the relevant addresses given below (please also send full details to Michael Seago for inclusion in this Report). The symbols used are explained in full in NBR 1983 p.367. My continuing gratitude to all the ringers who have made this report possible, both in the field and in submitting ringing data. Also to Dr N. Branson for his invaluable comments on the wader recoveries.



## NORFOLK RECOVERIES NOTIFIED IN 1985

**Fulmar:** two further recoveries of birds ringed at Scottish breeding colonies (including the oldest one so far to be found in Norfolk) and the first control back at the breeding colony at Sheringham of one ringed as a nestling.

1	22.7.70	Dunnet Head, Caithness, Scotland
x	5.6.85	Holme 677km SSE
6	9.7.83	Gruney, Shetland, Scotland
x	17.11.85	Sheringham 869km S
1	6.8.73	Sheringham
v	18.6.85	Sheringham

**Gannet:** there have only been three previous recoveries in Britain of Norwegian-ringed Gannets, all from the same Arctic breeding colony.

1	2.8.84	Skarvklakken, Nordland, Norway
x	31.10.84	West Runton 1,954km SSW

**Heron:** the first Danish-ringed Heron to be found in Norfolk.

1	18.5.84	Hjerk Nor, Denmark
xF	27.3.85	West Acre 691km SW

**Bewick's Swan:** further evidence of the far-ranging movements undertaken by individual Bewick's Swans. Details of colour-marked Swans should be sent to The Wildfowl Trust, Slimbridge, Gloucestershire.

3F	5.12.80	Slimbridge
vv	17.11.81	Welney
vv	31.12.83	Noordoostpolder, The Netherlands
vv	13.1.84	Arkemheenpolder, Gelderland, The Netherlands
vv	20.2.84	R. Ijssel, Hoenwaard-Hattem, The Netherlands
vv	Feb '85	Horsey Mere
4F	1.12.77	Slimbridge, Gloucestershire
vv	Feb '85	Horsey Mere
4F	10.2.82	Caerlaverock, Dumfries, Scotland
vv	2.12.82	Caerlaverock
vv	23.11.83	Caerlaverock
vv	Feb '85	Horsey Mere

**Whooper Swan:** details of three Whooper Swans ringed in different parts of Iceland and a further example of multiple sightings, demonstrating the value of colour-marking.

4F	30.7.84	Skogalon, Vopnafirdi, NE Iceland
vv	Dec '85	Welney
4F	1.8.84	Alftafjordur, Sudur Mula, S Iceland
vv	2.2.85	Welney
4M	7.8.85	Alftafjordur, W Iceland
vv	17.12.85	Waxham
6M	31.1.82	Saltvaerket, Jylland, Denmark
vv	16.10.83	Sarkat, Oulu, Finland
vv	9.1.85	Nibe, Jylland, Denmark
vv	10.2.85	Snettisham

**Brent Goose:** as a result of co-operative ringing in Europe, 2,650 dark-bellied Brent Geese have now been individually marked with engraved coloured rings. All birds

have been ringed with two rings, one on each leg. The majority of the birds carry two colour rings inscribed with letters, numbers or one, two or three horizontal black bars. An increasing number are being reported annually in Norfolk. In a future Ringing Report it is hoped to present an analysis of Norfolk sightings. Details of sightings should be sent to either Bart Ebginge, Rijksinstituut Voor Natuurbeheer, Postbus 46, 3956 ZR LEERSUM, The Netherlands or Moss Taylor, 4 Heath Road, Sheringham, Norfolk.

#### **Shelduck:**

4	24.12.77	Seal Sands, Teesmouth, Cleveland
xF	25.1.85	Blakeney Point 231km SE

**Wigeon:** in addition to those recoveries given, Pensthorpe-ringed Wigeon were found in France, The Netherlands, Denmark, Germany, Finland and the USSR.

3F	18.10.84	Pensthorpe
xF	15.1.85	Tyne Estuary, Dunbar, Scotland 416km NNW
3M	15.11.84	Pensthorpe
xF	16.9.85	Southport, Lancashire 270km WNW
5F	8.2.81	Loch Leven, Tayside, Scotland
xF	27.12.85	Cley 459km SE

**Teal:** amongst the ringed Teal reported in 1985, were birds from Eire, The Netherlands and France. Very few Czech-ringed Teal have been found in Britain.

4F	8.8.80	Libkovic, Usti nad Labem, Czechoslovakia
xF	6.10.84	Burnham Overy 927km WNW

#### **Pintail:**

3m	6.12.81	Slimbridge, Gloucestershire
xF	12.1.85	Terrington Marsh 218km ENE

**Shoveler:** a duckling ringed before fledging and the first Shoveler from eastern Europe to be found in Norfolk.

1	8.6.84	Lake Engure, Latviya, USSR
xF	5.1.85	Barton Turf 1,482km WSW

**Pochard:** Pensthorpe-ringed Pochard were recovered in France and Poland.

6M	3.2.83	Welney
xF	31.5.83	Oktyabr'Skiy, Perm, USSR 3,698km E

**Marsh Harrier:** this bird, a tide-line corpse, was only the fifth Dutch-ringed Marsh Harrier to be found in Britain, but the second in Norfolk.

1	24.6.84	De Geul, Texel, The Netherlands
x	22.5.85	Holme 280km W

**Kestrel:** the recent increase in the number of Kestrel recoveries continues. The first bird was trapped on the lawn of a town garden, where it was devouring a Starling it had just caught.

6M	12.1.85	Sheringham
xF	25.3.85	Croxdale, Durham 269km NW
1	9.6.84	West Tofts
xF	23.2.85	Boston, Lincolnshire 65km NW
1	8.6.85	West Tofts
v	26.9.85	Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk 32km S
2F	1.11.84	Worboys, Cambridgeshire (wing-tagged)
vv	13.2.85	Bacton

1F	24.6.85	Wellington, Shropshire
xL	22.12.85	Halvergate (in pigeon loft) 278km E
1M	5.7.82	Waltham Close, Hertfordshire
xF	15.9.85	Sheringham 164km NNE
4F	10.9.85	Ipswich, Suffolk
v	1.10.85	Mulbarton 54km N
1	25.6.85	Ketton, Stamford, Leicestershire
x	6.8.85	Stowbridge 62km E
4F	14.3.85	Lode, Cambridgeshire
x	25.8.85	Blakeney Point 95km NNE

#### **Coot:**

4	19.8.81	Rye Meads, Hertfordshire
xF	26.3.85	Kelling 149km NNE

**Oystercatcher:** apart from a small number of local breeding birds, almost all Oystercatchers occurring in Norfolk come from Norway. The first recovery is therefore highly unusual.

1	20.6.76	Fair Isle, Scotland
v	20.9.84	Holme
6	31.5.80	Hagavaagen, Rogaland, Norway
v	20.8.85	Wells 726km SSW
6	11.6.84	Flystasjon, Nordland, Norway
x	27.1.85	Wells 1,983km SSW

**Stone Curlew:** an unprecedented series of recoveries of Norfolk-ringed Stone Curlew, demonstrating one of the problems surrounding conservation of the species. These recoveries support the suggestion that British Stone Curlews winter in Iberia and NW Africa.

1	1.7.77	Norfolk
xF	7.1.85	St Just-Luzac, Charente-Maritime, France (shot) 750km S
1	12.7.84	Norfolk
xF	27.10.85	Alfaro, Logrono, Spain (shot) 1,152km S
1	25.5.85	Norfolk
vv	13.8.85	Norfolk
xF	1.11.85	San Martin de Losa, Burgos, Spain (shot) 1,126km SSW
1	20.5.85	Norfolk
xL	29.11.85	Durban, Gers, France 992km S

**Ringed Plover:** continental Ringed Plover generally occur in Eastern England only on autumn passage en route to Africa.

1	14.7.83	Neubessin, Rostock, German DR
x	24.2.85	Great Yarmouth 784km WSW

#### **Golden Plover:**

4	20.3.82	Jutrijp, Friesland, The Netherlands
x	5.4.85	Burnham Norton 331km W

**Grey Plover:** all the Grey Plover occurring at the Wash in autumn/winter come from Siberia, many stopping over en route in Denmark and Germany.

3	28.9.82	Langenwerder, Rostock, German DR
v	9.2.85	Snettisham 743km W



**Lapwing:** an almost identical movement to that reported in NBR 1984 p.109, of another pullus ringed on the Quags.

1 31.5.77 Kelling Quags.

xF 17.2.85 St Michel Chef, Loire Atlantique, France 682km SSW

**Sanderling:** some Sanderling arriving at the Wash in autumn, moult and then cross the UK to winter in the Morecombe Bay/Wirral area, others belong to the African-wintering population.

4 31.8.80 Heacham

v 23.2.85 Saltburn, Cleveland 233km NW

4 31.8.80 Heacham

v 10.5.84 Teesmouth, Cleveland 220km NNW

6 31.7.69 Snettisham

v 6.5.85 Southport, Merseyside 246km WNW

4 23.8.74 Heacham

xF 23.3.85 Sidi Mohamed Lahmar, Morocco 2,086km SSW

**Ruff:** Africa is the main wintering area for the species but this is the most southerly recovery of a Ruff ringed at the Wash.

3F 22.8.78 Wolferton

v 20.2.85 Tamach, Lampsar, Senegal 4,341km SSW

**Bar-tailed Godwit:**

4 21.8.82 Snettisham

xF 15.5.85 Mezen, Arkhangelsk, USSR 2,841km ENE

**Curlew:** almost all the Curlew occurring at the Wash breed in Finland/Sweden. The remains of the first bird indicated that it had fallen victim to an owl or other predator, possibly an Eagle Owl.

2 29.9.84 Wolferton

xL 20.6.85 Suolisto, Turku-Pori, Finland 1,609km NE

4 19.8.78 Terrington Marsh

x 20.6.85 Illo, Turku-Pori, Finland 1,657km NE

4M 29.7.76 Wolferton

v 21.2.85 Rogerstown, Dublin, Eire 446km W

**Redshank:** most continental-bred Redshank winter around the Mediterranean.

3J 22.9.84 Langenwerder, Rostock, German DR

xL 6.4.85 Horsey 667km WSW

**Greenshank:** the first German-ringed Greenshank to be found in Britain, identified by the combination of colour rings it carried. Details of any colour-marked waders should be sent to Hector Galbraith, Dept. of Zoology, The University, Glasgow, G12 8QQ.

2 15.7.84 Rieselfelder, Munster, West Germany

vv 17.9.85 Cley 458km WNW

**Turnstone:** the first three are probably examples of the Greenland population which winters around the North Sea, the fourth is probably a Finland-breeding bird wintering in Africa — this population only occurs at the Wash for two weeks in August to take on food.

6 17.4.83 Heacham

xF 27.7.85 Bretteville, Manche, France 385km SSW

4 22.8.70 Snettisham

xF 25.8.83 Baie du St Michel, Manche, France 488km SSW

4	23.10.76	Heacham
v	9.1.85	Oesterput Molenpolder, Zeeland, The Netherlands 282km ESE
6	4.8.74	Snettisham
xF	22.3.85	Casablanca, Morocco 2,228km SSW

**Black-headed Gull:** of the many Black-headed Gull recoveries reported in 1985, details of only three are given. One a fifteen year-old bird, the second indicating the timing of spring passage to Europe and the third in Norway, from where few Norfolk-ringed birds have been recovered. Details of any colour-ringed gulls should be sent to Dr John Coulson, Zoology Dept., University of Durham, South Road, Durham DH1 3LE.

3	31.12.70	Norwich
v	10.1.85	Copenhagen, Sjaelland, Denmark 805km ENE
5	11.1.85	Thorpe St Andrew
xF	18.3.85	Stade, Luneburg, F. R. Germany 552km E
4	18.12.76	Ketteringham
xF	1.7.83	Asmarka, Hedmark, Norway 1,102km NNE

**Common Gull:** fidelity to wintering areas is shown by the first bird which was controlled in the same Norwich garden, in which it was ringed. Note the interesting mid-winter movement of the last bird.

6	2.1.80	Norwich
v	30.12.85	Norwich
8	26.1.79	Sheringham
xL	21.5.85	Kalajoki, Oulu, Finland
6	12.2.78	Norwich
vB	26.5.85	Katholm, Jylland, Denmark 620km ENE
1	9.7.77	Lanker See, Schleswig Holstein, FR Germany
xF	6.2.85	Bacton 601km WSW
5	13.1.85	Helgoland, FR Germany
xF	23.1.85	Brancaster 499km WSW

**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** the fourth recovery of a Norwegian-ringed nestling in Norfolk

1	8.7.83	Rauna, Vest-Agder, Norway
x	17.8.85	Hickling Broad 670km SSW

#### **Herring Gull:**

1	11.7.84	Westerduinen, Texel, Netherlands
x	9.9.85	Blakeney Point 250km W

#### **Sandwich Tern:**

1	29.6.84	Blakeney Point
xF	28.2.85	Eboue, Aboisso, Ivory Coast 5,306km S
1	19.6.81	Farne Islands, Northumberland
x	7.8.85	Scolt Head 330km SSE

**Common Tern:** this bird was found within 17km of the Sandwich Tern from Blakeney Point, and only three days later.

1	13.7.84	Breydon Water
v	3.3.85	Vridi, Abidjan, Ivory Coast 5,289km S

**Little Tern:** this species has featured only once before in the Norfolk Ringing Report.

1	7.6.81	West Norfolk
xF	14.7.85	Sizewell, Suffolk 109km SE
1	13.6.82	West Norfolk
v	14.8.85	Werkeiland, Zeeland, The Netherlands 283km ESE

**Guillemot:** recoveries of Guillemots from the Scottish breeding colonies have not previously appeared in this Report.

1	30.6.85	Isle of Canna, Inner Hebrides, Scotland
x	21.11.85	Brancaster Staithe
1	30.6.85	Isle of Canna
x	12.12.85	Mundesley 689km SE
1	23.6.85	North Sutor, Nigg, Scotland
x	3.11.85	Sheringham 621km SSE

**Long-eared Owl:** only the third Swedish-ringed Long-eared Owl to have been found in Britain.

1	15.6.84	Limsjon, Kopparberg, Sweden
xF	5.2.85	Wroxham 1,218km SW

**Swift:** after ringing large numbers of Swifts over many years, John Bruhn has at last been rewarded with this recovery. The first British-ringed Swift to be found in South Africa.

4	20.6.82	Earlham
x	9.2.85	Utrecht, Natal, South Africa 9,367km SSE

**Swallow:** this bird, controlled by a team of German ringers, was the first recovery in North Africa of a Norfolk-ringed Swallow.

3	4.9.83	Rockland Broad
v	13.10.85	Oued, Oran, Algeria 1,892km S

**Robin:**

5	1.3.84	Stratford-on-Avon, Warwickshire
x	2.6.85	Shotesham St Mary 206km E
3	22.9.85	Mablethorpe, Lincolnshire
v	2.11.85	Cantley 123km SE

**Song Thrush:** the first bird was presumably of continental origin.

3	18.11.84	Burlingham
xF	8.5.85	Ile D'Ouessant, Finisterre, France 656km
5F	3.5.81	Sawston, Cambridgeshire (breeding)
x	6.7.85	Attleborough 73km NE

**Mistle Thrush:** there have been very few Mistle Thrush recoveries involving Norfolk.

4	31.7.84	Gibraltar Point, Lincolnshire
x	28.5.85	Hunstanton 19km SSE

**Reed Warbler:** the only significant movement reported in 1985, despite almost a thousand Reed Warblers being ringed in Norfolk in 1985.

3J	21.7.84	Weybourne
v	4.6.85	Sleaford, Lincolnshire 113km W

**Lesser Whitethroat:** an interesting example of a Lesser Whitethroat showing a south-easterly movement even before it has left Britain.

3	29.8.85	Gibraltar Point, Lincolnshire
x	12.9.85	Great Ormesby 104km ESE



**Garden Warbler:**

3	12.8.78	Walton Common
v	15.5.85	Dungeness, Kent 202km S

**Blackcap:** details are given of only the fifth British-ringed Blackcap to be recovered south of the Sahara. The majority of British Blackcap recoveries in winter have been in southern Iberia and North Africa, the last recovery being typical.

4F	24.7.82	Walton Common
x	2.3.85	Bolongo, Guinea 4,996km S
3M	31.8.84	Tottington
xF	4.5.85	Colchester, Essex 62km SSE
3M	6.10.84	Holme
xF	11.2.85	Dellys, Alger, Algeria 1,799km S

**Chiffchaff:** compare the direction of movement with the Lesser Whitethroat.

1	28.6.85	West Tofts
v	10.9.85	Upper Sundon, Bedfordshire 105km SW

**Willow Warbler:** details are given of only the sixth British-ringed Willow Warbler to be found south of the Sahara and the first African recovery from Norfolk. The first bird was clearly ringed whilst still on spring passage.

4	4.4.85	Sheringham
xF	7.5.85	Lancaster, Lancashire 288km WNW
3	20.7.83	Buckenham Carrs
xF	10.5.85	Brundall 21km N
3	1.10.85	Waxham
xF	14.12.85	Richard-Toll, Senegal 4,310km SSW

**Goldcrest:**

2M	1.10.83	Happisburgh
xL	26.02.85	Aston Rowant, Oxfordshire (owl pellet) 213km SW

**Pied Flycatcher:** this recovery suggests that, unlike the autumn drift migrants, spring birds are British breeders moving north and west.

4M	12.5.81	Sheringham
vB	10.6.85	Wythop, Cockermonth, Cumbria (in nest box) 349km WNW

**Long-tailed Tit:**

3J	21.5.83	Easton
v	27.10.85	Brancaster 50km NW

**Blue Tit**

5	3.2.84	New Costessey
x	8.6.85	Roughton 25km NNE
1	6.6.85	Great Glemham, Suffolk
v	12.10.85	Cantley 41km

**Great Tit:** as in 1984, a noticeable spring movement of Great Tits was recorded at this coastal ringing site.

5F	26.3.85	Sheringham
v	31.3.85	Ormesby St Margaret 46km SE
6F	30.3.85	Sheringham
vB	12.5.85	Kneesall, Nottinghamshire 146km W

**Jay:** recoveries of Jays over 50kms are noteworthy. It is therefore possible that this bird was involved in the eruption in October 1983.

6	21.4.84	Gibraltar Point, Lincolnshire
xF	31.1.85	Hanworth 68km ESE

**Chaffinch:**

3M	8.10.84	Kroons Polders, Vlieland, The Netherlands
xF	6.2.85	Thorpe St Andrew 250km WSW

**Brambling:**

6M	8.2.81	Norwich
xF	9.1.85	Steinau, Luneburg, FR Germany 518km ENE

**Greenfinch:** details are given of all the movements outside the County. Note the similarity between the last two recoveries. There have been only three previous recoveries of British-ringed Greenfinches in Norway.

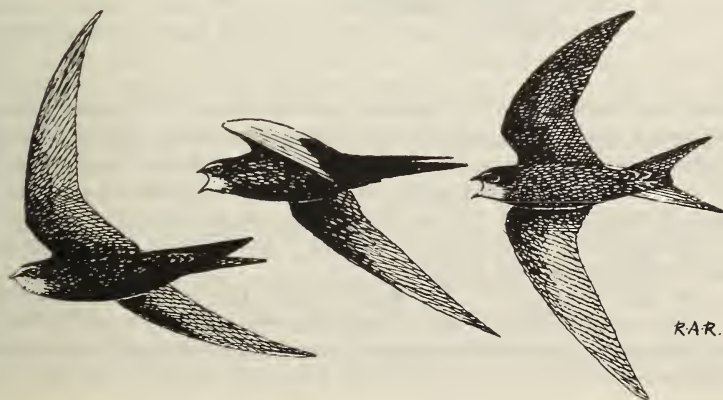
5F	29.1.84	Sheringham
x	28.1.85	Kongsvingen, Hedmark, Norway 1,041km NE
6M	2.1.83	Testelt, Brabant, Belgium
v	12.4.85	Holme 372km NW
4	18.2.84	Wellington, Shropshire
xF	13.4.84	Sheringham 251km E
5M	19.4.82	Tangham, Woodbridge, Suffolk
v	5.4.85	Ormesby St Margaret 67km NNE
4	29.3.81	Garston, Watford, Hertfordshire
v	10.11.85	East Winch, King's Lynn
4M	30.12.83	Crowborough, Sussex
xF	13.8.85	Loddon 188km NNE
5M	12.4.80	Crowborough, Sussex
x	16.6.81	Bunwell 173km NNE

**Goldfinch:** presumably ringed on passage as it returned from wintering on the Continent.

	6.5.85	Swaffham Heath
xF	1.6.85	Barnsley, North Yorkshire 174km NW

**Linnet:**

3	28.8.81	Holme
xF	15.2.85	Eeklo, Oost-Vlaanderen, Belgium 286km SE



# Classified Notes



These Notes are based on *Birds of Norfolk* (revised edition 1977) where fuller details regarding status, distribution, migration and ringing recoveries may be found. Fuller details of Fen records appear in the Cambridge Bird Club Report for 1985. Attention is drawn to the abundance of migration observations appearing in Norfolk Ornithologists Association 1985 Annual Report; the coastal accounts extend from The Wash to Breydon Water. In addition the N.A.R.V.O.S. Report contains much detail regarding distribution in west Norfolk.

The order used is that of K. H. Voous (1977) List of Recent Holarctic Bird Species. Observations refer to 1985, unless otherwise stated. To save space, all but the most essential initials have been omitted. Records are of single birds unless otherwise stated.



**Red-throated Diver:** Recorded to June 2nd (Paston) and from Aug 11th (Waxham). Only large numbers received 105 east off Paston Jan 26th. Inland birds at Horsey Mere March 10th and Oct 1st-10th, Hickling Feb 23rd with 4 Aug 29th, Heigham Sounds Feb 24th and March 9th, Norwich (River Wensum by Foundry Bridge) Feb 12th-14th, Great Witchingham Feb 9th and Denver Jan 26th.

**Black-throated Diver:** Over 90 North Coast observations to May 17th (Blakeney Point) and from Sept 1st (Holme). Mainly singles but 3 together Hunstanton Jan 12th and Feb 6th. Only East Coast record Yarmouth Jan 23rd. Inland: Strumpshaw Jan 20th.

**Great Northern Diver:** Forty-six records received all relating to North/Wash Coasts: Paston Jan 26th and Oct 13th, Sheringham March 2nd and Nov 10th, Weybourne March 10th, Salthouse Oct 10th, Nov 3rd, 11th and 13th, Cley Jan 27th and Feb 16th, eight records Sept 30th to Nov 25th with 2 Oct 17th, Blakeney Point 5 records Sept 29th to Oct 26th, Holkham Jan 27th and Feb 16th, Titchwell Nov 7th and 17th and Dec 25th with 2 on 31st, Holme Oct 6th, 30th and Dec 31st, Hunstanton 2 Jan 1st, six records Oct 31st to Dec 6th and Heacham Feb 11th.

**Little Grebe:** Usual high winter totals at Snettisham Pits where 75 in Jan, 45 in Feb, 46 in Oct and 55 in Nov. Over 40 along Lower River Bure Jan 21st. Unusual sighting of one on sea off Yarmouth Jan 9th. *All breeding records welcome.*

**Great Crested Grebe:** Autumn assemblies: Titchwell 60 Oct 29th, Holme: 45 Oct 1st, Hunstanton 117 Oct 30th and Snettisham 40 Aug 24th.

**Red-necked Grebe:** Over 110 coastal records to April 27th (Paston) and from Sept 15th (Titchwell). Mostly between late Oct and mid-Feb and mainly singles, but 4 off Blakeney Feb 6th, 4 off Salthouse Oct 20th/26th and 5 in Holkham Bay Oct 26th.

Inland records at Buckenham Feb 17th and 21st, Hickling Feb 10th, Sporle Feb 7th, Wissey Mouth Jan 16th, Brandon Creek Jan 23rd and Feb 4th, Denver Sluice Jan 17th-19th, Ten Mile Bank Jan 20th, Magdalen Jan 19th and Wiggshall St. Peter (Ouse Relief Channel) Jan 19th-23rd and Nov 20th-26th.

**Slavonian Grebe:** Expected late autumn influx into North Norfolk coastal waters particularly Holkham Bay where 7 Oct 5th increasing to 10 by 20th and to 14 on 26th then decreasing to 4 by Nov 4th and a single remained by 9th. Elsewhere upto 5 in Oct-Dec between Paston and Hunstanton particularly at Titchwell. Again no East Coast observations.

In Broadland Hickling Jan 1st and Feb 8th, Buckenham Jan 19th and Surlingham Jan 27th with 2 Feb 22nd. In Fens Denver Sluice Feb 18th-22nd.

**Black-necked Grebe:** More records than in recent years. *Coastal:* Salthouse Oct 23rd, Blakeney Point dead Feb 24th, Brancaster Jan 30th dead and Nov 17th, Titchwell 1/2 Jan 22nd to Feb 4th where one in breeding plumage on marsh May 23rd/24th, Holme Sept 25th and Oct 19th, Hunstanton 2 Jan 7th and Sept 20th and West Lynn Dec 20th.

*Inland:* Stowbridge Jan 17th/18th, Pentney GP summer plumage April 10th-17th and Cantley BF Sept 4th-13th. Remains the rarest of the grebes in Norfolk appearing most often in April and Sept, but very scarce in mid-winter.

**Fulmar:** Breeding records from Weybourne to Cromer (48 nestlings) and Hunstanton (97 occupied ledges July 17th and final count of over 50 young). First birds returned Hunstanton Oct 26th where 50 pairs in residence at year end.

**Cory's Shearwater:** 2 Horsey June 13th and Winterton June 18th.

**Sooty Shearwater:** Fewer autumn records than usual between Aug 5th and Nov 2nd: Winterton Sept 9th, Waxham Aug 11th and 2 Sept 1st/2nd, Paston Aug 26th, Oct

12/13th and Nov 1st, Cley 2 Aug 5th, 2 on 26th and Nov 2nd, Blakeney Point 4 Aug 26th, Holkham Sept 1st and Holme Aug 26th.

**Manx Shearwater:** In Spring off Paston April 20th, Holme April 28th and Titchwell May 11th. In Autumn recorded June 12th to Nov 18th. Most impressive totals at Waxham (55 south Sept 1st in 1½ hours), Cley (30 east July 30th), Blakeney Point (27 east July 22nd) and Hunstanton (86 July 30th; exceptional total of 326 Aug 5th including 83 in one group; also 24 Aug 26th).

An unusual winter observation off Waxham Dec 27th.

**Leach's Petrel:** Paston (RC MF) and Cley (PD) Oct 13th.

**Petrel species:** Cley Oct 27th (PT).

**Gannet:** Off Paston recorded monthly including following easterly movements: 281 Sept 5th, 263 Oct 12th and 258 Oct 19th. Cley, several hundreds east Oct 22nd; Hunstanton 200 Sept 5th.

**Cormorant:** Continues increasing. Four regular winter roosts occupied: Ranworth Broad (East Norfolk and Broadland birds), Holkham Lake (North Norfolk), Welney (overhead power cables used by Fenland birds) and Eau Brink near Wiggshall St. Germans on Great Ouse (Wash population). At Ranworth counts included 230 Oct and 298 Nov; at Holkham 25 April, 50 Aug/Sept, 48 Oct, 45 Nov and 50 Dec; at Welney 120 Jan and 116 Dec; at Eau Brink 82 Nov 29th.

Severe weather roost of 17 became established at Strumpshaw during Feb.

**Shag:** Coastal sightings of 1-6 till May and from Aug to Dec especially during Nov.

Inland: Hickling Feb 8th, Stowbridge 1-2 Nov 14th-30th, Eau Brink Feb 14th and 3 on 18th, St. Peters Feb 24th, St. Germans Feb 16th, Downham Market Jan 13th and 21st and Denver Sluice Jan 15th-17th and 2 Dec 19th/20th.

**Bittern:** In Broadland 3 regular boomers at end of May. To confuse the picture single boomers heard at an additional 4 sites during June. North coast: 5 regular boomers at 4 sites.

Winter records from Stanford Water, Wiggshall St. Peter, Snettisham, Pentney, Magdalen, West Acre, Lyng Easthaugh, Strumpshaw, Hickling and Womack where one dead Feb 24th.

**Little Egret:** Hickling May 25th (MJS SFS). Twenty-two previous county occurrences. Two were displaying at Minsmere (Suffolk) three days later followed by one on Havergate Island (Suffolk) May 29th.

**Great White Egret:** Horsey July 11th-16th (JB *et al*); also at Hickling July 15th (PJH). Third county record.

**Grey Heron:** A county total of 175 breeding pairs. Heronry details as follows: Barton 3 nests, Blakeney 3, Buckenham 9, Cley 3, Cockshoot 1, Didlington 3, Elmham Great Wood 11, Fleggburgh Common 1, Fritton Warren 3, Gunton Park 2, Herringfleet 2, Hickling 11, Hilgay 37, Holkham 4, Islington 84, Martham Ferry 1, Mautby Decoy 2, Narford 3, Old Hunstanton Park 8, Ranworth 2, Reedham 8, Shadwell 4, Snettisham 13, Sturston 7, Surlingham 4, Upton 1, Gt. Witchingham 4, Woodbastwick 1 + 1.

None nested at Belaugh, Fishley, Halvergate, Strumpshaw, Wheatfen or Wickhampton. No information available for Bawburgh or Sparham.

**Purple Heron:** Horsey/Hickling: June 4th-July 31st (JB SEL); Waxham an immature in from sea Sept 8th heading north-west (JRW) and later same day at Salthouse (SPH); Holme an immature west Sept 28th (NOA).

**White Stork:** Unpublished 1975 observations: Runham Church Marshes April 29th, West Caister April 30th and Halvergate May 13th.

**Spoonbill:** Hickling/Horsey: May 28th and Nov 21st-23rd; Cley June 9th, June 13th, July 7th, July 28th-Aug 5th; Holkham April 16th; Burnham Deepdale April 29th; Titchwell April 30th-Sept 1st and Holme May 16th and June 9th.

**Mute Swan:** King's Lynn flock peaked at 100 Feb 16th.

**Bewick's Swan:** Recorded to April 19th and from Oct 12th. As usual largest numbers in Fens where total Ouse Washes counts of 4,300 Jan, 5,227 Feb and 2,550 Dec when less than 8% young birds. Four injured birds summered at Welney.

Elsewhere winter totals included Horsey 178 Jan 20th, Potter Heigham 140 Feb 3rd, Hickling 86 Nov 25th, Ludham 85 March 3rd, Martham 76 Dec 28th, Filby 54 roosting on Broad Feb 10th, Haddiscoe 52 Feb 5th, Stracey Arms 78 Feb 2nd, Halvergate 178 Feb 17th, Buckenham 50 Jan 9th, Cley 63 Nov 14th, Snettisham 99 Feb 15th, Wissington BF 110 Feb 14th and King's Lynn BF 48 Feb 14th.

Easterly exodus: Yarmouth/Breydon 90 March 5th, 22 March 10th, 100 March 13th, 210 March 14th, 595 March 24th, 60 March 25th and 140 March 28th; Hickling 250 March 11th and 84 March 24th; Surlingham 160 March 24th; Norwich 82 March 4th and 29 March 24th; East Tuddenham 38 March 14th and Wereham 78 March 24th.

Autumn westerly arrivals (all Nov): Titchwell 43 on 2nd, Holkham 40 on 4th, Holme 25 on 14th, Salthouse 200 on 15th, Wymondham 25 on 17th and Titchwell 20 on 18th.

**Whooper Swan:** Recorded to April 3rd and from Oct 11th. Most impressive concentration at Welney: 210 Jan, 240 March, 55 April 3rd, 115 Nov and 234 Dec when over 20% young. An injured pair summered at Welney.

Elsewhere largest numbers in Potter Heigham/Hickling/Martham/Horsey area: 45 Jan, 20 Feb, 48 March, 18 Nov and 24 Dec; and Snettisham 27 Feb and 31 March.

Westerly movements: Titchwell 7 Nov 3rd, Wareham 6 on 4th and Snettisham 23 on 16th.

Bird wearing Icelandic neck collar at Waxham and Horsey Nov/Dec.

**Bean Goose:** Yare Valley: 196 (including 33 juveniles) early Jan increasing to 297 (approx. 80 juveniles) by 5th and a peak of 375 by Feb 11th; last noted March 8th. Five returned Nov 15th increasing to 196 by end of month and to 235 (only 20 juveniles) by year end.

Elsewhere: Potter Heigham 3 Jan 30th-Feb 11th; Holkham 10 Jan, 6 Feb and 4 Dec; Brancaster up to 15 Dec 4th-17th, Burnham Overy 6 Jan 27th; Downham Market up to 20 Jan 13th-19th; Castle Rising 3 Feb 11th; Welney 2 Feb 5th-13th, 4 Feb 14th, one March 9th and 7 Dec 22nd-29th.

March easterly exodus over Yarmouth/Breydon (presumably Yare Valley birds departing): 100 on 4th, 100 on 5th, 40 on 6th and 80 on 8th.

**Pink-footed Goose:** The impressive numbers roosting on Scolt Head during the second half of Dec 1984 peaked at 9,000 reducing to 4,000 on 31st and subsequently to a few hundreds due to bitterly cold conditions which began 3rd Jan 1985 when snow covered the feeding grounds.

First returned Oct 8th (51 at Snettisham) and Oct 28th (Brancaster and Holkham). Co-ordinated dawn counts at Snettisham and at Brancaster combined with visits to feeding areas revealed the following estimates for the population in north-west Norfolk during the 1985/86 winter: 15th Dec 1985 (10,300), 5th Jan 1986 (maximum of 19,900), 12th Jan 1986 (15,100), 18th Jan 1986 (15,350) and 9th Feb 1986 (6,500+).

**White-fronted Goose:** Largest gaggle at Holkham/Wells: 220 Jan, 270 Feb, 120 March till 14th, 100 Nov (from 17th) and 175 Dec. Elsewhere: Yare Valley peaks of 140 Feb 23rd and 96 Dec 21st, Rockland Broad/Claxton 31 Jan 20th and 30 Feb

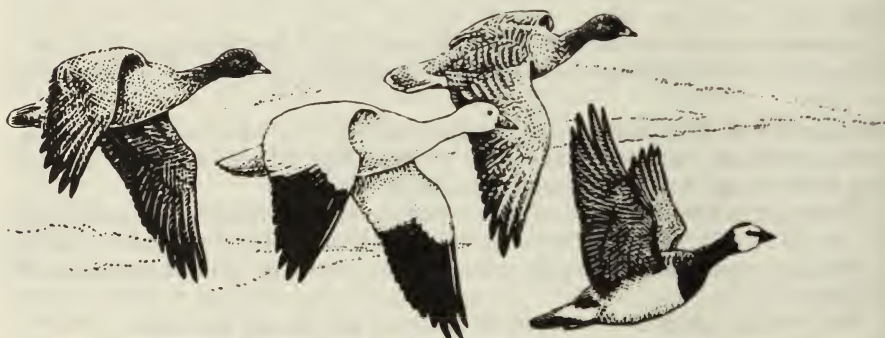


11th; Hardley Flood 29 Dec 1st; Sheringham 26 west Dec 25th; Cley 20 Nov 26th; Heacham 25 Feb 16th; Wolferton/Babingley 32 Jan 22nd-26th; Castle Rising 25 Feb 11th; Heacham 25 Feb 16th and Welney 20-24 Feb 7th-25th and 46 Dec 29th.

**Lesser White-fronted Goose:** 1984: Yare Valley an adult Jan 26th (MO). *Note:* Holkham Park: Feral bird present since 1983 often joins other geese on marshes particularly in hard weather.

**Grey-lag Goose:** Following thought to relate to genuine wild birds: Castle Rising, one with Pink-feet Feb 11th; Blakeney Point one arriving with Brents Oct 12th and Cley one west with Brents Nov 24th.

**Greater Snow Goose:** Adult with Pink-feet in north-west Norfolk Nov 17th-Dec 22nd considered wild as arrived with Pink-feet and very few kept in captivity. Lesser Snow Goose much more widespread in waterfowl collections.



**Barnacle Goose:** Breydon (east with Bewick's Swans) March 24th and 17th April 4th; Hickling 2 April 5th, Salhouse 6 Oct 12th, 7 Nov 18th, 12 Nov 20th; Cley 6 Oct 14th and 8-12 Nov 22nd-Dec 6th; Blakeney Point Oct 12th; Holkham/Burnham Norton/Brancaster 2 Feb 17th and 2 Dec 4th onwards; Titchwell 3 Jan 22nd/23rd and one Feb 22nd-25th; Docking Dec 12th; Castle Rising 6 Feb 11th; Heacham 2 Feb 16th; Snettisham Jan 5th, 4 Feb 16th and one Oct 15th and Lynn Point 6 March 12th.

**Brent Goose:** Recorded monthly. Co-ordinated counts in north Norfolk (Holme to Salhouse) undertaken Jan 20th and Dec 15th produced totals of 10,355 and 12,592 respectively. Severe weather had prevailed in the two weeks preceding the first count with heavy snowfalls and low temperatures; as a result it was thought some birds may have deserted the area. Unusual records included Filby Broad 10 Feb 10th, Rockland Broad 2 Feb 28th and Pentney GP 8 Dec 26th. The 1985 breeding season results on Russian tundra very successful and over 30% of 1985/6 wintering flocks were birds of the year.

Pale-bellied *hrota* from Spitzbergen and Franz Josef Land identified at many north coast localities with Jan/Feb peaks of 38 Salhouse, 20 Cley, 30 Blakeney and 35 Stiffkey; also one Horsey Feb 20th and 15 Lynn Point March 4th.

A Black Brant *nigricans* from Arctic North America/East Siberia at Cley/Salhouse Dec 1984 remained until March 10th and 2 appeared Dec 3rd onwards.

**Egyptian Goose:** Peak counts of 120 Holkham Lake, 70 Flitcham and 60 Sparham.

**Shelduck:** Wash (Snettisham) counts included 4,726 March, 5,110 April and 5,983 July. Breydon maxima: 862 Jan 19th, 873 July 6th and 613 Dec 29th. Off-shore movements at Paston: 128 west Jan 4th, 236 Jan 5th and 133 Nov 20th.

Among breeding sites away from coast: Swanton Morley, Lyng Easthaugh, Pentney, Tottenhill, Foulden, Great Snoring, Stanford Water and Cockley Cley.

**Mandarin:** 1-4 at Brundall, Felbrigg, Salthouse, Snettisham, Lynn Point, Welney, Pentney, Ashwicken and Bintree. No successful breeding reported.

**Wigeon:** Highest counts: Breydon 6,100 Jan; Yare Valley 5,500 Jan/Feb and 7,820 Dec; Horsey 3,000 Jan; Cley 2,000 Oct and 8,000-10,000 Nov and Blakeney Point 3,000 Jan. Total Ouse Washes counts (Welney figures in brackets) 23,500 (10,600) Jan, 23,700 (6,800) Feb, (11,200) Nov and (8,710) Dec.

**Gadwall:** Highest numbers: Gunton Park 327 Sept 15th. Coastal totals include Titchwell 63 Dec and Snettisham 216 Feb with 86 Dec. In Brecks Narford 50 Jan and Stanford 65 April and 180 Nov.

**Teal:** Counts include Snettisham 1,979 Sept and Welney 1,300 Dec.

**Mallard:** Peak counts include Horsey 2,000 Jan, Cley 1,000 Jan and Welney 5,280 Dec.

**Pintail:** Largest totals: Cley 400 Nov, Snettisham 1,000 Feb and 700 Dec, Lynn Point 1,000 Feb and Welney 250 Jan and Dec.

**Garganey:** Spring arrival from April 3rd (Titchwell) followed by 1-7 at Hardley Flood, Cantley, Horsey, Hickling, How Hill, Gunton Park, Salthouse, Cley, Stiffkey, Holme, Snettisham and Welney. Last Tottenhill GP Oct 6th. No proof of successful breeding.

**Shoveler:** Highest counts: Ranworth Broad 120 Oct and Cley 200 Nov.

**Red-crested Pochard:** The drake which reached Horsey Mere in Nov 1984 last reported in May. Elsewhere Lyng GP April 5th and Welney drake Feb 3rd and May 16th.

**Pochard:** Largest assembly Welney 1,200 Jan.

**Tufted Duck:** Jan counts included Tottenhill 193, Brandon Creek to Denver 200 and same day Denver to King's Lynn 330 and River Yare (Cantley to Strumpshaw) 500. In second winter period 150 Stow Bardolph Nov 30th.

**Scaup:** Highest total up to 250 off Snettisham/Heacham end Jan to March 23rd. Westward Jan offshore movements: 33 Cromer 16th and 40 next day, also 200 Cley/Salthouse 16th and 150-200 next day.

July records of single drakes at Breydon and King's Lynn and Snettisham GP where one summered.

At end of year 60 off Hunstanton Dec 15th.

**Eider:** Peak totals: Brancaster/Scolt Head 180-200 June to Aug including many flightless in late June; Holme 100 Feb; Hunstanton 200 Feb and Heacham 250 Jan, 750 Feb, 200 March and 400 April.

**Long-tailed Duck:** As usual most regular off Hunstanton/Holme where monthly totals as follows: 38 Jan, 50 Feb, 37 March, 30 April and 60 Nov/Dec. Elsewhere up to 10 (apart from Titchwell where 20-35 Jan/Feb) at Gorleston, Yarmouth, Winter-ton, Paston, Sheringham, Salthouse, Blakeney, Holkham Bay, Brancaster and Heacham.

Away from coast following singles in Broadland: Strumpshaw Jan, Rockland Feb, Martham Dec, Horsey Mere Jan to April and Hickling April and Dec; also in North at Holkham Lake Nov/Dec and 1-3 at Titchwell Marsh Nov/Dec.

**Common Scoter:** Coastal counts: Heacham 1,000 Jan and Hunstanton 1,500 Nov and 4,000 Dec. Away from coastline Holkham Lake May 5th-10th.

**Velvet Scoter:** Coastal records in all but summer months. Largest parties: Hunstanton 45 Dec and Heacham 60 Jan and 100 + Feb. A cream-coloured bird off Holme Sept 1st. Inland Great Ouse (Saddlebow) Jan 18th.

**Goldeneye:** Peak coastal counts: Blakeney 70 Jan, Holkham Bay 100 Jan, Scolt Head 200 Feb, Titchwell 90 Jan and Snettisham 61 Jan. Broads: Martham 26 Feb and Hickling 24 Jan/Feb. Brecks: Narford 29 March.

In summer Hickling June 16th and Tottenhill GP2 June 5th-10th.



**Smew:** Widespread influx during Jan/Feb when recorded at following localities (highest counts in brackets): Blakeney Harbour 3, Barton Broad 3, Burgh Castle, Breydon 10, Burnham Overy 2, Burgh St. Peter 3, Brandon Creek, Cantley 6, Cley 21 west Jan 17th, Cockshoot Broad 2, Cromer, Denver Sluice-King's Lynn 24, Denver 18, Downham Market, Eau Brink, Fustyweed GP 2, Gt. Ryburgh, Holme, Hickling 8, How Hill 2, Hunstanton, Hardley Flood 3, Horsey Mere 12, Holkham 3, King's Lynn BF, Lyng Easthaugh, Lower Bure 10, Ranworth Broad 8, Overy Staithe 2, Pentney 5, Paston, Saddlebow, Swanton Morley, Stowbridge 2, Sparham, Sheringham 2, Snettisham 4, Stanford Water, Strumpshaw, Surlingham 3, Salhouse, Titchwell 2, Tottenhill GP 3, Ten Mile Bank, Tottington, UEA Broad Norwich, Wells Boating Lake 11, Wiveton, Warham, Wisington 2, Wells, Wiggenshall St. Peter 18, Welney 11 and Yarmouth. Highest concentration in Fens including 24 (11 drakes) along Relief Channel between Denver Sluice and King's Lynn Jan 19th. By contrast 5 (2 drakes) the following day along River Bure between Acle and Yarmouth. Latest: Tottenhill GP March 24th.

End of year: Breydon Nov 1st, How Hill Dec 7th and Tottenhill GP one Dec 15th and 2 from 27th onwards.

**Red-breasted Merganser:** During Jan/Feb cold spell unusual numbers inland, particularly in Fens where peak attained by mid-Feb when a total of 58 between Downham Market and Lynn Point. One or 2 drakes remained at Denver until well into June and 2 flightless birds there Aug 15th-18th.

Elsewhere birds inland at Buckenham Jan 19th, Heigham Sounds 4 Jan 27th and UEA Broad Norwich 1-2 Jan 24th-Feb 12th. Coastal maxima: Snettisham 58 Oct 25th, Hunstanton 47 Oct 30th and Morston 37 Nov 17th.



**Goosander:** Remarkable concentration in Fens where a total of 98 along Great Ouse Relief Channel from Ten Mile Bank to King's Lynn Jan 19th. Birds remained until towards end of Feb with an injured individual summering at Welney. During Jan/Feb Broads maxima as follows: Ranworth 10, Hickling/Heigham Sounds 15, Lower Bure between Acle and Yarmouth 20 and Buckenham 10. Elsewhere Blickling Lake 17, Stanford Water 10 and Cley 20 west Jan 17th.

At year end 5 Stowbridge Nov 29th, 9 Stanford Water Dec 18th and 5 Tottenhill GP Dec 31st.

**Ruddy Duck:** Breydon Jan 19th; Hickling 2 Feb 13th, singles March 24th, April 16th-19th, May 4th and 24th/26th and 2 Dec 14th also one Dec 31st; Ranworth May 26th; Rockland Feb 24th; Buckenham Feb 21st; Surlingham Feb 19th; Holkham Lake March 9th-May 14th; Hillington May 11th-17th and July 14th and Dec 28th; Denver Sluice Jan 18th; Flitcham Dec 28th and Welney Jan 30th-Feb 1st.

**Honey Buzzard:** Probably the same individual at Snettisham May 24th, Holme 25th, Salthouse and Upper Sheringham 26th and Titchwell 28th. Another over Little Ouse Washes June 23rd.



**Black Kite:** North Creake/Wells/Holkham Park July 12th and Brancaster next day (NB *et al*) and Snettisham July 24th (RSPB).

1984 record: Loddon June 1st (ND). Nine previous county occurrences.

**White-tailed Eagle:** An immature frequented the North coast Nov 16th-19th being sighted at Holme, Titchwell, Brancaster and Scolt Head Island. At Titchwell it was observed pursuing an over-wintering Chilean Flamingo and also Cormorants; at Scolt it twice attacked a Shag (PRC *et al*). Second county record since 1963.

**Marsh Harrier:** Increased county total of 26 males and 26 females (including 9 pairs failing to breed) in summer; 36 young reached the flying stage. An abundance of coastal records April to Sept. For the second successive year one wintered along the North coast with as many as 6 at three sites in Broadland Dec onwards.

Over a hundred have been colour-ringed in this country since 1983 and any such observations are welcomed. It is deplorable to record 2 Marsh Harriers both recovered at Snettisham and both suffering from gun-shot wounds.

Between 1960 and 1974 single pairs of Marsh Harriers bred successfully in Norfolk

on two occasions only rearing one young in 1967 and 4 young in 1972. Since then (and including 1985) a county total of 276 free-flying young has been recorded. The considerable increase here in breeding birds was undoubtedly brought about initially by arrivals from abroad. By far the largest population (900 pairs) close to this country is in Holland where there has been a steady increase since 1958 despite the total reedbed area in the polders being reduced during the period from 41,000 to 4,000 h (101,311 to 9,884 acres) — J. C. Underhill-Day RSPB.

**Hen Harrier:** A great many observations mainly coastal and including May and, unusually, June records. May details included Horsey on 11th, Hickling on 12th, Winterton on 14th, Burnham Overy on 16th, Sheringham on 26th and Holme till 28th. In June appeared on edge of Wash at three localities 1st/2nd whilst at another site a male gave spectacular aerial displays till 26th on occasions attracting a wandering female.

First returning birds in Sept at Snettisham 11th, Titchwell 26th and Hickling 27th.

Winter roosting details appear on page 262.

**Montagu's Harrier:** Two pairs bred in county, the only successful breeding Montagu's in England in 1985. In addition over 20 coastal records of migrants April 20th to Aug 31st, mostly in May.

**Goshawk:** Pair in spring (male displaying) at one North Norfolk site. Elsewhere one successful nest.

**Sparrowhawk:** Recorded at over 130 localities, but only 7 pairs known to have definitely bred. Only notable spring movements: 5 at Snettisham March 17th where singles seven times in April and 6 south at Winterton April 11th.

**Buzzard:** Pair summered at one site, but no breeding attempt. Migrants as follows: Bayfield Jan 9th, Feb 1st with 2 on 10th, Blakeney Point Aug 25th, Brancaster March 5th and Nov 18th, Buckenham Jan 3rd, Cromer May 26th, Fritton Jan 19th, Foulden Sept 29th, Hickling April 5th and 24th, Horsey 2 April 6th and one 16th, How Hill Jan 19th, April 29th and Dec 8th, Holkham April 5th, Ridlington-Ebridge late Nov to Dec 15th, Snettisham March 12th, Swaffham-Hilborough Road July 17th, Swaffham-Fakenham Road Dec 29th, Wells Feb 24th, West Mere Aug 18th, Winterton May 5th, West Lynn Aug 27th and Yarmouth Nov 28th.

**Rough-legged Buzzard:** Very scarce at beginning of the year: Cantley Jan 26th/27th and in spring at Holme April 4th, Horsey on 13th, Winterton on 15th and Martham Broad on 21st.

Large-scale autumn influx from mid-Oct — the first at Paston on 19th. Subsequently at many coastal localities till year end and also inland. Mostly singles, occasionally 2 together with 3 at Brancaster and 4 in Horsey/Hickling area. Details as follows: Brancaster 7 sightings Nov 16th-Dec 30th including 3 on latter date, Burnham Norton Oct 21st and Nov 3rd, Burnham Overy Nov 13th, 16th/17th and 23rd/29th, Blakeney/Cley/Salthouse/Kelling Heath/Wiveton/Glandford area 1-2 almost daily Oct 23rd-Dec 29th, Docking Dec 7th. Fakenham Nov 10th, Flitcham Nov 10th, Fring Nov 2nd, Hardley Flood Dec 15th, Horsey/Hickling Nov 4th-Dec 14th on five dates with 4 Nov 18th, Holme on six dates Oct 20th-Dec 16th, Old Hunstanton Park Nov 3rd, Paston Oct 19th, Ringstead Downs in Dec, Sculthorpe Nov 10th, Titchwell on seven dates Oct 20th-Dec 16th with 2 on first date, Thornham Point Dec 1st, Wells/Holkham on eight dates Oct 21st-Nov 29th, Winterton/Horsey on 13 dates Nov 2nd-Dec 30th, Wereham Nov 25th/26th and Wroxham/Coltishall Dec 10th-16th.

**Osprey:** Recorded April 7th to Oct 5th at 26 sites including Babingley, Burnham Overy, Catfield, Cley, Cockshoot Broad, Gt. Ryburgh, Hickling, Hillington GP, Holme, Horsey, How Hill, Holkham, Martham, Narborough, Narford, Northrepps, Pentney GP, Sparham, Swanton Morley, Titchwell, West Acre and Wells. Majority of records refer to singles in May, but two at Hickling May 23rd and 2 at Narford and at West Acre on 30th. Interesting observations include one in Ant Valley several weeks between May 30th and July 2nd (presumably the same bird visited Ranworth and Cockshoot between July 4th and 27th); another was fishing off-shore at Titchwell Aug 18th.

**Kestrel:** Two interesting records: Holme total of 25 west May 25th and at Snettisham a remarkable total of 54 along sea walls Sept 4th.

**Red-footed Falcon:** Northrepps female May 25th moving to Overstrand next day (AS AC *et al*). North Tuddenham first-summer male May 27th/28th (RA JDG *et al*).

**Merlin:** Records from 40 sites (33 in 1984) until May 17th (Blakeney Point and Holme) and from Sept 7th (Cantley). Increasing as a late spring migrant with 10 sightings in May from 7 coastal localities. Two winter roost known: one in Broad's area held up to 5 whilst one in west held 4.

**Hobby:** Continues to increase as a migrant with over 80 records from 36 localities (59 records in 1984). First noted April 25th (Strumpshaw); last Oct 12th (Holkham).

**Peregrine:** Singles (and once 2) up to April 11th and from Aug 27th. Localities included Sheringham, Cley, Wiveton, Wells, Holkham, Warham, Brancaster, Choseley, Holme, Hunstanton, Dersingham, Sandringham Warren, Wolferton, Kettlestone Common, Snettisham and Welney (where total of 3 individuals). The Wolferton bird remained from Jan 5th to Feb 23rd. One at Horsey June 30th carried jesses and was a falconer's escape.

**Quail:** Calling at Cley, Drayton Drury, Egmore, Flitcham, Felthorpe, Glandford, North Creak, Shingham, Sheringham, Thornham, Tottington, Wiveton (2), Wolferton and Wootton Marsh.

**Golden Pheasant:** Reported at Croxton, Devil's Punch bowl, Grime's Graves, Hockham, Holme Hale, How Hill, Lynford, Merton, Narford, Sandringham, Swaffham Heath, Santon Downham, Thompson, Thorpe Gt. Heath, Wayland Wood and Wolferton. Largest group 11.

**Lady Amherst's Pheasant:** Wayland Wood male Jan 25th.

**Water Rail:** Breeding records from Cley and for first time at Strumpshaw. During Jan severe spell one feeding among Blackbirds on house terrace at Whitwell.

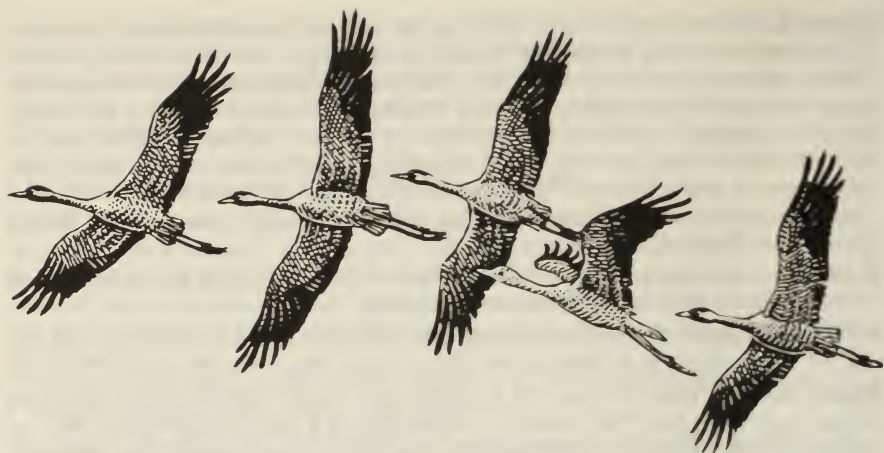
**Spotted Crane:** Welney calling June 25th-July 1st; Thelveton dead juvenile on road Sept 4th; Cley Sept 5th-17th and Blakeney Sept 7th-29th.

**Corncrake:** Holme/Thornham April 26th (MJK).

**Crane:** The 4 Broadland birds present at the beginning of the year were not seen after Jan 6th after three days of bitterly cold weather and blizzard conditions. A party of 4 adult Cranes at Pegwell and Sandwich Bays in Kent Jan 10th were doubtless the Norfolk birds. All 4 were spotted over Northrepps Feb 2nd returning to the traditional area the following day. Here they remained until the year end being joined by a fifth bird (an immature) from Nov 30th.

Doubtless this long-staying group provided the majority of the following records, particularly spring-time occurrences: Titchwell and Cley March 25th; How Hill and Woodbastwick April 12th; Wroxham April 13th; Salhouse/Cley 1-2 April 17th and 19th; Snettisham/Holme/Blakeney/Cley all April 21st; Welney April 21st; Hunstan-



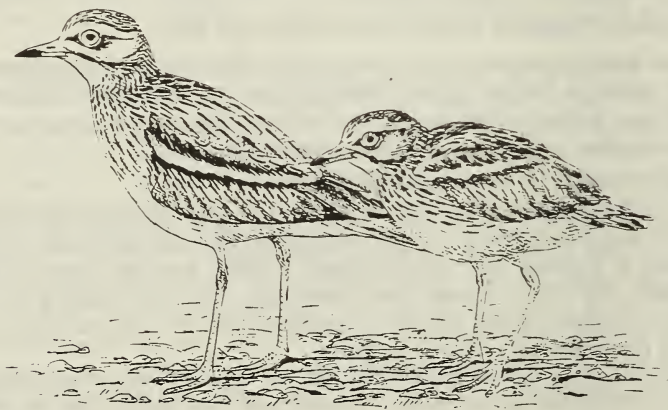


ton/Heacham April 27th-May 5th, Holme May 13th; Titchwell May 14th/15th; Burnham Overy 2 May 15th; Strumpshaw 2 May 15th and one May 16th; East Ruston May 17th; Holme 2 May 23rd and Terrington Aug 14th.

**Oystercatcher:** Inland pairs reported from over a dozen sites, with successful breeding at some. Largest Wash counts at Snettisham: 13,600 Jan 25th and 17,590 Aug 20th.

**Avocet:** Cley: First arrival March 1st. Up to 40 pairs reared 40 young. At another North coast site 2 pairs bred successfully. Titchwell: Present March 13th to Sept 27th with an autumn maximum of 43 birds in early Aug; 8 pairs produced 9 young. Holme: First arrival March 22nd; 3 pairs reared 5 young. Wash: 3 pairs reared 5 young to fledging.

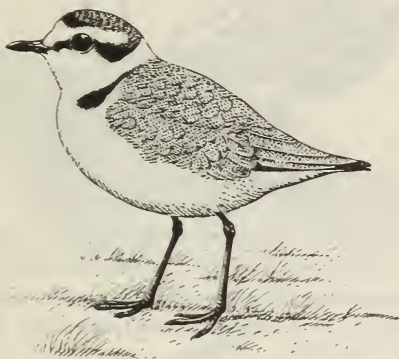
Otherwise reported from Breydon many dates between March 6th and Nov 18th with maximum of 6 April 18th; Hickling (non-breeding); Overy Staithe; Pentney GP; Snettisham (16 June 21st and a late bird Nov 4th); Lynn Point and Welney.



**Stone Curlew:** Sixty-one pairs located in Norfolk/Suffolk Brecks. Odd migrants at coastal sites: Cley April 20th and July 17th-24th and Titchwell Aug 5th.

**Little Ringed Plover:** Only 19 pairs reported on territory at 11 sites this year. Recorded between March 29th (Lyng Easthaugh) and Sept 23rd (Holme). Largest autumn concentrations 25 Cantley Aug 3rd, 12 Cley July 27th, 12 Holme Sept 3rd and 19 King's Lynn B.F Aug 8th.

**Ringed Plover:** Twelve inland pairs, including 2 pairs at Stoke Ferry in wheat field which hatched successfully. Spring passage of Arctic race *tundrae* not as obvious this year. Maximum 189 Breydon May 24th and 20 Happisburgh May 14th. Autumn peak of 342 Snettisham Sept 18th.



**Kentish Plover:** Only a single record: a female Salthouse May 14th.

**Greater Sandplover:** The second county record, a first-summer individual at Cley and Blakeney harbour July 30th to Aug 21st (SJMG JH *et al*) and again at Blakeney Sept 2nd (JR).

**Dotterel:** A disappointing spring passage with an early bird Cley April 10th followed by 6 Horsey May 5th. The recent trend of increasing autumn occurrences was maintained. Present Blakeney Point Aug 11th to Sept 1st with 2 birds on several dates and 3 Aug 22nd. A number of records from Thornham Point — Titchwell — Brancaster beach and Scolt Head may well refer to the same wandering bird(s). Observed there between Aug 19th and 29th; up to 3 individuals involved. Also a single Holme Sept 23rd and 6 Ringstead Aug 31st followed by 2 Sept 3rd. The latter locality is a spring staging post in some years.

**Golden Plover:** Among larger flocks were 500 Mattishall Dec, 1,000 Cley Nov, 1,800 Holkham Nov, 500 Wereham March, 1,000 Wisbech S.F Oct and 2,000 Welney April.

**Grey Plover:** Inland sightings from Tottenhill G.P Dec 1st and Welney Feb, March and Dec. Largest counts on Wash at Snettisham: 2,000 Feb 13th, 1,964 Sept 18th as well as mid-summer count of 222 June 21st. At Titchwell high tide roost of 5,000 Oct 13th one of the highest figures ever for the county.

**Lapwing:** The leucistic bird returned to Scarning Oct 27th/28th for the fourth winter. Westerly Lapwing passage may be observed from June to Dec. One such movement at Salthouse Sept 26th involved thousands of birds (up to 720/hour).

**Knot:** Inland records at King's Lynn B.F 5 Jan 21st and Welney Feb 22nd/23rd, March 17th, Nov 8th and Dec 31st. Coastal peaks of 4,400 Blakeney Jan 25th, 8,800 Wells/Warham Flats Jan 9th and 30,000 Titchwell Oct 13th while on the Wash there were 30,000 Jan and 37,700 Dec with a mid-summer concentration of 6,930 July 22nd.



**Sanderling:** Largest counts 151 Holkham/Overy Staithe May 26th, 130 Titchwell Aug 17th, 340 Holme March 10th and 456 Snettisham Sept 4th.

**Little Stint:** Light spring passage: 1-2 Breydon May 18th-24th, Cley April 23rd and May 20th/26th, Titchwell June 5th, Snettisham three dates in May and a single inland at Lyng Easthaugh June 7th.

Autumn passage between July 14th (Breydon) and Nov 16th (Cley) the largest parties being 28 Hickling Sept 13th where 27 Oct 5th, 20 Cley Sept 22nd, 27 Titchwell Sept 24th and 36 Wisbech S.F Oct 4th; also smaller numbers at many other coastal and a few inland sites.

**Temminck's Stint:** Spring birds at Hickling May 15th/16th and 21st, Cley May 18th-30th with 3 on 27th, Holme May 24th/25th, Snettisham May 22nd and Lyng Easthaugh May 10th. In autumn at Hickling Sept 2nd, 13th and 20th, a few at Cley July 22nd to Aug 3rd, Aug 10th and 24th and at Titchwell a juvenile Aug 15th-26th.

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** Reported at four localities, but possibly the same individual involved in some cases (Pentney-Titchwell-Holme for example): an adult at Cley Aug 17th-Sept 1st (BB RM JRW); another adult at Pentney G.P Aug 26th-30th (AC JL) followed by another (or the same) Titchwell Aug 31st-Sept 1st and again Sept 5th (AB WDT). Other sightings from Holme on five dates between Sept 4th-22nd (AEB *et al*).

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** Another good year with records from Breydon May 12th-17th, Hickling Aug 23rd-31st, Cley (four birds) July 4th, July 18th/19th, July 28th-Aug 6th and Aug 20th-26th, Titchwell Aug 21st and Aug 28th-Sept 5th, Holme Oct 4th-7th and Wisbech S.F Oct 8th-13th.

**Curlew Sandpiper:** A few spring records from Breydon (2) April 27th and June 30th, Cley (2) May 20th and Welney April 14th/15th and May 16th.

Red adults returned from July 16th (Snettisham) becoming fairly widespread in small numbers (up to 7 together) over the following week. An early juvenile reached Breydon Aug 8th followed by a spectacular invasion throughout the county. Peak concentrations included 107 Breydon Sept 18th, 66 Hickling Sept 13th, 69 Cantley Sept 10th, 20 Kelling Quags Sept 5th, 40 Salthouse Aug 31st, 51 Cley Aug 30th, 75 Blakeney harbour Sept 9th, 75 Brancaster Sept 14th, 100 Titchwell Sept 1st, 47 Holme Sept 3rd, 20 King's Lynn B.F Sept 15th, 200 Wisbech S.F Sept 18th/20th with 2 still there Oct 30th and well over 500 at Terrington on Wash Sept 14th-20th.



**Purple Sandpiper:** Main area is at Heacham/Hunstanton where peaks of 20 Jan 27th, 12 April 29th and 22 Dec 10th. Regular parties of 1-5 occurred at Yarmouth up to May 2nd and from Sept 6th. At Paston peaks of 6 Jan, 4 Feb, 2 March, 6 April and 16 Dec. A few rather early arrival dates: Blakeney (2) July 8th, July 22nd and Titchwell Aug 3rd.

**Dunlin:** Largest counts: 3,600 Blakeney Jan 25th, 1,390 Brancaster Jan, 9,000 Snettisham Oct 16th and 5,000 Wootton Marsh Sept 10th.



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**Broad-billed Sandpiper:** Two at Breydon May 17th-21st (PRA *et al*) followed by another at Cley July 4th (SJMG *et al*).

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper:** Single at Wisbech S.F Sept 7th-11th (PC JL JAWM *et al*) and another on Cromer G.C Sept 14th (MPL CL).

**Ruff:** No evidence of breeding. Some large spring gatherings in the East with 83 Hickling March 31st and 50 Horsey April 18th. Elsewhere only 25 Welney April 21st. Autumn passage well marked, highest counts included 60 Hickling Oct 21st, 95 Cley Sept 9th, 40 Titchwell Aug 31st, 55 Wisbech S.F Sept 10th and 85 Welney Sept 28th followed by 200 Oct 11th.

Substantial numbers wintering again including 50 Hickling Dec 6th, 21 Salthouse Feb 17th, 27 Cley Jan 19th, 100 Welney Jan 4th and 200 Dec 16th-19th. An individual at Hardley Flood May 11th had underparts dyed bright yellow. Marked in North Senegal by a German Group 25th Feb 1985. An injured bird remained at South Wootton until Jan 27th feeding on bread offered to local ducks.

**Jack Snipe:** Extreme dates April 24th and Sept 15th. Located at 24 sites; mostly ones and twos, once 3 birds.

**Snipe:** At Welney 106 drumming birds in May. Other drummers along Nar Valley, at Thorpe St. Andrew, Filby-Fleggburgh Common and Surlingham.

**Woodcock:** Usual wide scatter of roding birds. Winter concentrations of 6 Wells Jan and 27 Cley Jan, 20 Strumpshaw Jan/Feb and 30 Dec, 6 Hickling Jan/Dec and 6 Congham Jan. As usual a number of immigrants observed arriving off the sea in Oct/Nov.

**Black-tailed Godwit:** Winter records of a single Breydon Jan 19th, 6 Paston Jan 19th and 2 Snettisham Jan 25th increasing to 100 Feb 3rd, 117 Feb 17th and 230 March 19th suggesting a build-up of passage Icelandic birds.

Spring movements included 60 Cley May 30th, 19 Brancaster May 25th, 19 Holme May 14th-30th, 34 Lynn Point April 24th, 30 Terrington April 28th and 50 (Icelandic) Welney April 7th-18th.

A marked early autumn influx: 97 Titchwell July 13th, 350 Snettisham July 22nd, 57 Wisbech S.F July 16th and 50 Welney July 10th. Numbers remained high at Titchwell with 86 Aug 23rd and still all present Nov 1st. A mid-summer flood at Welney resulted in only one out of 5 pairs rearing any young to flying stage.

**Bar-tailed Godwit:** Largest counts at Snettisham where 5,000 Jan 11th, 3,800 Nov 17th and a number of smaller mid-summer concentrations. Holme high tide counts included 510 March and 809 Dec. Only inland sightings were of singles at Wisbech S.F Sept 7th and at Welney (May and Sept).

**Little Whimbrel:** Only the second British occurrence of this eastern vagrant and the first for the county. The bird frequent the Blakeney/Cley/Salthouse area from Aug 24th to Sept 2nd (AWS SJMG *et al*).

**Whimbrel:** Recorded April 8th (Paston) to Oct 31st (Titchwell). Widespread on spring passage with peak counts of 28 Horsey May 11th, 40 Egmore May 9th, 20 Cley May 16th and 40 Holkham May 9th.

A prominent return passage with a number of large gatherings including 20 Cley Aug 26th, 200 Blakeney Aug 15th, 46 Holkham Sept 4th, 37 Scolt Head Aug 8th, 38 Titchwell Aug 27th, 80 Holme Aug 17th with 120 Aug 29th, 24 Snettisham Aug 10th, 60 Lynn Point Aug 13th and 23 Wisbech S.F Aug 8th.

Inland occurrences at Sandringham and Downham Market (May), Pentney G.P 20 Aug 29th and Welney (April, May, Aug with maximum 13 April 18th and 13 Aug 4th).

**Curlew:** Largest Wash counts: 500 March 28th, 2,000 Aug 31st and 3,300 Dec 15th. At Brancaster a peak of 700 late July. Only successful breeding reported from Wolferton and Brettenham Heath.

**Spotted Redshank:** Winter records from Breydon Feb, Cley/Salthouse Jan/Feb and Warham Feb. Only a light spring passage followed by a number of mid-summer records: 14 Cley June 30th, 7 Wolferton June 26th and 17 there July 9th, 2 Snettisham June 20th and Welney June 14th/16th. Strong autumn movement with peaks of 12 Hickling Sept 2nd, 18 Salthouse Sept 2nd, 26 Cley Aug 13th, 21 Titchwell Aug 28th, 86 Holme Sept 15th with an impressive 121 there Sept 18th, 27 Snettisham Aug 20th; also smaller concentrations from several other localities.

**Redshank:** Peak Wash (Snettisham) counts of 845 Jan 11th, 3,000 March 9th, 1,678 Aug 20th and 3,363 Dec 15th. An estimated 62 pairs at Welney in May.

**Marsh Sandpiper:** The county's eighth record when one appeared at Wolferton May 19th-25th (NJH TC *et al*).

1984: The Holme bird was also at Titchwell May 25th (RH FM).

**Greenshank:** A few winter records from Cley/Salthouse Jan-March and Dec; Burnham Overy Dec and Titchwell Dec. Typically light spring passage, largest groups being 4 Titchwell April/May and 6 Welney April 26th.

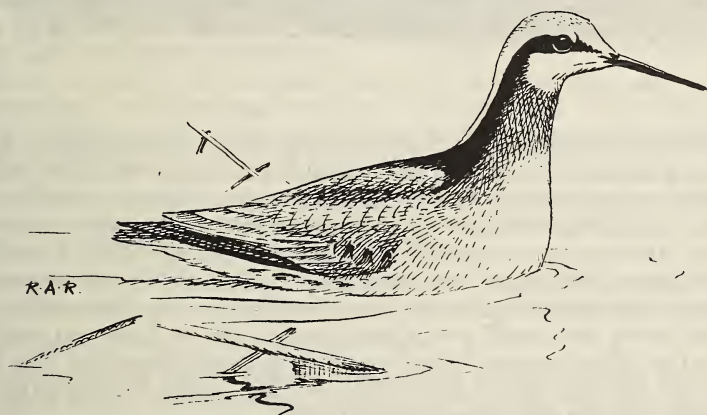
Largest autumn parties were 10 Cantley Sept 6th, 12 Hickling Aug 17th, 17 west Salthouse Aug 27th, 19 Cley Aug 15th, 40 Blakeney Aug 17th, 40 Burnham Norton and 20 nearby Brancaster late July/Aug, 20 Titchwell Aug 17th, 22 Holme Sept 17th and 25 Snettisham Aug 23rd.

**Green Sandpiper:** Recorded in both winter periods, mostly singles, from 17 sites. Few spring migrants as usual, but more obvious on return passage when 16 Hickling Aug 30th, 14 Holme July 6th and 10 daily in Aug, 11 King's Lynn B.F Aug 16th, 14 Wisbech S.F July 30th and 18 Pentney G.P Aug 8th; also many smaller groups elsewhere.

**Wood Sandpiper:** A poor spring passage with singles from 5 sites in April/May. Autumn return produced peaks of 8 Salthouse Aug 30th, 12 Cley July 30th, 3 Titchwell July 30th and 6 Holme Aug 16th; also ones and twos at 10 other sites with the last bird at Welney Oct 1st.

**Common Sandpiper:** Extreme dates April 15th (Titchwell) and Nov 26th (Tottenham G.P). Main autumn passage mid July to mid Aug when some of the larger gatherings included 16 Hickling Aug 17th, 18 Salthouse July 24th, 20 Titchwell July 30th, 10 Holme daily in mid-July, 13 Hunstanton under cliffs July 26th, 17 King's Lynn B.F July 29th, 28 Lynn Point Aug 6th and 14 Wisbech S.F July 28th where 15 Aug 17th.

**Turnstone:** Highest counts at Snettisham 507 Jan 11th and 830 Aug 16th. Several sightings of 1-4 Wisbech S.F July-Sept and 2 Welney May 20th.



**Wilson's Phalarope:** A moulting adult at Cley Aug 14th-17th (PW JDG *et al*). Eleventh county occurrence.

**Red-necked Phalarope:** A selection of records including some longish stays: Hickling Sept 8th-15th, Cley juvenile Oct 5th-18th, Snettisham June 10th/11th and Welney moulting adult Aug 1st-17th.

**Grey Phalarope:** An above average year: Breydon Nov 2nd and (2) Nov 13th; Bacton Nov 12th; Paston Nov 2nd and 6th; Sheringham (2) Nov 10th; Cley Sept 15th, (3) Nov 2nd; Titchwell Nov 11th-29th; Snettisham Nov 16th and East Wretham Nov 10th-26th.

**Pomarine Skua:** Late autumn 1985 will long be remembered for a major influx of Pomarine Skuas down the eastern seaboard of Britain enabling many observers to acquaint themselves with the diverse plumage sequences of this species. Autumn passage began slowly with no real hint of the huge numbers to follow. The first large movement was at the end of Oct. Monthly totals were as follows: 20 Aug, 50 Sept and 120 Oct, but it was during the first fortnight of Nov when county records were broken. Most birds passed in two movements, that on Nov 2nd giving counts of 110 Cley/Blakeney Point, 45 Snettisham, 50 Hunstanton, 10 Holme and 9 Paston together with smaller numbers elsewhere. The second large movement took place





Nov 10th seeing an estimated 200 Cley/Blakeney Point, 80 Sheringham, 80 Lynn Point (moving inland), 67 Paston, 20 Hunstanton and 12 Holme with others elsewhere.

Arriving at an accurate total figure is difficult, some overlapping of records must occur. Birds passing east off Cley on 10th were obviously also being observed off Sheringham. However, after studying the direction of passage on the dates in question and 'adjusting' the figures in an attempt to reach a credible total a county total of 180 birds is calculated for Nov 2nd and 380 for Nov 10th. The many smaller movements during the month give a Nov total of 780. A further 11 birds were reported in Dec. Highly unusual inland records came from Dilham Nov 17th, Kelling Heath (2) Nov 2nd and Welney Nov 7th, (3) on 10th, singles 20th, and Dec 26th.

The county total autumn passage was 981 birds.

**Arctic Skua:** Many more spring reports than usual, often associated with strong northerly winds: 8 Paston April 28th, Cley/Blakeney Point singles May 5th-19th, Holkham/Wells March 14th, April 23rd and 27th; Titchwell April 28th, 3 Holme April 28th and one May 7th, Hunstanton April 27th, Snettisham April 28th and June 21st and 4 Terrington April 28th.

Autumn passage observed between July 19th (Burnham Overy) and Dec 29th (Hunstanton); peak passage being two months earlier than that of Pomarine Skua. Earliest movement was of 76 off Lynn Point Aug 5th with 60 next day and followed on Aug 26th by 60 Cley/Blakeney Point and 100 Hunstanton. A further passage Sept 5th saw 63 Waxham, 108 Paston and 90 Hunstanton with 40 Holme Sept 6th. On Sept 13th there were 40 Wells/Holkham and 50 Hunstanton where other movements included 40 on 16th and 34 Sept 17th.

**Long-tailed Skua:** A typical small scattering of records: Yarmouth (a late bird) Nov 3rd, Salthouse Aug 25th, Blakeney Point Sept 4th and 21st, Holme adult and immature Oct 13th and Hunstanton Sept 15th.

**Great Skua:** Noted in spring at Blakeney Point May 12th and Holme (2) April 28th. Poor autumn movements with few sea-watchers producing double figures. Largest movement was 30 Cley/Blakeney Point Nov 2nd.

**Mediterranean Gull:** Fewer records from Breydon this year: a first summer May 18th/21st being the only report. Yarmouth produced 1/2 adults Jan 1st-March 2nd with further adults June 13th-17th and 1/2 Aug 2nd to year end; first winter birds Feb 2nd and 17th, Oct 2nd and 27th, Nov 13th and Dec 21st; first summer birds June 29th, July 17th and second winter Sept 7th-13th.

Cley/Blakeney Point/Salthouse: Adults Feb 10th, July 18th, Aug 24th-Sept 8th (2), Sept 21st/22nd and Oct 13th; first summer May 25th/26th, June 8th and 15th; first winter Sept 3rd-23rd (2) and Oct 4th-6th; second winter Feb 19th, Aug 24th and Nov 8th. Remarkably the species was rather rare on the north Norfolk coast only a few years ago.

Other reports of singles from Paston July 3rd and Sept 13th-20th, Sheringham first winter Oct 15th, Scolt Head June/July, Titchwell April and Aug, Holme April/May, Hunstanton Jan, Snettisham May, June and 2 July, Lynn Point Sept and Wolferton May and July; also an inland second winter bird at Brundall Jan 13th.

**Little Gull:** Singles in Jan/Feb at Paston, Sheringham, Cley, Hunstanton, Heacham and Snettisham. Very few spring adults appeared, but a number of summering yearlings at several localities: Breydon, Hickling 4, Cley/Salthouse up to 15, Titchwell 5, Pentney G.P, Snettisham and Welney.

Only small numbers in the early part of autumn passage and some larger movements later: 15 Sheringham Nov 21st, Cley/Salthouse 53 Oct 30th, over 100 Oct 31st and 30 Nov 2nd, 15 Holkham Nov 1st, 24 Titchwell Oct 30th, 16 Holme Oct 22nd; in addition 12 moved inland at Ousemouth Oct 10th.

**Sabine's Gull:** Single at Sheringham Sept 7th (AWS), followed by an unusual inland bird (an immature) at Strumpshaw Broad Oct 22nd (PJB *et al*).

Additional 1984: Single Paston Sept 15th (RC).

**Black-headed Gull:** Estimated breeding pairs: 500 Cantley B.F, 1000+ Blakeney Point, 520 Warham saltings, 300 Scolt Head, 880 Snettisham and 50 Wissington B.F.

**Common Gull:** Two pairs bred Blakeney Point.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** *Breeding:* Eight pairs Blakeney Point and 8/9 pairs Holkham-Warham. Concentrations at Hickling of 101 June 2nd, 143 June 22nd and 128 July 13th.

**Herring Gull:** *Breeding:* Blakeney Point 15-20 pairs and Holkham 4 pairs. Yellow-legged birds at Hickling (2) July 13th and Tunstead (adult and third year) Sept 13th-Oct 10th. A bird at Salthouse Dec 28th showed characteristics of the Northern race *argentatus* (breeding between Scandinavia and the White Sea); no doubt regular in varying numbers but not previously reported.

**Iceland Gull:** A typical year: Breydon Jan 13th (JCE), Yarmouth Jan 22nd (SJMG) and 26th (ADB), Holme (second winter) Dec 24th (NOA).

**Glaucous Gull:** A wide scatter of records though fewer than in 1984. Ones and twos observed at Gorleston Jan, Yarmouth/Caister Jan and March, Breydon Jan, Winterton Dec, Waxham Nov and Dec, Paston March and Dec, Sheringham Feb, Cley/Blakeney Point/Salthouse Jan-May and July-Dec, Holkham Jan, Feb and Nov, Brancaster April, Titchwell April, Thornham/Holme Jan, Feb, Aug-Dec, Hunstanton/Heacham Jan, Sept, Nov and Dec, Snettisham Feb, May and June and Lynn Point Jan, Feb, Sept and Oct.

A number of inland birds: Strumpshaw Feb 6th, Pensthorpe Hall May 12th, Beetley Tip Jan 5th/12th and Wereham Tip Jan 2nd/13th, Oct 16th/18th, Nov 18th, Nov 22nd-Dec 19th.

**Kittiwake:** A spring gale movement of 120 Terrington April 28th, most going inland. Inland sightings from Welney March 14th, Lyng Easthaugh April 12th, Pentney G.P April 28th and Fakenham May 12th.

Several autumn movements observed: 330 south inland at Ousemouth Oct 10th; 2,000/hour passed east at Paston and 1,500 east at Cley Nov 1st.



**Sandwich Tern:** Recorded March 19th (Blakeney Point) to Nov 10th (Salhouse). At Blakeney Point 1,000 pairs reared 700 young while on Scolt Head 2,500 pairs reared 2,400 young.

Fifteen birds flying inland up River Ouse Sept 11th.

**Roseate Tern:** An unusual series of sightings from Hickling Broad for what is usually a rather maritime species: observed there May 18th, 23rd, 28th and June 1st/2nd (SL MJS). A single west off Sheringham May 25th (MPT).

**Common Tern:** Recorded April 1st (Blakeney Point), 7th (Winterton) and 8th (Ranworth) to Nov 14th (Blakeney Point). A county total of 861 breeding pairs. Largest colonies at Blakeney Point (300), Scolt Head (200) and Snettisham (130). Other important sites included Breydon (58) and Ranworth (30). Poor success at some north coast colonies a combination of bad weather and predation.

**Arctic Tern:** Recorded between April 20th (Paston and Snettisham) and Nov 18th (Langley Marshes) when one was seen to collapse and fall to ground; body to Norwich Castle Museum. Several other Nov records. Six pairs bred Blakeney Point and one pair Scolt Head.

Spring passage records as follows: Paston April 20th, Titchwell May 10th, Snettisham April 20th, (2) April 29th, 5 records in May; Tottenhill G.P (9) April 28th, (3) May 3rd; Lynn Point (22) April 28th and (22) May 2nd; Welney (8) April 30th; Lyng Easthaugh (6) May 1st and (3) May 3rd; Pentney G.P April 25th, (3) May 4th; Earsham G.P (10) April 28th.

These records show typical spring broad front movement with coinciding records from various inland waters. A couple of mid-summer records from Breydon (2) June 13th and July 6th. Autumn passage insignificant, mostly ones and twos at many coastal sites.

**Little Tern:** Extreme dates April 7th (Titchwell — earlier than normal) and Oct 2nd (Holme). A county total of 441 pairs bred, but due to bad weather and predation success was generally poor. A couple of inland records from the Yare at Strumpshaw May 15th and Downham Market June 7th.



**Black Tern:** Extreme dates April 20th (Snettisham) and Oct 8th (Welney). Spring passage peaked in mid-May with a further influx in early June. Noted (peak figures in brackets) at Strumpshaw, Rockland (7), Hickling (6), Cley, Blakeney Point, Holkham Lake, Titchwell (6), Snettisham (14), Pensthorpe Hall (May total of 50 passed through), Pentney G.P, Saddlebow, Denver Sluice (3) and Welney.

Quite widespread in autumn, but numbers generally low with 18 Titchwell Aug 30th being the largest count, though 10 Hickling Aug 10th, 7 Waxham Aug 11th, 7 Blakeney Point Aug 31st and 7 Lynn Point Aug 31st.

**White-winged Black Tern:** A summer plumaged bird at Welney June 6th-8th (JBK RN JR).

**Black Guillemot:** Cley Sept 16th, Blakeney Point Oct 3rd and Holme Oct 31st.

**Little Auk:** Apart from singles in Jan, only appeared inshore in any numbers during Nov (2nd was peak day). All records relate to live birds: Yarmouth 13 Nov 2nd, 2 on 13th and one on 24th; Winterton Nov 1st, 5 on 2nd and one on 3rd; Paston Jan 5th, Jan 12th, Nov 1st, 52 Nov 2nd and 3 on 20th; Sheringham 2 Nov 10th, 40 on 21st, 3 on 22nd and one on 24th; Weybourne 12 Nov 2nd; Salthouse/Cley Jan 5th, Oct 10th, 2 Oct 15th, one Oct 16th, 8 Oct 27th, 5 Oct 28th, 3 Oct 29th, 16 Nov 1st, 55 Nov 2nd, 8 Nov 3rd, 2 Nov 9th, singles Nov 10th/11th, 16 Nov 12th and 7 Nov 19th; Blakeney Point 60 Nov 2nd and one Nov 10th; Holkham 2 Nov 1st; Titchwell 2 Nov 16th, 43 Nov 17th and 3 Nov 18th; Holme Jan 2nd and Snettisham Nov 12th, 17th and Dec 27th.

Inland: Horsey Mere Jan 3rd, Malthouse Broad Nov 26th/27th, Bessingham near Gresham Jan 7th and Anmer Nov 12th.

**Puffin:** Twenty-two coastal observations in Jan, March and Aug onwards. No party exceeded 3 in number.

**Collared Dove:** Largest assembly 150 South Lynn Oct 23rd.

**Turtle Dove:** Spring arrival from April 21st (Welney). May passage attained 50 birds an hour at Holme May 24th when day total of 1,300 at Snettisham; 200 west at Holme on 25th and 70 west at Sheringham on 26th. Largest post-breeding flock up to 230 at Gayton Sept 1st-5th.

**Ring-necked Parakeet:** Singles at Bradwell, Cromer, Cley and Hunstanton.

**Barn Owl:** Recorded at over 150 localities. A bird of the dark-breasted form *guttata* at Wighton April 7th (CJC).

**Little Owl:** Recorded at over 60 sites; breeding confirmed at only 4 sites.

**Long-eared Owl:** No full breeding survey available, in fact only known to have bred successfully at one site.

Migrants: Yarmouth in from sea Nov 25th, Happisburgh Oct 24th, Walcott Jan 8th, Paston Feb 9th and Nov 1st, Salthouse April 13th, Blakeney Point Oct 13th and 28th and Nov 13th, Stiffkey Oct 19th and Nov 19th, Wells March 31st, May 1st and 21st and Oct 26th, Burnham Overy Oct 27th, Scolt Head Sept 22nd, Burnham Market Nov 25th and Snettisham Nov 27th and 29th.

No winter roost held more than 3 birds.

**Short-eared Owl:** Bred at Lynn Point (1-2 pairs) and at Snettisham (1 pair). Winter concentrations at Burnham Deepdale 5 Nov 27th, Scolt Head 4 at beginning of year, Massingham Heath 5 Jan 13th and 6 Nov 29th, Snettisham 5 Nov 23rd and Lynn Point 5 March 4th.

**Nightjar:** Records of churring birds as follows: Bridgham, Cat's Bottom, Drymere, Fowlmere (12), Grimes Graves, Ickburgh, Kelling Heath, Leziate (2), Salthouse

Heath (2), Santon Downham, Santon Warren (4), West Tofts (10+), Winterton (3) and Wolferton (2).

An autumn migrant at Cley Oct 2nd.

Off-shore: Dudgeon light-vessel, (22 miles north of Sheringham), one arrived 1100 hours June 19th remaining 8 hours (Photographed by PL).

**Swift:** Exceptionally early migrants beginning of April at Cley (2-3) and Wells 3rd, Cley and Sheringham 5th and Paston and Winterton 6th. No further records until April 22nd. A partial albino with white belly and rump at Breydon May 18th and two subsequent dates. 1,000/hour moving eastwards Paston July 6th.

Oct migrants at Holme (2) 2nd, Waxham and Blakeney 6th and Cromer 8th.



**Alpine Swift:** One originally Cley April 3rd (BM MPL *et al*) subsequently observed at various north coast localities between Cromer and Holme up to 8th. It was timed to fly at an average speed of 50 mph. The same bird (distinguished by a pale wing marking) observed on 10th heading south along the Dengie Peninsular in Essex (GA).

Another Cley May 25th/26th (MVH PV MW *et al*).

**Kingfisher:** Recorded at 60 localities (compared with 75 sites in 1984). One landed briefly on washing line in a garden at Toftwood, Dereham, Sept 27th.

**Hoopoe:** Three typical spring records: A well watched (and disturbed) bird Blakeney Point May 7th-15th; Breydon May 18th and Caister next day; Edgefield May 30th to June 1st.

**Wryneck:** During May recorded at Holme 6th-20th with probably 7 separate birds in total including 4 on 14th; Blakeney Point up to 3 12th-15th; Holkham Meals on several dates 1st-21st (at least 2 birds involved); elsewhere singles at Glandford 5th, Caister 6th and 15th and Cley 14th.

Only two autumn records: Waxham Aug 13th and Holkham Meals Sept 25th.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker:** A bird of the Continental race ringed at Happisburgh Oct 24th.



I.L. n°85

**Woodlark:** Coastal migrants at Holme April 3rd and Oct 1st, Horsey May 16th, Salhouse Oct 10th and Winterton Dec 1st. In Norfolk Brecks 15 singing males recorded (RH).

For further reading, with particular reference to the Brecks, see 'Woodlarks in Britain 1968-83' (*British Birds* 79:105-116).

**Shore Lark:** On Blakeney Point up to 24 in first winter period with latest May 12th; again present from Oct 14th increasing to 12 by Dec. Elsewhere: Winterton Oct 23rd, Salthouse April 27th and 2 Nov 2nd, 12 Cley March 17th, 13 Morston Dec 14th, 5 Holkham Nov 3rd, Thornham Oct 13th and Holme 2 March 2nd and Oct 13th.

**Sand Martin:** Breeding colonies greatly reduced and only 10 pairs nested in Paston cliffs compared with 150 pairs in 1983. Largest autumn concentration 250 Cantley BF Sept 6th-8th. Latest Cley Oct 10th.

**Swallow:** Earliest arrival Snettisham April 1st. A complete albino Holme Sept 25th-Oct 1st. Still 4 Holkham Meals and another Fritton Nov 17th and one Holkham Park Nov 18th. A very late bird Yarmouth Dec 6th.

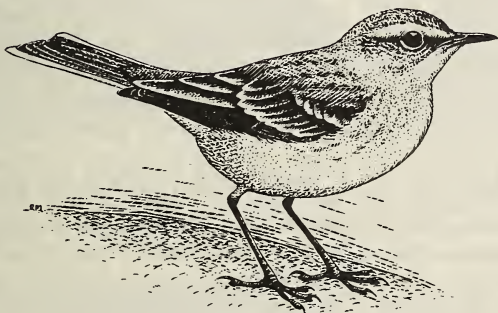
**House Martin:** Earliest record Beeston April 5th. A pale sandy bird, with rump patch just visible, Waxham Sept 1st. Several mid-Nov records with latest at Tuttington on 18th.

**Richard's Pipit:** Four typical autumn records: Blakeney Point Oct 14th, Scolt Head Oct 17th, Salthouse Oct 26th/27th and Cley Nov 5th-9th.

**Tawny Pipit:** Blakeney Point Sept 30th (BM) and Yarmouth Oct 19th (PRA).

**Red-throated Pipit:** Salthouse May 14th (SPH). Thirteenth county occurrence.

**Rock Pipit:** Birds of Scandinavian race *littoralis* identified in March as follows: 2 Cley 10th, 10 Lynn Point 12th, Breydon 23rd, 3 Sheringham 26th and Paston 29th with 2 on 30th and 3 on 31st.



**Water Pipit:** Only regularly identified at Hickling (where up to 5 in Jan/Feb and Oct and 6 in Dec) and Cantley BF (up to 5 in Jan and 4 in Nov). Other records from Breydon Oct 27th, Cley Jan 1st and 12th, April 3rd and Dec 2nd/3rd, Titchwell March 28th, Holme Oct 28th/29th and Nov 7th, Snettisham Oct 30th and 2 Nov 4th-8th and Welney Feb 15th.

**Yellow Wagtail:** First March 29th (Cley): last Oct 9th (Cantley BF).

**Blue-headed Wagtail:** Records received of at least 25 on spring passage, mainly singles but 5 Cromer May 6th and 3 Yarmouth May 10th. Inland records from Lyng Easthaugh May 1st and 26th and Buckenham May 6th and 15th. A male at Breydon with a possible female May 15th-July 7th.

**Grey-headed Wagtail:** Six males identified in mid-May: Yarmouth 10th/11th with 2 on 12th, Holme 14th, Salthouse 2 on 15th/16th and Cley 16th.



**Grey Wagtail:** Successful breeding at Bintree, Buckenham Tofts, Gressenhall, Lyng and Narborough (2 pairs). Also present in summer at Bawburgh, Costessey, Keswick, Norwich (Carrow Bridge area) and West Acre.

**Pied Wagtail:** Maximum numbers at roosts as follows: Bacton Gas Site 700, Scarning Fen 150 (July) and Rush Meadow Dereham 100 (Jan).

**White Wagtail:** Largest spring migrant groups: 7 Titchwell April 20th with 8 there May 5th, 10 Cley April 23rd and 7 Breydon April 26th.



**Waxwing:** Horsey Jan 1st, Costessey from 1984 until Jan 3rd when found dead, 3 Wheatfen Jan 25th, 2 Little Plumstead Jan 15th, Cromer Feb 25th, Wells Oct 26th/27th, 2 Titchwell Nov 12th, 2 Corpusty Nov 13th/14th, Snettisham Nov 16th-20th, 2 well-watched birds Wiveton Nov 16th-24th with 7 25th and 3 26th, 6 Edgefield in Nov, Yarmouth Dec 26th-31st and West Lynn Dec 27th-30th.

**Black-bellied Dipper:** Costessey, one present mid-Dec onwards.

**Nightingale:** Coastal migrants Blakeney Point May 5th and Trimmingham Sept 7th.

**Bluthroat:** An extraordinary and unprecedented arrival of displaced migrants in May with a county total of at least 54 birds of the Scandinavian Red-spotted race. The majority were males, several of which were heard singing. Contrasting with the often secretive autumn migrants of the past, many birds were watched in open sandhills, especially on Blakeney Point and at Holme allowing observers very close views. All records are listed: Winterton 12th, Horsey 15th, Waxham 12th, Happisburgh 17th, Cromer GC 11th, Sheringham GC 13th, Weybourne 12th, Salhouse 12th and another 15th, Cley 11th-15th, Blakeney Point from 10th increasing to 14 on 14th with last 2 21st then 2 on 24th and one on 25th, Wells 3 12th one remaining until 15th with 2 additional birds 14th, Holkham 14th, Burnham Deepdale 21st, Titchwell 12th-14th, Thornham Point 2 12th/13th, Holme daily from 8th-22nd with peak of 11 on 14th (at least 15 birds involved) and then another 26th-28th, Hunstanton GC 16th and Snettisham 12th-14th.

A single autumn record, the first for six years: Paston Oct 26th (JRA).

**Black Redstart:** Wintering birds at Heacham till Jan 3rd and again Nov 30th/Dec 1st; also West Runton Jan 19th and Feb 13th. Spring passage from March 26th mostly ones and twos but 4 at Wells April 4th. A noticeable increase in breeding records with single pairs rearing young at Cantley BF, Cromer, Hunstanton, King's Lynn, Norwich and Thetford. In East Norfolk, the main county stronghold, 14 singing males at Yarmouth with young seen at 5 sites; 2 singing males at Gorleston with



*Above:* Among the throng of sawbills seeking shelter along the Great Ouse Relief Channel in January was this Red-necked Grebe. Up to three Long-tailed Ducks — including this individual — appeared on Titchwell Marsh towards the year end. *Centre:* A Black Brant remained at Cley and Salthouse until March. *Below:* A reminder of severe conditions at the beginning of 1985 when the Broads and stretches of river became frozen.







1985 was an excellent year for wader enthusiasts. The Greater Sandplover was photographed at a high-water roost in Blakeney harbour. *Centre:* Black-tailed Godwits of the Icelandic race and Grey Plover in summer attire. *Below:* Curlew Sandpiper and Little Stint.





**Upper:** During February Long-eared Bats were found hibernating in tunnels in the Standard Military Training Area. **Lower:** Hares in pursuit. In the winter months there is a movement of these attractive animals into Thetford Forest to take advantage of increased shelter.



Norfolk and Suffolk Bat Groups in Thetford Forest.



young observed at one site; pair also present at Caister all summer but no young found.

**Redstart:** Early arrivals at Holkham April 3rd and Kelling next day. A small-scale 'fall' of migrants May 14th/15th when 20 Holme and 10 Blakeney Point. Latest Welney Oct 19th.

**Whinchat:** Earliest migrants at Winterton April 17th and Salthouse next day.

**Stonechat:** A migrant Blakeney Point May 8th-12th with another on 12th. County total of 10 pairs present in breeding season.

**Siberian Stonechat:** As in 1984 three records of one of the distinctive eastern races: Wells (East Hills) Oct 22nd (JPMC), Burnham Overy Oct 26th (JCE) and Winterton Nov 9th to end of year (PRA JD TWF *et al*).

**Wheatear:** An early bird Burnham Overy March 9th. Large falls of migrants April 3rd-6th when maxima of 100 Hunstanton, 70 Holme, 56 Snettisham and 33 Waxham. Another large fall May 13th when 70 Blakeney Point. Apart from Brecks breeding recorded at Bacton and Snettisham.

**Pied Wheatear:** An immature male on the cliffs at Sheringham Nov 21st-23rd (KBS *et al*). The third county record and frequenting exactly the same habitat as the bird present in 1983 half a mile to the west.

**Ring Ouzel:** A prolonged spring passage April 1st to June 4th with many records from 27 coastal and inland localities. Maxima of 5 Weybourne April 4th and May 4th/5th, 7 Snettisham April 5th, 5 Holme April 19th and 5 Horsey May 5th. As in recent years far fewer autumn records with only 7 individual migrants: Holkham Meals Sept 29th and Oct 22nd/23rd, Holme Oct 2nd and 24th and a very late bird Nov 16th, Waxham Oct 16th and Wisbech SF Oct 24th.

**Fieldfare:** Late migrants at Salthouse May 25th and June 1st and Snettisham (2) June 2nd. Earliest returning bird Holme Aug 30th.

**Redwing:** Latest spring record Terrington Marsh May 21st. Earliest autumn arrival Wells Sept 27th.

**Cetti's Warbler:** Broads total of 32 singing males as follows: *Yare:* Cantley, Buckenham Fleet, Strumpshaw to Postwick including Rockland Broad and Surlingham Church Marsh but excluding Wheatfen/Surlingham Broads 16; also Thorpe St. Andrew. *Bure:* Ranworth, Ranworth Marshes, Cockshoot, Horning 2 and Hoveton Great Broad. *Ant:* Wayford Bridge, How Hill, Irstead 2, Barton Broad and Sutton Broad. *Thurne:* Hickling (but absent March to early Sept). No information received from Waveney and Chet valleys, perhaps following blizzards at the beginning of the year.

Elsewhere one singing on Breck Borders at Lower Stow Bedon Bridge.

**Grasshopper Warbler:** A late migrant at Salthouse Oct 5th.

**Savi's Warbler:** Singing males at Martham Broad (April 24th), Horsey Mere (May) and 2 at Hickling (May-July).

**Aquatic Warbler:** One actually seen flying in off sea and landing on Blakeney Point Aug 13th (PHGW *et al*). The first recorded county occurrence since 1977.

**Sedge Warbler:** Earliest spring record University Broad Norwich April 5th.

**Marsh Warbler:** Singing males at Cley June 4th-18th (SR *et al*) and Holme June 7th (HBO). Only the third and fourth county records.

**Reed Warbler:** Late birds still at Cantley BF Oct 17th and Holkham Meals (4) Oct 19th.



**Great Reed Warbler:** Holkham June 15th-21st (MC DH *et al*). The eighth county record (The 1984 Titchwell bird was in fact the seventh county record, not the sixth, the previous record being in 1978).

**Icterine Warbler:** A total of only 5 records, one in spring and 4 in autumn: singing male Holme May 20th/21st, another there Aug 30th, Holkham Meals Sept 28th, Blakeney Point Sept 28th/29th and Cley (Walsey Hills) Oct 1st.

**Subalpine Warbler:** Holkham Meals a male May 27th (DC JPR *et al*). The fifth county record.

**Barred Warbler:** The first county spring record: Caister May 13th-14th (PRA). Only two autumn occurrences: Holme Aug 30th (HBO) and East Winch Sept 15th (AB NB).

**Lesser Whitethroat:** A wintering individual at Welney until Jan 14th. A late migrant Holkham Meals Oct 28th.

**Garden Warbler:** Latest record Holkham Meals Oct 20th.

**Blackcap:** Wintering birds at Holme (where 2 until Jan 12th and 3 present until end of year), Wighton Jan 24th, Thorpe St. Andrew Jan 27th, Sheringham Feb 2nd-9th and Dec 27th, Norwich Feb 9th-11th and March 16th, Dersingham Dec 5th, Letheringsett Dec 7th, Cley Dec 18th and How Hill Dec 27th.

**Pallas's Warbler:** Four typical Oct records: Holkham Meals 2 separate birds 21st and 23rd (JBK *et al*) Blakeney Point 21st (ETM) and Happisburgh 22nd (trapped by BMEU).

**Yellow-browed Warbler:** A large number of autumn arrivals for the second year in succession: Yarmouth 4 Oct 16th, 2 17th, 2-3 19th and singles 23rd and 27th; Winterton one found dying Sept 23rd and taken to Norwich Castle Museum; Waxham Oct 20th; Cromer Sept 27th; Sheringham Sept 28th; Cley Sept 26th-Oct 1st and Oct 19th/20th; Blakeney Point Oct 1st and 11th; Morston Oct 22nd/23rd; Stiffkey Sept 29th and Oct 12th; Holkham Meals Sept 23rd joined by another 24th and a third 27th, 3 new arrivals 28th when 5 present, 2 29th and one 30th, 3 Oct 15th with another 16th and a further arrival 19th when 3 present and one 20th; Titchwell Sept 24th and Holme Sept 29th, Oct 1st and 20th, 2 Oct 25th/26th and one 28th.

**Radde's Warbler:** Holkham Meals Oct 22nd-24th (RC *et al*). The tenth county record.

**Wood Warbler:** Early migrants Strumpshaw April 11th and Weybourne April 14th. Coastal migrants in May as follows: Yarmouth 6th, Waxham 21st/22nd, Weybourne 26th, Blakeney Point 12th, Holkham Meals 2nd, 4 6th, 7th, 2 13th and 23rd, Titchwell 10th, Holme 6th and 16th and Snettisham 26th.

Few records of singing males at breeding sites: singles at Sheringham (Roman Camp), Sandringham, Snettisham, Leziate and Weeting with 3 Fritton where 2 pairs proved breeding. In autumn Holkham Meals Aug 30th and 2 Waxham Sept 12th.

**Chiffchaff:** At Holkham Meals one of Eastern race Jan 4th then surprisingly after cold weather 4 there early Feb with singles later in month; also one Snettisham Jan 26th. First obvious spring migrant Burnham Norton March 9th. In Dec singles Titchwell 4th/5th and How Hill 7th/8th.

**Willow Warbler:** Earliest record Ranworth March 29th. Singles of Northern race Happisburgh April 30th and May 1st (both trapped) and Blakeney Point May 17th and 19th (different individuals).

**Firecrest:** Two winter records: Brundall Jan 13th and Cley several dates between Dec 1st and 21st. Small-scale spring passage of mostly singles from March 11th (Holme)

extending into May. In late May/early June singing males at Holkham Meals, Sheringham Hall and Sprowston (Cottage Plantation) but no proof of breeding. Total of about 15 autumn migrants following an early bird at Holme Aug 31st including 3 Blakeney Point Oct 26th which arrived with at least 150 Goldcrests.

**Spotted Flycatcher:** An early record, Fritton, April 24th. A large 'fall' at Holme May 26th when 40 present. Late migrants at Waxham Oct 12th and Paston Oct 19th.

**Red-breasted Flycatcher:** One spring record: a female Blakeney Point May 19th-24th. In autumn singles at Stiffkey and Yarmouth Oct 16th, Titchwell Oct 25th/26th and Morley St. Botolph (trapped) Oct 26th.



**Collared Flycatcher:** A first-summer male at Holkham Meals May 12th/13th (PMC RG *et al*). The second county record of this vagrant from Central/SE Europe.

**Pied Flycatcher:** Following one Holkham Meals April 20th an above-average spring passage May 6th-28th with records from many coastal localities including 7 at Holkham Meals May 12th and 9 Holme 14th and inland observations from Houghton, Itteringham and Strumpshaw. At Aylmerton a male regularly entered a nest-box late May — unfortunately no female present. In autumn 40 Holme and 50 Blakeney Point Aug 30th and 50 Holkham Meals next day when 20 at Wells (East Hills). A leucistic bird Holkham Meals Sept 29th.

**Bearded Tit:** Breeding records from Burnham Norton (pair reared 9 young), Burnham Overy (pair reared 4 young), Cley, Hickling (60 pairs including 22 pairs with fledged young), Holme (3 broods of young), Horning Hall (one pair), Horsey (20 pairs), How Hill-Irstead (6 pairs), King's Lynn BF (2 pairs), Snettisham, Titchwell and Woodbastwick.

At Cley 80 Sept 7th; at Holme 90 west Sept 27th, 40 west Sept 28th with 25 Oct 13th; at King's Lynn BF 30 in Jan, 35 Nov 14th increasing to 45 by Nov 26th and at Titchwell 66 in Nov.

Elsewhere 6 Winterton Sept 28th, 6 west Brancaster Staithe Oct 5th, up to 15 Snettisham Coastal Park Oct, 4 Colney/Bawburgh GP Oct 13th with 2 Nov 17th, 4 Welney Oct 17th, 2 19th and 2 Dec 16th, 4 Holkham Meals Oct 19th, 3 20th and 12 west Oct 26th, 10 Brancaster Oct 26th, 20 Seven Mile House (River Yare) Nov 26th and 6 Beetley GP Dec 11th.

**Blue Tit:** Passage birds present on Blakeney Point Oct 12th-26th in varying numbers up to 30 including several small flocks moving westwards.

**Treecreeper:** One, presumably a migrant, on Blakeney Point Sept 28th/29th. About 15 'in a tight flock' Holkham Meals also Sept 28th.

**Golden Oriole:** Coastal spring migrants as follows: a pair at Holme May 16th with a male May 17th/18th; one Horsey May 16th where 3 flying south with Turtle Doves May 24th; Cley May 24th, Wiveton/Blakeney May 26th and male found dead Sheringham June 4th. Also Welney July 4th.

**Red-backed Shrike:** May migrants as follows: Titchwell 8th-16th, Burnham Norton 10th/11th, Walcott 12th, 2 Holme 14th-20th, Blakeney Point 23rd and 30th, Burnham Overy 23rd, Holkham Meals 23rd and 30th and Winterton 24th; also Titchwell June 2nd.

Only 3 autumn records: Blakeney Point Sept 8th-10th, a juvenile (road casualty) near Oxborough Sept 19th and Holme Sept 28th-Oct 13th.



**Great Grey Shrike:** Only one record in early part of year: Roydon Common Feb 16th. Returning migrants at Beeston April 5th-19th, Thornham April 6th and North Walsham April 22nd. Autumn birds as follows: one flying in off sea Blakeney Point Oct 13th, later in day seen chasing another off inland (one remained until 16th), Kelling Heath Oct 20th-Nov 3rd, Salthouse Oct 27th, Morston-Stiffkey Oct 28th and Snettisham Oct 31st and Nov 9th. Subsequently records from Reepham Dec 1st and Salthouse Heath at end Dec.

**Jay:** Flock of 7 in off sea Holme Oct 23rd.

**Magpie:** Maximum of 44 at Roydon Common roost March 2nd.

**Carrion Crow:** Over 400 roosting at Roydon Common Feb 9th.

**Hooded Crow:** Occasional coastal records of 1/2 birds and at Hickling and Roydon Common; 7 at Holme Dec 8th and 4 Ickburgh Dec 14th.

**Brambling:** In first-winter period maxima of 270 Norwich (West Earlham) Feb 1st and 300 Santon Downham March 30th. Late departing birds Blakeney Point May 15th and Holkham Meals May 20th. Large passage of 1,313 Snettisham Oct 12th and 350 west Holme Oct 19th. Subsequently largest flocks Wissington BF Nov 17th and 250 Crimplesham GP Dec 7th.

**Serin:** A male in song Holkham Meals April 18th to at least May 22nd and then Wells Town June 20th to Aug 11th. Another male Holkham Park May 17th (AB). In autumn males Hunstanton GC Sept 25th (HR) and Holkham Meals Oct 19th (JMC).

**Siskin:** Largest flocks: 70 Fowlmere Jan 3rd, 75 Bintree Mill Jan 13th and 100 How Hill Oct 20th. Two present Holkham Meals in summer with 3 June 30th and 5 July 24th.

**Twite:** Maximum winter counts include 300 Blakeney Point, 300 Burnham Norton, 215 Lynn Point, 200 Titchwell, 200 Holme and 75 Breydon. Two late birds Holme May 14th. Inland records at Hickling 10 Jan 8th and Welney Oct 12th where 3 Nov 1st.

**Mealy Redpoll:** Following the influx at the end of 1984 records from ten localities in early months of year including up to 100 at Holkham Meals and 50 at Mousehold Heath Norwich. At Holkham the well watched flock of Redpolls was mainly 'Mealies' (including up to 4 'Arctic' Redpolls still under consideration by British



Birds Rarities Committee) whereas at Norwich only some 25% of the flock were 'Mealies'. Four late birds at Caister May 12th. Recorded again in small numbers at 11 localities Nov/Dec with maximum of 32 Holkham Meals Nov 23rd.

**Crossbill:** Regularly recorded in usual areas: Brecks (largest party 15); Sandringham/Wolferton/West Newton; and Wells/Holkham. The county shared in the mid-summer irruptive movement which may have begun in Russia and which reached as far north as Iceland. All such records are listed: Fritton 3 June 2nd; Lound 16 June 23rd and 23 July 7th; Horsey 21 July 13th; Norwich (Sprowston) 10 mid-June; Cley up to 14 July 9th-22nd; Wells Town several July 17th; Holkham Meals 21 west June 1st, 30 on 8th, 28 west on 9th, 30 on 13th, 17 north-west on 16th, 15 July 11th and 8 on 17th; Brancaster 2 July 4th and 7 on 12th; Holme 25 June 28th; Wolferton 5 June 3rd and Welney June 13th.

**Parrot Crossbill:** At Holkham Meals a pair returned Feb 19th and successful breeding again took place with 4 fledged young from the first brood and 2 fledged young from the second. A male and 4 juveniles at Cley July 17th/18th (SJMG *et al*). Subsequently at Holkham Meals a pair Oct 20th, 4 Oct 21st and one Oct 29th.

**Hawfinch:** Observed regularly Holkham Park where maximum of 18 in Feb. Rarely seen at East Wretham although a flock of 36 there April 7th-9th. An assembly found in TF 70 in first winter period with 45-50 in Feb, 1-2 birds present June and returned Oct with 20 until end of year. Other occasional records from Attlebridge (7 roosting Dec), Brundall, Costessey, Cranworth, Fowlmere, Kirstead, Lenwade, Letheringsett, North Creak, Ringland (3-4 pairs), Santon Downham, Sheringham (6 Nov), Stanford, Thompson, Watton and Weybourne (one pair bred).

**Black-and-White Warbler:** How Hill Ludham Dec 3rd-15th (MRMcD MIE RA *et al*). Full details appear on page 252 of this most unexpected New World addition to the county list.

**Lapland Bunting:** Largest numbers recorded at Burnham Norton where peak of 57 in early Jan slowly decreasing until sudden increase to 80 March 17th then declined to singles March 30th and April 18th; up to 20 again Oct-Dec. Elsewhere in first winter period occasional records from 8 localities including 17 Breydon Jan 19th and 14 Morston Jan 20th. Late migrants Salthouse April 21st-23rd (male in breeding plumage) and Holme May 1st. More widely recorded in second winter period from Sept 23rd (Holme) along North/East coasts with maxima of 20 Weybourne Oct 9th and 23 Blakeney Point Oct 25th. One inland at Wisbech SF Nov 9th.

**Snow Bunting:** Late departing birds at Titchwell (4) April 14th and Blakeney Point (8) April 19th. Largest flocks: 200 Cley Jan, 250 Blakeney Point March, 200 Holkham Nov and 150 Titchwell Jan/Feb. Inland one Wisbech SF Nov 23rd.

**Ortolan:** A male and female Cromer GC May 6th, the male still present next day; a male at Holme May 10th-15th joined by a second male 14th/15th; an immature Blakeney Point Aug 25th/26th where another Oct 16th.

**Rustic Bunting:** Salthouse a male May 16th (DM SH *et al*). The fifth county record.

**Corn Bunting:** Flocks of 150 Lynn Point Jan 8th and 120 Burnham Norton Jan 19th.

The following, not mentioned in the Classified Notes, were recorded in 1985 (*breeding species in italics*): Canada Goose, Red-legged Partridge, Grey Partridge, Pheasant, Moorhen, Coot, Guillemot, Razorbill, Stock Dove, Woodpigeon, Cuckoo, Tawny Owl, Green Woodpecker, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Skylark, Tree Pipit, Meadow Pipit, Wren, Dunnock, Robin, Blackbird, Song Thrush, Mistle Thrush, Whitethroat, Goldcrest, Long-tailed Tit, Marsh Tit, Willow Tit, Coal Tit,

*Great Tit, Nuthatch, Jackdaw, Rook, Starling, House Sparrow, Tree Sparrow, Chaffinch, Greenfinch, Goldfinch, Linnet, Bullfinch, Yellowhammer and Reed Bunting.*

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**Photographs:** Little Gulls, Red-breasted Flycatcher, Red-backed Shrike, Dotterel and Pectoral Sandpiper (*S. Young*); Little Whimbrel, Curlew Sandpiper and Alpine Swift left and lower right (*David M. Cottridge*); Alpine Swift top right (*T. Loseby*); Greater Sandplover (*J. Reed*); Little Stint (*R. Tidman*); Bluethroats and Black Brant (*T. Lubbock*); Black-and-White Warbler (*P. Morris*); Long-tailed Duck (*B. J. Wingrove*); Black-tailed Godwits, Grey Plover, Red-necked Grebe, Lapwing in winter and Hares (*C. R. Knights*); Norfolk & Suffolk Bat Groups and Long-eared Bat (*Press-Tige Pictures*).

**Line drawings:** 245 Wigeon and 248 Whooper Swan (*N. Arlott*); 252 Black-and-White Warbler (*N. Borrow*); Front Cover: Red-spotted Bluethroats (*G. M. S. Easy*); 262 Hen Harriers at Roost and 294 Alpine Swift (*M. Elliot*); 280 Smew (*R. A. Hume*); 254 Siberian Stonechat (*J. B. Kemp*); 305 Fox, 307 Stoats, 319 Otters, 320 Hare and End Cover: Long-eared Bats (*J. Last*); 287 Broad-billed Sandpiper and 294 Woodlark (*J. Lewington*); 241 Smew and Goosanders, 242 Bluethroat, 244 First-winter Mediterranean Gull, 249 Curlew Sandpiper and Dunlin, 250 Greater Sandplover, 251 Little Whimbrel, 256 Parrot Crossbills, 261 Red-breasted Mergansers; 265 Red-backed Shrikes, 278 Snow Goose, Barnacle and Pink-feet, 281 Black Kite, 284 Cranes and Stone Curlews, 285 Kentish Plover, 290 Immature Pomarine Skua, 295 Water Pipit, 300 Great Grey Shrike and 302 Alpine Swift (*R. Millington*); 253 Shorelarks, 273 Swifts, 274 Black-tailed Godwits, 286 Grey Plovers, 289 Wilson's Phalarope, 292 Sandwich Terns, 296 Waxwings and 299 Collared Flycatcher (*the late R. A. Richardson*)



# NORFOLK MAMMAL REPORT 1985

## Editorial

The Editor is pleased to present the 30th Norfolk Mammal Report.

So we find ourselves with yet another excuse to look back over the history of mammal recording and reporting in Norfolk! Yet decades are significant milestones and it does seem that we are now collecting the kind of data envisaged by the pioneers all those years ago. With so many contributors it is possible to see far more clearly how our mammal species are faring. We have, in other words, moved on from listing to interpretation.

It's just as well we have so many enthusiasts and even more are needed. What could we do if we could depend upon at least one recorder in every village? The interest must surely be there. It's up to us to channel that interest and turn it into a resource. Time is not on our side. Natural History is no longer the gentle pursuit where time almost stands still. The pressures of human society and its demands upon the environment are increasingly reflected in the change of status of mammal species. Admittedly we lose a few here and gain a few there. But is it really possible to draw up a balance sheet at the end of the year, draw a line across the page and put down the pen with a smile of satisfaction? Does the ostentatious presence of the Grey squirrel make up for the near loss of our native Red? We have Roe deer aplenty and the occasional glimpse of the majestic Red deer gives delight. The alien Coypu is much harder to find and few of us would express great sorrow. But what can we put against the loss of our Otters? Last year we were delighted by the hopes expressed for this declining species in our leading article. How much we would love to foretell the future but what a burden it would be! By the time our report was printed hopes were shattered by the news from the Glaven and the rest of the year brought no comfort. If the chemical cocktail that has usurped our fresh streams continues, can there ever be any?

1986 has been designated National Bat Year. So it seems appropriate to publish distribution maps while this special year is still running its course. We trust the information being promulgated will inspire many more to befriend this beleaguered group. John Goldsmith has been associated with this study for many years and founded the Norfolk Bat Group. He has been assisted in the preparation of the maps and notes by Dick Jones of the King's Lynn Museum Natural History Department. The Bat Group is sponsored by The Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists' Society and is also linked to national research. For further information, please contact John Goldsmith at Norwich Castle Museum.

Red deer sometimes feature in the headlines when they blunder into unfortunate situations but they appear in a much more dignified light in parts of the county where small groups can find the cover more in keeping with this woodland species. The Deer of Hickling are described for us by Stewart Linsell, Warden of the Norfolk Naturalists' Trust reserve at Hickling, who has observed and recorded this special group.

Dr. Jonathan Reynolds continues his study of the squirrels of Norfolk and collated data are sent to him. He provides us with his up-to-date comments.

Dr. Morris Gosling of the Coypu Investigation Centre again supplies us with an authoratative account of the species which can be found in the appropriate section of the Classified Notes.

Rex Whitta, Wildlife Ranger of Thetford Forest, helps fill the gaps in the notes on the mammals of that region while Percy Trett, aided by his own network of informants, supplies notes on the off-shore mammals, with special emphasis on those off the east coast.

We are most grateful to all of our specialist contributors for their continuing support as indeed we are to all our contributors listed later. Without them there could be no report. Every item of information is carefully noted and eventually stored in the archives at Norwich Castle Museum. If a name has inadvertantly been omitted from the list we do apologise. Unfortunately it is not possible to answer all the letters received and we trust this acknowledgement will suffice. We are again indebted to John Last whose delightful mammal studies enhance these pages.

It would help a great deal, especially now that more material is coming in, if information on particular species could be grouped together and species sorted into the order in which they appear in the Classified Notes. Map references aid transfer to the running distribution maps. It is our intention to continue to publish these in groups each year.

Notes for the 1986 report should be with the Editor as soon as possible in the New Year. Getting them off early could give a glow of satisfaction for having achieved at least one New Year resolution! Please send to: R. C. Hancy, Ardea, 124 Fakenham Road, Taverham, Norwich NR8 6QH.

Urgent queries or information can be taken by the Editor on Norwich 860042 or by John Goldsmith on Norwich 611277, ext. 287 which is in the Natural History Department at Norwich Castle Museum.



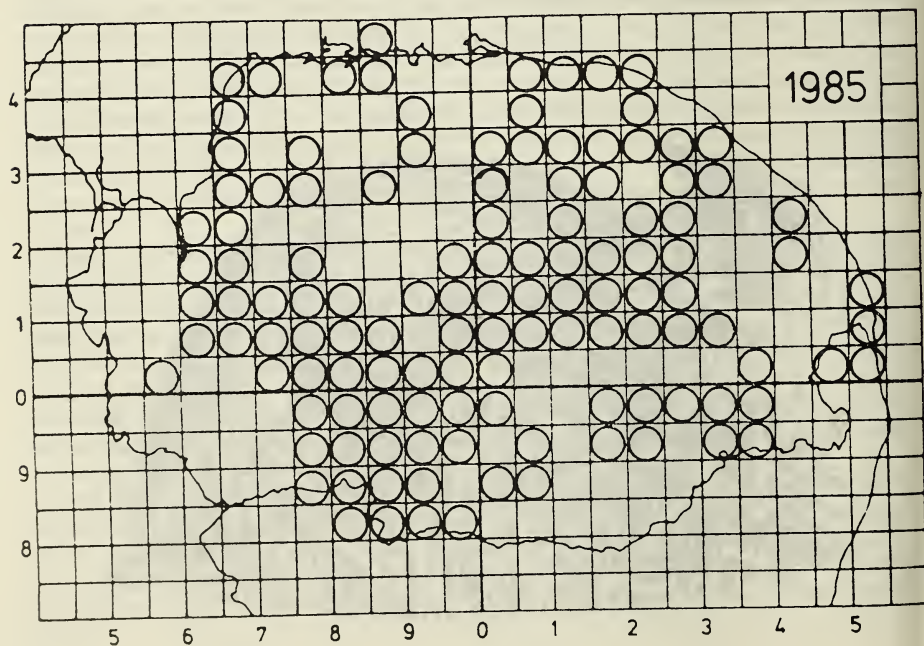
# Squirrels in Norfolk

*Jonathon C. Reynolds*

In this year's Mammal Report we can only really offer a picture of grey squirrel distribution in 1985, as so very few records of red squirrels have been received. Of course this reflects the now scant population of red squirrels remaining in the county, but there are still one or two areas known to have red squirrels for which we do not have accurate information. One of these is Thetford Forest (strange that so few of the Society's active correspondents seem to go there!). Thetford Forest is said to have Red Squirrels at very low densities in most parts. In fact, a fresh research project has now commenced there, in the hands of Mike Jordan of Queen Mary College, London. Regrettably, we have been unable to get Mike's survey data in time for inclusion in the present report, but it is good to know that research into this puzzling and frustrating squirrel question continues at Thetford.

Grey squirrel recording has been excellent this year, and represents as wide a geographical coverage as we have ever had in a single year. Inevitably some areas get missed out each year; the encouraging thing is that there are no real surprises, and I think we can assume that by now all  $5 \times 5$  km squares that have held grey squirrels in the recent past have been recorded, and furthermore that there is no further range expansion going on.

Please continue to send in squirrel records; but particularly keep note of any red squirrels you see — even road casualties.





# Classified Notes



## INSECTIVORA

First on the list and once first in the number of sightings, the Hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* has had to cede the latter title in recent years. Still plentiful, but the density of population in many parts of the county must surely be well down. Cover and food are obvious essentials to its well-being and where these abound in town and village fringes it still delights by its presence. Yet it does give cause for concern and this combined with its obvious appeal has led to the formation of its own national preservation society.

Dead hedgehogs were brought in for examination during the year where death had occurred in suspicious circumstances but no real grounds for suspicion were discovered. Four youngsters from Brooke appeared to have died from starvation, possibly having lost their mother before being properly weaned. A cautionary tale from Snettisham reminds us to examine our bonfire heaps while there is still time for occupants to escape. On August 29th a hedgehog made a hurried exit, accompanied by a Common shrew and a Bank Vole, before the holocaust began.

An unusual report told of a hedgehog trying to make off with a protesting Bantam cock and to maintain the balance a youngster was seen being carried off by a weasel. A clump of Pampas grass at Barnham Broom made an attractive hibernation site and to complete the good side of the story, G.J. reports a good year in Breckland, While J.E.G. saw a hedgehog almost every day between April 9th and December 12th.

The Mole *Talpa europaea* continues to annoy more than it delights and has even been reported making a nuisance of itself working behind a garden pond liner. Moles on hard surfaces have locomotive difficulties but can still make fair speed crossing a road. One was seen doing so at Shropham Hall and a youngster at Fulmodestone, this one half an hour after heavy rain. Another interesting observation from Snettisham tells of poisoning in pasture lane to remove moles. This gave only a temporary respite lasting from seven to ten days and then new hills would appear. Newcomers were assumed to be moving from adjoining arable and woodland. At the end of the year, poison was used in mid-November and nothing was seen for several weeks, but on December 30th new workings were again seen!

In Ditchingham, an opportunist blackbird was observed for a full quarter of an hour while it watched the mound being raised by an underground worker.

The Shrews are frequently found as dead specimens, either taken by cats and left or having died from natural causes. Examination of Barn owl pellets will usually reveal a proportion of this group, higher or lower as related to local availability. G.J.'s figures of the Common shrew *Sorex araneus* and the Pigmy shrew *Sorex minutus* taken from mainly the SW of the county are almost exactly two Common to each one Pigmy shrew. The number of contributors reporting the two species is roughly in the same proportion but with a few more including the former. It may well be that the Pigmy shrew is not identified and a few minutes with one of the many books on small mammals would help here. The Water shrew *Neomys fodiens* has distinct identification features all listed by D.R. in his report from Reepham. This is in fact an additional 5 km square to our distribution map published last year. New squares for the Water shrew are TG0520, TG1020 and TG4020. An odd coincidence in the similar line of latitude!

New squares for the Common shrew are: TF8505, TG1020, TG1520, TG2015, TG2025, TM1080 and TM2590.

New squares for the Pigmy shrew: TF5515, TF8500, TF8505, TG0505, TG2530, TL8585, TL9080 and TL9590.



## CHIROPTERA

At the time of writing we are well into National Bat Year and strenuous efforts are being made to make the general public aware of the perilous situation of our bats. Those with an interest in natural history have known for some time that all was not well and have made genuine attempts to record, to notify and to protect. In spite of this surge of interest there are still very few records. This is partly due to the extreme difficulty even experienced students may meet in finding and then identifying species and partly to the definite but unquantified reduction in numbers over most of the county. We certainly need to expand our knowledge as rapidly as possible both as individuals and in society but knowledge becomes merely academic if habitat and food supplies decline to such an extent that viable populations cannot be maintained. It does seem clear that in many areas we are well on the way to such a state of affairs so the question is, can the trend be halted or indeed reversed?

By far and away the commonest bat is the Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and the only species with a full record card. It never fails to astonish the uninitiated to see how tiny these bats really are. This does mean that they can pass through very tiny crevices in walls and roofs, which can get them out of trouble and also get them in. The failure of the domestic water supply at a house in Billingsford was eventually tracked down to a Pipistrelle that had fallen into the water tank in the loft and had eventually found its way into the down pipe and blocked it. A note to householders — the water tank should always be covered anyway!

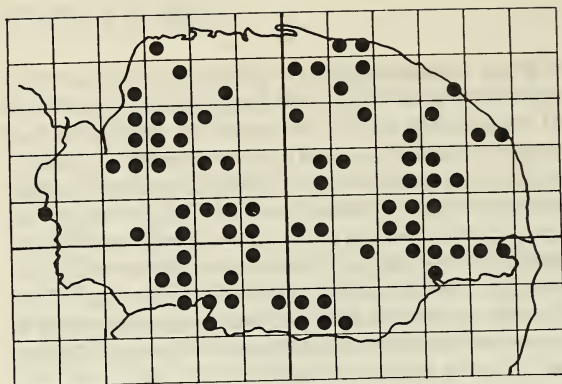
Long-eared bats *Plectotus auritus* were recorded from Eaton, where one was found dead on the footpath, Flitcham, Holme Hale, Shingham and at Thornage where on September 22nd a nearly full-grown youngster was killed by a cat. A check in west-Norfolk lime-kilns and tunnels on the Stanford Training Area in February listed this species hibernating in the tunnels.

This February survey listed the Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentoni* as the most numerous species found by a slight margin. The Outwell description of a bat collecting insect food from the surface of the water in broad daylight was put down to this species as it does hunt by scooping prey in this way. The Natterer's bat *Myotis nattereri* came next on the list in the kilns and tunnels and was also reported from East Tuddenham. All were in sound condition unlike the one found on February 17th in Drayton. It was hanging dead on an outside wall in a corner under the eaves. Not unexpectedly the weather was described as frosty. The unusual feature was that there was cement on the fur.

That spectacular bat, the Noctule *Nyctalus noctula* seems to be gathering its own group of regular observers. Quite a good thing because it does ensure regular reporting of the species concerned and colonies can be monitored much more efficiently. Reports were from Barnham Broom, Boughton, Bromehill, Bacton, Costessey, Flitcham, Hillington, Horstead/Buxton area, North Walsham, The Rosary area of Norwich, Sheringham, Shingham and Surlingham. At the last named site 50 to 70 could be seen in the air on certain evenings in late September, though not on every evening.

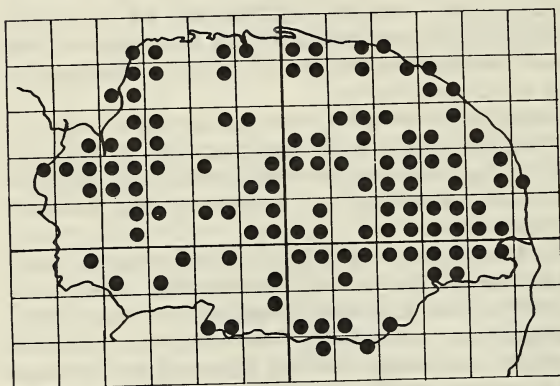
Returning to the February inspection mentioned above, the special prize was the identification of a male Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus* in one of the tunnels. This medium-sized bat has probably been under-recorded at a national level and its status is uncertain. It is some time since it has been recorded in Norfolk. The significant recognition feature is the joining together of the short black, broad ears across the forehead.





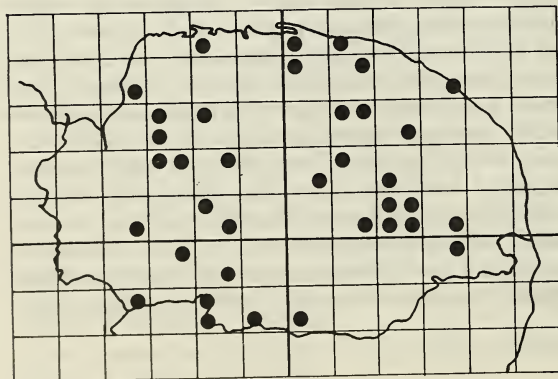
**Brown Long-eared bat  
(1975-1985)**

Quite a distinctive bat and well recorded though only common in the well wooded areas, especially around Thetford.



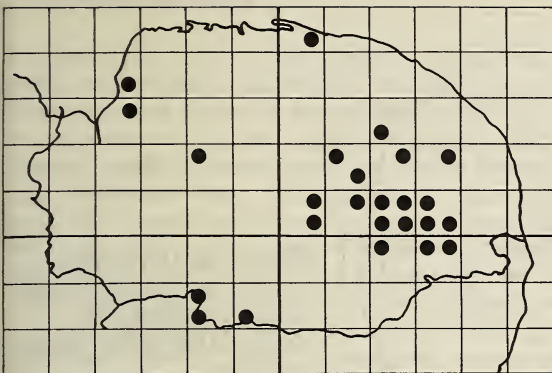
**Pipistrelle (1975-1985)**

By far and away our most common and cosmopolitan species — found virtually everywhere. This is *the* house bat and generally the one that has caused most alarm in chalet bungalows and churches.

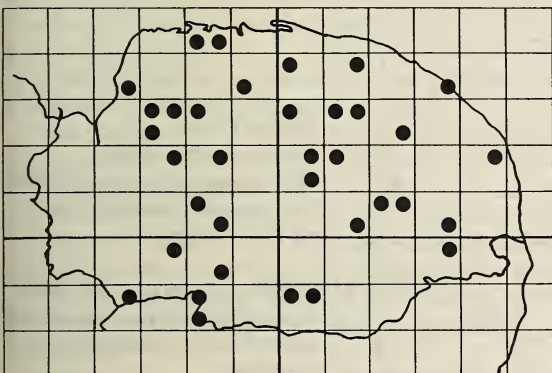


**Natterer's bat (1975-1985)**

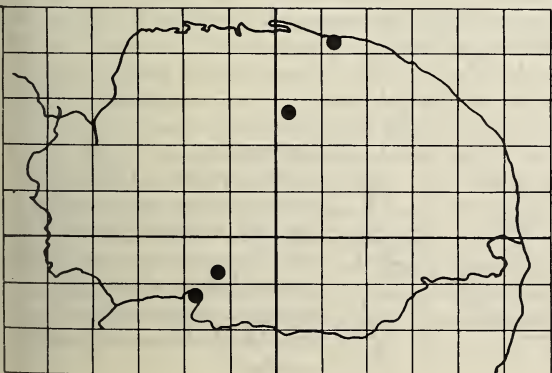
Recorded in many well scattered localities but mainly as hibernating individuals, although could be our third most numerous species.



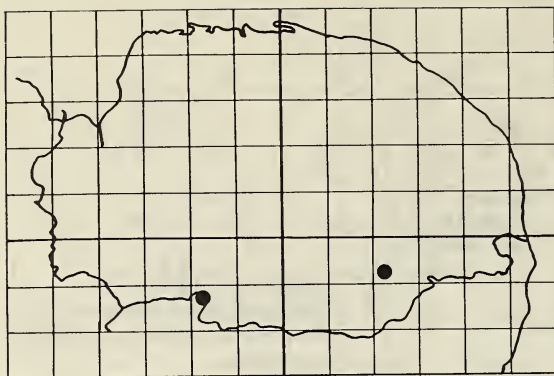
Noctule (1975-1985)  
Our largest bat living mainly in tree holes and fairly frequently recorded.



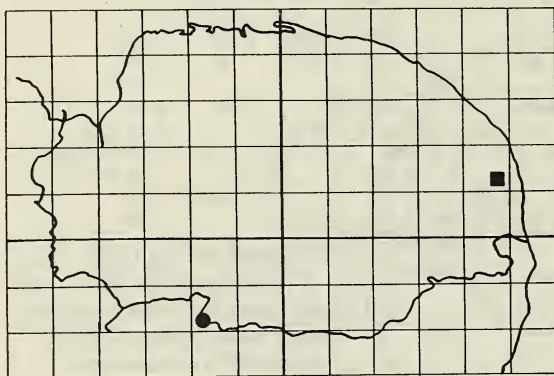
Daubenton's bat (1975-1985)  
A fairly frequent species, well scattered but often associated with watery places. Mainly recorded in hibernation.



Whiskered bat (1975-1985)  
Seemingly a genuinely rare bat in this area, and apparently becoming rarer.

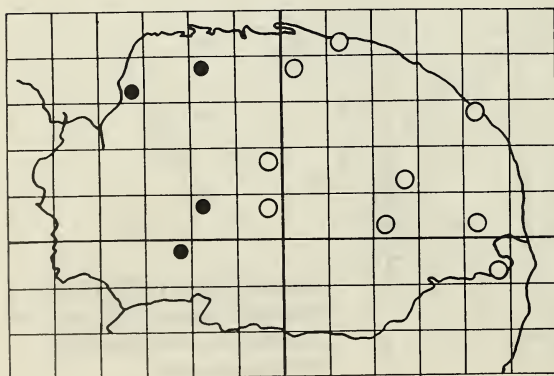


Brandt's bat (1975-1985)  
Another rare species, though former confusion with whiskered bat has not helped recording.



Leisler's bat  
(circle — 1981-1985)  
Still not actually *proved* inside the political boundary, but surely must occur.

Serotine (square — pre-1975)  
Undoubtedly a rare species but may yet be recorded in new localities.



Barbastelle  
(closed circles — 1975-1985;  
open circles — old records)  
An East Anglian speciality with more records than for the rest of Britain. Generally recorded as hibernating individuals during the coldest weather.



## LAGOMORPHA

For some years now the Brown Hare *Lepus capensis* has been at the centre of a debate on its relative distribution. The problem has been that in some parts of the county numbers have been well maintained but yet in others it has been very difficult to see hares even in open situations in spring. There are still reports of low numbers. They are scarce in Sparham and few around Buxton and Corpusty for instance but a slight increase in North West Norfolk is matched by more reported from Breckland and J.E.G. never saw so many in one year. Her figures for a three year period were: 1983 - 78, 1984 - 145 and 1985 - 214. These observations were made while travelling widely round the County. The hare in Norfolk is becoming a well documented species so we are on the way to producing good comparative data.

I.F.K. describes the section of road on the B1149 that he has frequently described as a 'hare crossing'. There is open arable land on the east side and a grazing ley on the west, well hedged but with gaps. It is there that 8 dead hares were recorded during the year. One of them on September 29th was after a very foggy night. A bird-watcher at the Titchwell reserve discovered a hare outfacing a stoat. The hare slowly advanced and just as slowly the stoat turned tail and slunk away through the grass into the water where it swam to the opposite bank. One hare found itself on the beach at the base of Hunstanton cliffs where a Fulmar appeared to be following it for some 50 metres.

A definite decline on the eastern marshes was noted when post-Christmas drives produced a very modest bag.

Two colour variants have been reported. A smokey-blue individual inhabited grazing marshes at Salthouse during the summer. The other was observed for some time through binoculars and telescope when it was running around in an arable field at Letheringsett in February. It seemed to lack the yellow-brown pigment so appeared silvery-grey, darkest on its back and shading to almost white below. It has the usual dark tips to the ears and on the tail and round the eye.

There is seasonal movement of hares and in the colder months more were seen in Thetford Forest taking advantage of the shelter and in a much smaller wood in Cossey.

A good year for Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus* in Breckland would not be called a good year for everyone concerned perhaps! In the Thetford Forest disease and control measures kept numbers to a reasonable level and these two battle against this animal's fecundity and powers of recovery, numerically speaking. Reports obviously vary from different parts of the county in accordance with the peaks and troughs of this see-saw situation. A decline in Sparham stands against an October shoot of over 300 at Guestwick, for instance. In Snettisham there was some evidence of myxomatosis during every month of the year and while rabbits were seen regularly on North Tuddenham Common they frequently appeared sickly and slow. October 20th a black rabbit was seen dead on the road at Stoke Holy Cross. It is not confirmed as a wild rabbit but it could well have been one of this interesting colour variation.

An account from Thorpe, Norwich, tells of the long spells of winter snow revealing numerous rabbit tracks coming from a bordering wood and circuiting the edges of the field. A high hedge gave additional cover. The field is now a building site, the hedge removed and the field half under buildings. However, there are still considerable numbers of droppings to be seen. No doubt next years report will include complaints of rabbit depredations in the new gardens!

## RODENTIA

Dr. Jonathan Reynolds' interpretation of the data collected on our squirrels is found elsewhere. We are fortunate to have had continuing interest and support from Dr. Reynolds whose studies in Thetford Forest ended some years ago. We are doubly blessed in that amateur naturalists and even casual observers have sent in their records of both squirrel species. This widespread support continued during the year but the card for our native Red squirrel *Sciurus vulgaris* is barely marked. The saddest word came from Dr. I. F. Keymer, whose hunt for the cause of the 'Red squirrel disease' has been followed in these reports. He tells us he found no Reds, alive or dead during 1985, the first year ever. Just before writing these notes we did hear of one squirrel being seen in Horsford, close by the Forester's house. Two others were seen in Thursford by the Forester's colleague.

Yet its not all gloom. Further studies are being carried on in Thetford Forest and individuals have been found in areas unlisted for some time and the feeling is that they are more widespread than expected even though the total numerically speaking is very low. We look forward to more detail for the next report.

Very few parts of Norfolk now appear to be without their Grey squirrels *Sciurus carolinensis*. When out for a walk in Thorpe-next-Norwich it is a surprise if our contributor doesn't see some. It was in Thorpe that the squirrels were a nuisance yet again eating strawberries in gardens. In spite of fruit cages, the Taverham greys carried on where they had left off the previous year and forced an entry to the ripening fruit. Yet not so far away where strawberries were being grown commercially there was little or no trouble. Grey squirrels can be seen travelling quite long distances over open ground but perhaps even this interloper is not quite bold enough to linger over a juicy meal in the middle of a strawberry field.

They are described as a growing menace in Sparham and specific damage is reported from Earsham where Beechs and Hornbeams suffered from bark stripping activities. Another warning to indulgent householders comes from Suffield. There they were preying on the contents of avian nest-boxes.

'Very common in Hunworth now. In spring and summer it is hardly possible to walk through the woods without seeing one.' (J.H.) The record card reveals that the first reports came from that locality as recently as 1982! A very good example of their rapid increase. The idea comes from Breckland that if we can't beat them we should, perhaps, eat them! They say that what happens in America today happens here tomorrow!

After looking through the record card for the Bank Vole *Clethrionomys glareolus* we realise how indebted we are to our domestic cats for so many small mammal records. A neighbours cat in the Editor's garden waiting patiently by the heaps of composting leaves is often a sign that Bank voles are again present. Three caught in mouse-traps in Walton certainly proved their presence and cats proved an abundance in Corpusty and Saxthorpe. In Holme-next-the Sea we are told they are usually far more common than the Short-tailed Field Vole *Microtus agrestis*. Both our small voles are liable to experience wide variations in population levels. It was in July that the Short-tailed field vole seemed to be unusually plentiful in Holme. Information again was by courtesy of the cat, but a Maggie was also seen to take one from a rough lawn and fly away with it, dangling from its beak. Two were found dead on the main coast road between Holme and Thornham just before Christmas and cats hunted them by the edge of an overgrown pond. Cat catches are also recorded from Hempnall and one was seen on the R.S.P.B. reserve at Titchwell. How often this

reserve is mentioned in reports. It suggests there is a wide variety in the fauna there. They are also reported from Great Hockham and East Wretham and from an area of rough pasture between Caston and Stow Bedon where a pair of Short-eared owls spent some six weeks quartering the ground.

There has been a good response to our request for information on the Water Vole *Arvicola terrestris*. There are in fact, more individual reports on the record card than for any year in the past decade. This is not to say there are more voles, of course. It may be a reflection on the zeal of our contributors. Having said that, the impression is that although there are large areas of Norfolk where it is not possible for these animals to re-establish themselves, where suitable habitat exists, there is no shortage of Water voles. A distribution map may well be included in the next report.

An interesting and informative story comes from Holme-next-Sea (M.C.). Clearly, good vole country! It is often seen in that village, especially on the banks of the tiny River Hun. Between September 4th and 7th one handsome specimen took advantage of a newly cut down platform of Reed-mace in front of an observation hide at the edge of a small pool. Over three long watches, it refused to eat any cut down vegetation, however fresh, but confined its attentions to very fine growing rushes which the shears had missed. But it did nibble three times at aromatic water-mint.

The Wood Mouse *Apodemus sylvaticus* would seem to be under-recorded as is usual. It may be that the term 'mouse' is used collectively for many small rodents and there is confusion between the species. Certainly we had positive identification in Sheringham. There a family group in the garden were disturbed by the cat which then brought three of them, alive, into the kitchen. Others in the lawn were seen to attract the attention of a Kestrel on November 5th. The agility of these small creatures can often cause surprise. A very good example comes from South Wootton. An enterprising mouse discovered a regular food source on a bird table some five feet above the ground and as dusk fell and the birds departed so the Wood Mouse arrived at the feast.

This year the Yellow-necked Mouse *Apodemus flavicollis* has entirely eluded us. After last years tantalising glimpses this mouse has again faded into obscurity. It is possible that we will never know the true story of this species in our county.

The House Mouse *Mus musculus* was positively identified at the following locations: Babingley, Barton Bendish, Corpusty, East Tuddenham, Flitcham, Holme Hale, Sedgeford, Snettisham, Tilney-All-Saints, Watton and Wereham. Perhaps the publication of the maps may stimulate more attempts to record this species.

The Harvest Mouse *Micromys minutus* has had much publicity at a National level for many years now but reports trickle rather than flood in. Mrs. M. A. Brewster continues her systematic searching in the Corpusty/Saxthorpe area which she is gradually extending. She contributes the bulk of the references. Other reports for the year come from Holme, Holme Hale, Snettisham, East Wretham, Diss, East and North Tuddenham.

If the cats of the county help us with the bulk of our smaller rodent records, it must be that motor vehicles perform the same service for reports on the Brown Rat *Rattus norvegicus*. Repeated road casualties in any particular area must surely imply a high population. This is an animal that is overlooked until it reaches the nuisance level so many of our contributors use such terms as 'too many'. Not only dead rats by the roadside are mentioned. Many more drivers are now making notes and the rat is frequently seen by travellers at night. An odd incident from Mattishall concerns a Starling lying on the ground giving out loud distress calls. When an attempt was made to pick it up a rat was found to be trying to pull it into a hole in the ground by its wing. A reduction in trappings around Breydon suggest a fall in numbers. Is there



a link with the excess fox population!

This report has followed the fluctuating fortunes of the Coypu *Myocaster coypus* in East Anglia through Dr. L. M. Gosling's authoritative reports. He again brings us up to date: 'The trapping campaign against coypus continued during 1985 and the population showed a further marked decline. The estimated number of adult females at large was about 300 in December 1984 and probably just under 100 in December 1985. This decline was primarily due to intense trapping by the 24 trappers employed by Coypu Control: total effort was over 183,000 trap nights. 786 coypus were killed during the year, 82% by Coypu Control trappers and the rest by landowners and research staff. The winters at the beginning and end of 1985 were colder than any others since 1962/63 and colder than average weather has undoubtedly helped the campaign, mainly by reducing the reproductive performance of females. Although the remaining coypus are few they are spread over a large area. At the western extreme of the range, two animals were caught near Ely and more recently a small colony was found in the marshland just to the north of Southend in Essex.'

## CARNIVORA

In this group it is the mixture very much as before with the fox thriving, the otter and the badger giving grave cause for concern, the mink not yet coming up to match its supposed threat and the small mustelids popping up all over the county.

The Fox *Vulpes vulpes* is widely reported with far more supporting the Sparham 'widespread' than the Buxton 'scarce'. As with the hares, it very much depends on local factors. Foxes often give away their presence by the distinctive smell, by droppings and by remains of prey. Droppings and bird remains on Beeston Common led to identification, for instance. The town fox is still not with us though one was reported from a King's Lynn industrial estate, and many people saw the one that was out and about in the Magdalen Estate, Gorleston. At Holme they are said to be more frequently seen over the dunes and the marshes. Adaptable creatures, ready to take every opportunity when it comes, the frozen surface of Hickling Broad gave access to the ducks.

Breydon Reserve has seen the odd fox for many years but recently numbers have increased dramatically and during 1985 gave cause for serious concern. During the winter tracks were seen everywhere along the tideline where foxes had been searching for corpses. On a summer afternoon four were watched as they searched along the marsh apparently for Lapwing chicks. Many other species were heavily preyed on. An interesting footnote to this report was the comment that foxes are using the big round bales of hay and straw we frequently see on our farmlands. Adaptable creature indeed!

A final fox story comes from East Tuddenham where a young family was orphaned when the vixen was probably killed by a stray black labrador. One by one the youngsters died from varying causes. Instinct is not all. These young creatures do need their course of parental training.

The forlorn search along the Glaven for the vanished colony of Otter *Lutra lutra* was featured in the press during the year. Tests on dead and dying otters had revealed high levels of organochlorines and also polychlorinated biphenyls. How these chemicals came to be in the otters in fatal concentrations is not fully reported. The story does demonstrate that the total habitat must be right if we are to preserve any threatened species. When all conditions are right, supported by correct attitudes, success must follow. Is this hope as forlorn as the search along the Glaven?

Our Badgers *Meles meles* are teetering on a knife-edge. The adult male brought in from North Norfolk as a road traffic accident could be put down as an inevitable consequence of our frenetic desire to travel farther and faster than ever before. There are so many animals killed on our roads we have come almost to accept them as part of modern life. But surely we cannot accept badgers gassed as part of the war against foxes, nor those killed in snares. One at least was released in time.

After studying the record card for these two of our larger carnivores, it is something of a relief to turn to the next pair. Stoats and weasels always feature in contributors reports and 1985 was seemingly a very good year for the first of these, the Stoat *Mustela erminea* in particular. Stoats hunting on a fresh-water marsh reserve brought on the usual displays of parent birds trying to lure the predator away from nests or chicks. These Lapwings, Coots and Moorhens are commended for their bravery. They were seen to counter-attack on occasion and stab the Stoats back with their beaks. A Coot could have some success in this but not a Dunnoek. One was singing in a gorse bush at Scarning Fen, unaware of the stoat climbing through the tangle towards it. A bird-watcher in Holkham Park was intrigued to see a stoat bounding by, following a scent trail. At ten feet away it became aware of the watcher and dived into a clump of nettles but its own curiosity got the better of it for it reappeared to stand on its hind legs to observe the observer before continuing its hunt. The stoat that was outfaced at Titchwell has already been described.

The Weasel *Mustela nivalis* is also widely reported though numbers vary in different parts of Norfolk. 'More than ever' in Breckland but 'not often seen' in North East of the county. The cat presented one in a North Tuddenham conservatory and in the same garden a Weasel was seen to hurry away pursued by a Blackbird. The most intriguing Weasel report was sent in October 28th after 5 dead Weasels had been seen in two days along a 2-mile stretch of the A47 into Norwich ending at the Norfolk Showground.

Information of the American Mink *Mustela vison* has been lacking this year. There has been more comment than hard fact. We hope to be able to present a fuller account of this species in a future edition. Two were shot on the allotments to the North of Great Yarmouth close to the Bure and within the town boundary. Several chickens had been killed but not eaten.

## CETACEA

Our efforts to inspire recorders to flood us with data on cetaceans can hardly be termed a success. With an ever-increasing number of high-quality optics trained seawards in the hands of practiced observers, the lack of reports must surely signify a dearth of these animals.

The Common Porpoise *Phocoena phocoena* was seen from Bacton, Cley, Hunstanton, Paston and Weybourne. Of these, Paston produced a comparative spring flush. 5 were seen on March 24th, 2 on April 8th, 2 on April 13th and a young, dead, specimen was on the beach in the summer. Pride of place must go to Great Yarmouth where a party of about 15, including a youngster keeping station with the parent, was seen in July over a period of days. They were gradually working towards the south.

Round the coast at Holme, a Bottle-nosed Dolphin *Tursiops truncatus* moved past at sea and on March 11th a dead 16-foot Pilot Whale *Globicephala melaena* was cast up by the tide. A couple of Common gulls enjoyed the too-massive feast but the flocks that could have made good use of it during earlier, colder, weather had lost their keenness.



## PINNIPEDIA

The Grey Seal *Halichoerus gryphus* endured its now familiar trials off the east coast during the autumn. Six dominant bulls had set up their territories on the reappearing sands of Scroby but when the cows arrived the sands had again been covered. The pups were dropped in the water and not seen again. Seven cows came to the quieter stretches of coast but all the pups were deserted. Some of the seals were marked and were later found at Morston. This is now a familiar pattern of movement. It is difficult to count the resident herd of Common Seals *Phoca vitulina* around the offshore sands when they have such difficulty in hauling out, but it is estimated that it consists of an average of 120 individuals. Four or five non-breeding grey seals are usually with them. The amount of scar tissue they display suggests they are very old. Common seals are reported from points all round the coast from Great Yarmouth to King's Lynn. Individuals ventured along inland waterways to Welney during March, to Denver Sluice in April where one fed in the turbulent waters at the base of the sluice and others were seen along the Yare. A grey seal also made an inland journey up-river to Bramerton in the spring.

## ARTIODACTYLA

There is an intensity of human activity over most of Norfolk that only a few years ago would have been thought impossible. The sound of an internal combustion engine, near or far, is an almost continuous background, even during the once quiet hours of early morning. No area is too remote for those with or without legitimate business. In the face of all this it is quite remarkable to be able to report that such a large beast as the Red Deer *Cervus elephas* is maintaining its position in our county. Small groups have been recorded from many areas covered by the term 'Wensum Forest'. The group in the Hickling area is described elsewhere. But by far the largest concentration is still in the Thetford Forest where numbers are slightly up in spite of periodic poaching expeditions. This says much for the vigilance of the Forest Rangers and the effectiveness of their cooperation with the local constabulary.

The Fallow Deer *Dama dama* in the woods of North West Norfolk are the most frequently seen of this species. Not so many can be found in Thetford Forest. There they wander in and out of the county with the advantage of a wide area of cover. The plantations of Wensum Forest are much smaller and widely scattered. The few fallow deer that stray outside are much persecuted.

The Roe deer *Capreolus capreolus* has almost a card full of references as befits our most numerous species of deer. It does seem to be able to settle down quite close to human habitation, provided the cover is there of course. It may not be noticed till numbers are quite high. The annual round-up continues in Thetford Forest and any sightings of the colour-coded collars which are applied should be noted and the details passed to the Forestry Commission Office, Santon Downham.

Where are the Chinese Water Deer *Hydropotes inermis*? Reports came from Hickling, Upton Fen and regularly from South Walsham Broad, yet there may be a question-mark over its future. Will this deer be able to maintain viable populations in isolated pockets of Broadland in the face of intensifying pressure on the habitat?

The Muntjac *Muntiacus reevesii* seems to be having no such problem! From all accounts it is thriving. One contributor noted 19, all in mixed deciduous/pine woodland. It is always intriguing when a report comes in a species turning up in a new site, remote from any previously known habitat. The Muntjac on Salthouse



heath was one such. In this case the mystery was resolved when it was discovered to be an escaped male from a caged pair.

The following summary of Deer at Hickling has been supplied by S. E. Linsell:  
Red Deer: An adult pair first appeared early in 1981 and in mid-year were seen with two young. Later, another hind joined them and all remained until the end of the year. In 1982 five were seen for the first time on April 25th remaining in the area until the end of the year. In 1983 the five were joined by another five in September (2 stags and 8 hinds). Early in November two hinds were shot. During 1984 local farmers reported two herds of 8 and 10; only the 8 stayed on the Reserve and a single young was born. In 1985 there have been regular sightings of 9 throughout the year.

Chinese Water Deer: Two groups each containing 3/4 individuals regular throughout 1985.

Roe Deer: Singles observed from time to time during 1985 at the western end of the Reserve in the vicinity of Ling's Mill.



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