

Norfolk Bird & Mammal Report 2004

S. 296



Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists' Society

THE NORFOLK & NORWICH NATURALISTS' SOCIETY

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The county's senior natural history society. It has for its principal objectives the practical study of natural science, the conservation of wildlife, the publication of papers on natural history, especially those relating to the county of Norfolk, arranging lectures and meetings and the promotion of active field work. Specialist groups cover most aspects of the county's flora and fauna.

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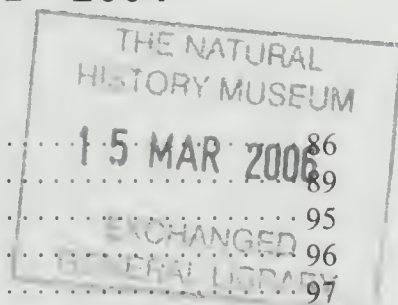
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Front cover photograph: Little Egrets (Julian Bhalerao)

Back cover photograph: Harvest Mice (Mike Toms)

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Editor: Giles Dunmore



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NORFOLK BIRD REPORT - 2004

Editorial

On behalf of the Society I am pleased to present the annual report on the Birds of Norfolk. Apart from the Review of the Year, Systematic List, Ringing Report etc a variety of articles are included. The first relates to the history of the RSPB reserve at Berney Marshes, followed by two detailed papers, one on the colonisation of Norfolk by the Little Egret, the other relating to Bearded Tit populations at Hickling Broad. Three articles concern county rarities - Grey-cheeked Thrush, Alpine Accentor and Pine Bunting. Last, but not least, is a list of Norfolk bird names compiled by Richard Richardson and recently discovered by Richard Fitter.

Acknowledgements

The Report continues to be very much a team effort and my special thanks go to:

- Neil Lawton - co-recorder,
- Julian Bhalerao - co-ordinating photographs,
- Justin Lansdell - commenting on and proof-reading articles,
- Peter Lindsley - for his major role in the actual production of the Report.

However, without the help of many other people the Report in its present format would not be possible. My thanks also go to:

- the inputters of the monthly records into the computerised recording system - Dave and Jacquie Bridges, Megan Crewe, Judy Dunmore, Vince Hanlon, Neil Lawton, Christine Stean and Pat Wileman;
- those who drafted sections of the Systematic List - Andy Benson, Dave and Jacquie Bridges, Andy Brown, Pete Clement, Keith Dye, Mark Eldridge, Mick Fiszer, John and Judy Geeson, Vince Hanlon, Phil Heath, Gary Hibberd, John Kemp, Justin Lansdell, Neil Lawton, Ben Murphy, Ashley Saunders, Mick Saunt, Enid Stanford, Peter Wilson and John Williamson;
- members of the County Records Committee;
- authors of the articles in the Report, in particular Peter Allard, Andrew Bloomfield, James Cadbury and Ron Harold;
- Dave and Jacquie Bridges for compiling the Review of the Year;
- particular thanks to Richard Fitter for providing the background information and his kind permission to publish Richard Richardson's Norfolk Bird Names;
- the artists and photographers who have made their work freely available;
- The Sarnia Charitable Trust for its continued assistance towards the cost of colour photographs;
- Moss Taylor for supplying details of the ongoing Norfolk Bird Atlas;
- Steve Wakeham for the meteorological information;
- Mike Rogers, Secretary of the British Birds Rarities Committee;
- all the many individual contributors and clubs/societies, and in particular Birdline East Anglia and Rare Bird Alert, who have contributed records;
- Pat Wileman for her continued help and support in the computerisation process;

- finally my wife Judy without whose help, support and time the whole process would never happen. It is she who spends more and more time dealing with the electronic receipt of records and receiving and typing replies to e-mails. I also have to thank her for her work with the typing and layout of the actual Report, particularly ensuring consistency of both writing and display style throughout.

The County Records Committee (Dave Bridges, Mick Fiszer, John Kemp, Justin Lansdell and Richard Millington) considered a total of 80 records in the year; 9 of these were rejected, mostly as a result of insufficient detail and not owing to an incorrect identification. At its recent annual meeting the Committee discussed in detail the acceptance of records of *tristis* Chiffchaff. Due to the problems of separating some 'northern' and 'eastern' Chiffchaffs the Committee considers that it can only accept birds showing the characteristics of the *tristis* race where a comprehensive description has been submitted and the characteristic call heard and fully described. It was also noted that there were no accepted records of Great White Egret and only one of Rose-ringed Parakeet despite several reports of both species. The Committee also reviewed the list of species needing submission of a written description or photographic evidence prior to publication (subject to acceptance) and decided to delete Greenland White-fronted Goose and Pallas's Warbler. The list is now as follows:

Taiga Bean Goose (away from Yare Valley)	Rose-ringed Parakeet
'Vagrant' Canada Goose	Dark-breasted Barn Owl
American Wigeon	Bee-eater
Ring-necked Duck	Short-toed Lark
Surf Scoter	Tawny Pipit
Black-necked Grebe (at sea)	<i>Flava</i> Wagtail (continental races except Blue-headed and Grey-headed)
Cory's Shearwater	Bluethroat (White-spotted only)
Great Shearwater	Aquatic Warbler
Balearic Shearwater	Marsh Warbler
Storm Petrel	Melodious Warbler
Night Heron	Dartford Warbler
Purple Heron	Chiffchaff (<i>tristis</i> race)
White Stork	Woodchat Shrike
Spotted Crake	Raven
Corncrake	Rose-coloured Starling
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Serin
Grey Phalarope (in flight at sea)	Common Rosefinch
Sabine's Gull	Ortolan Bunting
Ring-billed Gull	Little Bunting
Caspian Gull	

With regard to the submission of details, obviously the Committee would expect a far more detailed description of a species such as Ring-billed Gull (which is not only rare in the county but difficult to identify) than a species such as a White Stork. Written descriptions should consist of a brief note of the circumstances of the observation (weather, distance from bird, any other observers, etc), followed by a description of the actual bird(s) and details of any other species nearby for comparison. Written notes should state clearly how a bird was identified. Observers are also requested to include a note of their previous experience of the species and, if relevant, a brief outline of how any confusable species were eliminated. Copies

of field sketches (however poor artistically) are often invaluable together with written field notes. 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.

Editorial Material: Articles for consideration, artwork, photographs and transparencies should continue to be submitted to me at 49 Nelson Road, Sheringham, Norfolk NR26 8DA.

Submission of Records

Many people comment to me on the amount of work involved in the production of this Report. A county the size and importance of Norfolk generates a huge number of bird sightings. As will be seen from the acknowledgments I now have a team of people who help with the computerised recording throughout the year, taking responsibility for certain months. This way the handling of duplicate records is much simpler and far less time consuming and the workload is spread out rather than being concentrated on a short period of time. When records are not submitted until after the end of the year it is impossible to remember whether a sighting has already been recorded and therefore the work has to be duplicated. With this in mind I would ask all contributors **to submit records monthly** or, if this is not possible, then at least on a 3-monthly basis. I cannot emphasise enough the extent to which this cuts down the enormous workload experienced in recording without which there would be no Report.

Obviously records can be accepted annually after the end of the year but all observers are requested to submit their notes within a shorter time scale if possible to reduce the pressure of recording in January/February the following year. Receipt of late records causes a major problem in drafting the Systematic List *and observations received after February of the following year cannot be guaranteed for inclusion in the Report or the database.* All records should be listed in the new order of species appearing in this Report, based on the new BOU list, which basically places swans, geese and ducks before divers, grebes, seabirds and herons. Receipt of notes will not normally be acknowledged but names of all contributors will be published. To obtain as complete coverage as possible records via Birdline East Anglia and Rare Bird Alert 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.

Records can be sent by post or as MsWord or Excel attachments by e-mail to giles.dunmore@tiscali.co.uk but no photographs or sketches please - these must be sent by ordinary mail to 49 Nelson Road, Sheringham, Norfolk NR26 8DA.

During the year I spend a considerable amount of time 'chasing' descriptions of both county and national rarities. I would request that finders of such birds should submit details to me as soon as possible and certainly not leave it to the end of the year. Obviously if other observers have particularly good views of a rarity for example, but were not the finder, then additional descriptions would be gratefully received.

Giles Dunmore

Review of the Year

Dave and Jacquie Bridges

(with weather details by Steve Wakeham)

January started cold but from the 4th westerly winds commenced, strong-to-gale-force at times, with rain persisting until the 12th. A colder spell ensued until a ridge of high pressure on the 19th saw a return to milder westerly winds. These conditions remained until the 24th when northerly winds introduced colder air resulting in heavy snowfall on the 28th. The month ended with a vigorous depression bringing south-westerly gales and heavy rain on the 31st.

The month saw record numbers of both Bewick's and Whooper Swans at Welney, with further wildfowl highlights in the shape of several Black Brant, two 'vagrant' Canada Geese and two drake Green-winged Teal. These were added to mid-month by a drake American Wigeon at Holkham and a Ferruginous Duck at Welney, both of which arrived on the same day. At least three Rough-legged Buzzards remained in the Massingham Heath area all month and flocks of Shore Larks and Snow Buntings graced Holkham Bay. Gulls featured prominently in the first few days with high counts of both Mediterranean and Little. There were some large offshore movements of Red-throated Divers early on but the other two diver species and the rarer grebes were very few in number. Other notable birds were a wintering Stone Curlew, two Pomarine Skuas, a Dark-breasted Barn Owl and a Great Grey Shrike.

February began very mild with record temperatures of 16°C on the 4th. Winter returned on the 8th when northerly winds brought snow showers. High pressure then dominated until the 19th when the weather turned much colder and by the 22nd strong northerly winds brought more wintry showers. This situation persisted until the end of the month with overnight frosts and daytime temperatures reaching only 5°C.

Last month's American Wigeon and Ferruginous Duck remained as did one of the Green-winged Teals and the Massingham Rough-legged Buzzards. A second Ferruginous Duck appeared at Lynford and early year peaks were reached for White-fronted Geese at Holkham and Hawfinch at Lynford. The county's earliest-ever Swallow appeared at South Walsham on the 15th, only to be followed 6 days later by another at King's Lynn. Other

notable birds were Black-bellied Dipper and Hooded Crow but the highlight of the month waited until the final day when Norfolk's second Pine Bunting joined the Yellowhammers and Corn Buntings at Choseley.

Apart from a brief milder spell around the 3rd temperatures in the first half of **March** were disappointing with winds generally from a cold direction. Milder air arrived on the 13th but strengthening south-west winds resulted in gales on the 20th. Cool showery northerlies then took over until the 26th after which increasing pressure



Greater Sandplover (*Richard Johnson*)



Broad-billed Sandpiper (*Richard Johnson*)

brought lighter westerly winds, combined with dull and misty conditions. The month ended with fresh winds from a south-easterly direction.

First hint of spring came on the opening day of the month with a Garganey, followed over the course of the next week by firsts of Stone Curlew, Little Ringed Plover and White Wagtail. Spring migration was clearly under way from mid-month with large movements of Meadow Pipits at coastal sites. Other early spring migrants appeared on cue with several early first dates. Interesting records during the month included at least 11 Red Kites, an inland Purple Sandpiper, six Glaucous Gulls, two Great Grey Shrikes and sizeable gatherings of Water Pipits and Lapland Buntings. The event that overshadowed everything, however, was the grim discovery of large numbers of dead Fulmars, including several 'blue phase', along the entire length of the coast. On a lighter note the final week produced Spoonbill, Osprey and a gathering of eight Garganey at Berney.

By **April 5th** south-easterlies gave way to cool north-westerlies, gusting to gale force with heavy and thundery showers. A ridge of high pressure building from the 12th introduced warmer southerly winds until an unseasonably deep depression settled over the country on the 18th. By the 20th there was a return to warm southerly winds and high pressure building brought light winds and temperatures of 21°C on the 24th. Thunderstorms moved north overnight on the 27th/28th followed by cooler conditions with heavy rain on the 29th, with maximum temperatures of only 9°C. The month ended with north-easterly winds.

A Kentish Plover at Hickling on the first day heralded the start of a very interesting month. The star bird was an Alpine Accentor at Cromer but this was not alone in the rarity stakes as Alpine Swift, Red-rumped Swallow, Citrine Wagtail, Savi's Warbler and Subalpine Warbler all appeared in the same 10-day spell. Although not quite in the same category, Richard's Pipit, Serin and at least two Hoopoes during the same period were also very welcome. Some notable early arrivals occurred including Arctic Tern on the 8th, Montagu's Harrier on the 15th and both Honey Buzzard and Temminck's Stint on the 20th. Some winter birds were still hanging on with the highest count of Purple Sandpiper for the year on the north-east coast, two Green-winged Teal, a Ferruginous Duck and the last Waxwing of the winter on the 9th.

The first half of **May** was dominated by winds from a northerly quarter with a deep depression bringing heavy thundery showers from the 4th. The cool northerly airflow persisted until the 13th when an anticyclone became established over southern Britain and

temperatures rose to 24°C in light winds. Northerly winds returned on the 20th but with pressure remaining high, temperatures slowly recovered and by the 27th warmer southerly winds became established.

The month opened in fine style with a Rock Thrush on Blakeney Point. Also on the 1st the start of an influx of Red-footed Falcons began with at least six appearing during the month. Other rarities followed in the shape of two White-winged Black Terns at Hickling, a singing Thrush Nightingale at Titchwell, and Red-rumped Swallow and Savi's Warbler in The Broads. Waders figured prominently with two Broad-billed Sandpipers, over 40 Temminck's Stints, two or three trips of Dotterel and a Kentish Plover. Sea birds are not normally a feature of May but a Leach's Petrel and four Pomarine Skuas were certainly noteworthy. Scolt Head scored heavily in the scarce bird category with Short-toed Lark, Grey-headed Wagtail, Bluethroat, Icterine Warbler, Red-breasted Flycatcher and Mealy Redpoll. In mid-month a party of Bee-eaters first seen at Clcy were tracked along the coast as far as the Wash. Other notable birds included Green-winged Teal, Roseate Tern, seven Grey-headed Wagtails, Golden Oriole, seven Red-backed Shrikes, two Serins and two Common Rosefinches.

With winds turning west to south-west in early **June** temperatures climbed to 29°C on the 8th and, with high pressure always close by, mainly dry conditions prevailed until mid-month. From the 16th a more northerly airflow introduced a period of cooler weather with rain and showers from the 18th. The third unseasonably deep low in as many months arrived on the 22nd and with it came strong winds and heavy rain. Pressure then built over southern Britain ensuring a more settled end to the month.

Birdwise the month was fairly quiet but there were some interesting records. At the usual site Honey Buzzards reached at least five in total and Spoonbills were prominent in the early part of the month, with seven arriving in off the sea at Winterton and eight present at Holkham. Mid-June saw the year's only Rose-ringed Parakeet, on the outskirts of Norwich, and two rather unseasonable records - Purple Sandpiper and Wryneck. However, the last week held the real surprises in the shape of a Great Skua flying over Strumpshaw and a Raven at Choseley.

Breeding birds had very mixed success. On the plus side Little Egret and Stone Curlew showed an increase in breeding numbers and Cormorant, Bittern, Marsh Harrier and Mediterranean Gull all had good years. Montagu's Harriers fledged three young in the county and Common Cranes fledged four from as many nests. On the debit side all four species of breeding tern had disasters with hardly any young being fledged, in most cases due to the atrocious weather around the 22nd. Common Gulls also did poorly. Waders had mixed fortunes with a slight increase in the number of Snipe but poor success for the shore nesters. On the passerine front Woodlark and Black Redstart decreased in number, but Firecrest and Golden Oriole both bred in the county.

Heavy and thundery showers dogged the first few days of **July** up to the 5th followed by another spell of heavy rain overnight on the 7th/8th. It remained cool until winds backed towards the south after the 14th when temperatures improved. Occasional showers, some heavy and thundery,



Lesser Yellowlegs (*Andy Benson*)

occurred until the 23rd followed by more rain on the 25th. The month ended with temperatures climbing, reaching 27°C by the 29th.

For a month that normally starts quietly, the first week produced surprisingly some of the year's best birds. On the 3rd the Glossy Ibis that had been residing in Devon since the autumn of 2002 decided on a change of scenery and, having visited Minsmere, turned up at Breydon/Berney, where it remained for the rest of the year. The following day a Greater Sand Plover that had been seen flying south at Spurn a couple of days earlier was found on the Wash at Snettisham, staying for two days. Also during this spell a Cory's Shearwater passed Cley and at least three Roseate Terns arrived on the coast. For the second year running an American Golden Plover frequented Breydon but also commuted to the nearby Bure Marshes. Snettisham hit the news again when the year's third Broad-billed Sandpiper was found a few days later. A major arrival of Pectoral Sandpipers began with one at Titchwell on the 20th followed by at least five more by the end of the month. Red-necked and Slavonian Grebes, a Red-necked Phalarope, a Long-tailed Skua and two Golden Orioles also occurred.

After a warm first week of **August** the remnants of Hurricane Alex arrived off western Britain. This brought humid south-easterly winds with temperatures reaching 28°C. The night of the 8th/9th was one of the warmest ever recorded, temperatures remaining above 22°C. During the next 16 days thunderstorms were regular with significant rainfall in some places. The weather remained changeable for the final week of the month.

Apart from the now resident Glossy Ibis, three other rarities were found: a Broad-billed Sandpiper that visited three different sites on the north coast, a Savi's Warbler trapped at Haddiscoe and a Greenish Warbler on Blakeney Point. There were also some impressive gatherings; waders featured with a count of 84 Green Sandpipers at Cantley and 129 Greenshank passing Scolt Head. The latter site also produced a feeding flock of 295 Black Terns and a massive movement of over 8,000 Common Swifts. In the east eight juvenile Mediterranean Gulls together at Breydon was a county record and at Burgh Castle a roost of Yellow Wagtails was discovered, reaching a peak of 426 birds. A large arrival of Wood Sandpipers started mid-month resulting in double-figure counts at several sites. To add colour to an otherwise interesting month, an adult Rose-coloured Starling visited two villages on the edge of The Broads around the 7th. Also of interest were Cory's and Balearic Shearwaters, Red-necked Phalarope, Roseate Tern, and Icterine and Barred Warblers.

Early **September** was dominated by high pressure until the 10th with temperatures reaching 27°C on the 4th. Conditions for the next fortnight were unsettled with fresh-to-strong winds from a direction between south-west and north-west. From the 25th pressure built, bringing more settled conditions until fronts produced outbreaks of rain on the 30th.

The first few days were fairly quiet until a Buff-breasted Sandpiper was found in The Broads on the 6th. Two days later the second Greenish Warbler of the autumn appeared and on the 10th the county's earliest ever Yellow-browed Warblers arrived at Holkham. On the wader front,



Dark-breasted Barn Owl (*Andy Benson*)

the influx of Pectoral Sandpipers continued with at least another nine arriving and large numbers of juvenile Curlew Sandpipers appearing at several sites. Rare waders were represented by two White-rumped and two Baird's Sandpipers, and the arrival of a juvenile Lesser Yellowlegs which was destined to become the first to over-winter in the county. In the Brecks an assembly of 83 Stone Curlews must have been an impressive sight. Turning to the sea, the weather after the 11th produced some good seawatching conditions with two Balearic Shearwaters and the autumn's highest counts of Manx Shearwater, Gannet, Great Skua and Arctic Tern. This period culminated on the 23rd when several Sabine's Gulls and Leach's Petrels were seen off the north coast. Both species of phalarope also appeared on the latter date. In the final week the north-west coast produced some very early Little Auks. Staying with the maritime theme, a total of 39 Short-eared Owls were seen arriving in off the sea during the month. To complete the picture Spotted Crake, Richard's Pipit, Dipper, Bluethroat, Barred Warbler and Red-breasted Flycatcher were all recorded.

October began with south-west winds but, as a building high pressure moved from the Atlantic into Scandinavia, intensifying winds veered first to the east then south-east as a low pressure moved up from the Bay of Biscay. Very unsettled conditions persisted until the 17th after which there was a brief respite but the unsettled weather returned until the 26th. A very deep depression moving into the south-west approaches on the 27th became slow moving and as it gradually filled it produced warm south-easterlies with temperatures reaching 15°C daily from the 28th to the 30th. The month ended with cooler north-east winds.

The first day of October produced the last Honey Buzzard of the year and the first Greenland White-fronted Goose of the winter. The sea still grabbed the attention in the first 10 days with more Sabine's Gulls and large movements of Little Gulls, Kittiwakes and auks, and several reports of Grey Phalarope. The second week produced a *tristis* Chiffchaff and Western Bonelli's Warbler, and the start of a large influx of Pallas's Warblers; the first Rough-legged Buzzards of the autumn also arrived. Around mid-month the start of one of Britain's largest Waxwing invasions began with birds arriving along the whole Norfolk coast. Coinciding with this was a large irruption of Northern Bullfinches, birds being reported at several coastal sites from California to Titchwell. Interest in the third week switched to passerine rarities with Red-throated Pipit, Sardinian Warbler and Radde's Warbler being found, and a Dark-breasted Barn Owl was ringed on the north coast. The first of two Pallid Swifts was accompanied by Common Swifts over Blakeney Point on the 20th whilst the second was tracked along the north coast from Sheringham to Blakeney Point nine days later. Plenty of other good birds were about including Green-winged Teal, Roseate Terns, Richard's Pipits, Barred Warbler, Dartford Warbler, Red-breasted Flycatcher, Great Grey Shrike and Mealy Redpoll.

During the first five days of **November** the wind shifted clockwise from north-east round to north-west. A high pressure then developed to the south-west and with fronts running around it, the weather remained rather changeable until the 17th. A depression then moved east across the country introducing cold northerlies with some snow and low daytime temperatures on the 20th, followed by a very sharp overnight frost. Milder conditions then returned on the 21st and the remainder of month remained changeable.

The Waxwing invasion gathered pace with sizeable flocks reported at many sites throughout the month. Highlights in the first two weeks were Ferruginous Duck, two Spoonbills, one of which was to over-winter, a Black Guillemot in the Wash, the last two Pallas's Warblers of the autumn influx and two Great Grey Shrikes. Large flocks of Common Scoter built up in Holkham Bay and at Titchwell, with good numbers of Velvet Scoter present at the latter site. The Little Egret Roost at Holkham reached a new record high and other noteworthy counts were 1,000 Sanderling at Titchwell and at least 70,000 Knot in the Wash. In



Waxwing (*Richard Johnson*)

the east up to 15 Shags roosted regularly off Sea Palling/Eccles and at Holkham Bay 30 Shore Larks and up to 350 Snow Buntings were a regular spectacle. A good passage of Little Auks occurred on the 19th and a Quail was found on the 23rd. Bird of the month, however, was Norfolk's first Grey-cheeked Thrush which was picked out of a mist net in Thetford Forest. Unfortunately, after release, it was never seen again.

The first two weeks of **December** were generally dry but mild apart from the 13th when mist and low cloud kept temperatures around 1°C all day. A rapidly deepening depression moving east over southern Britain on the 18th fortunately passed south of the county and we escaped the rain and gales which lashed southern Britain. Northerly winds set in behind this depression and a sprinkling of snow occurred on the 20th. Gale force westerlies preceded the Christmas period followed by a return to northerly winds and snow showers on the 26th. Milder conditions then persisted until the end of the year.

The first of the month saw Mediterranean Gulls at Yarmouth reach a total of 44. Geese figured prominently with a larger than normal arrival of Tundra Bean and at least 150,000 Pink-feet in the county. Titchwell is normally one of the top winter sites but this month it surpassed itself. As well as the normal fayre at this time of year a trio of redpoll species arrived and remained around the visitor centre all month, allowing most people the chance to familiarise themselves with the subtleties of their plumage differences. Then in mid-month an immature drake King Eider was found close offshore and remained for 11 days. The Waxwings that arrived throughout November had now congregated in Norwich and several large flocks were dotted around the city. The Christmas period produced the first sighting of the immature White-tailed Eagle that was to lead many people a merry dance in the new year. Also at this time a very late Swallow was at Cley, a Rough-legged Buzzard settled at Wighton until the end of the year, and a Hooded Crow was found in the Broads.

Although there were several rather quiet periods, all in all **2004** was a fairly good year with plenty of interesting birds. Apart from a purple patch in April, spring was disappointing but the autumn more than made up for that. The year produced just one addition to the county list but the events surrounding this record lead one to ask an intriguing question -just how many more quality birds regularly lurk out there in the depths of the Norfolk countryside waiting to be found?

Wetland Bird Survey 2004

The Complete Wash: *Dave Bingham*

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Little Grebe	45	38	29	2	-	-	2	6	25	21	44	32
Great Crested Grebe	22	6	7	7	25	2	42	8	12	30	38	2
Cormorant	318	115	112	75	74	75	235	206	236	360	538	480
Little Egret	35	41	37	14	17	5	22	67	92	52	67	36
Grey Heron	23	15	5	12	14	16	28	43	50	33	19	15
Mute Swan	23	34	36	28	14	11	10	9	20	4	33	53
Pink-footed Goose	27353	20	5	103	10	-	-	1	1	1524	16516	27731
Greylag Goose	433	83	370	340	126	589	463	704	1038	6	546	520
Canada Goose	334	23	43	55	67	211	158	108	38	290	308	300
Dark-bellied Brent	18734	12150	9309	7654	6229	9	7	4	28	5966	11334	11139
Shelduck	7341	5140	2837	1252	1799	2780	5033	1757	1873	4031	7451	5782
Wigeon	3476	2255	807	117	1	2	1	2	463	1628	2819	2457
Gadwall	58	67	6	15	9	10	14	3	8	-	21	87
Teal	4223	1437	194	65	9	1	1	3	505	685	1109	1705
Mallard	2639	1921	754	389	227	580	236	264	1606	656	1573	1316
Pintail	373	1086	4	1	3	-	-	-	38	62	120	218
Shoveler	3	4	12	16	11	3	-	4	1	-	3	-
Pochard	37	36	13	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	9	2
Tufted Duck	42	58	36	65	54	73	36	23	35	3	43	25
Scaup	11	1	2	2	-	1	-	1	2	2	8	1
Eider	237	233	8	63	50	27	43	58	42	29	91	50
Common Scoter	2	-	-	-	-	-	372	156	30	22	39	-
Goldeneye	27	59	6	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	32
R B Merganser	42	30	36	12	9	-	1	-	-	33	10	13
Moorhen	14	6	9	3	9	12	12	18	9	6	26	16
Coot	70	125	52	37	21	43	52	88	73	34	37	34
Oystercatcher	14684	12209	7136	4485	3403	4684	4203	15699	14144	9231	12840	8251
Avocet	1	130	180	264	340	370	424	532	12	-	1	-
Ringed Plover	347	99	116	157	202	378	108	410	754	146	39	8
Golden Plover	25817	2508	310	64	1	5	874	5945	6354	6820	6473	34900
Grey Plover	10447	4144	6863	7419	12447	41	352	4108	12278	12342	2061	3812
Lapwing	27107	9131	277	25	49	115	422	1233	457	4732	9171	43822
Knot	36510	30918	32165	21278	7459	4090	4404	40369	71779	82638	105912	91468
Sanderling	317	241	30	106	105	1348	3	2386	1156	1152	170	225
Dunlin	23555	31624	27023	19681	39812	499	4726	25998	38361	23320	17518	18209
Snipe	5	16	8	-	1	-	1	16	10	10	23	6
Black-tailed Godwit	2616	1339	583	416	191	342	1210	2412	5546	2186	5492	945
Bar-tailed Godwit	16280	14425	6662	822	601	126	2251	5385	6105	4742	6640	8254
Whimbrel	-	2	-	19	87	2	32	414	21	2	-	-
Curlew	4037	2328	2055	642	334	313	3296	6978	5300	2878	1255	1994
Redshank	3410	3062	2895	3893	1406	576	1025	5546	6710	3131	2611	5048
Greenshank	-	-	-	2	34	2	92	195	204	14	4	-
Turnstone	235	354	90	239	471	106	79	1244	548	233	487	260
Black-headed Gull	1299	3726	1933	2136	2087	4513	5156	11093	7351	2452	1750	4274
Common Gull	1024	1375	115	92	28	82	133	247	199	147	83	498
L B B Gull	27	22	114	258	333	695	807	1039	102	243	929	4
Herring Gull	3154	2578	1423	1378	1621	1879	2299	3258	1958	1697	1727	2987
G B B Gull	559	181	50	31	97	193	152	419	124	1480	933	198
Sandwich Tern	-	-	-	2	5	1	116	208	145	2	-	-
Common Tern	-	-	-	2	40	93	150	199	63	7	-	-

The above data is unvalidated and for official uses the BTO should be contacted

Wetland Bird Survey 2004

North Norfolk Coast: *Neil Lawton*

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Red-throated Diver	11	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	5	11	8	11
Little Grebe	62	45	20	60	50	57	15	9	36	35	36	35
Great Crested Grebe	7	2	-	-	2	12	5	2	4	11	19	49
Cormorant	95	79	93	192	206	269	84	146	216	128	185	110
Little Egret	96	75	55	110	124	165	98	184	210	154	310	242
Grey Heron	20	16	17	34	22	29	22	33	32	24	20	17
Mute Swan	34	34	41	49	53	67	39	36	47	43	46	40
Pink-footed Goose	16039	7913	1085	111	32	-	-	-	22	1030	11948	9867
White-fronted Goose	540	450	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	229
Greylag Goose	859	635	652	502	619	527	515	572	1245	493	1085	1371
Canada Goose	132	48	89	122	98	159	216	212	247	112	269	200
Dark-bellied Brent	7649	4354	2775	2228	1225	17	5	7	13	2950	4973	6776
Egyptian Goose	11	16	22	23	33	39	27	28	144	82	10	21
Shelduck	1112	851	993	770	647	565	388	195	150	586	789	1110
Wigeon	20694	12549	8132	140	28	13	4	3	1565	11372	13324	16067
Gadwall	200	231	135	216	208	215	65	54	104	100	130	231
Teal	3436	1668	770	314	22	15	119	205	2562	3519	3003	3730
Mallard	1179	1221	738	588	492	532	288	433	1054	1063	1295	1101
Pintail	420	391	39	3	-	-	-	2	142	712	431	594
Shoveler	199	167	212	202	175	141	17	61	222	162	199	234
Pochard	95	36	57	37	43	11	9	3	1	1	16	16
Tufted Duck	39	71	100	115	95	70	33	31	15	18	26	40
Eider	41	42	63	23	42	43	44	32	52	65	39	62
Common Scoter	1710	1850	873	833	2252	2136	2121	-	-	584	4835	6200
Goldeneye	164	91	42	2	-	-	-	-	-	4	42	98
R B Merganser	89	71	105	23	7	-	-	-	1	46	92	81
Ruddy Duck	1	1	10	17	20	16	8	3	4	4	3	2
Coot	404	357	409	324	294	281	188	197	210	137	203	283
Moorhen	280	170	244	226	168	157	89	58	59	107	107	181
Oystercatcher	3158	2792	3858	1930	1717	1615	1942	2369	2539	2340	3241	2789
Avocet	31	125	508	591	541	461	465	75	18	27	33	39
Ringed Plover	307	385	464	259	582	491	191	809	1301	752	169	81
Golden Plover	5039	1718	193	7	34	-	1	177	452	862	3127	5375
Grey Plover	1082	1303	939	650	787	129	81	262	1359	1093	1103	875
Lapwing	5384	7325	873	704	714	681	840	569	291	1163	2475	6911
Knot	7125	6301	1170	444	54	138	3	16119	10011	38714	2193	6735
Sanderling	540	376	601	220	462	182	12	941	792	395	889	443
Dunlin	3308	3179	1592	757	1472	90	441	2613	1751	2225	2699	3148
Ruff	30	46	43	57	-	-	15	96	268	32	125	126
Snipe	78	51	121	28	19	22	-	35	51	79	74	77
Black-tailed Godwit	79	285	601	783	317	175	733	788	1020	355	771	663
Bar-tailed Godwit	1271	710	285	154	94	111	161	659	1347	1360	1162	788
Whimbrel	-	-	-	72	141	6	47	140	5	1	-	-
Curlew	1539	1463	1179	191	71	94	1275	1835	1795	1536	1460	1518
Spotted Redshank	4	3	4	-	-	-	9	34	20	12	16	2
Redshank	1250	1189	1085	921	604	688	832	1846	1681	1052	1180	1021
Greenshank	2	2	-	5	17	5	7	103	118	13	1	2
Common Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	13	1	1	46	8	-	-	-
Turnstone	473	448	382	395	455	171	144	1028	930	433	655	376

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Maximum Monthly Counts 2004

Breydon and Berney: *Peter Allard*

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Little Grebe	2	3	4	5	8	3	4	10	10	4	4	3
Great Crested Grebe	5	5	6	3	5	9	18	34	36	9	6	7
Cormorant	90	79	80	40	27	39	63	84	81	76	58	79
Little Egret	15	8	13	14	16	22	26	42	20	16	9	6
Mute Swan	163	120	148	67	121	82	52	43	42	36	33	61
Bewick's Swan	71	220	118	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	32	17
Pink-footed Goose	*17100	8519	2700	8	1	1	1	1	113	500	3360	9640
White-fronted Goose	455	1	231	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	4	42
Greylag Goose	298	16	7	34	84	65	99	121	146	*852	*1148	375
Canada Goose	81	35	12	17	44	42	49	68	87	135	286	95
Barnacle Goose	4	-	6	5	3	61	7	-	-	10	23	70
Brnt Goose	4	-	-	4	1	-	-	-	2	18	1	1
Egyptian Goose	1	2	4	12	10	21	60	20	*78	*82	23	5
Shelduck	82	111	139	152	134	278	153	53	257	431	183	131
Wigeon	16811	15230	10057	629	15	3	2	-	353	5130	7934	12890
Gadwall	44	98	129	109	53	37	3	2	3	9	6	2
Teal	1862	1982	1302	969	151	19	29	746	334	1360	1327	1260
Mallard	372	239	78	28	34	64	100	97	170	169	262	389
Pintail	194	127	188	14	2	-	-	1	61	106	118	242
Garganey	-	-	*8	3	6	1	4	3	2	-	-	-
Shoveler	176	210	322	261	25	11	29	37	119	218	234	267
Pochard	-	5	24	29	12	19	19	3	2	-	1	-
Tufted Duck	5	6	7	3	17	10	2	5	-	3	8	12
Coot	326	471	426	31	-	-	-	53	72	114	131	190
Oystercatcher	29	80	215	145	64	76	122	131	47	30	31	35
Avocet	191	234	240	153	61	182	858	1012	780	284	143	191
Ringed Plover	111	82	70	26	131	79	38	214	219	108	89	49
Golden Plover	10464	4627	3350	80	10	5	182	2760	5420	6100	12200	*15100
Grey Plover	45	42	49	16	10	7	2	3	12	51	68	32
Lapwing	14917	12200	2060	130	140	149	243	220	308	1160	8100	9810
Knot	196	143	107	32	13	15	23	30	74	49	62	302
Sanderling	4	5	7	3	6	-	4	1	1	-	1	3
Little Stint	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	4	-	-	-
Curlew Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	4	1	9	12	39	3	-	-
Dunlin	3931	3130	3217	2351	1357	34	756	515	810	1511	3160	4387
Ruff	22	19	43	14	5	3	69	62	8	26	3	86
Snipe	31	13	34	8	5	2	25	33	113	32	21	17
Black-tailed Godwit	695	520	434	326	106	71	798	1612	1417	1292	1312	1096
Bar-tailed Godwit	57	55	47	17	21	6	5	29	13	17	22	41
Whimbrel	-	-	-	66	55	-	12	2	1	-	-	-
Curlew	819	857	721	279	34	141	631	717	874	984	1169	982
Spotted Redshank	2	3	8	9	3	2	5	4	5	7	5	2
Redshank	880	857	*1566	*1581	152	98	989	1121	1140	1059	1140	1519
Greenshank	-	-	-	2	13	2	12	18	3	2	-	-
Green Sandpiper	-	-	1	-	2	2	3	4	2	3	-	-
Wood Sandpiper	-	-	-	2	3	-	-	*19	-	-	-	-
Common Sandpiper	-	-	-	3	13	-	10	16	3	-	-	-
Turnstone	4	10	9	9	9	-	21	16	18	10	9	4
Little Gull	-	-	-	6	1	2	1	1	-	-	-	-

* Site Record

Norfolk Bird Atlas

Moss Taylor

By the end of the 2004 breeding season, five years of fieldwork had been completed for the Norfolk Bird Atlas. Of the 1455 tetrads that are located, entirely or partly, in Norfolk, 64% had been covered in winter and 58% in summer. This represents a huge effort on the part of the growing team of observers, which by the end of the 2004 summer totalled 328. Between them they had spent over 12,000 hours in the field, as a result of which the Atlas database held nearly 130,000 records!

In previous bird reports, I have compared the current Atlas data with that obtained during the 1980-85 Norfolk Breeding Atlas, as well as making comparisons between years and between winter and summer totals for the current Atlas. Norfolk conveniently divides into two halves, east and west, along the 00 easting on the OS map that passes through East Dereham. This year I have used this as the basis for comparison, using the same 62 species included in earlier reports. In the table that follows East Norfolk is defined as those tetrads with the prefix TG and TM, while West Norfolk comprises TF and TL.

<i>Species</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>Species</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>West</i>
*Mallard	8	10	Garden Warbler	2	3
Sparrowhawk	1	1	Blackcap	7	7
Kestrel	1	1	Chiffchaff	7	7
Red-legged Partridge	5	8	Willow Warbler	5	6
Grey Partridge	2	3	Goldcrest	4	5
*Pheasant	12	16	Spotted Flycatcher	1	1
Moorhen	5	5	Long-tailed Tit	3	3
Lapwing	5	6	Marsh Tit	2	2
Feral Pigeon	9	7	Willow Tit	1	1
Stock Dove	5	5	Coal Tit	3	5
Woodpigeon	64	52	Blue Tit	15	10
Collared Dove	11	10	Great Tit	11	9
Turtle Dove	2	2	Nuthatch	2	2
Cuckoo	1	2	Treecreeper	2	2
Swift	11	11	Jay	2	2
Green Woodpecker	2	2	Magpie	4	3
Great Sp Woodpecker	2	2	Jackdaw	12	12
Lesser Sp Woodpecker	1	1	Rook	60	38
Skylark	12	12	Carrion Crow	6	6
Swallow	7	6	Starling	17	15
House Martin	10	10	House Sparrow	20	22
Meadow Pipit	5	6	Tree Sparrow	2	4
Pied Wagtail	3	4	Chaffinch	27	27
Wren	22	19	Greenfinch	14	11
Duncock	9	8	Goldfinch	5	5
Robin	16	13	Linnet	6	6
Blackbird	29	22	Lesser Redpoll	2	4
Song Thrush	4	4	Bullfinch	2	2
Mistle Thrush	3	3	Yellowhammer	7	6
Lesser Whitethroat	2	2	Reed Bunting	4	5
Whitethroat	8	9	Corn Bunting	1	3

Average number of breeding pairs in occupied tetrads in East and West Norfolk in 2000-2004. Note the breeding count of species marked with an asterisk refers only to males.

As a comparatively small area (the width of a single county) is being used, it is not surprising that the average number of breeding pairs in occupied tetrads is similar in both halves of Norfolk. However, there are some interesting differences, which confirm the general impressions that I have obtained over the last few years as I have been inputting the raw data.

It has been generally appreciated for a number of years that Grey Partridges are more abundant in the west of the county, but it appears that both Red-legged Partridges and Pheasants are also more numerous. Presumably more shooting estates are located in that half of Norfolk and this in turn would explain the lower count for Magpies but not so the other gamekeeper's arch enemy, the Carrion Crow. The totals also suggest that the larger rookeries are to be found in East Norfolk. Could this be in any way related to the same factors? The figures for Woodpigeons are very difficult to interpret, as visit counts really depend on exactly where the large flocks are feeding from one day to the next.

Of the summer migrants, both Garden and Willow Warblers appear to be more numerous in the west, and from personal experience I would agree that Willow Warblers are surprisingly scarce in many parts of East Norfolk. No doubt the extensive stands of mature conifers in the Brecks account for the comparative abundance of both Goldcrests and Coal Tits. Although not particularly abundant anywhere in the county, Tree Sparrows, Lesser Redpolls and Corn Buntings are significantly more numerous in the west, again confirming many observers' casual observations, but are Greenfinches really more common in the east?

It is only when the final maps are produced, showing the distribution and abundance of Norfolk's breeding birds, that such questions will be answered. It is planned to continue fieldwork for a further three years, finishing at the end of the summer of 2007. In order for this to be achieved, it means that everyone involved must make every effort to ensure that all remaining Norfolk tetrads receive their full quota of two winter and two summer visits during the next three years. It's not an impossible task, but one that will require a final extra push.

As in last year's Report, the percentage of tetrads in which these 62 selected species were recorded on at least one of the set breeding season visits during the summers of 2000-04, and the average number of 'pairs' per occupied tetrad are given in the species accounts of the Systematic List.

Additional fieldworkers for the last three years would be most welcome and anyone interested in taking part in either the winter or summer surveys should contact Moss Taylor at 4 Heath Road, Sheringham, NR26 8JH or by email on mosstaylor@care4free.net



Swift (Steve Cale)

Systematic List

Introduction

Following recent changes to the British List by the British Ornithologists' Union, the order of the Systematic List below has been subsequently amended. The English names that are most familiar have been retained. Unless otherwise stated, all observations are of single birds and refer to 2004. The following abbreviations are used in the species accounts:

BO	=	Bird Observatory	NBC	=	Norfolk Bird Club
BBRC	=	British Birds Rarities Committee	NBR	=	Norfolk Bird Report
BF	=	Sugarbeet Factory	NNR	=	National Nature Reserve
BOU	=	British Ornithologists' Union	NR	=	Nature Reserve
BTO	=	British Trust for Ornithology	RC	=	Relief Channel
CP	=	Country/Coastal Park	RSPB	=	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
ESA	=	Environmentally Sensitive Area	SM	=	Saltmarsh
FM	=	Fresh Marsh	STW	=	Sewage Treatment Works
GC	=	Golf Course	TA	=	Training Area
GM	=	Grazing Marsh	WeBS	=	'monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts
GP	=	Gravel Pit	WM	=	Water Meadows
NBA	=	Norfolk Bird Atlas	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 or none present. For wildfowl and waders, the data used derives generally from the monthly WeBS counts although if higher totals are available these are used instead; readers are also referred to the tables giving composite counts for the Wash, north coast and Breydon/Berney which should be read in conjunction with the individual species accounts in the Systematic List. WeBS thresholds for International/National importance have been inserted for all relevant species.

Whilst many records to the west of Sheringham town are in the Sheringham Bird Observatory recording area, for the sake of simplicity most records are referred to as 'Sheringham' only. The area previously referred to as 'Lakenheath Washes' is called 'Hockwold Washes' to avoid confusion with the adjacent Lakenheath Fen RSPB Reserve situated in Suffolk. The area referred to as mid-Yare RSPB includes the reserve at Strumpshaw and adjoining land under the Society's control and/or ownership. Where details of breeding birds are given at Holkham NNR for example these refer, unless otherwise stated, to the grazing marshes at Burnham Norton, Burnham Overy and Holkham.

Whilst a considerable proportion of the county's coastline to the north-east runs on a north-west/south-east axis to simplify matters movements have been quoted as east/west and north/south. Hence records to the west of Happisburgh are listed east/west as appropriate and those to the east as north/south.

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.

Mute Swan

Cygnus olor

A common resident; the Ouse Washes attract the most important winter concentrations

Highest numbers at most regularly counted sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Breydon/Berney	163	120	148	67	121	82	52	43	42	36	33	61
Nar Valley Fisheries	-	-	-	40	15	-	-	50	35	53	109	101
Welney	92	129	101	181	252	193	-	-	-	67	99	87

Other concentrations: *Jan* 246 Hardley Flood, 126 Halvergate Marshes, 120 Lyng; *Feb* 155 Acle; *March* 148 Halvergate Marshes; *May* 73 Stanford Water; *June* 84 Hockwold Washes, 60 Narford; *July* 75 Thorpe St Andrew; *Dec* 90 Halvergate Marshes, 63 Honing.

Records of 83 nests/broods including 18 Welney, 12 mid-Yare RSPB, 9 Holkham NNR, 7 Haddiscoe Island, 6 Hickling Broad and 4 Whitlingham CP.

No details received of any coastal movements.

Bewick's Swan

Cygnus columbianus

Passage migrant and winter visitor in internationally important numbers

Counts at Welney WWT:

Jan 6th	Feb 8th	Mar 7th	Oct 18th	Nov 28th	Dec 12th
5122	3264	213	88	3643	3031
(6330)	(4265)	(484)	-	-	(4935)

International importance (winter): 170

** (Total Norfolk/Cambridgeshire figure in brackets)*

Record numbers roosting at Welney during Jan with feeding flocks fanning out during daytime as far as Feltwell Anchor and west Suffolk border. Wintering birds usually tend to leave early and although 2256 remained on Feb 22nd most had gone by end of month. Late records included 14 on March 28th and 6 juvs April 4th with 2 remaining until 11th. Two adults briefly present at Welney Aug 30th before flying off north were of unknown origin. Autumn arrival commenced with 4 adults Oct 10th but no major influxes until later in month and early Nov. Flocks at year end contained 12.04% cygnets.

Substantial numbers again found in Broads where peak counts included: 380 Catfield Jan 21st - roosting Swim Coots and Hickling Rush Hills, 420 Hickling Jan 23rd with 173 Dec 24th, 320 Ludham Jan 7th - roosting at Ranworth Broad, 350 Potter Heigham Feb 4th, 480 St Benet's Level Feb 13th and 132 Dec 31st. Also 60 Repps-with-Bastwick Jan 24th with 80 Dec 25th, and 220 Breydon/Berney Feb 1st.

Easterly spring departure again noted at numerous localities during Feb and included 150 Sparham Pools 16th, 80 Norwich 18th, 200 Rockland St Mary 24th and during March 35 Necton 1st, 35 East Tuddenham and 153 Halvergate 2nd, 70 Ditchingham 7th and 58 Yarmouth 8th. Mostly small numbers recorded at a number of coastal sites during autumn immigration, although 49 west Scolt Head Nov 24th.

Whooper Swan

Cygnus cygnus

Winter visitor, mainly from Iceland, in internationally important numbers

Counts at Welney WWT:

<i>Jan 26th</i>	<i>Feb 22nd</i>	<i>Mar 7th</i>	<i>Oct 18th</i>	<i>Nov 28th</i>	<i>Dec 12th</i>
3051	2096	1979	305	2410	2537
(3350)	(2571)	(2540)	-	-	(3257)

International importance (winter): 160

**(Total Norfolk/Cambridgeshire figure in brackets)*

Record counts in Fens early in year at Welney with large numbers remaining into early March although virtually all gone by mid-April. Two flying birds remained until May 16th plus up to 9 casualties throughout summer. First 5 autumn arrivals Sept 24th with 15 next day. A fairly slow build-up of wintering birds with no major influxes until mid-Nov. Sample counts in early Dec showed 17.72% cygnets in the flocks.

Peak counts in Broads: 60 Catfield Jan 7th with 54 Feb 11th and 25 Dec 22nd, 41 Horning Upper Street Jan 21st, 25 Horsey Feb 7th, 70 Ludham Jan 7th and 51 Potter Heigham Jan 5th.

Elsewhere small numbers seen on both passages from many coastal and inland sites. A late individual Whitlingham CP April 25th while 6 early migrants passed Scolt Head Oct 3rd.

Bean Goose

Anser fabalis

Taiga Bean Goose *A (f) fabalis*

Winter visitor to the Yare Valley

Numbers in Yare Valley typical for recent winters with 111 Jan 4th and 140 18th. More than usual remained during Feb when 40 4th, 83 20th and last 30 29th. First back in autumn early Nov when 6 on 7th, increasing to 48 14th and 120 21st, and 156 Dec 12th.

As usual few away from main wintering site: 2 with Greylag Geese Horsey/West Somerton April 3rd-11th, one with Pink-footed Geese North Barsham Nov 26th, 3 Breydon/Berney Dec 3rd and one Ringstead Dec 17th.

Tundra Bean Goose *A (f) rossicus*

Small numbers increasingly recorded in winter

As usual small numbers identified amongst the vast flocks of Pink-footed Geese in north Norfolk during first winter period: Jan 3 Waterden 2nd, 7 Wells and 6 Docking 4th, 3 Langham 7th, 4 Brancaster 11th, 8 North Creak 12th; Feb 2 Holme 2nd, 4 North Creak 5th. Due to mobile nature of flocks difficult to be certain how many birds involved in these sightings but a conservative estimate of 10-12 appears reasonable. In Broads up to 7 during Jan in Martham area 1st-6th whilst 2 Repps-with-Bastwick Jan 1st-8th and in the Berney/Wickhampton/Reedham area 4 on 23rd and 17 24th. A small flock once again wintered at Welney where 6 throughout Jan and Feb until 27th. Elsewhere 2 west offshore West Runton Feb 29th and a Bean Goose sp at Buckenham March 28th.

First returning birds Nov when 10 Brancaster 6th and singles Ringstead 22nd, and Brancaster 25th and 27th. During early Dec and continuing throughout month an exceptional influx recorded involving as many as 220-250 birds, largest numbers at Breydon/Berney where 8 4th, 27 6th, 61 27th, 79 28th and an impressive 112 29th. Elsewhere 22 Waxham 12th, 21 Hickling Broad 21st and 39 22nd, 20 Happisburgh 3rd, 12 Repps-with-Bastwick 5th, 3 Acle 10th and 3 Martham 22nd. Numbers in north-west Norfolk estimated at 35-40 with Pink-feet including 23 Snettisham 6th/7th, 21 Titchwell 5th, 14 Brancaster 9th, 9 Ringstead 6th, 8

Brancaster Staithe 17th and 5 Docking 23rd. Elsewhere up to 39 present at Welney during Dec.

Pink-footed Goose

Anser brachyrhynchus

Winter visitor in internationally important numbers from Iceland and East Greenland

Co-ordinated counts of three main roosts in north Norfolk and Breydon/Berney showed once again a substantial increase in numbers wintering, with 115,972 Dec 6th and a record 147,250 Dec 13th. When added to those also roosting at Horsey, which were not always counted on count days, this produced a total of over 150,000, more than 50% of the world's population. Max counts from Horsey area 8000 Jan, 8000 Feb, 1000 Sept, 4200 Oct, 9256 Nov and 7500 Dec. None were noted roosting at Thornham this year, but birds increasingly used Holkham GM to roost rather than flighting to Wells/Warham sand flats.

Co-ordinated counts from the three north Norfolk roosts, Breydon/Berney and occasionally from Horsey during winter months, once again was best method for monitoring numbers:

	<i>Jan 25th</i>	<i>Oct 18th</i>	<i>Nov 12th</i>	<i>Nov 19th</i>	<i>Dec 6th</i>	<i>Dec 13th</i>
Snettisham	17300	5000	9470	13750	11340	27610
Scolt Head	19400	1300	22500	36300	66000	52000
Holkham/Wells	11700	18625	31470	29780	29382	58000
Berney	15880	90	2200	2950	8000	9640
Horsey	-	6400	-	-	-	-
Total	64280	31415	65640	82780	115972	147250

Largest feeding flocks away from roost areas: *Jan* 35,000 Waterden, 25,000 Reedham, 20,000 Flitcham, 15,000 Docking, 5000 Martham, 2000 Repps-with-Bastwick; *Sept* 1000 Waxham; *Oct* 5000 Burnham Market; *Nov* 25,000 North Barsham, 16000 Burnham Thorpe, 15000 Docking, 10,000 Egemere, 10,000 Flitcham, 6000 Heigham Holmes, 6000 Repps-with-Bastwick, 3000 Waxham; *Dec* 3500 Saxlingham, 2400 Acle, 2000 Freethorpe.

Birds departed rapidly during Feb and March, with few anywhere in April and May; best counts 200 Holme April 1st, 91 Burnham Norton 18th, 103 Snettisham 19th, 8 Breydon/Berney 20th, 600 Holkham GM 24th and in May 18 Holme and 77 Burnham Norton 1st, 18 Holme 8th and last wild/flying birds 10 Snettisham and 16 Holkham GM both 9th.

Summering birds including sick/injured and feral birds included 3 Holme and 1-2 Snettisham, Holkham GM, Breydon/Berney and Pentney GP.

First returning birds arrived back on cue during second week Sept when 14 Holkham GM 9th, increasing to 450 15th and 8000 by end of month, 29 Holme 14th, 65 Titchwell and 81 in off sea Scolt Head 15th, and 123 Aylmerton 16th. Fresh birds arrived daily during rest of Sept both on north coast and eastern part of county with 65 Hoveton and 100 Waxham 24th, 1000 Brograve Levels and Waxham 25th, 1000 Holme and 2500 roosting Scolt Head 29th, and 650 Barton Turf Fen 30th.

As usual almost daily movement of birds between populations in north-west and east of county including 5200 east Sheringham Oct 24th and 6000 north-west Happisburgh Oct 30th. Notable records elsewhere included 130 south-east Hellesdon Feb 11th, 3 Welney April 13th, 275 Gorleston Sept 25th, 150 north-east Hethersett and 196 east Whitlingham CP Oct 31st, 600 west Ringland Nov 10th and 250 north-west Frettenham, 400 over Aylsham, 100 over Cantley BF and 75 north-west Hellesdon all Nov 28th.

Various leucistic and partial albino birds once again recorded and demonstrated the mobile nature of flocks; a leucistic bird and partial albino Martham early Jan then in north

Norfolk by early Feb through until April. In autumn pair of white-bellied birds with white primaries and one with a white neck Flitcham during Nov, the leucistic bird was back in north Norfolk by mid-Nov joined by a second early Dec.

White-fronted Goose

Anser albifrons

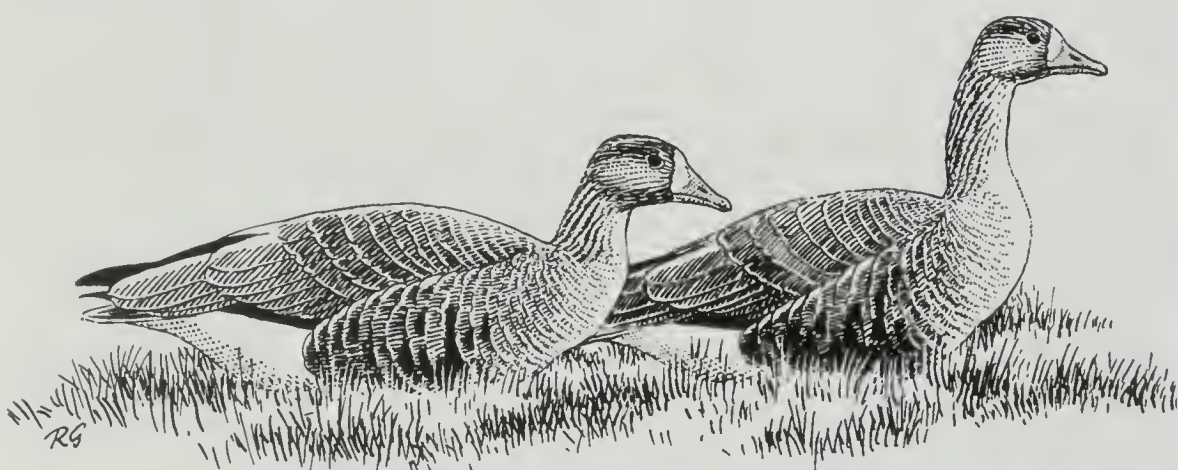
European White-fronted Goose *A (a) albifrons*

Winter visitor and passage migrant from Siberian tundra

Peak counts at traditional wintering localities:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Holkham GM	540	650	470	100	350
Hickling/Heigham Holmes	355	505	-	-	260
Buckenham/Cantley	150	200	-	54	83
Breydon/Berney	455	1	231	3	42

Away from main localities in first winter period: *Jan* 11 Mundesley 1st, 13 Felbrigg 1st and 11 20th, 500 Halvergate 22nd, one Bayfield Hall 25th; *March* 8 Ken Hill GM 2nd-7th and 2 16th, 12 Horsey/West Somerton 8th-20th, 50 Halvergate 14th, 3 Burnham Overy GM 26th, 10 Winterton 28th.



White-fronted Geese (*Robert Gillmor*)

During spring and summer single feral/injured birds Breydon/Berney, Heigham Holmes, Holkham GM, Martham and West Somerton.

First back in autumn 5 east Scolt Head and 3 Holkham GM Oct 11th, 6 Holkham GM 15th, 9 Cantley 28th and 30 Burnham Overy GM 30th. Only records away from key sites in final two months of year: *Nov* 2 east Weybourne 1st, 3 Stiffkey 4th, Ringstead 19th, Flitcham 21st, 11 in off sea Gorleston 28th, 8 Hickling Stubb Mill 29th; *Dec* 2 Ringstead 12th, 41 Snettisham 6th/7th.

Greenland White-fronted Goose *A (a) flavirostris*

Regular visitor in very small numbers from Western Greenland

In north-west Norfolk 2 adults present since 2003 and a 1st-winter seen intermittently until Feb 24th with the flocks of Pinkfeet. Also an adult Martham Jan 6th and 2 adults Wickhampton Jan 24th.

In second winter period over 30 sightings also from north-west with first bird (juv) Oct 1st and first adult 8th. In Nov 3 separate adults present and 2 'new' adults in Dec; with the juv/1st-winter seen irregularly at least 6 individuals present Oct-Dec.

Greylag Goose
Long-established and increasing feral population complicates identity of genuine wild arrivals

Anser anser

Highest counts at most regularly counted and important sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Snettisham	430	250	360	156	170	493	463	764	1037	219	489	650
Holme	85	60	52	30	2	42	10	40	90	60	72	50
Holkham NNR	516	416	376	259	310	226	1160	270	159	284	495	239
Stiffkey Fen	138	79	-	54	42	154	171	80	1000	74	441	781
Blakeney GM	63	41	72	56	82	31	41	103	-	113	36	-
Cley	-	50	90	91	134	42	218	290	199	216	-	274
Hickling/Heigham	440	-	-	160	356	170	-	500	760	-	456	360
Breydon/Berney	298	16	7	34	84	65	99	121	146	850	*1148	375
Pentney GP	342	-	-	125	200	180	190	200	300	-	-	-
Shropham GP	387	304	75	175	220	-	-	230	-	381	-	-
Thetford Nun Lakes	250	167	56	20	34	66	55	160	200	224	96	329

*Site record

Highest counts from other sites: *Jan* 345 Nar Valley Fisheries, 300 Great Ryburgh, 270 Bittering GP, 200 Fustywed GP, 150 Tottenhill GP; *June* 112 Ranworth Broad, 100 Rollesby Broad; *July* 286 Cranwich GP, 230 Bectley GP; *Aug* 430 Titchwell; *Sept* 950 Buckenham, 877 Titchwell, 750 Strumpshaw, 700 Swanton Morley GP, 320 Nar Valley Fisheries, 200 Brancaster Hbr, 200 Morston; *Oct* 550 Nar Valley Fisheries, 309 Welney; *Nov* 338 Welney, 200 Nar Valley Fisheries; *Dec* 541 Nar Valley Fisheries, 262 Martham, 178 Welney.

Breeding records received included (pairs in brackets): Bayfield Hall (2 broods), Breydon/Berney (6), Cley (56 young), Coxford (1), East Tuddenham (brood), Hickling Broad (11 young), Holkham NNR (80), Holkham Park (8 broods), Holme (2), mid-Yare RSPB (47), Pentney GP (many young), Shropham GP (6 broods), Whitlingham CP (2). Pairs also bred Bagmore, Nar Valley Fisheries and Wensum Valley (including Swanton Morley GP) but no details.

A neck-collared bird at Snettisham July 4th had been marked at Nosterfield GP, North Yorkshire 17th August 2002 (see also Ringing Report).

Only record possibly relating to wild bird of Icelandic origin feeding with Pink-footed Geese Ringstead Dec 12th and 26th.

Canada Goose
Introduced resident

Branta canadensis

Regularly counted at the following localities:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
T'ford Nunnery Lakes	123	92	183	118	127	288	203	47	244	108	191	66
Shropham GP	135	118	-	106	129	199	-	576	275	-	-	-
Pentney GP	99	-	-	-	12	-	43	226	250	130	302	196
Snettisham	-	51	-	16	-	153	142	137	-	128	205	170

Highest counts elsewhere: *Jan* 138 Nar Valley Fisheries, 81 Breydon/Berney; *Feb* 220 Heigham Holmes, 75 Buckenham Marshes; *June* 157 Titchwell, 70 Whitlingham CP; *July* 150 Cranwich GP, 138 Titchwell, 115 Barton Broad; *Aug* 112 Thornham; *Sept* 500 Buckenham Marshes, 300 Nar Valley Fisheries, 150 Salthouse; *Oct* 275 Nar Valley Fisheries; *Nov* 400 Thetford Nunnery Flood, 286 Breydon/Berney; *Dec* 132 Nar Valley Fisheries.

On April 22nd 16 seen arriving in off sea at Scolt Head when at least one mile offshore, continuing south and high inland until lost from sight. Midsummer movements again noted at various coastal sites in early June; at Scolt Head 102 west 5th, 23 in Brancaster Hbr 7th and 105 east 11th. Elsewhere 32 on sea Beeston Regis 6th, 36 west Overstrand 8th and 24 north Winterton 9th.

Breeding recorded at Bayfield, Blackborough End Tip, Breydon/Berney, Flitcham Abbey Farm, Holkham NNR, Holme, King's Lynn BF, mid-Yare RSPB, Nar Valley, Pentney GP, Shropham GP, Stanford TA and Wensum Valley.

'Vagrant' Canada Goose

Potential vagrants from north America

The bird present in Dec 2003 again in Burnham Market/Docking/Holkham area Jan 8th-24th. The *minima* Canada Goose also at Buckenham in Dec 2003 present until Jan 26th.

A new bird, not seen in county in recent years, in Burnham Market/Holkham area Sept 27th-Oct 3rd (AIB JRMc *et al*). Presumed same with Pinkfeet over Cringleford Oct 8th.

Barnacle Goose

Branta leucopsis

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers with feral/escaped birds often in large groups causing confusion

As usual a number of no doubt wild birds associating with the hordes of Pinkfeet in north-west of county. The high mobility of these geese makes exact numbers impossible to ascertain but up to 7 in first winter period and up to 5 in second winter period.

Presumed feral birds widely recorded during year with max counts: *Jan* 90 Buckenham Marshes, 58 Heigham Holmes; *Feb* 30 Heigham Holmes; *March* 15 Snettisham; *April* 27 Hethersett; *May* 43 Hickling Broad; *June* 61 Breydon/Berney, 30 Hickling Broad/Heigham Holmes; *July* 61 Hickling Broad; *Nov* 50 Buckenham Marshes; *Dec* 77 Buckenham Marshes, 70 Breydon/Berney, 50 Hickling Broad.



Brent Geese (Robert Gillmor)

Breeding occurred Holkham Park where pair fledged 4 young; also family party of 5 Nar Valley Fisheries in Aug.

Brent Goose

Branta bernicla

Dark-bellied Brent Goose *B (b) bernicla*

Abundant passage migrant and winter visitor

Monthly peak counts at selected important sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Oct	Nov	Dec
Terrington Marsh	2500	-	-	-	-	-	600	-
Ousemouth	-	2000	1900	600	500	-	2000	2000
Snettisham	-	-	196	250	225	-	-	-
Holme/Thornham/Titchwell	1200	407	343	193	127	429	400	513
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	350	744	418	850	480	725	1035	1380
Holkham GM/Wells	1500	576	287	-	57	272	252	1044
Stiffkey/Cockthorpe/Langham	902	280	641	332	400	-	4000	300
Blakeney GM/Hbr/Cley	1433	1052	1300	636	250	930	1214	1500

For further counts in Wash and north coast see WeBS tables

Most birds departed by end May but as usual a few lingered throughout summer. In June 7 Blakeney Hbr 6th and 3 27th, 5 Holme 1st and 5th, 3 Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr all month, 3 Blakeney Hbr 27th with 1-2 at Snettisham and Titchwell; also unusually one Holkham Park Lake 11th which arrived with Greylags. Similar situation July with birds noted at 7 sites. In Aug 5 Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr all month and single Stiffkey SM 26th.

First returning birds Sept 10th when 10 Wells and 2 Breydon/Berney (earliest ever for site). Numbers began to increase from mid-month with 140 present Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr by month end. Large-scale arrival Oct 9th when (all west) 1370 Scolt Head, 1200 Blakeney Point, 3100 Sheringham, 1637 Mundesley, 600 Sea Palling (north) and 318 (north) Winterton. Birds continued to arrive most days with most heading west along north coast but on Oct 28th a large-scale southerly movement noted east coast with an impressive 3630 Sea Palling, 6359 California and 2450 Gorleston (in 2 hrs), when also 541 west Scolt Head.

Indications of breeding success from Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr where 80 juvs amongst flock of 725 Oct 17th and Blakeney GM where 51 juvs in flock of 600 Dec 12th.

During both winter periods the regularly returning leucistic bird present Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr/Burnham area (now 23rd year) but for only second time accompanied by young. An adult Wells Nov 6th had neck and breast milky buff/brown with whitish necklace mark, whilst rest of body and wings dirty white.

Pale-bellied Brent Goose *B (b) hrota*

Scarce winter visitor

During first winter period 1-3 reported from numerous sites with most being found amongst Dark-bellied Brents along north coast or with Pinkfeet in north-west of county. Higher numbers Terrington Marsh where 5 (4 ads, 1 juv) Jan 4th, 16 Holkham GM Feb 1st, 6 Warham Greens Feb 3rd and 6 Cockthorpe Airfield March 1st. Latest Scolt Head May 1st-18th.

First in second winter period Stiffkey Fen Sept 21st followed by 7 west Holme 24th, and single Scolt Head and 2 Blakeney Point 29th. A party of 5 arrived Cley Oct 4th-7th with further Oct records of 2 west Sheringham 9th, Holkham 11th and 2 Blakeney Point 31st. In last 2 months of year 3 Cley Dec 25th; otherwise 1-2 at 11 localities but generally rather scarce.

Black Brant *B (b) nigricans*

An almost annual vagrant from Arctic Siberia

During first winter period singles Binham, Burnham Norton, Burnham Overy Staithe, Cley, Cockthorpe, Holkham GM, Langham, Lynn Point, Salthouse, Snettisham, Stiffkey Fen, Terrington and Wells. Multiple sightings of 3 ads Terrington Jan 4th, 2 ads Holme/Thornham/Titchwell Feb 3rd-March 25th, 2 Burnham Deepdale Feb 3rd and 2 Burnham Norton Feb 5th and 7th. Exact numbers hard to determine but analysing distribution of above records it would appear at least 6 birds present in county during this period. Last birds Titchwell and Wells both April 24th.

First returning bird (adult) Wells Nov 1st accompanied by 2 hybrid young. This family party remained in Holkham GM/Wells area until year end. In Holme/Thornham/Titchwell area last winter's duo returned by Nov 3rd. Singles Cockthorpe Nov 22nd and Morston Nov 27th presumably relate to same bird which no doubt also responsible for Dec records at Stiffkey and Cley/Salthouse. The 2 ads in north-west of county joined by a third bird Titchwell Dec 26th making total of 5 present in county at year end.

Egyptian Goose

Alopochen aegyptiaca

Long-established resident feral population

Highest numbers: *Jan* 92 Holkham Park; *Feb* 104 Pentney GP; *March* 107 Stanford Water; *June* 189 Holkham Park, 70 Sennowe Park; *July* 260 Holkham Park; *Aug* 200 Pentney GP, 63 Shropham GP; *Sept* 143 Buckenham Marshes, 100 Pentney GP, 87 Salthouse, 78 Breydon/Berney; *Oct* 116 Pentney GP, 82 Breydon/Berney, 76 Cley; *Nov* 73 Bawsey; *Dec* 106 Horning Waterworks.

Breeding recorded at Bayfield Hall, Bittering GP, Buckenham Marshes, Buckenham Tofts, Cley, Colney GP, Coxford, Cranwich GP, Diddlington, Earsham, East Lexham, Flitcham Abbey Farm, Hickling Broad, Holkham NNR, Holme, Hoveton Hall, Kelling WM, Lynford, Lyng, Nar Valley Fisheries, North Creak, Pensthorpe, Pentney GP, Ranworth Broad, Rollesby Broad, Shropham GP, Snettisham, Sparham GP, Stanford TA, Stow Bedon, Swanton Morley GP, Syderstone, Tattersett, Thetford Nunnery Lakes and Flood, Titchwell (first successful breeding for site), Whitlingham CP and Woodbastwick.

Shelduck

Tadorna tadorna

Widespread breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor

Winter movements 34 west 12 east Sheringham and 155 west Mundesley Jan 1st, 105 west Mundesley 2nd and 54 east Holme March 17th.

Monthly peak counts at selected sites:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Snettisham	581	-	606	229	115	175	1114	191	655	732	471	1200
Holme	52	39	76	47	14	18	16	5	4	20	22	17
Titchwell	54	65	98	81	49	30	26	20	12	13	13	69
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	343	188	122	90	86	69	51	32	35	324	310	325
Holkham NNR	39	103	210	203	222	155	-	-	15	-	43	71
Stiffkey Fen/SM	170	68	82	60	64	56	47	-	3	-	133	71
Blakeney Hbr/GM	297	241	264	141	129	132	144	68	15	128	83	365
Cley	64	68	67	55	63	76	43	31	39	34	87	111
Breydon/Berney	82	111	139	152	134	278	153	53	257	431	183	131
Welney	-	59	72	171	131	-	-	-	-	-	-	14

International importance (winter): 3000; National importance (winter): 750

Only other notable counts: Jan 65 Cantley BF, 620 Ongar Hill; May 90 Wissington BF; July 900 North Wootton Marsh; Aug 250 North Wootton Marsh. Leucistic bird Breydon July 17th.

Breeding records (single broods unless otherwise stated): Aylmerton (pr), Blakeney Point (18 prs), Breydon/Berney (9 prs - 26 young), Burgh Castle (2-3 broods), Burnham Overy GM, Cantley BF (27 young), Cley (6 broods), Coxford, Gooderstone/Hilborough (16 prs), Grimston, Holkham NNR (21 broods), Holme (19 prs - 3 broods), Langmere (2 prs), mid-Yare RSPB (19 prs), Pensthorpe, Pentney GP, Reedham Marshes, Salthouse, Scolt Head (25-30 prs - 12 broods), Sennowe Park, Sparham Pools, Tattersett, Thetford Nunnery Flood (2 prs), Threxton (9 prs), Titchwell, Welney (6 broods), Wissington BF (6 broods), Woodton.

Easterly midsummer departure to moulting grounds largely unnoticed with only 10 records, all from Scolt Head: 115 May 2nd, 69 June 6th and 42 on 10th, 61 July 4th, 78 5th, 73 6th, 36 on 10th, 43 Aug 1st, 75 2nd and lastly 6 on 10th.

Returning birds moving west in autumn noted from Sept 3rd until Nov 21st, with peak counts: 106 Scolt Head and 36 Sheringham (0830-1130) Sept 30th, 179 Scolt Head Oct 1st, 136 Scolt Head and 41 Sheringham (0630-1400) 9th, 126 Scolt Head 28th, 83 Cromer Nov 8th, 120 Scolt Head 9th, 100 Sheringham, 112 Cromer and 72 Walcott (0720-0840) 10th.

Mandarin

Aix galericulata

Small population derived from introductions and escapes

Slight increase on 2003 with 19 records. Single Cley Jan 12th then no reports until small flurry of spring records from Suffield April 10th, Cley pair flew in off sea 15th, pair Whitlingham CP 23rd-26th, Happisburgh May 3rd, 6 (5 drakes) east over Aylmerton 14th with presumably 5 of same Felbrigg Park Lake same day, Stiffkey 17th, Whitlingham CP 29th, 3 Tivetshall in June. Subsequent records from West Newton July 23rd, Cantley BF 25th, Flitcham Oct 4th, pair Gunton Park Lake 14th and again Nov 7th (when diving for and eating acorns fallen from a nearby oak), Diss Nov 16th, Felbrigg Park Lake 28th and Dec 26th, and Whitlingham CP Dec 27th.

Wigeon

Anas penelope

Abundant passage migrant and winter visitor in internationally important numbers; a few over-summer and have bred

Peak monthly counts at main localities:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Snettisham	1993	585	123	3	113	372	960	2030
Ken Hill Marsh	800	1370	1985	70	-	-	-	925
Holme	1600	2500	1048	200	350	590	1267	2000
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	2000	737	555	-	1500	7190	2550	890
Holkham NNR	14630	8516	4959	108	32	1165	5796	9788
Blakeney Hbr/GM	1436	973	758	629	399	1172	1526	3000
Cley/Salthouse	1311	861	403	90	74	600	1196	838
Breydon/Berney	16811	15230	10057	629	353	5130	7934	12890
Ranworth Broad	2470	4000	124	-	-	279	917	2000
Cantley/Buckenham	4000	4698	-	1500	-	-	8000	-
Welney	9615	11617	10362	1030	450	1919	10076	6253

International importance (winter): 12,500; National importance (winter): 2800

Other notable counts: Jan 340 Stiffkey Fen/SM; Feb 345 Pentney GP; March 432 Hockwold Washes; Oct 385 Titchwell; Nov 750 Burnham Norton, 320 How Hill Reedham Water, 324 Stiffkey SM; Dec 800 Horsey Mere, 442 Pentney GP, 380 Titchwell.

Winter movements of 95 west 13 east Sheringham, 400 west Mundesley and 215 south Gorleston all Jan 1st, with 168 west Mundesley 2nd.

Spring record 525 north Hunstanton March 29th start of rapid departure during April, with small numbers lingering into May. As usual small numbers of principally drakes over-summered at several wetlands with June/July records (max numbers): Blakeney GM (3), Breydon/Berney (3), Buckenham Marshes (4), Burnham Norton, Cley (4), Hickling Rush Hills (2), Holkham GM (28 - some injured), Holme (2), How Hill Reedham Water, Ken Hill Marsh (2), Martham Broad, Snettisham (4), Titchwell (5), and Welney (8). Breeding suspected at Buckenham, Holkham (5 prs) and Holme but no broods seen.

First returning bird Holme Aug 23rd with general arrival around county thereafter. Passage continued until early Dec, with peak counts (birds moving west along north coast and north along east coast unless otherwise stated): 388 Scolt Head Sept 4th, 261 Holme, 440 Scolt Head, 600 Sheringham and 200 Overstrand all 24th, 780 Scolt Head 25th with 2450 there 30th, 1285 Oct 1st and 720 2nd, 815 Scolt Head, 650 Sheringham and 806 Mundesley all 9th, 150 Holme 15th, 1540 Scolt Head and 852 south California 28th, 142 Cromer Nov 8th, 150 Scolt Head 9th, 200 Scolt Head, 167 Cromer and 131 Walcott (0720-0840) on 10th, 150 Scolt Head Dec 10th.

Leucistic female Holkham GM from 2003 noted by Lady Anne's Drive Jan 22nd-24th, then again there for its third winter Nov 14th.

American Wigeon

Anas americana

Vagrant from North America

A drake frequented Holkham GM, usually alongside Lady Anne's Drive, Jan 11th-Feb 24th, then more erratically March 3rd until 13th (many obs). It also visited Burnham Norton Feb 4th-7th.

Gadwall

Anas strepera

Resident, passage migrant and winter visitor

Peak monthly counts at principal localities:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Snettisham	125	124	65	11	5	8	14	3	8	11	45	40
Holme	14	8	24	39	11	40	20	32	55	6	11	12
Titchwell	50	53	38	25	35	62	4	13	12	19	14	46
Holkham NNR	90	115	20	67	101	109	-	-	28	21	54	94
Blakeney/Cley	57	39	28	66	51	45	34	16	23	47	29	79
Breydon/Berney	44	98	129	109	53	37	3	2	3	9	6	2
Whitlingham CP	334	55	16	18	12	7	1	4	53	89	136	138
Welney	64	94	275	115	83	141	-	92	11	25	34	84

International importance (winter): 300; National importance (winter): 80

Other notable counts elsewhere included: Jan 40 Cockley Cley, 60 Hickling Broad, 74 Ranworth/Cockshoot Broad, 41 Tottenhill GP; Feb 102 Haddiscoe Island; March 107 Stanford Water; April 73 Stanford Water; Aug 140 Hockwold Washes; Sept 50 Barton Turf Fens, 60 How Hill Cromc's Broad, 60 Tottenhill GP; Oct 50 How Hill Cromc's Broad; Nov 48 How Hill Reedham Water, 81 Nar Valley Fisheries, 60 Sparham Pools; Dec 50 Alderfen Broad, 39 Hoveton Great Broad, 40 Hoveton Hall, 46 How Hill Cromc's Broad, 83 Lynford GP, 70 Nar Valley Fisheries, 48 Ranworth Broad.

Spring movement west Sheringham March 27th.

Breeding records: Bayfield Hall (2 broods), Berney, Blakeney Point (4 prs unsuccessful), Cantley BF (2 broods), Cley (6 broods), Colney GP, Flitcham Abbey Farm (2 broods), Haddiscoe Island (2 prs), Hickling Rush Hills (2 broods), Holkham NNR (52 prs - 25 broods), Holme (20 prs - 10 broods), mid-Yare RSPB (45 prs), Salthouse, Scolt Head (5-6 prs unsuccessful), Sparham Pools, Stanford TA (8 prs), Syderstone Common, Welney (13 broods), West Newton, Whitlingham CP.

Usual limited summer/autumn coastal movements, with all records given (west unless otherwise stated): 3 Sheringham July 18th and 2 Aug 26th, 6 Scolt Head Sept 4th, Sheringham 15th, 6 Scolt Head 21st, Sheringham 24th, 4 Scolt Head Oct 27th and 2 on 28th, 3 Sheringham 30th, north Winterton 31st, 9 south 2 north California Nov 1st, 6 on sea Horsey 6th, 7 south 2 north California 9th, 3 Walcott 19th, 7 Sheringham 20th.

Teal *Anas crecca*

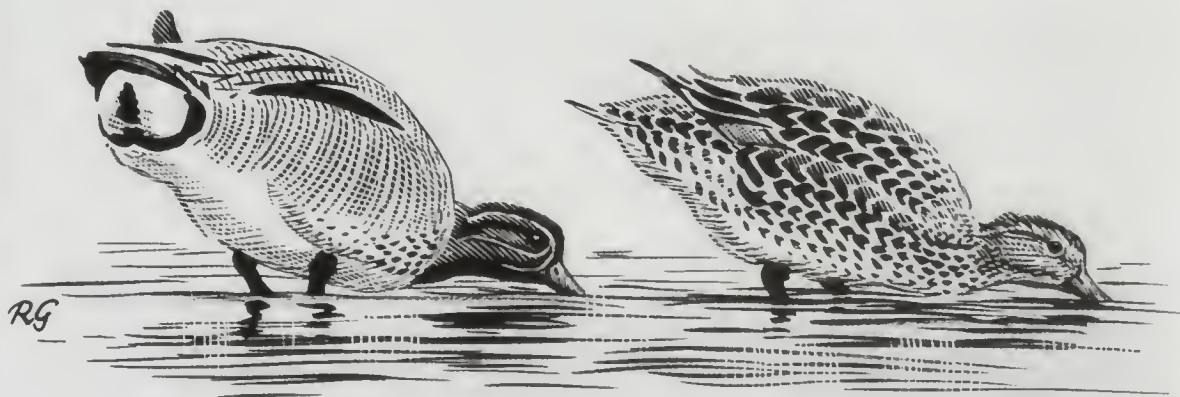
Passage migrant and abundant winter visitor; breeds in small numbers

Peak monthly counts at main sites:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Snettisham	2186	182	320	-	-	350	610	610	1200
Holme	286	102	144	39	31	49	255	116	213
Titchwell	375	330	55	41	6	508	377	213	282
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	206	127	30	19	110	369	451	215	185
Holkham NNR	442	674	209	-	-	136	195	367	558
Stiffkey Fen	761	69	-	-	-	190	177	404	860
Blakeney Hbr/GM/Cley	991	170	123	60	920	975	1005	1019	1228
Salthouse	116	86	79	38	-	207	177	209	86
Hickling Rush Hills	1400	650	132	60	160	500	3600	2500	1000
Breydon/Berney	1862	1982	1302	969	746	334	1360	1327	1260
Ranworth/Cockshoot Broad	329	280	42	41	-	71	341	120	283
Welney	2147	1211	1551	808	97	702	1398	2420	1442

International importance (winter): 4000; National importance (winter): 1400

Notable counts of over 100 elsewhere: *Jan* 352 Buckenham Marshes, 110 Cranwich GP, 277 Haddiscoe Island, 2500 Horsey Mere, 555 How Hill Reedham Water, 205 Ken Hill Marsh, 150 Tottenham GP, 560 Wissington BF; *March* 144 Hockwold Washes, 110 Horsey Mere; *April* 100 Martham Broad; *May* 151 Breydon/Berney; *July* 105 Cley; *Sept* 123 Blakeney GM; *Oct*



Teal (Robert Gillmor)

802 Blakeney GM, 1000 Cantley BF; *Nov* 138 Barton Broad, 1600 Horsey Mere, 220 Martham Broad; *Dec* 124 Barton Broad, 144 Blakeney GM, 120 Cranwich GP, 100 Lynn Point.

Winter movement 160 passed Mundesley Jan 1st.

Small numbers summered as usual at wetlands around county with confirmed breeding Berney (brood) and Welney (3 broods - first on July 8th), and suspected breeding at Holkham NNR (5 prs), Holme (3 prs) and Strumpshaw (2 prs).

Trickle of returning birds from late June, with first visible passage 13 west Scolt Head July 1st. Main arrivals mid-Aug to early Sept and late Sept to mid-Oct, with smaller numbers until mid-Nov. Peak counts (west along north coast and north along east coast unless otherwise stated): 120 Sheringham (0600-0800) Aug 14th, 492 Scolt Head and 430 Sheringham (0600-0900) 26th, 274 Scolt Head Sept 3rd with 757 4th and 198 5th, 554 Scolt Head and 350 Sheringham (0615-0815) 7th, 131 Holme, 665 Scolt Head and 570 Sheringham all 24th, 458 Scolt Head 25th, 362 Scolt Head and 460 Sheringham (0830-1130) 30th, 517 Scolt Head Oct 1st with 271 there 2nd, 244 9th and 219 28th, 135 Winterton 30th, 155 Cromer Nov 8th, 157 Cley (0915-1430) 19th.

Green-winged Teal
Vagrant from North America

Anas crecca carolinensis

At start of year wintering drakes Hickling Rush Hills Jan 1st-29th and Buckenham Marshes Jan 11th-Feb 3rd then presumed same Breydon/Berney Feb 4th-6th. Spring passage records from Stiffkey Fen April 16th, Berney 17th and Cley May 30th.

In second winter period returning drakes (both for their third winters) Hickling Rush Hills Oct 28th-Nov 11th and Buckenham Marshes Nov 27th-year end, with additional drake Cley Nov 17th.

Mallard
Widespread resident, passage migrant and winter visitor

Anas platyrhynchos

Peak counts at selected sites:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Snettisham	723	267	219	46	109	596	350	484	389
Holme	133	-	78	46	22	31	37	95	40
Titchwell	129	89	36	14	94	48	66	45	82
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	209	112	43	58	350	400	433	228	160
Holkham NNR	229	490	254	198	-	99	61	374	415
Wells Hbr	118	115	74	81	43	46	38	68	120
Blakeney GM/Cley	320	173	115	100	142	240	257	188	108
Breydon/Berney	372	239	78	28	97	170	169	262	500
Barton Broad	-	126	88	102	-	111	97	190	173
Ranworth/Cockshoot Broad	170	50	-	63	-	98	166	75	145
Welney	1191	895	352	253	1093	834	667	1033	784

International importance (winter): 5000

Other notable counts: *Jan* 500 Bittering GP, 270 Wissington BF; *May* 115 Barton Broad, 113 Blakeney GM/Cley, 192 Holkham GM, 294 Welney; *June* 166 Barton Broad, 210 Holkham GM, 500 Narford, 315 Snettisham; *July* 285 Barton Broad, 100 Breydon/Berney, 129 How Hill Reedham Water, 116 King's Lynn Fisher Fleet; *Sept* 105 Stiffkey Fen; *Oct* 123 Stiffkey Fen; *Nov* 420 Great Ouse RC, 362 Hickling Broad; *Dec* 420 Great Ouse RC, 146 How Hill Reedham Water, 105 King's Lynn Fisher Fleet.

Breeding data from Bayfield Hall (2 broods), Blakeney Point (2 unsuccessful prs), Cantley BF (3 broods), Cley (17+ broods with 55 fledged), Holkham NNR (157 prs - 105 broods), Holme (31 prs - 11 broods), Hoveton Hall (12 prs), mid-Yare RSPB (156 prs), Roydon Common (several prs), Scolt Head (11 prs - 2 broods), Welney (53 females - numerous broods), Whitlingham CP (6 broods), Wissington BF (5 broods). Late broods Pulham Market (Nov) and Fakenham Mill (Dec). NBA results showed the species was present in 89% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 9 drakes per occupied tetrad.

Usual very limited visible autumn passage with records on just 10 dates between July 6th Scolt Head – Nov 19th Weybourne when 19 west (1015-1105), the only double-figure count.

Pintail

Anas acuta

Passage migrant and winter visitor, has bred

Peak monthly counts at main localities:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Snettisham	110	140	10	92	32	65	60
Titchwell	39	166	40	4	123	6	57
Scolt/Braneaster Hbr	164	161	-	120	350	145	140
Holkham GM	4	55	10	-	60	122	41
Stiffkey Fen	18	2	4	20	220	50	38
Blakeney Hbr/Cley	203	122	14	72	340	7	414
Breydon/Berney	194	127	188	61	106	118	242
Tottenham GP	40	-	-	120	750	10	12
Welney	1071	605	602	93	452	1326	450

International importance (winter): 600; National importance (winter): 280

Usual scatter of records away from favoured sites, particularly late March-early April, with only additional double-figure counts 18 Ranworth Broad Feb and 200 Dersingham Bog Nov (flying in to feed on shooting pond).

Only movement in first winter period 17 east Sheringham Feb 22nd. Usual rapid departure from mid-March with single-figure numbers lingering into April. Recorded mid-May to July at Snettisham, Titchwell (4) and Welney (5). Single Breydon/Berney Aug 1st most likely also summering bird. Pair of uncertain provenance with 2 adult-sized young Salthouse duck pond July 28th.

First returning birds 8 west Sheringham Aug 26th and 4 Weybourne 31st heralded a significant visible passage through until mid-Nov. Double figure counts (birds moving north on east coast and west along north coast): 187 Scolt Head Sept 4th, 20 Sheringham 23rd, 30 Holme, 58 Scolt Head, 28 Weybourne and 90 Sheringham all 24th, 28 Holme and 83 Scolt Head 25th, 204 Scolt Head 30th with 202 there Oct 1st, 78 2nd and 35 6th, 18 Sea Palling 8th, 43 Scolt Head and 14 Sheringham 9th, 66 Holme (0845-1200) 16th, 25 Holme 17th, 16 east Sheringham 18th, 40 Holme, 45 Scolt Head, 17 Sea Palling, 31 south California and 21 Gorleston all 28th, and 18 Happisburgh 30th. Late winter movement 9 west Holme Dec 28th.

Garganey

Anas querquedula

Very scarce breeding summer visitor; scarce passage migrant

First of year How Hill March 1st followed later in month by Welney 22nd, 2 Berney 23rd, Kelling WM and 2 Hockwold Washes 27th, Haddiscoe Island 28th, 8 (7 drakes) Berney 29th and Hickling Rush Hills 31st. Recorded at 17 localities April/May: Barton Turf Fens, Berney, Breydon, Buckenham Marshes, Castle Acre, Cley, Hickling Broad, Hockwold Washes,

Holkham GM, Nar Valley Fisheries, Rollesby Broad, St Benet's Level, Salthouse, Snettisham, Strumpshaw, Titchwell and Welney. Most records of 1-3 but higher counts of 6 Berney May 1st, 5 Welney 19th with 6 on 20th, and 4 Titchwell 21st-27th.

Records of 1-4 during June/July from 10 localities. Breeding likely at Welney where brood of 5 freshly-fledged young July 24th.

Scatter of autumn records during Aug/Sept, chiefly of 1-2, from: Blakeney Point, Breydon/Berney, Cantley BF, Cley, Hickling Rush Hills (max 5 Aug 1st), Stiffkey Fen, Strumpshaw, Titchwell, Welney (up to 4 Aug/Sept). Birds on visible passage 4 east single west Scolt Head Aug 9th, north Gorleston 14th, then further singles west Scolt Head Sept 5th and 7th.

Last Welney on relatively early date Oct 4th.

Shoveler

Anas clypeata

Passage migrant, summer and winter visitor

Peak monthly counts at selected localities:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Holme	40	37	44	23	6	6	14	52	27
Titchwell	53	37	38	20	14	143	74	45	30
Holkham GM	32	46	33	104	-	-	-	27	84
Cley	89	82	43	25	-	49	54	49	79
Breydon/Berney	176	210	322	261	37	119	218	234	267
How Hill Reedham Water	101	80	77	34	9	16	-	4	35
Welney	146	147	206	159	-	203	216	328	134

National importance (winter): 100

Notable counts elsewhere exceeding 30: *Jan* 100 Holkham Park; *Feb* 89 Hickling Rush Hills, 196 Holkham Park, 45 Ranworth Broad; *March* 54 Blakeney GM, 170 Holkham Park; *April* 49 Cantley BF; *May* 102 Holkham GM, 60 Welney; *June* 92 Holkham GM; *July* 45 Titchwell; *Nov* 102 Hickling Broad, 36 Martham Broad, 35 Ranworth Broad, 35 Stiffkey Fen; *Dec* 67 Hickling Rush Hills, 65 Horsey Mere, 123 Ranworth Broad.



Shoveler (*Richard Johnson*)

Breeding records: Berney (several prs), Cantley BF (5 broods), Cley (7 broods), Haddiscoe Island (2 prs), Holkham GM (49 prs - 14 broods), Holme (22 prs - 9 broods), mid-Yare RSPB (39 prs), Salthouse, Titchwell (2 broods), Welney (14 broods). Summering birds noted at several other localities.

Westerly winter movement 2 Sheringham and 16 Mundesley Jan 1st. Sole spring movement 2 east Sheringham May 30th. Westerly autumn passage July 23rd (Scolt Head) to Nov 19th (Cley) on 17 dates, with only double-figure counts Scolt Head where 22 Sept 3rd, 11 4th, 13 Oct 12th, 10 on 28th, and 10 Sheringham 30th.

Red-crested Pochard

Netta rufina

An escape, but with possibility of genuine vagrants from the Continent
In first winter period in Brecks male Cockley Cley Jan 16th-18th and again Feb 29th, and male (same?) Thompson Water March 1st-April 15th. In Broads female intermittently March/April at Hickling and a female at Rollesby April 11th. At Blakeney GM female April 23rd.

A male was noted east over the raptor watchpoint at Great Ryburgh May 22nd with a pair there May 30th; at nearby Sennowe Park Lake 2 males and female June 5th and 2 males there again June 22nd - all these probably part of frce-flying Pensthorpe group.

Interestingly male with prsumed female and 7 young Pentney GP July 11th was only breeding record. At Titchwell an eclipse male Aug 1st, female Blickling Park Lake Aug 17th and single Hickling Broad Sept 3rd. Only one record in second winter period male Welney Dec 28th.

Pochard

Aythya ferina

Summer breeder in small numbers, common passage migrant and winter visitor
Peak counts at selected sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Snettisham	34	34	31	1	1	4	20	23
Holme	13	3	25	7	3	2	21	5
Titchwell	59	22	20	11	-	2	5	12
Holkham	13	-	15	20	-	-	-	-
Breydon/Berney	-	5	24	29	-	-	-	-
Nar valley Fisheries	44	17	-	-	40	100	95	133
Welney	1836	2188	803	9	-	308	825	108

National importance (winter): 440

Notable counts elsewhere: Jan 73 Fowlmere, 76 Martham Broad; Feb 110 Wroxham Broad; Dec 63 Horning, 44 Hoveton Great Broad, 47 Woodbastwick.

Small numbers summered at various localities with a good year for breeding records (broods in brackets): Barton Broad (1), Breydon/Berney (7), Haddiscoe (5 prs) Holkham NNR (17), Holme (5), How Hill Reedham Water (2), Titchwell (1). At Welney 10 males and 2 females but no evidence of breeding.

Significant coastal movements: 35 east Beeston Bump Oct 20th and 13 west Scolt Head Oct 28th.

Ring-necked Duck

Aythya collaris

Vagrant from North America
2001 Addition: A 1st-winter female Hockwold Washes Oct 26th (LVG et al).

Ferruginous Duck

Aythya nyroca

Rare visitor from the Continent, or escape from captivity
Welney continues to be main site to attract this species with separate males Jan 11th-26th (visiting Denver Sluice 17th) and Feb 17th, and an immature male Nov 1st (JBK et al). Also a

male (presumably one of Welney birds) Lynford GP Feb 21st-March 7th (DPA *et al*) and Stanford Water March 14th-April 11th (CAEK *et al*).

Tufted Duck

Aythya fuligula

Summer breeder, common passage migrant and winter visitor

Peak counts at selected sites:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Snettisham	55	48	49	34	26	45	28	36
Holme	19	11	33	23	3	8	13	16
Holkham	-	-	32	53	-	-	43	-
Ranworth/Cockshoot	53	33	30	21	22	-	32	22
Whitlingham CP	178	143	143	76	20	80	115	132
Thetford Nunnery lakes	87	35	27	14	-	23	65	36
Tottenham GP	110	-	-	112	43	124	238	150
Pentney GP	-	97	66	-	32	-	-	187
Welney	93	148	188	72	-	-	196	21

National importance (winter): 600

Notable counts elsewhere: *Jan* 83 Broome GP, 100 Denver, 71 Shropham; *March* 248 Great Ouse RC, 72 Hoveton Great Broad; *April* 145 Hoveton Great Broad, 100 Stowbridge; *Sept* 102 Nar Valley Fisheries; *Nov* 67 Great Ouse RC; *Dec* 122 Cranwich GP, 180 Nar Valley Fisheries.

Breeding records (broods in brackets): Bayfield Hall (3), Berney (1), Billingford (2), Buckenham Marshes (1), Cantley (1), Cley (10), Holkham NNR (16), Holme (2), How Hill (3), Sparham Pools (4), Stiffkey Fen (4), Welney (12). Also present in breeding season at Narford, Nar Valley Fisheries (2 prs), mid-Yare RSPB (23 prs), Shropham and Swanton Morley.

Notable coastal movements: 2 east Scolt Head May 31st, 4 west there Aug 1st and 3 west Sept 3rd, 4 west Beeston Bump Sept 23rd, 15 west Sheringham Nov 11th and 2 west Walcott Nov 20th.

Scaup

Aythya marila

Winter visitor in varying numbers; scarce inland; occasional in summer

Regular in first winter period at 3 localities: Snettisham Feb 15th and then rest of year with 3 April 3rd-month end; Saddlebow Jan 1st with 2 on river channel Jan 11th reducing to one by Feb 9th; Hickling Broad throughout with 2 March 29th. Elsewhere: 3 Gorleston Jan 1st with one south there April 18th, Elsing Jan 7th with 2 8th-11th, Sparham Pools Jan 18th, Fowlmere Jan 20th, 2 Fustyweed Jan 21st, Barton Broad Feb 26th, Tottenham GP March 13th-23rd, and Welney March 8th, 18th and 22nd with 2 March 10th.

During summer west Scolt Head July 23rd and 27th with 4 east there Aug 3rd, west Mundesley Aug 13th, 3 west Cley Aug 27th, the adult female at Snettisham joined by male July 31st and Aug 8th-31st, and south Winterton Aug 8th.

Autumn coastal movements: *Oct* 3 east Sheringham 10th, 2 east Sheringham, 2 east Mundesley, 2 south Eccles, 8 south Winterton and one south Scrabby all 11th, west Scolt Head 28th; *Nov* one west Sheringham 2nd, 5 west Walcott 10th, singles west Holme 14th and 17th.

Other records in second winter period: 3 Stiffkey Fen Oct 27th-Nov 2nd, 7 Holme and 4 Titchwell Nov 10th, 4 Breydon Nov 20th, 4 Cley Nov 28th-30th with 3 there Dec 2nd, one still Snettisham to year end with 3 11th, 10 Dec 16th and 5 on 22nd, 4 Welney Dec 11th and 3 Whitlingham CP Dec 21st.



Woodcock - a superb portrait showing the rarely seen threat display. (*Andrew Bloomfield*)



Mistle Thrush - a snowy portrait at Felbrigg. (*Julian Bhalerao*)

Common Crane - adult and juvenile, 4 pairs bred in the county this year. (*Julian Bhalerao*)





Green Woodpecker - a fine picture of this shy species. (*Rebecca Nason*)

the Bunting - present elusively at Choseley, this was only the second county record.
left (*Rebecca Nason*), right (*Alan Tate*)





Nightingale - this renowned songster survived egg collectors at Salthouse Heath. (*Julian Bhalerao*)

Alpine Accentor - the second county record was found at Overstrand. (*Steve Gantlett*)

Alpine Swift - another record from Beeston Bump. (*Julian Bhalerao*)



Eider

Somateria mollissima

Non-breeders throughout year, highest totals usually in winter and early spring

Max counts at regularly visited sites:

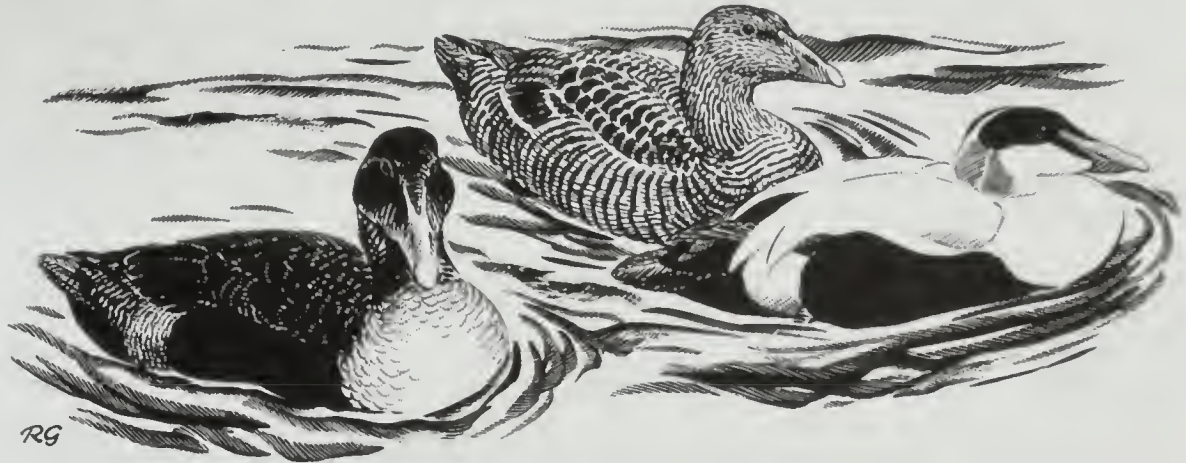
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Holme	9	40	4	4	3	-	-	1	15	20	45	4
Titchwell	15	20	40	20	5	7	1	1	2	20	29	25
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	37	40	63	28	46	41	70	33	51	45	20	40

National importance (winter): 750

Other regular localities with usually fewer than 10 birds included east coast sites from Sea Palling to Gorleston as well as Cley, Kelling and Cromer. Very low numbers reported from Holkham Bay this year and no reports from Hunstanton/Heacham.

Significant movements in first winter period, 118 passed Mundesley Jan 2nd and 27 east Sheringham Jan 4th.

Autumn/winter period movements: 10 west Sheringham Sep 26th, 47 west Scolt Head Oct 28th, 10 north Winterton Oct 31st, 32 north California Nov 1st, 16 west Cley, 53 west Sheringham, 28 west Walcott and 34 north Scratby all Nov 2nd, and 59 west Cromer and 39 west Walcott Nov 10th.



Eider (Robert Gillmor)

King Eider

Somateria spectabilis

Vagrant from the Arctic

A 1st-winter male Titchwell Dec 11th-22nd (DH *et al*). The sixth county record.

Long-tailed Duck

Clangula hyemalis

Winter visitor chiefly to north-west Norfolk coastal waters; occasional inland

In first winter period recorded mainly at Holme/Gore Point and Thornham with monthly max of 34 Jan, 50 Feb and 10 March. Also up to 10 Titchwell March 14th-17th with singles Tottenhill GP Jan 9th, Yarmouth/Gorleston Jan 31st and Hickling Broad Feb 1st-March 13th.

In second winter period earliest east Sheringham Sept 25th, with another Titchwell Oct 5th followed by female on freshmarsh to month end. Singles also recorded Holme, Holkham Bay, Cley and Sheringham in Oct with 4 west Scolt Head 31st. In Nov 2 west Cley 6th, west Walcott 10th, north Winterton 13th, east Sheringham 14th and 8 west there 20th. Max counts in Holme/Titchwell area 9 Nov and 20 Dec, with 2 Holkham Bay Nov 11th and 11 there Dec 11th.

Common Scoter

Melanitta nigra

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

Max monthly counts at principal north coast sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Titchwell	2000	2000	1500	80	1500	1500	491	60	50	500	4960	5000
Scolt Head	3000	900	900	258	1600	1600	1600	300	1125	-	600	1500
Holkham Bay	120	600	2000	1000	200	-	-	-	-	1000	4000	3000

National importance (winter): 350

Only other notable counts during first winter period at Holme where 600 Jan, 800 March and 700 May. Few coastal movements noted at this time except at Holme where 135 east Jan 13th and 147 east 16th, and at Scolt Head where 140 east 118 west April 29th. Inland records from Whitlingham CP 3 March 29th (2 drakes) and a single duck Sennowe Park Lake May 19th.

Midsummer movements noted from July 8th with 480 west Mundesley and 77 west 26 east Scolt Head, then 179 west Sheringham Aug 1st. In Sept good westerly movements near end of month: 24th 416 Holme, 1125 Scolt Head, 880 Sheringham; 25th 400 Holme, 1037 Scolt Head, 512 Sheringham; 30th 1170 Sheringham. Further movements noted Nov when 525 west Cromer 1st, 944 west Cley and 1985 west Sheringham (record count for site) 7th, and 306 north California 9th.

In second winter period other flocks of 1550 Blakeney Point Nov 7th, 1720 Cley 9th and 600 Winterton 18th.

Velvet Scoter

Melanitta fusca

Winter visitor, but numbers and localities fluctuate; occasional in summer

Max counts from principal sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Oct	Nov	Dec
Titchwell	30	15	8	1	6	70	59
Brancaster	-	-	21	-	-	15	16
Holkham Bay	-	2	60	1	-	-	3

During first winter period away from above sites: 10 west Mundesley Jan 3rd, 2 Gorleston Feb 3rd with 4 south March 14th, Holme Feb 22nd; 4 west Sheringham April 10th and singles Scolt Head April 12th, 22nd and 29th. At Titchwell up to 3 during May, and one until June 5th.

First returning birds Titchwell Aug 30th and Sept 4th. Subsequent westerly movements of 1-3 from coastal watch points from Sept 24th with 7 Blakeney Point and 10 Sheringham Oct 9th, 5 Holme and 4 Weybourne 11th, 4 Sheringham 15th, and 11 Scolt Head, 7 Blakeney Point and 6 (north) Winterton all 3 1st. In Nov present most days Blakeney Point/Cley with peaks of 11 4th, 18 6th, 8 7th, 7 west 21st and 21 28th. Max count east coast 5 north Walcott Nov 20th.

Goldeneye

Bucephala clangula

Passage migrant and winter visitor

Max monthly counts at selected localities:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Oct	Nov	Dec
Snettisham	52	60	45	3	-	36	47
Titchwell	62	75	23	12	5	10	100
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	45	29	15	2	32	41	41
Hickling Broad	27	26	41	1	-	-	-

Elsewhere during first winter period 15 Blakeney Hbr Jan 2nd, 20 Tottenhill GP Feb and 19 Great Ouse RC March 11th with up to 11 noted on various other land-locked waters. In April last noted Whitlingham CP 25th. No coastal movements recorded in first half of year.

In Aug single west Mundesley and Sheringham 14th. In Sept first returning birds 2 west Sheringham 30th. Westerly movements continued during Oct with 1-6 recorded at various coastal localities with more notable counts 13 Scolt Head 8th, 16 (south) California 28th, 32 at both Scolt Head and Sheringham 30th, with 20 at latter site 31st. In Nov further movements included 30 Holme and 39 Sheringham 7th, and 19 Cley, 22 Sheringham and 45 Walcott 19th. In Dec away from principal localities max counts 38 Thornham, 15 Blakeney Hbr and 17 Great Ouse RC.

Smew

Mergellus albellus

Winter visitor in small numbers, increasing during severe weather

A poor year for this species, with mainly singles only present during both winter periods. Coastal movement fared no better and was restricted to New Year's Day when one east Mundesley, one south Yarmouth and 2 south Gorleston. In first period: Jan Sparham Pools and Swanton Morley GP 2nd, 2 Tottenhill GP also 2nd with drake present until 17th and redhead 7th, Broome GP 4th-9th, Bittering GP 21st; Feb Hickling Broad 1st, Snettisham 1st-22nd; March Snettisham 6th, Ormesby Broad/Ormesby Little Broad 27th-April 1st with presumed same Rollesby Broad April 9th.

In second winter period only noted Snettisham Dec 8th and Tottenhill GP 20th-25th.

Red-breasted Merganser

Mergus serrator

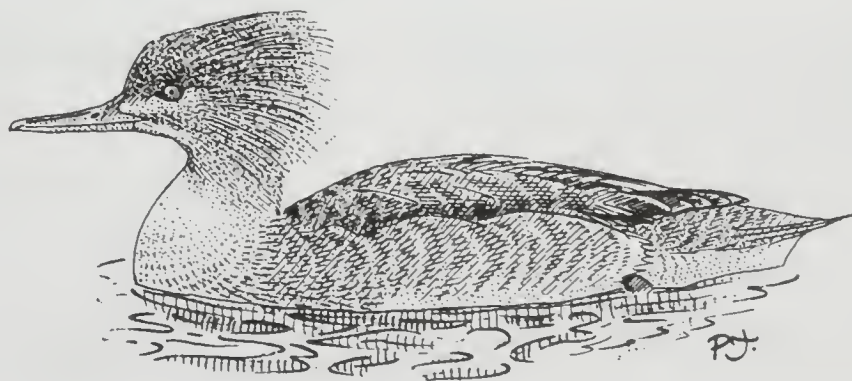
Passage migrant and winter visitor; occasional in summer

Max monthly counts at principal coastal localities:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Oct	Nov	Dec
Holme	12	8	9	9	8	30	15
Titchwell	25	21	26	26	7	24	30
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	37	35	46	18	41	49	37
Blakeney Hbr	18	12	10	-	5	6	18

National importance (winter): 100

Only other double-figure counts in first winter period: 10 Ongar Hill Jan 25th, 17 Snettisham Feb 22nd, 10 Stiffkey SM Feb 29th with 11 March 21st and 20 Thornham also 21st. At Ten Mile Bank 3 flew inland Jan 17th with single Saddlebow RC March 27th and April 10th. Several May records including 17 Scolt Head 1st with latest 4 Titchwell 16th.



Red-breasted Merganser (Phil Jones)

First of autumn Holme Aug 30th with 2 Sept 1st. Following one Scolt Head 19th westerly coastal movements commenced 25th when 4 Sheringham; on 30th 6 Scolt Head and 4 again Sheringham. Oct/Nov movements larger than in recent years with max: Oct 10 Scolt Head 1st, 14 (south) California 28th; Nov 13 Sheringham 7th and 14 10th, 10 Walcott also 10th, 25 Holme 14th and 12 28th.

During second winter period other double-figure counts of 25 Holkham Bay and 12 Stiffkey SM Nov 14th, 23 Thornham Nov 29th and 10 Holkham Bay Dec 14th.

Goosander

Mergus merganser

Winter visitor and passage migrant, most abundant in severe winters

Max counts from favoured sites:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
UEA Broad	15	5	15	-	-
Thetford Nunnery Lakes	24	26	10	7	21
Sparham Pools	14	15	10	4	18

Max counts elsewhere during first winter period: Barnhamcross Common 7 Feb, Barton Broad March, Breydon 3 March, Broome GP Jan, Cranwich GP 7 Jan, Earsham GP Jan/Feb, Great Ouse RC 12 Jan, 13 Feb, 20 March, Hardley Flood March, How Hill 2 Feb, Lynford GP 9 Jan, Methwold Fens 8 Jan, Nar Valley Fisheries 2 March, Pentney GP Feb, Stowbridge 11 Jan, Wisington BF 3 March. Coastal sightings during this period: 8 west Mundesley Jan 2nd, east Sheringham and south Winterton Jan 3rd, and female on sea with Red-breasted Merganser Titchwell March 15th. Also one north-west Aylmerton then west Sheringham March 29th. In April 2 Thetford Nunnery Lakes and one east Overstrand 1st, and another east Sheringham 12th. In May female Haddiscoe 9th and an injured drake Denver 26th; drake, possibly oiled, Ranworth Broad July 6th.

First returning bird Titchwell Sept 19th then none until 2 west Mundesley Oct 9th. Thereafter 1-4 noted at coastal watch points with 8 west Scolt Head 30th. In Nov 7 south Stiffkey 4th, 6 west Titchwell and 14 Blakeney Point 7th, 8 west Cley and Walcott 19th, 9 west Holme and 5 Sheringham 20th, and 6 south Hunstanton 24th with 5 south there following day.

In Dec numbers rapidly increased inland with good counts of 36 Great Ouse RC, 11 King's Lynn, 6 Felbrigg Park and Stowbridge; at Holme 6 west 6th.

Calculated max counts for birds present on inland waters:

<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
94	71	66	2	26	117

Ruddy Duck

Oxyura jamaicensis

An increasing but scarce introduced resident, first recorded in 1977

Max monthly counts from principal sites:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Holme	-	2	12	5	6	6	3	-	5	-	1	4
Tottenhill GP	11	7	10	7	-	-	-	2	1	-	2	-

Overall a slight decrease in the distribution of numbers compared with previous years, with 1-3 at 10 other sites, although 11 Hickling Broad Jan 2nd and 7 Titchwell April 8th. Conversely, breeding numbers appeared to increase, although success poor throughout, with pairs at

Cantley BF, Cley (brood), Fowlmere, Holkham GM (8 pairs only one brood seen), Holme (6 pairs, single brood none fledged), Titchwell (brood) and Welney (4 pairs, one brood but unsuccessful). From July onwards no more than 3 at any other site except 5 Bittering GP Oct 1st and 5 Pentney GP Dec 5th.

Red-legged Partridge

Alectoris rufa

Common introduced resident

Counts reported in first winter period: *Feb* 25 Barford, 22 Grimston Heath; *April* 80 Swaffham.



Red-legged Partridge (*Martin Woodcock*)

Breeding pairs included 373 Brancaster Thompson Farm, 19 Holkham NNR, 6 Scolt Head (no broods seen) and 3 Blakeney Point. A nest on Great Ryburgh Common had 9 eggs and 3 pheasant eggs. Pair regularly on bungalow roofs and in gardens at Beeston Regis, with breeding suspected. NBA results showed the species was present in 90% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 6 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Counts exceeding 25 in second winter period: *Sept* 35 Aylmerton, 30 Swaffham, 27 Tatterford; *Oct* 30 Grimston Heath, 30 Holkham GM, 26 Aylmerton; *Nov* 106 Beechamwell, 54 Clippesby Hill, 35 Kelling, 30 Sheringham, 29 Brancaster/Docking; *Dec* 66 South Walsham, 57 Hillington, 53 Newton Flotman, 29 Massingham Heath, 27 Sherborne, 26 Swainsthorpe.

Grey Partridge

Perdix perdix

Resident

Few double-figure counts in first winter period: *Jan* 20 Flitcham, 10 Choseley; *April* 14 Beechamwell.

Breeding pairs included 24 Brancaster Thompson Farm, 21 Holkham NNR, 8 Sparham (5 bred successfully with broods of 5-6) and 4 Roydon Common. NBA results showed the species was present in 41% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 2 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Counts in second winter period: *Sept* 40 releases Thetford Nunnery Lakes; *Oct* 35 Hilborough, 20 Roydon Common, 14 Caister, 12 Castle Acre, 11 Holme, 10 Grimston Pott Row; *Nov* 20 Flitcham, 17 Fring, 12 Holkham GM; *Dec* 50 Fring, 27 Massingham Heath, 19 Sheringham, 16 Repps-with-Bastwick, 15 Stiffkey, 15 Gayton, 14 Wighton, 12 Holkham GM, 11 Shernborne.

Quail

Coturnix coturnix

Summer visitor in erratic numbers; sporadic breeder

Majority of records related to calling males (unless otherwise stated) and also mostly for one day only: *May* Bayfield Hall (3 localities), Blakeney GM (flushed), Horsey, Long Stratton (10th - earliest record), Northrepps (2 flushed), Sheringham, Stiffkey, Thornham; *June* Bradfield, Breydon, Burnham Market, Cart Gap, Choseley (2), East Ruston (2), Felbrigg, Flitcham, Reedham, Sheringham, Stanford TA, Winterton; *July* Burnham Market (2), Eccles, East Carleton, Hockwold Washes, Lyng, Massingham Heath, Morston, North Creak, Sparham, Sheringham, Swaffham, Wighton; *Aug* Castle Acre (2), Salthouse (flushed), Titchwell, Walpole St Peter.

Latest record, one flushed during shoot Brancaster Thompson Farm Nov 23rd.

Common Pheasant

Phasianus colchicus

Common introduced resident

Breeding included at least 5 broods at Scolt Head from 16 resident males. NBA results showed the species was present in 94% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 14 cocks per occupied tetrad. At Tatterford 250 present Aug 23rd.

Golden Pheasant

Chrysolophus pictus

Scarce and local introduced resident

In period Jan-May regularly recorded at Great Hockham (max 3), Wayland Wood (max 5) and Wolferton (max 5). Elsewhere occasional records of males: *Feb* Mundford, Dersingham Bog (2); *March* Lynford Arboretum, Thompson Water (2); *April* East Wretham Heath (2), Thetford Rifle Range; *May* East Wretham Heath, Kilverstone.

In second half of year only 3 records, Wolferton Sept and Dec, and Rushford in Oct.

Red-throated Diver

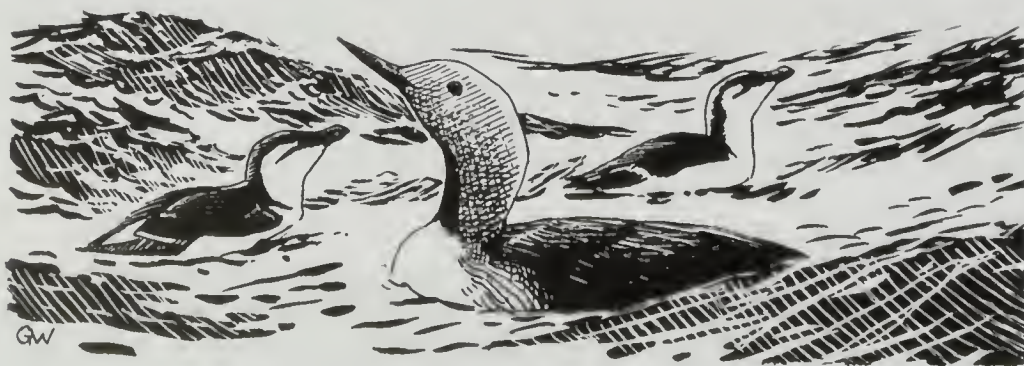
Gavia stellata

Common passage migrant and winter visitor; rare in summer

Recorded all months. Monthly max (including birds in flight and on sea) show importance of north-east coast:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Hunstanton-Scolt Head	8	2	5	1	1	1	1	1	28	14	5	8
Burnham Overy-Blakeney Hbr	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20
Blakeney Point-Happisburgh	271	212	277	-	1	1	3	1	90	82	134	121
Eccles-Hopton	258	15	215	-	1	-	-	-	5	60	114	40

National importance (winter): 50



Red-throated Diver and Razorbills (Gary Wright)

Three-figure counts on 7 dates in first winter period: 271 west Mundesley, 258 Sea Palling and 160 north at dawn Walcott all Jan 3rd, 101 west Walcott 4th, 160 on sea Cromer to Sidestrand Jan 7th, 100 Mundesley Feb 22nd with 212 on 29th and 160 west March 6th, and 277 Sheringham and 215 south Horsey (0850-1015) March 13th. After these March high counts, next just 2 birds Scolt Head March 23rd, and thereafter just singles on 15 dates until 2 Sheringham July 9th. First double-figure count of second winter period 24 Sheringham Sept 21st, with three-figure counts on 4 dates: 114 California Nov 1st, 86 west 48 east Walcott Nov 20th (0720-1100), 121 Sheringham Nov 28th and 121 west Mundesley Dec 28th.

The sole Wash record concerned a bird at Ousemouth Feb 1st.

Inland: Barton Broad Jan 20th-25th, Nar Valley Fisheries Feb 21st-April 16th and again Dec 5th, and Blackborough End GP April 12th-19th.

Black-throated Diver

Gavia arctica

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor; exceptional in summer

Recorded to April 19th and from Sept 10th.

Exceptionally scarce in first winter period, with records of just 3-5 birds: singles Holkham Bay Jan 2nd, with Holme Jan 24th/25th and 31st, Titchwell Jan 4th and Scolt Head Jan 25th almost certainly referring to same individual, Sheringham Feb 22nd, and Titchwell March 10th and April 19th.

First of autumn Holme Sept 10th then 1-2 there on 15 dates to Nov 27th. Nearby singles Titchwell throughout Oct, 1-2 on 3 dates in Nov and one Dec 5th, one Brancaster Nov 14th and 3 Scolt Head Oct 30th. Elsewhere, birds well-distributed at Burnham Overy Oct 30th with 2 there 31st, Holkham Bay Oct 30th and Nov 4th, Blakeney Point Oct 30th, Cley Sept 24th, Oct 17th, and Nov 6th and 19th, 2 Salthouse Dec 4th and one 6th, Kelling Nov 14th, Weybourne Oct 9th and 11th, with 2 Dec 4th, Sheringham Sept 25th, Oct 9th and 15th, Nov 5th and 2 Dec 4th, East Runton Nov 10th, Mundesley Oct 15th, Eccles Sept 24th, Cart Gap Nov 25th, Scratby Oct 10th, and Caister Nov 6th and 14th. Note - duplicate reporting of individuals cannot be ruled out and especially affects records in Holme-Holkham and Cley-Sheringham areas.

Sole Wash record Ongar Hill Oct 17th.

Great Northern Diver

Gavia immer

Winter visitor and passage migrant in small numbers; exceptional in summer

Recorded to March 20th and from July 25th, although one freshly dead tideline corpse in Wash at Ongar Hill May 9th. As with previous species, exceptionally scarce in first winter period with just 6 records, probably referring to just 5 birds: Caister Jan 24th, Holme Feb 1st, West Runton Feb 2nd, Holme March 7th and probably same Thornham Point March 13th, and Sheringham March 20th.

Although many more records in second winter period, birds remained very scarce in west of county, with only records from Scolt Head Oct 19th and 30th, Titchwell Nov 12th and 15th, and Holme Nov 14th.

Elsewhere: Blakeney Point Oct 30th/31st; singles 6 dates Cley Nov 2nd-Dec 2nd with 2 19th and 3 on 20th; Sheringham Sept 25th, west Oct 9th (also reported at Weybourne), Nov 13th and 19th with 2 on 20th; Mundesley July 25th, west Oct 11th, 31st, Nov 7th with 2 on 13th; Paston Nov 4th; 3 Walcott Nov 16th, 2 north on 19th and one north 20th; California Nov 8th; south Scratby Oct 10th; Sea Palling Oct 28th (when also passed Gorleston) and Nov 19th; 2 Yarmouth Sept 30th.

Little Grebe

Tachybaptus ruficollis

Resident, passage migrant and winter visitor

Found throughout county with monthly max at regularly counted sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Snettisham	13	12	10	2	-	-	2	-	5	17	13	7
Holme	5	2	7	6	2	4	1	-	2	4	3	3
Wells Hbr	10	6	4	-	-	-	-	-	3	7	11	7
Holkham NNR	6	5	4	46	44	46	-	-	4	-	6	5
Cley/Salthouse	13	8	4	10	3	9	7	6	17	15	9	13
Nar Valley Fisheries	-	-	3	-	-	4	-	-	10	12	8	12
Breydon/Berney	1	3	4	5	8	3	4	10	10	4	4	3

Counts in excess of 20 birds at just two other sites: 20 Swanton Morley GP Nov 13th with 35 in Dec; 31 Fowlmere March 26th with 20 April 3rd.

A total of 81-83 breeding pairs reported from 24 sites: Bagmore Pit, Beetley, Billingford, Blackborough End GP, Breydon/Berney (10), Buckenham Tofts, Cley (2), Corpusty, East Ruston Mown Fen, Fowlmere, Holkham (40-41), Holme (2-3), How Hill, Lopham Fen (5), Morning Thorpe GP, Nar Valley Fisheries (2), Sheringham, Strumpshaw (2), Surlingham Church Marsh, Swanton Morley GP, Syderstone Common, Titchwell (2), West Mere, West Tofts Mere.

Great Crested Grebe

Podiceps cristatus

Resident breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor

Found throughout county in both coastal and inland waters with monthly max at regularly counted sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Holme	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	23	27
Scolt Head	-	2	2	5	3	4	6	4	3	13	4	4
Breydon/Berney	5	5	6	3	5	9	18	34	36	9	6	7
Ranworth Broad	8	12	16	17	13	20	14	20	9	10	7	5
Barton Broad	14	27	31	42	27	53	40	30	22	15	8	7
Rockland Broad	4	5	12	12	10	11	11	11	10	5	3	3



Great Crested Grebe (Gary Wright)

Other counts of 20 or more: 54 Great Ouse RC March 11th, 21 Nar Valley Fisheries April 10th with 29 there Dec 4th, 25 Tottenhill GP Aug 31st with 20 there Sept 26th, 20 Titchwell Oct 5th and 22 Hickling Broad Nov 7th. Only notable coastal movement 23 west Holme Nov 14th.

A total of 73 breeding pairs reported from 21 sites, a slight decrease on last year's total: Bittering GP, Cockley Cley, Diss Mere (2), Hickling Broad (26), Hockwold Washes (3), Lenwade Common, Lyng, mid-Yare RSPB (8), Nar Valley Fisheries (4), Pentney GP (3), Ranworth Broad (2), Rockland Broad (3), Sennowe Park Lake, Sparham Pools (4), Strumpshaw, Swanton Morley GP, Welney (7), West Acre, Whitlingham CP, R Bure at Horning and at St Benet's.

Red-necked Grebe

Podiceps grisegena

Passage migrant and winter visitor

Exceptionally scarce in first winter period with singles off Titchwell Feb 11th and March 13th.

A summer-plumaged adult Scolt Head July 5th was first of autumn, with next not until Sheringham Aug 26th. Reports on 4 dates Holme Sept 26th-Oct 10th, Dec 4th and 2 Dec 28th, singles Scolt Head Sept 21st and Oct 1st, 2 Titchwell Oct 14th and singles Oct 17th, Nov 12th-18th, Nov 29th and Dec 31st, probably refer to 2 birds wintering in north-west of county in second half of year. Further east, Burnham Overy Hbr Oct 30th/31st, Holkham Bay Oct 16th and 30th with 2 on 31st, 1-2 on min of 30 dates Sept 3rd-Dec 19th between Blakeney Point and Sheringham, with 3 Cley Sept 23rd. Elsewhere, singles Mundesley Nov 14th and Dec 25th, Walcott Nov 20th, Winterton Sept 13th and Oct 31st with 2 Dec 4th, Scratby Oct 11th and Gorleston Nov 6th.

Inland: R Bure at Buxton Jan 3rd, Pentney GP Jan 22nd-24th and Nov 25th-Dec 16th, Tottenhill GP March 25th, Hickling Broad Nov 24th and Costessey Pits Dec 14th.

Slavonian Grebe

Podiceps auritus

Winter visitor and passage migrant, mainly during autumn

Fewer reported in first winter period than in recent years, although as usual most records from coastal waters in north-west of county: 1-2 Holme Jan 18th, 23rd and March 20th; 1-2 Titchwell on 10 dates to end of March with 4 on March 6th; 1-2 Holkham Bay Jan 4th and 10th. Elsewhere in first winter period Weybourne March 26th.

An adult Scolt Head July 5th-8th was followed by first of autumn there Sept 24th.

In second winter period 1-2 Holme on 10 dates Sept 27th-Dec 14th; Titchwell on 17 dates with max of 5 in both Oct (16th) and Nov (16th) and 4 in Dec (15th); 1-3 on 4 dates Scolt Head Oct 14th-31st; in Burnham Overy/Holkham Bay/Wells Channel Oct 25th, 2 on 30th, 3-4 on 31st and 2 Dec 6th. Elsewhere Blakeney Point Nov 9th, Cley Oct 30th, Nov 9th and Dec 18th, Weybourne Oct 12th, Walcott Nov 10th, Horsey Nov 1st and north California Nov 15th.

Inland Hickling Broad April 19th/20th.

Black-necked Grebe

Podiceps nigricollis

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor

A typical series of records probably referring to 9 birds: on sea Mundesley Jan 2nd (MDF), Tottenhill GP March 13th-28th, 1-2 Welney May 3rd-23rd, pair displaying Whitlingham CP May 10th, Burnham Overy Staithe Aug 31st-Sept 12th, Cantley BF Sept 1st, Breydon Sept 8th and on sea Holkham Bay Oct 16th (IPr) with 2 off Burnham Overy Dunes Oct 30th (CHM MAWa).

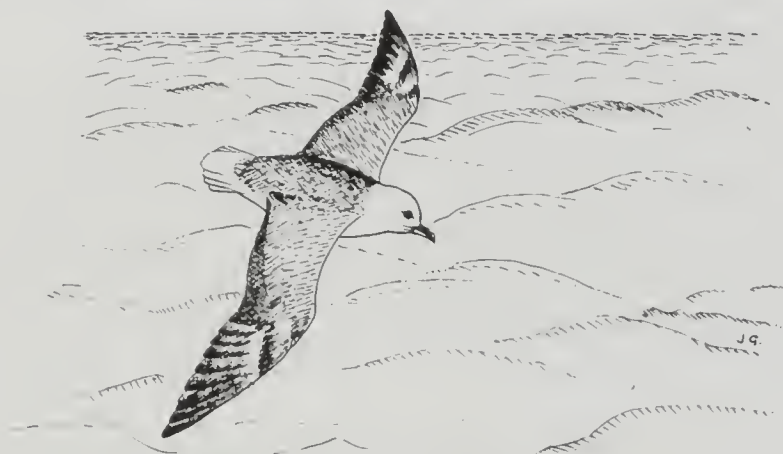
Fulmar

Fulmarus glacialis

Breeder, some remaining all year; regular coasting and storm movements

Only significant counts in first winter period 41 east Mundesley Jan 2nd with 112 east 102 west there Feb 28th, and 49 east 22 west Scolt Head April 29th with 42 west 18 east there May 8th. Also of interest 10 between Lynn Point and King's Lynn Fisher Fleet Feb 27th.

Of great concern was the incidence of tideline corpses noted throughout March: 54 Sheringham 2nd, 15 Cromer 10th, 27 Titchwell 12th, 35 Overstrand 15th, 7 Caister 18th, 9 Winterton 21st, 26 Salthouse 22nd, 124 Scolt Head and 10 Weybourne 23rd, 132 Blakeney Point late March and 15 Waxham April 4th. A number of blue-phase birds were included in the casualties with 24 found along Blakeney Point March 11th.



Fulmar (John Geeson)

Subsequent study of birds from the wreck, which covered the southern North Sea including the Belgian and French Channel coasts, indicated the birds, predominately adult females, were severely emaciated and in an incomplete state of primary and retricial moult. Females being more wide ranging in the post breeding season coupled with persistent northwesterly storms in Feb, may have assisted in their accumulation in the southern North Sea. Poor breeding success in 2003 and scarcity of food during the breeding season may have contributed to the disaster (British Birds, May 2004, Vol 97 No 5).

During breeding season only records 70 nests Hunstanton and 4 pairs California.

Best of autumn offshore movements included 53 east Scolt Head July 8th, 46 east Sheringham Sept 7th and 121 Hunstanton Nov 28th.

Live blue-phase birds: at Mundesley 2 Jan 2nd, 2 Feb 22nd, one Feb 27th and 2 Feb 29th (all east); at Sheringham 2 west Feb 28th and sick bird on sea March 1st.

Cory's Shearwater

Calonectris diomedea

Annual vagrant from Mediterranean/North Atlantic; most during autumn

Singles, all moving east, at Cley July 7th (RGM), Mundesley July 25th (MDF) and Sheringham Aug 21st (RL *et al*).

Sooty Shearwater

Puffinus griseus

Autumn passage migrant, most during northerly gales; rare at other times

A poor year with just 2 north in Aug at Gorleston on 21st. Noted on 5 dates in Sept when Sheringham 7th, north Yarmouth 9th, 2 west one east Scolt Head 21st, 6 west one east Scolt

Head, 3 Sheringham and 3 Walcott all 23rd, and 2 west Sheringham 24th. In Oct Waxham 8th, 4 west Mundesley and single west Scolt Head 9th, and Sheringham 9th, 11th and 13th.

Manx Shearwater

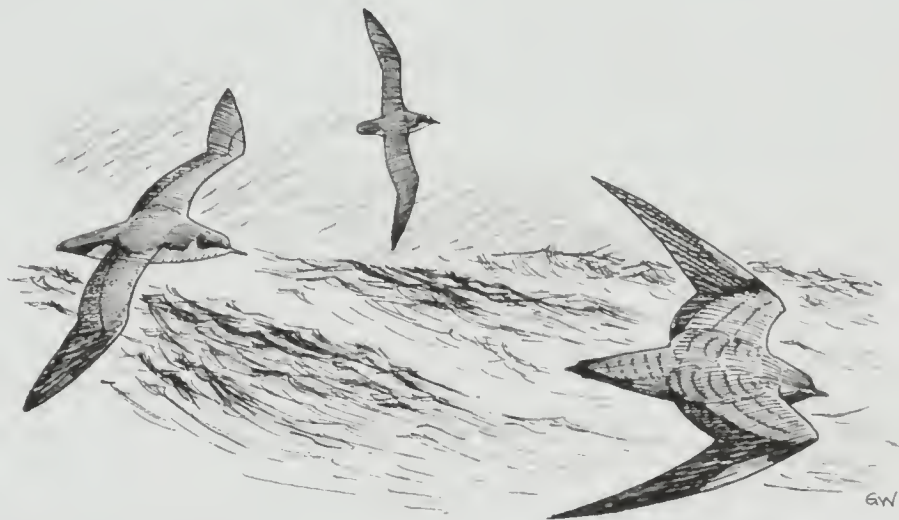
Puffinus puffinus

Passage migrant with majority during autumn movements

Very light spring movement with singles during April at Titchwell 24th, Cley 29th and Sea Palling 30th. In May 3 east Scolt Head 23rd and in June 2 Titchwell and singles Mundesley/Sea Palling 3rd, 2 Sheringham 24th and single Walcott 25th. Notable July counts: 3rd 8 Scolt Head, 6 east Mundesley; 4th 8 west Scolt Head; 7th 20 Cley, 6 Sheringham, 29 east Walcott, 8 Sea Palling; 8th 35 Sheringham, 7 east Walcott, 28 Sea Palling; 23rd 10 west 4 east Scolt Head.

Little movement in Aug with only 6 records of 1-3 birds, but Sept highlights included: 15th 70 Hunstanton, 64 west 11 east Scolt Head, 60 Blakeney Point, 88 east 36 west Sheringham; 21st 34 west 11 east Scolt Head, 30 Sheringham; 23rd 21 west 15 east Holme, 23 west 15 east Scolt Head, 38 Sheringham; 24th 10 west 8 east Scolt Head, 36 Sheringham. Unusually, one found dead inland Barnhamcross Common Sept 24th.

Oct max 4 west Scolt Head, 5 Sheringham, 7 west Mundesley and 5 Sea Palling all 9th. In Nov singles Cromer 2nd, Cley 4th, Mundesley and 2 Sheringham 10th, with latest Walcott/Sea Palling 19th.



Manx Shearwaters and Arctic Skua (Gary Wright)

Balearic Shearwater

Puffinus yelkouan

Annual in small numbers during autumn

Only three autumn records (all west): Mundesley Aug 29th and Sept 15th (MDF), and Sheringham and then Cley Sept 24th (PJH CEW *et al*).

Storm Petrel

Hydrobates pelagicus

Almost annual late autumn visitor, often in stormy weather

Another good year for this species: east Sheringham Sept 7th (MHo TCL); west Scolt Head Sept 23rd (NML); Scolt Head (NML), Cley (2) (JRMc CEW *et al*) and Sheringham (many obs) Sept 24th (all west); west Brancaster Oct 21st (JCo); west Cley Nov 6th (D&JB). Details of several other reports remain unsubmitted.

Leach's Petrel

Oceanodroma leucorhoa

Gale-blown visitor mostly during autumn

First spring record in 3 years when one north Yarmouth May 11th.

In Sept singles east Cley, Salthouse and 2 Sheringham 7th, south Yarmouth 13th, Cley and west Sheringham 15th, 2 west Scolt Head 21st, west Sheringham 22nd, 2 Titchwell, 12 Scolt Head, single Weybourne and 4 Sheringham all west 23rd, 3 west Scolt Head and 5 west Sheringham 24th, and 2 Sheringham 25th. In Oct, singles north Waxham and Sea Palling 9th, lingering offshore Eccles 9th/10th, Gorleston 10th, 4 north Yarmouth/Gorleston 11th and single east Mundesley 31st. Nov singles Sheringham 5th, and Mundesley and Eccles 10th.

Gannet

Morus bassanus

Passage migrant, most during autumn gales

Only two counts of note in first quarter: 105 east Mundesley Jan 2nd and 68 south Horsey March 13th. In spring, best counts 39 east Scolt Head April 28th, 100 Cley 29th, 108 Sea Palling 30th and 215 Sheringham May 21st. One inland at Rockland Broad May 30th.

Noted regularly during summer months with max 168 west Mundesley June 20th, 325 south Walcott July 7th, 130 Sheringham, 70 Paston and 258 Sea Palling July 8th, 119 Gorleston 9th, 241 west Mundesley 10th, 105 Gorleston Aug 14th and 103 Winterton 29th.

A good Sept with 200 Sheringham and 250 east Mundesley 7th, and 177 Gorleston 12th. Next major movement from 23rd when 620 east 118 west Scolt Head; on 24th 835 east Holme, 354 Titchwell and 970 east 110 west Scolt Head. Subsequently 312 north 129 south Waxham 25th and 772 west Sheringham 30th. The pace continued in Oct when: 9th 190 east 85 west Scolt Head, 1000 east Mundesley (in 5 hrs), 530 south Winterton, 612 south 264 north California; 10th 400 Holme, 721 south 51 north Scratby; 11th 975 east Sheringham, 1200 east Mundesley (in 2 hrs), 1800 south Eccles (0800-1030), 556 south 16 north Scratby. Less in Nov with 100 Titchwell 2nd, 118 north 22 south Walcott 15th and 70 Cley 19th.

Cormorant

Phalacrocorax carbo

Increasing winter visitor and passage migrant; sporadic breeder

Monthly counts from roost sites:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>June</i>	<i>July</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Snettisham	24	35	42	23	47	37	122	97	90	35	28	23
Titchwell	-	-	-	41	28	41	76	70	-	-	-	-
Holkham GM	43	35	51	146	148	145	-	-	-	-	109	63-
Ranworth Broad	284	182	105	24	26	16	17	56	83	170	232	246
Nar Valley Fisheries	35	46	45	-	8	3	3	3	-	-	-	35
Welney	207	172	171	61	-	-	75	-	93	128	176	168

National importance (winter): 130

Elsewhere 35 roosted Cranwich GP Jan 14th and up to 7 regularly roosting Hoveton Hall during year.

Other counts of daytime roosts/loafing birds from most regularly counted sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Breydon	90	79	80	40	27	39	63	84	81	76	58	79
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	6	11	8	18	65	85	120	115	140	88	13	12

Remaining notable counts included 60 Cley Aug 9th with 92 there Sept 12th, and 108 Great Ouse RC Nov 12th. Largest coastal movements at Holme in Sept when 42 west 27 east 23rd, and 34 west 26th. At Holkham GM 72 pairs bred with an impressive 200 young fledged; also 2 nests at Narford.

Majority of birds in the county are of the race *sinensis* including those breeding. Birds of nominate race *carbo* occur in small numbers in winter with occasional records in summer.

With legalised culling already taking place it will interesting to note future trends.

Shag

Phalacrocorax aristotelis

Autumn and winter visitor with occasional birds wrecked inland

With exception of 3 Gorleston Jan 1st, singles during remainder of first winter period when Weybourne/Sheringham and east Mundesley Jan 1st, Scolt Head Jan 25th, Holme Feb 10th, Saddlebow RC Feb 13th, Sheringham March 2nd and one at roost Hunstanton March 7th. Only two spring records Wells May 7th and one dead Blakeney Point May 10th.

A superb autumn/second winter period, with singles reported along and around whole coastline from Aug 28th with the following highlights: 6 Cromer Oct 25th with 8 28th; 7 Brancaster Hbr Oct 27th with 8 28th/29th and 9 30th; 17 around reefs Sea Palling/Eccles from Nov 1st with 15 roosting offshore 3rd, 14 on 11th and 12 still present 18th/19th; 11 west Walcott Nov 10th, 8 west 13th and 11 again west 19th; 11 west Mundesley also 10th and 16 west 13th. Birds at Mundesley and Walcott presumably same as Sea Palling/Eccles birds. In Dec still up to 4 Sheringham, 4 Sea Palling and 3 west Mundesley 25th.

Bittern

Botaurus stellaris

Rare resident breeder; also winter visitor in variable numbers

During first winter period up to 3 noted Strumpshaw Jan-March when at least one Cley and Hickling Broad. Wintering birds also present at New Costessey and Potter Heigham in Jan, and Colney GP and Titchwell Feb/March. Occasional records during this period from Sculthorpe Fen Jan 3rd, Pentney GP 12th, Holkham GM 15th and 31st, Thetford Nunnery Lakes March 4th, 3 localities in Broads and Holme, where noted 5 dates in March.

The continued recovery of this species as a breeding bird in the UK is perhaps highlighted nowhere better than in the Norfolk Broads, where 17 booming males were located in 2004 (12 in 2003). Booming was noted from early March and at least 4 nests were located, 3 of which contained young. In addition at least 3, possibly 4, booming males were located at coastal sites with probability of breeding having occurred at one of these. Another coastal site held a single bird June 12th.

Autumn post breeding dispersal almost negligible with 2 Holme July 18th only record of note.

Occasional birds noted during second winter period at Welney Oct 15th and 24th, and Nov 14th-18th, Burnham Overy Nov 7th, Martham Broad Nov 21st, Snettisham Dec 2nd, 4th and 11th, and Blakeney GM Dec 30th. Regular singles noted Cley, Hickling Broad, Holkham GM and Titchwell Oct-Dec, with 2 Strumpshaw Oct at least one remaining Nov/Dec.

Little Egret

Egretta garzetta

Increasing visitor especially in winter; breeding has occurred since 2002

This species' explosion into the county avifauna continues unabated. An article detailing its status past and present can be found on page 262.

Max monthly counts from well-watched localities:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Holme	3	3	-	4	2	5	5	2	4	6	6	4
Thornham Hbr	5	3	5	3	2	14	-	28	14	20	7	2
Titchwell	7	13	19	2	5	6	6	40	51	13	5	5
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	13	5	11	25	8	8	36	50	98	64	25	19
Burnham Overy Hbr	6	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	10	4	6	-
Holkham GM	31	58	17	84	89	86	-	-	-	200	212	186
Wells Hbr	-	-	2	5	5	4	14	28	19	16	12	4
Warham SM	13	9	30	9	9	31	8	32	28	19	46	17
Stiffkey SM	9	19	10	7	8	8	9	9	6	-	48	15
Blakeney Hbr	7	5	2	2	5	3	16	28	23	17	4	20

In addition now becoming more obvious on Wash coast as indicated by total of 5 south Hunstanton April/May and 36 south there Sept 30th-Nov 25th, including flocks of 5, 7 and 9; also 1-3 Snettisham Jan-April, 5 May, 1-7 July/Aug with up to 4 to year end; Ousemouth up to 6 Jan, 1-3 Feb-April, 5 May and 1-4 to Nov. Presumably some of those heading south frequent Welney where singles Jan/Feb, 4 March, 1-3 April-July, with 6 there July 31st, 5 Sept and single Oct.

Spring passage difficult to determine with so many resident birds, but between March-May around 20 presumed migrants passed coastal sites between Weybourne and Winterton, where Little Egrets are far less regular. Infrequent inland during spring when singles Caistor St Edmund March 4th, Pott Row 7th, 4 Buckenham Marshes 28th, Flitcham April 3rd and 17th, 3 Strumpshaw 11th and single Little Cressingham May 24th. Perhaps surprisingly also still infrequent in Broads, where 5 Haddiscoe Marshes May 8th, what may have been the same 5 Hickling Broad May 16th, and single Upton Fen May 30th being only records.

Numbers at both established breeding colonies continue to increase annually and are now supplemented by a new colony established in east of county. A total of 55 pairs bred fledging



Glossy Ibis and Little Egrets (John Geeson)

an impressive min of 152 young. Many nests at colony in north held at least 3 young. In addition at least one, and on one occasion 4, present at Wensum Valley sites between Sparham and Great Ryburgh from April 19th-end June at least but no breeding behaviour observed.

Some westward post breeding dispersal evident at coastal sites between Weybourne and Winterton when about 25 passed between late June-early Oct. Inland singles at 6 localities, plus 4 Reedham July 4th and 9 Pentney GP July 15th.

Grey Heron

Ardea cinerea

Resident and passage migrant/winter visitor

No significant counts received relating to first winter period.

Usual light spring movement recorded when 3 north-east Holme March 27th followed by April records from Scolt Head, where 5 west during month (max 2 on 15th), singles in off sea Cley and Horsey 3rd, 2 south-east over sea Winterton 4th, 5 south Hunstanton 15th, 2 in off sea Caister 17th and single north Waxham May 2nd.

Breeding details included total of 195-210 nests at 20 heronries. No details received from Colney, Didlington and Shadwell. No nests found at Feltwell Common and just one at Feltwell Black Dyke, apparently a result of the new land owner clearing ditches and felling trees making the area less attractive to Grey Herons. In addition the large heronry at Great Witchingham held just 16 nests, down from 50 in 2003, presumed to be a result of the new owner no longer putting out food. The Islington heronry (52 nests) is now easily the largest in county.

One sizeable midsummer count when 82 present Welney June 18th.

Familiar (mainly westward) summer and autumn movement at coastal sites commencing in June and continuing late into season, peaking late Sept-early Oct. Combined monthly counts from well-watched coastal sites at this time:

	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>
Holme	-	-	-	37	3
Scolt Head	4	19	12	74	86
Sheringham	-	-	1	12	26

Note: Sheringham figures include those from nearby Beeston Bump, but no duplication involved.

Largest movements recorded at Scolt Head include 44 Sept 30th, 22 Oct 1st and 31 2nd. Late autumn coastal movement noted elsewhere when 2 west Kelling Sept 26th, 2 west Overstrand 27th, 13 south Hunstanton 30th, 26 west Blakeney Point Oct 1st and occasional singles elsewhere plus 2 in off sea Cromer Oct 27th.

Autumn and winter counts: *Sept* 23 Welney, 22 Banham Zoo, 10 Downham Market RC; *Nov* 15 Welney; *Dec* 15 Eau Brink, 12 Great Ouse RC, 11 Lynn Point.

Purple Heron

Ardea purpurea

Almost annual spring and autumn vagrant from the Continent

Following another blank year a plethora of records: Brayden Marshes May 1st/2nd (PJH), Welney May 28th-June 1st (JBK *et al*), 3 west Langham July 21st (BJB), east Cley then Salthouse Aug 12th (TCD *et al*) and Breydon Aug 14th-Sept 3rd (KRD INS *et al*).

Glossy Ibis

Plegadis falcinellus

Rare vagrant from the Continent

Continuing the recent good run for this species one was present in Breydon/Burgh Castle/Berney area July 3rd-Aug 1st (PJH AS *et al*), then again Aug 8th-13th, having between

dates visited Cantley BF Aug 10th and Minsmere in Suffolk. One in the Netherlands on Aug 16th was also presumably this bird which was again seen daily in Breydon/Burgh Castle/Berney area Aug 17th-Oct 4th, and intermittently Oct 17th-year end, having visited Cantley Marshes Sept 1st and Minsmere again.

Spoonbill

Platalea leucorodia

Scarce non-breeding summer visitor and passage migrant; rare in winter

First of spring at Burnham Overy GM March 26th, followed by April records from Titchwell 3rd and 26th, sub-adult Welney 6th-10th with another 16th-19th, Cley 22nd, Sheringham 23rd, later at Cley 23rd/24th when high west on latter date and presumably then at Holme same day. Another Holme 27th plus single Cley 29th.

Further migrants noted during May at Sheringham 2nd, Holme 5th, Martham Broad 6th, 3 Scolt Head 11th, Welney 15th and Waxham 23rd. Also noted in June when 7 in off sea Winterton 6th and singles King's Lynn 19th and Fakenham 26th. Additional July single Snettisham 5th.

Recorded from more regular localities May-Aug as tabulated below. Note counts represent max numbers during each period and may involve grounded or passing birds; there may also be some duplication between sites:

	May		Jun		Jul		Aug	
	1st-15th	16th-31st	1st-15th	16th-30th	1st-15th	16th-31st	1st-15th	16th-31st
Titchwell	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-
Holkham GM	1	2	8	3	1	-	-	-
Cley	1	3	4	-	-	-	-	-
Hickling	1	2	4	-	3	5	2	1
Breydon/Berney	5	3	5	-	2	-	-	-

Late autumn records from Snettisham Oct 7th, Happisburgh Oct 14th, Breydon Oct 15th and Cley Oct 28th, followed by singles Welney Nov 7th and 11th and an imm that wandered the saltings and creeks between Blakeney Hbr and Titchwell Nov 9th-year end.

Honey Buzzard

Pernis apivorus

Rare migrant breeder and scarce passage migrant

An early spring passage with two records in April when singles north Hickling 20th and west Sheringham 25th, followed by further early records in May when 2 south-east Sheringham 2nd, with another there next day when also single east Ditchingham and another east Burgh Castle 8th. Further spring records from more familiar mid-May period when noted Wells 12th, Holme 15th, Blickling Park and Watton 16th, Titchwell 18th and Horsey 29th.

Last year's pair returned to the familiar breeding area on May 16th with 2 additional passage birds later in month. During June/July at least 6 birds were present in area. One pair bred, but unfortunately did not rear any young, probably as a result of bad weather. Although these birds, and others that visit the breeding area, are known to wander considerable distances no records received from other area regularly frequented during previous summers. Once again birds remained in area until Aug with latest 12th.

Autumn passage commenced early with July records of presumed failed or non-breeding birds Langham 2nd, Runham and west Whitlingham CP 4th, west Kelling Heath 11th, south Holt 19th, and in off sea then west Beeston Bump 29th. Further Aug records from Felbrigg 6th, Binham and 2 North Creak (with Common Buzzards) 7th, west Kelling 10th, west Holme 14th, 2 Brinton 26th and a remarkable 5 together Welney 31st. Further movement in Sept

when singles Cley, Cockthorpe and Swaffham 8th, and another Brancaster Staithe next day. Last of autumn in Oct when single south Weybourne 15th.

Red Kite

Milvus milvus

Increasing visitor; birds from the Continent and British reintroduction projects occur

Just two records in first winter period, presumably all relating to one wandering bird: Worstead and Stalham Jan 4th, and west through Cley, Stiffkey Fen and Holme Jan 10th.

Spring passage commenced March 1st when single south at Bergh Apton followed by further March records from Massingham Heath 5th and 8th, Trunch 10th, west through Sheringham, Weybourne, Kelling WM, Cley and later Choseley 14th, east Wroxham and Holkham Gap 15th, Shereford 17th, Wighton 18th, Yare valley sites from Cringleford to UEA 27th-April 1st, Stockton 28th, Holme 29th and Hoveton 30th. Further spring records in April at Waxham/Horsey/Winterton 4th/5th, Berney and Cley 14th, Sedgeford 15th, Langham 16th, Aylmerton, Sheringham and Cley 19th, and Blofield Heath 22nd. Good numbers in May when noted Flitcham 3rd, How Hill, Cockthorpe and Cley 15th, 5 together over Swanton Novers 17th, North Creak and Sparham 18th, Northrepps 19th, Massingham Heath 21st, at least one Great Ryburgh and adjacent Wensum valley localities north-west to Fakenham 23rd to June 22nd, Snettisham 23rd, east Aylsham and Kelling, west Overstrand and 4 south Winterton 24th, Dersingham and Langham 25th, Holkham 27th, Old Hunstanton 28th, and Lynford and Wells 30th. As usual declining numbers into June and spring passage over by mid-month when singles Shernborne 2nd, west through Cley, Wiveton, Stiffkey Fen and Hunstanton 8th, Warham 9th, Fordham 12th and North Walsham 15th.

First of autumn Aylmerton July 1st followed by further July records from Melton Constable 5th, Thetford Nunnery Lakes 24th and Diss 27th, and singles Stiffkey Fen Aug 18th, Gayton Aug 21st and Winterton Sept 18th.

No records from second winter period.



Red Kite (Steve Cale)

White-tailed Eagle

Haliaeetus albicilla

Rare vagrant, mainly in winter

An imm south Massingham Heath Dec 26th (JBK). No doubt the same bird which was to delight many observers in Jan 2005.

Marsh Harrier

Circus aeruginosus

Increasing migrant breeder; also passage migrant; small numbers winter

The main Broads roost retained impressive numbers Jan-March where 42 Jan, 25 Feb and 11 March. Elsewhere 1-6 roosted occasionally at 8 coastal and other Broads sites during this period and whilst there is doubtless some duplication it is likely that over 50 wintered in the county.

Some wintering birds returned to territories by end Feb but genuine spring passage commenced March 8th when singles Welney, and west Holkham Bay and Scolt Head, but only about 10 more coastal migrants noted in March. Further spring passage noted at coastal sites where 30 (just 2 adult males) through Aylmerton April 3rd-May 6th, max 12 in 3 hrs 20 mins May 3rd, 22 passed Scolt Head April/May, max 7 May 2nd, and 6 south Hunstanton April 16th-May 4th, max 3 on last date. Last migrant of spring out to sea Scolt Head June 5th.

Breeding details indicate min 81 females nested fledging at least 139 young: *Broads* 31 females fledged 29 young; *Fens* 2 nests both washed out by high water levels; *North coast* 28 females fledged 62 young (including record year at Holkham NNR where 14 nests produced 32 young); *Wash* 12 attempts, 10 nests successful with at least 33 young fledged; *elsewhere* 10 females fledged 15 young.

Details of min numbers of fledged young in recent years:

	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04
Fledged young	114	105	71	112	87	88	117	90	122	189	115	107	139

Autumn post breeding dispersal evident from July 7th when single west Sheringham with occasional singles west at coastal sites during month including juv 1 km offshore Scolt Head on 27th. Communal autumn roosting recorded at Roydon late Aug-early Oct, where 7 Sept 15th, 8 22nd, 7 29th and 3 Oct 7th.

Autumn coastal passage unexceptional with 14 west Scolt Head Aug/Sept, max 7 Sept 1st. Elsewhere 3 west Aylmerton Aug 7th and 4 west Holme Aug 22nd the only other coastal records of note, although movement continued into Nov when singles in off sea Eccles 14th, west offshore Cley 22nd and 2 west Sheringham 21st with another west there 28th.

During Aug/Sept small numbers regularly noted at numerous inland sites over much of county but by early Oct most records were from the vicinity of known roost sites. A juv at Fring Oct 1st, apparently very hungry, was photographed as it spent 30 mins at a road-killed rabbit carcass, oblivious to traffic passing within one metre.

Roosting numbers at main Broads site continue to increase where 25 Oct/Nov and 56 Dec. Successful over-wintering by males now becoming much more commonplace as illustrated by Dec count above including 11 adult males. In addition 1-9 roosted occasionally at min 8 other coastal and Broads sites Oct-Dec.

Hen Harrier

Circus cyaneus

Passage migrant and winter visitor; former breeder, now exceptional in summer

Increased and improved reporting of first winter period roost sites indicated a good population Jan-March. Away from known roost sites single Croxton Heath Jan 12th (only Brecks record during period), 1-2 regular in Grimston Heath/Massingham Heath/Flitcham area March 1st-26th, South Creake March 2nd and 25th, intermittently between Salthouse and Blakeney Point March 4th-22nd, and 1-2 occasionally in Strumpshaw/Buckenham area March 14th-25th.

Details from 7 regular and 3 occasional roosts at this time:

	<i>Regular roosts</i>							<i>Occasional roosts</i>	<i>Max total</i>
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>(min 3)</i>	
Jan	3	4	8	5	8	4	6	5	43
Feb	3	2	8	6	10	4	-	4	37
March	2	2	-	-	1	5	3	2	15

April coastal movement of departing wintering birds and spring passage migrants evident from Aylmerton 3rd and 12th, Cley 9th, Snettisham 12th, in off sea West Runton and south Overstrand 14th, Blakeney Point 15th-20th, Weybourne, Salhouse and North Wootton 21st, and Winterton 27th/28th. Extremely few May records when male west Cley 1st and ringtail west Aylmerton 6th.

Autumn arrival from Sept 10th when single Wells, followed by further Sept records from Burnham Overy area 11th-14th, Scolt Head 15th, with 2 there 16th, singles 19th and in off sea 21st, 2 again 22nd and single 25th-30th, and Titchwell and Holme 16th. During Oct roosting numbers building up towards end of month but very little evidence of coastal arrival or movement at this time when noted Eccles 1st, Strumpshaw 10th, Welney 11th, Sheringham 13th and 18th, and Southrepps 16th.

Recorded away from known roosting areas Nov/Dec at Holme, where west Nov 1st, 6th and 11th, Weybourne 1st, Castle Rising and along Babingley River 4th, Stanhoe 8th, Flitcham 12th and 19th, Strumpshaw 14th, between Salhouse and Blakeney Point 14th/15th and 18th-20th, in off sea Mundesley 20th, west Sheringham 20th and 21st, south over sea Hunstanton 24th, Buckenham 25th and 28th, and Dec 9th, Ongar Hill Nov 27th and Dec 11th, 2 Lynn Point/North Wootton area Nov 29th-Dec 1st, Cley Dec 9th and 15th, Buckenham 9th, Hillington 15th, Lynn Point 26th, Massingham Heath/Gayton 27th and Blakeney Point 30th.

Roosting numbers apparently returned to more familiar levels in second winter period. Details from 8 regular and 2 occasional roosts during Oct-Dec:

	<i>Regular roosts</i>								<i>Occasional roosts</i>	<i>Max total</i>
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>(min 2)</i>	
Oct	1	2	-	1	2	-	-	-	3	9
Nov	4	2	3	7	1	5	3	6	1	32
Dec	4	2	2	4	1	3	2	6	-	24

Montagu's Harrier

Circus pygargus

Rare migrant breeder and scarce passage migrant

First of a reasonable spring passage Holme April 15th followed by a further 5 during month at Sheringham and Cley 18th, Fring 19th, Sheringham 21st, Sculthorpe Moor 24th, and Burnham Overy and Scolt Head 25th. Around 14 more appeared in May when noted Burnham Norton 1st, ringtail Scolt Head and male Titchwell 3rd, Waxham and Weybourne 6th, ringtail Barnham Cross Common and Kenninghall, and male Holkham both 12th, ringtail Horsey and Waxham, and male Hockham Heath both 15th, Choseley 17th and 22nd, King's Lynn 18th, ringtail Guist 22nd/23rd, Warham 23rd, male Great Ryburgh 26th, Pott Row, imm male Titchwell and Scolt Head all 29th. Fewer recorded in June when singles Berney 8th, Docking 15th, Brancaster and Choseley 26th/27th, and Stalham 29th.

For second year in succession a single pair bred in county, successfully fledging 3 young. At least one additional male and female were present at same locality early in the season but it is unclear whether they represented a further pair. In addition an imm female summered

elsewhere in county, present June 5th-July 30th at least, and was joined by 2 imm males July 19th-30th.

An unusually high number of autumn records, doubtless supplemented by wandering failed or non-breeders, and later by dispersing local breeding birds. For the protection of breeding birds only those records away from the year's known breeding and summering areas are listed. Noted in July at Wighton 4th, Aldeby Tip 5th, Lynn Point 10th, Cley 12th, Cantley BF 14th and Runham 28th. Aug records included the first juv at Scolt Head 2nd, with others 15th and 21st, female Sculthorpe Airfield 5th with male there 12th, Glandford 12th, Cley 16th with juv there 24th, Langham 29th, followed by a ringtail in Sept at Hindringham and Bale 7th.



Montagu's Harrier (*Richard Johnson*)

Goshawk

Accipiter gentilis

Rare breeder; also scarce passage migrant and winter visitor

A small number of Jan records when reported from Hoveton 5th, Potter Heigham 16th, Thompson Water 17th, Sparham 23rd and Ongar Hill 25th. Further spring records away from known or suspected breeding areas, presumably including some departing migrants, from Shadwell March 16th, North Wootton 28th, Salthouse 29th, Bradfield 30th and April 4th, Holme April 11th and Inceborough Hill 14th.

More breeding data received this year with display noted as early as Feb 3rd, but the county breeding situation still remains something of an enigma. Reports received of at least 6 pairs in display at 5 localities. Of these just one displaying pair was reported from Brecks where also singles at 3 other sites during breeding season. No definite confirmation of successful breeding received but at one site, where a female seen on more than one occasion and breeding has been suspected more than once in recent years, the presence of a juv nearby in Nov was encouraging.

Just two autumn coastal migrants reported, Sheringham Aug 21st and Holme Sept 16th, plus a small number of records from breeding areas and single Marham Fen Oct 11th.

Sparrowhawk

Accipiter nisus

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor

Unusually well recorded on spring migration when singles south Hunstanton March 14th and west Holme 29th were first indications of coastal movement. Impressive numbers during April when 7 south Horsey 3rd, 5 north Winterton 9th, 5 in off sea then west Overstrand 11th, 15 west there 14th and 2 in off sea followed by a further 10 west there before 0935 hrs 22nd, 2 west Sheringham 11th and single in off sea 26th, 3 west Scolt Head 14th and 2 west there 16th,

and 2 south Hunstanton 15th. Movement barely continued into May when single south Hunstanton 3rd, 2 south there 6th when also 3 south Waxham.

NBA results showed the species was present in 52% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of one pair per occupied tetrad.

Very little evidence of autumn passage recorded. One found dead on Blakeney Point tideline Sept 8th may have been a migrant but the origins of 3 in off sea Sheringham Oct 18th are less doubtful. During Nov 3 south Hunstanton 3rd and 2 south there 25th, were only records likely to relate to coastal migrants.

Interesting observations included a Sparrowhawk dropping a dead Woodpigeon on a bowling green at Lyng during the course of a match on July 12th. Apparently, following consultation, the captains deemed the corpse not to be a natural hazard and removed it and continued the match. Another was seen frequenting the evening Pied Wagtail roost at Norwich Thickthorn Services at dusk Dec 22nd.

Common Buzzard

Buteo buteo

Passage migrant and winter visitor; small but increasing breeding population

Good numbers now regular in north and west of county, where it is no longer unusual to see small groups of up to 4 together at virtually any time of year. Occasional larger groups of 8-10 also recorded, often in late winter before onset of breeding behaviour. Elsewhere remains relatively scarce in Fens, Brecks and south Norfolk, but singles may be encountered virtually anywhere at any time.

In view of above spring passage becoming increasingly difficult to assess but was apparently light. First migrant probably one west Holkham Bay March 8th, followed by another south Hunstanton March 17th and 4-5 further March singles at north coast sites. Passage strongest during April when around 25 recorded, peaking mid-month when 10 Horsey 17th. Just 6-7 migrants during May, max 3 Aylmerton 16th.

Although north-west quadrant of county remains the stronghold, expansion of breeding range continues, now occurring in Brecks and on eastern edge of Fens. A total of 21 pairs were confirmed as breeding, 7 of which are known to have fledged a total of 13 young to flying stage; the outcome of several other nests unknown. Another 5 pairs thought likely to have bred. In addition another 8 localities held resident pairs (or at least 2 birds) throughout breeding season and although no display or nest building was recorded, breeding remains a possibility at these sites.

Recent breeding details:

	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04
Confirmed prs	2	1	2	4	5	5	9	10	11	17	21
Probable prs	1	-	5	4	5	5	6	5	10	8	5
Possible prs	1	1	1	1	2	2	5	5	3	8	8
Max prs	5	2	8	9	12	12	20	20	24	33	34
Min young	2	1	2	7	7	9	8	12	15	20	13

Many small groups recorded Aug/Sept as failed breeders and family parties wandered and dispersed. Occasional July coastal records probably relate to above, including south Breydon 7th and 2 south Snettisham 13th.

Autumn passage, also difficult to assess, commenced mid-Aug when singles east Walsey Hills 11th, Scolt Head 21st and Lynn Point 22nd, with 6 circling over Titchwell on latter date. Coastal movement during Sept/Oct almost negligible with probably fewer than 20 recorded, max 3 west Brancaster Staithe Sept 10th.

Very few noted in late autumn and second winter period away from known territories, the most unusual of which were singles Southrepps Oct 20th, Winterton Nov 6th, Welney village area for several weeks Nov and Warham Greens Nov 10th, with 2 there 16th.

Rough-legged Buzzard

Buteo lagopus

Passage migrant and winter visitor; periodic large-scale influxes

A few remained into first winter period when at least 3, often seen hunting together, in Massingham Heath/Grimston Heath/Fritcham area to March 16th with at least one remaining to April 13th, and further singles North Creake Jan 27th, Holkham Feb 6th, Horsey 15th and Thursford 25th.

Departure of wintering birds and/or spring passage commenced early March when singles Cley 3rd and Holkham 4th. The 3 Docking and east Titchwell March 25th perhaps accounted for at least some of those departing from west of county and were followed by further single Cockthorpe next day. During April 2 east Burnham Norton 1st, east West Runton 14th, west Cley, Blakeney and Stiffkey 25th, and east Muckleburgh Hill 26th. Spring movement continued into early May when noted Hickling, Aylmerton and Sheringham 2nd, Lessingham 4th, west Muckleburgh Hill and Stiffkey 5th, east Aylmerton and later Potter Heigham, Horsey and Waxham 6th, and last of spring north Haddiscoe 9th.

Autumn arrival from mid-Oct when singles Blakeney Point and Holkham 13th, Hickling Broad 14th, Eccles 15th, west Holkham and Holme 16th with another at latter site 20th-24th, Northrepps 23rd, Scolt Head 23rd-26th (presumed same Burnham Norton 24th) and 29th-31st, east Heacham/Old Hunstanton 24th (different from Holme bird) and south Snettisham 26th. Arrival continued into Nov when noted Holme 5th, Warham/Stiffkey area 7th-14th, Brancaster 14th and North Walsham 21st.

Few records in Dec but still one of better years for this species of late. At this time singles Wells East Hills 9th, and Horning and Hoveton 15th, which may well have been that which frequented Wighton 23rd-year end.

Osprey

Pandion haliaetus

Regular passage migrant in increasing numbers; over-summering has occurred

An average spring passage (totalling about 45 birds) commenced late March when singles west Cley 28th with another next day. A further 14 noted during April when Aylmerton 2nd, Snettisham 3rd, Weeting Heath and Titchwell 4th with another at latter site 11th, Wighton 14th, west Blakeney Point (with fish) and Scolt Head/Brancaster Staithe 15th, Horsey/Waxham and west Cley/Blakeney 17th, Blickling 18th, west Salhouse and Scolt Head 22nd, Horsey 24th, west Kelling and Stiffkey 25th, 1-2 at Wensum valley localities between Norwich and Lyng 26th-May 2nd, and east Holkham and Cley 30th.

Passage continued strongly into May when about 20 noted: Warham 1st, 4 singles west Scolt Head 2nd with up to 3 moving west singly at several other north coast localities between Sheringham and Holme same day, East Winch 3rd, west Cley, Blakeney Point and Wells 7th, Heacham 8th, Titchwell 10th, Hickling Broad/Calthorpe Broad 14th, Great Ryburgh/Guist/Sennowe Park area 14th-28th, 2 west Titchwell 16th with singles west at several north coast sites same day, Felbrigg and Overstrand 17th, west Blakeney Point, Scolt Head (caught fish), Titchwell and Holme 18th, Hickling Broad, Holme and Titchwell 19th, Pentney GP 20th, Whitlingham CP 22nd, Hickling Broad 23rd, and East Ruston Mown Fen 30th lingering to June 7th. A further 10 in June at Horsey Mere 3rd, Holme 5th, South Pickenham 6th, west Titchwell and Holme 7th, west Scolt Head 8th and 10th, also Sparham and west Titchwell 10th, Hoveton 16th, Guist 22nd and Strumpshaw 23rd.

Autumn passage was below average with only around 20 recorded, a small number of which lingered at chosen sites for a few days. First west Breydon then later Strumpshaw July 17th, probably same Wheatfen 18th and Rockland Broad 19th, with another East Carlton 25th. Aug records from Hockwold Washes 2nd, Burgh Castle/Breydon 13th-17th, Holkham 17th, 2 singly Blakeney Hbr 18th with one again 19th, west Scolt Head and Holme 19th, Weybourne 24th and Chedgrave/Loddon 28th/29th. Further records in Sept from Diss 1st, Breydon 2nd, Sparham/Lenwade 5th-7th, Strumpshaw 9th-14th, Titchwell 10th, Holme 12th, How Hill Cromes' Broad 17th-19th, Foxley, Hockwold Washes and west Salhouse, Warham Greens and Titchwell all 18th, followed by last of autumn Ranworth Broad Oct 2nd.

Kestrel

Falco tinnunculus

Resident and passage migrant

Minimal evidence of spring movement when singles west Beeston Bump March 15th and south Hunstanton April 12th, with 2 west Scolt Head April 14th and May 2nd, and singles also west April 15th and 22nd.

Breeding pairs included 4 at Aylmerton and 3 at Sparham. NBA results showed the species was present in 77% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of one pair per occupied tetrad. One at Burnham Overy was regularly noted taking Redshank and on June 10th was seen leaving the ternery with an adult Little Tern.

No autumn concentrations recorded but migrants noted in off sea Gorleston Sept 12th and Oct 6th, Scolt Head Sept 16th, with 4 Sept 20th and 2 Oct 10th, Mundesley 2 Sept 21st, and Sheringham also Sept 21st and Oct 17th.



Kestrel (Steve Cale)

Red-footed Falcon

Falco vespertinus

Vagrant, most often in spring; large influx in 1992

Another exciting spring influx with at least 6 birds involved. In May 1st-summer male Waxham 1st-13th visiting Horsey Mere 2nd and 7th, and finally Hickling Broad 14th/15th (PJH JLa *et al*); female north Bacton 2nd (AE BJM); adult male Hickling Broad also 2nd (AJL&ES), adult male Cley 18th (ABe); female north Snettisham CP 22nd (CHM MSS); 1st-summer male (different from Waxham bird) Hickling Broad 28th-June 2nd (MAC JHa PJH *et al*) with presumed same Horsey and Winterton 30th (INS). Details of 5 other reported birds not submitted.

Merlin

Falco columbarius

Passage migrant and winter visitor; exceptional in summer

Either scarce or poorly reported Jan-March. Max roosting numbers from 3 sites at this time: 5 Jan, 3 Feb and 7 March. Elsewhere 1-2 regularly Breydon/Berney to April 16th, single Scolt Head Jan-April 19th, then 1-2 April 20th-30th with 3 24th and 1-2 daily to May 11th, 2 Titchwell/Holme early Jan then single to March 29th, and another intermittently Welney Feb 3rd-March 22nd. Also during this period small numbers of singles on coast (occasionally 2) but few inland except Fritcham Jan 2nd, Roydon Common Jan 6th and Feb 2nd, and Massingham Heath March 16th.

Spring coastal passage light, during April Horsey/Waxham 10th, Holme 11th, south Hunstanton 15th and 21st, singles Blakeney Point/Hbr 18th and 27th with 2 there 19th and 30th-May 1st, and single Snettisham 19th. More obvious in May when singles Waxham and Weybourne and 3 west Sheringham 2nd, south Hunstanton 3rd, Blakeney Point 10th, Breydon/Berney 12th, Cley 14th, Burnham Norton 16th and Waxham 22nd. Recorded inland during April at Potter Heigham 4th, Sustead 5th, Fustyweed 9th, Welney 11th and 17th, Irstead 19th, and during May at East Ruston 3rd and Bradwell 25th.

Unusually 2 June records of singles Scolt Head 7th and Holme 26th.

First returning autumn bird Titchwell on early date of July 13th and again 15th followed by singles in Aug Ongar Hill and Terrington Marsh 1st, Scolt Head 7 dates from 7th with 2 on 23rd and 3 on 29th, Breydon 9th, Blakeney Point 27th, Titchwell 27th and 30th, and Burgh Castle 28th. Singles on 9 dates in Sept at coastal sites between Cley and Holme, plus 2 Ongar Hill and one Breydon/Berney 19th, and single Winterton 21st. Noted inland during Sept at Langham 8th, Buckenham (3 dates 11th-19th), Welney 17th-20th and Syderstone 30th. Fewer coastal migrants noted Oct/Nov when 5 singles Sheringham Oct 13th-Nov 14th and further singles Ongar Hill Oct 17th, Salthouse Oct 22nd and Nov 11th, south Hunstanton Oct 26th, south over sea Gorleston Oct 28th, and Bacton/Paston/Walcott Nov 19th/20th. Apparently a multiple arrival of wintering birds mid-Oct when: 1-2 Snettisham intermittently Oct 17th-Dec 22nd at least; 1-2 Titchwell/Holme Oct 17th-Dec 22nd at least; single Scolt Head Sept 1st-23rd, 2-3 Sept 24th-Oct 31st (4 Oct 10th) then single Nov 1st-year end (2 Dec 12th); 1-2 Blakeney Hbr/Cley area Oct 17th-Dec 14th at least (3 Nov 2nd); single Breydon/Berney Oct 17th to year end.

Max roosting numbers Oct-Dec (reported from just 2 sites): 4 Oct, 4 Nov and 5 Dec. Noted inland at this time on 5 dates Welney Oct/Nov, Burnham Thorpe Nov 2nd, Cantley BF 14th, Colney 17th, Roydon Common Dec 4th, Massingham Heath and Metton 27th, and Swanton Morley GP 28th.

Hobby

Falco subbuteo

Scarce but increasing migratory breeder and passage migrant

First of spring Surlingham April 18th followed by further April singles Snettisham 20th and 24th, Sheringham 21st, and Aylmerton and Strumpshaw 24th. By 25th already 5 at Hockwold Washes, with at least 10 further singles at various localities before end of April. Coastal passage continued steadily during May but petered out towards end of month. Some large gatherings during May when 6 regularly Sennowe Park, an impressive 30 Hockwold Washes 10th and 12 Hickling Broad 14th; also smaller parties of 2-4 noted over several other inland waters and 1-2 noted at many sites throughout May/June as non-breeding adults and 2nd-summer birds wandered the county.

More comprehensive breeding data received this year when total of 10 pairs confirmed as breeding, but just 4 of these known to successfully fledge min 5 young. This low count is

thought to indicate a lack of knowledge of outcomes of nests rather than a low fledging rate. In addition a further 10 pairs were thought to be possibly breeding. Of a max total of 20 pairs 13 located in and around Thetford Forest. Breeding data from recent years:

	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04
Confirmed prs	6	7	8	4	5	7	10	10	7	7	8	10
Possible prs	4	1	1	5	5	5	8	6	3	4	5	10
Max prs	10	8	9	9	10	12	13	16	10	11	13	20
Min fledged young	10	6	8	10	6	8	14	11	11	10	7	5

Many widespread records of 1-2 during July but evidence of autumn coastal movement from early in month when singles Cley 6 dates 3rd-24th and Scolt Head 7 dates 4th-29th. Elsewhere passage difficult to determine as summering and breeding birds confused the issue. First juv away from known breeding sites Berney Aug 9th. More evidence of coastal passage Aug when noted Blakeney Point 10th, Overstrand 10th and 12th, Titchwell 11th, 21st and 29th/30th, Salthouse 12th, Aylmerton 14th, 2 Beeston Bump 15th, Snettisham 15th, Sheringham 18th when 3 Winterton with 2 at latter site 30th, 2 Breydon 21st and singles there 22nd and 29th, Yarmouth 29th and Cley 29th/30th.

During Sept groups of 2-4 noted at Aylmerton, Buckenham/Cantley, Framingham Earl, Hockwold Washes (3 juvs), Nar Valley Fisheries, Necton, Shimpling and Welney. Coastal movement also evident throughout Sept when singles at 12 localities and 2 in off sea Sheringham then east 11th, 2 Stiffkey and Winterton 19th, and 2 Salthouse 20th. Few lingered into Oct when noted Hockwold Washes 3rd, Winterton 4th, Holkham 9th and 16th, Titchwell 14th, New Costessey 17th and Cley 21st.

Peregrine

Falco peregrinus

Passage migrant and increasing winter visitor

An estimate of around 15 wintering birds in first winter period: at least 2 southern Wash limits to March 13th, 1-2 Holme/Titchwell to April 27th, single Scolt Head to April 22nd (2 on 4 dates Jan/Feb), 1-3 between Holkham and Stiffkey (5 there Jan 31st) to March 31st, 1-2 Breydon/Berney to April 17th, 1-2 mid-Yare valley to March 9th, single Massingham Heath

and Grimston area to March 16th and possibly another Fritcham area to March 6th (2 there Jan 11th). Also noted singly from about 15 other inland sites at this time with 2 Stubb Mill Jan 24th and singles on 5 dates Sheringham to April 9th.

Spring migration noted from early March when singles Salthouse 3rd and 21st, and Cley 15th/16th and 21st. Coastal movement continued in April when singles Horsey/Winterton 4th, Aylmerton 11th/12th, and Blakeney Point 18th/19th, 23rd and 30th. Movement also evident inland where 2 Haddiscoe March 21st and 2



Peregrine and Common Snipe (Steve Cale)

Welney March 28th and 8 dates in April. Just two May inland records from Dersingham Bog 2nd and Great Ryburgh 18th, as last few coastal migrants passed Mundesley 1st, Scolt Head 2nd and 9th, Breydon 6th, Holkham 8th and 17th, and Snettisham CP 22nd.

During June adult female Herringfleet/St Olaves 17th and imm female Welney 28th are difficult to assign to either passage period.

First of autumn July 24th Titchwell with another Scolt Head July 26th. Adult in off sea Scolt Head Aug 8th, followed in month by first juv Cley 21st and 9 further coastal singles. Just 8 coastal singles Sept away from known wintering areas, including 3 Ongar Hill 19th, but noted inland at Thetford Nunnery 7th, Welney 10th-20th, Flitcham 11th, Hickling Broad 18th/19th, Briston 24th and Langham 27th. A further 9 coastal migrants in Oct including juv showing characteristics of the race *calidus* at Cley/Salthouse 21st-27th, and singles noted inland Oct-Dec at Flitcham on 3 dates and at 9 other localities, plus 2 Saxthorpe Nov 16th and 2 Ranworth Nov 26th.

Again around 15 wintering birds in second winter period: 1-2 on Wash border south from Snettisham to Lynn Point from Sept 24th, 1-2 Holme/Titchwell from Sept 1st, 1-2 Scolt Head from mid-Sept, 2 between Holkham and Stiffkey from Sept 23rd, 1-2 Blakeney Hbr (wandering to Cley) from Oct 18th, Heigham Holmes/Hickling from Nov 7th, singles Breydon/Berney Nov 7th-Dec 1st at least, 1-2 intermittently Waveney valley from Oct 7th, mid-Yare valley Oct 2nd-Dec 3rd at least, and singles Welney Nov 21st-Dec 24th. The difficulty of evaluating wintering birds is well illustrated by events at Scolt Head where 4 Sept 24th and 30th (min 6 birds involved), and 5 Oct 19th totalling min 9 during autumn.

Also at Scolt Head Oct 19th 4 Peregrines hunted incoming thrushes over the sea all day, on one occasion all 4 chasing a single Blackbird that pitched into the sea to escape its pursuers and quickly drowned. At Holkham a large adult female took prey varying from a Pink-footed Goose and Wigeon to Migrant Hawker dragonflies.

Water Rail

Rallus aquaticus

Resident, passage migrant and winter visitor

Peak numbers at regularly counted sites:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Holme	3	4	2	1	-	2	4	2	5
Titchwell	5	4	4	5	1	3	2	2	3
Cley	5	1	1	-	-	1	2	3	1
Hickling Broad	1	-	20	20	4	-	-	12	-
How Hill	5	-	6	-	-	-	-	3	5
Strumpshaw	-	5	24	2	-	-	-	-	-

Other localities with at least 3: *Feb* 22 Catfield; *March* 24 Catfield, 24 Barton Turf, 8 Surlingham Church Marsh; *April* 8 Barton Turf; *Sept* 3 Berney; *Oct* 6 Brancaster, 3 Whitlingham Marsh, 3 Thetford Nunnery Lakes; *Nov* 3 Winterton, 3 Holkham; *Dec* 7 Horsey, 6 Attleborough, 5 Holkham.

Breeding pairs included 55 Strumpshaw, 10-20 Holkham NNR, 4 Surlingham, 3 Cantley, 3 Roydon Common and one Welney.

Spotted Crake

Porzana porzana

Scarce passage migrant, rare in winter

A singing male Ranworth Marshes May 20th-24th (PJH). In autumn one Stiffkey Fen Sept 19th-21st (PG *et al*).

Corncrake

Crex crex

Rare passage migrant

2003 Addition: One on the most unusual date of Dec 29th at Coldham Hall near Surlingham (MHa IR).

Moorhen

Gallinula chloropus

Abundant resident; immigrants in autumn

Peak numbers at regularly counted sites:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>		<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Holme	22	13	36	11		12	7	9	8	25
Holkham GM	70	51	62	116		-	-	-	30	22
Blakeney GM	40	19	22	23		-		29	-	26
Cley	74	28	55	34		11	14	27	19	40
Salthouse	63	36	22	20		-	-	21	26	28
Thetford Nunnery Lakes	9	22	10	3		3	7	9	17	15

Other counts exceeding 14: *Jan* 30 Flitcham, 28 Strumpshaw, 25 Aylmerton; *Sept* 41 Nar Valley Fisheries, 23 Lopham Fen, 18 Flitcham, 18 Titchwell; *Oct* 32 Flitcham, 23 Nar Valley Fisheries; *Dec* 44 Woodbastwick, 29 Great Massingham, 24 Hoveton Hall.

Breeding pairs included 86-100 Holkham NNR, 10 Holme and 7 broods Cley. NBA results showed the species was present in 85% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 5 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Coot

Fulica atra

Common resident and winter visitor

Peak numbers at regularly counted sites:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Snettisham	36	36	38	19	-	-	-	34	32	25	27	139
Holkham NNR	92	133	135	208	191	264	-	-	-	32	67	94
Blakeney GM	-	20	35	17	23	-	16	-	-	-	-	-
Cley	84	53	33	27	40	47	56	63	50	19	36	35
Salthouse	19	36	49	13	-	-	20	29	30	20	22	38
Barton Broad	161	151	-	33	18	42	100	-	37	78	100	79
Breydon/Berney	326	471	426	31		60		53	72	114	131	190
Whitlingham CP	315	275	-	56	54	87	87	206	246	298	360	380
Welney	482	652	704	399	448	-	-	-	-	82	424	739
Pentney GP	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	100	83	-	74	153

National importance (winter): 1100

Other counts exceeding 100: *Jan* 500 Hickling Broad, 146 Strumpshaw, 141 Cranwich GP; *Feb* 200 Hickling Broad, 153 Cranwich GP; *May* 157 Hickling Broad; *June* 145 Martham Broad; *Sept* 143 Nar Valley Fisheries; *Nov* 178 Nar Valley Fisheries, 135 Ranworth Broad; *Dec* 265 Nar Valley Fisheries, 235 Horning, 150 Woodbastwick, 124 Ranworth Broad. Unusually one Brancaster Hbr Feb 21st and a tideline corpse Scolt Head April 10th.

Breeding pairs included 150 Welney during flood (many predated or failed as water levels fell), 132 Holkham NNR, 30 Berney, 15 Holme and 11 Cley.

Common Crane

Grus grus

Resident colony in Broads since 1979; some records may relate to continental migrants

Up to 14 birds seen during first winter period. Four pairs nested; 2 pairs raised 2 chicks each, another one pair hatched young but these were lost, while outcome of fourth pair unknown. In second winter period up to 20 adults and 4 juvs.

Away from regular areas in east of county, wandering birds (or possible migrants) started with one Blackborough End March 14th. In April, one east Corpusty 6th, 2 west Cley 9th, one east Burnham Norton and one Sheringham Park to Overstrand 14th, 2 south Bayfield and 3 west Gimingham 17th, and 3 Southrepps 20th. In May, one west Salhouse to Holme 14th (still present 15th), and one west Inceborough to Morston 16th.

In Aug one Edgefield 1st. In Sept, 3 commuted between Holme and Holkham GM 17th-20th, while 3 were also over Weston Longeville on 19th, 3 came in off sea at Scolt Head 26th and stayed Burnham Overy until 27th, then Dunton 29th and Holme 30th. In Oct, one roosted Titchwell 2nd-7th, wandering between Snettisham and Scolt Head and up to 2 miles inland south of Brancaster, one east Morston to Walsey Hills 3rd and 3 Burnham Overy 5th. Finally in Nov one west Holme 10th.

Oystercatcher

Haematopus ostralegus

Common winter visitor, passage migrant and breeder

Monthly max at regularly counted sites:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Snettisham	5260	1545	1744	943	1512	619	788	4587	4948	3650	4326	1800
Titchwell	200	341	306	75	142	59	47	200	120	146	361	294
Holme	1016	560	683	142	235	148	209	515	645	922	723	198
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	583	755	982	669	471	333	580	810	866	930	762	820
Wells Hbr	411	423	618	31	51	90	57	54	-	-	434	453
Stiffkey SM	340	243	403	378	262	263	306	553	564	-	321	388
Blakeney Hbr	469	286	493	399	308	457	573	315	474	299	179	186

National importance (winter): 3600

The Snettisham mean count dropped again to 2643 (3555 in 2003).

Breeding numbers down slightly on last year with 413 pairs (496 in 2003) at coastal sites (beaches and grazing marshes): Snettisham Beach 24 (27), Ken Hill 7 (8), Holme (all habitats) 29 (28), Scolt Head 107 (108) fledged 20-30 young, Holkham Beach 47 (57) fledged 7-10 young, Holkham GM 41 (41) fewer than 10 young fledged, Blakeney Point 148 (154) fledged 3 young, Cley 8 fledged 2, Yarmouth 2 fledged one.

Inland a total of 53-55 pairs at 26 sites (58 at 26 in 2003): Barnham Cross Common with chick, Bircham Newton, Brancaster Thompson Farm 2, Coxford, East Rudham with chick, Gooderstone 4, Haddiscoe 8, Hanworth Common 1-2, Hickling, Honingham, Hoveton Hall, King's Lynn BF fledged 2, Nar Valley, Narborough 2, North Barsham, Pentney GP fledged 2, mid-Yare RSPB 7, Salhouse with brood, Saxthorpe, Sculthorpe, South Creake, Sparham 3, Stanford TA 2-3, Stow Bedon, Swaffham with young, Thetford Nunnery Lakes fledged 2, Welney 5 fledged 4 young, Wisington.

Some breeding success inland, while on coast recruitment poor due to disturbance and ground predators. Displaying reported from Bircham Newton Training Camp roofs, and successful again at Yarmouth South Town on industrial estate.

Easterly spring movements at Scolt Head in May where 106 2nd, 103 13th and 73 14th. During autumn westerly movements at Scolt Head included 41 July 6th, 31 26th and 41 Sept

4th. Elsewhere 14 south Gorleston July 25th, and at Sheringham 22 west Aug 13th and 20 west 15 east 14th.

Albino bird back Scolt Head from Aug 17th to year end, and a leucistic bird Snettisham Sept 25th.

Black-winged Stilt

Himantopus himantopus

Vagrant from southern Europe, has bred

Present for its twelfth year at Titchwell, but less adventurous, not being recorded at any other nearby site.

Avocet

Recurvirostra avosetta

Breeding summer visitor, increasing in winter

Monthly max at main sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Snettisham	-	130	338	190	204	132	288	480	7	2	1	-
Titchwell	1	61	102	98	110	58	150	57	32	15	5	11
Holkham	-		116	95	124	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Cley	31	90	188	201	222	198	286	30	27	24	26	31
Breydon/Berney	191	234	240	153	61	182	858	1012	780	284	143	191
Welney	-	-	76	121	120	40	-	-	4	3	-	-

Although information more complete the increase in breeding pairs significant with 479-482 at 19 sites. Success recorded at 5 sites with 204 pairs fledging 120 young. Flooding at one site displaced 60 pairs, while predation from a Kestrel was significant at one coastal site. However ground predation from fox and stoat still cause the greatest damage to populations. This apart, the population still continues to rise, and significantly another inland locality was added to the 3 other sites away from coast.

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Prs	209	214	203	181	252-267	186	239-309	359-364	381-383	397	479-482
Sites	n/a	10	11	13	16	11	14	16	14	14	18

The numbers at Breydon levelled out during late summer, only the flock in Jan producing a record monthly count.

Visible migration noted in March with one west Sheringham 13th and 3 west Thompson Water 27th.

Other records in April: Nar Valley Fisheries 1st and 15th, 2 Pentney GP 12th, 2 Hockwold Washes 16th, Whitlingham CP 26th/27th, Hardley Flood 5 27th and one Great Ryburgh 29th. In July 4 Pentney GP 15th.



Avocet (Martin Woodcock)

Stone Curlew

Burhinus oedicnemus

Breeding summer visitor, mainly to Brecks

First record or wintering bird Gooderstone Jan 6th-15th. In Brecks early arrival March 8th, then more typically Grimston 25th and 2 Weeting 27th. Most arrived in early April with overshoots south-west Hickling 25th and Winterton 27th. Later one Holkham GM June 21st-23rd.

In Norfolk/Suffolk Brecks total of 187 pairs fledged at least 118 young (0.63 young/pr) the largest increase since 1998, with 107 pairs in Norfolk. A further 8 pairs fledged 4 young north of Brecks.

Late summer/autumn flocks around Great Cressingham/Hilborough included 40 Aug 24th, 63 Sept 5th, 83 Sept 18th, 47 Oct 6th and 15 remaining to Nov 5th. Other gatherings in Beechamwell area included 103 Sept 29th and 113 Oct 6th. Also singles Blakeney Point Aug 1st and Titchwell Sept 10th/11th.

2003 Addition: One Terrington Marsh Aug 31st.

Little Ringed Plover

Charadrius dubius

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant

Earliest arrival Titchwell March 8th, with sightings almost daily from 17th onwards. Spring/summer visible migration included: *April* west Weybourne 3rd, south Hunstanton 14th and 26th, 2 west Scolt Head 16th and west 22nd; *May* west Mundesley 8th, 2 west Cley 14th; *June* west Holme 3rd.

Breeding very slightly down on last year with 26 pairs (27 in 2003) at 11 sites (same as 2003): *north coast* 2 pairs; *Broads* 4 pairs at 3 sites; *inland* 11 pairs at 5 sites; *Fens* 11 pairs at 2 sites. Mixed success, with 8 pairs fledging 11 chicks at one site; elsewhere of 5 pairs reported hatching young only one brood fledged.

Concentrations of 5 or more included: Titchwell 9 July 27th and 14 Aug 21st; Cley 6 July 17th, 7 on 22nd-25th and 5 Aug 3rd; Hickling Broad 6 July 8th, 5 29th and 7 Aug 11th; Welney 6 Aug 30th and Sept 2nd.

Visible westward migration only noted in Aug with singles Scolt Head 11th and Sheringham 14th. Latest Pentney GP Oct 2nd.

Ringed Plover

Charadrius hiaticula

Breeding summer visitor, passage migrant, and winter visitor in small numbers

Most regularly counted sites:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Snettisham	-	-	46	47	700	29	200	300	156	1	-	8
Holme	80	90	81	12	25	32	12	108	402	43	17	3
Titchwell	64	8	42	34	43	25	12	100	104	31	25	14
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	45	107	139	140	320	161	285	910	1088	508	39	29
Stiffkey	-	9	70	30	90	28	23	61	27	-	4	-
Blakeney Hbr	68	81	40	15	43	232	16	106	97	70	2	25
Breydon/Berney	111	82	70	26	131	79	-	214	219	108	89	49

National importance: 290 (winter), 300 (passage)

The counts at Snettisham in May and Scolt Head May/June all refer to *tundrae* birds. Other sites reporting this race: Titchwell 2 June 8th, Cley 48 May 29th, Hickling Broad 47 May 18th and 125 29th (reserve record), Buckenham 15 May 28th, Breydon 59 June 5th, Welney 4-5

April 22nd-26th and 11 May 25th, and Wissington BF 6-18 May 10th-29th. Visible migration noted at Sheringham where 35 west May 3rd and at Scolt Head where 45 north June 6th.

On coast another very poor breeding year with only 158 pairs (172 in 2003) found at 11 (14) sites. Totals included: Snettisham 18, Holme 16 (25) fledged 2-3 young, Titchwell 8 (14), Brancaster 8 (7), Scolt Head 53 (54) fledged 25-30 young, Holkham Beach 28 (35) an all time low, Holkham GM 1, Blakeney Point 15 (18) fledged 2 young, Cley 1 fledged 2 young, Eccles North Gap and Sea Palling 10. The decline continues; 4 sites covering a good proportion of the north Norfolk coast (Holme, Scolt Head, Holkham and Blakeney Point) held 238 pairs in 1993, last year 131 and this year only 113. Disturbance from public, predation and the squeezing of available nesting habitat into cordons, while leaving much larger areas unprotected, make the picture look extremely bleak for this species. How far does the population have to drop before even more stringent measures have to be taken to protect this species? There would be major concerns if there was unrestricted access across coastal grazing marshes, but for the 'Stonerunners' they have little or no choice! Inland 6 pairs reported at 3 sites: Gooderstone 4, and single pairs Narborough and Welney (unsuccessful).

Visible migration noted Sheringham where 21 west Sept 5th and 20 west 21st. Largest autumn gatherings as usual on Scolt Head in Aug and Sept (see table).

At Breydon a leucistic adult Aug 9th.

Kentish Plover

Charadrius alexandrinus

Scarce but annual passage migrant, mostly in spring; rare inland

Two records: males at Hickling Rush Hills April 1st and Cley May 29th.

Greater Sand Plover

Charadrius leschenaultii

Vagrant from Middle East

One Snettisham July 4th/5th (JSc *et al*). The fourth county record.

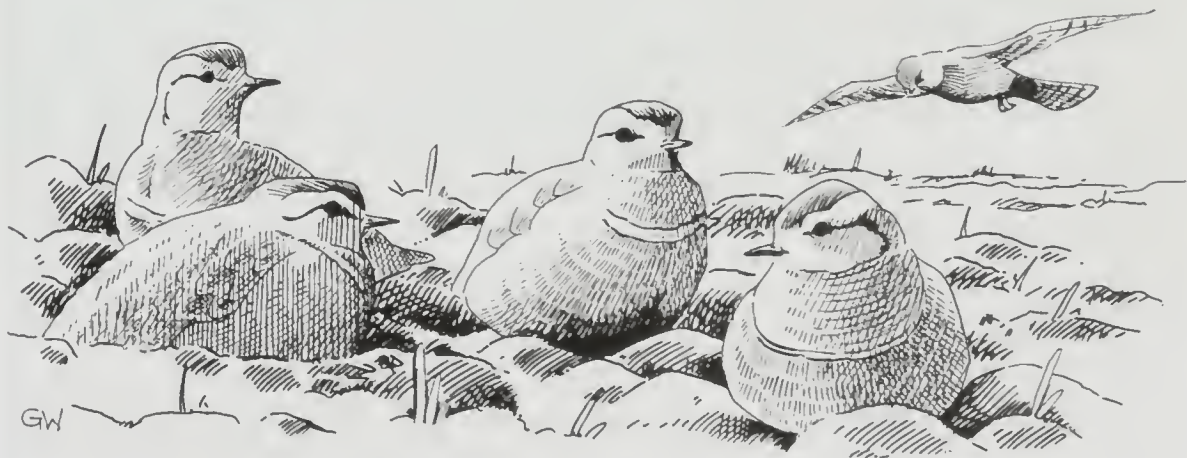
Dotterel

Charadrius morinellus

Scarce but annual passage migrant; has over-wintered

A good spring. During May 5 Waxham 6th/7th followed by 3 20th-22nd and 4 23rd, one Blakeney Point 18th-23rd, 8 Happisburgh 22nd with 9 next day, and 2 Horsey 26th.

In autumn singles at North Creake Aug 18th, Holme 22nd, Hickling Broad 23rd and Blakeney Point Sept 14th-19th.



Dotterel and Red-footed Falcon (Gary Wright)

American Golden Plover

Pluvialis dominica

Very rare vagrant

One Breydon/Bure Marshes July 11th/12th (LVG THu *et al*). Only the fourth county record but now seen two years in succession.

Golden Plover

Pluvialis apricaria

Passage migrant and increasing winter visitor

Most regularly counted sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Snettisham	2950	1500	1150	-	1650	1950	3500	6000	4500
Holme	150	40	100	32	2	550	400	2000	290
Titchwell	3170	2000	1150	16	300	250	2000	4600	6000
Holkham	4160	1000	30	6	100	395	243	1634	774
Blakeney Hbr	3200	-	150	-	39	500	2200	1000	500
Breydon	10464	4627	3750	80	2760	5420	6100	12200	15100

National importance (winter): 2500

Counts from the north coast should be used with caution as much interchange takes place between these sites and those just inland.

Other than those tabulated the following 12 sites (17 in 2003) had 2000 or more: Catfield 2000 Jan, Cley 4000 Nov, Dickleburgh 6000 Nov, Hoe Common 2000 Dec, Long Stratton 2000 Jan, Ousemouth 4000 Jan, 2000 Feb, 2000 Sept, Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr 2000 Oct, Snetterton 3000 Feb, Tivetshall 8200 Nov, Wacton 4500 Jan, Waxham 2000 Oct, Welney 2300 Nov. Counts of 1000 or more at 11 other sites: Alby 1200 Sept/Oct, Aylsham 1400 Nov, Burlingham 1150 Nov, East Beckham and East Rudham 1500 Jan, East Ruston 1100 Jan, Mattishall 1200 Dec, Postwick 1200 Nov, Stanford TA 1200 March, Ten Mile Bank 1000 Jan, Wretton Fen 1500 Feb.

Latest spring record Cley June 5th, returning back also at Cley 19th. In July peak counts 182 Breydon 1st and 220 Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr July 31st. Subsequent visible migration included 150 west Holme Aug 22nd, 133 west Scolt Head Sept 21st and 122 south Hunstanton Oct 28th with 112 there Nov 24th.

At Wacton a bird with completely creamy white wings Jan 22nd.

Grey Plover

Pluvialis squatarola

Passage migrant and winter visitor

Regularly counted sites holding 200+ birds:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Snettisham	1942	206	470	1970	2500	5	15	350	3000	1138	187	850
Holme	243	228	249	15	99	-	3	80	427	623	250	20
Titchwell	5	32	15	100	130	3	8	250	400	50	49	132
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	243	280	301	389	399	53	32	325	-	384	281	233
Stiffkey	147	191	183	201	121	72	47	-	298	-	-	-
Blakeney Hbr	169	106	35	9	20	-	-	-	-	13	229	201

International importance (winter): 1500; National importance (winter): 430

No other sites reported holding 200 or more birds.

Inland at Welney April 26th, May 1st and 23rd, and Nov 2nd; Hickling Broad April 15th, 2 29th, 3 May 2nd, 16th and 2 on 28th. Elsewhere Long Stratton Jan 7th and 22nd, and Repps-with-Bastwick Aug 14th.

Most visible migration noted Scolt Head where 49 west April 16th, 11 west 22nd, 41 north May 13th and 43 north 25th; in autumn there (all west) 55 Aug 10th, 11 18th, 70 Sept 4th, 30 30th and 10 Oct 2nd. Elsewhere 20 west Sheringham Aug 14th.

Lapwing

Vanellus vanellus

Passage migrant and winter visitor; declining breeder

Most regularly counted sites:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>		<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Holme	500	220	270	80		15	-	50	150	72	500
Titchwell	568	602	730	23		154	323	470	297	1309	909
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	4000	4190	-	-		449	250	163	72	2400	2450
Holkham NNR	1384	898	468	436		-	-	-	300	454	818
Blakeney GM/Cley	3000	523	646	115		218	248	310	293	1039	1254
Breydon/Berney	14917	12200	2060	130		243	220	308	1160	8100	9810
Welney	3487	457	3280	240		-	270	400	978	8000	3638

International and National importance (winter): 20,000

Other counts of 1000 or more from 10 sites: Buckenham Marshes 1500 Jan, Eau Brink 1017 Dec, Haddiscoe Island 1240 Feb, Halvergate Marshes 2400 Feb, 1000 Dec, Ousemouth 3000 Jan, 1500 Oct, 1200 Nov, Postwick 1025 Jan, 1850 Dec, Tcn Mile Bank 3000 Jan, Snettisham 1280 Nov, 1290 Dec, Wells Hbr 1930 Jan, Wiggcnhall St Peter 1005 Dec.

Only cold weather movement Scolt Head 250 west Feb 4th. Spring south-casterly movements at Winterton where 630 March 7th and 135 13th, and Hunstanton 59 south March 15th.

Breeding coverage similar to last year, but with only 667-675 pairs (835 in 2003) reported from 35 sites (with last year's figures where applicable): *North coast* Snettisham 1, Ken Hill 48 (51), Holme 38-40 (45), Titchwell 5 (2), Brancaster GM 3, Holkham NNR 237 (259) fledged 118, Blakeney GM 10, Cley 4; *Broads* Aldcby Long Dam Level 3, Berney 70 (63), Crostwick Common 1, Haddiscoe Island 10 (10), Hickling 7, mid-Yare RSPB 90 (85), Thorpe Whitlingham Marshes 1, Wheatacre Marshes 5, Whitlingham CP 3 (6); *Brecks* Cockley Cley 20, East Wretham 2, Gooderstone 45-50 (50), Shropham 1, Stanford TA 5 (29), Thetford Nunnery 9; Fens Welney 122 (154); *inland* Bintree 3, Coxford 1, Dereham Rush Meadow STW 1, East Tuddenham 1, Narborough 30 (25), North Tuddenham 4-5, Pentney GP 2 (2), Roydon Common 1 (1), Saxthorpe 1, Sparham 2, Swaffham 1. NBA results showed the species was present in 50% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 5 pairs per occupied tetrad. Most of key coastal sites were down, while most of Broads sites slightly up. However, the general trend appears bleak away from nature reserves, and sites such as Narborough and Gooderstone where nests and young are protected from damage by diligent farmers, and control of ground predators.

Post breeding westerly movements in June noted Scolt Head where 35 5th, 53 26th, 44 29th and 33 30th. In autumn in Aug 58 west Scolt Head 10th and 80 west Holme 11th, but usual largest arrivals Oct/Nov. At Hunstanton Cliffs total of 8589 south Sept 30th-Nov 25th, best counts 374 Sept 30th (3 hrs), Oct 331 27th (4 hrs), 3208 28th (2hrs 30 mins), 579 Nov 7th (1hr 30 mins) and 3146 24th (3 hrs). At Scolt Head 858 west Oct 20th and 2940 28th. Also westerly movements at Holme in Nov when 1200 3rd, 550 11th, 1000 9th and 24th, 468 26th and 1000 30th. At Sheringham 1670 west Nov 21st.

Knot*Calidris canutus**Passage migrant, winter visitor and non-breeding summer visitor*

Monthly max at main sites:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Snettisham	5420	10510	12500	11150	2200	6000	3039	11506	3500	50000	71360	45000
Holme	336	130	161	2	-	-	11	16085	9856	40000	92	145
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	420	300	103	405	230	180	45	265	267	95	450	650
Warham SM	500	1000	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	900	4500
Wells Hbr	1300	5000	540	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	570	1300
Stiffkey SM	29	42	264	37	23	-	-	2	18	-	52	69
Breydon	196	43	107	32	60	15	23	60	74	49	63	302

International importance (winter): 3500; National importance (winter): 2900

Despite low numbers at start of year and first half of autumn, an excellent series of counts Oct-Dec at Snettisham/Holme where highest counts in The Wash/Holme since 1994.

Additional counts: Ousemouth 3000 Jan, 200 March, 300 Sept and 400 Dec, Hunstanton 13,000 Oct, Thornham 379 Jan, Titchwell 460 Jan and 302 Sept, Blakeney Hbr 70 Dec and Cley 30 Aug.

First juv in autumn Breydon Aug 10th.

Coastal movements included: 47 west Holme Aug 30th, 93 west Scolt Head Aug 10th, where also 210 west 13th, 119 Sept 3rd, 67 19th, 135 29th, 1255 30th, 181 Oct 1st and 185 9th, 255 west Cromer Nov 9th, 117 west Walcott Nov 13th and 42 20th, 55 north Scratby Nov 13th and 23 north Gorleston June 12th.

At Snettisham a long-staying albino June 4th-Aug 2nd.

Typical number of inland records with singles Nar Valley Fisheries March 27th, Buckenham April 3rd, 4 Hickling Rush Hills April 16th and 4 May 17th, 3 18th, 2 19th, one 26th, 2 July 23rd and 10 Aug 21st, 3 Welney May 1st and singles May 30th/31st, July 13th-17th and Nov 24th, Whitlingham CP May 7th-10th and Marham Fen Nov 13th.

Sanderling*Calidris alba**Passage migrant and winter visitor*

Monthly max at main sites:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Snettisham	115	145	-	70	95	1045	80	1650	148	210	85	225
Holme	187	193	176	9	140	47	200	372	506	122	140	25
Thornham	24	6	120	98	13	38	-	-	-	3	48	269
Titchwell	80	46	126	116	150	70	154	211	100	34	1000	272
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	23	37	136	62	280	60	285	380	428	96	35	45
Holkham Bay	34	26	20	18	50	-	-	18	-	43	320	37
Stiffkey SM	193	28	91	18	27	1	-	6	14	-	26	78
Blakeney Hbr	12	-	-	-	36	5	-	47	2	24	10	1

International importance: 1000 (winter); National importance: 230

Apart from good numbers at Snettisham in spring and autumn, and an exceptional count at Titchwell in Nov, a typical year.

Additional counts away from main sites: Burnham Overy Hbr 25 Feb and 74 Oct, Warham 25 March, Cley 60 May, 11 Aug and 13 Sept, Waxham 30 Jan and 24 March (feeding on arable fields), Yarmouth 20 March and Breydon 7 March.

Offshore passage light, best counts 45 west Scolt Head July 29th and 14 west Blakeney Point Aug 15th.

A leucistic bird noted Titchwell Jan 18th, Feb 19th and 25th.

Inland a good series of counts Hickling Rush Hills where singles April 27th, May 2nd, 13th, 19th, 24th, 6 25th-28th, 2 29th and one July 28th/29th. Elsewhere 3 Welney May 1st and another 25th/26th, Wissington BF May 21st and 25th, with 3 27th, and one Blackborough End Tip May 26th.



Sanderling (*Richard Johnson*)

Little Stint

Calidris minuta

Double passage migrant in fluctuating numbers

Spring passage very light involving as few as 15 birds May 17th-June 22nd. Most Hickling Rush Hills where 5 May 17th, 8 18th, 4 19th and one 28th/29th; elsewhere singles Scolt Head and Breydon May 18th, Cley 20th, Welney 26th/27th and Titchwell 31st, and in June singles Cley 7th and 22nd, and Titchwell 12th-16th.

No further records until July when singles Cley 21st and 24th, Holme 25th, Titchwell 26th, Breydon 27th, 2 Titchwell 28th and one 31st, and 2 Cley 29th/30th. Numbers remained small during early Aug until small influx 9th-18th when 12 Hickling Rush Hills, 6 Cley and 1-2 Titchwell, Scolt Head, Kelling WM and Cantley BF. During rest of month highest count 4 Titchwell 28th and 1-2 Snettisham, Kelling WM and Welney. Numbers better in Sept but still low, with 10 Titchwell 4th, 3 Stiffkey Fen 24th, 9 Cley 3rd, 12 5th and 14th, and 13 18th, 4 Salhouse 21st, 4 Kelling WM 20th, 9 Hickling Rush Hills 3rd, 12 5th, 16 7th, 10 11th/12th and 12 13th, 5 Buckenham 10th and 8 14th, and 1-2 Holme, Scolt Head and Pentney GP. Small numbers reported during Oct until 20th, best counts 3 Titchwell 16th and 20th, 4 Salhouse 4th-8th, 4 Stiffkey Fen 7th and 5 13th, 6 Breydon 1st and 3 Cantley BF 7th.

Late migrants/wintering birds Nov/Dec at Titchwell where up to 2 Nov 2nd-Dec 17th, 2 Salhouse Nov 2nd-9th, singles Buckenham Nov 8th and 30th, and on four dates Welney Nov 20th-Dec 5th.

Temminck's Stint

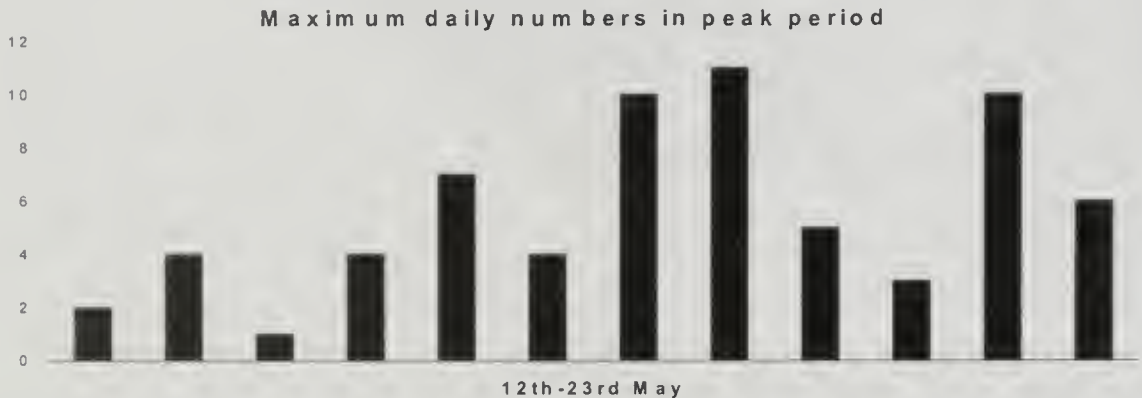
Calidris temminckii

Passage migrant, more frequent in spring

An outstanding year with total of around 60 recorded, 47 in spring and 13 in autumn, the most in any year. First Hockwold Washes April 20th and in May 2 Holme 19th, 4 Scolt Head 18th,

one Titchwell 6th and 2 17th/18th, one Holkham GM 13th, 3 22nd and one 23rd, one Stiffkey Fen 12th, 2 18th and another 28th, Cley 8th, 3 13th, one 14th/15th, 20th/21st, 4 22nd and one 23rd, Breydon/Berney 12th and 21st-25th, Hickling Swim Coots 3rd/4th, Hickling Rush Hills 3rd-5th, 2 15th-18th, 7 19th, 3 20th and singles 21st and 23rd, Buckenham 15th, 5 16th, 3 19th and one 20th, and Welney 3rd, 7th-10th and 2 22nd/23rd. Last of spring Cley June 6th.

In autumn most Hickling Rush Hills where one July 27th/28th and 2 29th, one Aug 11th/12th, 3 13th/14th with one until 19th and 2 Sept 4th; elsewhere 2 Titchwell Aug 3rd-5th, 2 Cley Aug 1st/2nd and another 12th-14th, and Kelling WM Aug 6th and 10th.



Baird's Sandpiper

Calidris bairdii

Vagrant from North America

Singles Titchwell Sept 15th and 19th (DH *et al*), and Buckenham Marshes Sept 21st-25th (JLa *et al*).

White-rumped Sandpiper

Calidris fuscicollis

Vagrant from North America

Two records: Sept juvs at Cley/Salthouse 20th (D&PW *et al*) and Hickling Broad 23rd-25th (PJH ADK *et al*).

Pectoral Sandpiper

Calidris melanotos

Almost annual autumn vagrant from North America/Siberia; rare in spring

Another excellent year with total of around 16 recorded, all in autumn: Titchwell July 20th-25th and Sept 5th, Hickling Rush Hills July 25th-27th, 2 28th-Aug 11th, Burnham Norton July 28th, Cantley BF July 31st, Sept 16th and 21st, How Hill Aug 10th, Stiffkey Fen Sept 1st and 19th-26th, Pentney GP Sept 4th-6th, Welney Sept 15th and 2 16th, Salthouse Sept 17th-21st, same Cley Sept 22nd/23rd and 26th, and Breydon/Berney Oct 6th and 17th.

Curlew Sandpiper

Calidris ferruginea

Autumn passage migrant in fluctuating numbers; scarce in spring

First of spring Welney April 15th-19th and presumed same 21st/22nd, 24th-26th and 30th, followed by 5 Cley 27th, and on 30th 2 Scolt Head and singles Holkham GM and Cley. Small numbers noted throughout May when 5 Scolt Head 2nd and 3 18th, 4 Breydon/Berney 15th-18th, 3 Cley 19th, 4 26th and 9 27th, 2 Titchwell 20th and singles Hickling Broad and Buckenham. Small numbers continued to be recorded during first half of June when 1-2 Titchwell, Burnham Norton, Cley, Hickling Rush Hills, Breydon/Berney and Welney until 10th.

No others until autumn when in July singles Breydon 11th, south Gorleston 17th, Cley and Breydon 19th, and Snettisham 20th. A noticeable influx of adults occurred during final ten days of month when up to 12 Breydon/Berney, 7 Cley, 5 Snettisham and Hickling Rush Hills, and 2 Titchwell. Similar numbers during first ten days of Aug when 15 Snettisham, 13 Hickling Rush Hills, 8 Breydon/Berney, 5 Cley and 4 Scolt Head. Few reported during rest of Aug, until influx of juvs during final week, when 20 Titchwell and Cley, 12 Breydon/Berney, 6 Kelling WM and 5 Scolt Head. Passage peaked during first half of Sept with highest numbers of juvs since 2000 (when similar numbers) max: 5 Scolt Head 4th, 51 Kelling WM 7th, 30 Titchwell 4th and 9th, and 33 17th, 70 Cley 4th, 27 Hickling Rush Hills 11th, 39 Breydon/Berney and 10 Stiffkey Fen 18th, with 1-5 Snettisham, Blakeney Point, Salthouse and Pentney GP. Coastal passage noted 17th when 20 west Holme and 21 west Scolt Head. Far fewer present during first half of Oct when 1-4 Snettisham, Titchwell, Scolt Head, Cley and Welney, after which only singles Welney 20th, Breydon 24th and a late individual Titchwell throughout Nov until Dec 6th.

Purple Sandpiper

Calidris maritima

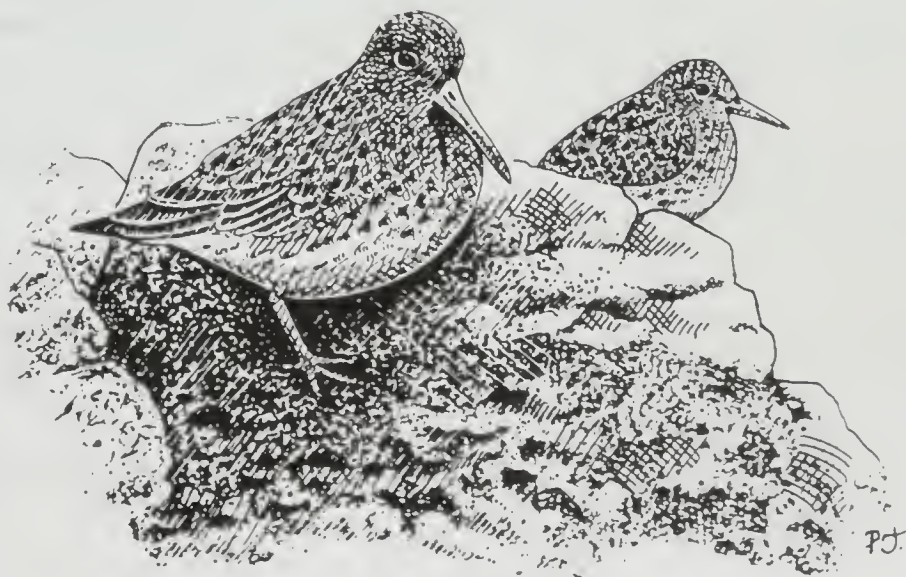
Passage migrant and declining winter visitor in small numbers

Numbers wintering in county remained very low. Peak monthly counts at main sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Holme	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	1
Titchwell	1	1	1	-	1	1	3	2
Sea Palling/Eccles	3	2	4	9	-	2	1	1

Few elsewhere (singles unless stated): Hunstanton Sept, Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr May and Sept, Holkham Bay Sept, Blakeney Point 2 Oct and one Nov, Salthouse Sept, Cley Sept, Sheringham 4 Sept and 2 Nov, Cromer Oct, Waxham 2 Nov, Horsey Nov, Yarmouth 2 Dec.

Last in spring Scolt Head May 26th/27th, with one Lessingham North Gap June 18th difficult to allocate to either passage period and mirrors one reported the previous June in same area. Autumn passage slow to get underway with none until Sept when singles Salthouse 2nd-4th and Titchwell 5th.



Purple Sandpipers (Phil Jones)

Westerly passage over sea in autumn poor, with one Scolt Head Sept 23rd, 2 Scolt Head, one Cley and 3 Weybourne Sept 24th, 2 Cley Oct 8th and one Walcott Nov 20th.

Inland one Buckenham March 9th (fourth inland record) and just inland at Breydon singles Nov 12th and Dec 27th.

A very poor year, the decline appearing to continue; the best site to see this species appears to be Sea Palling/Eccles area followed by Titchwell. The once regular wintering site at Heacham/Hunstanton now appears all but abandoned.

Dunlin

Calidris alpina

Passage migrant and winter visitor; non-breeders in summer

Peak counts at main sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Snettisham	2235	9200	4710	3950	4100	50	1135	7700	4256	4400	1860	800
Holme	339	552	250	38	140	4	51	31	270	540	469	57
Thornham	121	-	45	-	204	-	-	2-	-	-	12	456
Titchwell	122	-	29	15	245	11	250	300	178	105	117	517
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	954	710	489	518	671	72	850	1050	849	998	718	750
Burnham Overy Hbr	-	67	-	-	-	-	-	60	-	241	-	85
Wells Hbr	650	650	300	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	320	62
Warham SM	848	640	250	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	610	905
Stiffkey SM	94	-	161	114	139	-	118	170	204	-	230	336
Blakeney Hbr	187	263	-	50	177	9	6	1106	106	143	65	283
Cley	24	300	168	65	52	-	780	160	359	118	74	170
Breydon/Berney	3931	3130	3217	2351	1357	34	756	515	810	1511	3160	4387
Welney	-	-	78	75	84	-	-	-	-	-	38	45

International importance (winter): 14,000; National importance (winter): 5300

Elsewhere highest counts: North Wootton Marsh 500 Aug, Salhouse 114 Sept, 103 Oct and 84 Nov, Kelling WM 70 Sept, Halvergate 150 Feb and Buckenham 40 Nov.

First juv Breydon July 18th.

Light offshore passage noted Scolt Head in spring where 78 west April 16th and 372 30th, and in May 72 north 13th and 69 14th. Autumn movements again best recorded Scolt Head where moving west 43 Aug 10th, 78 Sept 25th, 247 30th and 318 Oct 2nd. Elsewhere 45 west Holme Aug 30th, 50 Sept 25th and 54 26th, and 150 west Walcott Nov 20th.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper

Tryngites subruficollis

Vagrant from North America

One Hickling Broad Sept 6th/7th (PJH AJK *et al*), the first record since 2000.

Broad-billed Sandpiper

Limicola falcinellus

Vagrant from north Eurasia

Spring adults at Holkham GM May 13th/14th (AIB) and Hickling Broad May 14th (ADK). In autumn adult Snettisham July 10th (LVG THu *et al*) and juv Cley/Salhouse Aug 13th/14th (AMS *et al*), then subsequently Titchwell 16th-20th.

Ruff

Philomachus pugnax

Double passage migrant; small numbers over-winter; has bred

Monthly peak counts at main sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Titchwell	120	45	56	20	2	8	72	86	100	110	86	50
Brancaster Hbr	30	25	-	-	-	-	-	6	193	28	45	95
Holkham GM	-	13	-	25	-	1	3	-	-	-	58	4
Stiffkey Fen	-	-	11	-	-	-	30	50	60	-	3	-
Blakeney GM	-	-	6	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Cley	4	7	41	37	24	-	35	65	7	21	14	23
Salhouse	-	-	3	10	18	-	-	-	12	-	-	-
Breydon/Berney	22	19	43	14	5	3	69	62	8	26	3	86
Cantley BF	-	16	-	-	-	-	2	28	-	-	-	1
Buckenham	-	-	50	34	1	-	-	-	-	-	35	8
Hickling Rush Hills	-	-	-	6	5	1	37	87	48	-	-	-
Welney	105	24	52	12	6	-	20	39	114	197	91	13

National importance (winter): 50

Few elsewhere during winter months with 23 Choseley and 4 Acle Marsh Nov, and 5 Whitlingham CP Dec.

As table shows spring passage poor, only additional counts away from tabulated sites 7 Tottenhill GP, 3 Pentney GP and 2 West Somerton all during April.

Lekking was once again noted during spring at Salhouse and Welney but there was no evidence from either site that breeding was attempted, these probably representing nothing more than passage birds, with none present after early June.

Following lean spring passage, autumn passage also poor, with first birds reappearing in small numbers during second half of June. Only counts away from main sites 12 Wissington BF July 21st, 20 27th and 15 Aug 14th, and 20 Lynn Point Sept 1st.

Counts of birds moving overhead included 5 east Weybourne March 15th, 6 south-east Sheringham May 16th and 10 west Aug 15th, 11 west Scolt Head Sept 3rd and 13 30th, and 3 west Walcott Nov 19th.

Jack Snipe

Lymnocryptes minimus

Passage migrant and winter visitor; declining

A poor first winter period/early spring with 5 Buxton Heath, 4 Hickling Broad and 1-2 Barton Turf Fen, Berney, East Ruston King's Fen, Holme, Kelling WM, Nar Valley Fisheries,



Jack Snipe (Gary Wright)

Pentney GP, Repps-with-Bastwick, Roydon Common, Scolt Head, Strumpshaw, Titchwell, Welney and Winterton. Last in spring Nar Valley Fisheries May 2nd and Hickling Rush Hills 19th, the latest since 1993.

First returning birds late Sept when singles Titchwell 27th, Scolt Head 29th, and south with Common Snipe Hunstanton and Blakeney Point 30th. Birds slow to arrive during Oct with records from just 12 sites including one in off sea Eccles 11th. Elsewhere during autumn and second winter period 6 Whitlingham CP, 5 Buxton Heath, 3 Nar Valley Fisheries and 1-2 Blakeney Point, Brancaster Thompson Farm, East Ruston South Fen and King's Fen, East Winch Common, Flitcham, Holme, Lopham Fen, New Buckenham, Norwich Sweetbriar Marshes, Roydon Common, Salthouse, Scolt Head, Sheringham, Sparham Pools, Stiffkey Fen, Titchwell, Warham Greens, Wells East Hills, West Walton and Winterton.

Common Snipe

Gallinago gallinago

Passage migrant and winter visitor; declining breeder

During first winter period 30 or more recorded only at 12 sites (14 in 2003), gatherings generally much smaller: Titchwell 37 Feb, 63 March; Sea Palling 54 Jan, 129 Feb; Horsey 42 Jan; Hickling Broad 120 March; Repps-with-Bastwick 40 Jan; Buckenham 30 March; Cantley 107 Feb; Breydon/Berney 31 Jan, 34 March; 191 Haddiscoe Island Jan; Whitlingham CP 64 Feb; Langford 37 Jan; Welney 53 Feb, 56 March.

Breeding reported from 14 sites (10 in 2003) with total of 107 drummers (111 in 2003): *north coast* Titchwell 1, Holkham NNR 17 (17); *Broads* Berney 4, Buckenham 4, Cantley 2, South Walsham 1; *Brecks* Great Cressingham 2, Stanford TA 1; *Fens* Welney 66 (71); *inland* Castle Acre 1, Great Ryburgh 1, Roydon Common 5, Tallents Meadow Lake 1, West Lexham 1. The breeding population just about holding its own. Very good breeding success at Welney with numerous fledged young.

Post breeding migration noted Scolt Head with single west June 10th and 5 west July 30th. Autumn movements Aug 24th-Nov 26th with some good counts: Hunstanton total of 479 south Sept 30th-Nov 25th with 295 Sept 30th, 83 Nov 24th; Holme (all west) 108 Aug 10th, 39 15th, 41 22nd, 30 26th, 50 Sept 22nd, 16 Nov 26th; Scolt Head total of 1218 west Sept with 187 3rd, 59 5th, 64 24th, 71 25th, 63 26th, 163 27th, 52 28th, 297 30th, and total of 956 in Oct with 61 1st, 58 2nd, 733 3rd, 33 20th and 20 29th. Elsewhere 21 west Sheringham Sept 23rd.

A better autumn/second winter period with 18 sites holding 30 or more (11 in 2003): Holme 30 Aug, 35 Dec; Titchwell 30 Dec; Scolt Head 31 Oct; Stiffkey Fen 60 Sept, 34 Nov; Cley 70 Sept; Hickling Broad 35 Oct, 224 Nov; Ranworth Marshes 35 Nov; Breydon/Berney 33 Aug, 113 Sept; Burgh Castle 57 Sept; Buckenham 160 Nov; Cantley 168 Aug, 30 Sept, 120 Nov; Strumpshaw 65 Sept; Sparham Pools 50 Nov; Whitlingham CP 48 Nov; Grimston Derby Fen 90 Sept, 56 Oct; Nar Valley Fisheries 30 Nov, 35 Dec; Downham Market 60 Dec; Welney 70 Aug, 109 Nov.

Woodcock

Scolopax rusticola

Passage migrant and winter visitor; breeder particularly in Brecks

As usual highest counts during winter months when birds flushed during shoots or management work with 30 Brancaster Thompson Farm Jan and 40 Nov, and an impressive 300 Holkham Park late Dec. Highest counts elsewhere in winter months 11 Titchwell, 6 East Wretham Heath, Lopham Fen and Ringland, with 1-4 at a further 40 sites scattered throughout county apart from Fens.

In spring roding birds once again widely recorded: Barton Turf Fen, Boughton Fen 3, Catfield Fen, Cranwich, Dersingham, Drymere 2, East Winch Common 2, Gooderstone,

Honing Lock, Hoveton Hall 3, Lopham Fen, Pentney Heath 2-3, Repps-with-Bastwick 3, Roydon Common, Salthouse Heath, Sandringham 8, Santon Downham, Sculthorpe Moor 2, Saxthorpe, South Walsham, Swaffham Forest 3, Syderstone Common 3, Thetford Warren, West Runton (Roman Camp) 2. Also present in spring/summer at Cockley Cley, Foulden Common, Holt Lowes, Marsham Heath, Methwold Fens, Titchwell, West Bilney, breeding probably occurring at all these sites. One observer commented that fewer were seen in Broads than previous years.

Autumn passage from mid-Sept when one Yarmouth 17th but no others reported until Oct when singles Holkham Meals 8th, with 2 Scolt Head and Blakeney Point 10th. Small numbers noted arriving almost daily during rest of Oct especially 11th-13th when 2 Scolt Head and Sheringham, and singles at 5 other sites, and 27th-31st when up to 6 Scolt Head, 2 Blakeney Point and Burnham Overy, and singles at 11 other coastal sites. Birds continued to arrive during Nov when 9 Wells East Hills 2nd and 3 Caister GC 4th with smaller numbers at many other coastal sites until end of month. As usual small numbers noted arriving in off sea during autumn including singles Sheringham Oct 13th and Titchwell 27th, and in Nov Sheringham 2nd, California 6th, Mundesley 7th, Paston 20th, and Cley, Kelling and California 21st.

Black-tailed Godwit

Limosa limosa

Increasing passage migrant and winter visitor; declining breeder

Peak monthly counts at main sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Snettisham	1	-	39	328	205	-	950	800	580	1292	5	1
Holme	-	12	2	30	120	140	100	60	9	55	1	2
Titchwell	40	7	31	49	165	200	426	200	140	155	250	3
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	16	50	107	135	66	55	302	120	277	250	359	400
Holkham NNR	-	4	33	290	450	300	23	49	-	-	58	31
Stiffkey Fen	12	-	63	101	-	35	62	112	20	56	-	5
Blakeney Hbr/GM	28	39	99	96	-	18	24	-	12	102	26	10
Cley	3	185	320	400	238	230	230	512	513	330	380	209
Salthouse/Kelling	-	-	18	80	-	-	7	85	689	650	100	28
Hickling Broad	-	-	116	64	85	-	47	56	-	-	-	-
Breydon/Berney	695	520	520	326	106	203	798	1612	1417	1292	1312	1096
Welney	600	332	1540	400	82	60	245	-	7	28	487	700

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

Highest counts from other coastal or near coastal sites: Lynn Point 50 July, North Wootton 600 July, 1000 Aug, Ken Hill Marsh 65 April, Thornham Hbr 18 Feb, 5 July, Wells Hbr 13 June, Brancaster GM 80 Nov.

Elsewhere inland: Acle Marshes 100 July 3rd and 500 Nov 14th, Buckenham 8 April 25th and 60 May 15th, Cantley BF 6 Feb 2nd, Haddiscoe Island 131 Jan 30th, Hockwold Washes 2 July 29th, Horsey Mere 33 May 17th, Whitlingham CP 150 April 3rd and 70 9th, Wissington BF 5 Aug 14th.

Once again a number of movements reported including 12 east Weybourne April 3rd, 40 north-west at dusk Scolt Head May 2nd, 11 west Sheringham June 6th, 23 west Weybourne July 5th and 23 south-east Sheringham Aug 7th.

Successful breeding again for fourth consecutive year, despite some disruption due to flooding, with 4 pairs hatching two broods both fledging three young each; first young on wing July 5th.

Another impressive year with good counts reported from many sites, especially at Holme and Holkham GM during spring, Cley/Salthouse/Kelling WM in autumn, Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr Nov/Dec and Breydon/Berney throughout year. It is now not uncommon to see three-figure flocks on grazing marshes at any time of year, with large wintering and summering non-breeding flocks. This increase can be put in perspective when compared with the 1982 Bird and Mammal Report account when highest counts were just 100 Lynn Point, 72 Welney, 65 Titchwell, 10 Breydon and smaller numbers at 5 other sites. The majority of birds now seen throughout the year are of the Icelandic race *islandica*. Breeding birds are of the nominate race *limosa* which also occurs as a scarce passage migrant, especially on the north coast in early autumn.

Bar-tailed Godwit
Passage migrant and winter visitor; a few non-breeders in summer
Monthly max at main sites:

Limosa lapponica

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Snettisham	2680	3955	1500	320	90	119	80	5000	2500	1400	2500	4200
Holme	346	80	84	6	2	4	3	130	676	1003	254	100
Thornham	59	-	-	13	-	-	70	-	-	-	21	12
Titchwell	459	65	29	25	8	44	69	2178	4000	350	779	167
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	206	242	90	123	60	65	128	205	290	201	146	165
Wells Hbr	95	110	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	71	110
Warham SM	22	30	41	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-
Stiffkey SM	130	167	11	14	59	7	-	91	52	-	70	15
Blakeney Hbr	-	14	3	8	2	-	27	38	3	27	5	201
Breydon	57	55	47	17	70	6	5	29	13	17	22	41

International importance (winter): 1000; National importance (winter): 530

Additional counts: Ongar Hill 1050 Feb, North Wootton Marsh 50 Aug, Holkham Bay 21 Dec, Cley 22 April, 32 May, 49 June and 20 July. Note the higher than usual counts in May and June, when displaced birds recorded in early May and non-breeding birds summered along the north coast.

Passage over sea in spring included 11 north Sea Palling April 25th, 31 south 8 east Horsey and 20 south Waxham May 1st, and 24 east 13 west Sheringham 2nd.

Autumn movements light, best recorded Scolt Head where 41 west June 27th and 49 29th, 34 July 1st, 30 5th, 46 20th and 15 Aug 10th. Elsewhere 18 west Sheringham Aug 1st and large tidal movements once again noted at Holme where 450 west Sept 15th and 650 27th.

Large numbers displaced inland in foggy conditions and north-east winds April 30th and May 1st when 45 over Nar Valley Fisheries, 36 east Aylmerton, 16 Welney and one Wissington BF. Inland during rest of year one north Great Ryburgh March 17th, Hickling Rush Hills April 1st and 3 27th, with singles July 7th and 28th, Welney April 8th and 2 26th-29th, Hockwold Washes April 25th and Buckenham 4 April 27th.

Whimbrel

Numenius phaeopus

Passage migrant in spring and autumn; rare in winter

Peak counts of grounded/feeding flocks at main sites:

	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>
Snettisham	11	19	5	-	-
Holme	10	47	27	21	1
Titchwell	17	20	13	18	-
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	23	54	36	49	4
Holkham GM	40	32	-	2	-
Stiffkey	8	10	-	5	-
Blakeney Hbr	10	34	24	70	2
Cley	15	35	12	15	-
Horsey	12	19	-	-	-
Breydon/Berney	66	55	14	40	6

National importance (passage): 50

In first winter period an injured bird on saltmarsh Morston Jan 26th.

First of spring Titchwell March 26th, Wells 27th, north Broome April 1st and Scolt Head 10th, with birds widespread by mid-month. Highest counts in spring away from main sites: *April* 11 Ken Hill GM, 5 Warham SM, 12 Blakeney GM, 24 Winterton, 7 Caister; *May* 15 Burnham Overy Staithe, 9 Warham SM, 6 Salthouse and 20 Waxham.

Best counts of birds overhead in spring: 19 passed Sea Palling April 18th, 10 west Scolt Head 21st, 10 east Sheringham and 8 north Sea Palling 25th, and in May 14 east Scolt Head 10th, 19 east Holme 12th with 19 west there 13th.

Inland records during spring: *April* 3 Hickling Rush Hills 15th, 2 16th and 8 20th, north Blackborough End Tip 20th, 2 Roydon Common 21st and one 22nd, 2 Welney 22nd with one 23rd and 26th, 50 Hickling Eastfield Farm April 24th, 3 Bayfield Hall, 3 Buckenham, 66 Hickling Broad, 12 Leziat Ashwick Heath (until May 2nd) and 2 Potter Heigham all 26th; *May* Stowbridge 1st and 2 11th, 9 Welney 1st and 2 9th, 8 Haddiscoe and 8 Stow Bedon 9th, 3 Hoveton Hall 11th.

During June 1-6 reported Terrington, Holme, Titchwell, Blakeney Hbr and Breydon/Berney until 12th. First returning birds second half of June when singles Cley 20th, Thornham 26th, Winterton 27th and 2 west Scolt Head 29th.

Highest counts of feeding flocks elsewhere in autumn: *July* 7 Ongar Hill, 7 Warham, 8 Winterton; *Aug* 8 Ongar Hill. Largest overhead movements in autumn (west unless stated): 50 Holme July 28th, and 60 Aug 11th and 33 26th, 20 Thornham July 31st, Scolt Head total of 298 July including 59 8th, 49 26th and 51 27th, 426 Aug including 52 2nd, 197 10th, 76 11th and 31 14th, with 11 Sept 2nd and 33 3rd, 11 Wells and 15 Warham both Aug 14th, 25 Blakeney Point Aug 11th, 23 Salthouse July 18th and 40 Aug 2nd, 22 Sheringham and 8 Beeston Bump Aug 10th, 13 south Potter Heigham July 3rd and 13 south-east 30th.

Inland during autumn Repps-with-Bastwick July 12th, south Castle Acre July 25th, 10 Hickling Rush Hills July 29th and 16 Aug 8th, south Weeting Heath July 31st, 15 south Langham Aug 1st and one Hoveton Aug 28th.

Last of year Oct when singles Scolt Head 8th-11th, Blakeney Hbr 17th and west Holkham/Wells 28th.

Curlew

Numenius arquata

Passage migrant and winter visitor; scarce breeder

Monthly max at main sites:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Snettisham	-	-	94	-	-	-	710	479	1000	132	110	440
Holme	250	235	210	100	50	13	127	160	200	95	197	236
Thornham	43	47	37	4	15	15	-	22	30	43	11	19
Titchwell	74	130	157	25	4	-	48	64	28	5	64	124
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	525	585	454	475	50	200	1100	1450	1096	897	595	605
Holkham NNR	173	72	137	11	11	-	-	39	127	156	225	162
Warham SM	164	58	47	-	-	10	-	-	81	26	54	29
Wells Hbr	43	19	29	-	-	-	32	-	52	-	37	19
Stiffkey SM	147	32	81	41	7	2	51	118	131	-	102	65
Blakeney GM	62	156	52	10	-	-	-	-	35	36	126	95
Blakeney Hbr	161	42	138	65	6	27	199	144	180	217	20	94
Breydon	819	1000	721	279	34	141	631	717	874	984	1169	982

International importance (winter): 3500; National importance (winter): 1200

Elsewhere: 36 Burnham Overy Hbr Jan, 68 Horsey Jan, 52 Hickling Broad Jan, 423 Haddiscoe Island Feb, 140 Cantley BF March (site record), 200 North Wootton Marsh July, 400 Aug and 120 Oct, 87 Cley Aug, 140 Sept and 40 Dec.

Inland feeding flocks included: 117 Stanhoe Jan, 56 Great Bircham Feb, 85 Flitcham March, 24 Great Massingham April, 62 Babingley Sept, 150 Babingley, 60 Castle Rising and 41 Roydon Common Nov, and 65 Castle Rising and 32 Harpley Dec.

Birds once again noted departing north-east on fine days in April when 36 Scolt Head 12th and 35 13th, 15 Blakeney Point 15th and 26 20th.

Westerly passage in autumn from June 10th, highest counts: *June* 23 Scolt Head 17th, 49 18th, 214 27th and 104 29th, 22 Cley 28th, 38 Sheringham 27th; *July* 47 Scolt Head 3rd and 44 5th, 18 south Gorleston 17th; *Sept* 19 Scolt Head 2nd; *Oct* 79 Scolt Head 1st.

Breeding records included pairs holding territories at 3 sites Stanford TA with birds seen at 17 localities there during spring/summer. Elsewhere pairs at Buckenham Tofts, Cranwich, East Wretham Heath, Gooderstone, Hockwold Heath (2), Roydon Common (failed) and Tottington.

An early juv noted Breydon July 13th.

Spotted Redshank

Tringa erythropus

Passage migrant; small numbers over-winter

During first winter period regular reports from just 2 sites: Titchwell (6 Jan, 9 Feb, 6 March) and Breydon/Berney (2 Jan, 3 Feb, 8 March 1st). Elsewhere occasional reports from Holme may relate to wandering birds from nearby Titchwell but Cley Jan 10th and Snettisham Feb 17th, March 2nd (2) and 16th hint at additional, previously unseen, wintering individuals.

Records from more sites March 19th onwards when first inland birds at Hickling Broad and West Somerton suggesting start of spring passage. Numbers small with April peaks 9 Breydon/Berney 1st (also 5 23rd), 6 Hickling Broad 15th and Titchwell 17th. That these numbers are matched by overwintering birds shows change in status of the species in county. Elsewhere scarce with 1-4 at 7 coastal and 5 inland localities until one Welney May 8th.

Assumed last of spring 2 Berney May 18th but 2 again at same site June 1st confuse picture and could relate to spring, autumn or perhaps non-breeding individuals. Singles at Scolt Head and Breydon/Berney June 16th for-runners of improved autumn passage.

Peak counts during protracted autumn at regular localities:

	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>
Snettisham	-	5	36	23	-
Holme	1	-	10	3	1
Thornham/Titchwell	8	28	32	23	15
Cley	5	8	8	6	6
Breydon/Berney	2	5	4	5	8

As always scarce away from favoured sites: 1-2 at Scolt Head, Salthouse, Beeston Bump, Hickling Broad, Strumpshaw (3 Oct 5th) and Welney.

Passage lingered into Nov at Snettisham 7th and Welney 15th with 14 still Titchwell 14th, after which wintering birds at Titchwell (8 late Nov, 9 Dec), Cley/Salthouse (2 late Nov, 4 Dec) and Breydon/Berney (4 late Nov, 6 Dec).

Redshank

Tringa totanus

Resident, passage migrant and winter visitor; declining breeder in some areas

Monthly max at main and most regularly counted sites:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Snettisham	237	280	110	335	125	95	535	1835	1510	474	152	300
Holme	168	145	113	65	10	23	7	145	166	45	249	94
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	367	509	293	185	153	152	695	1038	1025	654	315	270
Stiffkey SM	173	81	129	153	42	47	90	249	202	-	192	126
Blakeney Hbr	83	153	214	92	52	26	150	192	201	127	38	187
Breydon/Berney	880	857	1566	1581	152	98	1000	1121	1140	1059	1140	1519

National importance (winter): 1100

Counts at Breydon/Berney much higher than usual in March and April. Other noteworthy counts: Holkham GM 219 April, 337 May, 228 June; Welney 241 May.

No visible spring migration observed this year.

Similar breeding coverage this year with 629-631 pairs at 18 sites (609-614 at 18 in 2003): *north coast* Snettisham 138 (175), Ken Hill 22 (22), Titchwell 42 (32), Scolt Head 35 (30-35), Holkham NNR 133 (110), Blakeney Point 6 (5), Cley 8-10 (3); *east coast/Broads* Aldeby Long Dam Level 1, Berney 49 (44) fledged 100 young, Haddiscoe 5 (2). Buckenham 45 (42), Cantley 20 (21), Hickling Broad 1; *Fens* Hockwold Washes 1, Welney 120 (110), Wisington BF 1; *inland* Thetford Nunnery Lakes 1, Coxford 1. Breeding success much improved at Berney after fox control reinstated.

Most autumn migration noted in Aug at Scolt Head where 31 east 2nd, 40 east 3rd, 110 west 10th, 31 west 22nd and 33 west Sept 9th. Elsewhere Sheringham 97 east Aug 7th, 61 east 15th and 46 east 21st; Walcott 8 south July 7th and 10 8th; Winterton 16 south Aug 15th.

A leucistic individual at Titchwell from Jan 1st-13th at least.

Greenshank

Tringa nebularia

Passage migrant in spring and autumn; scarce in winter

During Jan/Feb only recorded at Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr (2) and Morston/Blakeney Hbr on scattered dates; sites that have become traditional for this species during winter period. Single at Titchwell intermittently March 4th-19th and again April 1st most likely an overwintering individual as no other sightings until Titchwell again April 13th, after which almost daily records until late May.

Third successive unspectacular spring with many reports but numbers low and very few counts of 5+ birds: 6 Cley April 25th, and in May 10 Welney 1st, 10 Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr 2nd and 9th, 8 Hickling Broad 18th, 7 Wissington BF 18th-23rd and peak of 13 Breydon/Berney during month.

Passage tailed off in early June with none after 11th except at Cley and Welney where singles present throughout month suggesting oversummering. First harbingers of autumn in last days of month at Breydon/Berney 26th and Scolt Head (3) 28th. Monthly peaks during autumn at favoured localities:

	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Snettisham	62	44	12	5
Holme	5	10	5	3
Thornham/Titchwell	33	47	35	1
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	35	*129	75	18
Warham/Stiffkey	-	32	20	-
Cley	13	25	7	1
Hickling Broad	4	26	8	1
Breydon/Berney	12	8	-	2

* Count of birds moving west (most in evening after heavy rain cleared) Aug 10th, a record Norfolk count (previous best 121 Terrington/Ongar Hill Aug 1999).

Peak Aug counts at Thornham/Titchwell, Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr, Warham/Stiffkey and Hickling Broad all during 10th/11th. Elsewhere many reports of 1-9 but only additional double-figure counts 30 Burnham Norton Sept 1st and 25 Wells East Hills Nov 2nd.

Numbers dropped sharply during Oct with last stragglers into first 5 days of Nov. Singles again settled for winter Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr and Morston/Blakeney Hbr where noted occasionally Nov/Dec but also one Holme Dec 1st and 2 Cley 7th.

Lesser Yellowlegs

Tringa flavipes

Vagrant from North America

A well-watched individual Stiffkey Fen Sept 14th-30th, Stiffkey FM Oct 10th-13th and then in the saltmarsh channel adjacent to Stiffkey Fen Oct 13th, where it remained remarkably faithful, to year end (BSt JCW *et al*). The first wintering record for Norfolk.

Numbers of record per decade since county first in 1966:

1960-69	1970-79	1980-89	1990-99	2000-
2	1	2	5	5

Green Sandpiper

Tringa ochropus

Double passage migrant, most in autumn; small numbers over-winter

During first winter period records from 23 inland and 2 coastal parishes, mostly on isolated dates suggesting either mobile individuals or more likely discrete birds easily overlooked at underwatched localities. Unlike previous years no concentrations, 2 each at Pentney GP, Sparham Pools and Thetford Nunnery Lakes, otherwise all singletons.

Commencement of spring migration impossible to ascertain with certainty but more records from mid-March. Spring reports from 32 localities (23 inland and 9 coastal) but numbers low. All sightings of 1-2 birds and only 5 sites recorded birds on multiple dates. Last of spring assumed to be Holme May 9th but sightings from West Walton 17th and Flitcham 18th bridged gap between traditional spring and autumn seasons.

First of autumn 2 Titchwell June 6th with widespread records from mid-month and continual presence in county throughout autumn. As usual, more records and larger numbers during southbound autumn migration with Cantley BF dominating:

	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>		<i>Aug</i>		<i>Sep</i>		<i>Oct</i>
	<i>16-30</i>	<i>1-15</i>	<i>16-31</i>	<i>1-15</i>	<i>16-31</i>	<i>1-15</i>	<i>16-30</i>	<i>1-15</i>
Cantley BF	9	33	77	84	17	26	8	3

Elsewhere reports form 51 other localities at this time (45 in 2003) with several double-figure counts: 10 Haddiscoe July 24th, 10 Wissington BF 27th, 10 Holkham GM 29th, 17 Scolt Head (west), 13 Holme, 13 Titchwell and 11 Kelling WM all Aug 10th. At Hoe Common 3 Oct 17th thought to be last of autumn with no records Oct 18th-31st.

Nov/Dec records from 19 exclusively inland localities (26 in 2003), mostly singles with 2 at 7 sites and 3 Haddiscoe Dec 5th.



Green Sandpiper (*Gary Wright*)

Wood Sandpiper

Tringa glareola

Passage migrant in spring and autumn

First of year April 25th when noted at Breydon/Berney (2) and Wroxham Broad, with two more records by month end.

Spring passage through to early June noted at following 12 localities (9 in 2003 and 2002): Titchwell, Burnham Overy, Holkham GM, Stiffkey Fen, Glandford, Cley, Hickling Broad, Wroxham Broad, Breydon/Berney, Buckenham, Wissington BF and Welney. All observations of 1-3 except 5 Hoikham GM May 5th increasing to 7 next day. Of interest, one of 3 individuals present at this site May 10th was in full song flight. Last stragglers of usual light spring movement Holkham GM June 7th and Titchwell 9th/10th.

Brief summer absence broken by first returning adults Holkham GM June 29th/30th (2) but no others until July 8th. Strong autumn showing with records from 19 localities (17 in 2003) and epitomized by waves of fresh arrivals (giving often spectacular gatherings) interspersed by very few sightings. Following isolated count of 7 Holkham GM Aug 1st, first such wave Aug 9th/10th when 21 Titchwell, 11 Scolt Head, 10 Hickling Broad and 28 Cantley BF. An impressive 20 Salthouse Aug 12th may have been a pre-cursor to 19 Breydon/Berney 14th (a site record) on which date also 12 Cley/Salthouse. At Breydon/Berney 8 remained 15th/16th before final influx of autumn Aug 19th/20th when 30 Cley and increase to 13 Breydon/Berney. The Aug 19th Cley count represents the largest concentration in county since 50 Cley July 31st 1980. Early withdrawal evident with no reports Aug 22nd-31st, and only seen on 2 dates first half Sept. Similar picture later in month with 2 Titchwell 16th and one Pentney GP 19th before last of year Welney Oct 4th.

Common Sandpiper

Actitis hypoleucos

Passage migrant in spring and autumn; rare in winter; has bred

For first time since 1999, no winter records during opening months of year. Earliest spring migrant Blakeney Point April 16th after which unspectacular passage recorded at 24 localities (same as 2003). Most sightings of 1-5 with larger counts restricted to 23 Berney May 18th, 8 Whitlingham CP and 7 both Barton Broad and Haddiscoe. Following 4 singletons in early June, last of spring Blakeney Hbr 6th except at Titchwell where bid June 10th and 19th-21st which may have oversummered.

First genuine autumn migrants 2 Sparham Pools June 23rd but only one further report by month end. As usual present daily at many sites across county July/Aug with new pulses of fresh arrivals bumping up numbers at regular intervals. Double-figure counts show this well but pattern also evident at localities where fewer birds involved.

Six double-figure counts during July: 12 Titchwell 8th, 10 Ousemouth 10th, 12 Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr 22nd, 11 Hickling Broad 23rd, 10 Cantley BF 25th and 14 Hickling Broad 26th. Slight increase in numbers in early Aug when 19 Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr 1st, 21 Cantley BF 4th and 11 Whitlingham CP 5th before largest influx of year 9th-11th. At this time: *9th* 21 Barton Broad, 16 Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr, 15 Hickling Broad; *10th* 45 Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr, 29 Titchwell; *11th* 30 Hickling Broad, 20 Ormesby Broad and 12 Salthouse, but few reports of smaller numbers elsewhere. Remaining significant counts may relate to lingering birds from this, often spectacular, arrival presumably supplemented by last new migrants of season: 21 Barton Broad Aug 13th, 16 Breydon/Berney 14th, 15 Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr 16th and finally 17 Cley 19th.

Steady decline during last week Aug and Sept but still 9 Hickling Broad 8th a day after a bird flew 500 m along a road at Salle in front of a cyclist! Sightings from just 6 coastal sites during second half of Sept until 26th followed by just one in Oct, last of year, inland Cantley BF 17th.

Turnstone

Arenaria interpres

Passage migrant and winter visitor; some summering non-breeders

Monthly peaks at regularly counted key localities:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
King's Lynn	150	191	178	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	132
Snettisham	38	31	15	75	106	53	*770	200	251	250	126	21
Holme	60	53	43	22	38	16	25	59	91	43	76	2
Thornham Hbr	14	-	10	17	-	13	-	15	-	4	25	17
Titchwell	154	190	44	27	45	31	2	69	25	17	500	27
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	95	149	174	276	325	81	320	535	635	307	179	135
Wells Hbr	28	31	28	6	8	-	-	-	14	-	20	30
Stiffkey SM	22	15	17	12	59	15	19	80	104	-	22	25
Blakeney Hbr	74	88	53	41	42	16	-	316	64	36	67	97
Gorleston	35	29	-	31	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	-
Breydon	4	10	9	16	9	-	21	16	18	10	10	4

National importance (winter): 640

* *The impressive late summer concentration at Snettisham has been observed in previous years but July count represents largest gathering in county since 900 at same site in Oct 1994.*

Bulk of population continues to be focussed on north coast and Wash. Numbers in east Norfolk more modest, a juv Breydon Aug 10th was earliest ever at site.



Red-footed Falcon - this 1st summer male at Waxham performed well for its crowds of admirers.
(Julian Bhalerao)





Tree Pipit - this individual returned for another summer in the tree-less surroundings of Cley beach car park. (*Julian Bhalerao*)

Sedge Warbler - a common summer visitor. (*Murray Smith*)





Bittern - numbers are notably increasing in the county. (*Tony Howes*)



Woodlark - this ringed bird was photographed a mile from where it was ringed two years earlier. (*Chris Knights*)

Stone Curlew - an unusual picture taken at night. (*Chris Knights*)





Greater Sandplover - the fourth county record appeared at Snettisham in July. (*Alan Tate*)

Knot - an albino present with the a Sandplover but probably rarer. (*Alan Tate*)

Knot - an unusual close-up of a summer-plumaged bird at Snettisham. (*Alan Tate*)



Elsewhere other counts of 20+ birds: Jan 24 East Ruston, 42 Waxham; Feb 28 Yarmouth; Aug 25 Cley, 34 Sea Palling; Nov 24 Holkham Bay, 34 Cley, 48 Walcott; Dec 400 Ousemouth, 32 Salthouse.



Turnstone (Gary Wright)

As noted in previous Reports, late spring departure witnessed Scolt Head where 45 north May 18th and 40 north 23rd.

Inland records continue to increase but remain noteworthy; in addition to Jan East Ruston count singles Welney April 26th, May 7th and 28th, Wissington BF May 14th and 26th-29th, and Buckenham May 15th/16th. Hickling Broad, however, remains most reliable site away from coast with 1-3 present on at least 6 dates May 2nd-29th with max 6 on 20th. Fewer in autumn: Hickling Broad July 26th (3), 29th (4) and Aug 13th (8 incl 7 juvs), and Welney singles Oct 31st and Nov 22nd.

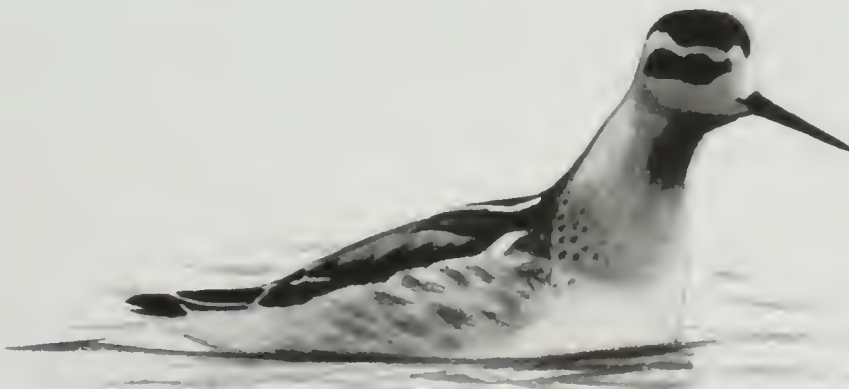
Red-necked Phalarope

Phalaropus lobatus

Scarce passage migrant

Three autumn records: Breydon July 15th, Snettisham Aug 26th and Kelling WM Sept 23rd-25th; the latter proving popular and spending much of its time swimming amongst hoards of Black-tailed Godwits sharing the same pool.

A typical showing and the second consecutive year without a spring sighting.



Red-necked Phalarope (Richard Johnson)

Grey Phalarope

Phalaropus fulicarius

Scarce autumn passage migrant; rare at other times

A good autumn for the species with all sightings Sept/Oct and two clear peaks coinciding with spells of productive seawatching.

First of year, single west Cley Sept 23rd (JRMc), Scolt Head same date and Holme 23rd/24th and 26th. One further record before month end, an individual on beach at Sheringham briefly 25th. Conceivable all records relate to just 2 birds.

Subsequent records from Scolt Head, Blakeney Point and Cley Oct 8th, the former lingering on tidal pools until 9th. Three subsequent records: Sheringham west Oct 9th (DPA), Waxham on sea 10th and finally Holkham Bay/Wells 24th/25th, feeding in surf on latter date.

Pomarine Skua

Stercorarius pomarinus

Passage migrant during autumn; small numbers at other times

Only two records during first winter period, both Jan 1st when singles west Mundesley and south Gorleston.

No further records until May when 2 adults (with tail spoons) north Yarmouth 11th, and singles north Trimingham 21st and west Cley 26th.

Rather unremarkable autumn passage underway July 8th when west Sheringham followed by other singles in month west Mundesley 10th, east Sheringham 24th and Blakeney Point 26th. Small numbers continued during Aug with total of 12 passed 9 sites, all singles apart from 2 east Sheringham 2nd. A similar situation in Sept with 20 birds, again mostly singles, except for 3 west Scolt Head 23rd, 6 Holme and 2 west Scolt Head 24th, and 2 Waxham 25th.

Even fewer birds during Oct with total of 16 passed 8 sites, again mostly singles apart from 2 Holme 17th and 2 west Scolt Head 28th and 30th. During Nov singles Titchwell 6th, Holme 10th, Burnham Overy, Holkham Bay and Sheringham 13th, and Holme 14th and 19th.

Arctic Skua

Stercorarius parasiticus

Mainly autumn passage migrant, scarce at other times

No records during first winter period.

The usual light spring passage underway April 18th with one Sea Palling and another there 30th. More widespread during May when south Horsey 1st, south Yarmouth 5th, Titchwell, 2 west Scolt Head and one west Mundesley all 8th, Waxham and Yarmouth 11th, Sea Palling 12th, Scolt Head, Mundesley and Eccles 23rd, Scolt Head 25th and Titchwell 29th. Midsummer records on 3 dates in June: singles Scolt Head 19th and 27th and 3 east Walcott 25th.

Autumn passage underway early July with singles Titchwell 1st, Eccles 4th and Snettisham 5th. Thereafter more widespread in month with max 6 Cley and 8 Walcott 7th, 10 Sheringham 8th, 7 Winterton 11th, 8 west Cley 17th, 25 Holme 20th, 15 Scolt Head 23rd and 5 Overstrand 27th. Numbers increased in Aug with highest counts: 14 east 8 west Scolt Head 12th with 12 west there 13th, 45 Sheringham 21st, 20 Cley 22nd, 12 west 2 east Scolt Head 26th, 23 Titchwell, 18 Scolt Head, 30 Sheringham and 29 east 6 west Mundesley all 30th, and 32 west Scolt Head 31st. Situation similar in Sept with max: 20 west Scolt Head 6th and 28 east 7 west there next day, 40 Hunstanton, 21 east 2 west Scolt Head, 27 Cley and 33 Sheringham all 15th, 34 west 5 east Scolt Head 21st, 60 Holme, 86 Scolt Head and 28 Sheringham all 23rd, 16 Holme, 30 Scolt Head and 68 Sheringham 24th, and 13 Sheringham 25th.

Only Oct counts of any note came from 3-day period 8th-10th with 5 west 3 east Scolt Head and 16 Sheringham 8th, 10 Scolt Head, 12 Sheringham, 12 Mundesley and 11 Sea Palling 9th, and 28 Eccles 10th. During Nov records from 6 sites mostly singles except for 3 north Walcott 2nd, 6 Sheringham 13th and 2 Sheringham 19th, the last record of year.

One inland record, single dark-phase bird east over north side of Norwich Aug 25th.

Long-tailed Skua

Stercorarius longicaudus

Autumn passage migrant increasingly identified in recent years

First record of year Cley July 25th. No further records until adult east Scolt Head Aug 11th. Further Aug records 2 east Sheringham 14th with 4 there 21st, adult Cley 22nd with juv there 26th, east Sheringham also 26th, and further singles Titchwell 28th, Hunstanton 30th and Sheringham 30th/31st.

In Sept Titchwell 2nd, east Sheringham 6th, Scolt Head, Blakeney Point/Hbr and Sheringham 7th, one east one west Sheringham 8th, 3 Yarmouth 10th, 2 west Scolt Head 15th, Holme, 2 west Scolt Head and single Sheringham 21st, Sheringham 22nd, 3 west Holme, 5 west Scolt Head, one Cley and 2 Sheringham all 23rd, 2 west Scolt Head and 2 Sheringham 24th, and one Salthouse 25th.

During Oct singles Scolt Head and Weybourne 8th, Mundesley and Sea Palling 9th, Mundesley and Gorleston 10th, and Sheringham 12th and 15th.

Great Skua

Stercorarius skua

Passage migrant mostly in autumn; small numbers at other times

During Jan singles west Mundesley 1st with another east there next day. In Feb singles West Runton 8th and Holme/Thornham 15th.

No further records until May when singles Happisburgh and Winterton 23rd (perhaps same bird), and Waxham 31st, followed by Holme June 7th. A very unusual inland record of one over Strumpshaw June 27th before it circled up and headed high north-east.

First in autumn July 7th when singles Cromer and Walcott, followed next day by 5 Sheringham, 2 Winterton and singles Titchwell and Sea Palling. Numbers increased during Aug but still remained low with monthly total of only 66 from 13 sites with max: 9 Sheringham 21st, 8 Titchwell and 8 Sheringham 30th, and 6 Scolt Head 31st. Numbers remained unremarkable for much of Sept until 4-day period 21st-24th when: 21st 32 west Holme, 18 Titchwell, 63 west Scolt Head; 23rd 191 west Holme, 15 Titchwell, 141 west Scolt Head, 40 Cley, 18 Sheringham, 11 Walcott; 24th 45 west Holme, 58 west Scolt Head, 15 Cley, 78 east 30 west Sheringham. No further notable counts until Oct 8th when 8 west one east Scolt Head, 7 Holkham Meals (arrived from south with an Arctic Skua at great height and carried on out to sea) and 5 Sheringham. On 9th 12 west 2 east Scolt Head, 5 Weybourne, 18 Sheringham and 7 west Mundesley.

During Nov total of 43 recorded at 10 sites with last of year Holme 21st.

Mediterranean Gull

Larus melanocephalus

Regular all-year visitor in increasing numbers, often remaining for weeks; recent breeder

Breeders favoured one site in particular this year and met with considerable success as 4 pairs fledged 7 young. A pair raised one young at another locality and nest building occurred at a third.

Records received from 35 coastal and 20 inland sites, a rather typical spread and for fourth year in succession Breydon attracted a new record largest gathering (see below). A marked arrival of juvs was enjoyed from mid-July: 2 Yarmouth July 15th also one 22nd, Overstrand

22nd and 27th, Breydon 24th, Cley/Salthouse 31st, Whitlingham CP Aug 1st, Burnham Overy and Cley 7th, Eau Brink and Titchwell 10th, Cantley BF and 8 Breydon both 15th, 8 Yarmouth 23rd and 2 Breydon 29th. The sightings of 8 juvs together is truly unprecedented in the county, the birds at Breydon roosting alongside a juv Caspian Gull for good measure!
 Estimated number of individuals per month:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Juv	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	14	-	-	-	-
1st-year	8	10	10	6	9	10	5	9	12	2	-	5
2nd-year	2	9	9	8	5	5	4	-	5	-	4	6
Adult	7	18	31	14	13	19	35	14	20	5	11	11
Unaged	41	21	23	6	3	3	3	51	2	24	27	23
Total	58	58	73	34	30	37	54	88	39	31	42	45

Not surprisingly Yarmouth was ‘the’ site for consistently high numbers with peak monthly counts: 47 Jan 1st (new site record), 38 Feb 2nd, 32 March 2nd, 16 July 1st and 15th, 23 Aug 23rd, 22 Sept 26th, 25 Oct 31st, 29 Nov 3rd and 44 Dec 1st. Breydon too saw some very respectable gatherings/roosts including 26 Jan 18th, 24 Feb 4th, 21 July 24th/25th, 62 Aug 13th and no fewer than 69 Aug 25th (a new county record). Elsewhere much smaller numbers generally but 10 Scolt Head April 15th with 6 there May 18th, 15 Snettisham July 4th and 5 Overstrand Sept 1st.

Other inland records: 2 Hickling Broad Jan 4th, adult Great Barwick 19th, adult Blackborough End Tip March 1st and 6th, adult Ditchingham 17th, Flitcham 19th, 2nd-calendar year (2cy) Ditchingham 23rd/24th, adult Strumpshaw March 26th, pair adults Holkham Park Lake 28th, 2 2cy Ditchingham April 4th, adult Cawston 17th, 4 Holkham Park Lake 20th, 2 adults Hickling Broad May 6th, adult Ludham 7th, 2cy Hickling Broad 19th/20th, 2cy Martham Broad June 3rd, Flitcham and 2 adults Hickling Broad 7th, 2cy Blackborough End Tip 12th, adult Welney July 4th, adult Burgh Castle 27th, adult Langham Sept 1st, 3cy Langham 15th, adult Repps-with-Bastwick Nov 6th, adult Aldeby Tip and adult Wheatacre Marshes 24th, Whitlingham CP 25th and adult Aylmerton Dec 10th.

A 2cy Cley June 25th was ringed in Hungary, as was a 2cy noted there Aug 1st and 9th. The juv Whitlingham CP Aug 1st was ringed in France/Belgium, while an adult, again ringed in Hungary, frequented Overstrand from Aug 9th.

Little Gull

Larus minutus

Non-breeding summer visitor, passage migrant and winter visitor

In first winter period only 11 reports throughout Jan-March, although 391 (372 east 19 west) Mundesley Jan 2nd was particularly notable for time of year.

During spring total of 26 individuals dropped into inland waters during April when max 7 Hockwold Washes 2nd and 7 Hickling Broad 15th; also on coast 9 Holme 23rd. May saw continuation of inland passage involving 50+ birds and peaks of 7 Hickling Broad (6 adults), 6 Barton Broad and 14 Welney 1st, 10 2nd-calendar year (2cy) Hickling Broad 16th and 5 Buckenham 27th. Titchwell witnessed its customary build-up at this time where 16 by 18th, while Stiffkey Fen attracted 7 on 13th. Away from Titchwell, where 12 2cy birds 3rd, more evident inland in June including 8 2cy Buckenham 1st and 10 2cy Hickling Broad 10th.

During summer July was quiet although a trickle of returning 3cy/adult birds Hickling Broad from 10th, 5 adults Gorleston 25th and max 5 (3 adults) Cley 28th. Likewise small numbers from a number of sites through Aug when max 7 west Scolt Head 9th. First juv Cantley BF from 27th whilst single adult Overstrand 15th to month end was less usual.



Little Gulls (John Williamson)

Sept continued in a similar vein but 25 lingering offshore Scolt Head 29th promised a busier month ahead. A large movement Oct 7th-11th began with 2000 Sea Palling, 200 Waxham and 926 California 7th. Next day saw 55 east Scolt Head, 523 east Sheringham, 500 Sea Palling and 1165 (1053 north) California. Scolt Head had 205 east 9th when 337 (0700-1400) Sheringham, 350 Mundesley and 1000 Waxham. Scolt Head recorded 305 east 10th with 2550 south Scratby same day, and finally 210 east Sheringham 11th. Further peaks included 710 east Sheringham Oct 15th, with 220 also east there 16th, and 120 east Sheringham and 206 south (3 hrs 30 mins) Winterton Oct 30th. Little action followed 44 Sea Palling Nov 1st, just 1-3 at coastal watch points and no records received for Dec.

The following table shows the largest number at any one site per month:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
391	1	1	9	16	12	5	7	25	2000	44	-

Sabine's Gull

Larus sabini

Almost annual but scarce autumn vagrant from High Arctic; extremely rare in spring

Onshore gales on Sept 23rd produced 2 adults west (ARB GFH) and one juv east (ORM) Holme, one adult 2 juvs west Scolt Head (NML) and one adult one juv west Cley (SJMG); on 24th adult east Holme (ORM).

A further scattering of records mid-Oct: juv west Cley 7th (SBa), juv west Scolt Head 8th (NML), juv north Gorleston (INS) and juv Mundesley (RC MDF) 9th, adult Mundesley 10th (RC) and juv south Yarmouth 11th (MHo TCL).

Bonaparte's Gull

Larus philadelphia

Vagrant from North America

2003 Amendment: Bird at Hickling Broad present until May 26th.

Black-headed Gull

Larus ridibundus

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

Monthly max at selected sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Lynn Point	7600	13000	-	2450	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Scolt Head	8400	-	-	3000	4500	-	-	3000	6200	6550	-	-
B End Tip	2000	1700	2500	150	48	90	610	-	-	-	3000	1500

Away from these localities gatherings included: 600 roosted Cranwich GP Jan 11th, 2300 Narford 13th, 2895 roosted Wash Stubborn Sand, 2290 roosted Thornham, 17,700 roosted Breydon, 983 roosted Barton Broad and 5000 roosted Hardley Flood all 18th, 5000 roosted Colney GP 20th, 1083 Holme and 4000 roosted Wells Bob Halls Sand 23rd, 4585 roosted Blakeney Point Feb 6th, 5000 Methwold Fens (pig farm) 7th, 1000 Saddlebow March 7th, 911 Wells/Blakeney Hbrs April 18th, 800 Wissington BF 19th, 2170 Wells/Blakeney Hbrs May 9th, 553 Salthouse Aug 1st, 5000 roosted Breydon 15th, 1200 Brancaster Sept 2nd, 3500 Saddlebow RC Nov 12th, 2500 Ranworth Broad 13th and an impressive 40,000 Wroxham Broad Dec 24th, the second largest-ever Norfolk count. Some of preceding roosts were counted as part of the 2003/04 Winter Gull Roost Survey (WinGS) organised by the BTO. The survey produced a total of 62,633 Black-headed Gulls at 13 roost sites. Also a further 32,438 unidentified small gulls were noted from 10 localities.

Presumed spring exodus only noted Mundesley where 1240 east March 28th.

Reports of breeding numbers from 15 localities, giving 5152 pairs in total: Snettisham 1970, Holme 63, Scolt Head 2250, Wells (saltmarsh not counted) 60, Holkham GM 50, Stiffkey 561 (Little Binks 365, Big Binks 46, Saltmarsh 150), Blakeney Point 800, Cley 10, How Hill 11, Hickling Broad 7, Ranworth Broad 2, Strumpshaw 274, Crimplesham GP 5, Wissington BF 70, Welney 120. The Scolt Head birds raised 1500-2000 young whilst 450 fledged on Blakeney Point, but the season proved disastrous at Holkham GM and Welney due to predation by foxes.

Returning birds from July at Scolt Head where 796 west 6th-31st including 156 on 6th. Not so much evidence of passage Aug with just 329 west Scolt Head but movement picked up Sept when 4188 logged west, again Scolt Head, including 3760 on 30th. Oct saw peak of immigration with 9732 west Scolt Head (2450 1st and 2650 28th) and 'hundreds' west Holme 1st.

Abnormally plumaged birds included a partial albino adult Blackborough End Tip Feb 21st with same bird returning Dec 31st. Wissington BF held a leucistic bird May 10th/11th and a partial albino frequented Yarmouth Dec 11th/12th.

Common Gull

Larus canus

Passage migrant and winter visitor with non-breeders remaining all summer; spasmodic breeder

Peak gatherings at selected sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Lynn Point	2750	4000	-	2000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Scolt Head	5600	-	-	1375	3000	50	85	415	2850	2850	-	-

Of 3000 present Scolt Head May 7th only 16 were aged as 3cy/adult. Other counts of note included: 1700 Narford Jan 13th, 1000 roosted Colney Pits and 2750 (roost flight) Lynn Point 17th, 4745 roosted Wash Stubborn Sand, 2000 roosted 'Titchwell coast' and 2136 roosted Breydon all 18th, 1767 Holme 23rd, 4000 Lynn Point Feb 22nd, 575 Holme March 15th, 500 Holkham Park 27th, 2000 (roost flight) Lynn Point April 6th, 1375 Scolt Head 7th, 604 Holme Aug 2nd, 800 roosted Breydon 15th, 450 Ranworth Broad Nov 13th, 600 Holkham Bay 14th, 451 Beechamwell 27th, 5000 roosted Wroxham Broad Dec 24th. The WinGS survey found 19,434 roosting at 12 localities.

A steady movement of several hundred (all highly vocal) high north-east out to sea Scolt Head March 17th and 106 north over Blackborough End Tip (all 2cy) April 30th, which may also have been migrating.

Numbers of breeding pairs reached 19 this year: Scolt Head 6, Wells 1, Stiffkey Binks 9 and Blakeney Point 3. Details of outcome not received from Wells but all attempts elsewhere failed.

Scolt Head logged westerly immigration of 124 July (max 48 on 13th), 303 Sept 30th, 290 Oct 9th, 495 10th and 165 28th.

A partial albino West Rudham Jan 6th.

Lesser Black-backed Gull

Larus fuscus

Passage migrant and migratory breeder; increasing in winter

Monthly max at some principal sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Saddlebow	45	51	60	150	496	700	700	1500	700	700	250	-
Wells Hbr	-	-	-	232	279	363	290	132	-	-	-	-
Blackborough End Tip	3	35	138	327	330	400	50	-	-	-	2	2

Large numbers attracted to Saddlebow as usual (particularly May-Oct) but no especially big gatherings were recorded elsewhere other than Stow Bedon. Other roosts/flocks included: 128 Welney Jan 5th, 126 Feltwell 11th, 62 (roost flight) Lynn Point 17th, 32 Breydon 18th, 100 Breydon Feb 2nd, 58 Welney 4th, 68 (roost flight) Lynn Point 22nd, 167 Feltwell Tip March 7th, 150 Ditchingham April 4th, 151 Feltwell Tip 17th, 57 Whitlingham CP May 31st, 250 (north-west at dusk) Wereham June 18th, 236 Cley 19th, 43 Scolt Head July 4th, 1500 Stow Bedon Sept 11th, 204 Whitlingham CP 13th, 837 (morning westerly flight) New Costessey and Tudd Valley 29th, 694 New Costessey Oct 7th, 270 Ranworth Broad 17th, 70 Welney Nov 25th, 135 Shropham Dec 19th.

Observations of 13 west Scolt Head April 12th, 75 west Sheringham May 3rd and 16 west Scolt Head May 17th suggestive of genuine spring movements.

Little breeding information received other than 30 pairs on roofs Yarmouth and 1125-1250 pairs in the mixed Herring/Lesser Black-backed colony on Wash Outer Trial Bank (2000 Herring/Lesser Black-backed chicks June 1st). First juvs of year at Blackborough End Tip on early date of July 10th.

Six localities reported sightings of *L. f. intermedius*, mostly in April-Sept and of 1-3 birds. Higher numbers, all at Saddlebow, were 4 June 12th, 12 Aug 14th and 10 Sept 12th.

Many Orfordness (Suffolk) ringed birds were sighted in county as usual - see Ringing Report. A 2cy at Blackborough End Tip June 26th was surprisingly the first individual sighted at this locality to have been ringed as a pullus in Bristol. Finally of 2 colour-ringed *intermedius* at Eau Brink Aug 1st, one was read and proved to have been ringed as a pullus at Teroy, Vest-Agder, Norway July 6th 2000 (also see Ringing Report).

Herring Gull

Larus argentatus

Herring Gull *L (a) argenteus/argentatus*

Increasing breeder, late summer migrant and winter visitor

Largest monthly counts at selected sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Saddlebow	1750	1800	2000	600	50	-	100	-	-	-	4500	-
Scolt Head	64	200	101	480	800	352	414	250	580	780	-	-
Wells	121	322	338	389	496	470	395	336	-	-	119	-
Blackboro' End Tip	1500	1100	1300	1200	1000	1050	500	-	-	-	2150	1500

The large count of 4500 Saddlebow Nov 4th was unprecedented at this locality and many northern *argentatus* birds were present in this sudden influx. Large/notable gatherings elsewhere: 100 roosted Cranwich GP Jan 11th, 50 roosted Colney GP and 2480 (roost flight) Lynn Point both 17th, 2300 roosted 'Titchwell coast' and 20 roosted Hardley Flood both 18th, 2413 (roost flight) Lynn Point Feb 22nd, 852 Thornham March 21st, 400 Ditchingham April 4th, 60 Feltwell Tip 12th, 333 Titchwell May 9th, 500 Snettisham June 4th, 105 Eau Brink July 25th, 450 Holkham Bay and 525 Thornham both Nov 14th. It is interesting to note that no particularly large feeding flocks/daytime gatherings occurred on coast this year.

Counts of birds moving along coast (some could be local movements) involved 5000 west Holme Jan 25th, 500 west Sheringham May 3rd, 115 west Scolt Head May 17th, 235 east Scolt Head Aug 4th followed by 105 east 5th and 145 east 6th.

Breeding data received for 3 sites including 1125-1250 pairs Wash Outer Trial Bank, 3 pairs Scolt Head and 50 pairs on roofs Yarmouth.

Largest counts of nominate *argentatus* typically in winter months: 30 Feltwell Tip Jan 18th, 40 Saddlebow Jan 31st, 60 Blackborough End Tip Nov 27th and 50 at the latter site Dec 31st. Late birds in May included 3 Blackborough End Tip 1st and one remaining until 11th. A yellow-legged adult *argentatus* was identified at Feltwell Tip Jan 18th.

Strangely, 3 different individuals with elongated bills were seen at Blackborough End Tip in first half of year, one of these also visiting King's Lynn Fisher Fleet. Also a leucistic 2cy at Blackborough End Tip March 27th.

Yellow-legged Gull *L (a) michahellis*

Increasing visitor from southern Europe

Reported from no fewer than 47 localities and for first time triple figures estimated to be present in county (Aug). An attempt at estimating numbers of individuals per month is tabulated below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Juv	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	16	-	-	-	-
1st-year	8	3	9	9	13	15	11	19	5	9	6	3
2nd-year	5	4	4	8	6	12	10	16	6	5	5	2
3rd-year	1	2	1	1	-	-	9	5	3	2	-	-
4th-year/Adult	10	8	2	1	-	2	43	52	40	43	13	3
Unaged	2	3	1	-	-	-	1	2	11	1	1	-
Total	26	20	16	19	19	29	89	110	65	60	25	8

Peak monthly counts at favoured sites:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Saddlebow	4	4	1	1	3	4	13	63	46	46	15	4
Cley	-	-	-	1	2	2	7	8	1	1	1	-
Breydon	3	5	3	1	-	-	1	4	4	-	-	-
Aldeby Tip	3	1	1	2	-	-	10	7	-	2	1	-
Blackboro' End Tip	2	2	1	4	8	10	11	5	-	-	1	2

Elsewhere larger numbers included: 5 Feltwell Tip Jan 11th, 31 Eau Brink July 25th with 11 there Aug 1st, 12 Wiggenhall St Germans Aug 3rd and 18 King's Lynn Sept 2nd.

Caspian Gull *L (a/michahellis) cachinnans*

Scarce visitor from eastern Europe

Always a favourite with the hardened gull-watcher this lovely gull is increasingly identified in the county as the following records demonstrate. Number of birds difficult to determine but maybe as many as 48 individuals, if not more, account for the sightings! Not unexpected was the Jan peak in numbers but a second surge in April/May does not fit the expected pattern for this form. From April 3rd-June 18th Blackborough End Tip saw an impressive run of 2nd-calendar years (2cy), perhaps involving 13 individuals with a 3cy also on one date. For first time a colour-ringed bird was sighted, probably of Polish origin. Estimates of individuals per month:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
All localities	10	5	5	6	7	3	4	5	3	3	2	2

All records listed with majority of sightings by DEB TCL and PMW. In first winter period: *Jan* adult Blackborough End Tip 10th, 2 (2cy, 3cy) Feltwell Tip 11th, adult Aldeby Tip and 4cy Saddlebow 13th, 2cy Saddlebow 17th, 3cy Feltwell Tip 18th, 2 (2cy, 3cy) Saddlebow 20th, adult Blackborough End Tip and 2cy Saddlebow 21st, 2cy Saddlebow 28th, 2cy Breydon 29th, 2cy Saddlebow 31st (different to bird 17th); *Feb* 2cy Saddlebow 1st, 7th and 9th (late Jan individual), 3cy Saddlebow and one Wiggenhall St Germans 2nd, 2cy Breydon 4th (different from that Jan 29th), 4cy Saddlebow 14th, 2cy Saddlebow 16th (new bird); *March* 3cy Blackborough End Tip and another 3cy Saddlebow 13th, 2cy Ditchingham 17th-20th, 2cy Thwaite 20th, 2cy (bearing green darvic ring and presumably of Polish origin) Ditchingham 22nd, 2cy Ditchingham 24th.

In spring: *April* different 2cy's Blackborough End Tip 3rd, 14th, 16th, 24th and 26th, 2cy Burgh St Peter 19th; *May* 2cy Blackborough End Tip 24th and 3 2cy 26th with 4 2cy there on 29th, 2 2cy Saddlebow 30th; *June* single 2cy's Blackborough End Tip 3rd, 17th and last 26th with 2 12th and 17th (one a 3cy on latter date) and 3 5th and 18th, 2cy Saddlebow 16th.

In summer: *July* 3cy Eau Brink 25th with same Saddlebow 31st (and Aug 10th, 22nd/23rd and 28th), 2cy Burgh St Peter 28th, 2cy Blackborough End Tip 29th, adult Walcott 31st; *Aug* juv Blackborough End Tip 14th, juv Breydon 15th, additional 3 cy Saddlebow 23rd, 2cy Saddlebow 29th.

In autumn/second winter period: *Sept* 4cy King's Lynn 2nd, 2 (3cy, adult) Saddlebow 28th; *Oct* 3 (1cy, 2cy, 3cy) Saddlebow 5th followed by 3cy there 9th and 2 (1cy, 2cy) 25th; *Nov/Dec* 2cy Blackborough End Tip and 2cy Saddlebow both 4th, 1cy Blackborough End Tip 6th, 20th, 27th and Dec 11th, 1cy Saddlebow Nov 27th/Dec 3rd and 2cy Saddlebow Dec 6th.

Iceland Gull

Larus glaucoides

Annual but very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

Up to 11 individuals was a good showing (although maybe some duplication), with most typically in period Jan-May but 2 or 3 individuals recorded Nov/Dec. Interestingly only 3 sightings were on coast. Sightings as follows: adult Yarmouth Jan 3rd, 2cy Saddlebow Feb 1st, 2cy Blackborough End Tip Feb 20th/21st, 2cy Ditchingham March 14th and 20th/21st (presumed same Thwaite St Mary 20th), 2cy (reportedly different individual) Ditchingham March 28th-30th, 2cy Burgh St Peter April 19th, 2cy Blackborough End Tip several dates April 20th-May 13th (same Lynn Point May 14th), 2cy Scolt Head April 23rd, 1cy west Cley Nov 20th, one roosted Welney Nov 21st, 1cy Saddlebow Dec 29th-31st and same bird Blackborough End Tip also 31st.

Glaucous Gull

Larus hyperboreus

Winter visitor in fluctuating numbers; rare in summer

Perhaps 15 or so individuals was an average showing for recent years with records spanning Jan-May (peaking March) and Nov/Dec. A number turned up inland again, with perhaps 3 different individuals noted in the gull flock at Ditchingham March.
Estimates of numbers of individual birds per month:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
All localities	1	3	6	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	3

All records listed: 3cy Cley Jan 1st, 2cy Hunstanton Jan 1st/2nd; 3cy Sheringham (8 dates) Jan 1st-March 27th also Weybourne Jan 1st, 14th, 23rd and Feb 2nd, 3cy Cley Feb 2nd, 2cy Saddlebow Feb 9th, 12th, 14th and 22nd, 2cy Ditchingham Feb 28th-March 28th with different 2cy there March 26th and 2 2cy 28th, with a further 2cy 29th/30th, 2cy east Blakeney Point March 15th, 2cy Cley March 19th/20th and 30th, 2cy Aldeby Tip (same as Ditchingham) and 2cy Horsey 27th, 2cy Blackborough End Tip also 27th with presumed same Saddlebow 28th, 2cy Aldeby Tip April 2nd, 2cy Burgh St Peter 19th, 2cy/3cy Blakeney Point 23rd, 2cy Winterton May 5th, 1cy Titchwell Nov 13th, 1cy Eccles and 1cy south Winterton Dec 1st, 1 cy Saddlebow 6th, 2cy west Paston 11th.

In addition a 1cy Glaucous/Iceland Gull south Walcott Nov 13th.

Great Black-backed Gull

Larus marinus

Passage migrant, winter visitor and non-breeding summer visitor

Peak counts at some principal sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Holme	21	-	-	-	-	-	10	59	67	84	100	40
Scolt Head	250	35	11	60	39	32	65	180	385	535	-	-
Blackborough End Tip	164	42	92	311	150	120	156	-	-	-	136	81

A roost flight count of 738 Lynn Point was largest of year and probably a record for site.
Further counts of note: 298 roosted Cranwich GP Jan 11th, 60 Berney 15th, 150 Breydon and 20 roosted Hardley Flood both 18th, 67 Feltwell Tip April 12th, 75 west Sheringham May 3rd, 202 Blakeney Hbr 30th, 104 West Runton Aug 8th, 130 east Sheringham 12th, 64 Thornham Sept 19th, 140 Sheringham 22nd, 64 Blakeney Hbr Oct 17th and 224 Breydon Nov 7th.

At Sheringham one dead on beach (clean of oil) March 2nd was thought to be associated with the Fulmar wreck. Also of note a 3rd-calendar year bearing a darvic ring Blackburn End Tip April 16th-18th had been ringed as a pullus at Vest-Agder, Norway July 5th 2002.

Kittiwake

Rissa tridactyla

Mainly passage migrant; occasional non-breeding concentrations in summer

Early winter saw 560 Mundesley Jan 2nd, 25 west Holme Jan 29th and 75 Gorleston Feb 8th. One dead on beach (clean of oil) Sheringham March 2nd. Spring passage almost went unnoticed but for an adult north Lynn Point and 12 west Scolt Head April 6th. In June a gathering of 80 on beach Scolt Head 20th.

Small numbers noted off coast from July 7th including 55 south Gorleston July 17th but no significant passage until Oct 9th when 420 (390 east 30 west) Scolt Head, 3500 (3000 east 500 west) Sheringham (0630-1400), 1500 west (5 hrs) Mundesley, 5000 Sea Palling and 303 (245 north 58 south) California. Next day 230 east Scolt Head and 3000 offshore (0700-1100) Eccles. In mid-Nov 200 west Holme 13th, and 80 west Holme and 330 (2 hrs) Cley 19th.

Sandwich Tern

Sterna sandvicensis

Migratory breeder and passage migrant

First spring arrivals 2 Breydon March 18th with further singles Cley 27th, west Mundesley 30th and 2 Titchwell 31st. First recorded at Scolt Head April 6th when 35 noted but probably present some time before that date. A build-up of numbers there early in month with 200 7th and 300 8th but cold nights and a lack of food considered the reason just 30 present 14th-21st, when birds also missing from Blakeney Point. Thereafter 400 22nd, 700 27th, 4000 throughout May and 4200 throughout June.

Another poor breeding season at Scolt Head where despite an almost threefold increase in numbers over 2003, 1800 pairs fledged only 600 young. During bad weather June 19th and 23rd/24th at least 1000 dead young found, including many large almost fledged birds. Dramatic decrease at Stiffkey Binks saw numbers crash from 250 pairs in 2003 to just 18 pairs, with no young fledged. A very poor season at Blakeney Point where 1260 pairs (down from 1640 in 2003) fledged only 300 young. Bad weather also considered reason for poor success at both sites.

Single 1st-summer birds at Scolt Head June 8th/9th and Winterton 27th; first juv away from breeding areas Breydon June 27th.

Other notable coastal movements/gatherings: 200 Blakeney Point April 9th, 267 west Sheringham 18th, 200 Cley 24th with 300 there 27th and 500 May 1st, 1300 Blakeney Hbr June 6th, 314 west Mundesley 3rd with 220 west 10th and 682 east on 25th, a site record 97 Berney July 4th, 349 Breydon 11th with 250 on 17th, and 450 passed Sea Palling by 0730 hrs on 27th.

Inland: singles over Croxton Heath and Thetford Nunnery July 27th.

Last in autumn Kelling and Weybourne Nov 1st, 2 Titchwell 4th and Holme 8th.

Roseate Tern

Sterna dougallii

Uncommon summer visitor; has bred

A reasonable year with mainly singles late May-early Oct, the latest since 1984. No breeding or attempted breeding recorded for fourth successive year.

All records: Cley May 30th, west July 2nd and Oct 7th; adult Burnham Overy and east Mundesley July 3rd; Scolt Head 3rd/4th; Titchwell Aug 1st and juv Oct 3rd; adult Snettisham Aug 3rd; 2 adults Sea Palling Aug 13th and Overstrand 22nd-24th.

Common Tern

Sterna hirundo

Migratory breeder and passage migrant at both coastal and inland sites

Recorded between April 1st (Ranworth) and Nov 6th (Lenwade). The only notable spring concentrations again Scolt Head where 100 April 30th, 152 May 9th, 200 18th and 300 June 2nd.

A min of 644 breeding pairs but very few fledged young:

	<i>No of prs</i>	<i>Young fledged</i>
Snettisham	71	0
Scolt Head	150	0
Holkham NNR	42	0
(Stiffkey Big Binks	22)	
(Stiffkey Little Binks	14)	
(Wells New Ridge	1)	
(Bob Hall Sands	5)	
Blakeney Point	120	2
Breydon	195	98
Ranworth Broad	6+	2
Barton Broad	28	unknown
Sparham Pools	10	8
Earsham GP	1	1
Sennowe Park	sev	unknown
Nar Valley Fisheries	3	0
Pentney GP	5	10
Welney	49	38
Wissington BF	1	unknown

A complete failure at Snettisham, cause unknown. At Scolt Head large reduction probably due to lack of food with many adults seen feeding on small shore crabs during May and June and small numbers of sand eels. None seen feeding on whitebait until early July. About 140 nests present prior to bad weather June 23rd/24th, after which all lost. Most pairs did not re-lay and those that did either abandoned nests at egg stage or were predated. A total failure at Holkham NNR due to bad weather in June. At Blakeney Point poor success also due to bad weather. At Breydon platforms the worst season since the original raft was positioned on the estuary in 1977, considered due to a lack of suitable food between late May and Aug. As a result it was not uncommon to see adults fishing in the adjacent dykes and other unusual places throughout the summer. Fishing on Breydon Water itself was much more noticeable than in past seasons. This non-total reliance on the coast for food may go some way to explain why the fledging success at Breydon this season surpassed any other coastal colony in the county.

1st-summer birds Breydon June 27th, July 6th and 19th, 3 Scolt Head July 4th with singles 6th and 23rd. An immature (1st/2nd-summer) also Breydon July 29th.

Autumn movements of note: 350 east Sheringham Aug 12th and 340 in evening 13th, 2000 south Winterton in evening 19th, 330 Overstrand 22nd, a site



Common Tern (Steve Cale)

record 2000 Breydon in evening 26th (could have been up to 3000 as birds still arriving after dusk).

Interesting records of up to 20 feeding on flying ants over Beeston Bump Aug 6th-8th and 50 similarly over Scolt Head Aug 10th.

Arctic Tern

Sterna paradisaea

Double passage migrant; a few pairs breed

First arrivals 5 Barton Broad and 3 Wroxham Broad April 8th. Another light spring passage with just 1-3 at 6 localities to end of month. In May 1-8 at 6 localities, the exception being 10 Colney GP 3rd with 15 on 10th, and 14 Blakeney Hbr 9th/10th.

Breeding: 2 pairs Scolt Head and 6 pairs Blakeney Point all failed presumably due to the bad weather that affected all north coast colonies in June.

Elsewhere singles Gimingham June 20th, east Mundesley July 17th, Cley 21st/22nd, 24th and 27th/28th, and Breydon 23rd.

1st-summer bird Gorleston July 18th and juv East Ruston Aug 30th.

A good autumn passage with 1-7 at 11 localities with exception of 15 passed Brancaster GC (1900-2000) Aug 10th, 14 north Waxham 14th, 16 west Holme Sept 7th, 115 west Scolt Head 21st, 51 west Holme and 34 west Scolt Head 23rd. Latest Weybourne Oct 23rd.

Little Tern

Sterna albifrons

Local migratory breeder

First Scolt Head April 6th, presumed very early returning bird from last year. No further records until 3 there 14th, and 3 Breydon and 2 Burnham Overy 17th. The only double-figure movements/gatherings during April were at Scolt Head with 12 on 22nd, 15 24th and 30 29th-31st.

Max of 522 breeding pairs fledged just 20 young, a disastrous season by any standards.

	<i>No of prs</i>	<i>Young fledged</i>
Holme	9	0
Titchwell	4	1
Brancaster Beach	3	3
Scolt Head	90-95	0
Holkham NNR	64	16
(Burnham Overy)	26	0)
(Wells)	24	16)
(Wells New Ridge)	11	0)
(Big Binks)	3	0)
Blakeney Point	75	0
Eccles	47	0
Winterton	200	0
Yarmouth North Beach	25	0

At Holme all failed due to bad weather and predation. At Titchwell one pair successfully fledged one young (the first breeding success for 10 years) with a little help from a 'friend'; at this nest incubation was shared by a male Ringed Plover which was seen to brood one of the Little Tern chicks shortly after hatching. The Brancaster Beach birds were thought to be failed breeders from Scolt Head and illustrates the value of small sites. At Scolt Head first clutches all taken by Common Gulls. Re-lays more successful but bad weather June 19th/20th resulted in all chicks perishing; 45 nests with eggs survived but further bad weather June 23rd/24th

resulted in one third of these being lost. All remaining nests were predated by a single pair of Oystercatchers which, along with Common Gulls, also accounted for all re-lays. At Holkham NNR nests lost to bad weather and predation by Common Gulls, Oystercatchers and foxes. Bad weather also completely decimated the colony at Blakeney Point.

At Eccles about 80 chicks hatched but all were predated by probably one Kestrel. The Winterton total failure was considered to be due to a food shortage, suggested by research that showed low fish stocks. This was perhaps due to especially low sea currents in early spring as the Herring spawn hatched, meaning that there was no phytoplankton to keep them alive. This then resulted in the adult Little Terns having to expend much more energy in the search for fish, flying further and hunting longer (ref RSPB Tern Round Newsletter July 2004).

The Yarmouth North Beach colony suffered fox predation early and later in the season, having been boosted from 4 to 25 nests by birds considered to have relocated from Winterton for a second breeding attempt. Food shortage also affected this site.

A 1st-summer bird Breydon July 17th and 24th, only the fourth county record of this age.

Two impressive midsummer counts, 300 Eccles July 17th and 330 Scolt Head 23rd.

Inland: Ranworth Broad April 26th, 2 Wissington BF May 2nd and south-west over Norwich Grant Street evening July 24th.

Last Lessingham North Gap Oct 2nd.

Black Tern

Chlidonias niger

Regular double passage migrant in variable numbers; has bred

First arrival How Hill April 14th with one Barton Broad 16th. No further records until 5 Rockland Broad 25th/26th, single Whitlingham CP 25th and 2 there 26th, the only other April records. A light spring passage commenced May 1st with 3 Hockwold Washes followed by 1-4 at 14 localities totalling a max of 53 birds throughout month, the exception 14 Rollesby Broad 16th and 7 Welney 17th. In June a single Shropham GP the only record on 20th.

In autumn Welney July 8th followed by small movement 20th-29th when 1-2 at 4 localities totalling 17 birds, the exception 10 Scolt Head 23rd. Early Aug saw a light passage 3rd-7th with total of 9 birds at 8 localities. Main passage commenced on 9th with 25 Titchwell, 24 west Scolt Head and 17 Cley, followed by a min 636 birds at 19 localities to month end, mainly 1-15 but peaks: 10th 34 Titchwell, 295 Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr (120 of which were feeding on flying ants in harbour in evening along with large numbers of Gulls and Swifts), 40 Blakeney Point, 18 Cley; 26th 21 Scolt Head; 30th 19 Ongar Hill, 18 Sheringham, 27 west Mundesley. In Sept 1-7 at 10 localities with 13 Scolt Head 4th the exception, totalling a max of 50 birds. In Oct 1-3 at 5 localities totalling 8 individuals; last Welney Nov 2nd.

White-winged Black Tern

Chlidonias leucopterus

Vagrant from south-east Europe

Two 2nd-summer birds Hickling Broad May 18th-20th (SC ND PJH *et al*) which remarkably returned on 23rd following a visit to Astley Lake (W Yorks) 21st/22nd. The first multiple occurrence since the two at Welney in 1977. Recorded for the eighth successive year in the county, no previous run has been for more than 5 consecutive years; these were 1973-77 and 1984-88.

Guillemot

Uria aalge

Passage migrant and winter visitor; occasional wrecks

In first months of year few records received; max 70 Sheringham Feb 22nd. During summer and early autumn only sizeable counts of specifically identified birds were 240 Sheringham

(0400-0600) July 8th and 100 Holme Sept 23rd. In second winter period 6 Holkham Bay and 5 Sheringham Nov 2nd, and 6 Titchwell Dec 31st.

Razorbill

Alca torda

Passage migrant and winter visitor

Small numbers (1-6) recorded from north and east coast sites Titchwell to Winterton on several dates June/July.

Autumn movements noted from mid-Sept including 35 Cley 24th. Largest counts all first half Oct: 25 Cley 8th, 1000/hr east Salthouse, 60 on sea Mundesley and 134 Scratby all 11th. The large auk counts of 5,000 east Sheringham (0630-1400) 9th, 1000 Eccles (0700-1100) 10th and 1000 south (0800-1030) there 11th considered to be made up of approximately two-thirds Razorbills. In Nov 1-10 noted off Cley on several dates 1st-15th, 10 Sheringham 2nd, and singles Sea Palling 3rd and Winterton 21st.

Guillemot/Razorbill

Apart from 130 Mundesley Jan 2nd, 16 Scolt Head July 8th and 330 Sea Palling July 25th, most major counts of large unidentified auks around our coasts were, as usual, in Sept and Oct. In Sept 280 east 213 west Scolt Head 21st, with a further 550 east 85 west 23rd, and 615 east 45 west 24th; 500 also east Sheringham 24th.

Largest numbers in Oct: 245 east 85 west Scolt Head, 1300 east 40 west Sheringham and 200 Sea Palling 8th; 60 east Holme, 3350 east 35 west Scolt Head, 5000 east Sheringham and 250 Sea Palling 9th; 1580 east 50 west Scolt Head and 1000 Eccles 10th; 95 east Scolt Head, 1700 east Sheringham, 500 in 2 hrs Mundesley and 1000 south Eccles 11th.

Black Guillemot

Cephus grylle

Rare passage migrant and winter visitor

A typical late autumn record, single west Sheringham with presumed same Cley, Nov 11th.

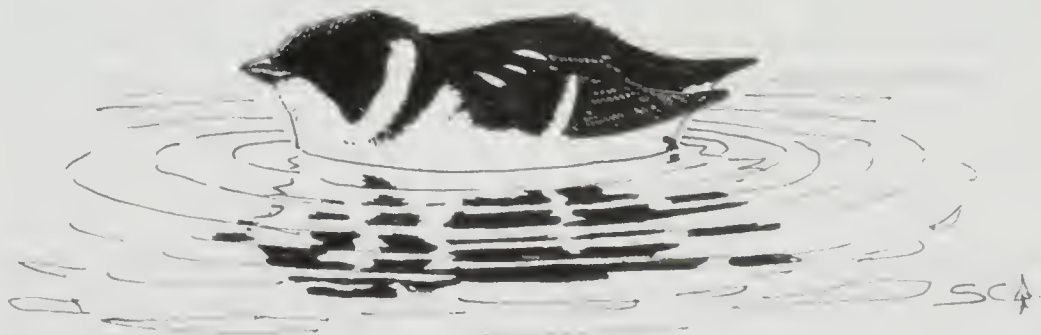
Little Auk

Alle alle

Passage migrant, most during northerly gales; occasional wrecks

The only record outside autumn was one long dead Weybourne April 16th.

Earliest autumn records in north-west with 3 Hunstanton Sept 24th, 2 Holme 25th and 3 there 28th. Small numbers (mostly 1-2) recorded regularly along north coast during late Oct (19th-31st) with max 6 Cley 24th and 4 there 26th; one unfortunate bird was seen to be pulled down and eaten by a Great Black-backed Gull off Cley 30th. Records of 1-3 from sites between Holme and Yarmouth continued through first half Nov, heralding the major movements of year from 13th when 4 west Titchwell, 3 Mundesley, 3 north Walcott and single



Little Auk (Steve Cale)

north Cart Gap. On 14th 6 west Holme, 3 Titchwell, 6 west Blakeney Point, 19 west Sheringham, 5 north Eccles, 4 Waxham, 36 north Winterton and 30 Caister. Numbers increased again 19th when 8 west Cley, 25 west Sheringham, 3 west Beeston Bump, 11 north Walcott, 10 north Sea Palling and 2 north Scratby. Largest counts on 20th were 14 west Cley, 11 Sheringham and 4 north Walcott, with scattered records of singles until month end. Dec records (mostly singles) from Holme, Cley (including 6 on 20th) and Sheringham, with latest Titchwell 30th.

Puffin

Fratercula arctica

Passage migrant and winter visitor

In first months of year singles Mundesley Jan 1st, Blakeney Point Feb 19th (dead), Sheringham and Winterton Feb 29th, 2 further casualties Sheringham March 1st and 2 east Scolt Head April 29th.

Autumn movements from Sept 6th when one south Horsey; 8 east Sheringham and single Yarmouth 9th; records of 1-4 at several sites between Titchwell and Mundesley 21st-27th. In Oct, single east Titchwell 2nd with largest (eastward) movement of year 9th when 16 Scolt Head, 11 Sheringham and one Weybourne; singles Holme and Eccles, 9 Scolt Head and 4 Sheringham 10th; 2 Holme and 2 Eccles 11th; 1-2 from 3 sites later in month. In Nov 1-3 at 8 sites between Blakeney Point and Sea Palling on 7 dates. Latest records of single live bird and single beach corpse Holkham Bay Dec 11th.

Rock Dove/Feral Pigeon

Columba livia

Introduced/escaped resident in most urban areas

Again few records received. Max 450 King's Lynn Fisher Fleet Jan 20th. At Beeston Bump Cliffs 10-15 present all year. NBA results showed the species was present in 37% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 8 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Stock Dove

Columba oenas

Resident, passage migrant and winter visitor

Highest counts during first winter period: *Jan* 440 Holme (site record); *Feb* 200 Thornham, 160 Holme, 44 Welney, 38 Waxham; *March* 350 Holme, 62 Beeston Regis, 29 Shropham; *April* 108 Horsey, 84 Breydon.

Typical small-scale coastal movement noted in spring, peaking mid-March. Main counts from Hunstanton where total 47 south including 10 14th, 14 15th, 5 17th and 5 29th. At Beeston Bump (west) 12 March 15th, 17 17th, 2 April 14th and 3 east 16th. Only other movement noted Sheringham where 9 west April 11th.

NBA results showed the species was present in 79% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 5 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Autumn coastal passage barely noticeable with only Sept records being 2 west Scolt Head 5th and 2 west Beeston Bump 19th. In Oct California only site to record movement with total of 15 south 22nd-31st, max 6 on 22nd.

Highest counts in second winter period: *Oct* 24 Coxford; *Nov* 90 Great Cressingham, 22 Whitlingham CP; *Dec* 104 Acle, 23 Eau Brink.

Woodpigeon

Columba palumbus

Resident, passage migrant and winter visitor

During first winter period main counts included: *Jan* 350 Wells, 300 Holme; *Feb* 1500 Holme, 1500 Aylmerton, 1000 Fornsett St Mary; *March* 800 Holme; *April* 1000 Sutton, 500 Waxham.

Coastal movement evident from Feb 13th at Holme where 475 west. No further movement until 360 west also Holme March 3rd, with 185 there 14th. At Hunstanton spring total of 10,277 south March 14th-May 19th, peaking mid-March with 571 14th, 994 15th, 675 16th and 3318 17th. Only other site to record regular movement Beeston Bump where spring total of 1075 (805 west 270 east) March 15th-May 5th peaking at 320 March 17th.

Breeding data from Scolt Head 5-6 pairs and Blakeney Point one pair. NBA results showed the species was present in 99% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 116 birds per occupied tetrad.

Compared with spring, autumn coastal movement on smaller scale with Hunstanton recording total of 1379 (south) Oct 18th-Nov 25th peaking at 775 Oct 31st. Elsewhere, coastal movement noted California where 236 south Oct 26th with 135 south next day. Autumn movement also detected inland at New Costessey where 1539 moved through R Tudd valley Oct 27th-Nov 14th.

Counts in second winter period included: Nov 1000 Little Snoring Airfield, 549 Beechamwell; Dec 3000 Brancaster Thompson Farm, 730 Beechamwell, 600 Grimston Heath, 500 Harpley, 500 Massingham Heath.

Collared Dove

Streptopelia decaocto

First bred in Britain at Cromer in 1955, now widespread and common resident

Only counts received during first winter period in Jan with 75 Ormesby St Margaret and up to 70 Aylmerton.

Small-scale spring passage more pronounced than 2003 with main counts from Hunstanton where total of 255 south March 14th-May 19th and Sheringham/Beeston Bump where 29 west April 24th-May 16th.

NBA results showed the species was present in 88% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 10 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Only summer gatherings reported 90 Wiggenhall St Peter RC May 8th and 33 King's Lynn Fisher Fleet July 31st.

Autumn passage recorded from Hunstanton where 86 south Oct 2nd-Nov 24th; also 3 west Scolt Head Oct 13th and 5 south over sea California Oct 25th.

Max counts in second winter period: Sept 70 Hellesdon, 43 West Raynham; Oct 100 Flitcham, 60 Great Ryburgh; Nov 70 Ormesby St Margaret, 50 Norwich Eaton Park; Dec 100 Ormesby St Margaret, 58 Holt, 56 Langham, 50 Aylmerton.

Also during Dec a bird noted on nest at Stockton 30th.

Turtle Dove

Streptopelia turtur

Migratory breeder and passage migrant; evidence of recent decline

First record Strumpshaw April 14th, with further April records from 23 sites, mostly 1-2 apart from 7 Low Tharston 26th. Thereafter more common with records from numerous localities.

Spring coastal movement noted at 6 sites with most records from Hunstanton where total of 63 south during May with peaks of 28 17th and 13 19th. Only two other sites recorded double-figure counts: 30 west Salthouse and 20 west 2 south Titchwell both May 19th. The number of birds recorded on active migration along the coast during spring makes for depressing reading. Even allowing for no duplication of records, the entire coast of Norfolk produced a total of only 136 birds. It is a sad fact that the number of migrating Collared Doves now exceeds those of Turtle Dove during a typical spring.

During summer months recorded from total of 101 localities with singing males/confirmed breeding from at least 35 of these sites, max: Sandringham 11, Welney 9,

Berney 5, Brancaster Thompson Farm 4, Roydon 4, Eccles 3, Narborough 3, Marham Fen 2-3. NBA results showed the species was present in 60% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 2 pairs per occupied tetrad. Double-figure counts of 12 Low Tharston June 13th, 15 Holme June 29th, 10 North Creak Aug 8th and max 10 whole summer Eccles at feeding station.

In autumn recorded from 8 sites Sept and 5 sites Oct, the latest Weybourne 18th.

Rose-ringed Parakeet

Psittacula krameri

Introduced vagrant

Despite several claims of 'fly-overs' only one accepted record, Hellesdon June 16th (per SH).

Cuckoo

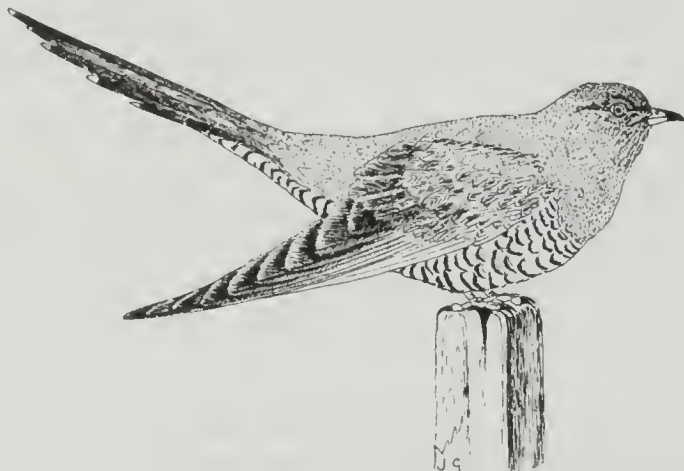
Cuculus canorus

Migratory breeder and passage migrant

First record Waxham April 12th followed by singles Titchwell and Strumpshaw 14th. As month progressed birds increasingly more common with records from 28 sites to month end, mostly singles but 3 Gooderstone Warren 16th, 3 Nar Valley Fisheries 24th, 2 Winterton 17th and 2 Holme 26th.

In summer months records mostly singles with counts of 3 at Snettisham, Blakeney and Waxham in May, and Holme in June. NBA results showed the species was present in 55% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of one pair per occupied tetrad. Perhaps indicative of long-term decline was the comment received that 'conspicuous by its absence this year' at Guist Common.

Total of 19 juvs recorded July onwards, including 2 Titchwell Aug 10th. Two Sept records, Horsey and Sutton Fen, both 10th.



Cuckoo (John Geeson)

Barn Owl

Tyto alba

Resident, continental race has appeared as a vagrant

Noted throughout county with records from 313 sites (285 in 2003). Several reports of multiple sightings, best being 13 Choseley (Feb 29th), 8 Burnham Overy (Jan 22nd), 7 Holkham (Jan 31st), Burnham Norton (Feb 9th) and Holme (July 7th), 5 East Ruston South Fen (Jan 23rd), 4 Welney (Feb 22nd), and 3 Belton (Feb 7th), Boughton Fen (July 30th), Burgh Castle (Sept 4th), Hickling Stubb Mill (Dec 7th), North Wootton Marsh (July 20th), St Benet's

Level (Feb), Snettisham (March) and Titchwell (Feb/March). Also 9 seen beside A148 between Holt and King's Lynn early morning Jan 9th.

Breeding records from 20 sites involving 36 pairs. The Cockley Cley/Gooderstone/Hilborough area held 12 pairs (14 in 2003) with 3 pairs each at Cantley, Sparham and Swaffham Forest, and 2 pairs at West Caister. At Stanford TA 3 pairs bred, one in a barrel fledging 4 young. In Reedham/Haddiscoe area, where 2 pairs bred, an increase in numbers has been noted in recent years.

Two records of dark-breasted birds, relating to continental race *guttata*, East Ruston Jan 19th-26th and Feb 21st (PJH ADK), and Weybourne (ringed) Oct 18th/19th (MP *et al*). The latter was found dead 5 kms away on 24th, a road casualty.

Little Owl

Athene noctua

Introduced resident

Noted at 123 sites, an increase of 11 on 2003. Highest count 3 Bradenham July 2nd with 2 birds reported at a further 12 localities. At Beeston Regis one Oct 24th was first record in 14 years, and at Burgh Castle up to 2 between June 19th and Sept 4th were first for many years.

Few reports of breeding with only confirmed record from Great Moulton where 2 juvs July 8th. Elsewhere 23 pairs reported from 12 sites during breeding season with birds noted at a further 49 localities at this time. In view of sedentary nature of this species the breeding population is almost certainly much higher than these figures indicate.

Tawny Owl

Strix aluco

Widespread resident

Reports increased again this year with birds noted at 119 sites, several records involving 2 or more individuals. Highest counts: 8 calling males Brancaster Thompson Farm (June 2nd), 5 together (presumed family party) South Pickenham (June 23rd) and 4 Holme (April/May), Themelthorpe (July 27th) and Hanworth Common (Nov 9th). The once regular cedar tree roost in Holkham Park remained empty all year.

Breeding confirmed at 9 sites with highest known concentration Hoveton Hall where 3 pairs bred. At Welney pair raised 2 young, and juvs seen at Themelthorpe and heard calling from nest at Morning Thorpe. A further 6 sites held pairs during breeding season.

Reports of 2 road casualties at Grimston Jan 5th and South Creake April 24th.

At Guist WM a bird was seen mid-afternoon July 31st with a dead Long-tailed Tit held in its talons.

Long-eared Owl

Asio otus

Scarce and local resident, passage migrant and winter visitor

During first winter period reports from only 6 sites with highest numbers 3 Moulton St Michael, and 2 East Ruston and Welney, all Feb. Noted at Welney also in Jan and March. Elsewhere recorded Swanton Novers Jan, Stiffkey Fen Feb and at one other site March. Coastal sightings, undoubtedly relating to spring migrants, Waxham and Winterton both April 4th, and in off sea Holme May 1st.

No records of confirmed breeding but following reports during late spring/summer: 2-3 heard Methwold Warren May 31st, one hunting Hickling Stubb Mill June 12th with possibly same hunting Hickling Broad on another evening in June, pair summered South Creake/Sculthorpe Airfield area, and single birds Cockley Cley July 23rd and Welney Aug 5th.

Autumn migrants seen arriving in off sea Yarmouth Oct 10th, Weybourne 12th, Cley 24th and a late bird Cley Nov 29th. Elsewhere on coast noted in Oct at Blakeney Point 11th,

California 13th with another 15th, Hopton 19th, and Holme 20th and 23rd, and in Nov Sea Palling 4th. Inland records at this time from Strumpshaw Oct 10th and Hoe Common Oct 17th.

In second winter period noted Brancaster Thompson Farm Nov 29th and in Dec at Illington 14th, Bradwell 28th and Wighton 30th.

Short-eared Owl

Asio flammeus

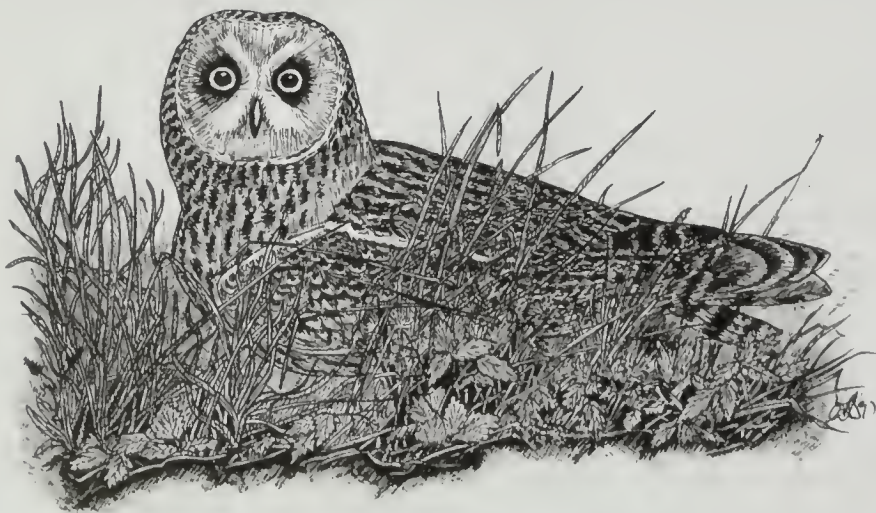
Rare breeder, regular passage migrant and winter visitor

Fewer records in first 3 months than same period last year with best area Breydon/Berney where 3 throughout and 4 Feb 28th. Apart from 2 Welney Feb 16th, Winterton March 16th and Ongar Hill March 27th, all reports at this time were of singles. Records from Burnham Overy, Caister, Choseley, Holme, Horsey, King's Lynn BF, Lynn Point, Roydon Common, Scolt Head, Snettisham and Warham Greens.

Sightings continued in Breydon/Berney area into spring with 3 still April 24th and last record May 8th. First signs of spring passage noted Holme where birds in off sea March 31st and April 1st. Noted more widely during April/May with reports from (all singles unless stated) Blakeney GM, Cley, Horsey (2 April 22nd), Lynn Point, Morston (2 April 4th), Paston, Salthouse (2 April 20th), Snettisham, Stiffkey, Terrington Marsh, Thornham, Titchwell, Walpole St Peter, Waxham, Wells East Hills, Welney and Winterton. At last site one over sea May 3rd was mobbed by Little Terns.

No reports between May 16th and July 31st when one Lynn Point and Snettisham. In Aug noted only at Breydon, Snettisham and Welney.

Reports increased through Sept leading to an avalanche of records in Oct when numerous birds noted arriving in off sea. First at Beeston Bump 3rd followed by others at Scolt Head 8th, Gorleston, Scolt Head (2) and Sheringham 9th, Holme (2), Mundesley, Scolt Head (2), Sheringham, Titchwell (2) and West Runton 10th, Weybourne 11th, Scolt Head and Sheringham 12th, Sheringham 15th and 17th, Holme 20th, California 22nd, Holme 26th, Scolt Head and Titchwell 27th, California (5) and Scolt Head (5) 28th (also 4 newly arrived birds Wells this date), Cromer and Gorleston 30th, and Gorleston and Sheringham 31st. There was no let up into Nov with further birds in off sea at Eccles 2nd, California 5th, Blakeney Point, Cley (3) and Sheringham 7th, California 14th and Sheringham 21st. During this period reported widely with 2 or more noted at several sites; highest counts 3 Blakeney Point and 3 Breydon/Berney both Oct 29th. Other than sites already mentioned, reports at this time from



Short-eared Owl (Alan Burtenshaw)

Brancaster Thompson Farm, Burnham Norton, Burnham Overy Dunes, Caister, Halvergate Marshes, Heacham, Hickling Stubb Mill, Holkham, Horsey, Martham, Mulbarton, North Wootton Marshes, Roydon Common, Salthouse, Sea Palling, Snettisham, Stiffkey Fen, Thornham GM, Thorpe Whitlingham Marsh, Warham Greens, Waxham, Wells East Hills and Welney.

Following the large autumn arrival good numbers were present in second winter period with some impressive counts. Breydon/Berney area held 15 during Nov with 14 still early Dec, and at Ousemouth 7 noted Nov 20th. Elsewhere in Dec 3 Welney 14th and Haddiscoe 31st, and 2 Stiffkey/Warham Greens 1st, Roydon Common 18th/19th and Burgh Common (Fleggburgh) 24th. Other second winter reports from Acle, Burnham Norton, Eccles, Hickling Stubb Mill, Holme, Marham Fen, Paston, Scolt Head, Sheringham, Snettisham, Waxham and Yarmouth.

Nightjar

Caprimulgus europaeus

Local migratory breeder and rare passage migrant

Compared with 2003 a late arrival with earliest not until May 9th (Roydon Common); main arrival last week May.

A detailed survey undertaken by the BTO resulted in a total of 314 males in Norfolk, a 41% increase since the previous survey in 1992. Of this total 190 were in Brecks with 124 at other sites in north-west and north-east of county. Nationally 4,132 males were detected and an actual population of 4,500 males calculated; this gave a 34% national increase since 1992.

At Kelling Heath one churring in broad daylight in afternoon June 26th; this locality also site for latest record Aug 25th.

Swift

Apus apus

Common migratory breeder and passage migrant

First records second half April when noted Ormesby Broad and Ormesby St Michael 17th, Cley 18th, Titchwell 19th, Hunstanton (3 south), Scolt Head (6 west), Sennowe Park, Strumpshaw, Weybourne and Whitlingham CP (2) all 22nd, Yarmouth 23rd and Hunstanton and Sheringham (2 west) 24th. Reported more widely thereafter in April with best counts 100 Whitlingham CP 27th, and 300 Filby Broad and 300 Welney 30th. In May passage at Scolt Head poorer than recent years with (all west) 74 2nd, 654 17th and 213 19th. Elsewhere in May on coast 53 south Hunstanton 3rd with 157 south there next day, 100 west Holme on both 5th and 6th, and 269 south Hunstanton and 500/hr west Salthouse 19th. Inland at this time highest counts: several 100s Colney GP 3rd, 500 Sennowe Park 5th, 170 Whitlingham CP 6th, 500 again Sennowe Park and 300 Welney 9th, 250 Whitlingham CP and 200 Sennowe Park 22nd.

Breeding records included (pairs): Langham 15, Martham 25 in single house and Wighton 30. NBA results showed the species was present in 82% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 22 birds per occupied tetrad.

At Scolt Head westerly movements noted throughout June with some large totals in final week: 123 9th, 258 10th, 320 14th, 367 26th, 2815 27th, 735 28th, 7280 29th and 1365 30th. This late June movement apparent at other coastal sites with (all west) 1000 Holme 28th, and 2000 Holme and 6-7000 (based on sample quarter hour counts) Beeston Bump 29th. Movement continued into July with totals at Scolt Head of (all west) 330 5th, 2240 10th, 690 11th, 325 12th, 205 13th and 155 14th. Elsewhere during month counts of 300 north Winterton 5th, 150/hr west Holme, 500 west Burnham Overy Dunes and 300 Whitlingham CP 10th, and 180 south Snettisham 11th.



Pallid Swift (*Phil Jones*)

Aug produced further impressive counts, Scolt Head logging 750 10th and 400 12th (feeding on flying ants on both dates) and westerly passage of 8650 17th, 1350 22nd and 1165 29th. On 12th a large movement ahead of an advancing storm Salhouse where 3400 counted in 15 mins. Elsewhere at this time 300 east in one hour Overstrand 9th, 2000 Holme and 1100 Sheringham 12th, 1200 south California 13th and 6250 south there in one hour ahead rain front 16th, 350 west Holme and 850 over Cley in 30 mins 17th, and 1000 Holme and 100s west Cley 29th.

Numbers much reduced in Sept with highest count 7 Costessey 14th. In Stafford Street, Norwich a pair was still feeding young in a nest up to 20th. Reports

continued into Oct with singles Scolt Head 2nd, Thetford Nunnery Lakes 13th, Waxham and Winterton 15th, Eccles 17th, Happisburgh/Cart Gap 24th, Cley 27th, and Old Hunstanton, Scolt Head and Titchwell 29th. Several reports at this time of swift sp related to this species or Pallid: Hickling 15th, Cley 17th, Sheringham and Wiveton 20th, and Beeston Regis (2), Blakeney Point (2), Cley (2), Sheringham (4), Titchwell (2) and Wells (2) all 29th (probably same birds involved in these sightings). The last report of year was a late bird Ashill Nov 5th.

Pallid Swift

Apus pallidus

Vagrant from southern Europe and north-west Africa

An influx in Britain in late Oct, when several Common Swifts also appeared, causing major identification problems. Only two accepted records, one with 2 Swift sp Blakeney Point Oct 20th (CHe) and one with 2 Common Swifts Sheringham then west Salhouse, Cley and Blakeney Point 29th (PCa AMS *et al*).

Alpine Swift

Apus melba

Vagrant from southern Europe

One Beeston Regis April 18th (JAd) and presumed same Beeston Bump/Sheringham April 21st/22nd (GED *et al*). Recorded for fourth year in succession.



Alpine Swift (*Gary Wright*)

Kingfisher

Alcedo atthis

Resident, numbers fluctuating in response to severity of winters

Another increase in reported sites with records from 153, an increase of 30 on 2003. Noted at 98 sites in first winter period with highest number 3 Hoveton Great Broad March 25th and 2 noted at Brancaster Hbr Jan 24th, Irstead Staithe Feb 2nd, How Hill Crome's Broad Feb 5th and Barnhamcross Common Feb 15th. In March two reports relating to migrants involving singles Overstrand Beach 15th and south at Hunstanton 18th.

Confirmed breeding at only 4 localities involving 5 pairs with juvs seen at two of these. Elsewhere during breeding season birds were present at 39 sites with 2 birds noted at 9 of these. At Barton Broad 5 birds, which may have included young, June 20th was largest number at any one site during year.

During last five months of year reported at 70 sites. Highest counts 4 (including at least 2 juvs) Strumpshaw Sept 19th and Barton Broad Sept 29th, and 3 Flitcham Aug 12th, Snettisham Sept 19th, Beeston Regis Sept 27th, East Ruston Nov 14th and Lyng-Easthaugh GP Dec 18th, with 2 noted at 8 other sites. One report of Sparrowhawk predation involved a bird killed at How Hill Staithe Oct 9th while another was briefly pursued at Ranworth Broad Sept 27th. In Nov a bird at West Runton was flying back and forth along beach investigating rock pools on 14th, whilst a male at Themelthorpe spent 2-3 hours fishing in a garden pond on 17th, eventually taking a goldfish.

Bee-eater

Merops apiaster

Vagrant from southern Europe

Three originally over Cley May 16th (IPr) were seen flying west at Blakeney, Morston, Stiffkey, Wells, Titchwell, Thornham and Holme, and then south at Hunstanton, Snettisham and North Wootton (only two at latter locality). A multiple sighting as a result of modern communications!

Hoopoe

Upupa epops

Annual vagrant in very small numbers

Similar numbers to 2003 with just 3 April records at Horsey and Winterton (probably same bird) 17th, Hickling Broad 22nd and Grimston Pott Row 25th. The last bird was also reported in the village the previous week.

Wryneck

Jynx torquilla

Former breeder; now scarce annual passage migrant, mostly in autumn

Remarkably total of 13 in spring, the same number as 2003, of which 8 occurred within a 3-day period: Ludham April 14th, Winterton 28th/29th, Scolt Head 30th with 2 May 1st, Blakeney Point and Walsey Hills both 30th/May 1st, Sheringham May 1st (trapped), Waxham 1st/2nd, 2 Burnham Overy Dunes 2nd, Weybourne and Winterton also 2nd, West Newton 8th, Morston 9th and Northrepps 19th.

An unusual midsummer record, Runham June 14th.

Total of 13 in autumn (same again as 2003!): Aug 2 Blakeney Point 10th, Burnham Overy Staithe 14th, Snettisham 18th, Winterton 28th; Sept Hickling Broad 4th, Hellesdon 6th, Winterton 8th/9th, Horsey 11th/12th, Titchwell 13th, Upper Sheringham 15th, Weybourne 28th; Oct a long-stayer Scolt Head 1st-21st.



Wryneck (*Alan Burtenshaw*)

Green Woodpecker

Picus viridis

Resident

Recorded from at least 144 localities including Welney, where noted every month except Jan and bred in village.

NBA results showed the species was present in 64% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 2 pairs per occupied tetrad. Counts of more than 2 birds: 3 Felbrigg Park April 9th, 3 Weeting Heath April 11th, 4 Leziate Heath July 24th, 5 Nar Valley Fisheries Aug 1st with 6 Sept 10th, 4 Swaffham Dec 28th and 6 Tasburgh Dec 30th. Also see Editorial.

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Dendrocopos major

Common resident; birds of the northern race occasional in autumn

Noted at min of 119 localities with 6 pairs Hoveton Hall and 4 pairs Repps-with-Bastwick. Also counts of 8 Holkham Park Feb 21st and 6 Felbrigg Park April 9th. NBA results showed the species was present in 76% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 2 pairs per occupied tetrad. Also see Editorial.

Usual scattering of coastal migrants: 2 west Holme Sept 26th; at Sheringham singles Sept 11th, Oct 3rd and 31st with 2 Sept 25th (all west), in off sea and then west Sheringham GC Oct 13th; west Beeston Bump Oct 3rd; at California 6 south and 2 north Oct 2nd-19th including one in off sea 7th.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker

Dendrocopos minor

Declining local resident

Worryingly, after an increase in past 3 years, only recorded at 32 sites: Beeston Regis, Blickling Park, Brancaster, Buckenham Tofts, Catfield, Cringleford, Dereham, Diss, Edgefield, Felbrigg Park, Frettenham, Hanworth Common, Holkham Park, Ketteringham, Lynford Arboretum, Lyng, Mundford, Narborough, Norwich Sweetbriar Marshes, Santon Downham, Sennowe Park, Sheringham Park, South Lopham, Sparham, Strumpshaw, Sturston, Thetford Nunnery and Flood, Tottenhill GP, UEA Broad, Wayland Wood and West Tofts Mere.

Only sites with more than 3 records were Blickling Park (one pair probably bred), Felbrigg Park (not seen after March), Holkham Park (3 territories), Santon Downham (2

females seen), Sheringham Park (at least one pair) and Wayland Wood (not seen after April). In breeding season also present Edgefield May/June and juv seen Dereham July.

Short-toed Lark

Calandrella brachydactyla

Vagrant from southern Europe east to Afghanistan

Only one record, Scolt Head May 10th-12th (JBr GFH NML).

Woodlark

Lullula arborea

Uncommon migratory breeder, recently increasing; also scarce passage migrant

In Jan wintering birds on stubble fields at Hilborough and Narborough with totals of 13 and 7 respectively. Migration evident at Holme and Hunstanton in March with singles in off sea then west Holme 8th and south Hunstanton 13th. Further migrants noted April (all south) at Hunstanton 3rd (2), 14th and 21st (2), and Caister 24th.

Singing males as early as Jan 24th when one in song on northern edge of Brecks. Birds on territory reported elsewhere widely from Feb with 8 prs/singing males in north, 14 in west and 5 in central. There were, however, numerous reports of birds present in suitable habitat during breeding season so the true number of pairs is probably much higher than these figures indicate. In central Norfolk 2 males were still in song Oct 3rd. In Thetford Forest 286 singing males were recorded of which 147 were in Norfolk. This represents a decrease of 12% on 2003 and a 43% decrease on the peak year of 2000.

In autumn, away from breeding areas, noted at Holme Oct 10th, west Wells East Hills Oct 20th, Winterton South Dunes with Skylarks Oct 26th, and south Hunstanton Oct 28th and Nov 25th.

Skylark

Alauda arvensis

Resident, passage migrant and winter visitor

During first winter period best counts: Jan 237 Sea Palling and 140 west Holme 29th, 192 Wells 31st; Feb 150 Stanford TA 19th, 193 Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr 22nd, 500 Aylmerton roosting in oilseed rape crop overnight 28th/29th, 350 Grimston Heath 29th. Also in Feb flocks of several hundred present throughout month on winter stubble at Gooderstone. Spring migration noted Hunstanton March 14th-May 17th with 63 south on 30 dates during this period, highest day count 17 on March 17th. Only other migrants reported 10 west Beeston Bump in 1 hr 30 mins March 16th.

Breeding reports of prs/singing males: Blakeney Point 69, Cley min 6 in Eye Field, Ludham 6 (20 in recent years), Ringstead Courtyard Farm 55 (80 in 2003), Scolt Head 90, Sparham 25 on arable land, Welney 35 after spring flood. NBA results showed the species was present in 95% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 12 pairs per occupied tetrad. Other counts during breeding season of 56 Wiggenhall St Peter May 8th, 32 Massingham Heath May 9th with 29 there July 4th, and 25 Stiffkey SM July 4th.

In autumn migrants noted Hunstanton Oct 2nd-Nov 25th with total of 870 south during this period; best day counts 138 Oct 18th and 258 Oct 24th. At Scolt Head following 7 in off sea Sept 30th passage during Oct (all west) of 138 18th, 163 19th, 446 20th and 305 27th with 250 present 30th. Other reports at this time: Sept 45 west Overstrand 27th; Oct 70 in off sea then east Sheringham 12th, 100 in off sea Beeston Bump and 265 Repps-with-Bastwick 20th, 100/hr west Holme and 100 Sheringham GC 24th; Nov 100 Holme 6th, 70 Wells 7th, 300 Holme and 50 Titchwell 9th, 150 Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr and 100 Holme 14th.

During Dec max 100 Horning 6th, 240 East Beckham 9th, 200 Stanford TA 20th, 100 Gayton 27th and 100 Breydon 29th.

Shore Lark

Eremophila alpestris

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant; exceptional in summer

Once again Holkham Bay held only regular flock during first part of year with max 26 Jan 3rd and 25 Feb 17th, with up to 20 present until at least March 28th and 14 still April 14th. Only other report during this period 6 Wells on arable land Jan 31st. In April noted more widely along coast with 4 Waxham 2nd/3rd, one Horsey 3rd/4th, 2 Sheringham GC 21st, and 2 Cley 23rd to May 1st with 3 April 25th.

First autumn records Cley (2) and Scolt Head Oct 1st. Thereafter noted: Oct 4 west Scolt Head 5th with one there 6th, 2 Thornham FM 9th, singles Breydon 15th, Thornham FM and west Titchwell 17th, Scolt Head 17th/18th, 5 south Hunstanton and 2 Scolt Head 19th, 14 Scolt Head 20th, 2 Holme 26th with 4 there 28th/29th, 2 Sea Palling and 6 Yarmouth 28th, 2 Winterton 29th, 4 Thornham FM 30th, 13 Scolt Head 31st; Nov 3 Thornham Point 1st/2nd, 2 Brancaster 2nd, 3 Eccles 11th, 2 Scolt Head 14th. At Holkham Bay birds from Oct 25th when 9 present building into Nov and peaking at 30 on 18th. During this time 2 were noted in full song flight Nov 14th. By Dec flock had settled at 28 and remained to year end. Away from Holkham Bay only report in Dec 2 Cromer 14th.

Sand Martin

Riparia riparia

Local migratory breeder and common passage migrant

First of spring Holkham March 15th. Further March records from Snettisham, Titchwell and Salthouse 16th, 3 south Hunstanton, 5 west Holme, 5 west Scolt Head and 5 How Hill Reedham Water 17th, Titchwell, 5 west Salthouse, 5 Rockland Broad and 4 Pentney GP 18th, and 10 How Hill 19th. Numbers built up through first half April with 80 Rockland Broad and 55 Titchwell 1st, 30 Barton Broad 4th, 30 Tottenhill GP 5th and 60 Whitlingham CP 10th. At Scolt Head first coastal movements noted second week April with (all west) 13 12th, 64 14th, 284 15th, 110 16th, 584 22nd, 145 23rd and 57 24th; at Hunstanton (all south) 58 15th, 88 16th and 28 22nd. Other counts at this time 50 Beeston Bump 19th with 100 there 21st, 120 Nar Valley Fisheries 20th, 150 west Holme and 60 Whitlingham CP 22nd, and 150 Pentney GP 30th. Passage continued into May with (all west unless stated) 135 Scolt Head 2nd, 20 south Hunstanton on both 3rd and 6th, 41 Scolt Head and 9 Blakeney Point 15th and 17 Scolt Head 17th with last report there 26th. Spring total at Hunstanton 323 south March 17th-May 19th. At inland sites during May best counts 100 Hickling Broad 3rd, 300 Whitlingham CP 4th, 500 Barton Broad in poor weather 5th, 140 Pentney GP 8th, 500 Sennowe Park 9th and 80 Blackborough End GP 16th.

During breeding season reports of prs/active burrows: Beetley 45, Blackborough End Tip 160, California 40, Cromer GC 25, Dersingham Bog 16, Gorleston 8, Happisburgh 115, Low Tharston 30, Nar Valley Fisheries 65, Shropham 60, Stanford TA 246 spread between two sites. At Roydon Common 4 present at nesting site June 2nd but heavy rain caused the clifftop to collapse.

Post breeding passage at Scolt Head began with 8 west June 9th followed later in month by (all west) 15 26th, 36 27th and 14 29th. Westerly movement continued there into July with 153 2nd, 94 6th and 185 10th. Passage also noted in July Holme where 100s moved west 10th with 500 counted there 17th. Only significant inland count in July 50 Welney 15th. Numbers remained high into Aug with best totals 100 Cley 7th and 250 there 9th, 181 east Sheringham 8th and 250 including 90 east there 12th, and 100 Welney 19th. By Sept most birds had departed with few reports received. Usual records of lingering birds Oct at Holme 3rd, Sparham Pools 7th and Titchwell 16th, with latest 29th when 4 Blakeney GM and 3 Winterton.

Swallow

Hirundo rustica

Common migratory breeder and passage migrant

Incredibly first records of year came in Feb with birds at South Walsham 15th and King's Lynn 21st. These constitute the earliest county records. Next reports not until March 17th when singles west Holme and Titchwell, with further March records west Sheringham 20th, 2 Strumpshaw 27th, Necton 28th, Hindringham 29th, Weybourne and Winterton 30th, and Holme 31st. During first half April most reports were of single birds, exceptions being 6 west Holme 2nd with 10 3rd, 10 Barton Broad 4th, 6 Gunton Park 6th and westerly movements at Scolt Head of 13 9th, 22 14th and 49 15th. Main influx late April with totals at Scolt Head of (all west) 210 21st, 1785 22nd, 765 23rd, 225 24th, 115 25th and 115 30th. Elsewhere at this time 93 south Hunstanton, 300 west Holme, 300 Titchwell late evening and 300 west Sheringham in 5 hrs 22nd, 68 south Hunstanton 23rd and 200 Welney 29th. Large movements continued in May with Scolt Head totals of (all west) 2375 2nd, 635 3rd, 289 4th, 615 6th, 925 14th, 2165 15th and 1220 17th with smaller numbers daily until June 9th. At Hunstanton (all south) 496 2nd, 256 3rd, 862 4th, 278 5th and 187 6th. At other sites in May 1400 west Sheringham, 1400 west Paston (0600-1000), 150 north Waxham and 200 Horsey Mere 2nd, 300 Hickling Broad 3rd, 155 Titchwell and 600 Whitlingham CP 4th, and 333 west Blakeney Point 15th with 305 west in 6 hrs 25th. Spring total of 2578 south at Hunstanton April 2nd-May 19th.

Breeding records with numbers of pairs: Blakeney Point 4 (at least 12 young fledged), Caister Stables 10, Cley Coastguards 6, Scolt Head 2 (no young fledged due to bad weather), Welney 17. NBA results showed the species was present in 92% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 7 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Signs of autumn migration first noted Scolt Head with 12 west July 13th followed later in month by 315 28th and 209 29th. Also on 28th 3000, presumably roosting, at Holme whilst much smaller roosts were noted at Guist Common and Boughton Fen. In Aug best counts 800 west Holme and 130 west Scolt Head 10th, 142 west Scolt Head 17th, 200 Winterton 28th and 200 Pentney Abbey 29th. In early Sept counts at Scolt Head of 74 west 2nd, 200 feeding 5th and 115 west 6th. Elsewhere in Sept 40 Horsey 11th, 40 Gooderstone 14th, 20 Cley and Thompson Water 15th, with last double-figure count of year 70 Holme 22nd. In late Oct 8 Burnham Norton 24th followed by reports of up to 3 at several coastal sites during final 4 days of month. Sightings continued throughout first 3 weeks Nov with birds noted at Titchwell (3) 1st, Stiffkey (2) 2nd, California (2 south) and Yarmouth (3) 3rd, Sea Palling 4th, Eccles (2), Titchwell and Yarmouth (2) 5th, Heacham (2) 6th, Northrepps 8th, Holkham Bay 13th/14th, Holme 14th, Weybourne 15th, Holme 17th, West Beckham 18th, Paston 19th and Holkham Park 28th. Final bird of year a very late straggler at Cley Dec 23rd.

Red-rumped Swallow

Hirundo daurica

Vagrant from southern Europe

Three spring records: Holme April 27th (AJS *et al*), Horsey Mere May 2nd (MAC PJH) and south Winterton May 3rd (PCa).

House Martin

Delichon urbicum

Common migratory breeder and passage migrant

The north coast saw first of year with one Salthouse March 16th followed by singles at Winterton 19th, Rockland Broad 22nd and Thompson Water 25th. Very small numbers, at

mainly inland sites, through first part of April with 5 Gunton Park and 3 Tottenhill GP 5th highest numbers. Sightings then increased markedly with 30 Wroxham Broad 19th, 37 west Scolt Head 21st, 21 south Hunstanton, 100 west Holme and 310 west Scolt Head 22nd, and 12 south Hunstanton and 76 west Scolt Head 23rd. Main migration occurred May with counts at Hunstanton of (all south) 48 3rd, 56 5th, 79 6th, 61 17th and 44 19th, and at Scolt Head (all west) of 407 2nd, 110 14th, 112 15th, 293 17th and 85 28th. Counts at other sites in May: 440 west (0600-1000) Paston, 50 north Waxham and 80 Horsey Mere 2nd, 100 Hickling Broad 3rd, 400 Whitlingham CP 4th, 200 Barton Broad 5th, 250 Dereham Rush Meadow STW 21st, 200 Titchwell 22nd. Westerly passage at Scolt Head continued into June with 84 3rd, 87 9th, 68 10th and 22 16th with smaller numbers most days until 29th. Spring total 502 south at Hunstanton April 14th-May 19th.

Breeding records of pairs/nests: Bintree Mill 3, Dersingham (St George's School) 43, Edgefield 5 (increase of 2 on 2003), Fleggburgh Sports Hall 5, Gooderstone 12 on one house, Gooderstone Warren 18 on farm house, Heydon 3 on main street, Horning Hall 30, Langham 28, Langley with Hardley 66, Magdalen Bridge (Great Ouse RC) 48, Old Catton 15, Saddlebow Bridge (Great Ouse RC) 25, Welney 25. NBA results showed the species was present in 78% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 9 pairs per occupied tetrad.

During summer gatherings of 100 Roydon Common June 18th, 80 feeding on emerging ants Necton July 21st and 500 Holme Aug 8th. First autumn movement Scolt Head 8 west July 24th with further westerly passage in Aug of 80 17th, 45 18th, 143 24th and 54 29th. Counts at other sites in Aug: 92 west Hanworth Common 18th, 350 west Holme (0730-0900) 24th, 100 Pentney Abbey 29th. In Sept further significant westerly movement noted Scolt Head on only 2 days with 40 4th and 50 19th. Elsewhere during month several sizeable counts, especially in last 10 days, with 600 Heacham 5th, 220 Gooderstone 14th, 152 Whitlingham CP 18th, 300 Thetford Nunnery Lakes 20th, 1200 Cantley BF 22nd and 1000 Cley 24th.

First week Oct saw large movements with (all west unless stated) 1065 Scolt Head, 2200 Sheringham, and 530 (0700-0815) and 1200 (0845-0945) Beeston Bump all 3rd, 1500 south Hunstanton (2 hrs 30 mins), 1000 Holme, 2125 Scolt Head and 630 Beeston Bump (0700-0800) 5th, and 1000 south Flitcham (1500-1600) 6th. Smaller numbers still moving mid-month when 139 east 53 west Holkham 14th, 199 east Holkham 15th and 12 west Hunstanton 16th. Thereafter noted Beeston Bump 17th, California 22nd, Beeston Bump (12) 23rd, Burnham Norton 24th, Holme 26th and finally Beeston Regis, Hunstanton and Scolt Head (2) all 29th. A martin sp probably this species, reported North Wootton Nov 1st.

Richard's Pipit

Anthus novaeseelandiae

Virtually annual autumn migrant from western Siberia; rare in spring and winter

In spring one West Runton clifftop briefly April 25th before flying west. Numbers in autumn poor with max 14, first south Hunstanton Sept 30th, followed in Oct by singles Scolt Head 1st, south California 2nd, Burnham Overy 9th/10th, Wells East Hills 10th, Sheringham 15th/16th, Breydon and Stiffkey both 16th/17th, 2 Morston 26th (one until 29th), and singles Scolt Head 28th, Stiffkey 28th-30th and 3 Burnham Overy Dunes 30th. One west Holkham Nov 1st was month's only record and last of year.

Apart from occasional poor years in recent times the long term trend is definitely upwards with 1994 and 2001 being exceptional years. The reason for this increase is unclear but is probably partly due to increased coverage during second half of autumn.

Annual Totals



Olive-backed Pipit

Anthus hodgsoni

Vagrant from Siberia

2001 Addition: Hopton Sept 30th (JBn AEn). Previously incorrectly published in British Birds as at Corton in Suffolk.

Tree Pipit

Anthus trivialis

Migratory breeder and passage migrant

First returning birds north Waxham and Santon Downham April 4th, Weybourne 9th and Holme 11th. Main coastal passage April 14th-May 6th when total of 69 south Hunstanton; in April 3 south Hunstanton, 2 west Holme, Titchwell, west Scolt Head and Waxham 14th, 5 south Hunstanton 20th, 4 west Sheringham 21st, south Snettisham, 16 south Hunstanton and 8 west Scolt Head 22nd, 4 south Hunstanton, 10 west Holme and singles Beeston Bump and Breydon 24th, and 6 south Hunstanton, 5 west 6 present Scolt Head and one Sea Palling 26th. In May 3 west 4 present Scolt Head 1st, 3 west Scolt Head, 4 Waxham and 2 Winterton 2nd, and 19 south Hunstanton and 6 west Scolt Head 6th. Last coastal migrants south Hunstanton and west Scolt Head May 19th, and west Holme 20th.

Singing males/territories during breeding season: Cockley Cley Wood 2, Cranwich Heath 2, Croxton Heath sev, Dersingham Bog 5, Hockwold Heath 10, Roydon Common 9, Salthouse Heath 1, Sandringham 1, Thetford Warren 1. Also described as 'still good population in Thetford Forest'. At Cley once again a male held territory along the shingle bank during May and June.

Autumn passage virtually none existent with singles Scolt Head Aug 7th and Sept 8th, 2 Blakeney Point Aug 10th and one Sept 7th, Yarmouth Sept 7th, 2 north Thorpe Marriott Oct 4th and last of year Holkham Meals Oct 28th.

Meadow Pipit

Anthus pratensis

Locally common migratory breeder and passage migrant with small numbers in winter

Largest flocks in first winter period 91 Holkham, 54 Roydon Common, 45 Holme, 41 Stiffkey and 37 Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr. Small cold weather movement noted at Holme Jan when 37 west 29th.

Return passage evident during last few days of Feb when flocks of 200 Holkham Bay and 150 Holme 28th. As usual good numbers noted moving over coastal sites including a spring total of 11,807 south Hunstanton March 14th-May 19th including 179 March 14th, 362 15th,

471 16th, 579 17th, 3181 18th, 2219 28th and 564 29th, in April 379 3rd, 718 15th, 676 16th, 548 21st and 299 22nd, and in May 114 5th. Best westerly movements elsewhere 172 Sheringham March 14th, 137 Beeston Bump 15th where 236 17th, 437 28th and 329 29th when also 160 Weybourne, and in April 492 Scolt Head and 129 Beeston Bump 14th, 434 Scolt Head 15th, 1009 Scolt Head 16th, 768 Scolt Head and 125 Beeston Bump 22nd, and 415 Scolt Head and 150 Beeston Bump 24th. Largest feeding/grounded flocks during spring 300 Holme, 100 Thornham and 40 Leziate Ashwick Heath March and in April 200 Blakeney GM, 150 Scolt Head, 60 Waxham and 50 Leziate Ashwick Heath.

Breeding pairs/singing males during breeding season included 119 Blakeney Point, 115 Welney and 94 Scolt Head. NBA results showed the species was present in 34% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 5 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Largest post breeding flocks July/Aug, 40 Scolt Head, 40 Stiffkey SM and 34 Cley July, and 80 Scolt Head Aug. Return passage in autumn from early Sept, overhead passage relatively light with highest counts: 115 west Scolt Head Sept 16th, 369 in off sea Scolt Head and 30 in off sea Sheringham 21st, 153 south Hunstanton (where autumn total of 864 south Sept 30th-Nov 25th) and 234 west Scolt Head 30th, and in Oct 109 south California 5th (where autumn total of 1267 south 140 north Sept 11th-Nov 25th), 235 west Scolt Head 20th, 76 Hunstanton 24th and 85 west Scolt Head 27th. Smaller numbers continued to pass overhead in Nov when 68 south Hunstanton and 20 west Beeston Bump 3rd, and at Hunstanton 40 south 12th and 34 25th. Best settled flocks in autumn: Sept 300 Sheringham, 120 Scolt Head, 100 Weybourne, 40 Holme; Oct 440 Sheringham, 250 Scolt Head, 80 Brancaster GM, 60 Holkham Bay, 44 Salthouse.

Largest counts in second winter period 50 Roydon Common and 30 at Beechamwell, Holme, Holkham Bay and Wormegay.

Red-throated Pipit

Anthus cervinus

Vagrant from northern Europe

Only one record, Sheringham Oct 17th/18th (APB MJS *et al*).



Red-throated Pipit (*Andy Benson*)

Rock Pipit

Anthus petrosus

Winter visitor and passage migrant, most probably of the Scandinavian race littoralis

As usual highest counts from county's saltmarshes where in Jan/Feb 100 Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr, 72 Warham, 40 Holkham Bay, 35 Burnham Overy, 14 Wells, 11

Stiffkey SM and 7 Holme. Rapid to depart in spring with very few records during March, but did include 3 south Hunstanton Cliffs 28th with singles there on 5 other dates until April 3rd, after which only records Scolt Head 6th and a *petrosus* race bird Breydon 15th.

First in autumn Ongar Hill Sept 19th, but generally passage later than usual to commence with no others until Blakeney Point Sept 26th, 2 west Holme 27th, 2 west 15 present Scolt Head and 2 west Sheringham 28th, and 24 south Hunstanton, 104 west 30 present Scolt Head and 10 west Sheringham 30th. Overhead passage recorded almost daily Oct, best site once again Scolt Head where 52 west 3rd, 42 8th, 77 9th, 89 18th, 78 27th and 38 28th. Elsewhere total of 231 south Hunstanton Cliffs Sept 30th-Nov 25th, including 34 Oct 18th and 27 24th, and 24 Nov 3rd and 13 7th, and 38 south California Oct 15th-Nov 16th. Best counts on coastal saltmarsh in Oct 350 Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr, 15 Warham and 7 Ongar Hill.

Under-recorded during Nov/Dec when highest counts 90 Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr, 39 Warham, and 12 Holkham Bay and Cley.

More inland records than usual during year with 2 Cantley BF March 6th and 4 Nov 6th, King's Lynn BF March 15th, Swanton Morley GP March 28th, 3 Buckenham Dec 2nd and 4 Hickling Broad Dec 5th.

Water Pipit

Anthus spinoletta

Local winter visitor

Far more than usual reported Jan-March when possibly up to 125 present in county. Highest counts: 26 Strumpshaw March 8th (roost count), 25 Buckenham March 28th, 17 Cley Feb 19th, 15 Rockland Marsh Feb 23rd, 11 Burnham Norton Feb 7th, 6 Hickling Broad Feb 11th, 4 Cantley BF Jan 2nd and Haddiscoe Island Feb 26th, 3 Wissington BF Jan 4th, Holme March 21st and Titchwell March 27th, 1-2 Hickling Rush Hills and Swim Coots, Hockwold Washes, How Hill, Martham, Pentney GP and Sparham Pools. Reported from 9 sites in April, last Hickling Broad 13th, Scolt Head 14th and Titchwell 20th.

First back in Oct when Strumpshaw 13th, Holme 18th, 4 Hickling Broad 28th, 3 Buckenham 30th and one Titchwell 31st. Fcw during second winter period when 6 Hickling Swim Coots, 5 Buckenham, 2 Cley and singles Breydon, Cantley BF, Hickling Rush Hills and Stubb Mill, Johnson Street Buttle Marsh, Sutton Fen, Titchwell and Whitlingham CP.

Citrine Wagtail

Motacilla citreola

Vagrant from western Russia and Siberia

A male Salthouse April 24th (JJG ACL). The fifth county record and the first in spring.

Yellow Wagtail

Motacilla flava

Yellow Wagtail *M (f) flavissima*

Declining migratory breeder and passage migrant

First of spring Hunstanton March 13th the earliest since 1990, followed by 3 Cley 18th, Nar Valley Fisheries 20th, west Titchwell 21st, west Holme 29th, 2 Bunwell 31st. An exceptional 20 Welney April 2nd, further singles Buckenham 3rd and Berney 4th. An early spring passage commenced on 5th when 71 west Scolt Head and 3 Pentney GP. Subsequent double-figure counts of 10 south Hunstanton and 22 west Scolt Head 14th, 17 Waxham and 18 Welney 17th, 230 south Hunstanton 19th, 18 Ken Hill Marsh and 50 Blakeney GM 20th, and 41 south Hunstanton and 53 Scolt Head 21st. Numbers increased in next few days: 22nd 33 south Hunstanton, 50 Holme, 71 west Scolt Head, 100 Blakeney GM, 50 west Salthouse, 73 west in 5 hrs Sheringham GC, 17 Cromer GC; 23rd 31 south Hunstanton, 50 west Holme, 58 west Scolt

Head; 24th 50 south Hunstanton, 117 west Scolt Head, 125 Blakeney GM; 15 Caister, 25th 43 south Hunstanton, 13 west Holme, 54 west Scolt Head; 26th 36 south 30 present Hunstanton, 42 west Scolt Head; 27th 15 Methwold Fen.

The main passage continued into early May: 1st 50 north Waxham (1215-1330); 2nd 30 Snettisham CP, 102 south Hunstanton, 454 west Scolt Head (in flocks of up to 40), 50 west Weybourne, 130 west Sheringham, 35 West Runton, 42 Waxham; 3rd 230 south Hunstanton, 173 west Scolt Head, 100 Holkham GM, 213 west Sheringham, 43 Beeston Regis; 4th 147 south Hunstanton, 89 west Scolt Head; 5th 160 south Hunstanton; 6th 66 south Hunstanton, 49 west Scolt Head. An incredible spring for this species including a total of at least 1411 west at Scolt Head.

Confirmed breeding pairs reported at just 10 localities (4 up on last season): Welney 31, Buckenham Marshes 6, Ludham Airfield 3, Wissington BF 3, Happisburgh 2 Holkham GM, West Runton, Stanford TA. At North Wootton 8 birds present with young being fed and female carrying food at Choseley. Presumed breeding also (pairs): Methwold Fen 7, Breydon 3, St Benet's Level 2, Repps-with-Bastwick 2, West Walton 1.

In July 4 west Scolt Head on 4th the only coastal movement. Aug and early Sept counts included 246 Welney 20th and 85 Sept 3rd, and 426 at a roost at Burgh Castle Glebe Marsh Aug 26th, where 412 31st and 217 Sept 4th. A mainly light Sept passage, double-figure counts of 15 Titchwell 9th with 25 next day, and 30 Buckenham Marshes 10th with 10 14th. In Oct singles Dereham 1st, 2 north Winterton 9th, Holme 19th and Weybourne 23rd. In Nov late bird Salthouse 3rd-8th.

Blue-headed Wagtail *M (f) flava*

Regular migrant from continental Europe, mainly in spring

First Titchwell and 3 Waxham April 17th followed by a light spring passage of 1-3 at 11 localities from 20th-May 5th with 4 Blakeney GM April 24th, and single Scolt Head May 19th.

Insummer apparent bird of this race at Choseley June 27th.

In autumn singles Titchwell Sept 9th and 14th with 2 on 12th, and Buckenham Marshes 10th-12th.

Grey-headed Wagtail *M (f) thunbergi*

Scarce spring migrant from North Fenno-Scandia

Singles Waxham May 9th and a pair there 16th, Kelling WM 13th, Cley 15th, Scolt Head 16th and 2 Hunstanton 18th/19th.

Grey Wagtail

Motacilla cinerea

Local breeder, fairly common passage migrant, less common in winter

Records of mainly singles at just 24 localities Jan/Feb, three sites had 2 birds, one 3 and one 4; in early March up to 6 Norwich Sweetbriar Marshes. A light spring passage with mainly 1-2 at 12 coastal localities in March, the exceptions being 5 Hunstanton 18th, 6 28th and 3 29th (all south), and 3 Winterton 21st; 4 singles at 4 coastal localities in April.

Birds on territories from mid-March with at least 25 confirmed breeding pairs (just one down



Grey Wagtail (Steve Cale)

on last year) at Bayfield Hall, Bintree Mill, Buckenham Tofts, Coltishall, Corpusty, East Tuddenham, Ebridge Mill, Guist Common, Hapton, Honingham, Langford, Lyng Mill, Marlingford Mill, Nar Valley Fisheries, Norwich Magdalen Bridge, Santon Downham, Saxlingham, Sculthorpe Mill, Sparham Pools, Thetford Nuns Bridge and Worthing Mill. At least 11 more pairs at traditional and other suitable localities where some may have bred.

First post breeding dispersal noted early Sept. A steady, mainly light, passage throughout Sept and Oct at mainly north and east coast localities as usual with counts above three: 5 south Hunstanton Sept 30th and 4 south Oct 19th, 4 Scolt Head Oct 1st and 5 14th, 4 south California 14th and 5 Sheringham 18th.

In second winter period recorded at 32 widespread localities Nov/Dec.

White/Pied Wagtail

Motacilla alba

Pied Wagtail *M (a) yarrellii*

Common breeding resident and passage migrant

At beginning of year Norwich Rampant Horse Street roost remained unoccupied until Jan 22nd when 49 present, the first record of winter there; further counts of 73 Feb 2nd, 112 18th and peak of 147 on 20th. At Norwich Thickthorn Services roost of 300 Feb 2nd and 330 March 9th. Roosts elsewhere included 60 Thetford Nunnery Lakes Jan 18th and 40 March 28th, and 79 Titchwell Jan 21st with 55 Feb 10th.

Other notable gatherings/movements: 62 Boughton Fen Jan 9th, 85 Saxlingham 11th, 30 Ditchingham March 4th, 80 on telegraph wires prior to roosting Guist Common 23rd, 102 29th and 57 on April 2nd, and 27 in horse paddock Winterton 18th.

Main westerly spring movement in March with 63 Sheringham and 22 Paston 14th, and 53 Holme 17th; at Beeston Bump 52 16th, 66 17th (both in 1 hr 30 mins after dawn), and 52 (0645-0745) on 28th. Southerly equivalent movement at Hunstanton, where 47 14th, 44 15th, 30 16th, 166 17th, 583 18th, 92 28th and 56 on April 3rd. At this site a total of 1091 were recorded moving south on 30 dates March 14th-May 17th.

NBA results showed the species was present in 90% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 3 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Counts of note in summer: 25 Scolt Head July 7th and 77 Aug 1st, 20 Beetley GP July 20th, 30 Hickling Rush Hills Aug 6th and 50 Pentney GP Sept 13th.

Only notable autumn coastal movements: 11 west Beeston Bump (0700-0800) Oct 2nd, 16 south California 16th, and at Hunstanton (all south) 10 19th, 14 24th and 17 27th.

The Norwich Rampant Horse roost remained unoccupied to end of year, but at Norwich Thickthorn Services 210 Nov 5th, 225 9th and max 800 Dec 16th, far lower numbers than last year. Elsewhere 40 Wereham Nov 5th, 25 Wymondham 6th, 110 west over Cley East Bank to roost 7th, 200 away from roost Brancaster Hbr 22nd, 157 in reedbed roost Titchwell 26th and several hundred flying in to roost Dec 19th, 48 Beechamwell Nov 27th, 65 Hoveton Riverside Shopping Centre roost 29th with 135 there Dec 14th, and 30 Harpley on 19th.

White Wagtail *M (a) alba*

Regular passage migrant from continental Europe; has bred

First Winterton March 7th the only record until 3 Sea Palling on 16th. Main spring passage March 17th-April 25th with 1-6 at 26 localities but 10 Pentney GP March 23rd and 12 24th, 7 Scolt Head April 15th, 8 17th, 29 west 22nd and 9 west 23rd, 8 Titchwell 18th and 11 22nd. Light passage continued May 1st-19th when 1-3 at 5 localities and 6 Scolt Head 2nd.

In autumn 3 west Sheringham Aug 25th, 2 Beeston Regis Sept 15th, Yarmouth Oct 24th and Scolt Head 27th.

Waxwing

Bombus garrulus

Irruptive late autumn and winter visitor

Small numbers only during first winter period with best counts: *Jan* 16 Norwich Edinburgh Road 1st, 18 Postwick 2nd, 8 west Warham Greens 3rd, 15 Norwich Colman Hospice 10th, 17 Norwich Parker Road 16th; *Feb* 18 Stoke Holy Cross 7th, 5 Thetford A11 10th-14th, 5 Thetford 26th; *March* 5 Trowse 3rd/4th, 5 Thetford/Croxton area 6th, 4 Strumpshaw 14th and 27th. One flying north Winterton 9th was only record in April. Elsewhere in this period reported at Acle, Bagthorpe, Belton, Burnham Deepdale, Burnham Norton, Caister, Cantley, Cley, Gillingham, Hales, Morston, Norwich Nursery Close, Ormesby St Margaret, Repps-with-Bastwick, Roughton, Roydon, Snettisham, Stiffkey Fen, Stockton, Swaffham and Wiveton.

From mid-Oct one of the largest invasions ever recorded in Britain began with Norfolk figuring prominently. First reports 17th when noted Beeston Regis, Blakeney (2), Sheringham and Weybourne. Thereafter noted daily until end of month with best totals: 8 Holme 22nd, 9 How Hill 24th, 30 west (plus 2 present) Scolt Head 27th, 25 Inceborough Hill 28th, 30 Beeston Bump and 25 west Scolt Head 29th, 88 Holme, 53 west Scolt Head, 40 Snettisham CP, 35 west Thornham, 30 Holt, 30 Snettisham and 25 west Choseley 31st. Nov saw no let up in influx with highest counts in first week: 60 Holme and 50 Snettisham 1st, 100 Overstrand 2nd, 60 Holt 3rd with 70 4th and 42 still 14th, 100 Upper Sheringham 8th. From mid-month large flocks gathered in Norwich with 65 Barton Road, 42 Victoria Street and 34 Brackendale 16th, 110 Dereham Road/Orchard Street 18th increasing to 130 25th, 50 Derby Street area 19th and 60 Hall Road/Gordon Square and 60 New Lakenham 29th. Elsewhere in second half of Nov 73 Brancaster Staithe 17th, 50 Briston 25th, 50 Bowthorpe 27th and 25 Martham 30th. By Dec Norwich held monopoly on birds, only reports away from city being 2 Castle Rising 4th, 19 west Titchwell, 17 south-west New Costessey and 4 North Walsham 5th, one Hoveton Hall 7th, 9 Winterton 18th, one West Walton 19th and 3 Thornham 30th. Some impressive flocks assembled in Norwich at this time with 65 Hall Road 4th, 90 Orchard Street 13th rising to 150 18th, 160 Edinburgh Road 19th, 160 Earlham Road 22nd, 170 Orchard Street 27th and 155 Chapelfield 29th/30th.

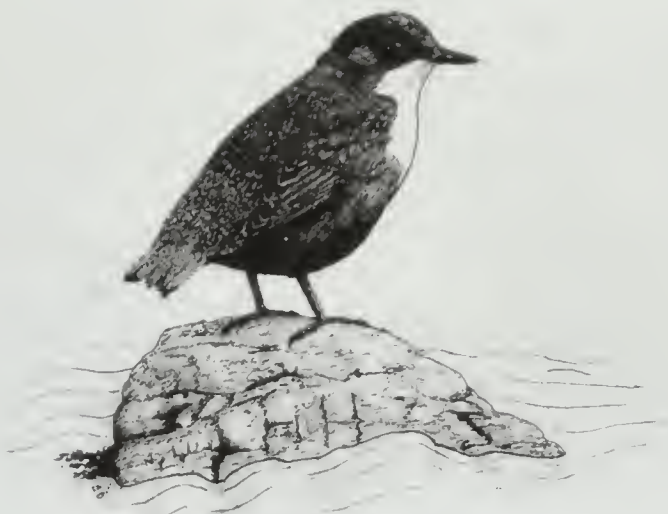
Other localities where birds reported in last 3 months of year: Aylmerton, Aylsham, Barnhamcross Common, Blakeney Point, Bradwell, Brancaster, Brancaster Staithe, Brundall, Burnham Market, Burnham Norton, Burnham Overy, Cley, Cromer, Dereham, Dersingham, East Runton, Eaton, Edgefield, Feltwell, Foxley, Framingham Earl, Gorleston, Great Plumstead, Hemsby, Holkham Meals, Honing, Horning Waterworks, Horsey, Hunstanton, King's Lynn, King's Lynn BF, Langham, Lower Kelling, Martham, Morston, Mundford, Narborough, Necton, North Creak, Northrepps, Old Hunstanton, Ormesby St Margaret, Pentney Heath, Ridlington, Ringland, Roydon Common, Salthouse, Sculthorpe, Sea Palling, Sheringham Park, Stalham, Stiffkey, Stiffkey Fen, Syderstone, Thetford Nunnery Lakes, UEA Broad, Waxham, Wells, Wereham, West Runton, Wiveton, Yarmouth.

Dipper

Cinclus cinclus

Almost annual winter visitor in very small numbers

One of nominate race, known as Black-bellied Dipper, on R Glaven at Letheringsett Feb 18th to at least March 13th. Another of unknown race reported Lynford Hall, Mundford Sept 16th.



Black-bellied Dipper (Alan Burtenshaw)

Wren

Troglodytes troglodytes

Very common resident and passage migrant in small numbers

Very little information received this year; 37 singing males present at Scolt Head (same as 2003) and 41 at Welney. Just one other report in spring at Eau Brink where 21 birds noted May 9th.

NBA results showed the species was present in 97% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 20 pairs per occupied tetrad.

In autumn only report was 20 Scolt Head Oct 11th. Dec counts from several sites: 8 Massingham Heath 11th, 13 Harpley Dams 19th, 13 Great Ouse RC at Wiggenhall St Peter 27th and 15 Eau Brink 28th.

Dunnock

Prunella modularis

Common resident and passage migrant, especially in autumn

During first part of year counts of 80 Stiffkey SM Feb 29th and 32 Blakeney Hbr March 21st.

Breeding data from 3 sites with 8 prs Blakeney Point (6 in 2003), 64 singing males Scolt Head (a large increase on 2003 when 37 reported) and 9 singing males Welney. NBA results showed the species was present in 95% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 8 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Several autumn counts: Aug 30 Blakeney Point 11th (a much higher total than usually seen and possibly part of previous day's fall); Sept 7 west Scolt Head 1st, 31 (including 6 west) Scolt Head and 30 Sheringham 26th, 5 south Beeston Bump 28th; Oct 37 south California between 3rd and 19th including 22 on 3rd, 15 Scolt Head 11th. Dec counts from 3 sites: 8 Massingham Heath 11th, 14 Great Ouse RC at Wiggenhall St Peter 27th and 9 Eau Brink 28th.

Alpine Accentor

Prunella collaris

Vagrant from mountains of Europe

A well-twitted individual at Cromer Cliffs April 20th (SCh BJM *et al*). One of the highlights of the year and the second county record, the first being between Weybourne and Sheringham in 1978. See article page 288.



Alpine Accentor (Gary Wright)

Robin

Erithacus rubecula

Common resident and passage migrant, especially in autumn

Max spring migrants noted at Waxham where 10 April 2nd and 8 16th, and 5 Yarmouth Cemetery 17th; latest Scolt Head May 2nd.

NBA results showed the species was present in 96% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 15 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Autumn passage evident in Oct with arrivals of 25 Scolt Head 11th, 20 Holme 20th increasing to 30 on 29th, 25 Winterton 30th and 13 Yarmouth Cemetery Nov 3rd.

Thrush Nightingale

Luscinia luscinia

Vagrant from eastern Europe and western Russia

One singing Titchwell May 11th (JAR HV *et al*). The ninth county record; noted for the third year in succession.

Nightingale

Luscinia megarhynchos

Local migratory breeder and very scarce passage migrant

First of spring Salthouse Heath April 16th, closely followed by others at Hockwold Washes and Pentney GP 17th, and Holme 19th. By end of month reported from 13 other sites coastal migrants Horsey 22nd and Sea Palling 23rd. In May further single migrants Blakeney Point and Horsey 2nd, Yarmouth 4th/5th, Thornham (in song by main road) 8th and 15th, Titchwell 17th and Holme 19th; also one singing Yarmouth Pasteur Road June 4th.

Singing males on breeding territories April-early June at Barnhamcross Common (2), Blackborough End GP, Boughton Fen (3), Castle Acre, Cranwich, Croxton Park, Grimston Heath (2), Hellesdon, Hilborough, Lynford, Methwold Hythe and Fen (7), Mundford, Narborough (2), Old Hunstanton, Pentney GP (6), Pentney Heath (2), Ringland, Ridlington, Roydon Common (3), Salthouse Heath (3), South Acre, Stanford TA (2), Thetford Nunnery Lakes, Tottington, West Acre and Wisington BF.

Latest record Ringland June 6th.

Bluethroat

Luscinia svecica

Scarce passage migrant, now more frequently recorded in spring

In spring a 'red-spotted' male Scolt Head May 10th and in autumn a male Gorleston Sept 30th.

Black Redstart

Phoenicurus ochruros

Rare migratory breeder, regular passage migrant and occasional in winter

In first three months of year, singles at 13 sites with 2 Overstrand March 21st. In April, passage mostly of singles at 20 sites with max of 3 Waxham 2nd/3rd and 4 Winterton 4th. Very light passage in May but 2 Yarmouth on 6th and 14th were near to a previous breeding site. No reports of breeding and the steady decline at the former stronghold Yarmouth South Denes, noted last year, appears to have continued.

Autumn passage began with singles Binham Aug 4th and Yarmouth South Denes 20th (did they breed undetected close by?). Passage noted at few coastal sites in Oct with max 10 Scolt Head 20th (with 6 still present 21st/22nd), 3 Blakeney Point and 2 Holme 21st, 2 Caister and 2 California 22nd, 2 Waxham 23rd and singles at 16 other sites. In Nov Hunstanton 1st-7th with 2 on 2nd, Colney GP 27th and Bacton 28th.

Redstart

Phoenicurus phoenicurus

Local migratory breeder (most in Brecks), common passage migrant

First returning bird Titchwell April 12th, followed by singles Holkham Meals 14th and Thetford 15th. Spring passage (to May 13th) followed pattern of recent years, very light with singles at 16 sites and a small arrival in early May, with max 6 Scolt Head and 5 Blakeney Point 1st and 2 at three other north coast sites; 5 also Scolt Head 9th. Inland singles East Wretham Heath April 23rd, Norwich May 1st and Santon Downham 15th.

Breeding season records: 2 singing males at previous breeding site Sheringham Park April 29th still present May 3rd, at East Wretham Heath 2 present May 23rd including a singing male. At the traditional site in Brecks, Stanford TA, numbers for the second year running were described 'as normal' (20 singing males in 2002).

In autumn, passage began Aug 9th, with singles Scolt Head and Blakeney Point, and 2 Holme 10th. Main passage from 20th very light with no large-scale arrivals, max 7 Scolt Head and Yarmouth Cemetery Sept 7th; also 7 at latter site on 15th, and up to 5 at 18 other sites. Inland Welney Aug 20th and Roydon Common Sept 8th. Last of year Blakeney Point Oct 30th.

Whinchat

Saxicola rubetra

Common passage migrant; has bred in past

First of year Holme April 16th and Snettisham 19th. Main passage from 24th very light with up to 2 at 23 sites with peaks of 4 Titchwell April 30th, 5 Scolt Head May 1st and 4 Holme 2nd. Inland singles Wolferton May 3rd and Massingham Heath 23rd, last of spring.

A singing male Roydon Common June 21st only midsummer record.

Autumn passage began Aug 3rd (a typical date) with single Blakeney Point followed by another Holme 7th and 2 Cley 9th. Steady but light passage of up to 4 at 24 sites with clear indication of larger arrival between Sept 7th and 15th when 11 Hunstanton, 12 Horsey (increasing to 20 on 11th) and 10 Kelling WM 8th, 10 Weybourne 11th, 5 Salhouse 13th and 5 Sheringham 15th. Inland, singles at Welney Aug 20th, Buckenham Marshes Sept 13th, Strumpshaw 18th and Wheatfen Oct 10th. Last of year Blakeney FM Oct 29th.

Stonechat

Saxicola torquata

Very small breeding population; regular passage migrant, local in winter

During first winter period, pairs present in Jan and Feb at 16 sites, of these 7 were inland at Buckenham Marshes (max of 6 individuals mid-Jan), Cantley BF, Haddiscoe Island (max 5

Jan 30th), Hockwold Washes, How Hill, King's Lynn BF, Roydon Common and Welney; also singles at Santon Downham and Syderstone Common.

As in previous years main passage or return to breeding areas in March and early April with peaks of 5 Titchwell March 3rd, 6 Horsey 13th, 5 West Runton 14th, 9 Holme 15th increasing to 16 16th, and up to 4 at 11 other coastal sites. In breeding season pairs reported from Hockwold Heath (4), Holme (2), Horsey, Roydon Common, Waxham (3), Weybourne and Winterton (4). In Brecks the increasing population noted last year was maintained with 16 pairs (including 8 Stanford TA) present during summer.

Dispersal from breeding areas in Aug and Sept largely obscured any passage movement as most birds were in or adjacent to such areas with peaks of 8 between Waxham and Winterton Aug 21st, 7 Horsey 22nd and 6 Holme throughout Sept. Late autumn passage of up to 3 daily throughout Oct at Scolt Head with max of 5 on 5th and 26th; elsewhere 4 Sheringham 13th, 4 Salthouse 17th, 4 Blakeney Point 18th and up to 3 at 7 other sites. In second winter period most of the traditional sites were occupied with max of 4 Bowthorpe, 4 Holme, 4 Horsey, 8 Salthouse, 4 Sheringham and up to 3 at 25 other, mainly coastal, sites.

Wheatear

Oenanthe oenanthe

Increasingly rare migratory breeder and common passage migrant

First returning bird Yarmouth March 15th, followed by singles following day Burnham Overy Dunes, Sea Palling, Thetford and Cley (2). Passage then continuous with March max 20 Burnham Overy Dunes on 22nd. Widespread in April (when most birds on passage from mid-month considered to be of the 'Greenland' race *O o leucorhoa*) with 30 Titchwell, 15 Blakeney Point and 10 Waxham 16th, 25 Scolt Head, 18 Sheringham, 23 Beeston Regis, 25 West Runton and 14 Winterton 17th, followed by 20 Waxham 19th, 20 Blakeney Point 20th, and 22 Scolt Head, 20 Burnham Overy Dunes, 17 Salthouse, 39 West Runton and 14 Yarmouth all 22nd. Numbers along north coast remained steady into May with further peaks of 29 Scolt Head 1st, 16 Wells East Hills 2nd and 17 West Runton 3rd. Most passage over by mid-May but late birds at Cley June 1st, Salthouse (2) 3rd and Burnham Overy Dunes 12th.

In breeding season 2-3 pairs bred at Stanford TA and there were early juvs in July at Berney 4th, Titchwell 17th/18th and 26th, Cley 20th, Scolt Head 22nd,



Wheatear (Richard Johnson)

Snettisham 25th and 30th, and Blakeney Point 26th.

Autumn passage began Aug 3rd with single Scolt Head and 2 Paston 6th. Main passage from mid-month with up to 6 at 10 sites and peaks of 16 Salthouse 19th and 11 Winterton 29th. Steady passage through Sept with notable 'fall' on 7th (with arrivals during afternoon) when 27 Hunstanton, 64 Scolt Head, 45 Blakeney Point, 25 Salthouse, 39 Sheringham, 17 Beeston Bump, 26 Eccles and 24 Yarmouth South Denes. On 8th a further 11 arrived during afternoon Beeston Bump and 10 present Horsey, but during rest of month numbers within single figures. Passage during Oct low with up to 2 at five sites and last of year singles Old Hunstanton and Breydon 30th.

Rock Thrush

Monticola saxatalis

Vagrant from southern Europe

A male Blakeney Point May 1st (PCo). Only fourth county record and first since 1995.

Grey-cheeked Thrush

Catharus minimus

Vagrant from North America

One trapped at Croxton near Thetford Nov 10th (BG DL *et al*). The first county record and undoubtedly the most bizarre 'find' of the year. See article page 286.

Ring Ouzel

Turdus torquatus

Passage migrant in fluctuating numbers; exceptional in winter

First noted April 1st when 2 Holme and single Cromer GC, followed by 1-3 at a further 7 sites between 2nd and 4th. Main movement from mid-April when 22 Holme 14th, peaking at 29 on 17th, with birds present daily at a further 40 mainly coastal sites during remainder of month. Other peak counts 7 Northrepps 15th, 6 Beeston Bump and 5 Yarmouth Cemetery 17th, 7 Beeston Bump, 5 Horsey and North Wootton 22nd, and 7 Waxham 26th. During first week in May 1-4 present at 17 widely scattered localities. Numbers then declined rapidly with just 1-2 at five sites, the last Ditchingham 25th. During spring, noted at following inland localities: Aylmerton, Barton Broad, Bradwell, Buckenham, Choseley, Cranwich GP, Dersingham, Ditchingham, East Ruston, East Winch, Felbrigg Park, Fersfield, Gunthorpe, Gunton Park, Northrepps, North Wootton, Roydon Common, Tottenhill and Whitlingham.

First of autumn not until Sept 30th when 2 Scolt Head, then single Winterton Oct 3rd. Small scale movement from Oct 11th when 1-2 Holme, Holkham Meals, Scolt Head, Stiffkey, Titchwell, Winterton and Yarmouth Cemetery; higher counts during remainder of month included 6 Scolt Head 18th and 28th. During Nov 1-2 at 7 coastal sites with latest Blakeney 10th.

Blackbird

Turdus merula

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor

Evidence of return passage in early March when 40 Holme 7th and 30 at same site 18th. Small-scale movement in early April with 12 Holme and 15 Waxham 2nd. Continued trickle of coastal migrants during rest of month with 1-4 Scolt Head on 8 dates and latest Blakeney Point 30th.

Breeding season records included (pairs/singing males) 57 Wiggshall St Peter, 34 Lower Stow Bedon, 21 Eau Brink and 20 Welney. NBA results showed the species was present in 98% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 26 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Autumn passage from Sept 30th when 6 Scolt Head followed by increasing numbers from Oct 11th when 50 again Scolt Head. Peak numbers 19th/20th with 300 Holme, 950 Scolt Head and 65 Waxham. A second wave of migrants from 27th to month end, peak counts being 750 Holme, 435 Scolt Head, 250 in off sea Wells East Hills and 200 Sheringham. Good numbers still present early Nov with 400 Holme 3rd (and again 9th), and 200 Holkham Meals 7th. During Dec highest count 200 Harpley 19th, with evidence of small-scale coastal movement when 20 Holme 28th.

Fieldfare

Turdus pilaris

Common passage migrant and winter visitor

At start of year peak counts 623 South Pickenham Jan 2nd, and 160 Holkham Park and 500 Wiggenhall St Germans Feb 2nd. Evidence of coastal movement from mid-March when 34 south Hunstanton 16th. An inland count of 200 Elsing April 8th with flocks of 250 Ludham 16th and 120 Hoveton 26th, a precursor to return passage from east of county. During May, evidence of departure from 8 coastal sites with 2 birds lingering at Hickling and Winterton 29th. A late bird Cart Gap June 9th and another Berney/Burgh Castle on unusual date of July 4th.

First in autumn Scolt Head Aug 10th but no further records until Sept 7th when 2 Roydon, followed by 1-2 at a further 4 sites during month. Increasing numbers from mid-Oct when 240 Roydon Common 17th and 1980 in off sea/south Scolt Head 19th. On 20th 1450 in off sea/present Scolt Head and 300 Holme. Many birds moved quickly inland with 200 Ashill and 500 west Little London 26th. Increasing numbers from 27th when 4960 in off sea/south Scolt Head and three-figure counts from 6 other sites including 875 south Hunstanton, with 885 Scolt Head and 500 Holme following day. Highest counts of autumn 1050 west Roydon Common Nov 1st and 1253 south Hunstanton 7th, with three-figure counts from a further 12 sites during month. During Dec majority of records from inland sites in west of county although peak count 650 Aylmerton 1st. A late influx Dec 22nd with 250 in off sea Winterton.

Song Thrush

Turdus philomelos

Common resident and passage migrant; recently decreasing

Evidence of small-scale movement during April and early May from several coastal sites, peak counts 10 Holme and Waxham April 2nd, and 10 Scolt Head May 1st.

Breeding healthy population noted Thetford Forest with areas consisting of 5-20 year-old growth being particularly favoured. NBA results showed the species was present in 88% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 4 pairs per occupied tetrad.

First migrant of autumn Scolt Head Sept 16th with numbers increasing to month end when 20 Holme and 270 Scolt Head 30th, with 60 at former site following day. A further influx Oct 11th/12th when 100 Blakeney Point and double-figure counts Holme, Scolt Head, Sheringham and Eccles. Main passage from 19th to month end with peak counts 380 Scolt Head 20th and 270 there 28th. Only other notable count of autumn 100 south Snettisham CP Nov 11th.

Redwing

Turdus iliacus

Common passage migrant and winter visitor

In Jan/Feb peak counts 180 Shouldham and 250 Felbrigg Park. Increasing numbers during March when three-figure counts Bodham, Horning Waterworks, Ludham, Pentney, Spixworth and Thetford Nunnery, plus 1000 south south-east over Holt 18th. In April, with exception of

73 Gunton Park 1st, only single-figure counts from just 5 sites. May singles Holme and Santon Downham 1st, with last of spring Scolt Head 9th-11th.

Earliest in autumn Sept 25th when 3 Repps-with-Bastwick with first major fall 30th when 735 in off sea Scolt Head and 211 in off sea Sheringham. Protracted movement from Oct 8th to month end with three-figure counts from 18 widely scattered inland and coastal sites. Peak counts inland included 1800 over Cringleford and 2274 west along Tud Valley 8th, and 2489 west at latter site following day. Along the coast, main movement centred on Scolt Head where 4385 19th, 3200 20th, 2120 27th and 2880 28th; most birds arrived in off sea and, after pausing briefly, continued south inland. Rapid decline during Nov but inland flocks of 150 Lynford 14th and 300 Hilborough 24th. Highest Dec count 200 Irstead 6th.

Mistle Thrush

Turdus viscivorus

Common resident and partial migrant

A partial albino with pure white head, back and tail but normal underparts Kelling WM Jan 4th. Spring movement disappointing with only record Scolt Head April 28th.

NBA results showed the species was present in 85% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 3 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Post breeding flocks noted at just 5 sites highest counts being 35 Weybourne July 5th, 30 Costessy Showground July 18th and 26 Leziate Heath Sept 17th.

Autumn passage birds equally sparse with 13 west Beeston Bump Sept 19th, 5 south Holme Oct 5th, 3 Scolt Head Oct 20th and single west Holme Nov 4th.

Cetti's Warbler

Cettia cetti

Broads breeding population established since 1974

Another mild winter allowed consolidation of birds along north coast and in Wensum valley. Records received of at least 176 singing males March-June. The true figure is certainly well over 200 as no records received from large sections of R Bure, R Yare and R Waveney, all of which hold significant populations. River valley totals for Broads: R Yare 52, R Bure 29, R Ant 45, R Thurne 26, R Chet 2, R Waveney 1. Also singing birds Yarmouth Pasteur Road in June and Waxham.

Along west and north coasts singing birds noted at Snettisham CP, Holme, Titchwell, Holkham Meals, Blakeney Friary Hills and GM, Cley/Walsey Hills (4), Salhouse, Kelling



Cetti's Warbler (Phil Jones)

WM, Weybourne STW, Weybourne (3 successful nests). Later in year also noted at Stiffkey Fen.

Singing males recorded in Wensum valley at Colney Pits (2), Hellesdon Fish Farm Meadow, Lenwade Station, Lyng-Easthaugh GP (2) and Sparham Pools. Additional birds in Nov/Dec Cringleford and Eaton GC.

Elsewhere around county Thetford Nunnery Lakes July 30th-Sept 9th and Lopham Fen Dec (having been present in Suffolk at Redgrave Fen Oct/Nov).

Grasshopper Warbler

Locustella naevia

Summer visitor and scarce passage migrant

First arrivals mid-April, when 2 Guist 11th/12th, singles Hickling Broad, South Lopham and Strumpshaw 13th, 3 Strumpshaw and singles Horsey and Snettisham 14th, 4 Snettisham 15th, and singles Thornham and Titchwell 16th. Widespread arrival April 17th when 6 Snettisham, 2 Horsey, Scolt Head and Sheringham, and singles Berney, Blakeney GM, Hockwold Washes, Holme, Horsey, Waxham and Winterton. Only other obvious migrant in spring Blakeney Point May 2nd.

During rest of spring/summer an impressive total of 155 singing males reported from 65 sites, some of these may have referred to migrants but most appeared to be holding territory for several days at least. Singing males as follows: Barton Turf Fen 4, Berney 2, Blakeney GM, Boughton Fen 2, Buckenham, Buckenham Tofts, Brayden Marshes 3, Catfield Fen 8, Cley 4, Dersingham Bog 3, Eccles, Fleggburgh, Guist 2, Heacham, Hempton Marsh, Hickling Broad 4, Hockham, Hockwold Heath, Hockwold Washes 3, Holkham Meals 10, Holme 4, Horning Hall Marshes 4, Horning Marsh Farm 2, Horsey, How Hill Reedham Water, Hunstanton, Kelling WM, King's Lynn BF 2, Langford 2, Lopham Fen, Lynford Arboretum, Lynn Point, mid-Yare RSPB 32, Morston, Mundford, Pentney GP, Potter Heigham, Ranworth Marshes, Rockland Broad, Roydon, Salthouse, Saxthorpe, Scolt Head 3, Sea Palling, Sheringham, South Lopham, South Walsham 2, Snettisham CP 9, Stanford Water 2, Sutton Fen, Thornham, Thorpe St Andrew, Titchwell 6, Tottingham, Upton Fen, Waxham 4, Welney, West Runton, Weybourne, Winterton and Woodbastwick.

Small number of migrants in autumn when singles Blakeney Point Aug 10th and Sept 9th, Holkham Meals Sept 5th, Holme Sept 7th, and a grey-toned bird seen well feeding on ground and high in tallows again Holkham Meals Oct 13th.

Savi's Warbler

Locustella luscinioides

Rare migrant and summer visitor

Singing males at Ranworth Ward Marsh April 24th-June 5th and Brayden Marshes May 1st (MAC PJH). An intriguing record of one trapped Haddiscoe Island Aug 28th (KJB).

Sedge Warbler

Acrocephalus schoenobaenus

Summer breeder and passage migrant

One Horning Marsh Farm March 30th was earliest and followed by another Titchwell April 3rd; 1997 was last year when this species failed to appear before end of March. No further records until small but widespread influx April 8th/9th when singles Catfield Fen, Cley, Snettisham, Titchwell and Whitlingham CP. Apart from 5 Titchwell 14th and 4 Hockwold Washes 16th numbers remained small throughout first three weeks of April until obvious influx to breeding sites during final ten days of month, when 25 Blakeney GM, 15 Burnham Overly GM and 25 Snettisham CP.



Sedge Warbler (*Martin Woodcock*)

Numbers of coastal migrants small with birds arriving directly to breeding sites or difficult to detect amongst breeding birds, but did include singles Scolt Head April 17th and Overstrand 30th, Waxham and Yarmouth Cemetery May 1st, 2 Scolt Head 10th, and singles Gorleston 20th and Scolt Head 29th.

Counts of singing males from breeding sites included: Blakeney GM 25, Burnham Overy GM 20, Eau Brink 75, Holme 21, mid-Yare RSPB 205, Snettisham CP 25, Welney 62, Whitlingham CP 7 and Wiggenshall St Peter RC 19. At Fring one singing from a garden hedge June 11th.

Once again the large numbers of migrants which must pass undetected through the county's reedbeds best

demonstrated at Haddiscoe where 40 July 31st (23 ringed), 80 Aug 21st (45 ringed) and 30 Aug 28th (20 ringed). Few reported after end of Aug, with singles Blakeney Point Sept 5th, Holme 16th and last Berney Oct 1st.

Marsh Warbler

Acrocephalus palustris

Rare in late spring and autumn

Only one record, a singing male Hickling Priory Meadow June 6th-8th (JHa PJH).

Reed Warbler

Acrocephalus scirpaceus

Summer breeder and passage migrant

First Titchwell April 13th, 2 Titchwell and singles Snettisham and Strumpshaw 17th, Holme and Lopham 20th, and Titchwell and Welney 22nd. Small numbers slowly arrived during rest of month and back at most breeding sites in good numbers by second half of May. Evidence of continued arrivals during second half of May/early June when migrants Scolt Head May 14th, singing Salthouse Heath June 5th and singing from a village garden Winterton 7th.

Counts of singing males during breeding season included: Blickling Park Lake 4, Boughton Fen 20, Burnham Norton 12, Holme 20, Lopham Fen 26, mid-Yare RSPB 186, Welney 82 and Whitlingham CP 14.

Interesting observations during breeding season included one singing in a Yew tree at Tasburgh well away from suitable habitat and a bird which was initially thought to be a Marsh Warbler singing at Titchwell which showed incredible mimicry including brilliant renditions of Water Rail, Oystercatcher, Redshank, Swift, Bearded Tit, Linnet and Goldfinch.

Good numbers of migrants once again noted passing through reedbeds at Haddiscoe where 100 July 31st (63 ringed), 120 Aug 7th (71 ringed) and 40 Aug 28th (26 ringed). Other migrants in autumn included 4 Blakeney Point Aug 10th, 6 Holme and 4 Winterton Sept 25th, and in Oct singles Holme 13th and last of year Scolt Head, Paston and Cantley 16th.

Icterine Warbler

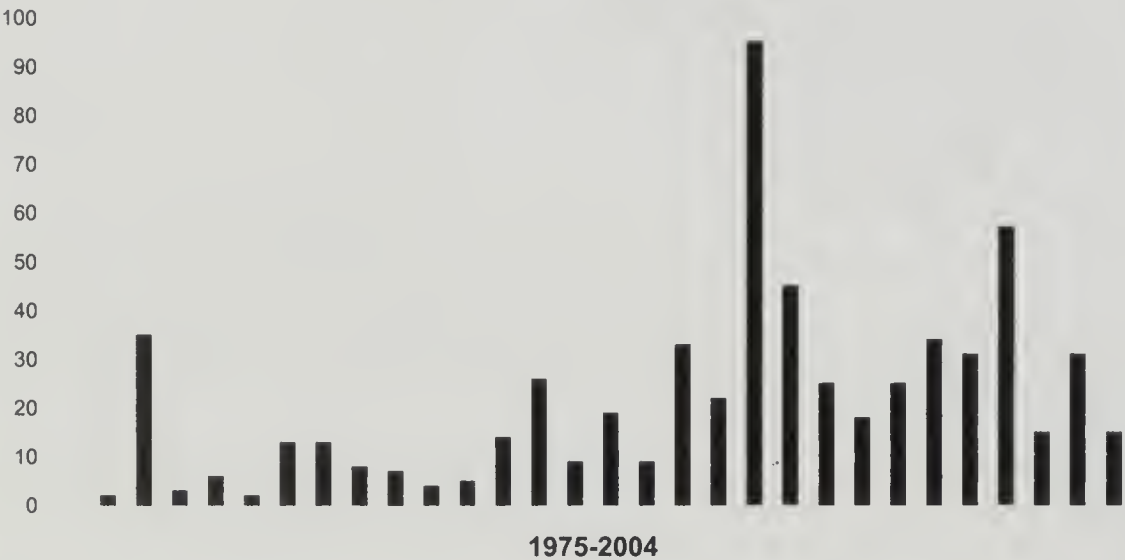
Hippolais icterina

A very scarce passage migrant

Another poor year with one in spring and 6 in autumn; Scolt Head May 28th/29th, 3 Blakeney Point and 2 Scolt Head Aug 10th, and another Blakeney Point Aug 11th.

Some observers have commented on the apparent decline in numbers in recent years; apart from a blank year in 2000, the graph shows there is little evidence to support this. Whilst there were exceptional numbers in 1977 there were also good numbers in 1984, 1993-1998 and 2002.

Annual Totals



Blackcap

Sylvia atricapilla

Summer breeder and passage migrant; winters in small numbers

During first winter period 3 Cley, 2 Beeston Regis, New Costessey and Norwich (Salisbury Road), and singles Briston, Bressingham, Brundall, Elsing, Holt, Holkham, Kelling, Norwich (Glebe Road), Thornage, Thorpe Hamlet, Titchwell and Trowse.

First migrants probably from mid-March when noted Sheringham 15th, and Titchwell 16th and 26th, but no others until late March/early April when singles Thetford Nunnery March 30th and 2 Filby Broad and 2 Wayland Wood April 2nd, and singles Fowlmere 3rd, Hickling Broad 4th and Frettenham 5th.

Peak numbers during spring included counts of both migrants and resident birds late April/early May when 6 Whitlingham CP April 25th, 20 Holme 26th, 10 Sheringham 27th, and in May 16 Scolt Head and 12 Holkham Meals 1st, and 14 Yarmouth Cemetery and 10 Holme 2nd.

Counts of singing males/territories during breeding season included: Massingham Heath 12, Old Catton Park 12, Roydon Common 5, Welney 11, Whitlingham CP 7. Breeding pair also noted Scolt Head for first time, probably due to increased amounts of scrub and increasing numbers of spring migrants over last decade. NBA results showed the species was present in 89% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 7 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Ringling data from Brancaster Thompson Farm showed that 2004 was a record year when 200 ringed (135 in 2003, 109 in 2002) with 30 present (19 ringed) July 3rd, 50 (29 ringed) Aug 10th and 20 (15 ringed) Sept 3rd.

Coastal passage in autumn early to commence with small but noticeable influx Aug 10th-12th when 8 Titchwell, 4 Scolt Head, 14 Sheringham and 6 Eccles. Highest counts during rest of month 15 Overstrand 16th and 8 Winterton 28th. Passage during Sept light with 8 Holme 5th easily highest count. Counts much better in Oct with a series of influxes during month, peak counts 10 Holkham Meals 11th, 20 Holme and 4 Scolt Head 12th, 20 Holme, 6 Scolt Head, 5 Blakeney Point and 3 Gorleston 16th, 8 Scolt Head and a Belgium ringed bird Weybourne 17th, 16 Scolt Head 20th and 10 Holme 28th. Small numbers of migrants continued to arrive/linger early Nov, with 4 Holme 7th best count.

Numbers small during second winter period when 2 Babingley, North Walsham and Norwich, and singles Eccles, Hethersett, Holme, Old Catton, Salhouse, Sheringham, Sparham Pools and Thetford Nunnery.

Garden Warbler

Sylvia borin

Summer breeder and passage migrant

First arrivals during final ten days of April when singles Lenwade 20th, Yarmouth 21st, Norwich, West Acre and Winterton 23rd, Lyng-Easthaugh GP, Whitlingham CP and Winterton 25th, and Holme, Scolt Head and Sheringham 26th. Small numbers of migrants continued to be reported from coastal sites during rest of April and May, including 5 Holme April 30th, singles on 5 dates Scolt Head May 2nd-14th, and singles Blakeney Point May 10th and 20th.

During spring/summer singing males/territories: Crostwick 3, Dersingham Bog 3, Fornctt St Mary, Foulton 2, Frettenham 2, Hickling Broad 2, Holt, Hoveton Hall 2, Kelling Heath, Methwold Poppylot Farm 4, Narborough 4, North Elmham, Pentney GP, Roydon Common 5, Santon Downham 4, Sparham Pools 2, Swanton Novers 2, Tacolneston, Wayland Wood, Weeting Heath, Welney, West Acre, Whitlingham CP 3. NBA results showed the species was present in 41% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 2 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Autumn passage poor, highest counts Aug 10th/11th when 2 Holme, 4 Scolt Head, 16 Blakeney Point and 3 Winterton. Peak counts during rest of autumn from Holme where 9 Sept



Barred Warbler (Steve Cale)

5th and 6 9th. Late migrants in Oct Stiffkey 11th, Scolt Head 20th, Holme 24th and 27th, and Scolt Head 24th-31st.

Barred Warbler

Sylvia nisoria

Scarce autumn migrant recorded only once in spring

A poor year with just 4 reported, the lowest numbers since 1999: Sheringham Aug 22nd/23rd, Horsey Sept 3rd, Eccles Oct 19th and Holkham Meals Oct 20th.

Lesser Whitethroat

Sylvia curruca

Summer breeder and passage migrant

One Choseley April 13th was first of spring and was quickly followed by others at Snettisham 15th/16th, Sea Palling 16th, Holme 17th and Wighton 20th. These early migrants were followed by one of strongest spring movements for sometime with records from an impressive 21 localities by month end, largest counts 6 Holme 25th and Snettisham 26th, and 3 Gorleston 28th. Good numbers continued to arrive during first half of May including 5 Scolt Head and 3 Waxham 1st, 4 Snettisham, 5 Holme and 4 Yarmouth Cemetery 2nd, 5 Sheringham 3rd, 2 Blakeney Point 10th and 5 Holme 12th.

During May-July singing birds (some of which may have been migrants) reported from following sites: Bayfield Hall 3, Bittering GP, Castle Acre 4, Choseley, Cley, Flitcham, Fornsett St Mary, Gayton, Gorleston 2, Holme 5, Horsey, Narborough 2, Ongar Hill, Scolt Head, Snettisham 4, Sparham 3, Spixworth, Tacolneston 5, Tharston, Whitlingham CP. Several observers reported that 2004 was a good year for this species. NBA results showed the species was present in 38% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 2 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Highest counts during autumn 5 Holme and 17 Titchwell Aug 11th, 8 Winterton Aug 14th and 15 Holme Sept 9th. More than usual during Oct when 1-2 at 15 sites, last Scolt Head 20th, Holkham Meals 21st, Holme 22nd, Cley 24th and Winterton 29th.

Whitethroat

Sylvia communis

Summer breeder and passage migrant

Earliest arrival Swaffham April 8th followed by others at Snettisham 13th, Weybourne 16th, and 4 Scolt Head and singles Caister and Winterton 17th, after which birds widespread. Most migrants arrived during last week of April when 29 Snettisham CP and 12 Warham Greens 24th, 20 Stiffkey 25th, 13 Scolt Head 26th, 40 Sheringham and 10 Cromer GC 27th.

Good counts of singing males during summer included: Eau Brink 42, Methwold Poppylot Farm 21, Stow Bedon 19, Welney 17, Massingham Heath 12, Scolt Head 9 (increase of 2 from previous year), Sparham 8. NBA results showed the species was present in 92% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 9 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Autumn migrants noted at coastal sites from early Aug, but passage relatively light; best counts 7 Scolt Head and 6 Blakeney Point Aug 10th, 10 Heacham Sept 5th and 12 Holme Sept 9th. A rapid departure of birds during Sept with few after mid-month and last of year Beeston Bump Oct 8th.

Dartford Warbler

Sylvia indata

Vagrant from southern England and the Continent

Two late Oct records: Happisburgh 26th (KMi) and Winterton 30th (PJH).

Subalpine Warbler

Sylvia cantilans

Regular vagrant from the Mediterranean

Following a gap in 2003 one Holme April 25th (PCA EEMc).

Sardinian Warbler

Sylvia melanocephala

Vagrant from the Mediterranean

Recorded for third year in succession with male Winterton Oct 15th-26th (PCa THe *et al*). This species is no longer a major rarity, are the increased number of records due to global warming?

Greenish Warbler

Phylloscopus trochiloides

Regular vagrant from eastern Europe and western Russia

Three autumn records: Hopton Aug 11th (INS), Blakeney Point Aug 14th-17th (SJMG *et al*) and Holme (trapped) Sept 8th (JAn).

Pallas's Warbler

Phylloscopus proregulus

Rare autumn migrant from Siberia

Another major influx of this classic 'Sibe' with at least 21 birds involved.

All records listed: Oct Winterton 8th, Holkham Meals (west) 10th-15th, Warham Greens and Sheringham both 10th, Holkham Meals 6 (5 west one east) 16th/17th with one 18th, Winterton (trapped) 17th, Scolt Head 2 17th/18th, Old Hunstanton 18th, Hemsby 20th-25th, Yarmouth Cemetery 23rd, Thornham Point 26th, Holkham Meals (east) and Weybourne (trapped) both 28th, Winterton (trapped) and Yarmouth Cemetery both 30th; Nov Winterton and Yarmouth Cemetery 3rd.

Yellow-browed Warbler

inornatus

Scarce autumn migrant from Siberia

After last year's unprecedented total, a return to more normal numbers with around 30-35 reported. First, 3 Holkham Meals Sept 10th, the earliest county record and continuing the long-term trend of birds arriving earlier in the autumn. Only other Sept records Cley and 3 Holkham Meals 29th. As usual most records during Oct when Snettisham 1st, Holme 16th, Titchwell 2nd and 19th, Burnham Overy 17th, 2 Holkham Meals 5th, singles 7th, 9th, 2 10th, one 12th, 2 13th, 3 16th, one 17th and 21st, Warham Greens 16th, Stiffkey Meals 1st/2nd and 10th, Lower Kelling 28th, Northrepps 1st-3rd, 2 Eccles 1st/2nd and one 3rd, Caister GC 1st and 30th, Yarmouth 2nd and 18th, Gorleston and Hopton 2nd, and Blickling Park 16th.



Yellow-browed Warbler (Steve Cale)

Radde's Warbler*Phylloscopus schwarzi****Vagrant from Siberia***

One trapped Weybourne Oct 17th (MP *et al*).

Dusky Warbler*Phylloscopus fuscatus****Vagrant from Siberia***

Four typical late Oct records: Blakeney Point 20th (BAEM RFP), Walsey Hills 20th-26th (RGM *et al*), Eccles 23rd (NBB ADK) and Winterton (trapped) 30th (KJB).

Western Bonelli's Warbler*Phylloscopus bonelli****Vagrant from southern Europe***

One Holkham Meals Oct 12th/13th (RGM *et al*). The seventh county record and the first since 1994.

Wood Warbler*Phylloscopus sibilatrix****Passage migrant and rare breeder***

A poor year with just 10 reported; in spring singles East Carleton April 25th and Titchwell 26th, and in May 3 Yarmouth Cemetery 2nd and singles Hickling 5th, Scolt Head 10th and Yarmouth Cemetery 21st. In autumn only records Trimingham Aug 14th/15th and Pentney Heath Sept 9th.

Once again no reports during breeding season; this species appears lost as a breeding species in Norfolk and with a continued decline in migrants is becoming more difficult to see than many of the other scarce/vagrant warblers.

Chiffchaff*Phylloscopus collybita****Common summer breeder, passage migrant and scarce winter visitor***

In first winter period up to 5 Whitlingham CP, 3 UEA Broad and 1-2 at Brundall, Bylaugh STW, Cley, Colney GP, Gorleston, Holme, New Costessey, Sandringham, Salhouse, Strumpshaw, Titchwell, Welney, West Runton, Winterton and Yarmouth.

Wintering birds may have masked first arrivals in spring but singles Titchwell March 13th and Weybourne 15th were probably newly arrived, with birds widespread a few days later and a larger general arrival during last ten days of month. Highest counts during early part of spring 6 Holme March 17th, 12 Cley 28th, 10 Holme and 10 Titchwell April 1st, 20 Holme 3rd, 6 Stiffkey 4th and 15 Roydon Common 9th. Migrants continued to arrive during April and May, with 10 Stiffkey and 5 Blakeney Point April 16th, 4 Scolt Head 17th and late migrants Blakeney Point and Scolt Head May 28th.

Largest counts of singing birds during breeding season: 15 Roydon Common, 13 Whitlingham CP, 11 Tottenhill GP, 10 Foxley Wood and 5 Catton Park. NBA results showed the species was present in 86% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 7 pairs per occupied tetrad. Singing birds with elements of both Chiffchaff and Willow Warbler song noted Titchwell and Langham.

Highest counts in autumn 35 Overstrand Aug 16th and 6 Winterton 21st, 15 Holme and 50 Holkham Meals Sept 10th, 12 Winterton 25th, 10 Eccles Oct 1st/2nd, 10 Holkham Meals 16th, 4 Holme, 15 Scolt Head and 6 Yarmouth Cemetery 20th, and 15 Yarmouth Cemetery 24th.

Wintering birds at year end 2 Holkham Meals and West Runton, and singles East Ruston King's Fen, Salhouse and Sheringham.

Only one accepted record of *tristis* Chiffchaff Blakeney Point Oct 10th-12th (AEa BJM *et al*). Also see Editorial.



Glossy Ibis - this long-staying bird in the Breydon/Berney area found its way onto many county life lists. (*Alan Tate*)

Mute Swan - an unusual portrait of a familiar bird. (*Tony Howes*)





Baird's Sandpiper - this brief stayer at Titchwell was part of a national influx. (*Howard Nicholls*)

Lapland Bunting - one of several obliging birds at Salthouse in September. (*Kevin Elsby*)





Sardinian Warbler - the current run of Norfolk records continues with this bird at Winterton. (*Alan Tate*)

Northern Bullfinch - a visitor from the North at Weybourne. (*Andrew Martin*)

Yellow-legged Gull! - increasingly reported due, in part, to observer awareness. (*Peter Wilson*)





Great Grey Shrike. (*Maureen Preston*)



Red-breasted Flycatcher. (*Julian Bhalerao*)

All four birds trapped at Denmark House, Weybourne, during one week in October.

Raddes Warbler. (*Pieter Wessels*)



Dark-breasted Barn Owl. (*Pieter Wessels*)



Willow Warbler

Phylloscopus trochilus

Common summer breeder and passage migrant

First of spring Ranworth Broad March 27th and in early April at Hickling Broad, Potter Heigham and Thetford Nunnery Lakes 1st, UEA and Waxham 2nd, and Barnhamcross, Holme, Norwich, Titchwell and Waxham 3rd, after which birds became more numerous and widely distributed during rest of month. A strong spring passage noted through most coastal watch points, peak counts 6 Waxham April 12th, 6 Scolt Head, 12 Stiffkey, 5 Blakeney Point and 4 Sheringham 16th, 15 Holme and 24 Scolt Head 17th, 20 Snettisham 24th, 30 Holme and 24 Scolt Head 26th, and 23 Scolt Head 30th. In May 42 Scolt Head, 20 Blakeney Point and 20 Sheringham 1st, 29 Scolt Head and 20 Yarmouth Cemetery 2nd, 10 Cromer 7th and 16 Scolt Head 9th, with smaller numbers until late May.

Small numbers of birds showing characteristics of race *acredula* noted with singles Sheringham April 16th and 27th, Holme May 2nd and Sept 7th, and Scolt Head May 9th and 11th.

Singing males in breeding season included: 15 Roydon Common, 10 Foxley Wood, 8 Massingham Heath, 7 Dersingham Bog and Welney, and 5 Pentney Heath. One observer reported that numbers were down in the Wensum valley this year and were not heard in the usual places. NBA results showed the species was present in 74% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 5 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Return passage evident at coastal sites from late July, counts generally poor, peaks 15 Holme and 4 Scolt Head Aug 1st, 9 Scolt Head and 21 Blakeney Point 10th, 14 Titchwell, 12 Scolt Head and 6 Blakeney Point 11th, and 6 Holme Sept 8th-10th. Few after mid-Sept, with last of year Oct when singles Winterton 2nd, Pentney GP 4th, Flitcham 9th, Titchwell and a northern-type bird Yarmouth Cemetery 19th, and last Kelling WM 29th.

Goldcrest

Regulus regulus

Resident breeder and passage migrant

An almost white individual Holkham then Burnham Thorpe Jan 1st. In spring, double-figure counts Holme on 4 dates peaking at 30 on April 1st and further evidence of return movement April 17th when 11 Scolt Head. Final coastal migrants 2 Scolt Head and 3 Blakeney Point May 1st.

NBA results showed the species was present in 61% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 4 pairs per occupied tetrad.

First autumn migrants 4 Scolt Head Sept 15th with 20 Holme next day. In Oct 25 Scolt Head 8th followed by 40 Holme and 50 Winterton 9th. Good numbers then present daily throughout month, peak counts being 100 Holme, 150 Scolt Head and 100



Goldcrest (Richard Johnson)

Stiffkey Meals 11th, 200 Holme 12th (and again 18th) and 140 Holkham Meals 16th. Double-figure counts noted from a further 8 coastal sites with a leucistic bird Holkham Meals 22nd. Numbers then declined quickly but 40 Holme Nov 3rd and flock of 40 Holkham Park Nov 28th.

Firecrest

Regulus ignicapilla

Spring and autumn passage migrant; scarce in winter; occasional breeder

Good numbers present throughout Jan with 1-3 Brancaster, Bradfield, Lynford, Holkham Park, Holkham Meals, Pentney, Welney and Wiveton. In Feb additional singles Caister Cemetery, Hockham and Yarmouth Cemetery. Increasing numbers through March when 1-4 at 14 sites with singing males noted Cromer, High Kelling and Lynford Stag. Small-scale passage during April with migrants noted at 9 widely-scattered coastal localities.

Breeding activity centred on Holt-Cromer ridge with up to 15 birds present including 9-10 singing males with at least 2 pairs probably successful. Elsewhere singing males or pairs Bircham Newton, Buckenham, Lynford, Santon Downham, Swanton Novers and West Newton, but breeding confirmed at just one of these sites.

First of autumn Holme Sept 26th; main movement commenced Oct 11th when 6 Holkham Meals and 1-2 at a further 8 coastal sites. Numbers well down on last year's impressive totals but peak counts 8 Holkham Meals and 6 Holme 16th (and 18th) plus 1-3 present daily until month end at many coastal localities including a total of 10 Scolt Head during period Oct 11th-31st. Singles in Nov at 8 sites including inland at Roydon Common and UEA Broad. Final birds of the year Brancaster (ringed) and Holkham Meals Dec 11th (joined by a second bird 29th), and Cley 27th.

Spotted Flycatcher

Muscicapa striata

Declining migratory breeder and passage migrant

First noted Yarmouth April 28th followed by single Scolt Head May 1st but then a repeat of May 2003 when coastal movement almost non-existent. Peak counts 3 Titchwell and 3 Blakeney Point 28th, followed by 4 Holme following day. Elsewhere, 1-2 Horsey and Salthouse on just 3 dates although present at 13 inland localities by mid-month.

Inland sightings continued to increase during rest of month resulting in an excellent breeding season. At least 79 pairs located (66 in 2003) although number of sites was down slightly from 51 to 48. Also 1-2 noted at a further 11 localities in the period mid-June to mid-July where breeding could possibly have taken place. NBA results showed the species was present in 32% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of one pair per occupied tetrad.

First of autumn Scolt Head Aug 6th, but further coastal migrants on just 3 other dates during month when singles Salthouse 12th and Sheringham 13th, and 4 Brancaster 21st. Low-key movement throughout Sept with max 5 Yarmouth Cemetery 9th; elsewhere just 1-2 Lynn Point, Holme, Scolt Head, Blakeney Point and Winterton with last of autumn Scolt Head Sept 30th.

Note: A project to monitor the fortunes of this at-risk species within the county began in 2003 and is continuing in 2005. The aims of the study are to determine the preferred habitat and site fidelity in the county and to monitor their breeding success and over-winter survival. During 2003 and 2004, 74 nestlings have been coloured-ringed and observers are asked to make detailed notes on any sightings involving these birds such as locality, whether breeding took place and the success or otherwise of the nest.

Red-breasted Flycatcher

Ficedula parva

Scarce autumn migrant; rare in spring

In spring female/1st-summer male Blakeney Point May 17th with a second bird Scolt Head May 25th. Only the second spring double occurrence, the last being in 1984.

In autumn 2 early migrants Holkham Meals Sept 5th and Yarmouth Cemetery 8th but no further records until Sept 29th when single Blakeney Point. During Oct 5 birds in period 10th-14th: Holkham Meals 10th/11th with 2 14th, Trunch 10th, Weybourne 11th-13th (ringed) and Titchwell 13th. Another average autumn.

Pied Flycatcher

Ficedula hypoleuca

Passage migrant, scarce in spring, abundant at times in autumn; has bred

First of spring Titchwell April 25th.

During May singles Scolt Head, Holkham Meals and Waxham 1st, with further singles Snettisham and Waxham following day. During period 9th-12th up to 2 present Scolt Head and 3 Blakeney Point, with last of spring Holme 17th.

Return passage from July 24th when single Winterton, but next not until Aug 3rd when 7 Scolt Head and 1-3 at a further 8 coastal sites. Peak numbers during Aug 9th/10th when 19 Scolt Head, 28 Blakeney Point and 10 Sheringham 9th, 65 Scolt Head, 65 Blakeney Point, 30 Holkham Meals, 10 Weybourne (ringed) and 19 Sheringham all 10th. Birds moved on quickly but still 13 Scolt Head 11th. Throughout Sept single-figure counts from many coastal sites with small influx 7th when 13 Holme, 8 Scolt Head, 6 Holkham Meals and 7 Yarmouth Cemetery. During Oct 1-3 at 8 coastal sites with last Trimmingham 11th.

Bearded Tit

Panurus biarmicus

Declining resident and partial migrant; periodic influxes from Low Countries

In first winter period max counts of 25 Cley, 19 Haddiscoe Island, 12 Cantley BF and 10 Titchwell. A wanderer at Thetford Nunnery Lakes Jan 7th-March 10th.

Breeding (pairs/broods): *north coast* Titchwell 16-24, Holkham NNR 14 (best ever year), Cley several, *Broads* Breydon 2, Buckenham Marshes 2, Cantley Riverbank 2, Haddiscoe 1, Hickling Broad complex 55 (see article page 273), Irstead Hall Fen 2, Strumpshaw 6-10, Sutton Fen 1.

In second half of year numerous double-figure counts with max: *July* 35 Titchwell; *Aug* 50 Haddiscoe; *Sept* 40 Cley, 40 Hickling Broad; *Oct* 76 Hickling Broad, 50 Brancaster GM, 50 Cantley BF, 48 Cley, 30 Holme; *Nov* 30 Titchwell, 20 Cantley Marshes; *Dec* 48 Hickling Broad. Evidence of irruptive behaviour in Oct with 5 west Holme 7th, 5 high west Horning 8th, 10 high west Holkham Meals 16th, with high-flying migrants heard there 18th and 5 east 19th, 5 high west Barton Turf Fen 26th; also single Cringleford Marsh 10th.



Red-breasted Flycatcher (Richard Johnson)

Long-tailed Tit

Aegithalos caudatus

Common resident breeder; Scandinavian white-headed race very rare in autumn

Largest flocks recorded: *Jan* 65 Kelling Heath; *Feb* 46 Dersingham Bog; *June* 55 North Tuddenham; *Sept* 50 Holkham Meals; *Oct* 30 Holme; *Nov* 30 Brancaster; *Dec* 40 Woodbastwick, 35 Catfield, 33 Swaffham.

NBA results showed the species was present in 79% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 3 pairs per occupied tetrad.

At Hunstanton total of 91 with 22 Oct 24th, 47 27th, 15 28th and 7 30th. Other evidence of migration: 25 circling high Great Ryburgh Oct 7th of which 15 flew off high south-west; 14 flying off to west calling continuously until out of sight Beeston Bump Oct 28th; 16 high north California Oct 31st with 21 also high north Nov 7th.

Marsh Tit

Parus palustris

Breeding resident

Appears to be continuing to decline as a breeding species, with records from only 43 localities, but no doubt under-recorded. Please see Editorial.

NBA results showed the species was present in 28% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 2 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Unusually high numbers noted Themelthorpe where 8 ringed Nov/Dec.

Willow Tit

Parus montanus

Breeding resident in decline

Recorded at 53 sites, an increase compared with 2002/3: Bagthorpe, Barton Turf, Booton, Bradenham, Brundall, Brundall Church Fen, Catfield Fen, Cranwich GP, Dersingham Bog, Didlington (3 prs), Drymere, East Rudham, East Walton Common, East Winch Common, East Wretham, Gateley, Glandford, Gooderstone, Great Massingham, Great Witchingham, Hempton, Hickling Broad, Horsey, Hoveton Hall, Langford, Lenwade Common, Little Massingham, Massingham Heath, Narborough, Pensthorpe, Pentney Heath, Rockland Broad, Sandringham, Santon Downham, Sculthorpe Moor, Stalham, Strumpshaw, Sturston Nursery, Surlingham Marsh, Sutton Fen, Swaffham, Syderstone Common (2 prs), Tattersett, Thetford Nunnery and Lakes, Thompson Common, Thorpe St Andrew, Tottenhill GP, Upton Fen, Wayland Wood, West Acre, Winfarthing and Yarmouth Cemetery.

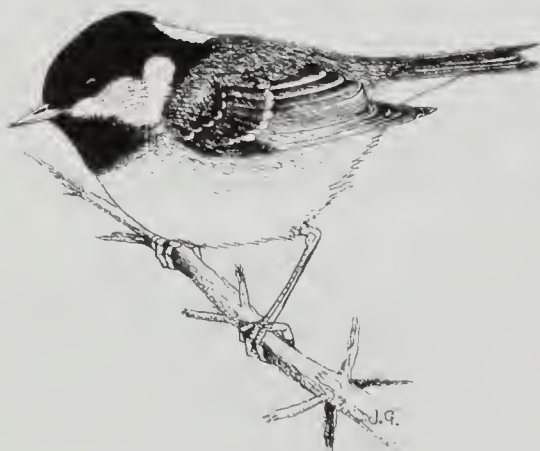
Coal Tit

Parus ater

Breeding resident and passage migrant

At Kelling Heath 25-30 Jan 17th. NBA results showed the species was present in 54% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 4 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Only evidence of migration: 2 continental birds Cley Nov 30th.



Coal Tit (John Geeson)

Blue Tit

Parus caeruleus

Common breeding resident and passage migrant

Only evidence of possible spring migration, 3 high west Beeston Bump March 17th. In autumn 5 west Sheringham Oct 19th, with 10 west 24th, and 5 south Hunstanton Oct 27th.

NBA results showed the species was present in 96% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 13 pairs per occupied tetrad.

At Brancaster Thompson Farm total of 341 ringed, compared with 288 in 2003. There also concentrations of 50 Feb and 60 Nov. Elsewhere 55 Beeston Regis and 42 Beeston Common June, and 40 Holme Oct.

Great Tit

Parus major

Common breeding resident and passage migrant

In spring 54 south Hunstanton March 17th and smaller numbers on 4 other dates.

NBA results showed the species was present in 94% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 10 pairs per occupied tetrad.

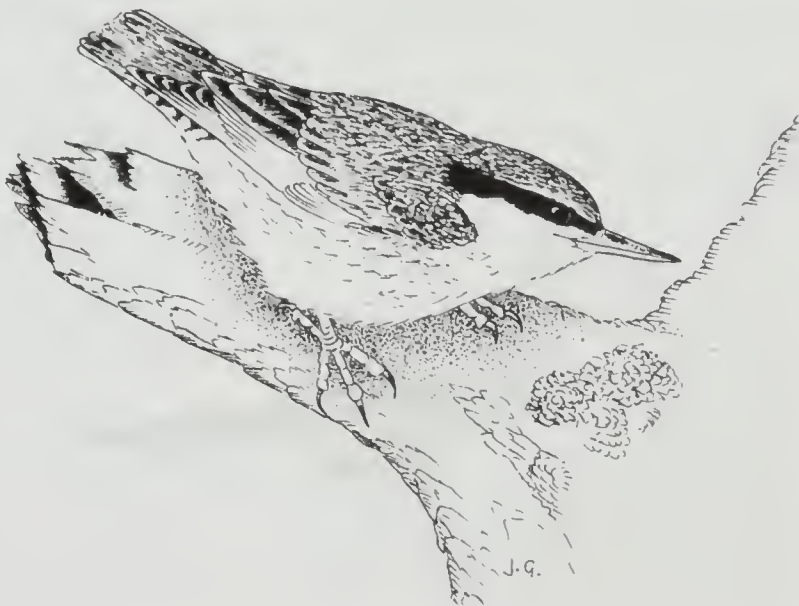
Flock of up to 65 Blickling Park in Dec. At Brancaster Thompson Farm total of 197 ringed during year compared with 165 in 2003.

Nuthatch

Sitta europaea

Breeding resident, possibly in decline

Highest counts of 6 Wayland Wood March and 8 Blickling Park April. NBA results showed the species was present in 23% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 2 pairs per occupied tetrad. A wandering bird near Titchwell Fen Hide Nov 23rd.



Nuthatch (*John Geeson*)

Treecreeper

Certhia familiaris

Widespread woodland resident

NBA results showed the species was present in 33% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 2 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Golden Oriole

Oriolus oriolus

Scarce migratory breeder and passage migrant in small numbers

Only one spring migrant, female Hunstanton May 19th. Singing male North Walsham June 11th; males Honingham early July and Brandon Parva late July.

Breeding: 2 pairs bred but success unknown; also a bird present on 2 occasions at another suitable site (Golden Oriole Group).

Red-backed Shrike

Lanius collurio

Passage migrant in small numbers; last bred 1989

In May, singing male Titchwell 8th-11th, and probably same Holme 12th/13th, was quickly followed by female Waxham and male Blakeney Point 9th, with latter being joined by female following day. A small influx later in month when female inland Sculthorpe Moor May 22nd and again 31st, male Winterton 23rd and female Horsey 24th. Additional females Brancaster June 5th and Eccles June 7th.

Two midsummer records with singles Hickling July 5th and Sheringham July 10th. Autumn passage disappointing with just 4 records: Holme Aug 4th and Sept 3rd-12th, Yarmouth Aug 10th and Horsey Sept 9th.

Great Grey Shrike

Lanius excubitor

Scarce passage migrant and declining winter visitor

At beginning of year what may have been same bird present at a number of sites in west of county: Grimes Graves Jan 3rd, Grimston Heath Jan 4th-10th, Massingham Heath also 10th, and Flitcham Feb 19th and March 1st. Spring migrants Holkham March 15th, Cromer March 31st, Upton Fen April 4th and Burnham Deepdale April 10th.

Autumn singles Holme Oct 10th-12th, Weybourne 11th and 13th (both ringed), Dersingham Bog 21st and Burnham Norton Nov 2nd-11th. In Brecks, an elusive over-wintering bird Lynford Arboretum Nov 11th and Dec 10th.



Great Grey Shrike (Phil Jones)

Woodchat Shrike

Lanius senator

Vagrant from southern Europe, mostly in spring

1995: A male Great Cressingham July 2nd-6th now accepted by BBRC as second record for Britain of West Mediterranean Islands' race *L s badius*.

Jay

Garrulus glandarius

Common resident; periodic influxes from the Continent following failure of acorn crop

Very little data received. At start of year groups of 7 Little Snoring Airfield March 2nd, 5 Norwich Bishopgate 23rd, 10 Lopham Fen April 12th and single Welney 13th considered unusual at these sites. Up to 8 Horning Waterworks April regularly observed collecting acorns stored last autumn.

Visible spring migrants 4 south Hunstanton Cliffs April 22nd and 5 west West Runton May 2nd.

NBA results showed the species was present in 69% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 2 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Only single record of autumn passage/dispersing bird Holme Nov 3rd. Good winter count of 19 Sandringham Dec 19th.

Magpie

Pica pica

Common resident forming winter roosts

Apart from details of birds on passage around coast very little data received. Roost counts at start of year: *Jan* 22 Hickling Stubb Mill; *March* 90 Lopham Fen; *April* 100 Roydon Common.

Spring movements around coast noted from mid-March with 4 south Hunstanton Cliffs and 11 west 6 east Beeston Bump 17th, south Hunstanton Cliffs, 5 high east Weybourne and 14 west Beeston Bump all 29th, 5 west Beeston Bump 30th, 2 south Hunstanton Cliffs and 7 west Beeston Bump April 3rd, singles Scolt Head and Blakeney Point 12th, 4 west Beeston Bump 14th, 2 south Hunstanton Cliffs 15th, south Hunstanton Cliffs 16th, west Scolt Head 17th, present Scolt Head and 8 west Cromer GC 22nd, south Hunstanton Cliffs 24th and again 25th, and 2 present Scolt Head 25th/26th, with further birds present there May 1st, 2 on 9th and single 14th.

NBA results showed the species was present in 82% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 4 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Autumn passage more prominent than usual with singles west Scolt Head Sept 26th and Oct 1st, 5 west there 3rd and 14 south Hunstanton Cliffs Nov 7th.

Roost counts in last quarter: *Oct* 100 Roydon Common; *Dec* 45 Harling, 144 Roydon Common. Additional counts in Dec of 16 Eau Brink, 7 Holme, 17 Leziate Ashwicken Heath and 10 Wiggshall St Peter RC.

Jackdaw

Corvus monedula

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor

Only large gathering/roost counts in first quarter 500 Blackborough End Tip, 3000 Cranwich, 3000 Roydon Common, 370 South Creake all Jan.

Numerous spring movements noted around coast March 8th (Holme) to May 19th (Hunstanton Cliffs), with peak counts 51 east Holme March 8th, 37 east Paston 14th, 155 south Hunstanton Cliffs and 55 east 20 west Beeston Bump 17th, 41 east Paston 21st, 50 east Beeston Bump 31st and 30 east April 1st, 45 east Cromer 2nd, 150 east Sheringham, 113 east Beeston Bump and 54 south Horsey 3rd. At Hunstanton Cliffs total 245 south on 30 dates.

NBA results showed the species was present in 86% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 12 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Generally single-figure autumn coastal movements from Sept 18th (Holme) to Nov 12th (Hunstanton). At Hunstanton Cliffs total 140 south Sept 30th-Nov 12th, including double-figure counts of 39 Oct 19th, 34 on 24th and 43 on 26th.

Aggregations in second half of year: *July* 500 Pentney GP, 250 Potter Heigham; *Aug* 200 Ashill, roost 1000 Burgh Castle, 200 Pentney GP; *Nov* 3000 East Winch Common (to roost at Blackborough End Tip); *Dec* 900 Hoveton, 311 Pentney GP. Also a mix Jackdaw/Rook pre-roost gathering 7000 Edgefield late Dec.

Birds considered to show characteristics of eastern race *monedula* Edgefield Jan 1st, Langham 22nd, Ditchingham March 28th and Thetford Nunnery May 6th.

Rook

Corvus frugilegus

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor

Only concentrations during first winter period 1200 Taverham Jan and 1000 Roughon Feb. Usual protracted series of spring coastal movements March 8th (Holme) to May 17th (Hunstanton Cliffs) involving higher than usual numbers of birds. Peak movements: 23 east Holme March 8th, 29 south Hunstanton Cliffs, 15 west Holme and 39 east Paston 14th, 29 south Hunstanton Cliffs 16th, 80 south Hunstanton Cliffs, 23 west Holme and 21 west Scolt Head 17th, 21 south Hunstanton Cliffs 29th, 23 south Hunstanton Cliffs and 15 south Horsey April 3rd, 18 south Hunstanton Cliffs 19th, 42 east Beeston Bump 22nd and 20 east there 26th. At Hunstanton Cliffs total 327 south on 29 dates March 14th-May 17th.

Rookery counts received from Long Stratton (84), Saxthope (8), Stanford TA (59 at 2 sites), Swaffham (165), Tharston (24), Wiggenhall St Peter RC (28) and Yarmouth (36 at 3 sites). NBA results showed the species was present in 65% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 38 pairs per occupied tetrad..

Only light autumn passage, with total 97 south Hunstanton Cliffs Oct 2nd-Nov 12th. Peak counts from there 17 Oct 19th, 24 26th and 7 on 29th, with only low single-figure numbers elsewhere.

Highest late summer/second winter period counts: 500 Pentney GP (July), 500 Spixworth (July), 850 Lenwade (Aug), 1000 Lenwade (Sept/Oct), 500 Sheringham (Oct/Nov), 450 Ashill (Nov), 1120 Reedham (Dec). A mixed Rook/Jackdaw pre-roost gathering of 7000 Edgefield late Dec.

Carrion Crow

Corvus corone

Increasing resident forming winter roosts; also a passage migrant

Only gatherings reported in first winter period, separate roosts of 93 and 105 Hickling Broad (Jan), several hundred Roydon Common roost (Jan) and 89 Ditchingham (March). Spring records, presumably of non-breeders, 85 at pre-roost assembly Hickling Broad Deep-Go Dyke April 15th, 229 Fersfield Airfield April 24th and 39 Low Tharston 25th.

Protracted spring coastal passage with peak counts: 45 in off sea Horsey March 13th; 10 east 8 west Sheringham and 40 south Horsey April 3rd; 56 west Scolt Head and 16 west Overstrand 14th; 16 west 6 east Beeston Bump and 35 in off sea then high south Overstrand 22nd; 36 north Waxham (0630-0830) 23rd; 54 north 30 south Waxham (0630-0900) 24th; 19 west Scolt Head and 20 west Sheringham 25th; 25 south Winterton May 2nd; 59 south Hunstanton Cliffs, 52 west Scolt Head and 16 west Beeston Bump 5th; 43 south Waxham (0600-0730) 6th; 18 west Scolt Head 14th with 18 west 17th. At Hunstanton Cliffs total 96 south April 20th-May 17th.

Total 70 located in tetrad around Wiggenhall St Peter RC May 8th. NBA results showed the species was present in 90% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 6 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Minimal autumn passage with only report 8 west Scolt Head Oct 3rd. Only concentrations towards end of year up to 300 Nar Valley Fisheries (Sept-Nov) and 35 Saddlebow (Nov).

Hooded Crow

Corvus cornix

A declining wintering and passage migrant.

In first winter period conceivably same bird Syderstone Feb 15th and Roydon Common March 21st. A few spring passage birds with 2 south Eccles March 31st, north Waxham April 4th, west Holme and Scolt Head 14th, west Cromer GC 17th, west Scolt Head, Burnham Overy Staithe, Beeston Bump, Cromer and Overstrand all 22nd (quite probably only 1-2 birds involved), and west Sheringham 25th.

At end of year pure bird Somerton Holmes Dec 27th only record.

At least one intergrade with Carrion Crow Winterton/Somerton Holmes plus 2 at Burgh Castle/Berney (one of which closely resembles pure bird) present throughout year. These regularly cause confusion. Additional hybrids noted Horsey/Winterton area April 3rd-9th with another north Winterton 9th (neither of which resident bird), west Blakeney Point 20th, and at end of year Gorleston Dec 16th-19th (variously reported as pure/hybrid, probably one of Burgh Castle birds).

Raven

Corvus corax

Formerly bred; now a vagrant/escape

One Choseley June 26th (GNB SCW), the first record since 1999.

Starling

Sturnus vulgaris

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor

Only notable counts in first winter period 1000 Caister (March), 1300 Holme (Feb), 2000 Taverham (March) and 5000 roost Thompson Water (Jan).

Easterly return passage much lighter than usual with few counts reaching triple figures. Peak numbers 350 Overstrand March 18th, 8196 Paston (0700-1000) 27th and 300 Overstrand 30th. At Hunstanton Cliffs total mere 558 south March 14th-May 6th.

NBA results showed the species was present in 90% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 16 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Midsummer westerly movement once again poor, with only notable counts all from Scolt Head where 525 June 14th, 353 27th, 587 on 29th and 249 July 6th. Best counts of daytime feeding flocks 700 Holme June 16th, 400 Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr 28th, 1500 Holme 30th, 3000 Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr July 11th, roost 2000 Brancaster 12th, 6000 Runham 13th, 500 King's Lynn Aug 1st, 600 Holme 17th and roost 1000 there Sept 1st.

Protracted westerly autumn passage from late Sept-late Nov with peak numbers as usual from Hunstanton Cliffs where total 186,947 south. Max counts (south at Hunstanton and west along north coast): 2200 Sheringham Oct 13th; 2050 Scolt Head 17th; 6133 Hunstanton Cliffs and 10,000 in off sea Paston 18th; 7547 Hunstanton Cliffs 19th; 7000 Holme and 9150 Scolt Head 20th; 6326 Hunstanton Cliffs and 6335 Scolt Head 27th; 17,880 Hunstanton Cliffs and 19,420 Scolt Head 28th; 16,361 Hunstanton Cliffs and 9350 Scolt Head 29th; 8352 Hunstanton Cliffs 30th with 7151 on 31st; 17,093 Hunstanton Cliffs, 2500 Holme and 2200 Beeston Bump all Nov 3rd; 50,000 south Snettisham and 13,934 Hunstanton Cliffs 7th; 13,263 Hunstanton

Cliffs 12th with 33,501 there 24th and 10,940 on 25th. Inland 13,000 Lopham Fen Oct 15th and roost 9000 there 22nd, and 10,000 Clippesby Hill 29th. Regular late autumn roost in R Ant valley where 80,000 How Hill Reedham Marshes Oct 29th increasing to 100,000 by Nov 11th, and still 80,000 Dec 1st. Only other concentration in second winter period pre-roost flock 10,000 Thetford Nunnery Lakes Dec 15th.

A leucistic individual with a normal dark head west with other birds Beeston Bump Nov 3rd.

Rose-coloured Starling

Sturnus roseus

Irruptive vagrant from south-east Europe and central Asia

Single record of adult Hellington Aug 7th (MLL) with presumed same feeding on peanuts in observer's garden Rockland St Mary the following day (PC).

House Sparrow

Passer domesticus

Common but declining resident

Some suggestion of stabilisation of population with levelling of numbers or small increases noted at East Tuddenham, Guist and Ridlington. Largest flocks during year: *Jan* 40 Narborough; *Feb* 60 Walpole Highway; *May* 60 Wiggenhall St Peter RC; *June* 47 Corpusty; *July* 50 Norwich Airport, 225 West Runton; *Aug* 80 Aylmerton, 100 West Walton; *Sept* 50 Little London, 110 West Runton; *Oct* 35 Lyng, 45 Norwich North Park Ave; *Nov* 40 Welney; *Dec* 90 Flordon, 40 Trunch, 55 West Acre, 72 Wiggenhall St Peter RC. Flocks present throughout year 50 Eastgate, 40 Fring and 50 Ormesby St Margaret (where 66 ringed).

Only three spring movements noted, all at Hunstanton Cliffs, March 29th, April 3rd and 15th, with 4 south on each date. Sole report of autumn passage 11 south same site Oct 24th.

NBA results showed the species was present in 87% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 21 pairs per occupied tetrad.

At Southrepps, from small population of 12, only 3 survived predation by Brown Rats while roosting under house pantiles in Nov.



House Sparrow (Phil Jones)

Tree Sparrow

Passer montanus

Scarce resident; passage migrant and winter visitor

As usual recorded from wide scattering of West Norfolk localities at start of year (with principal counts in brackets): Bittering (60 Jan), Blackborough End, Brancaster Staithe, Brettenham Heath (20 Jan), Choseley (30 Jan, 10 March), Coxford, Eastgate, East Rudham (30 Jan), Feltwell Anchor, Flitcham (43 Jan, 40 Feb), Great Hockham, Guist, Harpley Common, Hilborough, Illington (25 Feb), Litcham, Narborough, North Lopham, Oxwick (12 April), Ringstead (22 April), Rougham, South Creak, South Pickenham, Swaffham (10 March), Titchwell, Weasenham, Welney, West Lexham, Whissonsett (14 Jan).

Apart from singles Holme March 4th and Eccles April 8th, spring passage only noted at Hunstanton Cliffs where total 60 south on 11 dates March 16th-May 19th with peak counts 9 March 17th, 18 April 3rd, 14 12th and 8 on 22nd.

All breeding season records listed (with max counts/pairs): Castle Acre, Cley/Salhouse Heath (pr), Colkirk (2 prs), Dereham (12), East Lexham (3), Feltwell, Flitcham Abbey Farm (3), Fulmodeston (34 prs), Gooderstone (12 prs in nest boxes in one garden), Methwold Fens (2 prs), North Lopham (6 prs - 10 juvs), Shereford, Shipdham (20), Stow Bedon (13 prs), Swaffham (3), Weasenham (3), West Beckham. Additional post breeding records from Langham, South Acre and Titchwell.

Limited autumn passage noted with 3 present Hunstanton Sept 3rd, 2 West Runton 16th, 3 Holme 19th, west Holme 20th, 5 Snettisham 30th, 3 west Holme Oct 1st, 2 south California 2nd and 7 north 3rd, single Holme 7th/8th, 3 west Sheringham 13th, south Hunstanton Cliffs 18th, 3 south California 24th, and 7 West Runton and single Sca Palling 31st.

Few records in autumn/second winter period from Balc, Flitcham, Fring, Harling (10 Oct), Harpley, Holme Chalkpit Lane (60 Dec), Illington (65 Dec), UEA (Oct 10th), Oxwick (12 Oct-Dec), Shereford (15 Sept), Southrepps, Sparham (80 Nov/Dec), Welney and West Acre.

Chaffinch

Fringilla coelebs

Common resident; also passage migrant and winter visitor in varying numbers

Numbers during first winter period generally rather low with highest counts: *Jan* 200 Croxton, 50 Ormesby St Margaret; *Feb* 50 Roydon Common; *March* 500 Thompson, 100 Brancaster Thompson Farm, 80 Ormesby St Margaret.

Spring coastal movements first noted Paston where 300 east (2 hrs) March 1st followed by very impressive 5460 east (0700-1000) there March 14th. An equally impressive count same date Winterton where 7000 south (1000-1130). Only other site where noticeable passage during March at Hunstanton where main counts (to south) 346 17th, 209 18th, 133 28th and 157 29th. Smaller-scale passage continued into April with only counts over 100 all 3rd when (all south) 150 Waxham (1 hr 10 mins), 350 Horsey (3 hrs 15 mins) and 500 Caister (1400-1510). Movement dwindled rapidly thereafter until last of spring 2 south Hunstanton May 17th.

Breeding data included 36 pairs at Stow Bedon and 36 singing males Welney. NBA results showed the species was present in 97% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 27 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Autumn migration underway mid-Sept with small trickle of birds along coast. First count over 100 from Beeston Bump where 105 west (0645-0800) Sept 25th. Passage more widespread in Oct with main counts from Hunstanton where (all south) 586 18th, 2320 19th, 404 22nd, 1094 24th, 595 26th, 1059 27th, 332 28th and 335 29th; movement continued into Nov at this site with 2207 3rd, 171 7th and 147 12th. Elsewhere during Oct only counts of 100

or more at 3 other sites: 100 east Holme Oct 8th, 170 west Sheringham 19th with 60 east 40 west there 30th, and 100 in off sea Beeston Bump Oct 20th with 159 west there (0700-0815) Nov 3rd.

Highest counts in second winter period: *Nov* 74 Beechamwell; *Dec* 240 Thetford Nunnery Lakes, 102 Swaffham, 91 Beechamwell, 79 Massingham Heath.

Brambling

Fringilla montifringilla

Passage migrant and winter visitor in variable numbers

Counts during first winter period generally low with all flocks over 50: *Jan* 70 South Creake, 50 West Acre; *Feb* 50 Thetford; *March* 250 Swaffham, 200 Thetford, 80 Woodbastwick; *April* 140 Stanford TA, 120 Swaffham, 62 Rockland St Margaret.

Numbers dwindled rapidly from early April as birds departed, the last flock being 15 Strumpshaw 11th. Thereafter 1-3 at 14 sites until latest Titchwell May 2nd.

Very small late Sept arrival commenced 25th with 1-4 at 5 sites. A steady increase noted during Oct but numbers generally remained low, as illustrated by an autumn total of only 170 south Hunstanton Oct 11th-Nov 7th. Elsewhere during Oct only counts over 50: 80 Holkham Park 11th, 50 Tattersford 12th, 115 in off sea Scolt Head 20th with 50 in off sea Beeston Bump same day, and 60 Aylmerton 31st. Very small-scale immigration noted into Nov with final count from Titchwell where 100 west 7th.

Highest counts in second winter period: *Nov* 250 Stanford TA, 200 Burnham Market, 50 Holkham Park; *Dec* 250 Blickling Park, 200 East Barsham, 60 Brancaster Thompson Farm, 60 Cranwich.

Serin

Serinus serinus

Vagrant from southern Europe

A male Sidestrand April 19th (JRMc) and in May singles west Burnham Overy Dunes 2nd (AIB) and Weybourne 16th (MP). A return to a typical year compared with the two breeding records in 2003.

Greenfinch

Carduelis chloris

Common resident and passage migrant

Highest counts in first winter period: *Jan* 300 Great Fransham, 200 Massingham Heath, 150 Hoveton Hall, 100 Necton; *Feb* 250 Forncett St Mary.

Visible spring movement noted from only 3 coastal sites with lion's share at Hunstanton; where spring total of 921 south March 14th-May 17th with March peaks of 433 17th, 53 18th and 147 29th. Of other 2 sites only double-figures recorded at Beeston Bump where 40 west March 17th and 30 east April 3rd.

An interesting spring concentration of 120 Wiggenhall St Peter May 8th. NBA results showed the species was present in 93% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 13 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Autumn gatherings included 100 Heacham Sept 5th, 500 Holme Oct 9th and 100 Nar Valley Fisheries Oct 16th.

Autumn passage first noted Sept 9th when 100 east Holme. No further movement until end of month when 44 west Beeston Bump and 20 west Overstrand both 26th, and 200 west Holme 29th.

Highest counts of autumn at California where total of 6901 south 918 north Oct 2nd-Nov 25th, with max 526 Oct 16th, 402 17th, 1102 19th, 382 22nd, 334 23rd and 466 Nov 3rd. Only other site to consistently log counts Hunstanton where autumn total of 4816 south Sept

30th-Nov 25th with max 231 Oct 2nd, 202 3rd, 220 4th, 352 18th, 1805 19th, 197 22nd, 258 23rd, 335 24th, 466 26th, 188 Nov 3rd and 205 25th.

During second winter period max counts: *Nov* 600 Nar Valley Fisheries, 120 Riddlesworth, 110 Snettisham; *Dec* 400 Holme, 300 Nar Valley Fisheries, 200 Burnham Overy.

Goldfinch

Carduelis carduelis

Common resident, passage migrant and summer visitor

Only counts received Jan/Feb: 150 Hockwold Washes Feb 1st and 80 Welney 14th. Increase in submissions March/April with largest gatherings: *March* 120 Ormesby St Margaret, 95 Welney; *April* 80 East Winch.

Spring passage noted from March 17th at Hunstanton when 45 south. Further counts during spring at this site logged total of 2298 south until May 19th with peak early May when 134 2nd, 145 3rd, 214 4th and 281 5th. Regular passage also Scolt Head with total of 708 west April 12th-May 6th with max 198 May 2nd. Early May peak passage (all west) also recorded 2nd with 400 Sheringham, 200 West Runton and 320 Paston; also 200 again Sheringham 3rd.

NBA results showed the species was present in 89% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 5 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Sept gatherings included 150 Heacham, 100 Burgh Castle, 50 Grimston and 40 Paston.

Autumn coastal movement underway Aug 25th at Beeston Bump where 20 west (0630-0715). Only other sites to log regular counts were Hunstanton and California. At Hunstanton total of 57 south Sept 30th-Nov 25th was markedly lower than the 751 south 44 north at California Oct 2nd-Nov 20th. It will be interesting to compare autumn totals between these sites over future years.

Max counts during second winter period: *Nov* 59 Snettisham, 40 Bodney Camp, 40 Holme, 36 Whitlingham CP; *Dec* 74 Whitlingham CP, 70 Nar Valley Fisheries, 65 Smallburgh, 50 Snettisham.

Siskin

Carduelis spinus

Passage migrant and winter visitor in fluctuating numbers; small numbers breed

Widespread in first winter period with highest counts: *Jan* 70 Gunton Park, 90 Horning, 60 Lenwade, 60 Mundford, 160 Roydon Common, 75 Sparham Pools, 60 Thetford Nunnery Meadows, 80 West Lexham; *Feb* 100 Hempstead, 65 How Hill Crome's Broad, 60 Lynford Arboretum, 150 UEA Broad; *March* 40 Sweetbriar Marsh; *April* 150 Dersingham Bog.

A max of 18 in one Sheringham garden Jan-March but over 300 ringed during this period.

First movement of spring, 9 north Caister Feb 28th. At Hunstanton 1040 south on 30 dates March 14th-May 15th included 248 March 17th, 412 18th and 111 April 3rd. Elsewhere 7 west Holme March 2nd, 14 west 17th, 5 east 25th, 4 east 31st, 20 east April 1st, 2 west May 2nd, 16 south Caister April 3rd, 6 west Cley April 9th, 2 west Scolt Head 14th, 4 west 15th, 2 21st, and singles 24th and west May 5th.

Little breeding evidence: 2 broods Sheringham late May/early June and late June/July, 3 juvs Holt May 7th and all June, pair Munford May-Oct, juv on feeder Guist May 29th, juv Dersingham June 9th, male displaying Hockham June 15th, 1-3 juvs Beeston Regis July/Aug.

In autumn 82 south Hunstanton Oct 3rd-Nov 7th, 10 east Holme Oct 10th, 4 16th, 6 west Beeston Bump 21st and one west Nov 3rd, and 4 south-west Cley Oct 22nd. Only other double-figure counts in Oct 16 Titchwell 2nd with 15 on 27th.

In Nov/Dec only generally in very small numbers with exceptionally 150 Roydon Common during whole period. Counts from 14 sites with max 15 Lynford Arboretum Nov 14th and 25th, and 15 Pentney GP Dec 29th.

Linnet

Carduelis cannabina

Common resident and passage migrant

Highest counts in first winter period: *Jan* 120 Repps-with-Bastwick, 190 Rockland St Mary; *Feb* 145 Castle Acre, 100 Cockley Cley Wood, 100 Potter Heigham, 100 Salthouse; *March* 200 Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr.

Spring passage included 3529 south Hunstanton on 30 dates (80 hrs) March 14th-May 19th with max: 128 March 29th, 201 April 3rd, 229 22nd, 192 23rd, 190 24th, 207 26th and 304 May 4th.

Elsewhere highest counts: Scolt Head (all west) 313 April 14th, 278 15th, 173 16th, 356 22nd, 158 23rd, 189 24th, 467 May 2nd; 612 west Sheringham April 24th and 900 west May 2nd; 112 (87 west 25 east) Beeston Bump April 14th, 130 west 22nd, 243 west May 2nd; 450 west West Runton and 1800 west (0600-1000) Paston May 2nd; 300 south (1400-1510) Caister April 3rd.

Breeding pairs included 35 Scolt Head and 37 Blakeney Point. NBA results showed the species was present in 78% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 6 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Late summer/autumn flocks included: *Aug* 190 Cley, 100 Holme, 100 Scolt Head; *Sept* 250 Heacham, 100 Holme, 180 West Runton.

Visible autumn passage included total 518 south Hunstanton Sept 30th-Nov 25th, 579 south 41 north California Oct 2nd-Nov 18th and 80/hr west (0815-1200) Holme Oct 24th.

In second winter period highest concentrations: *Oct* 120 Ashill, 600 Hilborough, 170 Scolt Head; *Nov* 100 Sparham; *Dec* 100 Beeston Regis, 100 Burnham Overy, 150 Fring.

Twite

Carduelis flavirostris

Declining local winter visitor

Max counts at main resorts:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>
Holme	40	30	81	2	50	25
Thornham-Titchwell	58	80	150	27	50	65
Scolt/Brancaster Hbr	70	40	-	25	15	45
Holkham Bay	20	8	8	20	1	-

The sad decline of Twite in the county continues apace. Birds were regularly present at just 4 coastal sites in first winter period and at just 3 in second. Furthermore, the regular reports of birds at Holme, Thornham and in Brancaster Hbr almost certainly refer to same mobile flock, so table probably overstates the species' abundance, especially in second winter period. No reports were received from Happisburgh and the sole record from Breydon concerned an individual Feb 25th. Most remarkably, birds failed to overwinter in Holkham Bay, until now one of their most favoured haunts. Birds were reported on just 3 dates in Wash, with 35 Ongar Hill Jan 24th, 10 Feb 22nd and 18 Nov 6th. The paucity of records is not due to under-reporting; a small number of observers, studying the birds on their Pennine breeding grounds, made regular searches of suitable habitat along the coast throughout both winter periods and all their records are included. The largest count of the year, and the only three-figure count received, may have been boosted by the inclusion of Linnets which wintered

alongside Twite at Titchwell. Observers need to make doubly sure of their identification of this increasingly scarce species and, as Linnets now far outnumber Twite along the coast, should not assume that any drab finches on the shore are Twite. The last wintering birds were 4 Titchwell April 5th with 2 west Scolt Head April 14th, and first returning birds 7 Scolt Head Oct 13th.

Migrants were in evidence in spring at Hunstanton, with 4, 13, 11, 3 and 18 south March 17th, 18th, 27th, 29th and April 3rd respectively, with a single south there Oct 18th and 5 south California Oct 23rd.

The following additional reports were received of birds away from their favoured resorts in first winter period: Snettisham Jan 10th, 18 Burnham Overy Staithe and 19 Stiffkey SM Jan 31st, and 3 Morston and 17 Winterton Feb 24th. In second winter period: 2 Burnham Norton Oct 24th and one Nov 13th, 20 Burnham Overy Staithe Oct 30th, 8 Wells Oct 28th, one Cley Oct 30th and 5 Nov 3rd, 4 Salhouse Oct 22nd and 5 Oct 27th, Sheringham Oct 17th, 2 on 19th, 3 on 28th and one west Nov 14th, and 5 Paston Nov 9th.

Lesser Redpoll

Carduelis cabaret

Passage migrant, winter visitor and declining resident

In first four months of year following double-figure counts received: 12 Horning Waterworks Jan 9th, 15 East Ruston 14th, 25 How Hill Turf Fen 15th, 60 West Acre 23rd, 20 UEA Broad 31st, 15 Strumpshaw Feb 3rd, 30 Norwich Sweetbriar Marshes March 6th, 11 Whitlingham CP 13th, 20 Hickling Broad 17th, 16 Catfield Fen 23rd, 50 UEA Broad 29th, 14 Barton Broad and 10 Dersingham Bog April 6th, 12 Kelling Heath 16th, 30 West Newton 17th.

Spring passage March 14th-May 30th. At Hunstanton total of 235 south with max 45 April 26th. At Scolt Head 14 west April 23rd with 12 24th, 14 25th, 13 26th and a further 4 singles in May, latest 30th. Elsewhere single west Beeston Bump April 14th with 2 15th, 5 west Holme 16th, single west Cromer 23rd with 2 May 7th, 2 north Snettisham May 1st and 2 south 2nd when also 7 west Burnham Overy.

Very little evidence of breeding: 3-4 in song and display flight at Croxton Heath in April; in May singles Hempton and Fakenham, and noted in song flight Norwich Cathedral and Swanton Novers; June singles at Hickling Broad, Titchwell and Upton Fen.

Increasingly scarce in second half of year. Scant autumn movement: west Scolt Head Oct 7th and 18th, 8 south California 22nd, south Hunstanton 22nd with 4 24th, 2 south Winterton 23rd.

In second winter period single-figure counts from 12 sites plus 21 Filby Broad Nov 25th, 12 Irstead Dec 6th and 15 Smallburgh Wayford Bridge 20th.

A number of records of Redpoll sp included 20 Brundall Church Fen March 23rd, 40 east Sheringham April 16th with 10 west 25th and 15 east May 2nd, and 21 East Ruston South Fen Nov 24th.

Common (ie Mealy) Redpoll

Carduelis flammea

Scarce winter visitor

A poor year with singles UEA Broad March 29th, Scolt Head May 10th and north California Oct 31st. Two Titchwell Dec 4th until month end with another single Hunworth Dec 5th.

Arctic Redpoll

Carduelis hornemanni

Winter vagrant from Scandinavia and northern Russia

One of form *exilipes* Titchwell Dec 3rd until month end (JCo PE *et al*) in company with both Common and Lesser Redpoll for comparison.

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

Very few in first winter period with majority in Brecks where only double-figure counts 20 Lynford Arboretum Jan 1st and 10 Thetford Olly's Farm Feb 21st. Only coastal movements: single south Hunstanton March 17th with 2 18th and 28th, when also 2 south Holme.

No firm evidence of breeding.

First real sign of post breeding movements/immigration mid-June onwards with half annual total occurring June/July including: 10 Holkham Meals, 29 north Gorleston and 9 West Tofts Mere all June 14th, 2 south Horning Lock 16th, one south North Creake 21st, 9 west Sennowe Park 30th, 5 Sheringham Park July 1st, 5 8th and 4 22nd, 21 Dersingham Bog 5th, 6 east High Kelling July 6th, singles Costessey and Titchwell 18th, 4 Brancaster Staithe 26th, 5 Holme 28th, 4 west Cley 29th.

Thereafter very scarce with all records listed: 4 Holme Aug 1st, 2 3rd and 5th, 2 Thetford 14th, East Ruston 28th, Holkham Meals Sept 12th, Oct 14th, 29th, Nov 11th, 3 13th and one 14th, Holme Oct 11th, 5 east 27th, 2 Nov 7th, 6 Dersingham Bog Oct 16th, one in off sea then east Sheringham Oct 28th, 4 Brancaster Thompson Farm Nov 17th.

Common Rosefinch

Carpodacus erythrinus

Rare passage migrant; potential colonist

Despite national predictions some years ago this species remains very scarce in the county with only two typical short-staying singing males at Holkham Meals May 24th (AIB *et al*) and Sheringham next day (DHS MAWe).

Bullfinch

Pyrrhula pyrrhula

Resident and occasional immigrant

Recorded at similar number of sites to previous year (49) but continues to be seriously under-recorded eg only reported Holme (up to 3 Jan-March) in first winter period (see Editorial).

In breeding season min 4 pairs Roydon Common. NBA results showed the species was present in 42% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 2 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Largest numbers in autumn/second winter period 9 Beeston Common Sept 9th, and 8 Swaffham Dec 3rd, Eau Brink 28th and Pentney GP 29th.

The autumn saw an unprecedented invasion into the country (and also Western Europe) of birds of the form *pyrrhula*, recorded as follows: Oct north California 14th, Holkham Meals, Blakeney Point and Caister GC 17th, 2 Blakeney Point, 2 Weybourne and 2 Sheringham all 18th, 6 Scolt Head (2 feeding along strandline) and 2 Cley 19th, Overstrand 20th, 2 Holkham Meals 26th and 31st, 3 Scolt Head 29th, Titchwell 30th; Nov one Titchwell all month, 2 Holkham Meals and 2 Hemsby 9th, Holkham Meals and Cley 14th, 4 Salthouse 27th; Dec 2 Kelling WM 1st, Titchwell 7th with 5 12th, when singles also Morston and Sheringham, 2 Northrepps 13th, Strumpshaw 28th. Several of these individuals gave an unusual 'trumpeting' call which, contra to some reports, has been attributed to *pyrrhula* in western Europe previously (Dutch Birding 27: 86).

Hawfinch

Coccothraustes coccothraustes

Elusive and very local resident; scarce migrant

Recorded at a similar number of sites as 2003 but remains scarce and only regular at Lynford Arboretum and Barnhamcross Common (although much disturbance there in second winter period). No evidence of breeding.

Tabulated highest counts:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Barnhamcross Common	8	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Lynford Arboretum	7	25	14	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	5	17

All records at other sites: 6 Lynford GP Feb 21st, Holkham Park March 6th (first record after absence of 3 years), Kelling Heath 6th with 2 April 2nd, Beeston Regis March 13th (first record in 14 years), 2 Dunston 28th, 2 East Wretham Heath April 5th, Brancaster June 18th, 2 Brancaster Thompson Farm 19th, migrant in off sea then south Wells East Hills Oct 20th, Sprowston Nov 6th, Tottenhill GP Dec 29th.



Hawfinches and Redwing (Gary Wright)

Lapland Bunting

Calcarius lapponicus

Regular but usually scarce passage migrant and winter visitor

Monthly max at most regularly counted sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Holme	13	6	60	-	2	21	12
Thornham/Titchwell	2	6	-	2	4	17	4
Choseley	-	9	40	-	-	-	-
Scolt Head	-	-	-	6	7	-	-
Burnham Overy	-	-	-	4	2	2	-
Holkham Bay	-	-	-	-	12	3	-
Stiffkey/Warham Greens	15	-	-	-	1	3	16
Blakeney Point	-	-	-	1	3	-	-
Cley/Salthouse	-	-	-	4	4	1	-
Kelling/Weybourne	-	-	2	1	5	1	1
Sheringham	-	3	-	1	-	7	26
West Runton	-	-	-	3	2	12	-
Mundesley/Paston	-	-	-	-	10	12	5
Happisburgh/Eccles	-	-	-	-	8	-	-
Breydon	-	5	-	-	-	1	12

Elsewhere in first winter period singles Burnham Norton Jan 25th and Beeston Bump March 17th. In April singles Scolt Head 11th and 14th, Sheringham 17th and west Titchwell 22nd.

Autumn records included singles west Weybourne Sept 10th, Sheringham/Beeston Bump 16th and Beeston Bump Oct 2nd. Elsewhere total of 6 south Hunstanton Sept 30th-Nov 7th, one west over Norwich Oct 18th and singles Trimingham and Winterton Oct 30th. Singles also over Blickling Park and at Burnham Norton Nov 3rd, Terrington Marsh Nov 7th and Beeston Regis Dec 11th.

Snow Bunting
Winter visitor in declining numbers
Monthly maxima at most regularly counted sites:

Plectrophenax nivalis

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Snettisham/Heacham	3	23	13	-	1	-	150	60
Holme	60	80	6	-	-	33	200	75
Thornham/Titchwell/Brancaster	80	100	30	-	-	14	150	124
Choseley	-	40	10	-	-	-	70	-
Scolt Head	85	40	-	2	1	25	80	130
Burnham Overy	30	-	2	-	-	3	70	-
Holkham Bay/Wells	200	100	40	-	-	-	350	150
Stiffkey/Blakeney Point	23	25	7	-	-	20	130	-
Cley/Salthouse	82	80	20	-	7	20	80	90
Sheringham/West Runton	20	26	2	-	-	-	50	-
Walcott/Paston	60	50	-	-	-	-	250	61
Happisburgh/Eccles	60	-	-	-	-	-	200	-
Horsey/Sea Palling/Winterton	8	22	-	-	-	16	50	40
Caister	200	100	78	-	-	-	150	250
Breydon/Yarmouth/Gorleston	1	1	-	-	1	7	60	42



Snow Buntings (Gary Wright)

Elsewhere 14 Lessingham North Gap Jan 1st-March 7th and singles south at Hunstanton March 27th and April 28th. A single male in breeding plumage Winterton beach May 27th.

Earliest autumn arrival Scolt Head Sept 8th-11th with records at 7 other sites by end of month. Other Nov sightings not noted above included 11 Trimingham 4th and 60 11th, 7 between Ringstead and Heacham 19th, and 20 Runham on 20th. In Dec other significant flocks included 50 East Ruston 3rd and 80 Wighton 29th.

Pine Bunting

Emberiza leucocephala

Vagrant from Siberia

A male Choseley Feb 28th-March 11th (AJS *et al*). Only the second county record, the first being at Hopton in 1995. See article page 289.

Yellowhammer

Emberiza citrinella

Once common resident, currently in decline

Flocks in first winter period included at least 200 at Choseley, up to 200 in a mixed flock with Reed Buntings Potter Heigham, 100 Buxton Heath, 80 West Lexham, 70 Necton and 48 Ryston near Downham Market.

Spring passage birds included a total of 31 south at Hunstanton on 30 dates March 14th-May 4th with max of 9 March 17th, 3 west Beeston Bump March 16th/17th with one west April 3rd, and 3 west Scolt Head April 22nd/23rd.

Breeding territories/pairs included Ringstead Courtyard Farm 23 (same as 2003), Stow Bedon 19 and Roydon Common 13. NBA results showed the species was present in 83% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 7 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Autumn passage movement noted Hunstanton where 49 south Oct 4th-Nov 25th with max 29 Oct 24th. Elsewhere in Oct west Beeston Bump 3rd and 26th with 2 east 24th, 3 east Scolt Head 11th, 2 south California 19th and 31st, and 6 west Sheringham 23rd. Autumn flocks of 60 Morning Thorpe GP Sept 21st and 50 Holme Oct 11th.

In Nov/Dec flocks of up to 50 at Babingly, Beechamwell, Choseley, Great Ouse RC, Hoveton Hall, Nar Valley Fisheries, Potter Heigham and Watton, with 130 Gooderstone Dec 18th.

Reed Bunting

Emberiza schoeniclus

Resident and passage migrant

Flocks in first winter period included 70 Martham, 46 St Benet's Level, 44 Scolt Head, 42 Potter Heigham, 34 Titchwell, 29 Brancaster and 16 Berney; also 20 both Pentney GP and Welney March 27th.

Spring movements recorded south at Hunstanton Cliffs included 142 March 14th-May 6th with 94 on March 17th. Elsewhere 5 west Beeston Bump March 15th and 5 south Horsey April 3rd.

Breeding territories/pairs included Holkham GM 58, Blakeney Point 31 and Welney 51, with 85 singing males at Scolt Head and at least 40 Hickling Broad. NBA results showed the species was present in 35% of tetrads covered in one of the breeding seasons 2000-04, with an average of 4 pairs per occupied tetrad.

Autumn movements included total of 120 west at Scolt Head with 22 Sept 26th and 24 Oct 13th, 129 south Hunstanton Sept 30th-Nov 25th, and 109 south 9 north California Oct 3rd-Nov 21st. Smaller numbers also west at Holme, Sheringham and Beeston Bump, with 20 east Holme Oct 10th.

Second winter period flocks included up to 100 Sparham, 31 Scolt Head/Brancaster Hbr, 20 Holme and 14 Stalham.

Corn Bunting

Emberiza calandra

Local and declining resident

Peak first winter period counts at regular sites:

	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>
Snettisham	10	10	9	3
Choseley	8	120	107	70
Paston	-	19	10	6
Welney/Ten Mile Bank	150	1	1	2

Elsewhere 35 West Walton March 7th, 2 between Sea Palling and Waxham March 9th, single Sheringham March 27th, 2 Weybourne April 5th and 126 (including 2 singing males) Ringstead Courtyard Farm April 15th.

A spring movement of 1-2 birds noted April 14th-22nd at Hunstanton, Scolt Head, Salthouse and Beeston Bump.

In May 6 Paston 1st and 2 Brancaster Thompson Farm 2nd, with 3 singing males at both Choseley and Weybourne/Sheringham May/June. Elsewhere isolated records of singles at Feltwell May 27th, Titchwell May 28th and June 6th, West Walton June 6th and West Runton July 28th.

In autumn few records received and similarly in second winter period where max 20 Choseley Dec.



Corn Bunting (*Richard Johnson*)

Introductions, Escapes, Ferals and Hybrids

Appendix I - Categories A, B and C

Escapes or feral birds of species on the British List

Category A Species

Lesser White-fronted Goose

Anser erythropus

Northern Eurasia; winters southern Europe, India and China

Bayfield Lake 2 Feb 18th; Holkham FM Jan 2nd; Nar Valley Fisheries Dec 18th; Stiffkey Fen Oct 6th; Tottenhill GP Aug 3rd, Oct 16th, Dec 17th.

Snow Goose

Anser caerulescens

North-east Siberia and North America; winters to Mexico

Berney/Breydon 'blue-phase' April 17th, Nov 1st; Thetford Nunnery Lakes Jan 9th; Scolt Head roosting with Pink-feet Nov 14th.

Red-breasted Goose

Branta ruficollis

Western Siberia; winters Black, Caspian and Aral Seas

Diss Mere pinioned bird from 2003 joined by second free-flying bird from April 17th, both remaining until year end.

Lady Amherst's Pheasant

Chrysolophus amherstiae

Mountains of Tibet and China to north Burma

Ditchingham Jan 10th.

Night Heron

Nycticorax nycticorax

Free-flying colony at Great Witchingham, last bred 2003

Sparham Pools May 1st.

White Stork

Ciconia ciconia

Vagrant from the Continent

A considerable number of records from Broads that are presumably all attributable to the now familiar free-flying Thrigby Hall escapee. Noted April 9th-June 5th at Filby, Rollesby and Hickling Broads, Thurne, Runham, Acle, Breydon/Burgh Castle/Berney Marshes, Potter Heigham and Yarmouth, and again at Filby Broad Nov 5th.

Category B/C Species

Ruddy Shelduck

Tadorna ferruginea

Asia and North Africa

Bayfield Lake pair March 30th, pair with 5 ducklings May 26th and pair with no ducklings 29th; Bittering GP Jan 17th-31st with max 17 on 28th; Briston 6 Feb 7th and 4 on 8th; Cley April 13th/14th, 2 Aug 2nd, 3 9th, one 19th, 6 27th, 2 28th, 2 Sept 13th/14th and 6 Dec 13th; Earsham GP 6 Nov 2nd/3rd; Great Ryburgh March 8th; Gunton Park 2 April 29th; Holkham Park 2 April 26th and 2 Sept 26th; Sheringham 2 west July 4th.

Appendix II - Category D

Species that would otherwise appear on the British List except that there is reasonable doubt that they have ever occurred in a natural state

Ross's Goose

Anser rossii

Tundra of northern Canada, winters to southern United States

A confusing situation involving several birds, some ringed, wandering the north Norfolk coast and visiting Broads.

Appendix III - Category E

Escapes or feral birds of species not on the British List

White-faced Whistling-duck

Dendrocygna viduata

Costa Rica to Brazil; Africa, Madagascar and Comoro Islands

Great Ryburgh 2 March 18th.

Black Swan

Cygnus atratus

Australia and Tasmania

Acle Straight Feb 8th; Bayfield Lake Jan 21st; Buckenham Jan 14th; Bure Marshes Feb 9th; Cley present majority of year; Diss Mere July 8th; Halvergate Feb 12th; Horning 2 Jan 11th; Salhouse Broad Aug 16th and Dec 25th; St Benet's Level Feb 1st and 3 March 20th/21st; Ten Mile Bank Feb 27th; Welney Jan 5th, March 7th, 3 9th, one 18th, 2 25th, one on 30th and April 5th, 9th/10th; Whitlingham CP April 28th.

Bar-headed Goose

Anser indicus

Central Asia; winters in India and Burma

Aylmerton Dec; Cley Aug 9th-31st and Sept 16th; Coxford March 9th-May 7th and Oct 6th; Felbrigg Lake Feb 13th and during Dec; Nar Valley Fisheries Dec 4th and 18th; Salhouse Oct 6th and 8th; Stiffkey Fen Sept 20th and 26th/27th; Tattersett May 25th-July 28th; Tottenhill GP Nov 7th-11th and 22nd.

Blue-winged Goose

Cyanochen cyanopterus

Highlands of Ethiopia

Swanton Morley GP June 2nd.

Swan Goose

Anser cygnoides

Eastern Eurasia

Berney Nov 20th; Fowlmere 2 Jan 1st-April 25th.

Emperor Goose

Anser canagica

North-east Siberia to western Alaska; winters southern Alaska to northern California

How Hill Reedham Water Jan 29th, Sept 19th and Oct 18th.

Australian Shelduck

Tadorna tadornoides

Southern Australia

Shropham March 21st and June 20th.

Muscovy Duck

Cairina moschata

Southern Mexico to Argentina and Brazil

Brandon-Denver 4 Jan 1st; Broome GP Jan 6th and 8th; Glanford Mill 8 March 29th; Norwich Old Lakenham 2 pairs March 13th; Thetford 6 Jan 8th, 5 Jan 9th and Feb 4th.

Wood Duck

Aix sponsa

Canada to northern Mexico, Cuba and Bahamas

Cley 2 March 31st; Gunton Park Lake 2 Oct 14th.

Chiloe Wigeon

Anas sibilatrix

Southern South America

Wells Hbr Oct 29th.

White-cheeked Pintail

Anas bajamensis

South America, West Indies and Galapagos Islands

Breydon Oct 17th and Nov 6th/7th; Welney Sept 4th/5th.

Red-billed Teal

Anas erythrorhyncha

East and southern Africa; Madagascar

Cantley BF Aug 2nd and 27th.

Ringed Teal <i>South America</i> Tottenham GP Sept 25th.	<i>Callonetta leucophrys</i>
Chestnut Teal <i>Australia and Tasmania</i> Salhouse 2 Sept 6th-9th.	<i>Anas castanea</i>
Rosy-billed Pochard <i>South America</i> Ranworth Broad Oct 17th at least.	<i>Netta peposaca</i>
Reeves's Pheasant <i>North-central China</i> Stanford TA up to 8 males displaying late March/April; Wayland Wood March 6th.	<i>Syrnaticus reevesii</i>
Green Pheasant <i>Japan</i> There would appear to be a small but growing population in Briggate, East Ruston, Honing, Riddlington and Worstead area. Also up to 20 birds in Clippersby area resembled this species but were not examined critically to eliminate hybrid possibility.	<i>Phasianus versicolor</i>
Indian Peafowl <i>India and Sri Lanka</i> Croxtan Jan 7th.	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>
Chinese Pond Heron <i>Asia; winters to Malaysia and Borneo</i> Eccles Oct 31st.	<i>Arcleola bacchus</i>
Sacred Ibis <i>Africa south of Sahara to Iran; Madagascar</i> East Dereham Sept 18th and 26th-Oct 5th.	<i>Threskiornis aethiopicus</i>
African Spoonbill <i>Africa south of Sahara; Madagascar</i> Cley Oct 6th.	<i>Platalea alba</i>
Harris Hawk <i>USA and South America</i> Rockland Broad April 9th; Stanford TA April 3rd.	<i>Parabuteo unicinctus</i>
Red-tailed Hawk <i>North and Central America and West Indies</i> Cockley Cley Warren Aug 6th; Paston/Waxham/Winterton April 3rd; Swaffham March 16th; Waxham April 14th.	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>
Large Falcon (Lanner type) Cley April 3rd and Oct 21st; Fring March 15th-19th and 23rd; Titchwell March 6th and 28th.	<i>Falco sp</i>
Large Falcon (Saker type) Cley July 25th, Aug 17th and Oct 6th.	<i>Falco sp</i>
Grey Parrot <i>West and central Africa</i> West Walton Oct 12th-29th.	<i>Psittacus erithaeus</i>
Budgerigar <i>Australia</i> Beeston Bump July 18th; New Costessey 2 Oct 5th; Paston March 12th.	<i>Melopsittacus undulatus</i>

Cockatiel*Nymphicus hollandicus**Australia*

Breydon Aug 11th; Old Hunstanton Sept 10th; Repps-with-Bastwick June 23rd-July 15th.

Green Turaco*Turaco persa**Senegal to Zaire, Angola*

Barrow Common Jan 23rd.

Rock Eagle Owl*Bubo bengalensis**Pakistan, India and western Burma*

Eaton Jan 29th/30th and Feb 4th.

Appendix IV - Hybrids

As submitted by observers - parentage not necessarily confirmed

Canada Goose x Greylag Goose

Bittering GP Jan 1st; Cockley Cley Lakes April 22nd and 24th; Shropham GP 2 Feb 8th, one June 20th and Aug 22nd.

Canada Goose x Domestic Goose

Shropham GP Aug 22nd.

Canada Goose x Egyptian Goose

Shropham GP Aug 22nd.

Canada Goose x Barnacle Goose

Hickling Broad June 10th, July 3rd, and Sept 3rd and 6th.

Barnacle Goose x Greylag Goose

Berney April 17th; Flitcham Jan 29th; Holkham Park Feb 17th and May 6th.

Barnacle Goose x White-fronted Goose

Coxford March 9th-23rd, May 28th and June 6th; Flitcham Jan 10th and Feb 9th; Raynham Lake March 26th and Dec 23rd.

Barnacle Goose x Lesser White-fronted Goose

Wroxham first winter period

Ross's Goose x Pink-footed Goose

Brancaster Jan 23rd, Nov 24th and 26th, Dec 9th-19th; Brancaster Staithe Nov 30th, Dec 2nd and 20th; Burnham Market Jan 8th and 23rd-27th; Burnham Thorpe Jan 2nd; Chosely Nov 16th; Docking Nov 2nd and 11th; Hindringham Dec 3rd; Holkham FM Sept 28th; North Creake Feb 5th and 8th; Stanhoe Jan 8th.

Eurasian Wigeon x American Wigeon

Burnham Norton Feb 7th.

Aythya hybrids

Welney at least 4 during Jan.

Black-headed Gull x Mediterranean Gull

Whitlingham CP March 13th.

Herring Gull x Lesser Black-backed Gull

Breydon Jan 29th; Saddlebow Feb 2nd and 19th, March 28th.

Herring Gull x Glaucous Gull

Alderby Tip 1st-winter Jan 16th; Blackborough End Tip Feb 25th.

Earliest and Latest Dates of Summer Migrants

(excludes occasional winter records)

	<i>Arrivals</i>		<i>Departures</i>	
Manx Shearwater	April 24th	Titchwell	Nov 19th	Walcott/Sea Palling
Spoonbill	March 26th	Burnham Overy GM	Dec 31st	North Coast
Garganey	March 1st	How Hill	Oct 4th	Welney
Honey Buzzard	April 20th	Hickling	Oct 15th	Weybourne
Montagu's Harrier	April 15th	Holme	Sept 7th	Hindringham/Bale
Osprey	March 28th	Cley	Oct 2nd	Ranworth Broad
Hobby	April 18th	Surlingham	Oct 21st	Cley
Quail	May 10th	Long Stratton	Nov 23rd	Brancaster
Stone Curlew	March 8th	Brecks	Nov 5th	Great Cressingham
Little-ringed Plover	March 8th	Titchwell	Oct 2nd	Pentney GP
Dotterel	May 6th	Waxham	Sept 19th	Blakeney Point
Little Stint	May 17th	Hickling Rush Hills	Dec 17th	Titchwell
Temminck's Stint	April 20th	Hockwold Washes	Sept 4th	Hickling Rush Hills
Curlew Sandpiper	April 15th	Welney	Dec 6th	Titchwell
Whimbrel	March 26th	Titchwell	Oct 28th	Holkham/Wells
Wood Sandpiper	April 25th	Breydon/Berney	Oct 4th	Welney
Common Sandpiper	April 16th	Blakeney Point	Oct 17th	Cantley BF
Sandwich Tern	March 18th	Breydon	Nov 8th	Holme
Roseate Tern	May 30th	Cley	Oct 3rd	Titchwell
Common Tern	April 1st	Ranworth Broad	Nov 6th	Lenwade
Arctic Tern	April 8th	Barton/Wroxham Brd	Oct 23rd	Weybourne
Little Tern	April 6th	Scolt Head	Oct 2nd	North Gap
Black Tern	April 14th	How Hill	Nov 2nd	Welney
Turtle Dove	April 14th	Strumpshaw	Oct 18th	Weybourne
Cuckoo	April 12th	Waxham	Sept 10th	Horseý, Sutton Fen
Nightjar	May 9th	Roydon Common	Aug 25th	Kelling Heath
Swift	April 17th	Ormesby	Oct 29th	3 sites
Wryneck	April 14th	Ludham	Oct 21st	Scolt Head
Sand Martin	March 16th	Holkham	Oct 29th	Blakeney, Winterton
Swallow*	Feb 15th	South Walsham	Dec 23rd	Cley
House Martin	March 16th	Salthouse	Oct 29th	3 sites
Tree Pipit	April 4th	Waxham, Brecks	Oct 28th	Holkham Meals
Yellow Wagtail	March 13th	Hunstanton	Nov 8th	Salthouse
White Wagtail	March 7th	Winterton	Oct 27th	Scolt Head
Nightingale	April 16th	Salthouse	June 6th	Ringland
Redstart	April 12th	Titchwell	Oct 30th	Blakeney Point
Whinchat	April 16th	Holme	Oct 29th	Blakeney GM
Wheatear	March 15th	Yarmouth	Oct 30th	Old Hunst, Breydon
Ring Ouzel	April 1st	Holme, Cromer	Nov 10th	Blakeney
Grasshopper Warbler	April 11th	Guist	Oct 13th	Wells
Sedge Warbler	March 30th	Horning Marsh Farm	Oct 1st	Berney
Reed Warbler	April 13th	Titchwell	Oct 16th	3 sites
Lesser Whitethroat	April 13th	Choseley	Oct 29th	Winterton
Whitethroat	April 8th	Swaffham	Oct 8th	Beeston Bump
Garden Warbler	April 20th	Lenwade	Oct 31st	Scolt Head
Wood Warbler	April 25th	East Carleton	Sept 9th	Pentney Heath
Willow Warbler	March 27th	Ranworth Broad	Oct 29th	Kelling WM
Spotted Flycatcher	April 28th	Yarmouth	Sept 30th	Scolt Head
Pied Flycatcher	April 25th	Titchwell	Oct 11th	Trimingham
Red-backed Shrike	May 8th	Titchwell	Sept 12th	Holme

* *Earliest county record*

Latest and Earliest Dates of Winter Migrants

(excludes occasional summer records)

	<i>Departures</i>		<i>Arrivals</i>	
Black-throated Diver	April 19th	Titchwell	Sept 10th	Holme
Great Northern Diver	March 20th	Sheringham	Sept 25th	Sheringham
Red-necked Grebe	March 25th	Tottenhill GP	Aug 26th	Sheringham
Slavonian Grebe	March 26th	Weybourne	Sept 24th	Scolt Head
Black-necked Grebe	May 23rd	Welney	Aug 31st	Burnham Overy Staithe
Bewick's Swan	April 11th	Welney	Oct 10th	Welney
Whooper Swan	May 16th	Welney	Sept 24th	Welney
Taiga Bean Goose	April 11th	Horsey/Somerton	Nov 7th	Yare Valley
Tundra Bean Goose	Feb 29th	West Runton	Nov 6th	Brancaster
Pink-footed Goose	May 9th	Snettisham, Holkham	Sept 9th	Holkham GM
White-fronted Goose	March 28th	Winterton	Oct 11th	Scolt Head, Holkham
Long-tailed Duck	March 17th	Titchwell	Sept 25th	Sheringham
Goldeneye	April 25th	Whitlingham CP	Aug 14th	Sh'ingham/Mundesley
Smew	April 9th	Rollesby Broad	Dec 8th	Snettisham
Goosander	May 9th	Haddiscoe	Sept 19th	Titchwell
Hen Harrier	May 6th	Aylmerton	Sept 10th	Wells
Rough-legged Buzzard	May 9th	Haddiscoe	Oct 13th	Blakeney Pt, Holkham
Merlin	May 25th	Bradwell	July 13th	Titchwell
Peregrine	May 22nd	Snettisham GP	July 24th	Titchwell
Purple Sandpiper	May 27th	Scolt Head	Sept 2nd	Salthouse
Jack Snipe	May 19th	Hickling Rush Hills	Sept 27th	Titchwell
Iceland Gull	May 13th	Blackboro' End Tip	Nov 20th	Cley
Glaucous Gull	May 5th	Winterton	Nov 13th	Titchwell
Shore Lark	May 1st	Cley	Oct 1st	Scolt Head/Cley
Rock Pipit	April 15th	Breydon	Sept 19th	Ongar Hill
Water Pipit	April 20th	Titchwell	Oct 13th	Strumpshaw
Waxwing	April 9th	Winterton	Oct 17th	4 sites
Fieldfare	June 9th	Cart Gap	Aug 10th	Scolt Head
Redwing	May 11th	Scolt Head	Sept 25th	Repps-with-Bastwick
Great Grey Shrike	April 10th	Burnham Deepdale	Oct 10th	Holme
Brambling	May 2nd	Titchwell	Sept 25th	5 sites
Twite	April 14th	Scolt Head	Oct 11th	Holme
Lapland Bunting	April 22nd	Titchwell	Sept 10th	Weybourne
Snow Bunting	May 27th	Winterton	Sept 8th	Scolt Head

Non-accepted Records

The following refer to records where a written description has not been accepted by either the British Birds Rarities Committee or County Records Committee.

2002: Black-browed Albatross - California Dec 31st.

2003: Red-footed Falcon - Yarmouth May 28th.

2004: Little Shearwater - Salthouse Sept 15th; Great White Egret - Breydon Jan 3rd; Red-footed Falcon - Titchwell May 2nd; Corncrake - Clenchwarton July 23rd, Cley Sept 4th; Sabine's Gull - Holme Sept 24th; Caspian Gull - Ditchingham March 21st, Titchwell Oct 20th; Gull-billed Tern - Snettisham Sept 3rd; Pallid Swift - Ciaster Oct 24th; Dark-throated Thrush - Holkham Meals Oct 10th; *Tristis* Chiffchaff - Morston Oct 21st; Serin - Cley Oct 28th.

Non-submitted Records

The following records have been reported to either the National or East Anglian Birdlines, or Rare Bird Alert but to date no details have been received. Descriptions of any of these records would be welcomed (for consideration either by the British Birds Rarities Committee or County Records Committee) so that hopefully they can be published as accepted records in due course.

Black-necked Grebe	Titchwell (sea)	Dec 16th
Cory's Shearwater (2)	Sheringham	Nov 5th
Balearic Shearwater	Sea Palling	July 18th
Little Shearwater	Weybourne	Sept 15th
Storm Petrel	Winterton	July 8th
	Cley	Sept 7th
	Sheringham	Sept 15th
	Sheringham (4)	Sept 25th
Great White Egret	Hockwold Washes	Jan 25th
	Yarmouth	March 7th
	Thetford	April 20th
	Breydon	June 29th
	Burnham Overy Staithe	July 27th
	East Winch	July 31st
	Titchwell	July 31st
Purple Heron	Winterton	July 14th
Black Kite	Waxham	April 17th
	Horsey	May 6th
	Great Ryburgh	June 7th
Red-footed Falcon	Burnham Overy Staithe	May 2nd
	Cley	May 2nd
	Hickling Broad	May 14th
	Glandford	May 29th
	Wheatacre	June 5th
	Bittering GP	June 10th
Broad-billed Sandpiper	Salthouse	Sept 25th
White-winged Black Tern	Breydon	Aug 29th
Rose-ringed Parakeet	East Ruston	Jan 12th
	Yarmouth	Sept 2nd
	Norwich	Sept 9th
	Martham	Sept 12th
Pallid Swift	Cley	Oct 20th
	Morston (4)	Oct 20th
	Salthouse	Oct 30th
Alpine Swift	Cley	March 19th
Bee-eater	Wymondham	May 2nd
	Horsey	May 29th
Desert Warbler	Caister	Oct 22nd
Subalpine Warbler	Thetford	May 27th
Dusky Warbler	Winterton (south dunes)	Oct 29th
<i>Tristis</i> Chiffchaff	Holkham Meals	Oct 14th
Raven	Salthouse Heath (2)	April 25th
Serin	Titchwell	May 16th
	Hunstanton	May 16th

List of Contributors to Systematic List

S Abbott	R Brooks	E Cross	M Grantham
M Abdulla	A F Brown	T C & G Davies	A Green
R Abel	J Brown (JBn)	J Day	M Green
J Adelizzi (JAd)	Jon Brown (JBr)	P J Dolton	J J D Greenwood
P R Allard	S H Bryan	N Donaghy	C Gregory
J Andrews (JAn)	D A Bryant	C Donner	L V Gregory
D P Appleton	A L & R M Bull	D Dorling	R Gribble
G F Appleton	T Burke	G E Dunmore	A Grieve
J Appleton	Dr I Burrows	K R Dye	B Griffin
P C Arbery	A & S Burtenshaw	D Eade	G&J Gurney
S J Aspinall	B J Burton	A Eadson (AEa)	A J Hale
D Austin	J Burton	A Easton (AEn)	P D Halford
T Austin	N Burton	J Eaton	M Hall (MHa)
C Baines	R Burton	C Edwards	J Halls
M F B Baker	J F Butcher	K & S Edwards	J Hampshire (JHa)
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D E Balmer	Group	S Edwards	M Hanson
S Banks	B Byc	P Eele	R I Harold
A Banwell	J Cadbury	M I Eldridge	P E Harries
S Barker	N Calbrade	A Eliot	A F Harris
K Barrett	S Cale	N Elms	S P & E Harris
P E Beard	O Campbell	G S Elton	R Harvey
A Bennett	P Carr	T Emslie	D Hawkins
J A Bennett	P Cawley (PCa)	M P Esherwood	P Hawkins (PHa)
A P Benson	A G Channer	G J Etherington	I Haynes
L Benson (LBe)	N Chapman	A Excell	J&A Hayson
P Benstead	K Charters	C M & F J Farrow	P J Heath
L G Bentley	S Chidwick (SCh)	P C Feakes	T Hemmings (THE)
M Bentley	R H Chittenden	G Figg	I G Henderson
S Betts (SBe)	M A Chipperfield	J Filowiat	K J & A Herber
J V Bhalariao	C Clark	M D Fiszer	P Herkenrath
D Bingham	N A & J A Clark	G W Follows	G Hewson
P Birch	K Clegg	R A & A J Foyster	C Heyworth (CHE)
Birdguides	P Clement	A C Frost	G F Hibberd
Birdline East Anglia	Cley Bird Club	R J Fuller	B Hicks
Birdtrack	R Cobbold	J Gaffney	I Hines
J Blackburn	J Cockrum (JCo)	S J M Gantlett	M Hines
A I Bloomfield	A Cohen	A J Gardiner	R Hoblyn
A D Boote	M Colman	R W & H K Garner	M Hoit (MHo)
T E Boulton	P Colston (PCo)	N & M Gatward	S J Holloway
N B Bowman	G Conway	J D & J E Geeson	D J Holman
I Boston	F Cooke	N Gibbons	Holme Bird Observatory
S Bramham-Jones	R H Coombes	S Gillings	P Holness
K J Brett	A Court	J Gilroy	C A Holt
M A Brewster	T Cowan	P Gluth	J Hopkins
D & J Bridges	R A F Cox	D J Golds	A Horsefield
G N Brind	H P Crawley	M Golley	S Howell
BTO	M D & M Crewe	A Goodall	T Humpage (THu)
G J Brooking	J Cricket	S J Gough	C Hudson

R A Image	R Mabey	I Perry	Stanta Bird Club
W Irving	D Machin	S G Piner	A M Stoddart
A & C Jackson	J D Magee	S H Piotrowski	P J Strangeman
P Jackson	R C Mansfield	B Pleasance	N Street
C A Jacobs	J H Marchant	A Pocock	B Stretch (BSt)
A Jarrett	M R & O R Marks	N Pomiankowski	T Strudwick
B W Jarvis	B A E Marr	E Popple	M Sullivan
P A Jeffery	A Martin	R F Porter	M Swcency
R Jennings	D Mayes	I Prentice (IPr)	L S Taylor
R J Johns	A Maynard	M Preston	M Taylor
I G & K Johnson	J R McCallum	B&B Pummell	M P Taylor
S & M Johnson	R McCurley	M H Rains	P Taylor
R Johnson	A McElwee	Rarc Bird Alcrt	R Thewlis
R F Jones	R C & S McIntyre	M J Raven	M Toms
A J Kane	D McKensie	D I & R M Richmond	D K Toomer
J A Kay	E E McLernon	G Riley	H Vaughan
G I Kelly	H P Medhurst	I Robinson	A E Vine
J B Kemp	A Mellor	R Robinson	B Vevcrs
T Kerridge	C R Miller	C Robson	R B Votier
I F & J Keymer	J Miller	E V Rogers	J Wagstaffe
R Kimber	R G Millington	N R Rogers	S J Wakeman
P King	C H Mills	R Rolfe	M A Ward (MAWa)
L Kingcysides	K Milsom (KMl)	M E S Rooney	W Warrilow
C A E Kirtland	S & P Morrison	J A Rowlands	R Washbourn
D R Knight	K Mud	RSPB	J Wasse
T Knight	B J Murphy	G Ruffles	M A Webster (MAWe)
C R Knights	P W Murphy	D H Sadler	Wensum Valley Bird
M Knights	A R Murray	B Sage	Society
P C Lack	A J Musgrove	R St John	S C West
D A Lake	E T Myers	A J Saunders	P Westley
J Lambourne	NARVOS	M Saunders	C E Wheeler
W N Landells	P Newport	D Saunt	D White
J Lansdell (JLa)	S Newson	M J Saunt	J R Whitclgg
T Lawrence	B Nicholls	C Sayer	P Whittall
N M Lawton	H Nicholls	J Scott (JSc)	D & P Wileman
R M Leaney	T Nightingale	R E Scott	R Williams
P Leatherhead	NOA	S Schmitt	J R Williamson
M P Lee	P Noakes	J Secker	L Wilson
R Lee	K Noble	B & J Shepherd	P M Wilson
D Leech	D North	Sheringham Bird	D Wood
A C Lees	D Nye	Observatory	B Woodroffe
D P Lester	L O'Dwver	A Sillett	P J Woolnough
M L Lester	S Offord	G M Siriwardena	M J Wraight
K Leighton	M Olin	A J L&E Smith	G Wright
J Lines	W Oram	I N Smith	L Wright
S Linsell	G R Oxborough	S Smith	M Wright
P W Littler	J & A Oxenford	M Somerwill	S A Wright
P Lockwood	N Packer	S South	T Wright
J Lovett	P Parker	M S Speck	R Young
T C Lowe	R Patient	S Squires	
J C Lowen	D Pearce	P Stancliffe	
P & P Lynam	C W Penny	E M P Stanford	

Ringling Report

Allan Hale

A total of 45,137 birds of 130 species were reported as being ringed in Norfolk during 2004. Again it has not been possible to obtain every ringers' totals but this is still the highest number of birds ever ringed in the county in a year. The species count was average for the past decade.

Amongst the rarer birds to be handled were Red-necked Grebe, Grey-cheeked Thrush, Savi's, Dusky and Greenish Warblers plus a brace of Great Grey Shrike. The most-ringed species was Greenfinch with 6,138 followed by Blue Tit with 4,937. Other notable totals included 622 Sanderling, 399 Barn Owl, 37 Cetti's Warbler, 976 Chiffchaff, 238 Bearded Tit, 578 Snow Buntings and 702 Reed Buntings. Disappointing were only 8 Turtle Dove, 3 Cuckoo and 12 Willow Tit (the lowest total ever).

There was much of interest in the recoveries received. They concerned 18 countries including Switzerland, Ghana and Western Sahara which turn up very irregularly in this report. There were two stars in the local press; a Great Tit that travelled 1,359 km to Lithuania and a Blackbird that did a regular shuttle between Thetford and Newton Abbot in Devon.

Thanks to all Norfolk ringers for access to their data, and especially to Steve and Alison Wakeham for the Wash Wader Ringing Group recoveries and their interpretation.

Selected Norfolk Recoveries Notified During 2004

Ringling details are shown on the first line whilst recovery information is on the second.

Age when ringed

- 1 Pullus (= nestling)
 - 2 Fully grown, year of hatching unknown
 - 3 Hatched during calendar year of ringling
 - 4 Hatched before calendar year of ringling, but exact year unknown
 - 5 Hatched during previous calendar year
 - 6 Hatched before previous calendar year but exact year unknown
 - 7 Hatched two calendar years before ringling
 - 8 Hatched more than two calendar years before ringling
- M = male F = female J = distinctive juvenile plumage

Condition at Recovery

- X Found dead
- XF Found freshly dead or dying
- XL Found long dead
- + Shot or intentionally killed by man
- R Caught and released by a ringer
- B Caught and released by a ringer (nesting)
- RR Ring or colour marks read in the field

Greylag Goose

A remarkable record, but with insufficient detail to publish in the normal format, concerns a bird at Rollesby Broad on 29.06.04. It had been ringed somewhere in Southern Spain during January 2003, and represents the first movement between Britain and Spain. Most Spanish-wintering birds originate from further north and west and do not pass through Britain.

Over the past four years, Greylags from Poland, Belgium (via Scotland) and now Spain have appeared in the county. The species is clearly more mobile than it is given credit for!

Dark-bellied Brent Goose

4M	09.08.95	Lidia Bay, Taimyr, Siberia, Russia
RR	Jun 1996	Jersey, Channel Islands
RR	Spring 1997	Jylland, Denmark
RR	Spring 1997	Sylt, Germany
RR	Spring 1999	Sylt, Germany
RR	Spring 2000	Sylt, Germany
RR	Spring 2001	Sylt, Germany
RR	23.11.02	Cley-next-the-Sea
RR	14.02.03	Cley-next-the-Sea
RR	12.01.04	Cley-next-the-Sea
RR	05.02.04	Cley-next-the-Sea

A series of observations of an adult male ringed on its Russian breeding ground.

Great Cormorant

A nestling ringed at Abberton Reservoir, Essex, was seen at Cley-next-the-Sea during August, September and October 2003, then again 11.07.04

Spoonbill

1	21.05.01	Schiermonnikoog, The Netherlands
RR	31.05.01	Schiermonnikoog, The Netherlands
RR	08.08.01	Lauwersmeer, The Netherlands (until 15.08.01)
RR	15.08.03	Lauwersmeer, The Netherlands
RR	31.05.04	Cley-next-the-Sea

It has long been known that the vast majority of Spoonbill sightings in Norfolk are of birds originating from Dutch breeding colonies.

Kestrel

1	10.06.03	North Creak	
X	30.10.03	Saint-leger-Dubosq, Calvados. France	(413km S)

It is not uncommon for British-bred Kestrels to be recovered in France

Oystercatcher

1	16.06.03	Cockley Cley Warren, near Swaffham	
+	11.09.03	Baie du Mont St Michel, Manche, France	(467km SSW)
5	29.06.68	Snettisham	
R	08.09.83	Wrangle, Lincolnshire	
R	04.09.04	Wainfleet, Lincolnshire	(28km WSW)

Many inland-bred Oystercatchers in Norfolk spend the winter along the Norfolk coast. The first shown chose to winter on the French coast and failed to avoid the attentions of the French shooting brigade, who have a tendency to fire at anything that moves!

The second shows the national longevity record for Oystercatcher, or indeed any wader, returning to a Wash-ringed bird, the title having been taken away by a Welsh ringed bird last year! It was not immediately apparent when this bird was caught that it was a record-breaker, as it had been re-ringed when captured back in 1983, but record-breaker it is; extending the longevity for Oystercatchers to 36 years 2 months.

Avocet

I	18.06.96	Veta La Palma, Donana, Spain	
RR	01.07.96	Veta La Palma, Donana, Spain	
RR	22.04.03	Cley-next-the-Sea	(1,820km NNE)
RR	18.07.03	Cley-next-the-Sea	
RR	22.04.04	Cley-next-the-Sea (paired)	
RR	02.05.04	Cley-next-the-Sea (on eggs)	
RR	28.05.04	Cley-next-the-Sea (with mate and 3 chicks)	
RR	05.06.04	Cley-next-the-Sea (with 2 chicks)	
RR	17.06.04	Cley-next-the-Sea (no chicks)	

This bird, the first Spanish-ringed Avocet to be found in Britain, was reported in the last county bird report, but is repeated here for interest (with additional sightings). In 2004 it returned to Cley on exactly the same date as in 2003; it nested on Pat's Pool, hatched three nestlings, but lost them by mid-June.

Ringed Plover

4M	28.05.94	Snettisham	
RR	06.10.03	Ile de Sein, Finistere, France	(655km SW)
I	09.07.97	Snettisham	
R	27.12.03	La Saline, St Ouen, Jersey, Channel Islands	(445km (SSW))

The first is both the longest-lived and the most distant recovery of the year – it was already a breeding adult when ringed. Another two were seen in Finistere, France and the second shown is the first recovery for the colour-ringing project from the Channel Islands.

Grey Plover

4	12.08.83	Wolferton	
R	29.08.04	Terrington (local)	
5	13.07.79	Terrington	
R	29.08.04	Terrington (local)	

The national longevity record for Grey Plover of 21 years 2 months had remained unchallenged since a Wash-ringed bird was recaptured locally back in February 1991, but that all changed at Terrington this year. The first shown came close, having been ringed 21 years previously, but in the same catch the second shown smashed the longevity record being recaptured 25 years 1 month after originally being ringed. Normally a long-standing record would suggest a maximum life expectancy for the species concerned, but although this record had stood for over ten years, catching success for Grey Plover prior to 1980 was limited, with 70% of the Wash total having been caught since then, so there is a potential for the new record to be extended further.

Dunlin

6	02.04.00	Salinas Medhuona, Sidi Moussa, Morocco	
R	01.08.03	Terrington	(2,320km NNE)
4	30.07.00	Parque Naturel Marismas del Odiel, Huelva, Spain	
R	01.08.03	Terrington	(1,816km NNE)
3	19.08.98	Salinas de Puerto Real, Puerto Real, Cadiz, Spain	
R	02.08.03	Terrington	(1,878km NNE)
3	11.09.02	Terrington	
R	25.05.04	Bragar, Isle of Lewis, Western Isles	(755km NW)

The first shows the thirteenth Moroccan-ringed Dunlin to be found on the Wash. This bird will have been on northward migration from its West African wintering grounds when originally ringed.

Conversely the two Dunlin from Spain are likely to have been on southward migration when originally ringed. The first of these birds was already a lot further south in July than when first caught three years previously.

The last shows, perhaps surprisingly, the first Wash-ringed Dunlin to be found in the Western Isles, although there have been seven from there that have been subsequently controlled on The Wash.

Curlew

4	09.08.02	Terrington	
XL	08.07.04	Keminmaa, Lappi, Finland	(1,981km NE)

Reports of Curlew from Finland are not unusual, but this recovery from the Baltic coast is close to the northern limit of the species range.

Black-tailed Godwit

5	21.07.97	Terrington	
RR	23.02.98	Kingston, Suffolk	
B	16.06.03	Langhus, Fljot, Skagafjardar, Iceland	(1,830km NW)
4M	31.07.00	Terrington	
RR	Apr 2001	Kilnsea, East Yorkshire	
RR	07.03.02	Cley-next-the-Sea (until 20.04.02)	
RR	02.05.02	Eastern Iceland	
RR	20.03.03	Cley-next-the-Sea (until 06.04.03)	
RR	26.04.03	Eastern Iceland (until 05.05.03)	
RR	03.09.03	Stour Estuary, Essex	
RR	02.03.04	Cley-next-the-Sea (until 23.04.04)	

Colour-ringings has shown that the majority of the Black-Tailed Godwit using the Wash originate from the Icelandic breeding grounds. The first shown is the twenty-eighth to be reported from there. This individual, having previously been seen in Suffolk, was caught along with its mate, on the northern coast of central Iceland.

There were also sightings of over 30 colour-ringed birds of the form *islandica* at Cley during the year of which one has been selected for publication.

Bar-tailed Godwit

3	02.09.00	Terrington	
XL	22.08.04	near Cocksdoorp, Texel, The Netherlands	(305km E)

The only overseas Bar-Tailed Godwit recovery to be reported during 2004; the tenth Wash-ringed to be found in the Netherlands.

Redshank

3	21.09.01	Terrington	
B	17.07.04	Lysuhol, Snaefellsnes, Iceland	(1,893km NW)
4	11.08.87	Terrington	
R	29.08.04	Terrington (local)	
6	24.08.01	Terrington	
X	28.02.04	Marquenterre, Somme, France	(293km SSE)

It has long been established that Icelandic Redshank winter in Britain, and the first shows the thirtieth Wash-ringed individual to be reported from Iceland. The British ringer finding this bird reported that it was accompanied by chicks.

The Wash-ringed Redshank longevity record has remained at 17 years 0 months since 1976; This was achieved by a bird originally caught in the group's first-ever catch on 18.08.59, and only the tenth bird ringed by the WWRG. However the second shown has now extended the record, albeit by just 9 days! The third shown was reported as being taken by a Sparrowhawk.

Turnstone

4	21.09.01	Terrington	
R	16.05.03	Westness, North Ronaldsay, Orkney	(751km NNW)
1	14.07.04	Luoto, Vaasa, Finland	
R	03.09.04	Terrington Bund	(1,776km SW)

The first shown will have been on spring migration towards either Scandinavia or, more likely, the Greenland/Canadian breeding grounds, and is only the second Wash-ringed Turnstone to be found on Orkney, coming two years to the day after the first.

The second is the thirteenth Finnish-ringed Turnstone to be found in Britain, and the seventh for The Wash. It is of particular value in being a *pullus*-ringed bird.

Black-headed Gull

6	10.06.00	Pildammsparken, Malmo, Sweden	
RR	10.12.02	The Mere, Diss	(856km WSW)
RR	25.02.04	The Mere, Diss	
6	25.03.98	Frognerparken, Oslo, Norway	
RR	01.02.99	The Mere, Diss	(1,029km SW)
RR	01.02.99	The Mere, Diss	

RR	24.12.99	The Mere, Diss
RR	13.01.01	The Mere, Diss
RR	18.12.01	The Mere, Diss
RR	25.02.04	The Mere, Diss

Thanks to the 'Diss Gull Watcher' for his records. The second, showing winter site fidelity spent its fifth winter at Diss Mere. There was another from Sweden and two more from Norway seen at this site during the first winter period of 2004.

Herring Gull (Yellow-legged Gull *Larus (a) michahellis*)

I	18.05.03	Ile de la Correege, Etang de Salses, France
RR	18.07.03	Gloucester
RR	26.05.04	Blackborough End Tip, King's Lynn
RR	26.06.04	Blackborough End Tip, King's Lynn

Interesting that a bird hatched in France should travel to south-west England almost immediately and then be seen in West Norfolk during the following summer.

Lesser Black-backed Gull

I	12.07.03	Orfordness, Suffolk
RR	20.01.04	Laayoune, Western Sahara
RR	26.06.04	Blackborough End Tip, King's Lynn

I	12.07.02	Farsund, Vest-Agder, Norway
RR	23.06.04	Cley-next-the-Sea

I	08.07.00	Rotterdam, The Netherlands
RR	27.06.04	Cley-next-the-Sea

I	Summer 02	Ebro Delta, Spain
RR	28.05.04	Cley-next-the-Sea (until 06.06.04)

The first is an interesting record of a gull hatched in Suffolk, spending its first winter along the west African coast and then back to Blackborough End for the following summer. It is not unusual for Lesser Black-backs of British origin to winter off the African coast, whereas older birds travel significantly less far to spend their winter.

The second is one of three colour-ringed birds ringed as a nestling in the province of Vest-Agder, Norway and subsequently seen at Cley. The third is one of three similar birds from Rotterdam. The fourth is particularly interesting that this species has only been nesting in Spain for around three decades, and that this bird should choose to travel so far northward.

Great Black-backed Gull

I	05.07.02	Vest-Agder, Norway
RR	16.04.04	Blackborough End Tip, King's Lynn

Of foreign-ringed birds of this species found in Norfolk, the majority have been ringed as nestlings in Norway. Another colour-ringed nestling from Vest-Agder was seen at Cley-next-the-Sea from May to July 2004.

Little Tern

1	24.06.98	Great Yarmouth North Beach	
R	22.11.04	Fata, Palmarin, Senegal	(4,589km SSW)
1	05.07.03	Winterton Holmes, Great Yarmouth	
R	29.01.04	Ile Senghor, Saloum Delta, Senegal	(4,639km SSW)

Two examples are shown of no less than four birds that were all caught alive (and released!) at Fata in Senegal, the normal wintering ground for the species. A nestling from Great Yarmouth was found dead in the breeding season, but five years later, at Gibraltar Point.

Barn Owl

1	16.07.02	near Gunthorpe	
X	11.02.04	Hare Green, Essex	(110km S)

The longest movement of the year. Five other recoveries travelled between 12 km and 35 km. Also interesting was a bird of the dark-breasted race, ringed at Weybourne 18.10.04, but found dead only five days later and 5 km distant, a victim of the local road traffic.

Kingfisher

3	07.08.04	Manor Farm, Titchwell	
X	19.10.04	Oxley Marshes, Suffolk	(117km SSE)

Another road traffic victim. Only 4% of British Kingfishers travel in excess of 100 km

Great Spotted Woodpecker

3F	26.08.04	Shimpling, Diss	
XF	24.10.04	near Holkham	(67km NNW)

A relatively long-distance movement for a sedentary species for which movements of over 50 km are unusual.

Sand Martin

4F	29.06.03	Aylsham	
R	03.06.04	Ratcliffe-on Soar Power Station, Notts	(167km W)

The longest movement of the year, this bird was breeding at each point of capture. Breeding at widely spread sites in successive years is not unusual for Sand Martins.

Wren

3	19.10.02	Wells-next-the-Sea	
R	07.11.04	Langard Point, Felixstowe, Suffolk	

Thought by the ringer to be possibly of Continental origin since it was one of several Wrens captured on a day when there was an influx of Blackbirds and Robins. It was re-trapped at a well known migration watch point.

Robin

3	12.10.03	Orfordness, Suffolk	
R	22.10.03	near Weybourne	

Identified as a bird of Continental origin at Weybourne, this bird was travelling in the 'wrong' direction.

Blackbird

3F	19.10.03	Weybourne	
X	26.03.04	Helgoland, Germany	(490km NE)
3M	31.08.03	Jomfruland, Telemark, Norway	
R	03.12.03	Sheringham	(841km SW)
6F	17.01.04	Titchwell	
R	24.11.04	Schiermonnikoog, The Netherlands	(377km E)
1	05.07.03	Thetford (until 30.09.03)	
RR	26.12.03	Newton Abbot, Devon (until 14.02.04)	(370kmSW)
RR	28.05.04	Thetford (until 26.06.04)	
RR	26.12.04	Newton Abbot, Devon (until 16.02.05)	
RR	12.03.05	Thetford	

The first shown would have been on passage at Weybourne and again on passage to its breeding grounds when found dead on Helgoland Island, off the North German coast. The second shows where some of our Blackbirds originate and the third shows the route taken. There were also movements between Weybourne and The Netherlands and Titchwell and Helgoland.

The last was a star of the local press, being hatched in Thetford, spending two successive winters in the same garden in Devon and returning to the same Thetford garden as it was hatched in for the following two summers. Dates in 2005 would not normally appear in this report, but the travels of this bird are particularly fascinating.

Song Thrush

1	12.06.03	Martham	
+	11.11.03	Flottemanville, Manche, France	(419km SSW)

A Norfolk-bred bird choosing to winter on the Continent and sadly becoming another victim of the French hunting brigade.

Sedge Warbler

3J	21.07.04	Marston Sewage farm, Grantham, Lincs	
R	31.07.04	Haddiscoe Island	(161km ESE)
3	07.08.04	Haddiscoe Island	
R	23.08.04	Conchemarche, Charente-Maritime, France	(805km SSW)
3J	20.07.03	near Weybourne	
R	16.08.03	Le Massereau, Loire-Atlantique, France	(670km SSW)
3	11.08.04	Icklesham, Sussex	
R	14.08.04	Haddiscoe Island	(195km NNE)
3J	04.08.04	Weybourne	

R	06.09.04	Icklesham, Sussex	(229km S)
3	24.07.00	Pount Cam, Finistere, France	
R	14.07.01	Martham	(668km NE)

The elapsed times of only 10, 16 and 27 days respectively show fairly accurately when the first bird left its natal area and the second and third left the country. The fourth took only three days to travel 195 km in completely the wrong direction. The fifth would have been one of the later Sedge Warblers to have left Britain. The last was probably preparing to leave Martham, bearing in mind the date it was in France almost exactly a year previously. There was also a second movement to Loire-Atlantique (from Haddiscoe).

Reed Warbler

4	20.06.04	Little Fen, South Lopham	
R	04.07.04	Thatcham Marsh, Berkshire	(189km SW)
3J	28.08.04.	Manor Farm, Titchwell	
R	04.09.04	Icklesham, Sussex	(228km S)

It is unclear why a bird would need to re-locate nearly 200 km in the heart of the breeding season. Note the speed of movement of the second shown.

Garden Warbler

3	25.08.98	River Burn, Burnham Market	
XF	31.01.04	near Jumapo, Ghana	(5,201km S)

Little is known of the wintering strategy of Garden Warblers. This is only the eighth movement south of the Sahara, but seven of them have come from this part of Ghana, suggesting that the area may be important to the species.

Chiffchaff

3	19.06.03	Shereford, Fakenham	
3	27.07.03	Shereford, Fakenham	
R	10.04.04	Sint Laureins, Oost-Vlaanderen, Belgium	(257km SE)

The date is rather too early to suggest that this bird had taken up territory in Belgium, though this is by no means impossible.

Goldcrest

3M	22.10.03	near Weybourne	
R	28.10.03	Steenokkerzeel, Brabant, Belgium	(325km SE)
2F	12.10.03	Blavand Fuglestation, Jylland, Denmark	
R	26.10.03	Wells-next-the-Sea	(551km WSW)

The first is an interesting movement over only six days. Was this bird re-orienting after being blown across the North Sea to the North Norfolk Coast? The second is classic Goldcrest migration (again note the dates).

Firecrest

A bird ringed at Holme-next-the-Sea 13.10.03 was re-trapped near Burnham Market 13.11.03 where it remained until at least 09.03.04.

Long-tailed Tit

3J	13.07.02	near King's Lynn	
R	21.03.03	Grantham, Lincolnshire	(76km WNW)

Long-tailed Tits do not normally travel this far.

Blue Tit

3	27.11.03	Hempton, Fakenham	
X	27.05.04	Walpole St Peter, Wisbech, Cambs	(42km W)

The longest Blue Tit movement of the year.

Great Tit

5F	26.01.04	Hempton, Fakenham	
R	20.09.04	Ventes Ragas, Silute, Lithuania	(1,359km ENE)

Another star in the local press! In over 95 years of British ringing it was only the third Great Tit to have travelled so far, and the only one for Norfolk. The bird was caught whilst on migration in Lithuania, so it is likely that its breeding grounds were even further east. A remarkable feat when it is considered that only 1.6% of British-ringed Great Tits travel in excess of 100 km.

Jackdaw

1	01.06.91	East Winch Hall, near King's Lynn	
XF	17.03.04	Blackborough End, near King's Lynn	(3km SW)

Only a local movement (of a bird ringed back in 1991), but this Jackdaw was approaching its thirteenth birthday, which is close to the national longevity record for the species.

Tree Sparrow

3	02.09.02	Languard Point, Felixstowe, Suffolk	
R	30.03.04	Snail's Pit Farm, Swaffham	(90km NNW)

Whilst most British Tree Sparrows are sedentary, this represents one of the few that disperse in autumn or winter. Less than 5% of British Tree Sparrows travel this kind of distance.

Chaffinch

3M	09.10.02	Barry Mill, Tayside, Scotland	
R	30.03.03	More og Romsdal, Norway	
R	09.10.04	near Weybourne	

A particularly interesting multiple recovery. The bird was probably on passage at all three points of capture.

Brambling

5M	02.03.03	Aberdeen, Grampian Region, Scotland	
R	22.03.04	Roydon, King's Lynn	(519km SSE)

Interesting that a Brambling ringed in March in Aberdeen should be at Roydon almost exactly a year later. However, this species is known to winter in very different locations in successive years, depending on food supply.

Greenfinch

2M	16.11.03	Shimpling, Diss	
XF	21.05.04	Elloughton, Brough, Humberside	(189km NW)
4F	19.11.02	near Burnham Market	
RR	07.01.04	Usquert, Groningen, The Netherlands	(398km E)

The first, from over a thousand Greenfinches ringed in Shimpling during 2003, was the only one, so far, to be reported from outside of East Anglia! The second was the only foreign recovery of the year, and was interesting in that the ring number was read in the field by a non-ringer - no mean feat with a bird (and ring) of this size!

Goldfinch

4F	24.02.04	Manor House Farm, Grimston	
X	10.04.04	Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland	(372km NNW)

A bird wintering in Norfolk and presumably returning northward to its breeding grounds.

Siskin

5M	19.03.03	Shimpling, Diss	
XF	17.03.04	Schlatt b. Diessenhofen, Thurgau, Switzerland	(753km SE)
6M	01.03.03	Sheringham	
R	03.02.04	West-Vlaanderen, Belgium	
6M	13.03.02	Sheringham	
R	28.12.03	Polleur, Liege, Belgium	(419km SE)
6F	07.02.03	Sheringham	
R	23.03.04	Ijhorst Dennenlaan, Overijssel, The Netherlands	(344km E)
4M	03.06.03	Barstadvik, More og Romsdal, Norway	
R	14.02.04	Sheringham	(1,089km SSW)
5M	23.02.03	Sheringham	
R	11.04.04	Osteroy Hordaland, Norway	
5M	01.04.04	Sheringham	
R	12.04.04	Tain, Highland, Scotland	(635km NNW)

All foreign recoveries for the year are shown. Astonishingly the first was one of only two ringed at Shimpling during 2003, but becoming only the third British-ringed Siskin to be found in Switzerland! In addition there were seven reported from Scotland and a further three from Northumberland. One of the Scottish birds is shown for its speed of movement. The dates involved suggested that another three birds, all ringed in Sheringham, may well have travelled north together to the same site in Scotland.

Reed Bunting

3M 08.09.03

Orin, Verdal, Nord-Trondelag, Norway

R 12.02.04

Lowe's Farm, Ten Mile Bank

(1,408km SSW)

British Reed Buntings are generally sedentary, their numbers being augmented in winter by extremely small numbers of immigrants from Scandinavia. There are very few international ringing movements concerning Reed Buntings. Many birds of this species are ringed in Norfolk, yet this is only the second foreign-ringed bird to be found in the county - and the first from Norway. There are no records of Norfolk-ringed Reed Buntings being found anywhere abroad.

Norfolk Ringing Totals - 2004

Little Grebe	1	Collared Dove	131	Blackcap	1379
Red-necked Grebe	1	Turtle Dove	8	Pallas's Warbler	4
Mute Swan	3	Cuckoo	3	Radde's Warbler	1
Brent Goose	1	Barn Owl	399	Dusky Warbler	1
Egyptian Goose	5	Little Owl	8	Chiffchaff	976
Widgeon	1	Tawny Owl	12	Willow Warbler	331
Teal	8	Swift	15	Greenish Warbler	1
Mallard	2	Kingfisher	13	Goldcrest	1161
Tufted Duck	1	Wryneck	1	Firecrest	15
Marsh Harrier	1	Green Woodpecker	21	Spotted Flycatcher	41
Sparrowhawk	38	Great Sp Woodpecker	135	Red-breasted Fly	1
Kestrel	61	Skylark	4	Pied Flycatcher	39
Water Rail	9	Sand Martin	375	Bearded Tit	238
Moorhen	23	Swallow	1146	Long-tailed Tit	1097
Oystercatcher	467	House Martin	86	Marsh Tit	146
Avocet	17	Tree Pipit	1	Willow Tit	12
Ringed Plover	138	Meadow Pipit	18	Coal Tit	483
Grey Plover	99	Yellow Wagtail	26	Blue Tit	4937
Lapwing	181	Pied Wagtail	46	Great Tit	2690
Knot	773	Wren	864	Nuthatch	14
Sanderling	622	Dunnock	952	Treecreeper	95
Little Stint	1	Robin	1050	Great Grey Shrike	2
Curlew Sandpiper	2	Nightingale	7	Jay	46
Dunlin	2020	Black Redstart	2	Magpie	12
Ruff	1	Redstart	25	Jackdaw	37
Jack Snipe	1	Whinchat	2	Rook	4
Woodcock	6	Stonechat	8	Carrion Crow	1
Black-tailed Godwit	16	Wheatear	84	Starling	373
Bar-tailed Godwit	96	Grey-cheeked Thrush	1	House Sparrow	690
Curlew	5	Ring Ouzel	1	Tree Sparrow	58
Redshank	475	Blackbird	2663	Chaffinch	2361
Greenshank	19	Fieldfare	37	Brambling	345
Green Sandpiper	2	Song Thrush	337	Greenfinch	6138
Wood Sandpiper	1	Redwing	286	Goldfinch	1073
Common Sandpiper	4	Mistle Thrush	9	Siskin	1332
Turnstone	83	Cetti's Warbler	37	Linnet	82
Black-headed Gull	14	Grasshopper Warbler	9	Redpoll	27
Common Gull	1	Savi's Warbler	1	Crossbill	1
LBB Gull	281	Sedge Warbler	611	Bullfinch	172
Herring Gull	260	Reed Warbler	1250	Snow Bunting	578
Common Tern	106	Barred Warbler	1	Yellowhammer	162
Little Tern	12	Lesser Whitethroat	59	Reed Bunting	702
Stock Dove	26	Whitethroat	516		
Woodpigeon	51	Garden Warbler	84	Total Ringed	45137

The RSPB Berney Marshes Reserve

Peter Allard

A Chequered History

The mere mention of Berney Marshes to Norfolk birders conjures up thoughts of Norfolk's most isolated reserve, thousands of birds, very few birdwatchers and of rumoured suppression. The views most birders have of the reserve, dominated by the tall Berney Arms windmill, are either distantly from the high ground at Burgh Castle or maybe from a passing train window on the line between Norwich and Great Yarmouth.

The extensive fresh marshes surrounding Breydon Water were once a vast, wet wilderness home to teeming numbers of waterfowl. Gradually things changed; windmills were introduced from the mid-18th century and as the levels grew progressively drier, a roadway, the Acle New Road, was made across the marshes in 1831, to be closely followed 13 years later by a railway line between Great Yarmouth and Norwich via Reedham. Steam drainage was introduced from the mid-19th century and this eventually gave way to diesel, with finally powerful electric pumps installed in the late 1940s. These lowered the water tables even more and winter flooding of the marshes became a thing of the past. In addition alterations were made to the main drainage dyke, the Halvergate Fleet, this effectively becoming a low level gravity-fed water course.

With the levels now sufficiently drained, arable farmers began taking an interest. The first marshes were ploughed up in the early 1960s, but it was not until a decade later that concern was first raised. The 1970s saw a vast acreage turned over to the plough, new concrete access roads made and this invasion, plus further grant-funded ploughing in the 1980s, effectively ended what desolation was left.

A New Dawn

Wildlife was declining annually and the large numbers of wintering wildfowl and breeding waders, that had become such a feature over many centuries, became memories. Environmentalists were alarmed and much campaigning by conservation bodies, particularly the Friends of the Earth, resulted. The RSPB moved swiftly to arrest this in one area of the Halvergate Marshes complex, purchasing land from two owners under threat of the plough in the Berney Arms area. The purchase, at a cost of £550,000 in September 1986, assisted by the National Heritage Memorial Fund, The Countryside Commission and Broads Authority grants, consisted of 366 acres of freshmarsh adjoining the western end of Breydon Water and included the spacious Ashtree farmhouse. As part of the agreement with the previous principal owner, namely the Berney estate, the reserve was named Berney Marshes.

Reserved for Wildlife

The reserve is almost completely isolated, but can be reached by train, by using the Weavers Way footpath from Great Yarmouth along the north estuary wall, or across the marshes from either Halvergate or Wickhampton villages. Further areas of grazing marsh were purchased in 1991 (14 acres) and 1993 (305 acres) bringing the reserve size up to an impressive 685 acres. The addition of three blocks of neighbouring arable land (totalling 265 acres) to the north in 1998 gave the RSPB far greater control of the water levels in the Fleet Dyke, enabling it to retain higher water tables on the marshes for the best part of the summer. A further 190 acres of arable land, east of the Fleet Dyke, was acquired in 2004, bringing the size of this most isolated of reserves to over 1100 acres.

Dams have been made in the dykes and small wind pumps installed at strategic points to regulate the water table on the marshes for the benefit of breeding waders and wildfowl. This has proved very effective, especially in early spring with receding water levels turning back the clock to evoke scenes of what it must have been like several hundred years ago.

Water pumping began in mid-October 1987 and almost immediately birds responded. The Wigeon population increased from around 30 birds the previous winter to a notable figure of over 2000, whilst more Teal and Pintail favoured the floods and sanctuary at Berney. Wigeon have probably benefited more than any other species with the flooding of Berney and, coupled with the RSPB's established sanctuary areas on nearby Breydon Water, has led to annually increasing numbers. Over 10,000 Wigeon were present during the winter of 1997/98 and this increased to 14,000 in 1999/2000. Much of the increase was due in part to the extensive flooding created on the north side of the reserve after purchase in 1998. A record number of at least 21,700 were counted in December 2001, the largest assembly of Wigeon ever recorded in Norfolk.

The number of Teal has also dramatically increased from a mere handful present in the dykes in 1986 to record numbers in both 2000 and 2001. On these occasions record county totals were achieved with counts of 4,237 and 6,487 respectively. Likewise, Shoveler and Gadwall numbers have improved beyond expectancy and it is not unusual to see over 250 Shoveler on the Berney floods and a peak of 679 was achieved in February 2002. The numbers of these two species tend to peak towards the latter part of the winter; for example Gadwall are notoriously scarce before December, but become increasingly part of the scene in late-February and March when the highest numbers are usually seen. The peak count so far remains the 258 present in March 1999. Although Pintail are regular winter visitors to adjacent Breydon Water, small numbers often frequent the floods during high water, especially in spring. Numbers rarely exceed 50, but two counts of over 100 have been made and in October 2001 a remarkable 318 were present briefly.

Since flooding began, Garganey have become regular during the summer months, although a female with Teal on 10th February 2001 was quite exceptional. Most are present in May and into June, often in pairs and breeding within the reserve has occasionally been suspected.

There is little deep water aside from the wider dyke systems and consequently few diving ducks are present apart from Pochard and Tufted Duck. Both species have bred, Pochard most often, and small family parties are not unusual in early autumn. Other breeding wildfowl include Shelduck, Mallard and Shoveler with occasional attempts by Teal and Gadwall.

More than a Wildfowl Refuge

Local birders tend to take Little Egrets at Berney for granted these days, but it must be remembered that the first was seen as recently as June 1992. They are now present daily throughout the year and breeding began close by in 2002 and had increased to 11 pairs by 2004. The fledging success rate in the area has been high and it is now not unusual to see 10 or more together, even in the winter months with the highest count to date of 42 in August 2004. The reserve attracts rarer visitors, for example the once mythical Glossy Ibis appeared in early July 2004 and stayed into 2005, attracting much interest. Spoonbills are now regular visitors in spring and summer since the first adult alighted on the floods in April 1989. Most are immature birds, but fine adults displaying crests and ochre-coloured breasts appear from time to time. Parties of up to eleven were present for several weeks in June 2002 including individuals ringed in the Netherlands. However more exciting still were a pair (not quite fully



Glossy Ibis (*Gary Wright*)

adult), present in late April 2000, that began to build a nest, only to be put off by breeding Coots who as fast as the Spoonbills brought in sticks and twigs, took them for their own nest!

Bitterns are very occasionally seen in winter, but Grey Herons are widespread and nest locally. Up to 26 pairs have nested close to the reserve since 1986 and gatherings of both adults and young are not unknown in late summer often feeding on young Coot; 42 in July 1999 is the largest group to date. Despite the close proximity of the Broads breeding population, Common Cranes are relatively scarce at Berney, with singles or small groups dropping in from time to time, but never staying long.

Bewick's Swans were soon attracted to the winter floods and 700 began roosting in February 1988, with 300 often a regular scene, although in recent winters numbers have tended to be more modest. The first birds arrive in late October or early November, but these tend to move on and it is often not until January before fresh arrivals move in, with numbers usually peaking in February. Whooper Swans have always been strangely scarce at Berney, but in the last five years the pattern has been for small herds or family parties to linger here for several weeks and the presence of either species always adds sparkle to the Berney Marshes avifauna.

The reserve is now vitally important for the increasing hordes of wintering Pink-footed Geese on Halvergate Marshes. Pink-feet soon realised Berney Marshes provided a safe haven and readily use the floods as a night roost. The first gaggle to roost here were 14 on 20th November 1998 and these rapidly increased to 2300 by the last week of January 1999. The following winter saw numbers rise to a maximum of 6600 in February and these vast hordes have since become well established in the Halvergate Marshes area for the first time since the 1950s. Despite increasing hunting pressure on adjacent marshlands, January 2004 saw numbers rise dramatically to over 17,000, representing approximately 8% of the species' world population. Tundra Bean Geese are scarce, but during a nationwide influx in December 2004, up to 112 roosted at Berney floods and fed on the adjacent Breydon south wall marshes during the daytime. White-fronted Geese have used Berney in varying numbers since it was established, but never regularly and most are wanderers from established wintering gaggles in the mid-Yare valley. Feral Greylag Geese have increased tremendously in recent years and over 1000 have been counted roosting on the reserve. There is always speculation that the flocks could contain genuinely wild individuals, and this was confirmed in January 1998 when a Polish-ringed bird was located.

The Return of Breeding Waders

A sanctuary for breeding waders was one of the main reasons why the RSPB initially purchased Berney with the marshes so dry that the numbers of breeding Lapwing and Redshank were at an all time low. It presented a major challenge, but through careful management by a succession of head wardens from Les Street to Mark Smart and a small dedicated team, numbers have increased dramatically within the reserve. From a mere handful of breeding Lapwings in 1986, at least 60 pairs were enticed to nest on the marshes by 1997. Three years later this had increased to 129 pairs although it was becoming apparent that the breeding success rate was declining. In 2001, 117 pairs bred but by 2003 numbers had almost halved to just 63 pairs. The story was much the same for Redshank, with very few breeding here in the early days, then a sharp rise to a peak of 77 pairs in 2001, before sadly this too fell to only 44 pairs by 2003.

One of the main reasons for this alarming fall in breeding numbers of both species, coupled with a reduced fledging rate, was vermin, in particular the Red Fox. Fox numbers had increased enormously beyond acceptable numbers since penetrating this environment several decades ago. The numbers of Carrion Crows have also been a cause for concern and there is always the increasing threat of Mink in the area.

Avocets have probably suffered more from Foxes than any other species at Berney and the breeding records are very disappointing. Two unsuccessful pairs bred in 1992, these being the first nesting attempts in the area for nearly 200 years. Numbers had increased to 10 pairs in 1996, but we had to wait another year before the first young fledged. The following year was the most successful with 14 pairs raising 26 young, but a steady increase in pairs has not been matched in terms of productivity. In 1999, 22 pairs raised only 3 young and the impressive 53 breeding pairs in 2000 raised a disappointing total of only 15 young. Since then and up to 2003, all breeding at Berney has sadly ended in failure despite many pairs having second nests. Looking at the overall picture, the statistics reveal a dismal story; between 1992 and 2003, of a total of 173 breeding pairs (and an estimated 230 nesting attempts), only 48 young were actually fledged.

Vermin are now being controlled again following an eight-year research programme on the effects of predation at Berney. This will hopefully result in a sharp rise in breeding numbers of waders again, coupled with a higher fledging success rate. Certainly the breeding results in 2004 were an improvement with 27 pairs of Avocet (raising 32 young), 70 pairs of Lapwing and 49 pairs of Redshank, raising 100 young. The vast expanse of the reserve has the potential to hold an estimated 300 breeding pairs of Lapwing and 150 pairs of Redshank, together with 50 pairs of Avocets providing there is enough flood water in spring and early summer, with in particular, Avocets needing standing water more than other nesting waders.

Other breeding waders include Oystercatcher and on occasions both Ringed Plover and Little Ringed Plover while despite the clay soil, several pairs of Snipe have attempted to breed most years.

All Year-round Action

As a wader habitat outside the breeding season, Berney is often superb, but dependent on suitable water levels; 42 species have been recorded, a remarkably high total in such a short space of time. The reserve is part of the Breydon Water complex and is used by a number of wader species at periods of high tide on the estuary. In winter, Redshank, Curlew and Black-tailed Godwit often resort to the tranquillity of the reserve; during periods of exceptionally high tides it is not unusual to see groups of Grey Plover, Dunlin, Knot and Bar-tailed Godwits roosting at Berney. Huge concentrations of Lapwing are a feature of

winter, usually peaking in December and early January and often as many as 10,000 can be in the air at one time. With them are more modest numbers of Golden Plover and small groups of Ruff. Most Ruff that winter tend to be males and a group of 155 in February 2002 is the largest total to date. The species is also regularly seen in spring, and it is not unusual to see gatherings of males in full breeding attire rushing around chasing the females. The first week in May is often the peak time and in excess of 190 moved through the area on 3rd May 1994.

Wood Sandpipers appear in May and early June and the return passage spans from late July through to sometimes as late as early October. One in May 2002 was in constant display flight to a second individual and conjured up thoughts of what it must be like to be on their northern breeding grounds. Green Sandpipers tend to be earlier spring migrants and the small spring passage is invariably in April, returning as soon as mid-June. Common Sandpipers are noted as passage migrants between mid-April and mid-October with occasional birds in summer making it difficult to assign birds as late spring or early returning individuals.

The elegant Greenshank is another regular passage wader, but its cousin the Spotted Redshank is more associated with the reserve. It is seen almost throughout the year, the few wintering individuals giving way in April to spring arrivals which are often present in double figures, with 17 the highest total to date. Most have usually departed by the first week in May, but returning failed breeders appear as early as the second week of June, to be replaced by the first juveniles from August onwards. Black-tailed Godwits appear both on passage and in summer, with ringing information suggesting all come from the recently expanded Icelandic population.

Among other notable species are large numbers of Coot in winter, often in grazing congregations totalling several hundred, with exceptionally 1476 in December 2000. Birds of prey are a special feature at Berney and during the short days of winter it's regularly possible to see both Marsh and Hen Harrier, Merlin and Peregrine on the same day. Both Common and Rough-legged Buzzards have been recorded on occasions, whilst Montagu's Harriers have put in an appearance from time to time in spring. Amongst Owls, Short-eareds are still seen annually, but not in the impressive numbers present several decades ago. Distinctly unusual was the discovery of a roost of Long-eared Owls close to the Berney Arms public house in December 1991 and up to five birds remained here until February, often giving close views to admirers. Barn Owls are resident in the area and have bred within the reserve, but most nest close by where more suitable buildings exist.

Typically in a wet grassland environment, passerine birds are thinly spread. However, Meadow Pipits and Skylarks breed in reasonable numbers and there are good numbers of both Reed and Sedge Warblers in suitable dykes. Bearded Tits have also bred and although a distinctive albino individual was present one summer in the reeds, these attractive birds are more noticeable on passage, especially in late autumn. Cetti's Warblers bred for the first time in 2003 and Grasshopper Warblers have been



Lapwing (John Geeson)

noted in summer. Redwings and Fieldfares are birds traditionally associated with the marshes and sometimes large numbers pass through, while scarcer passage birds have included Water Pipit, White Wagtail, Ring Ouzel and Wheatear. Most unusual were a party of 7 Waxwings briefly in the garden of the Berney Arms pub in January 2003. In recent winters, the occasional Stonechat adds a splash of colour staying for short periods where areas of long grass and small bushes are to their liking.

Perhaps surprisingly, both Green and Great Spotted Woodpeckers occasionally make the short journey across from Burgh Castle to feed in the few trees that are available to them at Berney. In the early days of the reserve Lapland Buntings were frequently recorded on passage and in winter. An amazing party of 53 was on the flood wall in November 1987 but in recent years only the occasional single is now recorded. The same applies to Corn Bunting; it has long disappeared from its former winter haunts although singing birds have been in evidence on the edges of nearby arable during several recent summers.

Amongst the Masses

With the improved habitat, higher water levels and increasing numbers of birds, it was not unexpected that rarer visitors would be attracted to the reserve. One of the first was a third-year Night Heron in August 1987 which provided excellent views to the lucky few who saw it.

As the water tables fall in spring, leaving attractive muddy margins, rarer wader species began to turn up. In the early days of the reserve, most of the surface water had usually disappeared by mid-June, but with increased control of the water tables in later years, suitable conditions were often retained throughout the long summer months. In more recent years, thanks to the use of small wind pumps, surface water on some parts of the reserve, notably on the north side of the railway line, has remained throughout the autumn. Up to 3 popular Broad-billed Sandpipers were present for over a week with a large Dunlin flock in May 1989, justifying a long walk for many, while a Black-winged Stilt graced the main flood area for four days in late May 1992.

In spring 1995 Berney finally hit the jackpot; a Greater Yellowlegs arrived on 15th May, remaining on and off until the 25th. Fortunately birders soon realised that at low tide it could be found feeding on the adjacent Burgh flats, thus avoiding the long trek to Berney to see it. A month later a Terek Sandpiper was found asleep with a group of Dunlin at high tide on 15th June, having earlier been seen at the Great Yarmouth end of Breydon Water and washed off by the very high tides to Berney to roost. The wandering Collared Pratincole of the last decade found the Berney floods to its liking in May 1997 and remained for three days, returning on almost identical dates two years later.

The newly acquired, slightly lower, northern marshes combined with a wet summer provided the reserve with its best ever autumn in 1999. Large numbers of small waders were present daily throughout August and September and with them a juvenile Buff-breasted Sandpiper for three days, and the area's first-ever Baird's Sandpiper for two days, before it moved to Cantley Beet Factory.

An intriguing near summer-plumaged Dowitcher was briefly seen for a few minutes in May 2000, but unfortunately it couldn't be assigned to a particular species. A summer-plumaged Pacific Golden Plover in all its black and golden attire, graced the rapidly drying out floods briefly in July 2002. Another bird first seen at Breydon Water and exhibiting the relationship between the sites was a Semi-palmated Sandpiper present for one day in September 2003.



Purple Heron (*Steve Cale*)

Of the more predicable scarcer waders, Temminck's Stint has proved the most reliable in spring with up to four being seen in May 1988. The following spring, parties of up to seven graced the muddy margins of the reserve for over two weeks and since then it has been an almost annual visitor in spring. Rarer in autumn, it has been identified on only three occasions. Pectoral Sandpipers were first seen in September 1994 and have subsequently been recorded in five autumns, the most notable being in the good wader autumn of 1999 when possibly up to six different individuals were noted between 30th August and 2nd October. A bird on 6th November 1998 was one of the latest for Norfolk, whilst one in spring on 17th-19th April 2002 was the earliest. Juvenile Red-necked Phalaropes have appeared on two occasions, and although Kentish Plovers are increasingly rare in Norfolk, Berney has been fortunate with five visitations, albeit mostly brief ones.

Of all the other rarities, there has certainly been a wide selection, but the most frequent sightings have been of American Wigeon and Green-winged Teal amongst thousands of wildfowl that frequent the reserve. American Wigeon have been observed on seven occasions between September and May with all observations since the first in May 1988 involving adult drakes. There have been six sightings to date of Green-winged Teal, co-incidentally the first also being in May 1988.

An immature White-tailed Eagle graced the wilderness of the reserve in March 1990, being seen on three occasions before eventually departing high eastwards. Rarer Geese have been represented by a Red-breasted Goose with a gaggle of White-fronts in February 2001 and a Ross's Goose of unknown origin with Pink-feet during winter 2003/04. A Purple Heron was a brief short-stayer in May 1995 and a Great White Egret flew over in June 2002, while a superb adult White-winged Black Tern spent an evening over the floods in July 1999, but sadly departed overnight.

Almost anything can turn up at the reserve. A summer-plumaged Red-throated Pipit passed through briefly in May 1995, a Short-toed Lark gave brief views on the main footpath before flying west in May 1997, two Great Reed Warblers, (one of which was singing noisily) were in the reeds on a cloudy and windy day in May 1998, and a superb Penduline Tit was briefly on view in December 1999. In such a short space of time, Berney has been littered with many memories for the few who brave the long walk to this most isolated of reserves.



Lesser Yellowlegs - a popular bird at Stiffkey which stayed through the winter. (*Julian Bhalerao*)



Marsh Tit - a charming portrait. (*Nigel Blake*)



Hybrid goose - a presumed Dark-bellied Brent x Black Brant hybrid. One of two at Holkham.
(*Julian Bhalerao*)

Grey-cheeked Thrush - a totally unexpected first for the county found inland in a ringer's net.
(*Dawn Balmer*)





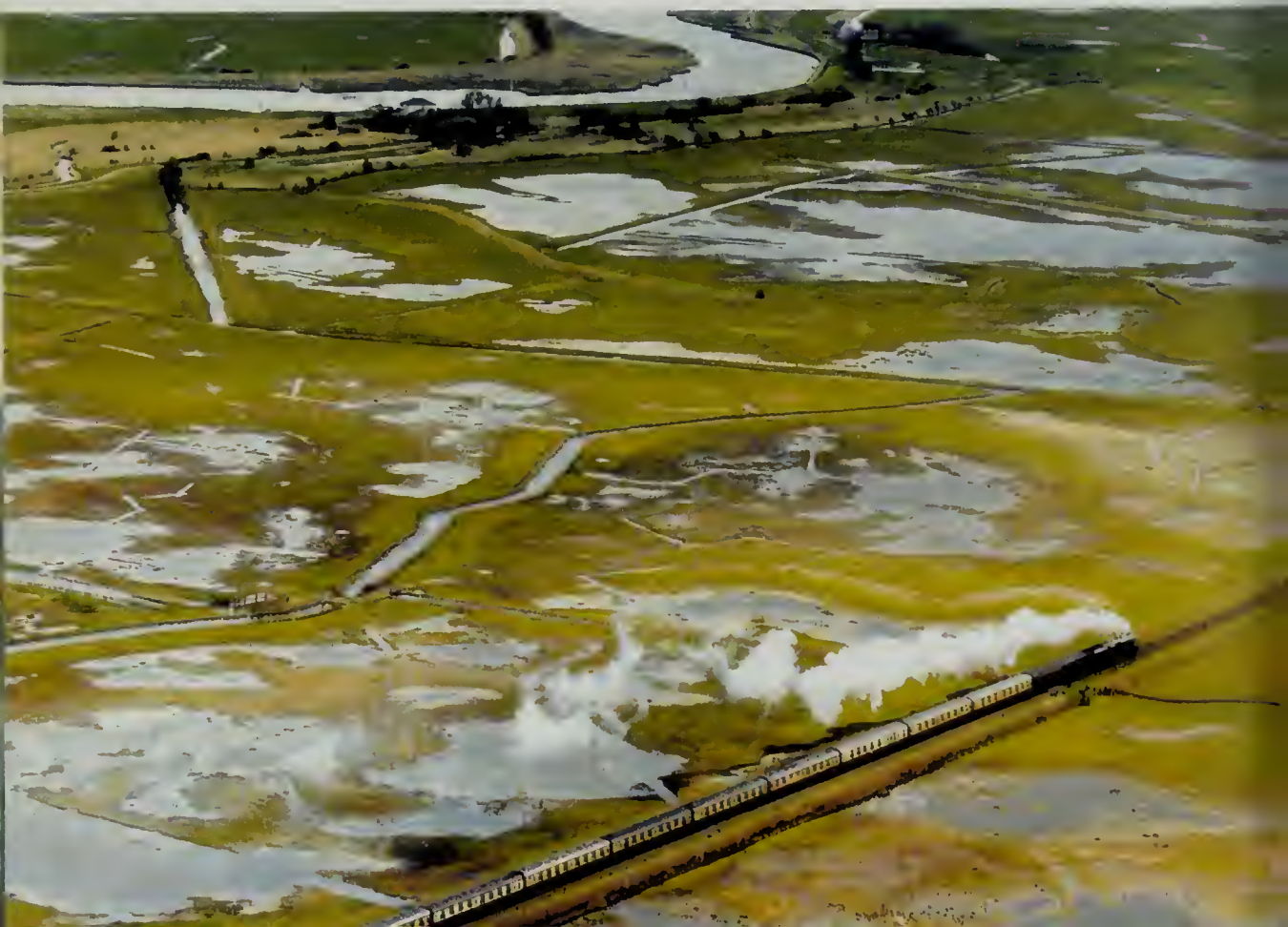
Chinese Pond Heron - a very brief visitor to a garden pond at Eccles-on-sea. (*Neil Bowman*)



King Eider - an excellent find at Titchwell. (*John Lambourne*)

Bearded Tit - a popular resident and migrant. (*Julian Bhalerao*) (*See the article on Hickling Broad*)

Berney Marshes - a site of major ornithological importance. (*Mike Page*)



Dispelling the Myth

Dealing with the suppression issue, news of rarities that have easily been seen from the footpaths at Berney have usually been passed to other birders and then to the bird information services. Most birds can in fact be seen quite well from the footpaths, especially from the higher flood wall, albeit rather distant at times. Only in a very few instances has it been compelling for the RSPB to suppress information, due to the sensitivity of certain areas and occurrences in the breeding season. Despite reservations and concerns, most birders will hopefully understand this and respect the decisions of the staff. It must also be accepted that should a mega rarity turn up away from the many footpaths, Berney would be struggling to host the vast numbers of birders seen at other reserves, partly due to the total lack of facilities available.

Birders should accept this exciting wetland reserve for what it is and its vital conservation work for breeding waders. Berney is now of international importance as a wetland site and is linked with the Breydon Water Special Protection Area and Reserve. It became classified as a Special Protection Area in its own right in March 1996, acknowledging the sanctuary it provides for a wide range of bird species throughout the seasons.

At present five small wind pumps keep water circulating around the reserve and three more are planned. Another slightly larger wind pump actually lifts water from the main drainage dyke into the reserve system, complimenting a powerful electric pump used for topping up the water levels during dry spells. Management of the water levels is a complex issue and needs to be fully understood to provide the necessary specialist habitat. High water tables can be notoriously difficult to maintain, especially as many of the neighbouring farmers usually require lower levels on their land. In October 2003, a new £40,000 American ditch-cutting machine, the first of its kind in Europe, was used to cut shallow drainage ditches over much of the reserve. When flooded, these ditches provide a valuable food source for both wintering and breeding birds. Cattle graze freely across the many marshes from April to October and provide the RSPB with valuable income. Their presence is essential to keeping the grass down to manageable levels and providing the necessary habitat requirements for wildfowl and waders.

Following Michael Seago's untimely death in 1999, it is perhaps fitting that there is a small memorial to him at the reserve. Michael, as many birders will recall, was the long-standing editor of this Report for over 40 years and the Breydon area was always his favoured haunt. The memorial is located just east of the Berney High Mill and compliments a large reserve information sign adjacent to the river wall. As a mark of Michael's contribution to Norfolk bird recording and conservation over many years, the RSPB have aptly named the largest expanse of water at Berney as 'Seago's Marsh'.

The outlook for the Berney reserve is healthy and as it expands, as it undoubtedly will, waterfowl and water levels should increase for the great benefit of birds and bird watchers. Had the RSPB not moved quickly to safeguard this particular area in 1986, these marshes would have been deep drained and partially ploughed. The RSPB certainly needs to be congratulated on re-creating this marvellous wetland.

The Little Egret in Norfolk - its Status Past and Present

Ron Harold and Andrew Bloomfield



Little Egret (*Martin Woodcock*)

INTRODUCTION

Memories of the Little Egret as a rare vagrant in Britain have faded in the face of an extraordinary range extension after an unprecedented influx into southern England in 1989. In 1952 when Dick Bagnall Oakley filmed Norfolk's first Little Egret at Cley, he and other bird enthusiasts of that era could barely have envisaged the remarkable series of events that would culminate in successful breeding in Norfolk at the start of the new millennium.

Egrets as a bird family had declined dramatically across Europe, Asia and North America by 1900 as a result of the Victorian feather trade. The plight of these birds led to the foundation of the RSPB in 1889 and a campaign was launched to arrest the march to extinction of these spectacular birds. In 1908 a Parliamentary Bill forwarded by the RSPB was blocked by the millinery trade but the campaigners soldiered on and finally the Importation of Plumage Bill (1921) was passed banning the importation of plumes into Britain, thus laying the foundations to assist in ensuring a brighter future for the Little Egret.

GENERAL DISTRIBUTION

The Little Egret is more often than not associated with wetlands in warmer climes, exploiting both freshwater and saltwater habitats. It is widespread in Europe, southern Asia to Japan, through the East Indies to Australia, interior and coastal Africa, and on Madagascar. The race *garzetta* is widespread in the temperate, subtropical and tropical zones of the Old World with a northern breeding limit at 50°N in the Dneiper valley between Kiev and Dnepropetroust, USSR. East of ex-Soviet central Asia it extends to about 37°N in Hopei, Korea and Honshu, Japan. It breeds sporadically in Africa, in the less arid parts of the Middle East, in India and its islands, and in southeast Asia. The populations are at least partially migratory with many wintering around the Mediterranean, the Middle East and particularly tropical Africa.

HISTORICAL DISTRIBUTION IN NORFOLK

Pre 1994 Summary

Prior to 1952 the Little Egret's status as a rare vagrant nationally was fully justified as there were only 12 UK records. There was a significant increase in records up to 1958 but these still numbered fewer than 50. In 1970 there was a small influx, followed by a more general increase through the 1980s, with the British Birds Records Committee listing 403 individuals during the 30 year period 1958-88 (Musgrove 2002). During a similar period 1952-88 Norfolk attracted a total of 26 Little Egrets. All the Norfolk records were of single birds apart from two at Cley, the most favoured locality, during May 1972. All appeared in the period 23rd April to 31st August and all but five sightings were from coastal localities. The majority of records are thought to have involved birds that 'overshot' their breeding grounds during spring migration, their occurrence usually coinciding with periods of warm weather.

The rapid colonisation of southern England by Little Egrets appears to have been triggered by an increase in breeding populations in France, Italy and Iberia; most especially by a colonisation of the French Atlantic coast and a rapid northwards expansion along it. During the 1980s post breeding dispersal led to a regular movement of the Little Egret to the north coast of Brittany stimulating an increase in population and breeding range in north west France. This process was assisted by the lack of cold winters and improved species protection (Voison 1991). By the late 1990s there were believed to be as many as 20,000 Little Egrets wintering in France where it was formerly almost entirely considered a summer visitor.

A large scale influx (at least by the standards of the time!) occurred along the south coasts of Britain and Ireland in 1989 with most birds observed between Cornwall and West Sussex. This event was linked primarily to post breeding dispersal of young egrets from Brittany - something that continued to occur as time progressed. Leaving aside the likelihood there was some duplication of records, there were probably no fewer than 120 individuals observed in Britain during 1989. Unfortunately, this remarkable invasion was barely evident in Norfolk, with only three records of interest. At the end of 1990 Little Egret was removed from the list of 'official' British rarities following submission of a further 113 records. An analysis of county bird reports (Fraser *et al* 1997) indicated that the numbers in Britain in 1991 and 1992 were at a similar level to those in 1989 and 1990. On the Norfolk front up to 16 individuals occurred between 1989 and 1992 and included sightings at Blakeney Point, Lynn Point and Welney. Single birds lingered at Breydon until 13th October 1991 and 23rd December 1992.

Assessing numbers in Norfolk became increasingly difficult from August 1993 onward, following a further major arrival along the south coast of England, larger than those seen previously. Many Norfolk sightings at this time involved flying birds moving to a selection of feeding localities mainly on the saltmarshes of the north coast but also as far as the Wash and in the east of the county. Most records referred to singles although four were in the Ongar Hill area and two birds remained on Stiffkey saltings between 3rd December 1993 and 27th March 1994, the first instance of wintering in the county. The Stiffkey birds regularly occupied a night-time roost from October to January at a site in the lower Stiffkey Valley, the first Norfolk roost site recorded. In 1994 ones and twos wandered extensively between coastal localities on the north coast and a second roost was established at Titchwell. This latter site attracted two birds in May, up to four in August, a peak of six in September and two-three thereafter until the year's end.

1995-1999 Summary

From 1995 Little Egrets started to appear with more regularity at Welney, Lynn Point, Snettisham, and in east Norfolk at Berney, Breydon, Heigham Holmes and Hickling. At

Titchwell one regular at the roost site in July increased to nine at the end of August, with eight still remaining on 1st December. The pattern of increased numbers continued in 1996, and on the north coast two remained at Titchwell from the previous year, being joined by a third 19th-21st January. The Titchwell birds probably fed locally at, for example, Brancaster Harbour, where some remained feeding into the night under moonlit conditions. Birds recorded on the saltings to the east at Stiffkey-Cley from January-March probably used the Stiffkey night roost. In April and May the species was regularly reported along the coast from Thornham to Sheringham, mainly ones and twos but with five at Burnham Norton in late May. The remainder of the year saw fewer birds but the Titchwell (up to 4 birds) and Stiffkey roosts (2-3 birds) were occupied at the year's end.

The period 1997-1999 saw the Little Egret consolidating its presence in the coastal belt with most records relating to ones and twos. The Titchwell and Stiffkey night-time roosts remained well established with peaks of 11 and 17 birds respectively. With more birds present in the county, it was hardly surprising that birds began to appear away from the coast, either exploiting new feeding opportunities or simply moving between sites at Sparham Pools in May 1997, Nunnery Lakes at Thetford in June 1997, Swanton Novers where two west on 10th June 1999 and at Hilborough where one was pursued by a Goshawk on 31st May 1999.

2000-2004 Summary

At the turn of the century it appeared to be only a matter of time before breeding would take place in Norfolk. The first confirmed breeding had taken place in Dorset in 1996 and by 1999 at least 30 pairs were nesting at nine different British sites. In 2000 Little Egrets were seen throughout the summer at Warham/Stiffkey and inland at Welney, and there were records from the Wash at Ongar Hill and Lynn Point. The Titchwell roost was well established by this time attracting up to 15 birds in November/December, whilst the Holkham Decoy began to attract a few roosting birds in the second winter period. Summer 2001 saw up to 5 birds summering in the vicinity of the Holkham Decoy, a site considered by then to be the most suited to host a breeding attempt in the north of the county. It was widespread in the county by this time suggesting a good spring passage had occurred, bringing prospecting birds from populations in the southern counties, or even France. There was a record count of 45 at the Titchwell roost in October, with the Holkham site attracting a peak of 10 in December. Nationally, it was thought that there could be as many as 2,700 Little Egrets present in Britain in autumn 2001 (Musgrove pers comm). Finally, 2002 saw the first breeding records for Norfolk with successful attempts at Holkham and in East Norfolk. There were also the first signs that Holkham was to become the premier roosting site in North Norfolk, at the expense of Titchwell, where a record 63 birds in October fell to 27 in November whilst Holkham attracted up to 61 birds.

Numbers at the breeding and roost sites continued to grow steadily in 2003 and by 2004 the species was a common sight in the core area of Holme to Blakeney. At Scolt Head and Brancaster Harbour regular daytime high tide roosts of up to 98 birds were reported illustrating the importance of the intertidal area. Similarly increasing numbers favoured the Breydon/Berney area. Birds also began to appear more regularly in the Wash. Observations from migration watches at Hunstanton Cliffs in autumn 2004 indicated that at least some birds were roosting at Titchwell and flying to the Wash to feed, although others may have been new or departing migrants.

The ever-increasing volume of records received by the County Recorder has made unravelling the data ever more difficult. It has changed from being a species where every individual record can be investigated, to being one where general patterns of occurrence can be

described but status better monitored by large-scale general surveys such as WeBS. It does seem, however, that Norfolk's Little Egrets now fit the following categories:

- 1 A resident that both nests and remains through the winter months.
- 2 A spring migrant and summer visitor that arrives annually, either early in the season as a prospector or having overshoot its migration during warm weather, or later as a failed breeder from elsewhere.
- 3
 - a a late summer/early autumn migrant caused by post breeding dispersal of continental and English breeding birds, for example 'in off the sea at Walcott on August 3rd 2000' and 'two in off the sea at Scolt Head on October 6th 2002';
 - b a winter visitor originating from the above post breeding dispersal;
 - c an outward going migrant in the late winter and early spring; again these are thought to be the above birds departing Norfolk and heading back to either other southern English or continental colonies for example 'three south east over Northrepps on 29th April 2003' and 'flocks of four and five south over Lessingham and Eccles on 29th March 2002'.

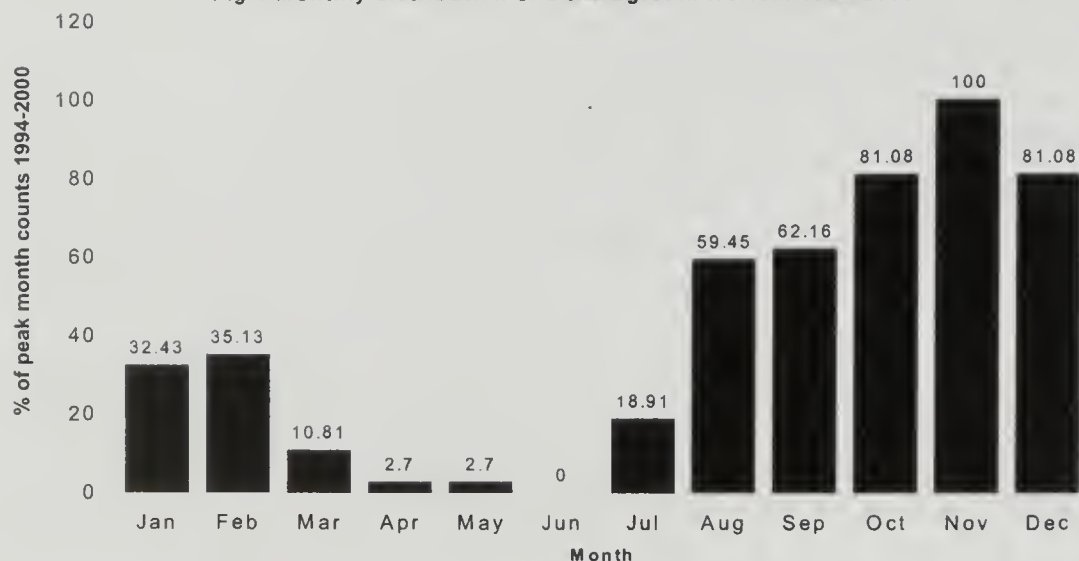
ESTABLISHING THE PATTERN OF PRESENCE AND POPULATION FIGURES

Establishing the actual numbers of birds present from month to month and year to year presents a problem given the individual status of birds concerned for example are they resident breeding, summering or passage birds. Inevitably birds counted at Cley may well be those counted later in the day at Brancaster or Holme, so multiple counting of individuals and groups of birds is bound to bias any attempts to determine actual numbers of birds involved. Coordinated counts generally achieve the best results in determining the number of birds in a given area. With this in mind (Musgrove 2002) used the UK Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) 'monthly core counts' to highlight a steady strengthening in the total number of Little Egrets nationally from July 1993 to January 2000. Autumn peaks of 185 in September 1993 increased to 1074 in September 1999, whilst the number of wintering Little Egrets increased from 124 in January 1994 to 513 in January 2000. He also drew attention to the relative monthly distribution of Little Egrets nationally from the core counts, to quote: "This reveals numbers are lowest in May and June, with return migrants appearing in June, increasing in July and peaking in September. Numbers remain high in October and then gradually decline through to January/February. There is a small but perceptible increase in March, before the main exodus in April".

The North Norfolk Coast WeBS counts have been utilised in the same way. Fig 1 gives the monthly distribution of records on the North Norfolk WeBS based on the % of the peak month counts for virtually the same period ie from 1994-2000. This shows a similar pattern to that shown by Musgrove 2002, in that the lowest numbers were present from April-June, with numbers picking up steadily from July-Sept. However, the Norfolk peak did not occur until November, two months later than shown by the national WeBS analysis. Thereafter the Norfolk data shows numbers falling away during the main winter period but without the March upturn noted by Musgrove.

An analysis of the North Norfolk WeBS that includes all Little Egret records from 1994-2004 (2004 figures yet to be validated) is shown in Fig 2. This highlights a significant change in the monthly distribution, which was not entirely unexpected considering the way the population has increased since 2000. The November peak remains the same and the pattern of falling numbers through the winter is also maintained. The main difference is the upturn in

Fig 1 Monthly distribution of Little Egret in Norfolk 1994-2000



numbers during the spring months attributable to the presence of breeding birds since 2001 and more passage birds.

The total number recorded on the North Norfolk coast WeBS each month from 1994 to 2004 is shown in Fig 3. This confirms low numbers, usually less than ten birds per month, present from 1994-2001. During this period the lowest numbers were recorded during April-June (only 2 records on WeBS April-June before 2001) ie similar to that shown by Musgrove 2002. This pattern altered by the regular presence of breeding birds after 2001. It also highlights the fairly consistent October/November peak throughout, whilst the staggering increase in numbers after 2001 to a peak of 228 in November 2004 is clearly apparent. The peak count probably included many birds fledged locally after an excellent breeding season.

Of course consolidating counts over such a large and complex area as the North Norfolk coast is obviously problematic and closer examination of the data requires this to be taken into account.

Fig 2 Monthly distribution of Little Egret in Norfolk 1994-2004

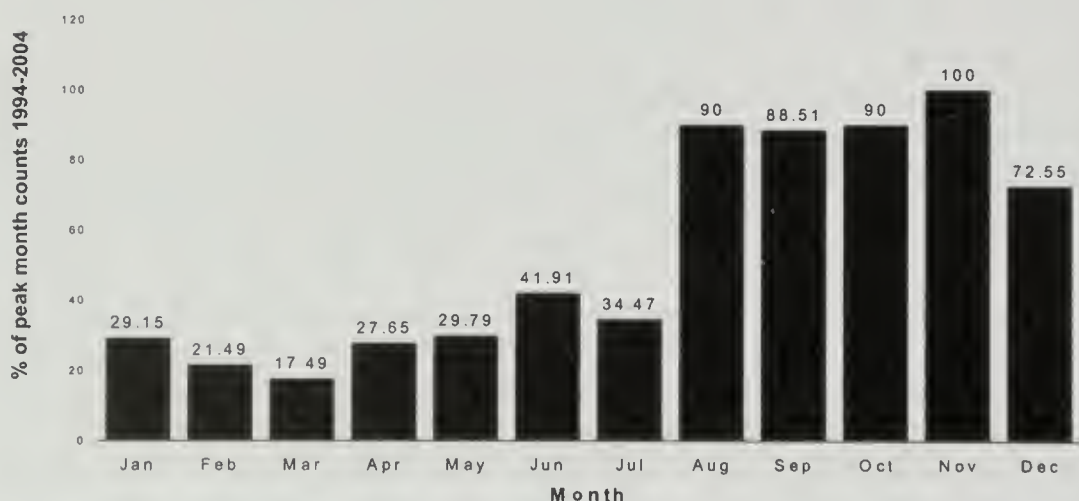
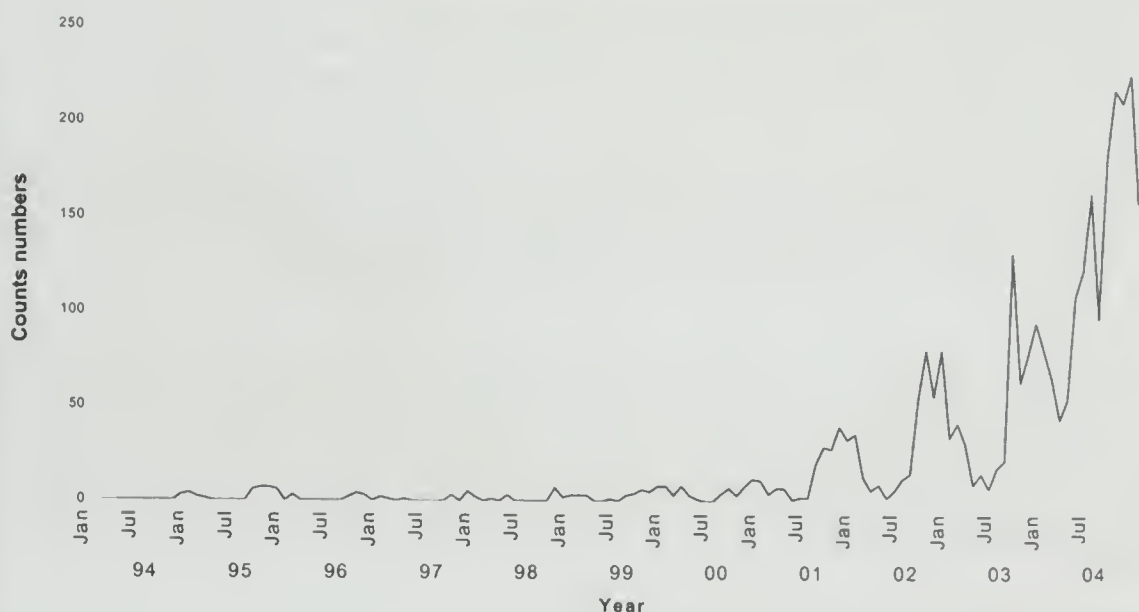


Fig 3 North Norfolk Coast WeBS counts 1994-2004



FEEDING ECOLOGY/DAYTIME HABITS

The vast expanse of the North Norfolk saltmarshes, combined with Breydon Water, its surrounding grazing marshes and the Wash, offer prime feeding habitat for the Little Egret. It has shown a marked preference for these areas in North Norfolk and is a common sight foraging the tidal creeks and tidal pools from Blakeney to Holme. Whilst no study has so far been carried out on specific diet here in Norfolk, observations from intertidal areas confirm that small fish and various crustaceans such as crabs form a major food source. Little Egrets have also only recently shown clear signs that freshwater habitats will figure more regularly in the future, with many more observations from for example the Holkham fresh marshes. Since 2003 a few birds have begun to regularly visit locations up river valleys for example at Wighton/Binham and as far as Great Walsingham on the Stiffkey River, around Shereford-Sculthorpe in the Wensum Valley and along the River Burn as far south as South Creak; the latter confirmed as birds from the Holkham decoy winter roost. Even lakes and gravel pits inland such as those at the Nar Valley Fisheries, Pentney, Thetford, Lynford and Cranwich have begun to prove attractive in recent times. This is perhaps an indication that as the breeding/wintering population grows competition is sharpening for this territorial feeding species. Observations from the coastal belt give weight to this as fierce fights have been seen to break out between rival birds disputing a particular feeding area. Whilst it is not unusual to see a family party congregating around a single salt pan after fledging, by October-November all family ties appear to be broken and from then on it is one salt pan - one egret.

The situation in the Breydon Water area differs in that Little Egrets have apparently always taken to using both fresh and saltwater habitats at all seasons; the Berney fresh marshes, for example, are a much favoured feeding haunt. The Broadland localities close by, which are generally shunned in winter, do attract some visiting birds, the largest groups up to 5 appearing March-May; perhaps a pointer for future breeding colonisation. Similarly the Ouse Washes attracted up to 6 in July 2004 and it's certain these large freshwater areas will figure significantly at some time in the future.

NIGHT ROOST SITES

Stiffkey

At the end of 2004 there were five known Little Egret roost sites in the county, plus one other site now abandoned. The abandoned site at Hall Farm Stiffkey was Norfolk's first confirmed roost with two birds regularly tucked in willows *Salix agg* situated on wet ground at the Old Duck Decoy from October 1993 to January 1994. This quiet secluded location away from the public gaze attracted up to 17 birds at its peak in 1997 but by 2001 was more or less deserted, this demise coinciding with the formation of the Holkham roost. The peak figure of 17 birds is extremely interesting as less than half this number were recorded on any WeBS count that year and the presumption is that birds remained hidden in saltmarsh creeks.

Titchwell

This roost was formed in 1994 and although numbers have fallen since the peak of 63 in October 2002 it continues to attract birds in double figures for example 40 in August 2004. Titchwell birds used a line of dead elms *Ulmus sp* near the eastern seawall as a pre-roost gathering area before dropping into low willows that formed the overnight roost. However, later as numbers diminished the birds moved onto the scrape to roost on the ground on isolated islands.

Holkham Decoy

This site started to attract roosting Little Egrets in late 2001, with numbers growing rapidly since that time to a peak of 212 birds in November 2004. The roost site lies within a defunct duck decoy and is essentially an island bounded by deep water channels, with earth banks formed during the original excavation of the decoy, thought to be pre-1780. A group of poplar trees *Populus sp* about 10-12 metres high fringe the west boundary of the roost area, with similar-sized poplar and pedunculate oak *Quercus robur* on the south side. The scrub layer beneath the trees and along the margins of the earth banks comprises a mix of shrubs, primarily elder *Sambucus nigra*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and wild rose *Rosa agg*. The willow carr forming the roost site and indeed the main breeding area for Little Egret lays in permanent water fringed with emergent vegetation, this reed-swamp community comprising common reed *Phragmites australis*, reedmace *Typha latifolia* and greater pond sedge *Carex riparia*. The reed-swamp grades into open water, superficially shallow but in fact deep and laden with silt. In all a treacherous habitat, as near a predator-proof site as one could imagine.

Roost counts at this site have until recently been carried out on a casual basis as time allowed but are now being undertaken more regularly and submitted as supplementary counts to WeBS, see Table 1 Titchwell/Holkham Roost Counts.

Birds approach the roost from the west and east with the highest numbers coming from the latter direction. Only recently have occasional birds been seen approaching from the south, no doubt returning after feeding along the river valleys. As might be expected we have never observed an approach from the sea to the north. However, between the sea and the roost lay the tidal flats and channels of Holkham Bay. Unfortunately this area is a magnet for people and despite its suitability as a feeding area for egrets, they are rarely seen here as human disturbance is almost constant. The first birds arrive at the Decoy well before dusk, some pausing on the way to drink at grazing marsh pools before moving on to the roost site. If weather permits birds collect at a pre-roost in the poplars and oaks, these gatherings tending to be uneventful apart from bouts of preening. As dusk approaches they move, sometimes restlessly, to jockey for a position in the roost either in willows, or possibly on the sedge beds. Most arrive on site well before dusk but often birds are glimpsed dropping in as darkness falls.

During periods of inclement weather, especially on windy days, they are inclined to drop straight into their roosting spot. They share a loose association with both Grey Heron and Cormorant. The herons () roost close by in the willow carr, while the Cormorants (usually less than 40 in winter) occupy loftier perches in the exposed poplars and oak trees. All species appear tolerant of each other and no antagonistic interaction has been observed.

Table 1 Titchwell/Holkham Decoy peak autumn/winter roost counts 2001-04

	2001		2002		2003		2004	
	T'well	H'kham	T'well	H'kham	T'well	H'kham	T'well	H'kham
Jan	nc	nc	nc	nc	18	62	7	96
Feb	14	nc	nc	nc	15	22	12	70
March	nc	nc	13	nc	22	nc	19	50
Sept	30	nc	55	nc	46	87	30	c200
Oct	45	nc	63	101	28	nc	13	200
Nov	34	nc	27	31	26	120	16	212
Dec	35	10	28	45	23	123	10	150

East Norfolk - Site 1

Little Egrets first wintered here in 2001-2002 with at least three birds regularly seen until March 2002. This sensitive site is a small mixed woodland with Alder *Alnus glutinosa* predominant. The status of the site as a winter roost is far from clear but as many as seven were present in March 2003.

West Norfolk

The situation in the Wash is unclear. Despite the existence of sizeable roosts over the county boundary in Lincolnshire near Kirton and Boston, there is no information to suggest that Norfolk birds travel this far, even though it would appear to be a feasible option for birds using the Terrington and Lynn Point areas. In 2004, two new night roosts were discovered in west Norfolk, both close to the southern shores of the Wash. Both sites held five birds; one in mixed woods with Grey Herons and the other in pines. If these roosts remain active it will be interesting to see whether movements noted past Hunstanton (as described previously) becomes less obvious, with birds feeding in the Wash choosing to roost locally, rather than journey to the Titchwell roost.

The Fens

A few Little Egrets wintered regularly in the Welney area for the first time in 2004/05. These birds depart the washes each evening and fly down the River Ouse. They are thought to cross the Cambridgeshire border and roost overnight in an area of mixed damp woodland also utilised by Grey Herons and Cormorants.

BREEDING STATUS IN NORFOLK

The Holkham Decoy attracted summering Little Egrets for the first time in 2001 raising hopes that a breeding attempt was imminent. Up to five birds were involved but no serious breeding activity was noted in that year. The UK breeding population was becoming well established by this time with as many as 98-111 pairs at 18 localities including two pairs in Cheshire, a single pair in Wales, with summering in Scotland, and Brownsea Island the main site holding 45 pairs.

The first eagerly awaited breeding attempts were confirmed from the East Norfolk ‘Site 1’ and the Holkham Decoy in 2002. As would be expected every effort was made to minimise disturbance to birds at both sites and in time it was clear three pairs were active in East Norfolk, where six young fledged, and five pairs at Holkham where 13 young fledged. Since this time the species has become well established in increasing numbers and a second breeding site was occupied in East Norfolk in 2004.

Table 2 Little Egret breeding results 2002-2004

	2002		2003		2004	
	<i>Pairs</i>	<i>Young</i>	<i>Pairs</i>	<i>Young</i>	<i>Pairs</i>	<i>Young</i>
Holkham Decoy	5	13	14	42	42	120
East Norfolk, Site 1	3	6	5	13	11	27
East Norfolk, Site 2	0	0	0	0	2	5

The annual increase at the two main sites is, to say the least, impressive and it remains to be seen how the breeding populations will develop both here, at the more recently colonised site, and at further new sites in the future.

(Note that even if all young at Holkham went on to nest in their first year, and there was zero mortality, the rate of increase there would still require immigration into the population ie 42 pairs in 2004 = 84 birds which is more than the 28 adults and 42 young from 2003).

It is interesting to note the variation between the breeding habitats being used in the north and east of the county. At Holkham egrets are almost entirely nesting within willow carr only 2-3 metres above the waterline. The exceptions are three nests in a hawthorn and one nest in the lower branches of a poplar close to nesting Cormorants. In the two East Norfolk colonies, nests are situated in mature woodland approximately 12-15 metres above ground level (see habitat descriptions for the Holkham Decoy and for Site 1 East Norfolk under Roost Sites section). The second East Norfolk site is similar to Site 1 in terms of tree composition but it is more extensive and difficult to observe. As a result specific tree species have yet to be identified as nest hosts. At Site 1 all nests are built in alders in close proximity to breeding Grey Herons, a population that has been established here for a number of years. The presence of breeding Grey Heron has not been confirmed recently at Site 2 but it is possible they still do so as birds are seen close by.

Little Egrets are known to utilise a wide variety of breeding habitat ranging from reedbeds to a wide diversity of scrub and tree species up to 20 metres above ground or water. The habitat types being used on the breeding sites in Norfolk fit neatly within this range. This suggests the availability of suitable nesting cover, irrespective of species composition or structure lying within reach of its feeding grounds, is the critical factor determining presence.

The Little Egret is known to form separate single-species colonies but more often associates with other herons and cormorants. Its association with Grey Heron at Holkham has generated a great deal of interest as the birds nest extremely close to each other. There is unlikely to be any significant benefit to the Grey Heron but it is probable the Little Egret derives a sense of security being tolerated by the larger bird. The Grey Herons, usually 6-8 pairs, nest in a loose colony within the willow carr. They tend to use the same nest sites each year adding to and repairing structures that survive the winter. Some are close to the boundary of the decoy and may be observed at a safe distance (Little Egrets for example will allow approach by foot to within 60 metres of the nesting colony at Holkham before lifting off). At some locations Little Egrets have constructed their platforms (also used in successive years)

less than two metres from Grey Heron platforms, with as many as six clustered around a single heron nest; in the few situations observed the heron occupied a dominant position overlooking the egret nests. It appears to be a harmonious relationship and the only observation to indicate otherwise involved a vociferous Little Egret that dropped in beside a sitting heron at an isolated nest away from the main breeding colony (albeit a site where Little Egret had nested in a previous year). The heron gave three purposeful lunges that caused the egret to leave.

Fifty to sixty pairs of Cormorants nest in the trees on the south and west side of the decoy that overlooks the nesting egrets. The birds appear indifferent to each other and no interaction between the species has been recorded.

The Birds of the Western Palearctic Cramp, S (ed) (1977-94) states "Eggs laid from end of April (south France), middle of May (Balkans)". It also depicts the general situation in southern Europe: ie earliest eggs laid from mid-May and the latest the third week of June. This differs significantly with the pattern of egg laying at Holkham where in 2003/04 the earliest eggs were laid during the first week of April and the latest around the 7th July (2004); the latter possibly replacement clutches. The earliest dates were calculated by deducting the incubation period (25 days) and the hatching to fledging period (45 days) from the fledging date. There is no information on clutch sizes from the east Norfolk sites as nests are not visited, but at Holkham up to four young have been noted in a few nests, twos in a few nests but with most containing three young. Three to five eggs per clutch is the norm for this species.

The parent birds appear to have little difficulty in locating sufficient food for their offspring and this is reflected in the good fledging rate achieved at Holkham and in East Norfolk. Despite the abundance of fresh water feeding habitat close to the breeding site at Holkham, the egrets' preference is the north coast saltmarshes. The energy expended flying back and forth, all day long, to satisfy the needs of their offspring is clearly worthwhile to exploit richer feeding grounds. Over the three year period since nesting began the Holkham birds achieved a fledging rate of about 2.87 young per nest and the East Norfolk sites 2.43 young per nest. The earliest fledging date recorded is 8th June 2003 and in 2004 the first fledged young were seen on the 11th June. The latter event involved three youngsters who followed an adult onto a pool where it regurgitated food for them; after a brief stay they all flew back to the decoy. The latest fledging date recorded was 15th September 2004; this event was memorable in that two broods (six birds) left the decoy together with the parent birds and flew to bathe and preen before returning to the decoy. The freshwater scrapes and pools situated in the vicinity of the breeding site are an important nursery habitat for young birds. They are safe loafing areas and an ideal place to practice their feeding techniques in the period before they are taken off to the saltmarshes by their parents. The literature states young birds become independent soon after fledging. However, observations from the Holkham NNR saltmarshes indicate that some family ties are retained longer, but for how long into the autumn requires investigation.

PROSPECTS FOR THE LITTLE EGRET IN NORFOLK

Having established a firm foothold in Norfolk it is difficult to imagine conditions, other than severe weather, that might lead to anything other than a population that will continue to increase and expand in the county. Where the numbers will eventually level out is currently impossible to guess. Our small number of breeding colonies have performed well, adding recruits to a population that will no doubt continue to be augmented by birds from elsewhere. There is no shortage of suitable habitat and there are already signs that birds are prospecting inland, so it is probable sites like the Ouse Washes, the Norfolk Broads and river valley sites

such as the Wensum and Stiffkey will attract breeding birds before long. Already there are rumours in 2005 of new breeding sites on the north coast and in the west near the Wash.

Predation is unlikely to be a significant factor and there appear to be no county records of Little Egrets being taken for example by avian predators. However, there is a record of a Goshawk chasing a single egret, mentioned earlier, and anecdotal information relating to a Peregrine chasing an egret in North Norfolk. There is no indication that human persecution will be an issue.

It is probable the weather holds the key to the future of Norfolk's Little Egrets. There is wide acceptance that the expansion of this species is linked to climate change and milder weather, so in the absence of hard winters the Little Egret is likely to continue to flourish here. However, winters on the North Norfolk coast in particular can be extremely cold and resident birds are bound to suffer severe hardship from time to time. The first real indication of hard weather impacting on Little Egrets in Norfolk was evident during the first winter period in 2005, when a number of birds showing signs of stress were noted on the Holkham NNR. One bird was located walking along the side of a hedge and did not fly away when approached. It was recovered dead the following morning and was found to be in an emaciated state. Other birds showing signs of stress were also noted and at least six were found dead locally by the time the weather improved. The probability is that other casualties will have gone unnoticed, especially on the saltmarshes, where attempting to locate live birds in the tidal creeks is difficult enough.

Only one of the recovered birds wore a ring. This bird was ringed as a nestling at Foulness, Essex and was recovered dead at Wighton on 13th March 2005. This is an interesting recovery that confirms that post breeding dispersal by young egrets from other colonies and subsequent wintering in Norfolk is still occurring. The origin of the other birds is unknown but it may be no coincidence that the number of breeding birds occupying the Holkham Decoy had fallen slightly in 2005.

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Bearded Tit and other reed-swamp passerine populations in the Hickling Broad complex 1980-2004

C James Cadbury



Bearded Tit (*Robert Gillmor*)

Summary

Breeding Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus* populations of the Hickling Broad complex, East Norfolk, were assessed over the 1980-2004 period by counts of pairs/fledged broods undertaken from a punt in mid-May to early June. The numbers declined from 111 in 1980 to 60 in 1985, then fluctuated between 21 and 55 subsequently. Overall densities in the 1980-85 period were 5.4 pairs/fledged broods per kilometre of reed-swamp fringe but dropped to 2.1 in 1990-99 and 2.8 in 2000-04. Average nearest neighbour distance ranged from 93 to 121 m in four surveyed sectors. Environmental changes that could affect Bearded Tits at Hickling Broad are reviewed. The most possible factors influencing the decline are considered to be water quality that affects Bearded Tit insect food, particularly chironomid midges, Reed die-back that reduces the feeding habitat in the breeding season and Reed seed crop that would affect winter food supply. Die-back accounted for 21% loss of the total 15.9 km reed fringe over the survey period.

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*, Savi's Warbler *Locustella luscinioides* and Grasshopper Warbler *L. naevia* were also surveyed at the same time.

Introduction

The Bearded Tit *Panurus biarmicus* is an Amber-listed species. The breeding population in Britain is subject to considerable fluctuations varying from two to four pairs in 1947 after a severe winter (Axell 1966) to an estimated 590 'pairs' in 1974 (O'Sullivan 1976). In the 1988-91 survey for the *New Atlas of Breeding Birds in Britain and Ireland* 319 'pairs' were recorded from 12 counties. This was probably an under-estimate in view of under-reporting in Kent and Norfolk (Gibbons *et al* 1993). 339-408 'pairs' were estimated in the 1992 national

survey of the species (Campbell *et al* 1996). 483-520 'pairs' were reported in 2000 and 395-396 'pairs' in 2001 (Ogilvie & the Rare Breeding Birds Panel 2002 and 2003). In 2000 the Norfolk total was 80-100 'pairs' while in 2001 it was only 36 which was clearly an underestimate. The main habitat of the Bearded Tit is large reedbeds where it can be difficult to survey accurately. Indeed the species is one of those non-territorial or colonial species for which no particularly reliable counting methods have been developed (Bibby *et al* 1992).

This paper presents the results of surveying breeding Bearded Tits at Hickling Broad and the adjoining broads on the River Thurne over a period spanning 25 years, 1980-2004. Apart from attempting to collect population data for an important but poorly surveyed area for the species, the study trialled a survey technique not used previously for Bearded Tits.

Methods

The survey covered virtually the entire reed fringe of the Hickling Broad National Nature Reserve including Swim Coots Bay, the reedbeds around Whiteslea Lodge and Whiteslea Sound, Heigham Sound and adjoining Duck Broad (Figure 1). The total margin surveyed was 15.9 km (Table 2). In most instances Hickling Broad and Swim Coots were covered in one morning and the rest on the next day, weather permitting. Counts were kept separate for each of the five areas. Surveying was undertaken from a quanted duck-punt which was not only quiet but allowed access to narrow channels and shallow bays. By standing to quant with a pole the observer had a reasonable vantage which on occasion could be extended using a step-ladder. The same route was followed in each of 16 years; in a further year, 1990, the western shore of Hickling Broad was not covered. Surveys were carried out in eight years between 1980 and 1994 and then annually in the nine years 1996-2004.

An attempt was made to survey when the first broods were fledging, before they had dispersed far and since Bearded Tits can rear several broods in a year, before second nests had started. Though Bearded Tits breeding at the Hickling Broad complex appear to nest back from the water's edge in a more sedge-dominated habitat, the fledged broods make for the margins of the broad where insect food is most available. Here they would be almost impossible to survey except by boat.

The optimal period for surveying was from the second week in May until the second week in June, but in 1997 the survey was carried out in the first week in May and in 1990 not until 16th June. All surveys were undertaken in the early morning 0600-1000 hrs in reasonably calm weather. This was essential to maximise detection of Bearded Tits. The use of taped calls was found to be useful, especially to confirm the presence of fledged young.

Counts were made of 'pairs' or in most instances broods. These were plotted on 1:7000 maps drawn by J Lunn from aerial photographs (Lunn 1980). Except in a few instances brood size could not be reliably counted. The maps depicted the many islands and spits that form the indented margins of the broads. The extent of reed-swamp fringe as mapped by Lunn is shown in Figure 1. Reed die-back was plotted each year from 1992 onwards.

The 1986 count was carried out by Stuart Lindsell, the Norfolk Wildlife Trust warden for Hickling Broad at the time, but the rest were undertaken by the author with assistance from others on occasion.

In addition to recording Bearded Tits, singing Cetti's Warblers *Cettia cetti* and Savi's Warblers *Locustella luscinioides* were mapped. Singing Grasshopper Warblers *L. naevia* were recorded most years, but since the majority occur in drier habitat away from the margins of the broad, surveys were almost certainly incomplete. Very approximate counts of singing Reed Warblers *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* and Reed Buntings *Emberiza schoeniclus* were made in a few years.

Fig 1



Habitat

The open water of the Hickling Broad complex covers approximately 173 ha. Most of this is less than two metres deep. The water is slightly brackish.

The area of reed-swamp of the Hickling Broad complex was calculated to be 141.5 ha. This area of reed is the third largest in Britain with only the Inner Tay (410.2 ha) and Bure Broads and Marshes (254.0 ha) larger (Painter *et al* 1995). Due to reed die back there has been a considerable reduction in certain areas around the fringes of the Hickling broads. (Figure 1 and Table 3).

Most of the reed-swamp margin was emergent Reed *Phragmites australis*, about two m. tall, but this was mixed in places with lesser amounts of Lesser Bulrush *Typha angustifolia*. (National Vegetation Classification S4). Back from the margin there was a more varied vegetation with stands of Saw-sedge *Cladium mariscus* and Greater Pond-sedge *Carex riparia* predominant (NVC S2 and S6). On higher peaty ground this was replaced by fen vegetation with such species as Hemp Agrimony *Eupatorium cannabinum*, Milk Parsley *Peucedanum palustre*, Common Valerian *Valeriana officinalis*, Purple Small-reed *Calamagrostis canescens*, Marsh Fern *Thelypteris palustris*, Narrow Buckler Fern *Dryopteris carthusiana*, the moss *Sphagnum fimbriatum* and scrub (NVC W2) with Grey Willow *Salix*

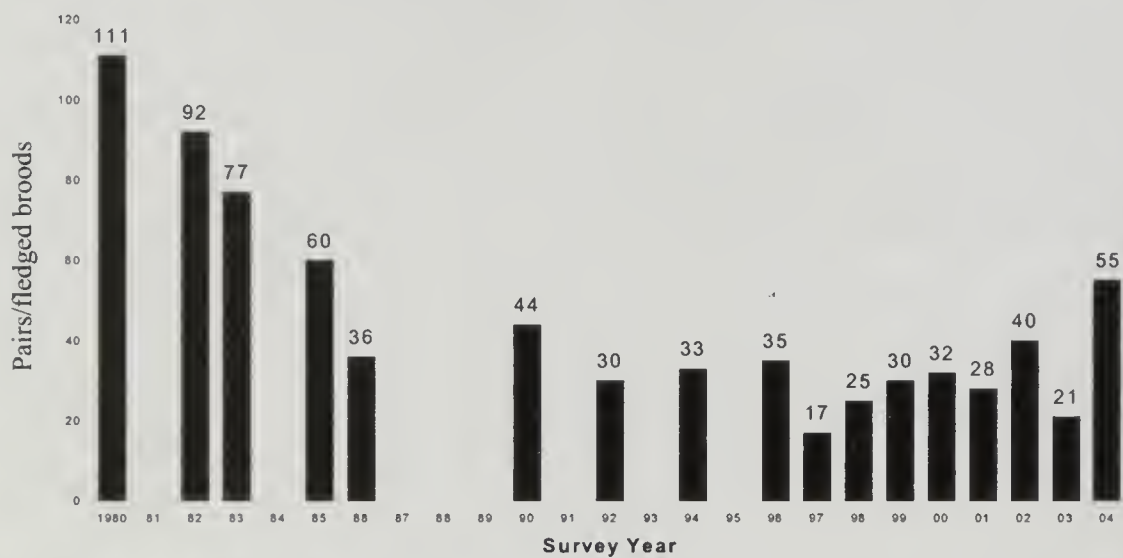
cinerea, bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg., Honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum* and even Downy Birch *Betula pubescens* (Rodwell 1984 & 1991).

Survey results

Bearded Tit numbers

The results of the survey are presented in Table 1 and Figure 2. The highest number of pairs or broods was 111 in 1980, the first year in which they were surveyed. Though numbers diminished in the next three surveys there were still 60 in 1985. The counts in 12 years 1986 until 2003 ranged between 44 in 1990 to only 17 in 1997, with a mean of 31.3 ± 7.8 . The 1997 count was undertaken on 3rd and 5th May, the earliest of the surveys when many pairs may still have had nests with eggs or young. Excluding 1997, the mean is 32.6 ± 6.3 ($n = 11$). In 2004, the most recent survey, numbers had recovered to 55 pairs or broods.

Figure 2. Bearded Tit pairs or fledged broods surveyed at the Hickling Broad complex 1980-2004



The population trend is somewhat obscured by the influence of when during May/early June the survey was carried out. The two lowest counts were on the earliest survey dates (17 on 3rd and 5th May 1997 and 22 on 9th-11th May 2003) while the higher ones are associated with counts in late May and early June. The count of 35 on 8th and 9th June 1996 does not fit this pattern but is nevertheless similar to the previous two counts in 1992 (30) and 1994 (33). There is the strong possibility that at the time of the surveys in the earlier part of May some Bearded Tits were still incubating or feeding nestlings. Later, when broods are fledged the young move to the water's edge where they were more visible from a boat.

Distribution

Analysis of the counts in each of the five sectors (omitting 1997, the early count) showed that Heigham Sound and Hickling Broad each had over 25% of the overall total. The Swim Coots Bay total increased to 25% in the 1990-99 and 2000-04 periods, while numbers on Heigham Sound decreased proportionally (Table 2). A relatively dry reedbed cut commercially near Whiteslea Lodge was not part of the surveyed area, but appeared to be occupied by one or two pairs of Bearded Tits in the breeding season once it had become wetter under the Bittern Life Project in the late 1990s.

Linear densities of pairs/fledged broods were calculated for the surveyed reed-swamp margin in each of the five sectors in three periods 1980-85, 1990-99 (1997 again excluded) and 2000-04. In the latter period densities were adjusted to take account of reed die-back. This showed that densities were highest in the first period when the Whiteslea area had 8.5 pairs/broods per kilometre followed by Heigham Sound and Swim Coots Bay with 7.6 and 7.4 respectively. Subsequently, though densities declined, it was Swim Coots that had the highest with 3.9 in 1990-99 and 5.2 (adjusted) in 2000-04 (Table 3). Duck Broad had the lowest densities in these periods with 0.7 and 2.2 (adjusted) per kilometre respectively.

Nearest neighbour distance between pairs/broods were measured off the maps. Over nine years 1992-2004, the lowest mean distance occurred in the Whiteslea area (92.6 ± 41.0 m) and the highest on Hickling Broad (130.3 ± 81.3 m). However, if five measurements over 300 m are excluded (three on Hickling Broad and two on Heigham Sound) Swim Coots Bay becomes the area with the highest mean (121.2 ± 58.9 m) Table 4.

The survey showed that fledged broods were particularly associated with 'spits' and islets of Reed that projected into open water. These projections were often floating mats (hovers). A drift-line forms on their shores, concentrating recently emerged adult chironomid midges which form a major part of the food of Bearded Tits when the young are fledged (Bibby 1981).

Environmental changes that could influence Bearded Tit numbers

Severe winters, particularly those with prolonged snow cover, have in the past decimated the East Anglian population of Bearded Tits (Axell 1966). However, over the period of the survey there have been no such winters to which the decline over the 1980-86 period could be attributed.

The salinity of the water in Hickling Broad has been increasing and is now about 1850 mg/litre of chloride (10% of seawater). It was only about 600 mg/litre at the turn of the 20th Century. Another change to affect the quality of the water was an increase in the nitrate and phosphate loading. The major source of phosphates has been effluent from sewage treatment works before phosphorous stripping was installed. This affected all but the broads such as Upton and Martham that were most isolated from the river systems. Excretion by roosting gulls added to the problem at Hickling Broad for a period in the latter half of the 20th Century (Moss 2001).

Both the increase in salinity and nutrient loading of the water resulted in increased cloudiness (turbidity) of the water. I can remember the crystal clearness of the shallow water of Hickling Broad and the extensive beds of stoneworts and pondweeds in the 1950s and 1960s. All this changed about 1970 and the water became opaque and brown due to an increase in phytoplankton. For a brief period in 1998 and 1999 the water regained its former clear state, but since 2000 turbid conditions have again prevailed. A decline in the water quality and a marked reduction in the macrophyte flora of the Hickling Broad complex may have had a considerable effect on the aquatic insect fauna which in turn could have affected the productivity of Bearded Tits. There was, however, no noticeable recovery of the Bearded Tit population in 1998 or 1999.

Another change that was noticeable during the survey was the die-back of Reed. In the 1950s and 60s the interface between the open water and the reed-swamp on Hickling Broad complex was marked by a outer fringe of Common Club-rush *Schoenoplectus lacustris* and Lesser Bulrush *Typha angustifolia*. The club-rush was first to disappear and this was followed by much of the bulrush. Reed, no longer protected, has been progressively dying back. 3.4 km (21.4%) of the total 15.9 km of reed fringe of the Hickling Broad complex, was lost between 1980 and 2004. The mapping I did during the survey showed this to be particularly prevalent

along the shores of Heigham Sound and Duck Broad (Table 3). Many reedy islands and spits that provided favoured feeding areas for Bearded Tits are now submerged. Duck Broad and other lagoons that were formerly almost isolated from the main river channel of Heigham Sound are now wide open (Figure 1).

Grazing by Coypus *Myocaster coypus* had a pronounced effect on reed-swamp vegetation but following intensive trapping this alien mammal was eradicated from the Norfolk Broads in the 1980s. Grazing by the much increased numbers of feral geese particularly Greylag *Anser anser* has contributed to the regression of the reed fringe. (The Hickling Broad complex was supporting at least 350 adult Greylag Geese in May 2004; many of them were moulting non-breeders). Wave erosion and probably the effect of nutrient enrichment on the brittleness of dead reed are also factors that are likely to have influenced the die-back (Boorman & Fuller 1981; Moss 2001). There appeared to be little change in the extent of scrub in the areas occupied by Bearded Tits.

In the late autumn and early winter the seed of Reed before it falls to the ground forms an important part of the diet of Bearded Tits (Bibby 1981). A poor Reed seed crop may result in mortality or dispersal. The Reed seed situation at the Hickling Broad complex has not been investigated but at least in recent years much of the Reed was slender stemmed with small heads.

Cetti's Warbler

This species has undergone a spectacular increase and spread in southern Britain since the 1970s. By 2000 678 singing males were recorded from 22 counties in England and Wales and 637 were reported in 2001 (Ogilvie & the Rare Breeding Birds Panel 2002 and 2003). In Norfolk there were three pairs and 140 singing males in 2000 and 103 singing males the following year. The main colonization has been along the River Yare where 90 singing males were recorded in 2003 (Norfolk Bird and Mammal Report 2003). No singing Cetti's Warblers were recorded on the survey by boat of the Hickling Broad complex until 1996. Since 1998 the number of singing males fluctuated between five (in 2003) and nine (1999) Table 1. Care was taken not to overestimate in view of the extensive and rapid movements which males make within their territory. Cetti's Warblers occurred where there were 'islands' of bramble and sallow scrub along dykes and in reedbeds.

Savi's Warbler

This warbler only became re-established as a breeding species in Britain since 1960. There was a temporary increase to 10-20 pairs until the early 1990s. Since then the numbers have decreased with very few confirmed breeding records. Kent, Norfolk and Suffolk have been the strongholds (Ogilvie & the Rare Breeding Birds Panel 2002).

Over 15 years of the survey between 1980 and 2004 singing Savi's Warblers were recorded in nine, the most recent being 2002. Up to six were recorded in 1980 and three in 1990 (Table 1). Singing was usually best heard in the late evening and early morning. Three areas were favoured: the southwest corner of Swim Coots Bay, Whiteslea Island and the southwest side of Heigham Sound. These sites were characterized by wet birch scrub growing on islands of peat where there were stands of Purple Small-reed *Calamagrostis canescens*. No nests were located but on two occasions scolding calls suggested nesting in tussocks of this grass.

Grasshopper Warbler

Between 1982 and 1999 the highest counts of singing males were 14 in 1992 and 23 in 1997 (Table 1). The majority of these were in drier marshland away from edge of the broads.

Reed Warbler

The only two counts were of 97 singing males over the study area on 23rd and 24th May 1992 and 108 between 12th and 15th May 2000, since Reed Warblers largely stop singing once paired, these counts are almost certainly minimum figures for the population.

Reed Bunting

Two counts of 45 singing males on 20th and 21st May 2001 and 40 on 9th-12th May 2004 were the only ones that are likely to approach anything like the population breeding in the reed-swamp within 100 m of the margin of the broads in the study area.

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I should like to thank the Norfolk Wildlife Trust, and in particular the wardens Stuart Lindsell, Francis Russell and John Blackburn for allowing me to undertake the survey on the Hickling Broad National Nature Reserve. Jeff Lunn's detailed maps of the reed-swamp on the reserve have been invaluable. In 1992 it was a pleasure to have assistance from David Pearson who was one of the organisers of the national Bearded Tit survey. The survey was inspired by the late Colin Bibby whose research revealed so much about biology of the Bearded Tit and other reed-swamp birds.

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Table 1 Bearded Tit, Cetti's, Savi's and Grasshopper Warbler Census, Hickling Broad complex 1980-2004

Year	Dates	Hickling Broad	Swim Coots Bay	Whiteslea	Heigham Sound	Duck Broad	Bittern Life Project reedbed**	Total Bearded Tit	Cetti's Warbler	Savi's Warbler	Grasshopper Warbler
1980	25 & 26.5, 10-12.6	34	21	17	30	9		111	0	6	nc
1982	30.5-1.6	20	18	9	35	10		92	0	1	7+
1983	30-31.5	23	13	9	25	7		77	0	2/3	3
1985	26-27.5	13	13	9	18	7		60	0	0	10+
1986	S Lindsell							36			
1990	16.6	7	15	4	15	3		44	0	1(+1)	2+
		(SE only)						(incomplete)			
1992	23 & 24.5	6	10	5	7	2		30	0	(1)	14
1994	28 & 30.5	10	5	4	13	1		33	0	0	7
1996	8&9.6	10	6	9	9	1		35	1	0	4
1997	3 & 5.5	6	2	5	4	0		17	0	0	23*
1998	15 & 18.5	11	8	3	3	0		25	6	1	11
1999	22 & 23.5, 13.6	10	7	3	8	2	2	30	9	2(+1)	2
2000	12-15.5	7	9	4	9	3		32	7	0	0?***
2001	20 & 21.5	8	9	4/5	6	1	1	28	6	(1)	0?
2002	27 & 28.5	8	9	6	14	3		40	7	(1)	0?
2003	9-11.5	7	6	1	6	1	1	21	5	0	2?
2004	9-12.5	21	11	6	14	3		55	7	0	0?

* The low count in 1997 was probably influenced by the early date of the count when few Bearded Tit broods had fledged.

** Bittern Life Project numbers excluded from the total.

*** Grasshopper Warbler counts from 2000 are considered unreliable in view of the observer's failing high frequency hearing. This does not apply to Savi's Warbler with a song at a lower frequency.

() Figures in parenthesis under Savi's Warbler were numbers not recorded by the observer, but extracted from Norfolk Bird and Mammal Reports.

Table 2

Distribution of Bearded Tit pairs/fledged broods
% of total pairs/fledged broods

	<i>Total Pairs/broods</i>	<i>Hickling Broad</i>	<i>Swim Coots</i>	<i>Whiteslea</i>	<i>Heigham Sound</i>	<i>Duck Broad</i>
1980-85 (4 yrs)	340	26.5	19.1	12.9	31.8	9.7
1990-99* (6 yrs)	197	27.4	25.9	14.2	27.9	4.6
2000-04 (5 yrs)	176	29.0	25.0	11.9	27.8	6.3
1980-2004 (15 yrs)	713	27.4	22.5	13.1	29.8	7.3

(*1997 count excluded)

Table 3

Bearded Tit linear densities

	<i>Hickling Broad</i>	<i>Swim Coots</i>	<i>Whiteslea</i>	<i>Heigham Sound</i>	<i>Duck Broad</i>	<i>Total</i>
Length of reed-swamp fringe (km), 1980	6.6	2.2	1.3	3.6	2.2	15.9
Length of reed fringe (km) lost 1980-2004	0.6	0.5	0	1.1	1.2	3.4 (21.4%)
Total prs/broods 1980-85 (n=4)	90	65	44	108	33	340
Av prs/broods per year	22.5	16.3	11.0	27.0	8.3	85.1
Prs/broods per km	3.4	7.4	8.5	7.5	3.8	5.6
Total prs/broods 1990-99 (n=6)	54	51	28	55	9	197
Av prs/broods per year	9.0	8.5	4.7	9.2	1.5	32.9
Prs/broods per km	1.4	3.9	3.6	2.6	0.7	2.2
Total prs/broods 2000-04 (n=5)	51	44	21	49	11	176
Av prs/broods per year	10.2	8.8	4.2	9.8	2.2	35.2
Prs/broods per km	1.5	4.0	3.2	2.7	1.0	2.2
Prs/broods per km (adjusted for reed loss)	1.7	5.2	3.2	3.9	2.2	2.8

Table 4 **Nearest neighbour distances for Bearded Tit pairs/fledged broods**

	<i>No pairs/broods</i>	<i>Mean nearest neighbour distance (m)</i>
Hickling Broad	8	115±55
	51*	130±81
Swim Coots Bay	47	121±59
Whiteslea	36	93±41
Heigham Sound and Duck Broad	56	105±53
	58*	114±72

* Includes nearest neighbour distances in excess of 300 m

Grey-lag Goose	Home Leg Goose
White-fronted Goose	Laughing Goose
Brent Goose	Scotch Goose
Sheld-duck	Bay Duck, Burrow Duck, Mussel Duck, Bar Goose, Bargander, Bergander, Will Duck
Mallard	Wild Duck
Gadwall	Rodge, Grey Duck, Haut Duck, Heart Duck
Teal	Crick, Half-fowl
Garganey	Summer Teal, Cricket Teal, Crick, Pied Wigeon, Gargle Teal
Wigeon	Smee, Whewer, Whim, Easterling, Half-fowl
Pintail	Sea Pheasant, Cracker
Shoveler	Shovel-bill, Spoonbill Duck, Beck
Pochard	Dun Bird, Poker, Pock-a, Red-head, Sandy Heads
Tufted Duck	Golden Eye (<i>Breydon</i>), Arts, Arps, Black and White Poker
Scaup-duck	Golden Eye, White-nosed Day Fowl (<i>Breydon</i>), Hard Fowl, Grey Back, Blue Gill, Pocka
Goldeneye	Rattlewings
Buffel-headed Duck	Little Rattlewing
Long-tailed Duck	Mealy Bird, Little Mealy Duck, Pheasant Duck
Common Scoter	Mussel Duck, Whilk, Scooter, Black Duck
Velvet Scoter	Double Scoter
Goosander	Dun-diver (<i>female/young</i>), Sawbill
Red-breasted Merganser	Sawbill, Sawyer
Smew	White Nun (<i>adult male</i>), Whim, Brown Nun, Weasel Duck, Weasel Coot (<i>female/young</i>)
Gannet	Gant, Holland Goose, Gent
Storm Petrel	Tom Taylor
Little Grebe	Dabchick, Dobchick, Di-dapper, Di-dopper, Deeve-dipper, Deave-dipper, Dipper, Divy-duck
Great Crested Grebe	Diver
Great Northern Diver	Herring Loon, Magaboon
Red-throated Diver	Sprat Loon, Loon
Wood Pigeon	Ring Dow
Stock Dove	Blue Rock
Turtle Dove	Coo-coo-roo
Bar-tailed Godwit	Pick, Scammell
Black-tailed Godwit	Yare-whelp, Yarwhelp, Shrieker
Common Curlew	Whistling Lew
Whimbrel	Jack Curlew, Half Curlew, Seven Whistler, May Bird
Common Snipe	Full Snipe, Air Goat, Summer Lamb
Jack Snipe	Half Snipe, Jacks
Turnstone	Tangle-picker, Tangle-turner
Dunlin	Stint, Sea-snipe, Purre, Ox-bird
Sanderling	Sand Lark
Curlew Sandpiper	Pigmy, Pigmy Curlew
Common Sandpiper	Summer Snipe, Little Sandpiper, Little Stint, Shrieker
Green Sandpiper	Martin Snipe, Mud Snipe, Woodpiper, Black Sandpiper
Wood Sandpiper	Wood Tattler

Redshank	Redleg, Tuke, Tukie
Greenshank	Cambridge Godwit
Ringed Plover	Stone-runner, Stone-watch, Ring Dotterel, Sea Lark
Kentish Plover	Alexandrine Plover
Grey Plover	Full-eyed Plover, Black-breast Plover
Lapwing	Green Plover, Black Plover, Peewit, Pee-weep, Pie-wipe, Pywipe, Horn-pie, Flapjack, Pert
Black-winged Stilt	Long-legged Plover
Avocet	Owl Bird, Shocing-horn
Oystercatcher	Sea-pie, Dickey-bird
Stone Curlew	Norfolk Plover, Thick-knce, Willie Reeve
Black Tern	Blue Darr, Mire Crow, Darr-swallow, Carr Swallow
Common Tern	Sea Swallow, Shrimp Picker, Dipeere, Perl, Darr
Little Tern	Lesser Tern, Chit Pearl
Black-headed Gull	Kittie, Sea-kitty, Peewit Gull, Puit Gull, Scoulton Peewit, Scoulton Puit, Scoulton Gull, Little Kitty, Skullcap Peewit, Scoulton Cob
Common Gull	Sprat Mow, Cob, Sea Cob
Great Black-backed Gull	Saddleback
Glaucous Gull	Cream-coloured Mow (<i>young</i>)
Iceland Gull	Cream-coloured Mow (<i>young</i>)
Great Skua	Gull-chaser
Pomatorhine Skua	Molberry, Boatswain, Shyte-hawk
Arctic Skua	Black-toed Gull
Razorbill	Wil-duck
Guillemot	Wil-duck, Wily-duck, Willie, Didlymot
Puffin	Sea-parrot, Parrot-beak
Little Auk	Sea Dove
Corn-crake	Land Rail, Runner, Raffle Jack
Water-rail	Runner, Rail
Moorhen	Waterhen
Coot	Baldie Coot, Bald Coot
Pheasant	Longtail
Red-legged Partridge	French Partridge, Frenchman
Quail	Wet-my-lips

Grey-cheeked Thrush near Thetford - an addition to the county list

Dave Leech

Just before 7.30 am on the 10th October, Bridget Griffin and I set out to ring at a feeding station set up by our colleague Jez Blackburn at Croxton, a small village just outside Thetford in south-west Norfolk. Jez rings at the site fairly regularly throughout the winter period but had chosen to take a short holiday in the US, an irony which would become more apparent as the day progressed. It's an interesting area; a small patch of scrub on the edge of the Raker family farm that attracts a large number of finches, including Brambling, and tits, thanks in no small part to the cropping regime on the surrounding farmland, which lies fallow over the winter months.

We put up our two 40 foot nets with our usual mix of optimism and fatigue, struggling slightly to find the guy ropes in poor light at an unfamiliar site. By 7.45 am there were plenty of thrushes moving about and it looked as if our efforts might be rewarded. Ten minutes later a mixed group of Fieldfare and Redwing, no more than 50 birds, dropped into the hawthorn bushes to the east of the nets, only to be flushed shortly afterwards by a passing truck. With high hopes of a net full of Scandinavian-ringed birds, we walked round the corner only to find an assortment of tits, a Bullfinch and a Great-spotted Woodpecker. I elected to begin extracting the Great-Spot, which was in the bottom shelf, and it was only when I raised my head that I realised we had actually caught a thrush, which was now resting only a few inches from my nose. I would like to take this opportunity to apologise to the residents of Croxton for any offence that my language might have caused at this point but it's not often you see a bird in a net that you can't immediately identify.

Bridget had already started moving towards the bird, having also noticed that something was not quite right. For a start it was incredibly small, the size of a Nightingale or perhaps slightly larger. The markings on the head and breast, meanwhile, were not hugely dissimilar to a Song Thrush. Everything pointed towards a *Catharus* thrush, but inland? In the East of England? And more to the point, if it was, was it Grey-cheeked or Swainson's? Neither of us had seen either species before and we don't make a point of taking our North American passerine guides with us while ringing in the Thetford area. We were going to need some serious gen.

As luck would have it, several colleagues in possession of just such gen live within five minutes of the site, and so it was that Dawn Balmer, Stuart Newson and Mark Grantham were roused courtesy of their mobile phones and arrived at the site shortly afterwards, armed to the teeth with a variety of literature. In the meantime, Bridget had bravely taken responsibility for extracting the bird while I looked on with trembling hands, sweating profusely and offering extremely helpful pieces of advice such as "Don't let it go" and "Be very careful".

Once in the hand, a brief examination of the underwing confirmed the bird's genus, a striking pale bar running along the underside of the primaries and secondaries. The crown, mantle and upperwing were uniformly dark, muddy brown with an olive-grey tinge to the back and rump and a warmer, slightly rufous tone to the tail. The undertail and belly were white with black tear-drop flecking on the upper breast and lower throat becoming denser to form clearly defined submoustachial stripes. The face was a similar muddy brown colour to the crown, with a slightly paler supercilium and off-white moustachial stripes. The lores were slightly darker than the rest of the face, the orbital ring was narrow and pale and the bill was dark with a flesh-coloured base to the lower mandible. It was a juvenile bird, as evidenced by

the six retained old greater coverts, which were slightly greyer than their newer counterparts. The wing measured 104mm (maximum chord) and the bird weighed 30.4g.

So what was it? Well, Veery and Hermit Thrush could be excluded straight away by the general colouration and lack of rufous tones, particularly on the tail, and the lack of a wide, sandy orbital ring and lores also indicated that it wasn't Swainson's Thrush. Finally, Bicknell's Thrush could be eliminated on the basis of biometrics, as the maximum wing chord cited for this species is 98mm, leaving Grey-cheeked Thrush as the only remaining candidate. Some confusion was temporarily caused by information about the relative length of the first primary and the extent of the emargination contained in an American banding guide, which suggested that the wing formula was closer to Swainson's. However, photographs of skins on the University of Puget Sound website viewed later that morning indicated that the book was in fact incorrect and that the wing formula supported our original identification.

(http://www.ups.edu/biology/museum/wings_Turdidae.html)

After the size of the leg had been measured with callipers, a B ring, the same size as that used for Greenfinch, was fitted. The bird was released and flew immediately into a tall bush, calling once and quickly dropping out of sight. Once access permission had been arranged with the landowner, the news was released. Unfortunately, despite much searching, the thrush was not seen again, although it was heard to call once at 11.00 am. The lure of a Pine Grosbeak further up the East coast quickly proved too much for many birders and the crowds had dispersed by early afternoon.

Interestingly, the only other east coast record of Grey-cheeked Thrush was from an equally unlikely site, having been found dead by a schoolboy in a patch of scrub near Horden, Co Durham and presented to his supply teacher. Fortunately for all concerned, the teacher showed the bird to none other than Eric Meek, the current chairman of the BOU Records Committee, on a training course shortly afterwards. Just goes to show - you've got to keep your eyes and mind open when birding, even when you're away from the established hotspots!

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Alan Tate, 55 Woodlands Way, Mildenhall, Suffolk IP28 7JA

Pieter Wessels, Rose Pightle, Cross St, Salthouse, Holt NR25 7XH

Peter Wilson, 39 Station Road, Thetford IP24 1AW

Alpine Accentor at Overstrand - the second record for Norfolk

Ben Murphy and Simon Chidwick

For Simon the evening of 20th April 2004 began, as usual, by him making his way along the cliff edge between Overstrand and Cromer, carefully checking the cliff face below the golf course for incoming migrants.

At first all seemed rather quiet but at 5.50 pm his attention was attracted to a Whitethroat sub-singing from bracken and brambles. As it was only his second of the spring, Simon watched it for a while and then turned to resume his search. Almost immediately his attention was drawn to a dark passerine clinging to the cliff face. This is usually a good spot for Black Redstarts and, fully expecting to see this species, he raised his binoculars. The image that appeared took him by complete surprise; instead of a Black Redstart this was clearly something quite different. As appears to be the norm in these circumstances, the bird seemed to realise it was something quite rare and played a frustrating game of hide and seek, immediately flying off along the cliff and disappearing around a buttress some 50 yards away.

Although the views were very brief, the combination of blue-grey plumage, white throat patch and chestnut flanks made Simon strongly suspect an Alpine Accentor. Aware it would be a widely-appreciated bird, he acted quickly and made a few calls to get other local birders to help relocate the bird and confirm its identification. Conscious that he might flush it and as a consequence lose it altogether he left it in peace until the first birders arrived.

Five minutes later (it felt like hours according to a rather anxious Simon!) fellow Overstrand birders Ben Murphy and Tony Eadson arrived, out of breath and alarmingly red of face! The search to relocate the bird began in earnest and after some 10 minutes it appeared at point blank range right in front of Ben and Tony. Despite the brief views, the grey upperparts with contrasting dark streaking on the mantle and scapulars, white throat (with sparse dark flecks), grey upper breast and belly and bright chestnut lower breast and flanks were enough to clinch the identity of this distinctive species to Simon's obvious relief. The news was then immediately 'phoned out'.

The bird remained in the same general area, often showing very well, until nightfall and allowed around a hundred, mostly Norfolk-based, birders to see it. Prolonged views enabled more plumage detail to be enjoyed, the dark patch and indistinct double wing-bar on the closed wing formed by black wing coverts with pale tips present on many individuals was obvious, while the bright yellow base to the lower mandible of an otherwise dark bill was commented on by many.

Birders who searched for it next morning were unlucky; it had obviously moved off overnight, although there was some compensation with the discovery of another Alpine, this time a Swift, which showed well some 5 miles further west at Beeston Bump.

The sighting constitutes only the second record for Norfolk, following one along the cliffs between Weybourne and Sheringham from 30th April to 4th May 1978. News of that bird's presence was not widely broadcast at the time and therefore the Overstrand bird was a very welcome addition to many birders' county list.

Pine Bunting at Choseley Barns

- the second county record

Ashley Saunders

While travelling towards Titchwell on 28th February, leading a birdwatching tour for Oriole Adventures, it looked unlikely that I would be able to provide much of a finale to my client's six-day tour as snow was beginning to fall. Hoping to add Corn Bunting to the trip list before dropping down to Titchwell for the remainder of the morning, I decided we should stay in the car as the inclement weather closed in. Pulling up opposite the concrete pad at the drying barns, I dropped my window and raised my binoculars to scan the mass of buntings that were feeding on the spilt grain.

Good numbers of Corn Buntings were immediately apparent, but a bird feeding on a much closer patch of grain alongside a Blackbird attracted my attention. Visibility was not brilliant as I watched the bird, back on to me, whilst chatting to my client and I expected to find a Yellowhammer. However, I was startled and surprised when the bird lifted its head and appeared to show a greyish-white central crown. Still with its back to me, a couple of species flashed across my mind, including Pine Bunting, and I expressed concerns to my client who then began watching the bird. It turned sideways and I nearly dropped my binoculars, exclaiming that we were indeed watching a male Pine Bunting apparently midway between winter and spring plumage.

My next reaction was to dive for the crumpled copy of Jonssons 'Birds of Europe' which lives in the glove box for just such an emergency. I thumbed through the pages to show my client an illustration and quickly talked him through the key features which identify such a rare bird. Elated at the shock of such a beautiful 'sibe' in snowy Norfolk, I rang my brother Michael remembering that he would be out birding somewhere. He must have been the luckiest person alive that morning as at the time of my call he was at Titchwell heading to Choseley! I think Colin McCrae would have been proud of his time from the reserve to the barns, but unfortunately a dog walker had flushed the buntings by the time he reached me, and in the mass of birds it was unclear whether the Pine Bunting had flown into the hedge or away with the Yellowhammers.

Clearly, although I was certain of the bird's identification it required a second opinion from Michael to eliminate the possibility of a hybrid, particularly as we had not yet scoped the bird. We stood outside with the scopes but although many buntings returned to feed, the Pine Bunting did not and several tense minutes passed. Eventually it began snowing quite hard so we retired to my car. Almost immediately the bird returned to the same spot and both Michael and myself were able to get on it before it once again flew to the hedge. Finally it settled further back on the concrete pad and we were able to get the scope views we wanted. Both happy with what we had seen it was at this point that I notified Rare Bird Alert - and the rest is history.

Although the bird did not show well again that day it was still present the following day, and subsequently enjoyed by many hundreds of admirers over the next couple of weeks although remaining elusive and erratic in its appearances.

Description

- Slightly bigger and stockier than a Yellowhammer, quite noticeable in direct comparison, when the longer tail also noted.

- At distance readily picked out from the Yellowhammers as being quite dark overall, with absolutely no yellow tones to the plumage, particularly the underparts which had a white ground colour. This gave the impression of a darker bunting with colder whiter underparts, though the whole plumage was typified by russet brown streaking.
- Underparts streaked russet, with a denser area of streaking on the breast and neat streaks on the flanks, contrasting with a clean belly.
- Head the most obvious feature, with a bold pattern of rufous/claret coloured stripes above and below the eye, split by a whitish patch at the bottom of the ear coverts. This pattern was clear, though partly obscured by the paler feather fringes of winter plumage that were still to wear away.
- Crown very distinctive and noticeable when the bird was facing directly towards or away from you. It had a broad, greyish-white centre, not bright white as on a spring male but more distinct than a male in winter plumage. The stripe was obviously whiter towards the forehead.
- Throat a solid russet/claret colour with a thin white line to the lower border separating it from the streaked upper breast, best viewed from head on.
- In flight Michael and myself both enjoyed a good view of the bird's extensive deep rufous rump, darker and not as bright or contrasting as that of a Yellowhammer. White outer tail feathers visible in flight.
- Bird exhibited a grey bill and pinkish legs.
- Upperparts heavily and boldly streaked with a distinct rufous tone, the mantle stripes particularly obvious.

This constitutes the second county record following a male on the Norfolk/Suffolk border at Hopton in October 1995.

The following artists may be able to provide copies of their work or take commissions

Andy Benson, Ciconia, The Close, Aylmerton, Norwich NR11 8PX
 Alan Burtenshaw, 14 Bellview Close, Briston, Melton Constable NR24 2SJ
 Steve Cale, Bramble Cottage, Westwood Lane, Gt Ryburgh, Fakenham NR21 7AP
 John Geeson, 22 Hillside, Barnham Broom NR9 4DF
 Robert Gillmor, North Light, Hill Top, Cley, Holt NR25 7SE
 Richard Johnson, www.stitchbird.co.uk or tel: 07811-409651
 Phil Jones, 24 Church Lane, Wolstanton, Newcastle, Staffs ST5 0EG
 John Williamson, 105 Spencer St, Norwich NR3 4PF
 Gary Wright, 27 Ray Bond Way, Aylsham NR11 6UT
 Martin Woodcock, Furlongs, Long Lane, Wiveton, Holt NR25 7DD

NORFOLK MAMMAL REPORT – 2004

Editorial

This is the 48th annual Norfolk Mammal Report and the editors are delighted to note the continued increase in both the number of records received (1,826 in 2004) and the number of recorders (86 in 2004) making submissions. The strength of the Norfolk Mammal Report comes from the contributions made by those volunteer recorders noting down and then submitting records on an annual basis. A number of recorders deserve special mention for the number of records submitted this year. All of the following recorders submitted over 100 records for 2004, and some submitted more than 300 records during the course of the year: Mrs J E Gaffney, Mr P J Heath, Dr I Keymer, Dr P Taylor and Mr P Westley. Of course, all records are equally valuable and the editors would be pleased to receive any observations of any mammal species seen within the county. The 2004 report also benefits from the inclusion of photographs provided by Neil Bowman, Graeme Cresswell and Ray Jones and we are very grateful for their generosity in providing such wonderful images.

Readers of the Norfolk Mammal Report for 2004 will note the general paucity of records relating to bats. We feel that, given the strength of the bat work taking place within the county, better reporting of bats should be possible and we would like to urge all bat workers to submit records on an annual basis. Sensitivities over disturbance through the naming of sites are easily overcome by flagging records as confidential or by adding acceptable site tags (*e.g.* 'confidential site near Aylsham'). The aim of the report and the associated Norfolk Mammal Database is to maintain a permanent record of the status of those mammal species found within the county. This can then be used to support effective conservation action and to provide a record of our changing mammal fauna for future generations. All records received are passed to the Norfolk Biological Records Centre (NBRC) unless requested otherwise by the person submitting the record. In return, we receive details of all records submitted direct to the NBRC. Although some recorders currently send their records to both parties, they may find it easier to submit in the first instance to the County Mammal Recorder, in the knowledge that the information will be passed to NBRC.

Articles for the 2005 Norfolk Mammal Report are especially welcome and an initial approach should be made to the editor to discuss ideas.

Mike Toms and Dave Leech

Submission of records

Records should be submitted to the County Mammal Recorder: Mike Toms, c/o BTO, The Nunnery, Thetford, Norfolk, IP24 2PU. Records may be submitted on paper or by email. A standard MS Excel template is available for those observers wishing to send in data electronically and a copy of this can be requested by emailing michael.toms@bto.org. The same email address should also be used for the submission of records or any queries. Observers are encouraged to submit articles for publication in the Norfolk Mammal Report or the other publications of the Society. Please contact the editor to discuss ideas and submission requirements.

It is helpful if records for 2005 could be submitted by the end of January 2006. Records from previous years are particularly welcome and, although they will not feature in the mammal report for the year in question, they will be added to the Norfolk Mammal Database. The information that makes up a record is all-important and observers should attempt to provide the following details when submitting making a submission:

Species

Site Name

Grid Reference

Number of individuals seen

Date

Notes (including age and sex if known)

Type of record (*e.g.* road casualty, field sighting, caught by cat, found dead, trapped)

Observer name and contact details.

Systematic List

The systematic list follows the classification used by Corbet & Harris (1991) and includes a summary of the information held on the Norfolk Mammal Database, both for 2004 and for the database as a whole. Two sets of figures are shown after the vernacular and systematic names. The first of these highlights the number of records received for 2004, with the total number of records held for this species in the database shown in brackets. The second set of figures shows the number of tetrads (a two by two kilometre square) from which the species was recorded in 2004, followed in brackets by the total number of tetrads containing the species in the database as a whole. Thus, 72 Hedgehog records were received for 2004, with 2,056 in the database as a whole (including 2004). Similarly, Hedgehogs were recorded in 38 tetrads during 2004 and have been recorded from 631 tetrads in total.

Although not recorded within the systematic list, three additional records held on the Norfolk Mammal Database for 2004 require a brief mention. ***Unidentified cat***: A second-hand report of a large puma-sized black cat was noted by DLC during Easter week. A visitor to the tenants of Ditchingham House reported seeing a large, puma-sized cat in Ditchingham House Gardens, close to the pond. The observer trains police dogs and was sure of the size of the animal. Two other reports of a large cat in the same area also reached DLC at about this time – one crossing the B1332 near Ditchingham Church and the other on the old railway line at Broome, adjacent to Ditchingham. Although these reports cannot be substantiated it is worth recording them here. Unusual mammals have been known to turn up in the county from time to time years, most recently the Raccoon seen during March 1997. ***Edible Dormouse***: A report was received of what was thought by the observer (JSE) to be an Edible Dormouse seen on the verge of a minor road near Bungay. The animal reminded the observer of a fat squirrel with a



Bank Vole - a surprisingly agile species sometimes recorded on bird feeders. (*Ray Jones*)

Grey Seal pup at Horsey, December 2004. (*Graeme Cresswell*)

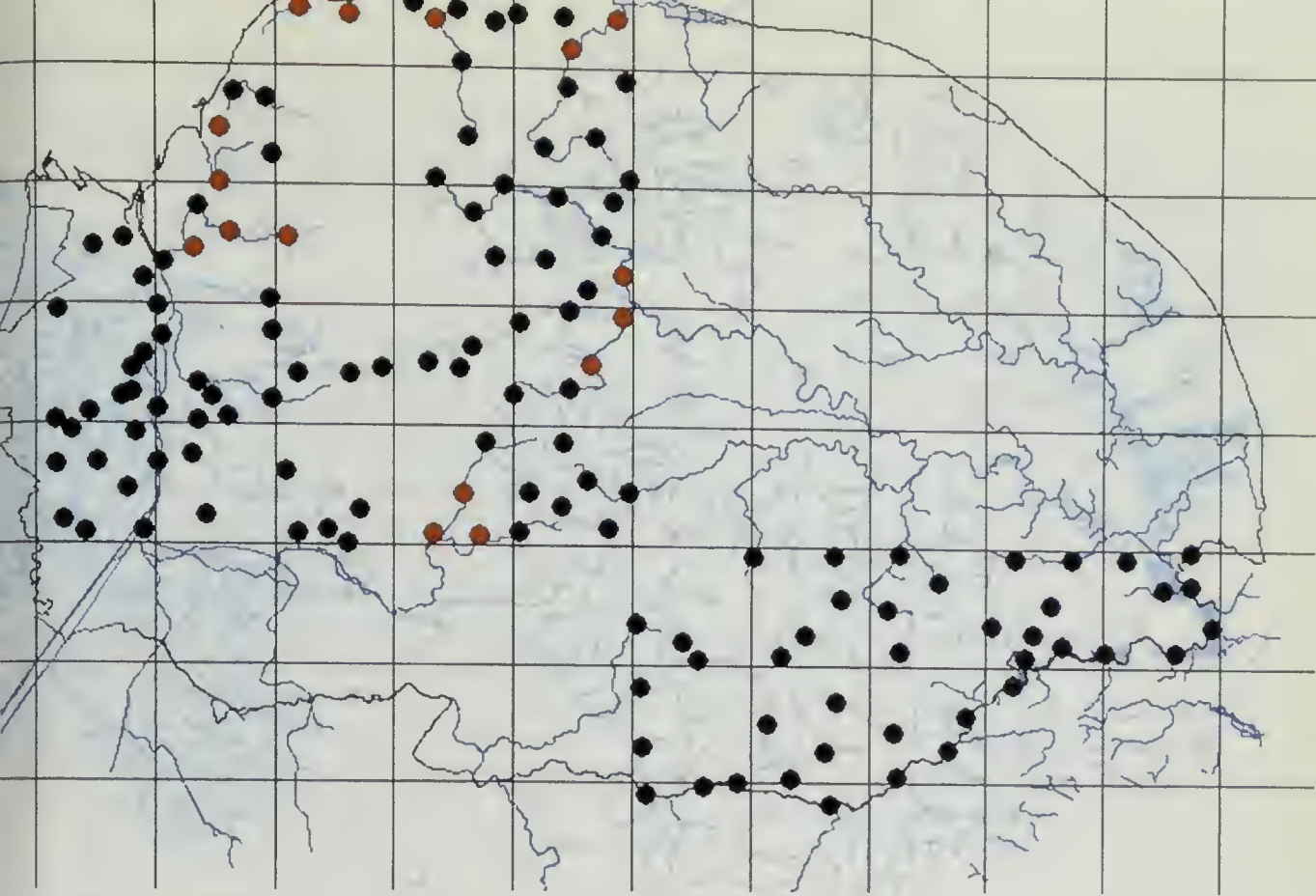




Harbour Porpoise bycatch, Horsey. (*Graeme Cresswell*)

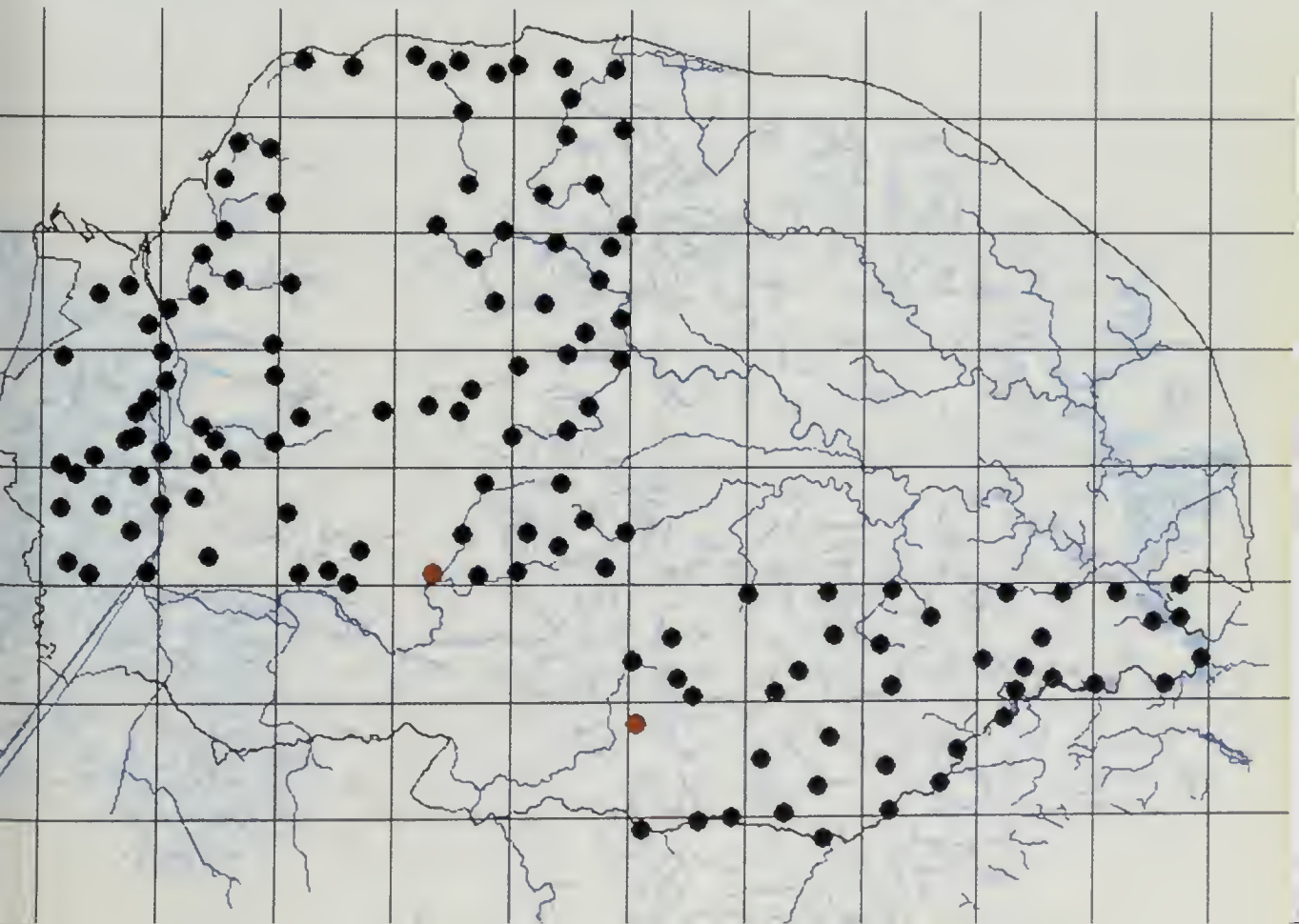
Young Fox cubs, June 2004. (*Neil Bowman*)

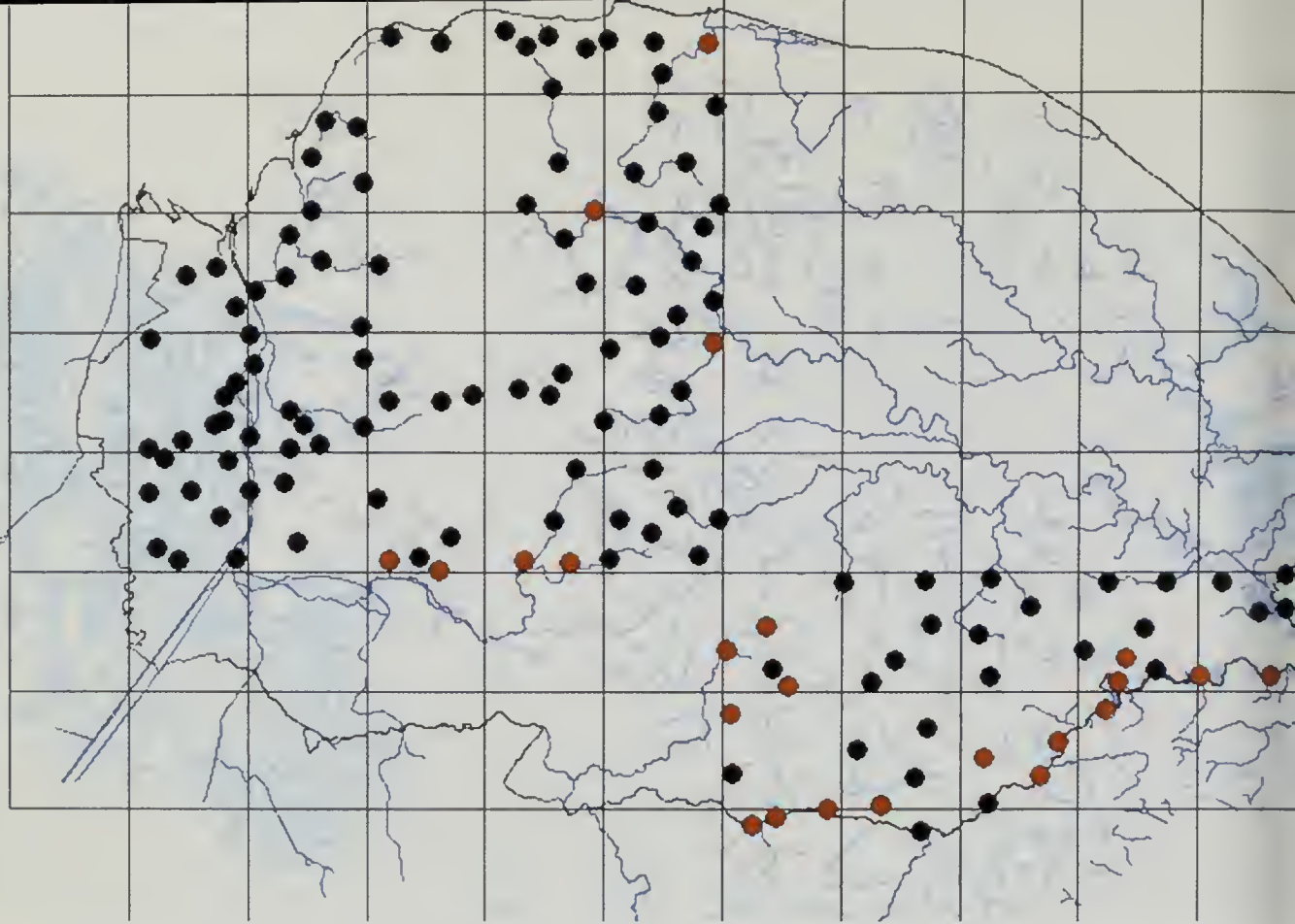




Map 1 First Otter Survey of England, 1977-79: results for 137 Norfolk sites, surveyed 1978-79 (red dots = positive records, black dots = negative records. *(See article by Steve Henson)*)

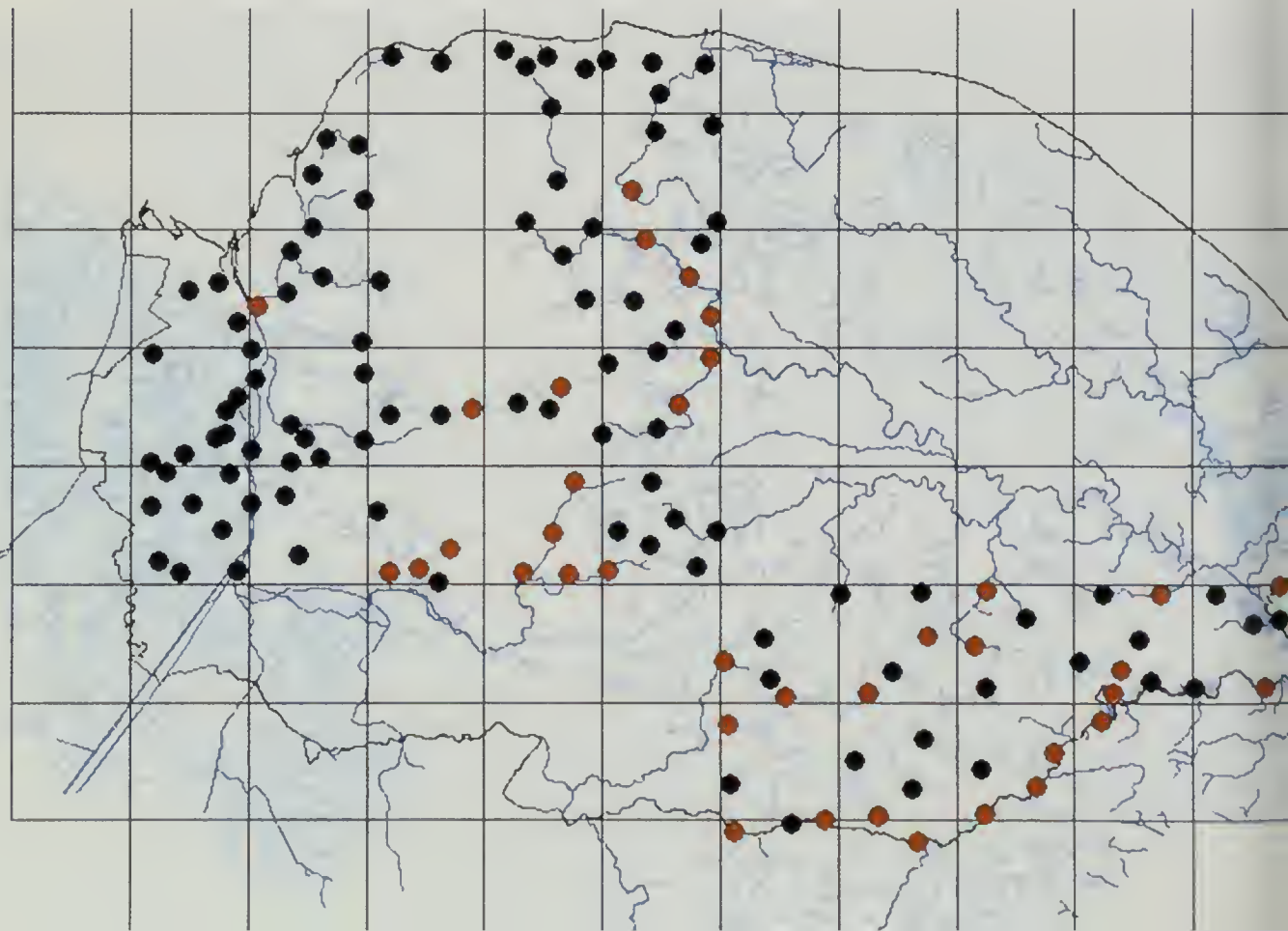
Map 2 Second Otter Survey of England, 1984-86: results for 137 Norfolk sites, surveyed 1985 (red dots = positive records, black dots = negative records. *(See article by Steve Henson)*)





Map 3 Third Otter Survey of England, 1991-94: results for 136 Norfolk sites, surveyed 1992 (red dots = positive records, black dots = negative records. *(See article' by Steve Henson)*

Map 4 Fourth Otter Survey of England, 2000-2002: results for 141 Norfolk sites, surveyed 2000-2001 (red dots = positive records, black dots = negative records. *(See article by Steve Henson)*



bushy tail. **Prairie Dog:** A small number of individuals of this species are known to live outside the boundary of a wildlife park in the south of the county.

Insectivora

Hedgehog

Erinaceus europaeus

72 (2,056) records 38 (631) tetrads

Very few of the 72 records received for 2004 were of live individuals. However, one report that did featured three seen at Ditchingham on 28th May and involved some rather aggressive behaviour (DLC). One of the three (presumably a male attracted to the snorting of a courting pair) was seen to rush across the grass and ram into the other two. It then attacked what was presumably the male of the courting pair, which kept turning to face its attacker. After a while, the attacking male abandoned his assault, with his victim partly on its side as if injured. The attacking male and what was presumably the female of the original pair then left, while the savaged male remained for a few minutes before getting up and running off, apparently uninjured. When two males encounter one another under such circumstances they may indulge in head butting and in generally banging each other about. In this instance the interloper appears to have won the bout and cleared off with his prize. The first individual of the year, found freshly dead on 22nd February, was thought to have been disturbed from hibernation within a heap of rotting straw. A number of late individuals were noted into the first half of December, highlighting the unseasonably mild weather.

Mole

Talpa europaea

130 (2,819) records 89 (750) tetrads

Most records of this under-recorded species are of the fresh earthworks pushed up during the excavation of new sections of tunnel. These are evident throughout much of the year, though tunnelling activity may be more pronounced during the breeding season when males tunnel over extensive areas in search of females. Just three records involved sightings of live moles seen above ground: Croxton 29th May (PJ), Thetford 2nd June (PJ) and Potter Heigham 30th May (PT). A further 12 records were of individuals found dead – one on a path at Potter Heigham (PT) and 10 brought in by domestic cats (again at Potter Heigham, PT). The other was a leucistic individual found dead at Welney, one of at least four such individuals encountered at Welney over recent years (JK). A recent review of mole population trends (Battersby 2005) suggests that several more years of annual monitoring data are required from a variety of recording schemes before a clear understanding of mole population trends can be attained.

Common Shrew

Sorex araneus

39 (1,023) records 15 (341) tetrads

As with previous years, most records of Common Shrews were the result of predation by domestic cats and involved individuals found dead. One 'lucky' individual caught by a cat at Potter Heigham was released unharmed (PT). Other individuals were found on footpaths with no apparent cause of death, although it is worth noting that the mortality of old adults at the end of the breeding season has been attributed to competition with juveniles for food, loss of territory and tooth wear (Corbet & Harris 1991). Individuals were recorded alive at Kilverstone (PJ), Talconeston (RB) and Fring (RO). The presence of other individuals was revealed through faecal remains collected in bait tubes deployed as part of the Mammal

Society's Water Shrew Survey. Although labour intensive in terms of analysis, this may prove an effective method for recording the distribution of various shrew species.

Pygmy Shrew

Sorex minutus

11 (444) records 4 (191) tetrads

Pygmy Shrews were noted at North Walsham Wood (PJH), Blakeney (KMF), East Tuddenham (ALB) and Potter Heigham (PT). In most instances, records were the result of cat predation. The Pygmy Shrew is probably widespread and fairly common within the county but difficulties in observing and identifying this species make it impossible to deduce current status or distribution. Information is also lacking at the national level, although data from an ongoing survey of Barn Owl pellets by the Mammal Society may just suggest a slight increase in the population over the last three decades (Love *et al.* 2000). A cautionary note needs to be added to this interpretation though, since the distribution of sites from which pellets are collected may have changed over time, as might prey selection by owls.

Water Shrew

Neomys fodiens

10 (257) records 7 (138) tetrads

Results from the Mammal Society's Water Shrew Survey will provide a more complete picture of the national distribution of this species. However, it is unlikely that sufficient sites will have been covered within the county to shed much light on the fine scale distribution of Water Shrew within Norfolk. Two of the records received for 2004 stem from the Mammal Society survey and more may be forthcoming when the analyses are complete and results filter down to county mammal recorders. The other records for 2004 stem mostly from cat predation, although two individuals were seen alive at sites within the county (PJH, PT) and a further individual was found dead at Catfield Fen (PJH).

Chiroptera

Lesser Horseshoe Bat

Rhinolophus hipposideros

0 (0) records 0 (0) tetrads

Although there are no records of this species in the Norfolk Mammal Database, the species was known to be present within the county during the 1950s and 1960s. This species was the subject of a UK Biodiversity action plan reporting in 2002 (see www.ukbap.org.uk).

Whiskered Bat

Myotis mystacinus

0 (3) records 0 (2) tetrads

This species was formally separated from Brandt's Bat in 1972. The most recent reliable and published report is from 1987, when a roost of 15 individuals was found near Snettisham (AEV). Future monitoring of this species at hibernation sites is likely to prove difficult because separation from Brandt's Bat requires close examination, something that could result in the disturbance of hibernating individuals. It is hoped that new fieldwork methods being developed through the National Bat Monitoring Programme, and involving the use of frequency division bat detectors, will allow field identification of the different *Myotis* species and more satisfactory monitoring.

Brandt's Bat*Myotis brandtii***0 (5) records 0 (5) tetrads**

Small numbers of this species are known to have used monitored winter roost sites through into the mid-1980s, although there are no recent records on the Norfolk Mammal Database.

Natterer's Bat*Myotis nattereri***2 (298) records 2 (88) tetrads**

Just two records were received for this species during 2004. Ten were found at a winter roost site near West Acre (JGG) and a single individual was found using a bat brick at a winter roost near Blickling (JGG). Both were recorded during February. This species prefers open woodland and parkland and maintains summer roosts in tree holes and in timber rot holes within churches and barns. No information was received for 2004 regarding the status of the small breeding colony at Waxham Great Barn. Although thought to be fairly common throughout much of the UK, the UK population may itself be of international importance (Hutson 1993).

Daubenton's Bat*Myotis daubentonii***5 (391) records 4 (97) tetrads**

Reports of winter roosting individuals were received from near Blickling (JGG), West Acre (JGG) and East Tuddenham (ALB) during 2004. One individual was seen to emerge from the thatch roof of the Broads Wildlife Centre at Ranworth on 27th March (PT) and the species was also noted at Welney Wildfowl Trust Reserve (JK). The species is clearly far more widespread and numerous within the county than this handful of records would suggest.

Serotine*Eptesicus serotinus***0 (25) records 0 (21) tetrads**

Although no reports of this species were received for 2004, previous records suggest populations are present within Breckland and at the extreme eastern end of the county, from the Broads south to the county boundary. The species is thought to roost almost exclusively in buildings and is, as a consequence, particularly susceptible to timber treatment and building renovation. The fact that this species roosts in crevices and maintains colonies of small size might suggest that it is easily overlooked and, hence, more widespread than the available records would suggest.

Leisler's Bat*Nyctalus leisleri***0 (0) records 0 (0) tetrads**

This species first began to appear in Thetford Forest bat boxes during the 1980s and is now regular there. However, there are no Norfolk records of this species in the Norfolk Mammal Database. While experienced bat workers are able to detect this species in the field, the increasing availability of broadband detectors should increase the number of records.

Noctule*Nyctalus noctula***3 (219) records 2 (106) tetrads**

In addition to two reports of single individuals seen at Sheringham Bird Observatory on 30th October (DAA) and Whitlingham Gravel Pits on 19th September (JRL), the Noctule was also noted to be present at Welney Wildfowl Reserve during the course of the year (JK). This tree-dwelling species may have suffered a substantial population decline, particularly after the 1940s, but available data are insufficient to substantiate this (Stebbing & Griffith 1986).

Pipistrelle

Pipistrellus spp.

25 (994) records 16 (372) tetrads

Following the separation of Common Pipistrelle and Soprano Pipistrelle (Barrett *et al.* 1997), most records on the Norfolk Mammal Database are held under *Pipistrellus spp.*, since they have not been resolved to species level. While most records received for 2004 were of individuals seen in flight, two fell victim to the cats at Decoy Farm, Potter Heigham (PT).

Nathusius's Pipistrelle

Pipistrellus nathusii

0 (7) records 0 (3) tetrads

No records of this species were received for 2004. A review of the status of this species within the county appears in the mammal report for 2002 (Parsons 2003). The distinctive echolocation call (and unique social call) means that trained bat workers can readily identify this species.

Barbastelle

Barbastella barbastellus

0 (107) records 0 (35) tetrads

No information was received on the well-known breeding colony at Paston Barns during 2004. A pilot detector-based survey is being planned through the National Bat Monitoring Programme and it is hoped that this will lead to wider scale volunteer-based monitoring of this species (Battersby 2005).

Brown Long-eared Bat

Plecotus auritus

2 (389) records 2 (175) tetrads

This species favours woodland habitats where it can glean insects from the vegetation, but it also uses large loft spaces, making it vulnerable to woodland loss and building renovation/timber treatment. The two 2004 records came from Corpusty (AE), where an individual was found grounded on a car before being released elsewhere, and Crostwick (JOH) where a large roost was reported in the roof space of Crostwick Hall.

Lagomorpha

Rabbit

Oryctolagus cuniculus

99 (2,359) records 61 (688) tetrads

This common and widespread species is under-recorded within Norfolk, especially in the extreme west of the county. While a melanistic individual was noted at Tivetshall St. Mary (JRL), the small black individual noted at King's Lynn (EH) may have been part of the mixed wild/feral population. Several reports of individuals showing symptoms of myxomatosis were noted: Dersingham (RO), near Calthorpe Broad (PT), Ditchingham (DLC), Snettisham (EH) and East Tuddenham (ALB). The effects of myxomatosis at the population level are nowhere near as damaging as they once were but there are some concerns over the possible spread of rabbit viral haemorrhagic disease. Nationally, evidence from three different surveys (National Game Census, Breeding Bird Survey and the Waterways Breeding Bird Survey) suggests a decline that has been ongoing since the mid-1990s (Battersby 2005).

Brown Hare

Lepus europaeus

177 (2,995) records 118 (770) tetrads

The Brown Hare is a widespread yet under-recorded species, with fewer records submitted for 2004 than for 2003. Most records referred to sightings of live individuals seen in arable crops,

with a small number of individuals found dead on the roads. Ongoing monitoring of this species is likely to be possible through national schemes like the Breeding Bird Survey, the results of which suggest some stabilisation of the population at a low level following a very long period of sustained decline. The Brown Hare, listed as a UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species, is most numerous in arable areas where cereals predominate alongside grass fields that can be used for summer feeding. It has been suggested that agri-environment schemes, such as the Environmentally Sensitive Areas scheme (ESA), may be a suitable vehicle for halting the substantial decline that has been ongoing since the 1960s (Johnson & Baker 2003). One such ESA, covering much of Breckland, is known to hold a substantial population of Brown Hares (Rothera 1998).

Rodentia

Red Squirrel

Sciurus vulgaris

3 (790) records 2 (284) tetrads

An individual was found freshly dead on the B1107, Thetford to Brandon road, on 20th May (JP). Although within the vice county of West Suffolk, this record falls within the administrative county of Norfolk and is worth noting here because of the uncertainty of the status of this species within Thetford Forest. The individual was made available to researchers in London for a post mortem, the results of which are awaited with interest. There was a second report from the Thetford Warren Lodge area 2 weeks after the dead squirrel was found and a forest ranger saw another at High Lodge early one morning in October (NGI). It is worth noting that there are people in the area breeding both European and British Red Squirrels and these occasionally escape.

Grey Squirrel

Sciurus carolinensis

100 (2,182) records 71 (600) tetrads

This familiar species is thought to have a stable or increasing population trend at the national level and is widespread across the county. However, as with many common species, this familiarity means that observers do not routinely record sightings, hence we receive more records of both Stoat and Chinese Water Deer than we do of Grey Squirrel. Fortunately, the changing status of the species within Norfolk can be monitored through the Breeding Bird Survey with some degree of certainty. Among the 100 records submitted for 2004 was one individual caught by a cat in Hunstanton (EH).

Bank Vole

Clethrionomys glareolus

26 (672) records 13 (245) tetrads

Among the records for 2004 were an individual recorded eating carnations in a garden at Blakeney (KMF) and two that were regular visitors to a garden bird feeding station at East Tuddenham (ALB). This species is very poorly monitored at the national level.

Field Vole

Microtus agrestis

75 (1,504) records 13 (399) tetrads

Three-quarters of the records for this species were the result of cat predation. One individual, which having been caught by cat and then lost indoors, was later found in fruit bowl munching through an apple (PT). Field Voles can be successfully recorded through the characteristic field signs that they leave. These include runways through grassland vegetation, in which distinctive droppings and clippings may be found (Hansson 1979).

Water Vole

Arvicola terrestris

37 (1,149) records 21 (399) tetrads

Water Vole populations at a number of selected 'key sites' have been selected for special management. Norfolk has three of these key sites: Titchwell Marsh, Hickling Broad and the Bure Broads and Marshes. Monitoring work, based on survey transects at these key sites, contributes to our understanding of the national status of this species. Records received for 2004 came from a combination of sightings of live individuals and recognition of the characteristic feeding and latrines signs. Most reports came from the three key sites.

Wood Mouse

Apodemus sylvaticus

27 (1,405) records 14 (399) tetrads

The majority of the 27 records relate to individuals caught by domestic cats, although one was found run over at Kilverstone near Thetford (PJ) and another individual set up home in the porch at Decoy Farm, sleeping in the firewood box and eating bird seed (PT). The Wood Mouse will be familiar to many observers as the species of small mammal seen to move into sheds and other outbuildings during the winter months.

Yellow-necked Mouse

Apodemus flavicollis

1 (38) records 1 (17) tetrads

Two individuals were found dead in the attic of Ditchingham Lodge during the course of 2004 (DLC). The observer correctly noted the prominent yellow collar that runs across the chest from armpit to armpit and gives the species its name. Care is needed when separating this species from the closely related Wood Mouse, which can also show a (less-extensive) yellow collar. The Yellow-necked Mouse appears to have a toehold in the extreme south of the county.

Harvest Mouse

Micromys minutus

14 (663) records 9 (233) tetrads

Fewer records of this species were received this year. Systematic searches of suitable vegetation late in the year are a good way of finding the characteristic nests.

House Mouse

Mus musculus

3 (707) records 2 (325) tetrads

We have very little new information on the status of this species within the county. Records of this species would be especially welcome.

Brown Rat

Rattus norvegicus

43 (1,293) records 29 (512) tetrads

The Brown Rat is a familiar and widespread species likely to be encountered anywhere within the county. Despite this, we continue to only receive a small number of records each year, highlighting how those species perceived to be common and widespread are generally ignored by observers when compiling their mammal records. Fortunately, projects like the mammal component of the Breeding Bird Survey have the potential to provide information on changes in the Brown Rat population. A number of Brown Rats were brought in by domestic cats, while one individual was the unfortunate victim of a Stoat (RO).

Ship Rat

Rattus rattus

0 (8) records 0 (6) tetrads

It is thought that only a few colonies of this species remain within Britain and although once widespread, it has been replaced by the more familiar Brown Rat. The two species can be very similar in appearance and are best separated in the hand. A rat with black fur is not necessarily a Black Rat and the presence of particularly dark coloured Brown Rats may result in misidentification.

Common Dormouse

Muscardinus avellanarius

0 (6) records 0 (6) tetrads

Although the status of this species within the county has been the subject of much discussion there are a handful of seemingly reliable records that go back over many years.

Coypu

Myocastor coypus

0 (5) records 0 (5) tetrads

A former pest species no longer resident within the county. Unfortunately, the Norfolk Mammal Database is far from complete with regard to records of Coypu. This is something that we would like to rectify.

Cetacea

Minke Whale

Balaenoptera acutorostrata

0 (10) records 0 (9) tetrads

This species has not been recorded since 1997, when a sequence of three records on 2nd September suggested a single individual passing along the coast from Weybourne to Sheringham. Although regularly encountered along the coasts of the western Scotland and the Northern Isles, this species is only rarely encountered on the east coast south of Yorkshire.

Fin Whale

Balaenoptera physalus

0 (1) records 0 (1) tetrads

Last recorded in 2003 when an upper jawbone found near a Sperm Whale carcass was identified as being from this species. Corbet & Harris (1991) suggest this may be the commonest large whale species in the northeast Atlantic, with a population thought to be between 9,000 and 14,000 individuals. However, populations of this large species (second only to the Blue Whale in size) underwent decline as a result of commercial whaling, something that is reflected in a pronounced reduction in the number of strandings reported from around the British coast in recent decades.

Sei Whale

Balaenoptera borealis

0 (1) records 0 (1) tetrads

A 44ft long individual stranded at Waxham Gap in 1971 was the last record of this species, which is an occasional visitor to UK waters (Evans & Hammond 2004).

Sperm Whale

Physeter catodon

1 (9) records 1 (7) tetrads

According to a report that appeared in the EDP, a 60ft long individual initially beached at Holme on 31st January and was then buffeted along the coast to Thornham Harbour.

Northern Bottlenose Whale*Hyperoodon ampullatus**0 (6) records 0 (5) tetrads*

This species has occasionally been recorded stranded on the Norfolk coast. The Northern Bottlenose Whale is known to approach stationary boats and is thought to be attracted by strange noises, such as those made by ships' generators.

Sowerby's Beaked Whale*Mesoplodon bidens**0 (1) records 0 (1) tetrads*

A single beached individual was recorded at Happisburgh, in August 1952.

Cuvier's Beaked Whale*Ziphius cavirostris**0 (3) records 0 (1) tetrads*

All three records on the database refer to the same individual, reported in the 2002 mammal report (Cresswell 2003).

Harbour Porpoise*Phocoena phocoena**27 (275) records 17 (50) tetrads*

A good number of reports for this species were reported this year, largely thanks to the contribution made by seawatchers at Sheringham Bird Observatory (DAA, RL, MS and MAW) and Horsey (ALB, GC, PJH and one other). Records were also received from Winterton, Kelling, Walcott and West Runton (CJ, CS, PJH and PB).

Common Dolphin*Delphinus delphis**0 (7) records 0 (5) tetrads*

No records reported this year. This species is recorded on regular basis from UK waters, with most records (both from incidental sightings and standardised survey work) coming from the southwest (Reid *et al.*, 2003).

Bottlenose Dolphin*Tursiops truncatus**0 (9) records 0 (9) tetrads*

A scarce species in the southern part of the North Sea.

White-beaked Dolphin*Lagenorhynchus albirostris**0 (21) records 0 (16) tetrads*

Another scarce visitor to the southern North Sea. Movements, associated with concentrations of prey species in these areas, may bring this species close inshore.

False Killer Whale*Pseudorca crassidens**0 (1) records 0 (1) tetrads*

The only record on the Norfolk Mammal Database concerns the stranding of eight individuals in Wooton Creek in November 1935.

Long-finned Pilot Whale*Globicephala melas**0 (6) records 0 (5) tetrads*

Last reported in 1992 when one was found dead on Scolt Head Island.

Carnivora

Red Fox

Vulpes vulpes

84 (1,523) records 56 (573) tetrads

Records of this species were recorded from across the county, including some from within the city of Norwich. The urban fox population within Norwich is thought to have become established some time after 1986 and is still increasing (Wilkinson & Smith, 2001). Road casualties are reported fairly frequently from the Norwich southern bypass. Successful breeding, as determined through the presence of cubs, was reported from Old Catton Park (RFJ), Great Melton (RB), Ranworth (RFJ) and Choseley (DAA).

Stoat

Mustela erminea

109 (2,692) records 74 (775) tetrads

Stoats were noted in all months of the year, with most records relating to individuals seen crossing roads and footpaths. A number of individuals were seen hunting, carrying prey or feeding. Individuals were noted with a range of prey species including Brown Rat (JRL, RO), unidentified mouse (DAA) and Grey Squirrel (AIB). This last individual was noted to be struggling to carry the dead Grey Squirrel across a path. However, when it spotted the observer it managed to hold the squirrel symmetrically and disappear into cover at speed and without any trouble. Individuals were recorded hunting Rabbits at Weeting Heath (PT), a Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus* at Titchwell (CR) and a young Brown Hare near Thetford (PJ). Two records also suggested scavenging on Brown Hare road casualties (RWG). As in previous years there were a handful of records of Stoats seen in ermine. One was seen by GDS (and reported by AIB) in full ermine at Houghton Park in late December, with a second individual in ermine seen at Holkham Fresh Marsh in mid-January (DAA). A further record refers to an individual seen on 2nd February at Gayton Thorpe (RO).

Weasel

Mustela nivalis

48 (2,038) records 44 (717) tetrads

Far fewer records are received for Weasel than for its larger relative. Again, most records are brief glimpses of an individual dashing across open ground, be it a road or footpath. Only a single record of an individual carrying small mammal prey was received this year (from Blakeney, KMF), although there were records of individuals involved in hunting. One lucky observer (AIB) was fortunate to witness a Weasel carrying three of its young, one by one, across a path at Holkham Meads. The dexterity of this species can be seen from records of one individual running along the top of the flint outer wall at Santon Downham churchyard (PW) and a second climbing a gate at Berney Arms (CR).

Ferret

Mustela putorius/furo

0 (28) records 0 (22) tetrads

No records received this year. There were three in 2003.

American Mink

Mustela vison

7 (342) records 6 (135) tetrads

The 2004 records for this species included 15 trapped at Welney Wildfowl Trust Reserve (JK), four hanging from a gibbet at the Nunnery Lakes Reserve, Thetford (MPT) plus others seen at Hellsdon Mill Sluices and on the campus at UEA. One was reported as a road casualty at Barsham (EHO) on 23rd March.

Badger

Meles meles

17 (551) records 13 (276) tetrads

Records (the vast majority of which involved road casualties) were received from near Thurton (VF), Bodham (ATR), the A47 at Norwich (PJH, JRL, SH), Thurning (PPW), North Tuddenham (ALB), Pentney (PW), North Elmham (ER), Guist (DN), Scarning (EHO), Welney (JK), Thetford (PJ, JP), Wood Norton (YT) and near Lessingham (PJH).

Otter

Lutra lutra

82 (948) records 28 (247) tetrads

A very good number of Otter records were received this year, most relating to feeding signs or droppings. Records were concentrated around the Broads, the STANTA training area, Corpusty and the Nunnery Lakes at Thetford. Away from these areas, records were also received from near Beetley, where two were seen swimming together by members of the mid-Norfolk group of the Norfolk Wildlife Trust during their Hoe Bird Walk (PC), the Thursford/Gunthorpe road, where a young adult was reported killed on the road (RM), Strumpshaw (JRL) and Norwich, where droppings were found on the River Wensum near Cotessey (CR).

Pinnipedia

Common Seal

Phoca vitulina

8 (122) records 5 (40) tetrads

Records came from Sheringham Bird Observatory (4 records – MAW, TW), Stiffkey Sands (1 record – DW), Waxham Gap (1 record – JRL), off Winterton (RB) and from the hundred foot river at Welney (JK). The record for Stiffkey Sands involved a count of 385 individuals.

Harp Seal

Phoca groenlandica

0 (2) records 0 (1) tetrads

The database contains two records from previous years for this species.

Grey Seal

Halichoerus grypus

16 (106) records 10 (32) tetrads

Records were centred on Blakeney Point and the Winterton and Horsey area. Peak counts of 132 individuals (Horsey, PJH) and 130 individuals (Stiffkey, DW) were noted. The first pups of the winter were noted at Horsey on 14th November (GC).

Walrus

Odobenus rosmarus

0 (1) 0 (1)

The only record of this species comes from 1981.

Artiodactyla

Red Deer

Cervus elaphus

72 (1,479) records 38 (394) tetrads

Most records of this species come from Thetford Forest although, as in previous years, there are clusters of records from the Broads and in the area between Melton Constable, Hunworth and Bayfield.

Sika Deer

Cervus nippon

0 (8) records 0 (5) tetrads

The eight records on the database leave the historical status and distribution of this species unclear within the county.

Fallow Deer

Dama dama

19 (451) records 11 (158) tetrads

In additions to those records relating to the Holkam Park herd, reports of Fallow Deer also came from the Ken Hill Estate (EH), Coxford Heath (AIB), North Creake (AIB), Horsford Woods (PJH) and Thetford Forest (various observers). Records from Thetford Forest included some white form individuals (PJ & MPT).

Roe Deer

Capreolus capreolus

89 (2,101) records 63 (498) tetrads

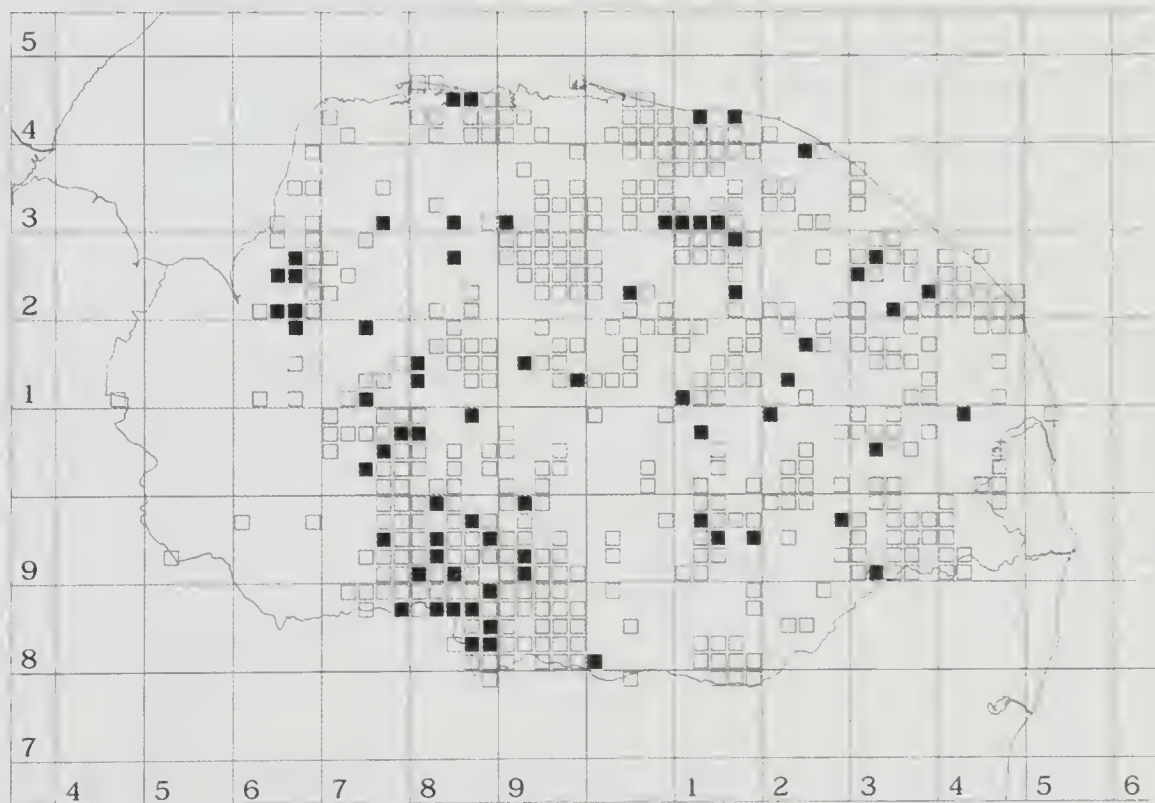
Records for this species continue to come from across the county, with most referring to single individuals. Several observers reported groups of three Roe together and there was one record of a group of six feeding together at Whinburgh (SE) on 31st December. There has been a continuous increase in abundance and distribution of this species at the national level (Battersby 2005).

Muntjac

Muntiacus reevesi

100 (1,555) records 68 (488) tetrads

Although Thetford Forest remains the stronghold for this species, records from across Norfolk highlight just how well established Muntjac is within the county.

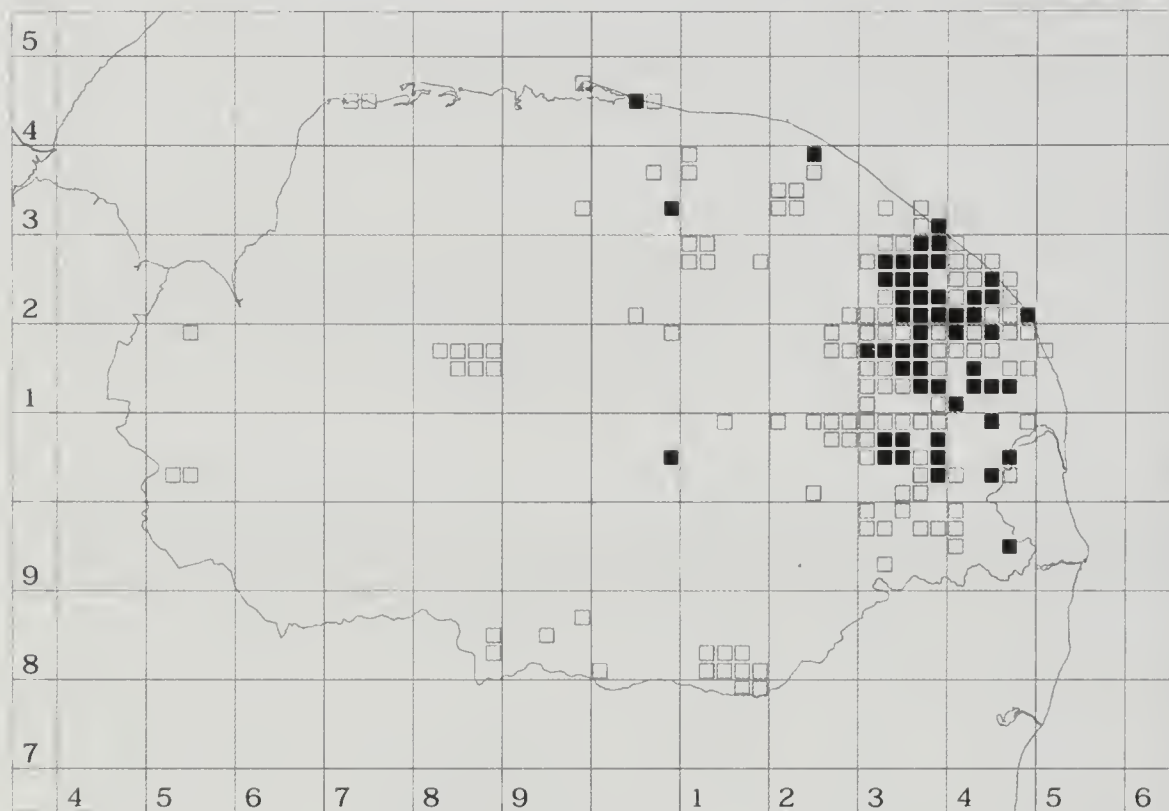


Chinese Water Deer

Hydropotes inermis

234 (1,554) 53 (177) tetrads

Although many fewer records were received for this species than in 2003, 234 is still a staggering number of records for a species with a restricted distribution within the county. Records were concentrated in the Broads but it is clear that the population of this species continues to expand (see map). A female with a small fawn was seen at Cley NWT reserve on 2nd July.



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The fourth national Otter Survey of England, 2000-2002: results & trends for the Norfolk sites

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Introduction

During 2000-2002, the fourth and most recent Otter Survey of England (Crawford 2003) was undertaken, encompassing a total of 3,327 survey sites that included 141 sites in west and southeast Norfolk. The survey was co-funded by the Environment Agency and English Nature and co-ordinated by Andrew Crawford at the Environment Agency. Unlike the previous three national surveys, which had been undertaken by a single surveyor (or two, as in 1984-86), the 2000-2002 survey used 25 surveyors, with two-thirds of the sites being covered by Otters & Rivers Project officers from The Wildlife Trusts. In 2000-2001, the 141 Norfolk sites were surveyed by the author as part of the Anglian Otters & Rivers Project (1999-2002). The results of the Norfolk survey are presented here, including comparisons with results from the previous three national surveys and an assessment of Otter distribution in Norfolk and trends in the recovery and expansion of the population.

Background

The Otter is protected in the UK under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 and the European Habitats Directive, implemented as the Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994. The European sub-species of Otter is listed as *Globally Threatened* on the IUCN/WCMC Red Data list (Groombridge 1993) and in the UK it is a priority Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species (HMSO 1995). The national BAP has also been translated at county level into a Norfolk BAP (Norfolk Wildlife Trust 2003).

Across lowland England, the Otter is still recovering from a massive decline that began almost 50 years ago as a consequence of the introduction of persistent organo-chlorine pesticides, part of the post-war drive towards agricultural intensification. Since the decline became evident in the 1960s and 1970s, considerable conservation effort has been invested in helping Otters return, notably by the Otter Trust, Vincent Wildlife Trust, Environment Agency and The Wildlife Trusts in partnership with the water industry. Latterly, at the regional level, Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk Wildlife Trusts set up the Anglian Otters & Rivers Project, undertaken during 1999-2002, in partnership with Anglian Water, Essex & Suffolk Water and the Environment Agency. Nationally, the signs of Otter recovery are encouraging with consecutive national surveys showing a steady expansion in the distribution of the Otter population since the mid-1980s. Regionally, thanks largely to a successful captive breeding and release programme undertaken by the Otter Trust, East Anglia is once again a stronghold for Otters although, as elsewhere, their recovery is slow and may be being hindered by a number of factors, including road deaths.

The national Otter Survey of England series

The first national Otter Survey of England was undertaken in 1977-79 (Lenton *et al.* 1980), providing a baseline for the distribution of Otters. Along with similar surveys in Wales, Scotland and Ireland, it was undertaken in response to growing concern over the status of the Otter in Britain. Only 5.8% (170) of the 2,940 sites surveyed showed evidence of Otter presence, confirming the impression that there had been a major decline in the population. Absent from, or sparsely distributed within much of lowland and central England, the only

significant populations of Otters remaining were in the southwest and along the Welsh border, with smaller and fragmented populations in East Anglia and northern England.

Repeat surveys were undertaken in 1984-86 (Strachan *et al.* 1990), 1991-94 (Strachan & Jefferies 1996) and 2000-2002 (Crawford 2003). For the second survey in 1984-86, a further 249 sites were added to improve survey coverage, bringing the total to 3,189 sites. Of these, 8.9% (284) showed evidence of Otter presence in 1984-86 and 22.1% (706) in 1991-94. For the 2000-2002 survey a further 138 sites were added, bringing the total to 3,327 sites; of these, 34.2% (1137) showed evidence of Otter presence. For the first three surveys, the number of survey sites allocated in Norfolk was 138. For the fourth survey, three of the new sites added were in Norfolk, bringing the total of sites to 141. In practice, survey coverage in Norfolk has been 137, 137, 136 and 141 sites in 1978-79, 1985, 1992 and 2000-2001 respectively.

Survey methodology & procedures

The survey is based on the presence/absence principal, using a 'stop at first sign' approach to reduce surveying time. As Otters are mainly nocturnal and infrequently seen, field-signs of Otter presence and activity are searched for. This is undertaken at pre-selected sections of watercourse, waterbody or sea coast; along watercourses this usually encompasses a bridge crossing or other access point. Results are expressed as 'percentage occupancy' and are assessed at both national and regional scales, the latter based on Environment Agency regions.

In order to ensure geographically representative coverage of all English regions, the national survey is restricted to alternate 50km squares, using the northwestern and southeastern quarters of each 100km square within the National Grid system. In Norfolk these are 50km grid squares TF and TM, although for the 2000-2002 survey three sites in the extreme east of the county, in grid square TG (southeast), were added.

Survey sites were pre-selected (at the time of the baseline survey in 1977-79) at 5-8km intervals along river systems, by waterbodies, within estuaries and on sea coasts, with up to ten sites being selected in each 10km grid square. The survey sites predominantly (but not exclusively) commence at and encompass bridge crossings or other access points and the survey is usually undertaken from only one bank at each site. A search is made for signs of Otter presence and activity – principally spraints or footprints – the site constituting a 600m section of a watercourse or waterbody bank or coastal shoreline. Field-signs of Otters confirm presence within any given 600m section and are termed positive records, usually expressed as percentage occupancy which can be applied at the river, sub-catchment or catchment scale, or for the entire county, as well as at national and regional scales.

For the second (1984-86) and third (1991-94) national surveys, the full 600m was usually completed at all the sites, including those where signs of Otter presence were found. For the first (1977-79) national survey and again in 2000-2002, the search was halted at the first sign of Otter presence found within a survey section, in order to reduce surveying time. There is no requirement to count spraints at each of the positive sites, as the survey does not attempt to determine relative Otter density. Surveys were undertaken at 117 sites between 6 April and 25 October 2000, when a prolonged period of high river levels and flooding precluded further fieldwork. Only one more site was surveyed in the remainder of the year, in December, leaving 23 to be completed. Between 10 January and 16 February 2001, a further 17 sites were surveyed and completion seemed in sight when news broke of a number of outbreaks of Foot and Mouth Disease and with these access restrictions were implemented across the Norfolk countryside. The survey was placed on hold and it was not until October 2001 that the last six sites were completed. An aim, as far as possible, was to survey each site within four weeks of the calendar date of the equivalent site survey in previous years but in practice this could not be

achieved for 72% (99) of the sites, with differences of up to 13 weeks and at a few sites, 16-18 weeks.

2000-2001 survey results for Norfolk

The distribution of positive (red dot) and negative (black dot) records for 2000-2001 is shown in colour Map 4 (see colour pages) and Table 1 presents these divided into river sub-catchment or, where applicable, by coastal area and by site ‘type’ (e.g. main river or tributary stream).

Of the 141 sites surveyed in Norfolk, 27.0% (38) showed evidence of Otter presence, compared to the result for the whole Environment Agency Anglian Region of 25.8% and the overall, national result of 34.2% (Crawford 2003). The Norfolk figure exceeds the predicted percentage site occupancy of 25% in Anglian Region for the year 2000, as derived by Strachan & Jefferies (1996).

Table 1: Fourth Otter Survey of England 2000-2002 – results for 141 Norfolk sites surveyed during 2000-2001, divided by sub-catchment or, where applicable, coastal area and by site ‘type’

Sub-catchment or coastal area	Total sites surveyed	Total sites positive	Total sites surveyed on main river	Total sites surveyed on tributary streams	Total other sites surveyed
Wensum	16	5	6 (3)	9 (2)	1
Yare	16	5		14 (5)	1
Bure	1	0	1		
Waveney	23	12	13 (8)	7 (2)	5 (2)
Stiffkey	7	1	6 (1)	2	
Burn	3	0	3		
North Norfolk Coastal	7	0	1		7
Heacham	1	0	1		
Ingol	1	0	1		
West Norfolk Coastal	1	0			1
Babingley	5	1	4 (1)	1	
Gaywood	1	0	1		
Nar	1	1	7 (2)	1	
Wissey	16	4	4 (3)	14 (5)	1
Thet	5	3	2 (1)	3 (2)	
Little Ouse	1	1	2 (1)	1	
Cut-off Channel	1	0		1	1
Great Ouse	17	0	1	1	16
Great Ouse Relief Channel	1	0		1	5
Middle Level Main Drain	3	0			3
Total	141	38	54 (20)	53 (16)	40 (2)

Notes to Table 1:

- figures in brackets indicate positive records of Otter presence (total = 38)
- survey sites are counted in more than one of the site type (the three right-hand) columns if the site includes for example, a main river and tributary stream; hence the total for the site type columns is 147 rather than 141
- positive records of Otter presence are counted only once

The proportion of sites showing evidence of Otter presence in relation to the number surveyed was highest in the Thet, Wissey and Waveney sub-catchments, with smaller proportions in the Wensum, Yare, Nar and other sub-catchments. Positive sites on the Yare, Nar and Little Ouse were the first recorded in relation to the national Otter Survey of England series, although Otter presence had already been recorded in these sub-catchments during the 1996-97 county survey (Yaxley 1997a, Yaxley 1997b). For the fourth consecutive survey, there were no positive records for the River Great Ouse sub-catchment and its associated relief channel and drains system in the west of the county. A positive site on the River Babingley, a tributary of the lower Great Ouse flowing into it near the mouth of The Wash, was the first on this river since 1978 and the only positive site within the west and north Norfolk coastal zone in grid square TF.

Previous national survey results in Norfolk, comparisons & discussion

For each of the three previous national Otter surveys, the distribution of positive (red dot) and negative (black dot) Norfolk records is shown in colour Maps 1-3 (see colour section) and Table 2 presents all four surveys divided into river sub-catchment or, where applicable, by coastal area.

Table 2: National Otter Survey of England – comparison of baseline (1977-79) and three repeat (1984-86, 1991-94 & 2000-2002) surveys of Norfolk sites by sub-catchment or, where applicable, coastal area.

Sub-catchment or coastal area	2000-1	1992	1985	1978-79
Wensum	15 (5)	15 (2)	15 (0)	15 (3)
Yare	16 (5)	15 (0)	15 (0)	15 (0)
Bure	1 (0)	0	0	0
Waveney	23 (12)	21 (10)	22 (0)	22 (0)
Stiffkey	7 (1)	7 (1)	7 (0)	7 (2)
Burn	3 (0)	3 (0)	3 (0)	3 (1)
North Norfolk Coastal	7 (0)	7 (0)	7 (0)	6 (1)
Heacham	2 (0)	2 (0)	2 (0)	2 (0)
Ingol	2 (0)	2 (0)	2 (0)	2 (1)
West Norfolk Coastal	1 (0)	1 (0)	1 (0)	1 (1)
Babingley	5 (1)	5 (0)	5 (0)	5 (3)
Gaywood	1 (0)	1 (0)	1 (0)	1 (0)
Nar	9 (2)	10 (0)	9 (0)	10 (0)
Wissey	14 (8)	14 (4)	14 (1)	14 (3)
Thet	5 (3)	5 (4)	5 (1)	5 (0)
Little Ouse	2 (1)	1 (0)	2 (0)	2 (0)
Cut-off Channel	2 (0)	2 (0)	2 (0)	2 (0)
Great Ouse	17 (0)	18 (0)	18 (0)	17 (0)
Great Ouse Relief Channel	6 (0)	4 (0)	4 (0)	5 (0)
Middle Level Main Drain	3 (0)	3 (0)	3 (0)	3 (0)
Total sites surveyed	141	136	137	137
Total sites positive	(38)	(21)	(2)	(15)
Percentage sites positive	27.0	15.4	1.5	11.0

Notes to Table 2:

- dates in table refer to Norfolk survey
- figures in brackets indicate positive records of Otter presence

At the time of the baseline national survey in 1978-79, Otters were still present in Norfolk on the north and west coastal rivers and on the Babingley, Wensum and Wissey sub-catchments, but had disappeared from the remainder of the Great Ouse sub-catchment, as well as the Yare, Waveney, Little Ouse and Nar sub-catchments. By the time of the first repeat survey in 1985, the only known wild Otter presence recorded in Norfolk was on the River Wissey (where there were no Otter Trust releases until 1992). A second positive record on a tributary of the River Thet was derived from an Otter Trust release of three individuals in July 1984 (Ridding & Smith 1988, Otter Trust undated). Further releases occurred on the River Waveney in 1984 and 1992, on the River Yare in 1989 and 1992 and on the River Wissey in 1992, so renewed presence in the Waveney sub-catchment at the time of the second repeat survey in 1992 was not extraordinary, although no signs of occupancy were recorded for the Yare sub-catchment. However, by 1992, Otters had returned to the Wensum sub-catchment, despite there being no releases on this system and presence there may have been derived from one or more of the three individuals released on the River Yare. Likewise, a positive record on the River Stiffkey may have been derived from one or more of the five individuals released in 1987 and 1991 on the River Glaven to the east, in grid square TG.

It is widely acknowledged that the post-1985 recovery and pattern of distribution of the Otter population in Norfolk, by the time of the 1992 and 2000-2001 national surveys, is largely due to the release of 34 Otters by the Otter Trust during the period 1984-96 as part of its captive-breeding and release programme (see Strachan & Jefferies 1996, Jefferies *et al.* 2000, Crawford 2003, Otter Trust undated). This includes 18 released within the Thet, Wissey, Waveney and Yare sub-catchments in grid squares TF and TM; river systems which are included in the survey and which yielded 74% (28) of the 38 positive records for the 2000-2001 survey. Additional records during this latest survey were on the Wensum, Nar, Little Ouse, Babingley and Stiffkey systems [26% (10) of the 38 positive records], indicating secondary expansion of the population into sub-catchments where there were no releases. A complete absence of positive Otter records within the lower Great Ouse sub-catchment or on any of the small west and north Norfolk coastal rivers since the 1978-79 survey reflects the fact that there were no releases in these areas. During the county Otter survey in 1996-97 (Yaxley 1997a) there were no records of Otter presence in northwest Norfolk anywhere north of the River Nar, so Otter presence on the River Babingley at a single site in 2000 may mark the beginning of a secondary expansion in population distribution in the west and northwest of the county (also see postscript below).

Table 3 presents a comparison of the percentage occupancy at Norfolk sites for each of the four national Otter surveys, with that of all Anglian Region and all national sites.

The increase in percentage occupancy from 8.0% in 1991-94 to 25.8% in 2000-2002, for the Anglian Region as a whole, was the second highest of the Environment Agency regions, representing an increase of 222.5% (Crawford 2003) and matching the predicted percentage site occupancy of 25% in Anglian Region for the year 2000 derived by Strachan & Jefferies (1996). In the Anglian Region, the Otter Trust released 81 Otters during the period 1983-98 including 34 Otters onto seven rivers in Norfolk during 1984-96, with 18 of these released during 1992-96 (see Otter Trust undated). These releases and the subsequent successful production of progeny have undoubtedly been the predominant reason for such a successful expansion of their distribution in the region. In Norfolk, the increase in percentage occupancy from 15.4% to 27.0% in 2000-2001 was more modest (at 75%) than the regional increase, possibly due to an earlier commencement in recovery of the Norfolk population following seven Otter releases (three within the national survey area) between 1984 and 1992 (but only six releases during the same period across the rest of the entire Anglian Region). This would

also help explain the earlier differences in the percentage occupancy figures, between 1985 and 1992, for the Norfolk sites (15.4%) compared with all Anglian Region sites (8%). However, for the 2000-2001 survey, the figures were similar for Norfolk (27%) and Anglian Region (25.8%), by which time a further nine releases (six within the national survey area) had taken place in both Norfolk and at sites in the rest of the Anglian Region; an indication of the effectiveness of even a small number of releases and the subsequent Otter population expansion in the region as a whole.

Table 3: National Otter Survey of England – comparison of percentage occupancy at Norfolk sites, all Anglian Region sites and all national sites for baseline (1977-79) and three repeat (1984-86, 1991-94 & 2000-2002) surveys

National Otter Survey of England	Norfolk sites	Anglian Region sites	National sites
1978-79	11.0	3.2	5.8
1985	1.5	1.1	3.3
1992	15.4	8.0	22.1
2000-2001	27.0	25.8	34.2

Notes to Table 3:

- dates in table refer to Norfolk survey
- ‘Anglian Region’ refers to the Environment Agency’s Anglian Region which encompasses Norfolk and includes Lincolnshire and other eastern counties outside East Anglia

Looking at the percentage occupancy figures for the three site categories (Norfolk, Anglian Region & national), the pattern of percentage occupancy for all national sites differs from that for Norfolk and the Anglian Region. For all national sites, percentage occupancy increased steadily with each of the four surveys, whereas for Norfolk and Anglian Region sites, there was an initial decrease between 1978-79 and 1985 before increases in 1992 and 2000-2001. This is due to a difference in timing between the earlier nadir and recovery of the western, compared to the eastern, population of Otters in lowland England, demonstrated by Strachan & Jefferies (1996). The nadir of the western England population occurred in 1968, prior to the baseline national survey, by which time the population recovery was underway. Conversely, that for eastern England occurred later, in 1980 (hence the very low figure of 3.2% for the Anglian Region as a whole in 1978-79). Specifically in East Anglia however, there was no true nadir in the decline prior to a population recovery, but rather a continuing progression towards extinction (Strachan & Jefferies 1996), a point almost reached by 1985 in Norfolk but which was prevented by the release of captive-bred stock from 1984 which seeded the subsequent recovery.

Postscript to 2000-2001 results

Since completion of the latest survey of Otter Survey of England sites in Norfolk and publication of the overall national results (Crawford 2003), Otter distribution data for the county continue to be collated by Norfolk Wildlife Trust and the Norfolk Biological Records Centre. Seemingly absent in 2000, Otter presence on the River Hun and River Ingol in the west of the county was at long last recorded in December 2004 and March 2005 respectively, the

first records at these two sites since 1978 (Norfolk Wildlife Trust unpublished data, Lenton *et al.* 1980). The Otter Trust did not release captive-bred Otters during the 1980s and 1990s onto any of the small west Norfolk coastal rivers so this recent return, even though it may initially represent sporadic occurrences, may indicate a secondary expansion in their distribution. There have been very few positive records on the River Stiffkey since the nadir of the Otter population in the mid-1980s, with signs of presence in 1992, 1994, 1999 and 2000 (Strachan & Jefferies 1996, Crawford 2003, Norfolk Wildlife Trust unpublished data). Further positive records in June 2003 and January 2004, as well as two road deaths, in 2003 and 2004, just outside the sub-catchment but nearby (Norfolk Wildlife Trust unpublished data), suggest that presence on this north Norfolk coastal river has become more constant since 2001. The two road deaths occurred mid-way between the rivers Wensum and Stiffkey and in between the rivers Wensum, Stiffkey and Glaven, respectively, providing a good indication of likely cross-catchment interchange of individuals between these three rivers. However, Otters appear to remain absent from the western part of the North Norfolk coast in grid square TF and along the River Burn, areas last occupied in 1978 (Lenton *et al.* 1980), despite their presence along the coast to the east in adjacent grid square TG (northwest). We await with anticipation their return to this part of the Norfolk coastline with anticipation.

Concluding remarks

The Otter Survey of England provides a means of systematically monitoring the Otter population at the broad regional and national spatial scales using a survey methodology adopted as standard for Britain. The detailed methodology and discussion of factors likely to influence survey results are discussed by Strachan & Jefferies (1996) and so have been omitted here. The sample of Norfolk survey sites contributes towards the broader picture and is not intended to yield exhaustive coverage of the entire county. However, for each of the four national surveys, the Norfolk results have aligned with definite regional and national trends and the sample of survey sites is sufficiently manageable to be repeatable in practice at fairly regular intervals, yet large enough to yield meaningful results, indicating specific trends and changes in the distribution of Otters in the western and southeastern parts of the county and thus informing on the likely trends and changes throughout the whole county. The four Norfolk maps of the national survey series illustrate very well the trend of decline in the Norfolk Otter population towards virtual extinction by 1985, followed by the subsequent dramatic recovery as a result of releases at selected sites of captive-bred Otters into the wild, without which the number and distribution of positive (red) dots on the 2000-2001 map would have looked markedly different.

Data management, dissemination & use

Raw data from the Otter Survey of England series are stored and managed by Norfolk Wildlife Trust in both hard copy and electronic formats, the latter in an Access database with GIS distribution maps using *MapInfo*. It is also held by the Norfolk Biological Records Centre and, nationally, by the Environment Agency. The Anglian Otters & Rivers Project funding partners and other partner conservation organisations hold summary reports of the 2000-2001 Norfolk survey.

Data from the 2000-2001 Norfolk survey forms part of a larger and more extensive Otter distribution dataset used routinely by Norfolk Wildlife Trust within its work relevant to conservation policy, planning and development issues, species protection and wetland management. Information on Otter status and distribution in Norfolk derived from this dataset is made available to appropriate partner conservation organisations and individuals.

Acknowledgements

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Why should birdwatchers be interested in mammals?

A mammal monitoring update

Dave Leech, British Trust for Ornithology

And why is an avian research charity blatantly encouraging them to be so? Over the last decade, the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) has introduced an element of mammal recording into three existing ornithological surveys – the BTO/CJ Garden BirdWatch (<http://www.bto.org/gbw>), the Waterways Breeding Birds Survey (<http://www.bto.org/survey/wbbs.htm>) and the BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Birds Survey (<http://www.bto.org/bbs/index.htm>). In fact, we've even gone a step further and piloted a survey specifically targeting this group, the Winter Mammal Monitoring project (http://www.bto.org/survey/special/mammal_home.htm), in conjunction with The Mammal Society.

The purest answer is that an interest in birds and a fascination with any other taxa are not mutually exclusive per se, although the implications, both temporal and financial, of possessing a diverse interest in the natural world are no doubt familiar to many of us. However, there is also an ecological explanation for studying both groups that centres on the degree of interaction between bird and mammal populations in the UK. Granted, we may not be fortunate enough to witness ospreys picking invertebrates from the hides of buffalo in the Broads nor Honey Badgers following honeyguides in Swanton Novers, but there are many examples of the dependency of birds on mammals and vice versa that can be observed within the British Isles.

The most obvious interaction between mammals and birds is that between predator and prey. The majority of the general public, if asked to name a mammal species that regularly preys on birds, would probably plump for the Fox, Mink or Wildcat. However, while predation on adult birds is primarily limited to these few species, a far greater array of furry fiends will willingly snack on nestlings and eggs. The identity of some, such as the Brown Rat, probably comes as no great surprise. The Grey Squirrel is also getting an increasing amount of (thoroughly deserved) bad press as a nest predator. The BTO's Nest Record Scheme (NRS) frequently receives reports of squirrels gnawing round the entrance holes of nest boxes to gain access and sometimes even chewing through the corner of the box. However, it is probably the open-nesting species that suffer most from squirrel predation, particularly the canopy nesters such as Chaffinch and the declining Spotted Flycatcher and Hawfinch (Fuller *et al.* 2005). Grey Squirrels may pose a particularly severe threat to bird populations as, unlike Sparrowhawks, they are generalist predators and are therefore less likely to be affected by their own impact on the abundance of their prey – if they cause a significant decline in the local avifauna then they have the ability to switch to a different food source. In addition, they are a recently introduced species and their prey species have therefore not evolved to coexist with them (Hewson *et al.*, 2004). Empirical data concerning the impact of Grey Squirrels on bird populations in the UK are urgently required.

The identity of some nest-raiders may be slightly more surprising. Opposition to the Hedgehog cull in the Western Isles in 2004 helped raise the profile of this species as an egg predator of ground-nesting birds, in this case primarily of Lapwing, Redshank and Snipe. Badgers too have a penchant for the contents of such nests, with an estimated 1.4% of their diet in the UK composed of avian material (Leitch & Kruuk 1986), although Hounscome & Delahay (2005) concluded that the species was unlikely to have a significant impact on bird populations

in Britain. Mustelids have been identified as nest box predators by BTO nest recorders. Weasels darting through the entrance hole to snatch the chicks while the larger Pine Marten simply pulls the box apart to gain access to the nest contents – a possible dilemma for conservationists in the Highlands. Even the humble Wood Mouse cannot claim innocence, often gnawing into tit eggs for a high protein meal (Chris du Feu, pers comm.).

Of course, the mammal is not always the predator in this type of relationship. Many raptor and owl species are highly dependent on mammalian prey. Taylor (1994) identified a significant positive relationship between Field Vole abundance, which appeared to follow a three-year cycle, and the number of breeding Barn Owls in his study area in southern Scotland between 1979 and 1991. Sim *et al.* (2001) observed that Common Buzzard produced larger clutches and fledged a greater number of young as the density of Rabbits around the nest site increased. Perhaps the increasing Grey Squirrel numbers in the UK will have a positive influence on the abundance of Goshawk, one of the species' main predators in North America.

Mammals and birds may also interact by competing for limited resources. Anyone who feeds the birds in their garden will have seen, or at least be aware of, the peanut-thieving Grey Squirrel which not only takes the birdfood but often destroys the feeder in the process. Squirrels have also been observed to steal the natural food caches of Jays (Goodwin 2002) and may compete with other bird species for invertebrates, seeds and berries (Hewson *et al.* 2004). As woodlands and parks become increasingly more manicured and old dead trees are felled to keep the place tidy, nest cavities are also at a premium. Grey Squirrels frequently nest in holes, often nest boxes, which would be suitable for species such as Tawny Owl, Kestrel, Starling, Stock Dove and Goosander, at times dispossessing the previous inhabitant (Hewson *et al.* 2004).

Mammals may have a less direct influence on bird species by modifying the habitat on which they depend. At times this can be positive, as is the case for species such as Nightjar and Stone Curlew, which depend on the grazing pressure from Rabbits and deer to keep their chosen nesting habitat from becoming woodland. However, there is increasing concern that, as numbers in the UK rise, deer may be having an increasingly negative impact on the populations of some woodland bird species (Fuller 2001). Grazing deer may modify the structure and species composition of a wood, thereby influencing the food supply, particularly for insectivorous species such as tits and Goldcrest. Heavy grazing by deer can all but eradicate the shrub layer on which *Sylvia* warblers, Nightingale, Wren, Blackbird and Robin depend for foraging and nesting. Indeed, contractions in the range of Nightingale in southern England have been associated with increases in deer abundance in the region (Fuller *et al.*, 1999), although there may be a common cause underlying both changes. However, where one species loses out, others can benefit and an increase in open grazed woodland may be good news for birds such as Pied Flycatcher and Redstart.

Due to the very nature of ecosystems, in which the interdependence of organisms is complete, conservation cannot occur in isolation. The more data that ornithologists can collect on other taxa that interact with bird species, the more effective their efforts to conserve those species can be. The increasingly holistic approach of conservation science is therefore a vital progression in the fight to understand and protect the environment. The latest results from the BTO's analyses of mammal monitoring data are presented below.

Winter Mammal Monitoring

While the fieldwork element of the Winter Mammal Monitoring (WMM) pilot came to an end during the winter of 2003/4, there was still plenty of analytical work to be done behind the scenes. In the intervening period, the BTO and The Mammal Society have put together a report

for DEFRA (Noble *et al.* 2005) which outlines the findings of the three field seasons thus far and offers a range of suggestions on how best to take the survey forward.

The principle aim of the WMM pilot was to assess whether it was actually feasible to monitor changes in mammal abundance at a national scale using the methods trialled. Would enough people be interested? Would they actually see any mammals? Would the data collected allow us to tell which species were declining and which were increasing? Happily, the answer to all these questions was a resounding ‘Yes’. On average, approximately 500 sites were monitored each year. Assuming this number of sites were monitored annually, the data collected would enable us to detect declines in relative abundance of between 25% and 50% and increases in relative abundance of between 50% and 100% for nine mammal species on the basis of either sightings or field signs information (see Table 1). A proposal based on the findings of this report has been sent to DEFRA in the hope of securing funding for the project as an annual monitoring survey, so watch this space!

Table 1: Species for which it is possible to detect significant population changes using WMM data on the assumption that 500 sites are monitored each year.

Survey phase	25% increase or decline	50% decrease or 100% increase (halving or doubling)
Sightings	Grey Squirrel Rabbit	Brown Hare Roe Deer Fox
Field signs	Badger Brown Rat Field Vole Fox Mole Rabbit	

Breeding Bird Survey

The Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) results for Norfolk in 2004 are presented in Table 2. Volunteer uptake was good, with coverage returning to pre-Foot & Mouth Disease levels. 2004 also appeared to be a good year for many deer species, with Chinese Water Deer recorded at the highest proportion of sites since the mammal-recording element was added to the survey in 1995, lending weight to anecdotal evidence that the range of this species in the county is expanding. Last season was also notable for the return of the Prairie Dog – has a feral breeding population become established? Conversely, Brown Hares seemed to have another poor year in Norfolk, as did Moles and Hedgehogs.

At a national level, the BBS results indicated that Rabbit populations have declined by 27% since 1995, although the East of England appears to be a stronghold with numbers actually increasing by 40% over the same period. These trends are supported by an analysis of national game bag data, which looked at the total number of mammals shot at estates across the UK (Whitlock *et al.* 2003). Brown Hare numbers both nationally and in the East of England remain stable, although the species has declined significantly in Scotland.

Grey Squirrels have increased by 20% in the UK, although the East of England population has not increased significantly since 1995. Again, this trend is supported by evidence from game bag data (Whitlock *et al.* 2003). Red Fox numbers continue to fall, with abundance nationally decreasing by 44% over the last 11 years. The processes responsible for driving this

decline are as yet unknown, although diseases, particularly mange, have been suggested as a possible cause. Roe Deer abundance has increased by 31% in the UK, due to range expansion as well as an actual increase in population density.

Table 2: Proportion of Breeding Birds Survey squares (%) on which species recorded as present 1995-2004

	1995 n=43	1996 n=51	1997 n=61	1998 n=56	1999 n=52	2000 n=38	2001	2002 n=47	2003 n=37	2004 n=55
Species										
Hedgehog	7.0	15.7	13.1	14.3	21.2	21.1	-	12.8	10.8	5.5
Mole	16.3	35.3	24.6	28.6	46.2	42.1	-	36.2	46.0	29.1
Common Shrew	11.6	5.9	4.9	12.5	7.7	2.6	-	2.1	0.0	1.8
Pipistrelle sp.	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	1.8
Rabbit	76.7	82.4	85.2	78.6	78.8	76.3	-	70.2	78.4	76.4
Brown Hare	74.4	74.5	78.7	69.6	76.9	68.4	-	59.6	62.2	60.0
Grey Squirrel	32.6	39.2	39.3	33.9	36.5	34.2	-	21.3	37.8	29.1
Bank Vole	2.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	0.0
Field Vole	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.8	1.9	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	1.8
Water Vole	2.3	2.0	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	-	2.6	0.0	0.0
Wood Mouse	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.9	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	0.0
House Mouse	0.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	0.0
Harvest Mouse	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.9	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	0.0
Brown Rat	11.6	13.7	8.2	8.9	13.5	15.8	-	6.4	21.6	7.3
Red Fox	11.6	21.6	16.4	23.2	23.1	23.7	-	14.9	18.9	20.0
Stoat	4.7	5.9	4.9	3.6	13.5	13.2	-	4.3	0.0	3.6
Weasel	2.3	7.8	3.3	3.6	5.8	7.9	-	2.1	0.0	1.8
Mink	2.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.9	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	0.0
Badger	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.9	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	0.0
Common Seal	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.9	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	1.8
Red Deer	4.7	0.0	0.0	3.6	1.9	0.0	-	0.0	2.7	5.5
Fallow Deer	4.7	2.0	1.6	0.0	3.8	0.0	-	2.6	0.0	0.0
Roe Deer	18.6	19.6	23.0	23.2	28.8	31.6	-	29.8	29.7	30.9
Muntjac	9.3	5.9	14.8	12.5	13.5	23.7	-	13.5	5.4	16.4
Chinese Water Deer	0.0	0.0	1.6	0.0	1.9	2.6	-	4.3	5.4	7.3
Prairie Dog	0.0	0.0	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	1.8

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The Birds of Blakeney Point

Andy Stoddart & Steve Joyner



This new book brings together for the first time a complete account of Blakeney Point's long history of birds, and includes a description of its topography and wider natural history, a history of its ornithology, an account of migration and the influence of weather, tales of some 'great days' and a full Systematic List.

Both the authors have been trekking out to the Point in all kinds of weather and at all seasons for many years, and so are ideally suited to write this absorbing account of Blakeney Point. However, it is not simply an account of personal observations, considerable research has been necessary to write the chapter on the Point's ornithological history and the characters involved, from the early days of the gentlemen gunners, through the establishment of the Point as a National Trust reserve, to the present day birding scene.

The major part of the 240 pages consists of a detailed Systematic List of species, written in a highly readable style and incorporating the often eloquent observations made by the visitors during the first half of the twentieth century, as the authors state in their Introduction: "... as well as the purely 'scientific' recording, we also hope to communicate through the text, photographs and artwork something more intangible – the 'feel' of this special place and its capacity to delight and inspire. Blakeney Point continues to offer an unparalleled year-round birdwatching experience. Standing on the furthest spits one can still feel a real sense of isolation in one of north Norfolk's few remaining areas of true wilderness."

The text is enlivened by over 40 of James McCallum's illustrations, while 16 pages of colour and black and white photographs are also included, and the evocative dust wrapper, portraying a spring male Bluethroat at Blakeney Point, is from a linocut print designed by Robert Gillmor.

Published in August 2005 at £25, copies of the book signed by the authors are available post free from Andy Stoddart, 7 Elsdon Close, Holt, NR25 6JW. Please make cheques payable to Wren Publishing.

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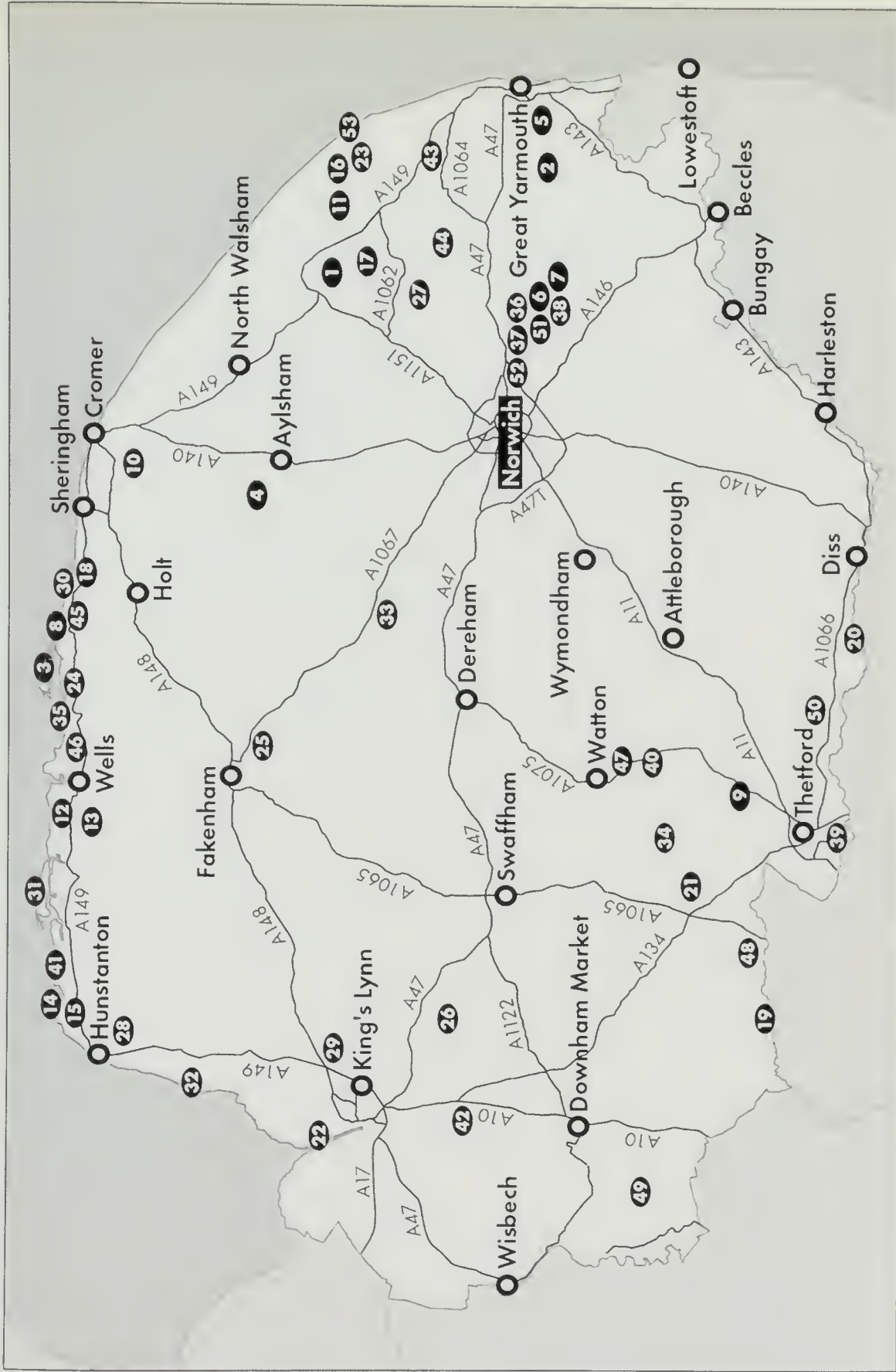
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NOTES

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Principal Sites and Reserves

1	Barton Broad	NWT	21	Lynford Arboretum		41	Titchwell Marsh	RSPB
2	Berney Marshes	RSPB	22	Lynn Point		42	Tottenham	GP
3	Blakeney Point	NT	23	Martham Broad	NWT	43	Trinity Broads:	BA
4	Blickling Park	NT	24	Morston/Stiffkey Marshes	NT		Filby Broad	
5	Breydon Water	LNR	25	Pensthorpe	PWT		Lily Broad	
6	Buckenham/Cantley Marshes	RSPB	26	Pentney GP			Ormesby Broad	
7	Cantley Beet Factory	BS	27	Ranworth/Cockshoot Broads	NWT		Ormesby Little Broad	
8	Cley Marsh	NWT	28	Ringstead Downs	NWT		Rollesby Broad	
9	East Wretham Heath	NWT	29	Roydon Common	NWT	44	Upton Fen	NWT
10	Felbrigg Park	NT	30	Salthouse Marshes	NWT	45	Walsey Hills	NOA
11	Hickling Broad	NWT	31	Scolt Head Island	EN	46	Warham Greens	EN
12	Holkham NNR	EN	32	Snettisham Pits	RSPB	47	Wayland Wood	NWT
13	Holkham Park	HE	33	Sparham Pools	NWT	48	Weeting Heath	NWT
14	Holme Bird Observatory	NOA	34	Stanford Training Area (TA)		49	Welney Washes	W&WT
15	Holme Dunes	NWT	35	Stiffkey Fen		50	West Harling	
16	Horsey Mere	NT	36	Strumpshaw Fen	RSPB	51	Wheatfen	TET
17	How Hill	BA	37	Surlingham Broad	NWT	52	Whitlingham CP	
18	Kelling WM		38	Surlingham/Rockland Marshes	RSPB	53	Winterton Dunes	EN
19	Hockwold Washes		39	Thetford Nunnery Lakes	BTO			
20	Lopham Fen	SWT	40	Thompson Water	NWT			
	BA	=	Broads Authority	NT	=		National Trust	
	BTO	=	British Trust for Ornithology	NWT	=		Norfolk Wildlife Trust	
	BS	=	British Sugar	PWT	=		Pensthorpe Waterfowl Trust	
	EN	=	English Nature	RSPB	=		Royal Society for Protection of Birds	
	HE	=	Holkham Estate	SWT	=		Suffolk Wildlife Trust	
	LNR	=	Local Nature Reserve	TET	=		Ted Ellis Trust	
	NOA	=	Norfolk Ornithologists Association	W&WT	=		Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust	





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