# SHOREHAM ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

# Fifteenth Annual Report



for the Year 1967

## SHOREHAM ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REPORT. 1967

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### EDITORIAL NOTES

Looking back over past Annual Reports, it is evident that there has been an increasingly liberal interpretation of "Shoreham" both in the scope of included articles, and in the catchment area of accepted records. In the former case we are confident of general approval of the interesting accounts of birding in distant parts which our contributors provide. For the latter, a disappointing number of submitted records from the central area, coinciding with increased watching at E. Worthing and N. Brighton, and a migration eastward of the editorial chair, have conspired to broaden the area recorded.

The year was quiet meteorologically, with no severe wintry spells, and the species recorded therefore show no striking hard-weather movements. The most notable rarities have been Philip Belman's very accurately reported Yellow-browed Warbler, and the Icterine/Molodious Warbler seen by Mr. Holman at West Chiltington,

although the Firecrest watched using a Southwick garden bird-bath by Mrs. Rampton was also a choice tit-bit.

Owing to pressure of work for the Sussex Society, Mr. Tony
Marr has been unable to visit Beachy Head often enough to offer us
a report; but he has contributed a stimulating account of a flying
visit to the Pyrenees. Devil's Dyke has also gone largely unobserved this year, but Mr. Eric Goddard, roving further afield to
the Norfolk coast, has recorded a most successful return visit.
And we have persuaded our former Editor, Mr. Frank Severs, who now
spends part of each year on the Spanish coast, to compare the local
bird life with that of Shoreham.

Mr. Rampton and Miss Biggs - the latter despite a spell in hospital from which we were all glad to see her recovered - provided us with an excellent indoor programme, beginning with Mr. Bayliss Smith's film of a bird-watching trip to Norway, "North with the Spring", and closing with Mr. Bob Scott's fine collection of slides of his work at Dungeness. The R.S.P.B. film show, brought forward to February and restricted to an afternoon showing, provided "Broadland in Summer" and "Broadland in Winter" for a large and appreciative audience.

The field excursions, whilst not attracting so many members as in some previous seasons (a mark of advancing years?) nevertheless proved very enjoyable to those who braved the often unsympathetic weather. Goring/Ferring Rife and Charlton Forest are now established as worth-while venues, and Mr. Burstow is to be congratulated on taking over the task of arranging the programme and doing it so well.

The "Wingshaven" Bird Sanctuary at Patcham continues to get its share of interesting birds as patients, among which have been two Kingfishers, three Water Rails, a Kittiwake, no less than eight Gannets, a Red-throated Diver, an Eider and a Great Crested Grebe, and one of the many Black-headed Gulls was found to have been ringed six months earlier in Finland. Mr. Anscombe plans to move his headquarters to Sheffield Park, where he has been offered more spacious accommodation for his patients, but expects to collect them from a wide area by means of the "ambulance" his organisation has now acquired.

The same untiring helpers have as usual carned our gratitude by their work in duplicating and distributing notices and in regaling us with tea and biscuits at the end of our indoor meetings. We must also express the warm thanks of the Society to Miss Helen Bartlett for so ably stepping into the breach as Membership Secretary, and regret that she feels unable to continue for a further year.

And last but not least we owe a great debt to Mr. Tom Palmer our evergreen Recorder, without whose meticulously kept records this Report would be a sandwich without meat.

### SANCTUARY REPORT FOR 1967

1967 will be remembered at the Sanctuary for the exceptional breeding season, followed by a concentrated Autumn passage. This can probably be attributed to a mild winter and a warm dry spell during the breeding months.

Although the number of daily visits were less than previous years there was thorough coverage during the Spring and Autumn migrations, and several visits were made during the breeding season to estimate the breeding population.

The following is a chronological analysis based on the daily log entries.

January and February. As mentioned above, the winter was very mild, consequently there were no cold weather movements and the numbers of winter visitors, Redwing, Fieldfare, Snipe and Duck were all less than in previous years. At least two Goldcrest were present throughout the winter months as was a Water Rail and two Kestrel. On January 6th the copse was invaded by a flock of c500 Greenfinches, among which were several Brambling and Chaffinch. The Brambling reached a maximum of c25 on the 25th January. Snipe numbers increased to c15 on February 8th when there was also a Jack Snipe among them and the last Brambling was seen on the 24th of the month.

Spring. A new species was added to the Sanctuary's list on 8th March when a Quail was heard calling from some willow scrub in the centre of the copse. The rest of March was very quiet ith up to three Goldcrests and three Kestrels on most days.

The Chiffchaffs did not start arriving until the last two days of March, and the first Willow Warbler arrived on the 3rd April. The Spring migration was rather disappointing as regards numbers but there were several interesting visitors. On the 14th

April a Black Redstart appeared in the scrub bushes on the hillside and May 2nd and 3rd had more than their fair share of
interesting birds. On these two days was the peak of the Spring
migration when present was: a Common Buzzard over the fields, a
male Garganey in the dyke, a Wood Warbler which was trapped and
ringed, four Cuckoos, a pair of Turtle Doves, two Blackcap, one
Garden Warbler, six Whitethroat, one Lesser Whitethroat, six Sedge
Warbler, and numerous Chiffchaff and Willow Warbler.

The breeding population was established towards the middle and end of May, when the migration slackened off. A cock Pied Flycatcher appeared in one of the mist nets on the 14th, the day of a field outing, consequently the members present were able to study its immaculate plumage at close quarters.

Breeding Season. The breeding season was definitely a great success at the Sanctuary this year. Several visits to the copse were made during the breeding period and an estimation made of the numbers of breeding birds. This was very difficult, so, unless young were actually seen, the breeding must be taken as very approximate. A new breeding species for the Sanctuary was the Blackcap, definitely one, maybe two pairs nesting. Nesting pairs were: one of Turtle Dove, eight of Wood Pigeon, one of Mistle Thrush, several Song Thrush and Blackbird, two of Robin, three of Reed Warbler, three of Sedge Warbler, five of Whitethroat, and one each of Lesser Whitethroat, Willow Warbler, Chiffchaff and Swallow. Out in the fields were the usual nesting Reed Bunting, Yellow Bunting, Corn Bunting, Meadow Pipit and a pair of Partridge which raised nine young. Several of the above nests were found and many of the fledgod young were trapped and ringed. Several Cuckoos visited us during the early summer and probably left their eggs with the hillside nesting birds.

Another new species for the Sanctuary was a Collared Dove which was seen over the fields on June 17th. This brings the grand total to 116 species.

Autumn and Winter. As mentioned above, the Autumn migration was very good reaching its peak in September. The coverage was better than in previous years and so a good picture can be built up of the autumn movement through the Sanctuary. A good idea can be obtained of the volume of migrants moving through the copse by a glance at the ringing totals for the Autumn. 65 new Blackcaps were ringed, 21 Garden Warbler, 13 Lesser Whitethroat

and 24 Whitethroat. These must only represent a small proportion of the total movement.

July was normal with only the beginning of an influx, many birds still finishing their breeding as the weather was warm. Juveniles abounded. Interesting to note was a female Whinchat which appeared on the hillside on the 7th. The gradual build up continued through August and the Reed Warblers reached their peak of the Autumn on the 10th with c14 present. On the same day c200 Linnet and c200 House Sparrow frequented the shrubs on the hillside.

The large movements occurred during September, with peaks between 7th and 11th.e30 Chiff/Willows, e25 Sylvia sp., and five Lesser Whitethroats were passing through each day. A Redstart was trapped on the 13th. Towards the end of September movements were still large. The 22nd produced the first Goldcrest of the Autumn; also there were three Stonechats and three Whinchats. On the 23rd there were signs of an influx of Thrushes, and Linnets and Goldfinches were in abundance on the hillside. The 25th was a rewarding day, a Firecrest turned up in one of the nets among the shrubs on the hillside, the first for several years; also Whinchat numbers increased to c6, with the odd Stonechat in the shrubs. The Hirundine movements were in general rather smaller than previous years, but occurred over a much longer period, the southerly movement of c200 a day occurred all through September, being more marked towards the end of the month.

There is a gap in the records from the end of September to the middle of December. Consequently, October, normally a good month, was not covered.

December was very quiet with a Water Rail appearing at the end of the month. The absence of any cold spell reduced the numbers of winter visitors. No Fieldfares were seen and only a few Redwing. On the 27th eight Mallard and three Teal made a brief visit and on the 30th c25 Redshank were in the meadows.

The Sanctuary continues to show that it is a major gathering point for the migrants which use the Adur valley as their migratory route. One only hopes that in future years more society members will take advantage of this fact and come and visit the Sanctuary to watch the birds in the copse and its surrounding habitats.

List of contributors: Messrs. B. & F.J. Forbes, M.J.S. Goddard, J.A. Newnham, F. Severs, J.M. Twort and Dr. & Mrs. A.B. Watson.

M.J.S.G.

## RINGING REPORT FOR 1967

1967 was a good average year of ringing activity.

1888 birds of 47 species were ringed in the Shoreham area.
Of these 1843 were trapped as adults and 45 ringed as nestlings.

Michael Goddard was responsible for 1706, Dr. A.B. Watson 109, and David Stone 73.

Michael Goddard is now a fully fledged ringer, having obtained his A. Permit, and did almost all the ringing in the Society's sanctuary.

The returns show a large autumn movement of Blackcaps, a feature also noted at Beachy Head Ringing Station.

The capture of another Wood Warbler confirms that it is a passage migrant here, and the number of Brambling was unusual for a mild winter.

| F1  | RINGING :  | TOTAL FOR 1967   |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| Bird  | Total  | Bird   | Total   |
| Great Tit Blue Tit Song Thrush Starling Robin Greenfinch Kingfisher Chaffinch Blackbird Dunnock House Sparrow Tree Sparrow Wren Reed Bunting Yellow Bunting Missel Thrush | 43<br>104<br>85<br>118<br>35<br>415<br>1<br>53<br>171<br>70<br>2<br>1<br>28<br>1 | Whitethroat Sedge Warbler Reed Warbler Spotted Flycatcher Lesser Whitethroat Swallow Corn Bunting Redwing Mute Swan Tree Creeper Stock Dove Wood Pigeon Brambling Firecrest Garden Warbler | 33<br>17<br>44<br>3<br>16<br>49<br>10<br>9<br>12<br>1<br>2<br>6 |
| Goldfinch   | 146  | House Martin<br>Redstart   | 6   |

| Bird   | Total                           | Bird   | Total                      |
|--|---------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Bullfinch<br>Goldcrest<br>Chiffchaff<br>Willow Warbler<br>Blackcap<br>Linnet | 67<br>7<br>69<br>65<br>72<br>58 | Stonechat Turtle Dove Whinchat Cuckoo Pied Flycatcher Wood Warbler | 1<br>1<br>2<br>2<br>1<br>1 |
|  |                                 | TOTAL .  | 1888                       |

## RECOVERIES of RINGED BIRDS

### Foreign Recoveries:

| Song Thrush. | Post-juvenile.<br>ringed 14.10.66.<br>shot 7.1.67. Beira | M.G.<br>Litoral. Portugal. |
|--------------|--|----------------------------|
| Chaffinch.   | Post-juvenile.<br>ringed 22.12.66.                       | M.G.                       |
| em           |  | d Waustwezel. (Antwerpen)  |

## Recoveries within the British Isles:

There were eight birds recovered within five miles of Shorcham and three within twenty miles.

Ringer's initials .... M.G. Michael Goddard.

J.S.

## NOTABLE BIRDS OF THE AREA. 1967.

This feature is based on records sent in by the following observers: Miss C.P.S. Griffiths, Miss M.E. Bull, Mrs. G.W. Rampton, Messrs. A. Burstow, P. Belman, S.E. Cole, F.J. & B. Forbes, C.F. Helyer, M.J. Goddard, B.A.E. Marr, J. Newnham, T. Palmer, R. Philips, F. Severs, J.M. Twort.

Abbreviations: m. - male; f. - female; imm. - immature; Br. - Brooklands; C.C. - Cuckoo's Corner; C.H. - Coney Hill, Brighton; F.A. - Flood Arch; F.B. - Foot Bridge; E.V.B. - East Worthing Beach; Harb. - Shoreham Harbour; R.B. - Rail Bridge; R.D. - Rubbish Dump; Sanct. - Sanctuary; Shm. - Shoreham; S.P. -Sussex Pad; T.B. - Toll Bridge; W.W. - Wide Water. Red-throated Diver: 9 off-shore Br., Jan.6. 1 Harb., Jan.6, 9, 11, 20. 1 off-shore Shm., Jan.4. 1 off-shore Lancing, April 26.

Other Diver Sp.: no records received.

Great Crested Grebe: 1 W.W., Jan. 10. c 23 on sea, Black Rock, B'ton, Jan. 15. 2 Lancing Beach, Feb. 2., & 2 there Dec. 18.

Little Grobe: 1 Adur, Jan. & Feb. 2 Harb., March 12. 1 Sanct., Aug. 8 & 1 there Nov. 19. 3 W.W., Dec. 29. 2 juv. Steyning Mill Pond. None seen at Br. Lagoon, where they used to be regular in winter.

Fulmar: 2 flying West, E.W.B., July 1.

Gannet: 1 off-shore Lancing, May 31.

Heron: 1 to 12 Airfield, throughout year. 1 in dewpond, C.H., Aug. 9 & 28, Sept. 7 & 17.

Mallard: Up to 25 on Airfield, Jan. to April. 1 pr. on dewpond, C.H., Nov.26.

Teal: 70 Airfield, Jan.4, 45 there Feb.15 & c 25 Dec.11. 1 preon dewpond, C.H., Nov.16. 3 Shm. R.D., Dec.12. 3 Sanct., Dec. 18. 10 C.C., Dec.11.

Tufted Duck: 1 Steyning Mill Pond, June 14.

Long-tailed Duck: 1 W.W. Jan.7 to March 23. 1 Harb. Dec.5 - 31. 1 Harb., Dec.9.

Common Scoter: up to 260 off-shore, E.W.B., Jan.17 to Apr.17.

1 oiled m. caught & taken to "Wingshaven", Palace Pier, Brighton,
Jan.21. 17 off-shore E.W.B., July 19. 2 off-shore Black Rock,
Brighton, Aug.16.

Eider: 1 f. Harb., Jan.20. 1 there Jan.30. & 1 on Dec.9. with 1 imm. 1 Lancing Beach, Sept.16.

Red-breasted Merganser: 7 Lancing Beach, flying E., Feb.7, & 7 there flying W., Sept.17. 1 m. W.W., Feb.15. & 2 m. there Mar.21. 1 f. on sea Lancing, Dec.25.

Shelduck: 14 flying E. off-shore E.W.B., Apr. 17.

Brent Goose: 10 flying W. off-shore Brighton, Jan.22. 9 flying N., Airfield Oct.17. c400 flying W., E.W.B. Dec.9th. 9 flying N. Airfield, 16 flying W., Shm., Dec.10.

Goose sp.: 6 flying W. off-shore Shm., Jan. 8.

Buzzard: 1 Sanct., May 2.

Rough-legged Buzzard: 1 Chanctonbury Ring, Feb.12.

Osprey: 1 Airfield, flying N.E., Apr.19.

Sparrowhawk: 1 hunting small birds, Ladywells, Coombes, Sept.8th.

Harrier sp.: 1 flying N., Lancing Beach, Sept.9. White rump patch seen.

Kestrel: from 1 to 3 reported from Worthing to Brighton and Steyning throughout the year. 1 pr. nested at the Royal Sussex County Hospital, but no young were seen. 1 f., newly dead, between C.W. & T.B., Mar.12.

Partridge: a pr. reared 9 young near Sanct.

Quail: 1 on Downs nr. Steyning, and 1 in Sanctuary the only records this year. No records last year, but 10 reports of about 20 birds in 1965.

Water Rail: single birds reported from Airfield, Ferring Rife, Worthing R.D., Br. Marsh and Sanct.

Ovstercatcher: 17 flying E., E.W.B., Apr.17, & 5 on Apr.29.
5 flying E. Harb., May 11. Continuous passage W., E.W.B., Dec.9
& 10. 1 on beach Black Rock, Brighton, Dec.26. 4 flying E.
there in morning, & 17 W. at dusk.

Lapwing: c12 flying NW Patcham, Jan.4, & c20 SW there on Jan.8.
100 Airfield, Feb.5. 100 Sanct. area, Aug.4. 75 flying W.
Southwick Dec.9. c650 flying W.Br., Dec.9. On Dec.10 another
observer noted Lapwings flying W in flocks.

Ringed Plover: 25 on mudflats Adur, Dec.17. 1 Black Rock, Brighton, Aug.20.

Grey Plover: 50 Lancing beach, Apr. 17. 4 W-E Harb., Apr. 29. 1 W.W., Oct. 1. 40 E-W Lancing Beach, Dec. 9 & 10.

Snipe: up to 35 on Airfield, and up to 15 near Sanct. during early months of year. Returned to Sanct. Sept.13. 1 C.H. near dewpond, Aug.12. 6 Airfield, Oct.17. 20 C.C., Dec.11.

Jack Snipo: 1 Sanct. Feb.8. 1 C.C., Dec.11.

Curlew: 3 W-E E.W.B., May 31, 5 W-E there July 16, & 2 W-E on Dec.9.

Whimbrol: 5 E-W E.W.B., Sept.15, & 16 E-W there Sept.16.

Black-tailed Godwit: 1 Shm. Mudflats, Aug.26.

Bar-tailed Godwit: 1 E-W Harb. entrance May 10. 1 Airfield, July 30. 1 Shm. Mudflats, Aug. 26.

Common Sandpiper: 2 Worthing R.D. from May 1 - Aug.7 may suggest nesting, but is more likely to be birds not yet ready to breed. A most interesting set of observations - comments from other observers would be welcome. 1 C.H. by dewpond, May 12. 3 C.C., Aug.13. Up to 4 F.A., Aug.20 to 31. 2 Worthing R.D., Aug.19 to Dec.9. 2 on jetty, Black Rock, Brighton, Aug. 20 & 21.

Redshank: 29 F.B., Jan. 20. 100 Shm. Mudflats, Dec. 17. Up to 80 F.B., Nov. 23 to Dec. 31.

Greenshank: 1 W-E Harb., Apr.29.

Knot: 5 Adur Mudflats, Aug.3.

Purple Sandpiper: 4 W.W., Dec.10.

Dunlin: up to 400 Adur Mudflats in Jan. & Feb. 20 in summer plumage there, Aug. 24 to 26. Up to 600 there in Nov. & Dec.

Sanderling: up to 40 E.W.B. in winter months.

Great Black-backed Gull: 400 Adur, Jan.21, & 300 there Feb.2. Present at Black Rock, Brighton, in winter.

Losser Black-backed Gull: up to 3 F.B. in Feb. 2 Adur in Oct., & 1 there in Doc. 1 flying over C.H., Sept.6.

Common Gull: 20 W.W., Nov.23 & Dec.19. Up to 200 Waterhall, Brighton, Aug.-Sept.

Little Gull: 1 (first winter bird) W.W., Jan.30. 2 there (1 on sea) Oct.25 & 26. 2 imm. Palace Pier, Brighton, Oct.7.

Black-headed Gull: c3000 Adur Mudflats, Feb.3.

Kittiwake: 1 W-E Harb., Apr. 29.

Black Tern: 3 Br., & 3 E.W.B., Oct.19. 4 E-W., E.W.B., Oct.21.

Common/Arctic Tern: 1 Black Rock, Brighton, Aug.21. 3 Harb. (eastern arm) Aug.22. 1 E-W., E.W.B., Oct.14.

Arctic Tern: 1 ad. 1 imm. W-E Black Rock, Brighton, Aug. 20.

Little Tern: 29 E.W.B., Apr. 2, and 40 there May 10.

Sandwich Tern: 3 E.W.B., Mar.31; constant passage there W-E Apr.15 to 26. 9 W-E Harb., Apr.29, 3 there May 10 & 4 on May 11.

- 1 W-E Harb., Aug. 22, 25 & 26. (these birds seem to have been going in the wrong direction) 1 E-W E.W.B., Oct.10 & 21.
- Guillemot: 1 Lancing Beach, May 31. 1 Black Rock, Brighton, Aug. 16. 2 E.W.B., Dec. 3.
- Razorbill: 1 Lancing Beach, Dec.25. (oiled bird, caught & taken to "Wingshaven".)
- Stockdove: 1 Shm. R.D., July 3, & 2 there July 19. 2 C.H., Apr.23. 1 pr. resident & breeding, Patcham.
- Wood Pigeon: 400 U-W in 2 hours, Southwick (hard weather movement)
- Turtle Dove: Many more reports than usual, from Coombes to Brighton. 1 pr. seen with 4 young, Sanct., Sept.6. (4 young would seem to be unusual for 1 pr.)
- Collared Dovo: seen in ones and twos from Mar. to Sept. at Mill Hill, Sanct., Old Shm. Churchyard & Broadwater. Resident Patcham, with maximum of 20 there Jan. 1. c20 C.H., Sept. 16.
- Cuckoo: 1 Sanct., Apr.22., entitled to a few yards by J.M.T. just one more facet of this remarkable man's outstanding ability
  with birds. 1 Cissbury Ring, Apr.26. 1 C.H., May 28. Up to 4
  Sanct. until June 25. (2 ringed).
- Barn Owl: 1 Lychpole Hill, Sompting, Apr. 17 & July 2. 1 Sanct. Jan. 2. hunting at dusk. 1 Airfield, Oct. 17, seen on ground.
- Little Owl: 1 or 2 Ladywells, Coombes, from Jan. to Oct. 1 calling Southwick, Oct.4. Heard throughout year, Patcham.
- Tawny Owl: 1 Beeding, June 20. 1 Westdene, Brighton, Aug. 23. Often heard calling at night in Southwick & Patcham.
- Nightiar: 1 heard and seen in garden at E. Worthing.
- Swift: 1 Stoyning G.S., Apr.30, & 6 there May 2. 2 Worthing R.D., May 1.
- <u>Kingfishor</u>: 14 records throughout the year from Coombes, C.C., F.A., Sanct., Houseboats & Worthing R.D. 1 m. trapped in Sanct. 3 together at Ladywells, Coombes, Aug. 20.
- Green Woodbecker: the only records were from Wiston Pond on Apr.8 and 30., and 1 in a Steyning garden, Aug.23.
- Wood Lark: 2 C.C., Apr.3. 6 Br., Apr.11. 8 there Apr.13. Reported to have been seen daily, E. Worthing, Sept.5 to 16.

Sky Lark: 1100 flying E-W in hard-weather movement, Southwick, Dec.9. 100 Worthing R.D., Dec.9 to 23.

Swallow: seen in numbers Apr.11 to 16. Nested at Coombes. 100 Br., Sept.17. 8 Coombes, Oct.17. 1 C.H., Oct.25.

House Martin: a few came in with Swallows on Apr.11 to 16. Food being taken to nest, Coombes, June 6. 30 on telegraph wire, Southwick Garden, Oct.9. 400 moving S Sanct., Sept.13. c40 C.H., Oct.20.

Sand Martin: 6 C.C., Apr.20. Recorded in small numbers C.H., Sept.9 to 28, and at Withdean Park, Sept.15.

Rook: Rookery at Patcham Place had c160 nests (March count). Birds from this rookery must constitute the records for an area of about 3 miles diameter (based on observation of roost and dispersion movements).

Jay: 1 or 2 C.H., from Feb.12 to Mar.3.

Coal Tit: seen at Wiston, Homerield Park, Worthing, Steyning Mill Pond, and Patcham. Not often reported, but probably over-looked in Shoreham, as it is a fairly common garden bird.

Willow Tit: resident and presumably breeding at C.H., and Devil's Dyke.

Long-tailed Tit: 1 Wiston, Feb. 17. - the only report.

Nuthatch: odd birds seen at Wiston. 1 at Buncton carrying nesting material.

Troccreoper: single birds seen at Chanctonbury Ring, Wiston, Coombes, Erringham Shaw and Buncton. A few C.H. in March and April, and 1 in N. Brighton, May 20.

Wren: 13 heard singing between Southwick & Coombes, June 30.

Mistle Thrush: 1 singing Southwick, Nov. 30.

Fieldfare: 37 Worthing R.D., Jan.4. 50 New Erringham Form, Jan.1 to 21. 20 Devil's Dyke, Nov.1. 2 Worthing R.D., Dec.22. Recorded C.H., Jan.8 & 22, Nov.8 & 13, Dec.10.

Redwing: up to 55 in the Br. - Worthing R.D. area in Jan. 40 Sanct., Jan. 26. 40 roosting there Jan. 14 & 15. 10 Devil's Dyke, Nov.1. 4 Worthing R.D., Dec. 22. Last spring record at C.H., Apr. 10.

Ring Ouzel: 1 Ladywells, Coombes, Apr.30. 1 m. C.H. by dewpond, Oct.21.

Blackbird: 30 Sanct., Oct.1.

Wheatear: 5 W.W., Mar.22. 1 Sanct., Apr.14. Up to 20 Worthing R.D., Sept.7 to Oct.20. Recorded C.H., Sept.6, 8 & 9, and at Black Rock. Brighton, (single birds), Aug.21 & Oct.7.

Stonechat: from 1 to 4 Br., Sanct., & W.W. areas throughout the year. Fr. on jetty near Black Rock, Brighton, Dec.26.

Mhinchat: no spring records. 1 Sanct., July 7. Up to 6 moving S., Sanct., Sept.25. 1 m. Worthing R.D., Aug.16. 1 m. Worthing R.D., Oct.15.

Redstart: 1 Lychpole Hill, Sompting, Apr.26. 1 Coombes, Apr.30. 2 Worthing R.D., May 1. 1 Sanct., Sept.13. 1 Coombes, Sept.14. 3 Worthing R.D., Sept.14. 1 f. C.H., Sept.25., also recorded there Sept.8, 10 and 12.

Black Redstart: 1 Sanct., Apr.14. the only record.

Nightingalo: 1 singing T.B., Apr.29. 1 f. Worthing R.D., Aug.7. Absent from Sanct. Reported from N. Brighton in April.

Grasshopper Warbler: 1 Lychpole Hill, Sompting, Apr. 17. 2 Cissbury Ring, Apr. 30. A nest was found by Mr. Phillips just outside Cissbury Ring on June 3. At least 2 reeling, (1 seen) Devil's Dyke, July 26, and 1 there Aug. 22.

Reed Warbler: 1 Airfield, Apr.28, then up to 10 C.C. by June.

Sedge Warbler: 1 Airfield, Apr.13; 8 there Apr.22. 7 Sanct., Apr.30. 3 prs. brod Sanct. Up to 4 Worthing R.D., May 1 to Sopt.4. 1 C.H. by dowpond July 30 and 31.

Blackcap: a very good year for this species - 18 records received from Worthing eastwards to C.H. One winter record - 1 m. Patcham, Fob.14. 1 singing Patcham, Mar.28 and 1 Sanct., Mar.30. 1 pr. nested Sanct. Large passage through Sanct. throughout Aug. & Sept. - maximum in one day 20, Sept.9. 65 trapped. 1 pr. C.H., Oct.21.

Garden Warbler: 1 Sanct., May 3 to 10. 1 Devil's Dyke, May 21.
21 trapped Sanct., Aug.10 to Sept.24 - max. 6 on Sept.7. 3 C.H.,
Aug.30 and recorded there Sept. 6, 9, 10 and 28.

Whitethroat: 3 Coombes, Apr.29. 5 breeding prs. Sanct. 24 trapped Sanct. on autumn passage. 1 Worthing R.D., Oct.9.

Lesser Whitethroat: 10 reports concerning 20 birds from Worthing to C.H. 2 prs. nested Sanct., and 13 trapped there on autumn passage.

Willow Warbler: 1 Sanct., Apr.3. 2 Coombes, Mar.24. 1 in garden, Southwick, Apr.25 & 30, May 1 & 2. 3 Sompting, Apr.17 & 19. 47 trapped Sanct., on autumn passage. Last report C.H., Sept.26.

Wood Warbler: 1 trapped Sanct., May 2.

Yellow-Browed Warbler: 1 C.H., Oct.15. Seen in good light down to 12 yards by P.J.B., who took very detailed notes of his observations, which have been accepted by the Sussex O.S. Recorder. This is a new species for the area; C.F.H. had a probable specimen at the same place in 1964, but was unable to confirm its identity.

Goldcrest: present Sanct. until Mar.31 & from Sept.22. Up to 5 Goombes, from Jan.14 to July 30. Present C.H. until Mar.24 & from Sept.28; 2 there July 23. 4 Coombes, Aug.20. 3 Worthing R.D. Aug.21 and 1 there Dec.11.

Firecrest: 1 in bird-bath, Southwick, Sept.7. 1 Sanct., Sept.25.

Spotted Flycatcher: 1 pr. nested & reared 3 young, Homefield Fark, Worthing, June 1 to Aug. 14. 14 Coombes, Aug. 20 & 12 there Sept. 8. 2 Steyning Mill Pond, June 14. 6 C.H., Sept. 30.

Pied Flycatcher: 1 Coombes, Apr.29. 2 Sanct., May 9, & 1 there May 14.

Tree Pipit: 1 or 2 C.H., July 20 to 23.

Rock Pipit: throughout the year at W.W., Br., Harb., Worthing R.D., Houseboats, & Black Rock, Brighton.

Grey Wagtail: 1 Morthing R.D. & Br., Jan. & Feb. 1 C.H., Sept. 22. 1 Sanct., Nov.19. 1 or 2 Er., throughout Dec.

Yellow Wagtail: 1 Sanct., Apr.15. 1 E.W.B., Apr.15 & 18. 2 Coombes, Apr.18. 3 prs. Adur above T.B., June 17. 1 Worthing R.D., May 10, & 1 imm. there Aug.7. 2 or 3 C.C. & Sanct. in Aug. 14 Worthing R.D., Aug.21 & 20 there Sept.17, & 4 on Oct.8.

Starling: large roost reported at Coombes, Apr.11. 1 ringed bird picked up by J.M.T. at Shm., Oct.18. Est. 90,000 flying W. in hard weather movement, Dec.9. Est. 10,000 moving over stubble C.H., Nov.17.

Twite: up to 20 F.B., Dec.17 to end of year.

Crossbill: 1 flying E-W, calling, Southwick Green, Aug. 3.

Chaffinch: 1 singing C.W., Feb.12 - an early date.

Brambling: a few at Br., & Worthing R.D. in Jan. & Feb. 1 m. in summer plumage at Coombes, Apr. 3. Max. at Sanct. in Jan. & Feb. - 25. 2 Worthing R.D., Dec. 11, & 3 there Dec. 20. (very small numbers compared with 1966).

Yellow Hammer: c100 Steyning Round Hill, Jan.27. 60 Lychpole Hill, Sompting, Mar.30. 10 Coombes, March to July. 1 seen carrying food to nest, Sompting, May 10. 4 Worthing R.D., Dec.11.

Cirl Bunting: 1 singing Lancing, Apr.23, & 2 singing there Apr.28. 1 singing Coombes, May 18.

Reed Bunting: 1 Devil's Dyke, Apr.18, & 1 there Sept.17. 1 throughout Oct. to Dec. at Worthing R.D.

Tree Sparrow: 10 Br., Jan. 26. Max. 60 Worthing R.D. in Dec. Recorded C.H. up to Apr. 23 & from Oct. 13.

T.P.

### BIRDS AROUND SHOREHAM, 1967

The most encouraging point about the past year's bird reports is the continuing increase in numbers of Kingfisher, Wren and Golderest.

The Little Grebe is still scarce and indeed absent from many of its old haunts. However it bred at Steyning Mill Pond again this year so will no doubt recover its former numbers in time.

The sad death of Mr. Charles Grigg has left a great blank in the records from Steyning. It was a pleasure to handle any set of observations from him. They were always clearly set out and accurately dated, as well as being sent in promptly. He was our authority on the Stone Curlew and probably he knew as much about the bird and its haunts in Sussex as any of his generation. Add to this his genial personality and kindliness, his insatiable curiosity about everything connected with the countryside and his great capacity for transmitting his enthusiasm to others when lecturing or in conversation and we have a true countryman.

The society has also lost three first rate observers in Michael Goddard, John Newnham and Martin Meadows who are at the Universities of Swansea, Edinburgh and Aberdeen respectively, we understand. The first two have supplied excellent records over

the last few years whilst the third, living outside the area has not been in a position to do so. However his capacity for finding Nightjar's nests whilst estensibly doing his obligatory 1 year's work in Charlton Forest before going to University shows a very proper sense of values, and leaves the writer amazed and envious. This is the stuff good bird watchers are made of. Our good wishes go with all three.

The pattern of bird life during the year was very much as usual. The over-wintering Chiffchaffs, the first few scattered migrants, the build-up of spring migrants passing through very quickly, the more leisurely autumn passage, the huge hard weather movements at each end of the year and the never-failing interest of mud flat and offshore life provide a picture which cannot have changed in its essentials throughout the centuries.

The spread of building and industry is bound to affect bird life and in this respect the regular counts of Gulls and Waders on the Adur Estuary undertaken by Mr. Severs is of the utmost interest and long term value.

It occasionally happens that two or more different parties send in results of counts, sometimes of 6 or 7 Bramblings or 400 or more Dunlin on the same day unknown to each other. The measure of agreement is quite heartening to the Recorder and speaks volumes for the accuracy and integrity of the observers.

For the third winter we have had no reports of the Spotted Redshank. The numbers of Ringed Plover have not yet recovered from the hard winter of '62/63 when they suffered severely.

We have had no reports of Grey Phalarope, Little Stint or Ruff. One feels that the filling in of the stagnant pool on Shoreham Rubbish Dump has deprived these and other waders such as Green and Wood Sandpipers of a much-used feeding and resting place on Autumn migration.

Finally we might mention two remarkable occurrences in member's gardens. The pair of Siskins in Mr. Whetham's garden at Burgess Hill and the Icterine/MelodiousWarbler in Mr. Holman's garden at W. Chiltington. We are always pleased to receive notes of interest from member's gardens, even if they are somewhat outside the writer's liberal estimate of what constitutes the boundary of the Shoreham Ornithological Society.

T.P.

#### MEMBERS' RECORDS

It would be a great help to the Recorder if members would send in their records twice a year, with the second batch in December, leaving the last few records to the first week in January.

Please send in lists by species. If more than a few entries are involved, it would be helpful if they were sent in the Wetmore

Order, which is that used in the Field Guide.

The Society's records are set out as shown:-

B.O.U.No. Date Name Locality Number Initials

321 1-1-67 Black Sanct. 2 A.B.

It would be much appreciated if members sending in long lists would keep to this system where practicable. Rarities should have a full description sent in with particular emphasis on field marks, etc.

## BIRDS AT BENIDORM

Most of us have read or heard fascinating accounts of expeditions to the ornithologically rich areas of Spain such as the Marasmas at the mouth of the Guadalquivir. Spain is a large country with a large variety of geographical and climatic conditions. The writer, having spent three months in spring (early March to early June) and three months in autumn (mid September to mid December) in each of the past three years in a Spanish resort on the Mediterranean coast cannot claim anything much in the way of rarities. Nevertheless many excursions, mostly on foot, into the surrounding countryside have provided much of interest, not only in the way of birds but also in other forms of natural history study. One finds of course that birds common in Sussex are rare or unknown in the Mediterranean coast of Spain and vice versa. In the early days in a new area one frequently experiences the excitement of finding new birds but later as one begins to learn what are the common birds of the area it may even happen that it is a thrill to find a bird which in England hardly merits a second glance.

One of the things one soon notices is the difference in the wader species. The most common wader is the Kentish Plover. Unfortunately this is becoming scarcer. Along the whole coast almost every available area of sandy beach is being taken over for

development as a tourist area, with new flats and hotels springing up at a prodigious rate, with the result that the places where undisturbed nesting can take place are becoming fewer every year. Another wader which is fairly common along the coast is the Sanderling. On two separate occasions the writer saw a pair of Blackwinged Stilts. On both occasions the birds, after being harried from place to place several times by bathers walking along the edge of the sea departed in disgust. Gulls are very scarce. A very few Mediterranean Herring Gulls can be seen regularly. Sometimes one sees a fishing boat out at sea with a swarm of gulls overhead but for some reason they fly away long before the boat reaches the coast. Groups of Blackheaded Gulls are seen at times, usually after bad weather. At Alicante, a large port about twenty-five miles away, gulls are rather more numerous. although still very few by our standards. There one also sees a few Common Terns. Out at sea, in the late autumn. Cannots can be seen regularly, unmistakable from their size and their spectacular dives.

Swallows and House Martins, of course, arrive earlier and stay later than in England. The same applies to Swifts. I am told Alpino Swifts can be seen but I have never found them. Every year in the late autumn large numbers of Crag Martins can be seen performing their evolutions over the hills near the coast. The strip of coastal development is very narrow and a very short way inland are rugged hills covered with small pine trees and low bushes, with a good deal of cultivation of olives, oranges, lemons, carobs etc., in the broader valleys. A very short walk therefore takes one to places where one can find some considerable variety of bird habitats. Black Wheatears are easily found because of their habit of perching on prominent rocks; Blackcared Wheatears leave in the autumn and reappear in the spring for nesting. I have seen the Common Wheatear but it is comparatively rare. Black Redstarts are common nesting birds but the Common Redstart is relatively infrequent. Whinchat and Stonechat can be found without difficulty. Hoopoes are common all the year and even when not seen their "poo-poo-poo" call becomes very familiar. Spotted Flycatchers are also quite common and a pair of Pied Flycatchers were nesting within two hundred yards of our flat. Nightingales I have heard once or twice in spring but have no knowledge of their nesting.

Woodchat Shrikes seem to arrive in the fairly late spring and then show themselves prominently; they also have quite an attractive song. I have seen Great Grey Shrikes and Redbacked Shrikes, but only on rare occasions. Buzzards in number occur in the higher country inland, also Kestrel, Lesser Kestrel and Peregrine Falcon. Identification of the different Larks I find rather baffling. The Crested species is the commonest and the Short-tood is also quite numerous. It is pleasant to see and hear our own familiar Blackbird, but other Thrushes apart from the Blue Rock Thrush are rare. I have seen the Rock Thrush elsewhere in Spain but not in this particular area. Meadow Pipits are quite common and it has been a great pleasure once or twice to see a Tawny Pipit.

I suppose the most common warblers are the Sardinian and Dartford Warblers and the Chiffchaff. The Rufous, a late arrival, displays itself in a spectacular manner and the Orphean, which can be distinguished by its white eye has a pleasant thrush-like song. I have identified Bonelli's and Olivaceous Warblers, and once, nearly home after a rather unfruitful expedition, I suddenly saw a Fantailed Warbler on a reed stem within a few feet of me, the details of rlumage etc., visible without the aid of binoculars.

Apart from resident finches many thousands of different species of finches pass through the district in the migration periods. "Hunting" birds is a very popular sport in Spain, both for the table and for caging. The autumn season starts in mid-October and last year I made a point of watching the methods used. I accompanied a Spanish friend on an expedition to catch cage birds one Sunday morning, by a method which I suppose is on the same principle as the old bird-liming in England. To the splaying out branches of small trimmed treas are tied lengths of hollow reed, and in the hollows are placed short light sticks the exposed ends being smeared with a sticky substance. Around the trees are placed cares with Linnets. Serins and Goldfinches. The noise they make attracts the flocks of migrating finches and some settle on the sticks. When they try to fly away the sticks adhere to their legs and impede their flight so that they are easily caught, then cleaned and caged. An alternative method is to use nets. Catching Starlings for the table is also a favourite sport. Quite claborate hides are built with loopholes for the guns. On prominent positions on bare medium-size trees stuffed Starlings are tiod. I counted over twenty small cages, each containing a live Starling, on the tops of low posts in the surrounding area, and the noise they made was sufficient to attract the flocks of migrating Starlings, who as soon as they settled on the tree wore a target for the guns.

Space is, of course, quite inadequate to give anything more

than a very brief account of bird life in the area, but the writer hopes the foregoing will give some idea of the interest which can be found in a place without any special features such as to attract expeditions in search of rarities.

One final note. On a bloak afternoon in March, in a valley a mile or two inland, I startled a large bird which flow across the further crest with slow wing beats. It was a dirty white in colour mottled with rather darker patches. I had a clear view of it as it flew and from the shape of its head I had no doubt that it was a Snowy Owl.

F.S.

### ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES OF MIGRANTS 1967

This feature has been compiled from the main body of records received. Abbreviations are as used in "Notable Birds of the Area".

| Species                | First Date | Locality         | Last Dato | Locality              |
|------------------------|------------|------------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| Whimbrel               |            |                  | Sopt.16   | E.W.B.                |
| Common Sandpiper       | May 1      | Worthing<br>R.D. | Dec.9     | Worthing<br>R.D.      |
| Black Torn             |            |                  | Oct.21    | E.W.B.                |
| Common/Arctic Torn     | n          |                  | Oct.14    | E.W.B.                |
| Little Torn            | Apr.2      | E.W.B.           |           |                       |
| Sandwich Torn          | Mar.31     | E.W.B.           | Oct.21    | E.W.B.                |
| Turtle Dove            | Apr.26     | Sanct.           | Sopt.29   | C.H.                  |
| Cuckoo                 | Apr.22     | Sanct.           | Juno 23   | Sanct.                |
| Swift                  | Apr.30     | Stoyning G.S.    | Sept.16   | Worthing              |
| Suallow                | Apr.11 -   | Br.              | Oct.25    | C.H.                  |
| House Martin           | Apr.11     | Br.              | 0et.20    | C.H.                  |
| Sand Martin            | Apr.20     | c.c.             | 0ct.17    | Ladywells,<br>Coombos |
| Wheatear               | Mar.22     | W.W.             | 0ot.20    | W.W.                  |
| Whinchat               |            |                  | Oct.15    | Worthing<br>R.D.      |
| Redstart               | Apr.26     | Apr.26           | Sept.14   | Worthing<br>R.D.      |
| Nightingale            | Apr.29     | T.B.             | Aug.7     | Worthing<br>R.D.      |
| Grasshopper<br>Warbler | Apr.17     | Sompting         | Aug.22    | Devil's<br>Dyke       |
|                        |            |                  | to        | ontinued)             |
|                        |            |                  | 100       | THULL THUCK )         |

| Species               | First Dato | Locality        | Last Date | Locality         |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------------|-----------|------------------|
| Reed Warbler          | Apr.28     | Airfield        | July 4    | Airfield         |
| Sedge Warbler         | Apr.13     | Airfield        | Sept.4    | Worthing         |
| Blackcap              | Mar.28     | Patchan         | Oct.21    | R.D.<br>C.H.     |
| Gardon Warbler        | May 3      | Sanct.          | Sept.24   | Sanct.           |
| Whitethroat           | Apr.29     | Coombes         | Oct.9     | Worthing         |
|                       |            |                 |           | R.D.             |
| Lesser<br>Whitethroat | May 3      | Sanct.          | Sept.7    | Sanct.           |
| Willow Warbler        | Mar.24     | Coombes         | Sept.26   | C.H.             |
| Chiffchaff            | Jan.1      | R.B.            | Oct.25    | C.H.             |
| Spotted<br>Flycatcher | May 10     | Patcham         | Sept.30   | C.H.             |
| Pied Flycatcher       | Apr.29     | Coombos         |           |                  |
| Yellow Wagtail        | Apr.15     | E.W.B. & Sanct. | 0ct.8     | Worthing<br>R.D. |

T.P.

## GARDEN BIRDS FOR 1967

The following members have contributed to these notes: Mrs. Rampton, Messrs. F.J. Belman, F.J. & B. Forbes, C.F. Helyer, A.E. Holman, R.P. Meadows, R. Phillips, J.M. Twort, S.R.G. Whetham.

## Garden at Southwick (J.M.T.)

Tawny Owl often heard at night. Blackbird's nest with 3 eggs, Mar.19. Chiffchaff/Willow Warbler, Apr.25 & 30, May 1 & 2.

# Garden at E. Worthing (F.J. & B.F.)

Nightjar (heard & seen), Blackcap, Whitethroat, Willow Warbler, Chiffchaff.

## Garden at Aldingbourne (R.P.M.)

Kingfisher almost daily in autumn, feeding on fish in small ornamental pond. (Its appearances were received with modified rapture by the family!)

## Garden at Southwick (Mrs. R.)

30 House Martins on telegraph wire, Oct.9. Bullfinches on rose trees, May 19 & June 8. Wheatear in bird-bath, June 11, and Firecrest there Sept.7. Wren, Dec. 1.

- Garden at Lancing (R.P.)

  Blue Tit 1 pr. often entering nesting box. Blackbird's nest with 3 eggs, Mar.31.
- Garden at Westdone (C.F.H.)

  Redwing, Willow Warbler, Chiffchaff, Redstart (f.), Whitethroat,
  Spotted Flycatcher, Kestrel (on street lamp).
- Garden at W. Chiltington (A.E.H.)

  Icterine/Mclodious Warbler seen at close quarters by two good observers on Aug. 31 and Sept. 1.
- Garden at Burgess Hill (S.R.G.W.)

  Siskin 1 pr. for 2 weeks in April. These birds were very tame and Mr. Whetham had no difficulty in getting almost underneath the basket where they were feeding on peanuts. He could clearly distinguish the head and chin markings.
- Garden at N. Brighton (P.J.B.)

  Kestrel on bird table, Apr.20. Collared Dove there occasionally. Coal Tit Dec.25.
- Garden at Stovning (M.E.B.)

  A Green Woodpecker, Aug.23. Cole Tit at mutbasket, Nov.22.

  Soon afterwards it flew against window and stunned itself, recovering after half an hour in the airing cupboard!

  Collared Dove 2 feeding regularly.

T.P.

### UNUSUAL OCCURRENCES

What appears, from the description, to have been a Redwhiskered Bulbul was seen in a garden in Old London Road, Patcham, for about a fortnight from Apr. 15. Reported by Mr. M.J. Dawson, our authority on falconry.

- A White Polican was seen flying W at Lancing Beach on Nov.20. afterwards settling on the sea. Reported by Messrs. F.J. & B. Forbes.
- A Flamingo (species unknown) was reported as being seen at Widewater in early September.

T.P.

#### HARD WEATHER MOVEMENTS

Tens of thousands of Starling-sized birds flying W at Goring, Jan. 10. (S.E.C.)

Est. 90.000 Starlings flying W at Southwick, Dec.9. (B.A.E.M.)
400 Wood Pigeons " " " " "
75 Lapuings " " Brooklands " "
1100 Skylarks " " Southwick " "

This total of 92,225 birds in one day is very good going for a man recovering from a bout of illness, as B.A.E.M. was.

T.P.

#### SOUTH TO THE SUN

Last May, a party of four ornithologists with a particular interest in birds of prey made what must be one of the shortest recorded birding trips to the Pyrences - a week spent driving from west to east through this chain of mountains which divides France from Spain, and which acts as a natural barrier to several species whose range does not extend further north than the Spanish side of the mountains.

Our week included driving from England to the western end of the range, a distance of about 500 miles to just south of Bordeaux, where we crossed the border; and the return journey of over 700 miles from the Mediterranean coast, which we reached on the Thursday evening, back to the Channel coast at Dieppe - in all a distance of about 1700 miles. We caught the Friday night car-ferry from Newhaven, a convenient short hop from home, and were driving away from Dieppe by 4 a.m. on the Saturday. A fast car and no 70 m.p.h. speed restriction enabled the two drivers to press on with little delay, and we reached the Spanish border at 5.58 that evening - two minutes ahead of the E.T.A.

As soon as we were over the border, we started seeing birds Griffon Vultures, a Peregrine and a Red-backed Shrike. We
climbed the road up the French side of the mountains in a
torrential thunderstorm, and once over the top, camped for the
night in a wide valley. Up early next morning, we found that the
verdant undergrowth and wooded hills were full of birds Cetti's Warblers, Short-tood Tree-creepers, Woodchat Shrikes,
Serins, White Wagtails and Melodious Warblers, while overhead
soared more Griffons and a fine Booted Eagle. The weather was

patchy, warm sunny spells broken about every hour by a heavy downpour; but one soon dried out and warmed up again, and the raptors were soaring well on the warm air currents that rose after each burst of rain.

Our restricted time-table did not, unfortunately, allow us to spend very long in any one place, and we had to adopt a policy of doing most of our birding in the early morning, then from the car as we drove on eastwards, camping in a different spot each night. We had some very fine camping places up in the hills and mountains which, in mid-May, and often being over 5000 feet above sea level, were still snow-capped and often shrouded in low cloud. The scenery was marvellous, and the selection of birds well up to expectation - in the week our birds of prey total reached 250 individuals of 19 species, for example.

We did find that the bird-life seemed to be more abundant in the Western and Central Pyronees, and that as we travelled further east, the numbers of raptors and the variety of smaller birds seemed to dwindle. The best area was in the Central Pyrences, and here we visited two very good Hational Parks, the Ordesa and the Aigues Tortes. In addition to the more normal species, the Ordesa Park produced Crag Martins and Alpine Swifts, Lammergeiers, and Citril Finch, Golden Eagle, Chough and Alpine Chough, while the Aigues Tortes National Park, in addition to Blue Rock Thrush, Crested Tits, Water Pipits and Rock Buntings, gave us the highlight of the holiday - a Wallcrooper. This exotic little bird, like a tiny crimson, black and white Hoopoe, jerked its way up rock faces like a clockwork mouse, flitting down rapidly to the foot of the next outcrop of boulders to start its ascent again; it was a fitting roward for a two-hour uphill walk through sleet and snow at an altitude of about 6000 feet.

The enjoyment of birding in the mountains was not merely that of seeing some of those truly Continental species, but also the finding of more familiar birds which, perhaps only passage migrants or rare breeders at home, were common there. Black Redstarts and Firecrests were not unusual, a few Redbacked Shrikes were found, Woodlarks were encountered now and again, and Grey Wagtails were common on all the mountain streams. But towards Andorra, on the Thursday of our week, numbers and variety started to dwindle, so that evening we drove further eastward, down towards the Mediterranean Costa Brava, where we spent Friday and Saturday morning in the Estartit area.

Provided that one can endure the deplorable fish-and-chip atmosphere and the heavily built-up coastline, the bird life in this area is positively prolific, and we added numerous colourful species to our holiday tally. In just a day and a half, Little Bittern, White Stork, Little Egret, Great Spotted Cuckoo, Blackwinged Stilt, Whiskered Torn, Gull-billed Tern, Purple Heron, Bee-cater, Lesser Grey Shrike, and an absolute plethora of warblers were "new" for the trip - too many to be enumerated here. Every marsh was teeming with birds, and the bushes just a mile or two inland, away from the almost unbearable ribbon development along the coast, were full of warblers and shrikes.

In our own inimitable way, Nike Jennings, Tony Sheldon, Mike Shrubb and I spent too much time watching birds, and too little time planning our drive homeward. We realised before long on the Saturday, while still very much in the south of France, that we still had a very long way to go to reach Dieppe by 1 p.m. on the Sunday, and eventually had to press on through the night to reach the Channel coast in time. After an almost non-stop night drive of 700 miles, we had almost reached Dieppe when we ran out of petrol at 6.00 in the morning when only three miles from the town! A kindly native took one of us into the town with a can, and all was soon put to rights.

Our short holiday was over only too quickly, but we know that we will go back. After all, the Pyrenees are no further away than the north of Scotland; and we might even manage two weeks next time!

B.A.E.M.

## BOOK REVIEW

"MEMORIES OF STEYNING" by the late C.A. Grigg.
(Printed & Published by West's Printing Works Ltd., Steyning, at 5/-d).

As members of the Society would expect, this book contains much information which will be of historic interest. Mr. Grigg's hobby took him to woods, parks and downland before the decline in numbers of birds, which he was one of the first to predict. He supplies an impressive list of the species he recorded during more than sixty years.

In addition the book recalls the days before television, with its stories of flint-pickers, stone-crackers, shepherds and cottagers. Although such an expert on bird-watching, Charlie

Grigg was never "cagoy" over helping the less knowledgeable. Anyone who has ever heard him give one of his wonderful talks will want to buy this book. It is typical of the man and his family that any profits from its sale will go to the Steyning Darby & Joan Club.

R.P.

## Morfolk revisited

It was probably a mistake to go back in 1967 after such a successful trip in 1966, but North Norfolk has a fascination and Blakeney is unspoilt and charming. This year we went on 23rd September, a week earlier in the hope of catching the tail end of the Summer migrants and the vanguard of the Winter migrants and in the event, fell between two stools. On the weekend of 16th September they had everything, Richard's, Tawny and Rod-throated Pipits, Yellow-browed, Arctic and Greenish Warblers, Red-Breasted Flycatchers and even an adult Red-flanked Bluetail according to reports we heard. Then came the South Westerly airstream which persisted almost continuously until long after our departure on 10th October.

Although it was disappointing not to see the Thrushes coming in off the North Sea and to go home without seeing a Brambling or a Shorelark there was much of interest. The Bearded Reedlings had obviously had a good year; they were more plentiful than last year and we had one restless flock of 17. The only Bittern on the marsh showed itself 10 yards from the East Bank. Little Stint numbers were fantastic. there must have been 100 at Wisbech on 26th September and at least 12 Curley Sandpipers. We had a Swift every day up to 1st October. Wells, which had so many Crossbills in 1966, had none. but the birches which were sheltered from the wind had most of the common Warblers and a party of very tame Redpolls. There was a Black Redstart there and it was delightful to see Red Squirrels in England. At Blakeney Point the seals were most engaging and we stood at the waters edge while seven seals were just as interested in us as we were in them. Arctic Skuas were seen quite often and a party of 27 Rider, including several adult males flew by close inshore. Sandwich Torns were soon regularly with smaller numbers of Common/Arctic Terns.

The second week started with a walk along the East Bank and being told of a Wilson's Phalarope at Wisbech. When we

arrived, we found that there were two. Some new birds are disappointing but these were delightful. We went twice to see them and had the most perfect views, both in the field of view at distances down to 15 yards. It was interesting to note that the first time we saw them they were almost continually in water up to their bellies but the second time they were continually feeding on the wet sludge. They are easy waders to pick out. Their dazzling white underparts could be seen at a considerable distance and in flight both the rump and tail show completely white. The black bill is very slender and the legs unbelievably bright yellow.

When things are a bit quiet, it is entertaining to take up a position where one can see one of the high tide wader roosts, which accommodates birds dislodged from the Wash by the tide. Holme Beach, just west of the observatory is a good place to watch. Oyster Catchers predominate and as the tide comes up there is a constant stream of birds in small and large flocks until the beach becomes black with them. Bar-tailed Godwits are the next most numerous, then Sanderling with smaller numbers of Ringed Plover, Knot and Redshank.

On Wednesday 4th October the sea watch before breakfast was more interesting with a Westerly passage of Auks with some close enough to be identified as Puffirs. Later on we had two distant raptores which appeared to be Honey Buzzards and shortly afterwards a Sparrow Hawk.

That evening the wind went round to West and a very high tide was due. At Blakeney the sea came in over the road by the quay and penetrated 20 yards up the High Street. The following morning the high tide caused real alarm and at Cloy East Bank the sea was beginning to come over the beach. A fantastic sea watch of two half hour periods produced a Sabine's Gull, 3 Manx Shearwaters and 16 Bonxies most of them about 40 yards offshore. By 10 a.m. the passage was over. That day we had our first Fieldfares and a flock of 24 Redwing.

Hothing very dramatic happened after this. We had two Short-eared Owls hunting at Wolferton and a flock of about 100 Fieldfares which we were able to watch and admire at close range from the car. We had all three species of Diver and Snow Buntings were present throughout our stay. Gannets were seen most days, several Guillemots close inshore and a Lapland Bunting on 8th October.

We met a lot of old friends from previous years and made new ones and in spite of unfavourable weather conditions we

### SUMMARIES OF FIELD OUTINGS 1967

Saturday. January 7th - Goring & Ferring Beach with Mr. F.J. Forbes.

Sixteen members turned out to brave a foul morning of wind and rain. All had distant views of Brent Goes, 200, Shelduck 100, Wigeon 45, Mallard 5, Great Crested Grebe 1, and Redbreasted Merganser 8, all flying E - W down Channel, and seen as we walked along Goring/Ferring Beaches.

On the sand at low tide we saw 3 Grey Plover, 3 Bartailed Godwits, 6 Turnstones, 5 Oystercatchers, 4 Redshanks and large numbers of Dunlin, Sanderling and Ringed Plover.

At Ferring Rife we had one immature Pied Wagtail, 3 Bullfinches (f), 2 Snipe, a Pheasant (m) and a Water Rail which flow right on to the bank and landed momentarily within six feet of us.

Sunday. February 12th - Amberley Wild Brooks with Mr. G.D.P. Dixon.

About 18 members met at 1020 hrs. at Amberley P.O. and moved off in bright sunshine up the lane and on to the main northward track across the Brooks, seeing a number of Mallard, 40 - 50 Teal, and a few Reed Buntings in the dead herbage of the dykes. We made our way to the small wood (now a Mature Reserve) NW of the marsh hoping to see Siskins in the alders, but none were to be found and bird life there appeared scarce. Returning to the village we saw nothing more unusual than Green Plovers and numbers of Wood Pigeons feeding on the ground.

After lunch, taken on the green by Rackham School, we walked through Rackham Wood to the edge of the marsh, encountering Cole Tits, Marsh Tits and Goldcrests, and looking over the marsh we saw 400/500 Wigeon. A few members saw a small party of Redpolls in the western projection of the wood, and two Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers were glimpsed. Further on a good view of two Muthatches was obtained.

By now, we were back near the cars, and most members called it a day, having enjoyed good weather even if the variety of birds was a little disappointing. Your leader joined several members of the Sussex Ornithological Society on the

north side of the marsh, and we were lucky enough to see the Hen Harrier which had apparently been on the Brooks for some little while.

# Sunday, March 12th - Pagham Harbour with Dr. J. Stafford.

A small party of members met at Sidlesham Ferry in fair weather, but with rain threatening.

The rubbish tip held no unusual birds, and in view of the likelihood of rain, the party went by car to Church Norton. Lunching on the bank, we had a fine view of Black - and Bartailed Godwits in flight. Dunlin, Turnstone and Groy Plover and other common birds were seen in a good light.

The few who walked to the boach had an excellent view of a Slavonian Grobe. Scoter and Mallard were too far off to see well. In all it was an enjoyable day.

# Sunday. May 7th - Charlton Forest with Mr. M. Mondows.

A strong south-westerly wind did not deter a party of about a dozen members; it did, however, seem to deter the birds, which remained quietly out of sight. In spite of this, a Wightingale and a Turtle Dove were heard, and Whitethroat, Chiffchaff, Willow Warbler, Jay and Carrion Crow were present. One could just hear a Grasshopper Warbler between gusts of wind. Whilst we were having lunch two Kestrels appeared, and a great Black-backed Gull flew over.

In a sheltered spot there was some activity from warblers one or two male Blackcaps, two Cole Tits, a Long-tailed Tit,
a Spotted Flycatcher and a Mistle Thrush were seen. A Cuckoo
and a Goldcrest were heard, but unfortunately not all the party
were present. On our return, a Tree Pipit started to display,
climbing up and parachuting down, singing as he went.

# Sunday. August 20th - Thorney Island with Mr. C.F. Helyer.

After a week of poor weather, the ten members who made the journey to Thorney Island were rewarded with an almost perfect day. The party proceeded to the eastern sea-wall where a nearly full tide was driving large parties of Redshank on to the fields. Moving across the marsh towards the Great Deep, several Green Sandpiper were seen, and the odd Grey Plover. Spotted Redshank and Greenshank were seen or heard.

Returning to the sea-wall for lunch, increasing shorewise movement as the tide dropped brought several Common Sandpiper, Whimbrel, Little Tern & Ringed Plover, and to these were added Oystercatcher, Dunlin, Common/Arctic Tern and a fine red Black-tailed Godwit in the course of a walk to the southern point of the island. Of land birds, several Wheatear were seen, and two small parties of Yellow Wagtail totalling 13 birds moved south over the tide-line. A brilliant cock Linnet surprised us with its colour, and the stragglers saw a Whinchat, as we returned to the cars.

## Saturday, September 23rd - Beachy Head with Mrs. M. Gillott.

Intermittent light rain in the morning made bird-watching difficult on this outing, and heavy, more continuous rain decided an early return in the afternoon.

However, a party of eight enjoyed seeing quite a variety of interesting birds, including a Firecrest, Ring Ouzels, Stonechats, Whinchats, Wheatears, Kestrel, Whitethroat, Blackcap and Chiff/Villow. The great thrill was an excellent view of a Hobby flying over.

Mr. Quinn and his assistants at the Sussex Ornithological Society's ringing station were most kind and helpful, showing us the birds they had trapped and were ringing before release, and we watched this work for some time. The birds included Whinchat, Wren, Whitethroat, Chiff/Willow, Garden Warbler, Robin, Dunnock, etc. Two bird-watchers on heliday from Essex, one a qualified ringer, joined our party for a time, and were glad of an opportunity of comparing notes with the Sussex ringers.

## Sunday. September 10th - Shoreham Sanctuary with Mr.M. Goddard.

About ten members gathered at the Bird Sanctuary on a calm, cloudy day. Although the species present were not particularly exciting, the volume of migratory movement probably represented the peak of the autumn migration. The members present were introduced to the ringing programme conducted in the copse, and were able to see mist nets being erected, and birds caught and ringed.

During the afternoon, 47 birds were trapped and ringed and members were able to see such birds as Blackcaps, Garden Warblers and Chiffchaffs being ringed, weighed and measured. It was interesting to be able to compare the birds in the hand.

Among the birds that appeared in the mist nets was a ringed Swallow; it had been ringed at the Chichester Gravel Pits this same autumn. In all, 13 Blackcaps and Garden Warblers, 13 Chiff/ Willow Warblers, 3 Swallows and 18 finches were ringed.

Saturday. October 14th - Ferring Beach & Rife with Messrs. F.J. & B. Forbes.

About twelve members turned out for this outing on a dull, windy day. Only two Common Terms were seen flying West as we walked along the beach. Turning up the west bank of the Rife a few Swallows and House Martins were still about, and a pair of Stonechats were seen on the opposite bank. Heavy rain then caused a hurried return to the cars, with just a glimpse of a Collared Dove and a probable Crey Wagtail, and it was decided to call it a day.

Sunday, October 22nd - Solsey Bill with Mr. M.A. Jennings.

This was a joint outing with the Sussex Society. Early mist dispersed by noon, and it was one of the most boautiful field days we have had, yet only six from each Society were present.

Little was seen at the Bill, so we enjoyed the pleasant conditions. Mr. Jennings had to leave soon after 1 p.m. and the rest of us decided to continue watching for a while, choosing our own venue. Some, I think, went to the Gravel Pits and one or two to Sidlesham. P.W. and I walked to Church Norton by way of the east side of the Bill and the Severals. It was an enjoyable walk, but with few birds - Coot and Mallard on the pools, and at Church Norton one or two hundred Curlew and Oystercatchers. Apart from these and two or three terms, the most interesting birds were the Swallows and House Martins at Solsey, with some fifty flying low over the grass behind us - some actually settling from time to time.

Sunday, December 3rd - Thorney & Pilsea Island with Mr. B. Metcalfe.

It was gloony and overcast as twelve members started the walk along the airfield perimeter, obtaining distant views in the channel of about 11 Mergansers and two Grebes of one of the larger species, regrettably unidentified. Small parties of Teal and waders were seen flying down-channel. Over the airfield

waders were massing - flocks of both Godwit species, Rodshank, Ringed Plover, Grey Plover, Knot, Curlew and Dunlin, the latter in numbers estimated at some 15,000 - give or take a few thousand. A good deal of massed flying took place, providing a spectacular sight, before the Dunlin settled on a runway for their high-tide roost.

By Pilsea Island Wigeon, Brent Geese and Mergansers were feeding quite close in, and a very pleasant afternoon was devoted to watching them and even larger numbers of Wigeon and Brents out in the Harbour. Waders were very active and in continuous view flighting back and forth. As the tide dropped, the vast Dunlin group flew over us from the airfield in a series of great flocks.

Stonechats and Rock Pipits were nearby, and on a final circuit of Pilsey groups of Bronts everywhere, a pair of Pintail, some Sanderling and a seal contributed to a very fine field day.

#### LIST OF LECTURES 1968

Jan. 14th. "North with the Spring". Mr.S. Bayliss Smith.

Feb.18th. "Broadland in Summer " & "Broadland in Winter". R.S.P.B. Films.

"Broadland in Winter". R.S.P.B. Films.
Har.18th. A.G.M. and "Migration over

the Bosphorus". Mr. B.A.E. Marr.

Mar.31st. "Bird Photography in Three Dimensions". Mrs.M.P.Whitehouse.

Oct.25th. "Birds of Norway" Dr. N. Peach.
Nov.25th. "Bird Studies at Dungeness". Nr. R.E. Scott.

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(Signod) C.F. HENTER.

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The Shoreham Ornithological Society is affiliated to or is a member of the following bodies: Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, British Trust for Ornithology, the Council for Nature, the Shoreham Community Association, and the Birds' Welfare and Protection Association.

The membership fee is seven shillings and sixpence a year, inclusive of a copy of the Annual Report. Junior members must be over thirteen and under eighteen years of age. The fee for these is five shillings a year, also inclusive of the Report.

Copies of the Annual Report may be obtained by non-members at two shillings and sixpence each.