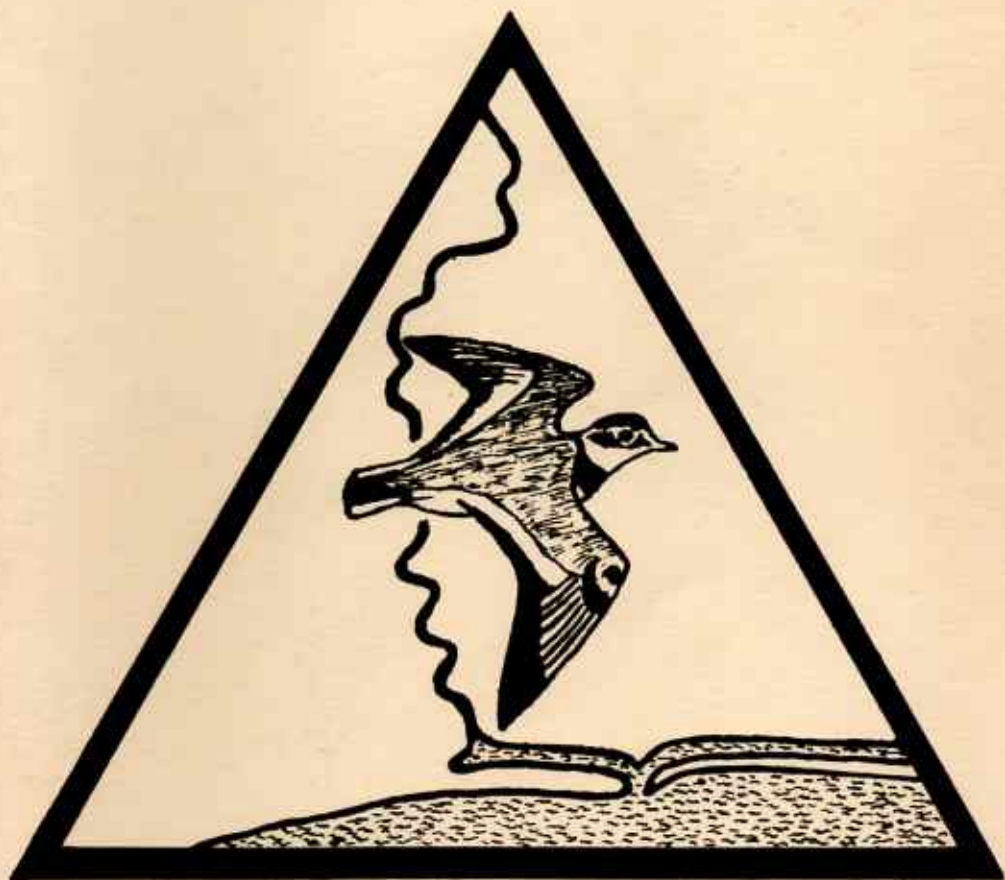


**Shoreham District
Ornithological Society**

REPORT 1985



No. 33

Price £1.00



Sociable Plover

Rhes

SHOREHAM DISTRICT ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Annual Report 1985

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EDITORIAL NOTES

It was hard to ignore the birds in 1985, indeed one of the best years the Society has had in terms of local ornithology has resulted in a more substantial report than usual to accomodate the observations. In particular, the extreme hard weather at the start of the year gave rise to some spectacular movements of birds which have been separately and well documented in a article by Dave Smith. In addition Richard Ives has kindly produced some excellent illustrations for this report, including sketches of some of the rarer of last year's visitors, which considerably enhance the report.

Apart from the birds the Society has continued with its programme of outdoor field outings and indoor lectures all of which have been well attended. The earlier innovations of the Newsletter and the Barbeque have now been established as popular and regular features of the Society year and will be continued.

Although during 1985 there were no areas of immediate concern to the Society regarding local conservation issues, Council continues a watching brief and will monitor and involve the Society where necessary to ensure that the local ornithological interest is well represented.

Limitations of space require me to be brief this year so a universal, but none the less sincere, thank-you to all those who have assisted throughout the year in arranging or helping with the barbeque, catering, raffles, deliveries, surveys, displays, lectures and field outings. Some of these activities are certainly less glamorous but without them the Society would not function as successfully as it does. It is often the same willing band of volunteers who come forward each time, giving of their own time and energy; during 1986 the Society will be looking for further volunteers, both to relieve some of the burden from the stalwarts, and to further promote the Society locally utilising the display. If you are able to assist please contact one of the officers.

BIRDS OF THE SHOREHAM DISTRICT 1985

1985 has been the year of the "megatick" for the local birder. All seasons produced special birds; the early months were dominated by the sub-zero temperatures bringing a plethora of duck, then an abundance of migrating seabirds predominated the spring and many a rarity enlivened the autumn.

January saw an interesting range of duck on the Adur with Smew and Goosander widely reported by many observers. Another feature of this period was Fieldfare and Redwing feeding in urban gardens, but a Ruff in a garden taking scraps had to be seen to be believed! The first Ring-billed Gull for our area (and only the 2nd for the county) was elusively frequenting the lower Adur and a Ruddy Duck in the harbour was another 2nd record. A Cetti's Warbler in song in a damp thicket lifted the winter gloom and even the isolated Downs harboured up to 5 Long-eared Owls and 2 ring-tail Hen Harriers. The unfrozen Ferring Rife afforded splendid views of Jack Snipe and many other hungry species.

February saw 2 Red-necked Grebes off Worthing Beach, an Avocet at New Salts Farm and 36 Grey Lag Geese at Widewater which were probably wild birds. An unexpected Sandwich Tern appeared over the Adur and also untypical was a party of 5 Pintail seen over Cissbury on the 17th of this month.

March, by early winter standards, was fairly quiet with just another Avocet on the River and a Little Ringed Plover on a flood pool near the Cement Works although at the end of the month Chiffchaffs and Wheatears were putting in their first appearances.

By April local Willow Warblers and Blackcaps were in song, joined by two migrant Nightingales and a Wood Warbler singing in a Goring Wood was the earliest for our district. Specialities of the month were a Merlin at New Salts Farm and a Glaucous Gull at Worthing Beach.

During May seawatchers had the best of the birds with good numbers of Great, Arctic and Pomarine Skuas, a Roseate Tern, the first Whiskered Tern for the area and a fine summer plumaged Little Auk. The dearth of Sand Martin records in the spring however was somewhat depressing and some observers also commented on a lack of House Martin and Chiffchaff, although Grasshopper Warblers singing at Devil's Dyke were a most welcome sound.

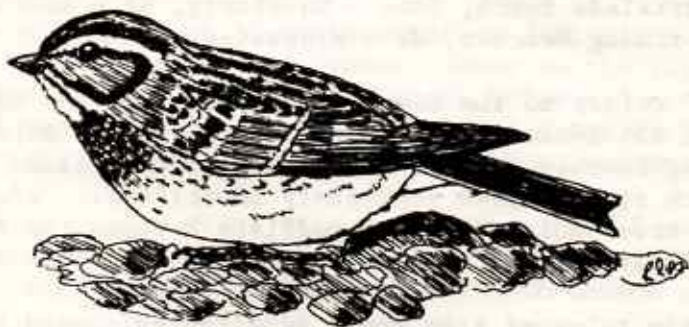
June and July are traditionally the slow, languid months but the Honey Buzzard watched in over the sea at Worthing Beach on June 8th increased the pulse rate of a lone observer; after a lengthy but not unexpected wait this is our first record. Three Manx Shearwaters and 131 Gannet were logged in one exciting day's seawatch; a single Manx also appearing later in the month. A male Gadwall at New Salts Farm was an interesting record; did it find a mate? Away from the coast a Long-eared Owl called for several days from a Shoreham garden in July and 5 Crossbills and a Quail were noted at Cissbury. Despite the wet, August produced yet another 11 Manx Shearwaters on the 11th, an exceptional flock of 200 Knot off Worthing Beach on the 13th, a Little Ringed Plover on the Adur and a Merlin at Truleigh Hill.

The remaining four months of the year produced some of the most exciting birds ever to be seen around the Shoreham area. 2 Marsh Harriers, Dotterel, Nightjar, Buzzard, Hobby, Ring Ouzel and Crossbill all occurred at or near Cissbury during September. The Adur contributed with 6 Curlew Sandpipers, a Little Stint and 16 Knot. Large numbers of Siskin and Redpoll were heard or seen overhead as they passed through. The star bird for September however was undoubtedly the Ortolan Bunting trapped at the Sanctuary but was alas only seen by one observer.

October and November attracted 4 species of rarity; 2 Yellow-browed Warblers, a Sociable Plover, 2 Lapland Buntings and 3 Dartford Warblers. The Plover drew massive crowds of watchers from many parts of the country although it was a local birder who logged Sociable Plover, Merlin, Dartford Warbler and Hen Harrier on one incredible day on the Downs when most of us struggled to see just one of these species during the whole period! Probably the most obliging bird was the Lapland Bunting on Goring Beach which afforded very close views. Other species seen that would normally have taken the honours during this exciting period were Crossbill, Snow Bunting, Firecrest, Little Auk and Black-necked Grebe.

December arrived and the bird life settled down to normality with the more usual observations such as Twite back on the River. The rarer sightings were 11 Bewick's Swans on the Adur Levels and a very late Pomarine Skua observed from Worthing Beach on December 21st.

B.F. Forbes.



Lapland Bunting

NOTABLE BIRDS OF THE AREA 1985

This systematic list of the birds in the Shoreham district is based on records submitted by the following:-

P.Allen, S.R.Allen, M.I.Banks, B.Buckler, E.Chadwell, G.L., L.M., M.L. & N.J.Champion, B.R.Clay, P.J.Clay, R. Edney, R.H.Eyre-Walker, J.Feest, B.F.Forbes, F.J.Forbes, C.J.Fox, E.Fuller, C.P.Griffiths, M.P.Hall, S.Harthill, S.Hitchings, C.Hope, R.Ives, R.W.C.Ives, P.James, L.R.Keen, D.King, D.H.Labdon, C.E.Messer, B.Metcalf, O.Mitchell, Dr.J.A.Newnham, K.Noble, A.J.Prater, G.Ralph, M.Raye, B.Reeve, M.Russell, R.J.Sandison, R.M.Shaw, B.Short, T.C.Smart, D.I.Smith, H.Sturman, J.Underwood, B.Upton, Dr.A.B.Watson, R.Weal, T.J.Wilson (See also seawatch report).

Abbreviations:-

ly - first year etc, ad - adult, f - female, ha - hectare, imm - immature, juv - juvenile, m - male, N - North etc., pr - pair, sp - summer plumage, wp - winter plumage.
AL - Adur Levels, Btn M - Brighton Marina, Ciss - Cissbury, CC - Cuckoo's Corner, FB - Ferring Beach, GG - Goring Gap, Harb - Shoreham Harbour, NSF - New Salts Farm, PB - Portslade Beach, Sanc - Sanctuary, SB - Southwick Beach, WB - Worthing Beaches, WW - Widewater.

'Downs' refers to the downland area between the Adur Valley and the A24 including Cissbury/Chanctonbury. References to Worthing Beaches (WB) in seawatching data include all seawatch sites unless separately identified. "Adur" refers to the river and associated mudflats between the footbridge and the flyover.

The table below of time spent seawatching should be considered when reading the seawatch summary tables.

Hours Watched	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	TOTAL
Worthing Beach	30	23	53	182	218	31	537
Brighton Marina	18	15	16	22	50	7	128

1. RED THROATED DIVER - noted offshore between Jan 7 and May 23 and again after Oct 15. Over 27% of flying divers at WB were identified as this species and the monthly totals were:-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Oct	Nov	Dec
Worthing E.	10	41	16	26	12	-	-	7	14
W.	17	12	-	-	-	-	1	23	19
Brighton E.	1	2	-	-	2				
Marina W.	1	2	-	-	-				

The peak movements WB were 16E on Feb 5; 15E on Apr 3 and 9E/7W on Dec 1 whereas at WW 1-3 offshore Jan 12 to Feb 12 and 29W on Feb 15: 1-2 offshore Btn M on 6 dates in Jan and Feb. Noted feeding WB on 9 dates late in the year with max.4 on Dec 18, 1 Adur on Nov 2 was unusual.

2. BLACK THROATED DIVER - recorded offshore between Jan 12 and June 6 and after Dec 15. Only 6% of flying divers were identified as this species and the monthly totals show it to be most numerous during the spring.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Oct	Nov	Dec
Worthing E.	1	1	2	17	12	1	-	-	4
W.	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Brighton E.	-	-	-	4	7	-			
Marina W.	-	-	-	-	-	-			

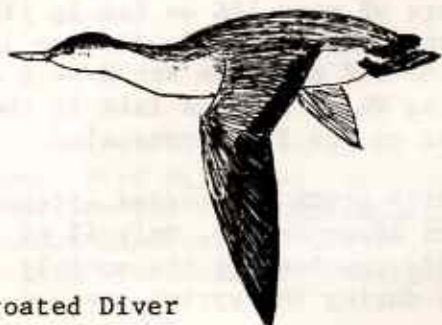
The largest movement was 7E on Apr 25. Singles noted offshore WB Jan 8, Feb 3 and 7: singles off Btn M on Jan 26 and Feb 14-15: singles off WW Jan 8, 9, and 17 and 2 there Jan 19.

3. GREAT NORTHERN DIVER - singles E WB on May 4 (DIS/RJS) and May 26 (DIS/GE) are subject to acceptance by SOS.

DIVER SP - offshore movements noted until June 9 and after Sept 14; the monthly totals of all divers seen were:-

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Worthing	E.	21	84	40	120	126	3	-	1	34	87
	W.	49	39	3	6	9	-	1	1	51	47
Brighton	E.	13	16	23	28	34	1				
Marina	W.	4	4	2	-	-	-				

Despite most being recorded in spring the peak movements were in the winter with 21W on Feb 3; 16E/19W on Dec 1 and 20E/5W on Dec 30.



Red-throated Diver

6. LITTLE GREBE - Max monthly counts on Adur; Jan -7, Feb -5, Nov -2, Dec -3 and max monthly counts WW; Jan-6, Feb-5, Mar-7 the last noted on Mar 29. Returned WW on Nov 5, 4 there in mid Nov and only 2 recorded in Dec showing a further decrease in numbers on WW. Singles on Brooklands Jan-Feb, Oct 9 and 2 there on Oct 13; 2 Btn M on Jan 16.

7. GREAT CRESTED GREBE - single Adur on Jan 11 and 3 there on Jan 22; most were noted offshore with 17 Shoreham/WW beaches on Jan 19 and 7 offshore Harb on Feb 24. Recorded WB between Jan and June 18 with total 30E/29W, max offshore there 8 on Feb 18.

Noted again WB after Nov 4, the total 7E/9W and max 3 on Dec 30: a single Harb on Nov 28 was the only other record late in year.

8. RED-NECKED GREBE - 2 WB on Feb 9 and 12, and a single there on Mar 4, possibly the same bird in Southwick Canal on Mar 3.

9. SLAVONIAN GREBE - most records related to the cold weather with 2 offshore WW on Jan 8 and 1 there on Jan 19; 1 WB on Jan 16; 1 Southwick Canal on Jan 27-28 and 1 Harb on Feb 19. Single WB on Dec 18 was the only record at the end of the year.

10. BLACK-NECKED GREBE - probably the same individual seen Shoreham Beach on Nov 28 (HS) and feeding on weed at edge WW on Nov 30 (RHE-W).

SLAV/BLACK-NECKED GREBE - singles E WB Mar 24, Apr 5 and 17.

12. FULMAR - recorded on seawatches at WB between Feb 20 and Dec 21 but the following table reveals how scarce they are from Sept until Mar.

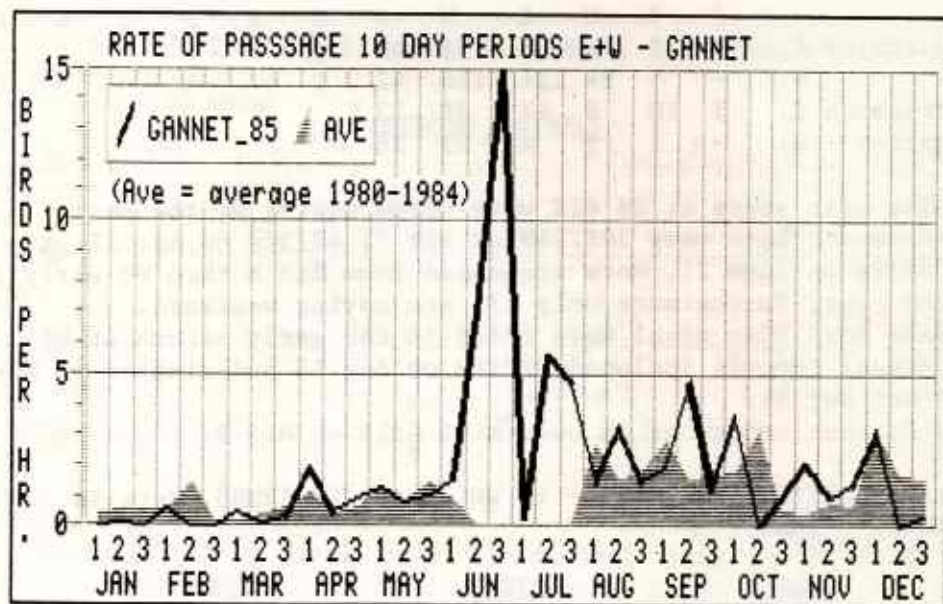
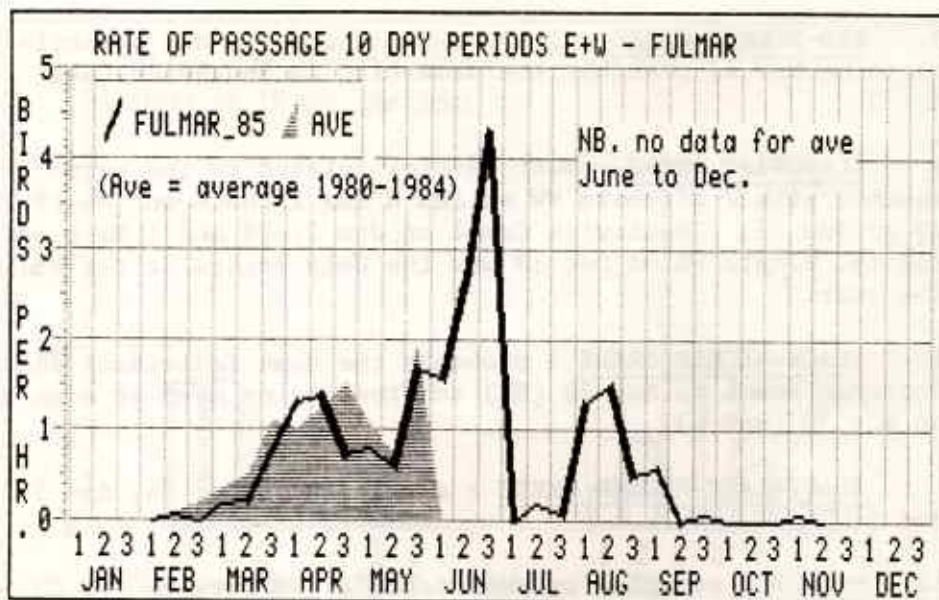
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Worthing E.	-	1	6	68	91	46	1	8	1	-	1	-
W.	-	-	24	124	126	42	1	47	4	-	-	1
Brighton E.	2	18	6	67	98	33						
Marina W.	-	1	1	4	25	16						

Like most years at WB 62% were noted moving W, the peak movements here were 20E/24W on Apr 7; 4E/31W on Apr 11; and 36E/9W on June 21. More are noted from Btn M than WB early in the year, furthermore only 17% are moving westward.

Many more than usual were noted in the early autumn at WB; unusual records included 2E/14W on Aug 11 and singles on Nov 4 and Dec 21.

A curious record of 1N over Mill Hill on May 9.

15. CORY'S SHEARWATER - 1W WW on Aug 19 (RMS), details sent to SOS.



18. MANX SHEARWATER - recorded on 12 dates at WB and Btn M between Apr 7 and Nov 4; the following table gives the monthly totals.

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Total.
E.	3	2	5	-	-	-	-	2	10
W.	8	1	-	1	13	-	-	-	23

There were fewer in the spring than recent years, however the number noted in autumn was higher with the peak of 11W on Aug 11. As usual the majority were the race "puffinus"; those of the race "mauretanicus" were noted on Apr 28 (2E), May 24 (1E), Aug 2, 11, and 15 (1W), and Nov. 4 (2E).

25. GANNET - recorded offshore during every month and the monthly totals are shown below:-

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Worthing E.	2	8	11	134	125	156	10	11	6	16	24	7
W.	2	-	10	71	116	88	80	109	37	17	15	13
Brighton E.	1	-	10	9	179	14						
Marina W.	-	-	-	-	19	6						

A higher proportion than usual (60%) were noted moving E WB in the first half year; more typically 79% were moving W in the autumn. The two main movements WB occurred in strong onshore winds, 70E/9W in 9.9hrs on Apr 7 were mainly adults whereas 131E in 3.8hrs on June 21 were immatures.

At Btn M the peak movement was 103E/5W in 8 hrs on May 15, a day when only 15 were noted in 13hrs at WB. Nearly 90% at Btn M were east bound.

26. CORMORANT - movements at WB remain as confusing as before with the monthly totals being:-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
E.	34	9	28	63	30	8	-	7	6	9	-	-
W.	50	4	26	60	66	11	-	1	11	30	14	3

At Btn M a marked roost movement is noted, the max seen in each month were 101W on Jan 19; 85W on Feb 3; 48W on Mar 16; 37W on Apr 17; 30W on May 16 and 5W on June 25.

Roost counts Wyckham Farm AL:-

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
-	17	24	30	16	6	17	17	26	20	21	-

Recorded Woods Mill in Apr and 15 Steyning on Nov 5.

27. SHAG - noted at Btn M on 15 dates until May 13 with most in Jan and a max of 12 offshore on Jan 16, further west singles off WW on 2 May dates and singles recorded WB on May 24-26, Aug 15, Sept 1 and Nov 15. The records show a further increase in this species.

39. HERON - no large numbers Adur during the winter possibly due to the frozen ground, 13 nests definitely occupied at Wyckham Wood heronry. Autumn counts Adur/NSF were Sept -16; Oct -13; Dec -10; single bird around Wood's Mill lake in Jan and Sept. 1W WB on Apr 29 and 1E there on May 18 were possible migrants.

46. MUTE SWAN - peak monthly counts WW:-

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
15	15	12	11	-	-	13	14	12	21

53 AL on Jan 20 and 29 there on Apr 13; 61 Cement Works on July 7 and Aug 7, 21 Adur at Shoreham on Aug 18. Pairs bred Patching Pond, WW, Brooklands, NSF, and Small Dole but failed to breed at Wood's Mill. 5 offshore WB on Oct 29.

47. BEWICK'S SWAN - 11SW AL on Dec 15 (BRC/CJF/DIS).

51. WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE - 120 N Hove on Jan 16 was, in view of the weather, surprisingly the only record.

53. GREY-LAG GOOSE - 4 over Wiston on Jan 26: 34E WW on Feb 9 and 36E over Lancing on Feb 10 may have been the same flock. 9 flightless birds AL in early July.

GREY GOOSE SP - 7E WB on Jan 17 and 17E, probably Grey-lags, WW on Feb 9.

54. SNOW GOOSE - a blue phase W WB on June 3 was undoubtedly an escape.

55. CANADA GOOSE - 2 WW between Feb 12 and 24 and again in May; 14 AL on Apr 7 and 9 there on Apr 13, 2E WB on Apr 15 and 1W there on Apr 24: 24W over Broadwater on June 10.

57. BRENT GOOSE - recorded until May 24 and again after Sept 27: as usual most were seen on seawatches and the monthly totals were:-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Worthing E.	18	222	6029	310	8	-	-	5	32	85
W.	366	28	12	4	-	-	5	112	764	65
Brighton E.	-	135	4139	58	17					
Marina W.	25	6	-	7	-					

A record spring movement WB of 3218E in 5.9hrs on Mar 21; 626E on Mar 22 and 746E on Mar 24. The peak at Btn M also Mar 21 where 3785E in 4hrs.

During Jan up to 101 in fields near Ferring Rife and 29 GG on Jan 19.

Autumn numbers WB lower than recent years with peaks of 260W on Nov 14 and 156W during cold weather on Nov 20. Flocks are now regularly recorded inland; 130SW over Sanc on Oct 19, 18S Adur Valley on Oct 25, 11W Airport on Dec 4. Up to 5 grazing on cereals near Sussex Pad in Nov/Dec and individuals noted at WW on various dates.

61 SHELDUCK - coastal movements at WB can be summarised:-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
E.	13	1	30	54	120	2	3	33	-	-	-	-
W.	367	12	4	57	89	-	-	13	-	-	182	55

Westerly movement is best noted during cold weather and the peaks of 62W on Jan 5, 225W on Jan 7, and 125 W on Nov 20 show this clearly. The main E passage, perhaps a moult migration to the German Waddensea, occurs in late May with peaks of 36E on May 13 and 27E on May 24. At Btn M small movements noted on 15 dates with a total 33E and 65W.

Max of 28 Adur in Jan and 16 there in Feb; 9 Ferring Rife on Jan 13 and 12 offshore WW on Feb 28. Single imms noted in autumn at Adur and WW.

64. WIGEON - the near arctic weather in Jan/Feb produced more records than usual with an estimated 3000 -3500 birds seen in the area. Details of these records are described in "Hard Weather Movements in early 1985" on page 62. Apart from records from WB and 8 at NSF most had moved away by Feb and the last were seen on Feb 20. Recorded again after Sept 13 and the total WB of 28E/502W was again mainly seen in harsh weather, the peak of 319W on Nov 20; 21 offshore Lancing on Nov 19.

67. GADWALL - 7 Adur on Jan 9; 23 offshore WW on Jan 14 and 7 AL on Jan 20 are the largest flocks seen in this area. A total of 10E/2W WB in Jan; 2f and 1m NSF Jan to June 1.

69. TEAL - small flocks of up to 12 recorded Adur/NSF in Jan; 41 Adur on Jan 20 when 27 AL also. 10 AL on Apr 13 and a pair there on Apr 30. Movements at WB totalled 16E/29W in the winter with a peak of 26W on Jan 7; returning birds seen WB Aug 25 until Nov 29, the total 17E/134W and the max 55W in cold weather on Nov 20.

70. MALLARD - the largest winter counts were 60 NSF on Jan 18 and 44 AL on Jan 20. Movements WB were prompted by cold weather; the annual total was 13E/119W and the only significant movements were 50W Jan 6-8 and 44W on Nov 19. Counts at NSF revealed 52 on Sept 24 and 23 on Dec 16; 95 Small Dole pit on Oct 1.

72. PINTAIL - 3 Adur Jan 18-19, 5 AL on Jan 20 and 5E over Cissbury on Feb 17. Seawatching WB noted 21W on Jan 7 and then a total of 13W on 4 dates between Nov 19 and Dec 1, the max 7W on Nov 21; finally 25SW Adur on Nov 24.

75. SHOVELER - 2 Brooklands on Jan 13 and 2 AL on Apr 13, noted sporadically WB where a total 19E/14W and max 10E on Jan 22 and 6W on Nov 20.

77. POCHARD - recorded WW until Mar 18 and the max monthly counts were:- Jan-10; Feb-12; Mar-12. Up to 9 noted Brooklands in Jan, 2 Southwick Canal on Jan 23 and 2 AL on Jan 20. Cold weather movements WB totalled 66W in Jan and 4E/12W in Nov. Returned WW on Oct 23, 3 there on Dec 3 and 5 on Dec 12, a max 5 at Brooklands in Dec.

80. TUFTED DUCK - max 13 Adur/NSF in Jan and 18 AL on Jan 20. At WW monthly counts show:- Jan-14; Feb-15; Mar-16; the last WW on Mar 19. At Brooklands up to 4 Jan/Feb. 12 AL on Jan 21. Record movements noted WB in Jan: total 14E/143W with a peak 103W on Jan 7, only 5E/12W seen here between Oct 27 and Nov 23. Returned WW on Nov 20, thereafter 5-6 here and Brooklands.

81. SCAUP - the records suggested 6-8 birds Adur, NSF, WW, and Harb in Jan and another 2 dead Adur on Jan 19-20. At WW 4 in early Feb, these possibly at Southwick Canal on Feb 15, and 2 still at WW between Mar 4-6. The only seawatching records were 2W WB on Jan 20 and 1E there on Mar 29.

82. EIDER - coastal movements noted WB can be tabulated:-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
E. 77	41	55	95	23	1	-	-	-	-	8	27	5
W. 65	9	32	11	2	-	-	21	-	-	5	17	6

The main movements were 39W on Jan 20, 76E/9W on Jan 22, 30E on Mar 2 and 26E on Apr 21. Noted on only 2 days in Feb and Mar at Btn M. During the later months far fewer than usual with no notable days at WB.

Elsewhere 10 offshore WW on Jan 19 and 3 there on May 1, a single bird Adur on Oct 21.

86. LONG TAILED DUCK - 2 f W at FB on Feb 20 (MPH) and 2 W WB on Nov 18 (JAN).

87. COMMON SCOTER - recorded passing WB during each month and the totals were:-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
E. 48	31	676	618	850	42	20	20	9	4	40	6	
W.226	15	-	25	48	21	64	27	3	14	17	4	

The most significant movements were 40E/200W in 1hr on Jan 22 and 368E in 4.7hrs on Mar 25; the rest of the spring passage revealed only low numbers (see fig on page ?).

Small numbers were also seen passing Btn M in spring with the monthly totals being Mar - 251E; Apr - 222E; May - 296E; June - 38E/48W.

A small flock of 44 at WW on Jan 9 and 12 feeding offshore WB on Jan 10.

89. VELVET SCOTER - The distribution of the records from WB show this to be a scarce duck except during the spring:-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
E. -	-	-	8	32	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
W. 6	-	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	2	-

The WB peak of 25E on Apr 7. The only autumn record of 2W on Nov 17. At Btn M recorded on 2 days in spring, 2E on Mar 25 and 19E on May 13.

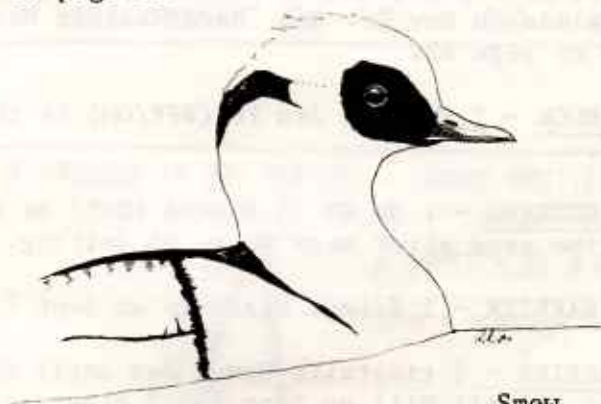
91. GOLDENEYE - a max of 8 in Lower Adur in Jan with 6 through Feb until Mar 11; 10 offshore WW on Jan 3, 3 Btn M on Jan 5, a single on Ferring Rife in mid-Jan and 2 AL on Feb 1 conclude the cold weather records.

Coastal movements of 22 individuals recorded WB between Jan 6 and Mar 22 with max 5E/3W on Jan 20 and 8E on Feb 12, a further 5 were noted there on 3 days between Oct 27 and Nov 20. 1W at Btn M on Feb 10.

Finally 3 Adur on Nov 9 makes the approximate monthly totals:-

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
34	17	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	6	-

93. SMEW - a record year with all the records occurring in Jan. First noted 1f W WB and 1E FB on Jan 7 followed by another 1W on Jan 8; 3 redheads Adur on Jan 18 were joined by 2m by Jan 19; a gathering of 34 redheads and 13m upper AL on Jan 20. A redhead stayed WW Jan 22 to 28 and 2 redheads on Southwick Canal on Jan 24. See "Hard Weather Movements in Early 1985" on page 62.



Smew

94. RED BREASTED MERGANSER - Regularly noted offshore during the winter and spring, the monthly totals from WB were:-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Oct	Nov	Dec
Worthing E.	40	94	184	219	26	-	-	7	14
W.	40	37	29	29	7	1	2	52	65
max no.offshore	47	70	54	26	-	-	-	10	24

The mid winter peak count was 70 on Feb 20; it would appear that eastward passage starts in Feb but it remains difficult to assess migration in this species at WB. The peak movements were 43E on Mar 21 and 44E on Mar 28. At Btn M only 12E noted all spring. Recorded Adur in Jan, Mar and Oct, with 1 AL on Jan 20. Autumn records WB start after Oct 6 with peak of 19W on Nov 14.

95. GOOSANDER - a most exceptional year with record numbers recorded, and like Smew, were first noted offshore with 7W WW on Jan 6, 1W WB on Jan 7 and 8 offshore FB on Jan 9. Larger numbers were involved in the second influx between Jan 16-20; 3 Adur on Jan 16, 10 there on Jan 17 and 33S followed 30mins. later by 17N on Jan 20. On the same day 25 SW over Airport, 19 AL and 3E WB. During this period singles seen Adur, NSF, Harb, and Southwick Canal, the last noted on Jan 24. Later in the year 1E WB on May 4, 1E there on Nov 24 and 4E Portslade on Nov 26. See "Hard Weather Movements in Early 1985" on page 62.

RUDDY DUCK - 1 Harb on Jan 18 (BFF/OM) is the second area record.

97. HONEY BUZZARD - 1 NW WB on June 8 (DIS) is the first record for the area after many years of waiting.

103. MARSH HARRIER - 2 f/imms Cissbury on Sept 7 (RI).

104. HEN HARRIER - 2 ringtails Downs Jan until Mar 31; 1W GB on Jan 14. 1 Mill Hill on Sept 15; 2 ringtails Downs between Oct 20 and Nov 12 were joined by a male on Nov 12. Finally a ringtail Upper Beeding on Dec 21.

108. SPARROW HAWK - recorded regularly in winter from 18-20 sites:- Downland-7; Coastal-8 and Wealden-5. Possibly 11 pairs located breeding in 7 areas. Autumn records involve 4 Downs in Aug-Nov, and 2-3 in lower Adur at the same time. Again seen regularly in several urban districts and most observers noted an increase in numbers. 1N WW on May 1 was possibly a migrant.

109. COMMON BUZZARD - 1W Upper Beeding on Jan 5 was an unusual date. Singles on 4 dates Aug 25 to Sept 20 Downs, and 1 over Cement Works on Nov 10.

115. KESTREL - Noted at seawatching sites on 5 dates between Apr 18 and May 26 with a further 2 arriving Portslade on Oct 29. Breeding season records suggested 25 pairs. The only autumn gatherings of 6 Downs on Aug 16 and 27.

118. MERLIN - 1 NSF on Apr 1; 1m Truleigh Hill on Aug 21 (a very early date); and 1 Steep Down on Nov 1-2.

119. HOBBY - Only 3 spring records: at Broadwater on Apr 27 and June 1, and over Lancing on May 14. In Aug singles recorded Wood's Mill, Upper Beeding and Devil's Dyke whilst in Sept noted at Shoreham and Upper Beeding. A total of 7 Downs during autumn, one watched taking a House Martin on Aug 15.

123. PEREGRINE - 1 Chanctonbury on Aug 29 (JU) is an early date. Details have been submitted to the SOS.

130. GREY PARTRIDGE - 1W along the shingle WB on Mar 25 was at least 2.5km. from the nearest suitable habitat.

131. QUAIL - single bird calling Cissbury July 16-18.

136. WATER RAIL - singles only recorded: during Jan/Feb at AL, Ferring Rife, Durrington, and one dead in Lancing. 1 AL on Apr 30. 1 killed by cat in Shoreham garden on Oct 20. Noted in Nov/Dec at St Botolphs, Sanc, and Sussex Pad.

142. MOORHEN - 37 Brooklands on Jan 23 and 9 Sanc Nov 30.

145. COOT - a large influx in Jan associated with harsh weather: 25 Adur on Jan 15 increased to 73 by Jan 19; 36 AL on Jan 20; counts at Brooklands increased to a max of 102 on Jan 23 and 88 were still there on Feb 16. Likewise 34 were still on Adur on Feb 14. At Brooklands 2 pairs bred, 12 there on Oct 9 increased to 40 by Dec 11.

151. OYSTERCATCHER - recorded in every month and as usual the largest numbers were noted on seawatches:-

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Worthing E.	25	74	79	201	309	6	28	103	37	91	35	147
W.	30	6	50	195	268	45	3	141	92	15	11	10
Brighton E.	-	44	57	105	158	32						
Marina W.	-	-	-	-	29	33						

These figures probably represent a local movement E in the morning and W in the evening, the evening flocks were invariably larger and included a party of 60W on Sept 9.

Increasing numbers at other sites: 23 GG roost on Jan 9, 38 on Shoreham Beach on Apr 18 and 30 there on Sept 11. Likewise 22 Adur on Aug 11, 23 WW on Sept 5 and 24 there on Dec 14 are larger numbers than past years.

153. AVOCET - a good sprinkling of records early in the year with 1 NSF on Feb 16; 1 Adur on Mar 24; 2W FB on Apr 6; 1E WB on Apr 19 and 1E Hove on May 22.

158. LITTLE RINGED PLOVER - singles in flooded pool near Cement Works on Mar 21-22; E WB on May 3 and 12; and AL on Aug 17.

159. RINGED PLOVER - Peak monthly counts as follows:-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
R.Adur	74	50	20	-	15	5	19	230	260	175	200	160
Goring	109	142	10	-	-	-	-	-	54	135	123	156

Coastal movements recorded between Mar 21 and late Sept, the monthly totals were:-

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Worthing E.	8	7	20	7	-	-	2	up to 25		
W.	-	3	9	1	3	94	39	on foreshore		

The peak movement was 55W on Aug 22.

A pair raised 2 young on Portslade Downs but the 3-4 pairs at WW were unsuccessful. 1 Cissbury on Aug 30.

163. DOTTEREL - 1 Downs on Sept 7 (RI), submitted to SOS.

165. GOLDEN PLOVER - 20 AL on Jan 22 and 6 there on Feb 3, cold weather brought more to the coast with 70W WB on Jan 7, 2 GG on Jan 26, 49 seen at 4 different sites on Feb 9 and the last in the winter were 2 Cissbury on Feb 23 and 1 Airport on Mar 2. Noted again Downs on Sept 21 and Sanc on Sept 28; 1-3 Downs Oct/early Nov with 31W there on Nov 7 and 14 on Nov 12. Single E WB on Nov 21 and 2W there on Dec 18.

166. GREY PLOVER - peak monthly counts were:-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
R.Adur	6	3	3	1	1	-	-	-	2	3	2	2
Goring	228	145	52	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	107	158

Coastal movements were below average in the spring and better than usual in the autumn, the monthly totals from WB were:-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
E. 14	17	1	47	88	1	-	-	-	-	-	8	-
W. 6	-	-	1	9	1	-	37	11	2	5	37	

The 2 peak spring days were Apr 7 (30E) and May 12 (26E); at Btn M the spring total was 26E/1W. The last spring record was on June 11. Autumn movements were mostly seen in SW winds with a max 13W on Aug 15.

169. LAPWING - cold weather movements S or SW only involved c 800 birds in Jan whereas 2000S at Hove and 500S WB on Feb 9 and 1928S WB on Feb 10. 100 GG on Jan 1 and up to 500 around Ferring Rife in Jan/Feb.

Downland count on Apr 30 revealed only 9 pairs in an area which supported 28 pairs in 1984. Post breeding flocks on Airport by July 15 and 1000 there by Aug 10. These dispersed

to newly ploughed downland in autumn and during Nov were found following the farm rotation or feeding on autumn sown cereal fields. By mid Nov most in Adur Valley where 2000 counted on Dec 4.

SOCIABLE PLOVER - a first year fed with Lapwings on Downs Oct 31 to early Nov, and was later seen in the Adur Valley, Airport, NSF and feeding on Adur until the end of the year(CEM/JAN).

170. KNOT - up to 4 Adur between Jan and Feb 26; 1 WW on Jan 9. Spring movements WB between May 5 and June 6 with total 87E/1W and peak of 40E on May 23.

Remarkable series of autumn records: noted regularly Adur Aug 12 to Oct 9 with peaks of 16 on Sept 4 and 11 on Aug 29 and Sept 13; flocks of 20 and 180SW WB on Aug 13 is the largest number seen in an autumn day in this area and 1 juv WW Aug 28 and Sept 12.

171. SANDERLING - max monthly counts at Goring Gap roost:-

Jan 20	Feb 6	Mar 27	Nov 27	Dec 14
100	34	236	40	89

This remains a very unpredictable roost site.

Coastal movements observed WB can be summarised:-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
E. -	-	-	3	176	380	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
W. -	2	10	9	58	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-

The peak movements 62E on Apr 4 and 49E on May 3, unusually none were recorded in June; although regularly seen on WB during late autumn and winter few are recorded moving. Small numbers noted beaches E of Worthing: 5 Ferring Rife on Feb 19.

175. LITTLE STINT - noted on 6 autumn dates from Aug 11 to Oct 9; singles at WB, WW and Adur with 2 Adur on Oct 9.

182. CURLEW SANDPIPER - a small but notable passage in Sept, first single Adur on Sept 3 then recorded until Sept 29 with max 6 on Sept 12: 6 WW on Sept 14 and 15, diminished to 2 on Sept 16.

183. PURPLE SANDPIPER - 2 Btn M on Jan 5 and Feb 13; 1E WW on Jan 17. Singles W WB on Aug 20 and Sept 4; finally 1 Btn M on Nov 30.

184. DUNLIN - The peak monthly counts were:-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
R.Adur	1030	500	70	13	-	-	7	33	35	15	520	1000
Goring	400	500	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	236	370

18 Ferring Rife on Jan 11, and 55 on floods near Upper Beeding on Feb 9. Fewer counts from WW; max 6 in July and 30 on Nov 17. Heard calling over Wiston Sept 23 and Oct 26.

The coastal movements from the WB sea-watching log were:-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
E.	-	-	50	369	63	5	-	5	1	5	-	-
W.	-	-	1	38	9	1	1	28	28	3	-	-

The peak spring movements were 115E on Apr 7 and 120E on Apr 18. There were no notable autumn movements WB but from Nov to Feb tidal movements can be seen involving up to 400 birds, as usual moving E to roost on rising tides and returning with the ebb. During the winter c.300 feeding on WB.

188. RUFF - most of the records were from the cold spell in Jan; up to 10 noted in the Adur Valley with max 10 AL on Jan 5 and 5 Upper Beeding on Jan 22; 2 or 3 Ferring Rife and taking kitchen scraps from gardens in Ferring and Maybridge in Jan; 1 WW Jan 24-25. 2 W WB on Aug 10 was the only record after Jan.

189. JACK SNIBE - up to 3 Ferring Rife from Jan 11 to 19 and 1 there on Mar 9.

190. SNIPE - typically a winter bird in this area; during the cold weather 160 AL on Jan 5, "many hundreds" reported in fields near Ferring Rife whilst 20 fed in the Rife stream on Jan 19; 35 Adur on Feb 1 but only 8 there by Feb 9: 45 AL on Apr 13 was the last spring record. 14 Adur on Nov 8 and 60 NSF on Dec 1; during cold weather total of 11W WB.

194. WOODCOCK - recorded between Jan 6 and Mar 4 from 11 localities and involving at least 26 birds; the majority were recorded in the cold weather with the max 9 Ciss on Jan 27, a single at Devil's Dyke on Dec 7 was the only record later in the year.

195. BLACK-TAILED GODWIT - singles at Hove Beach on Jan 6, GB on Jan 30 and Adur on Feb 10-11; 5E WB on June 4, 2W FB on Sept 21 and 4W there on Sept 27.

196. BAR TAILED GODWIT - more numerous than usual in winter with 14 Goring roost on Jan 20 and up to 3 Adur; 3 also here in late Apr. Unusual autumn numbers Adur - noted Sept 6 until Dec 14 with max 20 on Sept 6 and 13 on Sept 29. Unusually high numbers were seen passing WB in the winter and autumn but the spring total of 2336E was the lowest since 1981; the monthly totals from WB were:-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
E. 24	41	1	1844	475	17	-	-	1	3	2	-	-
W. 12	1	1	20	31	-	1	285	2	1	1	-	-

Although recorded until June 6 the spring peaks at WB were only 533E on Apr 24 and 597E on Apr 29; more atypical were 23E on Jan 7; 40E on Feb 28; 100W on Aug 9 and 160SW on Aug 13 (see fig on page ?).

At Btn M 500 of the spring total of 576E were also noted on Apr 29.

198. WHIMBREL - coastal movements at WB were noted between Mar 26 and May 26 in the spring and again between July 16 and Sept 10, the monthly totals were:-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
E.	-	-	7	403	331	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
W.	-	-	-	37	18	-	8	9	1	-	-	-

The peak movements were 195E on Apr 16 and 127E on May 13.
The monthly totals at Btn M were Apr (58) and May (37).

Inland records of 2 calling at Upper Beeding on Apr 17, 1 Cissbury on Apr 26 and 20S over Wiston on Aug 14. On both migrations up to 3 noted in the Adur Valley.

199. CURLEW - most were recorded on seawatches at WB were the monthly totals were:-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
E.	1	1	6	18	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
W.	84	1	2	8	5	119	14	26	4	-	1	-

The table includes a cold weather induced max of 61W on Jan 8 and a notable westward movement in mid summer with max 31W on June 23. At Btn M a total of 24E during Apr. Elsewhere 2 Ferring Rife on Jan 11, 15 Airport on Jan 21, 5 AL on Jan 22 and 1 there on Aug 25, and finally 3 Downs on Nov 3.

202. REDSHANK - peak monthly counts from the Adur were:-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
	116	70	60	-	-	27	-	54	102	-	94	107

Fewer noted GG roost with max 20 on Jan 9; up to 8 feeding Ferring Rife in Jan/Feb; small numbers passing WB Jan 7 to May 15, the peaks of 27W and 15W on Jan 7 and 8 respectively. An albino present on Adur between Aug 31 and Dec.

204. GREENSHANK - the only spring records from WB where 2E on Apr 19, and singles E on Apr 26 and May 26; recorded on 9 dates during the autumn (July 26 - Sept 14) involving probably 8 birds in the Adur Valley and 2W at WB.

208. GREEN SANDPIPER - more records than usual up to 3 Ferring Rife in early Jan, 1 at Swandean Hospital on Jan 11 and 1 over A27 at Worthing on Feb 9 may be same; 1 Adur Jan 9-16, then singles Woods Mill on Jan 16 and Apr 3, 1 AL on Jan 22 completes the winter records. 1 AL on May 18 then 1-2 noted AL on 4 dates between July 17 and Sept 17; heard calling over Wiston on Aug 20.

211. COMMON SANDPIPER - noted in spring between Apr 13 and May 29, involving 4 birds in Apr and 19 in May with a max of 5 WW on May 1. As usual more noted in autumn when at least 40 birds seen between July 25 and Sept 24, the majority were in the Adur Valley with peaks of 14 Adur on Aug 7 and 8 there on Sept 7.

213. TURNSTONE - singles Adur on Jan 28 and at WW on Feb 24 were the only winter records. Noted Adur and WW in spring but most WB where 129E/14W between Mar 18 and May 26, peaks were 19E on Apr 28 and 22E on May 4. Singles noted several dates Adur in autumn but 6 there on Dec 18. 10 WW on Nov 28 had increased to 23 by Dec 12. The max count GG roost of 5 on Dec 3 and 3 on WB throughout Dec.

217. POMARINE SKUA - recorded WB on 9 dates between Apr 26 and June 6; the monthly totals were Apr-4E; May-22E/31W and June-1E. The largest flock of 15W on May 13 was also noted at Selsey Bill; also on May 13 5E at Btn M.

The graph opposite clearly shows the peak Channel movements of this species in spring to be in mid May, occurring 10 days later than the peak of Arctic skuas.

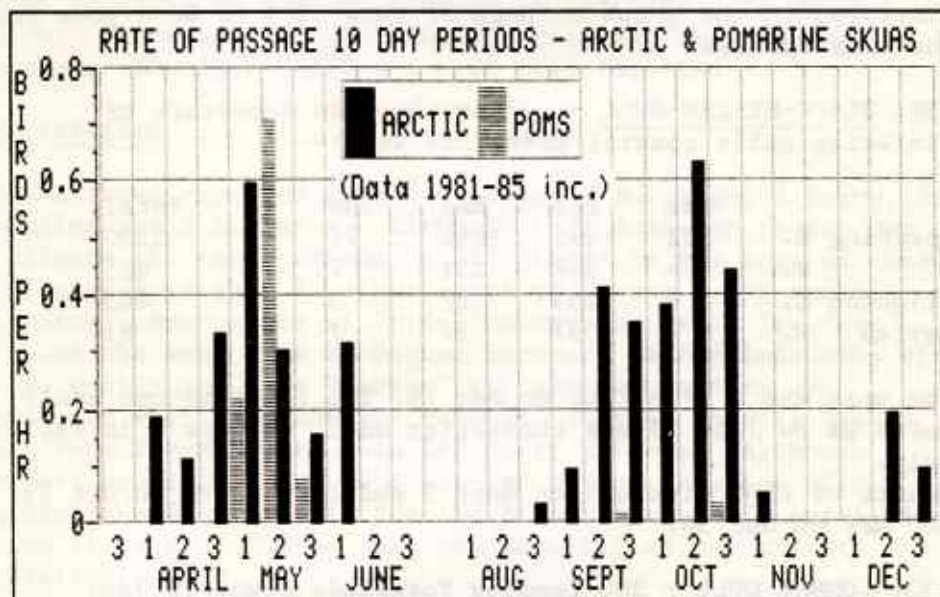
A late imm E WB on Dec 21 (JAN) was the only autumn record despite large numbers being seen in the North Sea.

218. ARCTIC SKUA - recorded after Apr 3 and the monthly totals recorded on seawatches were:-

		Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Worthing	E.	-	34	108	4	-	2	2	-	1	5
	W.	-	2	2	-	1	4	2	2	-	2
Brighton	E.	-	5	32	2						
Marina	W.	-	-	-	-						

The peak was a record for WB with 38E on May 5. Fewer were noted during the autumn but like 1983, several were seen late in the year with 3E on Dec 21, 2E/1W on Dec 22 and 1W on Dec 24.

The pattern of occurrence at WB is shown in the figure below.



220. GREAT SKUA - at WB 1E on Jan 27, then noted in spring between Apr 3 and May 25, the monthly totals were Apr-5E, and May 5E/5W: additionally 1E Btn M on Apr 19, 1E on May 5 and 1E there on June 22.

Despite nearly 200hrs watching WB during the second half of the year the only records were 1W on Aug 11; 2W on Oct 6; 1W on Oct 27 and 1E on Nov 4. This remains therefore, the scarcest of the regularly seen skuas.

222. MEDITERRANEAN GULL - fewer records than recent years probably involving 8 different birds; a 2nd yr WW on Jan 5, an adult SB on Jan 27, a 1st yr Harb on Feb 25. Eastbound spring birds were seen on Apr 25 (2), May 5 and May 26, and a 1st yr W at FB on Aug 21. None were seen later in the year.

225. LITTLE GULL - a single WW on Mar 31; recorded in spring WB between Apr 3 and May 25, 22 noted in Apr and 38 during May. The peak days were 9E on Apr 6 and 8E on May 21. The only autumn records at WB were 1W on Aug 20, 1E on Sept 16 and 3E on Nov 4. Comparison of these figures with those displayed in the graph on page 31 show 1985 to be a poor year for this species.

228. BLACK-HEADED GULL - after the main departure of wintering gulls coastal movements were:-

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
Worthing E.	222	1585	1446	77	3330
W.	-	367	251	7	625
Brighton E.	-	255	187	3	445
Marina W.	-	37	37	7	81

The peak was a mere 276E on May 18. The first autumn adult noted WB on June 23 and thereafter small numbers W in early July.

Counts of 2500 Cissbury on Sept 9 and 1600 there on Oct 13, 800 NSF on Dec 30.

233. COMMON GULL - 200 feeding Portslade Downs in Jan: spring coastal movements can be summarised:-

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
Worthing E.	12	460	53	2	527
W.	-	-	1	-	1
Brighton E.	15	144	102	-	261
Marina W.	-	60	89	-	149

The first adult returned WB on June 24. 600 Harb beach on Dec 17.

234. LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL - during the spring only 19E WB and 6E at Btn M. Few noted Adur and Small Dole.

235. HERRING GULL - records of the yellow legged race between June 20 and Oct 15, noted on Adur and Airport but no counts from Small Dole. The max count in each month was:- June -7; July -23; Aug -40; Sept -15; Oct -16.

237. GLAUCOUS GULL - a 1st yr W WB on Apr 18 (JAN) and a 1st yr Airport on Dec 29.

238. GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL - the largest counts were 330 Adur on Jan 30; 100 Adur on Oct 28 and 200 Airport on Dec 4.

RING-BILLED GULL - an elusive 1st yr Adur on Jan 11 and 22 (KN) and again Feb 9-10 (DIS). This is the first in the area and only the second for the county if accepted by British Birds.

240. KITTIWAKE - recorded offshore during every month and the monthly totals were:-

		J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Worthing	E.	8	21	64	63	195	1	3	20	-	1	505	38
	W.	4	4	16	79	68	7	2	74	12	2	10	65
Brighton	E.	-	53	2	115	211	12						
Marina	W.	-	-	-	12	31	15						

Unlike recent years no significant winter movements were seen. The spring peak WB was 47E on May 5 and the only notable passage recorded in the autumn was 505E on Nov 4. Singles noted occasionally in winter Adur, Harb, and Brooklands.

245. SANDWICH TERN - a single Adur on Feb 18 and 26 (KN); up to 4 there during Sept. Recorded offshore between Mar 22 and Oct 12, the monthly totals were:-

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Worthing E.	20	1603	1604	77	28	40	13	3	-
W.	-	164	91	26	45	357	142	14	-
Brighton E.	4	153	314	17					
Marina W.	-	14	35	12					

At WB the Apr/May rate was below average at 8.0/hr and the peaks were 330E on Apr 7 and 207E on May 4. The only significant movement of the autumn was 107W on Aug 31. 1 Ciss on Sept 14 was the only inland record.

246. ROSEATE TERN - 2W WB on May 23 (DIS).

COMMON/ARCTIC TERN - recorded offshore between Apr 3 and Oct 19, the monthly totals can be summarised:-

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Worthing E.	-	262	7571	144	10	83	5	-	-
W.	-	6	46	3	27	304	88	8	-
Brighton E.	-	48	2072	3					
Marina W.	-	-	4	-					

The main spring movement was slightly later than usual with the peaks 1338E on May 15; 695E on May 21 and 975E on May 23. The max on the return passage was a mere 74W on Aug 14.

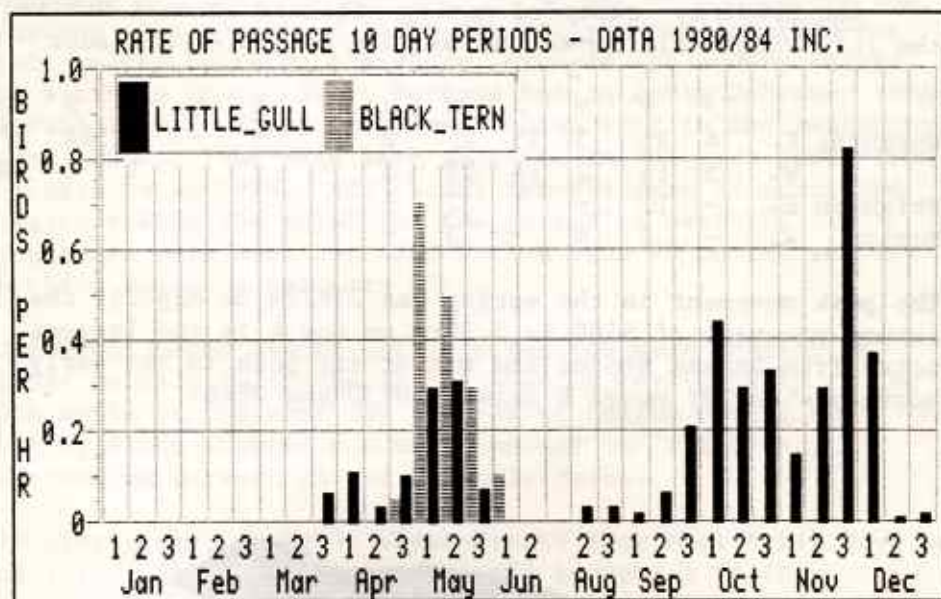
251. LITTLE TERN - noted offshore between Apr 3 and Sept 27, the following table demonstrates the monthly totals:-

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Worthing E.	-	59	421	5	-	4	-	-	-
W.	-	11	54	3	4	29	15	-	-
Brighton E.	-	-	55	-					
Marina W.	-	-	2	-					

Despite the earliest return ever recorded very few noted until May. Unusually high numbers seen WB during autumn with peaks of 11W on Aug 12 and Sept 14. Between July 31 and Sept 27 up to 6 noted Adur.

252. WHISKERED TERN - 1E WB during the evening on May 25 (JAN/DIS), it will be the first for this area if accepted by British Birds.

253. BLACK TERN - between May 4 and May 26 a total 60E at WB with the peak of 21E on May 21 and at Btn M 8E on 4 May days. The only other records WB were 2E on June 21; 2W on Aug 12; 1W on Aug 25 and 2W on Aug 27. The graph below shows the main passage time at WB and shows how scarce this species is at WB during the autumn.



255. GUILLEMOT - the most numerous auk although only a few are specifically identified: 8 found dead Shoreham beach Jan/Feb, up to 2 offshore WW and up to 3 off WB during winter and singles noted during spring. Seen again WB after Nov 4 with 81E during a large auk movement on Nov 4. The most unusual record of 1 on Adur on Aug 6.

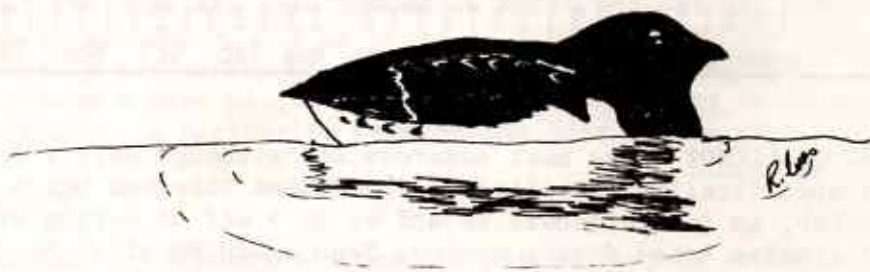
257. RAZORBILL - like the Guillemot very few are specifically identified; up to 4 seen offshore at Shoreham Beach, WW or WB during winter months. 11E/1W WB during Nov and Dec. It is interesting that a single was reported on the Adur on Aug 5!

LITTLE AUK - 1E in full sp at WB on May 24 was the latest recorded in the county and was one of several noted well south of their range in May. 1W WB on Nov 4 (JAN) is a more typical record.

AUK SPECIES - recorded moving offshore in most months; the following table shows the monthly totals of all auks -

		J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Worthing	E.	4	25	3	15	45	2	1	-	-	4	584	37
	W.	5	14	2	14	18	5	-	-	-	1	7	44
Brighton	E.	-	12	-	1	32	-						
Marina	W.	-	2	4	-	3	-						

The peak movement in the spring was 21E/2W on May 24; the autumn movement of 540E in 5.3hrs on Nov 4 is the largest noted from Sussex shores and was at its peak in the early morning when 291 moved E between 0730 and 0840.



Little Auk

RING NECKED PARAKEET - a single in Lancing garden Mar 9-10.

264. STOCK DOVE - reported from 6 localities during the breeding season including 3 prs Woods Mill; 70 Downs on Nov 12 was the only large count.

265. WOOD PIGEON - the only large count was 2000 Downs on Feb 20.

266. COLLARED DOVE - the largest gatherings were:- 75 Upper Beeding on Sept 13; 40 Ciss on Sept 18 and 180 feeding near grain silos Harb on Nov 28.

267. TURTLE DOVE - the first noted AL on Apr 30: 2 arriving from sea on May 17 and thereafter seen or heard at 14 localities during the summer; the last Mill Hill on Sept 12.

271. CUCKOO - the first records were singles at Woods Mill on Apr 19 then at Ciss and Ashurst on Apr 20. 6 Ciss on May 5, 1N WB on May 7 and 1 singing in a coastal Worthing garden on May 16 were migrants, although a max of 3 males at Woods Mill during May. During summer recorded from 18 localities with an increase in records from urban areas. No records were received for Aug/Sept.

274. BARN OWL - possibly 2 prs resident within the area. Apart from these 1 flushed from Airport ditch on Sept 14.

279. LITTLE OWL - an estimated 10 prs breeding included 3 at Wiston and 5 on the central downland block; regularly recorded upper Adur and Downs during autumn and winter. 1 Sanc. on Oct 23 was the first there for many years.

280. TAWNY OWL - 14 prs reported during the breeding season, one nest was abandoned due to tree felling. A single at Mill Hill on July 31 was the first there for many years. Noted at West Hove and Sanc in Nov.

281. LONG EARED OWL - 5 present at a downland site on Jan 26 and only 1 there on Feb 17; none were there in Nov/Dec. A bird calling in a Shoreham garden between July 6-13 (SRA) was unusual.

282. SHORT EARED OWL - the only 2 records were of a single flushed from a Goring garden at dawn on Sept 28 and 1 over Shoreham Beach on Nov 24.

284. NIGHTJAR - a single flushed near Ciss on Sept 12 was the only record.

289. SWIFT - first seen WB on Apr 29, thereafter 387 recorded arriving until June 22 with the peak of 317 on June 7. An earlier general influx was noted at coastal sites on May 1 and on May 2 at inland sites. Autumn gatherings and movements included 300 Ciss on July 29 and 1375S there in 4 hrs on Aug 16, 200 Ferring Rife on Aug 29, and 82S at WB during early autumn. The last at Ciss on Sept 11.

293. KINGFISHER - 1W WB on Jan 8, recorded Adur on 5 Jan dates but apart from a breeding pr at Woods Mill and 1 at Small Dole on July 13 there were no records until the autumn. These were singles in the Adur between Sept-Dec, at WW on Nov 6 and Worthing rubbish dump on Oct 13. This species has become scarce in the area, possibly due to the severe winter, and all records would be welcome.

300. GREEN WOODPECKER - probably 9 prs Downs with 3-4prs Ciss; 3-4prs Adur Valley and AL; 2 prs between Newtimber Hill and Devil's Dyke; several prs in Steyning, Wiston, Ashurst, and Rock Common. Away from these areas singles at West Hove on July 17 and at Sanc between Sept-Dec.

302. GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER - several prs reported Wiston - Steyning area; 2 pairs noted at Findon Valley, West Durrington, Swandean, Offington; single prs recorded at Chanctonbury and near Lancing College. Noted regularly Downs between Aug 31 and Oct 20; Sanc in Aug; and at Devil's Dyke and Newtimber in Sept.

303. LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER - resident at Woods Mill and bred near the reserve; 1 noted climbing reed stems NSF on July 15 and 1 calling Offington on Sept 10. Probably under recorded especially in the Wiston - Steyning area.

311. SKYLARK - the largest numbers were noted in the winter; flocks of 500+ Ferring Rife on Jan 11, 250 Adur on Jan 15 and 270 AL on Jan 20. 4 in Mill Hill garden on Jan 18. Autumn flocks of 130 Downs on Nov 10 and 350 there on Nov 12. Despite the cold weather few were seen moving along the coast at either end of the year.

313. SAND MARTIN - the numbers continue to decline: 2 Mumbles, Steyning on Apr 21 was the first record; only 5 seen arriving WB all spring and 1 Shoreham beach on May 17.

c35 occupied holes at Washington Sand Pits. The only autumn records were 3 GG on Aug 21 and 2 Ciss on Oct 13.

314. SWALLOW - first seen WB on Apr 8 and Woods Mill on Apr 12, fairly widespread by mid Apr. The total WB from Apr - June 7 was 362N with peaks of 36 on May 1 and 53 on May 16.

Only small movements noted in autumn with 300S FB on Sept 7, 340E Sanc on Sept 25 and 290E WB on Oct 18. The last records were 2 Ciss on Nov 12 and 1 Upper Beeding on Nov 17.

316. HOUSE MARTIN - first noted at Sompting and Upper Beeding on Apr 17; at WB only 77N during spring with peaks of 35 on May 1 and 15 on June 7. No breeding counts received.

Like the other hirundines the autumn numbers were low; 100 Cuckoo's Corner on July 26, 200 FB on Sept 7 and 300 there on Oct 17; 300E at WB also Oct 17, 100 Sanc on Oct 19, 60 Broadwater on Oct 30 and 2 still there on Nov 10. The last recorded Ciss on Nov 12.

320. TREE PIPIT - singles recorded Ciss on Apr 17, 26 and 27, and WB on May 3.

As usual mostly noted at Ciss during the autumn; a total 134 seen between Aug 10 and Sept 29 with peaks 35 on Aug 17; 20 on Aug 26; 25 on Aug 30 and 31 ; a total of 11 recorded from 4 other sites within the same period.

322. MEADOW PIPIT - in Jan 300 Ferring Rife and 20 AL on Jan 20; a total of 546 on 8 dates between Mar 19 and Apr 18 at WB with peaks 347N on Mar 28 and 138W on Apr 1.

The only notable autumn records were 200+ Ciss on Sept 26, 208 Newtimber on Sept 28 and a total of 65N WB during Oct.

324. ROCK PIPIT - 35 located on beaches from FB to Hove, most occurring around Shoreham where 7 on Jan 10. Returned to WB on Oct 19 thereafter seen at usual locations in small numbers.

325. YELLOW WAGTAIL - singles noted at Shoreham on Apr 10, Ciss on Apr 17 and WB on Apr 18. At WB a total of 24N during spring with peak 5 on May 1.

Autumn migration started on Aug 1 when 2 at NSF, 35 noted during Aug from various sites and 300 recorded during Sept. The largest flocks were 80 roosting at NSF on Sept 18 and 40 there on Sept 26, 24 WW on Sept 19 and 20 Brooklands on Sept 23. Last recorded on Oct 2 at WB and at Steyning road reed bed where 3 were trapped roosting with Pied Wagtails.

327. GREY WAGTAIL - at least 4 noted on the coast in Jan including 1 in a Shoreham garden on Jan 16. Bred at Woods Mill and resident at Ferring Rife. Probably 11 individuals recorded at 5 locations between Sept 8 and Oct 26.

328. PIED WAGTAIL - 23 WW on Feb 24; 150 at a pre-roost gathering near Cement Works in Mar; 60S Adur on Mar 17. Unusual numbers moving WB during autumn where 374E during brief morning watches Aug 24 - Nov 1; peaks of 84E on Oct 14 and 77E on Oct 15 occurred in settled weather. A small roost 2-300 Steyning road reed bed mid-Aug until mid-Oct thereafter main roost at "Seeboard" Worthing, flights to this roost

include 91E at Goring on Oct 12, 229E there on Oct 14 and 90W NSF on Oct 19. Abundant on beaches late in year with 20 FB on Oct 27 and 17 WW on Nov 28.

A single showing the characteristics of a "White Wagtail", *M. a. alba*, WW on Mar 12.

336. ROBIN - 1 singing at night Upper Beeding on Mar 30.

338. NIGHTINGALE - all records of singing birds: 1 No-mans Land on Apr 30; 2 Small Dole pits between Apr 26 and July 13; at Sompting Village between May 12 and 14; 1 at Oreham Common during May and 4 near Woods Mill on May 16; 2 Wappingthorn Wood on May 17 and 1 Chanctonbury on May 30 completes more records than usual.

342. BLACK REDSTART - as usual the majority of records come from the coastal belt with peaks in Jan associated with cold weather and a small spring passage mainly in Mar. However 1 in full song Worthing Pier on May 18.

Lower numbers than recent years in autumn with virtually no Oct/Nov passage and only 1 bird at WW in Dec. Records away from the coast were singles at Lancing College on Mar 31 and Steyning Round Hill on Nov 16, and 2 Ciss on Oct 21. The approx. monthly totals were:-

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
11	3	5	3	3	-	-	-	-	3	3	1

343. REDSTART - a female at WW on Mar 31 is the earliest record. The remaining 8 spring records were from 6 sites between Apr 20 and 30.

Only 26 at Ciss during the autumn including 12 on Sept 11. Elsewhere 6 on 3 days at Ferring Rife between Aug 31 and Sept 5, 3 Newtimber on Sept 8 and 3 Mill Hill on Sept 12. The Oct records were singles at Swandean, Shoreham and finally on Ciss on Oct 6.

344. WHINCHAT - a better than usual scattering of spring records between Apr 27 and May 25, 4 Ciss on this last date being the largest number.

First autumn bird at West Hove on Aug 18; only 19 noted Ciss between Aug 30 and Oct 6, which is a lower figure than daily totals in most years. At Ferring Rife 15 noted on 6 dates and small numbers seen at other sites on the coastal plain and Adur Valley.

345. STONECHAT - the winter records involved 10-11 birds seen at AL, Adur, WW and FB; the max 3 at WW on Feb 6 and 4 AL on Jan 12. Possible migrants were at Ciss on Mar 24, Ferring Rife on Apr 21 and at Lancing Clump on May 26. A pr bred Airport and 4 Ciss on Aug 24 had possibly bred locally. During Oct approx 21 birds were noted from Adur, WW, GB and Ciss with a max of 6 at WW on Oct 25. Noted towards the end of the year at WW, FB, Steep Down and Adur recreation ground.

The approximate monthly totals were:-

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
8	5	3	1	3	2	2	4	5	21	5	1

346. WHEATEAR - details of this species are shown in the survey report.

359. RING OUZEL - in spring only recorded at Ciss where 2m on Apr 17, 1m on Apr 20 and 2 f on Apr 26. Their downland preference was also shown in the autumn with records of 1pr at Ciss on Sept 20, 1m on Sept 21; 1m on Oct 6 and an imm trapped on Oct 27. The good total of 11 was completed with 1 at Sanc on Sept 25 and 1m at Swandean between Sept 28 and Oct 1.

364. FIELDFARE - large numbers were reported from gardens during the cold weather in Jan/Feb (see "Hard Weather Movements in Early 1985 on page 62.) Few were noted in Mar, the last departed from Woods Mill on Mar 21 and 7 at Upper Beeding on Apr 13 were the last in the spring.

After 7 at Ciss on Oct 18 and 1W WB on Oct 25 there were only scanty records for Nov. Larger numbers appeared in Dec when 100 at Southwick Hill on Dec 8, 172W Ciss on Dec 10 and 250 there on Dec 30.

366. REDWING - like the Fieldfare more than usual were seen in Jan and Feb. The last was seen at Woods Mill on Mar 22. The first records in the autumn were 3 at High Salvington and 9 at Ciss on Oct 13 followed by 8 at High Salvington on Oct 14. Nocturnal movements were heard on Oct 14 and 17. The first 2 seen at Sanc on Oct 16 and 30 remained there from late Nov until Dec. Counts elsewhere were 73 at Devils Dyke on Dec 7, 60 there on Dec 15, 50 at Southwick Hill on Dec 8 and 80 at Ciss on Dec 30.

369. CETTI'S WARBLER - 1 singing in typical habitat between Jan and Mar.

373. GRASSHOPPER WARBLER - 2 singing at Devils Dyke on May 3 and 1 there on May 10. The only other record was 1 imm trapped at Sanc on Aug 26.

378. SEDGE WARBLER - recorded after Apr 25 and most were seen around the Airport where 7 prs bred. Several noted at Patching Pond during the breeding season and 8 were singing at Small Dole on July 13. Only a few autumn records; 2 at WW on Aug 6, only 2 trapped at both Ciss and Sanc, and the last at NSF on Sept 25. This species is becoming scarce in this area and is the subject of a county study in 1986/87.

381. MARSH WARBLER - 1 singing on June 30, the only other record for this area was 1 trapped at Sanc in 1961.

382. REED WARBLER - the first were noted at Patching Pond on May 1 and 2 at NSF on May 4. Breeding was recorded at Patching Pond, Sanc and in the reed filled ditches by the Airport. A good autumn passage recorded at Ciss where 16 were trapped but at the Sanc the total of 14 trapped suggested a further decline. Singles in a Lancing garden on Sept 30 and at NSF on Oct 9 were the last records.

389. DARTFORD WARBLER - 3 singles were noted at WW on Oct 27 (RHE-W), on the Downs on Nov 2 (RI/CEM) and on Mill Hill on Nov 3 (PA). It is interesting these occurred within a short period and the only other records were in Nov 1961 and Mar 1974.

397. LESSER WHITETHROAT - the first 3 at Ciss on Apr 26 followed by 1 at Steyning on Apr 28. By early May noted at several sites with the max of 6 at Ciss on May 5. Breeding prs reported from Devils Dyke (4), Cote Street, Small Dole, Coombes (2), Hoe Court, Sompting and Sanc.

Low numbers were seen in autumn with peaks at Ciss of 20 on Aug 17 and 15 on Sept 21. Likewise at Sanc only 11 trapped throughout autumn, however at Newtimber 35 present on Aug 18 and 26 there on Sept 8. The last at NSF on Sept 28.

398. WHITETHROAT - a single at NSF on Apr 20 was the first and a single at Ciss on Apr 26 had increased to 5 by Apr 28. Breeding prs were noted at Woods Mill (3), Mill Hill (3), and at Devils Dyke (3). Autumn passage was less pronounced than previous years at Ciss where no counts exceeded 10. Likewise no passage was seen at West Hove Golf Course, only 4 were trapped at Sanc and at Ferring Rife the max was only 4 on Aug 29. The last was seen at Ciss on Oct 6.

399. GARDEN WARBLER - the first was seen at Mill Hill on Apr 30; thereafter 3 at Goring Wood and 1 at Woods Mill on May 2. Noted in the summer at Woods Mill and Devils Dyke. About 20 recorded on autumn passage at various sites; the max being 3 at Ciss on Aug 20 and the last at Woods Mill on Sept 14.

400. BLACKCAP - records between Jan 20 and Feb 21 from Offington, Shoreham and Upper Beeding suggest at least 9 were wintering. Spring arrivals were early with 4 singing between Durrington and High Salvington on Mar 3 and 1 in Steyning on Mar 12. No more recorded until 1 at Woods Mill on Apr 4 and the largest number seen in spring was 6 at Ciss on Apr 26. 1 singing Harb on Apr 27 was considered most unusual.

Autumn passage was at its peak in early Sept; 15 were trapped at Sanc on Sept 7 and 40 at Ciss the same day, 35 trapped at Ciss on Sept 8, 50 seen there on Sept 11 and 24 on Sept 12. December records included 1 at Hove on Dec 8 and a male at Sanc on Dec 29.

404. YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER - 1 NSF between Oct 16 and 19 (JAN) and another at Sanc on Oct 19 (JAN) were the 2nd and 3rd records for this area; the first in Oct 1967. These were part of a large influx associated with easterly winds.

408. WOOD WARBLER - 1 at GG wood on Apr 20 is the earliest recorded in this area.

409. CHIFFCHAFF - singles were recorded in Jan at Portslade, Ferring Rife, Steyning, Worthing and NSF. 2 were at NSF during Feb. The first migrants were at NSF and Sanc on Mar 10 followed by 1 at Woods Mill on Mar 12. The spring max was a mere 3 at Airport on Mar 30.

Autumn numbers at Ciss were average with peaks of 60 on Sept 11, 40 on Sept 12 and 20 on Sept 20. At Newtimber Hill 55 seen on Sept 8 and 10 on Sept 28. An average 33 were trapped Sanc until Oct 19 with 1 there on Nov 13. The last noted at Ciss on Dec 30.

410. WILLOW WARBLER - the first were at Woods Mill on Apr 2 and at NSF on Apr 3. Spring passage noted mainly at Ciss where 10 on Apr 12, 52 on Apr 18, 50 on Apr 26 and 20 on May 5. The only other count was 20 at Goring Wood on May 2. At Devils Dyke 9 prs bred.

The largest movements in autumn occurred in mid Aug; 250 at Ciss on Aug 17, 72 at Newtimber Hill and 23 trapped at the Sanc on Aug 18, and on Aug 22 a peak of 16 occurred at Ferring Rife and 40 were trapped at Ciss. The last 2 were at Ciss on Sept 15.

411. GOLDCREST - the only record of note was 30 at Ciss on Oct 6.

412. FIRECREST - 1 in a Shoreham garden on Nov 16 was the only record.

413. SPOTTED FLYCATCHER - although 2 at Ferring Rife on Apr 27 were very early there were only 5 other records until June 2. Reports of breeding birds were from Goring Wood, North Lancing and Lancing College.

During autumn noted at 12 different sites until last seen at Coombes on Oct 6. The max counts at both Ferring Rife and Sanc were 5 at each site on Aug 31 whilst at Ciss numbers were low apart from 30 on Sept 11 and 16 on Sept 12.

416. PIED FLYCATCHER - the 4 spring records were of singles noted between Apr 25 and May 1 at Worthing, Ferring Rife, Ciss and NSF. During autumn 7 were recorded on different dates between Aug 14 and Sept 13 at Worthing, Ciss, Coombes, Lancing and West Hove Golf Course.

418. LONG TAILED TIT - early autumn flocks of 30+ at Woods Mill and 20 in an Offington garden.

419. MARSH TIT - 2 prs at Ciss during Apr with 6 there in Sept/Oct; 2 at Devils Dyke in spring and a single there on Dec 7; finally 4 at Woods Mill in Mar and Sept.

420. WILLOW TIT - recorded at Woods Mill on May 2; 2 prs at Devils Dyke between July and Dec; 4 at Newtimber Hill on Aug 18; 1 at Lychpole on Sept 12 and 2 at Findon Park on Nov 2.

422. COAL TIT - 1 at the Sanc between Oct 5 and Oct 13 was unusual at this site.

423. BLUE TIT - 15 nest boxes were occupied at Woods Mill.

425. NUTHATCH - breeding records were from Clapham Woods, Woods Mill (2), Steyning Grammar School, Steyning Horseshoe (2), and Wiston (2). 1 at Ciss on Aug 17.

427. TREE CREEPER - resident at Woods Mill and Goring Wood. 1 Sanc between Oct 26 and Nov 13.

436. JAY - 8 at Small Dole on Sept 25 and a daily westward movement involving 1-3 birds was seen at Findon between Oct 17 and Oct 29.
437. MAGPIE - 35 roosting at Mill Hill on Nov 25 and 24 at Ciss on Dec 10.
438. JACKDAW - 10 prs bred at Rock sand pits, 200 at Cement Works on Oct 3.
441. ROOK - all rookeries in Upper Beeding and Steyning were counted revealing 152 nests.
442. CARRION CROW - 40N to roost at Highdown on Nov 11 and 85 on the Airport on Nov 24.
444. STARLING - c.50,000 occupied the Easthill Park, Portslade roost on Jan 13 and 5000 in Adur Valley on Nov 10.
448. TREE SPARROW - although there was a welcome increase in the number of records this species remains uncommon in this area. Apart from 7 at Sompting refuse tip on Feb 6, 3 at Ciss on Nov 12 and 40 at Sussex Pad on Dec 1 the records were of single birds. Prs attempted to breed at AL and Woods Mill.
451. CHAFFINCH - 50 at Ciss on Oct 24, 40 roosting at Sanc in Nov-Dec, 38 Devils Dyke and 100 Sweet Hill in Dec.
452. BRAMBLING - despite cold weather the only records were at Sanc where up to 4 noted between Feb 6 and Mar 2, and 7 at Wiston on Dec 17.
455. GREENFINCH - the only flocks recorded were 50 at Ciss on Sept 2, 90 on Shoreham Beach on Nov 24, and 42 there on Dec 6. Only 8 noted moving at WB throughout autumn. A common garden bird with up to 18 different individuals trapped in a day in a Worthing garden.

456. GOLDFINCH - none were recorded in the first 3 months. In spring a total of 58N or E at WB between Apr 18 and May 10 with a max of 38N on May 1. Eastward movement also noted WB in autumn where the total of 774E between Oct 1 and Nov 14; the peaks during settled weather when 125E on Oct 18, 169E on Oct 20 and 144E on Oct 24. The same movements noted in similar short watches at WW where 206E on Oct 24 and 114E on Oct 25. Small flocks of 33 Ciss on Oct 20, 31 NSF on Oct 14 and 30 at Airport on Nov 11.

457. SISKIN - the only spring record was 10 Sanc on Mar 2. In keeping with other Southern counties a large influx was recorded in Sept/Oct with most in late Sept. At Ciss the total of 231W or NW included a peak of 117W in 2hrs on Sept 20. A further 110 were seen or heard flying over at many other sites, the largest group being 20S at Worthing on Sept 26.

458. LINNET - in contrast to Goldfinch, movements at WB were most obvious in spring when 228E were seen between Apr 8 and May 26 with a peak of 34E on Apr 19. During autumn only 82E at WB with a peak of 42E on Oct 17. The only large flocks were 100 at Ciss on Aug 15 and 150 there on Oct 16.

459. TWITE - up to 9 were recorded between Jan and Mar 30 at Shoreham, however none were seen during the harsh weather between Jan 6 and Feb 5. Returned by Nov 24 and 8 there on Dec 6.

460. REDPOLL - 2 at Durrington were the only records before a large autumn influx with Siskins. Most then were seen at Ciss where the total of 90 included 48W in 2hrs on Sept 20. Elsewhere 78 were noted between Sept 22 and late Oct; the max on Oct 13 when 11W Adur and 15 at the Sanc.

463. CROSSBILL - an unusual number of records between July 8 and Nov 16. The first were 2 at Washington Common followed by 3 at Wiston on July 16 and 5SE at Ciss on July 18. Thereafter only singles noted on 5 other dates at Wiston or Ciss.

493. LAPLAND BUNTING - a 1st yr m at Goring Beach between Nov 19 and Nov 22 (DIS) was joined by a female on Nov 21 (RJS). These are the 3rd and 4th noted in this area.

494. SNOW BUNTING - 2 at WB on Oct 12 and 1 at GB on Nov 9 were the only records.

496. YELLOWHAMMER - flocks noted were 50 at Ciss on Oct 22, 30 Sanc on Oct 23, 85 Sweet Hill and 24 at Devils Dyke on Dec 7.

499. ORTOLAN BUNTING - a 1st yr male trapped at Sanc on Sept 11 (JAN) was the second record for the area.

506. REED BUNTING - during the severe weather in Jan counts of 20 at both Ferring Rife and in Adur Valley and seen in gardens in Goring (4) and Upper Beeding.

510. CORN BUNTING - winter flocks of 200 at Ferring Rife on Jan 11, 50 on downs near Portslade on Jan 1, 36 Mill Hill in Feb and up to 10 at WW during Jan/Feb. During the summer 18 prs singing between Portslade and Devils Dyke and 6 prs between Ciss and Stump Bottom. A further decline noted at Sanc where the largest flock was 15 on Oct 23.



Dartford Warbler

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE OF MIGRANTS IN 1985

This feature has been compiled from records sent in by local observers. Abbreviations are the same as in 'The Notable Birds of the Area'.

<u>Species</u>	<u>Arrival</u>	<u>Departure</u>
Whimbrel	Mar 26 WB	Sept 16 Adur
*Common Sandpiper	Apr 13 AL	Sept 24 Adur
Sandwich Tern	Mar 22 WB	Oct 12 WB
Common/Arctic Tern	Apr 3 WB	Oct 19 WB
Little Tern	Apr 3 WB	Sept 27 Adur
Turtle Dove	Apr 30 AL	Sept 12 Mill Hill
Cuckoo	Apr 19 Woods Mill	Aug 30 Cissbury
Swift	Apr 29 WB	Sep 11 Cissbury
Sand Martin	Apr 21 Mumbles	Oct 13 Cissbury
Swallow	Apr 8 WB	Nov 17 Upr. Breeding
House Martin	Apr 17 Sompting	Nov 12 Cissbury
Yellow Wagtail	Apr 10 Adur	Oct 13 Cissbury
Redstart	Mar 31 Widewater	Oct 6 Cissbury
Whinchat	Apr 27 Ferring	Oct 6 Cissbury
*Wheatear	Mar 24 Cissbury	Nov 5 Downs
Reed Warbler	May 1 Patching	Oct 9 NSF
Whitethroat	Apr 20 NSF	Oct 6 Cissbury
Lesser Whitethroat	Apr 26 Cissbury	Sept 28 NSF
Garden Warbler	Apr 30 Mill Hill	Sept 14 Woods Mill
*Blackcap	Apr 4 Woods Mill	Oct 6 Cissbury
*Chiffchaff	Mar 10 NSF	Oct 19 Sanctuary
Willow Warbler	Apr 2 Woods Mill	Sept 15 Cissbury
Spotted Flycatcher	Apr 27 Ferring	Oct 6 Coombes

* Excluding possible wintering birds.

RINGING REPORT FOR 1985

For the tenth successive year the total of birds ringed in the area exceeded the 3000 mark. The majority of this total of 3245 were, as usual, ringed as full grown birds and a mere 205 marked as pulli. The proportion ringed as nestlings fell to 6.3% keeping the local figures well below the national averages.

The cannon netting programme to catch gulls on Sompting Tip continued; although the number trapped in 1985 was fewer than in recent years, the total of 1287 gulls was the largest single contribution in the area. These catches frequently contained up to 25% retraps showing how faithfully the gulls returned in each winter to a known feeding site. Dr. Barrie Watson, as well as leading the the gull studies, caught 396 smaller birds in and around Shoreham; these included 157 Pied Wagtails trapped roosting in a local reed bed. Dr. John Newnham mist netted 182 birds in his Worthing garden and 590 at the Sanctuary; within this second total was the only new bird for the ringing list, an Ortolan Bunting. The activities of the Steyning Ringing Group, led by Phil and Brian Clay, showed some changes over the year as only 48 birds were ringed at the Mumbles whereas their trapping of migrants during the autumn on Cissbury produced 741 birds.

Such changes in ringing effort have to be considered whilst looking at Table 1 where the totals of the 51 different species are displayed. Undoubtedly many Blackcaps passed through the area as shown by a record total of 188. Whitethroats too, were numerous as this years total was also a record but this, in part, must represent the increase in effort at Cissbury. On the negative side both Reed and Sedge Warblers were trapped in smaller numbers with the lowest totals since 1966 and 1964 respectively. The Ring Ouzel was only the second to be ringed in this area, the last in 1959.

TABLE 1

Sparrow Hawk	2	Whitethroat	59
Kestrel	4	Garden Warbler	16
Black-headed Gull	1173	Blackcap	188
Common Gull	93	Chiffchaff	95
Lssr Black-back Gull	1	Willow Warbler	258
Herring Gull	28	Goldcrest	36
Swift	2	Spotted Flycatcher	5
Wood Pigeon	2	Pied Flycatcher	1
Green Woodpecker	2	Long-tailed Tit	38
Swallow	41	Marsh Tit	6
House Martin	1	Coal Tit	8
Yellow Wagtail	3	Blue Tit	272
Pied Wagtail	157	Great Tit	98
Wren	31	Tree Creeper	1
Dunnock	58	Jay	1
Robin	60	Starling	66
Redstart	3	Chaffinch	58
Ring Ouzel	1	Brambling	1
Blackbird	84	Greenfinch	67
Fieldfare	4	Goldfinch	28
Song Thrush	30	Linnet	1
Redwing	12	Bullfinch	51
Grasshopper Warbler	1	Yellow Bunting	17
Sedge Warbler	4	Ortolan Bunting	1
Reed Warbler	38	Reed Bunting	8
Lesser Whitethroat	28	<u>TOTAL</u>	3245

Recoveries - the following are the more interesting recoveries reported during 1985:-

1) Black-headed Gull. During 1985 there were 13 controls from:- England (2), Belgium (6), Netherlands (2), Finland (2) and Estonia (1).

The recoveries reported are shown below; it is interesting that 80 are from abroad whilst only 39 have been reported in Great Britain. The large numbers in Denmark are partly due to the enthusiasm of a small group of ornithologists studying this species.

The British recoveries were from Sussex (19), Kent (3), Oxford, Greater London, Essex (4), Cambridgeshire (3), Norfolk, Devon (2), Hampshire (2) and Surrey.

The foreign recoveries were reported from Finland (12), U.S.S.R. (7), Denmark (24), Sweden (14), Netherlands (11), German Democratic Republic (8), Poland, West Germany (2) and France.

2) Common Gull. Recoveries from Kent and Berkshire were recorded. The only interesting recovery was:-

Ringed	adult	24-03-82	Sompting Tip.
Found dead		15-09-84	Kiyev, USSR. 2173km.E.

3) Herring Gull. Recoveries were all within England and comprise of Sussex (7), Hampshire (2), Dorset (4), Devon, Kent and Norfolk.

4) Pied Wagtail.

Ringed	pullus	15-07-85	Woods Mill Henfield
Controlled		16-08-85	Shoreham Reed Bed Roost.5km.

Ringed	Ad.f.	11-10-84	Shoreham Reed Bed Roost
Controlled		17-05-85	Carlisle, Cumbria.(Nesting)

These two recoveries demonstrate that the local roost serves birds of both local and more distant origins. Several local recoveries have been generated by ringing at the roost site but the only other distant movement involved a control from Yorkshire in 1982.

5) Reed Warbler.

Ringed	juv.	27-08-85	Beachy Head, Sussex.
Controlled		31-08-85	Shoreham Sanctuary. 40km.W.

Note the short time between these two captures. During most years movements of this kind are recorded; Reed Warbler recoveries were summarised in the 1980 ringing report.

6) Whitethroat.

Ringed	1st yr.	29-08-84	Cissbury.
Controlled		10-08-85	St.Albans Head,Dorset.121km.

This, our first recovery of a Whitethroat, was presumably both ringed and controlled on autumn migration.

7) Starling

Ringed	Ad.f.	03-12-80	West Worthing.
Found dead.		15-05-85	Panevezhis,Lithuania.1742km.

Ringed	Ad.m.	04-03-84	West Worthing
Shot		16-12-84	W.Vlaanderen, Belgium.259km.

Ringed	Ad.f.	22-02-82	East Cosham, Portsmouth.
Controlled		14-02-85	West Worthing. 46km.E.

These typical movements augment those in the 1983 report.

8) Yellow Bunting.

Ringed	juv.	24-07-82	Shoreham Sanctuary
Found dead.		20-11-84	Near Fulking. 6km.

There were, as usual, local recoveries and retraps which help to build a more complete picture of the behaviour and movements of our local, common birds.

Dr.J.A.Newnham.

SANCTUARY REPORT 1985

The Sanctuary was visited on at least 60 occasions throughout the year; 32 of these were long visits with mist nets set for trapping and ringing. The bitter cold of early January deterred these operations and the first visit to the copse was not logged until January 27th when a Society work party succeeded in clearing small areas of hawthorn and hazel on the south side of the Sanctuary. A second 'conservation' party helped to restore the level of Osiers on the north side of the copse. I would like to thank all those who helped with these clearing tasks which enhance the habitat and maintain the level of the vegetation suitable for mist netting. Further maintenance of bridges, fencing and path clearing continued throughout the summer months.

During February the records reflected the harshness of the Winter; Woodcock and Snipe were seen regularly, parties of Redwing frequented the hillside and up to 4 Bramblings mixed with the small Chaffinch flocks. The last Brambling was noted on March 2nd when 10 Siskins were also present.

By March 10th the first Chiffchaff was monotonously singing and Spring seemed imminent as resident species were busy nest building. The subsequent arrival of migrants was only patchily recorded and like the last two years no large falls of warblers were noted. A pair of Mistle Thrushes, Long-tailed Tits, Carrion Crows and Kestrel were amongst the more regular species breeding in the Sanctuary. Numbers of most species fluctuate from year to year but I cannot recall a year when only two pairs of Swallows occupied the garage rafters.

The wet Summer and early Autumn limited mist netting activities considerably and resulted in the low totals of birds ringed. Thankfully fine weather accompanied a party of local school children who visited the copse to see some of the common and garden birds in the hand.

The first signs of Autumn were an increase in the number of warblers and a notable eastward movement of Swifts on July 27th. The strong west winds and unsettled weather of August was unfavourable for small migrants to depart from the country and it was thought that many of the warblers and flycatchers were concentrated in S.E. England. The number of warblers ringed during the Autumn is shown in the table which, despite less opportunity, reveals an increase over 1984 in some species, particularly Willow Warblers with a peak of 23 trapped on August 18th, and Blackcaps (max. 15 trapped Sept 4th).

Numbers Ringed During Autumn 1985

Sedge Warbler	Reed Warbler	Lesser White	Common White	Garden Warbler	Black-cap	Chiff-chaff	Willow Warbler
2	14	11	4	4	47	33	55

However declines were noted in both Reed and Sedge Warblers; the latter was once a common migrant at the Sanctuary and is now becoming quite unusual. Another scarce warbler, the Grasshopper Warbler, was trapped on August 26th; the same day a Greenshank passed overhead.

Throughout August and September Yellow Wagtails were regularly seen overhead but the numbers of hirundines seemed fewer than usual, the peak of 340 Swallows passed eastward during the afternoon of Sept 25th and no large gatherings of House Martins were recorded.

Like the last few years the early autumn flocks of finches and buntings were small so it was a pleasant surprise to find an attractive male Ortolan Bunting in a mist net on Sept 11th. Later in the Autumn small flocks of Goldfinches, Chaffinches and Corn Buntings were recorded and at least 30 Yellow Buntings could be seen together. Both Green and Great Spotted Woodpecker occurred in September; a Ring Ouzel was seen on the hillside on Sept 25th and a Golden Plover on Sept 28th was unusual.

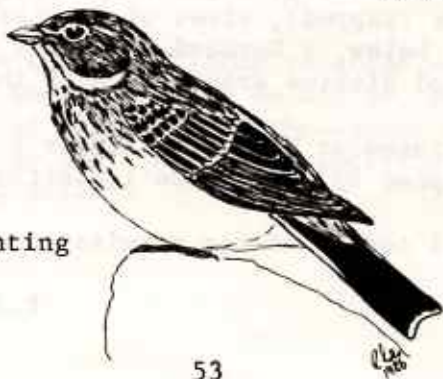
National ornithological newsletters reported large movements of Siskins starting in early autumn; this was echoed at the Sanctuary as small numbers of both Siskins and Redpolls were seen on each visit between Sept 25th and Oct 26th. After the Ortolan in mid-September two other new species were added to the Sanctuary list on Oct 19th; a delightful Yellow-browed Warbler was watched flitting in the willows regularly calling its distinctive note, meanwhile a large skein of 130 Brent Geese passed southward overhead.

The berry crop in late autumn was magnificent; the hawthorns particularly bearing a rich red harvest but few thrushes were seen until late November when 60 Redwings were present with upto 50 remaining to feed throughout December. Both Little and Tawny Owl were recorded in the late Autumn, a Water Rail returned to the streams in mid-November and small flocks of Lapwings were seen feeding on the water meadows. The mild weather was perhaps responsible for a small flock of Goldfinches remaining into the winter and for the sight of a male Blackcap on Dec 29th; a single Siskin being present on the same day.

Once again I would like to express the Society's thanks to the helpful and cooperative staff of the Southern Water Authority who remain interested in the activities at the Sanctuary. Furthermore I would like to thank those who have helped with the "conservation" work, the observations and the mist netting at the copse.

Dr. J. A. Newnham.

Ortolan Bunting



STEYNING RINGING GROUP REPORT FOR 1985

The first ringing of the year was done at the Mumbles reserve at Steyning two weeks after the first Willow Warbler arrived on April 7th. Two were retrapped on May 12th having returned to breed for another year and one was later retrapped again on July 21st in full moult having completed nesting. Not enough ringing sessions were carried out to give an analysis of the breeding Reed Warbler population although the year was generally poor with only 48 birds ringed at the site during 7 visits.

Cissbury however was more profitable with a total of 741 birds ringed during 27 visits. The bulk of the birds were ringed in August and September with peaks in August on the 20th (74), 22nd ((61), 26th (80) and a total of 89 on September 8th. Willow Warbler was the main species trapped in August with 24 on the 20th, 40 on the 22nd and another 24 on the 26th. In September the Blackcap was predominant with 35 on the 8th when last significant catch of 13 Willow Warblers was also made. New species for the site ringing list were Sparrowhawk (2m), Jay (1), Green Woodpecker (2), Redstart (3) and Ring Ouzel (1). The presence of Redstart in the totals can partly be attributed to better net sites and new rides, and more new sites are planned for next season. News has just been received from the B.T.O. of a Chiffchaff ringed in Wales and retrapped at Cissbury and a Cissbury Wren that moved to Kent; more details in next years report.

Sightings during the ringing sessions were again delightful with the usual constant passage of Tree Pipits in the mornings (2 were trapped), views of harriers over the downland fields below, a Buzzard on August 31st and again on September 9th and Siskins around much of the time.

No pulli were ringed at Wiston this year but only three nest boxes were occupied by tits; bees inhabiting two others!

My thanks to all concerned for permission to operate the sites.

P.J. Clay.

JAMBO NDEGE!

During the Christmas 1985 and New Year 1986 period my wife and I were very fortunate to spend a holiday in Kenya. Going by Kenya Airways the flight time from London Heathrow to Nairobi via Rome was 10 hours. Upon landing in Kenya one soon learns two important facts; firstly that "jambo" is swahili for "hello" and equally obvious, there are birds (swahili - "nedge") wherever you look. Kenya is an ornithologists paradise. Those seeking exotic reptiles and mammals don't fare too badly either! However, time and space do not permit a detailed description of our four-legged observations.

As you drive from the airport to your Nairobi hotel it is difficult to believe that you are in a Third World country. Nairobi's beginnings date from the last year of the nineteenth century when it formed a convenient base for the construction of the East African Railway. Its centre has been well planned and has incorporated numerous tower blocks which gives it a sky-line not unlike that of Croydon! There the similarity ends for Nairobi boasts cleanliness and a profusion of Hibiscus, Jacaranda, Bouganvillea, Frangipani and Acacia along the main roads and in neighbouring parks. Such plants have a colourful avian following but it was a Black-headed Heron and a Black Kite that formed our first "ticks". The latter were always present above the city and could be viewed frequently, gliding and diving in their relentless search for food.

Having into booked our hotel our eyelids begged for closure but our binoculars seemed to have other ideas! We were soon touring the nearby Nairobi National Park within the confines of a zebra-coloured mini-bus. Standing guard in a tree at the park entrance were half-a-dozen White-backed Vultures and a single Tawny Eagle. Already it was apparent that we were to receive a feast of predators.

The vastness of Africa is matched by the size of some of its birds and in our first day's excursion we were treated to several examples. Coincidentally as we were watching a Masai

Giraffe a pair of Masai Ostrich strolled into view. Equally impressive were the Kori Bustard, the snake hunting Secretary Bird and the majestic Crowned Crane.

Our itinerary dictated that "Christmas Week" would be spent "on safari". The day after arriving in Nairobi we departed the Kenyan capital in a mini-bus accompanied by a family party of six and our Kikuyu driver. By the end of the third day our enthusiasm for birding had rubbed off to the extent that the family were photographing birds as well as animals and even asked to borrow one of our field guides! Perhaps it is appropriate here to mention the bird book for Kenya - J.G. Williams' "A Field Guide to the Birds of East Africa" which saw much use and aged greatly during our travels.

Heading north we paused for lunch at the Outspan Hotel in Nyeri. It was in a cottage in the grounds of this establishment that Lord Baden Powell spent his final years. What a beautiful and lush setting it is, overlooking Mount Kenya (17,058 feet). As we idly sipped coffee on the terrace we were treated to sightings of Kenya's smaller and more colourful birds including the Bronze Mannikin and the nectar-sipping Bronze and Collared Sunbirds. Giving effortless aerobatical displays from a nearby tree were a group of Little Bee-eaters.

From Nyeri we made the half-hour road and track journey to the famous "Treetops Hotel". Whilst the adjacent water hole is popular with the animals that we had come to view, the central reed beds were the home of the Speke's Weaver who enjoyed commuting to the hotel's balcony to seek out the crumbs dropped during afternoon tea. Other crumb-searching visitors were the Blue-eared Glossy Starlings with their piercing yellow eyes and a group of arrogant Baboons. The "hole" was also home to some brash and noisy Egyptian Geese and some more subdued Ring-billed Ducks. As evening approached a Pied Kingfisher arrived to demonstrate its hovering ability whilst Red-rumped Swallows made low sorties over the murky water. After dinner and with midnight approaching the spotlight waterhole continued to be visited by various animals including three "outcast" elephants. Of

especial interest to us was the background call of the Abyssinian Nightjar and the fearless pair of Egyptian Geese who took their five chicks for a late night waddle into the bush before returning to the water.

Our stay at Treetops was all too brief. On the road again we ascended the Aberdare Range attaining more than 8,000 feet above sea level. 'En-route' we crossed the Equator three times before descending into the Rift Valley to visit Lake Nakuru which is often credited with affording one of the greatest bird spectacles in the world. Certainly the thousands of Lesser Flamingoes who were in residence made a spectacular sight. Accompanying the lake's pink fringe were numerous White Pelicans, White-necked Cormorants, Yellow-billed Storks and African Spoonbills.

Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing Day were spent at the no less spectacular, fresh water, Lake Baringo. This location is not nearly so densely populated with birds but its resident ornithologist, Terry Stevenson (world record holder for spotting the most number of birds in 24 hours), has recorded 457 in the vicinity. We were fortunate to be able to join one of his "bird walks" when the highlights included Ruppell's Long-tailed Starling, Grey-backed Fiscal Shrike, Pygmy Kingfisher and Northern Masked Weaver. The Weavers first arrived at Lake Baringo in 1969 and have successfully bred there ever since.

Christmas morning saw us on a small boat on Lake Baringo primarily in seach of hippopotami and crocodiles. There was no rest for our well thumbed field guide as we viewed a variety of birds fishing for their Christmas dinner! Pink-backed Pelicans, Long-tailed Cormorants and Goliath Herons were three notables but all paled as we approached Ol Kokwa Island. Here we were treated to close views of the African Fish Eagle with its white head and chest. Equally fascinating were a pair of Hammercop resting on a rock. This bird is the sole member of the "Scopidae" family and feeds largely on frogs and tadpoles.

After a splendid Christmas dinner served to a recorded accompaniment of "Carols from Kings College, Cambridge" we relaxed in the grounds of the Lake Baringo Club. With the temperature nearing 90 degrees F. in the shade, it was enough to shelter under a palm tree and lazily await the birds to come to us. Our "Christmas presents" continued with the arrival of a Bristle-crowned Starling folowed by a noisy and amusingly titled White-bellied Go-away Bird. Whilst the latter did depart we remained and "tick" number one hundred arrived in the form of a Hunter's Sunbird with its distinctive green cap, red chest and black body. Most male sunbirds have a brilliant metallic plumage which is seen to good effect in the African sunlight.

From Lake Baringo we retraced our steps to head south and west. Climbing out of the Rift Valley we rattled and bumped along the dirt tracks that form the main roads of the Masai Mara Game Reserve. This area is an extension of Tanzania's famous Serengeti National Park and offers the chance of watching "big game" at close quarters. These expansive grasslands are again the home of many large birds such as the Ground Hornbill. On first distant viewing we made the common mistake of crediting it as a domestic turkey! Perhaps most incongruous was the observation of a kingfisher perched on a tree apparently miles from any water. Our field guide revealed it to be a Striped Kingfisher which prefers dry country and feeds upon lizards and large insects. Equally fascinating, though anticipated, were the Yellow-billed Oxpeckers seen performing acrobatics on buffalo as they searched for their ticks! Meanwhile overhead, there seemed to be an endless procession of birds of prey, notably the Bateleur and Augur Buzzard.

And so it was that we returned to Nairobi - rather exhausted and in need of a holiday! From here we took the very comfortable over-night train to the coastal city of Mombasa. In the space of 13 hours the train slowly descends the 325 miles from Nairobi's 5,971 feet to sea level. The dry heat of the highlands was replaced by the hotter and humid coastal climate. At our hotel a few miles north of Mombasa we chose to relax and occasionally gaze out to sea. Our "tick" rate

dropped dramatically but we were pleased to meet more familiar species such as the Curlew and Turnstone. Yet there were still surprises as when a pair of Woolly-necked Storks dropped in at low tide one afternoon and were soon joined by a trio of Sacred Ibis.

More than 1000 species of birds are known to occur in Kenya - our final tally was a modest 157. Kenya is a remarkable country which offers much, its people are friendly and its feathered occupants most co-operative to observers. Should you be seeking a Third World holiday with avian interest then Kenya can be wholeheartedly recommended.

J.M. Maskell.

GARDEN BIRD FEEDING SURVEY

The Society's study of birds feeding/drinking in members' garden's has now completed three winters. Although contributors are still fewer than one would wish, a reasonable body of data is being collected and the total list of species seen using our gardens is now 43. (The B.T.O. scheme with 180 contributors has a total of 84 for 1984/5). During the past three years 19 contributors have taken part in our study, with yearly figures as follows:-

1982/83:- 8

1983/84:- 13

1984/85:- 13

Four contributors have kindly taken part in all three years.

Discussion

Comparison between the list of species compiled after three years and the 1982/83 list shows that the common garden birds remain the usual visitors to our feeding stations, but that a number of species are becoming more frequent attenders.

Total List of Birds Recorded

<u>Species</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>%</u>
Blue Tit	100	Blackcap	29
Blackbird	100	Herring Gull	24
House Sparrow	100	Fieldfare	24
Starling	100	Goldcrest	18
Dunnoek	100	Kestrel	15
Robin	100	Sparrowhawk	15
Song Thrush	100	Rook	12
Collared Dove	97	Chiffchaff	12
Chaffinch	94	Jay	12
Great Tit	94	Green Woodpecker	12
Greenfinch	91	Reed Bunting	12
Black-headed Gull	67	Grt-spotted W/pecker	6
Wood Pigeon	62	Long-tailed Tit	6
Wren	53	Short-eared Owl	3
Pied Wagtail	53	Firecrest	3
Carriion Crow	47	Goldfinch	3
Magpie	47	Nuthatch	3
Coal Tit	41	Willow Warbler	3
Mistle Thrush	41	Tree Sparrow	3
Redwing	41	Twite	3
Jackdaw	41	Black Redstart	3
Common Gull	38		

The extreme cold of early 1985 had a direct effect on species such as Redwing, Fieldfare, Blackcap and Reed Bunting which became both frequent and occasionally numerous visitors to gardens where they had previously been only occasional or absent. In Ferring, but unfortunately not in my garden, Snipe, Woodcock and even Ruff took food from gardens.

The effect of the cold winter on other species is much less easy to deduce from the data collected. 1984/85 was in fact two very different years; October to December 1984 were some of the mildest winter months recorded yet January and February 1985 produced some of the lowest temperatures ever in Sussex. Nevertheless, apart from the species already

mentioned, there were no dramatic changes in bird numbers between the mild end of 1984 and the cold start to 1985.

Some slight trends can be suggested; Song Thrushes, like their northern relations, used gardens more frequently and in greater numbers. Chaffinches and possibly Greenfinches also visited more often, although my own Greenfinches deserted our garden and have not yet returned.

The tits, particularly Great Tit and Coal Tit, seemed to vacate gardens during the extreme weather, although Blue Tits were not so significantly affected. Jays became more regular visitors perhaps because of new contributors but also possibly due to the 1983 influx of Jays into Britain.

The Rook remains an uncommon bird in our gardens although where it does occur (Roy Sandersons and Richard Eyre-Walkers) they can be regular and numerous (maximum 4). Why Rooks do not feed in some of the larger gardens such as John Newnham's and my own where Jackdaw, Carrion Crow and Wood Pigeon are regular has yet to be established.

As the survey continues more questions will be raised and perhaps even a few may be answered.

Many thanks to all contributors:-

S.Allen, E.Chadwell, R.Edney, R.Eyre-Walker, J.Feest, M.Hall, T.Hicks, H.Jackson, G.Martin, J.Newnham, J.Nye, Mrs.Ranger, R.Sandison, J.Stafford, B.Upton, C.Walder, P.Walker & R.Woodward.

M.P.Hall.

HARD WEATHER MOVEMENTS IN EARLY 1985

Introduction

The months of January and February 1985 will be remembered for their prevailing severe weather conditions. A combination of bitter northerly and easterly winds, snow, ice and sub-zero temperatures brought a large influx of birds either into or passing through our area, some species in unprecedented numbers. A harsh spell was experienced in both months with the bulk of the records originating in January; consequently all dates refer to this month unless otherwise indicated. The bias toward coastal records in January probably reflects the relative inaccessability of inland sites, particularly the Downs, during the month.

Weather Summary

Mild conditions in December 1984 continued to the end of the year. The new year commenced with high pressure to the West bringing a change from a westerly to a cold northerly airstream and by the 6th even colder air arrived over the South of England, followed by substantial snowfalls over the ensuing days. The following week brought freezing easterlies, maintaining sub-zero temperatures to at least the 19th, after which the freeze broke and milder conditions were experienced until the 6th February. An anti-cyclone to the north east of the country generated the second harsh spell with strong easterly winds, more snow and temperatures well below freezing. These conditions continued to just after the middle of the month, finally being replaced by mild south-westerlies.

Wildfowl

The major movements involved wildfowl, many probably of continental origin. Wigeon were first noted in numbers on the 7th when 735 passed west off Worthing Beach with a further 297 on the 8th when 120 were on the Adur, increasing to 200 by the 21st. On the 9th 100 flew north over Sompting Tip while 300 were counted at New Salts Farm, this group

expanding to 390 by the 18th. 250 were off Widewater on the former date, increasing to 300 by the 11th when 130 were also seen off Worthing Beach. In the extreme west of the area 250 arrived in fields adjacent to Ferring Rife on the 13th, 200 remaining there to at least the 19th. The largest flock reported was of 950 on the Upper Adur on the 20th, spread across and covering both banks of the river. Allowing for duplications a minimum total of 3000 to 3500 individuals were involved, not including those which may well have passed through under cover of darkness. Wigeon were also recorded in the second spell, the peak being 367 west off Worthing Beach on the 9th February.

Record Gadwall numbers were reported, notably the flock of 23 offshore at Widewater on the 14th. Additionally 10 flew east at Worthing Beach on the 8th with 2 west previously on the 6th. 7 were on the Upper Adur Levels on the 20th and 3 were at New Salts Farm on 15th February.

In the initial cold spell small Mallard numbers moved west offshore. Teal were few considering the conditions with a peak of only 41 on the lower Adur on the 20th, on which date a separate flock of 27 was on the Upper Adur. Offshore, 26 flew west at Worthing Beach on the 7th.

Pintail were virtually absent, only 9 being reported; 2 west at Worthing Beach on the 7th, 3 in the New Salts Farm/Adur area on the 18th/19th and 4 on the Upper Adur levels on the 20th. 10 Shoveler passed east at Worthing Beach on the 22nd in the opposite direction to most of the anatidae movements and on the 13th 2 were at Brooklands. Scaup, not an infrequent visitor to the area, were on Widewater with 4 on the 31st and 2 passed west off Worthing on the 20th. Tufted Duck and Pochard, usually few and far between on sea-watches at this time of year, passed west in good numbers at Worthing Beach; 103 of the former on the 7th and 66 of the latter on 3 dates between the 8th and the 14th.

Sea ducks were well represented and involved mainly offshore movements. Between the 20th and 22nd 48 Eider passed west with 76 east; 200 Common Scoter also moved west with 76 east.

There were smaller numbers of Velvet Scoter and Goldeneye flying west with 6 and 3 respectively, 5 of the latter species also moving east. Long-tailed Ducks only appeared at the end of the second spell, 2 passing west off Ferring Beach on the 20th February. Rafts of Common Scoter and Eider were evident offshore at Widewater with 44 of the former on the 9th and 10 of the latter on the the 19th.

Goldeneye took advantage of the of the available unfrozen water, scattered singles and small groups being reported along the coastline from Brighton Marina to Ferring Rife. Peaks were 10 off Widewater on the 3rd and 8 on the Adur on the 20th. An early Shelduck movement took place, notably 225 moving west past Worthing Beach on the 7th. 9 were in the Ferring Rife area on the 13th and 27 on the Adur on the 21st.

Undoubtedly the most significant influx involved the two sawbill species recorded infrequently in our area, Smew and Goosander. On the morning of the 20th on the Upper Adur, two somewhat astonished observers watched small parties of the former assemble on a stretch of unfrozen river, forming a single group of 47 individuals (13 males and 34 'redheads'), which quickly dispersed, leaving as they had arrived in small groups. 19 of the latter species were also present (6 males and 13 'redheads'), and to complete the sawbill trio, a single merganser.

On that afternoon a flock of 33 Goosanders flew south-west over the Adur lower down at Cuckoo's Corner, the majority appearing to be 'redheads', while 25 flew SW over the airport. Half an hour later 17 were logged flying up-river (6 males and 11 'redheads') which may have been from the first group. Even allowing for the possibility that the 19 in the morning may have combined with further group(s) by the afternoon, this one day's total by far exceeds the previous annual area record (20 to 25 in each of the harsh winters of 1963 and 1979). Only a further 13 have been recorded in just 5 of the remaining years 1960-1984. From conversations with others outside our area it appears that a general influx of both species took place in both the East and West of the county at this time. For example, high Goosander numbers

were recorded on the same morning in the Greatham Bridge area of the River Arun and sizable Smew flocks were seen on the East Sussex reservoirs.

Additional Goosander reports were of 7 at Widewater on the 6th, a total of 4 west off Worthing Beach on 2 dates in January and 8 males off Ferring Beach on the 9th. 3 were on the Adur on the 16th, increasing to 10 by the 17th and 2 males flew NW over the river on the 19th. Singles were in Shoreham Harbour on the 19th and Southwick Canal on the 24th.

Returning to Smew, the assembly of 47 not only shatters the previous area record of 14 in the early months of 1963 but also, unless bettered elsewhere, exceeds the county record for a single group; 22 at Manhood End in early February 1956 (Shrubbs 1979). It is worth mentioning that in the remaining years 1960 to 1984 none were recorded in our area apart from a singleton in 1979. Additional reports were of scattered singles taking the total for the period to over 50. Mergansers were well recorded with a peak 70 on the sea off Worthing Beach on February 20th.

Most Brent Geese passed offshore but 100 were feeding on winter cereals in fields to the west of Ferring Rife on the 19th while on the same day 29 were at nearby Goring Gap. The Ferring flock thinned out but remained until February, fluctuating between 20 and 60 individuals.

120 grey geese, probably White-fronts flew over north Hove on the 16th. The February harsh spell brought a further movement involving Greylags, as described in J.A.N.'s seawatch summary. 53 Mute Swans were on the Upper Adur on the 20th and we may have expected at least one party of Bewick's Swans; although this species was recorded in phenomenal numbers on the Ouse Washes (5100 in February representing around 35% of the entire European wintering population), none visited our area. However there remains the possibility that Whooper Swans could have passed through undetected in the early morning of the 16th February as a party of 5 flew north-west over the Arun valley at 09.25 hours (pers. obs.).

Miscellaneous Records

Miscellaneous reports included an extraordinary party of 12 Shags in Brighton Marina on the 16th, a single Ruddy Duck in Shoreham Harbour on the 18th, single Mediterranean Gulls at Widewater on the 5th (second winter plumage) and Southwick Beach on the 27th (adult) and an Avocet at New Salts Farm on the 16th February. Slavonian Grebes appeared offshore with 2 at Widewater on the 8th, a single there on the 19th February, and a single off Worthing on 16th January. 2 Red-necked Grebes were seen off Worthing on the 12th of February and Great-crested Grebes numbered 9 off Goring Beach on the 2nd February.

Glaucous and possibly Iceland Gulls were expected but none were recorded, probably due to the north west of the country remaining relatively mild. However a first winter Ring-billed Gull, the first for our area and the second for Sussex if accepted, arrived in the River Adur area in January, staying well into February but remaining elusive.

Raptors were disappointing with no records of Merlin or Short-eared Owl. However 2-3 ringtail Hen Harriers were seen; one coasting west off Goring Beach on the 14th, one at Cissbury on the 26th and another or the same individual there on the 2nd February. A Buzzard flew west over Upper Beeding on the 5th.

Coot influxes are experienced in harsh weather and early 1985 was no exception. 29 gathered at Brooklands by the 7th, steadily increasing to 65 by the 16th, 85 on the 19th, reaching a peak of 101 on the 27th and reducing to 80 by 13th February. A further 63 were on the Adur on the 18th January.

Waders

Contrary to expectations waders did not appear in unusual numbers - in fact counts for most species were down on the last few years. No vast Lapwing movements were noted, in complete contrast to December 31st 1978 when 40,000 flew out to sea. In 1985 the only January movements reported were a

total of 300 south at Worthing Beach on 3 dates between the 6th and 13th with a peak of 200 on the 7th, and 380 moved south over Upper Beeding in 1.5 hours on the 5th. Early February was a little better; at Worthing 500 flew south on the 9th with 1928 on the 10th. 500 were in the Ferring Rife area during the period.

Grey Plovers have wintered in increasing numbers in our area during the past decade. 228 were counted on the Goring Roost on the 9th, a little down on the January 1984 figure. They were joined by 2 Golden Plovers on the 26th and this species was well represented in both spells. In January 70 flew west at Worthing Beach on 7th and in February 17 flew north at Widewater on the 9th; 20 passing south over Broadwater on the same day. Several hundred Dunlin flew past Goring Beach on the 7th, possibly not associated with local wintering birds. An unusual roost of 74 Ringed Plovers on Shoreham Beach was recorded on the 10th January. The following table shows sample counts of the remaining wader species that winter in the area in numbers:-

RIVER ADUR

	<u>Dunlin</u>	<u>Ringed Plover</u>	<u>Redshank</u>	<u>Sanderling</u>
Jan.	1030	43	110	-
Feb.	500	50	70	-

GORING ROOST

Jan.	350	130	11	80
Feb.	300	140	7	60

Up to 4 Knot were present on the Adur during the period and one was on Widewater on the 9th. 3 Bar-tailed Godwits were regularly seen on the Goring Beach, this species also being recorded from the Adur. Sanderling numbers did not reach a significant level until March.

Curlews flew west at Worthing Beach on the 7th and 8th with 15 and 61 on these respective dates. At this site small numbers of Snipe, something of a sea-watch rarity, also passed west; 5 on the 8th and singles on the 14th and 17th. Other Snipe records were "many hundreds" on Ferring Rife in January and February, 160 on the Adur Levels on the 5th January and one found dead in a Shoreham garden on the 20th.

Woodcock, mainly singles, were reported from a number of coastal localities, including 3 in town gardens. These possibly constituted part of the inland breeding stock as few British individuals migrate over great distances, but may well have been of continental origin.

Ferring Rife remained largely unfrozen and became a magnet for waders, including 3 Jack Snipe on the 13th with one still present on the 22nd, and 2 Green Sandpipers, increasing to 3 on the 11th. Also noted were 3 Ruff, interestingly taking food scraps from adjacent gardens. Never a common visitor to the area, it was well recorded with singles from a number of localities, the peak being 10 on the Adur Levels on the 5th, the largest party since 1978. Additional Green Sandpipers during January were singles at the Adur Levels, Woods Mill and Swandean Hospital. Purple Sandpipers were few; 2 at Brighton Marina on the 5th and one passed east at Widewater on the 17th.

Passerines

Apart from a few species there was no exceptional passerine influx. Redwings, which were under recorded, were numerous in town gardens as were Fieldfares. Examples of the latter being 100 in a Lancing garden on the 18th, and in February 200 at Shoreham Airport on the 9th, 185 south in 2 hours at Worthing on the 10th and 100 in Durrington on the same day. Both species were seen moving west to escape the conditions, but it is impossible to assess the total numbers involved as these thrushes migrate largely at night.

There were no large Skylark or Meadow Pipit movements. Maximums of the former were 500 at Ferring Rife on the 11th,

250 in fields by the Adur at Shoreham on the 15th and c270 on the Upper Adur Levels on the 20th. The only substantial Meadow Pipit count was 300 on Ferring Rife in January. Twite numbers were low on the Adur with 7 on the 1st and 6th, disappearing after the latter date. Surprisingly no Siskins were reported and only 2 Redpolls! Bramblings failed to materialise but this seemed to be reflected throughout the south and east of England, possibly due to a shortage of beech mast. 7 Tree Sparrows were at Sompting Tip on the 6th February. 20 Reed Buntings and 200 Corn Buntings were present at Ferring Rife on or around the 11th, the former also recorded in similar numbers in the Adur area on the 15th. Blackcaps and Chiffchaffs again wintered in small numbers and Black Redstarts were well reported.

Mortalities

Mortalities reported were few - single Snipe and 2 Scaup, 3 Dunlins and 2 Skylarks. Although this does not in any way indicate the level of the "kill", birds in our area may have suffered less than in other parts of Sussex. For example, a personal observation of "tideline corpses every few feet around the west side of Pagham Harbour, mainly Redshanks with some Dunlin and Grey Plovers" reflects how waders are affected when the mudflats on which they so heavily depend for food freeze over, even for short periods. Although severe conditions are good for the birder it makes life exceptionally difficult for the birds; from their point of view it is encouraging that the majority of our winters are relatively mild.

D.I.Smith.

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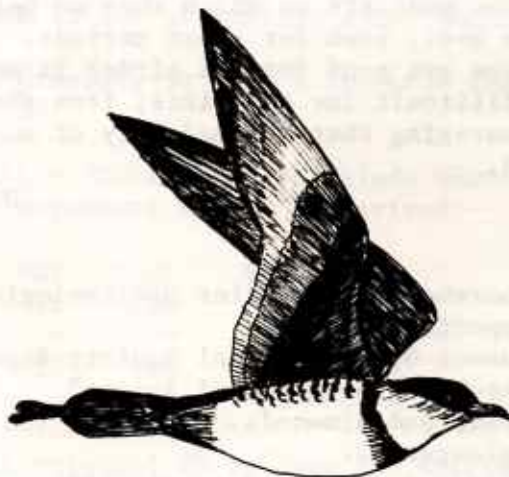
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SEAWATCHING REPORT FOR 1985

Introduction

The sea was watched for over 690 hours this year, a record endeavour logging over 100 hours more than the past best. Many of these extra watches have been during the summer with the effort logged for the two main migration periods being comparable to recent years. The histogram showing the hours watched depicts, as usual, the spring months to be the most popular but a glimpse at the illustration showing the overall rates of passage would suggest that other periods are worthy of study. Indeed the best rates of passage were recorded during the cold weather at the beginning of the year and in November. If one looks, however, at the total numbers of birds recorded, 34,421 (68%) of the total approaching 51,000 were recorded between March and May.

Most of the observations were made from the shelter opposite Marine Gardens on Worthing Beach. However, records from Goring , Ferring and a few from Widewater Beach have also been included if these watches covered periods which were not recorded at Worthing.



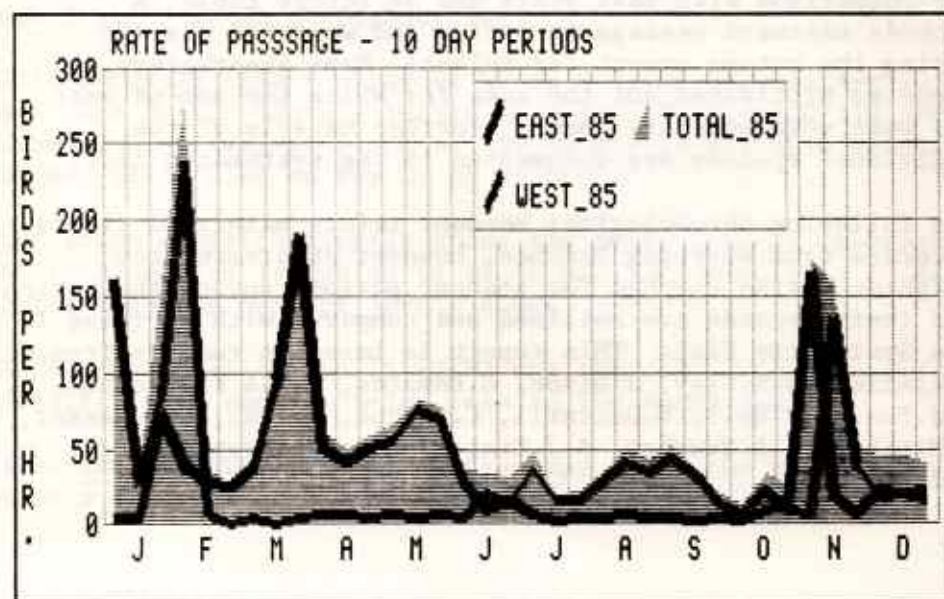
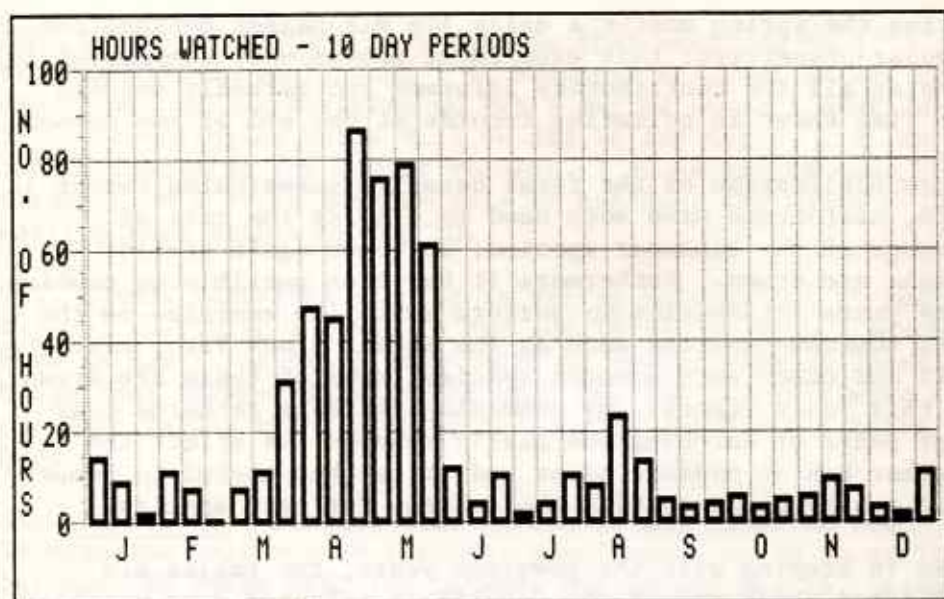
Pomarine Skua

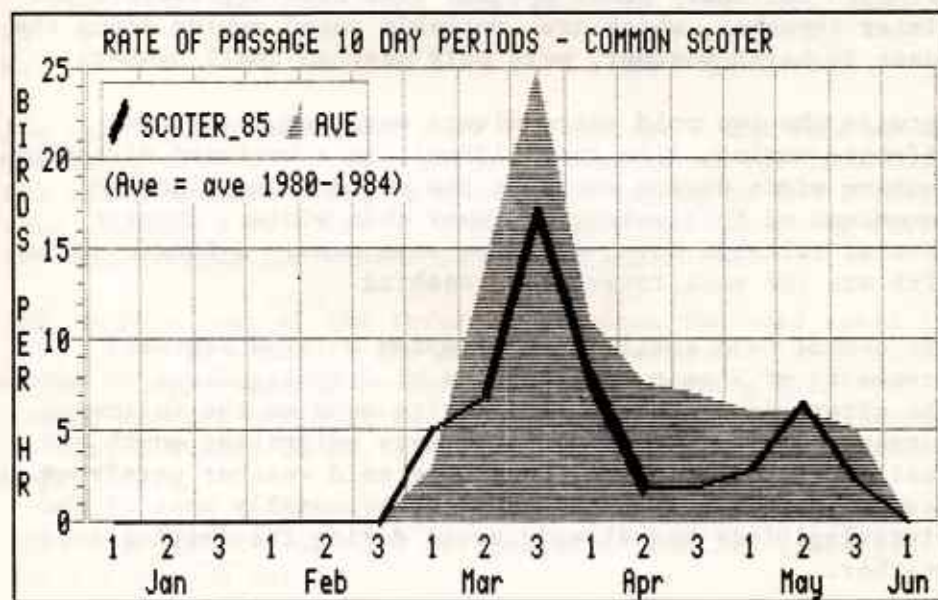
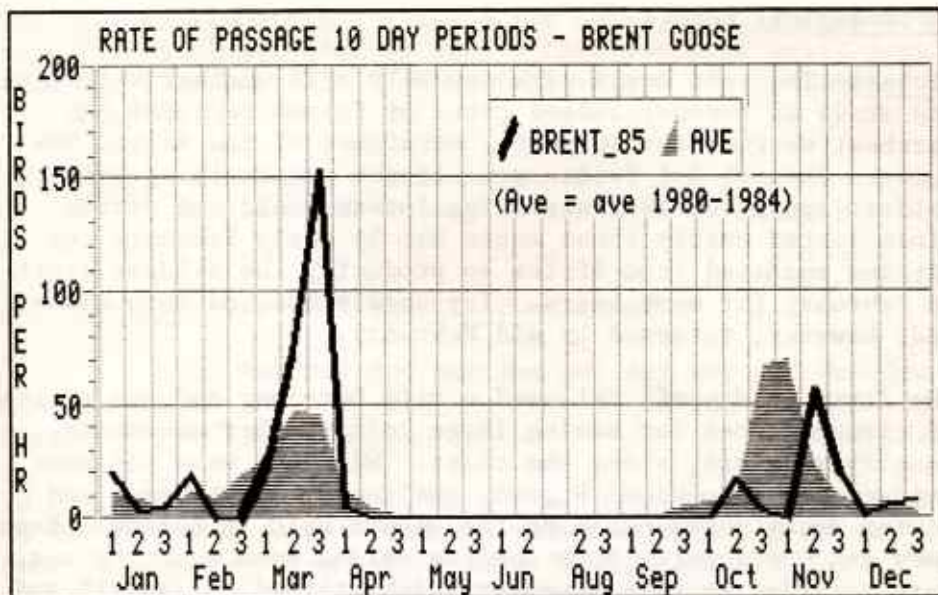
During the spring months a daily log was passed between the regular observers; this experiment proved very successful in keeping all the contributors informed and markedly reduced the time spent in collating records at the end of the season.

Since publication of the first detailed seawatching report in 1978, histograms have been used to display the rate of passage of the commoner species, and once again similar graphs are drawn. Furthermore it has been possible to combine many years information to perform a similar exercise on the less numerous species such as the skuas, Black Tern, Little Gull and other more oceanic species; some of these are drawn in this years report. By combining the data gathered over many years of watching one partly removes the effect the weather has on passage times and it is then useful to compare each years movements with the average for each species.

Also in keeping with the previous years, two tables are presented which reveal the details of selected days watching (Table A), and a summary of the main species involved in the autumn and winter watches (Table B). Each table is intended for comparison with past years and as before table 'A' records eastward passage in spring and westward passage during the autumn except for Fulmars, Manx Shearwaters, Gannets, Kittiwakes and the auks for which the sum of east and west movements are shown. Further details of the individual species are documented in the systematic list.

The following chronological account refers mainly to events recorded from Worthing beaches, however observers from Brighton Marina watched for shorter periods during the spring and their records are outlined and compared with Worthing in the Systematic List. This report is based on records from:- S.R.Allen, B.R.Clay, J.Dixon, G.Edwards, B.F.& F.J.Forbes, C.J.Fox, M.P.Hall, S.Hartnill, C.E.Hope, R.Ives, C.E.Messer, O.Mitchell J.A.Newnham, A.J.Prater, R.J.Sandison and D.I.Smith.





Chronological Report

Winter:- The year began with severely cold weather affecting the whole of Europe; indeed parts of France recorded the harshest weather for 40 years, stretches of the Baltic Sea between Denmark and Sweden were frozen and Worthing had its coldest spell for 29 years. The intense cold and arctic winds lasted nearly three weeks but by early February the airflow emanated from Africa so producing the mildest start to February for many years. Icy conditions and more snow had, however, returned by mid February.

The first cold spell followed a mild December and was typical of circumstances for seeing large cold weather movements, usually westward, along the coast. Wildfowl were the most evident with flocks of Wigeon, Shelducks, Brent Geese and diving ducks noted escaping the severe cold in Europe. Even Smew and Goosanders, both species seldom seen over the sea, were recorded in this movement which started on Jan 4th and reached a peak on Jan 7th. Waders too, particularly Curlew, Golden Plover, Bar-tailed Godwit and Redshank, were seen although curiously other species like Lapwing, Skylark and winter thrushes, which are normally noted moving along the coast in harsh weather, were only seen in small numbers.

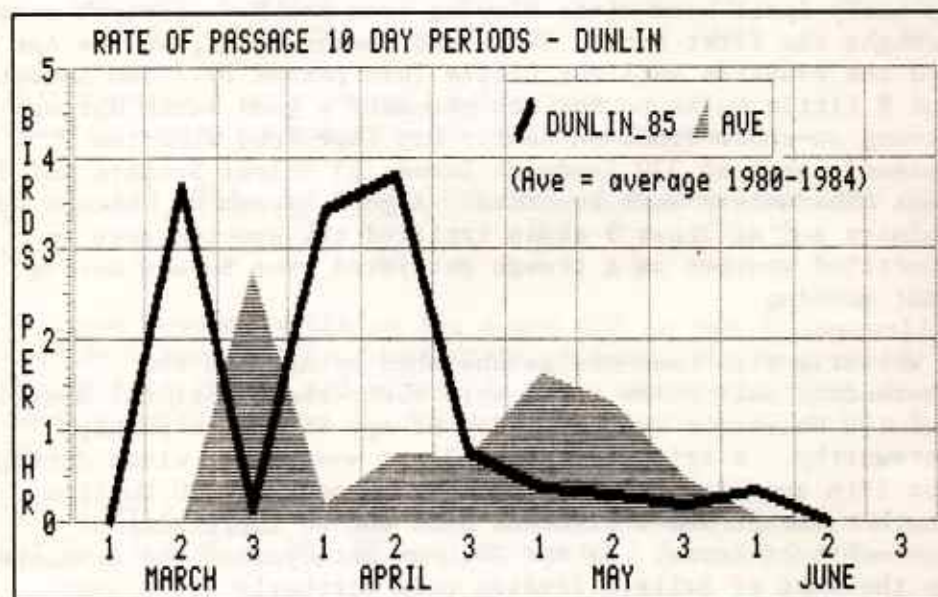
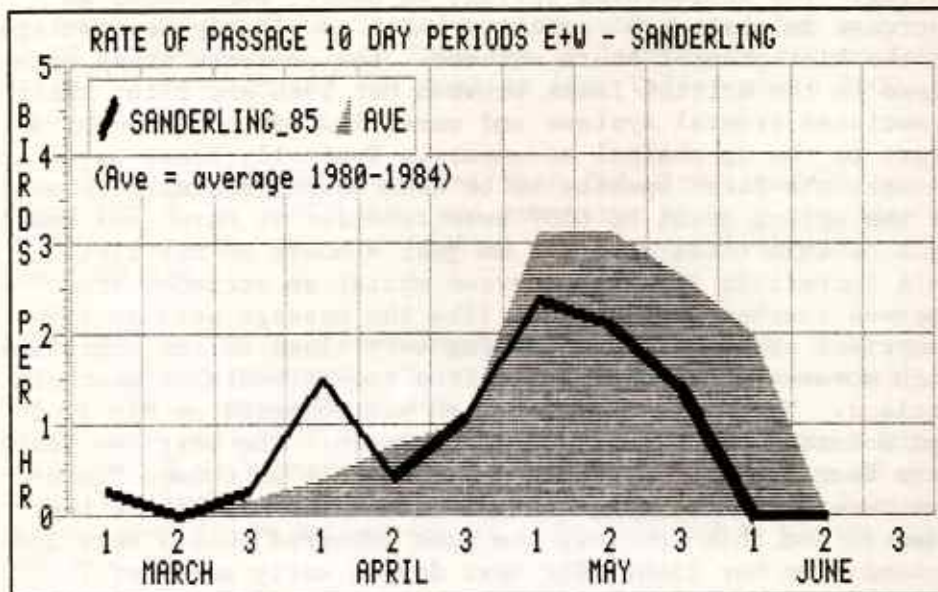
Between the two cold snaps divers were regularly seen offshore moving, like the wildfowl, in a westward direction. Onshore winds during the past few winters have induced movements of Kittiwakes. However this winter, despite several suitable days, very few were seen. A Bonxie on Jan 27th was the most interesting seabird.

The second cold spell again prompted a large westward movement of Wigeon and 2 skeins of Grey-lag Geese to move on the afternoon of Feb 9th and during snow on the following morning Lapwings and Fieldfares were emigrating south and west over the beach. Although the cold weather persisted for several days little else was seen; presumably most of the wintering birds had already moved during the initial cold weather.

Spring:- The approaching spring, as usual, encouraged an increase in observers' activity which is clearly demonstrated by the histogram of hours watched. Low pressure areas were close to the British Isles between Mar 19th and 27th; their associated frontal systems and unsettled weather brought a start to the up-channel movements. Typically Brent Geese are amongst the first species to be seen moving eastward as most of the spring total of 6587 were recorded in March and nearly half of this total was seen in just 4 hours on Mar 21st. This incredible passage occurred whilst an occluded front spanned southern England and like the passage seen in 1984 comprised of huge flocks passing very close to the shoreline. Such movements must originate from the harbours of southern England. The first Sandwich Tern was recorded on Mar 22nd and a further 19 were seen in the month. The past few years have been poor for watching the movements of Common Scoter but recent records suggest that late March may be the best time to see this species; the peak occurred when a mere 368 passed E on Mar 25th. The next day an early party of 7 Whimbrel flew over the beach and the month ended with unusual sightings of a drake Scaup and 4 Golden Plover on Mar 29th.

By early April warm winds blowing from the N.W. African coast brought the first Arctic Skuas and Common Terns, and on Apr 3rd the counties earliest Little Tern passed by. Two Avocets and 9 Little Gulls on Apr 6th preceded a good watch during strong on-shore winds on Easter Day (Apr 7th) when the season's peak of 330 Sandwich Terns, 25 Velvet Scoters and 9 Manx Shearwaters were recorded. A good stream of Gannets and Fulmars and at least 9 skuas typified the species seen in unsettled weather as a trough persisted over Sussex during that morning.

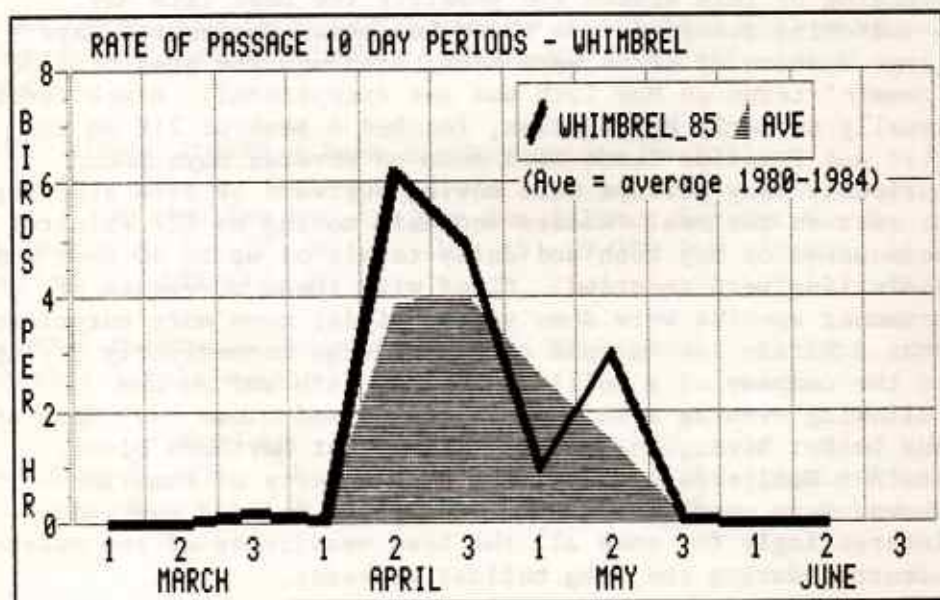
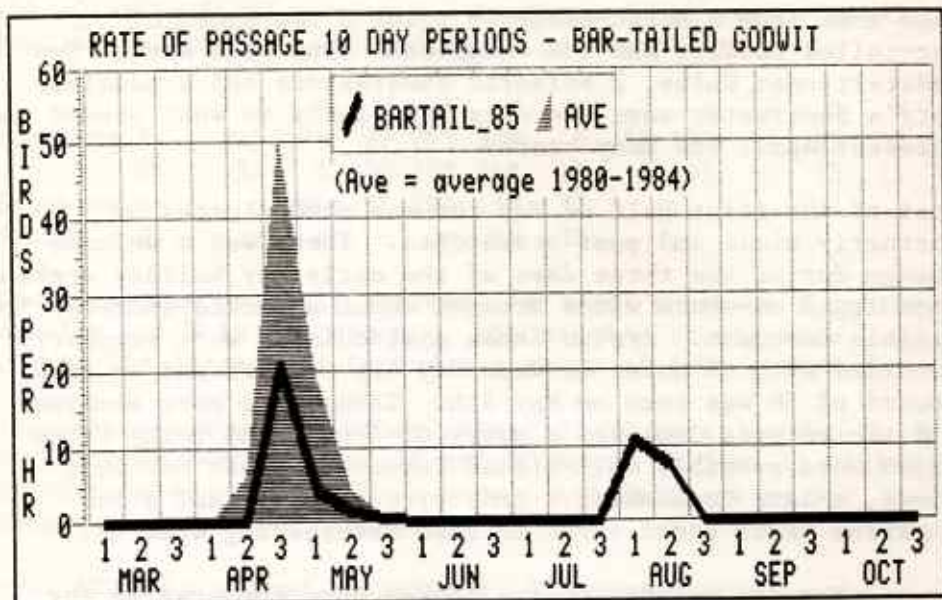
A westerly airstream was established by Apr 8th and thereafter only a few birds were seen; the occasional Bonxie and 195 Whimbrels in the midday of Apr 16th were perhaps noteworthy. A brief period of light south-east winds during Apr 18th and 19th brought the seasons peak of 120 Dunlins, another Avocet and a Glaucous Gull but no impressive movements of terns. By Apr 20th an anticyclone had developed to the west of Britain feeding cold northerly winds over

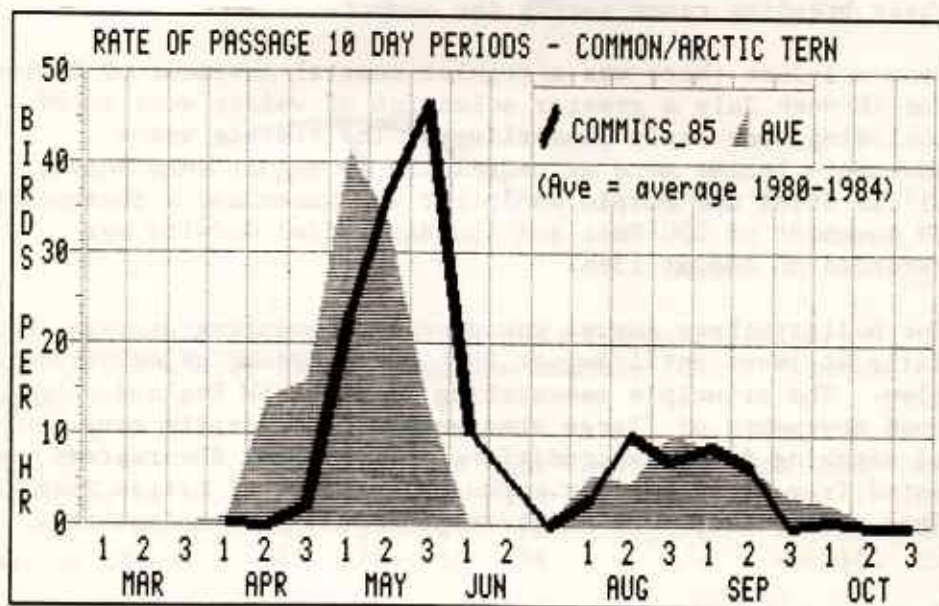
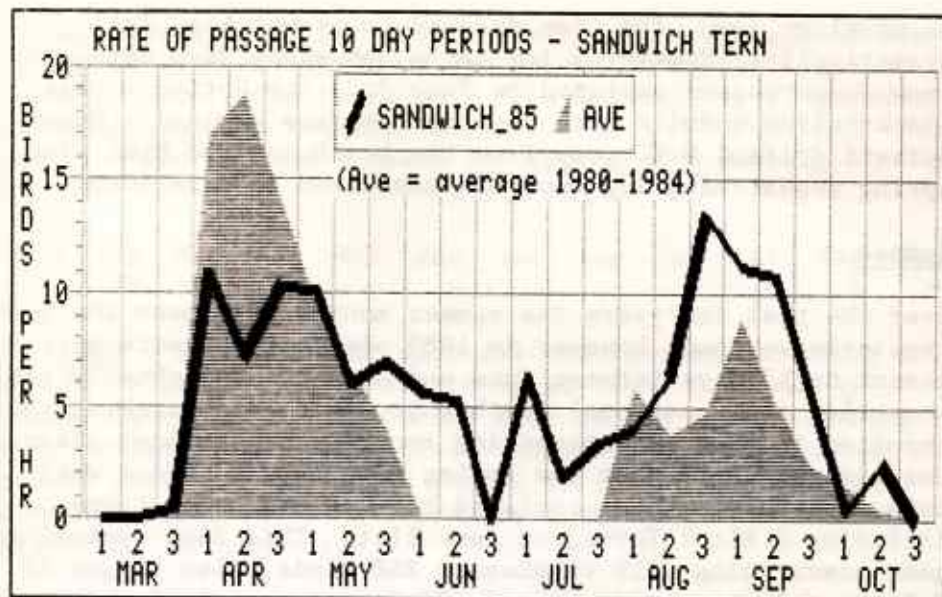


Britain until May 4th. Now and then when this wind abated or blew more from a north-easterly point a few packs of Bar-tailed Godwits and the occasional skua were seen. Two Mediterranean Gulls, 2 Balaeric Shearwaters and a possible Cory's Shearwater were the only highlights in what seemed the quietest April for many years.

Most of the first half of May too was predominated by northerly winds and poor seawatches. There was a welcome change during the three days of the early May holiday weekend when fresh on-shore winds brought about a marked increase in visible movement. Arctic Skuas particularly were regularly recorded with 68 noted between May 4th and 6th and an area record of 38 was seen on May 5th. Terns were more numerous and the records included a party of 7 pale and bulky terns which were possibly Gull-billed Terns. A Great Northern Diver, a late Goosander, a Mediterranean Gull and a few Pomarine Skuas added spice to this interesting weekend.

By mid-May the weather charts looked more encouraging for seawatching; complex low pressure and frontal systems brought more variable winds which produced the most interesting watching of this season and possibly the best late May seawatching recorded from these beaches. On several days large numbers of terns were seen, although the peak of 1338 'commic' terns on May 15th was not exceptional. Black Terns, usually an early May species, reached a peak of 21E on May 21st and Pomarine Skuas were seen on several days but curiously many parties were moving westward or even stopping to rest on the sea. Waders too were moving as 127 Whimbrel were noted on May 13th and daily totals of up to 40 Knot and Sanderling were recorded. Mixed with these movements of commoner species were some scarce birds; none more surprising than a Little Auk in full summer plumage conveniently flying in the company of a Guillemot on May 24th and on the following evening a Whiskered Tern passed close by. Many of the better birds, including a late Great Northern Diver, another Mediterranean Gull and even a party of Pomarine Skuas, were seen during the late spring holiday weekend; interestingly for once all the best seawatches of the season occurred during the long holiday weekends.





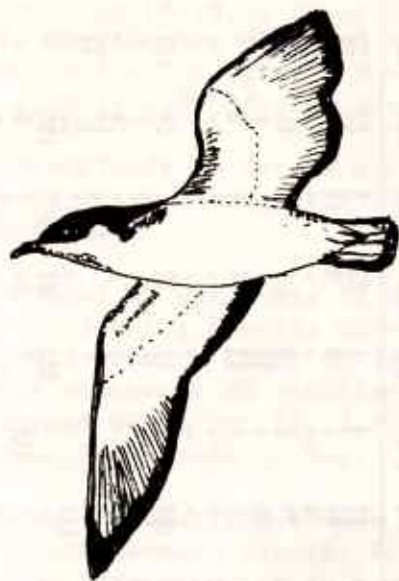
As usual by June, the time devoted to seawatching fell dramatically. However a few terns and skuas were noted, a Snow Goose passed westward on June 3rd, the Spring's only Black-tailed Godwits were recorded on June 4th and a Honey Buzzard drifted N.W. away from the beach on June 8th. The spring seawatching log book was concluded on June 10th.

Summer

Over the past few years the summer months have been the least regularly watched; however in 1985 observations were only absent on 17 days between June and August. Undoubtedly the unsettled and unseasonal weather prompted more watching and resulted in several interesting records. It has been clear for several years that the spring movements continue well into June but it was surprising to note eastbound terns, including 2 Black Terns, on June 21st. This day, typical for good seawatching with freshening SSE winds, also logged 45 Fulmars and an area record of 137 Gannets; most of which were immatures moving eastward. An Arctic Skua on June 26th demonstrated how some individuals remain well to the south of their breeding range during the summer.

From mid-June there was a regular coastal movement of Curlews and through July a greater selection of waders were noted including some early Sanderlings. The visible wader movements became more extraordinary in August when Ruffs, Little Stint and Purple Sandpiper were seen and a phenomenal SW movement of 200 Knot and 160 Bar-tailed Godwits was recorded on August 13th.

For holidaymakers August was most disappointing as rain fell daily at least until August 25th and fearsome gales often blew. The principle seawatching sites in SW England noted good movements of "large shearwaters" but despite many hours of watching in bleak conditions only 15 Manx Shearwaters were noted from these beaches. Unusual numbers of Little Terns, a Shag and a first year Mediterranean Gull were noteworthy.



Manx Shearwater

Autumn/Winter

After the schools reopened in early September the weather became much more settled and an "Indian Summer" prevailed through most of October. Although the first Brent Goose was seen on September 27th there were only a few noted thereafter. Seabirds too were scarce with only 6 Kittiwakes and 9 skuas logged through September and October. However the settled weather with light E to NE winds were ideal for watching early morning coastal movements of passerines. A good variety including a Grey Wagtail and 2 Snow Buntings were noted but surprisingly numerous were Pied Wagtails (total 380E) and Goldfinches (total 774E). The numbers seen during the short morning watches was only a portion of the movement as many parties of finches, pipits, wagtails and hirundines were moving just north of the beach and were obscured by the houses on Worthing's seafront.

SELECTED DAYS SEAWATCHING TOTALS SPRING TO WINTER 1985
FROM WORTHING BEACHES

TABLE A(11)

DATE	MAY 13	MAY 15	MAY 16	MAY 17	MAY 18	MAY 19	MAY 21	MAY 23	MAY 24	MAY 25	MAY 26	JUNE 21	NOV 4	NOV 14	NOV 19	NOV 20
HRS WATCHED	12.5	13.5	10.6	8.4	6.1	4.8	7.1	8.3	5.4	9.6	12.7	3.8	5.3	2.5	1.3	3.6
WIND DIRECTION	E2-SE3	NE 1-2	ENE 1-2	ENE 1-2	NE 3-4	CALM	SSW 1-2	SE-SE 4-5	SSW 4-5	S-SE 3-4	SE-1-3		SSE 4-5	75	NEG-E4	NNE 3-4
DIVER SP	4	15	-	3	5	9	3	1	8	1	1	-	7	15	4	10
* FULMAR	8	5	4	3	1	8	5	11	28	14	9	45	1	-	-	-
* HANX SHEAR	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	2	-	-	-
* GANNET	10	15	4	7	6	2	4	3	23	11	7	138	15	2	1	-
* BRENT GSE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	260	107	166
* SHELDUCK	38	12	7	10	1	11	-	14	32	7	12	-	3	1	21	125
* MIDGEON	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35	60	347
* EIDER	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	23	23	10
C. SCOTER	125	127	53	6	-	78	3	12	27	5	60	15	12	17	11	2
RED BR. NERB	-	-	-	3	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	4	20	4	4
GREY PLOVER	4	4	-	-	-	4	2	-	-	-	5	-	-	1	-	3
SANDERLING	3	37	19	32	21	12	-	40	-	16	19	-	-	24	104	14
DUNLIN	1	3	7	10	4	5	4	6	9	11	1	-	-	-	-	1
BAR T. GSWIT	47	37	6	10	4	23	2	2	1	-	4	-	-	-	-	-
WHIMBREL	127	56	3	13	1	10	-	4	1	-	7	-	-	-	-	-
* POM. SKUA	15	-	7	-	-	-	-	2	3	1	2	-	1	-	-	-
* ARCTIC SKUA	11	10	1	1	1	-	2	1	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
* BONNIE	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
LITTLE GULL	5	6	-	3	1	2	8	11	-	7	-	-	3	-	-	-
* KITTIMAKE	22	23	-	6	6	3	5	11	12	1	4	7	505	12	-	-
SANDWICH T.	93	106	25	34	27	19	48	130	23	68	90	26	-	-	-	-
COMIC T.	378	1338	394	237	208	183	695	975	432	218	237	7	-	-	-	-
LITTLE T.	32	34	37	12	12	3	26	8	11	7	11	2	-	-	-	-
BLACK T.	-	13	2	-	2	-	21	-	2	-	5	2	-	-	-	-
* AUK SP.	1	4	-	-	-	1	-	1	23	-	1	4	632	20	-	-

* Denotes summation of east and west movements; rest east movement spring, west in autumn.

DETAILS OF THIRTEEN REGULARLY RECORDED SPECIES SEEN FROM NORTHING BEACH
DURING AUTUMN/WINTER 1985

TABLE B	JULY			AUGUST			SEPTEMBER			OCTOBER			NOVEMBER			DECEMBER			TOTAL
	1- ALL	1- 10	11- 20	21- 31	1- 10	11- 20	21- 31	1- 10	11- 20	21- 31	1- 10	11- 20	21- 31	1- 10	11- 20	21- 31	1- 10	11- 20	21- 31
HOURS	20.6	9.4	24.7	14.9	6.7	4.6	5.6	7.4	5.3	6.3	7.2	10.9	9.0	8.0	3.8	12.9	157.3		
Diver Sp. E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	6	16	12	17	5	30	87	
W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	30	20	21	8	17	99	
Gannet E	10	1	7	3	2	2	2	15	-	1	-	11	1	12	6	-	1	74	
W	80	14	75	20	12	20	5	12	-	5	-	4	10	1	9	-	4	271	
Brent E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	17	17	18	50	122	
Goose W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	599	165	-	10	55	946	
Shelduck E	3	11	22	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	36	
W	-	1	-	12	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	6	148	28	-	1	54	252	
Wigeon E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	28	-	-	-	-	28	
W	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	415	77	-	-	8	502	
Eider E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21	6	5	-	-	40	
W	-	18	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	-	3	14	-	4	-	-	47	
Coasian E	20	-	20	-	-	-	9	3	-	1	12	27	1	-	-	6	-	99	
Scoter W	64	14	13	-	-	2	1	14	-	-	5	11	1	-	-	4	-	129	
Red-brst E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	5	2	-	16	28	
Merg. W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	37	12	8	1	56	119	
Little E	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	
Gull W	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	
Kittiwake E	3	4	14	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	505	4	1	5	-	33	572	
W	2	8	54	12	12	-	-	1	-	1	10	18	7	-	28	6	31	190	
Sandwich E	28	7	29	4	9	3	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	84	
Tern W	45	32	127	198	67	46	29	1	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	548	
'Coatic' E	10	7	51	25	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	98	
Tern W	27	22	197	85	55	31	2	6	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	427	
Auk Sp. E	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	3	542	26	6	5	17	15	595	
W	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	6	1	-	5	5	34	46	

On November 4th the settled weather ended, the barometer fell dramatically and the wind freshened from the SSE; resulting in an impressive watch, particularly just after dawn. Lines of auks and parties of Kittiwakes were moving eastward; the movement continued throughout the day and the total of 540 auks appears to be the largest movement recorded from the Sussex shores. Many of the auks were close enough to be identified and Guillemots were eight times more numerous than Razorbills. The days exciting records included 2 Balearic Shearwaters and both Arctic and Great Skuas; a Little Auk was the only auk to be seen moving westward, there were tantalising views of a small petrel dancing in the troughs and a distant small all-white gull defied identification. By mid-November the weather had turned very wintry with strong north-easterly winds and severe frosts; indeed the coldest November weather for many years. This undoubtedly stirred wildfowl into moving and the typical species recorded were Shelducks, Brent Geese and Wigeon. More unusual ducks included some Goldeneye, the autumn's only 2 Long-tailed Ducks and Velvet Scoters, a Goosander and several parties of Mallard - a species not regularly noted over the sea. Hard weather movements in late December or January usually involve parties of passerines and Lapwings; curiously these were virtually absent despite the harsh conditions. Divers returned to the Channel during November and most watches until the end of the year recorded small numbers moving offshore.

In total contrast December was very mild, rather wet and the winds blew mainly from the south west. No major movements were noted but, like 1983, an unusual number of skuas were seen with 7 Arctic and a Pomarine recorded between December 21st and the 24th. Perhaps these would be regularly sighted if more hours were spent watching the sea during onshore winds at this time of year. The final days of 1985 were quiet with a few records of divers, auks and Kittiwakes moving westward.

J.A.Newnham.

WHEATEAR SURVEY

Introduction

Until the early 1970's Wheatears bred in the Society's recording area, both at coastal and downland sites. Since that time breeding has ceased and the species is now a regular and common passage migrant. This decline has been attributed to habitat loss due to agricultural changes and to coastal development.

Shrubb (1) describes the decline in Sussex as a whole as "catastrophic since 1938" whilst Edgar (1) reminds us that Wheatears were still being taken to grace the menus of Brighton hotels as recently as 1902.

In more recent years passage through the county has presented a fairly consistent pattern. Spring passage begins in mid-March and extends to early June. Autumn passage begins in July and continues until November with a peak in late August to September.

Wintering birds are occasionally reported; the most recent definite one being the bird at Shoreham Harbour during the winter of 1982-83, although a bird was reported in the New Salts Farm area at the end of 1983.

Methods and Materials

Members of the Society were invited to report all Wheatear sightings throughout the year; recording date, number location and sex (Spring only).

Results

The following data is based on at least 26 contributors reports received by 31st December 1985. Although an attempt has been made to avoid obvious duplications some may exist. Each day's sightings have been counted as new and therefore additional birds although this may not have been the case.

Duration of Passage

	<u>Spring</u>	<u>Autumn</u>
<u>First:-</u> 1f	24/3 Worthing Beach	2 2/8 Shoreham Airport
<u>Last:-</u> 1m	25/5 Cissbury	2 22/10 Worthing Beach

MONTHLY DATA (Table 1)

	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	AUG	SEPT	OCT
TOTAL NO. RECORDED	83	17	24	281	134	18
% OF M.	69.9	40.0	25.1			
EACH F.	20.5	27.0	60.5			
SEX ?.	9.6	34.0	14.4			
% NO. OF DAYS SEEN	25.8	53.3	48.4	87.1	67.7	32.0

Discussion

Wheatear migration in 1985 generally followed the expected pattern, although in some ways it appears to have been a rather poor passage, slightly shorter in duration and with reduced numbers in comparison with previous years.

Fig (1) shows that 75% of Spring arrivals occurred in the last 10 days of March and the first 10 days of April. There was a much smaller secondary peak in May but numbers for that month were generally insignificant.

The data also shows that the ratio of males to females changed during the Spring, with a majority of males among the first arrivals then gradually a predominance of females by the end of spring passage in May.

FIG. (1) 1985 WHEATEAR SURVEY - RATE OF PASSAGE

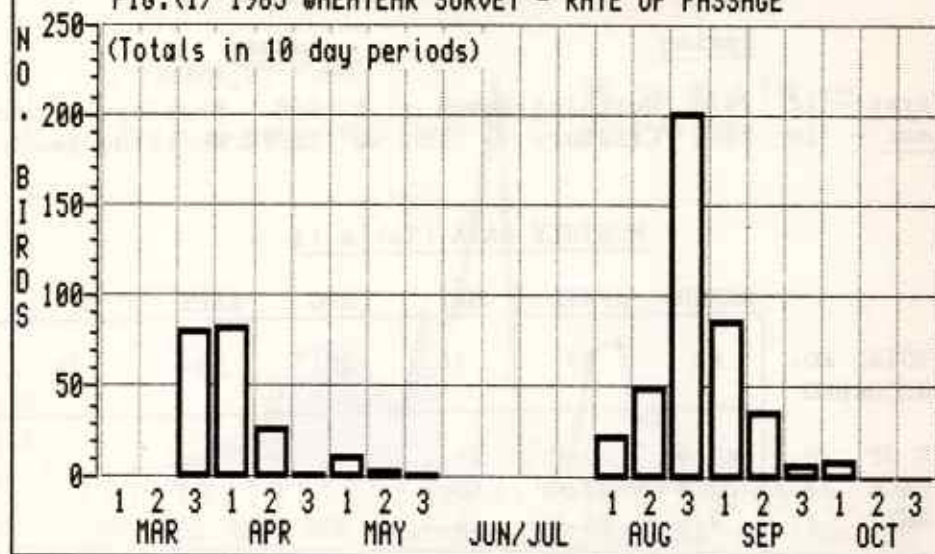
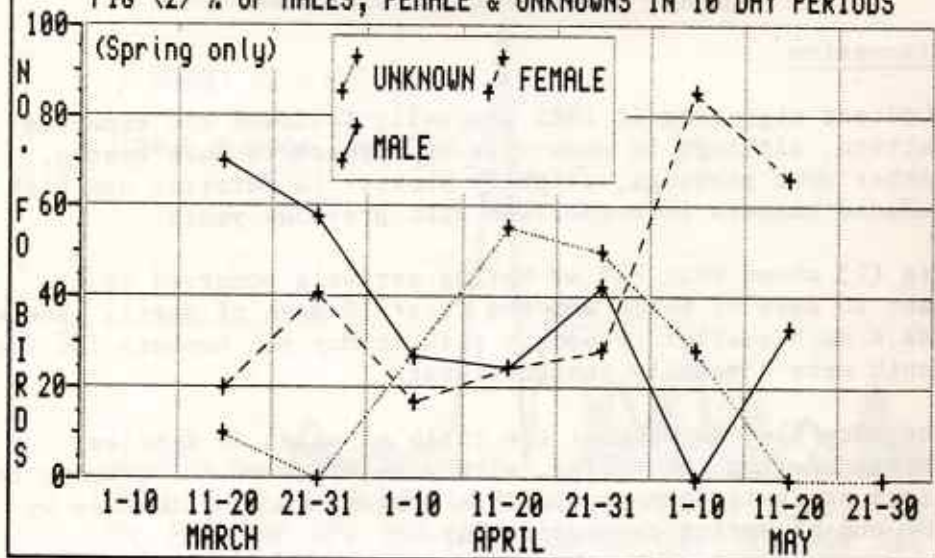


FIG (2) % OF MALES, FEMALE & UNKNOWN IN 10 DAY PERIODS



The influence of weather on the passage is difficult to interpret from the results. Winds were generally from a southerly quarter during the early arrivals, but on the 5th April when sightings stopped abruptly for three days, winds similar to those during peak arrivals continued.

Autumn passage occurred between 2nd August and 22nd October which is a slightly shorter duration than in previous years. Numbers appeared to be considerably reduced and at various sites where regular counts are made, such as Hove Golf Course and Ferring Rife, counts were reduced to just under a third of the 1984 totals (Hove Golf Course produced 28% of its last year total; Ferring 31%).

At Cissbury, normally the site with the largest 'falls' during Autumn, the decline appeared most dramatic. Only 77 autumn birds were observed compared to 484 in 1984. In fact Cissbury is a difficult location at which to compare yearly totals because although it is generally well watched and regularly counted by a few observers, it is not counted on a systematic daily basis during the whole of the passage period. Autumn totals therefore are subject to considerable fluctuations as seen by the following:- 1983-72, 1982-72, 1981-151, 1980-170. Furthermore, absence of the key observers at a critical time can lead to large 'falls' being completely unaccounted. The 1985 low total is in part attributable to a lack of observers at the peak passage time.

Apart from these known gaps in the records, the data collected by the Society is probably a fair representation of the passage for 1985. The Wheatear is an easy species to see, identify and count, and the contributors who took part often spent many hours in the field at relevant sites. There was no bias toward weekend watching; in fact analysis showed no significant differences between the number of sightings or numbers seen on each day of the week. Perhaps most validity can be assumed from sites where almost daily watching occurred and observers submitted absence records as well as presence. These were the Hove and Ferring sites previously mentioned and Worthing Beach, Goring Gap, Shoreham Airport, New Salts Farm area and Widewater.

It is too early to compare our Society's information with the overall county passage but A.J.Prater, the county recorder, tentatively suggested that records were low. However at Dungeness Bird Observatory, some 70 miles along the coast in Kent, the best spring passage for some years was recorded and autumn numbers were at least average.

1985 was obviously an interesting year to carry out the survey and no matter how tentative the conclusions, the results are significant enough to prompt close monitoring of Wheatear passage next year. Specific daily counts including absence at known Wheatear arrival and congregation points may prove to be most valuable to furthering our knowledge of this interesting bird's movements through our recording area.

M.P.Hall.

- References:-
- 1) Shrubb. 1979. The Birds of Sussex. Phillimore.
 - 2) Mead. Bird Migration. Country Life.
 - 3) Shoreham District Ornithological Society - Annual Reports:- 1976-1984.
 - 4) Sussex Ornithological Society - Reports:- 1976-1984.

Acknowledgement:- As many recording sheets were unnamed a list of contributors is not possible. The author and Society therefore thank all members and others who contributed. Thanks are also due to Sean Martin, the warden at Dungeness Bird Observatory.

FIELD OUTINGS 1985

The first outing of the year was to Amberley Wild Brooks, 18 members braved the cold spell on the 13th January to join Colin Messer at Greatham Bridge for the walk to Amberley. The usual flock of Bewick's Swans was absent; presumably they were grazing higher up the river near Pulborough. Pintail and Shoveler numbers seemed down on last year, but Wigeon, Teal and Canada Geese were very numerous. A Bar-headed Goose and a Barnacle Goose seen at Waltham Brooks were certainly escapes.

As usual Dr. John Newnham organised conservation working parties at the Shoreham Sanctuary on the 27th January and the 24th of February which he describes in the Sanctuary Report.

It was a cold and windy day when Colin Messer took 14 members to the Cuckmere Valley on the 28th April. The day produced only a few spring migrants among which were 1 Swallow, 3 House Martin, 2 Whinchat, 2 Wheatear and a Greenshank. 5 Ringed Plovers were seen prospecting the scrape at the mouth of the valley and a short seawatch produced 2 Whimbrel and 6 Fulmar.

An excellent turnout of 30 members joined John Dixon for the outing to Waltham Brooks and Coates Common on the 12th of July. On the Brooks members saw Common Snipe and a Bar-tailed Godwit in full summer plumage. Later at Coates Common a Nightjar and a number of roding Woodcock were seen.

Stanley Allen's Adur river walk was attended by 18 members on the 22nd August. 70 Ringed Plover were present at the footbridge together with a Shelduck and both Common and Sandwich Terns. The mudflats produced a lone Oystercatcher and the usual sprinkling of Redshank and Dunlin and New Salts Farm yielded several Wheatear and Yellow Wagtail. 32 species were recorded on the 2 hour walk.

The outing to Ferring Beach and the Rife was led by Mike Hall on the 31st August; 15 members attended. The first hour spent seawatching recorded the following:- 47 Sandwich Terns, Whimbrel, Shelduck, Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover and Grey Plover. The walk along the Rife produced 2 Tree Pipits, 3 Spotted Flycatchers, 2 Redstarts, 2 Lesser Whitethroats, 2 Yellow Wagtails, 4 Whinchats, 3 Wheatears and 2 different Sparrowhawks.

Waders provided the interest at Siddlesham when Dave Smith led 20 members on a walk around the harbour on the 21st September. Waders on the ferry pool included 8 Curlew Sandpiper, 30 Ruff and 3 Greenshank. 6 Knot were seen in the harbour as well as good numbers of Redshank and Dunlin.

There were strong SW winds blowing when Bernard Forbes took 14 members to Cissbury Ring on the 6th October. These winds kept birds away from the top of the Ring but more were seen at nearby Lychpole Hill where ringing was in progress. Members watched as Brian and Phil Clay ringed a Coal Tit and a Goldcrest. Notable birds seen during the day included 2 Wheatear, 1 Whinchat, 1 Stonechat, 7 Redpoll, 1 Siskin, 1 Golden Plover, 160 Meadow Pipit and 3 Sparrowhawk.

On the 8th December as the early morning mists cleared 18 members gathered at the Wildfowl Trust car park at Arundel. After a look around the pens of the more exotic species Colin Messer took members to the various hides to observe some of the wild birds present at the reserve. It was from one of these hides that a Water Rail was seen, not always the most conspicuous of species. Among the passerines noted during the day were a pair of wintering Blackcaps, a Nuthatch and a flock of Long-tailed Tits.

C.E.Messer.

LECTURES 1985

Monday 7th January

Mr Cliff Walder gave an illuminating talk on his recent visit to Tanzania. Although some species of birds proved too elusive to photograph members were shown some spectacular shots of the more approachable wildlife.

Monday 4th February

Mr J.R. Gascoigne, the retiring warden at the Seven Sisters Country Park, gave a highly amusing and original talk on his work at this site of great scientific interest, conveying his great depth of knowledge and enthusiasm for his work.

Monday 4th March

Members were given the opportunity to show a selection of their own slides, which featured many different birds and places from the classroom to the Farne Islands. Our Secretary, Mr John Dixon also provided some timely identification clues to the Ring-billed Gull; the second bird for Sussex having been recently observed in Shoreham.

Monday April 1st

After the Annual General Meeting, Dr. John Newnham updated members on the population changes within some of the regular species of birds occurring at our Sanctuary, illustrated as excellently as always with his own slides and graphs.

Monday 7th October

Mr Ken Smith explored some of the techniques for attracting wildlife into the garden, with a particular emphasis on encouraging the interest of children in wildlife about them.

Monday 4th November

Mr Mike Russell, the newly appointed warden at Woods Mill, described some of his earlier experiences in the creation of a Country Park near Reading and the assistance local young people provided. Members were acquainted with the tasks involved but also shown some of the rewards and benefits in terms of the species (and people!) subsequently attracted.

Monday 2nd December

John Newnham, returning by popular demand, produced one of his quizzes for the festive event which left members scratching their heads trying to identify the rear ends of birds in the field, ornithological philately, Lepidoptera together with associated botany, and just a few Odonata!!

NOTES, NEWS AND ACCOUNTS 1985

Membership

At the time of going to print there were 149 paid up members of this society.

Members Records

It would be a great help to the Recorder if Members could send in their records twice a year, with the second batch in December leaving the last few records to the first few weeks of 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>
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Rarities should have full supporting notes. All records should be sent to Mr. Bernard Forbes at 93 Wembley Avenue, Lancing, West Sussex.

Previous Years Reports

Some previous years reports are available on request. Special prices apply to purchases of three or more reports.

Secretary's Note

Members are entitled by their subscription to the Annual Report which is published during the year in which their subscription runs. This means that the report is only circulated to those members who have paid their subscriptions by the date of publication. Copies will be available to those who pay after this date, as and when they do so.

OFFICERS

President	Dr.J.Stafford.
Hon. Secretary	Mr.J.Dixon, Rock Cottage, Common Hill, West Chiltington, Nr. Pulborough. RH20 2NS. West Chiltington 2234.
Hon.Field Secretary	Mr.C.Messer, 15 Broomfield Avenue, Worthing, West Sussex. Worthing 35108
Hon.Treasurer	Mr.S.R.Allen, 3 Mill Hill, Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex. Shoreham 463332.
Hon. Recorder	Mr.B.F.Forbes, 93 Wembley Avenue, Lancing, West Sussex. Lancing 753876.
Hon. Report Editor	Mr.B.R.Clay, 16 Melbourne Avenue, Goring-by-Sea, Worthing, West Sussex. Worthing 49225.
Chairman of the Council	Dr.J.A.Newnham.
Sanctuary Committee	Dr.J.A.Newnham. Dr.A.B.Watson.
Other Committee Members	Mr.M.P.Hall, Dr.J.A.Newnham. Mr.R.Weal.(co-opted)

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 1985

<u>RECEIPTS</u>	1985 £	1984 £
Balance brought forward	913.91	776.44
Subscriptions	377.25	390.50
Sale of reports	9.90	13.60
Net raffle and refreshment receipts	42.93	63.87
Building Society interest	43.28	23.08
Bank deposit interest	-	8.44
	<u>£1387.27</u>	<u>£1275.93</u>
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PAYMENTS

Printing	258.80	250.57
News letter expenses	-	19.86
Postage and stationery	41.07	-
Secretary's expenses		
including hire of hall	65.00	60.50
Southern Water Authority	4.00	4.00
Speakers fees	30.00	-
Donation to Mr.B.Clay	50.00	-
Sundries	19.14	5.00
Wine for Christmas meeting	24.38	22.09
Balance carried forward	894.88	913.91
	<u>£1387.27</u>	<u>£1275.93</u>
	=====	=====

S.R. ALLEN (Hon. Treasurer). Date: 16th February 1986

ACCOUNTANTS CERTIFICATE

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

CHATER SPAIN BROS. Chartered Accountants
52/53 Old Steyne, BRIGHTON. BN1 1PH.

Date 18th Feb.1985.

