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# Norfolk Bird & Mammal Report 1996

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# Norfolk Bird Report - 1996

Editorial .....	95
Review of the Year .....	98
Wetland Bird Surveys.....	103
Contributors .....	106
Systematic List .....	110
Ringling Report .....	231
The Waxwing Invasion.....	241
A Trio of Eastern Vagrants New to Norfolk.....	244
Current Breeding Status and Recent History of Rooks in Norfolk .....	248



# Norfolk Mammal Report - 1996.

Editor: MARTIN R. PERROW

Editorial .....	256
Foxley Wood Small Mammals .....	257
Norfolk Foxes .....	262
Stranded Cetaceans on the Norfolk Coast .....	264

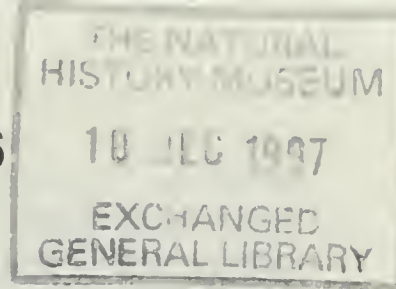
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*Front cover photograph:* Bittern (R. Jones)  
*Back cover photograph:* Red Deer (D. Mason)

# NORFOLK BIRD REPORT - 1996



## Editorial

The Council of the Norfolk & Norwich Naturalists' Society presents the annual report on the birds of Norfolk. Regular readers will be aware of the new arrangements for recording which became effective in February 1997. Close liaison has been maintained with Norfolk Bird Club and an introduction to those involved in the current Norfolk Bird Report appears below:

**Editor:** Michael J. Seago

Responsible, on behalf of the Society as publishers, for editing the Report as a whole, commissioning articles and illustrations, organising the layout, style and size of the publication and liaising with the printers.

**Editors of the Systematic List and County Recorders:** Giles Dunmore and Neil Lawton.  
Responsible for assembling teams of compilers and authors and producing the final edited List.

**Recording Card Compilers:** Dave Appleton, Neil Lawton, Mick Saunt and John Williamson.

**Systematic List Authors:** Peter Allard, Dave Appleton, Andrew Bloomfield, Andy Brown, Peter Clement, Giles Dunmore, Keith Dye, Mark Eldridge, Vernon Eve, Paul Fisher, Mick Fizzer, Phil Heath, Gary Hibberd, John Kemp, Neil Lawton, Mick Saunt, Michael Scago, John Williamson and Mike Young-Powell.

**Review of the Year:** Phil Heath and Steve Wakeham

**Recording:** All Systematic List records, including those relating to national and county rarities, should be sent on a monthly basis to Giles Dunmore at 49 The Avenues, Norwich, NR2 3QR. In the case of national rarities details (in duplicate, please) should be sent as soon possible and not left until the year-end. Observations will not normally be acknowledged but names of all contributors will be published. All records should be listed in the order of species appearing in this Report. 'To obtain as complete coverage as possible records 'phoned-in' to Birdline East Anglia have been frequently used in the compilation of the List. However, records of national and local rarities have only been included where considered and accepted by the appropriate committee. Receipt of late records causes a major problem in drafting the Systematic List *and in future any observations received after February of the following year cannot be guaranteed for inclusion in the Report.*

**Editorial Material:** Articles for consideration, the Ringing Report, artwork, photographs and transparencies should continue to be submitted to the Editor, Michael J. Seago at 33 Acacia Road, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich, NR7 0PP.

**County Records Committee:** Vernon Eve, Steve Gantlett, Phil Heath, John Kemp and Andy Stoddart with Giles Dunmore as Secretary. A total of 138 records were considered; 33 of

these were rejected, mostly as a result of insufficient detail and not owing to an incorrect identification. The Committee also reviewed the list of species needing submission of a written description (and subject to acceptance) prior to publication and decided not to make any changes to that published in the 1995 Report. The list is as follows:

Black-necked Grebe (at sea)	Short-toed Lark
Cory's Shearwater	Tawny Pipit
Great Shearwater	Flava Wagtail (Continental races except Blue-headed and Grey-headed)
Mediterranean Shearwater	Bluethroat (White-spotted only)
Storm Petrel	Savi's Warbler
Purple Heron	Aquatic Warbler
White Stork	Marsh Warbler
Green-winged Teal	Melodious Warbler
Ring-necked Duck	Dartford Warbler
Ferruginous Duck	Pallas's Warbler
Surf Scoter	Chiffchaff (Tristis race)
Spotted Crake	Woodchat Shrike
Comcrake	Raven
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Serin
Grey Phalarope (at sea)	Common Rosefinch
Sabine's Gull	Ortolan Bunting
Ring-billed Gull	Little Bunting
Ring-necked Parakeet	
Bee-eater	

Information regarding submission of descriptions was published in the 1995 Report. It should be noted that on occasions observers may be asked for further details of species not contained in the above list - if records relate to unusual dates, localities etc.

### Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to the following artists and photographers: N. Arlott, P. Beeson, J. Bhalerao, A. Bloomfield, N. Bowman, N. Borrow, R. Chittenden, C. Donner, B.W. Jarvis, P. Jones, R. Jones, C.R. Knights, I. Leach, D. Mason, M McDonnell, D. Nye, S. Patient, the late R.A. Richardson, A. Tate and G. Wright.

Acknowledgements are also due to the team of compilers of the recording cards (especially the prodigious efforts of Neil Lawton); the authors of the Systematic List; Dave Appleton (for proof-reading the draft Systematic List and for analysing/summarising the Breeding Birds Survey information received from BTO) and Susan and John Goldsmith for introducing the Report to the computer-age.

Thanks are also due to Birdline East Anglian, BTO, Cley Bird Club, Eastern Counties Newspapers (for providing the county map), English Nature, Gt. Yarmouth Bird Club, National Trust, Norfolk Bird Club, Norfolk Wildlife Trust, Rare Bird Photographic Library, RSPB, Stanford Training Area Bird Club, Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, Peter Allard (county archivist), Mrs. M.J. Dorling (marketing), Mrs. S.F. Seago and all other contributors.

### Sponsorship

We are grateful to Samia Charitable Trust for generous support.



## Front Cover Illustration

After returning from extinction as nesters, Bitterns became almost abundant in Broadland between the 1930s and the mid 1950s. In their wake came a succession of eminent photographers working mainly at Hickling. A series of books followed and the portraits showed that the birds favoured nesting in deeply flooded reedbeds with water lapping the nest ledges. One Bittern's nest built on the top of an old Coot's nest was in water so deep that the photographer had difficulty reaching the hide even clad in thigh boots. Some male Bitterns are bigamists; at Hickling up to 3 nests have been found very close to each other with only a single boomer in attendance. Recent studies confirm a single male can claim a harem of up to 5 females. Another nest originally held 3 young, but when a marshman recovered one which had wandered it promptly disgorged a leg and thigh of the youngest in the family.

Wetlands constantly change. Rush Hills, Hickling, was the one-time breeding ground of Ruffs and Reeves in collector Booth's time and where he obtained his specimens. But it became overgrown with reeds and sedge over a thirty-year period: one spring it held 3 Bitterns' nests. It had become a wader ground (and duck flight pond) by 1927. When the Broads Bittern population was at its peak fortunate observers once sighted 9 Bitterns flying high over the adjoining Heigham Corner.

Great efforts are being made to increase Norfolk's dwindling population of Bitterns. Reedbeds are being restored and extended and new ones created at a number of localities. Work includes improving dyke systems, creating areas of open water with reed fringes and raising water levels. A wide range of conservation bodies are involved: Broads Authority, English Nature, Environment Agency, Norfolk Wildlife Trust and RSPB. Funding has been awarded to this partnership by European Union's LIFE - Nature programme.

Main reasons for the Bittern's decline are thought to include the loss and deterioration of large reedbeds through lack of management and declining water quality.

Latest information indicates that during spring 1997 the nationwide Bittern total had shrunk to 11 or 12 boomers (including 3 or 4 in Norfolk) compared with 22 boomers in 1996. Most likely reason for the sudden reduction in numbers was the very cold weather at the beginning of the year.

## A New Publication: The Birds of Norfolk

A small team has begun work preparing a new county avifauna. It is over twenty years since the second edition of Michael Seago's *Birds of Norfolk* was published and it is appropriate to prepare a completely new work for publication by the turn of the century. This will coincide happily with the appearance of a new County Flora and publication of the results of the Society's Wildlife 2000 Project.

Peter Allard, Don Dorling, Michael Seago and Moss Taylor are members of the initial team. In addition many of the county's observers are being approached to compile sections of the systematic list. The response has been very encouraging.

A great deal of information is already published in the annual *Norfolk Bird Report*, but the assistance of Norfolk's birders will be needed to ensure that coverage of the county is as complete as possible. This applies particularly to less common breeding birds. Details of species needing a special effort during 1998 will feature in the Society's quarterly bulletins and Norfolk Bird Club issues.

# Review of the Year 1996

*Steve Wakeham and Phil Heath*

**January** saw pressure unusually high over eastern Europe, ensuring that winter maintained its icy grip on the county. The influx of Mealy Redpolls that marked the end of 1995 continued, with increasing numbers of Arctic Redpolls with them. Notable numbers of Slavonian and Red-necked Grebes were present off the north coast. The resident Black-winged Stilt remained at Titchwell all year, while there were up to 3 Little Egrets there during the month. Despite a brief interlude of dull, drizzly south-easterlies, the cold weather was never far away, and as pressure built eastwards across Scandinavia from the 18-20th winter resumed its grip with a vengeance. The penetrating easterly wind assisted the arrival of impressive Waxwing numbers. Flocks were found throughout the county, and provided an ever popular attraction over the next few months. The freezing weather also provided a fitting backdrop to a superb influx of Smew and Goosander. Other traditional winter birds included good numbers of Bitterns in the Broads, around 7 Rough-legged Buzzards, and exceptional numbers of Woodcock and Fieldfare, along with at least six wintering Ring Ouzels. Around 25 Mediterranean Gulls frequented the coast, along with a scattering of Glaucous and Iceland Gulls. A Serin was at Repps on 12th, while the wintering bird remained at East Runton/Cromer till late February.



*Arctic Redpoll (P. Jones)*

The Scandinavian high declined eastwards on **February** 1st and the month became rather changeable, allowing temperatures to recover to near normal. Flocks of Waxwings still dominated events, with numbers building up to peak at over 1,200 in the county mid-month, with various flocks of over 100 in King's Lynn and Norwich. Arctic Redpolls continued to be picked out among the hordes of Mealy Redpolls by diligent observers. Numbers of Rough-legged Buzzards, Mediterranean Gulls and Glaucous Gulls remained more or less unchanged. A Ferruginous Duck at Raynham Lake on 25th was the first of three records for the year. An exceptional total of 1043 White-fronted Geese were on Heigham Holmes on 18th. A week later (and 6 days after sea flooding at Cley) 30 of the 40 refugee Bearded Tits left Snipe's Marsh heading high to the south.

The winter of 1995/96 was colder than average and certainly the coldest since 1990/91. As might be expected some of the smaller and more susceptible passerines, such as Wren, Dunnock, Robin and Goldcrest, suffered as a result and showed notable population decreases. The low rainfall of 1995 and early 1996 badly affected the waterbird populations of the Breckland meres as many of these had dried out by late winter.

**March** started with a large anticyclone to the west of Britain, which transferred eastwards into Scandinavia on the 7th, bringing a return to cold easterlies across Norfolk. The now typical early spring scattering of continental Red Kites involved higher than usual numbers, presumably as a result of persistent easterlies. Many Waxwings remained throughout the month with as many as 350 still frequenting the Norwich area, and many Arctic Redpolls



were still present around the county. A somewhat elusive Black-throated Thrush at Holkham from 13th was a good find, and one of several in the country this winter, no doubt associated with the large influx of thrushes. Perhaps the same Ferruginous Duck was refound at Kettlestone Common on 16th.

It wasn't until the 23rd, when an area of low pressure moved east across southern England that milder southerly winds returned to the county: this prompting an exodus of 550 Bewick's Swans seaward from Yarmouth. The high pressure still held on to the north however, and colder northerlies resumed by the 26th, to end what was the coldest March for 10 years. Black Redstarts, held up by the northerly headwinds built up in numbers 28-31st, and a Rustie Bunting in a Sheringham garden from 27th was appreciated by many. Although the first spring migrant, a Garganey appeared on 6th, other spring migrants were in short supply.

What was to prove to be the driest April this century for most of the county was an exciting month, with much migrant activity and several rarities from the south. The first week was cold and anticyclonic with winds from the east or north-east. A Kentish Plover at Snettisham on 1st was followed by further singles at Titchwell and Cley. The year's third Ferruginous Duck was at Sennowe on 7th, while the first of three Serins for the month was on Blakeney Point on 8th. The county's fourth White-billed Diver was sadly a tideline corpse found at Winterton on 11th. On the 12th low pressure moving into western Britain saw a strengthening and bitterly cold south-easterly wind over Norfolk. It remained generally cold, with winds from the south or south-east until the 17th when a front moved east across the county bringing milder south-westerlies. A notable passage of Black Redstarts peaked mid-month.

There was a brief spell of warmer weather on the 20-21st, brought quickly to an end by thickening cloud and a little rain on the 23rd. There was a flurry of scarce migrants and rarities in this period, with an American Wigeon at Welney, Short-toed Lark at Weybourne, and Red-rumped Swallows at Cley and Holme. Rare herons included a Purple Heron at Costessey on 19th, and a long staying Little Bittern near Ken Hill from 27th.

Birds staying on into **May** from last month included the Short-toed Lark at Weybourne and the Little Bittern near Ken Hill, both of which attracted a steady stream of admirers. For the first couple of weeks of the month pressure remained high to the north of Britain, and a succession of depressions moving east through France gave east to north-easterly winds, producing several Bluethroats and a Tawny Pipit. Dartford Warblers, once a great rarity, now seem to be almost an annual spring visitor, and perhaps the same bird put in appearances at Winterton and Caister. Scarce waders included a good scattering of Temminck's Stints and a fine Red-necked Phalarope at Cley. Spoonbills appeared at many localities, often in reasonable flocks, while Little Egrets too put on a good showing around the coast, with inland sightings from Welney and Haddiscoe/Langley Marshes. An elusive Raven frequented Overy Marshes for a couple of days from 12th, while a single Waxwing in Holkham Park the next day was a straggler from the winters influx.

A further eastern vagrant in the form of a Red-throated Pipit arrived as an area of low pressure and accompanying rain moved north from France into central Britain on the 17-19th. In its wake weekend birdwatchers were rewarded with Great Reed Warbler, Red-backed Shrike, two Bluethroats, Alpine Swift and a fine Rustic Bunting. An impressive number of Manx Shearwaters passed the north coast on 26th, with a peak of 550 past Holme. An Icterine Warbler was in song at Yarmouth on 28th. An unseasonably deep area of low pressure off western Scotland on 30-31st brought very warm southerly winds to Norfolk, and perhaps accounted for a further Icterine Warbler and Short-toed Lark at Sheringham. Finally on 31st a singing male Serin was found in King's Lynn, remaining till mid July.

The southerly winds that brought May to a close no doubt brought the Woodchat Shrike found at Cley on **June** 1st. As pressure built over central Europe it became progressively hotter, culminating in thunderstorms overnight on the 7-8th. The rest of June was predominately anticyclonic, with only short interruptions to the settled weather, and the month was generally quiet. Two Little Egrets inland at Sparham Pools on 3rd were a good find. On 5th the much travelled Collared Pratincole returned to Norfolk for its third year running, appearing at Burnham Norton, Holkham and Cley. A Scarlet Rosefinch was at Weybourne on 6th with subsequent records from Cley and Blakeney. A Caspian Tern was at favoured Breydon on 9th and a Marsh Sandpiper at Hickling 10-21st.

Up to three Honey Buzzards returned to summer at Swanton Novers from 23rd, and a skulking Bluethroat at Cley on 26th remained till mid July.

**July** opened with a Woodchat Shrike at Kelling Quags from 2nd, and a Marsh Warbler trapped at Weybourne on 12th. The weather was rather unsettled at the start of the month, with a large area of high pressure centred over mid-Atlantic, and weather fronts moving quickly east towards Britain on often strong westerly winds. The high pressure transferred north-eastwards on the 14th and settled over central Britain, only slowly slipping into the near continent a week later. Waders, as usual, came to dominate events in late July. In the settled conditions that accompanied the high pressure the Collared Pratincole reappeared at Cley on 15th, and the first of an unprecedented arrival of White-rumped Sandpipers was found at Breydon on 16th. A second bird appeared on 20th, and a third and fourth on 28th and 30th. There were single Pectoral Sandpipers at Welney and Titchwell on 17th and 26th respectively. Broad-billed Sandpipers were seen at both Breydon and Cley on 24th, and Black-tailed Godwit numbers built up at various coastal localities, including over 490 at Ongar Hill and 600 at Breydon.

Breeding successes included two pairs of Mediterranean Gulls rearing a total of four young on Blakeney Point, and Avocets breeding at Welney for the first time.

Waders continued to dominate proceedings for the first couple of weeks of **August**, with a second Pectoral Sandpiper joining that at Titchwell and White-rumped Sandpipers still present at Breydon, where Black-tailed Godwit numbers peaked at 708.

An area of low pressure crossed England on the 11th, with strong north to north-easterly winds on the 13th. As the low moved away and the winds eased the first notable autumn fall occurred on the 15th, including 6 Icterine Warblers and up to 10 Red-backed Shrikes around the coast, and a Barred Warbler at Holme the next day - the first of several at this site during the autumn.

A photogenic Spotted Crake found at Titchwell on 18th remained well into September, with a second bird present for a time. An exceptional trip of 17 Dotterel near Docking on 26th was an excellent find. After a brief anticyclonic spell on 15-19th, low pressure returned to dominate for the subsequent 10 days, culminating on the 29th with an intense area of low pressure moving north-westwards into the southern North Sea. Prolonged heavy rain on the 28-29th, totalling over 4" in parts of the county, was accompanied by a gale force north-westerly wind along the coast, forcing inshore large numbers of skuas. Notably at Sheringham there were 240 Arctic and 13 Long-tailed Skuas on 29th, followed by 96 Arctic, 38 Great and 35 Long-tailed Skuas as the wind slowly eased during the 30th. Accompanying these were smaller numbers of Sooty and Mediterranean Shearwaters, Leach's Petrels, and on 30th a Sabine's Gull on the Wash Trial Bank.

**September** started with high pressure over the county. There was a wide scattering of Barred Warblers around the coast, plus a Booted Warbler at Gorleston on 3rd, and a Lesser



Grey Shrike at Burnham Overy on 5th. As the high pressure intensified north-west of Scotland on 8-9th a strengthening north to north-easterly took hold over the county, bringing further numbers of Long-tailed Skuas and several Leach's Petrels. After backing briefly on 10-11th, a further spell of strong northerlies brought 3 Sabine's Gulls, many Long-tailed Skuas, 2 Cory's Shearwaters, and record numbers of Sooty Shearwaters to the north coast.

The high pressure then slipped away across southern England and Scandinavia, bringing a spell of often strong easterlies. Large numbers of Scandinavian migrants arrived between the 18-25th, bringing with them a host of scarce and rare migrants, including exceptional numbers of Firecrests, a number of continental race Coal Tits, 8 Red-breasted Flycatchers, several Icterine and Yellow-browed Warblers, 2 Red-backed and single Great Grey Shrikes. Rarities included 1-2 Olive-backed Pipits and a Paddyfield Warbler at Wells, Little Bunting at Stiffkey and an early Dusky Warbler at Weybourne.

Perhaps the most noticeable feature of the month was the huge influx of Little Stints from mid-month, with around 800 reported from all over the county.

**October** started with rather changeable conditions, but with the winds mainly from the west or north-west. A very obliging Pectoral Sandpiper was at Kelling/Weybourne from 4th. In fresh north-westerlies on the 5th sea watchers were rewarded with many Sooty and 3 Cory's Shearwaters, several Leach's Petrels, 6 Sabine's Gulls and many Great Skuas. A White-billed Diver off Salhouse on 7th was only the third live sighting for the county. On the 10th an area of high pressure built over southern England, and as it moved into central and then eastern Europe the winds gradually backed to a strengthening south-easterly. A widespread arrival of Shorelarks around this time may have numbered as many as 80. An Isabelline Shrike at Horsey from 11th was a taste of things to come. As fronts edged eastwards into Norfolk on 14-15th thickening cloud and rain brought a further Isabelline Shrike to Holme, and the county's first Blyth's Pipit and Two-barred Greenish Warbler to Weybourne and Wells respectively.

Weather-wise the second half of the month was virtually a repeat of the first, with a changeable run of westerlies, broken by an area of high pressure crossing the south of England on the 20th. Strengthening south to south-easterly winds on the 22-24th brought an influx of Long-eared and Short-eared Owls, plus a few Yellow-browed and Pallas's Warblers. An intense depression crossed the county on the 28th, and the following strong to gale force north-westerly on the 29th brought good numbers of Pomarine Skuas along the north coast, a count of 685 Little Gulls off Sheringham, along with thousands of Redwings and Fieldfares.

**November** commenced very mild and changeable with a series of depressions bringing often strong to gale force west to south-westerlies. These doubtless had some part to play in the arrival of an obliging White-rumped Sandpiper at Salhouse, and also Norfolk's second Black-

and-White Warbler at Trowse on the 9th, a quite remarkable occurrence given Norfolk's geographic position. Maybe we should all check Long-tailed Tit flocks more often.



*Black-and-White Warbler*  
(G. Wright)

A deep area of low pressure moved east into Biscay on the 11th and a strong to gale force north-easterly set in over the county on 11-12th. These brought a second, much larger influx of Pallas's Warblers to the north and east coasts: the autumn total of at least 28 "seven striped sprites" easily eclipsing the influx of 1982. Along with these were two Dusky Warblers at Wells, Desert Wheatears at Wells and Salthouse, a scattering of Waxwings, an impressive arrival of Fieldfares, and three late Yellow-browed Warblers.

Although brief north-westerlies on the 5th produced some seabird movements, these were surpassed by reasonable numbers of Pomarine Skuas, several shearwaters and two Storm Petrels in the gales of 11-12th, with an excellent Little Auk passage on 12-13th. A Black Guillemot arrived at Brancaster on 16th, remaining till almost the year's end. An intense area of low pressure brought strong winds and rain on the 19th, rewarding sea watchers again as it moved away east on the 20th, and a further depression brought more seabirds on a strong northerly on the 26th. A Ring-billed Gull was located towards the month's end, at Breydon Water.

**December** too started mild and changeable, but pressure began to build on the 5th, with a light easterly drift giving persistent dull cold and foggy conditions. Good numbers of wildfowl began to appear, with peaks of 1202 Whooper swans at Welney and over 55,000 Pinkfeet in north-west Norfolk. Both localities also had single potentially wild Snow Geese. Up to 227 Bean Geese were in the Yare valley, with a scattering of rossicus race birds on the north coast and in Broadland.

Most birdwatchers' attention was focused on the north-west coast, with up to 30 Slavonian Grebes, 3 Little Egrets, 2 wintering Spoonbills, 40+ Shorelarks, the long staying Black Guillemot and resident Black-winged Stilt all in the Holme-Titchwell area. There were few exciting passerine records, though Waxwings continued to trickle in, and Shorelark numbers were the best for several years.

Despite a brief mild interlude, pressure continued to build to the north of Britain, and by the 20th a cold, and this time strong, easterly wind set in, bringing with it a wonderful arrival of Smew and Goosander, displaced from the continent by severe freezing conditions. The cold conditions, with winds between north-east and south-east, continued through to the New Year.

### **Norfolk Bird Club**

The NBC was established in 1992 to provide a forum for all those interested in the county's birds and their conservation and to promote improved communication and exchange of ideas amongst birdwatchers throughout the county. The club publishes six bulletins during the year, holds indoor meetings and organises bird survey work.

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#### **Annual Subscriptions:**

Individual: £8.50  
Joint: £11.00



# Wetland Bird Survey 1996

Breydon and Berney: *Peter Allard*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Little Grebe	15	11	12	12	15	15	5	12	10	12	10	1
Gt Crested Grebe	9	9	2	18	20	54	82	68	43	21	14	2
Cormorant	74	87	93	61	40	64	142	154	115	86	71	69
MuteSwan	118	133	120	75	57	57	48	55	42	43	49	62
Bewick's Swan	303	752	481	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	27	40
W-fronted Goose	60	64	33	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Greylag Goose	48	174	53	39	34	33	30	61	62	67	53	143
Canada Goose	-	31	2	5	13	40	45	78	85	85	85	75
Barnacle Goose	54	75	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	3
Brent Goose	44	285	19	5	1	-	-	-	4	12	6	23
Shelduck	206	268	311	246	411	460	291	28	61	114	137	473
Wigeon	2150	4300	2600	207	9	2	-	12	110	150	1400	6000
Gadwall	14	23	19	46	34	20	-	-	1	4	20	20
Teal	330	205	43	55	18	3	20	100	75	54	277	500
Mallard	168	70	68	44	41	82	49	66	86	114	188	117
Pintail	172	149	43	9	2	1	-	2	25	46	93	148
Garganey	-	-	-	3	4	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Shoveler	46	41	31	29	10	7	3	7	4	-	52	60
Pochard	15	22	19	4	5	1	3	4	4	2	3	4
Tufted Duck	12	12	15	12	12	8	8	10	8	4	4	3
Scaup	3	13	5	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
Goldeneye	1	15	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	6	.
Oystercatcher	54	135	174	197	131	92	208	269	66	70	88	98
Avocet	15	31	97	75	27	72	138	139	157	55	6	18
Lle Ringed Plover	-	-	-	1	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	-
Ringed Plover	56	37	95	35	457	107	44	354	292	127	107	97
Golden Plover	2100	80	2000	450	1	-	420	1450	2400	3000	4000	7550
Grey Plover	197	187	248	32	57	4	4	33	60	64	53	66
Lapwing	14000	2300	11500	138	78	200	560	300	1200	1100	10400	31000
Knot	1036	910	277	44	28	11	27	68	27	34	94	560
Sanderling	2	4	3	7	7	1	8	14	1	3	8	10
Little Stint	-	-	-	-	2	2	1	2	26	17	4	-
Temminck's Stint	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Curlew Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	2	1	12	14	76	74	1	-
Dunlin	3600	3450	2050	2410	2200	35	487	610	2050	2200	2310	3600
Ruff	-	1	-	0	1	-	6	6	6	3	6	15
Snipe	20	4	11	35	3	1	1	4	15	17	100	40
Black-t. Godwit	27	6	14	25	46	277	527	708	498	217	256	367
Bar-t. Godwit	83	116	52	14	47	3	5	12	16	17	11	14
Whimbrel	-	-	-	100	30	1	20	17	14	-	-	-
Curlew	713	779	731	591	46	139	686	767	937	766	781	617
Spotted Redshank	1	2	2	4	2	1	1	2	4	7	4	4
Redshank	606	624	705	74	40	119	417	490	680	653	720	690
Greenshank	-	-	-	9	10	1	7	9	7	3	1	-
Green Sandpiper	-	-	-	1	-	-	6	5	4	1	-	-
Wood Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	4	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Comm Sandpiper	-	-	-	3	9	-	5	18	4	1	-	-
Turnstone	10	4	4	18	38	6	10	20	13	7	6	4
Little Gull	-	-	-	-	2	5	7	6	3	-	-	-
Black Tern	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	25	2	-	-	-
Snow Bunting	10	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	80	115

# Wetland Bird Survey 1996

The Complete Wash: *Paul Fisher*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Little Grebe	62	38	19	4	1	7	33	27	24	53	47
Great Crested Grebe	17	9	7	7	63	35	16	53	48	20	6
Cormorant	58	54	123	54	70	327	218	124	162	142	206
Shag	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Grey Heron	6	1	3	5	3	10	24	26	18	8	19
Bewick's Swan	17	14	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	7
Whooper Swan	11	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26	-
Brent Goose	16944	18223	21023	19820	7220	11	8	137	10161	16436	19092
Shelduck	8790	11895	6865	6806	2259	1351	535	452	1278	6356	9694
Wigeon	502	1569	979	52	3	2	6	800	1006	3645	1697
Gadwall	39	94	68	20	9	-	3	-	2	-	21
Teal	102	586	167	105	13	3	89	723	697	1206	478
Mallard	1341	2818	670	447	170	290	518	1251	1635	1801	2636
Pintail	19	338	60	13	-	-	-	22	16	58	49
Shoveler	-	-	2	1	2	-	1	-	-	15	-
Pochard	49	34	35	8	-	-	-	1	11	39	65
Tufted Duck	24	43	26	51	54	37	31	54	36	48	46
Scaup	1	231	17	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	10
Eider	875	1273	514	1639	488	357	292	826	97	616	469
Common Scoter	-	76	6	2002	21	351	15	4	15	15	9
Goldeneye	51	100	52	43	-	-	120	-	-	36	61
Red-breasted Merganser	38	51	31	76	6	-	-	-	4	93	122
Coot	158	193	174	114	49	74	87	127	54	56	63
Oystercatcher	7705	13633	9056	8906	2967	4998	11973	14660	9782	16363	8733
Avocet	-	11	106	123	13	259	872	55	-	-	-
Ringed Plover	390	263	212	159	1066	204	874	955	213	46	57
Golden Plover	3734	1682	5359	2004	114	405	2605	5605	5100	3712	6879
Grey Plover	5622	4332	7396	7304	14712	337	9379	11459	9943	7483	8986
Lapwing	3540	2777	7178	89	24	527	537	731	2224	5963	7869
Knot	32846	29824	25060	25451	13581	5698	52075	87702	47810	72173	45015
Sanderling	327	401	172	308	1060	133	1044	2313	584	415	484
Little Stint	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	6	7	-
Curlew Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	15	14	-	-
Purple Sandpiper	-	12	4	8	2	-	-	2	-	6	5
Dunlin	25045	30898	31338	34397	34021	9418	20797	32081	35771	21939	31470
Ruff	-	-	17	7	-	2	3	6	1	4	-
Black-tailed Godwit	330	1764	346	339	103	3351	3197	5190	2386	2116	3939
Bar-tailed Godwit	10583	15627	14606	1746	704	2244	13063	6673	5257	6012	11920
Whimbrel	-	-	-	1	127	192	153	25	15	-	-
Curlew	2651	1916	3695	2102	592	7525	9831	6271	5172	1958	3220
Spotted Redshank	1	1	1	1	7	3	135	89	13	-	1
Redshank	2034	1805	1787	2979	1143	1725	2869	3642	4169	3006	2349
Greenshank	-	-	-	-	19	111	336	199	18	-	-
Common Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	3	8	65	1	5	-	-
Turnstone	334	448	249	345	781	282	325	363	282	222	359
Black-headed Gull	6693	1887	1499	2120	1808	5042	5552	7207	13975	998	366
Common Gull	2436	257	1188	194	88	267	691	137	821	281	208
Lesser Black-backed Gull	18	4	-	209	183	645	332	154	1338	4	-
Herring Gull	3205	1844	2788	2122	3043	3977	1037	2193	5147	1181	3504
Great Black-backed Gull	104	53	67	67	149	522	315	290	1076	461	465
Black Tern	-	-	-	-	2	-	4	-	-	-	-



# Wetland Bird Survey 1996

North Norfolk Coast: *Ron Harold*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Red-throat Diver	10	13	9	2	1	4	23	13	11
Little Grebe	84	37	36	45	16	44	22	35	44
Great Crested Grebe	16	13	11	9	11	24	26	19	15
Red-necked Grebe	2	-	2	-	-	1	-	4	3
Slavonian Grebe	7	8	2	10	-	-	2	8	7
Cormorant	146	118	112	115	384	513	437	158	96
Heron	12	11	17	15	33	27	34	15	15
Mute Swan	57	73	52	60	76	65	75	88	63
Bewick's Swan	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	13	-
Pink-f Goose	3232	10571	119	12	-	7	2249	26909	41564
White-f. Goose	379	473	522	-	3	7	-	24	94
Greylag Goose	1117	743	801	322	865	1804	868	491	1127
Canada Goose	131	89	86	80	497	313	228	250	71
Brent Goose	11452	14083	7741	2675	-	51	3010	9847	7779
Egyptian Goose	13	8	15	21	27	113	50	24	12
Shelduck	823	610	670	587	147	151	230	506	476
Wigeon	13361	11261	11232	220	13	3273	9322	14615	11125
Gadwall	42	35	54	124	165	113	83	106	84
Teal	1435	899	696	156	631	1327	1862	3126	2668
Mallard	1223	923	855	382	821	913	783	1159	1087
Pintail	1839	126	210	12	4	160	307	1212	830
Shoveler	155	43	42	40	145	80	118	123	97
Pochard	85	55	42	17	12	3	5	40	33
Tufted Duck	68	68	66	177	52	36	53	42	48
Scaup	2	201	517	-	-	-	-	1	-
Eider	80	367	287	177	52	36	53	42	55
Long-tailed Duck	25	41	35	-	-	-	-	22	3
Common Scoter	62	4713	5549	2625	1	45	204	641	226
Velvet Scoter	-	38	-	8	-	-	2	3	-
Goldeneye	100	182	147	8	1	1	1	45	161
Red B.Merganser	75	76	70	27	-	2	30	117	92
Coot	1016	980	785	427	294	384	371	540	453
Oystercatcher	3384	3028	3183	1892	2856	4296	4476	3260	2989
Avocet	2	-	41	345	20	36	1	-	-
Ringed Plover	126	157	203	242	950	1284	426	247	126
Golden Plover	1989	1918	652	3	322	2627	3094	2019	9415
Grey Plover	689	553	431	456	424	820	1060	741	1109
Lapwing	2156	783	2541	475	328	822	796	2244	2626
Knot	3653	5356	2010	406	163	428	10996	739	4219
Sanderling	105	281	282	385	344	867	601	352	415
Little Stint	1	-	-	-	3	58	26	-	-
Curlew S/piper	-	-	-	-	1	41	7	-	-
Dunlin	3692	2903	2476	790	1208	2020	2471	3193	4871
Ruff	40	58	34	9	109	4	1	1	97
Snipe	35	20	69	24	54	48	55	78	55
Black-t. Godwit	109	1	2	89	49	9	64	7	2
Bar-t. Godwit	1165	1347	504	185	135	862	1474	927	1737
Whimbrel	-	-	-	49	79	9	-	-	-
Curlew	641	490	592	328	972	1291	1264	902	1094
Spotted Redshank	3	5	2	31	5	9	6	2	9
Redshank	626	732	1088	442	377	1095	1061	977	1039
Greenshank	-	-	2	15	43	108	18	1	-
Turnstone	128	191	192	152	122	259	257	348	297

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## Systematic List

The order used follows the sixth edition of the Checklist of Birds of Britain & Ireland published by the BOU in 1992. The English names that are most familiar have been retained. Unless otherwise stated, all observations are of single birds and refer to 1996. The following abbreviations are used in the species accounts:

**imm** = immature

**juv** = juvenile

BO = Bird Observatory

BBRC = British Birds Rarities Committee

BBS = Breeding Birds Survey (details from BTO)

BF = Sugarbeet Factory

BOURC = British Ornithologists' Union Records Committee

BTO = British Trust for Ornithology

CBC = Common Bird Census

CP = Country Park

ESA = Environmentally Sensitive Area

GC = Golf Course

GP = Gravel Pit

NBC = Norfolk Bird Club

NBR = Norfolk Bird Report

NNR = National Nature Reserve

NR = Nature Reserve

RSPB = Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

STW = Sewage Treatment Works

TA = Training Area

WeBS = monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts

WM = Water Meadows

WWT = Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust

Where tables are used in the species accounts these refer to monthly maximum counts for main sites unless otherwise stated. A dash indicates that no count details have been received. For wildfowl and waders, the data used generally derives from the monthly WeBS counts although if higher totals are available these are used instead. The recording area of Sheringham BO lies to the north of the main coast road; it extends to the east to include part of the golf course and to the west as far as the access track to the former coastguard cottages at Weybourne. Observers' initials are given for all national and county rarities and for a few other exceptional records. Normally the initials of the finder(s) are given (where known) and if applicable initials of observers who have also submitted detailed descriptions.



# Systematic List

## Red-throated Diver

*Gavia stellata*

***Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Rare in summer.***

Large gatherings at Overstrand Jan-March peaked at 350 Feb 15th. Following a movement of 340 east at Mundesley Jan 1st another series of good counts at Sheringham in Feb when 370 east 2nd, 200 east 4th, 270 east 6th and 250 east and 100 west 11th. Recorded to June 2nd when 1 east Sheringham. Inland records during this period: Rollesby Broad Jan 21st, River Ouse, King's Lynn Jan 28th-29th (oiled), Magdalen Bridge Feb 2nd (injured and taken into care but subsequently destroyed), River Great Ouse Feb 13th, Rockland Broad March 18th-20th, St German's March 30th (oiled) and 1 in summer plumage Stowbridge Relief Channel April 1st (oiled).

A summer-plumaged adult flew south at Eccles/Sea Palling July 4th, there was one further July record east Sheringham 20th and a single August record of 2 east Sheringham on 30th. Numbers gradually increased through Sept and into Oct but the best movements were all at Sheringham in the final two months of the year: in Nov 130 east 20th, 190 east and 40 west 26th and 150 east 30th and in Dec 220 east 26th and 480 east and 70 west 29th. The only noteworthy gathering elsewhere was 140 Cromer Dec 7th and only a single inland record during the second half of the year, Cockshoot/Ranworth Broad Dec 15th.

## Black-throated Diver

*Gavia arctica*

***Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. Exceptional in summer.***

A good showing in the first half of the year. Monthly totals of individuals at coastal sites as follows: Jan 10, Feb 9, March 2 and April 3. Latest Holme April 22nd. Worryingly, several casualties were noted, 1 was found dead on the beach at Titchwell Jan 16th, 1 Thompson Water Feb 24th-27th (not included in totals above) was slightly oiled and found dead on the last date and a similar story from Kelling WM where 1 was found lightly oiled March 8th and lingered to 11th on which date it too was found dead.

An early returning bird, still retaining summer plumage Cley Sept 8th. Monthly totals of individuals at coastal sites to the year's end as follows: Sept 6, Oct 20, Nov 9 and Dec 5. Scolt Head appears to be the premier site for this species currently, up to 5 (Oct 25th) being noted during this period.

Apart from the unfortunate individual at Thompson Water in Feb, there was only one other inland record in the year, a well-watched bird at Norwich Waterworks Dec 31st which stayed to brighten the New Year.

## Great Northern Diver

*Gavia immer*

***Winter visitor and passage migrant in small numbers. Exceptional in summer.***

All records from the coast, the majority in the west between Hunstanton and Sheringham with occasional sightings east to Horsey Gap. 9 individuals recorded in Jan then 7 Feb and 3 March. Up to 5 were present daily at Holme in April and 4 seen Titchwell 23rd probably from this source; a total of 10 individuals noted in the month. Records from Holme continued into May, these birds no doubt accounting for sightings at Titchwell. Further May records were 3 Burnham Overy and Holkham Bay 12th, 1 in summer plumage Happisburgh 26th and 1 six miles NE of Brancaster 28th.



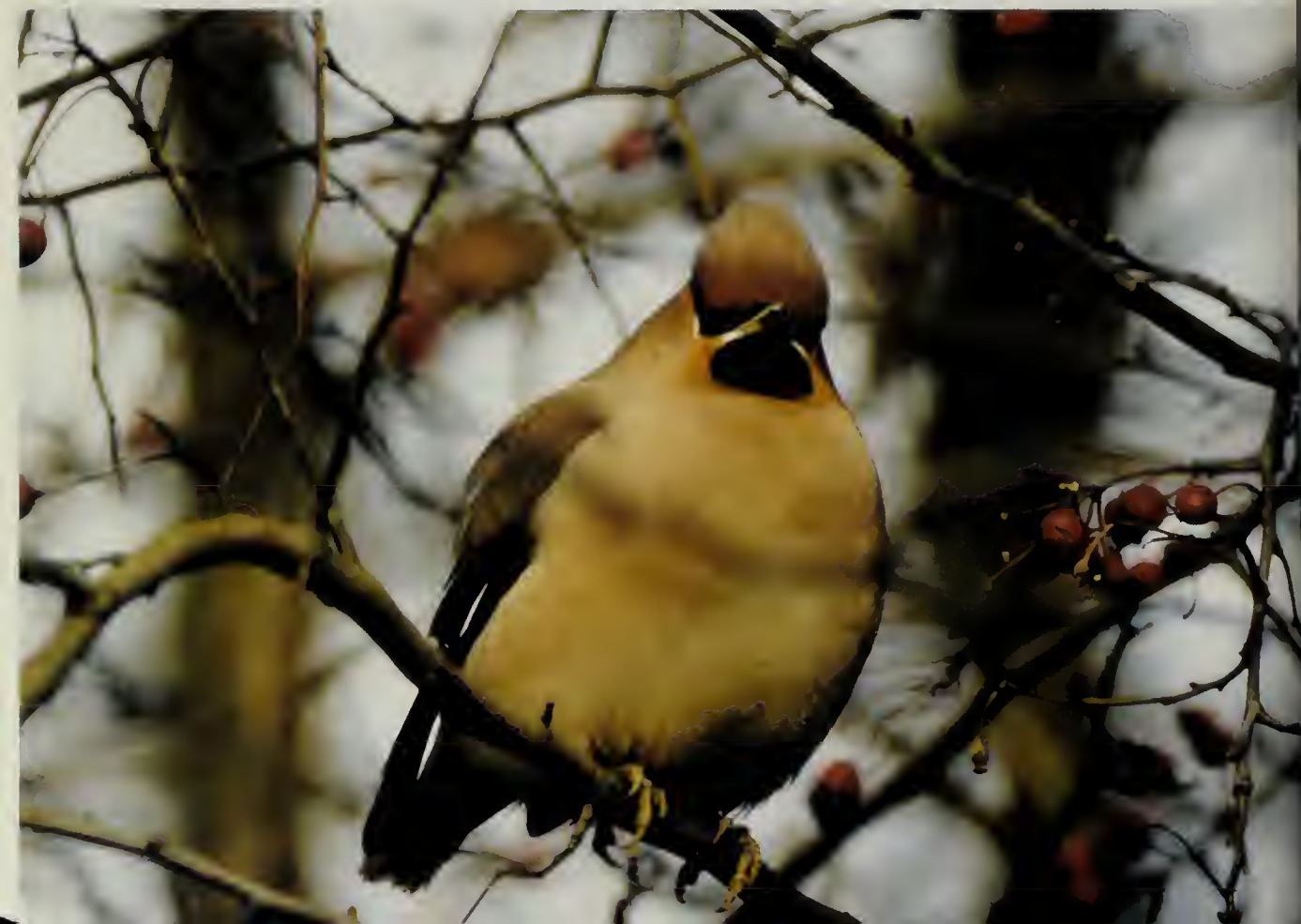
Among the internationally important numbers of Whooper Swans wintering at Welney were Finnish-marked birds. Their arrival perhaps due to severe weather on the Continent. The majority originate from Iceland (*C. R. Knights*).







Groups of Waxwings were on show from early December 1995 until late April. A total of well over 1200 arrived in the county. The spectacular large flocks became highly mobile constantly seeking supplies of berries (*B. W. Jarvis*). Facing page A. Bloomfield.









Upper: White-fronted Geese arriving at Welney; up to 120 wintered at the Wildfowl Refuge (*C. R. Knights*). Lower: White-fronts at Holkham National Nature Reserve (*A. Bloomfield*).





First returning bird west Beeston Regis Sept 23rd; no further records in the month but good numbers thereafter. 12 individuals were recorded in Oct including 4 off Scolt Head 25th and 2 there on several dates; 10 were recorded in Nov and then 4 in Dec. none after 20th.

**White-billed Diver**

*Gavia adamsii*

*Vagrant from Arctic Russia eastwards.*

One was discovered as a tideline corpse Winterton April 11th (SAW). Fortunately another was found in the autumn at Salthouse/Cley, very much alive, Oct 7th-8th (TRD et al). These become only the fourth and fifth Norfolk records, the three previous records have been all nearby at Blakeney Point and Cley in 1985 and 1986.



*Black-throated Diver left and White billed Diver (G. Wright)*

**Little Grebe**

*Tachybaptus ruficollis*

*Resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.*

Breeding records (number of pairs in brackets): Ken Hill Estate (6), Holme (3), Titchwell (2), Brancaster Marsh (1), Holkham NNR (31), Holkham Park Lake (5), Kelling Water Meadows (1), Sheringham BO (1), Breydon/Berney RSPB (20), Hickling (1), Halvergate Marshes (1), Strumpshaw (1-2), Surlingham Church Marsh (1), Whitlingham Lane CP (1), Pensthorpe (2), Baconsthorpe Castle (1), Corpusty Lime Kiln (1), Sparham/Lyng GP (1), Raynham Lake (2), Tattersett (1), Bawsey CP (3), Nogdam End (1) and Thompson Common (1). Breeding success at Holkham NNR was described as reasonable.

Winter totals (best counts of individuals) at selected sites as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Snettisham	74	-	12	-	22	66	44	50
Holme	-	8	5	4	5	6	4	2
Holkham NNR	9	7	8	-	5	7	7	-
Holkham Park Lake	-	-	-	-	29	7	1	-
Wells Harbour	17	6	5	-	-	-	7	-
Welney	-	2	-	-	1-2	4	-	1

Irregular counts from a variety of other sites reaching double figures as follows: 14 Heacham South Beach Jan 7th, 12+ Burnham Overy Hbr Jan 25th, 14 Hickling Broad Jan 19th, 12 Colney GP Jan 21st, 16 Heigham Sound Feb 17th, 13 Fowlmere March 30th, 12 Kelling Water Meadows April 10th (site record), 23 Fowlmere April, 10+ Titchwell Aug 27th, 10 Southacre GP Aug 24th, 17 Hickling Broad Oct 22nd and 23 Heigham Sound/Duck Broad Dec 13th. Though wintering numbers lower than in recent years, importance of Snettisham for this species is once more clearly evident.



**Great Crested Grebe***Podiceps cristatus****Resident breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor.***

Breeding records (number of pairs in brackets): Holkham Park Lake (1), Selbrigg Pond (1), Hickling Broad (3), Wayford Bridge (1), Sutton (1), Cockshoot Broad (1), Barton Broad (10+), Filby Broad (5-6), Ormesby Little Broad (3), River Bure, Horning Ferry (5), Malthouse Broad (2), Strumpshaw, including adjacent river (7), Surlingham Church Marsh (2), River Wensum Norwich (5), Colney GP (2), Lenwade GP (1), Sparham/Lyng GP (6), Pensthorpe (2), Fustyweed GP (1), Sennowe Park (2), Broome GP (3), Pentney GP (1), Thompson Water (3), Thetford Nunnery Lakes (2), Fordham (2) and Welney WWT (4).

Winter totals (best counts of individuals) at selected coastal sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Snettisham</b>	1	-	2	-	66	16	8	6
<b>Hunstanton</b>	5	-	-	6	6	-	-	-
<b>Holme</b>	8	-	3	5	8	16	6	13
<b>Titchwell</b>	12	3	-	7	14	30+	4	16
<b>Scolt Head</b>	-	8	-	-	3	11	6	23
<b>Holkham Bay</b>	7	-	-	-	-	10	5	-

Best winter counts (*all those above 20*) from inland sites: 30 King's Lynn BF-Denver Sluice Feb 14th, 34 Ouse Relief Channel, Saddlebow-Denver March 2nd, 36 Magdalen Relief Channel March 23rd, 21 Strumpshaw March.

There were only three coastal movements where counts reached double figures: 10 west Holme Sept 9th, 11 west Holme Oct 4th and 11 west Sheringham Nov 7th.

**Red-necked Grebe***Podiceps grisegena****Passage migrant and winter visitor.***

As usual coastal sites from the Wash to Sheringham held the majority of birds Jan-April. The total number of individuals as follows: Jan 31, Feb 15, March 6 and April 3 (latest Holme 16th) and included notable concentrations of 7 Titchwell Jan 7th and Holme 14th. Additionally there were records from Yarmouth, River Bure Jan 1st-14th and on the sea there Feb 23rd. One notable coastal movement of 7 west plus 1 east Sheringham Feb 21st.

Good numbers recorded inland during this period at Holkham Park Lake Jan 7th, River Bure, Salhouse Jan 14th, Hickling Broad Jan 19th-20th, Tottenhill GP Feb 2nd-3rd and 25th-March 3rd, River Ouse, Vinegar Middle Feb 9th, Filby Broad Feb 18th, Hempstead Mill Feb 21st-23rd, 2 Hickling Feb 21st, Horsey Feb 24th, Welney Feb 25th and Ormesby Little Broad/Rollesby Broad Feb 29th and from March 6th with 2 there 27th-April 8th.

The first autumn record was 1 at sea Titchwell Aug 26th and the monthly totals at coastal sites Aug-Dec were as follows: Aug 8, Sept 16, Oct 31, Nov 12 and Dec 6. All records Holme-Sheringham except for singles Overstrand Sept 7th, Winterton Oct 14th, Horsey Oct 26th and 1 south Eccles Dec 22nd.

Inland records: Horsey Mere Dec 1st then 2 there 21st 1 remaining to 22nd, Martham Ferry Dec 16th and Lound Waterworks Dec 17th.

## Slavonian Grebe

*Podiceps auritus*

*Winter visitor and passage migrant, mainly during autumn.*

The monthly totals at coastal sites in the first winter/spring were Jan 42, Feb 27, March 7 and April 16. As usual the majority of records and the most impressive gatherings were in the west of the county, the best count being a splendid 21 Titchwell Jan 13th. There were three May records, Burnham Norton 1st-12th (attaining summer plumage by the latter date), Sheringham 2nd and 2 Titchwell 12th.

An exceptional number inland during this period: Hickling Broad Jan 7th-24th, Feb 10th-16th and April 3rd, Denver Sluice Feb 1st, Strumpshaw Fen (dead) Feb 5th, River Ouse, Vinegar Middle Feb 10th and 22nd, Salhouse Broad Feb 10th-March 5th, 2 River Bure, Yarmouth Feb 11th one remaining on 12th and one March 3rd-13th, 2 Horsey Mere Feb 11th-29th with 3 there March 2nd-20th, Wroxham Broad Feb 13th-15th and March 26th-28th, East Winch Feb 19th, Rollesby Broad/Ormesby Little Broad Feb 24th and March 10th, Burgh Castle Feb 27th, Barton Broad March 15th and Cockshoot Broad (partial summer plumage) April 21st.

Four records Aug and Sept: north Sea Palling Aug 14th, a summer plumaged bird Holme Aug 15th and then singles Titchwell Sept 11th and Burnham Overy 22nd. The monthly totals at coastal sites Oct-Dec as follows: Oct 12, Nov 29 and Dec 32. In contrast to the plethora of inland records in the first half of the year, the second half of 1996 produced only one and that not very far inland: River Bure, Yarmouth Dec 29th-30th.

## Black-necked Grebe

*Podiceps nigricollis*

*Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.*

Three records in the first half of the year, Tottenhill GP Jan 31st-Feb 1st (PJ), dead on tideline Heacham March 3rd (NAC) and Holme grazing marshes April 28th-May 19th (GFH NML), the first record away from the sea at this site. One in autumn, Hickling Broad Oct 6th (INS) and a final record at Ormesby Little Broad Dec 25th (JO).

## Fulmar

*Fulmarus glacialis*

*Breeder, some remain all year. Regular coasting and storm movements.*

Hunstanton breeding colony fledged 103 young from 120 pairs, an increase on last year although the number of pairs were down. Last young left Sept 22nd and first birds back in residence Oct 26th. Elsewhere prospecting noted at Happisburgh (9 birds) and Scratby (5 birds) but no proof of breeding. Between Weybourne and Sheringham only 4 young fledged and birds absent from Sept 23rd until Nov 2nd.

Most impressive movements 1800 west and 400 east Holme, 3050 Cley and 2100 west Sheringham in strong NW winds Sept 13th, with a further 800 storm driven birds east at Sheringham Dec 22nd.

Blue phase birds at Sheringham as follows: Feb 13th (2), Sept 13th and 22nd, Nov 12th (14 east), Nov 20th (3), Nov 26th (5) and Dec 21st. Elsewhere: Weybourne Feb 13th, Hunstanton/Holme 3 Nov 12th and Cley Nov 26th. An albino past Cley Sept 8th.

Inland: Breydon Water Feb 21st, June 21st, Aug 17th and 31st; Welney picked up exhausted May 16th; Swanton Novers June 2nd; R. Ouse, King's Lynn Jun 12th.

**Cory's Shearwater***Calonectris diomedea*

*Vagrant from the Mediterranean/North Atlantic. Almost annual in autumn.*

Another good showing of this much sought after species with an unprecedented 3 together: Titchwell Aug 10th (JAl KW); Sheringham Sept 12th (DPA DJH JO et al) and 13th (JRW et al); Walcott Sept 22nd (MF); Mundesley 3 Oct 5th (RCob). Details of another 4 birds remain unsubmitted.

**Sooty Shearwater***Puffinus griseus*

*Autumn passage migrant, occasionally in large numbers during northerly gales. Rare at other times.*

Following a single off Brancaster July 24th, small numbers then recorded almost daily from Aug 28th until Sept 13th when considerable numbers all round the coast with maximum counts of 65 Holme, 123 Cley, 125 Sheringham, 18 Mundesley (1000-1100), 55 Eccles and 67 Sea Palling. Birds were moving north along the east coast and west along the north coast. Numbers then dwindled until a second peak on Oct 5th when 53 passed Sheringham with the last 4 seen at Sheringham Nov 23rd.

**Manx Shearwater***Puffinus puffinus*

*Passage migrant with majority during autumn storms.*

Singles at Holme April 12th, Walcott May 2nd and Sheringham May 26th. The next day (May 27th) an unprecedented spring passage with 45 west Terrington, 50 north Hunstanton and 550 east Holme (most birds passing 1400-1730 hours including one group of 81).

More traditional summer/autumn records commenced June 18th with significant numbers offshore again during the inclement weather of July 24th when 220 east and 50 west Holme and 150 east and 15 west Sheringham. At Welney one swimming on main lagoon July 27th/28th was found dead Aug 1st (JBK).

The only other autumn count of note occurred Sept 13th when 35 west Holme and 36 (31 east) Sheringham. In Nov stragglers at Sheringham on 12th and 20th (2).

**Mediterranean Shearwater***Puffinus yelkouan*

*Annual in very small numbers, mainly clearing early autumn.*

An average showing with some later records than usual. Cley Aug 16th (GHE), Oct 6th (IGJ) and Nov 10th and 11th (MAG RGM); Weybourne Nov 11th (MPT); Sheringham Aug 30th (MJ&DS JRW), Sept 10th (DHR), Oct 6th, Nov 11th and 12th (DPA et al); Mundesley 2 Sept 13th (MF); Happisburgh Nov 26th (JDG); Winterton Aug 13th (CJS).

**Storm Petrel***Hydrobates pelagicus*

*Almost annual late autumn visitor, often in stormy weather.*

At Sheringham Nov 5th (DPA JRW et al) and 2 Nov 13th (KBS SCV). This waif of the oceans remains much sought after by many county listers.

**Leach's Petrel***Oceanodroma leucorhoa*

*Gale blown visitor mainly in autumn.*

Another good autumn for this ocean wanderer with the following records: Hunstanton Nov 12th; Holme Sept 8th and Oct 5th (2); Titchwell Sept 4th; Brancaster Sept 8th and 9th; Cley



Sept 8th (2), 9th and 13th, Oct 5th (5) and Nov 12th (2); Sheringham Aug 29th. Sept 9th and 13th (3), Oct 29th and Nov 5th and 20th (2); Cromer Aug 30th; Horsey Oct 10th.

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

*Passage migrant, most abundant during autumn gales.*

Once again recorded every month, the largest winter count from Sheringham with 300 east Jan 22nd; no count between Feb and April exceeded 60.

A large scale spring movement of 350 east at Holme May 27th coincided with large numbers of other seabirds.

In autumn peak monthly visits as follows: 195 Sheringham July 24th, 450 east and 150 west Sheringham Aug 28th, 1200 west and 400 east Holme Sept 13th, 760 Sea Palling Oct 29th and 300 east Holme Nov 12th.

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

*Increasing winter visitor and passage migrant. Has bred.*

Peak monthly counts from roost sites.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Holkham	82	50	45	52	-	-	-	-	370	330	90	45
Lake												
Ranworth	215	278	134	55	7	25	22	29	71	181	231	260
Fritton	-	-	-	-	-	-	222	-	-	-	-	-
Lake												
Snettisham	-	-	-	28	40	70	110	-	23	31	-	20
Welney	254	161	196	201	20	17	32	-	118	130	-131	

Birds showing characteristics of the continental race sinensis continue to increase with one count of 22 at Ranworth Feb 18th

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

*Mainly autumn and winter visitor, occasionally wrecked inland.*

One at Hunstanton Jan 1st was the only record for the month. Apart from 6 south at Yarmouth Feb 23rd the majority of the month's records came from the NW of the county including 4 at Hunstanton on 4th. During the period, inland records for Watlington 1st (2); Denver Sluice 4th (7); Welney 4th-25th; Magdalen River Channel 6th and 21st (2); Stokesby Ferry 16th.

During spring the only records received were of singles at Holme April 3rd, Stanford Churchyard April 4th and Titchwell May 16th.

Autumn passage commenced Sheringham July 24th and concerned mainly single birds apart from 4 at Holme Sept 10th.

During the second winter period a scattering of singles reported from around the county's coastline; in Dec inland Welney 12th and Martham Broad 22nd.

## Bittern

*Botaurus stellaris*

**Rare resident breeder. Also winter visitor in very small numbers.**

The good numbers noted in the second winter period in 1995 continued to swell during Jan-April to produce the largest arrival of displaced continental birds for many years. Virtually every reedbed in Broadland, however small, seemed to hold at least one Bittern, this was mirrored in the coastal reedbeds between Weybourne and Snettisham. Breckland records were received from Nunnery Lakes Thetford and both Thompson and Stanford Waters; other inland birds were seen at Whitlingham Lane GP, Blickling Lake and Burnham Thorpe. On the coast away from reedbeds, an imm male, freshly dead, was retrieved from the tideline at Sheringham Jan 1st when one was at Bure Park, Yarmouth, and another was picked-up injured at Yarmouth, being cared for, ringed and released at Holme Jan 5th. Another corpse, long dead, Bush's Marsh, How Hill, April 30th. A much publicised imm male, found starving in a pig-sty in Cornwall, was transported to Strumpshaw Fen where it was radio-tagged and released, remaining to April 15th when it was seen circling high over the reedbed at dusk, presumably departing that night as it was not seen or tracked subsequently. Three other Bitterns used the same departure pattern from Strumpshaw April 7th. Another was seen, caught in car headlights, feeding in arable fields in full darkness at Burnham Norton Jan 13th.



*Bittern (P. Jones)*

During this first winter period, the largest concentration was at Hickling, where experienced observers considered up to 10 were present, with 2-4 Horsey, at least 2 Martham and another Heigham Sounds. Elsewhere, multiple records were received from Cley (3), Crome's Broad (2), Filby Broad (2), Holme (2), Ormesby Little Broad (2),

Rollsby Broad (3) and Strumpshaw (4). Estimating numbers is difficult as there is sure to be some duplication, but up to 50 may have been present in the county at this time.

Those reserves working hard to improve Bittern habitat must have had high hopes of success this season with so many continental visitors exploring our reedbeds. However, the breeding situation remains ever depressing. Booming was noted at just 6 sites, at one of these on one date only. Three pairs are known to have bred, each rearing one young. At least 2 boomers were thought to have not been paired. A further site held one bird during the breeding season, but no booming heard here.

There must be food for thought in how the dwindling British population will regenerate itself into the growing number of planned, new and improved reedbed complexes if continental visitors, as now seems possible, will not stay to breed.

Autumn records, away from known breeding territories, from Thornham and Titchwell Aug and Holme and Titchwell Sept. One flew in from the sea at Titchwell Oct 25th,

landed on Thornham Marsh and promptly flew out to sea again, only to return later to Holme, where it joined another present there at the time.

A return to normal, or possibly lower than normal, numbers in the second winter period, maximum 3 Hickling and 2 Strumpshaw Dec, with probably less than a dozen present in total if records received give a clear indication.

### **Little Bittern**

*Ixobrychus minutus*

#### ***Vagrant from the Continent.***

A female was typically elusive throughout its stay on a small reed-fringed pool on Ken Hill grazing marsh, Snettisham, April 27th-May 18th (IB, SSm et al), often skulking in adjacent bushes.

### **Night Heron**

*Nycticorax nycticorax*

#### ***Vagrant from the Continent. Free-flying colonies at Great Witchingham and Earsham cause confusion.***

An adult at Thetford June 18th (AMW). The possibility of an escape cannot be ruled out.

### **Cattle Egret**

*Bubulcus ibis*

#### ***Vagrant from southern Europe.***

1995 correction: the long-staying bird in the Potter Heigham area last seen Dec 29th at least (PAM).

### **Little Egret**

*Egretta garzetta*

#### ***Increasing annual visitor now recorded most months; a few over-winter.***

Up to 2 remained from the previous year in the Titchwell area, with 3 there Jan 19th-21st. These birds were never easy to locate, feeding in deep saltmarsh creeks during the day and also on moonlit nights. Other Jan-March records, presumed to relate to wanderers from the Titchwell area: Stiffkey Jan 10th-14th and 21st, Brancaster Harbour Jan 15th and Feb 22nd, Cley Feb 16th. At least one remained at Titchwell to the end of May.

From April onwards, a number of records related to new arrivals: Weybourne and Cley April 7th, Titchwell April 13th-15th, Stiffkey April 14th, Thornham April 16th, Holkham April 20th, 2 Welney May 13th, Stiffkey May 14th, Cley/Salthouse May 14th-16th, 2 Haddiscoe/Langley Marshes May 18th, Cley May 19th, west at Holkham May 22nd, Thornham May 23rd, 3 west at Sheringham BO May 26th, singles Kelling, Breydon and west at Cley May 27th when 3 west at Blakeney Freshes and 4 Burnham Norton, to 28th, with 5 there 29th when 3 east at Salthouse.

Fewer records from June onwards: 2 Burnham Norton June 1st, west at Weybourne June 2nd, 2 Sparham pools June 3rd, Berney Marshes June 4th, Terrington Marsh June 16th, Breydon/Burgh Castle July 19th-Aug 13th, Snettisham July 20th, Terrington Marsh Aug 30th-31st, Sept 7th-8th and 12th, Holme Sept 4th, Ongar Hill Sept 5th, Stiffkey Nov 23rd and 25th, Dec 1st, 17th and 20th. Regular records of 1-3 from Holme, Thornham and Brancaster Oct-Dec.

Possibly all records from the north-west of the county relate to one or more wandering birds from Titchwell where singles June 3rd and 14th, July 11th-12th, then 1-4 to end of July, 2-3 during Aug with 5 Aug 24th and 4 Aug 26th, 5 again Sept 4th and 17th-18th



and daily through Oct. Max 4 roosted on Titchwell freshmarsh Nov 14th, then 1-2 to month end. Birds no longer roosting on reserve in Dec but 1-2 noted throughout month.

### **Grey Heron**

*Ardea cinerea*

#### ***Resident and passage migrant/winter visitor.***

Largest concentrations during first winter period were 10 Holkham NNR and 14 Narford Lake Jan and 11 Attlebridge and 13 West Acre Feb. Cold weather casualties during this period at Sutton Broad, Yarmouth and Alderfen Broad.

Light spring passage at Sheringham where 12 migrants March-May, max 4 west Apr 1st. Additionally 4 east at Yarmouth March 23rd and 5 south at Winterton April 8th.

All breeding details received: Barton Broad (10 nests), Buckenham/Strumpshaw (5), Burgh Common (2), Cockshoot (1), Colney Wood (9), Earsham (8), Feltwell (Blackdyke) (4), Gt. Witchingham (54), Hilgay (35), Holkham NNR (8), Islington (53), Narford (5), North Elmham (7), Old Hunstanton (3), Quidenham (7), Ranworth Broad (2), Snettisham (9), Sturston Carr (9), Surlingham Broad (2), Upton (2), Wheatfen (5) and Wimbotsham (7).

A sizeable drop in nests at Islington, with other smaller heronries also indicating a possible decline, though figures not received for all those counted in 1995. The current national trend is for a slight decline in numbers, though this has not been evident in Norfolk until now. Observers are requested to maintain coverage of heronries to enable monitoring of the situation.

Reports of melanistic birds from Vinegar Middle May 8th and a juv Lyng-Easthaugh GP June 2nd.

Autumn exodus, westwards unless indicated: Holme 2 July 5th, 4 July 20th, 8 July 22nd, 6 Aug 4th, 5 Oct 29th; Scolt Head 2 Oct 9th and 3 Oct 23rd; Sheringham 1-2 on 8 dates in July with monthly totals of 12 July and 6 Aug, max 3 Aug 6th. Singles in from the sea at Horsey Aug 9th, east there Oct 19th and over the sea Oct 26th.

Largest second winter period concentrations again at Narford Lake where 12 Nov and 18 Dec.

### **Purple Heron**

*Ardea purpurea*

#### ***Almost annual spring and autumn vagrant from the Continent.***

A sub-adult flew low over the Tud valley, over Costessey GC and up the Wensum valley April 19th (JRW).

### **White Stork**

*Ciconia ciconia*

#### ***Vagrant from the Continent appearing most years, status clouded by free-flying collection birds.***

A large number of spring and autumn records, mainly from the north and east of the county, apparently all relating to 2 free-flying escapes from Thrigby Wildlife Park.

The only record which is possibly divorced from the above confusion was at Welney May 14th (JBK), where the observer noted a missing primary on a bird in flight, a feature not noted by any of the multitude of observers who saw the known escaped birds.



*Spoonbills (C. Donner)*

## Spoonbill

*Platalea leucorodia*

Scarce non-breeding summer visitor and passage migrant. Rare in winter.

Spring overshoots appear to be increasing in numbers in recent years. The following data represents the largest spring arrival in recent memory, rekindling hopes that breeding may again take place in the county.

First migrants appeared April 16th when one flew up the River Ouse at King's Lynn, another Kelling WM and one east at Holme and Titchwell before visiting Holkham. Latter joined by another April 17th with 3 there 18th-21st, 4 on 22nd-23rd, one remaining to 28th and 2 on 30th. Party of 3 west at Overstrand, Weybourne and Kelling WM April 21st when 4 Berney with 5 there 22nd-24th, 6 on 25th, 3 on 26th and 4 on 28th. Single west at Cley April 24th, one inland at Didlington April 26th, 2 Burnham Norton also 26th, one remaining to 27th and single east at Cley April 30th. Up to 6 at Horsey throughout May, singles Titchwell May 2nd, Cley May 4th, Berney May 5th, 2 there 14th-15th, 8 on 16th-19th, 3 on 23rd and 25th, 8 again 26th-27th, 5 on 29th, 4 on 30th and 5 on 31st. At Holme, 6 May 5th-6th, single there May 9th, 20th and 30th, 2 May 18th-19th and 3 May 28th, 4 north at Eccles May 6th and later at Titchwell where single May 18th, 3 Holkham May 6th-8th, 2 on 12th, 4 on 21st, 9 on 22nd, 4 on 23rd, 6 on 25th, 2 on 26th-27th, 5 on 29th and 2 on 30th, 3 Strumpshaw May 9th, singles Ken Hill Marsh May 18th, Weybourne May 19th and south-east there on 21st, Cley May 19th, west there 20th, 3 west 21st (also over Muckleburgh Hill and Kelling WM), 5 east on 25th, 3 west on 26th, singles Blakeney/Cley May 21st, one south-east at Kelling WM May 23rd, Burnham Norton May 26th and 4 Hickling May 30th.

Good numbers continued well into June when 4 Berney 1st and 10th, 2 on 12th-13th, single Cley plus 3 west there 1st, singles 2nd, 7th-8th, 11th and 16th-17th (plus 2 west), 5 on 6th, 2 west Sheringham BO 2nd, another west 8th, Burnham Norton 2nd-5th, 2 there 9th-

10th, 4 Titchwell 3rd, single 11th, 2 on 18th and 5 east on 27th. Singles Holme June 4th-5th, Hickling 5th, 3 Weybourne 6th with 2 west there 21st.

The above major influx was undoubtedly caused by adults deserting the main breeding site at Oostvaardersplassen, South Flevoland, in the Netherlands, where very low water levels enabled Foxes to raid the nesting colony.

Almost a month passed before the next record, at Titchwell July 20th, west over Holme later same date, then 3 imms Cley July 21st, 4 east at Holme July 27th, later at Titchwell same date and Burnham Norton following day. Further imms Breydon Aug 11th-28th, 2 west at Weybourne Aug 21st and later at Cley same date, remaining to 22nd, single there Aug 23rd, 2 there 24th-25th, 3 Glaven Marshes/Cley Aug 30th-Sept 16th, 2 on 17th, 3 again 18th-20th, single 21st-24th and 27th-Oct 1st, Titchwell Sept 17th, north at Wells Sept 23rd, 2 west at Brancaster Hbr Oct 24th, later same day at Titchwell. Both feeding flank-deep in the surf, Holme beach, on 26th then in area between Holme and Brancaster Hbr to year end, roosting on Titchwell freshmarsh to Dec 29th when freezing conditions forced a move to the saltmarsh to roost. This is the first occurrence of over-wintering in the county since the winter of 1989-90 when one present at Breydon. Additional imms Breydon and Cley Nov 8th, Holme Nov 10th, Hunstanton, flying north Nov 11th, and possibly the same west past Holme Nov 15th with a small herd of Bewick's Swans.

Mute Swan

Cygnus olor

*Resident. The Ouse Washes attract the most important winter concentrations.*

Monthly peak counts at main sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Welney	131	131	57	78	91	-	-	-	38	61	85	125
Holkham	26	35	28	-	-	-	-	-	-	41	25	22
NNR												
Breydon/ Berney	118	133	120	75	57	57	48	55	42	43	49	62
Rockland	27	24	5	2	21	136	58	47	38	14	1	9
Broad												
Horsey	-	62	47	43	38	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

32 Ousemouth Jan; 100 Ludham, 57 West Somerton and 60 Denver-Hockwold cut-off channel Feb; 24 Snettisham Mar; 60 Stanford Water May; 28 Wroxham Bridge June; 113 Wissington Cut and 37 Sennowe Park Aug; 41 Holkham Oct; 75 Lyng GP Nov/Dec; 31 Earsham Dec.

A total of 56 breeding pairs reported from 27 sites, the majority singles though 16 nests at Welney and 7 Holkham NNR. Breeding birds still under-recorded, the Mute Swans Census 1983 found 156 breeding pairs plus 91 territorial pairs (NBMR 1983, p. 340-341). The 1996 BBS showed it occurred in 10 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 4.4 birds per occupied square.



## Bewick's Swan

*Cygnus columbianus*

*Passage migrant and winter visitor in internationally important numbers.*

The main Fenland wintering site at Welney on the Ouse Washes produced the following monthly maximum counts:

Jan 21st	Feb 18th	Mar 3rd	Oct 31st	Nov 17th	Dec 15th
2151	2934	1658	247	2569	3311
(4830)*	(4643)*	-	-	(2916)*	(3667)*

\*Total Norfolk/Cambs figure in brackets.

A cold spring delayed departure with 514 still present at Welney on March 24th though virtually all gone a few days later, the last six (5 juvs) on April 15th with a final juv April 25th. Two injured birds over-summered.

The first autumn bird arrived at Welney Oct 13th but the following influx was rather slow with just 69 Oct 27th, 247 Oct 31st and no large counts until mid-Nov. Low early winter flood levels on the marshes resulted in spectacular concentrated mixed evening roosts of Whooper and Bewick's Swans on whatever water was available. A total of 55 colour-ringed birds observed in the 1995/96 winter, those having been ringed in Russia 20, Holland 5, Martin Mere 11, Slimbridge 11 and Welney 8. Autumn/early winter flocks held 8% young.

Large numbers of birds again in Broadland, especially during the first quarter of the year. Here, flocks were reported as feeding almost exclusively on winter cereals and harvested sugar beet fields, a total change of habit from their traditional use of grazing marshes. (In contrast Fenland birds have been arable feeding for over twenty years.) The constant interchange of flocks between sites in Broadland confuses the picture and makes it difficult to assess total numbers in the area.

A selection of counts from Broadland include: Horning/Ludham/Catfield 484 Jan 20th, 390 Feb 2nd, 127 Nov 27th and 258 Dec 31st; Halvergate 119 Jan 14th and 347 Feb 4th; Breydon/Berney 303 Jan, 752 Feb 25th (site record), 482 March 5th with last 3 April 8th.

Flocks on passage widely reported throughout the county, the spring exodus perhaps being more spectacular especially in late March, when largest flights to the east included 98 Wereham and 550 Yarmouth 23rd, 160 Cantley 26th, 180 Yarmouth 27th and 358 Buckenham 28th with many smaller sized flocks also observed.

## Whooper Swan

*Cygnus cygnus*

*Increasing winter visitor, mainly from Iceland, in internationally important numbers.*

As usual the Fens at Welney produced the largest gatherings with the following peak monthly counts:

Jan 21st	Feb 5th	Mar 10th	Apr 2nd	Oct 31st	Nov 17th	Dec 1st
668	784	729	343	544	9241	202
(1288)*	(1015)*	(914)*	-	-	-	(1211)*

\* Total Norfolk/Cambs figure in brackets.

Like the preceding species, the spring exodus delayed by cold weather with still 119 April 11th and the last 6 April 25th. Four injured birds over-summered.

Autumn arrival commenced with 24 adults on Oct 1st, the following immigration producing record Welney counts for each month Oct-Dec. Once again, a small number of Finnish ringed birds appeared late in the year, possibly due to severe weather on the continent. A total of 130 colour-ringed birds were observed at Welney in the 1995/96 winter those having been ringed in Iceland 111, Caerlaverock 3, Martin Mere 9, Welney 3 and Finland 4. Autumn flocks held 20% young, the largest family group containing seven cygnets.

Flocks widespread in Broadland where, like the Bewick's Swan, a change to arable feeding was noted. Main concentrations were at Ludham/Wood Street/Catfield 125 Jan 28th, 97 Feb 17th and 51 Dec 27th, while the Hickling/Horsey/Waxham area held 51 Jan 13th, 50 Feb 4th, 20 March 17th and 32 Nov 9th.

Small groups of birds were observed at numerous sites throughout the county on both passages. It may be worth emphasising that the majority of wintering Whooper Swans originate from Iceland and in normal conditions arrive from and depart to the NW, in contrast to much larger numbers of Bewick's Swans which arrive from and depart to the E or NE.

**Bean Goose**

*Anser fabalis*

*A.f. fabalis (Taiga Bean Goose), winter visitor to the Yare Valley. A.f. rossicus (Tundra Bean Goose), small numbers irregular in winter.*

Peak monthly counts Yare Valley:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Nov	Dec
300	310	121	148	266

A later departure than normal with 121 still present March 3rd and final birds on 10th. First returning birds 130 Nov 23rd.

Other records of fabalis birds included an exceptional 125 Heigham Holmes Feb 17th, 60 east Breydon Jan 29th, 2 Hickling Jan 20th and singles Cley Jan 13th-14th and intermittently Welney Jan 4th-Mar 25th and Dec 2nd-24th.

More records than normal of birds relating to the rossicus race including in the first winter period maximum counts of up to: 43 Heigham Holmes Feb 25th, 34 Catfield Fen Jan 18th-Feb 28th, 25 Belton Feb 12th-March 9th, 24 St Benet's Level Jan 31st, 21 Welney Jan 4th, 18 east Sheringham Jan 12th, 13 east Woodbastwick Feb 7th, 5 Holkham Jan-March 23rd, 5 Berney Jan 27th, 3 east Weybourne Feb 26th, 2 Fritcham Feb 3rd and 2 Stiffkey Jan 21st-22nd.

Few in the second winter period when in Dec 9 Welney 15th-26th, 9 Horsey 31st, 5 Eccles 13th, 5 Billockby 25th-30th and 1 Holkham all month.

**Pink-footed Goose**

*Anser brachyrhynchus*

*Winter visitor from Iceland and East Greenland.*

Co-ordinated counts of birds leaving north-west Norfolk roost sites at dawn produced the following monthly maxima:

	Jan 12th	Feb 12th	Oct 21st	Nov 11th	Dec 20th
Snettisham39130	8510	4070	16890	14470	
Scolt	7910	0	690	8500	15500
Wells/Warham	7720	7360	4500	8790	25530
Totals	54760	15870	9260	34180	55500

Not long after the January count many of the birds departed with the Scolt roost being abandoned during the last week of the month. During March up to 5000 remained at

Snettisham and 411 Wells/Holkham where still 160 May 2nd and final birds of spring May 20th. Small numbers of injured/escaped birds continued to be reported throughout spring and summer.

First autumn arrivals early when on Sept 11th 8 Holme and 60 Holkham. In east Norfolk numbers continue to increase in the Heigham Holmes/Horsey area where the following monthly maxima:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Oct	Nov	Dec
1000	1350	1000	1000	5000	5000

These birds wandered over large areas of Broadland and probably accounted for 200 Berney Oct 21st, 270 Breydon Nov 30th and 128 Strumpshaw Dec 13th.

Counts away from these regular sites included maximum of 28 Welney Nov 18th and interesting easterly movements of 2200 Sheringham Nov 16th and 2300 Mundesley between Oct 11th-20th, probably birds heading for the Broads. Also 150 over Hellesdon Nov 11th and heard over Norwich Nov 12th/13th.

**White-fronted Goose** *Anser albifrons*

*Winter visitor and passage migrant from Siberian tundra.*

Peak monthly counts at main sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Nov	Dec
<b>Heigham Holmes</b>	299	1043	600	-	183
<b>Holkham</b>	338	550	7-800	24	66
<b>Buckenham</b>	200	220	180	74	87
<b>Welney</b>	120	88	88	9	32

The Feb count at Heigham Holmes and the March count from Holkham were both site records.

During the first winter period numbers high and more widespread than normal with max counts of: 61 Holme Feb 26th with 63 there Mar 3rd, 65 Cley Jan 18th-21st, 25 Kelling Jan 20th, 146 Ludham Jan 18th, 146 St Benet's Level Jan 31st, 60 Breydon Jan 27th, up to 64 Jan-Feb 14th and 64 Haddiscoe Feb 21st-Mar 10th.

Several feral/injured birds reported May-Sept.

First returning birds 11 Tunstall on the early date of Oct 13th with best counts in second winter period all during Dec when 23 Westacre 16-30th, 26 Ousemouth 21st, 25 Cley 22nd, up to 50 Ormesby Broad 11th-13th and 11 Breydon 15th.

Greenland White-fronted Goose *A.a. flavirostris* Two adults with Pink-feet at Burnham Market Nov 16th (CDo).

**Lesser White-fronted Goose** *Anser erythropus*

*Vagrant from Northern Scandinavia but most escapes/feral birds.*

With so many escapes/feral birds at large around the county, some of which latch on to wild geese, it is impossible to determine if any are genuine wild birds, therefore all are listed for completeness: Holme Oct 14th-31st, Titchwell Nov 7th-18th, Brancaster Nov 11th, Burnham Norton April 21st to end of May, June 19th, and Oct 23rd-31st, 2 Stoke Ferry April 2nd, 3 Boughton Fen April 1st-5th, Ormesby Broad Dec 11th-31st, Breydon Feb 3rd, Hardley Flood March 29th and May 26th and finally Strumpshaw April 19th.



**Greylag Goose***Anser anser**Long established feral population complicates the identity of genuine wild arrivals.*

Highest and most consistently counted sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Snettisham</b>	327	195	195	452	747	280	318	152
<b>Holkham NNR</b>	288	299	650	-	600	571	286	130
<b>Holkham Lake</b>	685	350	-	375	220	89	70	828
<b>Strumpshaw/ Surlingham/ Buckenham</b>	-	102	55	100	305	200	300	-
<b>Heigham Holmes Area</b>	350	650	-	146	-	410	-	405

Other large counts included: Jan 458 Wroxham Broad, 400 Catfield, 283 St Benet's Level and 219 Cley; June 480 Sennowe Park and 246 Pentney GP; Sept 354 Welney; Oct 448 Welney; Dec 300 Tottenhill GP, 217 Ormesby Broad and 175 Filby Broad.

Breeding records included 45 pairs Holkham Lake, 30-40 broods Holkham NNR, 20 pairs Raynham Lake, 10 pairs Strumpshaw with 1-4 pairs Bawsey GP, Breydon, Colney GP, Cranwich GP, Gunton Park, Hickling, Horning Ferry, Horsey, Titchwell and a group of 83 young Pentney GP.

A number of birds considered of the eastern race *rubrirostris* reported: 1-3 Stiffkey Jan 21st-24th, 1-2 Flitcham Feb 1st-3rd and at Scolt 1 on sea 14th and 6 west with Brent Oct 23rd.

**Snow Goose***Anser caerulescens**Feral/escaped birds in small numbers. Probability of occasional genuine vagrants.*

Two adults appeared in Dec and remained into 1997. One at Welney throughout the month (JBK et al) arrived with Whooper Swans. Another arrived with Pink-feet from Lancashire and was first seen leaving the Scolt Head roost on the 6th (JoB). It was subsequently seen at Branthill (SE of Holkham) on 10th, Brancaster 15th and Snettisham 30th.

Whilst escaped/feral Snow Geese are common in the county, the circumstances of their arrival (and subsequent departure) and the behaviour of these individuals suggests that both were genuine vagrants, the first since 1985.

**Canada Goose***Branta canadensis**An abundant introduced resident.*

Maximum totals at main sites: Jan 109 Wroxham Broad and 70 Holkham NNR; Feb 172 Heigham Holmes and 86 St Benet's Level; March 66 Wroxham Broad; Apr 40 Thetford Nunnery; May 90 Sheringham; June 280 Titchwell; July 418 Titchwell and 125 Snettisham; Aug 308 Titchwell; Sept 268 Ludham Hall, 235 Holme and 155 Strumpshaw; Oct 390 Snettisham and 109 Holkham; Nov 235 Whitlingham Marshes and in Dec 260 Thetford Nunnery lakes and 150 Heigham Holmes.

Breeding records included the following pairs/broods: 6 Colney GP, 6 Lynford Arboretum, 5 Holkham Lake, 5 Burnham Norton and 1-3 at 8 other localities. More breeding records welcome. Interesting movement at Sheringham BO June 5th when 220 east and 6 west.

**Barnacle Goose**

*Branta leucopsis*

*Passage migrant and winter visitor with large feral groups causing confusion.*

After the Dec 1995 influx good numbers continued to be reported during the first winter period. Maximum counts included 13 Heacham, 53 Holme, 11 Burnham Deepdale, 26 Burnham Norton, 22 Burnham Overy, 67 Holkham, 18 Wiveton, 28 Stiffkey, 28 Cley, 53 Horsey/Heigham Holmes, 54 Breydon (including a Russian ringed bird) and 60 Haddiscoe. Some duplication likely between sites. Most had moved on by the middle of Feb but a few lingered into April which included up to 11 Holkham until April 14th.

Birds considered wild in the autumn included 7 with Pink-feet Holkham Oct 1st and 4 off-shore with Brent Yarmouth Oct 23rd. 45 Heigham Holmes Dec 14th were of unknown origin.

The following were considered to relate to feral/escapes: 15 Gunton Park Jan, up to 40 Hethersett Jan and Mar, 84 Pensthorpe Sept, 86 Rockland Broad Oct, 53 Strumpshaw Oct and 57 Cantley Oct.

Only breeding records from Pensthorpe where 5 pairs and Hickling where a pair fledged 5 young. Observers are encouraged to submit all records of known feral birds especially in spring and summer.

**Brent Goose**

*Branta bernicla*

*Abundant passage migrant and winter visitor.*

Monthly maxima:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Complete</b>	16944	18223	21023	19820	7220	10161	16436	19092
<b>Wash Count</b>								
<b>Terrington</b>	3435	2349	1681	1955	547	-	-	-
<b>Ousemouth</b>	150	1928	3935	2254	1775	-	-	-
<b>Holme to</b>	11452	14803	7741	2675	-	3010	9847	7779
<b>Salthouse</b>								
<b>Breydon</b>	44	285	-	1	1	-	-	23

As usual, good numbers remained until the last half of May which included 300 Warham, 260 Stiffkey, 200 Holme and 124 Thornham. The only summer records were 7 Warham June 3rd and a single Sheringham June 13th with 3 there 16th/17th.

First birds of autumn noted moving west at coastal sites from Sep 9th, with a larger movement on 21st when 150 Holme, 350 Sheringham, 540 Mundesley, 150 Happisburgh and 200 Yarmouth. Passage disappointing in Oct when best count 260 west Sheringham 23rd and in Nov 650 west there on 13th.

Inland records 17 Wroxham Broad March 24th and 15 south-west Cantley BF Sept 21st. At Brancaster Harbour a leucistic bird returned Oct 16th for its 15th winter.

Breeding success poorly documented but a sample count of 592 at Brancaster contained 7% young.

**Pale-bellied Brent *B.b.lrota*** Many more records than normal in the first winter period following unprecedented numbers in Holland: 2 Fritcham March 24th, up to 4 Lynn Point Jan 14th-March 3rd, Holme March 10th, 2 Burnham Norton Jan 24th, 3-5 Burnham Overy Jan 7th-March 4th, up to 17 Holkham Jan 6th-March 15th, 2 Wells Feb 21st, Warham

Jan 6th, 7 Langham Mar 13th-14th, 2 Blakeney Feb 21st, up to 10 Cley Jan 14th-Mar 10th, up to 23 Salhouse Jan 17th-Mar 1st, 6 Kelling Jan 12th-Feb 21st and 18 east there March 10th, 14 west and 2 east Sheringham Feb 21st, 3 Mundesley Feb 24th, Horsey Feb 19th and finally Caister March 29th.

In the autumn 13 very early birds flew north past Horsey and west past Sheringham and Cley all Aug 30th. The next day the same flock was seen flying north past Flamborough Head, Yorkshire. Other autumn and year-end records included Wells Sept 19th and Nov 27th, Horsey Nov 9th with 2-3 Dec 21st and Heigham Holmes Dec 29th.

Black Brant B.b.nigricans One in the Kelling to Cley area Nov 23rd-27th and Dec 24th-29th (IGJ et al), with presumably the same Stiffkey Nov 30th (GNB).

**Egyptian Goose**

*Alopochen aegyptiacus*

***Long established feral population.***

Highest counts: Jan 32 Horning, 54 St Benet's Level and 52 Ludham Hall; Feb 58 St Benet's Level; March 20 Sennowe Park; April 18 Sennowe Park; May 19 Gunton; June 106 Holkham Lake, 55 Blickling and 32 Sennowe Park; July 55 Sennowe Park; Aug 78 Lynford, 46 Ickburgh, 40 Sennowe Park and 39 St Benet's Level; Sept 76 Holkham Lake, 69 Cranwich GP, 39 Cantley and 33 Holkham NNR; Oct 66 Ludham Hall; Nov 84 Ludham Hall and in Dec 27 West Acre.

Confirmed breeding at Blickling Lake 4 pairs, Sennowe Park 4 pairs, Felbrigg 3 pairs and 1-2 pairs at Broome GP, Colney GP, Coltishall, Cranwich GP, Filby Broad, Fustyweed GP, Gunton Park, Holkham NNR, Lyng-Easthaugh GP, Merton Park, Pensthorpe, Pentney GP, Salhouse, Thetford, Nunnery Lake and Wolferton. Once again, early breeding noted at Salhouse where young in Jan.

**Shelduck**

*Tadorna tadorna*

***Widespread breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor.***

Monthly peak counts at selected sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
North	823	610	670	587	-	-	-	-	151	230	506	476
Norfolk												
WeBS												
Terrington	4176	3496	2633	1272	1040	-	440	-	-	-	-	-
Lynn Point	2000	1424	1526	4189	353	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Snettisham	542	-	411	144	267	825	478	58	234	1800	435	225
Brancaster	225	50	56	62	-	-	-	-	-	45	154	196
Hbr/Scolt												
Blakeney	183	112	69	61	32	-	-	111	141	190	-	217
Hbr/Cley												
Breydon	206	268	311	246	411	460	291	28	61	114	137	473

Notable counts from elsewhere include 1222 Wells Jan; 82 Rockland Broad Feb; 76 Hardley Flood, 42 Stanford TA and 186 Welney March; 52 Stanford Water and 185 Welney April; 63 Cantley BF Aug. Eviudence of late spring movement from Sheringham where 60 east and 20 west May 31st.

Total of 72 broods and an additional 19-20 pairs reported from 26 sites around the county. General success judged to be poor. Only 46 young (from 8 broods) at Breydon.



Summer eastward departure of adults to moulting sites off NW Germany noted at Holme where max counts in July of 115 8th, 150 10th and 225 17th. Returning birds moving west until year's end, with max counts 150 Holme Sept 9th, 80 Holme Sept 29th, 54 Scolt Oct 24th, 58 Scolt and 210 Sheringham Nov 8th, 161 Weybourne Nov 11th and 50 Sheringham Dec 21st.

Mandarin

*Aix galericulata*

*Introduced wanderer and escape. Breeding collection at Sandringham.*

Continuing increase in records, with 1-5 at Babingley River, Burnham Norton, Cley, Fakenham (R. Wensum), Felbrigg (regular Jan-May), Flitcham, Heacham, Holkham, Ken Hill Marshes, Kettlestone Common, King's Lynn Walks, Mundesley, Overstrand, Paston, Reedham Marsh, How Hill, Salhouse Broad, Sennowe GP, Snettisham, Snettisham CP, Strumpshaw Fen, Surlingham Church Marsh, Westbriggs Woods, Wiveton and Wroxham Broad. No records received after Aug!

Max. count of 102 Dersingham Jan 8th derived from displaced Sandringham population which is seriously under-recorded. This presumably the origin of many west Norfolk observations.

Breeding records from Sandringham (3 pairs), Pensthorpe (2 pairs) and Little Snoring (1 pair); also up to 9 at Ken Hill Marshes in June.

Wigeon

*Anas penelope*

*Abundant passage migrant and winter visitor in internationally important numbers. A few oversummer and have bred.*

Peak monthly counts at main localities around the county:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
North Norfolk	13361	11261	11232	220	3273	9322	14615	11125
WeBS								
Norfolk Washes	30545	29245	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ouse Washes								
RSPB	1791	1791	1794	250	-	-	-	3460
Welney	9782	8875	6270	1037	1313	2587	2500	7693
Snettisham	339	-	205	149	350	932	1394	250
Holme	1840	2050	850	260	262	450	770	1100
Holkham	11000	7510	6598	-	677	3443	7250	
NNR								
Blakeney/	1200	1350	3800	-	1093	2435	6035	1362
Cley								
Breydon/	2150	4300	2600	207	110	150	1400	6000
Berney								
Ranworth	18	1000	485	-	-	134	118	700
Broad								
Cantley/	-	-	3378	31	1904	3942	6134	7189
Buckenham								

Notable counts elsewhere include 1000 Heigham Holmes Jan, 2200 St Benet's Level Feb and 2500 Brancaster/Scolt Oct 14th.

Small numbers summered at many wetland sites around the county, with max counts in July of 10+ Welney, 14 Titchwell and 24 (incl. 9 pairs)Holkham NNR (several of which were injured birds). Breeding only confirmed at Holkham NNR, where one brood seen, and also pairs at Pensthorpe and Shereford.

Returning birds from Aug 3rd (Cantley BF). Coastal passage noted from Aug 27th (Sheringham) to late Dec, but numbers generally low, with peak westerly counts of just 200 Sheringham Sept 5th; 350 Sheringham Sept 6th; 220 Sheringham Sept 7th; 1150 Holme, 350 Sheringham, 110 Mundesley Sept 9th; 220 Holme Oct 4th; 280 Holme Oct 15th; 450 Holme, 320 Sheringham Nov 11th; 320 Holme and 150 Sheringham Nov 12th.

American Wigeon

*Anas americana*

Vagrant from North America.

A first-summer drake Welney April 22nd-28th (JBK et al). The fourteenth county record.

Gadwall

*Anas strepera*

Resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Peak monthly counts at principal localities:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
North Norfolk	42	35	54	124	-	113	83	106	84
WeBS									
Welney	42	20	81	122	40	49	7	-	5
Snettisham	39	-	58	17	-	2	9	9	25
Titchwell	12	12	35	43	111	15	13	27	28
Holkham NNR	13	11	19	-	-	74	62	26	25
Breydon/ Berney	14	23	19	46	-	1	4	20	30
Strumpshaw Fen	-	-	12	25	88	96	69	44	31
Whitlingham Lane	-	42	12	22+	-	-	-	-	-
Colney GP	145	25+	42	-	21	-	-	55	74
Sennowe		46	-	5	7	8	-	44	131

Other notable counts include: 88 Fowlmere, 80 Heigham Sound, 84 Hickling Broad, 75 Lynford GP, 135 Stanford TA, 210 Wroxham Broad Jan; 45 Coxford, 60 Denver/Hockwold cut-off Channel, 40 Hill Mere, 57 Raynham Lake, 100 Southacre GP, 46 Stanford TA, 40 Wroxham Broad Feb; 70 Strumpshaw Fen, 46 Cockley Cley May; 50 Burnham Norton, 34 Titchwell June; 51 Strumpshaw Fen July; 36 Stanford Water Nov; 90 Heigham Sound and 120 Lynford Dec.

Breeding records from the following localities: Bawsey CP (1 pair), Colney GP (7-8 pairs), Holkham Lake (8 broods), Holkham NNR (36-48 pairs - 16+ broods), Lynford GP (1 brood), Pensthorpe (2 pairs), Pentney GP (1 pair), Raynham (1 brood), Sennowe Park (1 pair), Shereford (1 pair), Titchwell (4 broods - 33+ chicks), Welney (8 broods), Whitlingham STW (2 broods - 5 chicks).

Very few noted on autumn passage with only records 4 west Sheringham Oct 7th, 3 west Sheringham Oct 8th and singles west there Nov 5th and 7th.

## Teal

*Anas crecca*

*Passage migrant and abundant winter visitor; breeds in small numbers.*

Peak monthly counts at main sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
North Norfolk	1435	899	696	-	-	1327	1862	3126	2668
WeBS									
Welney	1892	437	820	1464	370	375	582	600	552
Snettisham	108	-	68	-	-	276	642	400	236
Holme	150	85	85	6	59	158	50	148	117
Titchwell	330	168	28	52	229	140	267	402	500
Holkham NNR	594	205	205	-	117	182	257	632	225
Blakeney	430	325	95	-	11	94	373	469	130
Cley	308	-	245	-	300	747	926	1230	1543
Breydon/	330	205	43	55	100	75	54	277	500
Berney									
Ranworth/	217	265	143	39	5	36	114	93	108
Cockshoot									

Other high counts in first-winter period: 200 Heigham Sound, 180 Hickling Rush Hills, 250 Raynham Lake, 207 Sennowe Park, 200+ Wroxham Broad Jan; 180 Tallents Meadow, 200+ Tottenhill GP, 160 Wissington BF Feb; 276 Rockland Broad March.

Small numbers summered as usual at a few wetland sites, with max 28-30 at Welney and 4-5 pairs Holkham NNR, but no evidence of breeding.

Westerly coastal passage from early Aug, with largest counts 200 Holme Aug 29th; 300 Sheringham Sept 5th and 6th with 190 Sept 7th; 150 Holme, 160 Sheringham Sept 9th; 120 Sheringham Oct 21st and Nov 11th. Notable counts in second half of the year: 184 Hickling Broad Aug; 330 Hickling Broad Sept; 200 Hickling Broad Oct; 1000 Cantley BF, 2100 Horsey and 188 Lynford GP Nov; 1200 Horsey, 200 Scolt and 217 Sennowe Park Dec.

**Green-winged Teal** *A.c.carolinensis*: A drake of the distinctive Nearctic race Sennowe Park Nov 3rd (JRW).

## Mallard

*Anas platyrhynchos*

*Widespread resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.*

Peak counts at selected sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
North Norfolk									
WeBS	1223	923	855	382	821	913	783	1159	1087
Welney	1547	1298	658	292	432	492	826	-	1206
Terrington	104	161	39	16	-	-	-	-	-
Snettisham	546	-	217	-	-	451	1200	1035	543
Holme	145	85	42	-	65	120	90	122	25



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Titchwell	59	6	-	48	237	79	85	44	47
Holkham NNR	153	109	132	-	133	148	180	166	128
Holkham Park									
Lake	445	239	220	55	150	61	100	80	130
Blakeney	98	142	118	-	79	92	111	154	130
Cley	82	-	49	26	64	148	36	279	260
Ranworth/									
Cockshoot	377	218	151	39	156	142	247	153	331
Strumpshaw Fen	-	-	111	71	33	132	16	158	186
Sennowe Park	454	-	62	45	98	213	132	146	335

Notable counts elsewhere of 150 Brancaster Hbr/Scolt, 150 Coxford, 150 Hickling Broad, 310 Lynford GP, 114 Salhouse Broad, 119 St Benet's level, 111 Wroxham Broad Jan; 169 King's Lynn-Denver Relief-Channel, 114 Filby Broad, 122 Lynn Point, 260 Ouse Washes, 180 Stanford Water, 147 St Benet's level, 180 Stowbridge Feb; 167 Ouse Washes March; 136 Ouse Washes April; 130 Welney May-July; 400 Raynham Lake, 140 Snettisham July; 110 Barton Broad Aug; 188 Breydon/Berney, 130 How Hill, 282 Lynford GP, 205 Raynham Lake, 195 Scolt Nov; 161 Brancaster Hbr/Scolt, 210 Horsey Mere, 235 King's Lynn Docks and 202 Thetford Nunnery Lakes Dec.

Light coastal passage from Aug. Peak counts 45 west Holme and 40 west Sheringham Nov 11th.

### Pintail

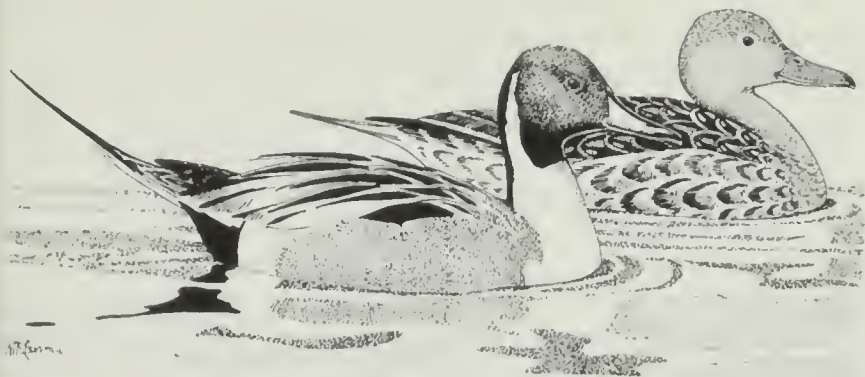
*Anas acuta*

*Passage migrant and winter visitor, but has bred.*

Peak monthly counts at main localities:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
North Norfolk							
WeBS	1839	126	210	160	307	1212	830
Ouse Washes	26	50	165	-	-	-	-
Welney	823	1092	758	74	455	-	254
Terrington	4	110	2	-	-	-	-
Lynn Point	-	4	8	-	-	-	180
Snettisham	-	-	50	14	2	-	5
Brancaster/Scolt	64	-	29	4	22	32	120
Holkham NNR	69	37	-	-	6	3	5
Blakeney Hbr	800	250	150	72	120	740	630
Cley	898	-	25	80	162	430	55
Berney/							
Breydon	172	149	43	25	46	93	148
Tottenhill GP	200	400+	4	-	550	300	700

Increase in numbers wintering in the Broads, with max 15+ Cantley BF, 29 Hardley Flood, 17 Hickling Broad, 5 Ranworth Broad, 16 Wroxham Broad Jan; 9 Rockland Broad Feb-March; 6 Cockshoot Broad, 12 Hardley Flood, 10 Strumpshaw Fen, 6 Surlingham Church Marsh March.



*Pintail (N. Borrow)*

Small winter movement noted with max 9 east Weybourne Jan 2nd, 11 west Weybourne and 4 east Sheringham Jan 3rd, 10 west Holme Feb 12th and 11 west Holme Feb 20th.

Still 263 Welney April 3rd, decreasing to 112 on 9th and only 2 by 30th. Odd ones and twos lingered at several wetland sites in May, with last 2 Titchwell June 6th. Single summering record Rockland Broad July 9th and presumed the same female Cantley BF July 18th and throughout Aug. Westerly passage from Aug 24th (Titchwell), with max counts 20 Holme, 26 Brancaster, 9 Weybourne and 7 Sheringham all Aug 30th, 20 Sheringham Sept 7th, 55 Holme Sept 12th, 47 Holme Oct 29th and 145 Holme and 15 Sheringham Nov 11th.

#### Garganey

*Anas querquedula*

*Very scarce breeding summer visitor; scarce passage migrant.*

First arrivals Tallents Meadow Lake March 6th and Weybourne March 25th-April 9th. Thereafter further spring records of 1-4 at Berney, Brancaster, Buckenham, Cley, Hickling Broad, Holkham NNR, Holme, Horsey, Kelling WM, Ludham Marshes, Lynn Point, Ouse Washes, Snettisham, Stiffkey, Strumpshaw Fen, Titchwell, Welney (where up to 6 May), Weybourne and Whitlingham GP.

Summer records from 11 localities, but breeding only confirmed from Cley where female with 5 ducklings June 3rd.

Autumn records of 1-4 at Cley, Hickling Rush Hills, Holme, Snettisham, Titchwell and Welney, Latest Welney Oct 10th-11th with 2 Oct 21st, and Holme Oct 11th-26th.

#### Blue-winged Teal

*Anas discors*

*Rare transatlantic vagrant from North America.*

Single female/imm Welney Oct 28th (JBK et al). Remarkably its visit coincided with that of two Ring-necked Ducks, also from America. The thirteenth county record.

#### Shoveler

*Anas clypeata*

*Passage migrant, summer and winter visitor.*

Peak monthly counts at principal localities:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
North Norfolk WeBS	155	-	42	40	145	80	-	123	97
Welney	74	30	147	228	40	90	108	-	44
Titchwell	29	5	-	16	81	19	33	26	21
Holkham NNR	48	18	26	-	12	111	45	5	34
Cley	36	-	-	-	39	10	36	45	33
Berney/Breydon	46	41	31	29	7	4	-	52	60
Ranworth/Cockshoot	11	31	14	9	9	11	15	34	70
Strumpshaw Fen	29	-	7	63	4	32	29	34	57
Sennowe Park	4	21	20	11	-	43	12	38	-

Other notable counts include: 54 Fowlmere, 31 Rockland Broad Jan; 40 Rockland Broad Feb; 48 Ouse Washes March; 36 Cantley BF, 38 Ouse Washes, 92 Trinity Broads April; 40 Holkham Park Aug; 50+ Hickling Rush Hills, 30 Holme Sept; 160 Hickling Broad Oct; 41 Stanford Water Oct-Nov; 47 Rockland Broad Dec. Breeding records included 35-45 pairs Holkham NNR (although only 11 broods seen) and 21 pairs Strumpshaw. At the end of the year freezing conditions concentrated birds on remaining open waters with 50 Filby Broad Dec 24th, 295 Rollesby Broad 27th and up to 47 Rockland Broad during this period.

Occasional autumn movements of small numbers from mid-Aug; highest counts: 12 west Sheringham Aug 14th, 10 west Cley Oct 10th.

### Red-crested Pochard

*Netta rufina*

*An escapee, but with the possibility of genuine vagrants from the Continent.*

At start of year drake Rollesby/Ormesby Little Broad Jan 7th-Feb 14th considered wild. Otherwise wing-clipped female Trowse from 1995-March 18th, drake Denver Sluice Jan 30th-Feb 11th, female Ormesby Little Broad Feb 17th, drake Welney March 1st, female Raynham Lake May 12th, female Wash coastal path June 7th, 2 drakes Titchwell June 5th-July 1st, with 3 eclipse Aug 16th, female Strumpshaw Fen Aug 18th-20th and Oct 10th-Dec 22nd, drake Welney Oct 26th, drake Ormesby Little Broad Dec 10th, female Trowse Dec 21st, 3 (1 drake) Titchwell Dec 18th-19th with single Dec 26th.

Up to 3 Kettlestone Common and 8 Sennowe GP considered to originate from the nearby Pensthorpe free-flying population.

### Pochard

*Aythya ferina*

*Summer visitor breeding in small numbers; passage migrant and winter visitor.*

Max. monthly counts at the main wintering site at Welney:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Welney	2188	1432	1368	88	12	133	-	728

Sex ratio at Welney in Feb of 11 males: 1 female.

Notable counts elsewhere: 107 Colney GP, 500 Earsham GP, 89 Hickling Broad, 100+ Narford, 200 Ranworth Broad, 84 Sennowe Park, 103 Stanford TA, 74 Swanton Morley GP, 200+ Tottenham GP, 548 Wroxham Broad Jan; 80 Denver-Hockwold Relief Channel, 122 Earsham GP, 75 Hickling Broad, 60 King's Lynn docks, 130 Ranworth Broad, 314 Tottenham



GP, 175 Wroxham Broad Feb; 332 King's Lynn docks, 127 Ouse Washes, 70 Ranworth Broad, 74 Stanford TA, 250 Tottenhill GP March; 70 Hickling Broad, 80 Ranworth Broad Oct; 65+ Martham Broad 70 Ranworth Broad Nov; 111 Barton Broad, 79 Snettisham, 96 Tottenhill GP, 163 Wissington BF Dec. Those at Tottenhill, Ouse Relief Channel and Wissington BF presumed to be birds displaced from Welney.

Breeding records (with number of broods) from the following localities: Barton Broad (1), Breydon (1), Hickling (7 - with 17 juvs), Holkham NNR (15), Hoveton Great Broad (1 - with 8 juvs), Kettlestone Common (1), Pensthorpe (12), Ranworth/Cockshoot Broads (17), Strumpshaw Fen (5).

Autumn coastal passage very light, with highest counts all from Sheringham where 17 west and 3 east Aug 5th, 14 west Sept 9th and 14 west Oct 8th.

### Ring-necked Duck

*Aythya collaris*

*Vagrant from North America.*

Two (duck and imm drake) Welney Oct 27th-28th, the imm drake remaining until Oct 29th (JBK *et al*).

### Ferruginous Duck

*Aythya nyroca*

*Rare visitor from the Continent, or escape from captivity.*

A drake Raynham Lake Feb 25th (A1B JRMc). with presumably the same bird Kettlestone Common March 16th (ADC) and a duck Sennowe GP April 7th (SBe JRW).

### Tufted Duck

*Aythya fuligula*

*Summer breeder, common passage migrant and winter visitor.*

Peak counts at selected sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
North Norfolk									
WeBS	68	62	66	177	52	-	53	42	48
Welney	108	94	101	23	-	4	14	-	62
Snettisham	44	-	25	-	-	52	90	68	57
Ranworth/									
Cockshoot	61	154	96	42	7	16	31	51	50
Wroxham Broad	358	175	28	18	-	-	-	8	34
Colney GP	206	-	67	67	68	48	27	65	67
Sennowe Park	54	82	67	110	97	96	67	55	94

Notable counts elsewhere of 94 Cranwich GP, 100 Earsham GP, 200 Hickling Broad, 78 Stanford TA, 100 Thetford Nunnery lakes, 95 Titchwell, 74 Tottenhill GP Jan; 300+ Denver Sluice, 338 Denver Sluice-Brandon Creek, 145 Hickling Broad, 80 Saddlebow Feb; 73 Ouse Washes, 87 Rockland Broad, 79 Strumpshaw Fen March; 120 Holkham Park Lake April; 118 Sennowe Park July; 75 Broome GP Sept; 200 Ormesby Broad, 90 Strumpshaw Fen Dec.

Breeding reported from the following sites: Berney Marshes (1 brood), Breydon (1 brood), Bure Valley Lakes (3 broods), Cockley Cley (6 broods), Cranwich (2 broods), East

Tuddenham (2 pairs), Filby Broad (3-4 pairs), Flitcham (1 brood), Fowlmere (1 pair), Guist (1 pair), Hempton (1 pair), Hickling Broad (1 brood), Holkham NNR (10-15 pairs, 7 broods), Holkham Park (1 brood), How Hill (1 brood), Lynford Hall (3 broods), Lyng Easthaugh GP, Martham Broad (1 brood), Pensthorpe (30+ pairs), Raynham Lake (2 broods), R. Wissey (1 pair), Rockland Broad (1 brood), Sculthorpe Fen (1 brood), Sharp Street Fen (1 brood), Shereford (3 pairs), Sparham Pools, Stanford Water (1 pair), Strumpshaw Fen (7 pairs), Surlingham Church Marsh (1 brood), Titchwell (3 pairs), Welney (1 brood) and Whitlingham Marshes (1 brood).

Rarely noted on coastal passage, and only records 3 west Sheringham Aug and 4 west there Nov.

## Scaup

*Aythya marila*

*Winter visitor in varying numbers. Scarce inland. Occasional in summer.*

Peak monthly counts from principal sites. As birds move around the coast some duplication of numbers is inevitable.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Nov	Dec
Snettisham	8	6	17	2	1	4
Hunstanton	65	370	40	-	-	20
Holme	7	340	510	23	1	33
Titchwell	95	11	12	-	-	29

Impressive numbers around the coast at the start of the year, with numerous records of 1-20 and higher counts of 45 Brancaster Jan, 40 east Weybourne and 46 east Sheringham Jan 26th, 80 east Salthouse Jan 28th; 50 Overstrand, 79 Sea Palling, 37 Caister, 44 Great Yarmouth Feb, with 40 east Paston Feb 12th; 34 Great Yarmouth March.

Numerous inland records during this period (with monthly max) from the following sites: Breydon Water (2 Jan, 19 Feb, 5 March), Broome GP (1 Jan), Colney GP (2 Jan, 1 Feb), Denver Sluice (1 Feb, 17 March), Hickling Broad (1 Feb), Holkham grazing marsh (1 Jan), Holkham Park Lake (1 Jan), Holme marsh (6 Feb), Kelling WM (6 Feb, 1 March), King's Lynn Docks/R. Ouse (6 Jan, 16 Feb), Magdalen (4 Jan, 19 Feb), R. Stiffkey (2 Feb), Saddlebow (5 Feb), Salthouse marsh (10 Feb), Sparham Pools (2 March), Strumpshaw (1 Feb, 1 March), Ten Mile Bank (1 Feb), Tilney St Lawrence (1 Feb), Tottenhill GP (3 Feb), UEA/R. Yare (1 Jan, 1 March), Watlington (4 Feb), Wells boating lake (1 Jan, 6 Feb, 5 March), Welney (2 Jan), West Somerton (1 Jan) and Wroxham Broad (1 Feb).

Most had departed by late March, with latest 2 Snettisham April 15th. Further isolated records of pair Horsey Mere May 25th, drake Kelling June 5th-6th, and singles Mundesley July 9th and Breydon Water July 30th.

First autumn records 1 west Mundesley Aug 13th, 2 west Sheringham Aug 14th, and 7 east Sheringham Sept 22nd. Very scarce in the second-winter period, and other than those tabulated, records of only 1-5 from Scolt, Holkham Bay, Wells Hbr, Cley, Sheringham, Mundesley, Sea Palling and Eccles, with max passage count 7 east Sheringham Dec 19th. Despite this scarcity inland records from Berney Aug 30th, Strumpshaw Nov 3rd, 2 Welney Nov 4th, 3 Cantley BF Nov 6th with single Nov 30th and Dilham Canal Dec 15th-31st.

## Eider

*Somateria mollissima*

*Non-breeders throughout the year, highest totals in winter and early spring.*

An improvement in numbers around the Wash and NW Norfolk, with impressive numbers off Snettisham at the year's end. As birds drift around the coast with the tides, some duplication of counts is likely.

Max. monthly counts at principal sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
North Norfolk WeBS	-	367	287	177	-	-	-	226	205	53	42	55
Terrington	4	60	47	320	-	-	40	63	-	-	-	-
Snettisham	464	-	270	300	181	180	224	82	66	380	500	1,000
Hunstanton	102	64	89	4	54	-	-	-	-	27	1	1
Holme	48	72	138	670	100	40	21	45	85	50	20	14
Titchwell	160	151	120	15	80	140	110	200	70	100	30	50
Brancaster Hbr/Scolt	177	150	65	70	110	250	25	48	82	68	30	20
Blakeney Hbr/Cley	26	12	67	43	-	29	-	20	40	35	7	2

Good numbers also off the east coast at the start of the year, with highest counts of 158 Winterton Jan 12th, same 158 Hemsby Jan 14th, 45 Great Yarmouth Feb 18th and 119 there March 21st. Numbers very low in the second-winter period with highest counts 21 Sea Palling Oct-Nov, and 28 Caister Nov.

Low numbers noted on autumn coastal passage, with max counts of 22 west Sheringham Aug 14th, 24 west Weybourne, 35 west and 5 east Sheringham Sept 28th, 46 east Sheringham Oct 30th, 45 west Holme Nov 11th and 45 east and 7 west Sheringham Nov 18th. In contrast 300 west Sheringham Dec 4th was an excellent count for that site.

Two inland records. A female which survived a collision with overhead wires) Wiggenhall St Germans Jan 20th, and drake Breydon Water Feb 20th-23rd.



*Eiders* (P. Jones)

## Long-tailed Duck

*Clangula hyemalis*

*Winter visitor chiefly to NW Norfolk coastal waters. Occasional inland.*

Carrying on from late 1995 very scarce in first-winter period, with only concentration off Holme where monthly max of 62 Jan, 41 Feb, 34 March and 63 April. Only double figure counts otherwise 10 Titchwell Jan and 11 Hunstanton Feb, where 4 March and 8 April. Elsewhere irregular records of 1-2 at Snettisham, Brancaster, Weybourne and Cromer. Latest off Holme April 18th.

Very scarce again in second-winter period. In Oct 5 Weybourne 17th, singles west Cley 22nd and at Titchwell 26th, 2 Bancaster 28th and at Holme 3 28th and 4 east and 1 west 30th. In Nov single west Scolt 11th, and same male west Weybourne and Sheringham 13th (the



only record for this site in 1996). Only concentration again off Hunstanton-Titchwell, where Nov North Norfolk WeBS count of 22. Monthly max of 21 Hunstanton, 11 Holme, 11 Titchwell Nov; 40 Hunstanton/Holme Dec. Only records elsewhere 1-4 Brancaster Nov-Dec and Sea Palling Nov 12th.

Inland, a female Holkham Park Lake Jan 20th-April 2nd with presumed same Holkham April 28th-May 13th, and drake Titchwell freshmarsh Dec 30th.

**Common Scoter**

*Melanitta nigra*

*Winter visitor in varying numbers, passage migrant, non-breeders over summer.*

True numbers as ever difficult to determine, as flocks drift around the coast and out to sea at times, as illustrated by a record of 400 two miles north of Scolt June 25th. Some duplication of counts is inevitable.

Max. monthly counts at principal coastal sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
North Norfolk WeBS	-	4713	5549	-	-	-	-	1	-	204	641	226
Hunstanton	17	1000	2000	2000	-	-	120	200	-	-	1000	400
Holme	2000	180	4200	4800	100	-	50	1	-	120	-	15
Titchwell	4000	3000	804	1500	900	300	350	100	150	300	480	350
Brancaster	1100	1700	200	500	-	-	-	-	120	300	400	36
Cley/Sheringham	75	50	-	110	-	32	40	100	120	-	60	-
Happisburgh/ Winterton	25	-	17	13	6	16	17	47	60	20	-	-
Winterton/Hemsby	78	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	32

Most notable coastal movements include 300 east Hunstanton Feb 4th, 250 east Sheringham Apr 21st, 360 east and 10 west Sheringham May 12th, 65 north Sea Palling June 27th, 50+ south Eccles July 20th and subsequently westerly counts of 110 Sheringham July 25th, 240 Holme, 130 Sheringham Aug 13th, 140 Sheringham Aug 14th, 140 Mundesley Sept 3rd, 110 Sheringham Sept 14th and 17th.

A series of inland records in the first half of the year, with female Snettisham Jan 10th-24th, drake Titchwell Jan 30th-31st, R. Ouse King's Lynn Feb 11th, drake Surlingham March 17th, drake Trowse April 1st, pair Wroxham Broad April 8th, 2 R. Ouse King's Lynn May 15th, 11 Breydon Water June 20th, with 3 there July 26th and single Aug 15th.

**Velvet Scoter**

*Melanitta fusca*

*Winter visitor, but numbers and localities fluctuate.*

Max. counts at selected sites. Some duplication of counts is likely.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Oct	Nov	Dec
Hunstanton	-	17	-	-	-	-	-
Holme	5	12	3	9	8	-	-
Titchwell	45	17	26	30	10	21	3
Brancaster	7	-	-	16	30	7	-

Numbers reasonable at start of year off NW Norfolk, with occasional records of 1-4 elsewhere around the coast. Only movement noted 8 west Overstrand Feb 8th. Last records 8 Thornham Point May 18-19th and 4 Titchwell May 19th, with none recorded over the summer.

First autumn bird off Horsey Aug 31st. Usual records of 1-4 passing coastal stations Sept-Nov, but numbers low and no count exceeded four.

Inland record of a drake on R. Bure at Yarmouth Feb 6th.

**Goldeneye**

*Bucephala clangula*

*Passage migrant and winter visitor.*

Maximum monthly counts at principal coastal sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Oct	Nov	Dec
North Norfolk							
WeBS	100	182	147	-	1	45	161
Snettisham	60	29	51	34	11	36	48
Hunstanton	7	51	71	-	-	-	-
Titchwell	13	16	18	-	1	9	21
BrancasterHbr/Scot	27	16	12	10	17	12	27
Holkham Park	15	24	52	35	1	-	9
Blakeney Hbr	44	11	48	-	-	9	39

Usual widespread records in the first-winter period with numerous counts of 1-10 throughout the county. Higher counts of 27 Hickling Broad, 12 Horsey Mere, 36 Hunstanton, 31 Magdalen, 36 Ten Mile Bank, 15 Tottenhill GP Jan; 15 Breydon Water, 24 Hickling Broad, 34 Magdalen, 21 Saddlebow, 43 South Lynn-Denver Sluice, 18 Stowbridge, 16 Wells Hbr, 26 Wiggenhall St Germans-Ten Mile Bank Feb; 11 Tottenhill GP Feb-March; 17 Filby Broad, 12 Heigham Sound, 30 Hickling Broad, 31 Holme, 17 Horsey Mere, 71 Hunstanton, 17 Tottenhill GP March; 20 Hickling Broad, 12 Wells Hbr April.

Lingering singles in May at Mundesley (2nd), Holkham (5th), Martham Broad (5th), Titchwell (11th), Tottenhill GP (12th), and Burnham Norton (16-19th). An imm female summered at Breydon Water, being present April 21st-Oct 20th.

Early autumn records of singles Holme Aug 18th and 24th-25th, then 2 west Mundesley Sept 11th. Main return passage from mid Oct, with max westerly counts 19 Holme and 32 Sheringham Oct 30th, 33 Holme and 13 Weybourne Nov 11th, 60 Sheringham Nov 12th, 45 Sheringham Nov 13th and 20 Holme Nov 26th.

Widespread records of 1-10 (mainly singles) for the second winter period, with higher counts of 15 Cley Nov; 14+ Bure Park Yarmouth, 14 Hickling Broad, 13 Magdalen, 15 Titchwell reserve Dec.

**Smew**

*Mergellus albellus*

*Winter visitor, only appearing in numbers during severe winters.*

Impressive influx in first winter-period, with numerous records (with monthly max) from the following sites: Blickling (1 Feb), Brandon Creek (2 Feb), Bure Park Yarmouth (1 Jan), Cley (10 Jan), Colney GP (3 Jan, 1 Feb, 2 March), Cranwich GP (1 Feb-March), Crome's Broad (8 Jan), Denver Sluice (3 Feb), Earsham GP (4 Jan), Filby Broad (2 Feb, 2 March), Fordham (1 Feb), Gunton Park (1 Feb), Heacham (1 Feb), Heigham Sound (1 Jan, 1 March), Hickling Broad (7 Jan, 9 Feb, 6 March), Holkham Park Lake (1 Jan), Holme (4 Feb), Horsey Mere

(1 Jan, 2 Feb), King's Lynn (1 Jan), Lyng Easthaugh GP (1 Feb), Lynn Point (2 Jan, 1 Feb), Martham Broad (2 Jan, 1 Feb, 1 March), Ormesby Little Broad (3 Jan, 12 Feb, 7 March), Ousebridge (4 Feb), Ranworth Broad (4 Jan, 2 Feb), Reedham Water (3 Jan), Rockland Broad (1 Jan-Feb), Rollesby Broad (3 Jan), Saddlebow (1 Jan), Salthouse (1 Jan), Sheringham (2 east Feb 3rd and 2 west Feb 11th), Snettisham (2 Jan), South Acre (2 March), Stowbridge (2 Feb, 2 March), Strumpshaw Fen (1 Feb), Ten Mile Bank (2 Feb), Terrington Marsh (1 Jan, 1 Feb), Titchwell (1 Jan, 1 Feb), Tottenhill GP (2 Jan, 6 Feb, 3 March), Watlington (1 Jan), Welney (1 Jan, 3 Feb), R. Delph Welney (3 Feb), West Acre GP (1 Jan), Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalen (4 Feb, 4 March), Wiggenhall St Peter (4 Feb) and Yarmouth Lower Bure (3 Jan). Latest a redhead Ormesby Little Broad until April 8th.



*Smew (N. Arlott)*

Martham Broad, 4 Ormesby Little Broad, Rockland Broad, Rollesby Broad, Snettisham, 2 Tottenhill GP and 3 Wells.

**Red-breasted Merganser**

*Mergus serrator*

*Passage migrant and winter visitor. Occasional in summer.*

Max. monthly counts at principal coastal localities:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Oct	Nov	Dec
North Norfolk WeBS	75	-	70	27	-	117	-
Snettisham	25	-	9	41	41	42	28
Heacham/Hunstanton	60	17	19	31	-	-	46
Holme	30	21	11	32	11	15	10
Titchwell	50	20	12	10	10	15	20
Brancaster Harbour	18	-	-	15	20	43	35
Blakeney Harbour	29	15	24	2	14	22	6

Present in good numbers in both winter periods in the Wash and off the NW of the county. Scarce off east coast with 3 Caister Jan 1st, 5 Horsey Jan 7th, 4 Caister Jan 27th, 2 Sea Palling and single Horsey Feb 11th, Sea Palling April 10th, Sea Palling Oct 6th, 9th and 22nd with 2 Oct 30th, 2 Horsey Oct 10th, Horsey Nov 9th and Caister Nov 13th.

High numbers recorded inland in the Fens in first-winter period, with max counts 9 Watlington Jan 6th, 14 Denver Sluice Jan 14th and 28th with 16 on 30th, 74 King's Lynn-Ten Mile Bank Jan 29th, 10 Watlington Feb 1st, 31 Wiggenhall St Germans Feb 4th, 25 Wiggenhall St Mary-Magdalen Feb 6th with 28 on 21st, 52 King's Lynn-Denver Feb 11th and



11 King's Lynn Feb 20th. Elsewhere 2 Breydon Water Jan 3rd with single Jan 4th, Tottenhill GP Jan 5th, Welney Jan 7th, 2 Nunnery Lakes Thetford Jan 29th/30th, 2 drakes Welney Feb 19th and redhead there Feb 22nd, Breydon Water Feb 27th, Riverside Road Norwich March 7th and Breydon Water April 6th.

Occasional records of 1-3 at various coastal localities June-Sept.

Fewer recorded in Fens in second-winter period, with records of 9 Denver Sluice Dec 13th, 4 Wiggenhall St Mary-Magdalen Dec 15th and 23rd with 6 on 24th, 15 King's Lynn Dec 26th. Other inland records from Surlingham Broad Nov 20th and Breydon Water Dec 29th.

1995 addition: 5 Breydon Water June 24th.

## **Goosander**

*Mergus merganser*

*Winter visitor and passage migrant, most abundant in severe winters.*

Cold weather at the start of the year produced a notable influx from the continent. Visible passage noted from Jan 1st, with highest counts 2 west Hunstanton, 2 west Titchwell, 3 west Mundesley, 3 west Paston Jan 1st; 22 off Heacham, 6 west Wells, 19 east Cley, 9 west 1 east Weybourne, 9 west Sheringham Jan 3rd; 30 west over Burgh Castle Jan 4th; 4 west Cley Jan 6th; 5 Sea Palling Jan 8th; 4 south-west Hunstanton Jan 27th; 6 west Wells Feb 7th; 3 east and 1 west Sheringham Feb 10th; 11 off Holme and 4 south Gorleston Feb 11th; 7 off Holme Feb 12th; 4 south Gorleston Feb 14th. Numerous records of 1-10 throughout the county. Exact numbers present impossible to determine as birds very mobile. Peak counts of 48 Broome GP, 12 Colney GP, 28 Cranwich GP, 23 Ditchingham GP, 11 Lound, 14 Lynford GP, 22 UEA Broad Jan; 21 Colney GP, 41 Cranwich GP, 36 Denver-Hockwold Relief Channel, 50 Denver-South Lynn, 12 Rockland Broad, 15 Tottenhill GP, 26 UEA Broad Feb; 12 Stowbridge-Denver, 24 UEA Broad March. Most had departed by April with occasional records of 1-2 passing coastal sites.

Injured/escaped female R. Wensum from 1995 present throughout the year, occasionally visiting Whitlingham. This attracted a male May 17th (Whitlingham), both moving to Friars Quay Norwich May 24th until at least Sept 11th.

First in autumn Sheringham Oct 5th. Thereafter 1-3 occasionally passing coastal sites Oct-Nov, and then widespread records of chiefly 1-2 inland in Dec. Coastal passage noted again at end Dec, with higher numbers inland. Best counts: 8 west Scolt 16th, 10 Brundall 21st, 8 UEA Broad 24th, 7 Brettenham R. Thet, 9 Horsey Mere 28th and 10 UEA Broad 31st.

1995 correction: Record of 5 Breydon Water June 24th erroneous.

## **Ruddy Duck**

*Oxyura jamaicensis*

*Increasing introduced wanderer, first recorded 1977. Has bred.*

A continued increase, with numerous records throughout the year of 1-5 from Cley, Cockley Cley, Colney GP, Fowlmere, Hardley Flood, Hickling Broad, Holkham Park Lake, Holkham NNR, Horsey Mere, Hoveton Great Broad, Little Broad Filby, Lynford GP, Lyng GP, Martham Broad, Ormesby Broad, Pentney GP, Ranworth Broad, Raynham Lake, Rockland Broad, Rollesby Broad, Sennowe GP, Strumpshaw Fen, Surlingham, Swanton Morley GP, Tottenhill GP and Welney.

Higher counts from Tottenhill GP where up to 7 Feb, 13 March, 6 Nov, and Holkham Park Lake where 10 Sept-Oct, and 6 Dec

Successful breeding this year at Cockley Cley, where female with 3 young July 6th, and Holkham Park Lake, where 5 young Aug with a second female thought to have nested. Failed breeding at Fowlmere due to low water levels.

### **Honey Buzzard**

*Pernis apivorus*

#### ***Rare migrant breeder and scarce passage migrant.***

Exceptionally scarce in spring with only one record, heading north over Yarmouth May 22nd.

Up to 3 adults were present at the much publicised breeding site from May 23rd. Little information received regarding breeding attempts other than birds in display on several occasions. Evidence would suggest no breeding attempt was made this year.

Mid-summer reports from Sennowe Park July 3rd and Guist Aug 1st presumably relate to birds from Fulmodeston Severals/Swanton Great Wood.

Few autumn migrants noted: Hempstead marshes Aug 19th, Titchwell Aug 20th and 28th, juvenile Docking Aug 24th, Holme Sept 15th and one out to sea at Horsey/Winterton Sep 24th.

### **Red Kite**

*Milvus milvus*

#### ***Increasing visitor. Birds from the Continent and British re-introduction projects occur.***

A scattering of first winter period records: 2 Ringstead Jan 2nd, singles there Jan 8th-9th, 13th and 31st, Bodney Jan 8th, Blickling, Catfield and Ranworth Jan 13th, Snettisham Feb 4th, Felbrigg and Cromer Feb 24th, Bradwell Feb 26th, Yarmouth and Stockton (near Loddon) Feb 27th.

A large number of spring migrants moved through the county March-early June, all records listed as follows:

March: Honingham 9th, Northrepps 10th, Mundesley, Paston and Bacton 15th, Overstrand, Bacton, Horsey 18th, Ringstead Common and Framlingham Earl 20th, Alderford Common 21st, 2 Winterton and presumably the same 2 Breydon 23rd, Rollesby and 2 Overstrand 24th, Wroxham Broad 25th, Briston and West Somerton/Winterton 26th, Grimston 26th, Welney, Smallburgh and Dunton/Tatterford 28th, Ringstead Common and 2-3 Hoveton and Smallburgh 29th, 3 Sheringham/West Runton/Cromer 30th, Winterton 30th-31st and Waxham and Wroxham Broad 31st.

April: 2 Sheringham 1st, Cley and Aldeby 3rd, Felbrigg/West Runton/Cromer and Horsford 5th, Snettisham 7th, Ridlington 8th, Sheringham and Buckenham/Cantley 9th, Yarmouth and Sprowston 10th, Snettisham 12th, Mundesley/Paston/Bacton 14th-16th, possibly the same Sea Palling 15th and Waxham 16th, North Wootton, Salthouse and Sheringham 16th, Seething 18th, 2 Snettisham 21st, Hilborough 25th and Kelling Heath 30th.

May: West Acre 6th, East Harling and Long Stratton 20th, Swanton Novers 21st, Horning Upper Street 23rd, Hardley and Cantley 25th, Welney 31st and Swanton Novers 31st-June 1st.

Not one record received indicated that a wing-tagged bird was involved.

A pair successfully reared 2 young just across the county border in Suffolk, both adults regularly being seen in Norfolk. A juvenile noted some distance away in Norfolk July 31st, may have been associated with this breeding occurrence.

The current success of the re-introduction scheme within Britain suggests it will probably be sooner rather than later when this magnificent raptor returns to the county breeding list.

In contrast to the spring passage, only two autumn records, West Newton July 7th and Sennowe Park Aug 11th, and no records for the second winter period.

**Marsh Harrier**

*Circus aeruginosus*

*Scarce but increasing migrant breeder. Also passage migrant; small numbers winter.*

Three roosts occupied during the first winter period when the main Broadland roost held 9 Jan, 7 Feb and 9 March, a Mid-Yare valley roost held 3 Jan, 2 Feb and 1 Mar and a Waveney valley roost held 3 Jan and 3 Feb. Unusual records during this period of singles hunting over Sculthorpe Fen Jan 13th, west at Weybourne Feb 2nd, Holme Feb 14th and Titchwell Feb 27th-29th, indicating early arrival of returning migrants. Sheringham recorded its earliest ever migrant for the second consecutive year (March 9th), with numerous coastal sites recording other early birds. Inland records (away from roosting areas) in March at Northrepps 10th and UEA Broad 28th.

Most breeding pairs on territory by the end of April. However, during April a total of 22 migrants through Holme, max 13 west on 27th and 10 passed through Sheringham, max 4 east on 22nd. Inland records from Welney April 3rd, 5th, 12th and 25th, Houghton April 18th, Norwich April 22nd, UEA Broad/Colney GP April 25th-26th and Fritcham April 28th.

Fewer migrants in early May, but 8 west at Sheringham May 19th was a record site day total; the following day 4 moved south at Breydon, then 3 west plus one in from the sea at Holme May 21st and 2 east at Weybourne May 22nd. Single inland record from Swanton Novers May 25th.

An unusual number of inland records during June away from breeding sites when noted at Dunton, South Creak, Syderstone, Waterden, and regularly hunting over arable fields at Fritcham.

Breeding: a minimum of 53 nesting females producing at least 87-89 young but fledging success not known at several sites. Numbers of young in recent years are listed below:

Year	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Fledged young	36	43	60	82	88	90	75	114	105	71	112	87

Widespread post-breeding dispersal from late July with records from all areas of the county except Breckland. Most had departed by mid-Sept. At Welney, regularly noted in Aug when 5 passed through, with 6 birds during Sept, when recorded on 18 dates, the last there Oct 1st.

Reports received from 2 roosts in the second winter period, both in Broadland. At the main roost: 3 Oct, 7 Nov and 9 Dec, at the second roost: 1 Oct, 3 Nov and 4 Dec. At this time recorded away from known roosting areas at Brancaster Harbour Dec 13th and Breydon 1 Dec 26th.

**Hen Harrier**

*Circus cyaneus*

*Passage migrant and winter visitor. Former breeder, now exceptional in summer.*

Roosting numbers stable from the end of 1995, details tabulated below. Roost identification as in 1995 report. No details received for roost C in this period.



	Roost A	Roost B	Roost C	Roost D	Roost F	Roost G	Max Total
Jan	8	8	4	2	-	3	25
Feb	3	7	2	2	-	1	15
Mar	-	1	-	-	4	-	5

Regular records from areas adjacent to known roosting sites in first winter period, usually singly, occasionally 2-3. Away from these areas, more common than usual during this period when odd records from Burgh Common, Egmere, Flitcham, Frettenham, Fring, Houghton, Kettlestone Common, Overstrand, Sheringham, Thwaite Common, Lower Waveney Valley (4 dates), Weybourne and Yarmouth.

Fewer records in April but again widespread as wintering birds dispersed. A total of 10 May records, all involving ringtails, at Potter Heigham 2nd, Salthouse 5th-6th, Winterton and Weybourne 6th, Wash coastal path 8th and 12th, Burnham Overy Dunes 12th and Holme 17th and 19th.

First returning bird at Wolferton Aug 28th, followed by 3 Sept and one early Oct record, possibly involving a single ringtail, at Waxham Sept 21st, Horsey/Winterton Sept 22nd. Horsey again Sept 29th and Eccles Oct 1st. Further arrival from the end of the first week of Oct but most recorded in last week of the month.

During the second winter period, fewer records away from known roosting areas, with records from Buxton Heath, Fring, Haddiscoe, Heacham, Sheringham and South Creak.

The variability of roost counts is well illustrated by counts from roost B (in Broadland), where none roosting Oct 7th, one Oct 27th but 7 Oct 28th (highlighting the late, simultaneous arrival date of most birds). At the same roost, 5 were recorded Dec 3rd, but 11 (including 6 grey males) on Dec 14th. Unless synchronised counts are conducted, the figures received can only give a broad estimate of numbers roosting at each site.

No details received from roost E in second winter period.

	Roost A	Roost B	Roost C	Roost D	Roost F	Roost G	Roost I	MaxTotal
Oct	-	7	-	-	2	0	-	9
Nov	3	5	4	1	6	-	2	21
Dec	-	11	3	3	5	-	2	24

### Montagu's Harrier

*Circus pygargus*

#### *Rare migrant breeder and scarce passage migrant.*

Simultaneous arrival of spring birds in third week of April when noted at Potter Heigham 23rd, east at Weybourne and Sheringham 24th, Flitcham 25th and Anmer 26th. During May a total of 9 recorded at Hickling Broad 2nd, west at Titchwell and Holme 6th, Sea Palling 8th, Cley 12th and 18th, Bawsey 19th, Swanton Novers 24th and Burnham Overy 28th. A further 5 in June at Sheringham 2nd, Swanton Novers 6th, Kelling 9th, Smokers Hole 13th and Docking/Choseley 22nd.

At the regular breeding area a total of 3 nests (2 males and 3 females), producing 10 young. The fledging success since 1987 is shown in the table below:

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Young	9	6	13	13	7	10	13	11	12	10
Nests	3	3	5	5	2	4	4	9	4	3



Forced out of Scandinavia and eastern Europe by plummeting temperatures and snow during late autumn 1995 a large-scale influx of highly mobile Mealy Redpolls became a feature of the 1995/6 winter. Among them a surprising number of Arctic Redpolls were detected by keen-eyed observers (Upper Arctic – both *D. Nye*; Lower left Mealy and right Arctic – both *R. Chittenden*).







Top left: Black-and-White Warbler, Trowse-next-Norwich, November. As unexpected as the county first at How Hill in 1985 (*J. Bhalerao*) and right: Booted Warbler, Gorleston/Hopton, September (*A. Tate*). Centre left: Lesser Grey Shrike, Burnham Overy, September (*I. Leach*) and right: Isabelline Shrike, Holme, October (*D. Nye*). Bottom left: Spotted Crake, Titchwell, August and right: Blyth's Reed Warbler, Warham Greens, September (*both D. Nye*).





Top: In the Norfolk Brecks 59 pairs of Stone Curlews summered, rearing 55 young (C.R. Knights). Bottom: Eight Pectoral Sandpipers were recorded during 1996 including this one at Weybourne and Kelling in October (I. Leach).





Top: Both this Jack Snipe (Left) and the Garganey featured in Martin Preston's Weybourne garden list where they were attracted by a pond and scrapes (J. Bhalerao). Bottom left: A very few Greenshank winter in north Norfolk's creeks and silted harbours (*I. Leach*); right: The Titchwell Black-winged Stilt first arrived as long ago as September 1993 (*J. Bhalerao*).





Autumn dispersal from July 28th when noted at Titchwell and Beston Regis, followed by singles Binham and Sheringham Aug 11th, Weybourne/Sheringham and Swanton Novers Aug 15th, Stiffkey Aug 16th and Blofield Aug 18th. Unusually no Sept records received.

### Goshawk

*Accipiter gentilis*

*Rare breeder. Also scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.*

A number of records away from known breeding areas in the first winter period: Houghton Jan 1st, Flitcham Jan 29th, Stiffkey Feb 3rd, Eaton (near Norwich) Feb 11th and Buckenham Toft Mill Feb 23rd. One at Welney March 24th was well out of the usual range and in unfamiliar habitat.

An imm male at Holkham April 2nd-26th, another imm male at Holme April 17th and one between Cley and Holt May 6th. All other records from this period probably relate to breeding or summering birds.

A total of 5-6 pairs probably bred, at least 3 of these in Breckland. A single male was seen in display at 2 further sites though breeding was not suspected at either.

Few records in the autumn and second winter period: Thornham Sept 23rd, Brundall Oct 14th, Cley Nov 13th and one at a Broadland Harrier roost Dec 25th.

### Sparrowhawk

*Accipiter nisus*

*Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.*

Evidence of spring migration in April when 6 south at Winterton 2nd and 14th, 2 east at Weybourne 10th and one east there 27th, 4 west at Holme 21st and 8 west there 27th. At this time 10 were in the air together at West Runton though it is likely that some were local birds.

Much more breeding detail received this year, a total of 32-48 pairs noted at 27 sites, many reports involving fledged young. This surely still represents but a fraction of the county breeding population.

Autumn migrants in evidence from Sept 27th when one in from the sea at Salhouse, then 2 south at Hunstanton Oct 11th, singles south there Oct 13th and 14th, singles in from sea at Titchwell Oct 16th and Holme Oct 22nd, followed by 3 in off the sea at Sheringham Oct 23rd. In Nov, one in off the sea at Weybourne 14th.

### Buzzard

*Buteo buteo*

*Passage migrant and winter visitor. Very small breeding population of unknown origin.*

A number of records Jan-March involving birds away from known breeding areas including one in the Cley/Salhouse/Kelling area Jan 5th-Feb 1st and one West Acre throughout Jan. Additional Jan singles at Burnham Deepdale, Horsey, Ingham, Mundesley and Stradsett. Singles during Feb at Berney, Flitcham, Kelling/Lower Bodham, Sea Palling and Sutton Broad with 2 West Acre 11th and 17th and 2 West Runton 28th.

Many more records in March, probably in excess of 25 individuals involved up to 29th including one at Southrepps throughout the month. In the last 2 days of March a major westward movement as follows: 9 west at Sheringham and 3 Salhouse Heath 30th, 7 west at East Runton, 9 west at West Runton and 13 west at Walsey Hills 31st. This movement continued into April when 4 west at Sidestrand and 9 east and 4 west at Sheringham 1st. Another peak occurred in the second half of April when 9 Waxham 18th, Burgh Castle, 2 Winterton, 2 Horsey, 3 West Runton and single Sheringham on 20th, 3 Lound, 4 Winterton.



3 Waxham and one West Runton 21st, Mundesley and 3 Sheringham 22nd, 3 Weybourne, singles Holkham and Snettisham 24th. A scattering of other April records, mainly from coastal locations, probably 20+ in total allowing for probable duplication.

Fewer in May, a number of which relate to breeding/summering birds, those not considered such were at Weybourne and Snettisham 5th, North Wootton 6th, 2 Martham 11th, Kelling 12th, Cley 17th, Eccles and Breydon 20th, Brundall and Breydon 23rd, Coltishall 25th and Cley/Langham 31st.

Situation from June clouded by breeding/summering birds and current release scheme, though one in from the sea at Blakeney Point on June 5th was clearly an immigrant, similarly 2 Cley/Kelling June 5th, Stiffkey June 6th, Summerfield June 9th, Hickling June 16th and Sculthorpe June 25th.

Breeding occurred at 2 sites, each pair raising one young. Adults were noted in display at a further 5 sites, though no confirmation of breeding from these. At least 2 birds summered at a further 2 sites, with 4 at one site and 5 at the other on at least one occasion. The situation begins to show some promise that the small breeding population may be gaining a foothold.

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Confirmed breeding pairs	1	3	2	1	2
Probable breeding pairs	-	1	1	-	5
Possible breeding pairs	1	1	2	1	1
Maximum breeding pairs	2	4	4	2	8
Minimum fledged young	2	6	2	1	2

Note: see NBR 1995 for qualifying data.

Little evidence of autumn movement until late Aug, all records thought not to relate to summering birds as follows: Yarmouth July 15th, Eccles Aug 10th, Titchwell Aug 24th with 2 there 25th, East Harling Aug 26th, Sea Palling/Hempstead Aug 27th-28th, 2 west at Holme Aug 28th, Downham Market and Burnham Norton Aug 31st, 2 there Sept 2nd, 2 North Walsham Sept 4th, Watton Sept 6th-7th and 15th, Holme Sept 7th, Holkham Bay (sitting on beach) Sept 17th, Barrow Common Oct 1st, Hingham Oct 6th, Massingham Heath Oct 30th and Shernborne Nov 18th. Few winter records in second period: Winterton Dec 4th, Wroxham Dec 20th, 2 Kelling Dec 21st and singles Hickling and South Acre Dec 26th.

### **Rough-legged Buzzard**

*Buteo lagopus*

#### ***Passage migrant and winter visitor. Periodic large-scale influxes.***

At least one remained in the Beccles area (Stanley Carrs) Jan-Feb, another regularly at Fritton and Haddiscoe Jan to mid-Feb, both presumably accounting for 2 Chedgrave/Thorpe Marshes Jan 23rd and 2 Belton Jan 24th. At Flitcham, 1-3 during Jan with one remaining to mid-Feb, these birds probably accounting for those at Gayton Jan 7th, West Acre Jan 29th and Feb 18th with 2 there Feb 11th, and Great Massingham Feb 17th. Additionally, singles Houghton Jan 1st, south at Snettisham Jan 11th and 31st, Wells/Walsingham/Barsham Jan 28th-31st, presumably the same Holkham Feb 1st-2nd and 6th and again at Barsham early Feb. Another Southrepps/Roughton Feb 5th. A single March record: West Acre on 24th.

In April singles Fritton 1st, Horsey 14th, Winterton 21st and 28th and also at Waxham on the latter date were possibly associated with Buzzard passage as the dates conform with the peak arrivals of that species. Additional single Binham May 14th.

No autumn influx this year and just a single winter record between Docking and Sedgeford Dec 31st.

## Osprey

*Pandion haliaetus*

**Regular passage migrant in small numbers. Over-summering has occurred.**

First spring passage migrant Thompson Water April 16th-17th followed by Titchwell 21st, 22nd and 23rd (3 birds), Hickling 21st, North Wootton and 2 Blickling Lake 23rd, Sheringham BO, Weybourne and Titchwell (all west) 24th, Bodney 27th and Sparham Pools/Lyng GP April 29th-May 1st. Further May records at Hardingham 2nd, Hardley Flood and west at Burnham Overy and Holme 5th, Binham/Cockthorpe and presumably the same Salthouse and Cley 7th, north at Holme 11th, Hickling Broad 14th and 21st, west at Cley and Scolt 16th, 1-2 Buxton Lammass 16th-17th, Blakeney Point and east at Cley 17th, Thompson Water, west at Holkham and Snettisham 18th, Cley/Morston and Holkham 19th, Fritton Lake 20th, Strumpshaw 22nd, Narford Lake 23rd, Glandford/Wiveton 25th, Ludham/How Hill/Catfield 27th-28th and in from the sea at Sea Palling, later over Rush Hills 29th. During June, singles west at Sheringham BO 3rd, Docking/Burnham Market 4th, Tottenhill and King's Lynn 13th, Sprowston and Lyng GP 25th and Wheatfen at the end of the month. The spring total of 35+ is almost identical to the previous year.



*Ospreys at Blickling Lake (G. Wright)*

Returning birds in autumn from Aug 15th (East Winch and in from the sea at Titchwell/Thornham). Two further Aug records, South Creak 17th and Lyng-Easthaugh GP 27th and a maximum of 10 in Sept when 2 Strumpshaw 1st, singles Hillington, Hassingham and Buckenham 5th, Whitlingham Lane GP 22nd, Newton Flotman 23rd-26th, Weybourne 24th, Brancaster and Overstrand 25th, Ickburgh 30th plus one Wheatfen (undated) during the month. Maximum of 14 in autumn when never as numerous as spring.

## Kestrel

*Falco tinnunculus*

**Resident and passage migrant.**

This species is currently undergoing a population decline at county and national levels. Agricultural methods are clearly an important factor in the equation and it is vital that the situation is closely monitored in such an agricultural-based county as Norfolk.

The large concentrations which regularly formed along the Wash sea wall in autumn are clearly a thing of the past, indeed the largest group recorded was 6 at Holkham in Jan.

Spring passage migrants west at Holme April 9th, 3 west April 18th and 4 west May 26th. Also 2 west Sheringham April 9th.

Much more breeding data received, a total of about 50 pairs located, many breeding successfully, most notably in the Stanford Battle Area where a vole plague enabled 16 pairs to rear 71 young; most nests here were in boxes. Elsewhere 1-3 pairs reported breeding at further 21 sites.

Despite these successes there is little evidence to suggest the future of this species has taken a turn for the better. All breeding data will again be welcomed, especially as the BBS showed it occurred in 20 out of 57 1km squares.

One passed Sheringham on the unusual date of July 22nd, followed by one in from the sea at Holme Sept 30th. No other evidence of autumn movement.

## Merlin

*Falco columbarius*

**Passage migrant and winter visitor. Exceptional in summer.**

Roosting numbers well down on end of 1995. Details from 3 roosts only.

	Roost A	Roost B	Roost D	Max total
Jan	-	3	1	4
Feb	1	3	2	6
March	-	3	-	3

A fair number of records away from known roosting areas in first winter period: including coastal records from Ousemouth, Heacham, Blakeney Point, Cley, Weybourne and Sheringham. Also odd inland records from Denver Sluice, Flitcham, Holme Hale, Langham, Potter Heigham, Reedham, Stanhoe, Syderstone Common, Terrington, West Acre and Welney (2).

Fewer April records as wintering birds departed, mainly coastal but singles inland at Sandringham 2nd, Welney 5th and Buckenham 21st, followed by 6 coastal birds in May: Mundesley 2nd-5th, Happisburgh 11th, Winterton 12th, Ongar Hill 17th, Blakeney Point 19th and Holme 20th.

A very early autumn bird at Snettisham July 28th, then singles Sheringham/Weybourne Aug 23rd (remaining to Dec) and Cley Aug 25th then a good arrival in the first week of Sept when noted Scolt and Cley 4th, Titchwell, Burnham Overy Dunes and Welney 5th, Cley, Sea Palling and 2 Breydon 6th, Holme, Titchwell, Burnham Overy Dunes, Sheringham and 2 Warham 7th. Further arrival Sept 18th-Oct 1st when most well-watched coastal sites noted singles but 2 Scolt Sept 18th, 3 Horsey Sept 24th, 2 Warham Sept 26th, 3 Sheringham Sept 28th and 2 Breydon Sept 30th. Inland birds very scarce at this time. At Scolt Sept 24th, one was up to 1/2 mile offshore at times, intercepting incoming migrants.

From Oct, in addition to the long-staying Sheringham bird, 2 were regular on Scolt, up to 4 in the Wells area and 1-2 regularly at Breydon and Titchwell. Inland birds during Nov-Dec at Choseley, Fring, Great Walsingham, Anmer, Kettlestone, Sandringham/Anmer and Welney (2). Usual coastal singles Nov-Dec but 2 Morston Nov 11th-year end, 2 Scolt Dec 9th and 2 Snettisham Dec 15th.

Details received from 4 roost sites in the second winter period, numbers again relatively low.



	Roost A	Roost B	Roost F	Roost I	Max total
Oct	4	-	-	-	4
Nov	1	1	2	1	5
Dec	-	5	1	-	6

## Hobby

*Falco subbuteo*

### Scarce migratory breeder and increasing passage migrant.

First in spring at Strumpshaw April 20th then Burnham Overy/Holkham (2) and Weybourne April 21st, Cley, Breydon and Berney April 22nd, Burnham Norton April 23rd followed by a further 12 in April. In May at least 65 reported from over 50 widespread localities, all singles except 2 west at Sheringham 30th and pairs at what proved to be breeding/summering sites. Passage was consistent throughout May with no obvious peaks of arrival. A further 30+ recorded from 25 sites in June, again all singles except 2 Sheringham 9th.

The breeding situation remains fairly stable, 4 confirmed breeding pairs fledged 10 young (equalling the best total in 1993) and a further 5 pairs summered, some of which possibly bred but were unconfirmed as such.

The number of July records indicate that single birds are summering within the county, though probably wandering widely. A total of about 40 recorded during July from 30 sites, again all singles, and a similar number in Aug when also 2 Cley 8th, Elsing 25th and Winterton 28th.

Considerably more coastal bias to the Sept records as birds departed south, most inland records relating to lingering breeding adults and fledged juvs, most of which had departed by the third week of the month. A total of 45+ at 30 sites, mainly singly but 2 Holme 3rd and 16th and Kelling 24th. A total of 6 lingered into Oct at Cley 2nd, Winterton 4th and 7th, Yarmouth 9th, East Rudham 11th and West Somerton 12th.

## Peregrine

*Falco peregrinus*

### Passage migrant and increasing winter visitor.

A number of overwintering birds remained from 1995, an imm male roosted on Hunstanton Cliffs and was regularly seen in the nearby vicinity to the end of March. Up to 2 at Holkham/Wells, one remaining to May 4th, 1-2 Breydon, at least one remaining to April 22nd, though again there is confusion and possible duplication here as 1-2 also recorded regularly in the Fritton/Chedgrave area, wandering into the mid-Yare valley. Additionally an imm was irregularly seen along the southern Wash limits to March 17th.

First winter period sightings unlikely to relate to those above as follows: Smokers Hole Jan 2nd, Cromer and Fincham Jan 20th, Sheringham Jan 20th and Feb 6th, Stanford Water Jan 21st and Feb 16th, Cley Feb 3rd, 6th and 10th, Nordelph Feb 11th, Horsey March 2nd, Welney March 2nd, 13th, 18th and 26th, Briston March 25th, Blakeney March 28th and UEA March 30th.

During April and early May, coasting migrants noted at Mundesley April 9th, Cley, out to sea, April 13th, Sheringham April 14th, east at Weybourne and Sheringham April 22nd, west at Cley and Blakeney Hbr May 6th. A late imm female was seen to kill a Gadwall at Titchwell May 19th.

An unusual series of early autumn records in July: Kelling WM 4th, Cley and Lakenheath 13th, a moulting adult Welney 18th and 22nd (when mobbed by Avocets) and Snettisham

19th. An adult again at Welney Aug 15th and 22nd and one arrived at Breydon Aug 31st, remaining to Oct 24th.

During Sept most wintering birds settled into the now familiar areas. One returned to the southern edge of the Wash Sept 19th-year end with 2 Terrington Dec 24th. An immature (or possibly 2) wandered widely between Snettisham and Titchwell and occasionally to other more easterly coastal sites, remaining to year end. An imm male was on Scolt Sept 27th to Nov 8th, often chasing migrant thrushes up to 1/2 mile out to sea. An adult and an imm Holkham/Wells/Warham Sept-year end. One at Breydon Dec 6th-year end with 2 Dec 22nd, again confusion here due to 1-2 noted at Fritton/Haddiscoe from Nov 1st-year end with occasional Yare valley records. At Welney, an adult Nov 1st and 9th-10th and 2 throughout Dec.

Additional autumn and winter records from Sheringham and Winterton (sitting on beach) Oct 6th, Horsey Oct 10th-12th, Nov 9th and Dec 8th, Kelling Oct 13th, Cley Nov 21st, Horsey Dec 8th and Ringstead Dec 13th.

### Red-legged Partridge

*Alectoris rufa*

#### *Common introduced resident.*

During the year coveys exceeding 20 were noted at Heacham (29) and Ickburgh (26) Jan, East Ruston (26) Oct, Ingham (34) Nov and Waxham (28) and West Somerton (21) Dec.

BBS results: found in 48 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 5.6 birds per occupied square - no significant change from 1995.

Information below (plus corresponding data for Grey Partridge) again provided by The Norfolk Partridge Group and The Game Conservancy Trust.

Spring density 1996

	Hectares counted	Pairs located	Density pairs/sqkm	Percent change 1995-96
North Norfolk				
Site A	918	206	22.4	0
Site B	195	42	21.5	+20
Site C	587	18	3.1	-24
Central Norfolk				
Site D	1823	101	5.5	+20
Site E	394	47	11.9	-11
North-west Norfolk				
Site F	790	61	7.7	+7
Site G	608	125	20.5	+32
Site H	1175	198	16.9	+7

Of 28 sites counted, 17 showed increases and only 8 recorded decreases with an average increase of 9%.

Autumn density 1996

Hectares counted	Broods	Mean brood size	%	chick survival	Density/sq km	Total birds
Site A	918	95	4.1	21.7	89.5	822
Site C	474	9	5.1	35.0	16.0	76
Site D	1822	44	5.0	29.3	22.8	415
Site F	1215	21	5.6	32.7	17.0	207

Of 22,114 hectares counted at 30 locations, 1070 broods and an estimated autumn total of 11,123 birds were present at a density of 50.3/sq km. Average chick survival rate was 27.4%, very close to the estimated 30% required to maintain a stable population - all encouraging signs.

Grey Partridge

*Perdix perdix*

Resident.

Only one sizable covey reported during the year, 35 Horsey Nov 9th. no others exceeded 15 birds.

BBS results: found in 22 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 5.0 birds per occupied square. At East Tuddenham a nest containing 15 eggs was deserted when a hen Common Pheasant laid 2 eggs in it.

Spring density 1996

	Hectares counted	Pairs located	Density pairs/sq km	Percent change 1995-96
North Norfolk				
Site A	918	435	47.4	-14
Site B	195	29	14.9	+16
Site C	587	6	1.0	+14
Central Norfolk				
Site D	1823	43	2.4	+114
Site E	394	22	5.6	-21
North-west Norfolk				
Site F	790	13	1.7	+86
Site G	608	103	16.9	+81
Site H	1175	79	6.7	+8

A total of 30 localities counted, 23 recording increases and just 6 with a decrease in numbers accounting for an average increase of 4%.

Autumn density 1996

	Hectares counted	Broods	Mean brood size	% chick survival	Density/sq km	Total birds
SiteA	918	84	3.3	12.3	79.7	732
SiteC	474	5	5.2	37.6	7.6	36
SiteD	1822	23	7.1	36.8	13.0	237
SiteF	1215	6	5.3	33.0	3.7	45



A total of 22,114 hectares surveyed at 30 localities produced 990 broods with a chick survival rate of 29.8% giving an estimated population of 9,114 birds - again an encouraging set of results.

### **Quail**

*Coturnix coturnix*

***Summer visitor in erratic numbers. Sporadic breeder.***

First in spring between Docking and Fring May 17th, then one flushed on Blakeney Point May 19th, Gaywood/Refley May 20th and 2 calling Matlask Airfield May 22nd. Singles Salthouse and Wiveton May 26th, with 2 at each site on 28th and single Kelling May 29th.

In June a further 20+ noted at 14 localities, max 3 Salthouse Heath and 3 Crowles Drove. Recorded at only 10 sites in July-Aug but successful breeding likely at Eccles, where 6 flushed early Aug and Suffield where 5 males calling and a juvenile found dead by the roadside Sept 5th. One further Sept record, Choseley on 1st.

### **Common Pheasant**

*Phasianus colchicus*

***Common introduced resident.***

The only information received was of a brood on Scolt July 18th and a report of a stand-off confrontation between a protective hen Pheasant and a Marsh Harrier, the latter losing the day, apparently through boredom, as the former stubbornly defended her ground.

BBS results: found in all 57 1km squares surveyed with an average of 8.4 birds per square.

### **Golden Pheasant**

*Chrysolophus pictus*

***Scarce and local introduced resident.***

Much the same series of reports as the previous year. Breckland remains the stronghold though there is some evidence to indicate numbers may be dwindling across its county range. It is clear that scrub clearance in dense woodland can cause considerable disturbance to this spectacular pheasant and it is thought that this is the reason for none being seen at East Harling for the first time since 1988.

Maximum numbers: 5 (2 males) Wolferton/Sandringham/Dersingham, 1 Breckles Heath, 2 Hockham/East Wretham, 10 (8 males) Wayland Wood. Also present at Merton March-April though no counts received.

### **Water Rail**

*Rallus aquaticus*

***Resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.***

Good numbers at over 40 widespread locations, including Breckland waters, in the first winter period, mainly 1-2 but larger numbers as follows: Snettisham 3 Jan, Holme 8 Jan and 3 March, Blakeney Freshes 6 Jan and 5 March, Cley 3 March, Hickling Broad 3 Feb and Sutton Broad 6 April. During this period 18 tideline corpses found on saltmarsh between Wells North Point and Stiffkey Feb 21st and one roadside casualty, Overstrand April 9th.

During the breeding season birds heard calling or young were seen at Burnham Norton, Burnham Overy, Cley, Hickling, Holkham, Strumpshaw, Surlingham Church Marsh, Titchwell, Welney and Weybourne.

Very few noted in autumn and still relatively small numbers in the second winter period. Noted at 20+ sites Oct-Dec, mainly singles, occasionally 2, but 5 Holme Oct and Dec, 10

Strumpshaw Oct, 4 Stanford Water Nov, 6 Titchwell Dec, 4 Thompson Water and How Hill Nov and 3 Brancaster Nov and Pensthorpe Dec.

An exhausted bird was on a Wereham doorstep Oct 13th, one became a window casualty at Eccles Oct 17th and another was a traffic casualty at Merton Nov 20th.

**Spotted Crake** *Porzana porzana*

*Scarce passage migrant. Rare in winter. Formerly bred.*

Three autumn records, continuing the recent trend for this species: Titchwell Aug 18th-Sept 21st (DCr RK NS TS et al) with a second bird there Aug 21st-24th (PJH RK); Cley Sept 17th (TCD et al).

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

*Abundant resident. Immigrants in autumn.*

North coast WeBs count totals: 451 Jan, 206 March, 129 April, 80 Aug, 63 Sept, 98 Oct, 144 Nov and 144 Dec.

Well recorded in first winter period, but not so well in second winter period. All regularly recorded sites tabulated below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Cley	67	-	30	13	3	13	-
Fritcham	20	36	22	-	-	-	-
Holkham Lake	75	48	46	25	64	72	95
Holkham NNR	166	15	62	-	-	-	-
Holme	62	11	27	10	10	17	-
Salthouse	80	61	44	10	7	24	-
SennowePark	6	40	25	-	20	-	18
Stanford TA	44	36	37	-	-	-	-
Welney	70	126	109	-	-	1	1
Wroxham (River Bure)	49	44	18	-	20	-	20

BBS results: found in 24 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 2.4 birds per occupied square. Compared to 1995 a 19% decrease in number of squares but a 31% increase in average number of birds per occupied square.

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

*Common resident and winter visitor.*

North coast WeBs counts: 1016 Jan, 870 Feb, 785 March, 427 April, 384 Sept, 371 Oct, 540 Nov.

Counts from well recorded areas displayed below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Colney GP	795	245	375	146	305	285	96	162
Cranwich GP	140	-	53	22	104	-	-	-
Fowl mere	41	53	52	65	-	-	-	-
Holkham Lake	573	517	330	144	174	305	379	340
Holkham NNR	165	221	223	-	-	15	84	-
Holme	134	109	113	40	120	10	15	11
Pentney GP	336	310	110	-	-	267	-	327
Sennowe Park	380	317	130	94	348	438	478	412
Snettisham	147	-	160	78	121	-	124	47
Strumpshaw	170	-	488	170	165	179	204	388
Welney	661	870	695	357	84	-	-442	
Wroxham Bridge	219	154	52	-	-	84	102	190
Wroxham Broad	129	169	50	-	-	-	-	-

As with previous species, numerous records in first winter period, less so in the second winter period, though, as can be seen above, most sites which hold large numbers are fairly well covered. Larger counts from less well counted sites of 400 Hickling Jan, 203 Tottenhill GP Oct, 250 Lyng GP Nov-Dec, 356 River Thurne (Candle Dyke-Potter Heigham) Dec and 375 Hickling Dec.

Unusual records from Sheringham (where very rare) of one on the sea Feb 6th and another found dead there Feb 21st.

Few breeding details received: Baconsthorpe (5 pairs), Broome GP (1), Colney GP (8), Flitcham (1), Ken Hill Estate (18), Lynford (5), Pensthorpe (17), Welney (44) and Weybourne (3).

### Common Crane

### *Grus grus*

*Resident colony in Broadland since 1979. Some records may relate to Continental migrants.*

The Broadland party numbered 9 at the start of the year and remained so through to spring. In autumn, 9 were again present until 11 were seen Nov 5th-6th, then 10 Dec 23rd and 12 in late Dec, all adults. It is thought that no breeding attempts were made this year, though a pair seen 'dancing' in May.

As usual, a number of spring sightings away from Broadland. To attempt to identify them with the resident population or as genuine migrants would be pure speculation: 2 North Wootton, north over Snettisham and east over Titchwell and Holkham April 12th; 2 east at Weybourne and 2



*Cranes (N. Borrow)*



west at West Runton were possibly not the same as 4 passed west over Sheringham and Kelling April 27th; 4 west over Sheringham, Weybourne and Cley April 30th; 2 east over Titchwell May 3rd; 4 Lound May 12th. In Suffolk 4 roosting nightly at Minsmere April 27th-30th were presumed to be the same birds seen in North Norfolk at this time.

In autumn at Hanworth Common 4 north-north-east Aug 26th and 3 east Nov 24th.

Oystercatcher

*Haematopus ostralegus*

*Common winter visitor, passage migrant and breeder.*

Table includes all sites holding 500 or more birds (qualifying level for national importance: 3600):

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Terrington	569	976	2380	315	105	-	679	1033	699	743	790	413
Snettisham	2950	-	1830	707	800	335	676	1244	2300	5750	3100	1580
Holme	250	680	1220	235	-	300	400	650	1000	1150	374	157
Warham	780	897	790	156	-	-	-	-	1380	1728	1350	754
Blakeney												
Harbour	680	510	386	430	-	-	-	-	410	540	520	541
Scolt/												
Brancaster	625	920	263	125	-	-	-	-	600	660	563	586
Wells	498	634	500	248	-	-	-	-	750	673	159	117

The decline in The Wash continues, with the average max count at Snettisham falling from 3165 last year to 2049 this year. Other sites with counts over 200 included: Titchwell 313 (Jan) and Stiffkey 726 (Sept).

Breeding data incomplete. A total of 477-479 pairs reported as follows: Coastal sites along beaches, Holme NNR 11, Titchwell 15, Scolt Head 44, Gun Hill-Stiffkey Binks 89, Wells Saltmarsh 15 and Blakeney Point 200. Coastal grazing marshes included: Ken Hill 4, Holme NNR 13, Holkham NNR 43 and Kelling 1. In the Broads under recorded with only 4 pairs from 2 sites, compared with 190 from last year's complete survey. Inland a total of 67-69 pairs from 29 sites, sites/areas holding 2 or more pairs included Baconsthorpe 2, Bircham Newton 2, Breckland 8-9, Dunton 3, Great Bircham 2, Holkham Park 3, Houghton 4, Pensthorpe 3, Sculthorpe 10, Shereford 2, Shernborne 2, South Creak 3, Sparham Pools 2-3, Tattersett 3, Waterden 2 and Welney 5.

Black-winged Stilt

*Himantopus himantopus*

*Vagrant, mostly in late spring/summer, has bred.*

The male at Titchwell continues to live on for a further year, making occasional visits to Brancaster in May.

Avocet

*Recurvirostra avosetta*

*Breeding summer visitor, and possibly increasing winter visitor in small numbers.*

During first-half of winter largest numbers at Breydon, 2-3 in The Wash. In March began to arrive in larger numbers; 72 Ousemouth on 17th, 97 Breydon 24th, 60 Cley 26th and 28 Titchwell and 20 Holkham NNR both 28th.

This year saw a small drop in breeding numbers with only 203 prs reported from 11 sites. The main reason for this was undoubtedly the flooding of Cley Marshes in Feb, the species'

stronghold for many years where only a handful attempted to breed this year. Only one site had reasonable fledging success (53 prs fledging 30 young) while others suffered greatly from Fox predation, mostly at the egg stage. On a more positive note the first inland breeding attempt in the county took place at Welney with a pair fledging a single chick.

Late summer saw the usual post-breeding flocks at Breydon (see table) and in The Wash with a huge count of 600 at the Ousemouth on Aug 16th. Wintering continued at Breydon but in lower numbers than in 1995, no doubt in response to the colder weather.

Breydon monthly maxima:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Breydon	15	31	97	75	27	128	140	170	157	55	6	18

**Stone Curlew**

*Burhinus oedicnemus*

*Breeding summer visitor, mainly to Breckland.*

The first arrival was a bird in off the sea at Great Yarmouth on March 23rd. More typically the first were noted at Weeting Heath with 3 on 28th. In April others seen at Sea Palling flying in off the sea on 15th and at Sheringham BO on 22nd. In May further wanderers were noted at Burnham Overy on 12th and Winterton on 30th.

The number of breeding pairs continue to increase in Breckland with 113 proved breeding pairs fledging 115 young, the Norfolk Brecks held 59 pairs fledging 55 young. Elsewhere in the county a further 4 prs fledged 3 young. Breeding success was again due to a long dry summer. The largest autumn gathering was 34.

**Collared Pratincole**

*Glareola pratincola*

*Vagrant from southern Europe.*

Surely the same bird returning for its third year. On the day of its arrival (June 5th) this very mobile individual was noted flying east at Burnham Norton (ADC), Holkham Gap (SBab ASC), and finally arriving at Cley (DJH et al) and remaining here until 8th, disappearing on 9th, and returning 10th/11th. A month's gap followed before what must have been the same bird returned to Cley on July 15th-16th, 20th-21st, 23rd-24th, and at Salthouse on 25th (RGM et al). Other sites visited at this time were Burnham Norton at dusk on 20th (RIH), and Weybourne on 22nd (FL JWal).

**Little Ringed Plover**

*Charadrius dubius*

*Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.*

The first arrival on March 17th at Whitlingham Lane GP, with the majority arriving from 24th. Visible migration was in April at Sheringham with 1 west 21st and at Holme with 2 west 26th and another 27th. Largest concentrations as follows: 8 Whitlingham Lane GP April 19th and 9 there May 3rd, 8 Welney April 13th and 6 Cranwich GP April 21st and 28th.

A further decline in the breeding population to 21-23 pairs at 13 sites. Only instances of success at Holkham NNR where a pair fledged two young and at Pensthorpe where one chick fledged. More information on success would prove useful as well as any extra measures to protect breeding birds from disturbance. Let's hope an upward trend returns next year.

Number of pairs reported 1987-1996:

1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
21	31	30	22	29	31	41	29	26	21-23

During late summer concentrations of 5 or more were present as follows: July - 6 Pentney GP 1st, 6 Sennowe Park 3rd; 5 Buckenham Marshes 3rd; 9 Cley 21st and 7 Welney WWT 22nd. Aug - 6 Buckenham Marshes 12th and 7 Cantley BF 16th. In Sept numbers tailed off quickly with no records after 16th apart from single Cantley BF Oct 1st.

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*  
*Breeding summer visitor, passage migrant, and winter visitor in small numbers.*  
Table includes all sites holding 250 or more:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Snettisham	0	3	55	-	119	50+	100	-	180	60	0	2
Holme	18	22	48	40	-	-	-	335	275	64	-	6
Scolt/ Brancaster	20	20	-	-	-	-	-	400	260	63	47	23
Blakeney Harbour	102	72	-	91	-	-	-	183	250	181	114	73
Breydon	56	37	95	63	457	107	44	354	292	127	107	97

At Overstrand 2 oiled birds were seen Feb 1st. Typically with cold weather during the first-half of the winter present only in low numbers, the only exception being 102 in Blakeney Harbour in Jan.

During the spring the usual build up of tundrae birds was noted at Breydon, numbers gradually building up from 258 on 7th to a peak of 457 on 26th. The only other site noting this easily over-looked sub-species included Welney WWT with 12 on 19th and 30th.

A total of 251 pairs reported but from fewer sites than last year. The following totals also include last year's in brackets (where applicable) for comparison: Snettisham 36 (56), Holme 30 (45), Titchwell 18, Scolt Head 30 (25), Gun Hill to Stiffkey Binks 37-39, Blakeney Point 75 (45-50) and Yarmouth 9. Inland 8 prs were found at Welney (2), Tallents Meadow GP (1) and Breckland (5).

During Aug-Sept largest numbers built up, best count was 400 on Scolt Aug 26th. During the same period Sheringham BO witnessed their largest ever movement with 55 west Aug 14th.

During the second winter period only low numbers present at most sites.

**Kentish Plover** *Charadrius alexandrinus*  
*Scarce but annual passage migrant, mostly in spring. Rare inland.*

Four records. In April a male at Snettisham 1st, a female at Titchwell 13th-16th and a male at Cley 17th-23rd. In May a female at Breydon 29th to June 1st.



**Dotterel***Charadrius morinellus***Scarce but annual passage migrant. Has over-wintered.**

During spring the first birds noted in April with 3 Waxham 15th, 3 in west Breckland 17th, 2 Sheringham and 1 Sturston 22nd and 1 Sheringham 24th. In May at Sheringham 1 on 2nd and 2 21st, 6 at the same west Breckland site 12th, and 7 at Welney 13th. A female at Winterton/Horsey on June 19th was an unusual date.

A nice late summer 'trip' between Docking and Ringstead at Summerfield in Aug with 17 on 26th, 8 on 27th and 2 on 28th; also at Sheringham 1 west 24th and a juv at Titchwell 28th. In Sept 1 on 21st at Hopton was the last of the year.

**Golden Plover***Pluvialis apricaria***Passage migrant and increasing winter visitor.**

Table showing most regularly counted sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Terrington	1000	175	154	0	234	2428	179	790	725
Snettisham	1000	1	200	440	0	1600	2000	1800	900
Holme-Titchwell	9000	400	230	90	420	1280	400	600	128
Breydon	2100	800	2000	450	1450	2400	3000	4000	7550
Welney	374	43	365	356	-	34	55	-	155

The numbers reported and flock sizes were slightly down this year. Six sites held 2000+ or more, the premier site Breydon, continuing to break its own records with 7750 in Dec. Other sites (not tabulated) included: Repps 3000+, St Benet's Level 2200 and Fakenham 2000 all Jan and Brancaster Harbour 2700 Oct. A further 7 sites had 1000+ as follows: Ludham 1800 Jan; Burnham Norton 1360, Potter Heigham 1600 and Colby 1000 all Oct; Cley 1000 and Horsey 1000 Nov. There may have been some overlap at some of the sites in the Broad.

**Grey Plover***Pluvialis squatarola***Passage migrant and winter visitor.**

Table showing all sites holding internationally important (1500), and counts over 200 birds:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Terrington	1159	244	1107	920	2512	-	1493	3058	1860	500	400
Snettisham	760	622	1250	1120	3300	5	1420	1900	780	800	456
Holme	370	740	1135	120	240	-	-	313	1300	122	95
Titchwell	27	31	24	57	41	5	200	157	129	32	72
Warham	240	70	-	57	-	-	73	118	164	210	111
Breydon	197	187	248	32	57	3	33	60	64	53	66

Similar numbers at the traditionally important sites. Stiffkey loses its status in the table from last year.

Visible migration most noteworthy in August at Holme where 90 west on 13th and at Sheringham where 80 also west on 13th and 30 west next day.



*Grey Plover (N.Borrow)*

Inland at Welney WWT recorded as follows: 6 Jan 7th-8th, 3 March 24th, 4 Oct 10th and 1 Dec 24th. Singles also recorded at Buckenham on 25th April and 20th May, and at Ormesby Broad on Jan 24th.

## Lapwing

*Vanellus vanellus*

**Passage migrant and increasing winter visitor. Declining breeder.**

All counts (1000+) and sites included for completeness and future reference. A total of only 9 sites holding 1000 or more from the following sites during first-winter period as follows: Terrington 2000 Jan, 2380 March; Ousemouth 1600 March; Lynn Point 1590 March; Snettisham 1130 Dec; Breydon 14,000 Jan, 2300 Feb, 11,500 March, 10,400 Nov, 31,000 Dec; St Benet's Level 5000 Jan, 1600 Feb; Ludham 5000 Jan; Fakenham 3000 Jan; Welney 3015 Jan, 1093 March, 2020 Dec. Only movement during first-winter period was 300 east at Sheringham on Mar 10th.

A total of 723 breeding pairs reported. Largest concentrations on coastal grazing marshes totalling 316 pairs, best site as usual was Holkham NNR where 240 pairs fledged 175-200 young, while numbers continued to increase at Ken Hill (26) and Holme (40). In the Broads 76 pairs reported from only 5 sites, the vast majority at Strumpshaw/Buckenham/Cantley with 72 pairs (more records please). At other inland sites 78 pairs were reported from 20 sites, best areas being South Creak/Syderstone (10), Flitcham (Abbey Farm) (7), Pensthorpe (7) and Tattersett (6). In the Fens at Welney WWT a further increase to 147 pairs though only fledging 60 young, due to cold weather and heavy predation from foxes.

Summer movements included at Holme 650 west June 28th, 750 west July 20th, and 220 west on Aug 3rd. In autumn a series of counts from dawn at Hunstanton Cliffs (hrs from dawn) in Oct as follows: 11th 657 (6.5), 12th 452 (5.5), 23rd 2337 (all day), 24th 1463 (8), and 25th 767 (2). Also 2200 west Scolt Head and 1050 west Sheringham Oct 11th and 1400 west Sheringham 23rd (all day counts).

## Knot

*Calidris canutus*

**Passage migrant, winter visitor and non-breeding summer visitor.**

Monthly maxima from main sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Terrington	3150	4270	1560	7541	277	12088	4103	7530	9202	21410
Snettisham	9540	1470	5030	7520	5000	28300	35000	17000	35070	2508
Holme	1000	120	3527	300	6000	12000	30000	38100	23	73

International importance (winter) - 3500; National importance (winter) - 2900.

The winter population in the Wash continues its decline. The link with the poor state of cockles, which appears also to be dramatically affecting Oystercatcher and Pintail, is being urgently investigated. Autumn passage was slightly up on last year. It is extremely interesting that Knot continue to roost outside the Wash at this time, notably at Holme. There is ample space for them at the Snettisham roost but what is presumably a long tradition has not been broken. Perhaps the tradition is founded in equinoctial high spring tides, an historic shortage of safe roost sites and the diminished energetic constraints of long flights in good weather. At Snettisham it is interesting to note that thousands of knot regularly roost on the wing on fine autumn days.

Other coastal counts: Titchwell 152 Jan, 237 Feb, 200 March, 2000 Sept; Scolt/Brancaster harbour 690 Jan, 3000 Feb; Wells harbour 1050 Jan, 550 March, 350 April; Warham 5400 Jan, 3000 Feb, 720 March; Stiffkey 512 Jan, 196 Oct; Blakeney 600 Jan, 200 Oct. East Coast, highest counts at Breydon: 1036 Jan, 910 Feb, 560 Dec.

Scattering of inland records: Welney singles Jan, March, April, Dec; Colney GP singles Jan (dead), March; Wroxham Broad 2 Feb; Hickling Broad single June; Buckenham 2 Sept.

### Sanderling

*Calidris alba*

*Passage migrant and winter visitor.*

Monthly maxima from main sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Snettisham	175	127	2	105	650	500	844	1565	350	200	169
Heacham	-	2	64	21	-	-	-	579	-	25	7
Hunstanton	146	197	106	103	29	-	-	19	76	100	234
Holme	136	157	245	225	395	85	615	395	263	118	98
Titchwell	-	22	-	53	92	145	30	-	144	40	76
Holkham Bay	-	25	-	-	60	-	-	66	25	62	164

International importance - 1000 (winter); 300 (passage); National importance - 230.

The increased weight of autumn passage continues; the Sept count at Snettisham is a record for that site. Good spring passage continued into June, when 570 at Snettisham on 2nd and 80 Holme on 5th.

Fewer large flocks away from main sites than in 1995; best counts: Thornham harbour 80 Aug, 109 Oct; Wells harbour 175 Sept, 161 Oct; Caister 90 Feb.

Inland: singles at Horsey Feb 27th and March 15th; Buckenham April 11th; Pentney GP May 5th.

### Little Stint

*Calidris minuta*

*Double passage migrant in fluctuating numbers.*

Spring: 1 at Welney April 13th the first, followed by singles there on 4 dates to 30th when also 1 at Titchwell. Light passage in May, all singles except Lynn Point 2, Berney 3, Breydon 2, Hickling Broad 2. Passage picked up markedly in June, perhaps due to May's cold weather. 2 at Berney 1st, then noted 8th to 22nd with maximum counts: Welney 2, Titchwell 7, Cley 4.



A notably strong autumn passage began with 1 at Snettisham July 18th and continued quietly in July, maximum Titchwell 3, and Aug, maximum Titchwell 3, Cley 3, Weybourne 4 east 31st, Breydon 2, Hickling Broad 3. Heavy Sept and Oct passage; maximum counts from main sites are shown in the table:

DATE:	Sept 1-10	Sept 11-20	Sept 21-30	Oct 1-10	Oct 11-20	Oct 21-31
Welney	1	30	80	7	10	1
Titchwell	-	22	90	69	15	4
Holme	-	22	1	2	-	-
Cley	-	119	160	100	17	-
Salthouse	-	28	50	12	5	-
Kelling	-	15	44	5	21	-
Breydon	2	7	26	3	17	-
Cantley BF	-	86	136	55	-	-

Recorded in Sept/Oct at a further 23 sites; highest counts, Sept: 24 Holkham Park Lake 10th (first ever records), 20 Weybourne Camp and 10 Horsey 19th, 20 Holkham Meals and 13 Lyng-Easthaugh GP 22nd, 101 Buckenham 26th/27th, 23 Burnham Norton 27th and 37 Terrington 29th. Oct: 11 Holkham 1st and 10 Buckenham 2nd.

Allowing for improved coverage by observers, this is probably the best autumn showing since 1976.

Recorded at 7 sites in Nov, mostly 1-4 birds 1st to 11th, but at Terrington 15 on 25th and 3 on 27th. Singles at Cley on Dec 5th, Titchwell Dec 6th and 2 at Salthouse Dec 7th.

### Temminck's Stint

*Calidris temminckii*

*Passage migrant, more frequent in spring.*

Spring: April, Hickling Rush Hills 1 on 29th. May, Cley 1 on 4th; Berney Marshes 4 on 15th with 3 on 16th; Welney 1 on 19th and Holkham 1 on 20th/21st.

In autumn singles at Cley and Kelling Water Meadows on Aug 22nd. Subsequently 4 individuals in Sept: Breydon on 2nd, Cantley BF on 2nd-4th, Kelling Water Meadows on 5th and Welney on Sept 5th-7th - only the second autumn record there.

A single at Wissington BF Sept 12th-21st the only other record.

### White-rumped Sandpiper

*Calidris fuscicollis*

*Vagrant from North America.*

An amazing congregation at Breydon, all adults. It began with 1 July 16th-19th (PRA et al), 22 July 20th-27th (PRA KBD DJH et al), 3 July 28th-29th (PRA INS et al) and 4 July 30th-31st (DFa RF DJ JO RWi et al). One remained until Aug 14th (PRA et al). A juvenile at Salthouse Nov 2nd-5th (DNY et al). These take the county tally to 42 individuals.



*Four White-rumped Sandpipers and Dunlin (G.Wright)*

### **Pectoral Sandpiper**

*Calidris melanotos*

*Almost annual autumn vagrant from North America/Siberia. Rare in spring.*

Single adults at Welney July 17th-24th and Titchwell July 26th-Aug 7th, the latter joined by a second Aug 6th-11th. Then 3 different juveniles at Welney Sept 7th, 16th and 27th. Another at Cantley BF Sept 16th-19th. One juvenile in Oct: Weybourne and Kelling 4th-24th.

### **Curlew Sandpiper**

*Calidris ferruginea*

*Autumn passage migrant in fluctuating numbers; scarce in spring.*

Spring: Following 2 at Welney on April 27th, recorded at 6 sites in May, all singles except Breydon 3 and Rush Hills 2, on 1st-2nd. In June, singles Cley 14th, Titchwell 27th-30th, Breydon 28th-July 3rd (a grey adult) and 2 Hickling 18th-22nd.

A strong autumn passage began July 3rd (Hickling) followed by 3 at Titchwell on 8th. Noted at 5 other sites in July, best counts Snettisham 4, Cley 10, Breydon 12 and Hickling 4. Adult passage continued in Aug, augmented by first juveniles. Maximum counts: Titchwell 5, Cley 28, Breydon 14, Hickling 18 and Pensthorpe 14. Good numbers at 16 sites in Sept, mostly 7th-30th. Highest counts: Welney 8, Terrington 8, Holme 15 west 9th, Titchwell 70, Burnham Overy harbour 11, Cley 60, Kelling Water Meadows 11, Breydon 76, Cantley BF 8.

Widespread throughout Oct. Best counts: Titchwell 5, Brancaster harbour 5, Breydon 74 on 1st with 37 2nd. Singles only after 12th, except Brancaster harbour 3 west 23rd. 1 remained at Breydon to Nov 13th.

### **Purple Sandpiper**

*Calidris maritima*

*Passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers.*

Recorded to May 5th (Hunstanton 2) and from Aug 18th (Salhouse 1). Heacham/Hunstanton as usual the main regular site, with monthly maxima: 10 Jan, 12 Feb, 10 March, 8 April, 2 May, 7 Nov and 5 Dec. Noted at a further 16 sites, with 1-3 irregularly at Sheringham, Cromer, Sea

Palling (4 Jan), Caister, West Runton (4 March) and Mundesley/Paston. Also 4 at Eccles Nov 13th and 5 Holme Oct 23rd. 6 west Mundesley Aug 30th the only notable observed movement.

Dunlin

*Calidris alpina*

*Passage migrant and winter visitor. Non-breeders in summer.*

Peak counts at the main regular resorts:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Terrington	8018	8014	3915	5016	6260	927	3475	1000	5281	2238	10250
Ousemouth	150	1544	2785	1985	1192	365	123	-	105	475	119
Snettisham	8510	3850	9902	9060	8922	1958	8250	11400	11200	5068	6950
Holme	500	800	900	84	50	5	220	253	2730	304	310
Titchwell	254	273	168	54	33	100	125	125	101	105	130
Brancaster/											
Scolt	685	1275	450	78	-	45	2	430	306	850	905
Warham	895	520	430	40	-	-	433	-	299	420	550
Stiffkey	357	306	164	112	-	-	48	-	155	-	252
Blakeney	700	600	375	185	-	100	420	310	840	620	514
Cley	57	-	260	55	-	200	200	45	40	229	28
Breydon	3600	3450	2050	2410	2200	487	610	2050	2200	2310	3600

International importance (winter) - 14000; National importance (winter) - 5300.  
Still 260 at Snettisham in June.

Widespread records from inland locations, most notably Welney where monthly peak counts were: 92 Jan, 20 Feb, 103 March, 423 April (a site record), 120 May, 5 July, 15 Sept, 10 Oct, 18 Dec. Otherwise Hickling Broad (62 Aug), Buckenham (25 Sept), Horsey Mere (20 Aug) the highest counts. Most notable coastal movement was 2600 west Nov 11th-14th at Sheringham.

Broad-billed Sandpiper

*Limicola falcinellus*

*Vagrant from North Eurasia.*

Two records after two blank years bring the county total to 45. Adults at Breydon July 24th (PRA) and Cley July 24th-25th (IGJ AMS et al), the latter also seen Blakeney harbour on 25th.

Ruff

*Philomachus pugnax*

*Double passage migrant. Small numbers over-winter. Has bred.*

Monthly peak counts at the regular resorts:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Titchwell	56	90	60	14	-	90	86	100	78	80	50
Holkham NNR	3	1	54	50	17	25	4	-	-	-	-
Cley	3	-	20	13	1	20	40	8	2	-	-
Breydon	-	1	-	10	-	6	6	9	3	6	15
Welney	44	18	13	14	1	34	32	78	86	80	70

National importance (winter) - 50.



Also reported from a further 14 sites during the winter periods. Notable amongst these were Hardley Flood (18 Jan) and Buckenham (20 Nov), whilst presumed Titchwell birds were found at Brancaster harbour (97 Dec - note exceeds Titchwell count) and Choseley (40 Feb).

Spring passage: only noted at 4 other sites in April, 12 at Buckenham the highest count. May was extremely poor, with only 2 birds recorded away from the main sites. Exceptionally, Holme recorded none whatsoever during the entire spring!

In June, 1-6 at 6 sites.

Autumn passage: something of a return to normal, with records from 22 sites other than those in the table. Highest counts: Hickling 28 Aug; Choseley 16 Aug; Kelling WM 17 Sept; Cantley BF 50 Sept, 51 Oct; Sheringham 43 Sept; Ludham NNR 68 Sept; St Benet's Level 68 Sept; Brancaster Staithe 140 Oct; Wissington BF 28 Aug; Wereham 27 Sept.

**Jack Snipe**

*Lymnocryptes minimus*

*Passage migrant and winter visitor. Declining.*

First winter period/spring: reported from 30 localities, all involving 1-2 birds except Bure Park, Great Yarmouth 4 Jan, Holme 4 Jan, Buxton Heath 3 Feb and Wells where 9 ringed March 20th. Last birds were 2 Welney April 19th, 2 Salthouse April 21st and 1 Holme May 4th.

Autumn/winter: records from 34 localities, from Sept 17th when 1 at Thornham Point. Then two apparent waves of arrivals from Sept 21st and Oct 19th. Again, mostly 1-2 birds involved, except Weybourne 3 Sept, Ludham 4 Oct, Bure Park, Great Yarmouth 6 Dec, . 1 flying west with starlings at Brancaster Staithe on Oct 12th may have been more startling than treading on one!

**Common Snipe**

*Gallinago gallinago*

*Passage migrant and winter visitor. Declining breeder.*

Table shows a selection of well counted sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Holme	15	10	37	35	1d	2	14	22	15	35	14
Holkham NNR	20	20+	47	30	14d	-	20	20	26	13	27
Buckenham/ Cantley	-	-	37	37	10d	-	22	-	-	14	14
Welney few*	31	66	78	52d	-	-	50	-	-	16	

\* whole area flooded                      d-drummers

Low numbers during the first-winter period with the best counts elsewhere at: St Benet's Level 22 Jan and Ken Hill 20 Mar. Spring movement noted in April at Sheringham with 15 east on 8th, and 11 west 11th.

A total of 88 drummers reported from only 12 sites (last year's total where applicable); Holme NNR 1 (5); Titchwell 1; Holkham 14 (11); Surlingham 1; Cantley/Buckenham/Strumpshaw 10 (13); Wroxham 1; Berney/Breydon 3 (0); Threxton 1; Burgh Common 2; Dersingham Bog 1; Seamere Hingham 1; Welney 52 . At Kelling WM no drummers were heard this year the first time since the observer can remember. Along a stretch of the River Tudd where 1-2 drummers were found regularly from 1976-79 there have been no observations in the last 2 years. Though The Broads was covered less well this year

it would seem Norfolk's breeding snipe population is heading ever closer to extinction. Will all observers making contact with drumming birds please report them to the county recorders.

Concentrations during the autumn seemed to be at an all time low, the following counts (20+) do not include the tabulated figures: Titchwell 20 Aug; Salthouse 25 Aug; Kelling WM 31 Aug, 30 Oct; Tallents Meadow Lake 21 Aug, 20 Oct; Cley 20 Sept; Horsey 28 Sept.

Autumn movements most notable at Holme NNR in Aug with 120 west 17th, and in Sept 75 west 3rd. At Hunstanton Cliffs in Oct 39 south 12th, and 27 next day, smaller numbers moving up to Nov 9th.

**Woodcock**

*Scolopax rusticola*

*Passage migrant and winter visitor. Abundant breeder particularly in the Brecks.*

First winter period: widespread reports from about 70 sites, especially in Jan during hard weather movements; small numbers, except Holkham Park/Quarles 1000 (best for 15 years), Baconsthorpe Wood 100 and Ringstead 40.

Widespread reports during the breeding season, but only noted as roding at 20 sites; still under-recorded? No more than 5 individuals counted at any site.

Autumn/winter: seen at 42 sites, from evident coastal arrival Oct 21st-25th. Best counts were Wells 25 Nov and in Dec Ringstead 35 (flushed on pheasant shoot), Hickling 13 and Winterton 12.

**Black-tailed Godwit**

*Limosa limosa*

*Passage migrant and winter visitor; declining breeder.*

Peak monthly counts at main sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Welney	19	140	250	232	34	144	13	26	13	-	3
Terrington	-	1	121	2	-	1333	1060	1200	3	1	184
Ousemouth	-	-	-	334	83	1009	340	-	-	-	-
Snettisham	120	-	-	-	-	-	40	-	1	-	-
Titchwell	100	3	10	17	16	72	80	13	90	20	5
Holkham											
NNR	1	1	2	82	56	40	37	15	28	7	-
Cley	9	10	40	75	20	-	3	-	-	-	1
Breydon	27	7	14	25	46	600	708	498	217	256	367

International importance (winter): 700. National importance (winter): 70.

The recent dramatic increases continue in the Wash (since 1990) and at Breydon (1993), both on passage and in winter. More than 2000 now regularly occur in the whole Wash in autumn and winter. Generally this year, spring passage unspectacular with no significant numbers away from the main sites.

Good numbers remained throughout June, notably 61 Welney, 43 Titchwell, 120 Brancaster/Burnham Norton/Holkham, 269 Breydon, 89 Berney Marshes. 3 breeding pairs in the county all failed due to predation.

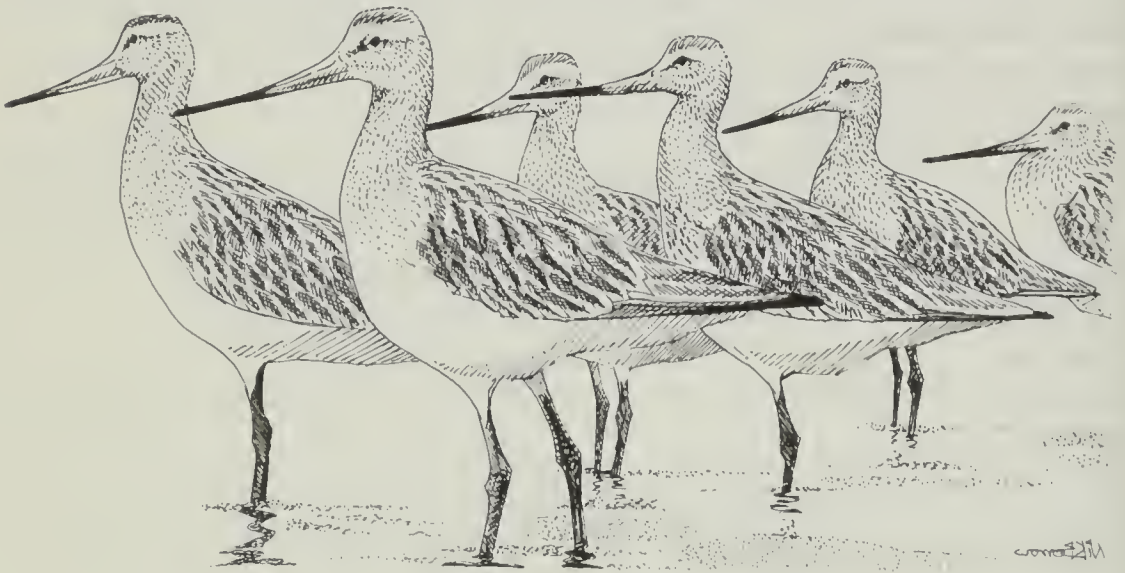
**Bar-tailed Godwit***Limosa lapponica**Passage migrant and winter visitor. A few non-breeders in summer.*

Monthly maxima at main sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Terrington	1010	920	121	1	5	261	537	205	575	63	4793
Snettisham	5030	9300	7015	4	510	300	3050	2000	1800	2000	3100
Holme	580	601	1030	36	-	60	230	500	1200	305	150
Titchwell	168	145	220	-	15	200	650	623	160	138	460
Brancaster/Scolt	300	450	-	138	-	-	-	24	90	100	74
Wells Hbr	356	42	40	-	-	-	-	-	28	149	242
Blakeney Hbr	92	119	76	41	-	-	-	72	132	136	94
Breydon	83	116	52	17	47	13	12	16	17	11	12

International importance (winter): 1000; national importance (winter): 530.

The Wash dominates the scene; indeed many of the large counts at Holme and Titchwell refer to birds quitting the Wash to roost. A sharp increase at Snettisham in Feb is typical of cold weather movements from the continent. Only other high counts are Stiffkey 176 Jan, Thornham 148 Jan and 120 Oct. In June, Snettisham 280, Titchwell 12, Breydon 4.

*Bar-tailed Godwits (N. Borrow)*

Coastal movements: at Sheringham 170 west July 9th, 65 west July 24th; 20 west Nov 13th.

Inland: a few scattered sightings, but 36 at Welney on April 21st and 7-14 at Pensthorpe Nov 2nd-23rd were unusual.



**Whimbrel***Numenius phaeopus***Passage migrant in spring and autumn. Rare in winter.**

National importance (passage): 50.

Spring: from April 15th (1 Berney RSPB) to June 6th (1 east Sheringham). Widely recorded during main passage, April 21st to May 19th. Highest counts: 12 Snettisham May 19th, 35 Holme April 28th, 12 Titchwell April 23rd, 40 Holkham May 1st, 30 Burnham Norton April 30th, 12 Blakeney April 24th, 28 east Sheringham April 21st, 29 Breydon April 14th and 100 Berney Marshes April 21st. Further movement evident late May, when 10 Berney Marshes 27th and 15 Titchwell 28th.

Autumn: from June 27th, when 1 at Breydon and 2 flew south over Burnham Overy. Main passage from mid July, when 9 Cantley BF 13th and 20 Breydon 15th. Monthly counts at Holme produced 306 west in July (max 110 20th) and 431 west Aug (max 113 11th). Other counts: 47 Terrington July 27th, 36 Ken Hill marshes July 31st, 49 east Titchwell July 28th, 44 Scolt/Brancaster harbour July 18th, 40 Overy harbour Aug 18th, 93 Blakeney harbour Aug 18th and 20 Cley Aug 10th. Passage continued to end Sept, largest counts 29 Ken Hill marshes 3rd and 67 Lynn Point 13th, otherwise single figures only.

Two late birds: Overstrand Oct 26th and Stiffkey Nov 25th.

**Curlew***Numenius arquata***Abundant passage migrant and winter visitor. Scarce breeder.**

Monthly maxima at main sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Terrington	885	480	1068	768	85	1517	3088	2017	680	82	231
Ousemouth	443	90	259	167	3	479	353	-	53	18	13
Snettisham	350	317	235	6	6	941	1560	850	1450	1000	1498
Heacham	55	80	196	-	24	-	-	123	-	-	64
Holme	109	52	47	45	11	-	32	60	90	55	110
Thornham	-	3	26	17	-	-	1	-	20	5	104
Titchwell	145	50	77	30	-	65	60	76	70	3	70
Brancaster/Scolt	500	400	250	66	-	80	33	410	674	498	508
Overy Hbr	-	14	117	-	-	-	91	63	-	71	120
Holkham NNR	102	159	143	-	-	28	15	-	67	46	137
Wells Hbr	40	41	60	56	-	650	650	360	65	-	26
Warham	36	26	36	23	-	-	5	66	124	87	36
Stiffkey	30	21	57	28	-	-	-	61	43	-	41
Blakeney Hbr	111	28	-	-	-	-	-	93	136	91	117

International importance (winter): 3500; national importance (winter): 1200.

Good numbers also at Breydon, where "average 7-800 most months" but including July 763, Sept 937 (a record for the estuary) and Oct 766. Non-coastal feeding flocks perhaps under-recorded, but included 91 Berney Marshes Jan, 100+ Knight's Hill, King's Lynn Jan, 57 Flitcham March, 188 Ken Hill marshes April, 80 Anmer Aug, 113 Sheringham Sept, 26 Welney Oct, 95 Ringstead and 70 Burnham Thorpe Dec.

Some efforts at improved counting were made, in recognition of the failure of WeBS high tide counts to provide accurate numbers. For example, it was estimated that 40% of 410 at Brancaster/Scolt in Sept were non-tidal feeders and would therefore not necessarily have been picked up by WeBS. This percentage may well be exceeded in the Wash.

Breeding information received from Stanford TA only - at least 20 pairs. High counts in June: Snettisham 40, Titchwell 48, Brancaster/Scolt 100, Holkham NNR 28, Breydon 175.

Passage observed included: 108 west Holme June 22nd, 42 west Weybourne June 24th and at Sheringham, 30+ west most days in July with max 590 on 9th (a record).

## Spotted Redshank

*Tringa erythropus*

*Passage migrant. Small numbers winter.*

During the first-winter period found at many of the usual sites and in similar numbers: Holme 1, Titchwell 4, and Breydon 2. Other less regularly used sites included: Brancaster Harbour 1; Hickling NNR Rush Hills 1 Jan 17th and March 16th-19th; Burnham Norton 1 March; Berney 2 on March 3rd.

Spring passage noted in small numbers, best counts included: Snettisham 6 May; Titchwell 5 April; Holkham NNR 4 April; Cley 5 June; Breydon 3 June; Berney 4 April, and inland at Welney 2 May.

Late summer counts typically higher with Snettisham having by far the most impressive totals: July- 74 on 28th and 85 next day; Aug- 50 on 18th; Sept- 70 on 16th; Oct- 10 on 2nd and 13th. Other sites with 5 or more included: Titchwell 7 July; Cley 8 July; Salhouse 6 Sept; Breydon 7 Oct. Noted inland at Welney WWT, 3 Aug, 4 Sept, and 2 Oct.

During second winter period noted at Holme 1, Titchwell 3-5, and Breydon 4.

## Redshank

*Tringa totanus*

*Resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Locally declining breeder.*

Table shows all sites with regular monthly counts:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Terrington	263	312	301	295	83	575	641	735	880	1067	272
Ousemouth	29	24	83	187	53	31	134	-	47	95	73
Snettisham	163	110	103	166	85	482	600	360	161	500	91
Holme	140	145	596*	-	-	14	31	90	140	60	149
Brancaster/Scolt	90	36	69	41	-	-	-	470	402	375	400
Blakeney Hbr	111	161	130	66	-	-	93	108	161	124	163

\*reserve record

The first-winter period saw some disappointing counts from all the main sites, the only notable count from Holme in March. The poor showing may have been in response to the cold weather, from Wells North Point to Stiffkey 50 corpses were found on 21st Feb. Movements at Sheringham would also suggest this, in Jan 60 east 1st, 10 east 22nd and 50 east 31st. Further south at Winterton 31 south also Jan 1st.

Largest remaining coastal gatherings (100+) as follows; Burnham Overy 110 Mar, 120 Nov; Warham 103 Sept, 163 Oct, 148 Nov; Overstrand/Cromer 100 Feb.

A total of 325-354 breeding pairs reported. Along the coast 145 pairs as follows; Ken Hill 8; Holme NNR 17 on saltmarsh and 7 on grazing marsh; Holkham NNR 86; Wells Saltmarsh 17 (success good); Breydon 9. In the Broads 42-44 from 2 sites; Berney 18-20 and Buckenham/Cantley/Strumpshaw 24. Inland at Welney 165 prs along the Norfolk section of the Ouse Washes, at Welney WWT 71 of these fledged c100 young.

A leucistic bird was seen at Cley on July 1st. Visible migration observed at Sheringham with largest movements in Aug with 225 east and 20 west 6th, and 75 east, and 16 west on 15th.

### **Marsh Sandpiper**

*Tringa stagnatilis*

*Vagrant from eastern Europe.*

An adult at Hickling NNR (Swim Coots) from June 10th-12th (AJK et al) and again from 17th-19th (AJK). This constitutes the 19th Norfolk record.

### **Greenshank**

*Tringa nebularia*

*Passage migrant in spring and autumn. Scarce in winter.*

Found only in ones and twos at the usual sites during the first-winter period: King's Lynn 1 Mar; Holme 2 Feb; Brancaster Harbour 1 Jan-Feb; Breydon 1 north Mar 23rd.

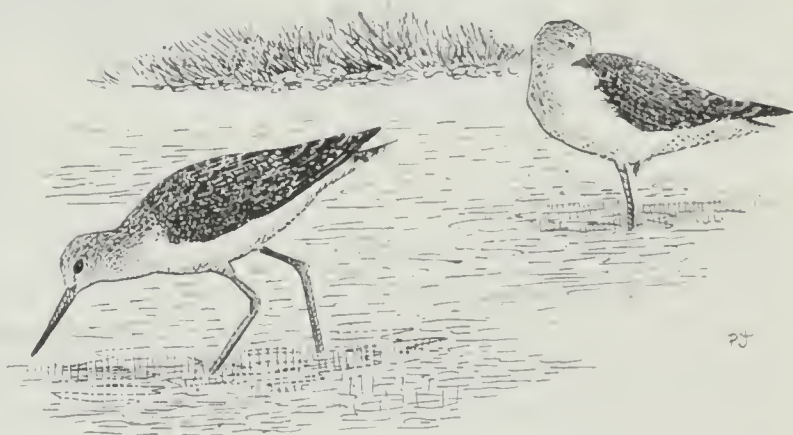
Small numbers in spring, sites recording 4 or more as follows: Snettisham 4 April; Holme 4 April; Burnham Norton 4 April; Holkham NNR 5 May; Cley 5 April; Breydon 9 May; Berney 9 April, 11 May; Hickling NNR 4 April. Reports from 4 inland sites including 6 at Colney GP May 6th.

Late summer and autumn saw larger numbers with double figure counts from the following coastal sites: Terrington 40 Aug; Admiralty Point 21 Aug; Wash Coastal Path 24 Aug; Snettisham 22 July, 41 Aug, 20 Sept; Titchwell 23 July, 20 Aug, 30 Sept, 32 Oct; Burnham Norton 50 Aug 3rd dropping to 18 on 27th, 9 Sept, 9 Oct;

Morston 23 Aug; Cley 37 Aug 2nd declining rapidly by months end, 2 Sept, 9 Oct; Kelling WM 11-13 Aug. At Hickling NNR 33 Aug. Noted at 12 other inland sites with counts of 4 or more as follows: Cantley 7 Aug 24th, 15 Sept 19th; Gunton Park 4 Aug 10th; Welney WWT 10 Aug 31st.

Visible movement of 5 or more as follows: Holme NNR 6 west July 7th and 21st; Kelling Water Meadow 6 south Aug 24th; inland at Colney GP 14 south-west on July 21st.

The second-winter period produced singles at Holme and Breydon with 2 west Brancaster Harbour Nov 8th.



*Greenshank (P. Jones)*



## Green Sandpiper

*Tringa ochropus*

*Double passage migrant more numerous in autumn. A few over winter.*

During first-winter period typically all sightings inland from 14 sites totalling c20 birds, all refer to singles with the exception of the following: Cantley BF 3 Jan; Northwold 5 mid-Feb; Cranwich GP 2 Mar.

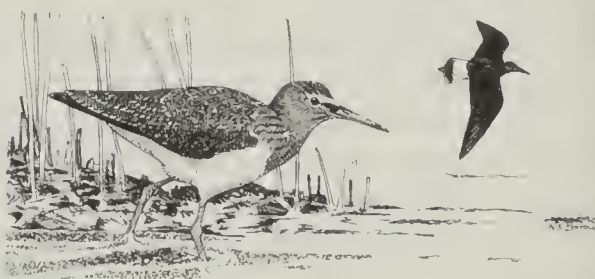
During spring passage again usually observed singly March 24th-May 25th from 21 sites, 12 of which were coastal. In April 2 at Welney 6th and Wissington BF 20th were the highest counts.

The following table shows most frequented sites:

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Holme NNR	1	-	1	8	5	3	1
Titchwell	1	-	1	2	8	6	-
Burnham Norton	-	1	-	2	14	1	1
Holkham NNR	-	-	2	12	8	2	-
Cley	-	-	1	15	15	2	1
Cantley BF	-	-	4	30	30	20	4
Wissington BF	2	-	1	-	26	-	-

Other sites recording 3 or more: Kelling WM 4 Aug; Salthouse 3 Sept; Strumpshaw Fen 3 Aug; Hickling Broad 4 Aug; Breydon 6 July; Cranwich GP 7 July; Merton Park 3 Sept; Pensthorpe 4 Aug; Welney WWT 7 Aug, 5 Sept.

During second-winter period only singles reported from Cantley, Lodge Farm Swaffham Forest, and Cranwich GP.



*Green Sandpiper (N. Borrow)*

## Wood Sandpiper

*Tringa glareola*

*Passage migrant in spring and autumn.*

Spring passage began on April 18th at Cley, with further singles during the month at Buckenham 21st-23rd, and at Holkham NNR on 23rd, 24th and 30th (all different birds). In May passage most notable from mid-month, recorded from 9 sites (6 coastal), all singles other than: 2 Welney 12th and 4 Berney 17th. In June singles at 5 coastal sites and 2 Titchwell 9th/10th.

Autumn passage began early July, with singles at 3 coastal sites and 1 inland at Welney WWT. August produced the lion's share as usual with the bulk of birds recorded from mid-month onwards, maxima from the following sites: Holme NNR 3; Titchwell 6; Burnham Norton 5; Cley 4; Salthouse 5; Kelling 5; Cantley BF 2. Numbers dropped off in Sept, sites recording 2 or more as follows: Holme 2; Titchwell 4; Burnham Norton 3; Gillingham Marsh 4; Welney 2. In Oct 1-2 reported from Buckenham, Cantley BF, and Welney WWT up to the 12th.

## Terek Sandpiper

*Xenus cinereus*

*Vagrant from north-east Europe/Siberia.*

Additional 1995 sighting: The bird at Breydon also seen at Berney late on June 15th (PRA).

(Common Sandpiper

*Actitis hypoleucos*

! Passage migrant in spring and autumn. Rare in winter. Has bred.

First arrival on April 6th at Lynford GP, but most observations from the last third of this month from 23 sites, no more than 1-2 at anyone site. During May higher numbers present with 3 or more at the following sites: Snettisham 5; Holme NNR 6; Titchwell 5; Holkham NNR 9; Kelling WM 6 ; Wroxham Broad 4; Felbrigg 7; Colney GP 4; Sennowe Park 4. One or two recorded in June from only 3 coastal and 1 inland site.

Monthly maximum counts during autumn from most recorded sites:

	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Snettisham	6	10	2	1
Holme	1	15	3	-
Titchwell	5	23	10	-
Cantley BF	3	17	7	3

Largest numbers moved through in Aug all sites recording 4+ as follows: Burnham Norton 7; Holkham NNR7; Cley 10; Kelling WM 6; Sheringham 3; Breydon 6; Hickling NNR. Rush Hills 4; Eccles 21; Gunton Park Lake 4; Thetford Nunnery lakes 5 and Pensthorpe 7. A late bird remained at Breydon until Nov 13th.

! Turnstone

*Arenaria interpres*

! Passage migrant and winter visitor. A few oversummer.

! Monthly maxima from sites holding 100 or more during year:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Terrington	6	8	-	-	279	-	17	23	11	16	2	192
Snettisham	37	-	48	25	139	15	200	220	216	87	109	33
Hunstanton	110	198	84	89	84	-	-	-	87	58	41	129
Holme	-	87	46	53	42	-	-	107	120	37	24	22
Scolt/Brancaster	70	31	28	100	90	9	1	-	87	85	179	125
Blakeney	43	39	29	21	-	-	-	-	62	111	77	66

Most of the above sites showing little change in numbers, the exception being Snettisham whose counts were well down from Jul-Sept. Odd sightings included 30 feeding on wheat at King's Lynn on Jan 7th during hard weather, while later in the month a flock of 18 were in a car park at Eaton, Norwich from 8th-22nd! Three oiled birds were seen at Overstrand on Feb 1st. Also inland, singles Welney Jan 7th and Thetford Nunnery lakes Dec 4th.

! Red-necked Phalarope

*Phalaropus lobatus*

! Scarce passage migrant.

One spring record, a female at Cley from May 10th-12th. During autumn three records: Snettisham Aug 16th-24th, an adult at Cley on Aug 30th, and a juvenile at Titchwell on Sept 2nd.

### **Grey Phalarope**

*Phalaropus fulicarius*

*Scarce autumn passage migrant. Rare in spring and winter.*

Three records during first-winter period at Titchwell on Feb 14th, Admiralty Point Feb 17th and east at Sheringham March 13th (KBS).

Autumn passage began at Blakeney Point on Sept 9th/10th and Blakeney Freshes on Sept 19th/20th. In Nov one caught with hand net at Weybourne 5th, remaining until 7th. It then moved to Kelling WM 8th/9th. Also singles west Weybourne 8th (RHC), west Sheringham 11th (DPA) and east at Cley, Weybourne and Sheringham 12th (DPA RGM MPT).

### **Pomarine Skua**

*Stercorarius pomarinus*

*Passage migrant during autumn; unusual at other times.*

The only winter record concerned one at Titchwell Feb 20th.

Autumn passage began Titchwell/Thornham July 31st (2). No more seen until Aug 17th after which ones and twos were seen on several dates in the Wash and along the coast to the end of the month.

Sept passage remained light with no counts reaching double figures; the species remained scarce during Oct until the 29th when 30 west and 4 east Holme, 20 Cley, 20 east and 3 west Sheringham, 20 south Eccles and 44 Sea Palling. Nov counts were generally small apart from 15 west and 4 east Holme and 15 east Sheringham both on the 11th and 17 east Sheringham on 12th. Total of 12 birds seen in Dec including 3 Snettisham on 2nd.

### **Arctic Skua**

*Stercorarius parasiticus*

*Mainly autumn passage migrant, scarce at other times.*

A light spring passage with birds noted at North Wootton May 28th; Holme May 2nd/3rd; Titchwell May 3rd (3); Cley Apr 23rd; Mundesley May 2nd; Sea Palling Apr 13th and Waxham May 2nd (2).

Return passage began Scolt Head July 9th with numbers slowly increasing to reach peaks on Aug 29th, when 240 east at Sheringham, and 30th, when 125 west at Holme. Another large movement occurred Sept 12th when 212 west and 14 east Holme, 81 Cley, and 75 east and 25 west Sheringham. Numbers then declined, the largest Oct count being 75 east at Sheringham on 29th.

The only Nov count to reach double figures was 10 at Sheringham on the 5th. The only definite Dec record was 1-2 at Dec 26th.

Two inland records: flying over Swanton Novers Aug 16th and following a tractor Little Dunham on Sept 21st. Also a Skua sp. east at Brundall Nov 19th.

### **Long-tailed Skua**

*Stercorarius longicaudus*

*Autumn passage migrant, increasingly recorded in recent years.*

The first of the autumn, an adult, appeared at Mundesley Aug 24th followed by another adult at Snettisham Aug 25th; 2 at Sheringham on 28th heralded a large movement with a total of 13 east past there on 29th, with a further 35 east next day; during 29th/30th a further 10 recorded from seven other coastal sites. The majority of birds during the period were juveniles.

During Sept becoming more widespread with most coastal sites reporting small numbers especially around mid-month with the largest counts on the 12th when 16 west Holme, 25 Cley and 24 east and 8 west at Sheringham.



In Oct 1-3 at Holme, Cley, Weybourne and Sheringham on 5th; on 29th 2 west Holme, 4 Cley and 6 east Sheringham.

Two late immature past Sheringham on Nov 7th and 12th.

## Great Skua

*Catharacta skua*

*Passage migrant mainly in autumn - otherwise scarce.*

During Jan records received from Ongar Hill on 26th; Cley 28th; Weybourne 27th; Sheringham 22nd and 28th; Overstrand 23rd, 26th and 28th; Gt. Yarmouth 14th.

The only Feb reports concerned singles Hunstanton on 21st and Sheringham 13th and 19th.

In spring recorded at Holme Apr 20th and May 3rd (2).

Return passage commenced July 15th; numbers during Aug were generally small apart from 30 Holme and 38 Sheringham both on 30th. Increased numbers during Sept with largest counts on 12th when 210 west Holme, 104 Cley and 145 east and 15 west Sheringham. Also 145 west Holme on 13th.

Two large movements in Oct: on 5th 231 west Holme and 70 Cley; on 29th 105 west Holme, 100 Cley and 160 east and 25 west Sheringham.

Generally scarce during Nov apart from 90 east at Sheringham on 12th. Total of 7 birds in Dec, including 2 Thornham on 13th and 2 Hunstanton Dec 30th.

## Mediterranean Gull

*Larus melanocephalus*

*Regular all-year visitor in increasing numbers, often remaining for weeks. Recent breeder.*

Successful breeding recorded for only the second time. Two pairs fledged 4 young at Blakeney Point following the first breeding success in the county in 1993 and failed attempts in 1991, 1992 and 1994. Breeding behaviour recorded at 3 other sites: 2nd-summer sitting on nest at Snettisham April 13th, 2 adults displaying at Strumpshaw April 24th and a pair of 2nd-summer birds displaying at Cantley BF April 24th.

All 3 age groups recorded each month for the first time, reflecting a continued increase in sightings. The problem of exact numbers remains but some birds very site loyal. Approximate coastal totals are summarised in the table as a comparison to previous years.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1st year	2	5	8	9	10	8	3	3	6	6	7	8
2nd year	13	9	15	14	6	13	8	5	3	3	6	5
Adult	10	8	8	13	4	4	7	7	13	9	9	11

Most favoured sites continued to be Snettisham, Heacham/Hunstanton, Cley/Blakeney, Sheringham, Overstrand, Mundesley and Yarmouth/Breydon. Mainly 1-3 but Heacham 2 adults and 3 2nd-winters Jan 6th, 3 adults and 2nd-winter Dec 30th; Hunstanton 4 in area in March; Holme 3 adults and 2 1st-summer April 15th; Blakeney Point 4 adults May-July; Sheringham 3 adults and 2 1st-summer July 13th; Overstrand 3 adults and 4 2nd-winters Jan, 2 adults, 6 2nd-winters and 1st-winter Feb, 3 adults 6 2nd-winters and 2 1st-winters March, 2 adults, 4 2nd-summer and 2 1st-summer April; Horsey/Winterton 2nd-summer and 3 1st-summer June 14th; Caister adult and 4 2nd-winters Jan 29th, 4 2nd-summer March 31st and April 13th; Caister-Yarmouth 4 adults, 4 2nd-winters and 5 1st-winters Nov-Dec; Yarmouth

adult, 2 2nd-winters and 1st-winter Jan, 3 adults, 3 2nd-winters and 1st-winter Feb. adult, 2 2nd-summer and 1st-winter March 24th, 4 adults 2 2nd-winters and 3 1st-winters Sept 28th, 2 adults, 3 2nd-winters and 6 1st-winters Oct; Breydon up to 5 1st-summer May 25th-June 21st with 4 2nd-summer June 4th, 4 un-aged July 11th.

Inland: Cantley BF 4 2nd-summer April 24th, 2nd summer May 2nd and adult Sept 18th and 23rd; Colney GP 1st-winter Sept 12th, 2nd-winter on 15th; Edgefield Tip adult June 19th-20th; Hickling Broad 2nd-summer May 26th, un-aged 31st, 2nd-summer June 3rd, Juv/1st-winter Aug 19th; Holkham Lake 3 adults and 4 2nd-winters Jan, 3 un-aged April 20th and 2 un-aged on the 26th, adult all Dec; Holt adult June 1st; Martham Broad 1st-winter Oct 20th; Pensthorpe adult May 1st; Sparham GP 2nd-winter Jan 1st, 1st-winter Dec 29th; Strumpshaw 2 adults April 24th; Tottenhill GP 1st-winter Jan 14th, Feb 7th and 11th, March 3rd, 2nd-winter Dec 22nd-23rd; Welney 1st-winter Feb 15th, 1st-summer May 19th-20th with another May 26th-27th and 29th; Wroxham Broad 1st-winter March 4th.

Away from breeding sites single juveniles recorded at 6 sites: Morston Quay July 19th-21st and 24th-25th, Sheringham July 25th and 1 east Aug 30th, Cley Aug 21st, Sea Palling Aug 27th, Caister Sept 3rd and Yarmouth Sept 18th.

### Little Gull

*Larus minutus*

*Non-breeding summer visitor, passage migrant and winter visitor.*

Recorded every month with the exception of March. No records received for that month for the first time since at least 1991. Few notable coastal movements prior to Oct-Nov with Oct 29th being the single best date. 13 Cley Jan 5th, 7 Holme 14th, 20 Sheringham 21st with 16 22nd, 6 Weybourne 22nd and 25th and 6 Hunstanton 28th; 7 Holme Feb 11th with 8 there and 20 Sheringham 13th, 43 Winterton 14th, 5 Waxham 18th, 37 Holme 20th; 7 Titchwell May 27th, 6 on 28th, 8 June 6th and 11 on 9th-16th; up to 7 Breydon June 21st-Aug 1st; up to 7 Titchwell July 1st-21st; 8 Holme 6th and 6 on 7th, 9 Sheringham 26th; 7 Weybourne Aug 3rd with 5 there on 13th and 31st, 34 Sheringham and 6-7 Cley 30th; 7 Horsey Sept 14th and 14 on 24th, 7 Happisburgh 21st, 10 Sheringham 23rd; 31 Holme and 11 Sheringham Oct 5th, 39 Horsey and 15 Titchwell 10th, 20 Horsey 12th, 16 Happisburgh 13th, 12 Waxham 14th, 34 Horsey 19th, 7 Cley 21st and 7 Horsey 26th; major movement on Oct 29th when 65 Holme, 100 Cley, 55 Weybourne, 685 Sheringham (a site record), 81 Eccles, 41 Horsey and 24 Caister; 42 Sheringham Nov 7th, 12 Holme and 10 Titchwell 8th, 30 Brancaster 9th, 20 Cley and 21 Sheringham 10th, 34 Holme, 100 Sheringham and 20 Weybourne 11th, 15 Brancaster, 40 Cley, 141 Sheringham and 75 Sea Palling 12th; 9 Cley Dec 18th, 20th Cley and 30 Sheringham 20th and 75 Sheringham 21st.

Inland: recorded between April and Aug with one Nov record. 9 Cantley BF and 3 Wroxham Broad April 16th; 7 Colney GP April 20th with 3 there on the 23rd; singles Barton Broad and Hickling Broad April 21st; Rockland Broad April 29th-May 5th; Hickling Broad May 15th with a maximum of 8 there May 24th-June 26th involving 10 individuals; 2 Berney Marshes May 16th and 3 on 25th; single Fustyweed GP May 19th; 3 Barton Broad May 22nd, 5 on 25th, 3 June 14th and 1 on 24th; singles Cantley June 25th, Holkham Lake mid-July to mid-Aug and at Colney GP Nov 12th.

### **Sabine's Gull**

*Larus sabini*

*Almost annual but scarce autumn vagrant from High Arctic. Extremely rare in spring.*

The best autumn since 1988 with 13 records between Aug and Oct: Wash Trial Bank adult Aug 30th (VD), Holme juvenile Sept 12th (GFH NML PMW), Sheringham 2 juveniles Sept 12th (DPA DJH JRW), Holme juvenile Oct 5th (AFB NML), Cley juvenile Oct 5th (RGM), Sheringham 4 juveniles Oct 5th (SBe PJH KBS JRW), Blakeney Point adult Oct 12th (IB) and Cley 2 juveniles Oct 29th (RGM).

### **Black-headed Gull**

*Larus ridibundus*

*Breeds colonially, dispersing in winter when many immigrants from Eastern Europe.*

Breeding pairs recorded as follows (success unknown unless otherwise stated): Snettisham Pits 1460, Snettisham Saltmarsh 110, Holme 150 controlled, Titchwell 280 (fledged 100 young), Scolt Head c460, Holkham Bob Hall Sands 39, Holkham Grazing Marsh 24-44, Wells Saltmarsh 1768, Stiffkey Binks 111, Stiffkey Saltmarsh 20-50 (all 5 preceding sites poor success due to high tide flooding), Blakeney Point c2500 (good success), Kelling Water Meadows 2-3, Strumpshaw/Buckenham/Cantley 140, Hickling Broad (Rush Hills area) 12 fledged most nests controlled, Barton Broad c10 (4 young fledged), Hoveton Marshes 200, Welney 1 nest abandoned and Wissington BF 60.

Monthly roost counts: Jan Welney 6500, Ranworth Broad 4000, St Benet's Level 4000, Colney GP 1750; Feb Attlebridge 5000+, Welney 4800, Overstrand 3000, Wroxham Broad 3000, St Benet's Level 1400, Thornham 500; March Wroxham Broad 10,000, Lenwade 3150, Welney 3100, Titchwell 570, Rockland Broad 500, Thornham 400; April Rockland Broad 1200, Titchwell 752, Strumpshaw 557, Welney 350; June Snettisham 1000; July R. Ouse 5000 north to roost 23rd; Sept Scolt/Brancaster 5000, Welney 970; Oct Snettisham 5080, Welney 2300, Thornham 500; Nov Attlebridge 2750, Lyng 1450, Colney GP 650; Dec Welney 5600, Attlebridge 3100, Filby Broad 1000.

Coastal movements included Sheringham 1100 east Jan 29th, 700 east Feb 8th, 1800 east on 9th and 600 each March 21st, Mundesley 1400 east March 18th, Holme 400 west June 28th, Sheringham 1500 west July 9th and 2250 west on 20th, Weybourne 1500 west Oct 10th, Scolt Head 5000 west Oct 11th and 2160 west on 24th, Sheringham 2400 west Oct 11th, 3500 west on 23rd and 1500 west Nov 14th, Holme 2200 west Nov 11th and Sheringham 600 Dec 13th.

A leucistic bird at Lyng March 10th. Up to 3 albino or partial albino birds noted at Breydon May-Dec.

### **Ring-billed Gull**

*Larus delawarensis*

*Vagrant from North America.*

A 1st-winter at Breydon Nov 25th (PRA). The eighth record since it was added to the county list in 1991.

### **Common Gull**

*Larus canus*

*Passage migrant and winter visitor with non-breeders remaining all summer. Spasmodic breeder.*

Breeding only recorded Scolt Head where 1 pair failed.



Increase in numbers at roost sites. Notable counts: Jan St Benet's Level 1800, Cromer 1500, King's Lynn Docks 1000, Thornham 800, Welney 640, Hunstanton 608, Holkham Lake 500, Colney GP 465 and Wroxham 460; Feb Overstrand 5000, Attlebridge 4000, King's Lynn Docks 2000+, Thornham 1500 and St Benet's Level 1230; March Lenwade 2050, Thornham 1500, Holkham Lake 850 and Welney 760; April Rockland Broad 300; Oct Snettisham 500 and Thornham 450; Nov Lyng 2500, Attlebridge 1650 and Thornham 1500; Dec Attlebridge 1750, Holkham Lake 1200, Houghton 600 and Welney 300.

Most notable coastal movements: Holme 800 west Jan 27th; Sheringham 200 east Jan 28th; Weybourne 700 east Jan 31st; Sheringham 400 east March 10th with 100 east on 17th when also 300 east Holme; Sheringham 130 west July 9th, 200 west on 20th, 140 west on 26th, 500 west Oct 13th and 420 west Nov 14th; Holme 400 west Nov 11th; Sheringham 120 west Dec 1st and 150 east on the 22nd.

A partial albino 1st-winter at Wroxham Broad March 3rd.

4 hawking flying ants over a garden at Yarmouth Aug 20th with Black-headed Gulls and 4 Common Terns.

### **Lesser Black-backed Gull**

*Larus fuscus*

*Passage migrant and migratory breeder. Increasing in winter.*

Breeding recorded at 3 sites: Wells Saltmarsh 15 pairs with low success due to high tide flooding; Blakeney Point 4 pairs success unknown; at Yarmouth several pairs attempted to nest on factory roofs but were discouraged - the same site as in 1994.

Small numbers as usual during winter. Highest counts: East Wretham Heath 5 Jan 9th, Breydon 11 Jan 13th, Attlebridge 14 Feb 2nd, Rockland Broad 33 Feb 4th, Welney 1-4 on six dates in Feb and Attlebridge 4 Dec 1st.

Largest gatherings: Colney GP 85 and Lenwade 42 April 3rd; Colney GP 90 April 20th; Gaywood Park King's Lynn 41 May 24th; Terrington 80 in May; Snettisham 50 June 2nd; 100 Brettenham 5th; Titchwell 40 June 8th and 40 in July; Gaywood Park 96 July 7th; Lynn Point 227 north to roost July 23rd; Horsey/West Somerton 600 Aug 16th; Lyng 115 Nov 3rd. At Hickling Broad, Rush Hills Maxima 99 June, 145 July and 95 Aug. At Sea Palling maxima 150 Aug and 50 Sept.

The only recorded coastal movements were at Sheringham where 45 east March 17th and 90 west April 28th, 70 east May 11th, 60 west on 19th and 65 west on 26th, 50 west July 14th, 60 west on 26th and 70 west on 28th, 90 west Aug 5th and 42 west Oct 14th.

Individuals showing characteristics of the Baltic and Northern Norway race fuscus at Lyng-Easthaugh March 30th (2) and at Lenwade May 3rd (2).

### **Herring Gull**

*Larus argentatus*

*Increasing breeder, late summer migrant and winter visitor.*

Breeding occurred at 5 sites: Titchwell 1 pair success unknown; Wells Saltmarsh c130 pairs poor success due to high tide flooding; Blakeney Point 100-110 pairs success unknown; Yarmouth several pairs attempted to nest on factory roofs but were discouraged (same site at 1994); Strumpshaw 1 pair success unknown (first attempt at this site).

Largest gatherings: Aldeby Tip 3000 Jan 4th; Holme 2000 Jan 27th; Thornham 2500 Feb 4th; Overstrand 700 Feb 21st; Hunstanton 600 March 6th; Holme 3500 and Snettisham 700

March 10th; Snettisham 1000 April 7th and subsequently 1740 May 5th, 700 June 2nd, 610 July 9th, 680 Oct 13th and 500 Dec 15th; Welney 235 Dec 2nd (surprisingly largest reserve count).

Major coastal movements: Overstrand 400 east Jan 23rd and 600 east Jan 29th; Holme 1500 west Jan 27th and 2300 east Feb 19th; Sheringham 400 east March 10th and 600 east Dec 22nd.

A leucistic adult Caister beach Jan 29th. Northern race *argentatus* noted at Sheringham where 100 east Jan 21st and 200 east Jan 28th, Wroxham Broad adult and 1st-winter March 7th and adult on 13th, Sheringham 20 present + 20 west Nov 5th, Cley 100 Dec 20th and Yarmouth 50 Dec 21st.

Yellow-legged Gull *L.a.michahellis/cachinnans* Recorded each month with the customary mid-summer peak. Mainly 1-2 at predominantly coastal localities, Cley and Breydon being the main sites with Colney and Hickling Broad the main inland sites. Largest counts: Cley 4 various dates June 4th-July 9th with 5 July 3rd. Also Hickling Broad 4 Aug 1st. Mid-late summer birds considered to be the Mediterranean and Iberian race *michahellis*. It is likely that the south-west Asian race *cachinnans* occurs, especially in winter. Careful scrutiny is required to separate each group.

### (Iceland Gull

*Larus glaucoides*

*Annual but very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.*

Caister adult Jan 1st; Cley 1st-winter Jan 19th and 27th; Taverham Pits immature Jan 28th; Costessey Pits un-aged Jan 31st; Attlebridge 1st-winter Feb 3rd; Wroxham Broad 2nd-winter March 3rd, 4th, 7th and 9th, presumed same Yarmouth March 10th, Sparham GP 1st-winter March 19th, presumed same Lenwade March 20th; Cley 3rd-summer Oct 1st; Yarmouth adult Oct 24th; Winterton adult Oct 27th; Sheringham 1st-winter Nov 4th; Martham 1st-winter Nov 15th and 22nd, same Horsey Mere Nov 21st.

### (Glaucous Gull

*Larus hyperboreus*

*Winter visitor in fluctuating numbers. Rare in summer.*

King's Lynn Docks 1st-winter Jan 1st-March 2nd; Yarmouth 1st-winter Jan 6th, 11th and 29th, same or another 1st-winter Caister/Yarmouth Feb 7th-April 9th, presumed same Breydon March 4th, 11th and 29th, another 1st-winter Breydon Nov 13th-14th; Winterton 1st-winter Jan 14th and 24th; Cley adults Jan 27th, March 3rd and Dec 20th; Colney GP 1st-winter Jan 28th; Attlebridge adult Feb 3rd; Horsey 1st-winter Feb 21st; Sheringham 1st-winter Feb 23rd-April 1st, same Weybourne March 31st, adult Feb 26th, same Weybourne Feb 26th; Bawburgh 1st-winter March 2nd; Wroxham Broad 2nd-winter March 8th and 12th-13th; Lyng-Easthaugh/Great Witchingham/Lenwade up to 2 1st-winters March 9th-April 3rd. West Runton 1st-winter April 4th; Bacton adult Oct 5th, same Mundesley Oct 5th; Brancaster adult Nov 3rd and 1st-winter Nov 27th.

### (Great Black-backed Gull

*Larus marinus*

*Passage migrant, winter visitor and non-breeding summer visitor.*

Largest counts: Breydon 481 Jan 6th, 400 Aug 11th and 24th, 1200 Aug 29th, 300 Dec 7th and 1400 Dec 22nd; Attlebridge 400 Jan 5th, 640 Feb 2nd, 150 Nov 28th and 190 Dec 1st; Wroxham Broad 210 Jan (site record) and 135 Feb 21st. Holme 140 Jan 27th and March 10th;

Lenwade 250 March 20th; Cley 108 July 24th; Scolt/Brancaster 450 Sept 2nd and 157 Oct 14th; c300 following a shrimper 5 miles north-east of Brancaster Sept 24th; Lyng 110 Nov 23rd.

Notable coastal movements: Overstrand 100 east Jan 23rd, 400 east Jan 29th and 300 Feb 23rd; Sheringham 120 east March 10th and 17th, 120 west Aug 31st, 100 east Sept 22nd and 400 east Dec 22nd.

### **Kittiwake**

*Rissa tridactyla*

**Mainly passage migrant. Occasional non-breeding concentrations in summer.**

Few notable gatherings reported. Best counts: Yarmouth harbour entrance 41 Aug 25th and Horsey 120+ roosting on sea Aug 29th.

Major coastal movements: Holme 140 east Jan 28th, 150 west Feb 19th, 400 east May 27th, 2250 west Sept 13th, 950 west Oct 29th, 300 west Nov 11th, 2500 west 12th and 1000 west Nov 26th; Cley 710 Sept 9th; Weybourne 150 east Jan 25th and 1200 east Feb 13th; Sheringham 1100 east Jan 25th, 900 east 26th and 800 east 28th, 6500 east Feb 13th, 170 east Mar 10th and 250 east 13th, 180 west May 28th, 100 west Sept 9th, 640 east Oct 29th, 300 east in 4 hours Nov 5th, 110 per hour east Nov 7th, 1300 east Nov 11th and 3950 east 12th, 650 east Dec 21st and 300 east on the 22nd; Overstrand 100 east Jan 23rd, 500 east 26th and 700 per hour east Feb 13th; Sea Palling 2796 Nov 12th.

Inland: Breydon adult Jan 1st, 1st-summer May 5th, adult June 21st, adult and 1st-winter Nov 11th; Titchwell 3 Jan 4th, 1 June 12th, 2 June 15th; Tottenhill GP 10 adults March 17th; Colney GP 1 April 24th; Welney adult May 4th.

### **Caspian Tern**

*Sterna caspia*

**Vagrant from the Baltic.**

One at Breydon June 9th (KRD SSm et al). The first since 1993.

### **Sandwich Tern**

*Sterna sandvicensis*

**Migratory breeder and passage migrant.**

First noted Snettisham March 7th then no other records until Cley and Sheringham March 23rd.

The terneries experienced mixed results with 450 pairs Scolt Head fledging only 20-50 young, while 3500 pairs Blakeney Point had 'very good success'.

Inland records included Welney April 2nd, Barton Broad May 7th-9th, Hingham May 17th, Hickling 2 May 25th, 5 June 19th, 4 on 22nd and 3 August 28th, 3 King's Lynn Beet Factory July 10th and Lyng-Easthaugh September 15th.

Some large gatherings/movements away from the colonies: Holme 350 August 2nd, Cley (North Scrape) 173 May 10th, Sheringham 150+ west in one hour April 28th, 650+ west May 29th and 300 west on 31st, Mundesley 240 east July 24th and 125 east August 12th, Breydon 351 May 2nd and 448 August 10th with 758 next day.

In Nov 3 Titchwell 7th and 1 Cley 13th.

### **Roseate Tern**

*Sterna dougallii*

**Uncommon summer visitor. Has bred.**

Following a trend of increased occurrence in recent years, the first nesting attempt since 1948 occurred when a pair laid eggs at a coastal site but were washed out August 2nd. A second pair was present at the same site for a few days but did not attempt to breed. Elsewhere at



Eccles/Sea Palling 2 birds were displaying on an offshore reef June 16th-July 3rd with 3 birds there June 18th.

Elsewhere records from: Breydon May 25th, 2 June 23rd, 2 July 14th and 1 17th-28th; Mundesley 2 west June 8th, Sheringham July 25th and 27th; Cley 1-2 on several dates in August, including a juvenile west on 30th and one Sept 9th; and Burnham Overy Sept 1st.

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

*Migratory and passage migrant at both coastal and inland sites.*

Recorded between April 8th (Ranworth and Wroxham Broad) and November 1st (Titchwell).

Coastal movements/concentrations in spring included 50+ west in one hour Weybourne April, 300 Lynn Point May 3rd, 150 West Holme May 21st and 100 Sheringham June 9th.

A minimum of 811 breeding pairs although no figures available from some sites.

	No. of Pairs	Young Fledged
Snettisham	70	1
Scolt Head	150	10-20
Bob Hall Sands	4	0
Stiffkey Binks	72	7-8
Blakeney Point	280	'Poor Success'
Breydon	183	133
Hickling	8	Unknown
Ranworth Broad	17	Unknown
Barton Broad	21	Unknown
Lyng-Easthaugh GP	1	Unknown
Sparham Pools	3	Unknown
Wissington BF	1	3
Fustyweed GP	1	Unknown

At Breydon the lowest ever productivity (0.74 young per pair) was blamed on cold mid-summer weather.

Up to 3 1st-summer individuals were seen at Breydon between June 22nd and July 13th with a 2nd-summer bird on June 23rd.

In autumn 202 Snettisham Aug 18th, 320 Holme Aug 1st with 180 west there on 13th and 260 on 18th, 93 west Weybourne Aug 8th and 202 Sheringham Aug 18th.

**Arctic Tern** *Sterna paradisaea*

*Double passage migrant; a few pairs breed.*

Recorded from April 16th (Holme) with passage of 1-7 birds at 18 sites; only double figure counts were on May 3rd when 10 Denver Sluice, 30 Lynn Point and 30 Breydon.

Breeding occurred at Stiffkey Binks where 3 pairs failed to produce any young and Blakeney Point where 20 pairs had 'fair success'. Single 1st-summer birds at Hickling June 5th and Breydon 22nd.

Only a light autumn passage at 17 sites with 31 Cley September 13th being the only notable count. A scarce inland sighting at Lyng GP on September 28th-29th. Nov records from Scolt Head 5th, Brancaster 9th and Blakeney Point (2) 16th.

### Little Tern

*Sterna albifrons*

#### *Local migratory breeder.*

Recorded between April 13th (Titchwell) and September 23rd (Sheringham). Inland records from Rockland Broad May 11th and a series from Hickling with 1 May 7th, 2 on 14th, 2 on 20th-21st, 3 on 25th, 4 June 22nd, 1 on 26th, 2 July 5th and 18 on 30th.

At least 615 breeding pairs were recorded, the 6 at Winterton probably coming from Yarmouth and therefore excluded from the total, a slight decrease on the previous year with the number of fledged young only a minimum of 155, well down on 1995. This was, in part, attributable to the total failure of the Yarmouth colony due to combination of high tides and serious Fox and Kestrel predation.

	No. of Pairs	Young Fledged
Holme	5	0
Titchwell	6	0
Brancaster	21	0
Scolt Head	35-40	Unknown
Gun Hill	37	40
Wells	49	30
Wells, East Hills	1	0
Stiffkey Binks	38	1
Blakeney Point	215	80-90
Winterton	6	3
Caister	5	1
Yarmouth	197	0

A few concentrations of birds in July with 280 Lynn Point on 21st with 97 on 27th and 40 Sheringham on 29th.

### Whiskered Tern

*Chlidonias hybridus*

#### *Vagrant from Southern Europe.*

1995 correction: the finder of the Breydon bird of June 15th was INS.

### Black Tern

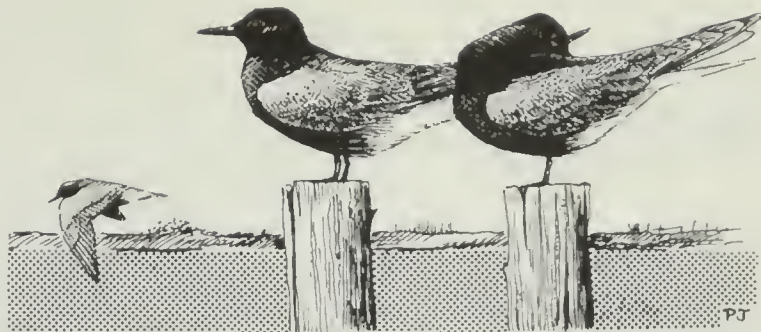
*Chlidonias niger*

#### *Regular double passage migrant in variable numbers; has bred.*

First recorded Holme April 15th with 3 Lyng GP and 1 Titchwell next day. Spring passage small with the bulk of birds in April unlike recent years. Maximum of 48 birds in the month at 11 sites. Majority of records 20th-22nd with largest counts only 11 west Holme 20th, 4 Cantley and 6 Colney next day and 4 Holme 22nd.

Maximum of 15 in May at 8 sites, mainly 1-2 birds apart from 4 Lyng GP on 1st. June records at Strumpshaw where 2 on 16th and Hickling 4 on 19th.

A total of 102 birds recorded at 18 localities on autumn passage commencing July 18th (Snettisham). The bulk of records (81 birds) in



*Black Terns (P. Jones)*

August, mainly 1-2s but including 3 Caister (swimming on sea), 4 Titchwell and 3 Cley on 7th, 4 east Sheringham 12th and 5 south Winterton 18th. Much the largest count 25+ Breydon on 23rd with 9 Hickling the same day. 19 birds in September with 5 Breydon on 25th. In Oct singles at Sheringham 8th, Kelling 13th and Holme 15th.

### **(Guillemot**

*Uria aalge*

*Passage migrant and winter visitor; occasional wrecks.*

Large numbers of Auks are often seen off the Norfolk coast at a range which makes positive identification between Guillemot and Razorbill initially impossible. Hence identifications are usually restricted to occasional birds feeding close inshore or to oiled bird/tideline corpses.

In March 25 dead/oiled birds on a 3km stretch of beach at Horsey on 23rd. In April 56 corpses between Waxham-Winterton on 11th and on 16th 30 dead on 800m of beach at Burnham Overy.

Inland: Denver Sluice Feb 4th and 2 Welney Feb 21st, one found dead next day.

### **(Razorbill**

*Alca torda*

*Passage migrant and winter visitor.*

Two unfortunate counts of corpses: 23 on a 3 km stretch of beach at Horsey March 7th and 96 Waxham-Winterton April 11th.

Four inland records in Feb: Colney GP 18th-21st, Welney and Tottenhill (in a roadside puddle) 20th and Denver Sluice 21st.

### **(Guillemot/Razorbill**

Largest count in first half of year 400 east Holme on the usual date of May 27th.

In autumn largest counts from Sheringham where 955 east and 135 west Oct 5th, 820 east and 105 west Oct 29th, 2100 east Nov 18th and 1800 east Nov 20th.

### **(Black Guillemot**

*Cephus grylle*

*Rare passage migrant and winter visitor.*

An above average number of records: Cley east Jan 28th, Overstrand Feb 11th, Sheringham east Feb 13th, Holme east Sept 18th, Happisburgh north Oct 7th, Sheringham west Nov 7th, Salthouse Nov 9th and Sheringham west Dec 11th.

Also one Brancaster/Titchwell irregularly Nov 16th-Dec 20th.





*Black Guillemot*

(S. Patient - Richard Richardson Award)

## **Little Auk**

*Alle alle*

*Passage migrant and winter visitor. Occasional 'wrecks'.*

In Jan one on Snettisham pits all month with 3 there on 14th. Also 2 Cley 14th and Thornham 28th.

Feb records from Hunstanton 20th (2) and 21st; Holme 19th; Titchwell 19th and 20th; Cley 2nd; Weybourne 21st; Sheringham 13th (2), 19th, 21st (3); Mundesley 19th. One found at West Beckham on 20th released on the coast. The only March record was from Overstrand on 5th.

First autumn record from Titchwell Oct 18th, then seen on most days with maximum of 12 at Sheringham on 21st and 29th.

Much more numerous and widespread during Nov on both north and east coasts. At Sheringham (where monthly total of 668) largest movements on 12th (400 east and 10 west) and 13th (160 east and 50 west). 2 flew inland with Starlings at Sea Palling on 11th. Inland casualties at Little Walsingham 12th and Helhoughton 13th. No December records.

## **Puffin**

*Fratercula arctica*

*Passage migrant and winter visitor.*

In the early part of the year singles at Sheringham Jan 29th and Feb 13th, and Mundesley also 13th. On Feb 20th 11 east Sheringham and this time several distressed birds were picked up both on the coast and inland (Docking and Old Lakenham) and taken into care, including one found at Admiralty Pt on 21st which weighed only 268 gms. Subsequently singles Snettisham March 10th and Mundesley May 4th (in full summer plumage).

In Aug Cley 28th and at Holme 30th. Small passage Sept 9th-19th with a max of 9 at Cley on 13th, becoming scarce during Oct with a maximum of 4 at Mundesley on the 5th. The only count of note during Nov was from Sheringham with 6 on 23rd, with a final record from there Dec 21st.

## **Stock Dove**

*Columba oenas*

*Resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.*

Highest counts in early part of year were 200 Stiffkey Meadows, 150 Horsey and 50 Vincent Hills (West Newton) Jan and 78 Welney Feb.

Spring coastal passage much lighter than last year with peaks of 24 south Winterton March 24th and 27 west Cromer April 1st.

Very little breeding data received. 5 pairs displaying East Tuddenham but not enough nesting sites (2-3 pairs nested successfully here 1976-96). BBS results: found in 31 out of 57

1km squares with an average of 3.3 birds per square. 65 Holme June 17th was presumably post-breeding gathering.

Light westerly passage noted at Sheringham on several dates in July but little evidence of usual autumn movement with just 21 south Winterton and 13 west Sheringham Oct 24th and 40 east Ousemouth next day. Counts at end of year included 44 Sennowe Park Sept and in Dec 120 Ousemouth and 135 Baconsthorpe Castle.

### **Woodpigeon**

*Columba palumbus*

#### ***Resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.***

Best counts at start of year included in Jan 500 Ringstead, 400 Cley and 500 How Hill. In Feb 350 Houghton, 500 Hickling and 1000 Heigham Sound. Then in March 600 Weybourne and in May 350 Welney.

Spring passage from late Feb to early June. Highest counts were 1000 west Sheringham March 28th, 100 east and 500 west Sheringham April 10th, 750 west Holme and 350 east Mundesley 18th and 750 west Holme 27th.

Virtually no breeding data received except from Abbey Farm, Flitcham where 13 pairs on 83 hectares of farmland. BBS results: found in all 57 1km squares surveyed with an average of 33 birds per square - no significant change from 1995.

Midsummer coastal movements included 125 west Sheringham June 26th. Evidence of autumn migration included 200 south Horsey Gap Oct 14th, 1500 east Ousemouth Oct 25th and southerly movements at Hunstanton from mid Oct with peaks of 427 in 2 hours Nov 1st, 1121 in 2 hours 9th and 1011 in 5.5 hours 14th. Also 730 south Winfarthing Nov 8th 0720-0800.

Peak count at end of year 1650 Ringstead Dec.

### **Collared Dove**

*Streptopelia decaocto*

#### ***First bred in Britain at Cromer in 1955. Now widespread and common resident.***

In first quarter highest counts included 40 Holme Jan and 75 King's Lynn Docks March. A leucistic bird Wereham Feb-March. Coastal movement in spring included 103 west Holme April 27th, 10 south Snettisham May 21st, 18 west Sheringham 26th and 16 west Sheringham June 5th.

BBS results: found in 32 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 6.3 birds per occupied square.

Autumn migration noted at Hunstanton where total of 477 with Oct peaks of 141 11th and 77 14th. End of year peaks: Sept: 78 Sheringham and 72 Bawburgh, Oct: 200 Thetford Nunnery Lakes, 63 King's Lynn, 67 Holme, 48 Docking, 50 Gresham and 100 Barnham Broom, Nov: 39 Terrington, Dec: 70 Egmere and 120 Ludham.

### **Turtle Dove**

*Streptopelia turtur*

#### ***Migratory breeder and passage migrant. Evidence of recent decrease.***

An early record from Burgh Castle April 8th (PN). Small numbers arrived from 19th (Repps) with many well-watched sites recording their first by 24th. The best spring passage for many years began May 19th with peak counts of coastal migrants moving west during the rest of the month as follows: 155 Holme and 95 Sheringham 20th, 101 Holme and 65 Sheringham 21st, 160 Holme 25th, 42 Holme and 150 Sheringham 26th, 63 Titchwell 29th, 80

Sheringham 30th and 60 Sheringham 31st. Then in June 45 Holme and 57 Sheringham 1st and 28 Sheringham 5th. Gatherings of spring migrants included 11 Salthouse May 16th, 8 Kelling 20th and 8 Terrington 27th.

Breeding data sketchy but 10 pairs Welney, 6 pairs Dunton, 4 pairs Titchwell, Warham and Swanton Novers Woods and 1-3 pairs reported at 25 further sites. BBS results: found in 31 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 2.9 birds per occupied square. In squares surveyed in both years a 24% rise in number of squares from 1995 to 1996.

Few autumn gatherings noted, the best being 11 Flitcham Aug, 20 Winfarthing and 13 Horsey Sept. Coastal migration began with 4 west Sheringham July 9th with up to 5 west there on several dates until late Aug. Few reports in Sept especially after mid month. Last records were Warham Greens 26th, Wighton 28th and Happisburgh Oct 11th.

### **Ring-necked Parakeet**

*Psittacula krameri*

#### ***Introduced vagrant.***

Again the only record was from Holme where 5 Aug 9th (NML et al). The following records of Ring-necked Parakeets were also received but with no descriptions the possibility of other similar species being involved cannot be eliminated: East Tuddenham April 20th, Cley April 22nd, King's Lynn BF May 20th and Blakeney July 15th.

The identification of 2 parakeets seen throughout the year in Sheringham remains unclarified: 3 Ring-necked Parakeets are said to have escaped from a local aviary in November 1995, one of which was subsequently recaptured. Yet other sources indicate that they have been identified as Plum-headed Parakeets. Still other observers suggest that Alexandrine Parakeet may not have been ruled out! Perhaps 4 (or 6) birds are involved? Clearly there is a need for care and accuracy in identifying and recording parakeets.

### **Cuckoo**

*Cuculus canorus*

#### ***Migratory breeder and passage migrant.***

An early record at East Harling April 10th followed by singles Pott Row and Horsey 14th and Reepham, Sculthorpe and Hickling 15th. More general arrival 17th-21st. Coastal migrants in May: 4 in off sea Holme 18th, 4 west Holme and 4 west and 1 east Sheringham 19th and 2 west Sheringham 29th. Up to 6 Holme May and 4 in one tree Ditchingham June 13th were the only other reports of more than 2 birds.

Evidence of a decline in breeding birds from East Tuddenham where young birds were regular until 1983 but only recently in Aug 1991 and July 1994. BBS results: comparison of 47 1km squares surveyed in both 1995 and 1996 also suggests decline with birds found in 33 squares in 1995 and 27 in 1996 (a drop of 18%). Also, average number of birds per occupied square fell by 9%.

Rather more Sept records than of late with the latest ones being Stiffkey 20th-23rd (2 on 21st), Holme 21st-25th, Holkham 22nd and Warham Greens 25th-28th.

### **Barn Owl**

*Tyto alba*

#### ***Resident. Continental race guttata has appeared as a vagrant.***

Remains a widespread species. Recorded from 195 sites, well up on last year's total. Most records are from the winter periods (eg records from 8 sites in May but from 42 in January), undoubtedly because birders frequently remain active in the field until dusk at this time of



year. Norfolk remains one of the bird's English strongholds and it is pleasing to receive reports of 59 pairs breeding at 50 sites, well up on last year but presumably a reflection of greater recording/reporting effort.

### **Little Owl**

*Athene noctua*

#### ***Introduced resident.***

Recorded from a total of 97 sites, well up on last year's total of 62. Birds were reported from 38 sites during the breeding season (April-July) with 24 pairs reported from 18 sites in this period. There was a notable increase in the number of records from the north coast with singles at Holme, Burnham Overy, Weybourne, Sheringham (only the second record at SBO since 1975), Paston and Mundesley during the year. As an indication of breeding density, 5 pairs bred on one 400 acre farm at Mundham.

### **Tawny Owl**

*Strix aluco*

#### ***Widespread resident.***

Far more records received than last year, with birds present at 101 localities (36 in 1995). 48 pairs were either proven or suspected of breeding, with 27 of these found with broods. The strong bias in breeding records towards northwest Norfolk is almost entirely due to the efforts of just two intrepid observers (NML & MESR) and a similar effort by others elsewhere in the county would undoubtedly make a highly significant contribution to our knowledge of the status of this species in the county.

### **Long-eared Owl**

*Asio otus*

#### ***Scarce and local resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.***

A total of 26 birds were reported from 14 sites between January and April. Only one roost held more than two birds: a Fenland site held 10 birds nightly during January. One Blakeney Point on the unusual date of May 14th. A total of 15 pairs at 12 sites were proven or suspected of breeding - three times last year's reported total.

A total of 23 birds were reported from 21 sites from September to the year end. 14 of these were recorded at coastal sites between Sept 20th and Nov 15th at Titchwell (2), Holkham, Stiffkey (2), Blakeney Point, Kelling WM, West Runton, Eccles, Horsey Gap (2), Caister, Yarmouth and Hopton and were presumed to be coastal migrants, with others in off the sea at Sheringham Sept 24th, 2 at Holme and 1 at Weybourne Oct 24th. Apart from one Ridlington Dec 10th no other late winter reports received and no communal roosts noted in second winter period.

### **Short-eared Owl**

*Asio flammeus*

#### ***Rare breeder, regular passage migrant and winter visitor.***

Scarce during the first winter period and early spring. Monthly totals of 1-2 in Wash Jan and Feb, 5 March-May and 2 until June 8th; along north coast between Holme and Sheringham of 2 Jan, 4 Feb, 5 March, 4 April & 3 May (including 1 in off sea at Sheringham on 19th); at Welney 2-3 in Jan and Feb and at Breydon/Berney 5 Jan, 3 Feb-April and 1 in May. Elsewhere birds at Colney GP (Jan), Heigham Holmes (Jan), Reedham (Jan), Ten Mile Bank (Jan and 2 in Feb), Chedgrave (Jan and April), Haddiscoe (Feb), Hickling (Feb), Strumpshaw (Feb), Yarmouth (Feb)

& April), Bircham (March), Burgh (March), Stokesby (2 in March), Horsey (April), Mundesley/Paston (April), Sculthorpe (April), Winterton (April), and Hardley Flood (May).

No evidence of breeding in the county, though singles reported in the Wash at Snettisham July 6th and Aug 31st, Sept 14th and 2 on Sept 30th, at Sculthorpe Aug 14th and Kelling Hard Aug 23rd.

Subsequently single in Wash Sept 14th, with 2 30th; Sheringham Sept 17th, followed by singles there 23rd and 26th, Sidestrand 20th, Berney Marshes 23rd, Burnham Norton and Horsey 24th and Warham Greens 26th. Further singles, part of a marked influx at this time, were in off the sea at Cley on Oct 10th, Titchwell, Holme and Sheringham (2) on 23rd, Holme, Eccles and Sea Palling on 24th and Weybourne on 25th Oct and elsewhere in the



*Short-eared Owl (P. M. Beeson)*

county in Oct in the Wash, at Whitlingham Lane, Winterton, Yarmouth and Welney. Thereafter, 2 were in the Wash in Nov and Dec, 10 were on the north coast between Holme and Sheringham in Nov, including 1 in off the sea there on 18th, with 7 in the same area in Dec. Elsewhere during Nov-Dec singles were at Baconsthorpe Castle, Caister, Martham, Strumpshaw, Surlingham, Thorpe Marshes and Waxham.

### **Nightjar**

*Caprimulgus europaeus*

*Local migratory breeder and rare passage migrant.*

Birds were reported from May 25th with, presumably, earlier birds unnoticed or unreported. 11 churring males were reported from 6 sites in Breckland, a small fraction of the population here in this major British stronghold. Can anybody out there provide more information on this important population? Elsewhere, a total of 65 males were reported from a total of 11 sites - a similar level to last year, confirming the bird's recent and rapid range expansion into former breeding sites. A single migrant noted at Wells Dell Sept 21st.

### **Swift**

*Apus apus*

*Common migratory breeder and passage migrant.*

First recorded at Strumpshaw April 18th, with 2 at Brancaster and 1 west at Overstrand 19th, single Thetford 21st, 12 at Holme 23rd and up to 4 birds at each of a further 16 sites by month end. Migration gathered pace during May with peak counts of birds passing west from mid-month at Holme of 1200 17th, 270 20th, 550 21st, 470 26th and at Sheringham of 600 19th, 280 20th and 21st, 680 26th, 700 30th and 300 31st. Elsewhere, gatherings of 250 at Welney 21st and 29th, 4-500 Colney GP 21st and 400+ Narford Hall 23rd were notable. Large movements continued just into June with 420 west Sheringham and 1750 west Holme on 1st; 500+ were at Hickling on 19th and 350+ there on 20th.

BBS results:  
found in 37 out of 57  
1km squares with an  
average of 7.4 birds  
per occupied square.

Large westerly  
autumn movements  
observed at  
Sheringham with  
2150 on July 9th,  
500 on 13th, 3100 on



Swifts (N. Arlott)

14th and 500 on 23rd and 250 on Aug 5th, 370 on 6th, 250 on 7th and 115 on 9th. A large southerly movement of birds passed at rate of 60 per minute between 2 and 4 pm at Horsey Corner on Aug 9th. A general departure of birds noted from Norwich area between Aug 15th and 17th. Very few birds reported in Sept, with maximum of 12 at Holme on 3rd and 1-3 birds at 16 other sites. In Oct, singles Overstrand and Waxham with 3 Titchwell on 1st, singles Swaffham and Holme 2nd, Caister 3rd, 2 at Cley 4th, 1 Burnham Norton 11th, 2 Holme on 15th with 1 there on 17th and the last of the year, a single at Weybourne on 26th.

A partial albino with a white rump, white around the face and a slight whitish area on the mantle was at Barton Broad on June 23rd (PRA).

### Alpine Swift

*Apus melba*

*Vagrant from southern Europe.*

Two typical records of single birds at Breydon May 19th (GMCo) and east at Bacton May 20th (MF) bring the county total to 37.

### Kingfisher

*Alcedo atthis*

*Resident, numbers fluctuate in response to severity of winters.*

Recorded throughout the year and throughout the county at a total of 80 sites. The bird was absent from a large part of Broadland in the early winter period, many presumably moving to unfrozen waters or perishing in the severe conditions. Breeding or suspected breeding only recorded at 10 sites: 2-3 pairs in the Lyng-Sparham area and singles at UEA Broad, River Yare at Postwick Grove, Belaugh Broad, Barton Turf, Cantley, Wheatfen, Thetford Nunnery lakes and the River Wissey at Didlington - surely many more went unreported. Low productivity may compound problems for this species, with just 3 juvenile birds caught and ringed at Garboldisham compared to 15 in 1994 and 12 in 1995. One west along the beach Sheringham Aug 21st was presumably an immigrant. 5 birds at Snettisham, with 1 in off the sea, on Sept 21st, perhaps indicated an influx but most other sites held only single birds during the second winter period.

### Hoopoe

*Upupa epops*

*Annual vagrant in very small numbers.*

Three typical spring records with single birds at Welney April 23rd, Lound May 8th/9th and Swanton Novers May 15th.



## **Wryneck**

*Jynx torquilla*

**Former breeder. Now scarce annual passage migrant, mostly in autumn.**

Following the first of the year at Overy Dunes on April 21st, an average passage involving 12 birds noted at the following sites: Dersingham (found dead in a garden, probably killed by a cat, on April 26th), Happisburgh, Holme, Kelling WM, South Wootton, Wells, West Runton, Winterton and Yarmouth. Last of the spring at South Wootton on May 21st.

Autumn passage commenced on Aug 27th at Winterton with a further 25 birds noted up until Sept 25th when the last was at Snettisham. Apart from 1 inland at Strumpshaw on Sept 14th/15th the rest were at the following coastal sites: Caister, East Runton, Holme, Upton, Mundesley, Overstrand, Overy Dunes, Repps, Sheringham, Snettisham, Stiffkey, Warham Greens, Waxham, Wells, Winterton and Yarmouth. All were singles apart from 2 at Overstrand on Sept 21st.

## **Green Woodpecker**

*Picus viridus*

**Resident.**

Thanks to more information submitted, yet another increase in the number of sites. In contrast to last year when noted at 57 localities, this year seen at 71 widely scattered sites. Still very few records from Breckland (only 9 sites) which has traditionally been regarded as a stronghold. Breeding season records noted at the following locations (single pairs unless stated otherwise): Bawsey (2), Beeston Regis, Brampton, Corpusty, Cranwich, Dersingham, Ditchingham, East Harling, East Ruston, East Winch, Fordham, Frettenham, Hanworth, Hoe, Holkham (5 park, 3 pines), Holme, King's Lynn, Kirstead, Lound, Ludham (3), Norwich, Old Catton, Salhouse, Salthouse, Saxthorpe, Snettisham, South Wootton, Strumpshaw, Thorpe St Andrew, Waxham, Weeting and West Acre.

BBS results: found in 16 out of 57 1km squares. A small decline from 1995 suggested but possibly insufficient data for meaningful conclusions.

Most records were of singles or pairs although 7 together at Holkham Park on Nov 2nd. One at Ormesby in December was eating apples.

## **Great Spotted Woodpecker**

*Dendrocopos major*

**Common resident. Birds of the northern race occasional in autumn.**

Although still undoubtedly under-recorded, an increase in records from 69 widely scattered sites in the county, with a total of 33 breeding locations. Of these most were of single pairs or drummers except for: 19 Holkham Park, 6 Ludham, 8 Overstrand, 3 Raynham Park, 3 Strumpshaw, 3 Tatterford, 5 Thompson Water, 2 Thorpe St Andrew (Belmore Plantation) and 2 Thornham.

Still too few records from the county's great estates which must hold good numbers. Observers throughout frequently noted Great Spotted Woodpeckers at garden peanut feeders with some lucky enough to attract late summer family parties.

Usual spate of coastal records between September 19th and October 24th, with several sightings of birds arriving in from the sea (Holme, Waxham and Wells). One at East Hills, Wells on October 16th arrived high from the north, landed in a lone pine, where it was instantly attacked by a Sparrowhawk and promptly flew straight back out to sea! At the year's end, drumming again noted rather early - December 29th at Merton. A male at Raynham Park on March 31st showed red/brown back and primary barring.

**Lesser Spotted Woodpecker**

*Dedrocopos minor*

**Local resident.**

As in 1995 recorded at 40 localities with drummers or birds in the breeding season from the following 17 sites (singles unless otherwise stated): Ashill, East Harling, Felbrigg, Garboldisham (where 3 juvs caught in Aug-Sept), Holkham Park (9 territories), Lyng, Ludham (3 pairs bred), Lynford, Lyng-Sparham, Merton (2), Narborough, Rollesby, Santon Downham (pair seen with young), Strumpshaw, Thompson Common, Tottenhill and Wayland Wood (2). As a largely sedentary and secretive species it might be reasonable to assume breeding occurred at some of the other sites where recorded. More evidence of a decline, however, came from East Tuddenham where only 1 record since 1989 when it ceased to breed. Further details for the county are still needed. Wandering birds/migrants noted in March/April when 2 Holme where seldom noted, 1 Wells pines Oct 20th and 1 flying west over Cromer GC on Oct 7th, along with a Great Spotted Woodpecker.

**Short-toed Lark**

*Calandrella brachydactyla*

**Vagrant from southern Europe.**

Two records in spring, both at Sheringham BO. A well-watched bird April 24th-May 3rd (KBS et al), followed by a brighter reddish individual May 30th which stayed only briefly before flying off west (KBS).

**Woodlark**

*Lullula arborea*

**Uncommon migratory breeder, recently increasing. Also scarce passage migrant.**

The year began with the wintering flocks from 1995 still present on arable fields around Feltwell. The unprecedented early arrival of a pair on a forest re-stock on Jan 14th heralded the new season and several other pairs were on site before the end of the month.

The Breckland population was surveyed for the 23rd consecutive year. A new record total of 311 singing males and/or pairs were recorded, an overall increase of 25% on 1995. Of these 167 were in the Norfolk Brecks and 144 in Suffolk. Forest habitats held 253 but the remaining 58 on heathland and other habitats represented a 57% increase, a most encouraging situation reflecting the benefits of improved latter day heathland management.

The geographical spread of Woodlarks throughout Thetford Forest is now consistently even with core areas no longer such an important factor. Their distribution relative to planting year is again heavily weighted towards the younger restocks and permanent open-space areas as shown in the table below:

planting year	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	unplanted etc	Total
singing males	1	7	12	34	47	59	50	14	29	253

The most unusual nesting site was in a large barley field on the forest edge, instances of which have seldom been recorded in Britain.

A record total of 164 birds were colour-ringed, bringing the total ringed since 1986 to 811. There were 39 sightings of these during the year including a wintering bird in Devon in Feb and migrants at Sheringham in March, Walberswick (Suffolk) in May and Holland in Oct, the first ever sighting in mainland Europe.

Away from the Brecks pairs or singing males were recorded during the breeding season at ten sites with fledging success confirmed at two.

Following an early migrant west at Stubbs Mill, Hickling on Feb 11th, there were eight records of coastal migrants March 23rd-April 9th. Later reports included 1 Waxham April 25th. Autumn migration again restricted to the north-west of the county where 10 seen Oct 11th-24th including 4 Snettisham 23rd. Final coastal migrant east at Scolt Nov 14th.. (Ron Hoblyn/Forest Enterprise kindly provided the Breckland information.)

## Skylark

*Alauda arvensis*

### *Resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.*

More counts of wintering flocks received this year; highest for first quarter were 200 Brancaster Staithe, 250 Dunton and 230 East Wretham all Jan and 200 Ringstead and 240 West Runton Feb. Disturbingly there were none in one extensive area of arable and set-a-side in north-west Norfolk in Jan.. Cold weather movement of 150 west Holme Jan 27th.. Again no evidence of spring passage.

Counts of breeding pairs or singing males included 30 Choseley/Thornham/Titchwell, 20-30 Scolt, 45-50 Blakeney Pt, 19 Weybourne, 22 Cantley, 23 Flitcham (83 ha farmland) and 31 Welney. Comparable counts on a year to year basis are still severely lacking however. BBS results: found in 56 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 11.7 birds per occupied square - no significant change from 1995.

First autumn coastal migrant west Sheringham Sept 15th. Best movements concentrated in Oct when 379 south Hunstanton 11th, 345 south Hunstanton 12th, 487 south Hunstanton, 600 west Scolt and 700 in/west Sheringham 14th and 582 south Hunstanton and 400 west Sheringham 23rd. Passage continued until Nov 14th when 136 south Hunstanton.

End of year gatherings included 250 Baconsthorpe Oct, 250 Terrington and 270 North Lopham Nov and 300 Lynn Point, 270 Ringstead, 260 Hickling and 200 Harling Dec.

## Shore Lark

*Eremophila alpestris*

### *Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Exceptional in summer.*

Two wintering flocks remained from 1995: 5 Holkham Bay until April 18th and up to 6 Titchwell until March 12th, this latter group also seen at Brancaster Jan 6th-15th. Only other reports in first winter period were 2 Cley Jan 5th and 1-3 additional birds Holkham Bay Jan 27th-Feb 17th.

Only 5 spring migrants recorded: Snettisham March 31st, Sheringham April 14th-17th, Cley 19th-22nd (up to 2) and Weybourne 29th..

First autumn migrants 16 Mundesley/Walcott Oct 5th. Next arrivals 9th when 3 Scolt, 2 Holkham, 3 Salthouse/Cley and 1 Sheringham with widespread arrivals continuing until 15th, the largest flocks by this time being 10 Holkham and 13 Holme. Further spate of immigrants between 24th when 6 Hopton and Nov 1st when 6 west Sheringham. Passage less obvious at most sites during Nov with light scattering of migrants but flocks at main sites building up rapidly with 34 Titchwell 14th and 22 Salthouse/Cley 23rd. Last migrant Sheringham Nov 30th-Dec 1st.

Numbers of wintering Shore Larks in north-west Norfolk difficult to analyse due to their elusive and mobile habits. A massive 63 at Titchwell in early Dec down to 38 by the year's end may have accounted for subsequent reports elsewhere including 14 Holme 14th. Of



greater interest is the question of where these 63 came from since there was no evidence of immigration elsewhere after the end of Nov. Were they simply an accumulation of all (or most) of the Shore Larks already present in the county? There may also have been some commuting between north-west Norfolk and Gibraltar Point in Lines where similar numbers were present (41 in late Nov increasing to 65 in mid Dec). Observers should look out for birds marked as part of a colour-ringing programme at Gibraltar Point during the winter.

### **Sand Martin**

*Riparia riparia*

*Local migratory breeder and common passage migrant.*

An early migrant at How Hill March 6th followed by 1 Welney 19th. Widespread arrival 24th when 7 Rollesby Broad and 1-2 at 6 further sites. Few records after this until April 8th/9th when several sites recorded their first.

Following 50 Welney April 11th heavy passage began 15th when 1050 west and 150 present Holme and 40/hr south Winterton. Thereafter coastal migration in April included 400 west Holme and 230 west Sheringham 16th, 200 west Holme and 266 southeast in 1.5 hrs Happisburgh 21st, 200 west Holme and 90 west Sheringham 22nd and 400 west Mundesley 26th. Much smaller numbers moving in May with 175 west Holme 21st the only significant count, the last coastal migrants noted on June 4th.

Gatherings in April included 100 Titchwell, Hickling and Colney and 300 Tottenhill all 18th-24th. Subsequent counts of 625 Colney May 3rd, 220 Pentney GP 9th and 100 Broome GP 18th but not clear as to whether or not unreported breeding colonies influenced these counts.

Breeding recorded at the following sites (number of pairs or occupied burrows in brackets): Mundesley/Bacton (65), Happisburgh (120), Winterton (10), California cliffs (1), Hopton cliffs (15) - the first for many years, Lyng-Easthaugh GP (152), Crimplesham GP (80), Cranwich GP (78) and Feltwell GP (21). Colonies also reported at Blackborough End GP and Bawsey CP but no details received. Unfortunately there is still no consistency in recording breeding colonies with different sites reported from one year to the next allowing no useful comparison.

Autumn coastal migration included 150 west Holme July 12th, 300 west Holme and 2100 west Mundesley 13th, 120 east Sheringham Aug 6th and 5000 west Holme 24th. Autumn gatherings concentrated Aug 14th-20th: 150 Burnham Norton 7th, 350 Welney 14th, 300 Titchwell 17th and 19th, 600 Salthouse 17th and 200 Weybourne 20th. Once again a late gathering at Cantley BF of 400 Sept 18th. The only reports after Sept 24th were singles Holme Oct 22nd and Happisburgh Nov 1st.

### **Swallow**

*Hirundo rustica*

*Common migratory breeder and passage migrant.*

First 2 Wroxham Broad March 28th. Subsequently 20 Didlington April 4th and widespread by 8th. Only gatherings reported in spring were 100 Holme April 15th, 120 Welney 23rd and 70 Colney May 3rd.

Coastal movements began in earnest April 15th when 670 west Holme and 60/hr south Winterton. Subsequent counts of birds flying west included 400 Holme April 22nd, 350 Holme 24th, 300 Sheringham 27th, 400 Sheringham May 19th, 3750 Holme 21st and 300 Holme June 1st.

Breeding data again very sparse: 75 pairs Stanford TA (down from 100 pairs in last 5 years) whilst further evidence of decline noted at Garboldisham and East Tuddenham. BBS results: found in 43 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 4.3 birds per occupied square.

Autumn coastal migration from at least July 20th but only small numbers involved with a maximum of 60 west Sheringham Sept 6th. Gatherings included 561 Welney Aug 15th, 5000 Martham roost 27th (none present next day) and 250 Scolt/Brancaster roost Sept 4th. Recorded from many sites until Oct 25th with further records from Weybourne, Happisburgh and Sea Palling (3) Nov 1st, Snettisham and West Somerton (2) 4th and Salthouse (2) 8th.

### **Red-rumped Swallow**

*Hirundo daurica*

#### ***Vagrant from southern Europe.***

Two records in spring: Blakeney/Wiveton/Cley area April 24th (BJB GED et al) and west at Holme April 27th (NML). The county total moves on to 25.

### **House Martin**

*Delichon urbica*

#### ***Common migratory breeder and passage migrant.***

First Glandford April 3rd then 2 Didlington 4th followed by singles Snettisham and Waxham 8th and Holkham and Yarmouth 9th. More widespread by 10th. Coastal migration from mid April including 140 west Holme and 90 west Sheringham 24th. First significant inland gathering 60 Colney 28th. General arrival in Broadland May 2nd and 150 Colney 3rd. Further arrival May 19th when 150 Rockland Broad and coastal passage picked up from then until end of month with 2500 west Holme 21st, 1000 west Holme 25th and 600 west Sheringham 29th. Finally 200 west Holme June 1st.

Breeding data: 56 nests Aylmerton Lodge (58 in 1994), none in Chedgrave, 24 Claxton (Beauchamp Arms), 13 Docking (King William pub), 60 Geldeston (Crow Hall Farm) (43 in 1995), 10 Longlands Farm (18 in 1995), 23 Titchwell (Manor Hotel) (28 in 1995) and 6 Topcroft Street (3 in 1992-5). Once again a confusing mix of increases and decreases. BBS results: found in 25 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 7.4 birds per occupied square. In 47 squares surveyed in both years a rise of 17% in number of squares recorded but a fall of 46% in average number of birds per occupied square.

Autumn coastal migration from at least July 20th but rather small numbers involved, especially compared to last year. Best counts 350 west Sheringham Sept 28th and 200 west Sheringham 30th. Gatherings included 80 Flitcham Aug 12th, 100 Titchwell 20th, 100 Pott Row 27th and 130 Cantley BF Sept 28th. Disappeared from Garboldisham in last 2 weeks of Sept usually lingering here throughout Oct. At East Tuddenham numbers in autumn fallen gradually since 1983 (when 800 in Sept) with a maximum of 20 this year. A scattering of Nov records: Happisburgh (2) and Sea Palling 1st, Sheringham 2nd, Salthouse 3rd, Berney 8th and finally Winterton and Burgh Castle 16th.

### **Richard's Pipit**

*Anthus novsaseelandiae*

#### ***Virtually annual autumn migrant from Western Siberia. Rare in spring and winter.***

An autumn total of around 25 birds from 13 sites, with many records referring to birds moving overhead along the coast, some duplication is probable.

During September near Nene Mouth 15th, Burnham Norton and Burnham Overy Dunes 20th, Brancaster GC 25th and Snettisham CP 30th.





Upper: Well over a thousand Pintail were attracted to Welney during February. Lower:  
Increasing numbers of Pink-footed Geese have become a feature at Abbey Farm Flitcham  
(C. R. Knights).







Upper”: Ever elusive it is difficult to assess the number of Shorelarks in north-west Norfolk. Colour ringing at Gibraltar Point may help solve the mystery. Lower: Snow Buntings have greatly declined. During the 1960s the Cley/Salthouse flock totalled 500 and in the severe 1962/3 winter an exceptional gathering of 650 appeared at Berney Marshes (*I. Leach*).





Top left: Avenues of redwoods are well worth examining for Treecreepers roosting in hollows in the fibrous bark. Top right: Although Breckland has long been considered a stronghold for Green Woodpeckers the number of recent observations is disappointingly low. Bottom left: At one time Wheatears were abundant in Breckland including 35 nesting pairs at Weeting in 1976; nowadays the species is restricted to a few pairs in the Stanford Battle Area. Bottom right: A survey in Holkham Park produced a total of 30 pairs of Nuthatches (D. Mason).







Three springtime occurrences of Rustic Buntings included this female (upper) which visited a Sheringham garden during six days (*A. Tate*) and this splendid male (lower) at Kelling and Cley in May (*D. Nye*).





As usual, most records during Oct and, once again, best localities Hunstanton Cliffs where 3 south 4th and another 24th and Sheringham where west 11th, east 16th, west 22nd, west 24th and another present 24th-30th, with 2 31st-Nov 2nd, 1 remaining until 6th. Other Oct records as follows: Burnham Norton and Cromer GC 2nd, Kelling 10th, Happisburgh 13th, west Weybourne 14th, Wells 22nd and Winterton 30th. Further records during Nov when at Weybourne in off sea 9th and east 15th, and an unusual inland record Honing Common 28th-29th (PJH AJK et al).

	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
Autumn totals	5	13	30	7	17	10	32	22	95	40

1996 was the best autumn total since 1993 but still about an average showing. Autumn 1994 still stands well above the rest.

**Blyth's Pipit**  
*Rare vagrant from Siberia.*

A 1st-winter bird was present in cliff top fields Sheringham (Oct 14th-16th (TW et al) and was the first county record. With an increasing awareness of the field identification features we can possibly expect further records in the forthcoming years. See article on page 245.

*Anthus godlewskii*

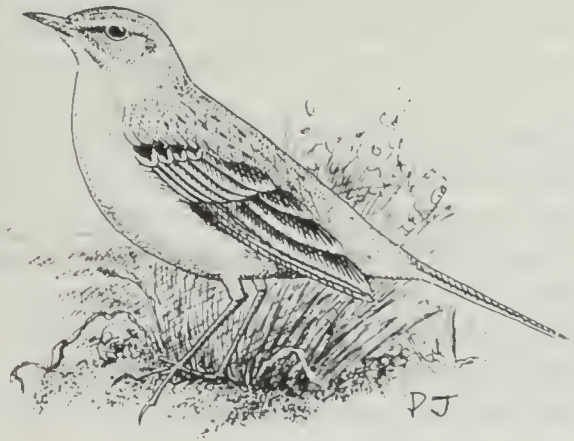


*Blyth's Pipit left and Snow Bunting (G. Wright)*

**Tawny Pipit**  
*A scarce migrant from Southern Europe.*

*Anthus campestris*

After an absence of records last year a much better showing with birds at Sheringham BO April 24th-25th (KBS MPT et al) and June 8th-9th (DPA APBe MY-P), Warham Greens Sept 25th-28th (JRW et al) and west at Sheringham Oct 3rd (KBS).



*Tawny Pipit (P. Jones)*

## Tree Pipit

*Anthus trivialis*

### *Migratory breeder and passage migrant.*

First returning birds April 8th at Sheringham and Swanton Novers and 9th at Holme, Cley and Weybourne. Main passage/arrival not until April 20th when coastal passage daily through until June 1st. Passage fairly typical with a total of c160 migrants reported. Largest counts during April when at Holme the following west: 30 20th, 25 21st and 10 22nd. Elsewhere 10 Sheringham 21st and 10 Burnham Overy Dunes 22nd. Counts much lower during May: 8 west Holme 19th and 21st, 5 west Burnham Overy Dunes 5th and 5 west Sheringham 30th.

Breeding data sparse but did include the following number of territories: 6 Roydon Common, 5 Frost's Common Hockham, 3 Salthouse Heath, 3 Wolferton, 2 Horston, 2 East Wretham and singles Beeston Regis Common and Holt Lowes. In the Brecks numbers seem to be remaining stable where described as 'still common'.

Autumn passage commenced Aug 19th when recorded Hickling. Passage not on the scale of last year involving around only 30 birds, most Sept 19th-22nd, when 6 Holme, 4 Yarmouth Cemetery, 3 Sheringham and 1-2 Burnham Norton, Scolt, Burnham Overy Dunes, Holkham, Wells, Warham, Blakeney Point, Trimingham, Eccles, Sea Palling and Waxham.

A scattering of records during Oct when 2 Cley 8th, Sheringham 12th, Weybourne 14th and finally Yarmouth Cemetery 24th.

## Meadow Pipit

*Anthus pratensis*

### *Locally common migratory breeder and passage migrant with small numbers in winter.*

As usual few during Jan and Feb, best counts 104 Welney, 70 Dersingham, 60 Burgh Castle, 40 Abbey Farm, Flitcham, 35 Colney and 30 Wroxham, Stiffkey, Feltwell, Garboldisham and Hardley. During Jan a cold weather movement evident on 27th when 75 west Holme and 30 east Sheringham.

Spring passage underway early when first birds noted moving west at coastal sites Feb 27th. However, during March passage very poor due to the absence of southwesterly winds; best counts 200 east Sheringham 24th and 150 west Weybourne 28th. Largest flocks at this time 270 Sheringham 23rd and 50 Reffley 13th. A slight improvement during April but passage never reaching the scale of recent springs. Maximum counts Holme where westerly movements included 655 9th, 400 15th and 300 19th, and at Sheringham where 600 west and 30 east 8th. Largest numbers of grounded migrants April 11th-12th when 350 Holkham, 300 Burnham Norton, 80 Holme and 50 Cley.

Breeding information included the following territories/pairs: 106 Welney (very similar to last year), 30 Blakeney Point, 20 Cley and inland 1-2 pairs Bodney, Gillingham, Nogdam End and Watton Common.

Autumn passage from Aug 3rd when 60 Holme increasing to 120 there 18th. Passage heavier than normal when large flocks Sept 20th-22nd with 300 Cromer GC, 166 Welney, 160 Scolt, 100 Holme and 80 Weybourne, and in Oct 450 Holme 12th, 140 Scolt 9th and 105 Welney 7th. Visible passage also more evident than normal, with an exceptional autumn count at 1000 west Scolt Oct 11th (all day count) and at Hunstanton Cliffs an autumn total of 2957 south Sept to Nov. Best counts here in Sept 311 (in 2 hours) 25th, 263 (2 hours) 26th and in Oct 252 (5 hours) 7th, 352 (6\_ hours) 11th and 325 (3 hours) 13th, all counts from dawn.

Very few records from the final months of the year, best counts 53 Welney, 20 Holme and Ringstead.

### **Red-throated Pipit**

*Anthus cervinus*

*Vagrant from Northern Europe.*

Only one accepted record: a single Burnham Norton May 17th-18th (ADC JRMc et al).

### **Olive-backed Pipit**

*Anthus hodgsoni*

*Vagrant from north-east Russia and Siberia.*

During Sept singles Wells 21st-22nd (GWA GA et al) and almost certainly another Holkham Sept 22nd-23rd (GMCr PID PM et al). The thirteenth and fourteenth county records.

### **Rock Pipit**

*Anthus petrosus*

*Winter visitor and passage migrant. Most probably of the Scandinavian race littoralis.*

During the first winter period largest counts 50 Brancaster/Scolt, 24 Warham, 11 Snettisham, 11 Titchwell, 8 Lynn Point, 8 Holme and 5 Caister and Weybourne.

Spring passage negligible, 3 west Sheringham March 23rd the best.

Final birds of winter/spring during April when Breydon 6th, Titchwell 7th, Weybourne 9th and Holme 10th.

As birds began to moult into summer plumage during March/April, many of those wintering proved to be of the Scandinavian race littoralis as expected. Best counts in March 22 Lynn Point 10th, 8 Holme 10th, 5 Caister 19th and an inland bird Welney 18th. A few continued to be reported during April when 2 Weybourne 9th and singles Breydon 3rd, Mundesley 9th and Titchwell 14th.

First returning birds arrived Sept 19th (Blakeney Point) following by others Weybourne 20th, Holme 21st and Sheringham 22nd. A very typical arrival date. Peak autumn passage during Oct when much heavier than normal. Best site Sheringham where a monthly total of 500 west including 70 6th and 130 22nd. At Hunstanton an autumn total of 270 south Sept to Nov including 29 Oct 23rd. Passage continued until mid-Nov when 40 west Scolt 14th.

Some good counts from coastal saltmarsh Nov/Dec including 110 Scolt/Brancaster Nov declining to 50 Dec with 39 Wells Harbour, 20 Holme, 12 Snettisham and 10 Lynn Point, Titchwell and Salhouse.

Only inland record 1 Ringstead Dec 12th and 15th.

### **Water Pipit**

*Anthus spinoletta*

*Local winter visitor.*

In Jan a total of 31 reported from 9 sites virtually all coastal or from the Broads. Highest counts 9 Cantley BF, 6 Cley and 4 Titchwell. Under-counted during Feb with just 15 at 6 sites including 5 Hall Fen, Irstead and 4 Wissington BF. A slight increase during March when 33 at 9 sites, best counts 9 Wissington BF, 6 Catfield and 5 Holkham and Cley. Numbers very similar during the first half of April with again 9 Wissington BF, 6 Buckenham and 4 Holkham. Final birds of spring Wissington BF 20th and Buckenham 23rd.

First bird in autumn Horsey Oct 4th but very few others during the month with just 1-2 at four sites. Numbers during the final months very similar to first winter period with around 45 reported including 14 Buckenham, 14 How Hill, 6 Cley and 5 Catfield.

It is unfortunate that sites are not counted on a much more regular basis. The winter population in the county probably exceeds 30 but many sites are not counted monthly, regular counts would probably produce a much higher total.



## Citrine Wagtail

*Motacilla citreola*

### *Vagrant from western Russia and Siberia.*

At long last the first winter bird at Welney Nov 16th-17th 1980 (TP&CI JBK et al) has been accepted and at the time was the first county record. Since then other juveniles/1st-winters have occurred Blakeney Sept 1986 and Kelling Sept 1995. With a recent upsurge in spring records elsewhere a nice spring bird may not be too long coming.

## Yellow Wagtail

*Motacilla flava*

### *Declining migratory breeder and passage migrant.*

First birds of spring not until April 8th when recorded Cantley and Strumpshaw and next day at Welney and Holme. Main passage from 18th when 40 west Holme. Largest numbers recorded April 20th-22nd and 24th-27th. On 20th 60 west Holme, 110 west Holkham and 50 west 8 east Sheringham. On 21st 50 west and 45 present Holme and on 22nd 45 west Holme and 60 west and 15 east Sheringham. Higher numbers from 24th when 150 west Holme, 50 Brancaster, 110 Holkham and 100 west Sheringham. On 26th 85 Snettisham, 100 west and 150 present Holme, 60 Burnham Norton and 52 west Paston and finally on 27th 220 west and 80 present Holme and 60 Warham. Best counts during May west Sheringham 5th, 30 Burnham Norton 6th and 30 west Holme 21st.

Breeding data incomplete but did include 51 pairs Welney and 12 Holkham NNR, 6 Wash Coastal Path, 5 Lynn Point, 4 Strumpshaw/Cantley and 1-2 Boughton Fen, Ludham Airfield, Gillingham Marsh, Muckfleet, Ongar Hill, Sheringham and Thorpe Camp. With the decline this species is obviously undergoing within the county, it is imperative that all breeding records are submitted annually.

Autumn passage commenced July 9th. Best counts during Aug when 71 Welney, 50 Wash Coastal Path, 30 Lynn Point and 25 Blakeney Point. In Sept 77 Welney, 50 Burnham Overy and 40 Cantley BF. Visible migration typically poor, best counts, 21 west Sheringham Aug 7th and 15 west 5 east Holme Aug 17th.

October records included Burnham Norton 2nd-3rd, Cley 2nd (2), Hunstanton 3rd (2), Cley 8th, Horsey (4) and Lynn Point 24th, with a late bird Cley Nov 8th-9th.

**Blue-headed Wagtail** *M.f.flava*: Spring passage slightly better than last year with around 55 reported. First Welney April 8th, followed by influxes April 15th-17th when 2 Snettisham and singles Heacham, Holme, Horsey and Trowse; 21st-22nd when 3 Waxham, 2 Heacham and singles Holme, Cley, Ludham and Buckenham Marshes, and finally 24th-29th when 6 Holme, 3 Waxham, 2 Brancaster, Burnham Norton and singles at 8 other sites.

During May max 3 Warham 6th and 1-2 at 6 other sites, with final birds of spring Cley on 29th and North Wootton June 9th.

**Grey-headed Wagtail** *M.f.thunbergi*: A disappointing spring passage with singles in May Cley 14th-15th, Burnham Norton 20th and 25th, Holkham 20th and Kelling 30th. Two autumn records with singles Yarmouth Aug 22nd-23rd and Caister Airfield Sept 1st.

## Grey Wagtail

*Motacilla cinerea*

### *Local breeder, fairly common passage migrant, less common in winter.*

During the first winter period a total of around 50 birds reported from 40 sites. Best counts 4 Holt STW and 3 at Heacham, Westacre and Whitlingham Lane.

As usual, spring passage light commencing March 18th and continuing until the end of May involving around 20 individuals. Best counts 3 east Sheringham March 23rd and 2 west Weybourne April 8th. Also at this time 4 Wroxham Broad March 28th.

During the breeding season single pairs present or bred at the following localities: Buckenham Tofts Mill, Buxton Mill, Corpusty Mill, Cranwich GP, Hellesdon Mill, Langford Bridge, Lynford GP, Lyng Mill, Norwich Carrow Bridge, Norwich Duke Street, Narborough Mill, Pensthorpe, Rushford, Shotesham Ford, Thetford and Whitlingham Lane GP.

Autumn passage late starting, first Sheringham Aug 11th but few until Sept when passage continued to end of Oct involving a total of around 120 birds. Best localities Sheringham where an autumn total of 28 through including 5 west Sept 30th, at Holme total of 26 with 5 west Sept 15th and 4 west Oct 17th and at Hunstanton an autumn total of 22 south, including 4 Oct 3rd. Best counts elsewhere: 7 west Weybourne Sept 24th, 3 south Sea Palling Sept 25th and 3 south-west Baconsthorpe Oct 22nd. During the autumn a further 20 reported from 13 inland sites. Few at the end of the year with about 25 reported from 15 sites.

### **Pied Wagtail**

*Motacilla alba*

*Common breeding resident and passage migrant.*

Few large gatherings/roosts during Jan-March but 180 Downham Market STW, 65 Holt STW, 60 Titchwell and 35 at Lynford and East Harling.

First coastal migrants west Feb 27th but numbers throughout the spring very poor. Highest counts from Sheringham where in March 25 east 9 west 23rd and 50 east 25 west 24th.

BBS results: found in 39 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 2.1 birds per occupied square.

Post breeding dispersal produced 30 west Sheringham July 13th and on Aug 31st flocks of 60 Cley and 30 Titchwell.

Autumn passage very much on the scale of last year with a total of 152 south Hunstanton Cliffs Sept-Nov, best day 18 Oct 11th. Highest counts elsewhere: 17 west Sheringham Oct 12th with an exceptional 60 west there Nov 14th. The last count was impressive for late autumn, from where had they come and of what race were they?

Largest gatherings Oct-Dec 98 Strumpshaw, 60 Wroxham Bridge, 35 Horning and 30 at Brancaster Staithe and Titchwell.

White Wagtail *M.a.alba*: Spring passage involved around 100 individuals with the first Sheringham March 23rd. Influxes occurred in April on 9th-10th when 3 Holkham and 3 Breydon, 16th-17th when 6 Snettisham and 3 Titchwell and 20th-29th when 13 Titchwell, 5 Holme, 5 Cley, 4 Burnham Norton and 2 Sheringham. Very few in May, most during the first half of the month, and final birds 2 Sheringham 26th.

Inland records during the spring all during April when North Walsham 2nd, Boughton Fen 5th, Wisington 20th, Holt 22nd, Wroxham 23rd and Whitlingham 26th.

Only autumn records 2 Burnham Norton Aug 30th, Titchwell 31st, 3 Snettisham Sept 3rd and Hopton Oct 14th.

### **Waxwing**

*Bombycilla garrulus*

*Irruptive late autumn and winter visitor.*

A large-scale arrival which began during early Dec 1995 greatly accelerated by the third week of Jan. By mid-Feb a peak of 600+ were within Norwich outer ring road with a county

population in excess of 1200 birds. Parties lingered until April 26th with a single straggler in Holkham Park May 13th. This irruption, the largest since 1965, is featured on pages 241-244.

A further, smaller scale influx began Oct 29th when 3 at Holme and a single at Holkham Gap on 30th.

During Nov largest groups included 9 Yarmouth on 13th; 12 Snettisham, 14 Burnham Deepdale, 9 Holkham and 20 Weybourne all on 14th; 12 Holkham 15th and 11 Surlingham 28th. One to 8 appeared during the month (the majority from 13th onwards) at Belton, Caister, Cley, Cromer, Docking, East Ruston, Eccles, Fakenham, Hickling, Holkham Meals, Holme, Horsey, King's Lynn, Lyng, Norwich, Overstrand, Ringstead, Sea Palling, Sheringham, Snettisham, Stalham Green, Titchwell, Trowse, UEA Earlham, Watton, Wells, West Runton, Weybourne and Winterton.

Further arrivals continued until Dec 22nd and included 35 in off sea at Holme Dec 16th, 11 Bowthorpe 20th and 15 Norwich 22nd. Singles and parties of 2-5 appeared during the month at Blakeney, Burgh Castle, Fritton, Hickling, Hunstanton, Old Costessey, Snettisham and Yaxham.

## **Wren**

*Troglodytes troglodytes*

*Very common resident and passage migrant in small numbers.*

CBC and other breeding surveys produced the following pairs/territories: Welney 23, Abbey Farm (Flitcham) 8, Marriotts Way, Reepham 6 and Weybourne Camp 5. Abbey Farm showed a 20% decline which was also reflected nationally with 20-50% declines in most CBC plots. BBS results: found in 51 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 5.2 birds per occupied square. A comparison with 1995 reveals a drop of 39% in average number of birds per occupied square as well as a less significant decrease in number of squares recorded. Ringing totals at Garboldisham were 50% down on recent years with very few juveniles caught, an indication of a poor breeding season and possibly a further decline next year?

## **Dunnock**

*Prunella modularis*

*Common resident and passage migrant, especially in autumn.*

CBC and other surveys produced the following territories/pairs: Weybourne Camp 13, Abbey Farm (Flitcham) 10, Belmore Plantation (Thorpe) 6, Welney 5 and Scolt 4. Declines were noted at Abbey Farm, and at Garboldisham where, like the last species, ringing totals were 50% down. Also at this site late breeding was noted with 2 juveniles ringed in mid-Sept.

BBS results: in contrast to the above found in 49 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 3.7 birds per occupied square. An increase of 16% in number of birds per occupied square as well as a less significant rise in number of squares recorded.

Autumn migration recorded at several coastal sites, including Holme 25 Sept 14th and 35 Sept 19th, at Hunstanton 6 moved high south Oct 11th and Scolt 23 Nov 9th.

## **Robin**

*Erithacus rubecula*

*Common resident and passage migrant, especially in autumn.*

Very light spring passage at Holme with peak of 40 April 8th. Only breeding season data received was from Abbey Farm, Flitcham CBC plot 5 pairs (the same as in 1995) and Belmore Plantation Thorpe St Andrew CBC plot 20 pairs (same number as in 1994). The only other



information on population was from Garboldisham where only 34 birds ringed between Jan and Sept, a reduction of at least 50% on previous years and very few fledglings seen.

Autumn passage evident along the coast with an influx on Sept 19th-23rd reported from nine sites with 100 at Winterton, 25 Holme, 25+ Holkham Meals, 25 Sheringham and up to 10 at the remaining sites including Yarmouth cemetery. No other peaks reported except for 60 at Holme on Oct 24th.

### **Nightingale**

*Luscinia megarhynchos*

**Local migratory breeder and very scarce passage migrant.**

First arrivals Pentney April 15th and Salthouse Heath 16th, by the 18th there were 8 singing males at the latter site. Between then and the month's end there were 5 singing males at East Walton Common, 3 at Alderford Common and 2 at Hunstanton GC and Narborough and single males at eleven other sites. In May there were further migrants at Heacham and Holme, and a late bird at Weybourne 26th; the same day there was a bird at Yarmouth cemetery which was not specifically identified.

Breeding season singing males were at Alderford Common 3, Boughton Fen 4, Buxton Heath 1, East Ruston 1, Foulden Common 8, Kettlestone Common 5, Marham Fen 5, Narborough 7, Narford 1, Pentney GP 12, Salthouse Heath 7, Santon Downham 3, Sheringham (Pretty Corner) 1, Sheringham Park 1, Stanford Water 3, Swanton Little Wood 2, Thompson Water 1 and West Bilney 2. One pair may also have bred at Muckleburgh Hill.

In the autumn only recorded at Holme where singles on Aug 17th and 26th and Sept 2nd-4th.

### **Bluethroat**

*Luscinia svecica*

**Scarce passage migrant, now more frequent in spring.**

A good spring with at least 8 records: females at Snettisham April 17th and at Salthouse on May 6th-8th; a male on Blakeney Point May 6th-7th, a female on 7th and an unsexed bird 19th; males at Cley on May 15th and 19th and at Hopton on 17th, the latter unfortunately killed by a cat. Following the record in June last year there was a female at Cley on June 26th and presumably the same bird there on July 5th-12th.

Sole autumn record, a single at Cley Sept 13th-14th.

### **Black Redstart**

*Phoenicurus ochruros*

**Rare migratory breeder, regular passage migrant and occasional in winter.**

Wintering birds at Heacham with 2 during Jan, one remaining to Feb 8th and singles at South Creak on Jan 20th, Overstrand 22nd and a male at Mundesley/Paston Feb 10th. First returning birds in March with singles at 23 mostly coastal sites but 5 at Winterton on 31st and up to 3 at Caister GC, Heacham North Beach, Sea Palling and Sheringham and 2 at Caister and Sheringham cemeteries. In April there was a widespread passage, mostly of single birds from coastal sites with an exceptional max of 23 on 13th at Winterton; elsewhere there were more usual peaks of 4 at Heacham 5th, 6 Holme 8th and 14th, 4 Burnham Overy Dunes 5th, 6 Sheringham cemetery 6th, 9 Cromer GC 9th, 4 Happisburgh 15th and 6 Yarmouth cemetery 13th. There were also singles at seven inland sites and 2 at Burgh Castle. Migrants tailed off during May with only singles from six coastal sites.

Singing birds in the breeding season at three sites in Yarmouth but there was no definite proof that any bred successfully. In June there was a single on Scolt Head on 18th and in July another at Holme on 23rd/24th.

Autumn passage was poor with two records in Sept but singles from 18 sites in Oct with a small arrival providing peaks of 3 at Hunstanton cliffs on 23rd and 2 at Scolt Head on 23rd and Holme and Yarmouth cemetery 24th and Blakeney Point 26th. In the early winter there were singles in November at four coastal sites and at Ringstead, with 2 at Gorleston cemetery on 2nd. In Dec singles at Holme on 1st, Snettisham 28th and 2 in Yarmouth 2nd-15th.

## **Redstart**

*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

***Local migratory breeder (most in Breckland ), common passage migrant.***

Spring birds arrived on cue with the first at Snettisham Chalk Quarry on April 8th and Yarmouth cemetery 10th. Several more appeared on the 12th at two other coastal sites but the main arrival was from 14th when it was widely recorded, mostly singles, from both coastal and several inland sites; passage lasting to mid-May. There were good numbers at both Sheringham and Holme with April max of 5 Sheringham and 13 Holme on 20th; in May max. of 8 Holme and 6 Yarmouth cemetery on 19th. Last migrants of the spring were 2 Holme May 30th and a female Sheringham June 6th.

Following the good spring passage there were high breeding season numbers in Stanford TA with 75 singing males (41 in 1995) the highest there for many years. Elsewhere breeding season records came from Sheringham Park, Felbrigg, Narborough and Wretham Heath.

First returning birds of the autumn were singles at Holme on Aug 11th and Eccles 18th, followed at the end of the month by a small influx along the north coast of up to 3 at seven sites. Steady passage in Sept with an arrival on 19th-22nd with max of 60 Holme 19th and 35 there 23rd-24th, 60 Burnham Overy Dunes 20th, 60+ Holkham Meals 21st-23rd, 45 Sheringham 22nd, 30 Sidstrand 21st, 27 Paston 24th, 25 Mundesley 22nd and 30 Yarmouth cemetery 21st. Unlike previous autumn arrivals there were only a few inland records. Few Oct records with singles from eight sites, the last being 2 at Ludham on 23rd.

## **Whinchat**

*Saxicola rubetra*

***Rare migratory breeder and common passage migrant.***

First arrivals were singles at four north coast sites on April 21st followed by several others to the end of the month, max of 6 Snettisham 25th. Widely recorded in May from 20 mainly coastal sites with max of 8 Holme 19th and 4 Potter Heigham 11th. Last of the spring Holme June 1st-2nd.

There were no breeding season records and it now appears to be lost as a breeding species from Stanford TA.

Autumn birds were plentiful along the north coast from the end of Aug, max 11 Horsey 31st, following 2 Holme 13th and 4 Blakeney Point 15th. In Sept reports from 23 sites with max 35 Holme 7th, 13 Burnham Overy Dunes 2nd, 11 Waxham 7th, 12 Horsey 14th, 10 Sheringham 8th and 9 at Winterton 1st, Stiffkey 3rd and Snettisham 8th. Inland 5 at Fersfield Airfield 1st and at East Ruston noted most of month with max 8 on 1st and 6 on 24th. Only three Oct reports including the last at Cromer GC on 7th.

## Stonechat

*Saxicola torquata*

***Very small east coast breeding population; regular passage migrant, local in winter.***

The small wintering population was less in evidence at the start of the year with only 1-2 at nine sites along the north coast and in the northern part of the Broads. Elsewhere in Jan-Mar there were reports of single birds at up to 36 sites (including 15 inland) with a max of 2 pairs at Colney. Very little evidence of any spring passage except for a few reports of single birds away from the wintering areas.

Breeding, as always, very small scale. A pair at Smokers Hole, near Saxlingham raised two young and pair at Hickling also raised two juveniles. 4 pairs at Winterton where two pairs raised 8 young, the other two lost broods to a predator. A juv at Eccles on July 6th may have originated from another pair. Two pairs present at Horsey in April and May and a max of 10 there in mid-Sept.

A generally poor autumn passage began with singles at Sheringham July 28th and Waxham on Aug 31st followed by up to 3 birds at seven north coast sites in Sept and at ten sites in Oct. The usual wintering sites were reoccupied from early Nov with 17 mostly coastal sites with 1-2 birds present to end of the year.

## Wheatear

*Oenanthe oenanthe*

***Increasingly rare migratory breeder and common passage migrant.***

First arrival Heacham South Beach March 15th followed by another West Runton 17th. Steady arrival in next few days followed with influx from 28th with 10 Cley 28th, 12 Heacham South Beach on 30th, and up to 6 at three other sites. Passage in April centred on arrivals around 10th-11th and 20th-22nd with 35 Holme 10th, 30 Sheringham, 25 Cromer and Overstrand 11th, 20 Weybourne 20th, 45 Holme, 30+ Burnham Overy Dunes and 62 Sheringham on 21st and 95 Sheringham 22nd. Numbers slightly lower in May with passage less noticeable with max only 13 Holme 20th and up to 10 at four other sites 19th-28th. Late passage of Greenland birds at several north coast sites late May and early June, max of 10 Burnham Overy Dunes May 28th, 4 Holme June 1st and last at Sheringham on 12th. Inland passage reported at eleven sites, mostly of single birds but 7 at Fersfield Airfield April 28th.

Breeding recorded only at Stanford TA where 10 pairs present. A pair may have bred in the Mundesley/Paston area. A juv at Welney July 17th may also have been of local origin.

The first returning birds of the autumn were 3 Holme July 23rd-24th followed by singles at three other sites before the end of the month. Widely reported in Aug and Sept with clear arrival at the end of Aug with peaks of 20 at Kelling WM on 31st and up to 10 birds at three other sites. Passage in Sept peaked on 19th-22nd with 50 Hunstanton 19th, 80 Holme 19th and 110 there on 21st, 50 Burnham Norton 20th, 60 Burnham Overy 20th-21st, 60 Blakeney Point 19th, 60 Sheringham 20th-22nd, 55 Beeston Regis 21st, 100 Cromer GC 23rd, 65 Paston 23rd. An interesting report of visible migration came from a boat 60 miles off Bacton when 2 were seen in flight on 14th. Numbers declined rapidly in Oct with mostly singles at less than ten sites, max 7 Sheringham 11th; two Nov reports with the last at Breydon 8th.



## **Desert Wheatear**

*Oenanthe deserti*

### ***Vagrant from North Africa or Central Asia.***

A male at East Hills, Wells Nov 11th (AIB JRMc) and another at Salthouse Nov 14th-18th, which also paid a brief visit to Weybourne Camp in the early morning of 15th (SPH, MPT et al). The sixth and seventh records for the county following two in 1993 and one in 1994.

## **Ring Ouzel**

*Turdus torquatus*

### ***Passage migrant in fluctuating numbers. Exceptional in winter.***

An unprecedented series of winter records with up to 7 birds present in the county, some remaining from 1995. Recorded in Jan and Feb as follows: Holkham Park Jan 24th-25th; Wells 2 present Jan 1st-8th; West Runton Jan 1st and 12th and again on Feb 11th; Langham Jan 30th and Feb 1st; Thornham Orchards Jan 30th and Feb 2nd-8th and Sheringham Feb 21st-26th.

Start of spring passage clouded by wintering birds but singles reported from 10 coastal sites during March, the first being at Morston on 13th. In April, recorded from 38 sites with a noticeable increase in sightings from mid-month. Maximum counts: 5 Cromer GC 11th, 5 Winterton 12th; 6 Heacham South Beach 17th; 11 Snettisham Country Park 19th and 5 Holme 23rd. Inland records from Baconsthorpe, Choseley, Diss, Felbrigg, Kettlestone and Syderstone. In May reported from 14 sites but all records of 1-2 birds. Three June records with single at Weybourne on 2nd and two late birds at Overy dunes 16th and Holme 17th bringing the spring total to c160 birds.

Return passage from Sept 19th with singles at Wells, Winterton and Thorpe St Andrew followed by records from a further 17 sites up to the 27th. No further records until Oct 14th when 4 Holme and singles at Beeston Regis and Horsey Gap. Small scale movement continued until month's end but only notable counts 5 Yarmouth Cemetery 22nd and 4 Sheringham 24th. Just two Nov records: Cley Marsh Lane 13th and West Beckham 23rd.

## **Blackbird**

*Turdus merula*

### ***Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.***

In Jan, only counts were 50 Holkham village and 60 at Mundesley. Return passage noted from Mar 20th when 26 How Hill. Passage continued at various coastal localities in early April with maximum counts of 'hundreds' Paston 7th-14th, 60 Holme 8th, 120 Sheringham 9th, 70 Holkham 9th and 55 Happisburgh 10th.

Few breeding records received but 3 pairs Weybourne, 10+ Flitcham Abbey Farm, 11 Belmore Plantation and 22 singing males Welney.

Autumn passage noted from Oct 14th when 50 Holme with peak counts on 30th when 400 Holme, 220 Holkham, 400 Sheringham, 1500 Cromer/Trimingham and 700+ Paston. Fewer records in November but an impressive 1000 in/west Sheringham 8th and 950 south at Hunstanton Cliffs at dusk on 11th.

## **Black-throated Thrush**

*Turdus ruficollis*

### ***Vagrant from Central Asia.***

An elusive female present at Holkham Park March 13th-16th (IR et al) and again on April 4th (JDM). The fourth county occurrence, previous records being Holkham Oct 21st-24th 1975, Coltishall Feb 21st to April 3rd 1976 and Sheringham Oct 31st 1993.

## Fieldfare

*Turdus pilaris*

*(Common passage migrant and winter visitor with occasional summer records.*

The huge influx which began towards the end of 1995 continued with birds recorded in large numbers throughout the county in the first three months of the year.

In Jan peak numbers recorded as follows: 'thousands' Cley 1st with 2000 on 2nd; 1000 Anmer on 1st rising to 1200 on 30th; 750 Ringstead 2nd; 3000 Quarles/Creake 6th; 1500 Holme village 6th; 1120 Welney 7th; 3000 Felbrigg 22nd; 800 How Hill 26th and 3500 Thornham Orchards 30th. By early Feb, many birds had moved on with only four-figure counts being 1000 Thornham Orchards 2nd and 1000 Holme 3rd. However, still some good counts during month with 400 at Ringstead, Belton and Felbrigg with three-figure counts from a further eight sites. Through March and April, a slow build up prior to return with an impressive 1240 Felbrigg April 7th, 2000 Cockley Cley 8th and 2000 Berney 8th-16th, with 'thousands' present around Breydon and at other suitable habitats further north as far as Horsey during this period. Mass exodus noted from the east coast April 15th-16th in company with Redwings. During May, mainly singles noted at 15 sites with last bird at Lound on June 1st-2nd. An almost all white bird noted at Merton March 10th.

In autumn, an early bird at Holme on Aug 18th. Very few Sept records, being noted at just 7 sites with maximum count being 11 Holme 4th. However, October 22nd heralded the start of a major influx when 5500 flew south at Snettisham and 1274 south at Hunstanton Cliffs the following day. Main movement on Oct 30th when 30,000 south in just 3 hours at Snettisham, 15,000 west at Paston, 10,000 south at Hunstanton and 1200 in at Sheringham. A second wave of migrants on Nov 8th when 36,726 in just 4 hours at Hunstanton Cliffs, 2500 off the sea and west at Sheringham and 1500 at Morston/Stiffkey with further reports of thousands moving west from both Brancaster and Holme. The movement continued over the next few days with the west of the county maintaining its near monopoly. Hunstanton Cliffs again provided the majority of records with 12,899 on 9th in just 2 hours, 1985 on 11th and 8050 on 14th. Regular observation at Hunstanton Cliffs during the autumn period produced a total of 71,890. Other notable counts during the month included 2500 Ringstead 15th, 600 south west over Wereham on 13th and 430 Welney 18th. Surprisingly few Dec records when maximum counts included 1200 in orchards near Wisbech, 865 Welney WWT 16th and 650 Ranworth Broad 14th.

## Song Thrush

*Turdus philomelos*

*(Common resident and passage migrant. Recently decreasing.*

Spring passage from April 9th recorded from just 3 sites with maximum counts all on this date when 30 Holme, 25 Winterton and 20 plus 20 west at Sheringham.

Breeding records from just 13 sites but data inconclusive in assessing county trends. At Abbey Farm Flitcham 2 pairs bred (same as 1995) but 5 pairs Welney was a decrease from the 6 in 1995. BBS results: found in 42 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 3.2 birds per occupied square.

In Sept, heaviest passage during period 17th-25th when recorded from 13 mainly coastal sites. Best counts: 150 Holkham/Overy 20th; 100 Winterton 20th; 60 Blakeney Point 20th-21st, 60 Holme 21st and 80 Holkham Pines 23rd. In Oct, small influx on 14th when 120 Holme and 75 Sheringham. Further movement 22nd-25th with max counts 50 Sheringham with 23 south at Hunstanton Cliffs on 23rd, 100 Holme 24th and 20 Scolt 25th. Regular observation during autumn at Hunstanton Cliffs produced a total of just 37 migrants.

## Redwing

*Turdus iliacus*

**Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Exceptional in summer.**

The year began with 'thousands' of birds reported from Cley on Jan 1st but these quickly dispersed. Inland in the Wensum valley, 1500 birds reported on 5th but for the rest of the month fewer records with maxima of 300 Ringstead 2nd, 300 Holme village 6th and 500 Thornham 30th. In March only notable count 1150 Holkham Park 17th but early return passage noted when 100 north-east Colney GP 30th and 140 north-east Abbey Farm Flitcham 31st. During April, gradual increase in records with 600 east Holme 4th and 380 east on 6th with steady movement east over Norwich on the night 8th-9th. Peak counts from 9th-16th with maxima as follows: 11,500 west and 600 east at Sheringham, 3000 Felbrigg, 'thousands' Breydon/Berney, 850 Beeston Regis and 500 Sidestrand, all on 9th; 1100 west Holme with 500 west and 100 east at Sheringham 10th; 1550 Repps and 500+ Sandringham 11th with 2400 Berney and 1000 Burnham Norton 12th. Many flocks of 'hundreds' in east Norfolk during the period with most departing 15th-16th. Usual scatter of May records with singles reported from 7 sites, the last being at Winterton on 26th. A creamy white bird noted Belton/Burgh Castle area April 9th-13th. Singing birds noted UEA March 20th and Lynford April 5th.

In Sept, first of the autumn at Holme on 2nd. Very light passage reported until month's end from 12 coastal sites with max count 60 Holme 21st. In Oct very heavy passage noted over Hunstanton on the night 9th-10th with birds heard every few seconds. Increase in records from 22nd when max count 1500 south at Snettisham, 150 Holme, 200 Scolt, 200 Wells and 350 Sheringham with 500 there the following day. Movement peaked on 29th when an amazing 60,000 south at Snettisham in just 3 hours. On 30th max counts 2000 west at Paston, 631 south Hunstanton with 785 inland at Baconsthorpe. Fewer Nov records but southerly movement continued when 777 Hunstanton Cliffs 8th with 3915 9th and 500 Snettisham 11th. Only notable count in Dec 600 west Sheringham 21st.

## Mistle Thrush

*Turdus viscivorus*

**Common resident and partial migrant.**

In first winter period maximum counts of 8 Hanworth, 10 Raynham and 20 Holkham Park.

Few breeding season reports and these from 20 widely scattered sites. Mainly 1-2 pairs but 3 Docking, 3 Burnham Norton village, 4 Welney and Houghton Park with 6 Ludham. BBS results: 47 squares surveyed in both 1995 and 1996 revealed a slight increase - found in 30 squares in 1996 compared with 27 in 1995 and an increase of 18% in average number of birds per occupied square. Usual post-breeding flocks reported between June and early Sept mostly from inland sites. Maxima included 50 West Raynham, 55 Frettenham New Farm and 55 Welney with double figure counts from a further 16 sites.

In autumn, small scatter of coastal migrants from Sept 26th when 9 south at Hunstanton Cliffs to Nov 14 when 4 at Sheringham. Regular observation at Hunstanton Cliffs produced an autumn total of 109 birds, mostly moving south.

## Cetti's Warbler

*Cettia cetti*

**Broadland breeding population established since 1974.**

During the breeding season singing males at the following sites: River Yare: Buckenham/Cantley 4, Rockland Broad 8, Strumpshaw 9, Surlingham Broad 6, Surlingham Marshes 3-4, Wheatfen Broad 6-8. River Bure: Fleet dyke, Hoveton 1-2, Ranworth Broad 2,



Upton Broad 2, Woodbastwick, Wroxham 2. River Ant: Barton Broad, Catfield 2, How Hill. Elsewhere at Filby Broad, Hardley Flood 1-2, Heigham Sounds, Hickling Broad 2, Martham Broad, Ormesby Broad/Rollesby. Also isolated singing males at Brancaster April 5th-20th and Norwich Unicorn Yard April 19th were both considered unmated.

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Singing males	18	28	22	24-27	51+	56+

The continued increase in breeding numbers is welcome.

In second half of year only one record away from the Broads, a male at Welney 16th-31st December.

This species remains a very rare bird in the county away from the Broads.

### Grasshopper Warbler

*Locustella naevia*

#### Summer visitor and scarce migrant.

First of the year on April 10th at Wells followed next day by one at Heacham. Small numbers arrived after this date with the heaviest passage from the 20th onwards.

Singing males during the breeding season were noted at the following sites: Barton Turf Fen, Beeston Regis Common, Berney 3, Berry Hall, Boughton Fen, Brancaster, Burgh Common 3, Catfield Fen, Dersingham Bog, East Ruston 2, Felbrigg, Foulton Common, Hands Marsh (Sutton) 2, Heacham, Hempton 2, Heigham Sounds-Hickling Broad 13, Holkham NNR 9, Holme, Horning, Horsey 3, King's Lynn, Rockland Broad, Santon Downham (Little Ouse) 3, Scolt Head 3, Sculthorpe Fen, Sharp Street Fen, Snettisham 3, Strumpshaw (inc Cantley-Buckenham) 10, Surlingham 4, Sutton High Fen 2, Titchwell 3, Tottington 2, Weybourne, Wiveton, Wheatfen 2, Whitwell Common and Wroxham Broad. The increase in breeding data is again very encouraging. In autumn only few September records: Scolt Head 10th, Salthouse 21st, Sheringham 22nd and Overstrand 25th.

### Savi's Warbler

*Locustella luscinioides*

#### Rare migrant and scarce summer visitor.

As in 1995, only a single record: Surlingham Church Marsh July 24th-August 1st (AJ).

### Sedge Warbler

*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

#### Summer breeder and passage migrant.

Following first record at Holme April 8th a very slow start to the spring passage with only singles noted at Barton Broad, Cantley GP and Titchwell, until 17th. After this date a widespread arrival countywide. Counts of singing males in breeding season included: Catfield 12, Colney GP 21, Pensthorpe 20+, Raynham 10, Santon Downham (Little Ouse) 22, Strumpshaw 7, Welney 86 and Weybourne 14. Many sites reported larger numbers than in recent years; the Welney count of 86 compares with 56 in 1995.

During Sept few records with latest Welney 17th, East Hills (Wells) 21st, Holme and Weybourne 24th and Winterton 25th.

**Paddyfield Warbler***Acrocephalus agricola****Vagrant from South Russia.***

One present on East Hills (Wells) on Sept 23rd (AIB JRMc). The second county record and three years less one day after the first at Sheringham.

**Blyth's Reed Warbler***Acrocephalus dumetorum****Vagrant from North-east Europe and Central and Southern Asia.***

A well watched bird at Warham from Sept 25th-27th (MAG RGM et al). The first county record of a species that can only be considered an overdue addition to the county list (see article on page 244).

**Marsh Warbler***Acrocephalus palustris****Rare in late spring and autumn.***

An adult caught and ringed at Weybourne on July 12th (MPT). A most unusual date for this species, as May and June are the months in which it is most often recorded. The bird was in pristine condition - was it a late spring migrant or an early autumn bird? The county total reaches 25.

**Reed Warbler***Acrocephalus scirpaceus****Summer breeder and passage migrant.***

Earliest Burnham Overy on April 16th followed by singles Strumpshaw 18th and Cley 19th. A widespread influx from the 22nd onwards when birds arrived at many sites. During the breeding season largest counts of singing males: Ludham NNR 11, Pensthorpe 21+, Welney 89 and Weybourne 37. The Weybourne figure is up from 26 in 1995. The table below shows the Welney totals since 1992.

Welney	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Singing males	56	47	44	72	89

The autumn passage was small as usual with the best counts during Sept, 6 Holme 20th, 5 Blakeney Point 21st, 6 Snettisham, Wells and Sheringham all 23rd. During Oct Burnham Norton 2nd, Sheringham until 6th, and 4 at Welney on 10th with a late bird there on 26th.

**Great Reed Warbler***Acrocephalus arundinaceus****Vagrant from continental Europe.***

One trapped at Sheringham May 21st (APBe DHS KBS). Another in a remarkable run of recent records; the county total moves to 14. Unfortunately this bird was not seen again following its release.

**Booted Warbler***Hippolais caligata****Vagrant from North-west Russia and across Southern Siberia.***

One at Gorleston/Hopton Sept 3rd/4th (DJ et al). This well watched bird represents the third county record and justifies the perseverance of the finder in watching his local 'patch'.

### **Icterine Warbler**

*Hippolais icterina*

***Scarce autumn migrant, rare in spring.***

Two typical May records: singing male Great Yarmouth cemetery on 28th and one trapped at Sheringham on 31st.

In the autumn another excellent run of records. On Aug 15th singles at Holme, Blakeney Point (until 17th), Cley and Great Yarmouth cemetery, followed by others at Cley 17th, Holme 18th/19th, Salthouse 28th and Morston 31st. During Sept on 5th at Sheringham, Sea Palling and Waxham (until 10th), and then at Titchwell 8th and Weybourne 9th and 18th. The 21st produced birds at Wells 2 (until 23rd), East Hills, with 2 on 22nd and 1 on 23rd, and Stiffkey. This is the third autumn running with good numbers arriving, only bettered in the last decade by 1995.

### **Dartford Warbler**

*Sylvia undata*

***Vagrant from Southern England and Europe.***

In May a singing male at Winterton on 5th-7th (PJH et al) was followed by a male at Caister-on-Sea 13th/14th (JO et al). It seems most likely these records refer to the same individual and are treated as such in the county total which now stands at 9 for this century.

### **Barred Warbler**

*Sylvia nisoria*

***Scarce autumn migrant recorded only once in spring.***

During August recorded at Holme where singles 16th-18th and 30th, with 2 31st, Overstrand 21st and Sheringham 31st. A good showing in September when noted as follows: Holme 3 on 1st, 2 on 2nd/3rd, one 4th, 2 on 5th/6th and 3 on 7th/8th; Sheringham 1st and 15th-24th; Overy dunes 2nd-7th; Stiffkey 2nd; Weybourne 2nd-4th (ringed) 6th (ringed), and 7th-12th (ringed); Salthouse 3rd-6th; Wiveton 5th-8th; Cromer 7th-9th; Horsey Gap 7th and 22nd; Waxham 7th/8th; Winterton 7th, 11th and 15th -18th; Snettisham 17th; Hunstanton GC 20th; Hopton/Corton 21st/22nd; Thornham 21st; Wells 22nd; Blakeney Point 23rd and Cromer GC 25th. In Oct Wells 22nd-23rd, and an interesting series of records from Eccles with singles on 1st, 9th/10th and 17th until Nov 4th. The autumn minimum of 34 represents the third best autumn ever, only bettered by 35 in 1995 and 38 in 1994.

Records of ringed birds reappearing days, and sometimes weeks, after the initial trapping means that caution has to be applied to determining the total number of birds in an autumn at any one site, especially as this secretive species is obviously capable of disappearing for long periods of time in often heavily 'vegetated' localities.

### **Lesser Whitethroat**

*Sylvia curruca*

***Summer breeder and passage migrant.***

First recorded at Holme on April 20th followed on 22nd/23rd by arrivals at several other coastal and inland sites. The only spring count to reach double figures also came from Holme where 15 on May 19th. The only breeding season data received included 3 pairs at Baconsthorpe, Fordham, Salthouse, Strumpshaw and Titchwell, with 5 pairs at Abbey Farm, Flitcham, and 6 pairs at Sparham. BBS results: found in 14 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 2.0 birds per occupied square. Recorded in 20% fewer squares than in 1995 but with a 36% increase in average number of birds per occupied square.



Autumn passage uneventful with no August count exceeding 10, while September peaks included 12 at Holme on 5th and 8 Sheringham on 7th. An interesting series of records from Sheringham of birds showing characteristics of the race *blythi* with 2 on 22nd, 3 24th and 1 on 26th. In Oct singles Holme 1st-10th, Eccles 9th and another *blythi* type Sheringham 24th-26th.

### **Whitethroat**

*Sylvia communis*

#### ***Summer breeder and passage migrant.***

The first of the year at Great Yarmouth April 11th followed by Holkham and Sprowston on 15th, and Cromer GC and Horsey on 16th. On 20th/21st widespread influx along the coast and inland. Peak counts included 17 at Sheringham on 20th and 20 Holme the following day. May peaks of 50 at Wells on 1st, with 25 at Holme 19th and 20 on 20th.

Several observers commented that singing males were both widespread and common as evidenced by the counts at the following sites: Choseley/Thornham/Titchwell area 25-30, Flitchan (Abbey Farm) 13, Holme 14, Merton Village 16, Sheringham 20-30, Welney 22 and Weybourne 30. In contrast BBS results: found in 47 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 4.6 birds per occupied square. A 21% decrease in average number of birds per occupied square but found in slightly more squares than in 1995.

Autumn passage was very light with maximum Aug counts from Holme where 20 on 16th and again 30th/31st. Largest Sept counts again at Holme where 15 on 1st and 10 on 19th/20th. Latest at Weybourne Oct 10th.

### **Garden Warbler**

*Sylvia borin*

#### ***Summer breeder and passage migrant.***

First recorded April 22nd at Snettisham (2) and Thompson Water, followed next day at Great Yarmouth cemetery. Small numbers at several inland sites towards the end of the month but remaining scarce on the coast. May also only produced small numbers at coastal sites with maximum counts on 5th when 6 Holme and 5 Great Yarmouth cemetery; also 6 at Sheringham on 30th.

During the breeding season 15 pairs at East Wretham compared with 18 in 1995. BBS results: found in 15 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 2.1 birds per occupied square - no significant change from 1995.

Autumn passage commenced in mid-Aug with largest numbers towards the end of the month: 35 at Holme 30th and 25 Sheringham on 31st. During Sept small numbers noted at many sites with maximum of 20 Overstrand 20th and Holme 22nd. Oct records from Holme 1st-14th, Sheringham (2) 2nd, Eccles 11th and Weybourne 30th.

### **Blackcap**

*Sylvia atricapilla*

#### ***Summer breeder and passage migrant, winters in small numbers.***

During the first winter period birds recorded at the following sites: Ashwellthorpe, Belton, Blakeney 4, Coltishall 2, Dersingham 2, Diss, Eaton 2, Felbrigg, Great Yarmouth 4, Hemsby 2, Hethersett 2, Hickling, Holme 4, King's Lynn, Knapton, Lingwood, Mundesley, Norwich 3, Overstrand 3, Salthouse 3, Stibbard, Thornham 2, Thorpe 2, Watton and Weybourne 2. The total of 48 birds from 25 sites compares with 47 from 30 sites in 1995.

Spring passage was fairly uneventful with the maximum count of 14 at Holme on April 20th, coinciding with the first spring influx along the coast. Singing males in breeding season included 12 Belmore Plantation (Thorpe St Andrew), 7 South Wootton Common and 10 Wayland Wood.

Autumn migration started in mid-August with highest counts on 31st when 15 Holme and 10 Sheringham. September peaks of 15 Holme 19th and Wells 23rd. No noticeable falls of migrants in Oct. The second winter period produced 17 birds from 12 sites with highest count of 3 in Norwich.

### **Greenish Warbler**

*Phylloscopus trochiloides*

#### ***Vagrant from north-east Europe.***

One at Wells dell on October 15th/16th was of the race plumbeitarsus (Two-barred Greenish Warbler) (AIB JBK JRMc et al). This is the first Norfolk record of this race from East Asia and represents only the second British record. Though this was until recently considered a separate species, Two-barred Greenish and Green Warbler are, at present, considered as races of Greenish Warbler (see article on page 246).

Additional 1995: Holkham Mcals another (to that already published) Sept 3rd (OR&MRM) and Sept 13th (GAJD). This brings the 1995 county total to at least 9.

### **Pallas's Warbler**

*Phylloscopus proregulus*

#### ***Rare autumn migrant from Siberia.***

A remarkable series of autumn records, starting Oct 23rd when one at Winterton 23rd (ringed), another 24th (ringed) (KJB et al), Waxham 24th-25th (JABr GED et al), Eccles 24th/25th (NBo AJK), Caister 26th (JHa JO) and Snettisham 31st (CBu). A second and much larger arrival took place in November with a multiple arrival from the 11th onwards: Wells, East Hills 11th (JRMc); Winterton 11th (ringed) and 2 on 14th (ringed) (KJB et al); Great Yarmouth cemetery 11th-13th (TC JO et al); Wiveton 13th and 2 on 14th/15th (SJMg); Sheringham 13th/14th (ringed) (KBS SCV); Cromer 2-3 on 13th-14th (BJM); Winterton village 13th with 2 on 14th, one remaining 15th/16th (PCaw GED); Wells 14th with 2 on 15th (AIB JRMc); Trimingham 14th (JHa); Hopton 14th (DJ); Sidestrand 15th (SCV); Eccles 15th-17th (NBo JH); Waxham 15th-17th (KH GWRH et al); Caister 15th (JO) and lastly Sheringham 23rd (DPA KBS TW). This autumn total at least 28 individuals is by far the largest for the county and part of a very large national influx. The previous best years for Norfolk are 18 in 1982 and 12 in 1995, when in Nov that year the one hundredth record for the county was noted. Only 1983 and 1990 have failed to produce this species since 1980, a remarkable fact considering the former great rarity status of this Siberian beauty.

1995 correction: one in Great Yarmouth cemetery remained until Oct 31st (PRA).

### **Yellow-browed Warbler**

*Phylloscopus inornatus*

#### ***Scarce autumn migrant from Northern Siberia.***

A reasonable showing although, by recent standards, not a high total. Sept records as follows: Sheringham 17th/18th, Holkham 21st, Brancaster 23rd, Wells 23rd/24th, Hunstanton 2 24th-26th, Holme 25th and Winterton 27th. Larger numbers in Oct when birds at Cromer GC 9th, Titchwell 10th-17th, Paston 12th-14th, Wells East Hill 13th, Eccles 14th-15th, Holme 17th, Sea Palling 23rd, Winterton 23rd (ringed), Horsey 24th, Caister 25th and Weybourne 30th-

Nov 2nd. November produced 4 birds, 3 of them rather late: Happisburgh 2nd, Weybourne 11th, Paston 13th and Hempstead 16th-18th. The autumn total of 23 bettered the 17 in 1995, but falls well short of the 52 in 1994.

### **Dusky Warbler**

*Phylloscopus fuscatus*

#### ***Vagrant from Northern/Central Asia.***

One trapped at Weybourne Sept 23rd (MPT) remained until 29th. In Nov one ringed Wells Nov 11th (RobB) and this was joined by another on 13th (AIB JRMc), both birds remaining (but not usually together) until 21st. The Weybourne record represents the earliest county record, and these records carry the county total to 30.

### **Wood Warbler**

*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

#### ***Passage migrant and scarce breeder.***

An above average spring passage with first Holme April 21st. In May as many as 16 individuals: Holme 1st, 6th and 19th; Belton 7th/8th; Great Yarmouth 7th-9th and 20th; Sheringham (Pretty Corner) 9th and 2 on 17th; Horsford 10th; Titchwell, Sheringham Park and Roman Camp all 13th; Cley and Happisburgh on 19th; Blakeney Point 20th and Muckleburgh all on 28th. During the breeding season no data received and, with only one such record in 1995, this species may be on the verge of vanishing as a breeder.

An average autumn showing with singles at Great Yarmouth cemetery Aug 30th-1st Sept, Holme Aug 31st and Wells Sept 5th. Another small arrival later in Sept at Wells 19th-23rd, Stiffkey 20th-22nd, Salthouse 21st and Holkham 24th.

### **Chiffchaff**

*Phylloscopus collybita*

#### ***Common summer breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers.***

During the first winter period recorded in Jan at Sheringham (2), Titchwell and Irstead Staithe and in Feb at Overstrand (2) and Great Yarmouth cemetery. Main spring arrival not until the fourth week of March, with highest spring totals in April when 48 at Holkham 9th and 10 at Holme 15th.

BBS results: found in 22 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 2.2 birds per occupied square.

Autumn passage low with highest counts of 10 at Holme on Sept 21st and 30 at Holkham on 23rd. Coinciding with the influx of Pallas's Warblers, many birds appeared in the first half of Nov with at least 39 reported from 18 sites including 5 at Holkham Meals on 15th and 3 at Hempstead on 17th/18th. In Dec records Beeston Regis, Holkham (4), Honing, Horsey, Sennowe Park, Titchwell, Weybourne and Whitlingham Lane.

Birds showing characteristics of the race tristis at Burgh Castle Oct 4th (PRA), Eccles Oct 15th (AJK), Sea Palling Oct 23rd (AJK) and Yarmouth Cemetery Nov 16th (PRA).

### **Willow Warbler**

*Phylloscopus trochilus*

#### ***Common summer breeder and passage migrant.***

First of the spring April 6th when 2 Sprowston and one Ranworth. From the 10th onwards a more general arrival took place county wide. Highest April counts at Holme, where 25 on 17th, 30 on 20th and 25 on 21st, and Sheringham where 32 on 20th and 25 on 21st. May totals small with maximum of 15 at Holme and 25 Blakeney Point on 19th. Birds showing



characteristics of the race *acredula* in May at Sheringham (3) 19th, Blakeney Point (2) 20th, Weybourne 22nd/23rd and Holkham 27th.

BBS results: found in 33 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 3.6 birds per occupied square. Compared with 1995 data no significant change in number of squares but a 26% fall in average number of birds per occupied square.

The autumn migration commenced in mid-August with peaks of 20 at Holme and Blakeney Point on 15th; 20 again Holme on 31st. September passage was heavier with main fall between 19th-23rd with largest counts of 25 Yarmouth cemetery on 21st, and 50 Wells and 22 Stiffkey and Happisburgh all 22nd. Also single '*acredula*' types Stiffkey 19th and Sheringham 23rd. Subsequently low numbers rest of Sept and only one Oct record, Cley on 5th. Also a very late individual at Burnham Deepdale Nov 11th-13th (MESR).

1995 addition: the major fall on Sept 18th included 700 at Sheringham.

### Goldcrest

*Regulus regulus*

*Resident breeder and passage migrant.*

Spring migration small with max 15 Holme April 9th-15th, and 25 Sheringham April 16th. Autumn migration also very low with the highest counts being 20 at Holme Oct 14th/15th and 15 Sheringham Nov 15th.

### Firecrest

*Regulus ignicapillus*

*Spring and autumn passage migrant. Scarce in winter. Occasional breeder.*

During the first winter period 1-2 birds remained at Lynford Arboretum, with another individual appearing at Caister on Feb 4th and staying to at least end March.

An extremely slow start to spring migration with only one March record from Holkham on 16th. Many more records in April starting on 9th and continuing until the month's end with 27 birds noted from 19 sites. The heaviest passage occurring from 14th-23rd, including 7 Caister 23rd. Very few records in May; 2 birds remained at Lynford and recorded at five other sites totalling 6 birds. During the breeding season only noted at Lynford, where a male was seen occasionally during June and July, although no firm evidence of breeding was observed.

Autumn passage was very good with many sites recording record numbers. Largest numbers in Sept with peak passage from 17th-24th. At least 94 birds were recorded at 29 sites, with highest counts: 3 Holme 20th, 9 Holkham 24th, 3 East Hills Wells 21st, 3 Sidestrand 21st, 5 Happisburgh 21st, 7 Sea Palling 21st, 6 Waxham 21st, 3 Horsey 24th, 5 Caister 18th and 10 at Great Yarmouth cemetery 21st/22nd. Also one at Welney 30th was the first autumn record for the site. Oct records returned to more usual numbers with 10 birds noted at 6 sites. Nov produced 4 coastal records and two from inland where 2 at Whitlingham Lane on 17th and another at Strumpshaw on 30th. December saw 5 individuals in the county: at Lynford 2 birds all month; the Strumpshaw bird also remained all month and was joined by a second bird on the 7th/8th and 25th; one Thetford (High Lodge) on 24th.

### Spotted Flycatcher

*Muscicapa striata*

*Migratory breeder and passage migrant.*

First record May 2nd at Thetford Nunnery lakes. Subsequent notable counts in May with 15 Holme 19th and 12 on 30th, 12 Winterton 31st and 4 plus 13 west at Sheringham on 30th.

Breeding records from 28 sites. Mainly single pairs but 2 Barmer, 2 Holme Hale, 2 Rollesby, 3 Dunton, 4 Quarles, 5 Ludham and 19 Holkham Park. At Garboldisham 22 birds ringed at the site, only 3 were females. BBS results: found in 13 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 1.5 birds per occupied square.

In Aug, small scale movement from mid-month but 15-20 birds noted at South Lopham Fen on 26th and a count of 28 in Holkham Park between main gates and lake on 27th. In Sept recorded from just 8 coastal sites when only double figure counts of 10 Holme 5th, with 15 on 9th and 10 on 20th, and 10 Sidestrand 21st. Only three Oct records: Weybourne 14th, Sea Palling 23rd-25th and Horsey 24th.

### **Pied Flycatcher**

*Ficedula hypoleuca*

*Passage migrant, scarce in spring, abundant at times in autumn. Has bred.*

A good spring passage with records from 23 mainly coastal sites. Commencing with a male at Holme on April 14th, passage continued until June 1st when a female was in Yarmouth Cemetery. Maximum count at any one site was 6 Holme May 17th but most records of single birds.

At Holme a female present May 28th-June 22nd was seen nest building and 4 eggs were laid but these proved to be infertile and the nest was deserted. A male was also present at the site from June 14th-18th but subsequently disappeared. This constitutes only the second breeding attempt in the county, the first being at Felbrigg in 1978 when a pair succeeded in fledging an unknown number of young.

Return passage from Aug 5th when 2 Sheringham. Small scale movement continued through the month with birds at 19 coastal sites, maximum counts being 6 at Yarmouth Cemetery 12th and Waxham 31st. Sept produced double figure counts from ten sites with the most impressive totals 19th-23rd. Maximum counts: 25 Holme 20th; 35 Holkham Meals 20th/21st; 25 Yarmouth Cemetery 22nd and 20+ Mundesley 22nd. Only two inland sightings, a single at Baconsthorpe and at St Benet's Level on Sept 21st. Single Oct record: Holme 4th-6th.

### **Red-breasted Flycatcher**

*Ficedula parva*

*Scarce autumn migrant. Rare in spring.*

The best autumn showing since 1989 with the first Blakeney Point on Aug 28th. An excellent series of records in Sept with a noticeable peak 17th-20th: Holme 2nd and 6th with 2 present 7th-8th; Blakeney Point 4th-5th, 17th and 19th; Scolt Head 8th; Yarmouth Cemetery 17th-23rd with 2 21st-22nd; Caister 19th; Cley 20th; Walsey Hills 20th-21st; Sheringham 20th-24th; Titchwell 21st and Winterton 27th. Single Oct record: Holme 23rd.

### **Bearded Tit**

*Panurus biarmicus*

*Resident and partial migrant. Periodic influxes from Low Countries.*

In the first winter period birds recorded at the following sites: 15 Salthouse, 13 Titchwell, 10 Fritton, 7 Hall Fen, Irstead, 7 Hickling, 6 How Hill, 4 Cley, Martham and Reedham and 2 Barton Broad, Buckenham, Burgh Castle, Burnham Norton, Holme and Snettisham.

Breeding numbers very low with declines at several sites. Following numbers of breeding pairs with last year's in brackets: Titchwell 15 (18), Strumpshaw/Cantley/Buckenham 6-10, Hickling NNT 35 (33 in 1994), Horsey 4 (5), Cley 4 (5+), Holkham NNR 4 (8), Breydon 2

and Cockshoot Broad 1. The decline is not confined to Norfolk; most sites in Britain seem to be suffering a similar fate, the reasons at present remain unclear.

Some reasonable counts in Oct when the usual dispersal from breeding sites with possibly some additional Continental migrants. Maximum counts: 12 Snettisham 22nd, 20 Holme 14th, 40 Titchwell 1st-7th, 23 Burnham Norton 1st-11th, 25 Cley 8th, 26 Salthouse 26th, 11 Kelling 7th, 8 Weybourne 14th, 6 east Sheringham 13th, 5 Martham 22nd and 13 Rockland 13th.

Very few at end of year when 10 Strumpshaw, 6 Surlingham, 4 Cley, 4 Titchwell and 3 Holme.

### Long-tailed Tit

*Aegithalos caudatus*

**Common resident breeder; Scandinavian white-headed race very rare in autumn.**

Largest parties in first winter period when 26 Beeston Regis, 25 Paston, 20 Strumpshaw and 19 Thetford. The usual records during both winter periods of birds visiting garden feeders. Due to a cold spring and natural food shortages this carried on well into April.

Most CBC plots both in Norfolk and nationally reported significant declines of up to 50% no doubt due to the cold winter. BBS results: of 47 1km squares surveyed in both years found in 17 in 1995 and 12 in 1996, a drop of 29%. Average number of birds per occupied square more or less unchanged (3.2 in 1996).

Flocks in the later part of the year included 33 Holme, 20 Titchwell, 18 Sheringham and 15 Sea Palling. Several observers have commented that the general size of flocks has declined. For example, at East Tuddenham prior to 1993 groups of 30-40 were standard, recently 18-20 is more the normal.

### Marsh Tit

*Parus palustris*

**Common breeding resident.**

Reported from an impressive 64 widely scattered localities. The largest numbers of breeding pairs were 15 Holkham Park, 4 Houghton and 3 West Briggs Wood, with other breeding season records from the following sites: Barrow Common, Barton Turf, Belmore Plantation, Brumstead, Cockshoot Broad, Ditchingham, Filby Broad, Foxley Wood, Garboldisham, Hanworth, Hethersett, Horstead, Ling Common, Martham Ferry, Merton, Muckleburgh Hill, North Walsham, Nunnery Lakes Thetford, Ormesby Little Broad, Ranworth Broad, Salhouse Broad, South Walsham Broad, Santon Downham, Strumpshaw, Wayland Wood, Woodton and Wormegay.

BBS results: found in 5 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 2.2 birds per occupied square.

### Willow Tit

*Parus montanus*

**Breeding resident possibly in decline.**

Recorded from the following localities during the breeding season: Barton Broad, Beeston Regis, Boughton Fen, Bressingham, Buxton Hall, Catfield Fen, East Harling, Garboldisham, Great Bircham, Great Melton, Hanworth Common, Hempton, Hoe Lane Dereham, Hickling Meadow Dyke, Hickling Weavers Way, Kettlestone Common, Lopham Grove Wood, Ludham, Mundford, Narford, Pensthorpe, Quidenham, Repps (4 pairs), Rockland Broad, Salhouse Broad, Santon Downham, Sennowe Park, Shereford, Strumpshaw, Sparham Pools, Surlingham, Sutton High



Fen, Syderstone, The Nunnery Thetford, Thompson Common, Thompson Water, Upton Fen and West Briggs Woods. Reported from an additional 40 sites during the rest of year. BBS results: found in 5 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 1.0 birds per occupied square. Data probably insufficient to make meaningful comparison with previous species.

A bird showing characteristics of the Scandinavian race *borealis* was present East Ruston Nov 21st (AJK) and was the first county record.



*Willow Tit (P. Jones)*

### **Coal Tit**

*Parus ater*

***Breeding resident and passage migrant.***

Typically apart from the autumn very few records received.

BBS results: found in 17 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 2.1 birds per occupied square.

From mid-Sept Norfolk, along with the rest of the British east and south coasts, received a large influx of continental migrants. In Sept best counts 22 Holme 18th-19th, 13 Wells 20th, 12 Snettisham 20th, 6 Weybourne 30th and 1-3 at 14 other coastal localities. In Oct a total of 42 south Hunstanton Cliffs including 13 10th, 15 Wells 20th, 7 Sheringham 6th, 5 Snettisham 8th and 4 Titchwell 11th. Most of these were probably continental birds, however certainly some of those at Holme were of the British race which occurs every autumn on coastal passage.

### **Blue Tit**

*Parus caeruleus*

***Common breeding resident and passage migrant.***

CBC data produced the following pairs: 11 Belmore Plantation, 8 Abbey Farm Flitcham, 6 Weybourne and 5 Muckleburgh. The cold spring seems to have taken its toll on early broods when 4 dead Pulham St Mary, 2 Pulham Market and 1 Garboldisham. BBS results: found in 47 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 8.5 birds per occupied square. No significant change in number of squares recorded but 41% increase in average number of birds per occupied square from 1995.

Highest counts from coastal sites in autumn when 45 Holme Sept 15th, 30 Sheringham Oct 17th, and at Hunstanton 16 south Oct 13th and 19 south Oct 14th.

### **Great Tit**

*Parus major*

***Common breeding resident and passage migrant.***

In Feb an albino East Beckham 27th (VJH).

Small numbers on passage in spring when 11 north Winterton March 24th, 11 east Burnham Overy Dunes April 3rd and 12 west Sheringham April 8th.

Only significant breeding data 9 pairs Belmore Plantation. BBS results: found in 49 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 4.8 birds per occupied square. A 19% increase on average number of birds per occupied square compared to 1995.

Best counts in autumn: 25 Holme Sept 15th, 20 Sheringham Oct 11th and 12 south Hunstanton Oct 14th.

### **Nuthatch**

*Sitta europaea*

#### ***Breeding resident possible in decline.***

Reported from around 35 sites during the year, many during the breeding season. A comprehensive survey produced an impressive 30 pairs Holkham Park where success good. Other breeding records included the following pairs: 6+ Old Hunstanton Park, 4 Houghton Wood, 3 Felbrigg, 3 Quarles and 3 How Hill. BBS results: found in only 5 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 1.6 birds per occupied square.

General status comments included 'stable, no significant decline' Overstrand, and at East Tuddenham 'now rarely seen'. At this site the decline has been blamed on the ever increasing numbers of Grey Squirrels which are eating hazel nuts before they have ripened.

During the late spring to autumn many more records than normal at coastal sites, several of which recorded their first records for 7-8 years. These included singles Snettisham June 6th, Holme June 8th with 2 Oct 1st, Titchwell Oct 1st, 2 Burnham Overy Dunes Sept 5th, Holkham Pines June 2nd and 5 Sept 15th and Sheringham May 28th. Those records are perhaps a reflection of a good breeding season and/or a shortage of food.

### **Treecreeper**

*Certhia familiaris*

#### ***Widespread woodland resident.***

Breeding season records from the following localities: Baconsthorpe, Belmore CBC, Brumstead, Cockshoot Broad, Corpusty, Ditchingham, Harling, Hickling, Houghton, Kerdiston, Malthouse Broad, Merton Park, Nunnery Lakes Thetford, Ringstead, Wayland Wood and West Briggs Wood. Recorded during the year at 25 other sites. BBS results: found in 11 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 2.4 birds per occupied square.

At Wroxham Broad a pair spent some time mobbing a Jay until the Jay turned, caught and ate one!

### **Golden Oriole**

*Oriolus oriolus*

#### ***Migratory breeder and passage migrant in small numbers.***

A much better year for spring migrants when in May singles Yarmouth Cemetery 18th, Horsey south 26th, Holme different birds 26th, 30th and 31st, Sheringham 2 west 26th and 1 west 30th, and Weybourne 30th.

Breeding: 4 pairs bred, 2 pairs probably bred and birds present at 7 other sites: breeding success poor for third year running (information from Golden Oriole Group).

Summer records away from known breeding sites included a single male Holkham June 22nd and July 4th and Welney July 13th.

### Isabelline Shrike

*Lanius isabellinus*

#### *Vagrant from Central Asia.*

Two 1st-winter birds in Oct, both showing characteristics of the race *isabellinus*, at Horsey 11th-13th (ADB et al) and Holme 14th-21st (DJC MEc et al) were considered by some observers to be different birds. The Holme individual, noted arriving in an exhausted state over the sea, was skulking and very inactive during the initial days of its stay, indicating it had possibly travelled considerably further than from the east of the county.

These records constitute the sixth and seventh for the county and completed 'the set' of five shrikes in the county for many observers.

### Red-backed Shrike

*Lanius collurio*

#### *Passage migrant in small numbers. Last bred 1989.*

A meagre spring passage produced just 4 records: Sheringham May 11th-12th, Warham/Stiffkey May 12th-14th, Holkham May 21st and June 16th.

A mid-summer female at Thrigby, July 11th, serves as a reminder that the loss of this species from the county breeding list is still a recent memory.

Much better numbers in autumn when a total of about 30 were recorded. An early Aug record from Sheringham on 1st, then a notable arrival Aug 15th when recorded at Holme (to 17th), Titchwell, 3 between Stiffkey and Morston (one to 16th), 3-4 Blakeney Point (one to 16th), Overstrand and Yarmouth. Further Aug records from Sheringham 17th-19th, 23rd and 30th-Sept 1st, Salthouse 18th-20th, Horsey/Winterton 21st, Holkham 23rd, Cley 28th and Salthouse Heath 31st. Fewer in Sept, but still reasonable numbers, when noted at Winterton 1st-4th, Weybourne 6th-7th, another there 7th-11th, Horsey 8th, 14th-16th and 24th, Mundesley 9th, Holme 14th, with 2 there 15th, one remaining to 16th and Scolt Head 20th-22nd.

### Lesser Grey Shrike

*Lanius minor*

#### *Vagrant from south-east Europe.*

A splendid and, at times, confiding adult, Burnham Overy dunes, Sept 5th-18th (RIH et al), was enjoyed by a constant stream of visitors during its stay. The nineteenth county record.

### Great Grey Shrike

*Lanius excubitor*

#### *Scarce passage migrant and declining winter visitor.*

Another poor year for this species, none being recorded in the first winter period or spring passage.

In autumn/winter, singles Wells/Warham Sept 21st-25th and Nov 14th, Horsey Gap 19th and one flying east at Brancaster Dec 23rd.



*Great Grey Shrike (P. M. Beeson)*



**Woodchat Shrike**

*Lanius senator*

*Vagrant from southern Europe, mostly in spring.*

A 1st-summer male Cley June 1st (SJMG RGM et al) and an adult male, Kelling WM and Quags area July 2nd-5th (MPT et al) continue the recent upsurge in records of this species in the county.

**Jay**

*Garrulus glandarius*

*Common resident. Periodic influxes from Continent following failure of acorn crop.*

BBS results: found in 18 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 2.4 birds per occupied square. Comparison of 47 squares surveyed in both years reveals an increase from 1995 to 1996 with a 17% rise in numbers of squares occupied and an 83% rise in average number of birds per occupied square.

From the middle of Sept small numbers began to be reported from coastal sites when 4 west Holme 16th, 8 west there 24th and 14 west Sheringham 30th. These were the herald of a classic influx of local/Continental migrants during Oct. Both in Britain and across Europe there was an almost total failure of the acorn crop. It seems probable that both British and Continental birds were involved in this influx. Largest counts during Oct as follows: 18 south Lynn Point 11th; 41 south Snettisham 13th; a monthly total of 203 south Hunstanton Cliffs including 43 14th; 40 Old Hunstanton Park 10th; 131 through Holme 9th and 45 west 24th; 30 west Titchwell 12th; Sheringham 30 west 6th and 38 west 11th.

At the end of the year good numbers continued to be reported from many inland localities.

**Magpie**

*Pica pica*

*Common breeding resident forming winter roosts.*

Best counted winter roost Ringland Common where following monthly maxima:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Oct	Nov	Dec
53	59	43	21	45	51	64

The only other roost counts 77 Roydon Common Jan and 19 Colney GP also Jan. Evidence of continuing expansion/increase of breeding range and numbers from Yarmouth Cemetery where 2 pairs nested for the first time ever.

Unusually some birds on obvious migration noted in both spring and autumn for what is normally thought of as a highly resident species. In the spring 10 flew out to sea and 1 high southeast Winterton March 27th, 7 east Sheringham April 3rd and 2 high out to sea Holme April 9th. In the autumn 4 south Hunstanton Cliffs Oct 7th and 1 in off sea Scolt Oct 11th.

**Jackdaw**

*Corvus monedula*

*Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.*

In the first winter period largest roosts/gatherings: 600 Lynford, 600 Northrepps, 500 Thetford Nunnery lakes, 260 Attlebridge, 118 Welney and 100 Fritcham.

After last year's exceptional spring passage numbers, this year below average. 20 in off sea Cromer GC April 22nd and 12 west Paston May 12th were easily the largest counts.

BBS results: found in 35 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 8.4 birds per occupied square.

In July a post-breeding roost of 200 Spixworth. Autumn passage light: at Hunstanton Cliffs total of 106 south including 25 Oct 21st.

Best counts Nov/Dec 750 Taverham and 340 Merton.

In the first winter period birds showing eastern race characteristics continued to be reported. These included up to 3 Easton, and 1-2 Attlebridge, Bawburgh, Colney, Keswick, Lenwade and Thetford Nunnery lakes. At Cley 1-2 were reported all year and could have possibly bred in the area. In addition to these, several observers commented that some birds showing mixed characteristics could be found in several flocks. These birds possibly originate from Scandinavia and have probably been overlooked in the past.

## **Rook**

*Corvus frugilegus*

*Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.*

Largest gatherings/roosts in first reported winter period of 2000 Thetford, 1400 Attlebridge and 300 both at Ditchingham and Sidestrand.

A light spring passage with best counts of 24 migrants Cromer GC April 22nd and 20 west Holme April 27th.

Following additional information the county total is 17,302 nests contained in 338 rookeries. See article on pages 248-255.

Summer and autumn roosts/gatherings included 1000 Spixworth, 400 Welney, 300 Sheringham and 250 Hanworth Common. Autumn passage most pronounced at Hunstanton where 288 south during the autumn, best days 80 Oct 7th and 50 Oct 11th.

In second winter period maximum counts 1000 Surlingham and 200 Baconsthorpe.

## **Carrion Crow**

*Corvus corone*

*Increasing resident forming winter roosts; also a passage migrant.*

Very few roost counts or gatherings received but they did include 180 Roydon Common (Jan), 110 Docking (Feb) and 40 Suffield (Dec).

A few migrants reported in the spring when in April 18 west Sheringham 9th, 30 south Horsey 15th, 30 Cromer GC 22nd and 35 west Holme 27th.

BBS results: found in 48 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 4.9 birds per occupied square. A 55% increase in average number of birds per occupied square from 1995.

In the autumn best counts 14 south Hunstanton Oct 11th and 7 west Scolt Oct 17th.

Hooded Crow *C.c.cornix*: Sightings of this form continue to decline and for the first time all records are listed. In the first winter period only records in Jan when Hickling 4th, Winterton 10th and Burnham Overy 16th.

A few records of passage birds in spring: March 2 east Paston 11th and singles Winterton 10th and 30th-31st, Waxham 10th; April Breydon 2nd, West Runton 7th-8th and west Sheringham 8th; May Sheringham 4th and north Breydon 16th.

First returning birds in Oct when singles Breydon 1st and Brograve Level 14th with others in Nov Horsey 9th, Stiffkey 14th, Bexwell 30th and Hickling Nov to end of Dec.

A hybrid continued to be present at the Burgh Castle area all year.



### **Raven** *Corvus corax*

**Formerly bred. Now a vagrant/escape.**

A single bird was present at Holkham/Burnham Overy 12th-13th (GPD VE RIH DRS et al) and was the third in four years.

*Raven (R. A. Richardson)*

### **Starling**

*Sturnus vulgaris*

**Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.**

No reports of any roosts or gatherings received in the first winter period.

Spring passage far more pronounced than normal, especially at Sheringham where the following easterly movements: in March 2400 21st and 8000 30th, and in April 3600 1st and 3400 3rd. Best counts elsewhere in April included 3000 east Cromer GC 1st and 1000 per hour south Winterton 3rd.

BBS results: found in 45 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 13.0 birds per occupied square. Compared to 1995 a 10% fall in number of squares recorded and a 23% decrease in average number of birds per occupied square.

Post-breeding passage from June 7th when up to 1550 at Holme, with 2000 west there June 28th and roost of 4000 July 4th, and at Sheringham where 300 west June 26th and 450 west July 3rd.

Autumn passage from late Sept-mid Nov as usual. At Hunstanton Cliffs an autumn total of 339,000 south Sept-Nov. Best counts in Oct when 23,000 12th (in 5\_ hours), 40,500 16th (2 hours), 47,000 23rd (all day), 30,000 24th (8 hours) and 25,000 25th (in 2 hours), and in Nov 13,000 16th (2 hours). All counts from dawn. Highest counts elsewhere an all day count of 120,000 west Scolt Oct 11th, 12,500 west Sheringham Oct 23rd and 7500 west West Runton Nov 14th.

From the end of Oct a large roost began to form at Strumpshaw where 5000 Nov 4th, 20,000 Nov 21st and 30,000 Nov 30th. Numbers dwindled during Dec, possibly due to the numbers of raptors the roost attracted.

### **House Sparrow**

*Passer domesticus*

**Common but declining resident.**

Few records received. Local declines still being noted, with colony extinctions at Aylmerton and East Tuddenham. BBS results: found in 35 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 15.5 birds per occupied square. Almost identical results to 1995. Largest flocks noted: 75 Welney Jan; 100 Baconsthorpe July-Aug; 90 West Runton Aug; 64 Holme and 60 East Tuddenham Sept. Interesting passage noted Hunstanton Cliffs where monthly totals of 165 south Oct and 41 south Nov.



## Tree Sparrow

*Passer montanus*

**Scarce resident. Also passage migrant and winter visitor.**

Numerous records of 1-30 from west Norfolk and the Fens in the first-winter period. Largest gatherings of 160 Great Cressingham, 50 Westacre, 110 West Beckenham Jan; 40+ Choseley, 50 Flitcham Feb; 60 Choseley April. East Norfolk records of singles Cromer Jan 3rd, Paston and Knapton both March 9th. Most parties had disappeared by April, with passage noted from Holme (total 6 west April 6th-21st), West Somerton (1 April 8th), Weybourne (1 west April 9th), Sheringham (1 west April 22nd), and what was possibly a late migrant Sheringham May 26th.

Records from only 21 sites during the summer. Of these, confirmed breeding from Flitcham (3 pairs), Pulham Market (1 pair raised 9 young from 2 broods), Pulham Market, Colegate End (2 pairs in nest boxes), Shropham (2 pairs) and Stanford TA (3 pairs). Probable breeding at Briston (several) and Harpley Dams (1 pair). BBS results: found in 7 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 2.0 birds per occupied square. Of 47 squares covered in both years recorded in 11 in 1995 but only 6 in 1996.

Very light autumn passage from Aug 6th when 7 west Sheringham, with monthly totals from Hunstanton Cliffs (25 Oct - max 16 on 11th, 3 Nov), Holme (1 Aug, 6 Oct), Weybourne Camp (2 Aug), Sheringham (8 Aug, 8 Sept, 4 Oct), East Runton (1 Sept), Eccles (1 Aug), Sea Palling (7 Sept, 2 Oct).

Only records received for second-winter period were: 3 Edgefield Sept 24th, 20-40 Saxthorpe Nov 5th, 2 West Beckham Nov 23rd, 52 Ringstead Nov with 34 there Dec 13th, 4-8 Titchwell visiting feeders Nov-Dec, and 70 Cock Fen, Welney Dec 29th.

Interesting observation from Wramplingham of one copulating with female House Sparrow in a garden over the winter and spring (RMB).

## Chaffinch

*Fringilla coelebs*

**Common resident. Also passage migrant and winter visitor in varying numbers.**

Low numbers throughout the county during the first part of the year, with largest flocks reported: 65 Cromer, 75 Guist, 100 Holkham Park, 80 Ringstead Jan; 150 Raynham Park, 300 Thetford Feb; 300 Holkham Park, Feb-March; 180 Flint Lodge, 200+ Massingham Heath, 500 Roudham Heath 400+ West Harling March; 100+ South Acre April. Spring passage noted at Sheringham where 55 west April 8th.

A few items of breeding data received: 30 singing males Welney, 16 singing males Muckleburgh Hill, 11 territories along 2.5 miles of the Marriott's Way at Reepham, 4 pairs Belmore Plantation CBC Thorpe, and 39 pairs on 83ha of farmland at Abbey Farm, Flitcham.

Autumn passage from Sept 30th when 35 west Sheringham. Oct and Nov saw some impressive movements, details of which are tabulated below:

	Oct 11th	Oct 12th	Oct 13th	Oct 14th	Oct 22nd	Oct 23rd	Oct 24th
Snettisham	-	-	-	-	1500s	-	-
Hunstanton Cliffs	6759s	3626s	1085s	3702s	5044s	12882s	5853s
Sheringham	1000w	-	-	-	500w	900w	-

	Nov 8th	Nov 9th	Nov 14th
Snettisham	-	-	-
Hunstanton Cliffs	449s	200w	415s
Sheringham	-	-	-

Additionally 400 Warham Nov 14th and 600 west Paston Oct 30th. Autumn total from Hunstanton Cliffs of 45,288 south.

Very few sizeable flocks reported in second winter period, with max 50 Baconsthorpe, 75 Suffield Sept; 100 Wells Oct; 70 East Harling Nov; 50 Garboldisham, 150 Ludham 80 Moulton St Mary, 100 Reepham, 40 Ringstead Dec.

Single melanistic bird Holkham Park Jan 22nd, and a leucistic male there throughout Feb.

### **Brambling**

*Fringilla montifringilla*

*Passage migrant and winter visitor in highly variable numbers.*

Very scarce at the start of the year, with the only notable regular concentrations at Buckenham Tofts (where 300 Feb, 250 March and 200 April), and Holkham Park (where max 500 Jan-Feb, 600 March, 500 early April). Elsewhere scattered flocks, with largest counts: 150 Cranwich Heath, 100 Dersingham, 60 Felbrigg, 75 Guist Jan; 50+ Amner Jan-Feb; 100 Santon Downham, 600 Thetford (2 sites) Feb; 200 Bircham Newton, 150 Holt, 100 Massingham Heath, 100+ Sandringham, 60+ Sennowe Park March; 75 Bircham Newton, 100+ Southacre April.

Little spring coastal passage noted. Last spring records Holme May 5th and 2 there May 11th.

Autumn arrivals noted from Sept 17th when single Sheringham, with very small numbers around the coast for the rest of the month. Peak movement as usual in October, though numbers generally very low, and hardly any records away from coastal localities. Max counts: 310 south Hunstanton Cliffs Oct 3rd; 50 Yarmouth cemetery Oct 9th; 977 south Hunstanton Cliffs, 400 west Sheringham, 50 Happisburgh Oct 11th; 146 south Hunstanton Cliffs Oct 12th; 689 south Hunstanton Cliffs Oct 14th; 103 south Hunstanton Cliffs Oct 15th; 120 south Hunstanton Cliffs Oct 16th; 200 south Snettisham, 117 south Hunstanton Cliffs, 40 west Sheringham Oct 22nd; 314 south Hunstanton Cliffs Oct 23rd; 122 south Hunstanton Cliffs, 40 Winterton Oct 24th; 50 south Hunstanton Cliffs Nov 8th; 127 south Hunstanton Cliffs Nov 14th. A total of only 3,585 south Hunstanton Cliffs Oct-Nov compared with 13,130 in 1995.

Away from the coast max autumn records of 50+ East Ruston Oct 10th, 12 Welney Oct 17th, 10 Hanworth Nov 7th, 180 Ludham Nov 11th and 15 Ringstead Nov 27th. Incredibly scarce in second-winter period, with the only Dec records 5 Titchwell Dec 5th-6th, 3 Wells/Warham Dec 7th, East Ruston Dec 23rd, and 4 Moulton St Mary Dec 28th.

### **Serin**

*Serinus serinus*

*Vagrant from continental Europe.*

The wintering imm male from 1995 remained at East Runton/Cromer until Feb 26th. An additional bird at Repps Jan 12th (SAW). A good series of spring records, with a singing male Blakeney Point April 8th (PLi), a female Overstrand April 11-12th (BJM et al), and one Burnham Overy Dunes/Holkham April 21st (PCI). A singing male set up territory at Gaywood Park on the outskirts of King's Lynn May 31st-July 13th (TGir et al).

### **Greenfinch**

*Carduelis chloris*

*Common resident and passage migrant.*

Some good sized flocks located around the county during the year, with largest noted: 200 Vincent Hills, West Newton, 75 Weeting Jan; 100+ South Acre April; 50 Holme Aug; 50

Boyland Wood, 75 Broad Fen Dilham, 50 Fersfield Airfield, 150 Reepham Sept; 180 Diss Oct; 200 Burnham Deepdale, 80 Lyng Nov; 60 Eccles Dec.

No noticeable spring passage. In contrast an impressive autumn passage around the coast. Max counts: 100 Holme Sept 20th; 64 south Hunstanton Cliffs Sept 25th; 337 south Hunstanton Cliffs Oct 7th; 200 Scolt Oct 10th; 1189 south Hunstanton Cliffs, 140 west Sheringham Oct 11th; 541 south Hunstanton Cliffs, 150 Kelling Water Meadows Oct 13th; 440 south Hunstanton Cliffs Oct 14th; 127 south Hunstanton Cliffs Oct 16th; 200 Snettisham, 185 south Hunstanton Cliffs, 140 west Sheringham Oct 22nd; 150 south Hunstanton Cliffs Oct 23rd; 154 south Hunstanton Cliffs, 145 west and 150 present Scolt Oct 24th; 204 south Hunstanton Cliffs, 170 west Scolt Nov 14th. Autumn total of 4,591 south Hunstanton Cliffs Oct-Nov.

### **Goldfinch**

*Carduelis carduelis*

*A common resident, passage migrant and summer visitor.*

Usual widespread flocks of 20-50 in first-winter period, with higher counts of 218 Garboldisham (on unharvested evening primrose), 60 Welney Jan; 63 Welney, 66 West Runton Feb; 90 Blo Norton Fen, 200 Tatterford, 94 Welney March; 100+ South Acre April.

A strong and protracted spring passage with max counts: 150 west Holme April 18th; 550 west Holme, 80 west Sheringham April 22nd; 120 west Holme April 24th; 850 west Holme, 150 west Sheringham April 27th; 75 west Sheringham May 6th; 65 west Sheringham May 19th; 60 west Holme, 50 west Sheringham May 20th; 55 west Holme May 21st; 80 west Sheringham May 26th; 100 west Sheringham May 31st; 50 west Sheringham June 2nd.

Autumn passage very light with max of 43 south Hunstanton Cliffs Oct 14th, and an autumn total there of only 104 south. Autumn concentrations of 100 Holme, 80-100 Tallents Meadow Aug; 210 Baconsthorpe, 100 Burnham Norton, 60 Fairstead Estate 80 Holme, 80 Wacton Sept; 60 Snettisham Sept-Oct; 120 Holme, 50 Riddlesworth Oct.

Interesting observation of two feeding on peanuts in a Bradwell garden in April.

### **Siskin**

*Carduelis spinus*

*Passage migrant and winter visitor in fluctuating numbers. Small numbers breed.*

Widespread but in low numbers in first-winter period, with few flocks exceeding 30. Best counts: 40 Great Snoring, 80 Thetford, 70+ Westacre, Jan; 100 Lynford Arboretum, 50 Wroxham Broad Jan-Feb; 50 Felbrigg, 150 Letheringsett, 70 Salhouse Broad Feb; 74 Belton Common, 80 Briston, 40 Cockshoot Broad, 40 Lower Bodham, 100+ Lynford Arboretum, 40 Repps March.

Spring departure (from March 9th) correspondingly almost negligible, and other than 50 Waxham March 10th figures rarely approached double figures. Max counts; 8 east Sheringham March 27th, 25 west Sheringham Apr 1st, 20 Titchwell Apr 6th, 8 west Holme May 21st.

Records indicative of breeding: Female trapped with brood patch and singing male Sheringham May 31st; singing male and additional bird nearby Frost's Common, Hockham June 26th; pair bringing 3 recently fledged young to Weybourne garden June 27th, with male and 2 juvs all July; 3 pairs Holt until mid July, with female and juv July 9th; 12 Merton Park Aug 15th, with 5 including juvs Aug 31st.

Autumn migrants from Sept 9th to Dec 5th (both Holme). Numbers again generally low. Main arrival September with max counts: 120 west Holme Sept 16th; 35 east and 10 west Holme Sept 17th; 450 in off sea Holme, 50 Paston Sept 18th; 40 Holme, 40 Gypsy Lane,



Titchwell, 40 Sheringham, 50 Yarmouth cemetery Sept 19th; 210 in off sea Holme Sept 21st; 200 Holkham Meals Sept 22nd/23rd. At Hunstanton Cliffs autumn total of only 376 south with peaks of 39 Sept 25th, 53 Oct 11th, 46 Oct 14th and 37 Oct 23rd.

Widespread but scarce in the second-winter period, with few localities holding flocks in double figures. Best counts: 40 Bailey Bridge (Stanford TA), 50+ Hockham, 100+ Merton, Sept; 180 East Harling, 45 How Hill, 80 Hunworth, 70 Lynford Arboretum, 70 Raynham Park, 65 R. Wensum, Fakenham, Nov; 60 Hillington, 50 Honing Nov-Dec; 250 Archers Covert, 40 Hickling Staithe, 100 Stalham, 50 Surlingham Church Marsh, 300 The Nunnery, Thetford, 250 West Tofts Dec.

Of 102 ringed in 1996 at Garboldisham, 72% were males and 63% were juvs.

## Linnet

*Carduelis cannabina*

### *Common resident and passage migrant.*

Unusual winter movement of 170 east Sheringham Jan 31st. Widespread flocks in first-winter period with largest reported: 135 Roudham, 200 Sennowe Park, 200 Stiffkey, 130 Terrington, Jan; 300+ Harpley Common, 200 Reepham, 160 Ringstead, 140 Thornham Feb; 100+ South Acre, 200 West Runton March; 200 Holme April.

Regular coastal passage from end March to mid May, with peak counts of 300 West Runton Mar 31st; 200 west Sheringham Apr 8th; 200 west Holme, 300 west Cromer GC Apr 9th; 100/hr south Waxham, 120/hr south Winterton Apr 13th; 400 east Sheringham Apr 14th; 650 west Holme Apr 15th; 200 west Holme Apr 16th; 220 west Holme Apr 17th; 450 west Holme Apr 18th; 300 west Holme, 100 Kelling Apr 22nd; 250 west Holme, 220 west Sheringham Apr 24th.

Again little data over the summer, but good counts of 150 Holme June and 200 there July, 50 Weeting Heath July, 80 Toft Monks Aug, and interesting movement 70 west Sheringham July 9th.

Good autumn coastal movements at many sites, with peak counts 350 Sheringham Aug 28th; 200 Warham Sept 4th; 200 Waxham Sept 7th; 300 Snettisham Sept 16th; 500 Sheringham Sept 30th; 400 Sheringham Oct 2nd; 128 south Hunstanton Cliffs, 300 West Runton Oct 7th; 335 south Hunstanton Cliffs Oct 11th; 160 Holme Oct 13th; 120 West Runton Oct 15th; 700 Snettisham Oct 22nd; 820 West Runton Nov 3rd; 145 West Runton Nov 7th; 800 West Runton Nov 8th; 350 Sheringham Nov. Autumn total of 1202 south Hunstanton Cliffs.

Few second-winter period flocks noted, with largest gatherings 120 Ringstead, 70 Sheringham, 95 Titchwell and 185 West Runton, all in Dec.

## Twite

*Carduelis flavirostris*

### *Local winter visitor.*

Recorded to April 21st (2 Holme) and from Sept 26th (1 Breydon). Maximum counts at main resorts:-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Oct	Nov	Dec
Wash	100	70	7	45	3	5	250
Holme	140	160	140	120	60	60	80
Titchwell	60	50	24	0	2	30	30
Brancaster Hbr	170	170	35	30	70	120	70

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Oct	Nov	Dec
Holkham	120	220	150	0	180	150	45
Wells/Blakeney							
Harbour	50	90	30	0	0	20	60
Breydon	23	13	19	1	1	15	4

Small numbers occasionally present elsewhere: Jan 11 Cley 14th, 3 Salthouse 15th and 12 Fritton Warren 21st; Feb 6 Burgh Castle 26th; March 15 west Weybourne 10th; April 2 Berney 17th and 16 west Thornham 19th; Oct up to 5 Sheringham 6th-17th, singles Welney 7th, Kelling 12th and Cley 26th, 20 Weybourne 15th and 6, 5 and 4 west at West Runton on 15th, 28th and 30th respectively; Nov 5 Salthouse and 4 Sea Palling 1st, at Sheringham 10 west 1st, 11 on 7th, 2 on 9th and 8 on 16th, at Hunstanton 2 south 8th and 12 on 14th.

Three birds colour-ringed as pulli from two separate nests in the Halifax area of Yorkshire in June 1995 were relocated at Holkham on Jan 18th, 19th and March 1st (PWA AFB).

## Redpoll

*Carduelis flammea*

*Lesser Redpoll (race cabaret) passage migrant, winter visitor and declining resident. Mealy Redpoll (race flammea) scarce winter visitor.*

Following the impressive late autumn influx of 1995 numerous parties were located throughout the county in the first-winter period, favouring weedy fields and stands of alder or birch. The Broads in particular held some particularly large but mobile flocks. Highest counts were: 110 Barton Turf, 200 Ling Common, 100 Ormesby Broad Jan; 100 Ranworth Broad, 200+ Wroxham Broad Feb; 100 Cringleford Low Wood, 100 Hickling Broad, 250 Lower Bodham, 90 Strumpshaw Fen, 500+ Wroxham Broad, March; 100 Strumpshaw Fen, April. Not all of these flocks were racially identified, and it is likely that the majority of the birds involved were Mealy Redpolls.

Return passage noted from early March, with records of 45 east Sheringham March 10th, 430 west Sheringham and 40 south Winterton March 28th. Subsequently totals of 39 west +71 east Holme, 13 west +1 east Burnham Overy dunes, 5 west Weybourne, 38 west +105 east Sheringham, 80 east Cromer GC in April, and 12 west Holme in May. Again many of these birds probably were Mealy Redpolls.

Small numbers lingered throughout the summer with potential breeding records of pairs or singing males from: Aylsham, Barton Turf (2 males), Barton Turf Fen, Catfield Fen, Coxford, Fakenham (1 pair), Hempton, Holkham Meals (3 pairs), Holt Lowes (1 pair), Norwich Riverside, Norwich The Avenues (2 pairs), Nunnery Lakes Thetford, Santon Downham, Sculthorpe, Strumpshaw Fen (3 pairs bred), Sutton High Fen (up to 5 males), Syderstone (1 pair bred), Tattersford, Tattersett, Wells town. Additional records of 1-4 at the following sites during summer months: Catfield Common, Drakes Marsh Barton Turf, Hickling Broad, Holme Hale, Holt, Kettlestone Common, King's Lynn Gaywood Hall Drive, Lakenham, Norwich Cathedral Close, Norwich Cozens Rd, Salthouse Heath, Sutton Broad, Swanton Novers (up to 20 present June-July), West Bilney, Winterton Dunes.

Autumn passage very light, with totals of just 63 south Hunstanton Cliff's Oct-Nov with max 15 Oct 11th, 12 Oct 14th, 6 Nov 14th and 9 Nov 16th. At Weybourne 8 Oct 17th, and at Sheringham 5 west Oct 11th and 1 west Oct 12th. Elsewhere 1-3 in Nov at Holme, Titchwell,

Scolt, Wells, Stiffkey, Weybourne, Eccles and 5 Winterton Nov 23rd. Equally scarce inland in autumn/second-winter period, with only a handful of largely single figure records, with max 40 Kilverstone Nov 13th, 28 Fairstead Nov 28th and 10+ How Hill Dec 7th.

**Mealy Redpoll** *C.f. flammea*: Following last year's late autumn influx numerous records throughout the county, with largest counts of 120 Catfield/Sharp Street Fens, 200 Cockshoot Broad, 100 Dersingham, 120 Hickling Broad, 85 Ormesby Broad, 200 Ranworth Broad, Jan; 100 Filby Broad, 90 Ingoldisthorpe, 150 Selbrigg, 240 Sharp Street Fen, 230 Woodbastwick, 200 Wroxham Broad Feb; 115 Cringleford Marshes/UEA, 100 Lower Bodham, 100 Sugar Fen Pott Row, 165 Sutton Broad, 250+ Wroxham Broad March; 145 Sutton Broad, 500+ Wroxham Broad April.

Only a light return passage of birds specifically identified noted from March 22nd (Titchwell), with 49 west Sheringham and 1-10 at Holkham, Wells and Paston all in April.

A small autumn arrival, with records from Burnham Overy dunes Oct 6th; Holme Oct 10th with 3 there Oct 11th; 2 Holme, 10 Wells, 1 Warham Oct 13th; 2 Weybourne Camp Oct 15th; 25 Wells Oct 16th; Caister Oct 21st; 5 Holkham Oct 30th; 2 Weybourne Nov 15th.



*Serin left, flying Waxwings, Mealy and Arctic Redpolls (G. Wright)*

### Arctic Redpoll

*Carduelis hornemanni*

#### Winter vagrant from Scandinavia.

A major influx occurred in the first winter period. Following the discovery of at least 10 at Cromer in Jan (PLee RGM AMS et al), with up to 8 there until Feb 17th and 1/2 until March 12th, careful scrutiny of other numerous large Redpoll flocks throughout the county produced a wealth of other records. These included: Belton Common Feb 4th-6th and 2 March 9th-April 4th (JBu TL); Dersingham/Ingoldisthorpe 2, probably 1st-winter Jan 30th (JBK) and adult and 1st-winter Feb 11th (AHJH JWr); Filby 3 Feb 20th/21st (TAC JO); Hickling male and 2 others Jan 21st (MIE AMS); Kettlestone Common March 3rd (ADC); Langham at least 8 Jan 9th-March 22nd (JMi AMS et al); Letheringsett Feb 9th-12th (SCV); Lower Bodham Feb 4th-10th (IP); Mousehold Heath, Norwich male Feb 17th, 2 others Feb 17th/18th, one of same March 29th (MIE AMS); New Costessey Feb 25th-28th (DPA et al); North Wootton male and another Dec 20th 1995 until Jan 4th (GNB D&MR et al); Ranworth Jan 13th (MIE AMS); Sparham at



least 2 March 30th (JRW et al); Sheringham at least 8 including 4 males Feb 3rd (APB IP et al) and at least 4 there Feb 4th (AMS); Stonepit Heath, Holt at least 9 Feb 23rd (DPA MCY-P) and another March 10th; Wroxham area up to 8 Feb 8th-April 2nd (NBo).

Details of at least 20 other birds claimed at the time remain unsubmitted. With the difficulties in the identification of this species, and the frequent problem in getting adequate views of the mobile Redpoll flocks, undoubtedly many more remained undiscovered.

### **Crossbill**

*Loxia curvirostra*

***Breeding resident in fluctuating numbers with Thetford Forest the stronghold. Immigrants arrive most years in late summer and autumn. Major irruptions at irregular intervals.***

Seemingly very scarce. The Breckland population would appear to be at a very low ebb. Only recorded regularly from Lynford Arboretum (where 1-4 at start of year, 12 June 25th, regularly 8 July-Nov, 28 Dec 12th, and 20 Dec 15th), and from Santon Downham (1-4, with max 10 March 28th). Only other Breckland records 10 Croxton Wood April 17th and single Thetford Warren March 31st and Apr 5th. Elsewhere Sheringham Feb 3rd and Ken Hill Wood May 18th.

Only indication of breeding 2 juvs Santon Downham May 4th.

A small summer/autumn immigration, with records of 10 Burgh Castle July 16th, Sheringham Sept 7th/8th, 2 Wells Sept 18th, singles south Hunstanton Cliffs Oct 7th and 16th, 4 Wells Oct 17th, 1 west Paston Oct 26th and 2 west Brancaster Staithe Nov 14th.

### **Scarlet Rosefinch**

*Carpodacus erythrinus*

***Rare passage migrant. Potential colonist.***

Three typical late spring records with a 1st-summer trapped Weybourne June 6th (MPT), a singing imm male Cley Hilltop June 10th (TCD et al), and another singing imm male Friary Hills, Blakeney June 13th (TCD).

Two further autumn records from Holme Sept 3rd (NML) and Warham Greens Sept 20th (MAG RGM).

### **Bullfinch**

*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

***Resident and suspected immigrant. Scandinavian race pyrrhula has occurred.***

Higher than usual numbers noted by several observers along the north coast in Jan. Of 8 Overstrand Jan 30th some considered to be pyrrhula race. Elsewhere scattered records throughout the county with highest counts 10 Helhoughton Jan 20th and 15 Bodham Jan.

BBS results: found in 21 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 1.6 birds per occupied square.

Autumn passage noted at Sheringham where recorded on nine dates in Nov, with max 8 on 14th. A female pyrrhula race trapped there Nov 23rd-24th. Also single Holme Oct 9th and 4 Titchwell Oct 22nd judged to be pyrrhula race. Notable autumn/winter concentration of 25 Courtyard Farm, Ringstead in Nov, with 30 Dec.

### **Hawfinch**

*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

***Elusive and very local resident.***

Only regularly recorded at Holkham Park and Lynford Arboretum. Monthly maxima are tabulated below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Holkham Park	10	1	7	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lynford Arboretum	2	7	18+	12	4	1	1	-	-	-	-	1

Otherwise very scarce elsewhere, with all records given: East Wretham Jan 9th; 4 West Harling Mar 10th with 2 there Apr 14th; 2 Thetford Warren Mar 31st; Felbrigg Apr 1st; Kelling Triangle Apr 24th; male Docking Sept 21st-23rd; singles Holkham Pines and Sandringham Oct 10th; Mundford Dec 28th.

A nest found at Kilverstone in May and breeding suspected at Lynford Arboretum where male in song April-June and feeding a female May 25th, and at Holkham Park where 4 pairs displaying throughout April.

Single spring migrant east Brancaster May 4th, and two in autumn with male trapped Weybourne Oct 15th, and single Yarmouth cemetery Nov 16th.

### Black-and-White Warbler

*Mniotilta varia*

*Rare North American vagrant.*

A 1st-winter male at Whitlingham Lane, Trowse, Norwich, November 9th-15th (SJC et al). The county's second example was as unexpected as the first at How Hill in 1985.



*Black-and-White Warbler*  
(P. Jones)

### Lapland Bunting

*Calcarius lapponicus*

*Regular, but usually scarce, passage migrant and winter visitor.*

Small numbers present in the first winter period at the following coastal sites (larger counts in brackets): Berney, Blakeney Point, Brancaster, Breydon (9 Jan 27th, 5 Feb 8th), Burnham Norton (5 Feb 13th), Cley, Cromer, Holme (6 Jan), Salthouse, Sheringham, Stiffkey, West Runton (8 Feb) and Weybourne. In addition, seen inland at Buckenham (2 Feb 15th) and Ringstead (3 March 11th and 1 20th-29th). Only 2 April records: 1 West Runton 4th-6th and a singing male Sheringham 27th.

First returning autumn bird Holme Sept 15th with a small but widespread coastal passage thereafter involving over 100 individuals. Passage continued until early November with most passing through in October. Most counts were small with maxima reached at Sheringham where 15 seen on 30th. Sites included all those mentioned above plus Caister, Eccles, Hopton, Horsey, Hunstanton, Kelling, Sea Palling, Sidestrand, Scolt Head, Terrington, Titchwell, Thornham and Wells.

By the year's end only noted at Holme (maxima of 5), Ongar Hill, Snettisham, Thornham, West Runton and Weybourne.



*Lapland Bunting (N. Arlott)*

### **Snow Bunting**

*Plectrophenax nivalis*

*Winter visitor in declining numbers. Exceptional in summer*

Generally very small numbers present in first winter period. Movement between sites no doubt caused some duplication of numbers, but groups of over 30 birds at Blakeney Point (45), Cley/Salthouse/Kelling (175), Heacham (50), Sheringham/Weybourne (45) and West Runton (50). Elsewhere smaller numbers at Breydon, Caister, Holkham, Holme, Horsey, Hunstanton, Lynn Point, Mundesley, Snettisham, Titchwell, Weybourne and Yarmouth. Very few seen after mid-March with last birds of spring at Happisburgh March 28th, Weybourne April 3rd, Heacham April 8th, inland at Hempstead April 8th, Overy Dunes April 9th and Titchwell April 10th.



*Snow Buntings (P. Jones)*

First returning autumn birds at Holme Sept 7th. Noted from 5 other coastal sites in Sept with numbers slowly appearing until late Oct and Nov when largest groups noted at the following sites: Blakeney Point (82), Caister (58), Holkham (40), Holme (106), Salthouse (65), Scolt (58), Sheringham (160), Sidestrand (40), Titchwell (100), West Runton (70) and Weybourne (100). In addition, noted at another 17 coastal sites. One inland at Whitlingham Lane, Trowse, on Nov 13th. In December maxima at Bacton (60), Breydon (115), Burgh Castle (80), Holme (47), Salthouse/Cley (45), Sheringham (60), Snettisham (45) and Titchwell (40). Taking the inevitable movement of flocks between sites into consideration, it is safe to say this species has declined dramatically in recent years as a winter visitor. It was only as far back as the late 1980s when flocks of over 200 regularly appeared at several coastal sites.



## **Yellowhammer**

*Emberiza citrinella*

*Once common resident, currently in decline.*

Quite scarce in the first winter period. Only flocks reported over 30 were 90 Hethersett, 60 Lynn Point, 200 Paston, 80 Ringstead and 50 Wrampingham. Smaller groups noted at 13 other sites may be a case of under-recording, although one observer stated that very few present on farmland in NW Norfolk, despite extensive searching'.

In the breeding season more evidence of declining numbers came from East Norfolk where only 20 pairs found between Winterton and Hopton (12 pairs between Winterton and Hemsby in 1995 alone, only 6 in 1996). Also, a decline reported from East Tuddenham since 1984, with a complete absence of young in some years. Other counts received this year included 25-30 pairs Choseley/Titchwell/Thornham, 12 pairs Docking/Fring/Sherbourne/Dersingham, 15 Flitcham (on an 83 ha farm), 6 Hedenham, 7 Muckleburgh Hill, 6 along Marriotts Way, Reepham (in 2\_ miles) and 3 Sprowston. BBS results: found in 49 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 4.8 birds per occupied square.

At Hunstanton total of 59 migrants south Oct/Nov with max of 9 on Nov 8th and 14th. During the second winter period records from fewer sites, although 500 at Hindringham and 354 Ringstead were impressive counts by recent standards.

## **Ortolan Bunting**

*Emberiza hortulana*

*Scarce passage migrant.*

A relatively poor showing with only 2 records, both from Eccles: Sept 2nd (NBo AJK) and Sept 24th (NBo).

## **Little Bunting**

*Emberiza pusilla*

*Vagrant from N Scandinavia eastwards, mostly in the autumn.*

Three typical autumn records: Warham/Stiffkey Sept 21st-26th (MAG PJH et al). Wells end of Holkham Meals Sept 23rd (JRW) and Yarmouth front Oct 23rd/24th (GED et al).

## **Rustic Bunting**

*Emberiza rustica*

*Vagrant from Northern Europe.*

Three records, all in the spring, brings the county total to 13. A female in a Sheringham garden March 27th to April 1st (MPT et al), followed by one, possibly a male, in a Weybourne garden April 9th (ES) and a full breeding plumaged male Kelling WM and then Cley NWT reserve May 19th (SAI DBuf MEa MPT et al).

## **Reed Bunting**

*Emberiza schoeniclus*

*Common resident and passage migrant.*

Only small numbers reported in the first winter period. Largest groups 25 Hickling, 26 Ludham, 20 Lynn Point, 30 Ringstead, 18 Vinegar Middle and 17 Welney. Smaller groups at 10 other sites. During the breeding season territories noted at the following sites: Kettlestone 2, Ludham 11, Raynham Lane 1, Santon Downham 3, Scolt Head 3, Sculthorpe Fen 3, Strumpshaw 19, Surlingham 17, Syderstone 1, Tatterford 1, Tattersett 1, Vinegar Middle 5, Welney 31, Weybourne 4 and Wicklewood Mere 1. No doubt very under-recorded although a decline noted on the River Tudd where 4 pairs bred until 1976, 2 pairs until 1985 with only 1 unsuccessful pair since. BBS results: found in 19 out of 57 1km squares with an average of 2.7

birds per occupied square. Comparison of 47 squares covered in both 1995 and 1996 confusing with 36% increase in number of squares occupied but 40% decrease in average number of birds per square. Small autumn coastal passage peaked in early Oct when 40 Scolt on 9th and 50 south at Hunstanton in 6\_ hours on 11th; total 178 south Hunstanton in autumn. Very few records from the second winter period with 35 Ringstead Nov/Dec being the largest count.

### **Corn Bunting**

*Miliaria calandra*

#### ***Local and declining resident.***

During the first winter period largest concentrations at Choseley 72, Hilgay Fen 43, Lynn Point 60, Ringstead 30, Vinegar Middle 35 and Welney/Ten Mile Bank 38. Smaller numbers at another 14 sites. In the breeding season singing males/pairs noted at the following locations: Bacton 2, Brancaster, Burnham Norton, Choseley/Titchwell/Thornham area 15, Crowles Drove 5, Docking, East Ruston 5, East Somerton 2, Happisburgh, Hemsby, Kelling, Newton by Acre, Rollesby 2, Sea Palling, Sheringham 4 (although none bred successfully), Ten Mile Bank and Winterton. At the year's end largest numbers at Ringstead 75, Terrington 45, Vinegar Middle 25, Welney 60 and Wiggenhall St Peters 21.

The above information clearly shows that the Fens and the county's coastline remain important for this species' survival in the county. Does anyone see any in central Norfolk these days?

## **Selected Introductions, Hybrids, Escapes and Ferals 1995 and 1996**

### **APPENDIX 1. CATEGORY D SPECIES**

Species (mostly wildfowl) which are likely to fall within Categories A and D are treated as Category A species for the purpose of the report and all records, including known and probably escapes, are summarised in the main systematic list. The following species could occur as genuine vagrants, either from their native range or from a self-sustaining feral population, but are more likely to have escaped from captivity. Their inclusion here does not imply acceptance onto Category D by either the BOURC or the BBRC.

#### **Greater Flamingo**

*Phoenicopterus ruber*

Breeds Mediterranean, Asia, Africa, Caribbean and parts of South America.

1995: Breydon May 15th-25th.

1996: Breydon April 22nd-29th and Titchwell May 1st-3rd.

#### **Chilean Flamingo**

*Phoenicopterus chilensis*

Breeds South America.

1995: Cley April 10th, 13th and 15th, Breydon May 15th-25th.

1996: Breydon April 22nd-29th, Titchwell May 1st-June 14th, 2 June 15th-July 2nd, Ousemouth May 5th and Salthouse May 20th.

**Bar-headed Goose***Anser indicus*

Breeds Asia.

1995: 2 probably the same during the year at Blakeney Marshes, Breydon, Cley, Hardley Flood, Sennowe Park and Welney, with singles Whitlingham GP and West Raynham.

1996: 2 Haddiscoe and singles Titchwell, Surlingham Church Marsh and Wissington BF during the year.

**Snow Goose***Anser caerulescens*

Breeds extreme north-east Siberia and North America.

1995: Blue-phase adult resident Holkham Park most of 1994 and 1995, wandering to Burnham Thorpe and Holkham NNR occasionally. A wandering flock of up to 17, resident in North-west Norfolk between Snettisham and Holkham. Elsewhere singles Buckenham and Colney.

1996: Up to 9 Titchwell on and off May-Aug probably originating from feral breeding birds Sandringham.

**Ross's Goose***Anser rossii*

Breeds Canada, winters western USA.

1996: 1 Snettisham all year.

**Ruddy Shelduck***Tadorna ferruginea*

Breeds Asia and North Africa.

1996: A scatter of spring and autumn records, with 2 south Letheringsett Feb 10th, Holme Feb 11-12th, 2 Colney GP Feb 23rd with possibly the same pair Lyng Easthaugh/Sparham throughout March-April 4th, with an additional male there paired to an Egyptian Goose March-April 20th, 2 Briston March 5th, 1 west Felbrigg April 1st, Salthouse April 8th and 13th, 2 east Kettlestone Common and single Cley April 19th, Bayfield Hall April 25th, 2 north Swanton Novers May 26th.

Bred at an undisclosed north Norfolk site (not Bayfield Hall where bred in 1997): a pair seen with 2 young ducklings. Typical autumn records included 4 juvs Cley-Sheringham Aug 4th-27th, juv Buckenham Aug 6th-14th and singles Ongar Hill July 21st and presumed same Snettisham July 28th and 31st, Breydon Aug 15th, Titchwell and Aug 23rd-25th and Oct 21st.

1-2 Sennowe Park Feb and July considered certain escapes.

**Wood Duck***Aix sponsa*

Breeds North America.

1995: Males Sparham Pools Jan 15th, Surlingham Feb 25th and a female Potter Heigham Aug/Sept.

1996: Females Lound Jan 13th and Salhouse Broad April 16th.

**Saker/Lanner***Falco cherrug/biarmicus*

Breeds eastern Europe and Asia.

1995: Weybourne/Sheringham west carrying jesses Oct 2nd and east 11th, Holkham adult Oct 17th.

1996: west Sheringham Sept 23rd.

**Lady Amherst's Pheasant***Chrysolophus amherstiae*

Breeds Asia, feral population established in central England.

1995: Male Hoe Rough May 22nd, Pentney GP June 15th.



## APPENDIX II. HYBRIDS

### **Bean Goose x White-fronted Goose or Greylag**

1996: A family group of 6 fabalis type Holkham Feb 8th.

### **White-fronted Goose x Pink-footed Goose**

1995: Holkham 2 March 2nd.

### **White-fronted Goose x Lesser White-fronted Goose**

1995: Stradsett Jan 14th. Titchwell single on several dates in June.

1996: Tottenhill GP Feb.

### **Lesser White-fronted Goose x Pink-footed Goose**

1995: Great Bircham adult with Pink-feet Jan 8th.

### **Greylag Goose x Canada Goose**

1995: During the year 5 Wroxham, 4 Lyng-Easthaugh GP, 2 Holme and 1 Whitlingham GP.

1996: Through the year 3 Colney GP and singles East Ruston, Heigham Sound, East Ruston.

### **Greylag Goose x Snow Goose**

1995: Wroxham Aug 25th, 2 Nov 1st.

### **Greylag Goose x Barnacle Goose**

1996: Wissington BF April 4th-8th.

### **Snow Goose x Ross's Goose**

1995: Stiffkey Feb 8th.

### **Ruddy Shelduck x Egyptian Goose**

1995: Cley July 21st

### **Wigeon x**

1995: 1-2 Colney GP Oct 10th-Nov 21st.

1996: 1 Kelling Oct 4th

### **Wigeon x Mallard**

1996: Ranworth Feb 18th.

### **Gadwall x Mallard**

1995: Cley male March 7th, 14th and Oct 25th.

### **Pochard x Ferruginous Duck**

1996: Male Welney Jan 20th, March 2nd-26th and Dec 16th-31st.

### **Pochard x Ring-necked Duck**

1996: Lyng-Easthaugh GP male March 9th-April 20th.

### **Pochard x Tufted Duck**

1995: Welney male Jan-April 9th and Dec Holkham Park Lake male Aug 7th.

1996: at Welney a male Jan-Feb, 2 March 1st-10th, female March 1st and male all April. Pair Colney GP Jan 18th-28th and a male Lyng-Easthaugh GP March 8th-9th.

### **Ferruginous Duck x Tufted Duck**

1996: Female Welney Jan 8th.

### **Tufted Duck x Scaup**

1996: Male Surlingham Broad Sept 16th.

### **Scaup x**

1995: Filby Broad female resembling a Lesser Scaup Feb 9th.

### **Chukar x Red-legged Partridge**

1995: West Runton pair March 8th.

1996: 8 Nunnery Lakes, Thetford Oct 7th.

**Mediterranean Gull x Black-headed Gull**

1995: Heacham 2nd-winter Jan 4th, 1st-year Sheringham April 29th, June 2nd and July 1st.  
Heacham 2nd-winter Nov 8th, adult Cley Nov 10th.

**Mediterranean Gull x Common Gull**

1995: Cley Dec 7th.

**Kittiwake x Common Gull**

1995: Hopton-on-Sea Dec 25th.

**Carrion Crow x Hooded Crow**

1995: Horsey-Waxham March 2nd, Weybourne west April 29th, Burgh Castle May 19th.

1996: 1 Burgh Castle area all year.

**APPENDIX III. ESCAPES**

The list comprises records of those species not admissible into Categories A-E of the BOURC Checklist. The following were recorded in the county:

1995: Pink-backed Pelican, Black Swan, Emperor Goose, Hawaiian Goose, Australian Shelduck, Muscovy Duck, Maned Duck, Chiloe Wigeon, Chilean/Speckled Teal, Chestnut Teal, Laysan Teal, Bahama Pintail, Cinnamon Teal, Red-tailed Hawk, Parakeet sp, Peach-faced Lovebird, Alexandrine Parakeet, Glossy Starling sp, Zebra Finch, White-headed Munia and Red-billed Quelea.

1996: Black Swan, Muscovy Duck, Cape Teal, Chestnut Teal, Bahama Pintail, Cinnamon Teal, Rosybill, Red-tailed Hawk, Peacock, Reeves Pheasant, Cockatiel, Common Rosella, Eastern Rosella, Peach Faced Lovebird, Alexandrine Parakeet, Plum-headed Parakeet, Moustached Parakeet, Diamond Dove, Black Bulbul, Hill Myna, White Eye sp. and Red-billed Quelea.

## Ringling Report

*Allan Hale*

During 1996, a total of 37,478 birds of 147 species were ringed in the county. This is the highest number of species on record and the second highest number of birds (after 1995). Spectacular amongst the birds handled were Grey Phalarope, Little Auk, 2 Dusky Warblers, Great Reed Warbler, 6 Pallas's Warblers, Isabelline Shrike, 2 Common Rosefinch and Rustic Bunting. Unusually impressive totals included 131 Woodlark, 22 Waxwing and 222 Wheatear, whilst the Siskin total of only 569 was well down compared with recent years.

Once again, thanks to Steve and Alison Wakeham for Wash Wader Ringing Group recoveries and for their interpretation.

For interpretation of the codes used, readers are requested to consult the 1994 Ringing Report where a full explanation can be found.

## NORFOLK RECOVERIES NOTIFIED DURING 1996

### Bewick's Swan

Four colour-ringed Swans were sighted in Norfolk during January and February. The history of two of them is detailed below.

28.01.93 Ringed at Slochteren, The Netherlands (1st year male)

11.11.95 - 12.11.95 Tisso, Sjaelland, Denmark

19.11.95 - 03.12.95 Three sites in Friesland, The Netherlands

02.01.96 - 20.01.96 Potter Heigham, Catfield and Ludham, The Broads

05.02.96 - 09.02.96 Hilgay and Welney, West Norfolk

28.04.96 - 01.05.96 Two sites in Estonia

22.01.94 Ringed near Slochteren, The Netherlands (adult female)

01.12.95 - 03.12.95 Two sites in Flevoland, The Netherlands

29.12.95 - 30.12.95 Thorney, Cambridgeshire

20.01.96 - 15.02.96 Potter Heigham, Catfield, Horning and St Benet's Abbey

18.02.96 - 24.02.96 Two sites in The Netherlands

26.02.96 - 19.03.96 Five sites in Germany

### Wigeon

There is usually a Pensthorpe Wigeon reported from Russia each year. This individual travelled particularly far east.

3 22.11.85 Pensthorpe, Fakenham

X 14.05.96 Khanty-Mansiysk, Omsk, Russia 4,210 km NE

### Teal

We are used to the Teal from Pensthorpe travelling in the opposite direction. The last Norfolk Wigeon to Eire was as long ago as 1970.

4M 09.09.92 Pensthorpe, Fakenham

+ 21.01.96 River Boyle, Lough Gara, Roscommon, Eire 628 km WNW

### Pochard

The first shown represents the first Norfolk Pochard to Russia for a decade and the second is only the fourth British Pochard ever to Romania.

4M 24.12.91 Pensthorpe, Fakenham

+ 15.04.96 Mikhailove Ryazan, Russia 2,522 km E

5M 05.01.92 Pensthorpe, Fakenham

X 15.12.95 Sulina Danube Delta, Galati, Romania 2,256 km ESE

### Tufted Duck

Norfolk-ringed Tufted Duck regularly turn up in Finland, and often way beyond.

3M 05.10.95 Pensthorpe, Fakenham

X 22.05.96 Himanka, Vaasa, Finland 1,810 km NE



### **Oystercatcher**

There is invariably one Wash Oystercatcher recovery from The Faeroes each year, the first shown is the 21st such example.

The second is, perhaps surprisingly, the first Belgian-ringed Oystercatcher to be found in Britain. This nestling-ringed bird coming from the small, but increasing, Belgian breeding population.

Additionally, a new national longevity record for Oystercatcher was set by a bird ringed at Holbeach, Lincolnshire, and eventually found dead at Morston having reached the grand old age of 33 years 8 months. It had also been trapped at Friskney and Wrangle (both in Lincolnshire) during the intervening years.

6 31.01.93 Heacham, Hunstanton

X 25.06.95 Kollafjordur, Stremoy, The Faeroes 1,113 km NNW

1 28.05.92 Kallo, Oost-Vlaanderen, Belgium

R 18.03.95 Terrington Bund, King's Lynn 324 km WNW

### **Grey Plover**

This represents the eleventh Wash-ringed Grey Plover to be recovered in France.

6 08.09.91 Terrington, King's Lynn

X 06.01.96 Ile-Tudy, Finistere, France 634 km SSW

### **Knot**

The first shown is still going strong nearly 15 years after ringing, this Knot had its ring number read in the field.

The second shown is, perhaps surprisingly, the 70th Wash-ringed Knot to be recovered in Greenland. However, the breeding grounds in Canada and Greenland of this species are well known.

The third is another long distance movement. Knot passing through northern Norway are most likely en-route to Arctic Canadian breeding grounds, since this is actually a shorter route than going via Iceland and southern Greenland.

5 03.05.81 Wolferton, King's Lynn

RR 27.02.96 Den Helder, Noord-Holland, The Netherlands 287 km E

4 04.11.90 Holme-next-the Sea, Hunstanton

X 05.08.96 Qeqertarsuaq, Greenland 4,076 km NW

4 12.05.85 Kantomes, Balsfjord, Troms, Norway

R 26.11.95 Snettisham, King's Lynn

### **Sanderling**

The fifth and sixth Norwegian-ringed Sanderling to be found on The Wash: caught together at Heacham having been ringed at the same Norwegian site just one week apart.

3 03.09.95 Revtingen, Klepp, Rogaland, Norway

R 26.11.95 Heacham, Hunstanton 722 km SSW

3 10.09.95 Revtingen, Klepp, Rogaland, Norway

R 26.11.95 Heacham, Hunstanton 722 km SSW

### **Dunlin**

The Alpina population which breed in northern Scandinavia and northwest Russia mostly arrive from late July onwards to moult on The Wash. Some move on to other estuaries further south to winter. The majority of the 35 Russian-ringed Dunlin caught on The Wash hail from Great Aynov Island.

3 03.08.86 Great Aynov Island, Murmansk, Russia

R 07.09.91 Terrington Bund, King's Lynn 2,491 km SW

### **Woodcock**

As a result of sedentary nature of British-bred Woodcock and the fact that few are ringed, recoveries worthy of note are few and far between. However, after a gap of 18 years, we have now had two Woodcock entries in as many years.

2 02.11.95 Weybourne, Sheringham

X 17.04.96 Wallsend, Tyne and Wear 286 km NW

### **Black-tailed Godwit**

The first Wash-ringed, and the third British, recovery of a Black-tailed Godwit in France. Regrettably, as with so many French recoveries, it was a victim of the shotgun.

6 31.07.92 Terrington, King's Lynn

+ 20.01.96 Tardinghen Marsh, Pas-de-Calais, France 233 km SSE

### **Bar-tailed Godwit**

The only overseas movement of the year concerning a Norfolk Bar-tailed Godwit.

4 08.11.80 Wolferton, King's Lynn

R 22.10.95 Oosterkwelder, Schiermonnikoog, The Netherlands 394 km E

### **Redshank**

Two distinct populations of Redshank are known to occur on The Wash: one breeding in Britain, the other in Iceland. The last Wash-ringed recovery from Iceland was back in 1991, these two now bringing the total to 29.

4 27.08.88 Terrington, King's Lynn

X 10.05.95 Bodvarsholt, Snearfellsbaer, Iceland 1,898 km NW

3 22.08.86 Terrington, King's Lynn

X 13.07.95 Laugabakki, Vestur Hunavatns, Iceland 1,835 km NW

### **Turnstone**

Another recovery showing the value of colour-ringing, thus enabling individual birds to be identified without the need to re-trap them.

6 04.10.95 Noordsestrand, Vlieland, The Netherlands

RR 05.03.96 Winterton, Great Yarmouth

RR 06.03.96 Caister-on-Sea, Great Yarmouth 230 km WSW

### **Black-headed Gull**

The regular 'Gull watcher' in Diss has reacquainted himself with an old friend. Additionally, a Cringleford-ringed bird was found dead near Groningen, The Netherlands, with a return bird from The Netherlands to Wroxham Broad. The picture is completed with Danish-ringed birds being captured at Wells and found dead at Wroxham Broad.

1 13.07.93 Kuru, Hame, Finland

RR 24.12.93 to 01.03.94 The Mere, Diss

RR 17.12.94 The Mere, Diss

RR 13.02.96 The Mere, Diss

1,708 km SW

### **Common Tern**

A pair of normal movements are shown. That British birds spend their first summer and second winter predominantly in the northern tropical zone is demonstrated by the Ghanaian bird. The oldest recovery of 1996 reached nine years; unexceptional by Tern standards.

1 22.06.95 Breydon Water, Great Yarmouth

X 24.03.96 Gbangbatuk, Southern Province, Sierra Leone 5,140 km SSW

1 13.07.95 Breydon Water, Great Yarmouth

V 20.06.96 Ahobre, Axim, Ghana

5,303 km S

### **Puffin**

In its seventeenth year, this bird was a victim of violent weather. It was found freshly dead on the tideline after severe north-easterly gales.

1 28.06.80 Craigleith, Lothian Region, Scotland

X 20.02.96 Weybourne, Sheringham

429 km SE

### **Woodlark**

The two longest movements of the year. The second shown represents the sole British-ringed Woodlark to have moved out of the country. The uncertain dates and vague locations are not connected with site confidentiality; rather to uncertainty with the reading of the colour ring combination by the finder. It is possible that the Dutch bird was in fact ringed just over the county boundary in Suffolk.

1 02.05.94 Breckland

RR May/Jun 94 Sheringham

62 km NE

1 1994 or 1996 Breckland

RR 09.10.96 Vlieland, Fresian Islands, The Netherlands 290 km NE

### **Meadow Pipit**

Prior to 1992 there were no previous records affecting Britain, of Meadow Pipits involving any of the Fenno-Scandian countries. This bird is however, the fourth since. Of the previous three, one arrived on a gas platform in the North Sea, whilst the other two were both found dead in Norfolk.

3 13.10.95 Monstermyr, Flekkefjord, Vest-Agder, Norway

R 04.11.95 Weybourne, Sheringham

683 km SSW



### Redstart

Note the rapid movement of this Norfolk passage bird. There are more Redstarts recovered in Spain than in any other country. Sadly, like this one, too many are shot.

3M 19.09.95 Weybourne, Sheringham

+ 25.09.95 Fuencarral, Madrid, Spain 1,428 km SSW

### Whinchat

There are no previous records of Whinchat movements between Britain and the Benelux countries. Doubtless this bird was still on spring passage at both Weybourne and Echt.

5F 18.05.95 Weybourne, Sheringham

X 16.05.96 Echt, Limburg, The Netherlands 383 km ESE

### Blackbird

The two longest movements of the year are shown. There were also interchanges between Norfolk and The Netherlands (two birds), Germany (two birds) and another two to Denmark.

Interestingly, a Blackbird ringed at Wells-next-the-Sea travelled to West Yorkshire before being killed by a golf ball!

2 24.10.93 Christianso, Bornholm, Denmark

R 04.02.96 Holme-next-the-Sea, Hunstanton 988 km WSW

4 26.10.93 Weybourne, Sheringham

X 19.04.96 Vasteras, Bjornon, Vastmanland, Sweden 1,205 km NE

### Fieldfare

The previous Fieldfare to appear in this report was also found during the second half of June in the same area of Sweden.

5 04.02.96 Holme-next-the-Sea, Hunstanton

X 17.06.96 Djura Dalarna, Kopparberg, Sweden 1,220 km NE

### Song Thrush

Many autumn passage birds are en route to Iberia. Like the Redstart detailed previously, the first shown was also shot by a Spanish hunter. The second shown was taken by a predatory bird, possibly a Peregrine.

3 19.10.87 Weybourne, Sheringham

+ 01.11.94 Villanueva de San Juan, Sevilla, Spain 1,832 km SSW

4 29.09.93 Weybourne, Sheringham

X 29.10.95 Cidiello, Aviles, Oviedo, Spain 1,165 km SSW

### Sedge Warbler

It might have been expected that this area of France would be overflowed by a departing British emigrant.

3 02.07.95 Keswick, Norwich

R 05.08.95 Etang de Kergalan, Plovan, Finistere, France 658 km SW

### Reed Warbler

Many British Reed Warblers break their journey in Portugal. Recoveries from Belgium are far less common.

4 05.05.95 Wetteren, Oost-Vlaanderen, Belgium

R 21.05.95 Keswick, Norwich 253 km NW

3M 05.09.89 Lagao de Santo Andre, Sebutal, Portugal

R 24.07.95 Weybourne, Sheringham

### Lesser Whitethroat

4M 04.07.95 Weybourne, Sheringham

R 02.09.95 Focagne, Namur, Belgium 417 km SE

### Blackcap

Blackcap movements from Norfolk to Algeria are regular, but remarkably this was the second in successive years to Tizi Ouzo.

3J 24.07.94 Shimpling, Diss

? 30.03.96 Tizi Ouzo, Kabylie, Alger, Algeria 1,759 km S

### Willow Warbler

This is the first time that the Isle of Man has featured in this report.

4 23.04.94 Weybourne, Sheringham

R 22.04.95 Calf of Man, Isle of Man 412 km WNW

### Starling

Many Danish-bred Starlings spend the winter in Norfolk. It is unclear why the second bird chose to migrate back to the generally colder Continent of Europe during mid-winter.

1M 23.05.95 Gronbaek, Holstebro, Jylland, Denmark

R 09.03.96 Rollesby, Great Yarmouth 609 km SW

6 15.01.96 Burnham Market

R 21.02.96 Kortwoude, Friesland, The Netherlands 366 km E

### Greenfinch

Yet another trio of interchanges between Norfolk and Norway, making a total of 14 since 1989 (there was only one prior to 1989). The two chosen for publication suggest that some of them might stay in Norfolk for only a relatively short time since the first was still in Norway at the end of November and the second had returned there by early April.

3M 26.11.93 Kurefjorden, Rygge, Ostfold, Norway

R 09.12.94 Weybourne, Sheringham

R 14.02.94 Sheringham 927 km SW

4M 09.12.94 Weybourne, Sheringham

R 06.04.95 Austad, Flekkefjord, Vest-Agder, Norway 691 km NNE

## Siskin

Many of the winter Siskins in Norfolk originate from Scotland. The multiple movement shown below is particularly interesting in this respect.

5M 01.05.92 Golspie, Highland Region, Scotland

R 18.03.94 Glentool, Dumfries, Scotland

R 02.03.95 Sheringham 643 km SE

R 20.04.95 Clochan, Buckie, Grampian, Scotland

6F 23.02.96 Garboldisham, Diss

X 23.05.96 Milngavie, Glasgow, Scotland 522 km NW

## Snow Bunting

Although no Norfolk-ringed birds were located outside of England, the following table adds to our knowledge of their winter movements. All of the birds were either trapped again by ringers or had their colour ring combinations read in the field.

Dates	Movement	Distance	Number
26.11.95-03.03.96	Holkham - Gibraltar Point Lines	34 km	1 bird
09.12.95-17.02.96	Salthouse - Northumberland	311 km	1 bird
19.01.96-03.03.96	Heacham - Gibraltar Point Lines	22 km	4 birds
7.02.96-03.03.96	Heacham - Gibraltar Point Lines	22 km	5 birds

## Norfolk Ringing Totals - 1996

Fulmar 7	Moorhen 25
Grey Heron 32	Coot 19
Mute Swan 22	Oystercatcher 121
Greylag Goose 4	Little Ringed Plover 1
Egyptian Goose 5	Ringed Plover 164
Shelduck 30	Grey Plover 57
Wigeon 5	Lapwing 26
Gadwall 39	Knot 515
Teal 61	Sanderling 77
Mallard 3	Little Stint 24
Pintail 3	Purple Sandpiper 2
Shoveler 12	Dunlin 891
Pochard 123	Ruff 2
Tufted Duck 140	Jack Snipe 11
Goldeneye 1	Snipe 60
Scaup 1	Woodcock 9
Sparrowhawk 45	Black-tailed Godwit 65
Kestrel 35	Bar Tailed Godwit 2
Grey Partridge 52	Whimbrel 5
Water Rail 9	Curlew 11



Spotted Redshank 1  
Redshank 52  
Greenshank 4  
Common Sandpiper 6  
Turnstone 60  
Grey Phalarope 1  
Black-headed Gull 174  
Common Gull 42  
Common Tern 147  
Little Tern 4  
Little Auk 1  
Puffin 1  
Stock Dove 33  
Woodpigeon 70  
Collared Dove 80  
Turtle Dove 9  
Cuckoo 5  
Barn Owl 101  
Tawny Owl 19  
Nightjar 27  
Swift 58  
Kingfisher 28  
Wryneck 2  
Green Woodpecker 28  
Great Sp Woodpecker 65  
Lesser Sp Woodpecker 4  
Skylark 5  
Woodlark 131  
Sand Martin 703  
Swallow 497  
House Martin 73  
Tree Pipit 8  
Meadow Pipit 71  
Rock Pipit 3  
Yellow Wagtail 9  
Grey Wagtail 1  
Pied Wagtail 245  
Waxwing 22  
Wren 655  
Dunnock 950  
Robin 981  
Nightingale 14  
Black Redstart 13  
Redstart 138  
Whinchat 26

Stonechat 18  
Wheatear 222  
Ring Ousel 3  
Blackbird 3576  
Fieldfare 265  
Song Thrush 527  
Redwing 431  
Mistle Thrush 64  
Grasshopper Warbler 19  
Dusky Warbler 2  
Sedge Warbler 572  
Marsh Warbler 1  
Reed Warbler 842  
Great Reed Warbler 1  
Icterine Warbler 4  
Barred Warbler 8  
Lesser Whitethroat 184  
Whitethroat 670  
Garden Warbler 416  
Blackcap 951  
Pallas's Warbler 6  
Yellow Browed Warbler 3  
Wood Warbler 3  
Chiffchaff 745  
Willow Warbler 814  
Goldcrest 313  
Firecrest 8  
Spotted Flycatcher 96  
Red-Breasted Flycatcher 1  
Pied Flycatcher 52  
Bearded Tit 57  
Long-Tailed Tit 726  
Marsh Tit 123  
Willow Tit 53  
Coal Tit 413  
Blue Tit 4001  
Great Tit 2341  
Nuthatch 26  
Treecreeper 127  
Isabelline Shrike 1  
Red-Backed Shrike 2  
Jay 55  
Magpie 15  
Jackdaw 33  
Rook 32

Starling 1106  
House Sparrow 431  
Tree Sparrow 47  
Chaffinch 2265  
Brambling 199  
Greenfinch 4304  
Goldfinch 351  
Siskin 569  
Linnet 236

Redpoll 119  
Common Rosefinch 2  
Bullfinch 267  
Snow Bunting 96  
Hawfinch 1  
Yellowhammer 201  
Rustic Bunting 1  
Reed Bunting 178

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**Total Ringed 37478**

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## **THE NORFOLK & NORWICH NATURALISTS' SOCIETY**

(Reg.Charity No. 291604)

**Patron: Her Majesty the Queen.**

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# The Waxwing Invasion

*Michael Seago*

The vast tracts of dense taiga forest stretching across northern Europe are the summer home of enigmatic Waxwings. These birds breed in old stunted conifers festooned with hanging witch-hair lichen. Both the dense forest interiors and the fringes edging peat swamps are favoured. But having switched to an autumn diet of berries the wanderers either linger in their native forests or, if necessary, launch into eruptive movements seeking alternative supplies in temperate lands.



*Waxwings (N. Arlott)*

The chief winter food is the berries of the rowan (or mountain ash), an abundant tree in northern Europe where it is found both wild and lining the avenues in towns. However the rowan crop varies widely from year to year. Warm conditions when rowans flower produce a heavy crop. In a poor year, the fruits are rapidly exhausted. Warm spring weather in the arctic forests is also conducive to a high survival rate among nestling Waxwings.

The subsequent heavy berry crop provides ample food during the following winter. As a result the Waxwing population builds up rapidly. Since, however, a poor berry crop often follows a heavy one, it is in the autumn following a heavy crop that food is in the greatest demand. The birds must then migrate from the taiga or starve. In some winters Waxwings do indeed fail to find food. Many died on reaching this country one year following severe weather in northern Europe. When this happens the population crashes bringing invasions here to an end for several winters.

During one large-scale invasion (when well over a thousand assembled in Norfolk alone) remarkable distances were achieved by the berry seekers. Iceland, Portugal, Spain, southern Italy, Greece and Turkey all reported them. Readily approached, Waxwings will visit small gardens close to busy streets and are indifferent to passing traffic. In fact individuals often become traffic casualties when flying too low after gorging on fruits. Waxwings are noted for their erratic wandering. British observers, in the far westward fringe of even the extended winter range, only occasionally see what is in fact an annual event. Here in Norfolk between 1946 and 1995 Waxwings were observed each winter (although only a single bird in 1987/8)



except in the winters of 1980/1 and 1983/4. The highest numbers occurred in 1946/7 (total of 100), 1956/7 (144), 1957/8 (316), 1958/9 (213), 1959/60 (304), 1963/4 (275), 1965/6 (1400+), 1970/1 (860), 1971/2 (280), 1972/3 (100), 1974/5 (356), 1988/9 (315), 1989/90 (100), 1990/1 (370) and 1991/2 (300). Extreme dates have included 12th May 1967 (2 at Freethorpe), 2nd-6th May 1991 (4 in Norwich) and 21st September 1967 (2 at Wolferton).

A nationwide invasion began during December 1995 and in January 1996 some 6000 birds were reported in the country. Arrivals peaked in mid-February when as many as 10,000 were estimated. Several thousands remained throughout March and over a thousand were still in the country during early April. It is impossible to provide an accurate total of the numbers appearing in Norfolk during the finest display for many years. But it certainly exceeded 1200 birds. The flocks, especially the spectacular larger ones, became highly mobile constantly seeking supplies of berries. The Sweet Briar Industrial Estate gathering (the largest recorded in the county) attracted much attention. They made an impressive picture regularly seeking food in an area of three or four square miles, swooping into roadside hedges, tree-lined avenues and gardens. Periodically all rested in large groups in trees, on rooftops, television aerials and telegraph pole steps and wires. These Waxwings regularly divided into smaller groups, heading in different directions before re-grouping a short time later.

As the weeks passed, food became less abundant and the birds regularly fed on the ground attacking fallen fruits. Many drank from house gutters. Interest in these attractive visitors became very high; their portraits featured in the local press and on television screens. Non-birders, providing many observations, ensured widespread cover throughout the county. A wide range of berries were taken including rosehips, pyracantha, ornamental cherries and crabs, guelder rose, rowan, cotoneaster and hawthorn. Windfall apples guaranteed visits. With the arrival of warm spring days the Waxwings began flycatching from treetops and overhead cables.

Small numbers began appearing inland early in January with somewhat larger coastal flocks of up to 55 between Holme and Yarmouth. The first arrival to appear in the west was at Babingley on 7th. By the third week in January numbers had greatly increased at localities throughout Norfolk including the Brecks. Many groups exceeded 20 birds. Fenland was the final district to be occupied. Largest flights on the last day of January included 56 Brundall, 90 Holme, 41 Holt, 38 Rollesby, 39 Sheringham and 37 Thornham.

Numbers continued increasing during early February. The first three-figure totals were obtained on 4th/5th: 100 Snettisham, 100 Cromer and 138 Norwich (Mile Cross). At the last-mentioned locality the visitors almost certainly moved to the nearby Sweet Briar site. Peak numbers were attained around mid-February. Spectacular numbers at Sweet Briar Industrial Estate close to Drayton Road stayed between 4th and 13th February. A total of 235 was attained on 11th with a peak of 285 on 13th. This assembly is thought to have accounted for 215 in Vauxhall Street and 100 in Hellesdon shortly afterwards.

Further large flocks appeared in Norwich at the Denmark Arms in Sandringham Road (126) on 11th before moving to Earlham Road next day; Barrett Road, Lakenham (200) on 12th; Dereham Road (150) on 13th; Nelson Street (100) on 17th; Adelaide Street close to Old Palace Road (120) on 21st; Vauxhall Street (215) on 21st and (150) on 24th and Rupert Street

(100) on 26th. During this exciting time the majority of the Waxwings in Norwich were roosting in Earlham Cemetery, the flocks returning to feeding locations soon after dawn. As a result of the constant search for berries the same birds must have put in appearances at a number of localities.

Beyond the city Ring Road 200 Waxwings in Highlow Road, New Costessey, 24th February and 84 at Taverham next day were thought to be in addition to the city centre flocks. Waxwings were in fact present in the Costessey area almost daily from mid-February until 26th April.

The highest February counts elsewhere in Norfolk included 87 Holme 2nd, 57 Sheringham 3rd, 100 Cromer 4th-7th, 100 Snettisham 4th-5th, 76 Thornham 5th-7th, 74 Hunstanton 7th, 70 North Walsham 7th, 60 Heacham 7th-8th, 46 Thetford 7th-13th; 50 Wymondham 10th, 40 Aylsham 11th; 40 Fakenham 14th, 75 King's Lynn 15th-17th, 40 Gorleston 23rd and 50 Reydon-Diss 26th.

Impressive numbers were still on show in early March, particularly in Norwich city and the suburbs. But diminishing supplies of berries meant ever more mobile flocks. Up to 120 lingered in the Unthank Road area together with 100 Alexander Road (Park Lane), 90 in Pottergate, 60 in Riverside Road, 45 in the Cathedral Close and 50 in Magdalen Street. During the same period 70 were in Lakenham, 75 Hellesdon and 120 Lindford Drive (close to Marston Marshes). Between 7th and 15th March Thorpe St. Andrew (especially Plumstead Road and the vicinity of Thunder Lane) attracted up to 156. These birds roosted in ivy-covered oaks. Later reports extended to 50 at Spixworth 19th, 100 Sprowston 24th, 150 Royal Norwich Golf Club, Drayton High Road 26th and 100 New Costessey 29th which stayed until 8th April. Among highest March totals elsewhere were 76 King's Lynn (Windmill Court) on 7th and 45 also King's Lynn (Queen Mary Road) 17th-21st and 70 Hoveton on 19th.

During April each Waxwing flock disappeared. A high proportion of the month's records came from Greater Norwich where the Bowthorpe district was especially favoured with 130 still present on 16th. At Hellesdon up to 75 on 10th could not resist specially provided apples and here the last 22 stayed until 23rd. Latest flocks of any size totalled 30 in Aylsham and 20 in King's Lynn both on 17th and 44 in New Costessey on 18th while in Norwich there were 42 in Finklegate in the city centre, 34 in Salisbury Road (off Thorpe Road) and 7 in Yarmouth all on 19th. Additional Norwich observations included 20 in Barrack Street on 20th and 35 in Pembroke Road (near Park Lane) on 22nd. New Costessey (Sunny Grove) provided regular sightings until the last 3 birds on 26th. The Mile Cross Estate in Norwich still held 11 Waxwings on 27th. And Holkham Park provided a final record of a solitary bird 13th May.

During the invasion Waxwings were recorded at the following localities: Aylsham, Babingley, Bacton, Beeston Regis, Beetley, Belton, Blakeney, Blofield, Bowthorpe, Bradwell, Brancaster, Brancaster Staithe, Briston, Brundall, Burgh Castle, Burnham Norton, Caister on Sea, Cantley, Catton, Cley, Colney, Cringleford, Cromer, Dersingham, Docking, Drayton, Earlham Marsh, East Dereham, East Runcton, Eaton, Fakenham, Felthorpe, Field Dalling, Framingham Earl, Fritton, Glandford, Gorleston, Great Ryburgh, Great Yarmouth and Griston.

Haddiscoe, Hainford, Hanworth Common, Happisburgh, Hardley, Hardwick (King's Lynn), Heacham, Hellesdon, Hemsby, Hickling, Hockering, Holkham Park, Holkham village,

Holme, Holt, Horsey, Horsham St. Faith, Hoveton, Hunstanton, King's Lynn, Lakenham, Langham, Lingwood, Little Plumstead, Loddon, Long Stratton, Ludham, Lynford, Lyng, Morston, Mulbarton, New Costessey, Northrepps, North Walsham, North Wootton, Norwich, Old Catton, Old Costessey, Old Hunstanton, Ormesby Broad, Panxworth, Pentney and Poringland.

Ranworth, Ranworth Broad, Reepham, Repps, Ringstead, Rollesby, Roydon (Diss), Salthouse, Scarning, Sculthorpe, Sheringham, Snettisham, South Wootton, Spixworth, Sprowston, Stalham, Stibbard, Stowbridge, Strumpshaw, Surlingham, Swaffham, Swanton Abbott, Syderstone, Taverham, Terrington St. Clement, Thetford, Thetford Warren, Thornham, Thorpe, Thorpe Marriott, Thorpe St. Andrew, Titchwell, Toftwood, Trowse, Trunch, Upwell, Watton, Waxham, Wells, Weybourne, Winterton, Wissington, Wiveton, Wroxham, Wymondham and Yaxham.

Acknowledgements are due to Birdline East Anglia, Norfolk Ornithologists Association, Cley Bird Club and a host of observers especially John Williamson and John Butcher.

## **A Trio of Eastern Vagrants New to Norfolk:**

### **Blyth's Reed Warbler, Blyth's Pipit and 'Two-barred' Greenish Warbler**

The autumn of 1996 was remarkable for the appearance of an impressive selection of eastern vagrant passerines in Britain. Norfolk shared in this arrival, three additions to the county list resulting in red-letter days for many birders. As full descriptions of each vagrant have appeared in *Birding World* and in a *Norfolk Bird Club Bulletin* the following accounts are mainly restricted to describing the discovery of each rarity thus providing supplementary reading to the *Systematic List*.

**Blyth's Reed Warbler:** During the early morning of 25th September, whilst checking the overgrown pit at Warham Green near Wells, we found and positively identified Norfolk's first Blyth's Reed Warbler. It was showing well and calling so there was no doubt in our minds (or that of Neil Alford whom we met on site) that it was a classic first-winter Blyth's Reed. Indeed we could not envisage that trapping the bird could add anything to the identification process since even the primary emarginations had been clinched!

As the bird remained faithful to its chosen locale for three days many birders were able to share the experience of watching a vagrant Blyth's Reed Warbler in Britain without a shiny new ring on one leg being the prime identification feature (no disrespect to ringers, without whom most British records of this species would not exist). From the very first glimpse it appeared suspiciously unfamiliar being structurally rather dissimilar to Reed Warbler (relatively frail and short-winged with a low forecrown and sharply tapering bill), while the characteristic face pattern - especially the prominent pale super loreal stripe - and the diagnostic call confirmed that it was indeed a Blyth's Reed Warbler.

Subsequently, prolonged observation at various ranges and in different lights enabled visitors to evaluate the relative importance of a number of in-field characters for themselves. To us the initial impression always held good with close views providing a range of additional clues. Overall colour of the upperparts seemed ever changing, sometimes pale and at other



times dark, but never did it appear cold grey or show any rich rufous hue; rather it was generally a neutral dusty pinkish-brown with a dull slightly olive wash on the crown and mantle, but distinctly warmer tawny-brown on the remiges, rectrices and uppertail coverts. Underparts were essentially greyish-white with an ochre wash invading the rear flanks and a slight touch of yellow on the breast but contrasting white throat and undertail-coverts.

Characteristic 'jizz' seemed to be the cumulative effect of a long sloping forehead and tapered bill (giving a 'snouty' look), undeniably short wings (usually held slightly drooped with the rump exposed) and somewhat pot-bellied stance: the so-called 'banana' posture was often evident as a result of the habitually uptilted head and tail.

It was generally quite confiding and preferred warm sunlit spots where it was not particularly skulking. During its first day, the Warham Blyth's Reed Warbler often flicked its wings nervously whilst also flicking and slightly fanning its tail. But this habit was observed less often later in its stay. Insects were plainly the main prey (especially flies which it would both assiduously stalk and sally out of cover for). It ignored the plentiful berries on offer. Travellers to India in winter will be familiar with the distinctive contact call of Blyth's Reed: a soft course teck (similar to but not as clipped or metallic as Lesser Whitethroat) often delivered in a short series. This was the only call uttered. It was given frequently usually prior to some change in its routine.

Birds of the Western Palearctic states some Blyth's Reed Warblers cannot be told from the Reed Warbler. We would not be so bold as to presume that birders should identify every vagrant Blyth's Reed in Britain, but at least some may be confidently identified in the field. Identification of this increasingly regular visitor is not a process of elimination: there are a number of positive features to look (and listen) for which in combination should render most eminently identifiable (*Mark Golly and Richard Millington*).

This Blyth's Reed was captured on film and the bird's portrait features in this Report. A central Palearctic species, it breeds in Sweden, Finland and the Baltic States then eastward across Russia and Siberia to Mongolia and Afghanistan. Winter is spent in India and south-east Asia. It is interesting to note that a Blyth's Reed Warbler taken on the Dudgeon light-vessel 18 miles north of Sheringham on the night of 20th/21st October 1912 is recorded in Riviere's Birds of Norfolk.

**Blyth's Pipit:** The 14th October looked promising from the start. A warm south-east wind and plenty of bird activity. Skylarks and Starlings were moving in good numbers and thrushes, Rock Pipits and finches also trickled through. Just after midday at Sheringham Bird Observatory I flushed a large pipit from a clifftop field together with two Skylarks. It immediately called: a double chup, chup resembling a Tawny Pipit. Luckily it landed only a short distance away and still in company with the Skylarks. On closer examination it looked rather like a Tawny Pipit with horizontal stance, unstreaked peachy flanks, whitish supercilium and bright pinkish-orange legs. Bill was pointed and broad-based. The stranger approached a Skylark in size, but clearly smaller and more compact.

Suddenly it disappeared, but luckily I soon relocated it. Further plumage detail became apparent including a neat gorget of blackish streaking across the breast and pale lores. This together with the strength and distribution of upperpart streaking and a relatively short tail

ruled out Tawny Pipit. But it didn't look like a Richard's Pipit, nor did it behave or call like one. There was certainly a need to look very closely at this surprise bird; for an hour or more I noted details down to 8 metres with a telescope. The more I observed the more the evidence swung towards Blyth's Pipit as the bird's identity. Apart from plumage detail, behaviour and call were significant.

The bird remained settled. There was no-one about. It seemed worth trying to contact other birders and luckily I got through to Kevin Shepherd and Dave Appleton. Both were soon at the scene and by the end of the day over 60 observers had been successful. The bird remained a further two days being appreciated by hundreds of watchers.

During its stay this Blyth's Pipit favoured a small gulley between recently sown winter cereal and a strip of set-aside in two clifftop fields. When settled it ran along this gulley feeding and constantly pumping its tail like a small pipit. It preferred to be close to the cover of the set-aside. Much of its time (including roosting) was spent within Sheringham Bird Observatory recording area. From time to time it appeared in a field closer to Weybourne. The chup, chup call was very different to the House Sparrow-like notes of Richard's Pipit. An occasional pscheeo call when first taking flight was noted. This was much different to Richard's Pipit and similar to Red-Throated Pipit but less 'hissing'. The running action with constant tail pumping (no side to side movement) was like a small pipit, but never strutting like a typical Richard's. It would freeze or disappear into short grass rather than take flight at a distance. It never hovered and tail-flicked prior to landing like Richard's Pipit or Skylark (*Tim Wright*).

Blyth's Pipit, a long distance migrant, breeds in Mongolia and neighbouring parts of China and Russia. The species winters in India and Sri Lanka.

**'Two-barred' Greenish Warbler:** After a day's birding on the north Norfolk coast on 15th October to watch Blyth's Pipit and Isabelline Shrike, I decided to finish off at Wells Woods one of my favourite autumn sites. Arriving at 3pm and soon plunging into the depths of birch and bramble scrub, I discovered little in the way of either birds or birders. Shortly after reaching The Dell however I saw a small warbler facing me from the edge of a willow bush. My initial impression was that it must be a Yellow-browed Warbler as it showed a long prominent supercilium and two wing-bars. As it moved around feeding I realised that it lacked the prominent cream-coloured tertial edgings so typical of Yellow-browed and also that it was 'one size' larger and its movements were less hyper-active than is typical for a Yellow-browed Warbler. The bird was just 15 feet away and in excellent light when another piece of the puzzle emerged: the legs were grey. All this occurred within 20 seconds. Frustratingly, the bird then moved deeper into the willow complex and was soon out of sight.

A fruitless hour followed. As I searched I puzzled on the bird's identity eliminating Yellow-browed Warbler and both Greenish and Arctic Warbler on the features I had seen (the greater covert-bar was far too bold for either of the latter two species and the leg colour was wrong). The only other candidate seemed to be Two-barred Greenish Warbler, a bird I had only seen on Scilly in 1987. That evening I spoke to Dave Holman and Richard Millington and mentioned the possibility of my having seen a Two-barred Greenish, but was reluctant to claim this potential second record for Britain on a 20 second view. Nevertheless after an

evening researching the literature and my own notes on the 1987 bird I became increasingly confident of its identity.

It was with great delight therefore that I learned of its relocation next morning when it gave prolonged views to Richard Millington, Mark Golley and local birders Andrew Bloomfield, Dave Foster and James McCallum. Identity was confirmed. As the day progressed it was seen by many visiting observers, but became more erratic in its appearance. On my return that afternoon it was a full two hours before I achieved a final two minutes viewing (John Kemp).

In the calm sunny conditions during the early morning of 16th October the bird showed continuously for nearly an hour. Critical examination at close range confirmed that John Kemp had been correct with his initial impression. It was indeed Britain's second-ever Two-barred Greenish Warbler. Structurally the bird resembled a Greenish Warbler, but with a surprisingly long bill (recalling Arctic Warbler) while the distinctive call was a loud, liquid, trisyllabic Pied Wagtail-like tseu-li-let. The lead-grey legs and feet could appear flesh-tinted against the light, while the lower mandible appeared wholly pale. The upperparts were dull green with a grey wash to the crown and mantle, but bright olive fringes to the wing and tail feathers. The greater coverts were broadly tipped off-white forming a solid broad wing-bar, and contrasting with a shorter upper wing-bar. The broad, long, pale yellow supercilia turned up onto the sides of nape but became narrower and dull before the eye. A black eye-stripe ran from just in front of the eye and broadened towards the rear ear-coverts (Birding World).

The Two-barred Greenish Warbler (*P.t. plumbeitarsus*) is still regarded by the BOU Records Committee as a race of Greenish Warbler. It breeds from Mongolia to eastern Siberia and Manchuria and winters in southeast Asia. It has now been identified four times in Europe including Isles of Scilly 1987, Netherlands 1990 and Sweden 1991.

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# The current breeding status and recent history of the Rook in Norfolk

*Bill Landells & Michael Seago*

## Introduction

This paper is an analysis of the Norfolk Rook Survey conducted between 1994 & 1996 which was reported as raw data in the Norfolk Bird and Mammal Report, 1995 (1). This data is now given a historical aspect, an analysis of the current density and distribution of nesting rooks in the county, and an analysis of change. Finally there is some consideration of the relationship to land usage and the conservation implications.

## Survey Methods

The survey attempted a complete coverage of the county and was wholly reliant upon the positive recording of rookeries by volunteers recruited by personal contact, appeal in the local ornithological bulletin, an article in the county press and some involvement of the local schools and YOC. No historical survey data were available at the outset. Although some recorders surveyed selected areas individual records were also available. The survey was piloted in 1994 and most effort was made in 1995. Supplementary recording and checking was done in 1996 when a number of previously unidentified rookeries were found. In 1997, 3 previously unrecorded rookeries have been identified which represent <1% of the total number of rookeries. These, together with a late submission of 1996 data are listed in Appendix 1. All data for 1994-96 has been included in the analysis. We estimate that this represents at least 95% of the county rookeries and a similar level of coverage of the county land area. Recorders were required to submit the location and number of nests in the rookery as counted in the late March/early April leaf-free window though many added further detail with nest/tree counts and tree species data. Unfortunately original grid references were not universally supplied. Several recorders added longitudinal observations over several years. All data has been retained. A rookery is defined as a nest or group of nests separated from another group of nests by at least 100 m, or 100 yd in earlier surveys (2,3). We have no argument with this definition which is a necessity for accurate census work. However we are uncertain of the biological significance that this might imply. In the previously published material there is considerable variation in the units of density. For the purposes of this paper all densities have been transformed to 10 km<sup>2</sup> of either whole areas or agricultural land, as used in Brenchley, 1986 (2) and commented upon in Sharrock, 1976 (11).

## Historical Aspects

Rooks and rookery surveys have a long history (2,4) including an early Government sponsored initiative in 1943-1946 (5,6) until the latest national survey in 1996. All national surveys have been organised by the BTO. There are several comprehensive county and national surveys of varying date (2,7,8,9,10). Perhaps surprisingly Norfolk has a limited tradition of local rookery surveys. Stevenson's Birds of Norfolk, 1866, (15) listed 9 rookeries within a few miles of Norwich including one in the city centre but gives no counts. Seago's

Birds of Norfolk, 1977, (16) records a sample survey of 60 rookeries in 1966. 65% held less than 50 nests, but 250 nests were counted at Sheringham, at Letton Park complex there were 490 nests in 8 groups and at Hethersett complex 379 nests in 6 groups. In 1971 M. Seago surveyed "11 rookeries with 426 nests within 3 miles of Norwich Castle. All but one are now abandoned" (pers com). Neither the 1975 national survey nor the NBR 1975 give hard data for the earlier Norfolk situation but there is no reason to suggest that Norfolk deviated from the national decline of 44.6% and Brenchley's partial survey indicates a 56% fall in the county rook population from 5280 nests in 1946 to 2333 nests in 1975. Incomplete coverage in either one or both surveys was a problem. In 1946 Norfolk was the only lowland county with a rook nest density below 50 nests/10 km<sup>2</sup> of agricultural land. There is a brief summary in the Norfolk Bird & Mammal Report 1975 (14), as part of the BTO national survey of that year. Whilst the National Survey indicates adequate county coverage the NBR records a sub-optimal situation from which it is difficult to draw hard comparative data, apart from the broad indices. Some high rook nest densities in individual 10 km squares of over 700 (70 nests/10 km<sup>2</sup>) are noted though the overall situation was of reduction in rookery and nest totals. Declines in the west of the county and the Fens and scarcity on the coastal fringe were noted already. The 1980 sample survey showed a clear national trend but variable local situation from which comparison is problematic and discussed below. Other longitudinal records have been submitted by individuals usually relating to more recent years and a single rookery. However there is also anecdotal comment that the rookery "has been present here for over 100 years". There is no reason to doubt this though the age of the trees indicates there has been change within the rookery.

**The Rookeries of Norfolk in 1994-96.**

The final summation of rookeries and nests for the whole of Norfolk gives 338 occupied rookeries containing a total of 17302 nests, an average of 51 nests per rookery. 8 previously known rookeries held no nests in 1994--96. These superficial figures obscure an underlying skewed distribution as shown in Table 1 wherein rookeries containing less than 50 nests comprise 69% of the total rookeries and 32% of the total nest numbers. In contrast the 45 rookeries with over 100 nests comprise 13% of the total rookeries and 43% of the total nest numbers.

**Table 1.**

Rookery Size (nests)	% of rookeries (n=338)	% of total nests (n=17302)
0 - 50	68.2	31.4
51 - 100	18.3	24.8
>101	13.1	43.4

The data from the National Survey, 1975 (9) gives Norfolk county totals of 347 rookeries and 7184 nests with an overall density of 13 nests/10 km<sup>2</sup> in the county overall. There has been major increase in both the absolute number of nests and average rookery size. The lesser and reverse change in rookery number is potentially within the error range of the surveys (Table 2).

**Table 2.**

	1975	1995/6	% change
Total Rooks Nest	7184	17302	+140
Total Number of Rookeries	347	338	-2
Average Nest/Rookery	20.7	51.1	+146

These overall changes are reflected in the change in rookery size both nationally and in Norfolk. Whereas in 1975, 71.4% of rookeries held up to 25 nests (9) this had fallen to 59.9% in 1980 (10) and further still to 39.6% in the current survey. In contrast less than 2% of rookeries were larger than 100 nests in 1975 whereas now 13.1% are of this size.

The map plots all 1 km grid squares containing rookeries with 10 km grid squares are overlaid and superficially shows a county-wide distribution. Comparison of the density of rookeries and rook's nests in the four 100 km grid squares which quarter Norfolk shows a non-uniform distribution. The overall county density of rookeries is 0.6/10 km<sup>2</sup> and the density of nests is 32.5/10 km<sup>2</sup>. The relationship between the respective land area, rookery and nest density shows that whilst the NE quadrant (TG) is pre-eminent in absolute numbers - 40% of rookeries, 44% of nests, rookeries are relatively commonest in the SE quadrant (TM) with rookery and nest densities of 0.97 & 43.4/10 km<sup>2</sup> respectively, and scarce in both westerly quadrants (TF & TL) - 0.42 & 23.9/10 km<sup>2</sup>.

In comparison to both 1946 and 1975 data there has been no change in the density of rookeries in the county although the density of rook's nests has more than doubled from 13 per 10 km<sup>2</sup> to 32.5 per 10 km<sup>2</sup>. Summation of the arable, various grassland types, wood pastures and parkland areas in Norfolk, which are identified as the habitat of prime importance to rooks particularly in the breeding season (2,11,12), indicates an area of 3748.1 km<sup>2</sup> (13), the unit of land area utilized by Brenchley, 1986. The calculated rookery and nest density in Norfolk related to this "prime" habitat gives 0.9 rookeries /10 km<sup>2</sup> of agricultural land and 46.1 nests /10 km<sup>2</sup>, densities which are only approached or exceeded in TG and TM.

Consideration has been given to the data relating trees and rookeries but some detail is lacking and the quality variable. The results from a series of 36 rookeries from one observer is given in Table 3.

**Table 3**

Rookery Size	No of Trees	T/R 'kry	1n	2n	3n	4n	5n	6,7,8n	9,10n	>10
1-25 n=9	64	7	33	13	6	4	4	2	1	1
26-50 n=107	10	25	25	17	13	10	1	3	3	
51-100 n=14	370	26	136	123	55	30	28	26	7	5
>101 n=3	122	40	32	24	11	11	9	14	8	13



In these rookeries a total of 9 tree species were used, Oak, Sycamore, Beech, Pine, Chestnut, Ash, Lime, Elm & Poplar in descending order of frequency of use. None of these rookeries used more than 3 tree species and 80% used 1 or 2. A larger tranche totalling 68 rookeries adds only one further tree species, Willow, confirms the order of popularity and shows 72% of rookeries using 1 or 2 tree species but 6% and 3% use 4 or 5 tree species respectively. Whilst several people have commented upon seeming local preference and habit there appears to be no county-wide trait.

Norfolk in relation to the UK

The lack of good comparative data permits some generalizations only. Despite the changes noted, the status of the rook in the county is broadly comparable to that found in both 1946 and 1975 national surveys with densities in the lowest rank of those in the country, Table 4. This has been attributed to poor habitat rather than other local untoward factors and similar low densities were found in similar less favourable habitats elsewhere in the country, though often with greater areas of high ground or higher latitude. Individual loci within Norfolk do attain higher densities but these are few and only sustained in TM.

Table 4.

All per /10 km2	1946	1946	1975	1975	1995	1995
	AL(i)	Range(ii)	NC(iii)	N Range (iv)	NC (v)	AL (vi)
Rookery Density	<1.5	0.03	0.6	5.8-0.6	0.63	0.9
Rook Nest Density	<50	261-<50	13	103-10	32.5	46.1

(i) Norfolk County Agricultural Land (ii) Agricultural Land National Range (iii) Norfolk County All Land (iv) National Range All Land (v) Norfolk County All Land (vi) Norfolk County Agricultural Land

The national sample survey, 1980 (10) indicates a slight increase in both rook nest numbers and rookery size but falling numbers of actual rookeries. Detailed reporting by county is not given, the percentage change in relation to 100 km grid squares is the chosen method. Only one square - TG - is wholly within Norfolk. Surprisingly, and perhaps an anomaly, there was a 34% fall in nest numbers and a 51% fall in rookery numbers in this square. The squares TF and TM incorporate large areas of Lincolnshire and Suffolk respectively but show marked increases of nest and rookery numbers. The slight falls of both rook nests and rookeries, 14% & 17%, in square TL is more expected.

The first atlas of breeding birds (11) gives no indication of density, merely distribution, but confirms breeding rooks in all of Norfolk's 10 km squares with the exception of TG31 where it was recorded as probable. In contrast the second atlas survey (12) records an absence in two 10 km squares, TF63 & TF84, and no proof of breeding in 9 squares. The current survey shows no rookeries in twelve 10 km squares. 4 squares, all in TF, are common to both surveys. The earlier national surveys and compilations indicate large changes in rook numbers with a 20% increase between the 1920's and the 1940's and a subsequent decline until 1975 of 40%.

The sample survey of 1980 showed a slight overall increase of around 6% since 1975. The large increases documented in this survey are a remarkable recovery though still not one which would have altered the status of Norfolk on the distribution and density maps of Brenchley, 1986 (2). At present the 1996 BTO National Survey is being analyzed.

## Discussion

The decline in rook numbers until the 1960's or 1970's was previously ascribed to changes in agricultural practice, intensification of agriculture, the trend to winter cereals, loss of grazing land and probably to a lesser extent pesticide use. Such changes have continued to be an integral part of Norfolk agriculture since 1975 and yet there has been 140% increase in rook's nests.

This increase, with no real change in the overall number of rookeries, has been accommodated by more than doubling the average rookery size and the development of a relatively small number of large rookeries by Norfolk standards. We are very aware of some land owners who view their rookery and woodland with paternalistic care and as a conservation asset. However many of these rookeries are in increasingly mature woodland where owners may soon be seeking to harvest a timber crop. Whilst this arboricultural and conservationist trend is welcomed it also presents a management challenge since the largest 10% of rookeries contain almost 50% of nests.

This return of prosperity to rooks has merely retrieved the situation to 1946 levels as judged by comparison of densities and Norfolk remains a relatively poor zone for rooks to thrive. It is unlikely that any of the county boundary changes have had any effect. Any reduction of breeding activity following Dutch Elm disease and loss of nest sites would appear to have been transient and cannot now be detected.

We suspect that rookeries mainly enlarge by small increments and move by a process of gradual budding and translocation, up to the limit of available nest sites within the specific area. Translocation is hastened by tree management within woodland or shelter belt and tree clearance in arable grasslands. For instance the rookery at Griston is now spread widely over a distance of more than 1 km with several intervening gaps of at least 100 m and at Oxborough there is now one nest 200 m from the main rookery. The re-routing of roads through rookery areas such as the A11 development at Attleborough may have similar effects. There are few truly urban rookeries in Norfolk and these are subject to some degree of continual disturbance as well as development pressure. The future for rookeries in East Dereham and Downham Market is of concern and we suspect that urban pressure is fragmenting hitherto single rookeries and radially dispersing them to the edges of towns. We are aware of one planning application in which the possible effect on an adjacent rookery became an issue at the subsequent inquiry. The future outcome for the many small rookeries in Norfolk will be watched with interest.

Our preference is for "rookery complexes" rather than separate rookeries. This implies a biological concept encompassing a number of closely located nest sites, often large nest numbers, communal feeding areas and probable interchange. There may be marked variation in nest numbers at individual sites within the complex year by year, when only the overall number of nests in the complex reveals the trend. The rookeries of Hethersett, Recpham and

Reedham/Wickhampton are examples. This suggestion is tentative since it is problematic to define a complex and accordingly census accurately. At present there is insufficient further information

We are aware of a few cases where rookeries have been shot at by local farmers or gamekeepers. This has also evoked protective action from local people. Our impression is that rooks are well tolerated in the county and the consumption of rook pie has declined. Undoubtedly long term security of nest site has permitted the growth of rookery size. The availability of forage in the breeding season and consequent fledgling survival cannot be ignored and has usually been correlated with arable and grassland acreage's available. The rapid development and spread of outdoor pig farms almost certainly post-dates the start of increased breeding success. They are a source of both food and water during the breeding season and over winter and cannot be without some beneficial effect. Whilst this may mitigate against further loss of grassland areas there is also the potential for conflict. It is unclear what influence if any the inception of set-aside regimes will have on rooks.

With regard to the 1980 national sample survey and TG square it is probable that the result came from too small a sample to represent adequately the square except as part of a national survey. Therefore this represents a local anomaly not invalidating the overall national sample. The trend of increasing rook numbers from 1975 remains nationally valid. Similarly the recent sample survey will show nationally valid data but be too small for detailed county-based interpretation.

At present the data to allow co-incidence mapping of habitat or agricultural usage and rookery distribution are lacking though this is an obvious next step and the future development of geographical information systems will permit this. We believe that it would show a preponderance of rookeries in the arable grassland areas. Clearly the status of the rook is a dynamic situation though with a long cycle length. We would predict that the current trend of larger rookeries and in increasingly non-uniform distribution will continue. The future breeding success of rooks is likely to be limited by the availability of suitable forage during the breeding season as long as there are sufficient secure nest sites. Perhaps it is now time to start a dialogue with the land owners of large rookeries.

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## Appendix 1

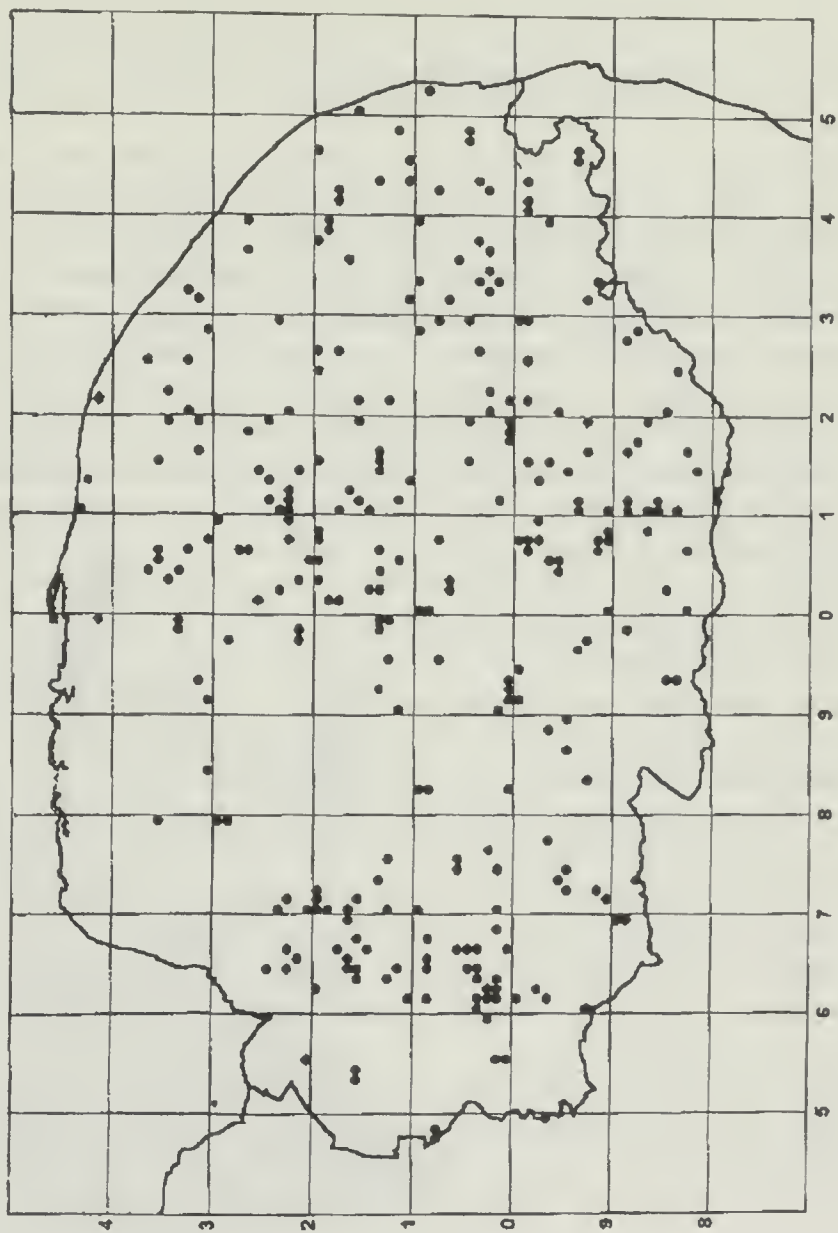
Rookeries not listed in NBR 1995 (nests). Emneth, Inglethorpe Manor (83), Nordelph West Farm (80), Nordelph White House (6), Watlington (8), Runcion Holme (15), South Runcion (97), Denver Park (35), Denver Clubhouse (13), Southery (43), Shouldham Townhouse (50), Shouldham Thorpe (88), Crimplesham Hall (48), Crimplesham Hall Farm (12), Wereham (17), West Bilney (16), Pentney Maltkiln Farm (151), Narborough (89), N. Elmham 2 (105), Great Witchingham Wildlife Park (223), Beechamwell (143), Hockwold Cut-off Channel (20)

Rookeries identified in 1997 but not included in analysis. Wretton Fen, Wormegay Park Farm, Pentney Dentons Farm.

The authors gratefully acknowledge the efforts of many over several years of field work and in particular the following who surveyed a large number of rookeries, P Allard, J Appleton, J Ashworth, M Boldero, C Clarke, Eaton Hall School, S Ellis, J Hall, C Neale, B Nixon, D Ovenden, M Payne, A Valori, A Vine, & L Wilkinson. Dr J Marchant has been a source of advice throughout the survey and has critically reviewed the manuscript. Mapping is from DMAP.



*Rooks (R. A. Hume)*



## NORFOLK ROOKERIES

Each symbol is a 1km square with a rookery(s). 10km grid square overlay.

# NORFOLK MAMMAL REPORT 1996

## Editorial

Although I was pleased to receive several encouraging notes of support for the new format introduced last year, I am somewhat dismayed by the large reduction in the number of contributors sending in records, from 46 in 1995 to just 12 for 1996. Consequently, I have taken the decision to hold the records until next year and to perhaps produce a more meaningful analysis of the information. I apologise to those people hoping to see their records in this years report.

Inevitably, this has led me to think very carefully as to the content and even future of the mammal report and whilst I will be discussing this with other members of the publication committee, I would be grateful for any opinions on the subject. One of the clear problems in the compilation of records is whether this is really useful or not and consequently whether it justifies the time and expense it incurs. My own opinion is that it can be, provided it is done in as rigorous a manner as possible, although this is not to say that even anecdotal records are not of interest. Even accepting the compilation of records is desirable, this begs further questions. Should this then be on an annual basis? Should this be effectively the responsibility of the Norfolk & Norwich Naturalists' Society in what is their Transactions? Others may argue that the Castle Museum which also receives mammal records, compiling these into a database where resources allow, should have more input or even produce the report. Clearly, the situation at present, where many individuals and organisations who gather useful information for a variety of reasons apparently do not wish to contribute to this report, is regrettable and ultimately diminishes the exchange of information and increased level of knowledge that imparts. Hopefully a solution can be found.

For this year, regrettably the mammal report is limited to three articles and I'm again grateful to Adrian Jowitt and Michael Seago for uncovering information..

*Harvest Mice (Kim Dyble)*





Assuming the mammal report is to be produced next year, I would be grateful to receive any articles for inclusion. These should preferably be word-processed, although hand-written articles may still be acceptable. Perhaps those with information will be able to provide some insight and background on the discovery of the only breeding colony of *Barbastelles* yet recorded in the UK (accepting the need to omit site names etc.)? Or the findings of the current otter and water vole surveys in the county? Or perhaps somebody who's had an encounter with a big cat would like to share their experiences?

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## **Small Mammals of Foxley Wood**

*Dr. Martin Perrow, Adrian Jowitt & Roxanne Bligh,  
ECON, Ecological Consultancy, Biological Sciences, UEA.*

In the summer and autumn of 1992, John Howes, then an ecology student at UEA, undertook an extensive survey of the small mammals in Foxley wood. His principal aim was to determine whether the small mammal communities differed between the native deciduous woodland and the stands of conifers, which had been planted by the Forestry Commission in the 1960s occupying around a third of the 125 ha of the wood. Prior to this, John surveyed the various habitats, including stands of different tree species, the grassy rides between the blocks of woodland and two areas in which the conifers had been felled and removed (in spring 1991 and 1992) by the current owners of the wood, the Norfolk Wildlife Trust. The ultimate goal of this large-scale management action was to restore the ancient woodland and its distinctive flora and fauna (Barkham 1976). This preliminary study also allowed John to determine which small mammals were present in the wood, in particular whether two species often associated with ancient woodlands, dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) and yellow-necked mouse (*Apodemus flavicollis*) were present. Unfortunately neither species was represented in the catch of 400 individual animals captured during the initial survey and dormouse at least remains unrecorded in Norfolk. Further, only 3, what are largely ubiquitous species; bank vole (*Clethrionomys glareolus*), wood mouse (*Apodemus sylvaticus*) and common shrew (*Sorex araneus*) constituted 99% of the catch. The only other species were pygmy shrew (*Sorex minutus*) and water shrew (*Neomys fodiens*). The presence of the latter species at respectable densities of >3 ha. was rather surprising given its usual association with aquatic habitats such as reed-beds (Perrow & Jowitt 1993). The absence of field vole (*Microtus agrestis*) and to a lesser extent harvest mouse (*Micromys minutus*) in the grassy rides and clear-fell areas (see Flowerdew 1993 for an example of the opposite situation) may be indicative of the fact that Foxley is effectively an island in an arable landscape and even if suitable habitat is created then there may be no potential source of colonists. Some support for this idea is provided by the water shrews in Foxley displaying considerable pelage variation including one remarkable melanic individual with a white ventral stripe (see photograph), indicating an isolated, in-breeding population.

In this pilot study, the numbers of animals were lowest in the grassy ride and clear-fell areas, largely a result of the low numbers (<20% of the numbers in wooded habitats) of the overall dominant species, bank vole. Moreover, it was surprising that the numbers and proportions of the various species was broadly similar between deciduous and coniferous woodland. Conventional wisdom suggests that planted coniferous woodland is botanically poor (Bainbridge et al. 1966) with consequences for the faunal diversity and thus overall conservation value (Yorke 1981, Avery & Leslie 1990). Yet here was a major faunal component in terms of woodland ecology (small mammals may disperse seeds, prey on invertebrates, improve soil structure through burrowing etc.) being unaffected by the gross structural and presumably functional differences of the two woodland types. This was largely confirmed by John Howes subsequent main trapping using replicate trapping grids (six in each type) conducted a month later in September. The overall density of animals being very similar (a huge 180 and 190 ha<sup>-1</sup> in coniferous and deciduous respectively), although there were clear differences between species. A significantly higher density of more Bank voles were present in the deciduous woodland whilst a significantly greater density of wood mice was present in the coniferous. In contrast, the densities of common shrew were virtually identical. The densities of the two species, pygmy and water shrew, were not significantly different although it was of note that 4 times as many water shrews were captured in the coniferous as in the deciduous.

By recording habitat variables at every trap point, John was able to elucidate the reasons for these differences. For example, bank vole was highly associated with bramble cover in deciduous woodland. In the absence of this under the conifers, the voles present preferred dense litter. This is in keeping with the vulnerability of the species to predators such as tawny owl (*Strix aluco*) and weasel (*Mustela nivalis*). Wood mouse on the other hand, with longer legs conferring greater escape ability and the tendency of the species to be strictly nocturnal reduces some of the risks and thus allows mice to utilise the structurally simpler coniferous woodland floor. However, mice were also significantly associated with the complexity of the habitat above the ground. Wood mice are known to exploit arboreal habitat and this was no exception at Foxley judging by the frequent captures of mice in aerial traps. Such habitat use may be an anti-owl predation strategy, as taking a mouse from amongst a tangle of branches must be a difficult task. In contrast to the other two dominant species, shrews were associated with moss cover in both habitat types and as this occurred frequently in both habitats, shrew densities were not statistically different.

In late July this year, we revisited the site with the specific aim of providing further information on the development of the small mammal populations in the clear-fell areas, although we were also interested in checking up on the small communities in both deciduous and coniferous woodland. The latter has continued to be removed and some of the remaining blocks have also been thinned. We set up a total of six grids; two each in both of the wood types and in both of the clear-fell areas trapped by John. We located John's original grids as far as possible and used the same methods, although the length of the trapping session was reduced as a result of time and resource constraints.

In the clear-fell areas, the vegetation had developed greatly in the 5 and 6 years since the conifers had been removed with around 90% ground cover including grasses, herbs and young trees. The latter were still often very small in the younger clear-fell contributing to the ground cover, whereas in the older clear-fell, these were typically up to 3 m high. The number of species represented was also higher (Fig. 1). Such shrubby habitat may be good for several species of bird and anybody visiting Foxley this spring must have been impressed by the abundance of warblers, particularly garden warbler (*Sylvia borin*). From a small mammal point of view, there were 50% more mammals in the older clear-fell, with numbers of both the commonest species, common shrew being 50% higher (Fig. 1). The suitability of this habitat for shrews was illustrated by the fact that the clear-fell contained more shrews than any other habitat (Fig. 1). In John's study, shrews were significantly associated with moss cover in both coniferous and deciduous woodland. This ties in with the tendency of common shrews to hunt under the litter layer (Churchfield 1991). Grassy habitats are thus optimal and the abundance of grasses in the clear-fell is likely to be responsible for the population increase. There also seems to have been an increase in the suitability of the clear-fell to support bank voles, which is almost certainly linked to the development of the vegetation. However, judging from the fact that the maximum number of voles recorded from one of the wooded grids was almost 3-fold higher than the maximum recorded from clear-fell and that no juvenile voles were captured in clear-fell indicating a lack of successful breeding, it seems the habitat will have to develop considerably before it is truly suitable for bank voles. The development of trees is not all that's required however. The current study illustrated that without cover, even deciduous woodland may support few bank voles and with good bramble cover (see above), coniferous woodland may also prove suitable (Fig. 1). This seemed to have been achieved by thinning and allowing more light to reach the woodland floor.

The final significant result of this year's trapping was that wood mouse was conspicuous by its absence, with only 2 individuals captured. Although potentially related to number of factors such as the abundance of the nut and seed crop of the previous year perhaps leading to competition with bank vole, one can't help but wonder if the removal of the conifers has had some impact, as this seemed to be the preferred habitat. We also didn't capture any water shrews, which also seemed to prefer the conifers. The use of conifers by water shrew had only previously been recorded in Poland (Dehnel 1950), and it would be a shame if this unique population had been reduced. We now also know that although good for some species such as shrews, it may be a number of years for the dominant woodland species, bank vole to develop large populations. In real terms, it will take 100's of years to restore the ancient woodland at Foxley, although a close approximation of the structure and form of much of the abandoned coppice may be obtained within our life spans. From a small mammal perspective, there may be case for leaving the remaining conifers or simply thinning the dense blocks that remain, as this habitat seems to add to the diversity of the small mammal community of the wood. However, as always, this will have to be weighed against the long-term objectives for the wood and the requirements of its other fauna and flora.



Acknowledgments

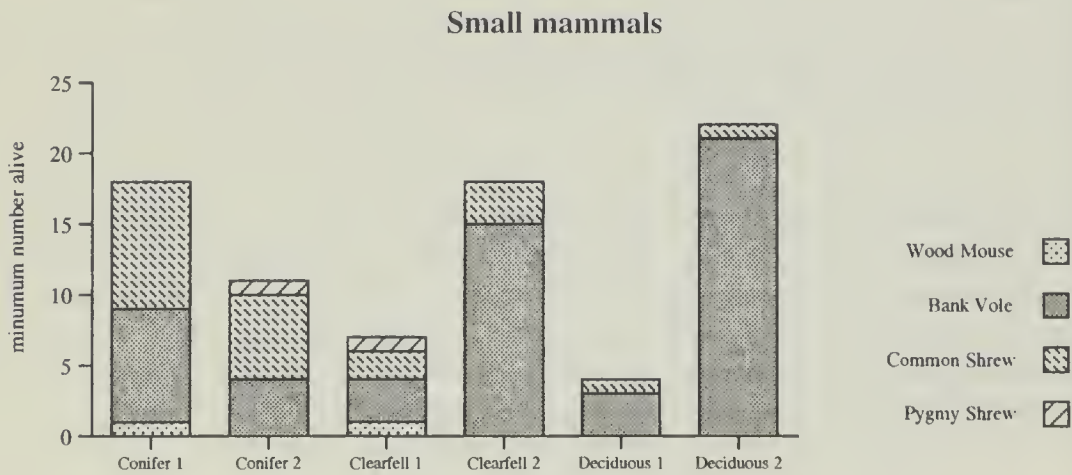
We are grateful to John Milton, the NWT warden of Foxley for access to the site and information on aspects of the management and to the hard work of John Howes which provides the basis of this article.

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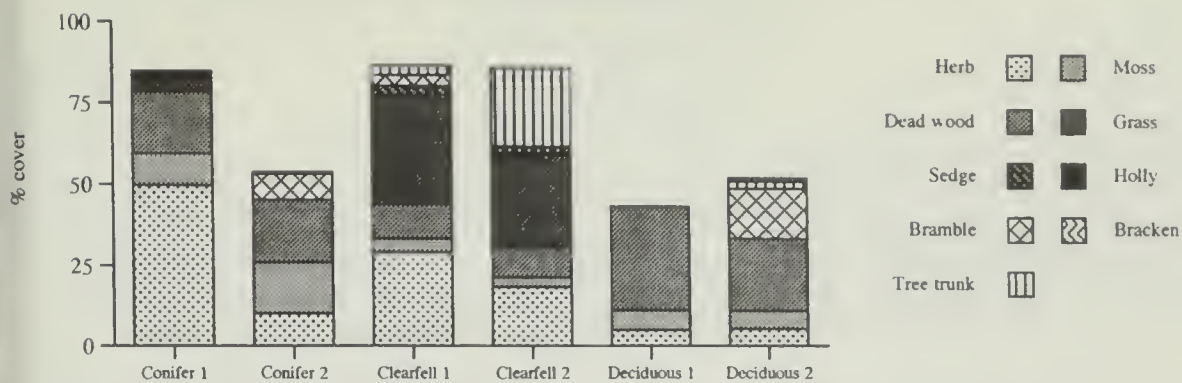
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Figure legend

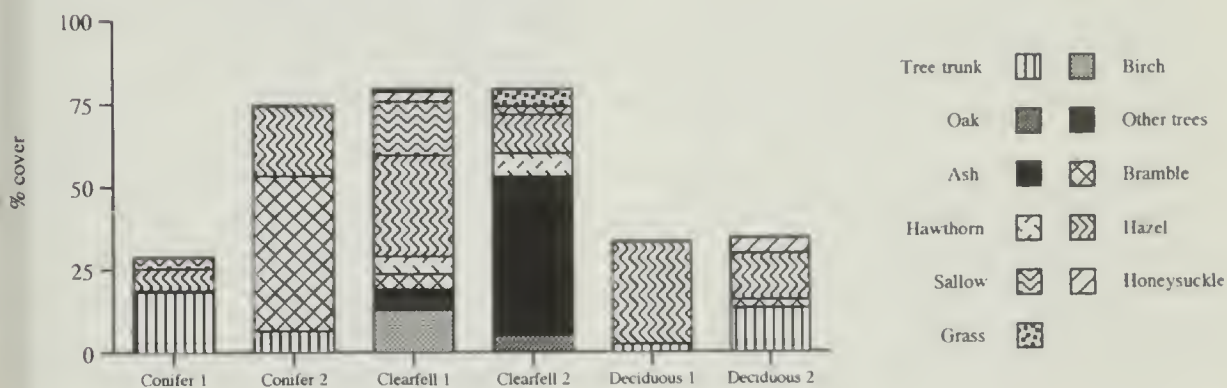
**Fig. 1.** The abundance of the various mammal species and mean (from the 12 trap points in each grid) % ground, shrub (at 1m height) and canopy cover in the six trapping grids in deciduous and coniferous woodland and clear-fell habitats.



## Ground cover



## Shrub cover



## Canopy cover



# The Status of the Fox in Norfolk

*Adrian Jowitt ECON, Ecological Consultancy, Biological Sciences, UEA.*

How many of us regularly see foxes? Not many I would guess. Unlike much of the Britain, Norfolk does not really have a town fox population. For many people in cities elsewhere in the country foxes are a regular sight and I for one certainly have seen far more foxes when visiting my parents in London than I do when working in the countryside around Norfolk.

Recent research by the Game Conservancy has shown that Norfolk does in fact have a much lower fox population than other areas of the UK. As part of a large national study of foxes being carried out by Jonathan Reynolds, Matt Heydon and others, surveys have been carried out in the spring and autumn over the last 2 years. In Norfolk, each survey has consisted of driving a 190 km circuit around the west of the county on four consecutive nights, spotlighting either side of the road and recording any foxes seen. The provisional results of the survey estimate the density of foxes in spring county to be 0.15 per km<sup>2</sup> rising to 0.6 per km<sup>2</sup> in the autumn. Autumn densities in the east Midlands, mid-Wales and south-central England were approximately 4, 1.5 and 5 times greater respectively than in Norfolk.

Analysis by the Game Conservancy of the information from game-keepers on the number of foxes killed has shown that nationally the fox population is on the increase (Reynolds & Tapper 1996). The most obvious reason for this is that there is far less keeping carried out today than previously. In addition there has been a shift from a dependency on wild pheasants to released birds. This has in turn altered the nature, extent and timing of the keepers predator control activities. Since the last war there has been a steady decrease in the number of kept estates and on many of those remaining the number of full time keepers has been greatly reduced. In Norfolk, a county with a history of sporting estates and a high density of gamekeepers, the decline has been less rapid. Further, Norfolk has never had a strong tradition of fox-hunting and in many areas which did, keepers would have been encouraged not to put too much pressure on the fox population to leave adequate numbers for the hunt. This pattern would account both for an extremely low density of foxes in the past and although on the increase, a reduced population compared to the rest of the country.

Additional reasons for the national increase in foxes, may be related to the food resources available to them. One of the most marked changes in the countryside in the last fifty years has been the fluctuation in rabbit numbers brought about by myxomatosis. Initially devastated by the disease, the rabbit population recovered and has been steadily increasing since the 1970s, implying an increase in the food supply available to foxes. It is clear however, from long term data sets available to the Game Conservancy have shown that although the fox population dropped following the introduction of myxomatosis it has now increased beyond pre- myxomatosis levels.





Top: Spoonbills were a spring feature. Low water levels at a principal Dutch colony attracted marauding Foxes hence the arrival of full adults. (*I. Leach*). Centre left: Little Bittern, Snettisham, April/May (*M. McDonnell*); right: Greater Flamingo, Titchwell, May (*D. Nye*). Bottom: By the year-end 12 Cranes were on show in Broadland (*B. W. Jarvis*).



This vagrant Desert Wheatear from North Africa remained at Salthouse five days in mid-November (Top: *D. Nye*; lower right: *I. Leach*). Lower left: It was the best autumn showing for Red-breasted Flycatchers since 1989. This bird visited Yarmouth cemeteries (*B. W. Jarvis*).







Further seasonal attractions: Top left: Slavonian Grebe, Wroxham Broad, March (N. Bowman) right: These Little Stints frequented Holkham Lake in September, a new locality (A. Bloomfield). Centre: A late Cuckoo, Warham Green (D. Nye). Bottom left: Black-throated Thrush, Holkham Park, March (R. Chittenden) and right: Why is the Bearded Tit in decline? (J. Bhalerao).





Top: The presence of Water shrews in coniferous areas at Foxley Wood (left) was surprising, especially this individual displaying a white ventral stripe (*M. Perrow*). Bottom: Variant Moles are rarely reported, but this white specimen was found at Brettenham. Golden ones have appeared at Hempnall and at Costessey (*D. Mason*).





*Rabbits (Kim Dyble)*

Consequently the increasing rabbit population alone is not enough to explain the increase in fox numbers. However, another important potential food, released pheasants (see above) has increased in the same period. At a typical stocking density of 330 birds per km<sup>2</sup> with each bird weighting approximately one kilogram they are an attractive food source. Overall, it must be remembered that the fox is a highly adaptable and successful mammal, taking a huge variety of prey items. This suggests that although perhaps increases in prey such as rabbits and pheasants has contributed the principal reason for an increase in foxes is reduced predator control.

Although for many of us the sight of a fox is an engaging experience not everyone finds the experience quite so rewarding. Leaving aside the obvious problems encountered by gamekeepers and owners of free range chickens, many nature reserve managers are in conflict with the fox. At reserves where there are large numbers of colonially breeding birds (e.g. terns on Scolt Head island or Blakeney Point) or for a rare bird with a restricted distribution (e.g. stone curlews at Weeting Heath) a single visit from a fox, a species prone to surplus killing (killing more than can be consumed in one sitting but may be cached for later use), can wreak havoc. Moreover, it has even been suggested by one Broadland landowner that the increase in foxes may have contributed to the decline in the breeding bittern numbers.



All this leads to a moral dilemma amongst conservationists (see Mead 1994). On the one hand we like to see foxes but on the other we expect the reserves to protect breeding bird populations. Although we may find it distasteful, many reserves, especially on the North Norfolk coast, carry out fox control in the spring months to protect particular populations of birds. With a continued increase in fox numbers, there will be a corresponding increased need for control. The managers of these reserves may begin to ask themselves if this is sustainable or indeed desirable?

### Acknowledgements

I am indebted to Matt Heydon from the Game Conservancy for supplying and discussing the information in this article.

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## Stranded Cetaceans on the Norfolk Coast 1992 to 1995

*M.J. Seago*

A summary of cetacean strandings where the species was identified between 1913 and 1991 appears in the 1991 Norfolk Mammal Report. A further summary appears below. Order follows *Sea Guide to Whales of the World* (1981) by Lyall Watson.

**Great sperm whale** *Physeter macrocephalus*: A female over 12 metres in length stranded in the Wash at Heacham on 2/12/93 and died soon after coming ashore. The corpse was washed out to sea on the evening tide. This is only the third instance of a stranding locally in over two centuries.

**Common porpoise** *Phocoena phocoena*: A total of 9 strandings were recorded during 1992, 6 in 1993, none in 1994 and 7 during 1995. Despite a great increase in seabird watching it is unusual nowadays to receive reports of more than 8 porpoises in inshore waters. Sightings such as the large school just 50 meters off shore at Cromer in 1961 which took more than 15 minutes to pass have not been repeated and, given the current level of casualties caused by gill-net fishing, are unlikely to be. According to a Danish survey some 7000 porpoises are being killed annually in the North Sea. Although inland sightings are rare, in 1960 a porpoise was filmed on the county boundary in the tidal Nene at the Dog in a Doublet sluice.

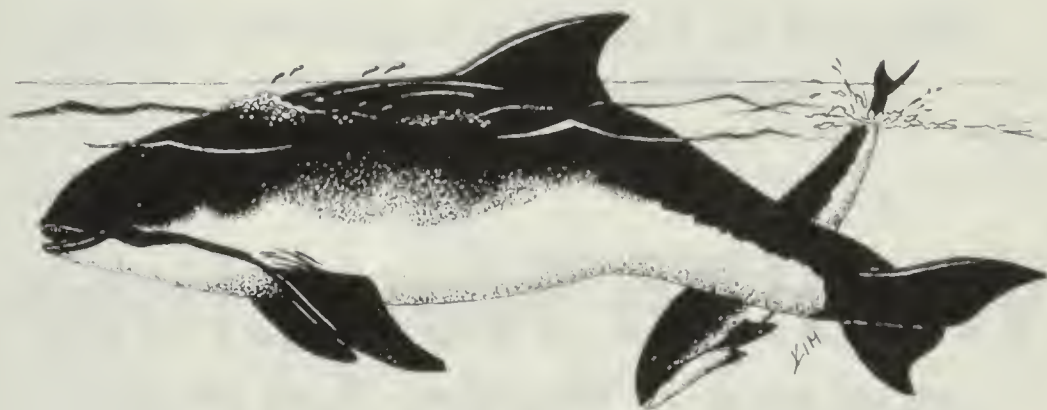


**Long-finned pilot whale** *Globicephala melas* A dead male, 5.75 metres in length, came ashore at Scolt Head on 13/12/92. The fifth county stranding since 1913.

**White-beaked dolphin:** *Lagenorhynchus albirostris*: Two were stranded at Holme on 17/6/92, and single animals at Gorleston 25/5/94, Eccles 16/6/95, Bacton 27/6/95, Sheringham 29/6/95 and Caister and Yarmouth both on the 2/7/95. The most remarkable occurrence was in March 1968 when a group of 8 became stranded on sandbars at Blakeney Point.

### Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to the Marine Biological Services Division of the Natural History Museum London for making periodic reports available.



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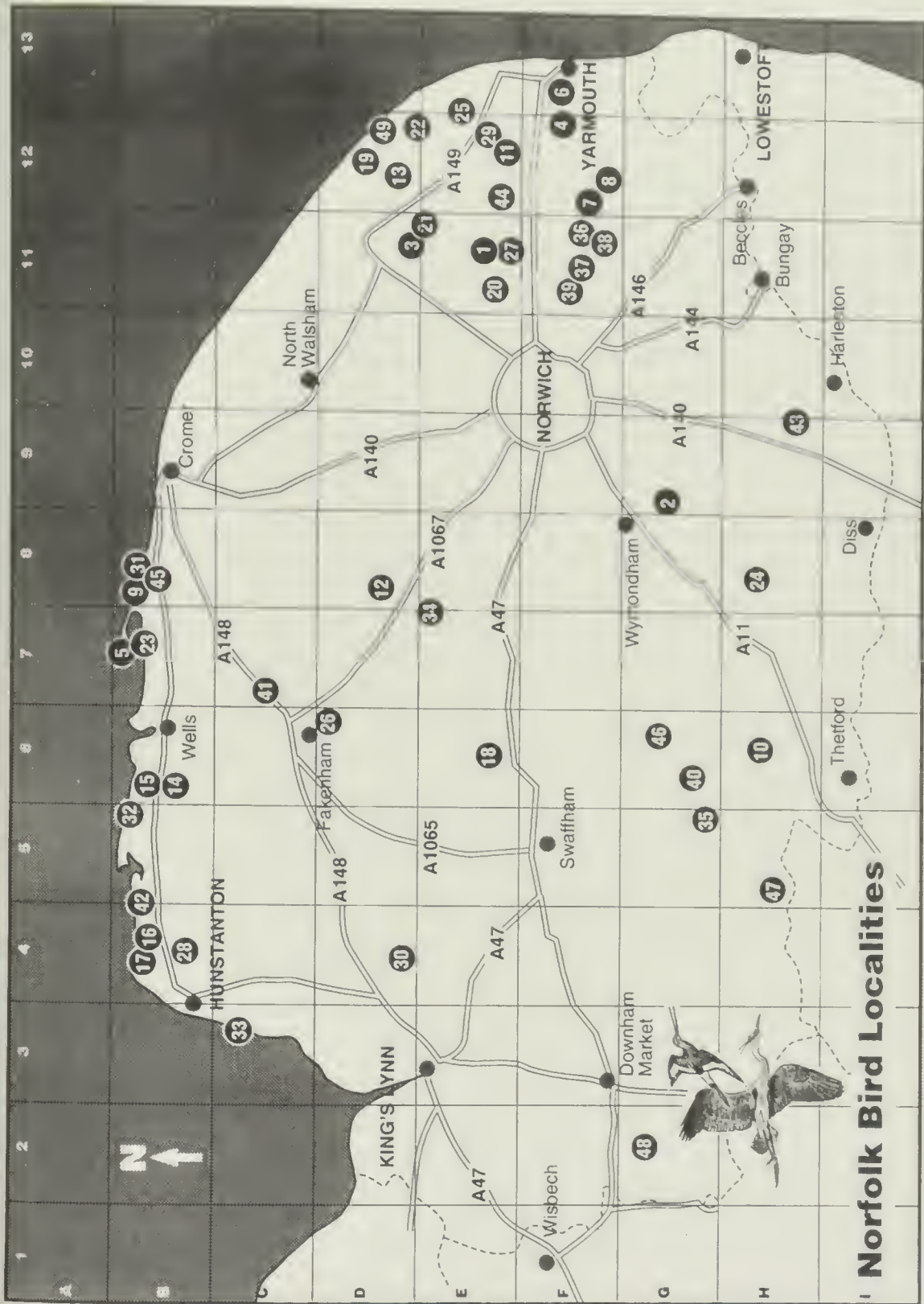
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