

**Shoreham District
Ornithological Society**

REPORT 1981



No. 29

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SHOREHAM DISTRICT ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Annual Report 1981

<u>C O N T E N T S</u>		<u>P A G E</u>
Editorial Notes	B.R.C.	2
A Review of Ornithology in the Shoreham District During 1981	J.A.N.	3
Notable Birds of the Area	J.A.N./M.P.H.	7
Arrival and Departure of Migrants	J.A.N.	29
Ringling Report	J.A.N.	30
Sanctuary Report	J.A.N.	36
Breeding Bird Populations in the Sanctuary 1981	J.B.	38
SteYning Ringing Group Report	P.J.C.	41
Autumns 1980/81 at Cissbury	B.F.F.	43
Spring Seawatch Report	M.P.H.	48
The Great May 7th 'Pom' Passage	C.J.F.	54
Sea Watching End of Year Report	J.A.N.	56
Garden Bird Feeding Survey	M.P.H./S.A.	58
Birds in a Coombes Garden	B.R.	62
The White Gull Dilemma of 1981	J.A.N.	66
Tree Sparrow Winter	S.A.	68
Birds of Prey - A European View	R.I.	69
Alfred Burstow	J.S.	73
Notes, News and Accounts		74

Cover logo by Mr. C. Messer.

EDITORIAL NOTES

A few months ago I would not even have contemplated the task of attempting to put a few editorial sentences together. Other recently appointed officers are no doubt equally surprised by a sudden elevation to their new duties. Other changes await further deliberation at the next A.G.M. Such has been the pace of events within the Society over the past few months that one tends to think only of happenings post September 1981 and the Extraordinary General Meeting. In fact the year has marked a considerable change in the direction and fortune of the Society.

Before considering the changes, deserved thanks must be given to the retiring officers: Mrs. Farmer as Secretary and Ms Ranger as Treasurer. For their efforts and support the Society owes a great debt. Thanks are also due to Brian Short for his year in the editorial role which he so ably filled. It was the retirement of these officers which culminated in the E.G.M. in September.

Perhaps against the odds volunteers were forthcoming, undoubtedly encouraged by the enthusiasm of members present at the meeting. Council meetings were called, programmes arranged, displays and film shows organised. The response has been tremendous which has been a more than adequate reward for the efforts made.

The pleasure of the success was tempered by news of the death of Alf Burstow in January of this year. As a former junior member, I will always recall his enthusiasm and encouragement particularly towards the younger members attending the field outings which he arranged. I am sure that the increasing support the Society is receiving would have given him much pleasure. A tribute by Dr. J. Stafford is included in this report.

In between meetings a lot of bird watching has been done, testified to by the record number of contributions John Newnham has received for the systematic list. This has

almost been matched by the contributions I have received for this report for which I am grateful. I apologise here for any deficiencies created by trying to cram 100 pages of material into 70+ pages of report. The exercise has also made me realise that my grasp of basic grammar and punctuation is not all it should be! Particular thanks must go to Mrs. W. Oliver for typing John Newnham's invaluable articles, and thanks also to Alison Noble for similar assistance given to Mike Hall. Acknowledgement must also be made of the time and effort spent by contributors to the various articles in assembling and presenting their data.

The future of the Society looks bright, but it would be easy to misdirect the current enthusiasm and thus derive little benefit for the Society. Change is not being made for its own sake, but it is up to you as members to ensure that the changes reflect your wishes by keeping officers aware of your views. In this way Shoreham District Ornithological Society will continue to record and support the birds of the Shoreham district.

A REVIEW OF THE ORNITHOLOGY IN THE SHOREHAM DISTRICT DURING 1981

1981 will be regrettably remembered as the year in which this local society suddenly was struggling for its life: fortunately the revitalising force of new ideas and members soon came to the rescue. There seemed a strange irony that the society should have been in such a plight when local ornithology appeared to be flourishing; evidence for this has been the steady increase in the number of observers submitting notes for inclusion in this report. Indeed the systematic list for 1981 is fuller than any previous year as a record 34 observers have contributed their records.

Notes have been received from the extremes of our recording area; from Brighton Marina in the east to Ferring Beach in the west; from Washington in the north and even to a point

in mid-Channel to our south. Most records, like the previous years, have come from a number of well watched localities such as the River Adur, its estuary and upper levels, Widewater, the Sanctuary, the downland between Cissbury and Steyning, the fields at Goring and Ferring and the local beaches. Regrettably the trend for fewer records from east of the Adur has continued and many potentially good areas like the Devil's Dyke and downland north of Portslade are unrecorded and possibly unwatched.

Whilst 1981 was a year when the society's membership faltered the birds did their very best to keep observers' morale high as yet another exceptionally good year was recorded. No fewer than three new species were added to the ever-growing area list; two, the Caspian Tern and Long-tailed Skua, were only seen by one member, but the third, the Baird's Sandpiper, delighted many watchers with good views.

The year began quietly with no prolonged or severe cold weather to force exciting wintering birds into our area; however, unusual birds now becoming typical of the Shoreham district were seen. Amongst these are the Mediterranean Gulls and Black Redstarts along the beaches, the Twite on the River Adur, the Long Eared Owls on the Downs and the occasional grebe offshore. A Firecrest at the Sanctuary in March was bearing a ring; whether it was the bird there in November 1980 or another was undiscovered.

As the spring passage gets truly under way in April, so the numbers of unusual sightings increase. With the current mania for sea-watching it is not surprising that many of the better birds in April and May were seen on the coast. Amongst good numbers of the slightly unusual Manx Shearwaters, Velvet Scoters, Black Terns, Little Gulls and Arctic Skuas came the more unusual Marsh Harriers, Roseate Terns, 'White' gulls and Pomarine Skuas, but the rarest was the Cory's Shearwater just offshore at Worthing in a strong on-shore gale. The coast also produced some unusual wading birds as two Little Ringed Plovers appeared, Avocets, a large number of Grey Plover and Knot passed by, and an

unidentified stint appeared at Goring. Away from the beaches Ruff, Little Ringed Plovers and the year's only two Spotted Redshanks appeared on the Adur Levels and the area's second Purple Heron flapped over Lancing to crown an interesting spring.

Mid-summer is usually very quiet for unusual birds, not so in 1981 as a Woodchat Shrike frequented a Hove garden for a period in June, a Caspian Tern was seen fishing around a boat off Shoreham beach and some Crossbills flew over Steyning in July.

By August the migration tempo is again in full swing and there seems nowhere better to view this than Cissbury where falls of the common migrants like warblers, chats, Redstarts and Tree Pipits were regular. The downland cereal fields provide cover for Quail and good hunting for migrant raptors like Hobby, Buzzard, Marsh and Montagu's Harriers, and Goshawk.

The dry warm weather coupled with a run of low tides encouraged the water level at Widewater to fall and expose muddy banks which attracted a number of Little Stints and the area's first Baird's Sandpiper. At this time waders were particularly numerous in the Adur Valley and included Wood, Green and Curlew Sandpipers and several more Little Stints, but many observers were equally interested in the roosting gulls as amongst these were an unusually high number of yellow legged Herring Gulls.

The strong winds of September and October blew a record number of Grey Phalaropes to our area and probably were also responsible for the Storm Petrel at Goring, the area's first authenticated Long-tailed Skua at Widewater and the early appearance of Red-necked Grebes offshore. Whilst a Dotterel only stayed on Steyning Round Hill for two days, an obliging Osprey fished in the Adur for a week.

October, a month when visible migration is very evident, provided ample record of migrating hirundines, pipits and finches; it was noted that Siskins appeared to be more

numerous than Redpolls and House Martins lingered longer and in larger numbers than usual. The occasional surprise appeared, none more so than the trio of Bearded Tits seen flying over Widewater or the appearance of a Gull Bunting on Cissbury; perhaps this delightful bunting isn't lost from our area yet.

The Gull Bunting and a Woodlark were the only unusual birds recorded on the downs during November but on the coast a Great Northern Diver, up to six Red-necked Grebes, a Goosander, Gadwall and Avocets appeared. The late autumn and early winter saw 4 Hen Harriers, 4 Merlins and at least one Buzzard, but no large influx of exciting raptors.

As the year winds to an end in December it is not unusual for the birds to diminish; however, in 1981, thanks mainly to the cold weather and associated severe gales, plenty of interesting records occurred. The coast was well watched and a phenomenal number of divers, auks, Gannets, Kittiwakes and Little Gulls were noted as well as wildfowl moving westward away from the cold. Typical cold weather birds were in evidence as Fieldfare and Redwings were common garden birds, Lapwings and an exceptional number of Golden Plover were moving southward, a large mixed finch flock fed in the sprout field at Goring, 13 Barnacle Geese appeared briefly on the airport and several skeins of Whitefronted Geese were seen. A Snow Bunting at the coastguard station and the Woodlark at Goring were rather unexpected as was the collection of unusual wintering waders which included Green Sandpiper and Little Stint in the Adur Valley, a Common Sandpiper at Widewater and an immature female Kentish Plover usually seen roosting at Goring. The year therefore ended in a cold yet exciting way leaving most of us optimistic for 1982.

J.A. Newnham

NOTABLE BIRDS OF THE AREA IN 1981

This systematic list of the birds recorded in the Shoreham district is based upon records sent in by the following:

Ms J. Baker, Ms B.M. Buckler, Miss M. Davies-Scourfield, Ms B. Reeve, Ms A. Westlake, Messrs S.R. Allen, M. Banks, R. Chapman, B.R. Clay, P. Clay, J. Dixon, C.J. Evers, J. Feest, B.F. Forbes, F.J. Forbes, C.J. Fox, M.P. Hall, D. Heryett, R. Ives, A.R. Kitson, R. McDermott, C.E. Messer, Dr. J.A. Newnham, K. Noble, R.F. Porter, A.J. Prater, R.J. Sandison, B.J. Short, T. Smart, D. Smith, Dr. J. Stafford, H. Sturman, C.W. Symington, Dr. A.B. Watson, M. Welfare, A. Wilson (K. Ives and R. Fairbank via C.J.F.)

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; G.B. - Goring Beach; S.B. - Southwick Beach; Harb - Shoreham Harbour; B.Ma. - Brighton Marina; N.S.F. - New Salts Farm; Sanc - Sanctuary; S.R.B. - Strivens Reed Bed; S.H. - Steyning Horseshoe; 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.

1. RED THROATED DIVER - a total of 10 individuals feeding offshore W.W. and G.B. Jan 23 - Mar 4; only 9 specifically identified on spring sea-watches in Apr and May although most Mar/Apr 'divers' thought to be this species. 1 W.B. Oct 19, 2 E there Oct 24 and 1 W Oct 30. Most divers in Nov/Dec probably this species.
2. BLACK THROATED DIVER - not recorded until 3 E B.Ma. Apr 24 thereafter 8 identified during spring sea watches. 1 W.B. May 15 and 2 there Oct 28. Between Nov 2 and Dec 26 11E and 32W G.B. and 1 on sea there Dec. 1. 1 W.W. Nov 28.

3. GREAT NORTHERN DIVER - 1 E G.B. May 17 (FJF); 1 W W.B. Nov 14 and 1 W G.B. Dec 24 (MPH).
DIVER Sp - during 370 hours spring sea watching W.B. Total 187E; Monthly analysis: Jan - 6; Feb - 6; Mar - 13; Apr - 19; May - 71; peak movements shown on table of selected days.
 From B.Ma. 82 hours watching 58E and 4W Mar 28 - May 19 with peak 20E Apr 24 and 14E May 8.
 Large movements off-shore during Nov/Dec. (for details see Autumn/Winter sea-watch table); peaks 74W and 17E in 3 hours Dec 28; 81E in 4 hours Dec 30. Similar, but smaller, movements were noted for the first time in Dec 1980.
6. LITTLE GREBE - W.W. Jan - Apr 7 (max 15 Mar 15) and again from Oct 7 - Dec, (max 20 in Dec); recorded similar periods Adur (max 7); A.L. (max 2); and N.S.F. (max 2). 1 Small Dole during July.
7. GREAT CRESTED GREBE - recorded 14 dates Jan 11 - Apr 26 offshore with max 8 W.W. Feb 7; during spring sea watching 7, out of the total 10, passed E during first 10 days Apr. Absent until Oct 19, thereafter recorded offshore on 5 dates with max 4 W.W. Dec 13.
8. RED NECKED GREBE - 1 W.W. Apr 16 (BFF). 2 there Sept 20 (ARK., MPH) 6 Nov 10 (AJP), 2 Nov 18 and singles Nov 19, Dec 6 and Dec 16. Singles also G.B. Nov 29 and Dec 27 (FJF) making an exceptional collection of records for this species.
9. SLAVONIAN GREBE - recorded 9 dates Jan - Apr 23 offshore with max 2 W.W. Feb 23. No autumn records.
10. BLACK NECKED GREBE - 1 sp B.Ma. Apr 4 - 8 (TW)
12. FULMAR - recorded B.Ma. and W.W. Jan 1 but thereafter few until spring when a total of 355 E and 178 W from W.B. continues the increasing trend; the peak of 28 Apr 24 coincided with the peak 40E at B.Ma. Still scarcely recorded in autumn with 4 E B.Ma. Aug 12, 2 W W.W. Aug 20 and 1 E G.B. Dec 13.
15. CORY'S SHEARWATER - 1 W W.B. May 3 (CJF, JAN) will be the second record for the area if accepted by B.B.

18. MANX SHEARWATER - 6 E and 9 W offshore on eight dates Mar 21 - May 25; max of 4 E Apr 23 and 4 W May 25. Although this species was first recorded in Apr 1975 it has now occurred offshore annually since 1977.
- STORM PETREL - 1 W G.B. Sept 30 (JD) constitutes the second record in this area.
25. GANNET - W.B. spring sea-watching total 161E and 118W in 370 hours with a peak Apr 24 of 14; B.Ma. 35 E and 20 W in 82 hours watching Mar 28 - May 12 with a peak of 29 May 10; Autumn/Winter sea-watching detailed in table with peaks 27 W Dec 7, 56 E in 4 hours Dec 13 and 28 E Dec 27.
26. CORMORANT - regular along the coast during winter, present S.B. until Apr 23 with peak 32 Jan 25, returned to S.B. by Aug 30, thereafter present to the end of the year, peak 24 Nov 1; other coastal counts at G.B. 23 Nov 25 and 32 Dec 1; inland pylon roost A.L. max 25 during winter and Upper Beeding max 7. Movement suggested by 1 continental from W.W. Mar 15 (CJF), 30 E W.B. turning NW over the town Apr 18, and 32 W in 9 small groups W.B. Dec 14.
27. SHAG - a single B.Ma. Apr 19 and 21 (TW).
39. GREY HERON - regularly seen in Adur Valley, max 11 N.S.F. Aug 16; 5 individuals E W.B. and 1 N B.Ma. during Apr suggests some migration.
40. PURPLE HERON - 1 W over Lancing May 28 (BFF) will be the second record for this area if accepted by B.B.
51. WHITE FRONTED GOOSE - 1 juv Brooklands Jan; 58 S G.B. Dec. 24 (FJF) and some heard calling over Worthing during night Dec 24; 35 E G.B. Dec 29 (FJF).
53. GREY LAG GOOSE - 13 Hove Beach May 7.
- GREY GOOSE Sp. - 1 E Shoreham Feb 26; 3 SW Swandean Mar 31; 2 W W.B. Dec 16 and 5 W G.B. Dec 18.
55. CANADA GOOSE - 13 Downs Feb 8; Max winter count 18 A.L. Mar 8; 6 summering there but no large flock noted later in the year. 3 W.W. and lower Adur during Aug and Sept.

56. BARNACLE GOOSE - 13 briefly on Airport Dec 18 were possibly the same as in the Chichester area thereafter. Although possibly from the Arundel Wildfowl Reserve their behaviour suggested wild origins.
57. BRENT GOOSE - A single W.W. until Mar 11; the eastward offshore passage Jan until May 15 totalled 1822, monthly analysis of Jan/Feb - 397, Mar - 995, Apr - 426, May - 4 and peak of 515. Mar 18 is shown on the histogram: returned Oct 10 and thereafter 1777 W and 126 E (details Autumn/Winter sea-watch table) with peaks 475 W Dec 6, 329 W Nov 15 and 276 W Dec 15. Overland migration shown by 23 S Upper Beeding Nov 1. Single bird returned W.W. Nov 14.
61. SHELDUCK - Most frequently seen offshore; during 370 hrs spring sea-watching W.B. a total of 190 E and 108 W; many more seen passing during Nov/Dec (see autumn/winter sea-watch table) when 903 W and 11E with a peak 518 W in 5 hrs Dec 15; 16 Adur Dec 28, and the only inland record of 1 Small Dole Nov 22.
54. WIGEON - 26 G.B. Jan 24, 1 E W.B. Apr 13 and 1 A.L. Apr 21 were the only records for the early part of the year. 16 W W.B. Sept 17, thereafter 651 W between Oct and Dec (see autumn/winter sea-watch table) with peaks 225 W in 4 hrs Dec 13 and 218 W in 5 hrs Dec 15. 19 N Upper Beeding Dec 13 and 7 A.L. Dec 15.
67. GADWALL - 9 E W.B. May 7 at 0825 also passed Hove and B.Ma. at 0850 and 2 W G.B. Nov 15 are the only records.
69. TEAL - Counts from A.L. Jan 24 - 11; Mar 15 - 42; Mar 24 - 65 and Dec 15 - 220. During spring 20 E W.B. Mar 8; Nov - Dec 13 W.B. total 125 W on 5 dates with max Dec - 48; 50 W.P. Dec 17.
70. MALLARD - Smaller numbers than usual; 20 G.B. Jan 24; max count 20 A.L. Mar 24; Breeding records from Small Dole, A.L., Annington and N.S.F.
72. PINTAIL - 6 over Chanctonbury Feb 26; max count 8 A.L. Mar 15; remaining records of birds passing offshore, 8 in spring with peak May 7 - 4; between Oct 19 and Dec 31 - 23 W and 17 E on 6 dates with max 15 W Dec 13 and 13 E Dec 30.

75. SHOVELER - Max. count 10 A.L. Mar 15; during spring 43 E offshore on 7 dates max 27 E G.B. May 9; no records after May 16.
77. POCHARD - 7 E W.B. May 7; 2 W there Oct 28; W.W. from Dec 13 with max 12 Dec 23; 6 Adur Dec 28.
80. TUFTED DUCK - 3 W.P. Jan 24; 8 W W.B. Mar 8 and 2 E there Apr 17; 4 W W.W. Nov 30 and 6 W W.B. Dec 17; W.W. from Dec 13 with max 7.
81. SCAUP - W.W. f on sea Nov 3 flew W; 5 m W W.B. Dec 24.
82. EIDER - Spring sea-watching total 175 E between Jan and May 6, monthly analysis: Mar - 1; Apr - 162; May - 12; peak at B.Ma. of 25 E Apr 12; Offshore movement in autumn/winter outlined in table with peak 35 E Oct 28; small numbers feeding offshore during winter and spring months.
86. LONG TAILED DUCK - 4 E S.B. Apr 6; 2 S.B. throughout April; 2 E W.B. May 7.
87. COMMON SCOTER - During 370 hrs spring sea-watching, W.B. total 2713 E, monthly analysis Jan/Feb - 22; Mar - 713; Apr - 835; May - 1143, with a late peak 610 May 7; see histogram illustrating rate of eastward passage. B.Ma. Mar 28 to May 19 1046 E in 82 hrs. During summer 14 E B.Ma. June 29 and 36 W W.B. July 11. Autumn/winter sea-watching total 190 E and 132 W detailed in table.
 Wintering flock W.W. between Jan 1 and Jan 26 with max 60 Jan 1, and after Nov 10 with max 32 Nov 22 and 60 briefly Dec 23.
89. VELVET SCOTER - 9 offshore W.W. Jan 11; spring sea-watching W.B. a record 99E and 36W with peaks Apr 24 - 44; Apr 27 - 36 W; May 6 - 21 and May 7 - 18; at B.Ma. 13, out of a total of 20, also Apr 24: 2 singles W. G.B. in Nov and 9 E and 2 W there, 3 late Dec dates.
91. GOLDENEYE - Between Nov 15 and Dec 18 IOW G.B. on 5 dates; 1 f W.W. Dec 16 and 1 f B.Ma. Dec 30.

94. RED BREASTED MERGANSER - 56 G.B. Jan 24 is the only count during the early months; spring sea-watching W.B. recorded 291 E whilst at B.Ma. in 82 hrs 41 E and 15 W; reappeared W.B. Oct 17 and peak autumn movements 32 W Nov 15; counts G.B. illustrate winter arrival Nov 25 - 17; Dec 3 - 37; Dec 13 - 48.
95. GOOSANDER - 1 m G.B. Nov 29 (FJF).
103. MARSH HARRIER - 1 N Hove Beach May 7; 1 NE W.B. May 20; 10 dates Downs Aug 18 to Sept 23 probably involved 4 birds; max 3 together Sept 4.
104. HEN HARRIER - 1 ringtail Downs Feb 24, and 1 there Oct 13; 1 ringtail Mill Hill Oct 4; 1 ringtail Upper Beeding Dec 6; 1 ringtail NW W.B. Dec 18 and 1 ad m W W.W. Dec 23.
105. MONTAGU'S HARRIER - Between Aug 11 and Sept 23 2 or 3 ringtails Downs, 2 together Sept 20.
GOSHAWK - 1 Downs Sept 15 (FJF) is only the third for the area.
108. SPARROW HAWK - Recorded regularly during every month from 18 localities with at least 5 pairs breeding.
109. BUZZARD - Singles Downs May 31; Aug 21; Aug 30; Sept 12 and Sept 17; and Oct 1. 1 NW G.B. Dec 12.
113. OSPREY - 1 Adur Sept 21 to Sept 27 (var obs), presumably same bird Downs Sept 25 (RJS) and possibly the same bird Adur fishing Oct 18 (local fisherman who regularly saw Sept individual).
115. KESTREL - Recorded from 22 localities with possibly 25 breeding pairs; 9 Cissbury Oct 7.
118. MERLIN - A record number of sightings all in the latter part of the year. 1 Upper Beeding Oct 18; 1 Southwick Nov 4; 1 S.R.B. Nov 22; 1 Chanctonbury Nov 27; 1 Goring and 1 A.L. Dec 26.
119. HOBBY - 4 spring sightings of single birds May 2 - May 14; during autumn July 29 - Oct 1 singles on 7 dates from Downs, A.L., Sanc., and Upper Beeding.

131. QUAIL - Singles Cissbury June 22 and 26.
136. WATER RAIL - All year S.R.B. max 4 in spring. 1 Airport Apr 23, up to 2 Sanc Nov and Dec.
145. COOT - 4 W.W. Dec 16 increasing to 11 Dec 31.
151. OYSTER CATCHER - Most frequently recorded G.B. during winter months with max 23 there Dec 5; W.B. eastward spring movements totalled a record 401. Jan/Feb - 4; Mar - 10; Apr - 189; May - 198; with peaks May 9 - 45; May 6 - 33; at B.Ma. similar peaks of 33 E on May 9 and 37 E on May 10 out of a total of 169 E and 19 W.
153. AVOCET - 8 E B.Ma. Apr 4 (TW); 2 E W.B. Apr 22 (CJF, MPH) and 2 W G.B. Nov 21 (FJF).
158. LITTLE RINGED PLOVER - All recorded in spring, 1 Downs Apr 16; 2 A.L. Apr 26; 1 E W.B. May 7.
159. RINGED PLOVER -

Selected counts

Adur: Jan 4 - 120	Goring: Jan 18 - 190
Jul 31 - 30	Feb 21 - 130
Aug 23 - 264	Mar 4 - 120
Aug 31 - 171	Oct 2 - 146
Sept 11 - 159	Nov 30 - 131

Pairs attempted breeding at two locations and 1 defending territory Downs; spring sea-watching totalled 55 E.

161. KENTISH PLOVER - An imm f first located W.B. Oct 24 (JAN) was seen at Goring regularly until Nov 4. Presumably the same bird Adur 6 dates Nov 12 to Dec 1; during this period noted at Goring Nov 14, Nov 30 and Dec 1; seemingly disappeared thereafter until Dec 25, then daily to the end of the year and well into 1982.
163. DOTTEREL - 1 juv Steyning Round Hill Sept 16 and 17 (CJF).

165. GOLDEN PLOVER - 30 A.L. Feb 24; 6 Downs Apr 4; 1 N W.B. May 8; 4 Downs Aug 29; 1 there Sept 5 and 4 on Oct 14; incredible cold weather movement 309 S Upper Beeding Dec 12 and 2 E G.B. Dec 13.
166. GREY PLOVER - Peak monthly counts Goring, Jan 3 - 102; Feb 2 - 105; Mar 4 - 99; Oct 25 - 13; Nov 27 - 73; Dec 25 - 140; roost counts fluctuate daily with frequent zero or single figure counts. Spring sea-watching W.B. produced a record 439 E with the peak 398 on May 7; similar numbers recorded passing E at B.Ma. May 7.
169. LAPWING - Winter flocks of 400 Airport Jan 4 and 200 Annington Jan and Feb; breeding pairs at Goring Gap (3); Highdown, West Durrington, High Salvington (2); and Annington (2); post breeding flocks 300 Downs Aug 17 and 400 N.S.F. Aug 23; 160 A.L. Nov 22; 200 Sanc Dec 5 and 383 Sompting Dec 12 were the only noted winter gatherings.
170. KNOT - W.B. spring sea-watching total 275 E of which 257 on May 7; few autumn records with peaks 9 Adur Aug 23 and 7 W.W. Nov 1.
171. SANDERLING - Peak monthly counts: Goring, Jan 23 - 130; Feb 5 - 134; Mar 4 - 120; Sept 12 - 23; Nov 30 - 94; Dec 17 - 40. W.B. spring sea-watching totalled 565 E with 247 peak May 7; 16 E W.B. June 1.
178. LITTLE STINT - A good year. 1 stint E G.B. May 10; W.W. singles on 10 dates, Aug 12 to Sept 23, with 2 on Sept 18; recorded 6 dates Adur Sept 22 to Oct 10 with 2 on Sept 23. 1 Adur Dec 28 (MW).
- BAIRD'S SANDPIPER - 1 W.W. Aug 18 and 19 (JAN, ARK, CJF et al).
182. CURLEW SANDPIPER - Singles Adur 7 dates Aug 25 to Sept 21.
183. PURPLE SANDPIPER - Recorded G.B. Jan to Mar 4 with max 5 on Feb 21; 2 W.B. Mar 29; 1 ad B.Ma. July 30; 2 Harb Aug 30, and recorded there Oct to Dec with max 5; 1 W.W. Oct 26 and 1 G.B. Nov 1.

184. DUNLIN - Peak monthly counts:

Adur:	Jan	4	-	1000	and Goring:	Jan	6	-	492
	Feb	8	-	500		Feb	5	-	664
	Mar	14	-	30		Mar	4	-	200
	Aug	23	-	36		Nov	12	-	314
	Sept	25	-	24		Dec	25	-	600
	Nov	14	-	700					

Considerable movements noted between Goring and Ferring and R. Adur the largest 460 E (rising tide) Nov 15 and 515 W (falling tide) Dec 24. Spring sea-watching totalled 333 E with peak 147 on May 6; early autumn flock W.W. 35 max July 21; only noted autumn passage 157 W W.B. Oct 19.

188. RUFF - 1 E W.B. Apr 14 and 3 E there May 11; a pair A.L. Apr 15 and 21; 1 f Adur Sept 15 and 2 Goring Dec 20.

189. JACK SNIPE - 1 A.L. Jan 7 is the only record.

190. SNIPE - Up to 150 A.L. Jan and Feb; 100 Annington Jan 24; up to 46 in small field near Airport in Jan; 2 Airport Apr 23; 200 Upper Beeding Oct 14; 50 Small Dole Oct 31 and 304 between Upper Beeding and A.L. Dec 6 were the largest autumn/winter counts.

194. WOODCOCK - Recorded Downs Jan, Mar, Nov (up to 4) and Dec; summer records from S.H. and Wappingthorn.

195. BLACK TAILED GODWIT - 8 W W.B. Apr 1; 15 W W.W. Nov 10 and 1 there Nov 19.

196. BAR TAILED GODWIT - Eastward passage offshore W.B. Apr 14 until May totalled 1829 with peaks of 396 on Apr 24 and 298 on May 7; at B.Ma. only 403 E and peak 181 on Apr 24; up to 3 on several dates Sept to Dec Adur; 3 G.B. Dec.

198. WHIMBREL - First recorded W.B. Mar 28, thereafter 346 E there during spring with 149 during mid-April and 136 in the first period of May. From B.Ma. 87 E

on 11 dates Apr 13 to May 10. Only 11 noted during autumn between July 3 and Sept 2 from scattered localities.

199. CURLEW - During the first half of the year only recorded offshore with a total 58 E. Feb - 6; Mar - 11; Apr - 27; May - 14; 6 W W.B. July 6 and thereafter regularly recorded Downs with max 11 W Aug 30. Occasional single in River Valley during autumn. 32 W in 1 flock G.B. Dec 17 and 7 near Steyning Dec 28.
201. SPOTTED REDSHANK - 2 A.L. Apr 15 (AJP).
202. REDSHANK - Peak counts Adur Feb 8 - 183; July 22 - 74; Aug 23 - 130; Sept 8 - 131; Nov 12 - 124; 12 A.L. Mar 15.
204. GREENSHANK - Only spring record 4 E May 7 W.B.; 1 W W.B. July 11. Between Aug 1 and Oct 3 recorded on 14 dates on upper and lower Adur, monthly analysis of Aug - 18 bird/days; Sept - 7 bird/days; Oct - 2 bird/days. 2 W.W. Aug 19 and 1 there Aug 20; 1 W. Downs Sept 29.
208. GREEN SANDPIPER - No early or spring records. 1 Washington Sand Pit July; 3 A.L. Aug 9; 1 Small Dole Aug 22; 1 Lancing overhead at night Aug 23; 1 S.R.B. Aug 2 and 1 there Nov and Dec; 1 Adur Oct 11; 1 feeding on Coombes Road Dec 22.
209. WOOD SANDPIPER - 1 Small Dole tip Aug 22 (KN).
211. COMMON SANDPIPER - First recorded Adur Apr 22, 2 more birds in April and 4 in May were the only spring records. During autumn Jul 23 to Oct 3 recorded regularly in Adur Valley with peak 14 Upper Adur July 24. Monthly analysis July - 38; Aug - 34; Sept - 10; Oct - 3. 1 W.W. Dec 21 to Dec 30.
213. TURNSTONE - Regularly recorded G.B. during winter months with max 14 on Nov 30; B.Ma. 5 throughout spring; spring sea-watching W.B. total 85 E with peak 34 on May 7 and monthly analysis Mar - 1; Apr - 26; May - 58. 2 Adur Aug 22 and 1 W.W. Nov 13.

216. GREY PHALAROPE - Autumn gales produced a record year. An ad Harb Sept 22 transferred to Adur (CJP); 1 juv Harb Sept 30 (BFF); 1 S.B. Oct 5 (BMB); 1 ad and 1 juv W. W.B. Oct 10 (JAN) and 1 ad Harb Oct 10 p.m.; 1 ad G.B. Oct 17 brings the total to at least 6 individuals.
217. POMARINE SKUA - 2 E Hove Beach May 6; a minimum 88 between W.B. and B.Ma. May 7; (see special article) 2 E Hove Beach May 8 and 4 E W.B. May 9 completes another phenomenal spring.
219. LONG-TAILED SKUA - 1 juv W W.W. Sept 11 (AJP) is the first record for the area.
218. ARCTIC SKUA - A record 79 E and 7 W W.B. from Apr 5 to May with peaks Apr 24 - 11 E. May 5 - 13 E and May 7 - 18 E. Recorded offshore during autumn Sept 30 to Nov 2 with a total 13 W and 2 E.
220. GREAT SKUA - A good year with 5 E noted offshore on 4 dates May 2 to May 12, and in autumn 3 E and 4 W between Oct 8 and Oct 28; the year's 12 individuals is more than half of the grand total recorded for this species for this area.
222. MEDITERRANEAN GULL - The regular ad W.W. recorded until Mar 3; 1 ad G.B. Jan 18; during spring 2 ads E Apr 17; 1 1st summer W W.B. Apr 27 and 2 ads E W.B. May 8.
Adult returned W.W. and Adur Aug 3 and recorded regularly until Dec 2 ads W.W. Oct 21 confirmed thoughts that more than 1 individual wintered at this locality. 1 ad with very pale head W.B. Oct 15; 1 very weak juv G.B. Nov 1 and 1 juv W.W. Nov 18; 1 ad Small Dole Tip Nov 7 and 2 ads Halewick Lane Tip Nov 12 show this species to have adopted the scavenging habits of this genus; 1 ad G.B. Nov 15 and late Dec which may have been one of the two W.B. Dec 15. A seasonal analysis: winter - 2, spring - 5, autumn/winter - 6 minimum shows a further increase in records of this species.
225. LITTLE GULL - A record year for this seemingly increasing species; not recorded until Apr then

during spring sea-watches W.B. 77 E with peak 43 E on May 7; also noted moving E, B.Ma.; in autumn not recorded until Sept 20 but late Sept gales blew several to our coast with max 9 W.W. Sept 29; autumn/winter sea-watching (see table) produced a staggering 61 W and 5 E with a peak 31 W in 3 hrs Nov 22 and 4 Dec records presumably due to strong SE winds. 1 B.Ma. Dec 30.

228. BLACK HEADED GULL - Counts and estimates W.B.; Mar 17 - 15,000; Mar 20 - 4000; June 21 - 162; July 4 - 1267; July 18 - 4184; Aug 29 - 9000; Sept 29 - 33,500; Dec 25 - c 100,000 along coast W.B. to W.W. Counts in the Adur Valley of Feb 7 - 15,000; July 11 - 300 (only 2 juvs); Dec 26 - 4250; Dec 30 - 5000 (80% oiled). Few detailed notes about visible migration; between Apr 5 and May 6 1258 E W.B. mainly imms; 1500 E in 3 hrs G.D. Apr 2; 300 per hour W, W.W. July 18.
233. COMMON GULL - 600 Downs Mar 28; 190 E in 2 hrs B.Ma. May 12. Counts W.B. Mar 27 - 500; June 21 - 31; July 4 - 10; July 18 - 42; Sept 29 - 6700.
234. LESSER BLACK BACKED GULL - Too few records submitted to indicate a pattern of occurrence, most regular Adur max 50 (continental) Sept 15 - 16.
235. HERRING GULL - No co-ordinated winter counts; 200 imms Sompting Tip Mar 25; summer counts W.B. June 20 - 452; July 4 - 180; July 18 - 270; Aug 29 - 750. Marked increase in yellow legged subspecies, recorded July 14 - Dec 25 mainly in Adur Valley and Small Dole Refuse Tip. Peak monthly counts: July - 1; Aug - 47; Sept - 25; Oct - 8; Nov - 4; Dec - 1.
236. ICELAND GULL - 1 considered to be this sp W.B. Apr 25. (see White-gull Dilemma).
237. GLAUCOUS GULL - 1 W, S.B. Apr 20 (RFP); 1 second year W.B. May 9 (JAN); 1 juv Brocklands May 13 (BJS).

238. GREATER BLACK BACKED GULL - Counts R. Adur : Jan 14 - 800; Sept 8 - 230; Oct 21 - 400; Nov 2 - 130; Dec 20 - 480. Counts W.B.: June 20 - 13; July 18 - 58; Aug 25 - 30; Nov 22 - 300; regular movements offshore of small numbers.
240. KITTIWAKE - Spring sea-watching W.B. totalled 139 W with a monthly analysis: Jan/Feb - 2; Mar - 2; Apr - 10; May - 125; with peak 20 on May 6; B.Ma. peak 21 on May 16; 80 there Aug 12; autumn/winter sea-watching (see table) peaks 134 E in 1 hr Oct 24; 179 W in 1.25 hrs Nov 15; 214 E in 4 hrs Dec 13; 269 E in 2.5 hrs Dec 20 shows a further increase in this species recorded in the late part of the year.
245. SANDWICH TERN - First recorded Mar 21 and thereafter from W.B. a total 3217 E giving overall rate of passage a consistent 10.5 birds per hour watched during April and May. (10.9 in 1980). The rate of eastward passage is shown on the histogram.
- Monthly analysis of Mar - 33; Apr - 2177; May - 1007; and peaks of 260 E on Apr 11, 237 E on Apr 24 and 184 E on May 7. At B.Ma. 752 E in 82 hrs watched with peak 143 on Apr 24.
- Only notable autumn movement 60 E in 1 hr W.W. Sept 9 and last 2 W W.B. Oct 19.
246. ROSEATE TERN - 3 E W.B. May 7 and 2 E Hove Beach May 16.
- CASPIAN TERN - 1 feeding around boat 7 miles S. Shoreham July 28 (MPH).
- 247/ COMMON/ARCTIC TERN - After Apr 7 the spring sea-
248 watching total W.B. 5441 E, 75% of this total seen on May 7 - 1349; May 8 - 1176 and May 11 - 1012; B.Ma. peak of 2487 in 9 hrs May 8 out of a total 3063 E; 7 E Downs May 7; few during summer months, 11 W B.Ma. June 29; during autumn regularly in Adur estuary with max 37 on Aug 3; 4 W Downs Sept 18 and last recorded S.B. Oct 16.

251. LITTLE TERN - Between Apr 9 and May 24 a total 404 E W.B. with 36 in Apr and 368 in May; peaks May 6 - 67; May 7 - 50 and May 9 - 53; during autumn recorded Adur in Aug with max 7 on Aug 10 and last recorded there Aug 22.
253. BLACK TERN - First recorded W.B. Apr 18, thereafter spring sea-watching total W.B. 111 E with a marked peak of 85 on May 7; B.Ma. peak of 41 E on May 8 and 11 E on May 9 (only 8 and 5 respectively at W.B.); only 3 autumn records 1 W, W.W. July 18, 1 W there Aug 9 and 1 Adur Sept 30.
255. GUILLEMOT - Recorded offshore in small numbers Jan - June, small numbers again after Oct but a large influx in early Dec many being affected by oil.
257. RAZORBILL - Singles Harb Jan 1 and Feb 22, Shoreham Beach May 8 and G.B. May 12, 1 Shoreham Beach Aug 15, then regular offshore after Sept 29, in smaller numbers than Guillemot, and max 3.
- AUK Sp - Spring sea-watching totalled 93 E, a monthly analysis of Jan/Feb - 57; Mar - 2; Apr - 8; May - 26. 1 E B.Ma. June 29. During autumn/winter sea-watches a total 175 E and 94 E (see table), this possibly represents an increasing number feeding in the Channel rather than movement.
264. STOCK DOVE - Breeding season records from Goring Gap, Ferring, Swandean and High Salvington; downland flocks Mar 17 - 50; Apr 4 - 30 and Sept 26 - 100.
265. WOOD PIGEON - Early morning movements noted over West Worthing, Oct 22 420 W in $\frac{1}{4}$ hr, Nov 6 1780 E in $\frac{1}{2}$ hr and Nov 7 80 E in $\frac{1}{4}$ hr.
266. COLLARED DOVE - Roost at Sanc max 100, 100 Aldrington Basin Dec 28.
235. TURTLE DOVE - First recorded Small Dole Apr 17; breeding in at least 5 localities; max number 22 Downs June 22; 1 W.W. Oct 12.

271. CUCKOO - First arrivals Apr 15 when 1 N W.B. and 1 Sanc, thereafter recorded from 7 localities during spring; as usual few autumn records, the last 2 Downs Sept 10.
274. BARN OWL - Recorded in June, July, Oct and Nov from 4 localities in the Adur Valley and on the Downs.
279. LITTLE OWL - Breeding records from A.L. (2 prs), and Steyning; Downs none located during summer but singles regular in autumn.
280. TAWNY OWL - Breeding season records: Swandean, West Worthing, Worthing centre, Lychpole (2), Steyning (4 prs), Coombes and Sanc.
281. LONG-EARED OWL - Downs roost max 3 in Jan.
282. SHORT-EARED OWL - Only 4 records; 1 A.L. Feb 24; singles Downs Sept 9 and Oct 18; 1 in from sea G.B. Dec 24.
284. NIGHTJAR - 1 near Patching June; 1 Steyning Sept 8.
289. SWIFT - First arrived Steyning May 3 but main influx during May 7; 35N B.Ma. in 2½ hrs May 9, 90 over Brighton May 10 and 200 Small Dole on the same day; gatherings of 100 to 200 at B.Ma., West Worthing, Durrington, Goring, Tarring and Sanc between June 20 and Aug 15, scarce after this date with the last recorded Aug 25 suggesting a very early departure.
293. KINGFISHER - Recorded regularly in the Adur Valley, at Ferring, Brooklands and Washington; at least 2 pairs attempted breeding. A monthly analysis of sightings perhaps represents the pattern of occurrences in this area:
- | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| J. | F. | M. | A. | M. | J. | J. | A. | S. | O. | N. | D. |
| 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | 2 | 6 | 10 | 8 | 2 | 14 | 5 |
298. WRYNECK - 1 killed by cat Durrington Aug 29.

300. GREEN WOODPECKER - Small numbers recorded throughout the year from several well-scattered localities, breeding season records suggest at least 6 pairs bred; some movement possible as 1 W.W. Apr 15 and 1 arriving from sea B.Ma. Apr 23.
302. GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER - Recorded throughout the year from 12 localities.
303. LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER - Only 2 records of singles S.H. Jan 24 and West Worthing Mar 10.
310. WOODLARK - Singles Downs Nov 4 (BFF) and G.B. Dec 26 (FJF, JAN).
311. SKYLARK - 31 prs breeding 55.1 ha. A.L.; autumn flocks Downs peak 300 on Oct 31; 200 fields Goring Dec 12 and 151 near Sompting same day; cold weather movements of 200 W G.B. in 2 hrs Dec 12 and 191 W W.B. in 1½ hrs Dec 24.
313. SAND MARTIN - Recorded Mar 28 to Oct 7: 20 - 40 prs Washington and 10 - 20 prs Storrington pits.
314. SWALLOW - First seen Steyning Apr 1 and G.B. Apr 2 but then none until 1 W.W. Apr 10 and by Apr 15 seen at 6 other localities, at B.Ma. peak arrival of 73 N in 2½ hrs May 9; main exodus Sept and early Oct, 140 E W.B. in 1 hr Oct 17; 5 singles noted in early Nov and 1 Worthing Nov 24.
316. HOUSE MARTIN - After 1 G.B. Apr 2 no more were noted until Apr 18; peak arrival at B.Ma. 35 N in 2½ hrs May 9; although breeding widespread throughout area no colony counts received; departure seemed later than usual; 2700 E in 1 hour W.B. Oct 17; 54 birds noted in Nov, 30 of which were over Brighton on Nov 5, 5 W.B. Dec 2.
320. TREE PIPIT - Only spring record of single Shaves Wood May 15; during autumn Cissbury total of 75 was lower than the past few years, the peak 21 on Sept 3.
322. MEADOW PIPIT - Only spring record of 16 N Downs Mar 17;

- 31 prs breeding 55.1 ha, A.L.; during autumn 3 counts of 100 or more Downs on Sept 4, Sept 19 and Oct 13 (200); during hard weather in Dec many feeding on beaches with 30 G.B. Dec 30.
324. ROCK PIPIT - Max 3 Shoreham Beach early winter, re-arrived Oct 13 then a max of 4 until Dec. 7 W.B. Nov 22; 2 Adur Nov 29. Singles showing characteristics of 'Water Pipit' W.W. Mar 17 and Mar 21.
325. YELLOW WAGTAIL - 2 single W.W. Apr 8, and Shoreham Beach Apr 8 and 9, followed by 3 N W.B. Apr 10 heralded their arrival; no large spring falls noted. Probably bred A.L. near Small Dole and possibly Annington. During autumn Cissbury total 121 with peaks Aug 22 - 27; and Sept 17 - 30; also recorded regularly N.S.F. and Adur Rec during late Aug and Sept with peaks Aug 28 - 42 and Sept 9 - 37. Only Oct records Downs Oct 3 and 1 W.W. Oct 7.
327. GREY WAGTAIL - Singles Adur and Brooklands in Jan, 2 W.P. Apr 5; 1 W Downs Aug 22; single Coombes Sept and Oct; Brooklands in Oct; 1 Sanc Nov and Dec; and 1 G.B. Dec.
328. PIED WAGTAIL - 2 'White' Wagtails W.B. Apr 4; 1 pr bred A.L. Large autumn roost Steyning Road reed Bed; 36 E at dusk Lancing Dec 14 were presumably going to roost, 35 W.B. Nov 22.
338. NIGHTINGALE - Singles Downs Apr 28 and May 17; Small Dole in late May and 2 Shaves Wood May 10 - May 15.
342. BLACK REDSTART - Wintering records Jan - Mar: W.W. (2); Harb (2); S.B. (2); Brooklands (1); probable spring migrants at Steyning Mar 30, Downs Apr 28 and B.Ma. Apr 4 and Apr 7. At B.Ma. a pair held territory but no breeding records received. During autumn 2 Downs Oct 13; 1 Steyning Oct 28 to Nov 3; singles W.B. and G.B. Nov 4; 4 other Nov records from these localities; 1 Shoreham Nov 11; After Nov 3 W.W. to Harb area with max 2 m and 3 f, single S.B. late Dec.

343. REDSTART - 1 Hove Apr 3, 1 Airport Apr 22, 1 N.S.F. Apr 23 and 1 Shoreham garden Apr 25 were the only spring records; during autumn, Aug 2 - Oct 21, Cissbury total 99 with peaks 16 on Sept 7 and 13 on both Aug 30 and Sept 5; only 3 records from other localities.
344. WHINCHAT - Only spring records of singles on Apr 23 at B.Ma., N.S.F. and Downs. The autumn Cissbury total of 273 had peaks of 47 on Aug 24 and 60 on Sept 5; 9 at Small Dole on Sept 5 also; peak of 12 Sanc Aug 31; 1 Airport Oct 21 and 1 Harb Dec 2 (KN) is the latest record from this area.
345. STONECHAT - Wintering records from several coastal localities with max 4 W.W. Jan 2; 1 with odd plumage Downs Mar 29 and singles there Apr 4 and May 2; no breeding records; recorded Downs from Sept 7 but never numerous, Nov/Dec records from W.W., G.B., Airport, A.L. and N.S.F.
346. WHEATEAR - 1 W.B. Mar 7 is the earliest recorded and with 11 other Mar records suggested a very early arrival; peak influx on Apr 7 when 11 arrived W.B. in $\frac{1}{2}$ hour and total 75 recorded from 5 other coastal localities; 8 Downs Apr 23 shows passage continuing later in spring but no May records received; 1 very juv Downs July 5 was possibly hatched locally; autumn total Cissbury 151 with peak 48 on Sept 5; this date was also the peak (19) at N.S.F./Adur Rec; 9 Oct sightings with the last G.B. Oct 25.
359. RING OUZEL - 1 Downs Apr 8; 2 there May 19 and 1 Oct 19 are the only records.
360. BLACKBIRD - 15 prs A.L. (55.1 ha plot); 10 prs breeding Sanc.
364. FIELDFARE - 200 A.L. Jan 25 and 60 still there Mar 15; 7 recorded during Apr, the last 2 Cissbury Apr 16. In autumn 5 A.L. near Small Dole Oct 18 which had increased to 70 by Oct 31. 74 E Sanc Nov 14. Cold weather movements of c400 W in 4 hrs G.B. Dec 12 and 180 W in $1\frac{1}{4}$ hrs

- W.B. Dec 24, thereafter noted in unusual numbers in suburban habitats with 50 in West Worthing garden Dec 25 and 30 in Hove Cemetery Dec 27.
366. REDWING - Only records from early months of 40 A.L. Mar 8 and 4 E Worthing Apr 2; in autumn first 2 trapped Sanc Oct 14, 60 Downs Oct 19 but few other than 200 in beech woods Nov 25. Cold weather movements of 100 NW W.B. Dec 11 and 3150 W G.B. in 3 hrs Dec 12, thereafter, like Fieldfare, well spread along coastal plain.
 373. GRASSHOPPER WARBLER - Singles Goring Apr 14, A.L. Aug 1 and Downs Sept 7.
 378. SEDGE WARBLER - Recorded between Apr 12 and Sept 13; 3 pr bred S.R.B. and 22 prs in 55.1 ha A.L.
 382. REED WARBLER - Recorded in suitable habitat between Apr 22 and Sept 28; breeding counts 14 prs S.R.B.; 26 prs 55.1 ha A.L. and 4 prs Sanc.
 397. LESSER WHITETHROAT - 1 Downs Apr 17, 3 there and 2 S.R.B. Apr 18; peak Downs 13 on May 2; autumn total Cissbury 532 with peaks Aug 25 - 36; Aug 30 - 96; and Sept 5 - 30; last 10 recorded Downs Sept 22.
 398. WHITETHROAT - Recorded Apr 11 until Oct 3; no notable spring falls noted the most being 13 Downs May 2; Cissbury autumn total of 558 with peaks Aug 30 - 80; Sept 5 - 46; and Sept 12 - 41.
 399. GARDEN WARBLER - Only 1 spring record at Goring May 11. 13 trapped Sanc in July/Aug; singles Downs on 5 dates July 5 to Sept 9.
 400. BLACKCAP - A single m. Steyning Jan 25 and 2 m. Swanedan were undoubtedly wintering as first spring birds arrived in Apr; largest spring fall of 8 Downs May 2; 4 prs found breeding at Shaves Wood, Small Dole and Sanc and 2 prs at Coombes. Autumn total Cissbury 594 with peaks Sept 7 - 56; Sept 12 - 72 and Sept 16 - 70; 1 Sanc Oct 14 and 1 m. Southwick Nov 22.

409. CHIFF-CHAFF - Wintering individuals Worthing Jan 7, Cissbury Jan 27, Shoreham Feb 20 and Brighton Feb 26; probably first arrival at W.W. Mar 4 followed by 3 Sanc Mar 14, a total of 11 March records and 6 April reveal no large falls; bred Coombes and Sanc. Autumn total Cissbury 1097 with peak Sept 5 - 150 and Sept 16 - 204; 2 Sanc Nov 4, one with particularly grey plumage, 1 W.W. Nov 25, and 1 Brighton Dec 8 which may have been attempting to overwinter.
410. WILLOW WARBLER - 1 Downs Apr 1, thereafter counts between 40 and 60 there Apr 8, 16, 18, 22 and 28 and May 2; 6 prs nested Sanc and 1 pr in central Shoreham garden. Autumn total Cissbury 1475 with peaks Aug 12 - 112; Aug 17 - 130; Aug 25 - 140; Aug 26 - 104; Aug 30 - 130. Last 8 recorded W.W. Sept 22.
411. GOLDCREST - Small spring passage through Sanc with max 8 on Mar 22; autumn peak Downs Oct 17 of 50, 12 there Nov 4.
412. FIRECREST - Single record 1 Sanc Mar 25.
413. SPOTTED FLYCATCHER - First 2 Goring May 9 and at 4 other localities within next 4 days; pairs bred Durrington and Coombes; autumn total Cissbury 294 with a peak Aug 26 of 48 and last 4 there Sept 23.
416. PIED FLYCATCHER - 1 m Apr 27 Sanc was the only spring record, during autumn 10 individuals on 7 dates Aug 15 - Sept 22.
417. BEARDED TIT - 3 NE W.W. Oct 22 (KN, AJP).
419. MARSH TIT - 1 S.H. Jan 24 - 25; 1 Cissbury Nov 4.
420. WILLOW TIT - 2 Downs Apr 28.
425. NUTHATCH - Recorded at Maybridge, Highdown and Chanctonbury.
427. TREE CREEPER - Recorded regularly Coombes Apr 6 to Aug 12, otherwise scattered records from 5 localities in Jan, Mar and July.
435. WOODCHAT SHRIKE - 1 Hove June 10 - 12 (BMB).

436. JAY - recorded regularly Shaves Wood, Small Dole and Coombes; during Oct several flocks noted, the largest of 29 moving S. Cissbury Oct 3.
441. ROOK - Rookeries Southlands Hospital - 26; Cement Works - 16.
- STARLING - Movements to roost regularly noted but seldom counted; at Worthing 1900 E in 40 mins Mar 3; Brighton 4000 S in $\frac{1}{2}$ hr July 22 and 5635 S on July 26, presumably heading for the Dome roost estimated at 10,000 during autumn.
448. TREE SPARROW - Jan-Mar Mill Hill max 210 on Mar 27; 50 Downs Apr 4, but in autumn BFF noted a marked decrease at this locality, throughout Dec Goring Gap max 200 Dec 12.
451. CHAFFINCH - 100 Downs Jan 27 was only record in early months. In autumn westward movement Downs reached a peak 540 W in 2 hrs Oct 19 and on 3 other Oct/early Nov dates counts exceeded 100; smaller numbers of birds arriving from sea W.B. Oct 17 and 28; throughout Dec flock in sprout field Goring Gap with peak 200 Dec 12.
452. BRAMBLING - 1 N Downs Mar 17 and 1 W there Oct 18; a single at Goring Gap throughout Dec and 4 W.P. Dec 26.
455. GREENFINCH - Up to 150 Durrington in Feb; large gathering Sanc in July and early Aug when 150 trapped; 150 Harb Oct 1 and 200 there Nov 25; 80 W Downs Oct 18 but the peak 250 Oct 26.
456. GOLDFINCH - No records until spring when at B.Ma. 250 flew N; 30 N Downs May 2; autumn flocks smaller than usual with 70 Downs Sept 1, 60 there Oct 3 and 50 Sanc Oct 14; scattered Nov records amounting to 14 individuals and 26 noted during Dec with a max 20 Goring Dec 12.
457. SISKIN - 1 Swandean Apr 6 and 2 Shoreham Beach Apr 9; recorded regularly Oct 1 - Dec 27 with max 42 Sanc Dec 5 and 15 A.L. Dec 16.

458. LINNET - Winter flock Durrington reached peak 150 Feb 17; 70 Highdown Apr 11 and 99 E W.B. in 1 hour Apr 16; breeding Coombes garden and 16 prs in 55.1 ha A.L. Autumn flock Downs up to 200 during Sept/Oct and winter flock Goring Gap peaked at 400 Dec 12.
459. TWITE - Max 10 recorded Adur Jan 1 - Feb 28 and again after Nov 19 with max 17 Dec 20; up to 6 Goring Gap late Dec.
460. RED POLL - 2 N W.B. May 7; recorded in autumn after Oct 11 in fewer numbers than the past few years with max 9 Oct 21; 3 Goring Gap late Dec.
463. CROSSBILL - 8 W Steyning July 25 (ARK) are the first since 1968.
494. SNOW BUNTING - 1 Harb Dec 28.
496. YELLOW HAMMER - 200 Downs Nov 3, 170 there Nov 4 and 60 Nov 25.
497. CIRL BUNTING - 1 m Cissbury Oct 26 and Nov 3.
506. REED BUNTING - Maybridge garden max 8 during Jan; 20 prs breeding in 55.1 ha A.L.; up to 18 Adur Dec.
510. CORN BUNTING - 5 W.W. Jan 21; 1 N B.Ma. May 8 is unusual for a sedentary Downland species; 40 Cissbury Apr 28 and 25 Airport May 17; only large autumn collection of 550 Upper Beeding Sept 8. S.R.B. winter roost 600.
- BLACK NECKED SWAN - 1 W.W. Dec 6.
- RING-NECKED PARAKEET - 6 Hollingbury Woods June 9.

JAN

MPH (Sea watch data)

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE OF MIGRANTS IN 1981

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

Whimbrel	Mar 28	W.B.	Sept 2	Downs
* Common Sandpiper	Apr 22	Adur	Oct 3	Adur
Sandwich Tern	Mar 21	W.B.	Oct 19	W.B.
Common/Arctic Tern	Apr 7	S.B.	Oct 16	S.B.
Little Tern	Apr 9	W.B.	Aug 22	Adur
Turtle Dove	Apr 17	Small Dole	Oct 12	W.W.
Cuckoo	Apr 15	Sanc.	Sept 10	Downs
Swift	May 3	Steyning	Aug 25	Worthing
Sand Martin	Mar 28	Goring	Oct 7	Coombes
Swallow	Apr 1	Steyning	Nov 24	Worthing
House Martin	Apr 2	Goring	Dec 2	Worthing
Yellow Wagtail	Apr 8	W.W.	Oct 7	W.W.
Redstart	Apr 3	Hove	Oct 21	Downs
Whinchat	Apr 23	N.S.F.	Dec 2	Harb.
Wheatear	Mar 7	W.B.	Oct 25	Goring
Fieldfare	Oct 18	Small Dole	Apr 16	Downs
Redwing	Oct 14	Sanc.	Apr 2	Worthing
Grasshopper Warbler	Apr 14	Goring	Sept 7	Downs
Sedge Warbler	Apr 12	Airport	Sept 13	Sanc.
Reed Warbler	Apr 22	Airport	Sept 28	Sanc.
Lesser Whitethroat	Apr 17	Downs	Sept 22	Downs
Whitethroat	Apr 11	Highdown	Oct 3	Downs
Garden Warbler	May 11	Goring	Sept 9	Downs

* Blackcap	Apr 6	Downs	Nov 22	Southwick
* Chiffchaff	Mar 4	W.W.	Nov 25	W.W.
Willow Warbler	Apr 1	Downs	Sept 22	W.W.
Spotted Flycatcher	May 9	Goring	Sept 23	Downs

* excluding possible wintering birds

JAN

RINGING REPORT FOR 1981

During 1981 a record 6168 birds were ringed in the Shoreham area; 5984 ringed as full grown birds and only 184 as nestlings. Nearly 60% of this total comprised of gulls cannon netted on Sompting and Small Dole refuse tips by Barrie Watson and his team of gull enthusiasts. The 25 catches netted a grand 1.52 tons of gulls including 4 Herring Gulls with yellow legs, which are thought to belong to a Mediterranean race. John Newnham, often assisted by Judith Baker, trapped 1346 birds mainly at the Sanctuary. Barrie Watson totalled 609 passerines, largely roosting Pied Wagtails and Swallows in the local reed bed and the Steyning Ringing Group, organised by Phil and Brain Clay, completed the tally with 592 birds.

Below is a table of the 52 species ringed:-

Sparrow Hawk	1
Black-headed Gull	2995
Common Gull	91
Lesser Black B. Gull	23
Herring Gull	482
Greater Black B. Gull	40
Wood Pigeon	3
Collared Dove	4
Turtle Dove	3
Kingfisher	4
Green Woodpecker	1
Great Spotted Woodp.	3

Sand Martin	5
Swallow	404
House Martin	76
Pied Wagtail	186
Wren	44
Duncock	89
Robin	52
Blackbird	87
Song Thrush	32
Redwing	4
Mistle Thrush	1
Sedge Warbler	68
Reed Warbler	166
Lesser Whitethroat	26
Whitethroat	24
Garden Warbler	13
Blackcap	38
Chiff-chaff	33
Willow Warbler	140
Goldcrest	15
Spotted Flycatcher	4
Long-tailed Tit	14
Willow Tit	2
Blue Tit	208
Great Tit	67
Tree Creeper	3
Jackdaw	3
Rook	4
Carriion Crow	6
Starling	279
Tree Sparrow	3
Chaffinch	28
Greenfinch	179
Goldfinch	85
Linnet	78
Redpoll	3
Bullfinch	30
Yellow Hammer	5
Reed Bunting	13
Corn Bunting	1

RECOVERIES DURING 1981

- (1) BLACK HEADED GULL - This species has a very high recovery rate and during the year 146 recoveries and controls have been reported. Clearly all these details cannot be included, but if the recoveries continue at their present rate it should soon be possible to prepare a detailed paper of this species' movements.

The 1981 controls (birds trapped already bearing a ring from elsewhere) came from Great Britain (11); Netherlands (6); Belgium (4); West Germany (3); East Germany (1); Poland (1); Lithuania (2); Estonia (7); the rest of the U.S.S.R. (2) and Finland (2).

The recoveries, 66% of which were foreign, can be briefly tabulated as follows:-

<u>Sussex</u>	Feb (1); Mar (3); May (1); July (2); Aug (9); Sept (2); Oct (1); Dec (1)
<u>Surrey</u>	Aug (1)
<u>Hampshire</u>	Apr (1)
<u>Kent</u>	Mar (1)
<u>Berkshire</u>	Apr (1)
<u>Cheshire</u>	Aug (1)
<u>France</u>	Oct (1)
<u>Netherlands</u>	May (2); June (1); July (1); Aug (1); Oct (4)
<u>Denmark</u>	Mar (3); May (2); June (3); Aug (1); Oct (1)
<u>F.R. Germany</u>	July (1)
<u>German D.R.</u>	May (4)
<u>Poland</u>	Apr (1); June (1)
<u>Czechoslovakia</u>	Sept (1)
<u>Lithuania</u>	July (1)

<u>Latvia</u>	June (1)
<u>Norway</u>	Aug (1)
<u>Sweden</u>	June (2); Aug (1)
<u>Finland</u>	Apr (2); May (4); June (2); July (1)

The most unusual recovery was that in Cheshire as hitherto all British recoveries of Blackheaded Gulls from this area have come from an area south-east of a line between the Wash and the Solent. The Czechoslovakian recovery is the first from this area.

- (2) COMMON GULL - The following were all ringed in January and suggest a N.E. origin for our Common Gulls.

- (a) Found dead 17.07.80 Gotenborg Sweden
1089 km. NE
- (b) Controlled 23.06.81 Larviksfjorden Norway
1123 km. ENE
- (c) Found dead 15.07.81 Shoeburyness Essex
113 km. NE

- (3) LESSER BLACK BACKED GULL

- Ringed nestling 13.06.81 Zuid-Holland
The Netherlands
- Controlled 12.09.81 Henfield, 32 km. WSW

is the first movement of this species recorded from our area.

- (4) HERRING GULL - Controls originate from North France (3); Sark, Channel Islands (1); Durham (1) and the Bristol Channel (3).

The only distant recovery reported to date -

- Ringed Adult 26.11.78 Worthing
- Found dead 07.07.81 Barry, Glam.
221 km. WNW

This interestingly also from the Bristol Channel. In addition, juveniles ringed at Small Dole in October were found at Pagham and Deal, Kent in Nov.

(5) HOUSE MARTIN

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------------|----------|--|
| (a) | Ringed juvenile | 17.09.77 | Shoreham Sanc. |
| | found dead | 16.07.81 | Gimingham, Norfolk.
254 km. NNE |
| (b) | Ringed juvenile | 13.08.81 | Castleford,
N. Yorkshire |
| | controlled | 28.09.81 | Shoreham Sanc.
330 km. SSE |
| (c) | Ringed juvenile | 28.09.81 | Shoreham Sanc. |
| | controlled | 04.10.81 | Hoddesdon,
Hertfordshire
106 km. N |

The last two birds were in the same flock; clearly the last was a little disorientated. These three movements augment our previous ones from France (2), Dorset, Bedfordshire and Essex.

(6) ROBIN

- | | | |
|-----------------|------------|----------------------------------|
| Ringed 1st year | 03.10.79) | Shoreham Sanc. |
| retrapped | 31.10.79) | |
| found dead | 01.05.81 | Olstykke, Denmark
992 km. ENE |

The only other foreign recovery of a Robin from Shoreham was reported last year; interestingly also ringed in early Oct. 79 and recovered about 150 km. away from this bird in Denmark.

(7) REED WARBLER

- | | | |
|-----------------|----------|-----------------|
| Ringed 1st year | 20.07.75 | Strivens R.B. |
| controlled | 12.06.81 | Bramley, Surrey |

Two birds were also recovered in Sussex; the previous recoveries of this species were reviewed in 1980.

(8) LESSER WHITETHROAT

- | | | | |
|-----|----------------|----------|------------------------|
| (a) | Ringed nesting | 07.06.80 | Hamble, Hants. |
| | adult | | |
| | controlled | 20.05.81 | Shoreham Sanc. 71km E. |

- (b) Ringed 1st year 15.08.81 Strivens R.B.
 controlled 02.09.81 Dungeness, Kent
 91km. E.

Our only previous recoveries of this scrub warbler are from Israel, Beachy Head and Northampton. Ringing has shown that British Lesser Whitethroats, unlike other 'Sylvia' warblers, migrate SE in autumn through Italy to Eritrea; after wintering in North-east Africa they return via Israel.

(9) CHIFF-CHAFF

- Ringed 1st year 23.09.79 Shoreham Sanc.
 controlled 26.09.81 Dorchester,
 Dorset 150km. W.

This tiny warbler is seldom recovered; a previous autumn recoveries came from Spain and 300 miles SSW of the Canary Islands; a spring recovery from Maidstone and a mid-winter recovery from Lancashire complete our collection.

(10) STARLING - The following were ringed during winter in West Worthing:-

- (a) Found dead 27.01.81 Zuid-Holland, The
 Netherlands.
 335 km. ENE.
- (b) Found dead 15.08.81 Lennewitz, German D.R.
 876 km. ENE
- (c) Found dead 10.12.80 Milton, Portsmouth,
 Hants. 47 km. W.

As usual there were several local recoveries each helping us piece together the life history of our local birds.

J.A.N.

SANCTUARY REPORT 1981

Upon reflection 1981 was a quiet year at the Sanctuary as fewer visits were logged and unusual records were scarce. The year started in the usual manner with virtually no ornithological notes but plenty of human activity when a large area of overgrown hawthorn and hazel was coppiced. The other annual chores of bridge repairing and path clearing were completed by mid-spring. As usual the Society enjoyed the help and close co-operation of the staff of the S.W.A. and especially Mr. Santer who, after sixteen years, sadly left the Waterworks Cottage in December. Our good wishes go with him and his family in their new home.

The bird life of the Sanctuary has been chronicled in detail in previous reports and as most features of the ornithology vary little from year to year only exceptional notes are included in this summary.

After an eventless winter when even the Collared Dove roost seemed to diminish, the first sign of spring was a small but marked passage of 'crests' and 'phylloscopus' warblers in March. At least 4 chiff-chaffs were in song on March 14th; a party of 9 Goldcrests were seen on March 22nd and a solitary Firecrest was recorded on March 25th. April then seemed very quiet and most other migrants seemed to be slow and sparse in their arrival, and, unusually, no falls of Willow Warblers were noted. The only species which were perhaps earlier than usual were the Cuckoo on April 15th and a Turtle Dove on April 27th. However, most birds delayed until the winds backed to the South-east on May 7th as by the 8th virtually all summer migrants were recorded. The only two notable birds in spring were a fine male Pied Flycatcher on April 27th and a large falcon which disappeared eastward over Mill Hill on April 30th without positive identification.

During the short dry spells in the summer more finches than usual flocked to the copse in quest of water; in July up to 100 Greenfinches and a similar number of Goldfinches and Linnets were noted in August. At this time autumn passage

starts, firstly with Swifts, 200 or more were noted on July 26th, and then with Warblers in August. Like the spring passage no one day was outstanding but by the end of the season the ringing totals for the passage warblers were in the same order as previous years. The only common migrants which had a peak were 16 Willow Warblers on August 8th; 4 Garden Warblers on August 15th and 12 Whinchats on August 31st.

September brought little change to the tempo of migration with the exception of an acceleration in hirundine passage reaching a peak of 3-4000 House Martins passing overhead on September 13th. On September 16th and 18th a Hobby was seen chasing the swallow and martins. This hirundine movement continued into October, considerably later than usual and long after most of the summer visitors had left, even the last Blackcap was recorded as early as October 14th. October recorded only a few Redwing, the first on the 14th, and fewer Redpolls than usual.

Throughout the autumn Woodpeckers were recorded regularly; Kingfishers were occasionally seen darting up and down the streams, and at least one Sparrowhawk tormented the small birds.

By November the copse had taken on its winter look as the water level was again very high and most of the trees now devoid of foliage. On November 4th 2 Chiffchaffs were trapped, one with very grey and silver plumage, and on the 14th the first Water Rail was recorded; about 70 Fieldfare and 170 Lapwings passed overhead, a Grey Wagtail was seen feeding on the lawn and the first 3 Siskins noted. This delightful small finch was seen in record numbers as 42 were noted on December 5th and 2 on December 27th. On December 5th a small speckled brown Crake swam across the stream and skulked off into the thicket; if only this bird showed itself for longer or reappeared it would undoubtedly have been identified as the best bird of an otherwise quiet year.

J.A.N.

BREEDING BIRD POPULATIONS

IN THE SANCTUARY

1981

A study of the breeding birds in the Sanctuary was carried out in order to compare estimates of breeding pairs obtained by Common Bird Census against estimates from ringing results. Data for the C.B.C. was collected on eleven visits between May and June 1981. Ringing estimates were calculated from records covering the period from June 1976 to August 1981 which enabled full advantage to be taken of retrap information. The number of breeding territories of the species studied totalled 35 by C.B.C. and 49 by ringing. The disparity was probably caused by inadequate data from certain 'problem' species.

The C.B.C. was carried out and analysed in the B.T.O. manner. For the ringing study, breeding pairs were estimated in the following way. Birds were considered to be holding territories in 1981 if they were caught more than once in the breeding season, with a period of at least seven days between captures for resident birds, and at least ten days for summer visitors (to ensure that no passage birds were included). A bird ringed in previous seasons and retrapped during the breeding season in 1981 was also considered to be breeding as were birds possessing a good brood patch. Using these methods breeding pairs were estimated either from the total numbers of males or the total number of females, whichever were the greater.

see Table of Breeding Pairs on page 39

BREEDING PAIRS AT SANCTUARY IN 1981 AS DETERMINED BY C.B.C.
AND RINGING

SPECIES	BREEDING PAIRS RECORDED		DIFFERENCES	
	RINGING	C.B.C.	RINGING+	C.B.C.+
Blackbird	5	10	-	5
Song Thrush	0	5	-	5
Robin	3	3	-	-
Wren	2	7	-	5
Dunnock	5	2	3	-
Blue Tit	3	2	1	-
Great Tit	2	1	1	-
Blackcap	4	4	-	-
Willow Warbler	2	6	-	4
Whitethroat	0	1	-	1
Reed Warbler	4	0	4	-
Yellowhammer	0	2	-	2
Bullfinch	5	0	5	-
Swallow	0	6	-	6
TOTALS	35	49	+14	+28

The clear difference between the two methods can be seen from the table without any statistical analysis. Blackbird, Wren, Willow Warbler, Swallow, Song Thrush, Yellowhammer and Whitethroat all show a greater number of territories with C.B.C. than with ringing. In most cases the difference is significant. Blackcap and Robin territories are the same for both methods. The remaining species, Great Tit, Blue Tit, Reed Warbler, Bullfinch and Dunnock

show more numerous territories using the ringing/retrap method, although the difference is not as marked.

Obvious problems occurred with many species for one or both methods. Location of mist nets almost certainly affected the results. As mist nets were not used on the hill, this probably caused an under-estimation of the territories of the more sedentary birds and birds disliking coppice, the major habitat around the mist net sites. This probably affected the Wren, Yellowhammer, Willow Warbler, Blackbird and almost certainly the Whitethroat results. From the data the ringing/retrap method does not seem suitable for the Swallow. This was because the nets were not in a suitable location for Swallows which like open spaces rather than confined coppice rides and because they escape from the nets; hence fewer birds were ringed and retrapped. However swallow pulli are ringed in the ringing programme. By counting the number of occupied nests the most accurate estimate of any of the breeding species can be obtained.

C.B.C. mapping for one year was compared with ringing results for several years. This was felt to be justified because ringing provides a history of individual birds whereas birds plotted by the C.B.C. are only known by territory and not individually. Some birds change territories mid-season, which is difficult to monitor with the C.B.C. However, past ringing records, together with retrap information for the current year show which birds are resident, at least during the summer months. Thus a bird which is passing through and not breeding can be distinguished from a bird which has been trapped in the breeding season in a previous year and which is more likely to be resident and breeding. All species in the Sanctuary will attempt to breed in their second summer, provided they can find a mate and defend a territory. Although it covers a small area, the Sanctuary supports a large breeding bird population. A non-breeding pair are less likely to succeed in defending a territory than a breeding pair when competition for food and nest sites is so strong.

Certain species were not easy to record using the C.B.C. For example, Linnets and Goldfinches roved in flocks and were not strongly territorial. Problems were also encountered with the Song Thrush, which only sang well just before and after dusk, when its song post was difficult to locate. Another problem with the Dunnock, Bullfinch, Reed Warbler and Great Tit was late or erratic singing which caused under-estimation of C.B.C. territories. The Dunnock stopped singing, probably whilst feeding its young, resulting in fewer registrations and thus fewer territories. The Blackcap moved around while singing which complicated registrations, making it difficult to assess whether the singing bird was the original or a new bird. However, the Blackcap was readily caught in the nets and they were, despite complications, relatively easy to map. Both methods appear to give an accurate estimate of actual breeding pairs of this species.

From the table the two methods do not appear to correlate very well. The balance swings between either the C.B.C. showing a much greater number of territories, or the ringing technique. The two methods agree well for only 35% of the species. It was evident when doing the fieldwork that some species demanded far more intensive work than others and I believe this is the main reason for the different results obtained. A study by other ringers and C.B.C. recorders (B.T.O. News March 1981, No. 113, pp. 4) was successful in showing a good correlation between these methods. To improve this particular study therefore, more time was needed on the C.B.C. and ringing of 'problem' species in order to ensure data collected was representative.

Judith Baker

STEYNING RINGING GROUP REPORT 1981

1981 was a settling-in year at the site, for which contracts between the County Council and myself were exchanged in March.

The pond became more established and blended into the

landscape, with the spoil banks becoming covered with nettle and dock. On the verges of the pond sedges, rushes and the transplanted reeds spread. In the water hornwort appeared and Water Milfoil was introduced from Pett Pools. Unfortunately Canadian Pondweed found its way in and this will need controlling to prevent it taking over.

There was a setback when the wier across the stream to the north collapsed and the water level dropped below that of the pond inlet pipe. Evaporation became a problem and water had to be pumped in from Tanyard Stream. It was interesting to see the shoals of small fish that appeared in the refreshing gush of water from the pump.

The planting scheme continued with some 200 Birch, 200 Goat Willow, plus Hawthorn, Hazel, Beech, Yew and Dogwood all planted in a trench excavated down the centre of the embankment to provide more cover and to create a new net ride. Further areas have planted up and infilled with Goat Willow, Osier, Oak Elder and Alder during the year. Not a single tree has been purchased! Some have been donated from people's gardens, but the bulk have come from S.O.S. and S.T.N.C. conservation corps meetings where they have been removed because they were invading other habitats; i.e. Silver Birch from Iping Common, Alder and Willow from Welches Common and Hawthorn and other scrub species from Heyshott Down.

Other management tasks included vegetation clearance along Tanyard Stream and reed clearance to allow better growth the following year and to try to stop the reed bed drying up. A lot of rubbish was removed and a fence 350 feet long erected along the south-east boundary, the major expense of the year. I was extremely grateful to the S.O.S. for their generous contribution towards this work and to their members who helped in the tasks.

During the year 117 Reed Warblers were ringed, a satisfactory total, but only 14 pairs could be proved breeding, a 50% drop from 1980, suggesting that a lack of management work in the

main reed bed may be the cause. Other breeding birds were Chaffinch (1 pair), Longtailed Tit (1), Blackbird (4), Dunnock (4), Robin (1), Linnet (1), Reed Bunting (1), Bullfinch (1), Wren (1?), Greenfinch (1), Song Thrush (1), Whitethroat (1) and Sedge Warbler (3). 51 Sedge Warblers were trapped but autumn passage was again poor except for the small movement of 58 Willow Warblers which were ringed.

The perennial Corn Bunting roost occurred again and Herons frequently came to the pond to feed with up to two Green Sandpipers sometimes in attendance. The small Redwing roost in the Blackthorn collected 25 birds. The "Bird of the Year" award would go to the Merlin which alighted on a fence post to the north of the plot.

Finally, three new nest boxes were erected at Wiston making the total up to twelve. Only seven were occupied, all by Blue Tits and three broods were ringed with brood sizes being 12, 9 and 7.

P.J. Clay

AUTUMNS 1980/81 AT CISSBURY

To many of our members the downland around our area conjures up a picture of a vast expanse of corn desert with the odd Corn Bunting or Skylark to excite the observer. However, to a few, looking at birds in this area when the sun and the light are behind you is a rare and unique experience; far better than being restricted by the confines of a sea shelter! At Cissbury autumn migration takes place on a very large scale with vast movements of common passerines occurring generally in early morning.

I use the term Cissbury to cover a large area including No Mans Land and Stump Bottom with Findon village on the western boundary and the Steyning - Sompting road to the east. The complete site covers about 12 km², with the Ring itself accounting for 2 km². The Ring rises gently from

Worthing golf course in the south terminating in a steep scarp on the northern face approximately 200 m high. It is an open plateau with a scattering of Ash and Sycamore trees. The lower slopes are more densely covered in scrub. On the northeast summit the Ring joins Lychpole Hill which is covered in dense scrub with large stands of Ash and Sycamore, some over 40 years old. The Ring acts as a beacon with Lychpole Hill funnelling the birds to rest and feed in a rather barren hinterland. The variety of scrub provides the food needed for their long journey. The map on page 47 shows the area and the main movements of the birds.

Early morning in August, September and October, especially during periods of unsettled weather conditions, is the best time to visit the Ring, particularly when late night mist or light rain may have forced the birds down. About one hour after first light birds can be found in the bushes, especially warblers and chats. The open stubble and plough can be alive with finches and larks. This movement takes place often over a short period of 1 - 2 hours. The warblers and chats move through the bushes flitting southwest mysteriously towards Findon village, whereas the large flocks of finches fly northwest. There can be few places in southern England where one can watch such a visible movement of warblers etc. on the scale which has been recorded here.

For the past two autumns I have collected and collated records made by a small band of observers watching at the Ring. It has proved impossible to tie in falls and big movements with detailed weather patterns. In fact, on a few days high numbers of migrants have occurred when fine settled weather has prevailed. The following is a summary of particular species which occur.

The Tree Pipit, once thought of as being an infrequent visitor to our area, is often recorded in fair numbers passing directly over the Ring, north to south. The movement starts in mid-August and tails off by early September. The birds move in small parties of two or three and are always calling. The Redstart puts in an appearance in mid-August, peaks in the

last few days of the month and often again in the first ten days of September. There can be few more exciting sights than suddenly being confronted with half a dozen Redstart in a large bramble bush. Whinchat and Wheatear are classic downland species in the autumn. Our counts would undoubtedly be much higher if we spent more time watching the open cornfield which they favour. However, lack of time and energy keeps us mainly to the Ring area. Movement of both species starts very slowly in the first few days of August, peaks in late August/early September and again towards the middle and end of that month.

Records of common passage warblers at Cissbury are very high. Obviously it has a wide attraction for the berry eating species such as Whitethroat and Lesser Whitethroat. They pass through in droves from early August until early September with a peak at the end of August. Blackcap movement starts later in early September and reaches large numbers in the middle of the month. On occasions more than fifty can be seen.

The Willow Warbler is the commonest passage migrant occurring in huge falls generally in the middle of August and again in the last few days of that month. There is virtually no movement after the first few days of September when they are displaced by the Chiffchaff (with) recorded in high numbers between the first and the third week. On 16th August 1980 I witnessed 400 Willow Warblers bush-hopping west past the car park at the base of Cissbury between 07.15 and 08.15 hrs. In this movement were also a few Common and Lesser Whitethroat. I think this is the most phenomenal migration spectacular I have recorded in Sussex which must be on a par with the Pomarine Skua movements recorded off the coast in spring.

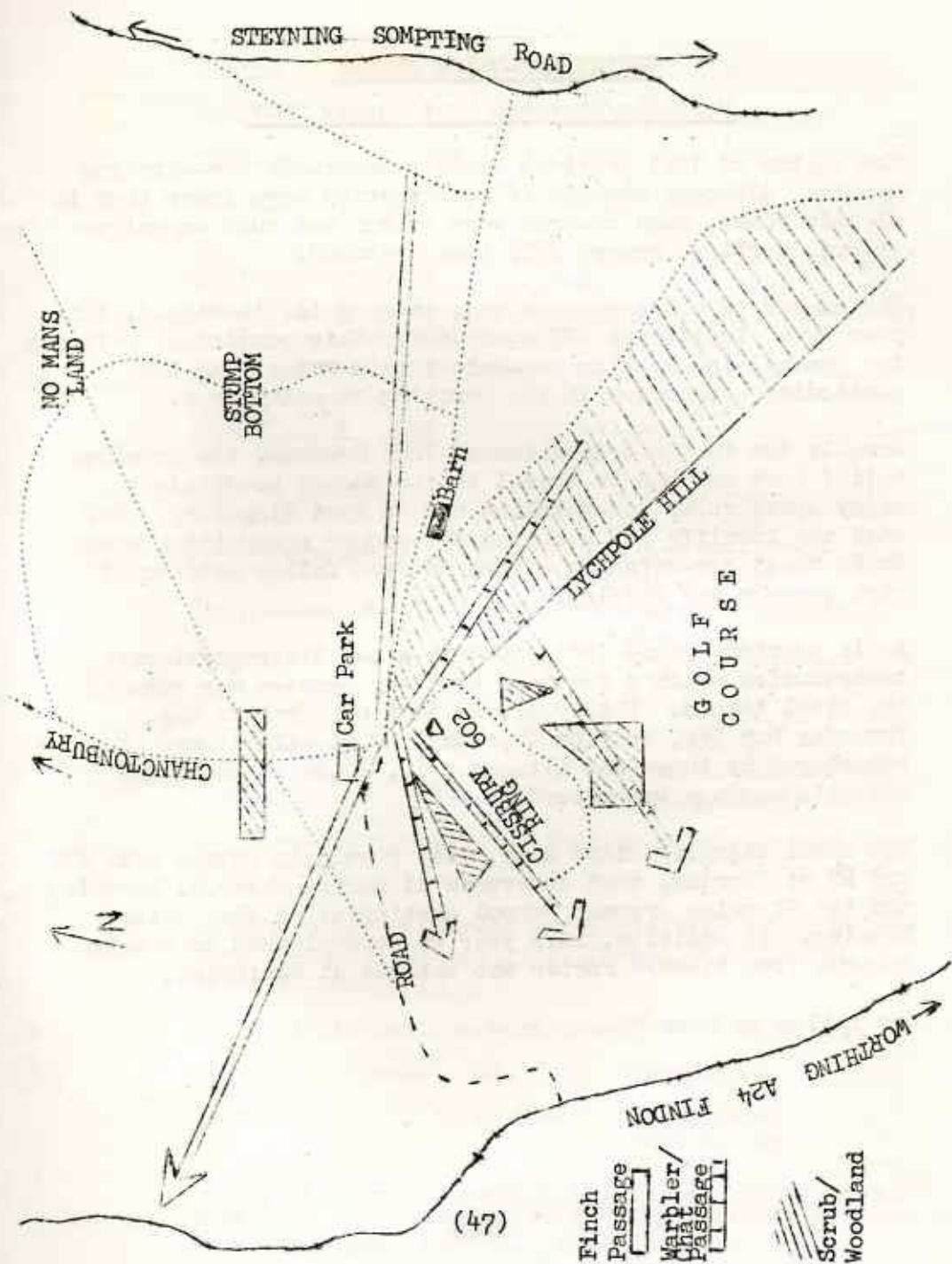
Finally the Spotted Flycatcher is recorded throughout August in small numbers until the last few days of the month when larger numbers are seen continuing into the first week of September.

SUMMARY OF PEAK PASSERINE MIGRATION 1980/81

SPECIES	TOTALS		PEAK NO'S AUTUMN	
	1980	1981	1980	1981
Tree Pipit	246	75	36; 16/8 34; 27/8	14; 30/8 21; 3/9
Redstart	62	99	14; 27/8 10; 30/8	13; 5/9 16; 7/9
Whinchat	218	273	22; 19/9 28; 21/9	47; 24/8 60; 5/9
Wheatear	171	151	28; 23/8 28; 27/8	10; 3/9 48; 5/9
Whitethroat	448	558	46; 16/8 37; 27/8	82; 30/8 46; 5/9
Lesser Whitethroat	354	532	33; 27/8 22; 1/9	36; 25/8 92; 30/8
Blackcap	629	594	104; 9/9 60; 15/9	64; 13/9 70; 16/9
Willow Warbler	1600	1475	550; 16/8 469; 19/8	140; 25/8 150; 30/8
Chiffchaff	893	1087	283; 9/9 204; 16/9	150; 5/9 204; 16/9
Spotted Flycatcher	384	294	34; 31/8 55; 1/9	48; 26/8 21; 3/9

In the table above I have compared the totals and the peak numbers of the birds mentioned for the years 1980 and 1981. The table confirms that the most important period is the last ten days of August to the first week of September, although birds are recorded earlier and later, often into October. Finch movements have been excluded as insufficient data prevents a detailed study. I hope to spend more time in October observing the Finch movement at this site.

To look to the future, I feel that it would be of ornithological importance to study this area in the Spring in greater depth. This may mean trying to move the inelastic sea watcher from his entrenched position when the wind is in the South East! I would be pleased to 'show the ropes' to anyone who is interested in the Ring and its environs. A look through previous reports, including my raptor article in the 1977 report, will show what a wonderful area this is.



Finch

Passage

Warbler/

Boat

Passage

Scrub/

Woodland

(47)

SPRING SEA-WATCH REPORT

Worthing/Shoreham West Sussex 1981

The Spring of 1981 provided another memorable sea-watching season. Although numbers of some species were lower than in classic years, many records were broken and much experience gained, during a record $371\frac{1}{2}$ hours watched.

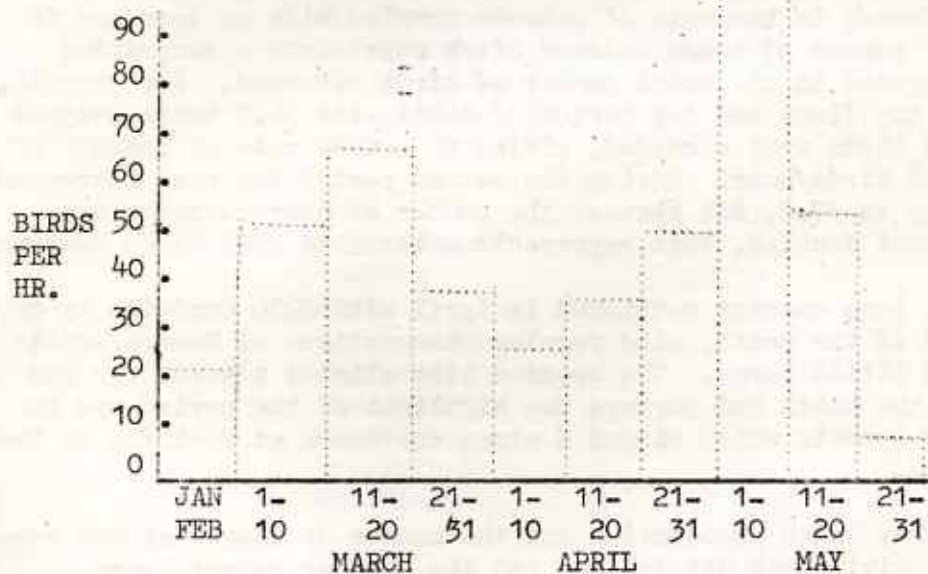
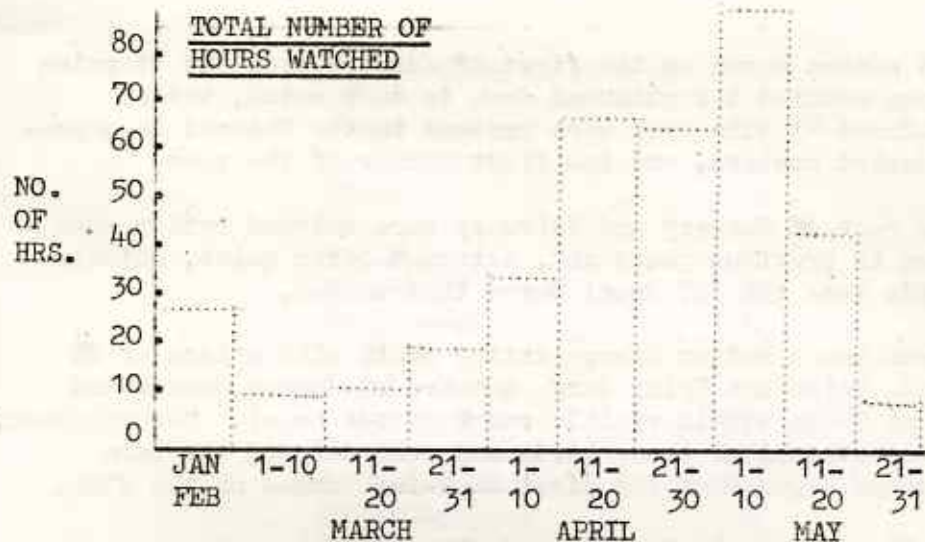
The number of hours watched was, once again, increased, this year by a significant 27% over 1980. This commitment reflects the general interest in sea-watching in Sussex and the particular enthusiasm in the Worthing/Shoreham area.

Largely due to the dedication of John Newnham, the previous belief that one had to travel to the Sussex headlands to enjoy spectacular sea-watching has at last dispelled. Now that the locality has received its proper recognition among South Coast sea-watching sites, an even fuller pattern of bird passage may develop.

As in previous years 1981 emphasised the disproportionate contribution which a few days of heavy passage may make to the final totals. This year, in just one frantic day, Thursday May 7th, or 'Pom Thursday' as it will always be remembered by those who witnessed it, 20.5% of the total season's passage was recorded.

The usual watching sites were again regularly manned with FJF and RS at Ferring, most observers at Marine Gardens, Worthing and the Steyning Grammar School contingent at Wide Water, Lancing. In addition, this year we were pleased to receive records from Richard Porter who watched at Southwick.

See tables on page 49.



The season began on the first of January when the Steyning group mounted a continuous dawn to dusk watch, which produced 43 Auks that were present in the Channel in unprecedented numbers, and the first Fulmar of the year.

The rest of January and February were watched rather more than in previous years and, although often quiet, notable birds were the 397 Brent Geese that passed.

March was a rather disappointing month with a lack of SE winds which can bring large numbers of Common Scoter and Brent Geese within visible range of our coast. Nevertheless, some movement of these birds was recorded and the tern passage began when the first Sandwich passed on the 21st.

April started slowly but gradually brought an increase in the rate of passage and the number of hours watched. When interpreting the histograms it is to be remembered that an increase in the rate of passage coupled with an increase in the number of hours watched often represents a surprising increase in the total number of birds recorded. For example, in the first ten day period of April with 34.5 hours watched 921 birds were recorded, giving an hourly rate of passage of 26.6 birds/hour. During the second period the rate increased only to 37.2, but because the number of hours watched was almost doubled, this represents a total of 2522 birds recorded.

The tern passage continued in April with 2210 Sandwich by the end of the month, plus regular observations of Common/Arctic and Little terns. The species list climbed towards the end of the month and perhaps the highlight of the period was the two Avocets which winged E along the beach at Worthing on the 22nd.

As May began expectation and the number of hours watched rose steeply! Each day the sea and the weather reports were scanned for signs of a favourable SE wind. In fact, the first few days were relatively poor with N and variable winds. The storm on the 3rd brought a reward in the form of a Cory's Shearwater for those keen enough to brave the gale, but as

the days ticked by the atmosphere among the watchers grew tense, it was evident that 'Pom Fever' was gradually tightening its grip!

An analysis of previous reports reveals that if, in any particular season over the past 7 years, the Pomarine Skua occurs in the Worthing/Shoreham area, then one of the recorded dates is always May 7th. It was with this rather precarious statistic in mind that the watchers left the beach on the evening of the 6th with the wholly unscientific determination that tomorrow would be the day!

As the events of the following morning showed the 'Poms' did come on the 7th, and with them came the host of other birds which made 'Pom Thursday' so rewarding. It was obvious that an exceptional passage was underway when the first watchers reached the beach. In addition to the usual sea-watch species many passerines, notably the first Swifts were winging in from the sea.

A weak depression moving N through the Atlantic had brought a complicated frontal system over the Channel. Light SE winds blew onto the beach as cloud and slight mist hung over the sea. Before 08.00 Greenshank and Roseate tern had caused some excitement, 'Commic' terns were flooding past whilst Arctic Skuas were occurring regularly. A bonxie flapped by and there was a steady movement of duck, mainly Common and Velvet Scoter, and waders.

At 08.05 the first Pomarine Skuas reached Worthing, a party of six passed majestically up-channel in the middle distance. For the vast majority of the rest of the day the migration was watched with every nerve, family relationship and flexi-time schedule strained to complete the coverage. At 20.15 dusk was falling and the watchers withdrew to reminisce.

The following morning was somewhat anticlimatic and although there were good numbers of terns on the 8th and 11th the season's passage declined very abruptly well before the end of May.

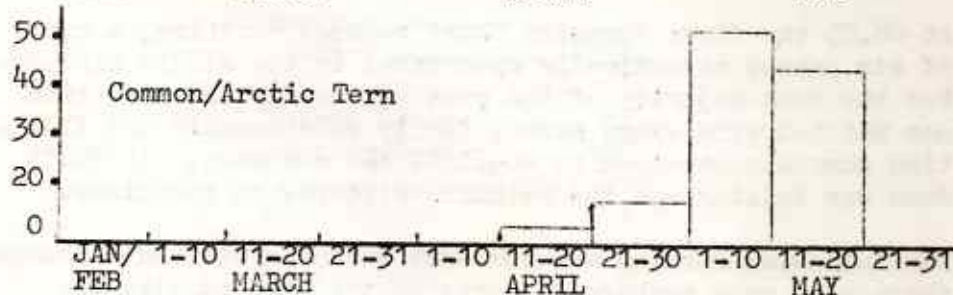
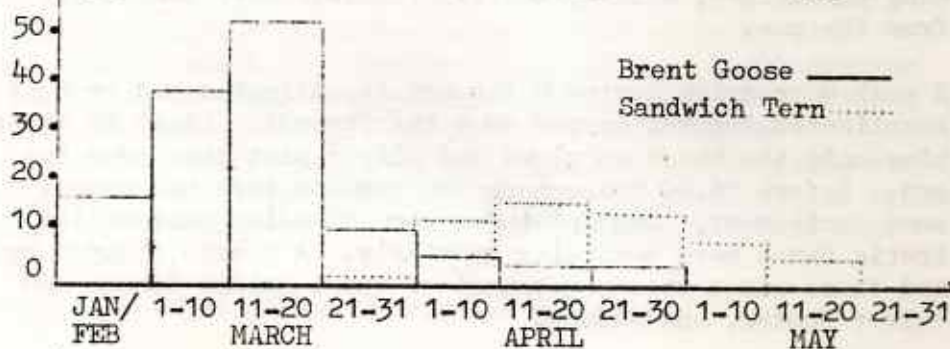
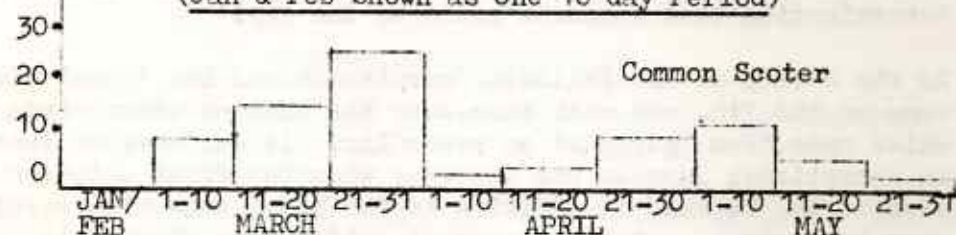
Perhaps in some respects it was a disappointing season overall, but the experience and comradeship will undoubtedly stimulate even more sea-watching next season. M.P. HALL

References

Report on the Offshore Sea Passage of Birds recorded along the South Coast, Spring 1980 C.J. Fox.

Plus: Previous Sea-Watch Reports for WORTHING/SHOREHAM, SELSEY BILL and BEACHY HEAD.

RATE OF PASSAGE IN 10 DAY PERIODS, SELECTED BIRDS (Jan & Feb Shown as One 10 day Period)



SELECTED DAYS SEAMATCHING TOTALS SPRING 1981

DATES	MAR	APR	APR	APR	APR	MAY	MAY	MAY	MAY	MAY	MAY
HOURS	13	10	11	17	24	25	6	10	13	7	8
WIND	WSW	E1-2 ESE	SE2	NE6	SE4- SSW7	VAR	WSW2	SE	SW	NE	SE
DIRECTION	1-1W	-	-	-	-	19	3-1W	10	13	4	6-2W
Diver Sp.	2	3	1	17	28	6	2	6	3	1	1
Fulmar	-	-	-	6	14	5	1	7	2	2	-
Gannet	515	-	7	-	30	69	1	-	-	-	1
Brent Gse	-	-	14	-	-	7	51	-	12	1	-
Shelduck	-	-	14	13	144	201	87	601	35	29	73
C. Scoter	-	-	-	-	44	-	21	18	1	-	-
V. Scoter	-	4	-	2	10	4	1	2	-	-	-
R.B. Merg.	-	7	-	-	2	6	33	7	3	11	-
Oycatcher	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	398	3	8	-
Grey Plov.	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	257	-	16	-
Knot	-	-	-	-	-	-	67	247	12	62	35
Sand/ling	-	5	2	2	2	10	13	147	1	15	-
Dunlin	-	-	-	69	369	34	134	298	41	37	5
Bar T Gwt	-	1	-	20	10	5	1	32	6	16	-
Whimbrel	-	-	-	2	3	-	-	34	5	11	-
Turnstone	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	4	1	-
Pom. Skua	-	1	-	-	11	-	4	19	2	1	2
Arc. Skua	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	43	6	-	-
Ltle. Gull	-	1	1	-	2	-	20	19	4	2	-
Kittiwake	-	173	260	100	237	186	62	184	86	27	28
Sand Tern	-	13	4	12	76	220	261	1349	1176	406	93
Commic Tn.	-	5	-	15	-	-	67	50	21	53	6
Ltle. Tern	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	85	8	5	-
Black Trn.	-	-	1	1	2	2	-	5	3	-	-
Auk Sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

THE MAY 7th 'POM' PASSAGE

'Pom Mania' is not just a localised disease restricted to the now famous Worthing Shelter; it has over the last few years taken an ever increasing hold over birdwatchers who have access to other areas of our coastline in Spring.

It is interesting to note that as the sun rose on May 7th people were making their way to other suitable vantage points on our coastline. Optimism was high as the previous night's shipping forecast had predicted ideal conditions for a strong sea passage which might well include the ever illusive Pomarine Skua.

At Brighton Marina a small band of observers were barely settled for the morning watch when the first 'Poms' were located - a flock of 27 were observed resting on the sea a few minutes after six a.m. This was to herald not only a spectacular movement of this illusive Skua, but also a memorable passage of general bird migration.

The table below shows the times that Pomarine Skuas were observed along the Hampshire, Sussex and Kent coast on May 7th 1981.

One of the great attractions of this species is its unpredictability. Whereas the movements of most species of sea-birds along our coastline in Spring follows a regular and predictable route the 'Pom' obeys no such rule.

During the Spring of 1980 and again this year, we were fortunate to record good numbers on just one day in each season. There is strong evidence to suggest that these birds are blown into the Channel, for once there they spend long periods on the sea with little urgency in their behaviour to continue their journey eastwards.

TIMES OF SIGHTINGS OF POMARINE SKUAS OFF THE SOUTH COAST

• SELSEY • WORTHING • HOVE • BN MARINA • BEACHY HD. • BEXHILL • DUNGENSESS											
Dist	20	8	3	16	15	37	22	Miles			
Time @	60	24	9	48	45	111	66	Mins			
20 MPH											
10E 07.30			5NE 7.05	7E 06.50				12E 07.15			
3E 07.33			27W 07.30					16E 07.30			
			2E 07.40	6E 07.45				4E 07.36			
	6E 08.05		11E 08.45					12E 08.20			
	10E 08.34	7E 08.43		12E 09.30				3E 09.10			
		44E 09.18	26E 09.50			13E 10.15					
			20C 11.15					14E 11.05			
	4E 12.45							1E 11.25			
	4E 13.10							5E 12.36			
	4E 13.40							15E 13.45			
	7E 16.25		13E 15.39	36E 16.45							
	13E 17.17	16E 17.10	18E 17.19								
	2E 17.19	13E 17.38	1E 17.27	11E 17.40							
		2E 17.45		14E 17.55							
10E 18.30				16E 18.20							
12E 19.30								40E 18.18			
35E	50E	82E	6E 27W on Sea	102E	13E			15E 18.45			

A quick glance at the figures in the table on the previous page suggests there is little correlation between birds recorded at neighbouring sites, but when one remembers that this species does frequently sit on the sea for long periods the likelihood of birds joining passing flocks is great; hence the discrepancies in the flock sizes between two vantage points only a few miles apart.

When this discrepancy is taken into account, it is possible to plot the eastwards journey; rough calculations show that the Skuas were flying at approximately 20 miles per hour.

C.J. Fox

SEA WATCHING - A brief look at the end of the year

For the past few years detailed records have been kept and articles produced about the up-channel spring passage observed from our local beaches, but very little attention has been paid to movements later in the year. Hitherto autumn watches were prompted by either strong on-shore winds or severely cold weather. However, during 1981, thanks mainly to the efforts of Frank Forbes, a more constant vigil was kept.

Between October 1st and December 31st the sea was watched for 141 hours with a result of about 50 birds per hour seen. This, as expected, is considerably less than the number of birds seen in the spring; however, some interesting features have emerged. Predictably the majority of birds were moving westward (c.4500 or 70%) but, unlike the spring, a significant proportion (30%) were moving the wrong way, eastward. Many of the birds moving eastward were divers, scoter, kittiwakes and auks, particularly during December.

This exercise enabled one to view the departure of summer sea birds such as terns, Little gulls and skuas; has indicated when most Brent Geese return to the southern estuaries, and

when the Shelduck reappear from the German Waddensea. The exciting but cold weather in December probably prompted more movement of Wigeon and geese, and perhaps accounted for the sighting of unusual wildfowl such as Scaup, Goldeneye and Goosander. This weather, coincident with large sprat shoals, was possibly the reason for the increased number of divers, gannets and auks in the Channel.

References to the more unusual species and the peak counts of the common species can be found in the systematic list; the following table outlines in 10 day periods the occurrence of the most regularly sighted species. J.A. Newnham.

DETAILS OF TEN SPECIES SEEN DURING AUTUMN
WINTER 1981 FROM WORTHING BEACH

Date	OCT			NOV			DEC			Totals
	1-10	11-20	21-31	1-10	11-20	21-30	1-10	11-20	21-31	
Hours	11.5	9.5	9	7.5	9.5	17.75	11.75	24.5	30	141
Diver	E -	-	4	10	5	-	1	11	159	190
Sp	W -	1	4	11	8	15	10	22	184	255
Gannet	E -	-	-	-	4	-	-	60	49	113
	W 23	7	7	4	20	7	52	2	18	140
Brent	E -	3	-	-	-	-	-	12	111	126
Goose	W 1	91	9	679	329	267	71	327	3	1777
Shel-	E -	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	10	11
duck	W 1	1	-	29	17	104	50	610	91	903
Wigeon	E -	-	-	-	-	-	-	31	24	55
	W 2	14	-	15	73	44	-	487	16	651
Eider	E -	-	35	-	-	-	3	12	8	58
	W -	-	1	1	-	-	30	24	6	62
Common	E -	-	-	-	-	3	90	37	60	190
scoter	W -	-	-	36	-	18	16	-	62	132
Little	E -	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	6
Gull	W 16	1	2	-	4	33	2	1	1	60
Kiti-	E -	-	207	3	-	10	-	483	210	913
wake	W 17	-	32	-	184	40	38	20	-	331
Auk	E -	2	11	27	11	11	3	60	50	175
Sp.	W 1	1	6	2	23	7	1	28	25	94

GARDEN BIRD FEEDING SURVEY

Making a regular count of the birds feeding in one's garden is a useful way of learning more about our common species, and a good excuse to sit in an armchair and stare into the garden!

The B.T.O. run a scheme to which at least two members of this society contribute and although the B.T.O. scheme needs no more participants in the S.E. at present, anyone may use the same methods to survey their own garden.

The B.T.O. scheme is "designed to gather information about the variety and numbers of birds which are currently being fed by man at different times of the year and the food stuffs they consume". "The basic requirement for participation in this survey is that birds should be coming to food put out for them within a defined area which can be watched regularly. Natural foodstuffs occurring in the garden such as shrub berries and soft fruit are not relevant to this survey unless they are presented artificially at the feeding station."

The B.T.O. scheme normally takes place from early October to early April. During that time a weekly record is kept of the maximum number of each species feeding or drinking in the garden.

A convenient way to collect this information is to keep daily records in a note book or on a memory-board and to transfer the data to a prepared sheet at the end of each week.

It is not possible to actually count the total number of birds feeding in the garden. As we know the four Blue Tits always seen in our garden is in reality fifty or so which come to our garden four at a time! (In a Gloucestershire garden with a normal count of approximately twenty Blue Tits, two ringing sessions ringed almost three-hundred different birds.

The maximum number is, however, a useful way of sampling the value of the feeding station and the changes in bird populations from month to month, in different weather conditions

and when other environmental changes occur.

Stanley Allen and myself contribute to the B.T.O. scheme. The Allen's garden is a mature garden on the edge of Shoreham, my own a newly made garden in a semi-rural position on the outskirts of Steyning. To conserve space the comparisons between the two gardens are shown on one chart. The list follows that provided by the B.T.O. with additional birds from the two study gardens added below. The Shoreham garden is shown under S.A. and the Steyning garden under M.P.H.

Table 1 compares the two gardens in the first Survey week in 1980. The figures are remarkably similar with only the very common birds present, plus a few birds obviously moving through. Perhaps the main difference is that Collared Doves were regular at the Allen's garden, but very infrequent at the Hall's.

Table 2 compares the gardens in the thirteenth week of the survey period. Again the figures are very similar with the exception of Collared Dove. In both the gardens a general increase in both the number of species and the number of individual birds can be seen.

Table 3 compares the Steyning Garden during Christmas week 1980 (Dec 21-27) with the same week in 1981 (Dec 20-26). There were three notable differences between the years.

- (a) The garden was generally more established by 1981.
- (b) More pergola fencing had been constructed to encourage birds.
- (c) December 1981 was unusually cold with much frost and snow.

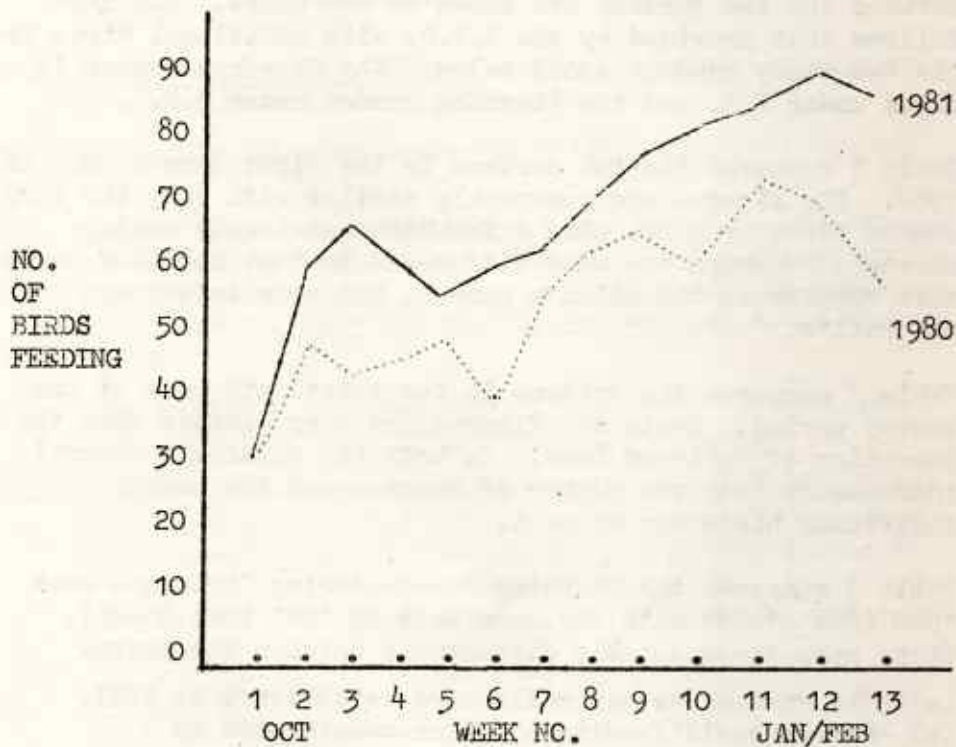
It is evident that there was a significant increase in the number of species and individual birds, and that a cold weather species such as Fieldfare was present.

The graph overleaf shows the increase in the number of individual birds feeding at the Steyning garden in the first half of the Survey period Oct-Dec 1981 against the same period in 1980.

M.P. Hall S. Allen

NUMBERS OF INDIVIDUAL BIRDS USING THE
FEEDING STATION

Semi-Rural Position Steyning



GARDEN BIRD FEEDING SURVEY

SPECIES	TABLE 1 4/10/80- 11/10/80		TABLE 2 28/12/80- 2/01/81		TABLE 3 MPH Only	
	SA	MPH	SA	MPH	Dec	Dec
					1980	1981
Blue Tit	4	4	3	5	5	5
Robin	-	1	1	1	1	2
Blackbird	1	2	1	2	2	3
House Sparrow	7	6	27	11	18	25
Starling	7	14	12	13	19	30
Dunnock	2	1	2	2	2	2
Chaffinch	-	-	1	3	3	3
Great Tit	-	2	1	3	3	3
Greenfinch	-	-	1	3	4	2
Song Thrush	-	-	1	1	1	2
Coal Tit	-	-	-	-	1	1
Pied Wagtail	-	-	-	-	-	1
Collared Dove	2	1	14	-	-	2
Wren	-	-	1	1	1	1
Mistle Thrush	-	-	-	1	-	1
Black-headed Gull	-	-	3	4	4	4
Magpie	1	-	2	-	-	1
Marsh/Willow Tit	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jackdaw	-	-	-	1	2	2
Great Sp. Woodpecker	-	-	-	-	-	-
Linnet	9	-	-	1	-	-
Wood Pigeon	1	-	-	-	-	-
Kestrel	1	-	-	-	-	-
Carrion Crow	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tree Sparrow	-	-	-	-	-	-
Herring Gull	-	-	-	-	-	-
Goldfinch	-	-	-	-	1	1
Chiffchaff	-	1	-	-	-	-
Rook	-	-	-	-	3	5
Common Gull	-	-	-	-	-	2
Fieldfare	-	-	-	-	-	1
TOTAL NO. SPECIES	10	10	14	15	16	22
TOTAL NO. BIRDS	35	33	70	52	70	87

BIRDS IN A COOMBES GARDEN 1981

After the 1981 A.G.M. and a talk given by John Newnham, I was prompted to keep a daily record of the birds in my garden. I live in the tiny hamlet of Coombes which consists of the little Norman Church, Church Farm and its attendant farm cottages, our house and one other in our grounds which used to be the gardener's cottage until 1976.

Our fifteenth century house nestles just under the downs in 2½ acres of mature garden rescued from encroaching woodland in the late 1940s. We have two small orchards, a woodland area and a vegetable garden and fruit cage. The rest is informal flower borders and lawns.

The Spring is a good time to begin a record of birds because one may expect new species almost every day. At the beginning of April the following common birds, all of which bred in the garden, were seen daily: House Sparrows (at least 5 pairs), Starlings (6 pairs), Dunnock (3 pairs), Robin (2 pairs), Wren (3 pairs), Song and Mistle Thrushes, Blackbird, Chaffinch, Great Tit, Blue Tit, Wood pigeon and Collared Doves. All these birds were recorded throughout the year and the Mistle Thrushes were the first to make a nest.

There were two pairs of Mistle Thrushes, one near the house, the other in the lower woodland. The latter pair were harassed by a Jay from April 11-17th. Both pairs suffered from the attentions of breeding Magpies, especially early in the morning.

One pair of Duncocks and a Robin made full use of the free food offered in the chicken run situated at the top of the lower woodland. The Robin appeared every time the hens were fed, much to the delight of my nursery school children who thought I summoned the Robin by magic!

Collared Doves are with us all the year round, with numbers reaching 40+ daily in the winter months especially January and February. They sit in the bare trees, gentle colours on

the stark branches. However, my wall flowers are considered to be a tasty snack during the hard weather!

Migrants began to arrive in early April. A Willow Warbler was singing in the bushes on the edge of the vegetable garden on April 7th, then again on May 14th when there seemed to be a fall of migrants. Swallows were over the garden on April 15th and by the 19th were investigating old nest sites. 3 House Martins fed over the garden on April 19th.

In May the garden became frenetic! The Swallows were well established in the stable and in my garage, although my husband keeps his garage door firmly shut! In fact last year in order to avoid the droppings he parked his car outside but, unfortunately, the Swallows decided to feed their young on a telephone wire directly above the car ... ! One Swallow actually tried out the beams inside our front door on April 19th, but I didn't think I ought to encourage it!

House Martins and Swifts first arrived on May 14th and were seen constantly through to the end of June. The Swifts nearly all departed by July 4th though House Martins were seen well into October.

In the fall of migrants on May 14th all the following birds appeared in or over the garden; House Martins, Swifts, Spotted Flycatcher, Blackcap, Chiffchaff, Willow Warbler and Cuckoo.

Two pairs of Spotted Flycatchers have been present for the last two years, but this year there was only one pair and they had a chequered existence. By May 29th they had built a nest less than 3 feet from the front door, but the comings and goings of 24 children were a bit too much of a good thing, and they deserted. On June 20th I found another nest in a climbing rose in the lower garden from which four young were successfully fledged - what perseverance.

The Chiffchaff was only a brief visitor in mid-May and again in early June although I saw young being fed in the garden

from July 16th to August 21st.

There were two pairs of Blackcaps in the garden which I felt was more than my fair share. One pair was established near the chicken run and the other was probably nesting just on the garden boundary. Quite often you could hear the two males, never interrupting each other, singing from the upper and lower ends of the garden.

I wasted many hours watching a pair of charming Treecreepers first seen in the lower woodland on April 6th. First their tiny communicating call told you they were present and then one would land on a sunlit patch of treetrunk, always working from the bottom of the tree spiralling upwards never much more than 12 feet high before moving to another tree. They were present continuously from early April until the end of June.

The Cuckoo was a popular visitor for my nursery school children. I first saw and heard him on May 4th and then on most days to the end of the month. On June 4th the children had excellent views of the male as he called from the top of a dead elm just behind the house. As a result I had some interesting pictures of the bird by some of the 4 year olds who thought it ought to perform every day!

A Whitethroat was an irregular visitor to the garden and the comforting call of the Turtle Dove was with us from June 1st. At least two pairs of doves were nesting in the woodland close to the garden boundary.

We were fortunate to have Goldcrests breeding once again in the garden. They were first seen on May 3rd and were present almost daily until the end of August. Small feeding parties were also present in the autumn.

Goldfinches, Greenfinches and Linnets all bred in the garden, and Tawney Owls are regular visitors; probably nesting in the woodland above the house.

Other interesting visitors included Great Spotted Woodpecker,

Grey Heron and Kestrels. A Barn Owl has been seen 3 times; the last when it was caught in my headlights as I came up the drive. A Sparrowhawk put in a very brief appearance as it whizzed through the garden on August 13th taking a Swallow with it!

The year ended with the intense cold and the ground covered in snow, when Tits, Robins and Dunnocks, Starlings and Chaffinches watched anxiously each day as I loaded the bird table.

My records may be of interest only to me, but it is quite enjoyable to put the picture of the year together and to realise how many birds have used my garden.

The total list is as follows:-

<u>Daily Visitors</u>	<u>Regular Visitors</u>	<u>Migrants</u>	<u>Brief Visitors</u>
Starling	Tawney Owl	Swallow	Grey Heron
House Sparrow	Mistle Thrush	Hse. Martin	Kestrel
Great Tit	Rook	Swift	Barn Owl
Blue Tit	Jackdaw	Sand Martin	Gn. Woodpecker
Wren	Pheasant	Cuckoo	Great Spotted
Dunnoch	Magpie	Turtle Dove	Woodpecker
Robin	Greenfinch	Chiffchaff	Pied Wagtail
Blackbird	Goldfinch	Willow Warb.	Bullfinch
Collared Dove	Linnet	Blackcap	Jay
Song Thrush	Tree Creepers	Whitethroat	Yellowhammer
	Goldcrests	Spotted	Sparrowhawk
	Wood Pigeon	Flycatcher	Long Tailed Tit
		Grey Wagtail	
<u>TOTALS:</u>			
<u>10</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>11</u>

Brianne Reeve

THE WHITE GULL DILEMMA OF 1981

Most of us enjoy seeing unusual birds and there is often more satisfaction to a record if the birds identification stretches the watchers powers of observation to its limits. One group of birds which always does this is the group of large white gulls.

The local beaches, river and harbour attract large numbers of gulls throughout the year so it is no wonder that several white gulls have been seen. Glaucous Gulls have been the most numerous and are probably the easiest to identify if they are truly massive with a powerful bill. Since the beginning of the Society 17 Glaucous Gulls have been recorded in 14 different years, all but 2 occurring between November and April and mostly immatures. The recent exception was the regular adult which frequented Hove Beach from 1967 to 1976 and which returned regularly by October and in one year was as early as July.

Iceland Gulls have been considerably scarcer and can prove much more difficult to identify, the main criteria being a typically less bulky gull with a shorter, slighter bill, domed head and centrally placed eye. After 2 in April 1956 and an individual which returned during the winters 1958-61, the last authentic Iceland Gull was seen in December 1961. A 'White' gull seen in 1973 was thought to be an Iceland but eventually disappeared, unidentified. A similar problem arose in December 1954 when a 'White' gull foxed many observers, gained the name 'Enigma' and was finally, after several months and years, thought to be either an albino Herring Gull or a hybrid.

Partial or complete albinism resulting in leucistic or albinoistic gulls is not uncommon and here lies a problem!

In the spring of 1981 many members saw one or more 'White' gulls whose identity created much controversy. The Saga started on April 25th when a 'White' gull, thought to be an Iceland Gull, arrived from the West and sat in front of the

Worthing 'sea-watching' shelter. Unfortunately, I was leading an outing in Shoreham and when I eventually returned to Worthing the bird had flown off eastward, but not before two experienced watchers had seen a distant 'white' gull which they considered to be too bulky and broad in the wing to be an Iceland Gull and felt that Glaucous Gull was the more likely identification. This seemed even more possible as a 'White' gull identified as a Glaucous Gull was seen flying westward past Beachy Head and Southwick 4 days previously. The telephone lines were hot that evening with discussions over various field points and soon rumours spread that an Iceland Gull had been seen at Hove and Seaford and a leucistic Herring Gull had passed eastward at Selsey. What had been seen at Worthing? Or was there more than one gull involved? Several stuck to their first view that there was an Iceland Gull at Worthing.

Just as the talking and arguments were simmering down, 3 more White gulls were seen on May 9th and once again the dilemma returned. During the afternoon Chris Fox and Richard Porter had prolonged close views of a yellow-billed white gull which, after considerable thought, they felt was more likely to be an albino Herring Gull than either an Iceland or Glaucous Gull.

Later in the evening, as the light was fading, I joined Tony Marr at the Worthing shelter where there were 2 White gulls, one was very obviously a second-year Glaucous Gull. Although notably smaller than the nearby Greater Black Backed Gulls it was a heavy chested, broad and stocky Gull with a massive triangular head and heavy, pale based bill; in flight it appeared huge and very broad winged. The other bird more challenging. It was consorting with juvenile Herring Gulls and had a similar ghostly white plumage as the Glaucous Gull. In stature I could detect no difference or shape to the juvenile Herring Gulls which were readily mobbing this White gull. In flight it seemed too broad winged for an Iceland Gull, although many authorities say this is not an important identification point. This, coupled with its similarity to the Herring Gull, the occasional oddly placed brown feather,

the total lack of any features of Glaucous Gull and its totally dark bill suggested this was an albino first year Herring Gull rather than a second year Iceland or Glaucous Gull, both of which, in their second year, should have some pallor to the bill base.

Unfortunately, the bird wasn't seen again in better light so a question mark will remain over its true identity.

To cap the spring Brian Short saw a juvenile Glaucous Gull on Brooklands in the evening of May 13th.

So it appears there were at least 6 white gulls in our area between April 20th and May 13th, at least 2 of which caused a similar controversy to the 1954 'Enigma'. One overriding lesson was taught to all those involved, this group of bird needs careful observation, precise notes on structure, plumage and soft parts, and considerable experience to separate confidently. Furthermore, the standard field guides are only of value when viewing typical examples and one needs often to look to more detailed studies on identification.

Ref. Hume, R.A. "Identification and Ageing of Glaucous and Iceland Gull" British Birds Vol. 68 No. 1 pp 24-37 Jan. 1975.

J.A. Newnham

TREE SPARROW WINTER

Until the winter of 1980/81, I'd seen the occasional Tree Sparrow in the Shoreham area; there are usually a few near the top of Beeding Hill, and in the hard winter of 78/79, there were a few with Bramblings near South Saxon Kennels.

On 19th December 1980, I recorded 15 near Mill Hill car park, in the bushes to the north of it, and they were seen almost

daily in that area for the following fortnight.

On 7th January 1980, things got more interesting, with 70 being recorded in the bushes between the gardens on the west side of Mill Hill and the large 'horses field', and 23 in fact fed on the grass in our garden: this was a maximum garden figure, but we had ones and twos in the garden throughout January and February.

However, the numbers in "the bushes at the bottom of the garden" continued to increase, with 160 recorded on 19th February, and a maximum flock of 210 on 27th March.

Close observation during the winter left an impression of a bird my wife and I have previously underrated for interest. The flocks have a far lighter flight than House Sparrows, and on a dark winters day the males particularly show up as a most attractive small bird, with the very 'clean' white of the face contrasting strongly with the distinguishing black spot. Since the end of March they have vanished, but at the time of writing (October 1981) we are hoping that the attractions of the 'horses field' will bring them back.

For my wife and I, 1981 has been 'sparrow' year, for in Crete in late May, we were fascinated to discover (by a remote stream), our 'first' Spanish sparrows - which we'd never seen on many visits to Spain and the Balearics.

S.A. Allen

BIRDS OF PREY - A EUROPEAN VIEW

When one reads through the Shoreham Reports one cannot help being impressed by the number of raptors which have been recorded over the last twelve years. 17 species have been seen since the downs were regularly watched, of which the Gyr Falcon, Lesser Kestrel, Black Kite and Red-footed Falcon are not only of local interest, but also national significance. Unfortunately, Britain lies out of the major raptor migratory

routes otherwise the downs would no doubt record some birds far more often than they do.

I have been studying a small area just outside Frankfurt (625 km ESE) for the last 27 months and the graph shows how important this area is as an autumn migratory area. The figures are negligible when compared with Falbesto (Sweden), Gibralta, Istanbul and Elat (Israel) but they do give an indication of just how many birds pass through central Europe.

The area itself is far from interesting being traversed by motorways, railways and high tension power lines. The land is intensively farmed providing little cover for passerines and even less for predatory species. The graph shows the paucity of species at the beginning of the year with only four species being represented. The Goshawks and Sparrowhawks prey on the Stock Doves and Yellowhammers respectively whereas the Buzzards and Kestrels hunt along the motorways looking for an easy meal. There is a distinct lack of passerines owing to the severity of the winters in Germany, with Fieldfare a rarity and other thrush species completely missing.

Spring is marked by the first Red Kite moving northwards, usually in the second week of February, with Fieldfares and other thrushes returning soon afterwards. By the middle of March, Black Kite make their appearance as they loaf along the rivers looking for dead fish. By the middle of May suburbia is full of song with Nightingale, Marsh Warbler, Golden Oriole and Serin taking up their breeding territories.

Raptors begin to move at the end of August with mixed flocks of Buzzard and Honey Buzzard becoming quite common when a depression passes over the Baltic. It is quite probable that the majority of these birds are from Scandinavia moving southwards as the northern summer finishes. Black Kite also begin to congregate around the local rubbish tips picking up any edible offal. It is heartening to hear that this species is extending its range northwestwards and so they may become more common in Sussex and even become a regular sight along the River Adur.

By September the flocks increase in size with Red Kite forming the majority. These superb birds really live up to their name as they hang in the wind, twisting their tails to maintain perfect control even in the most blustery of conditions. Their manoeuvrability must be second to none and this was shown when a flock of nine were attacked by a Peregrine over the city centre. The Kites merely flexed their wings and twisted their tails and outwitted the boisterous falcon.

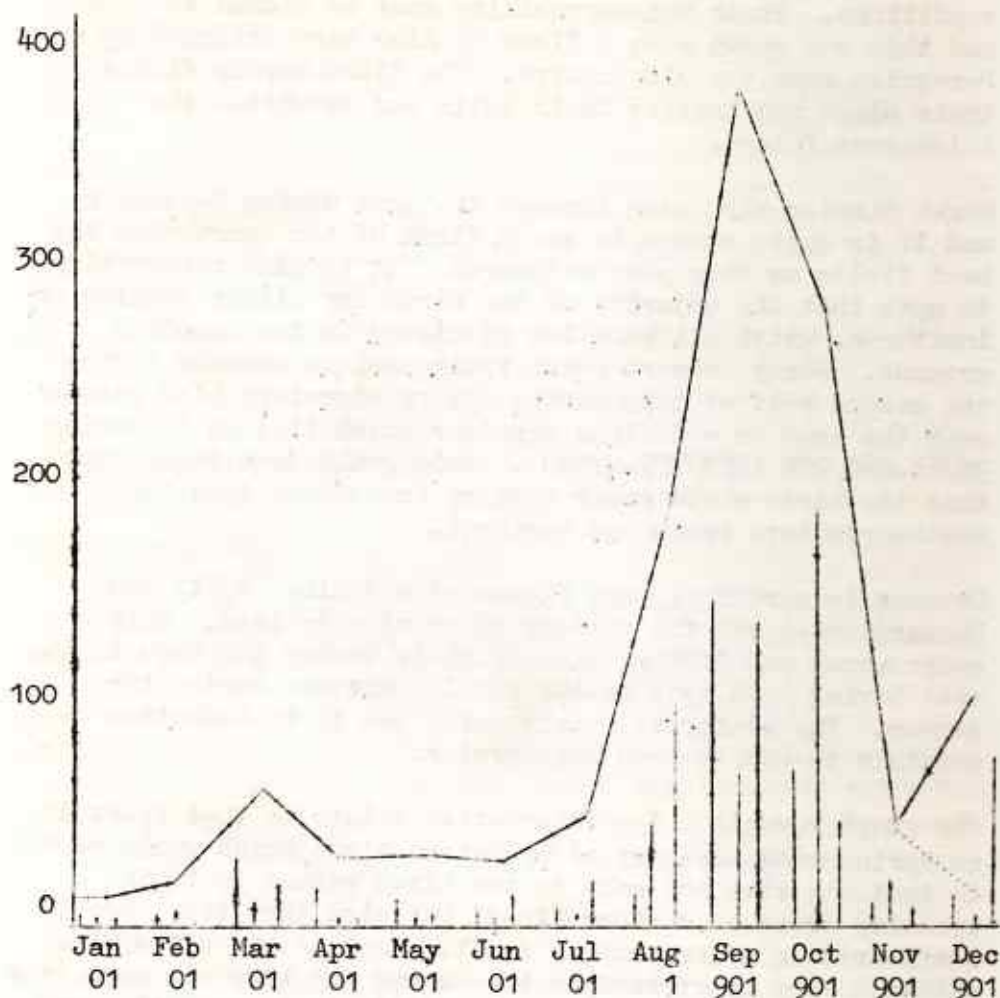
Marsh Harrier also pass through the area during September and it is quite common to see a flock of ten quartering the beet fields as they pass westwards. It is also interesting to note that the majority of the birds are either females or immatures, which allows a lot of bigamy on the breeding grounds. Honey Buzzard reach their maximum numbers during the second half of this month. Every migratory bird passes over the area on a defined corridor which lies on a bearing 35/65-240/270 (NNE/ENE-W/WSW). This would seem to suggest that the birds would enter eastern France and then turn southwards into Spain and Portugal.

October is marked by huge flocks of Red Kite (45+!) and Buzzard (60+) but the variety of species is less. Only sparrowhawk and Goshawk take up their winter quarters in the area having been away in the local mountains during the summer. The winter is fairly quiet but it is sometimes possible to see the odd Hen Harrier.

The graph reveals a few interesting points in that there is no spring mass movement of predatory birds which would seem to indicate that not only do the birds return to their breeding areas at various times, but also that they move northwards on a far broader front. Most of the birds move within a very short time in the autumn and they all pass over on a certain flight path. It is difficult to suggest where these birds come from as the bearing seems to indicate an eastern breeding area. It is really fascinating to see so many birds on the move; 1200 birds in 27 months is not too bad, at least I am satisfied, wouldn't you be ?

R. Ives

NUMBER OF RAPTORS SEEN AT AREA A 1979-1981



Key 9 = 1979
0 = 1980
1 = 1981

..... usual trend
—— number of raptors seen
per 10 days i.e. 1st-10th,
11th-20th, 21st-30/31st.

Totals

73	Honey Buzzard	
308	Red Kite	
82	Black Kite	
23	Goshawk	
37	Sparrowhawk	
1	Rough legged Buzzard	
455	Buzzard	
4	Hen Harrier	
5	Montagu's Harrier	
79	Marsh Harrier	
3	Peregrine	
14	Hobby	
5	Merlin	
1	Lesser Kestrel	
110	Kestrel	
	Grand Total	1200
	over 27 months	
	Monthly Average	44

R. Ives field notebook

ALFRED BURSTOW

Alfred Burstow died in January of this year aged 79. He joined the Society in 1956 and was soon elected to the field committee of which he became chairman, he served on this and later on the sanctuary committee until his death, he was also on the council of the Society and attended a meeting only a few days before being taken ill.

Alf' Burstow was an unassuming man who enjoyed his bird watching in his own quiet way. His organisation of field outings and his care of the sanctuary was his great contribution to the Society over twenty-five years. All this was done without fuss and he did not expect praise or thanks for his efforts. Our debt to him is great. He is with us no more, though I still find that I am looking for that familiar figure cycling in all weathers apparently deep in thought, around the local countryside.

J. Stafford

NOTES NEWS AND ACCOUNTS 1981

FIELD OUTINGS

Sunday, 11th January 1981 - Amberley with Mr. C. Messer.

A small group of members gathered at Greatham Bridge for a day of wildfowl watching on Amberley Wild Brooks. However, the floodwater that had covered a large part of the brooks a week or so before had nearly all disappeared, so that most of the wildfowl were now concentrated on the new reserve area on Waltham Brooks which had successfully retained its floodwater.

The estimated number of wildfowl present is as follows:
500+ Wigeon, 300+ Teal, 50+ Mallard, 2 Pintail, 1 Shelduck and a Canada Goose.

On the Wildbrooks a number of paired Mallard were seen as well as a fine flock of 41 Bewick Swans.

Green, Spotted and Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers were observed on the northern edge of the Wildbrooks. The last bird seen at the end of the day was a Kingfisher perched on the wall of Greatham Bridge.

Note

John Newnham has alluded to his seawatching outing in April and details of the only other spring outing were not received in time to be included in this report. There were no other field outings during 1981. The full programme of 1982 outings has already got off to a fine start with two well-attended outings. Full details will appear in next year's report.

LIST OF LECTURES 1981

- Monday, 5th January - A Miscellanea of Bird Watching
by Mr. P. Martin
- Monday, 2nd February - Birds of Canada
by Mr. R. Fairbank
- Monday, 6th April - A.G.M. and A Study of the Birds of
the Shoreham Area
by Dr. J.A. Newnham
- Monday, 28th September - Birds of the Wetlands
by Mr. K. Noble
- Monday, 2nd November - Selsey Bill
by Mr. C. Janman

OFFICERS

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| President | - Dr. J. Stafford |
| Chairman | - Dr. J.A. Newnham |
| Hon. Secretary | - Mr. J. Dixon,
Rock Cottage,
Common Hill,
West Chiltington,
Pulborough, W. Sussex. |
| Hon. Field Secretary | - Mr. B.F. Forbes |
| Hon. Treasurer | - Mr. S.R. Allen,
3 Mill Hill,
Shoreham-by-Sea,
W. Sussex. |
| Hon. Recorder | - Mr. B.F. Forbes,
42 Penstone Park,
Lancing, W. Sussex. |
| Report Editor | - Mr. B.R. Clay |
| Sanctuary Committee | - Dr. A.B. Watson, Dr. J.A. Newnham |
| Other Officers | - Mr. C. Messer, Mr. M. Hall,
Mrs. J. Weeding. |

Editor's Note

The appointment of some officers was confirmed at the Extraordinary General Meeting on 28th September, 1981. The appointment of other officers will be subject to confirmation at the A.G.M. on 29th March, 1982.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Will members kindly advise the Secretary of any alterations of name and/or address.

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.

A reminder that 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.

Rarities should have adequate supporting notes. All records should now be sent to Mr. B. Forbes at 42 Penstone Park, Lancing, W. Sussex.

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR
ENDED 31st DECEMBER 1981

<u>Receipts</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>Payments</u>	<u>£</u>
Balance brought forward	140.17	Subscriptions	14.00
Surplus Income arising from previous years	51.03	Southern Water Authority	4.00
Subscriptions	229.00	Binding British Birds	6.00
Donations	53.00	Hire of Hall	20.00
Sales of Reports	40.21	Lecturers	13.00
Raffle & Refreshment receipts	12.28	Printing	130.99
Bank Deposit Interest received	7.88	Postage, Stationery & Sundry Expenses	21.48
		Balance carried forward	<u>324.10</u>
	<u>£533.57</u>		<u>£533.57</u>

S.R. Allen (Hon Treasurer)
22. February 1982.

Accountants Report

We hereby certify that the above Receipts and Payments Account has been prepared without audit from books, vouchers and information supplied to us and is in accordance therewith.

Date 22. February, 1982

52/53 Old Steine
Brighton

(Signed) Chater Spain Brothers
Chartered Accountants.

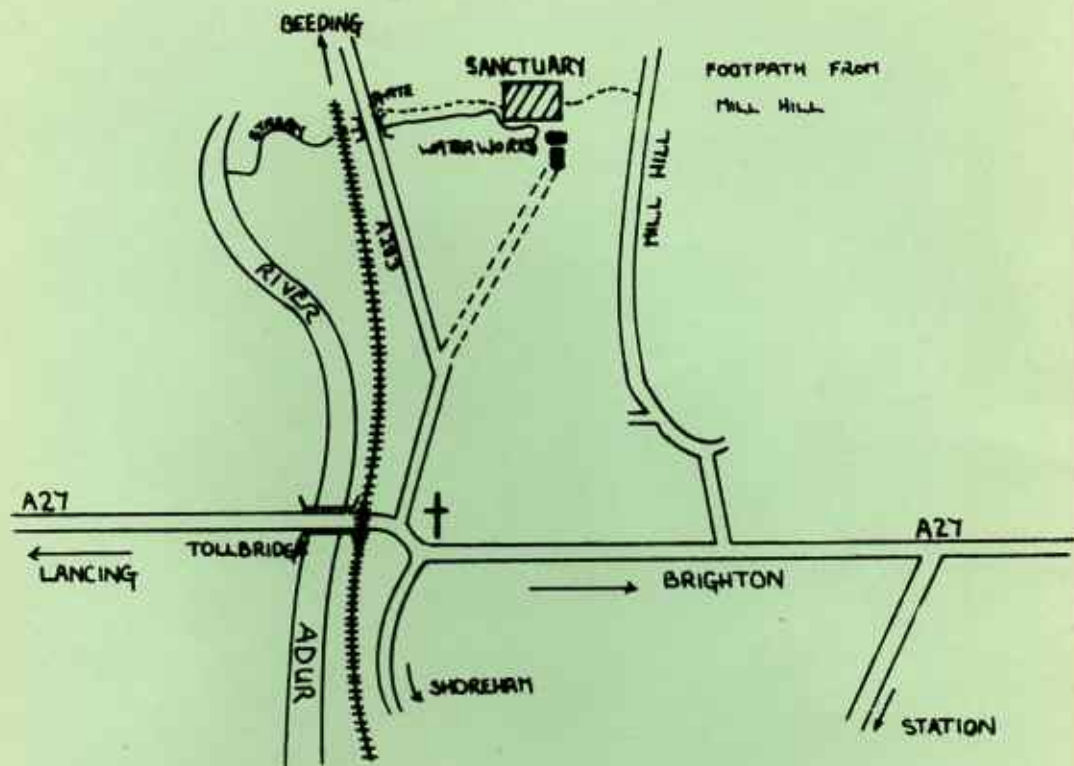
GENERAL INFORMATION

Previous Years Reports

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

Membership

The number of members at the time of going to print was 86.



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