

SHOREHAM ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Twentyeighth Annual Report



for the Year 1980

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SHOREHAM ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REPORT 1980

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EDITORIAL NOTES

This task would not be mine, except for the sad demise of Cyril Helyer on the day his last report was published. This came as a great shock to us all and I must firstly extend our sympathy to Florence, his wife, and then our thanks to Tony Marr for his fitting and kind tribute. How lucky we are that Cyril carried out the survey of the botany of the

sanctuary last year. An exercise which gave him great pleasure and satisfaction.

It is a sad reflection to note that in the year when the greatest number of records were received by our Recorder our membership and finances are at their lowest, virtually since the societies inception. To those who have compiled these records and articles we are extremely grateful but we must now see a drive to recruit new, younger and energetic members.

Your committee wish to dispel the belief that at the present time there is a limitation in our membership. Should St.Giles's hall become overcrowded next winter then we may again be able to afford the facilities provided at Shoreham Community Centre. We look forward to that day.

Since the Sussex Ornithological Society decided to withdraw its winter indoor meetings, we, here in Shoreham, have been spoilt with our monthly meetings solely devoted to Ornithology. This, the early production of our annual report and the wealth of species both common and exceedingly rare in our area each year can provide you with no better selling credentials.

I have tried to produce an interesting and varied report within my financial restraints and, hopefully, this somewhat limited edition will pass hands at a later date at a premium.

CYRIL HELYER

We were all saddened to hear of the untimely death of Cyril Helyer on the 28th March. Cyril's name first appeared in the Society's membership list in 1961, and he and his wife, Florence, were loyal and popular members for the next twenty years.

Cyril's keenness and abilities were quickly recognised, and by 1965 he had been asked to succeed Frank Severs as editor of the annual report (which then cost two shillings and sixpence per copy).

Cyril was such a modest man. In the Editorial Notes for his first report, he explains that the Society's Recorder, Joseph Twort, was relinquishing his post, and that with Tom Palmer taking over, "this vital job is still in capable hands". He added that "the Editorship, however, in default of a more suitable volunteer, has fallen into less skilled and less local hands, and an apology is offered in advance for the inevitable shortcomings."

There were none, of course, and from 1965 until his death, Cyril continued to edit the report with his customary flair and competence. He had the ability to choose just the right word for any occasion, and his sense of humour was inimitable. I shall always remember reading in the 1975 report, his account of his move from Brighton to Southwick: - "Faulty cardiac plumbing has forced the writer to forsake the Alpine heights of Westdene for the gentler pastures of Southwick - would contributors to the report please note the change of address - and this means an end to Coney Hill records, although he hopes to see the occasional bird in Southwick (Tel: Brighton 594579!)"

Sadly, it was the "cardiac plumbing" which finally took him from us, after a long series of heart attacks. This had forced him to reduce his birding and travelling over recent years (and he had to stop going out with actresses, he told me.)

By profession, Cyril had been a pharmacist, retiring in 1977 as Principal Pharmacist to the Royal Sussex County Hospital and District Pharmaceutical Officer for the Brighton Health District. He was awarded the Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal in that year. He had spent most of his working life at the Sussex County, joining in 1938 as second assistant pharmacist.

His interest in birds was a keen and practical one, and he did not let setbacks in his health in recent years stop his outings to coast and countryside. It was always a pleasure to meet him in the field, where his delightful sense of humour would enliven everybody's day out. Sharp yet kindly, his pertinent comments showed that little escaped his attention.

Cyril had many plans for his well-earned retirement, including trips to Gibraltar and to Australia, which were denied to him. We will all miss his kindness and all his help. Our sympathies go out to Florence and to his daughter, Elizabeth, and her family in Turkey.

B.A.E.M.

BIRDS AROUND SHOREHAM, 1980

As I endeavour to summarise the year's ornithological highlights in each report, I usually feel the past year will never be bettered: once again when considering 1980 these thoughts occurred. After 1979, a year dominated ornithologically by the cold early months, 1980 will be remembered, by me, as a year of migration spectacles and unusual migrants.

The systematic list for 1980 is fuller and took longer to prepare as many more records were presented to me than in previous years. At least 22 observers have contributed, many submitting long comprehensive lists of useful records. A brief glimpse through these records will reveal the areas watched and reported most fully; most of the observations coming from the Cissbury/Chanctonbury area, the Adur levels, the lower reaches and most of the flats of the Adur, the Sanctuary, Widewater and the beaches between Lancing and Ferring. During the past few years there has been an increasing bias in the records to the westerly part of the Shoreham area, this accelerated in 1978 when the recorder moved from Portslade to Worthing but, during 1980, very few notes were received from areas east of the Adur. Past reports contain several records from Devil's Dyke, Hove Beach and Lagoon, Mile Oak and the Downs north of Portslade which are regrettably lacking from this report.

Although the winter was mild, the collection of birds on Adur levels was notable. The wildfowl peaked at 200 Canada Geese, 45 Bewick Swans, 300 Teal, nearly 100 Mallard and 50 Wigeon. The Waders likewise were numerous with 300

Fieldfare and 500 Redwing, were the largest in the area. Compared with 1980, the only party of White-fronted Geese passed over Durrington in early January. An unusual thrush resembling Naumann's Thrush would have been the rarest bird of the period if accepted by the rarities committee.

By March, attention had turned to the beaches for the Spring sea-watching (a detailed resume of the Spring results can be obtained from me) where Divers, Brent Geese and Common Scoter were very numerous. Two unusually early migrants occurred in March, a 'Flava' wagtail at Steyning and a Turtle Dove at the Sanctuary.

Migrants were slow to appear in April, the unusual being the little Ringed Plover, Wood Warbler and Firecrest. A Cirl Bunting reappeared at the Court after a year's absence of records. The sea-watching during April was quiet apart from one or two days, the most memorable being April 25th when an avalanche of 2,000 Bar-tailed Godwits passed eastwards during the evening.

After this quiet April watching the sea, the observers were delighted with the first half of May. Record numbers of virtually all species were seen, the most notable being 9,000 Comic Terns, 700 Little Terns, 210 Black Terns, 600 Whimbrel, 3,000 Bar-tails, 250 Grey Plover, 400 Turnstone and 60 Little Gulls. Along with these came the unexpected like a possible Bulwer's Petrel, Garganey, Goosanders, 3 Marsh Harriers, an Osprey, Avocets, no less than 98 Pomarine Skuas, 5 Roseate Terns, a possible Caspian Tern and 2 Puffins. On the Downs no large fall of migrants was noted but Bedstarts, Ring Ouzels, 4 late Fieldfare and a party of 3 Dotterel were seen.

With Spring over, the number of Summer records diminish considerably, the 2 Spotted Redshank off shore in June and the magnificent Black Kite over the Downs in July were exceptions.

The Downs was the place to be in August; here large falls of chats, warblers, flycatchers and Tree Pipits were seen. For the second year a Ped-backed Shrike turned up on Cissbury but most local watchers visited Cissbury to chance seeing one or more of the 3 Marsh and 3 Montagu's Harriers which stayed during late August and early September.

Throughout September, further large falls of passerines occurred on the Downs and another bird of prey, a Peregrine, was seen. Other unusual Autumn visitors included a Storm Petrel off Shoreham Beach, a Nightjar in Coombes and a Wryneck in Hove. On the night of September 20th, torrential rain and floods hit the south coast to be followed during the night by strong southeast winds which continued throughout the next morning. This day produced a host of unusual birds in our area, offshore 350 Comic Terns, 8 Black Terns, 7 Avocets and a Leach's Petrel passed; on the Adur, 3 Kentish and 1 Little Ringed Plover were found; over the Downs, 2 Tawny Pipits, an Osprey and a Purple Heron were seen and a few counts of obvious migrants suggested over 150 Whinchats and 300 Yellow Wagtails were in the area. These were birds which were seen, I wonder what was missed?

Many migrants were still present into October, a month when visible migration is often most obvious; hirundine movements were noted and some large Chaffinch movements noted over the downs. Again, offshore large numbers of Brent Geese and Kittiwakes were seen and several late Little Gulls passed. A Wood Sandpiper appeared at Strivens Reed Bed and in the reed bed at Shoreham, a roost of 500 Pied Wagtails gathered.

Wintering Thrushes appeared in force during November when 3,000 Fieldfare and 1,500 Redwing were recorded on Adur Levels. A Long-tailed Duck and Snow Bunting at Widewater and Firecrest at the Sanctuary completed the Winter picture, however, there were very late November records of both Swallow and Turtle Dove and a morning when 27 Manx Shearwaters passed offshore to remind observers of the Summer past.

Notable December records came mainly from the coast where unusual numbers of Sprats in the Channel produced unusual numbers of Gulls and Divers offshore. With them, one morning at Widewater, was a Red-necked Grebe.

Throughout the year, certain unusual species were recorded more frequently than previously; these include Slavonian and Black-necked Grebe, Sparrow Hawk, Buzzard, Merlin, Hobby, Ruff, Greenshank, Green Sandpiper, Bonxie, Mediteranean Gull, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Black Redstart, Grasshopper Warbler and Siskins. Needless to say, there were some species with notably less records:- Gannet, Hen Harrier, Quail, Shorteared Owl and Twite are examples. I wonder what 1981 will bring?

J.A.N.

SANCTUARY REPORT 1980

The number of visits to the societies Sanctuary was markedly reduced during 1980. This was in part due to fewer opportunities for mist netting during migration seasons but more to the sad passing of Cyril Helyer in the Spring. His meticulous watching and recording of both birds and plants at the Sanctuary are some of the activities for which he will be missed.

The usual work of coppicing, bridge mending and fence repairing was completed early in the year but unfortunately, further repairs were needed after considerable vandalism during the Summer.

The ornithological pattern throughout the year was similar to that described in previous years. The early months were notably quiet apart from the occasional Kingfisher, up to 200 Collared Doves and an enormous pre-roost gathering of 10,000 Starlings on February 20th.

Surprisingly, the first bird of the Spring was a Turtle Dove on March 25th. The first phylloscopus was not seen until April 2nd and the first Willow Warbler heard on April 9th.

Although most passerine migrants arrived in singles throughout late April, the only notable fall of warblers occurred on May 7th when 20 Willow Warblers and the first Spotted Flycatcher, Reed Warbler and Swift arrived.

On April 27th, 10 members gathered for the annual ringing demonstration and fortunately a number of birds were trapped enabling all present to have close views of the birds plumage and to watch how the ringing, measuring and recording is done at the Sanctuary.

May was unbelievably quiet, apart from a female Marsh Harrier on May 4th and a Hobby hunting on the hillside on May 14th and 15th.

No precise breeding surveys were done, but breeding success appeared quite good with plenty of juvenile birds present by late June. Throughout July, parties of young tits admixed with Willow Warblers and a Tree Creeper foraged in the copse. Several young Kingfishers were trapped suggesting nearby successful breeding. As usual, the main warbler passage occurred in August with Willow, Reed and Sedge Warblers in usual numbers, Garden Warblers marginally more numerous and Lesser Whitethroats, Whitethroats and flycatchers considerably fewer than past years.

The characteristic Blackcap and Chiff-chaff passage took place through September; a month when the copse and surrounding fields were twittering with the charms of Goldfinches. The hirundine passage seemed smaller with a peak of only 1,000 House Martins on September 25th, the same day as the last Sedge Warblers, Willow Warblers and Lesser Whitethroat were recorded and the first of a small number of Redpolls seen passing overhead.

The signs of forthcoming winter appeared at the beginning of October with a marked increase in the number of Blackbirds and the arrival of 35 Redwings, a Water Rail and a Siskin on the 12th. However, both Garden and Reed Warblers remained until October 5th, hirundines into late October and a Chiff-chaff until November 20th. A Green Woodpecker

was often seen feeding on the lawns during October.

November was under recorded and uneventful apart from records of a female Firecrest, 60 Fieldfare and a Nuthatch and by early December, the typical quiet Winter picture was drawn. At dusk, however, during early December, a roost of 500 Redwing associating with 70 Blackbirds and a variable number of Fieldfare settled on the hillside; 100 or so Collared Doves in the high hawthorns of the copse and a small roost of Tree Sparrows and finches in the thicket just above the Sanctuary.

Despite 1980 being a relatively disappointing year watching at the Sanctuary was enjoyable. I would like to extend the societies thanks to Mr Santer and the staff of the Southern Water Authority for their help and co-operation throughout the year.

J.A.N.

RINGING REPORT FOR THE SHOREHAM AREA, 1980:

A record of 5,188 birds were ringed in the Shoreham area during 1980; of those 5,040 were ringed as fullgrown birds and 148 as nestlings. This massive increase is attributed to the activities of the gull group cannon-netting a total of 3,173 gulls and corvids on the local beaches and Sompting rubbish tip. Dr. J.A. Newnham ringed 1,185 in his garden and at the Sanctuary; the Steyning Ringing Group, under the auspices of Phil and Brian Clay totalled 574 and Dr. A.B. Watson ringed 256 birds including the large collection of Pied Wagtails from the local roost.

Below is a table of the birds ringed :-

<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>TOTAL</u> <u>1980</u>	<u>GRAND TOTAL</u> <u>1953 - 1979</u>
Dunlin	4	415
Black headed Gull	2881	2089
Common Gull	63	74
Lesser Black-b. Gull	1	-
Herring Gull	163	196
Greater Black-b. Gull	33	1
Collared Dove	4	196
Turtle Dove	3	25
Kingfisher	12	51
Green Woodpecker	1	11
Great Sp. Woodpecker	1	46
Swallows	96	1586
Tree Pipit	1	6
Pied Wagtail	165	403
Wren	56	812
Duncock	76	1494
Robin	51	1250
Blackbird	97	5312
Song Thrush	26	2006
Redwing	4	150
Mistle Thrush	1	143
Sedge Warbler	74	541
Reed Warbler	181	1214
Lesser Whitethroat	17	411
Whitethroat	12	482
Garden Warbler	20	180
Blackcap	66	763
Chiff-Chaff	47	1277
Willow Warbler	126	2396
Goldcrest	11	249
Firecrest	1	10
Spotted Flycatcher	3	170
Long-tailed Tit	14	206
Willow Tit	4	16
Blue Tit	172	4319
Great Tit	54	1650
Tree Creeper	4	40

<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>TOTAL</u> <u>1980</u>	<u>GRAND TOTAL</u> <u>1953 - 1979</u>
Magpie	1	12
Jackdaw	25	7
Rook	6	24
Crow Sp.	6	14
Starling	400	3251
Chaffinch	22	1297
Greenfinch	23	4073
Goldfinch	84	1570
Linnet	6	556
Redpoll	4	50
Bullfinch	41	935
Yellowhammer	1	335
Reed Bunting	14	296

A brief comparison between the 1980 total column and that for the grand total for the previous 27 years should reveal which birds were caught in greater or lesser number in 1980.

Prior to 1980, 48,076 birds were ringed in this area of which nearly 90% comprise of species ringed during 1980. However, 55,000 birds have been ringed of 65 species not trapped during 1980, the following is a list of these species and their 27 year grand total, (listed in Vauous order).

Little Grebe	4	Knot	2
Storm Petrel	1	Little Stint	1
Mute Swan	295	Snipe	34
Whooper Swan	1	Bar-tailed Godwit	1
Canada Goose	1	Redshank	68
Shelduck	1	Common Sandpiper	4
Mallard	1	Grey Phalarope	1
Sparrow hawk	2	Mediterranean Gull	1
Kestrel	13	Stock Dove	6
Water Rail	6	Wood Pigeon	85
Corncrake	1	Cuckoo	7
Moorhen	18	Barn Owl	5
Coot	1	Little Owl	12

Stone Curlew.....	2	Tawny Owl.....	6
Ringed Plover.....	3	Nightjar.....	7
Lapwing.....	10	Swift.....	8
Lesser Sp. Woodpecker.....	7	Cettis Warbler.....	1
Skylark.....	73	Grasshopper	
		Warbler.....	3
Sand Martin.....	726	Marsh Warbler.....	1
House Martin.....	2276	Barred Warbler.....	1
Meadow Pipit.....	37	Wood Warbler.....	3
Yellow Wagtail.....	21	Pied Flycatcher.....	21
Grey Wagtail.....	10	Marsh Tit.....	21
Nightingale.....	13	Coal Tit.....	89
Bluethroat.....	1	Nuthatch.....	4
Black Redstart.....	5	Jay.....	4
Redstart.....	25	House Sparrow.....	1482
Whinchat.....	15	Tree Sparrow.....	209
Stonechat.....	28	Brambling.....	41
Wheatear.....	9	Siskin.....	1
Ring Ouzel.....	1	Twite.....	1
Fieldfare.....	10	Snow Bunting.....	1
		Corn Bunting.....	293

RECOVERIES DURING 1980

Inevitably as more birds are ringed then more recoveries are reported, the following is a summary of more interesting aspects.

- (1) BLACK HEADED GULL - No fewer than 33 controls and 44 recoveries were reported during 1980. The controls (birds bearing a ring from elsewhere) originated from Surrey (2), Kent (2), Netherlands (6), Belgium (4), Denmark (3), Germany (1), Poland (1), Latvia (2), Estonia (5), Finland (6), and Norway (1) and these re-inforce the previous movements suggesting our winter gulls originate from the Baltic States.

The recoveries provide similar information, coming from local areas (10), Sussex (5), Greater London (3), Isle of Wight (1), Kent (1), Essex (2), France (2), Netherlands (7), Denmark (7), Germany (2), Estonia (1), USSR (1), Finland (2).

Fuller details will appear in the next London Gull Study Group Bulletin.

- (2) HERRING GULL - Winter ringed birds on Worthing Beach were subsequently recovered at -

- a) Brean Somerset 11.08.80 194 km WNW
- b) Torquay Devon 09.05.80 225 km SW
- c) Clacton-on-Sea, Essex 17.08.80 152 km NE

controls trapped on the Sompting Rubbish Tip originate from -

- a) Prudhoe Northumberland ringed 02.10.79 468 km SSE
- b) Steepholm Avon " 05.06.80 as a pullus

Preliminary recoveries suggest our wintering Herring Gulls come from either NE England or the West Country/Wales and Ireland.

- (3) GREATER BLACK-BACKED GULLS - ringed Adult 25.01.75
Slyfield Green, Guildford, Surrey. Found dead
06.01.80 Brighton 54 km SE. This is the first move-
ment of this species involving this area.
- (4) KINGFISHER - ringed juv. 12.07.80 Shoreham Sanctuary
controlled 23.07.80 Steyning (Strivens RB)
8 km N
This showing rapid post fledging dispersal upstream
from its presumed natal site.
- (5) SWALLOW - Two birds ringed as nestlings at Lancing and
the Sanctuary were found dead in Upper Beeding and
Shoreham respectively during mid-May presumably being
killed whilst prospecting nesting sites.
- (6) PIED WAGTAIL - ringed 1st year female 29.11.78 Shoreham
Reed Bed. Found dead in greenhouse 21.01.80 Thakeham
Sussex 16 km NW. A similar recovery was reported in 1976.

- (7) ROBIN - ringed 1st year 14.10.79 Shoreham Sanctuary;
controlled 02.04.80 Christianso Bornholm, Denmark 1145
ENE. The first foreign recovery of this species from
the Shoreham area shows that continental migrants reach
our part of the South coast in Autumn.
- (8) REED WARBLER -
- a) Ringed 1st year 09.09.79 Church Norton, Sussex
controlled 21.06.80 Steyning
- b) Ringed 1st year male 14.08.75 Shoreham Sanctuary
controlled 27.07.80 Ouseflat Goole Humberside 318 km N
Reed Warblers are the most frequently reported small
passerine; prior to 1968 only one reed warbler move-
ment was noted and that same year movement to Selsey.
Since then, 34 recoveries and controls have occurred
from West Sussex (6), E.Sussex (3), Surrey (3), Hampshire
(11), Cambridge (1), Hertfordshire (1), Shropshire (1),
Northamptonshire (1), Yorkshire (3), Morocco (1),
Portugal (1), and Spain (1). Ten of these movements
have been reported during the same Autumn as ringing
showing both southerly movement and shorter coastal hops.
- (9) LONG-TAILED TIT - ringed F.G. 01.11.78 Shoreham Sanctuary.
controlled 19.01.80 Patcham, Brighton
9 km E
- (10) BLUE TIT - ringed juv. 15.09.79 Shoreham Sanctuary
controlled 07.05.80 Littleworth, Partridge
Green, 13 km N
Short movements of Tits are recorded virtually annually,
the Long Tailed Tit is the first recovery of this species
from Shoreham.
- (11) STARLING - Three Starlings controlled in West Worthing
between January 7th and February 13th were ringed as
follows :-
- a) Adult male 22.01.78 Bierbeek Brabant Belgium 362 km W
b) 1st year male 30.11.77 Wetterden Oast Vlaanderen
Belgium 301 km W
c) 1st year male 28.10.79 Middelkerke West Vlaanderen
Belgium 229 km W

- d) ringed adult male 14.02.79 West Worthing
found dead 18.05.80 Emmen Drente The Netherlands
548 km ENE
- e) ringed full grown female 29.11.79 West Worthing
found dead 12.01.80 Brix Manche France 165 km SSW

These movements supplement those summarised in the 1979 report in confirming the European origins of some of our wintering starlings.

J.A.N.

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. This is vital if Members want to receive the annual report at the A.G.M.

Members will have noted that the Systematic list has now been re-organised into the Voous order and unfortunately, as yet, is not numbered. The Society's 'master sheet' records have also been arranged in this order so it is imperative that records should now be submitted accordingly and not in chronological or the old Wetmore order. The list order appears on P.44 in the 1978 Shoreham Report - the unspotted omission (Long-tailed Tit) follows Bearded Tit. (now Bearded Reedling).

The Society's record sheets are set out as shown :-

<u>Species</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Locality/Notes</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Observer</u>
Redstart	Aug.30	Cissbury	48	B.F.F.

It would be appreciated if members sending in lists would keep to this system where practicable. Rarities should have adequate supporting notes. On this point and other aspects of record keeping, it is suggested that members read the special supplement issued by the Sussex O.S. on records and note taking; many of the points raised in this document

should equally apply to this Society's records.

NOTABLE BIRDS OF THE AREA IN 1980

This feature is based upon the records sent in by the following :-

Mrs K.M.R. Bowyer, Miss M Davies-Scourfields, Ms P Griffiths, Mrs B Reeve, Messrs S R Allen, B Clay, P Clay, C Evers, J Feest, B F Forbes, F J Forbes, M Hall, C Hope, C Measer, O Mitchell, Dr J A Newnham, A J Prater, R Sandison, B J Short, T C Smart, N A Smith, H Sturman, M Welfare, Steyning Grammar School Bird Club.

ABBREVIATIONS: Ad - adult; imm - immature; juv - juvenile; ly - first year, m - male; f - female; E - East, W - West; etc., A.L. - Adur Levels; cc - Cuckoo's Corner; W.B. - Worthing Beaches; S.B. - Southwick Beach; Harb - Shoreham Harbour; N.S.F. - New Salts Farm; Sanc - Sanctuary; S.R.B - Strivens Reed Bed; S.H. - Steyning Horseshore; W.P. - Wiston Pond; W.W. - Widewater; s.p. - Summer plumage; w.p. - winter plumage.

'Downs' refers to the downland area between the Adur Valley and the A24 road including Cissbury.

DIVER Sp - 1 W. W.B. Jan 27; spring sea watching recorded 186E and SW on 29 dates February 18th - May 31st with peaks 45 - March 24th; 23 - March 25th; 12 - March 26th; 13 - Mar. 27th; 17 - April 12th; 18 - April 13th and 14 - May 10th. This is double the previous highest spring number of records.

Likewise markedly more numerous than usual in the late part of the year with a minimum of 143W and 18E from November 6th - December 30th with peaks 52W W.W. December 21st; 18 W Dec. 22nd; 13W then Dec.24th and 17W Ferring Dec.28th.

RED-THROATED DIVER - most divers passing offshore in March were thought to be this sp; 1 W.B. May 7th and 1 there May 10th; 1 E W.B. Oct. 11th; regular off W.W. from Nov.7th with max 4 November 15th.

BLACK-THROATED DIVER - 6 sp W.B. April 13th; 1 there May 24th.

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER - singles E W.B. March 29th; April 9, May 12th and November 6th.

LITTLE GREBE - recorded during winter months W.W. with max 9 in March 2nd; 16 in December; 3 Adur February 23rd; regularly recorded W.P. where at least two young reared; singles A.L. April 13th and August 27th.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE - 1 or 2 recorded offshore on 7 dates February 5th - April 9th and 1 W.W. December 21st; 1 juv. Adur September 3rd.

RED-NECKED GREBE - 1 W.W. December 3rd (A.J.P.)

SLAVONIAN GREBE - 1 W.W. March 17th; singles W.B. April 12th and May 10th; 1 Goring September 21st; irregular on sea W.W. from November 6th with max 2 November 14th.

BLACK-NECKED GREBE - 1 W.W. January 21st and 22nd; 1 s.p. Ferring April 12; 1 W. W.W. October 7th.

FULMAR - 180E and 105W recorded March 17th - May 31st during spring sea-watches with peaks 19th March (19) and 35 May 2nd. Only autumn record 1 W. W.B. August 17th.

MANX SHEARWATER - 2 Ferring March 31st (an early date); 2 E and 1 W W.W. and 7 W Ferring May 8th; 6E and 1W W.B. June 14th; 2E and 1 W W.B. June 16th; 7 E (all 'puffinus') July 1 W.B; 2 W August 6th and an incredible 29 W W.B. as late as November 20th.

STORM PETREL - 1 Shoreham Beach September 4th (vars. obs) the first live bird recorded in this area.

LEACH'S PETREL - 1 E W.B. September 21st (BJS). The only previous report is of one found injured in October 66 near Patcham.

BULWER'S PETREL - a bird showing many features of this species feeding W.B. May 12th and May we (BJS JAN).

GANNET - regularly offshore, largest movement 17 W and 5E W.B. June 22nd; only 34E and 18W noted during 292 hours spring sea-watching.

CORMORANT - A.L. pylon roost max 26 February 3rd; Autumn counts S.B. showed max 31 November 13th.

SHAG - singles W.W. September 21 and December 4.

GREY HERON - regularly noted in Adur Valley with largest collections of 20 A.L. February 2nd; 10 there July 3rd and 10 Airport September 7th. Obvious migrants arriving from the sea April 12th and May 14th and departing S.W. offshore September 18th.

PURPLE HERON - 1, with 2 Grey Herons over Steyning Sept. 21 (A.Kitson).

BEWICK'S SWAN - 12 A.L. Jan 1-6 increasing to 45 February 3-10; 15E Ferring March 2; 2 A.L. Dec.28th.

GREY GOOSE sp. - 70 E.N.E. over Shoreham Jan. 23rd (MW).

WHITE FRONTED GOOSE - 21 W Durrington Jan. 1st (FJF).

GREY LAG GOOSE - 1 A.L. Mar 2.

CANADA GOOSE - peak counts A.L. of 200 - Jan 5; 100 - Feb.3rd; 100 - October 18th and 50 - December 21st; elsewhere 2 W.P. Feb.18; 2 W.B. Apr. 15th and 11 there May 10th; 2 E Swandean April 22nd.

BRENT GOOSE - eastward offshore passage Jan 1 - May 24 totalled 3222; monthly totals Jan - 163, Feb - 333; Mar - 3056; April - 102; May - 64. The peak 1102 in 4 hours W.B. March 19th absent until 3 E W.B. Ferring Sept. 21st; peak autumn movements of 56 W in 20 min.Oct 25th; 1281 W in 5½ hours October 26th and 28W and 70E October 27th; during 11 hours watching W.W. December 59E and 89W.

SHELDUCK - between Jan. 20th - May 31st, 187E and 111W on 40 dates offshore with 152E and 48W occurring on 20 May dates. Few Autumn and Winter records.

WIGEON - peak counts A.L. 50 - Jan 5th; 20 - February 2-3; 20 October 12th and 8 - November 16th. 6 small parties noted throughout Spring or Autumn offshore the most unusual being 2 E W.W. May 1st.

GADWALL - 1 A.L. February 17th and 2 there October 12th (PJC) 2 pairs E W.B. March 19th (JAN) and 1E W.W. May 2nd (AJP).

TEAL - peak counts A.L. 300 - January 5th; 40 - January 13th, 50 - February 2nd; 64 - February 17th; 40 - March 23rd; 25 - April 10th; 20 - September 21st; 30 - October 12th; 30 - Dec. 30th; recorded regularly W.P. during December with max 30 December 29th.

MAILLARD - peak counts A.L. 89 - February 17th; 35 - March 2nd; 30 - September 14th and October 12th, 25 Airport November 28th.

PINTAIL - 42E on 4 dates January 18th - April 12th offshore W.B. and W.W; peak counts A.L. 3 - January 5th; 20 - Feb.2; 25 - February 17th; 26 - October 11th, only 2 - December 30th.

GARGANEY - 2 E W.W. May 2nd and 2 pairs E there May 13th.

SHOVELLER - recorded moving E offshore January - March, 4 dates, total 24; April 2 dates total 14 and 4 dates until May 10th with total 39 peak counts A.L. 20 - January 5th; 15 - February 2nd; 11 - February 10th; 13 - February 17th; 26 - April 11th; 20 - April 20th; 4 - October 19th.

POCHARD - up to 5 pairs W.P. January - February 1 E W.B. May 3rd; 8 W W.W. October 28th; 14 W there October 29th and 1 W December 9th; 2 W P November 13th.

TUFTED DUCK - recorded throughout year W.P. with max 10 during Winter months. Five records of 1 or 2 moving offshore March, April, May and December.

EIDER - total 58E and 2 W offshore January - May 18th, monthly totals January - 2; February - 0; March - 32; April - 18; May - 6; 5 W.B. November 30th, 25 W there in one party December 3rd and 11 W- Dec.30; regular on sea

W.W. and Harb from December 5th with peak 9 - December 21st.
No adult males recorded November - December.

LONG-TAILED DUCK - 2E W.W. March 24th; 1 m W.B. April 6th and 12; 1f W.W. November 14-15.

COMMON SCOTER - March 5th - May 31st spring sea watching total 4268E and 10 W on 48 dates. Monthly totals March - 2499; April 1014; May 755; peak date March 23rd when 1632 passed E in six hours. 1 W.B. June 1st and 4 there June 21. Recorded passing W.B. 17 dates after August 3rd with max 43 W November 7th. Wintering flock W.W. peaked 60 - December 18th and reduced to 25 by December 30th.

VELVET SCOTER - total 22E on 5 dates March 19th - May 11th offshore; 5 W W.B. October 31st; from December 4th offshore W.W. with Common Scoter, max 15 December 21st.

GOLDENEYE - 3 W.B. March 19th and 2 there March 25th; 2 W.W. November 11th and 1 there December 9th.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER - total 195E and 89W offshore January - May 31st; monthly analysis January-March 97E and 54W; April 71E and 34W; May 27 all E. An exceptionally difficult species to assess passage as up to 70 on the sea during April off Ferring and W.B.

First Autumn sightings 18W W.B. October 26th thereafter small number offshore.

GOOSANDER - 4 E W.B. May 11th (BJS BC) and 1 E there May 17th (M.H. et al).

BLACK KITE - 1 near Washington July 12th (R.S. JAN BJS)

MARSH HARRIER - 1 Adur Valley April 13th, 1 arriving W.B. May 3rd and another May 5th, 1 Sanc. May 4th; Autumn August 24th-September 7th multiple sightings Downs with peak 3 (2 imms/1 imm M) on evening September 4th.

HEN HARRIER - 1 M A.L. February 16th and 1 m there April 14th; single ring tails Downs November 1st and 8th.

MONTAGU'S HARRIER - 1 ring tail Downs August 14th; August 24th - September 6th several sightings of 2 ring-tails and 1 m Downs, all three seen together evening September 4th. Dispersed with Marsh Harriers as cereal fields were harvested.

SPARROW HAWK - recorded on many dates from at least 15 localities.

BUZZARD - 1 S.H. March 8th; 1 Downs June 25th; recorded 8 dates August 31st - October 12th Downs with 3 September 6th and 2 September 1st and 4th.

OSPREY - 1 W. W.W. May 12th (MW AJP) 1 Downs September 21st (FJF).

KESTREL - recorded in most areas with estimates of 11 in the Adur Valley during September and 15 Downs September.

MERLIN - a record number of observations; 1 mW Durrington January 23rd; 1 m A.L. March 1st; 1 f Downs April 6th; 1 there September 9th and October 2nd.

HOBBY - Spring records of 1 Sanc May 14th and 15th, 1 S.H. May and 1 Lancing June 16, during Autumn a record 16 sightings from August 7th - October 12th mainly Downs (12) Airport Lancing S.R.B. and over Shoreham.

PEREGRINE - 1 f Downs September 27th (ARK) is the first since 1975.

QUAIL - 2 Downs August 2nd, 1 there August 7th and 22nd.

WATER RAIL - winter records from Sanc. S.R.B. and A.L.

OYSTERCATCHER - regularly recorded Goring/Ferring beach with max 17 January 20th and 15 March 11th; spring sea-watching total 194E and 97W in 292 hours watching; 2/3 of which were recorded in May. No clear autumn movements although 30E W.B. September 18th and 18E there Sept. 19th. Occasional single bird Adur.

AVOCET - 9 E W.B. May 1 (RS) 1 E W.W. May 10th (M.W) 7 W
W.B. September 21st (BJS).

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER - 1 W.W. April 26th (NAS) and 1
Adur September 21st (MW).

RINGED PLOVER - selected counts from

(a) Adur, February 10th - 50, August 20th - 221, September
3rd - 110, September 19th - 215, September 21st - 250,
October 4th - 180, October 15th - 121, December 24th - 146.

(b) Ferring, January 1st - 200, January 19th - 158,
February 16th - 83, September 22nd - 120, October 31st -
180, November 24th - 160, December 24th - 117.

During prolonged spring seawatches, a total of 35E and 7W
recorded all in May. 2 pairs successfully bred in the area.

KENTISH PLOVER - 3 Adur September 21st (wars obs) 2 still
there September 22nd and at least 1 until September 24th.

DOTTEREL - up to 3 Downs May 13th-16th (vars obs).

GOLDEN PLOVER - peak counts A.L. January 9-24, February
10-22; November 2 - 11; November 9-30; December 30-20;
1 W.B. March 20; during autumn Downs 7 dates Aug 24-Nov.8
with peak 27 November 8.

GREY PLOVER - counts of wintering Goring/Ferring beach
population Jan. 1-47; Jan 19-83; February 16-78; Nov 6-137;
Dec.24-23; during 292 hours spring sea watching a total of
259E and 2W; only 1 W in March, 17E in April, the rest in
May with max 83 May 11. Occasional single, usually during
passage periods, Adur with max 7 May 12.

LAPWING - up to 3000 A.L. February; and 1100 there July 20th;
max 200 Annington fields in November. Counts of large
flocks on N.S.F. Airport-Lancing Marsh-Sussex Pad area
would be welcome.

KNOT - a frequent but not numerous passage wader. During spring 2 Adur May 12; 61E W.B. May 8 - May 13 offshore usually in company with other waders; August 27 - October 2nd Adur/W.W. with max 5th September 18.

SANDERLING - counts of Ferring wintering population suggests a further decline in numbers with peak counts of January 8-123; January 19th - 133, February 16th - 78, November 7th - 70; December 24th - 104.

During spring seawatches 519E and 85W, peaks 67E May 3rd and 61W May 31st.

LITTLE STINT - 1 stint E May 3 and 2E May 10 W.B. probably this sp. 1 juv W.W. August 13th - August 27th.

CURLEW SANDPIPER - singles Adur September 6th, 11th and 12th.

PURPLE SANDPIPER - 1 E W.W. January 9th; 1 Ferring February 8th and 8 there in December. During autumn 1 juv W.W. August 12th - September 13th and 1 W.B. September 15th.

DUNLIN - selected counts from

(a) Adur February 10th - 1400; March 3rd - 730; March 25th - 9; May 9th - 10; August 21st - 42; September 19th - 29; October 15th - 13; November 20th - 130; November 28th - 900; December 24th - 1300.

(b) Ferring, January 8th - 410; January 19th - 340; February 16th - 250; September 22nd - 33; October 31st - 50; November 24th - 400; December 24th - 516.

Considerable movements noted between Adur and Ferring on rising and falling tides with Ferring feeding birds favouring the Adur 'Airport' roost.

During spring seawatches - 70 E April and 282E May the only notable offshore autumn movement was 459W in 5½ hours W.B. October 26th.

RUFF - singles A.L. April 10th, 11th and 21st, and September 21st; 1 Adur September 21st and 1W both W.W. and W.B. October 26th.

JACK SNIBE - singles W.B. April 2nd and 25th; singles Annington October 26th and 31st.

SNIBE - peak counts from A.L. January 13 - 330, February 17th - 250, March 23rd - 100, December 15th - 30, 2 pairs possibly bred A.L. No collections greater than 50 in lower Adur Valley.

WOODCOCK - singles in January S.H. and W.P. 1 May 19th Patching Woods; 1 Downs November 16th, 3 there December 8th and 2 December 10th.

BLACKTAILED GODWIT - 14E W.W. May 3rd (MW) and 5E W.B. May 4th (BJS) are the first spring seawatching records of this species in this area.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT - 1 Ferring January 22nd; spring seawatching produced a record total of 5820 E and 20 W with peaks 2266 in 8 hours April 25th and 2146 in 6½ hours May 3rd 10 Adur May 9th and 7 there May 12th; max 7 Adur autumn August 10th - October 4th.

WHIMBREL - between April 12th - May 26th 754E and 27W on 32 dates offshore, during April 146E and 14W, during May 608E and 8W with peaks April 26th - 64; May 7th - 203; May 8th - 149; May 9th - 56; Elsewhere in spring up to 6 Adur on 7 dates, 9 Ferring Beach April 27th and 4 S.R.B. May 4th.

Recorded in small numbers (maximum 7) on 15 dates July 19th-September 27th Adur Downs and W.B.

CURLEW - no records until March when 7E passed offshore, a further 5E and 6W during April and 21/ and 3W during May. 38W in small group 1 hour W.B. July 1; 16W Ferring Sept. 22nd during October-November regularly Downs with peak 53 October 16th.

SPOTTED REDSHANK - 1 W 2 km offshore Lancing June 26th (BFF)
1 W W.B. June 27th (BJS).

REDSHANK - selected counts Adur - January 23rd - 120; Feb. 10th - 60; August 21st - 108; September 12th - 120; December 24th - 185. Fewer at Ferring with max 25 January 30th and 32 December 23rd.

4 pairs A.L. no signs breeding lower Adur although 5 new Coombes June 21st.

GREENSHANK - only spring records from sea watching, May 2nd - May 19th 11E and 2W with 7E May 2. At least 14 dates August 6th - October 8th with max 4 Adur August 17th and 4 Small Dole Clay pit September 27th and 28th.

GREEN SANDPIPER - wintering records from Ferring Rift and A.L. 1 S.R.B. April 15th; 2 A.L. April 18th and 1 May 1; 1 A.L. July 5th, 12 there July 19th, 4 August 9th and present A.L. at least until November 1st. 1 Beeding Aug. 7th and 1 W.W. August 19th.

WOOD SANDPIPER - 1 S.R.B. October 5-6 (SGS)

COMMON SANDPIPER - not recorded until 1 W.B. May 11; 9 Adur May 22nd; Adur - July 16th - November 2nd maximum 10 August 15th and September 2nd; A.L. July 9th - October 4th with maximum 12 July 9th.

TURNSTONE - spring sea watching total April 15th - May 25th 386E and 8W with peaks May 1st - 115 and May 3rd - 98 max 9 W.W. August; up to 10 Ferring winter months.

POMARINE SKUA - a phenomenal spring - 6E May 6th; 3 E - May 7th, 21E May 11th; 68E and 26W May 12th; 4W May 13th totalling 98E and 30W.

ARCTIC SKUA - spring sea watching March 23rd - May 31st only 34E and 3W with peak 6E May 12th; 1 W W.B. June 19th; between September 15th - October 30th total 2E and 10W off W.B. or W.W. 2 over Steyning October 3rd.

GREAT SKUA - between March 21st and May 12th 7E on 5 dates offshore, in autumn 4W on 4 dates September 5th - November 2nd.

MEDITERRANEAN GULL - 1 2 y W.W. January - March 20th; another 2 y Adur, January 29th; 1 Ad Sompting Tip January 12th and 1 ad and 1 2 y there March 1st; 1 2y E.W.B. January 27th and February 10th; 1 ad W.B. March 20th and May 4th, 1 ad Ferring May 10; these records relate to at least 5 individuals.

1 2y in moult Lancing August 6th; 1 ad N.S.F. September 6th; 1 ad Airport September 11th, 1 ad Adur September 28th, October 4th and 18th. 1 ad W.W. October 6th - December; 1 ad W.B. October 26th and November 11th; 1 ad Ferring September 30th, November 25th and 26th; 1 ad Cissbury November 16th. Possibly 4 different adults in our area.

LITTLE GULL - 1 E W.B. March 24th, 2E there April 14th, then between May 3rd-17th 57E offshore; 1 ad W.W. April 20th; 1 imm W.B. June 14th; 1 imm W.W. September 23rd; 2 imms W. W.B. October 14th; 8 ads and 7 imms W there October 26th and singles W October 27th and November 18th.

BLACK HEADED GULL - c 10,000 A.L. January-February, c5,000 following plough Applesham Farm January 9th, up to 5,000 Sompting Tip January-February; c2,500 Ferring catching flies March 9th; 30-40,000 W.B. March 16th; small numbers W.B. W.W. moulting July 12th by July 15th, 2,000 W.B. and 10,000 there July 31st; 10,000 Airport September 22nd; 5,000 Downs September 27th.

COMMON GULL - No formal counts, autumn return of adult birds to W.B. on July 15th.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL - maximum count 20, Adur, March 26th.

HERRING GULL - yellow legged race Adur March 23rd - 2; August 21st - 1; October 4th - 5; and October 8th - 2.

GREATER BLACK-BACKED GULL - up to 66 A.L. during February - no counts of large Adur/Airport roosts.

KITTIWAKE - 23E Ferring January 21st; spring sea watching only totalled 147E and 20W with 104E in May. Larger autumn movements of 100E W.W. October 18th; 163W and 34E W.B. Oct. 26th and 33E W.B. December 20th.

SANDWICH TERN - spring seawatch total 2465E and 123W March 20th - May 31st with peaks April 12th - 221; April 25th - 252 and May 9th - 238. In June, evening westward movement noted with up to 35W in $\frac{3}{4}$ hour largest autumn movement 40W W.B. September 10th and last recorded W.W. October 14th.

ROSEATE TERN - 1 E W.B. May 2nd (JAN) 1 E there May 10th (BJS)(JAN) 2 possibly 3 distant E W.B. May 31st.

COMMON/ARCTIC TERN - April 12th May 31st a record 8996E and 55W noted offshore with peaks of May 3rd - 1484, May 6th - 858, May 9th - 1163 and May 31st - 448.

Notable passages in Autumn August 11th - 120W, September 21st - 348W and 44E September 22nd - 100E last recorded W.W. October 21st.

LITTLE TERN - April 13th - May 31st a record 699E and 54W noted offshore with peaks of May 6th - 51; May 10th - 63 and May 11th - 72. Very few autumn records with last and max record 8W W.B. September 21st.

BLACK TERN - April 12th - May 21st a record 214E noted offshore only 5 in April, the bulk in May with peak May 7th - 48. Autumn records confined to period September 21st-25th when 7 W W.B. and singles at various places in Adur Valley.

AUK SP - 2 W W.B. February 5th; 2 W there March 23rd and 12W and 11E W.B. during spring sea watches. During November-December notably more numerous offshore than usual with peak 39W W.B. in 1 hour December 19th.

GUILLEMOT - 1 W.W. January 9th offshore December with oiled birds ashore after December 22nd.

RAZORBILL - singles offshore in March, May, October and November.

PUFFIN - 2 W W.B. May 9th (JAN FJF).

STOCK DOVE - regularly recorded in Steyning area; breeding season records for Steyning, Goring Gap. West Durrington and Swandean, small flocks 100 Downs September 18th and 30 there November 1st.

WOOD PIGEON - 850 Downs April 4th.

COLLARED DOVE - sanc.roost 200 in January but only 100 in late year. 70 Aldrington Basin November 9th.

TURTLE DOVE - An early arrival March 25th Sanc., single Downs April 23rd and 1 Steyning April 25th, more general arrival in early May. 35 Downs September 18th and last recorded Annington November 27th.

CUCKOO - 1 S.R.B. April 20th, 1 A.L. April 21st, 1 N W.B. and 1 Downs April 26th peak count of 5 Downs May 23rd. In autumn regularly seen Downs until September 5th.

BARN OWL - very few records, 1 pair Steyning area; 1 Downs December 19th and 1 Downs N of Brighton December 27th.

LITTLE OWL - possibly breeding pairs Downs (5) Erringham Fm Small Dole and Highdown, several widespread autumn records.

TAWNY OWL - birds heard calling Shoreham (4) Downs, Lancing, High Salvington, Sanc, Tarring, West Worthing, Steyning, Ashurst Woods, Patching, Goring Gap.

LONG-EARED OWL - Downland roost max 8 March 2nd.

SHORT-EARED OWL - no reports.

NIGHTJAR - 1 Coombes September 10th is the first since 1976
(BR)

SWIFT - L N W.B. April 27th; 1 Steyning April 28th and 1 Steyning W.B. and Goring April 29th; only large gathering reputed 200 Durrington June 24th and 50 Steyning July 25th. Late records of 1 W.P. September 21st; 1 W.W. September 29th and 1 Steyning October 3rd.

KINGFISHER - regularly seen in Adur Valley where possibly 3 pairs bred.

WRYNECK - 1 Hove, September 11th (per AJP)

GREEN WOODPECKER - 1-2 recorded throughout year from 11 localities.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER - up to 3 noted in 9 localities in most months.

LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER - over 19 individuals reported from 15 localities, mainly during autumn/winter and early Spring presumably when they are not obscured by foliage.

SKYLARK - only recorded flocks of 60W Goring January 2nd; 200 Downs September 22nd and 150 there October 16th.

SAND MARTIN - small numbers recorded between April 1st and October 11th.

SWALLOW - 1 N W.B. April 2 and 1 there April 3rd then no further arrivals until April 10th, no large flocks until autumn when 200 per hour E Shoreham all days September 19th - 21st; 1,000 Steyning September 22nd; 150S W.W. in 20 min. September 24th, still 50 Coombes October 22nd. 1 Ferring November 2nd and 1 Worthing November 20th.

HOUSEMARTIN - a rather late arrival with 1 Airport April 13th, 3 Lancing April 22nd, and 1 Shoreham April 23rd 20^N Downs May 3rd and 60 Sanc. May 17th. No breeding records - counts of the local colonies would be welcome. No large autumn movement noted with peak of 1,000 Sanc Sept.25 and still 150 there October 19th.

TAWNY PIPIT - 2 Steyning Round Hill September 21st (ARK) and September 22nd (BFF).

TREE PIPIT - 1 N April 26th the only spring record. During autumn total 241 Downs August 12th - September 18th with the peaks, as usual, in late August. 1E W.W. September 30th.

MEADOW PIPIT - 98N over Goring March 30; 233 N W.B. April 2nd and 229N in 1 hour April 3rd Autumn Downs peaks Sept. 22nd - 100, September 27th - 500 and only 1 there Dec. 7th.

WATER PIPIT - 1 showing characteristics of this race, Airport April 17th.

YELLOW WAGTAIL - 1 f ON THE EXCEPTIONALLY EARLY DATE OF March 23rd Steyning; 1 N W.B. April 12th and 1N there April 14th steady passage N all morning May 3rd W.B. None found breeding in Adur Valley although 3 Annington June 22nd. During autumn Downs peaks in late August with August 24th - 77; August 28th - 35, however largest too September 21st when 110 A.L.; 50 Glebe Farm; 40 near Steyning, 75 S P and 20 N.S.F. Last recorded A.L. October 11th. Breeding records of this species as well as Redshank and Snipe would be particularly welcome.

GREY WAGTAIL - Autumn and winter records from Ferring, Old Salts Farm, Downs, Annington, Sanc, Adur and Wiston.

ALBA WAGTAIL - 25 near Steyning January 10th; autumn reed bed roost Shoreham c500 in late October.

NIGHTINGALE - none breeding in Shoreham area, nearest singing birds wood NW of Steyning and Woods Mill.

BLACK REDSTART - wintering m W.W. and Shoreham Beach until March 4th, 1 Findon March 25th, 1 f Beeding April 18th, pair holding territory mid summer in central Worthing, in autumn first recorded Downs October 9th and 5 there October 16th and 3 October 23; other October records from W.W. (3) Southwick, Ferring and Steyning Garden, wintering birds returned to W.W. (2) and S.B. (2) November 9th, 1 Lancing November 9th and 1 Goring the same day.

COMMON REDSTART - spring records of 1 Downs May 3rd, 1 Lancing May 5th and 1 Mill Hill May 31st. Autumn passage Downs August 12th - October 12th totalled 62 with 23 in September and a peak of 14 on the typical date August 27th, 4 Steep Down; other autumn records singles from S.R.B. A.L. W.W. Ferring and gardens in Shoreham, Steyning and Lancing, the last in Lancing on November 9th.

WHINCHAT - only spring record of 3 Downs May 3rd, autumn censuses on Downs near Cissbury, produced a total of 218 of which 84 occurred in August, peak August 27 - 26. Peak September day September 21st with 28 on this date when enormous falls occurred in the East of the county other counts included 50 Downs near Steyning 60 A.L. and 20 N.S.F. last recorded October 10th Downs.

STONECHAT - widespread small numbers throughout the winter months, no breeding records, autumn peak 7 October 18 Downs.

WHEATEAR - 1 m Ferring March 22nd then a substantial arrival of 3 W.B. and 5 W.W. March 26th thereafter regular with peak 21 W.B. April 3rd, 16 Downs May 3rd. If Devils Dyke June 29th; during autumn no large falls were noted Downs where 171 were seen in total with peaks August 23rd-28th and August 27th-28th, in the Adur Valley H.S. reports 107 sighting from August 9th with a peak 19 September 22nd. Last recorded W.B. November 2-3.

RING OUSEL - 1 Downs May 3rd and 2 pairs there May 5th; autumn records on 9 dates September 13th - October 24th all Downs with peaks October 16-9 and October 18-7.

BLACKBIRD - sanc. roost c70 November 30th.

FIELDFARE - 300 A.L. January 6th but only 40 there January 21st; up to 21 Downs January-February with last 4 Downs May 3rd. 1 Downs October 12th and 10 there October 18th; 2 A.L. October 19th but by Nov. 16th 3000 there; Sanc. peak 60 Nov. 20th & 300 Downs Nov. 24. No Dec. counts.

REDWING - 500 A.L. January diminishing to 30 By March 23rd; considerable numbers heard overhead nights March 8-9-10th. 4 Glebe Farm Steyning, October 11th, but main arrival October 12th when 35 Sand and 200 W Downs peak Downs November 24th - 200, peak A.L. November 16th - 1500; late Autumn roost Sanc. with c500 November 30th. Few large flocks noted in December.

NAUMANN'S THRUSH - an unusual thrush thought by B.B. to be possibly this species. Ferring Rife January 22nd (JF) (not accepted as a record).

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER - 1 S.H. April 15th, 2 there May 4th and 1 there other dates until July 21st, 1 Airport May 5th and 1 Chanctonbury area July 13th.

SEDGE WARBLER - 1 S.R.B. April 12th, 1 there and 5 Airport April 13th. No breeding counts. Last recorded September 25th, Sanc.

REED WARBLER - April 15th-October 5th S.R.B. where c27 pairs bred. May 11th-October 5th Sanc. where 47 individuals were trapped.

LESSER WHITETHROAT - 1 Downs April 20th, 3 there April 26th and 9 May 3rd, Sanc. arrival April 30th where 2 pairs bred.

During Autumn Downs total counts 354 with peaks August 7th - 24, August 15th - 27, August 27th - 33, September 1st - 22, September 9th - 21. Last recorded September 25th Sanc.

WHITETHROAT - 2 Downs April 15th, 5 there April 26th and 7 May 3rd. 5 pairs Highdown May 11th, total 448 during autumn Cissbury area with 310 occurring in August, the max 46 August 16 last recorded Steyning October 1st.

GARDEN WARBLER - 2 Worthing April 29th and 1 there April 30th a scattering of autumn records until September 9th Sanc. 14 trapped with max 4 August 2nd and 5 August 23rd.

BLACKCAP - January - February records, Goring, Durrington, Shoreham; 1 Steyning March 14th and 1 Worthing March 31st, widespread during April. During Autumn, 31 trapped Sanc. Downs, counts totalled 629 with 220 during August; September 9th - 104, and September 15th - 60. Last recorded Harbour November 11th.

WOOD WARBLER - 1 Worthing, April 29th and 1 Lancing, May 9th.

CHIFF-CHAFF - No winter records; 1 Worthing March 10th and 7 further March reports after March 23rd, no large falls in Spring, during Autumn Sanc. until November 20th Max 12 September 25th; Cissbury area counts totalled 893 with peaks September 1st - 83, September 4th - 95, September 9th - 283. 1 Steyning, November 29th.

WILLOW WARBLER - 1 Downs April 6th, 1 Sanc. April 9th S.H. S.R.B. and Coombes April 10th and widespread by April 13th. Peak counts Downs April 26th - 65 and May 3rd, 60, only fall Sanc. May 7 when 15 trapped. Enormous numbers Cissbury area August with peaks August 16th - 550, August 19th - 469, and August 22nd, - 143. Usual numbers Sanc. with last two September 25th.

FIRECREST - 1 S.H. April 12th and 1f Sanc. November 20th.

GOLDCREST - Autumn counts Downs October 16th - 18, October 24th - 26, October 30th - 18.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER - 1 Worthing April 14th but no other arrivals until May; Autumn passage more obvious especially Downs where 384 seen near Cissbury; 220 in August but peak days Sept.1 - 55 last recorded Downs S.R.P, Sept.21 but 1 W W Oct.3

PIED FLYCATCHER - singles recorded Steyning Aug.16, W.W. Aug.28 Downs Sept.1 and W.W. Sept.19.

MARSH TIT - 3 prs. S.H. 3 Wiston Jan; 3 Downs Nov.-Dec.

WILLOW TIT - recorded Downs and S.R.B.

NUTHATCH - regular Steyning area especially S.H. and W.P.
1 Sanc. November 15th.

TREE CREEPER - recorded W.P. S.R.B. Sanc and Steyning.

RED-BACKED SHRIKE - 1 Downs, August 14th (FJF)

ROOK - 12 nest Southlands Hospital.

STARLING - evening E movement Durrington, peak February
21st, 6,000 in half an hour. 10,000 Sanc February 20th.

TREE SPARROW - 90 S.R.B. January and 50 there February
16th, 50 Downs March 2nd, only summer records from A.L.
50 Downs October 12th and 30th, up to 20 Steyning area
during last quarter.

CHAFFINCH - 150 Downs March 2nd; 120W Downs October 9th,
950W there October 12th, 120 October 30th and 200 Nov.11th.

BRAMBLING - 1 Downs October 19th, the only record.

GOLDFINCH - 60 Goring April 16th Max. 150 Sanc. August 23rd,
100 Downs September 3rd and October 12th.

SISKIN - recorded 14 dates October 8th-December 10th from
6 localities with max 54W Downs October 24th, 30 Wiston
November 20th and 20 Steyning November 22nd.

LINNET - 100 Durrington April 9th, 300 Downs September 18th,
300 Mill Hill October 5th and 100 S.R.B. on same date.

TWITE - 5 dates January 18th-February 23rd Adur max. 16,
9 there November 11th and 8 December 26th suggests a
decline of this wintering flock.

REDPOLL - 1 S.R.B. January 1st, 19 Autumn records August
8th-November 9th including 63 birds from 5 localities, no
large numbers mas of 12 Sanc October 19th.

SNOW BUNTING - 1 f W.W. November 12th (AJP).

CIRL BUNTING - 1 Hove Court April 16th (BR).

REED BUNTING - 9 Goring garden March 21st, Downs 7 dates
September 27th-December 7th with max. 3 October 24th.

CORN BUNTING - winter roost S.R.B. c300; 50 Adur September
8th no large flocks sanc.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE OF MIGRANTS IN 1980

This feature has been compiled from records sent in by
members - abbreviations are the same as in Notable Birds
of the area.

Whimbrel	Apr 12 W.B.	Sept 27 Adur
Common Sandpiper	May 11 W.B.	Nov 2 Adur
Common/Arctic Tern	Apr 12 W.B.	Oct 21 W.W.
Little Tern	Apr 13 W.B.	Sept 21 W.B.
Sandwich Tern	Mar 20 W.B.	Oct 14 W.W.
Turtle Dove	Mar 25 Sanc	Nov 27 Annington
Cuckoo	Apr 20 S.R.B.	Sept 5 Downs
Swift	Apr 27 W.B.	Oct 3 Steyning
Swallow	Apr 2 W.B.	Nov 20 Worthing
House Martin	Apr 13 Airport	Oct 19 Sanc.
Sand Martin	Apr 1 W.B.	Oct 11 A.L.
Fieldfare	Oct 12 Downs	May 3 Downs
Redwing	Oct 11 Steyning	Mar 23 A.L.
Wheatear	Mar 22 Ferring	Nov 3 W.B.
Whinchat	May 3 Downs	Oct 10 Downs
Redstart	May 3 Downs	Nov 9 Lancing
Grasshopper Warbler	Apr 15 S.H.	July 21 S.H.
Reed Warbler	Apr 15 S.R.B.	Oct.5 S.R.B. & Sanc.
Sedge Warbler	Apr 12 S.R.B.	Sept 25 Sanc.
*Blackcap	Mar 14 Steyning	Nov 11 Harb.
Garden Warbler	Apr 29 Worthing	Sept 9 Downs
Whitethroat	Apr 15 Downs	October 1 Steyning
Lesser Whitethroat	Apr 20 Downs	Sept 25 Sanc.

*Chiff Chaff	Mar 10 Worthing	Nov 29 Steyning
Spotted Flycatcher	Apr 24 Worthing	Oct 3 W.W.
Yellow Wagtail	Mar 23 Steyning	Oct 11 A.L.

*excluding possible wintering birds.

NOT! THE STRIVENS REED BED REPORT 1980

After last year's disappointment concerning the "Reed Bed", the Steyning Ringing Group decided to continue mist netting and recording birds on the section of the old railway line overlooking the reed bed. The site includes a strip of reeds on our side of the fence along the railway embankment, and on the other side of the embankment half an acre of wetland bordered by two streams.

In January, the owners of the land, the County Council, decided as a matter of policy to dispose of all surplus land in the area; following the delineation of the By-Pass which passes nearby. I am pleased to report that the above land and a further area of old rubbish tip, in total 2.8 acres are to be purchased by PJC with contracts due to be signed shortly.

The Council agreed that various tasks and improvement work for wildlife could take place before the exchange of contracts. So, with the agreement of neighbouring farmer, Des Heryett, who has a tenancy of the marsh, a pond was dug there. I would like to thank my neighbour Gerry Russel and Phillip Jolly of Gamble Plant Hire who excavated the pond for me. Gambles had a machine working on the construction of the By-Pass, which found its way to the site one spring weekend.

With some help of the members of the County Society and with the agreement of the Southern Water Authority, a planting scheme was started in the Autumn with about 20 Oak

trees, 7 Alders (courtesy of Woods Mill), 5 Goat Willows, many Osiers and White Willows installed.

Common Reeds were transplanted around the pond and established themselves during the summer. Other introductions were considered, but following the profuse spread of Amphibious Bistort over the pond, it was decided to see what would happen naturally. It was a delight to see damselflies and the Broad Bodied Libellula Dragonflies feeding off the Bistort during the summer.

The pond instantly proved attractive to starlings who flocked from the nearby sewage works to bathe, and then to Swallows who dipped in as they flew over. The first wader for the pond was a Green Sandpiper which flew up when disturbed on the 15th April.

Mist netting started in the spring when the Reed and Sedge Warblers began to return. The first to arrive were Sedge and Willow Warbler, on the 12th April, followed by a Wheatear Sand Martin and Swallow on the 13th with the first Reed Warbler arriving on the 15th.

A net rise 240' long was cut in the reeds, just alongside the fence. This ride caught a large proportion of the total of 134 Reed Warblers caught plus retraps from previous years. Nine birds were retrapped from 1979, 2 each from 1978, 1977 and 1975. The breeding population was the highest ever with about 30 pairs, estimated from the 26 females trapped with good brood patches.

It was also a good year for Sedge Warblers with 60 trapped and ringed, one bird was retrapped from 1978, but unfortunately due to the absence of Aphids during the autumn, passage was very poor, and the birds moved elsewhere for the premigration fatten-up. Kingfishers were caught in a new net site on the embankment where the tanyard stream goes underneath. The net intercepted five birds, one bird had been ringed eleven days previously by J.A.N. at Shoreham.

Birds of interest noted during the year included a male Martin on the 1st day of March when the usual corn bunting roost was dispersing. Redwing and Water Rail were still around, Sparrowhawk were seen almost weekly, most sightings were of female birds. A Heron alighted by the pond in June, while finches were using the new feature for drinking and bathing. Green Sandpiper now frequented the pool regularly. A Redstart was seen in one of the old Ash Trees on the 6th August when three Mallard and two Teal appeared. Ringing activities were interrupted on the 24th when a Greenshank, flying south, circled and dropped in by the pond enabling us to have good views of it feeding on the muddy bank.

The remainder of the year followed the usual pattern, with the Corn Buntings coming into roost, and the start of various management tasks, including stream clearance, removal of surface rubbish from the tip bank, and planting trees. We all now look forward to the developments there will be in its first spring.

The group erected nine Tit Boxes in Wiston Park, by kind permission of Mr H Goring. Of the six boxes inspected, five were occupied by Blue-tits, which in total raised 42 young. All the boxes were hung from boughs with wire, as nailing boxes to trees is not advisable.

My thanks to members of the Ringing Group, and all who have helped in any way in the creation of our "mini reserve".

TABLE OF WADERS SEEN ON THE ADUR ESTUARY DURING PEAK
AUTUMN PASSAGE JULY 30TH-SEPTEMBER 27TH 1980

(Including New Salts Farm and Widewater)

	JULY		AUGUST					SEPTEMBER				
	30	10	13	15	17	19		6	13	20	21	27
Ringed Plover	37	60	65	175	175	198		205	*	200+250	*	
Little Ringed Plover											1	
Kentish Plover											3	
Grey Plover			1									
Knot								1	3	3	1	
Little Stint			1									
Curlew Sandpiper								1				
Purple Sandpiper			1			1						
Dunlin	25	20	29	75	55	31		25	*	15	20	20
Ruff											1	
Snipe												2
Bar-tailed Godwit		1						3	2	5	7	4
Whimbrel		1	2							1	1	1
Redshank	32	50	*	100+	*	*		*	*	*	*	*
Curlew			1	1				1	1	1	1	
Greenshank			1	2		1		1				
Common Sandpiper	4	8	8	10				1			2	
Turnstone		1	9	1	1							

* denotes present but not specifically counted.

Mark Welfare

STEYNING GRAMMAR SCHOOL - BIRD STUDY GROUP

The school group has been in existence for over four years and although small in number, its members are becoming known in the local birding community. Many pupils maintain their links with the group after leaving school and are developing into a thriving Steyning Area team. Some of the group belong to this Society and the S.O.S. and it is hoped that further links will be developed.

The group's aims are to promote bird study generally and to carry out studies in the local area in particular.

For the past year, a monthly bird report sheet has been produced, compiled mainly from members' sightings but also contributed to by a few adult bird watchers.

In addition to this, two long-term studies are being carried out on Steyning breeding bird populations. One is an "atlas" type survey of the 2 x 2 km tetrad 1610, which includes most of Steyning plus countryside to the South and West. The other is a common bird census of 45 hectares of downland, woodland, scrub and farmland within the same tetrad to the west of the town. The "atlas" survey results for the past two years are as follows :-

BREEDING STATUS

<u>Year</u>	<u>No.Species Confirmed</u>	<u>No.Species Probable</u>	<u>No.Species Possible</u>
1979	50	9	11
1980	40	23	3

Apart from the local surveys, regular field trips are made to the usual Sussex Birding localities, with occasional camping trips further afield.

Evening meetings are also held and the group has been fortunate in receiving some excellent talks from various ornithologists including local RSPB and Shoreham Ornithological Society's officers.

Film shows of RSPB films have been held each year and through these, coupled with sales, the group has been able to make donations to that Society.

In 1981 the local surveys will continue and the group intends to make a contribution to a detailed sea-watch from Shoreham Beach. Any members of this Society who live in the Steyning area and who would like closer links with the school group, should contact me.

M. P. Hall

LANCING / WORTHING, 1980

DAY	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	TOTAL
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

TABLE SHOWING

SELECTED DAYS SPRING SEA-WATCHING

TOTALS

LANCING / WORTHING, 1980

SELECTED DAYS SPRING SEA-WATCHING TOTALS

DATE	MAR 12	MAR 20	MAR 23	MAR 24	APR 12	APR 13	APR 25	MAY 1	MAY 2	MAY 3
HOURS WATCHED	4	4	6	2½	3½	3½	8	8½	7	6½
WIND DIRECTION	ENE 4-5	NE 3	ESE 5	SSE 5 - SSW5	SE4	SE2	NE2- E3+ calm	ENE 4-5	NE 3-4	NE 5
Diver Sp.		2	1	45	17	18	1			1
Brent Geese	1102	459	369	19	57	7				33
Com. Scoter	308	92	1632	197	443	171	10	1	2	13
Grey Plover							1	11	13	34
Sanderling					1		13	34	9	67
Dunlin	33	18			3		27	15	46	53
Bar-tailed Godwit			3				2266	181	94	2146
Whimbrel					1	3	24	23	28	18
Turnstone							28	115	9	98
Arctic Skua			1		1	1			2	1
Pomarine Skua										
Little Gull										3
Sandwich Tern					221	90	252	109	63	115
Com. Arctic Tern					2	19	42	218	460	1484
Little Tern						3	37	24	4	46
Black Tern					1			1	2	14

- LANCING / WORTHING, 1980

MAY 4	MAY 5	MAY 6	MAY 7	MAY 8	MAY 9	MAY 10	MAY 11	MAY 12	MAY 13	MAY 31
4	4	8½	8½	5	8	9¼	8½	9½	8¼	5
NNE 3	NNE 3	NE 5	NI→ calm	NE 2	NE2 →SE3	SE4	SE4	SE4 →6	SE2	SE5 →NW2
			1	1	3	14	6	4	4	2
3									3	
11		33	22	9	66	22	137	78	12	214
8		5				31	83	30	8	
	3	10	2		20	37	39	49	12	61W
25		53		12		29	10	10	2	
212	24	103	27	5	176	111	109	45	13	
7		19	203	149	56	46	26	14	4	
	7	14	2	3	8	7		23	1	
	2		1	1	3	2	3	6	1	1
		6	3				21	68E 26W	4W	
		6	1		1	12	21	9	1	
29	19	68	56	31	238	125	81	105	58	19
119	680	858	322	256	1163	697	595	529	251	446
6	10	51	45	5	101	63	72	41	10	20
8	2	3	48	1	12	34	33	44	3	

REPORT ON THE OFFSHORE SEA-PASSAGE OF BIRDS OBSERVED FROM
WORTHING-LANCING BEACH DURING THE SPRING OF 1980

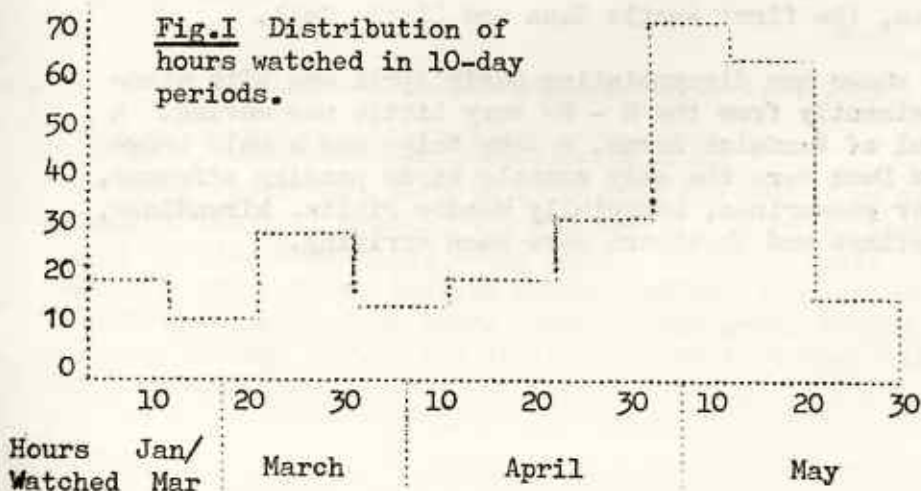
The Spring of 1980 proved to be the most spectacular for observing offshore sea-passage of ducks, terns, geese and waders since the commencement of regular watching from these beaches. Greater coverage, by more observers, coupled with favourable, usually Easterly, winds meant that most species were noted in record numbers for this area.

The main observation points were: (from West to East)

- (a) Ferring Ilex trees TQ 106016 (mainly FJF) 2½ km E to
- (b) Marine Gardens Shelter TQ 130019 (most observers) 2 km ENE to
- (c) Worthing Pier TQ 151022 (mainly RS) 5½ km NE to
- (d) Widewater, Lancing TQ 203042 (mainly MW & AP)

Up until May 31st, the sea was watched for 292½ hours; the number of observer/hours was considerably more as there were several synchronous watches at two or more points. The distribution of "different" hours watched throughout the Spring is shown in Fig.I. These ten-day periods are used for the following histogram.

Fig.I Distribution of
hours watched in 10-day
periods.



Clearly the strong easterly winds in late March and early May prompted more observation.

The monthly hour totals were :-

Jan - 2 $\frac{1}{2}$; Feb. - 14 $\frac{3}{4}$; Mar. - 47; Apr. - 73 $\frac{1}{4}$; May 154 $\frac{3}{4}$

CHRONOLOGICAL ACCOUNT

Watching throughout January, February and March was sporadic and largely unproductive. A steady trickle of Brent Geese was noted but highlights were the 15 Bewick Swans and 4 Grey-lag Geese.

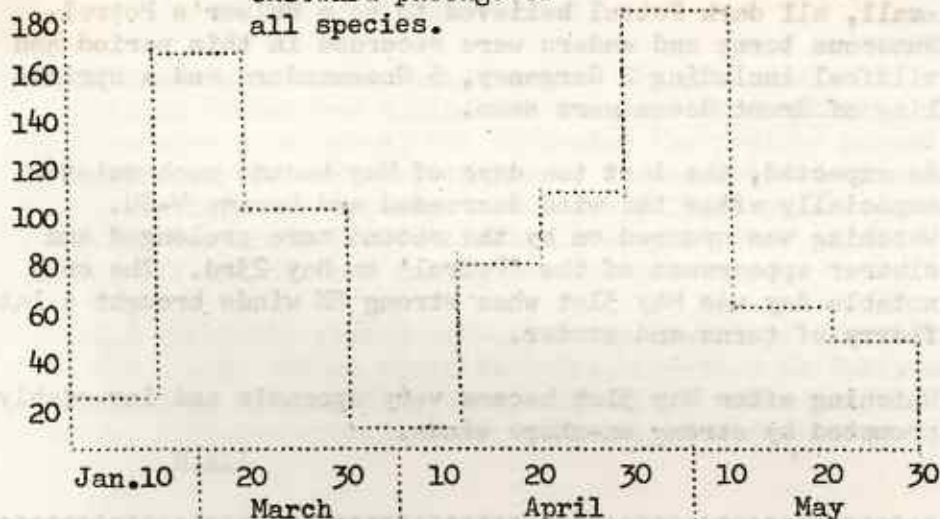
Watching began in earnest on March 15th and thereafter observations were possible until early June.

Mid-March was a most productive period, the cold ENE wind stirring a large passage of Brent Geese and wildfowl including four Gadwall and 3 Goldeneye. The first Sandwich Tern and Fulmar appeared in this period.

The two peak days in the last 10-day period of March were the 23rd and 24th; the 23rd noted for the largest Common Scoter passage of the year and the 24th for the largest Diver movement. Brent Geese were still fairly numerous; Red-Breasted Merganser numbers increased and the period saw 3 Bonxies, the first Arctic Skua and Little Gull.

Fig.2 shows how disappointing early April was with winds predominantly from the N - NW very little was moving. A handful of Sandwich Terns, a Jack Snipe and a male Long-Tailed Duck were the only notable birds passing offshore, however passerines, especially Meadow Pipits, hirundines, carduelines and Wheatears were seen arriving.

Fig.2 - The rate of eastward passage of all species.



A welcome return to SE winds on April 11th dramatically increased the passage of Sandwich Tern and Scoter; the following day saw the first Common-Arctic Tern, Black Tern and Whimbrel as well as an interesting selection of Wildfowl.

The last period in April would have been very quiet but for the 25th when the largest passage of Sandwich Tern was recorded and an avalanche of Bar-tailed Godwits moved past in late afternoon and evening. Unusual records at the end of April included another Jack Snipe and a party of 9 Velvet Scoter.

The first ten days in May was the most productive period with large numbers of terns and waders recorded. Details of the commoner species are outlined in the table of selected days watching. This period had the most varied selection of unusual occurrences including two Manx Shearwaters, a Slavonian Grebe, a Gadwall, 10 Avocets, 3 Stints, 19 Black-tailed Godwits, 9 Greenshank, 2 Roseate Terns, a possible Caspian Tern, 2 Mediterranean Gulls, 2 Marsh Harriers and 2 Puffin.

The exciting watching continued with SE winds into Mid-May with May 12th producing 94 sightings of Pomarine Skua, the

Spring peak of 6 Arctic Skua, a Bonxie, an Osprey and a small, all dark Petrel believed to be a Bulwer's Petrel. Numerous terns and waders were recorded in this period and wildfowl including 2 Garganey, 5 Gooseanders and a sprinkling of Brent Geese were seen.

As expected, the last ten days of May became much quieter especially after the wind decreased and became W-SW. Watching was spurred on by the second more prolonged and clearer appearance of the 'Petrel' on May 23rd. The only notable day was May 31st when strong SE winds brought a late flurry of terns and scoter.

Watching after May 31st became very sporadic and invariably prompted by strong on-shore winds.

J.A.N.

SEA WATCHING IN SUSSEX - SPRING 1980

Every spring a number of misguided enthusiasts sit glued to various points along the Sussex coast to record the annual arrivals of migrant landbirds from the south, and the up-Channel passage of various seabirds and water birds. Neither phenomenon is at all predictable. When a large arrival or movement takes place, it is usually over in a few hours; quite often it happens on a weekday; and so the chances of an ordinary weekend birder seeing such events are fairly slim. In fact, after some 25 years or more of such activities, I would say that in an average spring, a regular weekend observer would be lucky to have more than one or two really good seawatches. There are articles which I wrote in this society's report in the 1950's and 1960's which prove this!

1980 was, in fact, an exceptional year, and it was not just on the headlands that this was so. Selsey Bill in the west and Beachy Head in the east are the best seawatching points in the county, but regular watching between Worthing and Shoreham by members of this society shows that a surprising amount can be seen from this part of the coast well back from the main headlands.

The weather plays a major part in the sighting of migration, and for the dedicated seawatcher, easterly winds are a must in the spring. This is because the birds prefer a headwind, and will come in closer to our coastline if the wind is from the south east. The Spring of 1980 was exceptional for persistent easterlies, alternating between cold north-easterlies and warm south-easterlies, and during April and May there were some large unchannel movements.

These started in mid-April with a big movement of typical April species - several hundred each of Common Scoter and Sandwich Terns; a number of Velvet Scoter (one flock of 28 which was watched passing Beachy Head two hours after leaving Selsey Bill); a dozen or so Arctic and half a dozen Great Skuas; 150 Divers in a day; a few Garganey; and several Little Gulls. The rest of the month was not so eventful, owing to strong northerly winds, and it was not until the first two weeks of May that things really got under way again as the easterly winds re-appeared.

Then some spectacular passage occurred of duck, geese, waders, skuas, and terns along the coast. Up to 3,000 Common/Arctic Terns and 2,500 Bar-tailed Godwits were recorded in a day. Duck passing included Velvet Scoter, Common Scoter, Pintail, Shoveler, Tufted Duck, Mergansers, Shelduck, Pochard, Garganey, Eider and even Gadwall. There was a great selection of waders, mostly in small numbers - Oystercatchers, Grey Plover, Turnstone, Curlew, Whimbrel, Greenshank, Knot, Dunlin, Little Ringed Plover, Sanderling, and a few black-tailed Godwits and Avocets.

Skuas were particularly interesting. There were very few Bonxies - probably no more than a dozen altogether - but this is not surprising, as they tend to move more with the prevailing south-westerly winds, which were virtually absent this spring. There were not many Arctic Skuas either - perhaps about 20 in all, an extraordinarily low number as they seem to prefer easterly or south-easterly winds, and the average for recent springs has been about 100.

It was definitely the year of the Pomarine Skua. Some 120 in all passed the Sussex coast, the largest party of this big handsome skua being of 25. Several flocks were noted at successive points as they passed. Peaks occurred on Sunday and Monday the 11th and 12th May, when on the Sunday, some 35 and on the Monday some 70 or so were seen. Exciting observations were made from the mid-Sussex coast, as described elsewhere in this report.

Overall, 1980 was one of the most exciting and rewarding Springs for many years. It may be several years before it is as good again.

B.A.E.M.

A REPORT ON THE OFFSHORE SEA PASSAGE OF BIRDS RECORDED
ALONG THE SOUTH COAST PORTLAND BILL TO DUNGENESS DURING A
ONE MONTH PERIOD IN THE SPRING OF 1980

Having sea watched on occasions at Hurst Castle in Hampshire for a number of years and at Worthing during the Spring of 1980, it became possible to make direct comparisons of data between the two localities due to contact with observers at both sites. It soon became apparent that regular watching was also taking place at other sites along the coastline and I am grateful to the following for making their information available to me: Portland Bill and Dungeness Bird Observatories; Eddie Wiseman, Bob Dunn and Barry Duffin from Hampshire; Dave Wooldridge from the Isle of Wight and John Newnham and the Beachy Head group from Sussex.

The object of this report is to show the passage of selected species of birds along the south coast between 12th April and 12th May, 1980 and observe any variations or trends in these movements. Most of the analysis of data is left to the reader, though for certain species an attempt at interpretation has been made.

As can be seen from the map below, detailed recording was taking place at most suitable vantage points and at regular intervals along a stretch of approx. 170 miles of coastline,

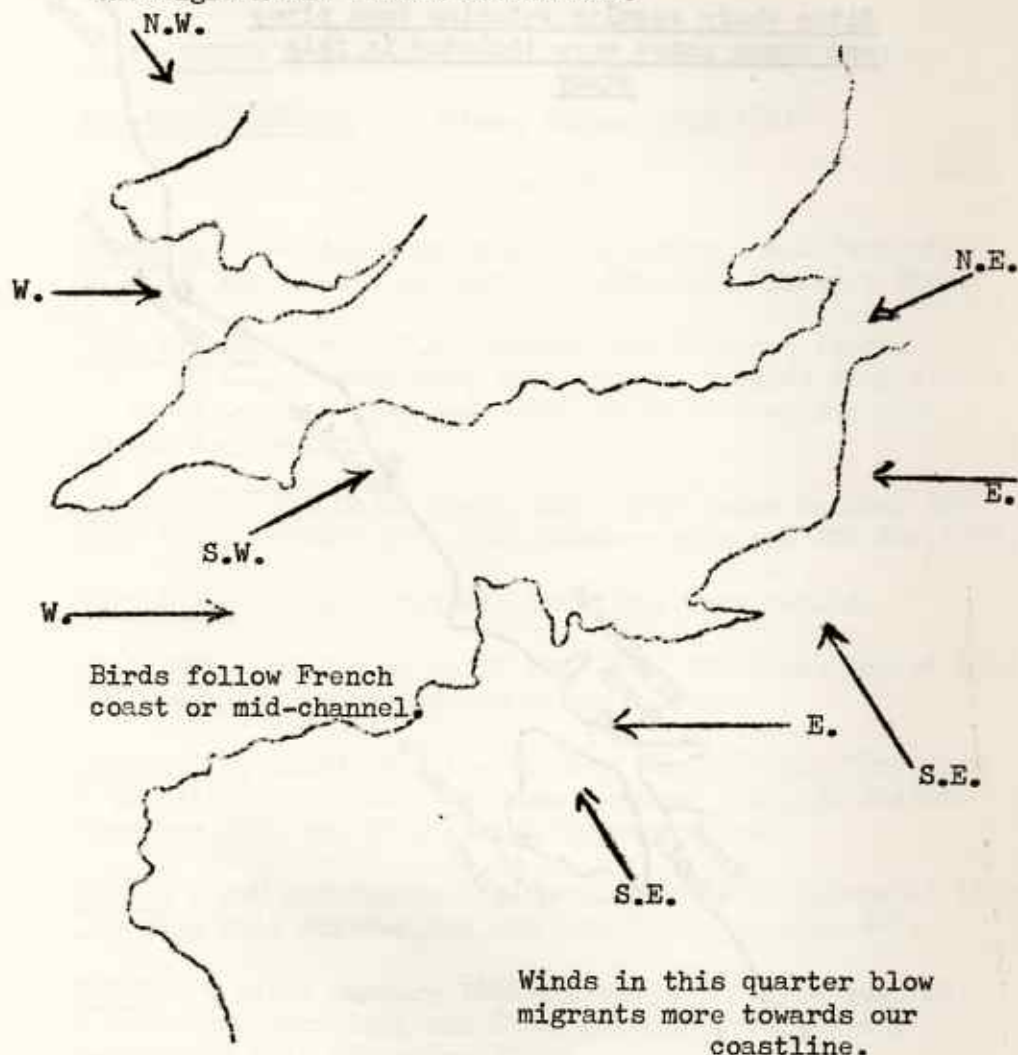
consequently, any movement of birds could be accurately plotted.

Sites where regular watching took place
and whose notes were included in this
study



(43A)

The further the birds migrate through the Channel, the greater the concentration due to the funnelling effect of the English and French coastlines.



CHRONOLOGICAL ACCOUNT

Although there were slight variations in the wind direction and speed along the coast, this does not appear to have influenced the pattern of migration judging from the records, all of which are of birds travelling east.

At the beginning of the study period, April 12th - 14th, there were favourable light south easterly winds resulting in the last sizeable passages of Common Scoter and Brent Geese and the first good numbers of Sandwich Tern. There then followed a period of ten days when winds were from the north west, north or north north east direction, resulting in only a few Sandwich Terns being recorded possibly because very few hours were spent watching.

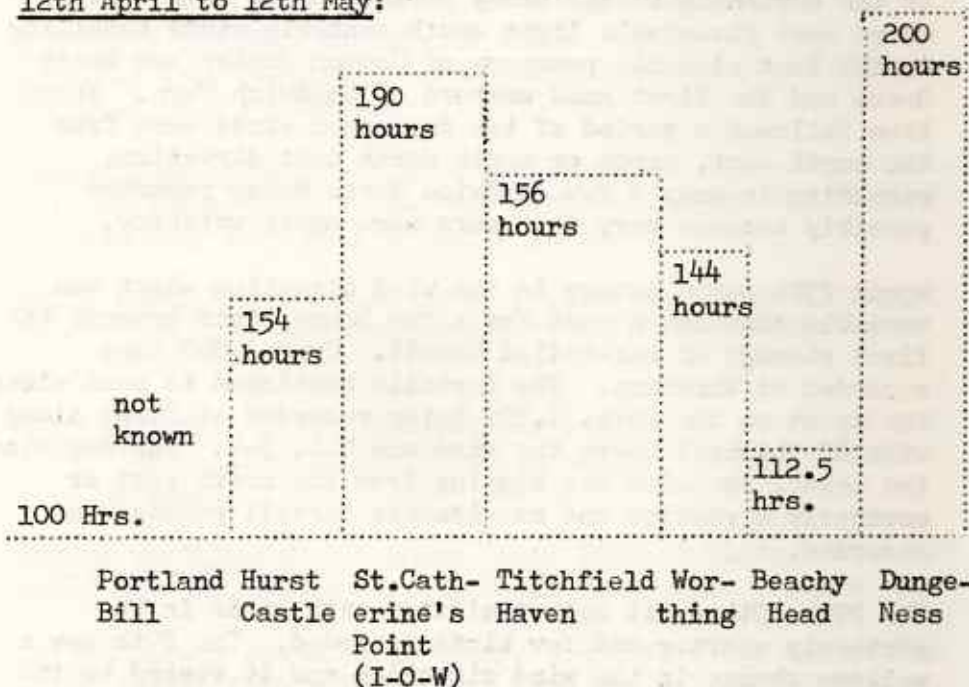
April 25th saw a change in the wind direction which was variable then south east for a few hours, this brought the first passage of Bar-tailed Godwit. Over 2,000 were recorded at Worthing. The Bartails continued to pass along the coast on the 26th, 1,300 being recorded at Hurst along with 83 Whimbrel where the wind was N.E. 3-4. Further along the coast, the wind was blowing from the north west or northerly direction and no sizeable Bartail passage was recorded.

The 27th-29th April were dominated with winds in the northerly quarter and few birds recorded. The 29th saw a welcome change in the wind direction and it veered to the north-east and heralded the beginning of a hectic 15 days sea-watching period, when the winds remained in the NE/SE direction and brought the passage of birds along our coast. Flocks of Bartailed Godwits and Commic Terns were recorded on every day until the end of this study period on 12th May.

Times given for each days recording are totals. Most watching takes place before and after normal working hours, which fortunately coincides with the normal pattern of movement of birds (except during SE winds). This explains why a similar number of hours were recorded from different sites during the study period, as shown in the histogram below. Experience over the years has shown that winds in

a southerly or south easterly direction have always produced good passages of migration, easily observed from suitable vantage points and it will be seen on the record charts for each locality that a proportionately higher number of hours are watched when the wind is in this quarter.

The number of hours watched during a one-month period -
12th April to 12th May:



The really large passages of birds are always during the end of April and the first 10 days of May, when the bulk of migration is taking place through the English Channel, and it would seem logical that the majority of these birds would be following the French coast and would not appear along our coastline unless blown there, so the importance of the 'right' wind will be appreciated.

SPECIES ANALYSIS ON SELECTED DAYS

Black-Throated Diver

	April					May											
	12	13	25	26	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Portland Bill	13	1		2	5		1		1					3			
Hurst Castle		1															
Titchfield		1															
St.Cath.Point	1	7	3	3	1		2		1	1							
Worthing																	
Bchy.Head																	
Dungeness	15	6		9	4		18	30	9		2	21		7	12		2

Red-Throated Diver

Portland Bill	2	2					4	1	1						2	2	
Hurst Castle	1	1	1		2		1	1									
Titchfield																	
St.Cath.Point		8					1										
Worthing																	
Beachy Hd.							6	1		1						2	
Dungeness	27	18	4	18	2	4	6	5	8	3	3	4	2	3	15	10	2

Diver Sp.

Portland Bill	8	7	1						2	1	1						3
Hurst Castle									1								
Titchfield	1							1								1	
St.Cath.Pt.	3	20	22	71	22		2	1	13	4						6	
Worthing	17	18	1		2			1			1	1	3	14		6	4
Beachy Head	50	153		4				13	4	5	4	12	5	34		17	3
Dungeness	42	36	18	2	4	1	6	5	8	3	3	4	2	3	15	10	2

From the figures, as would be expected, the divers stay well off shore and do not enter the Solent in any numbers, most choose the route to the south of the Isle of Wight and are moving off St. Catherine's Point. The birds continue to keep off shore and are only recorded in good numbers from those points jutting well into the sea, i.e. Beachy Head and Dungeness.

Gannet

	April							May						
	12	13	25	26	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Portland Bill	Recorded in good numbers most days													
Hurst Castle	4		18											
Titchfield					1		2	3						
St.Cath.Pt.	6	11	22	71	22	2	1	1	5	3	4			6
Worthing					2									
Beachy Head		7		20				10	3	4		2		4
Dungeness	21	30	7	56	20	1	12	16	10	14	6	2	4	10

This 'oceanic' species is seldom met with in the Solent, a party of 18 fishing on the 25th April being unusual. From those points jutting further into the sea, regular sightings are made though it would be difficult to draw any conclusions as to migration patterns on the evidence here.

Brent Goose

	April							May						
	12	13	25	26	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Portland Bill			1											
Hurst Castle	56	31												
Titchfield	22	49						2					1	6
St.Cath.Pt.	11	11												
Worthing	57	7						33	3					
Beachy Head	91	71		32				115	5				1	1
Dungeness	333	220	42	38				127	6	5		3		7

Clearly the passage of this species is concentrated in March, 1,102 being recorded at Worthing on March 19th and 1,509 at Dungeness on the 23rd March.

Shelduck

	April					May											
	12	13	25	26	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Portland Bill			2	2	1												
Hurst Castle			3					10	37	12				9			
Titchfield	2	9		2	5		3	8	66	24				16	5		13
St.Cath.Pt.																	
Worthing		2			2	3	3	3	4	8				34	1	11	8
Beachy Head	14	6		8				22	11						5	15	8
Dungeness	23	3		9			6	43	8	6	4	18		8	18	14	7

Common Scoter

	April					May											
	12	13	25	26	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Portland Bill	910	68						24		10	13	2	32	17	27	95	28
Hurst Castle	143	45						69									
Titchfield		9		2	5		3	8	66	24				16	5		13
St.Cath.Pt.	1733	260	21	6	3		3	136		3	23					24	39
Worthing	443	171	10	16		1	2	13	11		33	22	9	66	22	137	78
Beachy Head	1640	800		43				594	56	5	37	69		42	23	324	66
Dungeness	3808	1984	27	75	8	5	17	783	38	5	1	94	28	93	46	535	186

This species shows a reluctance to migrate through the Solent, often parties are observed entering Hurst Narrows only to turn round again and pass to the south of the Needles. The main passage takes place in March and largest numbers are recorded at Dungeness where the channelling of birds is evident as the French and English coastlines are at their closest.

Velvet Scoter

	April											May										
	12	13	25	26	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12					
Portland Bill	13	7						2			1				1	7						
Hurst Castle		2																				
Titchfield			1																			
St.Cath.Pt.	25	2	1																			
Worthing			1		9																	
Beachy Head	48	12						30			10				4	7						
Dungeness	38	35		3				30			0	2					1					

Red-Breasted Merganser

	April											May										
	12	13	25	26	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12					
Portland Bill	5	2																				
Hurst Castle	1	5						1														
Titchfield	1	5			1					2												
St.Cath.Pt.	16																					
Worthing					5																	
Beachy Head	81	26						48	5	2	4		5	8	3	5						
Dungeness	165	66		12	47	3	8	6	7	1	3	13	3	6								

Grey Plover

	April											May										
	12	13	25	26	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12					
Portland Bill																						
Hurst Castle	1	1					2	40	13						33	58	31					
Titchfield	7	4	4	11			3	25	29		9			4	6		19					
St.Cath.Pt.																						
Worthing			11			11	13	34	8		5				31	83	30					
Beachy Head								44	1	2	1			1	1	29	29					
Dungeness	1	1		1			2	78	17	7	2				4	51	123	6				

Sanderling

	April										May							
	12	13	25	26	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Portland Bill																		
Hurst Castle	1			6			8	72	6	3				9	40	47	25	
Titchfield	1	3	14		3		6	23			25	2		3	47	32	13	
St.Cath.Pt.								1			5							
Worthing	1		13		10	34	9	67		3	10			20	37	39	49	
Beachy Head								38	4	4				3	21	9	5	
Dungeness	2			8	13			57	3	2				7	23	36	33	

Dunlin

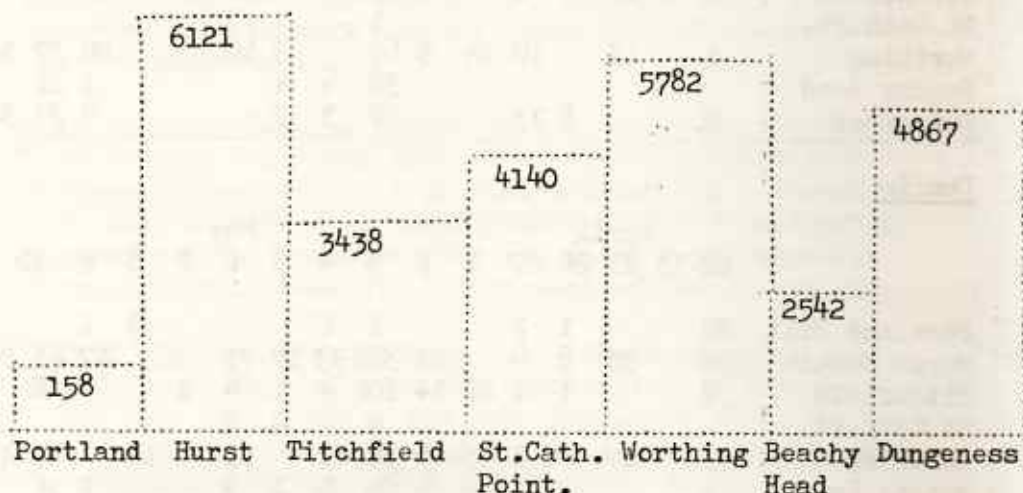
	April					May											
	12	13	25	26	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Portland Bill	20			1	2			1	6				2	1			
Hurst Castle	34		35	8	4		21	388	33	17	71			17	61	59	29
Titchfield	2			1	1	22	14	102	4	1	4	1			8	7	
St.Cath.Pt.								9		2	2						
Worthing	3		27		1	15	46	53	25		53		12		29	10	10
Beachy Head	1							59	5	1	9			5	16	4	2
Dungeness	21	4					25	156	3		9		4	1	6	34	10

Bar-tailed Godwit

	April					May											
	12	13	25	26	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Portland Bill	1								157								
Hurst Castle			481	139	110		12	275	40	14					105	163	7
Titchfield		3	761	6	2	7	9	215	69	1	11			27	42	62	21
St.Cath.Pt.			246	770	80	23	2	690	244	6	20						
Worthing			2266	170	20	181	94	2146	212	2	103	27	5	176	111	109	45
Beachy Head				880				1006	489	22	9			17	61	45	3
Dungeness	10		12	805	52	39	27	1855	623	23	76	20	331	55	34	22	

The very low number of Bartails recorded at Portland could well be because the species passed behind the Bill over the causeway as most records this year from other sites were of birds hugging the coastline.

Number of Bar-tailed Godwits recorded from
12th April to 12th May



The birds recorded at Hurst Castle on the Hampshire mainland would be different birds to those recorded at St.Catherine's Point on the Isle of Wight, therefore, at least 10,261 Bartails passed along that stretch of coastline, yet only 5,782 were recorded at Worthing. This species, unlike most dealt with, is frequently observed leaving the coastline and moving inland, usually up the Meon Valley at Titchfield Haven in Hampshire or the Cuckmere Valley in East Sussex, which would be one explanation as to the loss of birds at Worthing and Beachy Head.

Whimbrel

	April										May							
	12	13	25	26	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Portland Bill	2	1	2		14	2		11	1		2		1	1	11	3		
Hurst Castle	3		57	83	103	25	41	46	42	4	20			36	28	17	4	
Titchfield	3		12	14	23			1	2	15	2		51	153	1	1		
St.Cath.Pt.			9	23	12		8	4	100	11	3	20						
Worthing	1	3	24	64	17	23	28	18	7		19	203	149	56	46	26	14	
Beachy Head	1			24				9	7	1				62	8	5		
Dungeness		1		1				3	3	1	35	23	14	1	4	11	2	

Like the Bar-tailed Godwit, this species also follows inland routes.

Turnstone

	April										May									
	12	13	25	26	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12			
Portland Bill					5			1	7					1						
Hurst Castle			20	11			10	40	3		6			7	5	25	5			
Titchfield								54	8	10	3	8			7	4	2			
St.Cath.Pt.								3		3										
Worthing			28			115	9	98		7	14	2	3	8	7		23			
Beachy Head								73	1	1	3				8	3	2			
Dungeness								80	8	3	4			1	4	2				

Curlew

	April										May									
	12	13	25	26	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12			
Portland Bill	4			1				30						2						
Hurst Castle	6	1					2								3					
Titchfield		7			3		1	1			1			2		3				
St.Cath.Pt.			10		1	2		1	2	3										
Worthing							6	2	1		6				1					
Beachy Head	6		5					7	1	1	1			11	7	11	1			
Dungeness	27	6			11			1	11	2	8	2	2		2	3	1			

BONXIE

	April												May											
	12	13	25	26	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12							
Portland Bill	1	1						1					1		1		1							
Hurst Castle	1	1						1																
Titchfield																								
St.Cath.Pt.	1	3		1											4									
Worthing																							1	
Beachy Head	1	4							2	1					1									
Dungeness	6	6				1		3																

POMARINE SKUA

	April												May											
	12	13	25	26	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12							
Portland Bill								9	1	2			2	1		1	6							
Hurst Castle									13								57	20						
Titchfield																	3							
St.Cath.Pt.																								
Worthing												6	3				21	68E/ 26W						
Beachy Head								1	13					10		36	20							
Dungeness								20	26	7	1			9	4	43	14							

The times and sightings of Pomarine Skuas off
Hampshire and Sussex

Date	Hurst Castle No. Time	Selsey Bill No. Time	Worthing No. Time	Beachy Head No. Time
4 May	13E 1920			1E
5 May		5E 1745- 2010		11E 0650 2E 0920
6 May			6E 1410	
7 May		2E 1915 1E 1918	3E 1945	
9 May		2E 0726		1E 1020 9E 1350
10 May		7E 1750		
11 May	55E 0930 2E 1700	10E 0700 4E 1740 4E 1910 1E 1946	9E 0748 3E 0830 2E 0910 7E 2008	25E 0730 2E 0857 9E 0930
12 May	20E Evening	2E 0645 1E 0720 10E 1640 12E 1815	17E 0755 24E 0829 1E 0830 3E 0835 4E 1515 10W 1830 12E 1915 3E 1925 3E 1930 1E 1930 16W 2025	20E 1120 (No watching between 0900 and 1045).
13 May			4W 0640	1E 0540
TOTALS:	90E	61E (1W?3E outside period covered)	98E 30W	81E

It is interesting to note that 15 of the birds at Hurst in the flock of 55 were dark phase. (I would like to have been there!)

Arctic Skua

	April					May											
	12	13	25	26	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Portland Bill	9	9		1		2		4	2	3			3	2	8		
Hurst Castle	2		5	2		3		9	5					1	6	9	1
Titchfield			1					4						1	4	9	1
St.Cath.Pt.	3	11	3	8	10	6		1	2	2					1		
Worthing	1	1	1				2	1		2		1	1	3	2	3	6
Beachy Head	1	9		2				1	2	3	1				5	9	3
Dungeness	2	5		7	2	1	8	6	19	13	12	5		9	6	16	8

Little Gull

	April					May											
	12	13	25	26	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Portland Bill	3	16						2							9	16	5
Hurst Castle	1							2							14	8	
Titchfield	11					2		1						1	2	3	2
St.Cath.Pt.	3	1						3		1					1		
Worthing								3			6	1		1	12	21	9
Beachy Head		7		2				6			1				22	22	
Dungeness	6	31				1	1	1	13	8	4	12			15	23	14

Sandwich Tern

	April					May											
	12	13	25	26	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Portland Bill	12	15	5	2		6		4	15	10	5	5		5	8	14	5
Hurst Castle	78	63	13	14		7	8	10		8	22			9			
Titchfield	34	40	18				1	5		2	2			6	12	10	8
St.Cath.Pt.	68	13	35	25	8	3	6	32	6	8	3				85	4	4
Worthing	221	90	252	40	49	109	63	115	29	19	68	56	31	238	125	81	105
Beachy Head	317	537		28				110	32	20	23	16		84	92	55	25
Dungeness	428	762	11	35	54	27	21	71	81	86	172	57	19	102	92	42	67

These figures suggest that the Sandwich Tern moves further off shore along the Hampshire coast to the south of the Isle of Wight.

Commic Tern

	April										May											
	12	13	25	26	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12					
Portland Bill	91	16						582	40	275	109	47	3	483	546	508	178					
Hurst Castle	3	15	9	22	35	151	209	1222	61	51	533	40		31	632	551	66					
Titchfield	7	9	58	2	132	146	70	562	111	166	254			416	251	214	112					
St.Cath.Pt.	6	3				57	23	427	91	33	281				1187	136	144					
Worthing	2	19	42	44	48	218	460	1484	119	680	858	322	25	1163	595	529						
															697							
Beachy Head	14	40		108				2830	578	124	71	202		96	2230	800	600					
Dungeness	35	235	24	37	22	120	632	200	228	802	1269	530	399		1204	834	506					

Little Tern

	April										May											
	12	13	25	26	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12					
Portland Bill			1					2								3						
Hurst Castle	3	15	43	38			12	19		9	31			8	57	58	9					
Titchfield		3	12		3	2	7	32	10	17	21	2		21	19	40	12					
St.Cath.Pt.																3						
Worthing		3	37	8	4	24	4	46	6	10	51	45	5	101	63	72	41					
Beachy Head				3				40	17	5	6			27	30	58	17					
Dungeness	2	3	1	52	18	18	10	53	34	29	35	8	9	71	64	37	23					

Black Tern

	April										May											
	12	13	25	26	27	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12					
Portland Bill	1							5			1				13	36	8					
Hurst Castle								31		2	1				19	61	3					
Titchfield	2					2	7	11	4		8			5	19	38	34					
St.Cath.Pt.								6							7							
Worthing	1	3				1	2	14	8	2	3	48	1	12	34	53	44					
Beachy Head								25	3	1	1	2			21	24	16					
Dungeness		3				1	9	35	19	8	4	4	3	13	6	13	12					

As is well known, the Black Tern frequently follows inland routes which would explain the loss of birds between sites.

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I would be grateful to know if this report has been useful and would welcome any suggestions for improvement. Hopefully with everyone's co-operation, once again, I will endeavour to produce a report for 1981.

C.J. Fox
21 Newham Lane
STEYNING Sussex
Tel: Steyning 813364

EDS - Due to lack of space, the full report is not published here. Further information and a copy of the full report is available from Chris on request.

"SEA LINK SEAWATCH" or "CROSS CHANNEL CAPERS"

With the Worthing Beach Hut becoming overcrowded and the pebbles too hard, we decided to get closer to the birds by watching from a Cross Channel Ferry.

Early on the 27th April, we set sail for Newhaven to join the good ship "Vinoncey" then having assured Customs Officials that our rucksacks contained cameras and binoculars and not overnight gear, we took up positions on the stern of the ship and began our fume-ridden ride to France. In the harbour area we watched a few Sandwich Tern, 1 Kittiwake and a Fulmar.

Some twenty minutes after leaving the quay, we were delighted to see a Hobby winging its way to Seaford Head and shortly after a *Phyloscopus* warbler flitted over us. The mist surrounded us until mid-Channel, so we adjourned our watch for a cup of Sealink coffee. Soon the mist lifted and we were treated to a fairly constant occurrence of various birds, by Dieppe we had totalled 55 Fulmar, 8 Gannet, 24 Commic Tern, 20 small waders, flying northwest, 2 Kittiwake. Other moments of interest included a Yellow Wagtail, 3 possible Long Tailed Duck, but the best sighting of the journey were 2 Bonxies, which came close enough to give us good views.

After disembarking at Dieppe, we searched for a few continental souvenirs and with our rucksacks heavier and clinking a little, we had a brief look round Dieppe, added Swallow, Blackbird, House Sparrow and Kronenburg to our lists and then looked for somewhere to lunch. We avoided the "Poisson and Chips" offered in the quayside cafes, and eventually enjoyed french cuisine at reasonable cost.

The day was now warm and we rested, enjoying the free licensing laws of our Norman neighbours, before returning to the harbour to board the superiod British Rail Vessel, the "Vinlac".

Our homeward journey produced fewer birds, 28 Fulmar, 4 Gannet, 2 Kittiwake, 1 Commic Tern, although we did take the opportunity of emptying a nearby bottle in order to celebrate our third Bonxie.

As the white cliffs of Seaford came hazily into view, the light failed, the birds disappeared and the sea became rougher (this being apparent from the state of our handwriting in our notebooks.)

It was like many sea watches a rewarding combination of birding and comradeship in this case, augmented by the excitement of PJC's much overdue first step onto foreign soil.

PHIL CLAY and MIKE HALL.

(Is this a new site for Tetras urogallus Eds.)

SEA WATCHING - a lighter view

As a coastal society, a greater part of our recording area is flanked by the sea.

In the past, this area has been defined as starting at Black Rock in the east and ending at Ferring in the west. A distance of some 15 miles. The Marina now provides an even better vantage point for observation.

This year, John and others spent a considerable time at an undisclosed sea front shelter in West Worthing peering at the sea n any young lady who cared to undress in front of them or within telescope vision. Now you know why the site and the names of the others remains a secret.

Sitting there in a strong wet South Easterly when there is little shelter is good for the soul. Unidentifiable shapes pour past you as, Binoculars, telescopes, tripods and even the forgotten camera get soaked. Not to mention the rest of the silent shape huddled in a corner. But no-one bothers you.

Then you have the warm clear balmy evenings and weekends in May, June, July, August when the one sandwich tern goes west then east and then back west again. The poor holidaymaker or local geriatric out of hibernation insists on asking what you're doing - "What is the name of that ship?", "what class of dinghy is that?", "What !, I don't know mate, is the only answer you dare give". Mention that you are taking part in a scientific survey of the migration of birds to and from their breeding grounds in relation to wind, weather and time of day, and you'll never get chance to look through your scope again as you are blinded with that person's profound lack of knowledge on the subject.

Be careful, choose a quiet and dry vantage point close to home, go prepared for that one time when "its happening" and your inner man cries out for warmth and food. Along with your birding equipment, take a note pad and a reliable watch. Mine's quartz and normally accurate to a second a week but you'll soon find that when you pop down for ten minutes and its good, that the hands have misteriously sped round the face and you're two hours late, half a mile away.

Seriously, times of unusual species including all skuas, large scoter and 'barwit' flocks are important. It will enable the recorder to tie in the passage of birds along the coast at times of multiple observation and he will then be able to calculate speeds, changes in flock sizes, birds missed at one spot and seen at another. If its a good

species, then this is known as 'gripping off' at one site and 'string' at the other.

If you are new to the sport only try to identify the near ones. Leave those distant spots until you are more proficient. Take care because we all make mistakes and try to identify something too far out. If you think you've seen something good then record the time it was directly in front of you and hope someone else saw it further up or down the coast. Its not unusual these days for birds to be seen passing off Hampshire in the morning and spotted all the way along the coast to Dungeness. The stronger and wetter the onshore wind is between the end of March and late May, the better the watching.

Think as you sit at home in the warmth and dry what some fool frozen to the bone is gripping you off with. Before long, you'll become obsessed and will arrive as the wind drops, the rain stops, the sun comes out and no birds. Then all you can do is wait until next year and curse that weak will of yours.

Next year when the obsessions grown, you'll try to get there first, leave last, delay the call of the nature to the last possible moment and then as happened this year, watch someone through binoculars who is watching something you haven't seen and can't see and then the ultimate, sit next to someone who is watching something you can't find.

No wonder some brave people watch on their own. But you can't look in front, above - "oh the disgrace" and behind you at the same time. As yes, they're there.

Everything's gone full circle when you can see it, you can see it well, you can watch it for nearly as long as you want but can you identify it? No. No-one's ever seen anything like it before, it's certainly not described in the books. Why do we sea-watch?

Or more to the point, why are we the only ones going through this? Come on join us. 1981 may not be as good as 1980 but how can you tell till 1982? Sorry Officer, I hadn't noticed that 'that' young lady comes down here every evening and undresses in exactly the same spot. The focussing knob's just there.

BIRD WATCHING TO ORDER

It was suggested at a meeting of this Society by our new Editor that an article on the commercial bird watching tour abroad might be of help to members who might be contemplating going on one.

I have been lucky for, when I started to make trips abroad, I had been asked by experienced ornithologists to join them rather for my medical than my ornithological ability. On the tours abroad, all the hard work of organisation had been done for me but I learnt a lot, often as much what not to do, as what to do or how not to do it. The object of the journey was usually to find and then photograph some rare species such as the Bearded Vulture perhaps better known as the Lammergeier. Later, I organised my own trips usually in search of less exotic species such as Alpine Accentors, White Pelicans, and other birds not to be seen in England, also enjoying seeing all the other birds that might be seen during the holiday.

In 1980, I chose to join a commercial birdwatching holiday, a one-week conducted tour in Spain. The reason I chose this was that though I knew Spain and had been birdwatching there quite often, several of the rarer species had eluded me chiefly because their haunts were inaccessible to the tourist in Spain.

The parties were to go from Gatwick Airport to Madrid each week on a Monday and consisted of three or no more than four at a time in the party. The transport from Madrid was a Range Rover with a driver who was also the leader and organiser. Accommodation was in his house in South West Spain or in Spanish Hotels when needed. The cost was inclusive of everything and birding started as we left the airport and heard the first Serin in the trees on the road to Madrid. Arriving about one, we were driven off at once to a marshy area outside the city where we had a picnic lunch, (tables and chairs), and watched for birds, Penduline Tits and Peregrine Falcon presided over our meal. Each day was planned to see a special bird, as the leader had the knowledge and the entree to private estates, also he had contact with the local gamekeepers or their Spanish counterparts. So we went to

see and found Great Bustards, Black Vulture, Pintail and Black-bellied Sandgrouse, Black Stork, all the European eagles, Flamingoes and Whiteheaded Duck. A brief description of the journey to see this last species will give some idea what our week was like.

Up at 6 am for breakfast and to leave at 6.30, four of us in the Range Rover, plus luggage for the night, off we went, all birds seen had to be identified for the log at the end of the day, one was in the dog-house if one's enthusiasm waned as we pitched and rolled over rough roads as another Little Bustard ran across the road. That day, we had lunch at 3.30 with a Bonelli's Eagle and an Imperial Eagle low over head, then on to reach the hotel at 11 that night, taking in on the way a Black Stork to sit down to supper at 11.30, to be up at 7, the leader would have made it 6 but he relented to our tiredness.

Too early for breakfast at the hotel, we made a search for Rufus Bushchat without success, then to a reeded pond where we saw several White-headed Duck, then on to a Spanish breakfast in the local village cafe. So it went on all day up hillsides and mountains, across rivers, shaken and jolted, never letting up.

The most species we saw in one day was 117 and it pushed 100 most days, the most unusual was a Red-throated Pipit on a marsh in the extreme south.

Each day was much the same but not so long, it never let up but was a great experience and much enjoyed because of good organisation and the great enthusiasm of the leader, how he kept it up week after week I do not know.

Not for the faint-hearted nor those set in their ways.

Dr. J Stafford

SUMMARIES OF FIELD OUTINGS

Saturday 12th January - Amberley with Mr C Messer

Flood waters had subsided dramatically from the previous weekend and the 10 members present were robbed on the large number of wildfowl the leader had found present on his reconnoiter. However good views were had of 40 Bewick Swan, 30 Wigeon, 200 Teal, 50 plus Mallard, 2 Feral, Greylags which were accompanied by 3 wily birds of the same species. Sparrowhawk and 2 Kestrels were also seen.

Sunday 10th February - Pagham Beach & Lagoon with Mr C Janman

A better attended outing consisting of 13 members on a beautiful sunny and mild day when the flamingo was seen in flight and close views were obtained of Slavonian Little and Great Crested Grebe, 3 female type Goldeneye, Tufted and Pochard were seen on the lagoon and in the harbour, 60 Black-tailed Godwits, Dunlin, Oystercatcher, Redshank and Turnstone were present.

Saturday 15th March - Climping Beach with Mr F Forbes

10 members, perhaps the same as 12th January turned out on a dull morning for a walk along the beach and across the Golf Course which produced 100 Oystercatchers, 200 Sanderling, 10 Purple Sandpipers along the tide line, 20 Red-Breasted Mergansers on the sea and a Black Redstart on the Beach.

Sunday 27th April - Shoreham Sanctuary and Sea Watch with Dr. J Newnham

Please see under Sanctuary Report.

Saturday 3rd May - Cissbury Ring with Mr B Forbes

Only 2 members supported this venue on a cold windy May day when good numbers of common migrants were seen. These included 60 Willow Warblers, 7 Whitethroats, 9 Lesser Whitethroats, 3 Chiffchaff, 1 Blackcap, 3 Turtle Doves, 3 Cuckoo, 16 Wheatear, 3 Whinchat, 20 House Martins north,

6 Sand Martins, 1 Yellow Wagtail, 1 Redstart, 1 Great Spotted Woodpecker, 6 Swift, 1 Heron and 1 Jay, 4 late Fieldfares and a Ring Ouzel.

Thursday 19th June - Arundel Park with Mr O Mitchell

Only 1 member on a wet but exciting evening. 5 Nightjars were watched extremely closely, 6 Grasshopper Warblers were heard, 3 Green and 1 Great Spotted Woodpecker were seen along with 1 rodding Woodcock and a pair of Tawny Owls with young.

Sunday 21st September - Climping Beach again with Mr F Forbes

Only 3 members turned up so the outing was called off due to rain and gale force wind.

Cissbury - No Man's Land, Saturday 18th October 1980
With Mr B Clay

On a cold but bright morning seven members assembled at the Cissbury Car Park. The walk round the north and west side of the hill proved to be unproductive apart from a group of three stonechats sitting on the fence. However, as we moved round to the southern flank it became more sheltered and birds began to appear. Small parties of linnets and redpolls were seen and then fine views were obtained of a female Sparrowhawk flying west to east over the ring. Goldcrests were calling in a small copse and a Kestrel hovered down in Findon Valley. In the rifle-buts on the south side of the ring, up to 6 Ring Ouzels were observed perching prominently in the bushes. The party then moved to the north side of lychpole Hill where a small group of Curlew were seen in the fields and a female Black Redstart was seen near the lawns. Some members departed at this point, the remainder enjoyed a brisk circular walk through No Man's Land and back to the car park. Little else was seen apart from common downland finches and buntings and three more kestrels.

Last year, the party, led by Bernard Forbes standing in for Colin Messer, were fortunate in seeing the Red Kite. Although the birds seen were perhaps not quite in the

same class, I still feel that I can echo Bernard Forbes comment to his report - I was lucky to be standing in for him as leader!!

Sunday 23rd November - Adur Levels with Mr M Welfare

10 members on a dull day with rain late causing the outing to terminate at mid-day. The walk along the riverbank from Cuckoo's Corner to the footbridge produced little other than 400 Dunlin and a few Redshank. Rumours of Firecrest in the Sanctuary led the party there. Although several crests were seen, the Firecrest eluded them, but good views were had of the Common downland/woodland species of the area, including Redwing and Bullfinch.

Outings in General

It is disappointing to write of such a poor attendance at these outings especially when they are being led by people outside the Society. It may well prove difficult to procure their services in the future. These outings are intended for the members' benefit and we really need to establish that there is a need for future outings to be organised as on present attendance figures, this does not appear to be the case.

FROM OUR MEMBERS' NOTEBOOKS

In the Hot Seat

One lovely sunny, windy day last June, I went to Siddlesham. I hadn't been there long when I met two fellow members of the Society, Chris and Harold Newcombe, sitting on a bank overlooking the "Long Pool". They were watching four Black Terns feeding and a pair of Dabchicks with young. We spent a very pleasant hour, Harold with his camera, Chris and I telling him when to shoot. After having our sandwiches, we decided to move, as is usual I went to stand the grass up where I'd sat and saw something dark curled up. I didn't really believe Harold when he said "It's an Adder". It wasn't until I got home that I realised I'd been in the 'Hot

Seat' and wondered whether the snake had enjoyed the heat I'd generated or had I sat on its head and it couldn't move. I'll never know!!

Mrs B M Butler

Male Nightjar

One seen resting in my garden at Coombes on September 10th. Very strong wind, off the sea, probably preventing migration.

Mrs B R Reeve

Blackcap

A wintering record of a male bird visiting the bird-table taking bread and stilton cheese rind. First seen 9th January. Between 27th January and 6th February, seen 2-3 times a day eating ravenously and once to visit bird-bath to take four sips of water.

Mrs K M R Bowyer

Bulwer's Petrel (*Bulweria bulwerii*) - At present under consideration by the British Birds Rarities Committee

12th May 1980 - On an evening's sea watch, five observers, in light south-easterlies with 16-32 Pomarine Skuas off shore and a light passage of other sea birds, Dr. John Newnham picked up briefly a small dark bird being chased by a Pomarine Skua. He thought that this may have been a Black Tern. The Skua settled on the sea and the Tern disappeared. Shortly afterwards I picked out a small dark bird with a butterfly-like fluttery flight flying east, low over the sea. The bird, the like of which I had never seen before, was a 1000 yards distant flying close to the sea just below the horizon. Its flight was slow but steady and, as fate would have it, there were no buoys or boats to aid my frustrated colleagues in locating the bird as I followed its slow path eastwards. The bird appeared totally dark with no contrast above or below, it was small but not tiny, its wings were relatively broad with rounded tips and the strange flight and lack of pattern were intriguing.

At last it passed behind a small yacht, but Dr. John Newnham had hardly picked it out when it was beset by juvenile Herring Gulls and dashed off westward at height and great speed. Our friends who unfortunately do not own telescopes, saw neither 'sight nor sound' of the bird. (This has been rectified EDS).

There the story might have ended, but for what was intended as a brief look at the sea on the 23rd which was a clear bright evening with a moderate off-shore north easterly. The tide was right in and there was only a slight swell on the sea.

Virtually, the first bird I picked out on a scan with the telescope was small, totally dark seabird half the size of a Fulmar, smaller than a Manx Shearwater but quite definitely larger than a Storm Petrel which, when feeding out at sea, would be virtually invisible. A quick 'phone call' and John was next to me in the shelter. The bird was in view on and off from 19.20 to 20.30 when the light became too poor to continue observation as it was obvious that the bird was not going to come any closer.

SIZE - small-medium, not tiny.

PLUMAGE - totally dark showing no contrast between upper and lower surfaces of body or wing.

SHAPE - closely resembling large Storm Petrel with tail heavy and headless appearance.

BEHAVIOUR - We are in doubt that the bird was feeding. Mullet or mackerel were jumping and porpoise were showing themselves in the feeding area covered by the bird. This feeding behaviour had two facets. On the slow fluttery head into wind low over the water, hovering, foot paddling 'possibly' head plunging like Black Headed Gull, *Larus ridibundus*, looking to me like a Common Scoter, *Malanitta nigra*, just about to land with head up and deep fast wing beats keeping the bird just off the sea. These would be interspersed by Shearwater like 'jinks' from side to side on bowed forward held stiff wings.

There was no regular pattern. At times, it was 3-5 flaps to a glide, other times hovering for several moments before it dropped on to the sea and was out of sight for seconds to several minutes. The bird would start up again and we likened this flight to Swift, *Apus apus*, small Arctic Skua, *Stercorarius paraiticus*, and even Hoope, *Upupa epops*.

CONCLUSION - A species new to both observers. A bird too large for a Storm Petrel (*hydrobatidae*) and probably an all-dark Gadfly-Petrel.

Either we have chosen the wrong species, described a species new to man or more hopefully have observed a Bulwer's Petrel driven close to our shores in a feeding behaviour normally not witnessed until after dark.

B.J.S.

Storm Petrel - *Hydrobates pelagicus*

4th September. First seen only a few yards offshore at Shoreham Beach, flying west against a steady SW wind. First impression was of a large House Martin *Delichon urbica* with noticeably pointed wings, black plumage and white rump. There was no noticeable grey area on the wing coverts, forked tail or bend of the wing at the carpal joints to suggest Leach's Petrel *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*. The pale edgings along the underwing coverts, a useful feature for Storm Petrel were not glimpsed however. But at close range, the upper wing did show a pale line along the edge of the upper wing coverts.

Flight was generally steady into wind and away from the shore at a few feet above the water. Course was fairly direct not zigzagging, twisting or undulating, the bird flew for several minutes against the wind before either drifting several yards down wind but would maintain its position and hop over waves as they approached, there being no contact with the surface. The bird was observed for about 30 minutes in fading light.

N.A. Smith

Leach's Petrel - *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*

21st September 0840 from the reknown Worthing beach shelter in strong SW with good visibility about 100 metres out, a small, all dark sea bird with white rump was picked out through the telescope coming east in a hurry on the strong SW wind. The bird looked immediately larger and different from the typical 'stormy' giz. Gliding on stiff slightly bowed wings, level with the horizon and then down into a trough and then up again on a quick fluttery flight to plain in the wind, down again into the next trough. You tell yourself to look for the pale panel in the wing along the wing coverts and it's there before your eyes, more pronounced than expected and the white on the rumps pours over onto the flanks with a clear greyish line down the centre of the rump and you say now for the forked tail but no, it's gone down again and then up again and it's nearly past you, the angle's wrong, John, can't find it and then it's gone.

B.J.Short

LIST OF LECTURES, 1980

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| Saturday 26th January | - The Wildfowl Trust by Mr A Dawney. |
| Saturday 23rd February | - The Thames Transformed by
Dr Pamela Harrison. |
| Saturday 29th March | - AGM and Some Birds of the Danube
Delta, by Dr J Stafford. |
| Monday 6th October | - Birds of Israel by Mr D Parminter. |
| Monday 3rd November | - The Birds of the Farne Islands by
Mr C J Fox. |

OFFICERS ETC.

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| President and Chairman | - Dr J Stafford |
| Council Members: | |
| Hon.Secretary | - Mrs E Farmer, 78 Park Avenue
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| Hon.Field Secretary | - Mr B F Forbes, |
| Hon.Treasurer | - Mr F W Ranger, 52 Cobton Drive,
Hove. |

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| Hon.Recorder | - Dr. J A Newnham |
| Report Editor | - Mr B J Short |
| Field Committee | - Messrs A Burstow, B F Forbes,
C Messer, & Dr A B Watson. |
| Sanctuary Committee | - Dr A B Watson and
Dr J Newnham. |

Member kindly responsible for distribution of "British Birds" etc., - Mrs E Farmer.

NOTICE - Will members please advise the Secretary of any alterations of name and/or address.

SHOREHAM ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

RECEIPTS & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT TO 31ST DECEMBER 1980

<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Expenditure</u>	
Brought forward from		Subscription - British	
31.12.79	201.51	Birds	17.00
Subscriptions, full		RSPB	5.00
85 @ £2.00	170.00	BTO	7.00
Junior, 2 @ £1.00	2.00	Southern Water Authority	4.00
1981, 8 @ £2.00	16.00	Binding British Birds	6.00
Sales of Reports	8.10	Hall	47.25
Donations	2.50	Lecturers	40.00
		Printing	118.00
		Postage & Sundry	
		Expenses	15.69
		Carried Fwd.to 1.1.81	140.17
	<u>400.11</u>		<u>400.11</u>

(Signed) F.G.Ranger, Hon.Treasurer. Audited, and from the information available, believed to be correct.

(signed) B.J.Short.

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Miss W M Woodroffe, 6 Charles Close, Goring Rd, Worthing
Mr N N S Yonge, Homefields Farm, Bulls Lane, Cowfold.

GENERAL INFORMATION

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 membership fee per year, inclusive of the Annual Report is as follows :-

Full	- £3.00
Family (i.e. 1 report per household)	- £3.50
Junior (over 13 and under 18 yrs.of age)	- £1.50

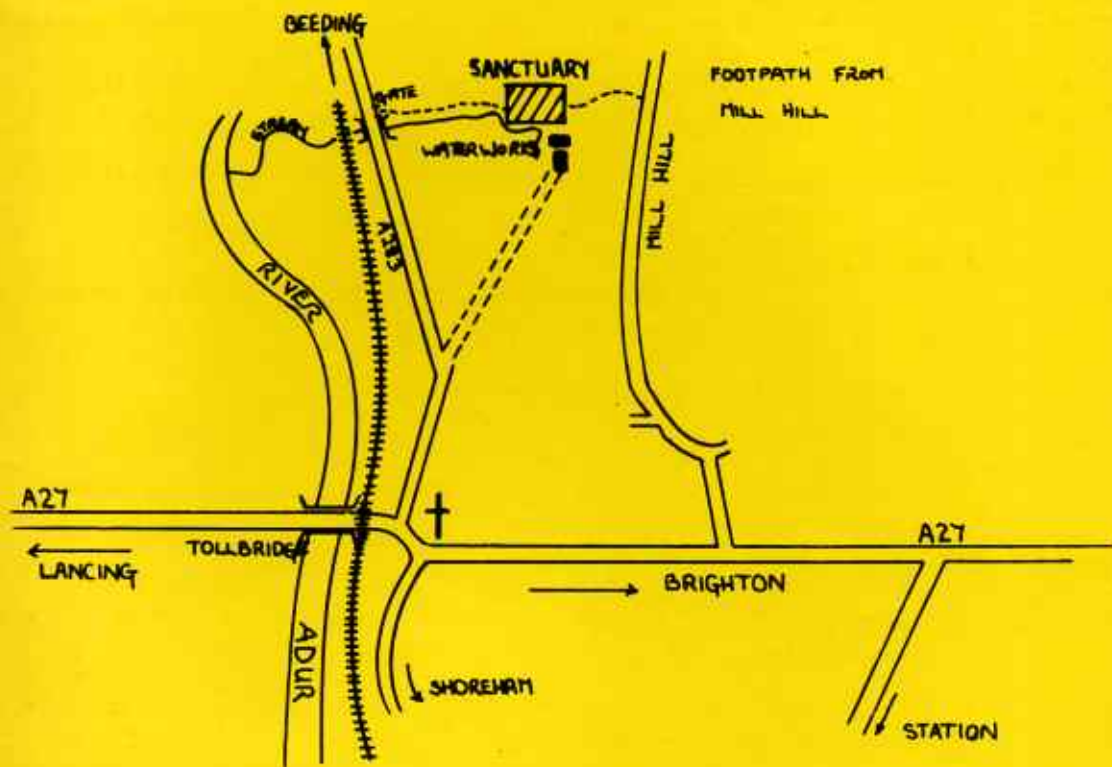
British Birds is still available to members of this Society and may be obtained at the reduced rate of £12. per annum instead of the normal £16. Write to Mrs Erika Charrock, British Birds (Circulation), Fountains, Park Lane, Blunham, Bedford, MK44 3NJ.

PREVIOUS YEARS' REPORTS

Extra copies of this and many previous reports are available from John Newnham on request. Special prices are available for purchases of three or more Reports.

A complete set of the Society's Reports in excellent condition has been donated to the Society. Offers to John, please. Worthing 47596.

SHOREHAM SANCTUARY



The Sanctuary is now held on a new Agreement. *Pedestrian* access is now by the Waterworks Road, at the end of which take a pathway to the left skirting the Waterworks buildings. Cars *must* be left at the junction of the Beeding Road and the Waterworks Road.

Alternative access is through the gate on the Beeding Road, or steeply down from Mill Hill.

Note: The new Adur Bridge and its approaches are omitted from this map for the sake of clarity.