Shoreham District Ornithological Society Annual Report 2003

John Reamy XXX



Front Cover Goldcrest - John Reaney Back Cover Grey Heron - Terry Hicks



SHOREHAM District Ornithological Society

ANNUAL REPORT 2003



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PRESIDENT'S GOLDEN JUBILEE ADDRESS

Who would have thought, when a thirteen-year old schoolboy, that I would some day be honoured, even privileged to be elected as the president of our small society or to be asked to write any material for its Golden Jubilee report? We have seen the society progress over the past years and emerge into the 21st century. With a strong membership we are still recruiting new people who have brought fresh ideas into the group, as we set out into the next 50 years, modernising and adapting. Perhaps in another half-century our efforts and achievements will be celebrated in some unknown form yet to be discovered. I can honestly look back and say that we have improved the society. You only have to take a look at the indoor programme. The quality of the speakers is the envy of organisations much larger than the SDOS. Each month draws in an average audience of 50 or so members for our talks from October through to April. This is over a third of the membership, and the much larger Sussex Ornithological Society achieves this once a year at its annual conference.

Our aim is to enlighten in an atmosphere of relaxed informality and I think we achieve this very well. Our field trips or outings - this always sounds so old fashioned and stirs up memories of tweed and brogues, are in fact at the cutting edge of modern birding, visiting exciting locations at the right time of year, with the group leaders well informed about birds and the habitat, often with the aid of mobile phones and computers to glean any information on the whereabouts of any species. Strangely none of the current leaders possesses a pager! As a member new to computers I am still amazed that I would ever get any fun or satisfaction from such progress. Any SDOS member who belongs to the computer user group will enjoy the benefits this brings to our knowledge of local birding, whether it's up-to-date information on sightings or just passing on tips about books, holidays or relevant TV programmes. Any subject becomes more enjoyable if we can share it with others.

We could lament the lack or loss of habitat since the creation of the Society. I remember as a young lad cycling around the local area and still finding small areas of marsh that often attracted loads of birds. I guess that all the odd bits of land have now been built on. On the positive side we have the open spaces of the foreshore and the Downs and the Adur river valley which have changed very little in the passing years. Even with all this increase in urban sprawl and population we still turn up fantastic birds and witness the wonders of migration. If you check back through old annual reports to the fifties and sixties you will find that we are seeing more bird species than ever before and are still recording scarce and rare species, so all is not lost.

I can only thank the founder members of our society for encouraging me in the pursuit of my hobby; bird watching has given me such enjoyment, fun and pleasure over the past forty years. I believe that bird watching is a great leveller, bringing together people from all walks of life and in doing so making us all equal in status. Creating this infatuation has become a mission of mine to do likewise and offer encouragement to pass on the knowledge and passion to others.

Bernie Forbes

CHAIRMAN'S GOLDEN JUBILEE NOTE

In 1953, when I was at school in Middlesex and spent most of my free time on my grandfather's farm trying to identify birds, no-one I knew had the least interest in birds. I had no binoculars (though excellent eyesight in those days) and only 'The Observer's Book of Birds' as my guide.....

Later I joined outings with sixty other people at a time (not the best way to see any birds) but at least I was in touch with a few people who were pleased to share their knowledge.

Then in 1964, having moved to Sussex I found the SDOS and really began to enjoy the meetings and outings, extending my ability to recognise birds by sight and sound. The leaders were patient and helpful and the Field Guides we used had improved and were a positive help to all birdwatchers.

The SDOS has always been respected and I feel sure this is because of the solid base on which it was established. John Stafford and Miss Biggs set out initially to draw in keen birdwatchers, expert observers who knew their subject from constant forays into the area and then shared and discussed their sightings. These were highly esteemed people in their middle years. However very soon young boys became involved in the Society mainly from Steyning Grammar School. Their enthusiasm was encouraged and fostered and the Sanctuary became a hive of ringing activity. These boys would crisscross Sussex by any means of transport to see birds and were probably the first twitchers, though this term was not in general use then! Their notebooks recorded seawatches and many rarities, with incredibly detailed drawings to back up their sightings and lists of birds on a daily basis. Some of those young men are not only still members of the SDOS but have also given a great deal to the world of ornithology in the intervening years.

There can be very few organisations of our size that have managed to produce a 200page book to celebrate the achievements of its members: 'Fifty Years of Birdwatching' is a good read and a valuable archive.

So fifty years later John Stafford is amazed that the SDOS is still in existence. We acknowledge the foresight of the founding members and the loyalty of all those who have made the SDOS what it is today: a thriving, active group of people moving forward with all that the 21st century offers, but above all enjoying the extraordinary pleasure birdwatching gives us.

Brianne Reeve



BIRDING HIGHLIGHTS AND NOTES FOR 2003

The wintering Lessser Whitethroat remained around an East Worthing garden through January into early March. Two other urban records in January included a Firecrest in a Hove park and a Waxwing seen briefly at Shoreham on 12th. The weather was cold and frosty for the first 2 weeks, bringing a Snow Bunting to Hill Barn, Worthing on 2nd, a Great Northern Diver flying west off Worthing the next day and a Red Kite over Woods Mill on 10th. Another Snow Bunting was reported at Widewater on 12th. More mundane, were high counts of 250 Canada Geese on Henfield Levels and a roost of 290 Magpies at Wildpark. Seawatching at the Marina produced massive auk movements from 7th, with a peak of 12,500 on 13th and a huge monthly total of 44,900. The warmest day was 26th, but then another cold snap occurred with snow during the last 3 days of Jan, bringing a pair of Mandarins to Brooklands and 2000 Razorbills offshore at Marina.

February weather was a mixture of mild conditions but sometimes cold and frosty, dominated by high pressure mid-month. Two excellent area records were a first for the Shoreham area with 2 female Ring-necked Ducks on Wiston Pond for a period from 9th, and an elusive Bittern at Beeding Fish Farm during the first 2 weeks of the month. High counts from seawatching sites were 245 Red-throated Divers at Marina on 20th, and 7 Whitefronted Geese flying east at Worthing the same day; then 175 Cormorants feeding off Worthing and a very early Sandwich Tern at Marina, both on 22nd. A Ruddy Duck was a visitor to Widewater on 23rd and three other scarce area records included a Lesser Spotted Woodpecker on Upper Adur Levels, 3 Tree Sparrows in the Standean area, and a Willow Tit at Patching Hill.

An early Swallow on Mar 5 at Shoreham Airfield was 2 weeks ahead of the next arrivals. The first half of the month was quiet, with just a Great Northern Diver off Worthing on 9th, and an early Osprey at Woods Mill on 12th. On 16th a big movement of 595 Kittiwakes were recorded moving east at the Marina, and the next day a probable Scandinavian Rock Pipit was on Widewater beach. Skywatching over Brighton on 17th produced Osprey, Short-eared Owl and a few Common Buzzards. Further significant counts from the Marina included 2999 Brent Geese flying east on 23rd and a Puffin on 26th. A Red Kite flew over the Wildpark on 26th.

April was mainly sunny and dry, with above-average temperatures at the end of the month. Six Black-necked Grebes were a splendid sight off the Marina on 8th, and duck species featured strongly there with 51 Velvet Scoter on 13th and 5 Garganey on 14th. Two Long-tailed Ducks were recorded passing Worthing and then the Marina mid-month, and a Serin was heard. On 16th a record count of 29 Mediterranean Gulls, including a flock of 10, passed the Marina. Inland a Little Ringed Plover was at Sandgate Park and a Long-eared Owl was flushed from Hollingbury hillfort. Highlights at the end of the month came predominantly from the Marina with a string of high day-counts and an excellent period of seawatching. This included 59 Arctic Skuas and 385 Fulmar on 21st; a Puffin on 22nd; 298 Whimbrel on 25th; and a Sussex record of 564 Little Gulls going east on 26th and 16 Manx Shearwater on 28th. Elsewhere a Roseate Tern and 12 Pomarine Skuas passed Worthing, and an Osprey was seen at the Airfield, all on the 25th.

May can be an entertaining birding month, but generally there were few spring migrants around and nothing of any real significance except along the coast. Pomarine Skuas peaked with 22 passing the Marina on 4th, yet another Nightjar flew in off the sea there on 7th and a Balearic Shearwater was seen on 9th. At Goring a Black-necked Grebe was on the sea on 10^{th} , and a Roseate Tern at the Marina on 15^{th} . A Glaucous Gull was reported at Widewater from 20^{th} to 21^{st} .

Some interesting details regarding breeding birds around the recording area included the ever-increasing Peregrines and Common Buzzards. Ravens nested at the Cement Works and an urban record of Grey Wagtails nesting in Hove made a good discovery. At least 1 pair of Black Redstarts bred, and good news was a Lesser Spotted Woodpecker on territory at Warren Hill and what would have been our first record of Mandarins nesting at Wiston, had they been successful.

Light southerly winds in June helped to make it the warmest since 1976. There was little rainfall. On 1st a Nightjar was churring at Cissbury early in the morning, and an immature Montagu's Harrier came in off the sea at Ferring on 3rd. In spite of the good conditions there was very little of note except a sub-adult Great Northern Diver on 8th and a Red Kite over Patcham on July 13. The first Quail of the year was at Beeding Hill; later more were recorded at other downland sites into August.

August was hot and dry, one of the hottest for many years. The light winds were mainly from east and south, but veered northerly towards the end of the month. At the Mumbles there were high net-counts on 2nd with 25 Sedge and 47 Reed Warblers. During midmonth there was a record count of 11 Little Egrets around the Shoreham area and a Red Kite was at Harrow Hill. Two species of kite occurring in one month must be pretty unique, as a Black Kite flew over Brighton on 26th. Autumn passage for small birds was well under way at the month's end and included 30 Spotted Flycatchers at Chanctonbury and 45 Yellow Wagtails with cattle at Chantry Hill.

September started with an Osprey following the coast along Brighton, and then 2 Honey Buzzards over the city on 5th and 7th. Some good counts of Whinchat included 30 at Cissbury on 6th and 25 at Sheepcote on 9th. By mid-month there were 300 Meadow Pipits at Upper Beeding, but the highlight was an Ortolan Bunting there on 13th. A superb juvenile Montagu's Harrier went over Brighton on 14th. Right on schedule a Wryneck appeared at Sheepcote on 21st, keeping up a good annual run for this site. A Honey Buzzard also went over same day.

October somewhat outshone the previous month with good variety and interest, and some high passage counts. A 'first' for the SDOS area was a brief Little Bunting at Sheepcote on 1st and Woodlarks were noted with 3 moving north at Sheepcote on 11th and another the next day at Widewater. High passage counts came from Sheepcote with 1000 House Martins on 12th, 250 Siskin on 16th and 120 Brambling and 800 Fieldfare flying east on 20th. Also seen at this site were a single Dartford Warbler and a Tree Sparrow, both on 14th. Another Woodlark was at Goring on 18th, whilst a migrant Short-eared Owl was seen at Whitehawk Hill on 21st. The month ended with the discovery of a Dartford Warbler on Hollingbury hillfort which remained into November, and a Pallas's Warbler at Sheepcote on 31st completing an excellent month.

A mixture of rarities and seasonal movement gave November some interest. On the 4th a Pallas's Warbler turned up briefly at Sheepcote, a Sabine's Gull off the West Pier stayed

until the next day, giving the chance for a number of our members to see it, and a Spotted Redshank was on the Adur. A late Ring Ouzel was at Sheepcote on 5th, a Red Kite at Wolstonbury on 6th, and a huge movement of 30,000 Wood Pigeons went westward over Brighton on 7th. A Yellow-browed Warbler was found at Sheepcote on 8th and the site had a good autumn for Firecrests, the peak being 10 on 11th. Another Sabine's Gull was off the Marina on 14th and 500 Kittiwakes moved westward there on 25th with 200 Linnets feeding in stubble at Upper Beeding on 30th.

A Little Auk was off Widewater beach on December 5th and a Snow Bunting was a little further along the coast at Southwick on 7th. The area around Kithurst Hill and Lee Farm included a record peak number of 150 Bramblings amongst other finches and Yellow-hammers feeding in maize. They stayed for a lengthy period giving members good views, with the occasional wintering Hen Harrier appearing to provide added interest.

My thanks to all members for submitting their records, in particular to those that spend so much of their time out in the field or tirelessly seawatching, for without them this highlight section would not reflect the annual potential the recording area has. Thanks also to Clive Hope for again helping out with some of the species accounts.

Peter Whitcomb



One of THE rare birds recorded in the SDOS area during recent years, this GREAT SPOTTED CUCKOO was allegedly first identified by a Hampshire lorry driver who had been stopped by a red traffic light at the entrance to Ricardo's, north of Shoreham Airport late on 4th April 1990 (though a 'large grey bird with white spots, being mobbed by Crows' had been reported in the area 3 days earlier). It remained around this area for three weeks, until 1st May at least, often feeding voraciously on Brown-tail Moth caterpillars, and is thought to have left the area because the supply of these eventually ran out. An excellent account of the bird and its stay is given on page 89 of the 1990 "Sussex Bird Report".

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A GUIDE TO RECORDING BIRDS IN THE SDOS AREA

The following is an edited version of the guide which appeared in the 1997 Report together with detailed guidance on individual species.

The Society is keen to encourage all members to send in their records so that a complete picture of the birds of the area can be shown in this Report. As most members will already be aware of the need to report scarcer birds and all rarities, I propose to use this space to give examples of some 'grey areas' where members may be uncertain of the usefulness of reporting a record.

It really goes without saying that any bird noticed to be in decline, or to have a changed distribution should be considered important. We are fortunate to have good numbers of Corn Buntings and Skylarks, species which are in decline nationally, but what of Tree Sparrow, Sand Martin and Lesser Spotted Woodpecker? Are they really as rare as the lack of records indicates? Do Spotted Flycatchers or Grey Wagtails nest in our area? Also I have received very few reports of Cuckoos or Lesser Whitethroats. These are just a few examples and from the Recorder's point of view, it's difficult to formulate any pattern for some of the scarcer breeding birds. I would urge all members to send in records of successful or possible breeding for these species. And even a rookery count wouldn't go amiss!

Nowadays, in a good year, over 200 species are recorded in our area, ranging from the very common to the very rare. In between are species considered 'grey areas'. The following examples illustrate which records to send in:

— a large raptor soaring over Cissbury Ring. You think it's a Marsh Harrier but aren't absolutely sure. Send it in as a 'probable' as someone else may have seen the same bird further along the downs. The direction of flight would be useful.

— a flock of Wood Pigeons in a field. Again rather insignificant but if unusually, they were feeding on the tideline of a beach or a large flock coming in off the sea (pigeons do migrate, especially in November) - in both cases send in the record.

— you find something rare and exciting. If it looks likely to stay, 'phone another member to share it, and help verify the sighting.

It's most important that all national rarities should be submitted to the SOS with a full description. Forms are available from John Hobson, 23 Hillside Road, Storrington, RH20 3LZ. Please mention to the SDOS recorder that the record is under consideration. The record will be confirmed the following year if necessary.

Remember, if in doubt, send it in! The society will not mention the location of a breeding site or owl roost and confidentiality will be honoured.

Peter Whitcomb

SDOS recording forms are available from Peter Whitcomb, 99 Barnett Road, Brighton, BN1 7GJ. Please enclose postage with your request.

The boundaries of the SDOS recording area are shown on the map on page 81.

SYSTEMATIC LIST FOR 2003

This systematic list of birds in the Shoreham District is based upon records submitted by members together with additional records from non-members (marked *) from the SOS database by courtesy of John Newnham:

S.R. Allen, C.L. Barnard, I. Barnard*, V. Bentley, R. Bratton, L. Brigginshaw, C. Brooks*, G.L. & M. Champion, B.R. Clay, P. Clay, C. Corrigan*, J. Curson*, S. Denman, B. Easlea*, B.F. Forbes, M. & P. Ford, T. Goble, D. Green, D. Grimwood, D. Harper, J.C. Holt, K. Hearne, T. Hicks, C.E. Hope, F.W. Howard, R.A. Ives, H. Jackson, L.R. Keen, A.R. Kitson*, J.N. & S.P. Maskell, H. & B. Metcalfe, J.A. Newnham, K. Noble, C. Piper, B. Reeve, A. Robinson, R.J. Sandison, R. Simpson, D.I. Smith, J.C. & J.M. Steedman, P. Stevens, Steyning Ringing Group, P.Thompson*, J. Underwood, A.B. Watson, I. J. Whitcomb*, P.J. Whitcomb, M. Wilsdon, and C.H. Wright.

Abbreviations: ad = adult, BBRC = British Birds Rarities Committee, CW = cement works, E=East, etc, f = female, GC = golf course, ha = hectare, imm = immature, juv = juvenile, m = male, (m.o.) = many observers, pr = pair, SOS = Sussex Ornithological Society, sp = summer plumage, wp = winter plumage, W=West, etc. yr = year, the Marina = Brighton Marina, the Airfield = Shoreham Airfield, the Fort = Shoreham Fort, the Harbour = Shoreham Harbour, the Canal = Aldrington Basin & Southwick Canal, the Sanctuary = Shoreham Sanctuary, University = University of Sussex.

References to **Worthing** in seawatching data include all seawatch sites unless separately identified. 'Adur' refers to the river and associated saltings between the footbridge and Shoreham Flyover. 'Wildpark' includes the whole of the Local Nature Reserve namely, Hollingbury Camp, Woods, Golf Course and Moulsecoomb Wildpark.

0002 RED-THROATED DIVER Gavia stellata

Regular passage migrant and winter visitor

High numbers during the first week of Jan included 111W at Worthing on 3rd and 109E at Marina on 5th. Monthly totals from the main seawatching sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	772	1132	307	183	18	-	-	-	-	-	112	223
Worthing	114	85	23	32	3	-	-	-	-	-	49	30

Other high counts followed in Feb with 245E at Marina on 20th and 178E there on 23rd. Small numbers were noted from other sites such as off Widewater and Palace Pier, mainly during winter months, and there were singles reported from Aldrington Basin and Shoreham Adur.

0003 BLACK-THROATED DIVER Gavia arctica

Fairly scarce passage migrant, rare in winter

A good number were recorded passing Marina which included peak counts of 18E on Apr 13 and 23E on Apr 25. Monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	1	- 1	3	96	15	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Worthing	-	-	-	9	3	Ξ^{γ}	-	-	-	-	2	1

The only other record was 1 actively diving in Harbour on Jan 18.

0004 GREAT NORTHERN DIVER Gavia immer

Scarce winter visitor, rare on spring passage

2002 - Extend Southwick Canal bird from Nov 17.

2003 – Marina records totalled 18 sightings from Jan 5, most as singles. Recorded from off Worthing with singles on Jan 3 and Mar 9.

DIVER Species

Additional counts of divers not specifically identified are shown below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	60		1000 B		-						9	45
Worthing	157	379	15	14	15	-	-	-	-	-	4	45

Peak counts included 119W at Worthing on Jan 3 and 40W/15E the next day at Marina, then 53E at Marina on Feb 23.

0007 LITTLE GREBE Tachybaptus ruficollis

Mainly winter visitor, occasional breeder

Early in the year records were predominantly from Adur Saltings or Widewater but probably no more than 6 birds were present in total. At Brooklands a single bird was resident from Jan, then 4 on Feb 16. Two pairs raised one young each from Brooklands and the peak count there was 11 on Aug 17. At the end of the year numbers were lower than usual with a maximum of 8 at Brooklands in Oct, a maximum of 4 at Widewater in Dec and up to 2 birds present during the second half of Dec inside Marina.

0009 GREAT CRESTED GREBE Podiceps cristatus

Regular offshore, usually in winter/spring

Almost without exception all records were from the sea. It is puzzling that a relatively common lakeland species is not even occasionally found on ponds at Patching or Wiston, or even Brooklands. The seawatching totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	188	132	116	23	6	-	-	-	2	-	47	70
Worthing		97	70	53	6			-				

Peak counts from Marina were 36W on Jan 13 and from Worthing 24W/6E on Dec 21. Lingering offshore flocks were well down on average with up to 20 birds regularly reported between Lancing and Goring during the winter months.

0010 RED-NECKED GREBE Podiceps grisegena

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

One was offshore at Worthing moving slowly E with Great Crested Grebes on Feb 24 (JAN). All the other records were from the Marina: 1 offshore on Apr 15, 1E on Sep 24, 1W in a southerly gale on Nov 3, 1 offshore on Dec 4, 1W on Dec 21 and one offshore next morning.

0011 SLAVONIAN GREBE Podiceps auritus

Scarce passage migrant, mainly in winter

A better than average showing commenced with 1E at Marina on Jan 1, followed by offshore birds at Goring and Widewater in Feb. Another went E at Marina on Apr 8 which may well have been the same summer-plumage bird lingering off Worthing the same day. The Marina had 3E on Apr 13 and a single the following day. The only late-winter birds were 4 offshore and 1E on Nov 29 from Marina.

0012 BLACK-NECKED GREBE Podiceps nigricollis

Scarce passage migrant, rare in winter

All records were from the period late winter/spring. Sightings from Marina were 1W on Feb 8, 1E in summer plumage on Mar 21, 6 drifting E on Apr 8, 2E on Apr 14 and 1W along the shore and over Palace Pier. Lastly 1 was offshore Goring/Worthing on May 10.

0020 FULMAR Fulmaris glacialis

Common passage migrant, nests just outside area

Some high counts are reflected in the monthly figures shown below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	432	572	677	1223	776	93	30	-	-	-	10	150
Worthing	-	13	18	208	59	4	-	12	5	-	-	-

Peaks at Marina were 155E on Jan 7, 176E on Mar 15, 185E on Mar 16, and 30W/100E on May 4. On two occasions birds were noted prospecting close to hotels along Brighton seafront. Blue morph birds were seen from Marina with 3 singles during Jan; E on Mar 23; 3 during Apr and a single bird on Dec 12. Inland birds were 1S at West Blatchington on May 1 and 1 over Whitehawk Hill on Jun 6.

0043 SOOTY SHEARWATER Puffinus griseus

Rare autumn visitor

2002 - 1W at Marina on Jan 24, 1E there on Oct 13 and 3W on Oct 15 (all IJW). All accepted by SOS.

0046 MANX SHEARWATER Puffinus puffinus

Uncommon passage migrant and summer visitor

First of the year was 1E on Apr 21, the full monthly totals being as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	-	-	-	18	84	-	4	-	-	-	-	-
Worthing	-	-	-	3	6	1	-	1	-	-	-	-

On Apr 16 there were 16E in 5 hrs of seawatching at Marina, and the peak counts were typically in May with 52E on 21st and 13W on 23rd.

0046.01 BALEARIC SHEARWATER Puffinus mauretanicus

Rare summer visitor

2002 – 1 flew W following a trawler off the Marina on the late date of Oct 29 (IJW). Accepted by SOS.

2003 – The only confirmed records were 1 off Marina on May 9 (IJW), 2 off Worthing on May 17 (RAI), another single off Marina on Jul 25 (IJW) and another off Worthing on Sep 13 (RAI). All accepted by SOS.

0071 GANNET Sula bassana

Present offshore in most months

Some heavy passage was noted in mid-Jan, with 245W/155E at Marina on 13th, 150W at Worthing the same day, and 230W/45E at Marina on 17th. Full monthly totals were as

shown in the following table::

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	1296	886	560	1070	1143	417	18	-	132	400	240	238
Worthing	223	121	50	563	290	107	60	103	246	440	1052	105

Other high counts included 160E at Marina on Mar 15 and just as many the next day; 174E there on Apr 13 and 175E on Apr 28. The crazy roof-top bird which became famous at Seaford, was occasionally seen in the Kemp Town area of Brighton during the year. This was probably the bird flying over Wilson Avenue, near Sheepcote on Aug 26. Late-year passage peaks were 400E off Marina on Oct 30 and 830W at Worthing on Nov 12. This latter movement was the second highest for the site and involved a very large loose flock associating with Kittiwakes, appearing after rain.

0072 CORMORANT Phalacrocorax carbo

Common at coastal and some inland sites

Early-year offshore counts were well above average, with 40 off Worthing on Jan 3 and 82 on Jan 8. Further east were 65 off Marina on Jan 11, increasing to 100 the following day, then 160 on 13th. Dispersal was fairly quick, but another high count of 175 off Worthing on Feb 22 was exceptional. The full monthly seawatching totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	390	25	NC									
Worthing	126	221	29	50	15	5	5	13	-	6	6	10

Spasmodic counts of the pylon roost in Upper Adur included 137 on Jan 10, 65 heading towards the roost on Jan 31, 96 on Feb 23 and 54 on Nov 6. Small numbers occasionally reaching double figures, were often reported from the West Pier ruins.

0080 SHAG Phalacrocorax aristotelis

Regular winter visitor and scarce passage migrant

All records for the early year were from Marina and consisted of a mixture of passage or offshore birds. The Jan total was 47 made up of 9E/8W and 24 offshore; the Feb total of 69 comprised 2E and 67 offshore; and in Mar all 18 were offshore. Smaller numbers continued until Jul, with a gap then until Oct when 2-3 birds seemed to be resident. Elsewhere there were singles off Goring in Oct and Shoreham in Nov; 3 off Widewater on Nov 24 and 1 off Worthing in Dec.

0095 BITTERN Botaurus stellaris

Very rare winter visitor

A bird was present on Beeding Brooks from before Jan 25 to at least Feb 10 (JCS et al).

0119 LITTLE EGRET Egretta garzetta

Once a rare vagrant, now annual in area especially in summer

Recorded in all months except May. Early year there were 1-2 semi-resident on Widewater and peak 4 on Steyning Levels. An increase in numbers showed from Mar/Apr with 3 at Ferring Rife and a peak of 5 at Widewater. Some movement occurred at Marina with 2E on Apr 14 and 1E the following day; also 1E at Broadwater on Apr 21. Most sightings, though, tended to be from the Adur valley and in spite of regular reports there was no evidence of breeding. Ferring and Goring area had reports of singles but from Aug the numbers increased again with 11 in the Shoreham area on 12th and 10 on 3 subsequent



dates into Sep. During this period some further movement occurred on 6 dates at Worthing, peak 6 on Sep 4; and another off Marina on Sep 16. From Oct there remained up to 8 birds around the area, some reported feeding along the shoreline at Worthing, others roosting at New Salts Farm, and a maximum of 6 on 2 dates in Dec from Steyning Levels.

Of particular note was a bird feeding at the waterfall pond, Preston Park, Brighton on Dec 18 (CB) and whilst previous visits by Grey Herons had been noted there, this seems to be the first real urban record.

0122 GREY HERON Ardea cinerea

Fairly common resident

As with last year, it seems strange to report less sightings of this species than Little Egret. There were 23 occupied nests at Wyckham Wood but away from that site the maximum count was only 9 in Lower Adur on Oct 12. Seawatching from Marina produced 6 on 2 dates in Apr; 1E in Oct and 1E in Dec. Overflying birds were noted from Highdown, University of Sussex and Wildpark.

0134 WHITE STORK Ciconia ciconia

Rare vagrant

2002 - 1 circled over Tarring and central Worthing on Sep 25 (JAN) was accepted by SOS as probably an escape.

0152 MUTE SWAN Cygnus olor

Fairly common resident

Regularly reported from a handful of sites, with the following peak monthly counts:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Henfield levels	39	73	48	-	-	-	-	-	10	12	9	43
Lower Adur	6	2	7	-	-	-	71	50	13	-	5	9
Steyning Levels	7	20	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Widewater	22	17	18	14	2	2	2	2	9	12	2	5
Upper Beeding	-	2	3	2	-	-	42	-	-	8	-	-

Pairs attempted to nest at Beeding Brooks, Brooklands, Patching Pond and Widewater with mixed success. Small numbers were recorded on seawatches from Marina and Worthing during the year, though at least 2 birds were resident inside the Marina for most of the year and often tended to be overlooked!

0153 BEWICK'S SWAN Cygnus columbianus

Scarce but regular winter visitor in varying numbers

A herd of 26 was counted at Henfield Levels on Jan 1, but subsequently reducing to 6 on neighbouring Steyning Levels on Jan 3 and just 2 on Jan 5. Up to 3 were present on Henfield Levels from Dec 21 to the year end.

0158 PINK-FOOTED GOOSE Anser brachyrhynchus

Rare winter visitor

2002 - A flock of 17 flew E past the Marina on Feb 14 (IJW). Accepted by SOS.

0159 WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE Anser albifrons

Scarce winter visitor

At Goring a flock of 5E and 2 more flying with Brents on Feb 20, then 3E at Worthing on Feb 25.

0161 GREYLAG GOOSE Anser anser

Fairly scarce introduced resident

A single bird seemed to be resident in Lower Adur throughout Jan. Marina produced 6E on Feb 9 and 41E on Feb 25. Worthing also had 10E on Feb 25. The largest numbers were 30 on Wiston Pond on Feb 16 and small numbers present at Henfield Levels.

GREY GOOSE sp

Unidentified flocks included 31E at High Salvington on Feb 13; 4E at Worthing beach on Feb 13 and the same number on Feb 18; and 4E at Shoreham on Mar 16.

0166 CANADA GOOSE Branta canadensis

Introduced, increasing in area

By far the largest group all year was a WeBS count of 260 on Jan 5 at Henfield Levels. Small numbers were seen on seawatching sites in Mar/Apr. Probably bred at Beeding Fish Farm. A group of 18 were in fields at West Durrington in Aug, and a small flock at Shoreham on Aug 12 included 2 with orange rings on their right legs. Late-year counts were lower than in Jan, with peaks of 80 at Beeding Brooks in Oct and 70SW over Coombes on Oct 12. There were no records from Henfield Levels at the end of the year.

0168 BRENT GOOSE Branta bernicla

Common passage migrant and occasional winter visitor

The monthly seawatching totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	41	5471	5370	2582	14	-	-	-	8	2	41	31
Worthing	22	1463	646	500	1	-	-	-	16	142	144	14

Peak counts from Marina were 1055E on Feb 19, 2055E on Feb 22 and 2999E on Mar 23. The next day a partial albino or leucistic bird flew E at Marina. Birds were also reported off Widewater, and inland were 2 nr Tollbridge on Oct 12. Pale-bellied birds (*BB hrota*) were 1E at Marina on Feb 19, 1E there on Mar 23 and 2W off Lancing Beach on Nov 25.

0173 SHELDUCK Tadorna tadorna

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor

Monthly totals at seawatching sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	21	15	42	59	66	6	-	-	-	-	-	-
Worthing	9	6	19	35	70	24	-	2	5	15	6	6

Peak counts were 17 on Mar 17 and 28E on May 2. Inland 2 birds were present on Steyning Levels during Jan to Feb 2, and possibly the same 2 moving downstream to the Tollbridge area to Feb 24.

0178 MANDARIN Aix galericulata

Rare in our area

A pair were present on Brooklands from the end of Jan to mid-Feb. One was resting on rocks inside Marina on Mar 9. Probably the first breeding attempt of this species in our area was a pair using an owl box in Wiston village, but they later deserted.

0179 WIGEON Anas penelope

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant

Monthly seawatching totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	26	106	22	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	34
Worthing	67	91	4	4	-	-	-	-	10	102	27	-

Elsewhere there were 60 on Henfield Levels in early Jan, with only 8 there on Feb 2. Passing birds were heard at night from Hollingdean on Mar 20. Late-winter counts from inland were poor, with just 6 on Lower Adur in Nov, and 2 on Beeding Brooks and 8 at Henfield Levels during Dec.

0182 GADWALL Anas strepera

Uncommon in the area

Higher numbers than usual occurred during the early-winter period with 5 at Henfield Levels on Jan 5 and a peak of 28 on Steyning Levels on Jan 25. Ones and twos remained to Feb 4 within this general area. Seawatching from Marina produced the following: 5E on Feb 22, 2E on Mar 16 (also recorded off Worthing), singles on 3 dates in Apr, and 4E on May 7.

0184 TEAL Anas crecca

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor

The early-winter period produced peaks of 48 at Henfield Levels and 46 at Adur Saltings, both in Jan. Two were also noted from Brooklands and Widewater; 10 in Feb at Beeding Brooks and still 2 in Lower Adur on Mar 23. The seawatching totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
								-				6
Worthing	23	4	31	35	-	-	-	-	3	23	-	-

Peak counts were low with 49E at Marina on Mar 23, whilst a small number were seen off Widewater. Late year was poor with 4 at Beeding Brooks at end Oct; 25 at Adur Saltings in Nov; peak 46 at Lower Adur in Dec; and oddly none at all from Henfield Levels.

0186 MALLARD Anas platyrhynchos

Common resident and winter visitor

The main sites with monthly maxima are shown in the table below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Adur Saltings	12	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Brooklands	39	65	17	23	10	35	37	22	4	17	15	29
Henfield Levels	50	25	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Lower Adur	12	9	2	-	-	-	-	-	40	2	2	5
Steyning Levels	20	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Widewater	-	21	7	3	10	2	2	-	· =-	2	6	8

Other significant counts were 19 at Beeding Fish Farm in Mar and 100 on Storrington Pond in Jul. Additional records came from seawatches at Marina and Worthing, and some fly-overs at BTO Survey sites on downland at Tegdown Hill and University.

0189 PINTAIL Anas acuta

Regular passage migrant and occasional winter visitor

Early-year groups included 6 on Henfield Levels on Jan 1, increasing to 14 at nearby Steyning Levels on Jan 25 and a peak of 20 at Henfield on Feb 11. Smaller groups were on Beeding Brooks and Upper Adur Levels during this period. The monthly seawatching totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	-	81	51	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
Worthing	5	69	12	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-

Peaks were 50E at Worthing on Feb 23 and 32E at Marina the next day. Elsewhere a flock of 13E occurred off Shoreham on Mar 23. There were no late-winter inland records.

0191 GARGANEY Anas querquedula

Scarce spring passage migrant

Seawatching from Marina produced typical spring records of 4E on Mar 16 and 5E on Apr 14.

0194 SHOVELER Anas clypeata

Regular spring passage migrant and regular winter visitor

Totally absent in Jan, the only winter birds were a single on Henfield floods on Feb 2, a pair there on Feb 11 and a single on Wiston Pond on Mar 1. Seawatching numbers from Marina were Mar - 29, Apr - 138 with peak 57E on 14^{th} , and May - 8. Worthing recorded Mar - 6, Apr - 24 and May - 4. Late-year birds were 12E at Marina on Dec 7 and 2 birds in mid-Dec at Henfield Levels.

0198 POCHARD Aythya ferina

Regular winter visitor in small numbers

Flocks commuting between Brooklands and Widewater had peaks of 21 in Jan and 24 in Feb. Rarely noted on seawatches in any number, but 10E on Feb 22 were noted from both Marina and Worthing. A single was on Wiston Pond on Mar 1. Late-year numbers showed quite a decline with 5 birds arriving at Brooklands on Nov 1, only 9 at Widewater on Dec 10, and the flock remaining there until year-end with a peak of only 12 on Dec 16.

0200 RING-NECKED DUCK Aythya collaris

Very rare vagrant

The first-ever record for the SDOS area occurred when a female was found at Wiston Pond on Feb 9, with a second female turning up on Feb 24. Both birds remained until mid-Apr, leaving just a single until May 3 (ARK et al). They had been seen earlier at Swanbourne Lake, Arundel.

0203 TUFTED DUCK Aythya fuligula

Declining winter visitor

In Feb a flock of up to 35 resided on Wiston Pond and consisted mainly of male birds. Once a regular visitor to Brooklands and Widewater with Pochards, the numbers have now reduced to just occasional birds, with 3 on Apr 20, a single in Jun/Jul and 1 during Sep. Seawatching produced meagre results too, with 1E at Worthing in Feb and Mar, 1E at Marina in Apr and 4W at Marina on Jun 13.

0204 SCAUP Aythya marila

Scarce passage migrant and rare winter visitor

Late-year seawatching produced 1W at Worthing on Nov 25 and 5E at Marina on Nov 29.

0206 EIDER Somateria mollissima

Regular passage migrant and winter visitor

Ones and twos were offshore between Shoreham and Goring during Jan and Feb. The monthly seawatching tables are as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	5	-	40	113	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	6
Worthing	4	13	24	26	4	-	-	-	-	2	12	-

Peaks were 20E at Marina on Mar 7, 24E on Apr 1 and 27E on Apr 27. Other records included 17E off Shoreham on Aug 5 and a repeat of the small numbers offshore from Lancing in late winter.

0212 LONG-TAILED DUCK Clangula hyemalis

Rare passage migrant

A female flew E with 3 Common Scoter at Worthing on Apr 25 (JAN) and another went E at Marina on Apr 29 (IJW).

0213 COMMON SCOTER Melanitta nigra

Common passage migrant

Monthly seawatching totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	36	122	1799	7270	1773	102	-	-	38	12	122	121
Worthing	21	15	179	1282	485	-	20	23	16	64	48	26

Highest day-counts from Marina were 791E on Mar 23, 883E on Apr 8, 801E on Apr 13 and 1003E on Apr 21. The maximum at Worthing was 282 on Apr 26. Very few records were received from elsewhere, the only significant offshore flock being up to 28 at Hove in early Nov.

0215 VELVET SCOTER Melanitta fusca

Scarce passage migrant

An early bird was 1W at Worthing on Jan 1, but the main passage is shown in the following monthly seawatching totals:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	6	-	6	153	28	-	-	-	-	-	1	9
Worthing	1	-	-	27	23	-	-	-	-	2	17	-

High counts included 51E in 6 hrs at Marina on Apr 13, and 42E there on Apr 21.

0218 GOLDENEYE Bucephala clangula

Regular winter visitor in small numbers

A rather poor year, all records coming from seawatches as follows: 1W at Marina on Feb 14; 1 offshore at Worthing on Oct 16 and 1E there the next day; 1W at Worthing on Nov 25; and 1E at Marina on Dec 8.

0221 RED-BREASTED MERGANSER Mergus servator

Common winter visitor

The usual offshore gatherings between Goring and Worthing peaked at 150 on Jan 13. These winter flocks varied between 40 and 80 throughout the first 3 months and are not included in the passage counts listed below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	40	41	48	308	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Worthing	89	~	81	76	2	-	-	-	-	29	204	736

The peak count from the Marina was 71E on Apr 11. 1W at Shoreham on May 30 was the last of the Spring sightings, and they were then totally absent until mid-Oct. Winter flocks again appeared off Worthing, building up to 40 in Nov, and then a peak of 70 on Christmas Day. Highest late-year passage count was 137W/84E at Worthing on Dec 21.

0223 GOOSANDER Mergus merganser

Scarce winter visitor

A female was present on the Beeding Brooks area from Feb 17 to 24.

0225 RUDDY DUCK Oxyura jamaicensis

Rare visitor

One reported on Widewater on Feb 23.

0231 HONEY BUZZARD Pernis apivorus

Rare passage migrant

The first was 1 over Hollingdean on Sep 3, followed shortly after by singles on Sep 5 and Sep 7 (IJW). A fourth went over Sheepcote on Sep 21 (IJW). All have been accepted by the SOS.

0239 RED KITE Milvus milvus

Increasing but scarce visitor

Yet another good year started with 1 at Woods Mill on Jan 10. Probable migrants were 1NE over Wildpark on Mar 26 and 1 at Wolstonbury on Apr 15. Singles were at Steyning Roundhill on May 30, 1W at Patcham on Jul 13 and at Harrow Hill on Aug 15. The last was over the A23 at Pyecombe on Nov 6. None of the birds involved in these sightings was reported as having wing tags.

0260 MARSH HARRIER Circus aeruginosus

Scarce passage migrant

One at Beeding Brooks on Feb 10 started a good year for this species. In Mar there was an imm f E at Sompting on 17^{th} and an ad m NE over Hollingdean on 26^{th} , and another flew NE over Brighton Station on 28^{th} . Last of the spring was 1S at Beeding Brooks on May 4. In the autumn a total of 8 flew over Brighton during Sep and a male flew over

Sheepcote Valley on Sep 21. The year ended with 1W near Cement Works early in the morning on Dec 15.

0261 HEN HARRIER Circus cyaneus

Passage and occasional winter visitor

The only early-winter birds were males at Mill Hill on Feb 6 and at Standean Bottom on Feb 26. First of the autumn was 1 female at Steyning Roundhill on Oct 23 and another in the Ditchling Beacon area on Oct 26. Ringtails were seen at Chantry Hill, Cissbury, Harrow Hill and flying over Sheepcote during Nov/Dec. Last of the year was a male that flew E over the Marina on Dec 19.

0263 MONTAGU'S HARRIER Circus pygargus

Rare passage migrant, has summered

A single observer was lucky to see an imm bird in off the sea at 9.15am at Ferring on Jun 3 (CEH). In the autumn a fine juvenile went SE over Hollingdean on Sep 14 (IJW).

0269 SPARROWHAWK Accipiter nisus

Fairly common resident

Well reported throughout the year from all areas, including the occasional garden visit. Confirmed breeding included single pairs at Patcham and Wildpark; 2 pairs at Findon and 3 pairs in the Kithurst Hill area. Four different birds were ringed at the Sanctuary of which 3 were young birds and 1 an adult.

0287 COMMON BUZZARD Buteo buteo

Increasing breeding resident and passage migrant

Numerous reports in every month and from all around the recording area. Not unexpectedly, most of the sightings came from downland sites with confirmed breeding at Durrington, Kithurst Hill and Washington Bostal but judging by the numbers seen, particularly in Apr/May from areas like Ditchling Beacon, Stanmer Park, Tegdown Hill and Wolstonbury, there may well be a few more breeding. Multiple sightings included 4 at Cissbury and 3 at Steyning in Apr; 4 at Patching and Cissbury in Aug; 8 at Chantry Hill on Nov 13 and 4 at Harrow Hill in Dec. Visible migration from Brighton included a spring total of 15 with a maximum of 5N on Mar 17, and 31 during the autumn.

0301 **OSPREY** Pandion haliaetus

Scarce passage migrant

First of the year was a single flying over Woods Mill on Mar 12, then birds in off the sea at the Marina on Mar 17 and Shoreham on Mar 30. Another single was around Shoreham airfield on Apr 25. In the autumn there was 1W over Brighton on Aug 31 and 1 at the Tollbridge on Sep 9.

0304 **KESTREL** Falco tinnunculus

Fairly common resident

Widely reported from around the region. Breeding was confirmed at Coombes, Findon, Rock Common, Swandean Hospital and University of Sussex, with 2 pairs at Wildpark. Also probably bred at Cissbury, Goring, Highdown Hill, Maybridge, Washington Bostal and Whitehawk Hill, where observers were noting pairs together or regular sightings during the year.

0309 MERLIN Falco columbarius

Scarce but regular, mainly in autumn/winter

The only early-year sighting was 1 mobbing a Hen Harrier at Mill Hill on Feb 6. Sightings from Sep to Dec were as follows: 1 at Mill Hill on Sep 17, 1 at Wildpark on Sep 23, 1 at New Salts Farm/Widewater area between Oct 6 and 7, 1 or 2 in the Cissbury/Findon area during Nov, and lastly a female was observed around the Chantry/Harrow Hill area in Dec.

0310 HOBBY Falco subbuteo

Regular passage migrant and summer visitor, has bred

First was 1 in off the sea at Widewater on Apr 6. The number of sightings from around the area are shown in the table below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
All sites	-	× :		8	20	8	6	8	11	1	-	-

There was no confirmed breeding, but birds were noted during the season at Beeding Brooks and Steyning. Last of the season was 1 juvenile at Cissbury on Oct 4.

0320 PEREGRINE Falco peregrinus

Stable breeding resident

Three pairs nested in the recording area, all fledging young successfully, with also an additional non-breeding pair at a new site. Most sightings were from the Brighton and Shoreham vicinities but also from downland sites like Small Dole, Cissbury, Devil's Dyke and University.

0358 RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE Alectoris rufa

Introduced resident, status uncertain

Regularly reported from the east of the area from Feb to Jun with a maximum of 9 at Keymer Bostal, 6 at University of Sussex, 8 at Tegdown Hill and 4 from near Ditchling Beacon. In the west the largest coveys were 40 at Chantry Hill in Sep, and 22 there in Dec; 24 at Saddlescombe in Oct; and smaller late-year counts were recorded from Cissbury, Lee Farm and Stump Bottom.

0367 GREY PARTRIDGE Perdix perdix

Decreasing resident

In Jan, 1 calling at Stump Bottom, then 2-4 regularly encountered from Ditchling Beacon and Tegdown Hill areas and likely to have bred there. The only other breeding-season record was 1 calling at Sompting Refuse Tip in Jul. Coveys of 10 were at Steep Down in Aug and 12 at Chantry Hill in early Dec.

0370 QUAIL Coturnix coturnix

Scarce but regular summer visitor

First of the year was 1 at Tegdown Hill, Patcham on Jun 1 followed by 1 at Beeding Hill on Jul 6. Next 2 were flushed at Steep Down on Jul 10 and another 2 nearby on the same day. Birds continued calling from the Lychpole Hill/Steep Down area into Aug. This month also produced 1 or 2 birds on the Downs N of Shoreham with 1 calling from a barley field and singles seen on separate occasions at Mill Hill. The last was flushed from stubble at Steyning Roundhill on Sep 16.

0394 PHEASANT Phasianus colchicus

Common introduced resident

The BTO Migration Count produced additional records from the east of the recording area, with a maximum of 12 at University of Sussex, a similar number from Tegdown Hill and 28 at Westmeston. Smaller numbers were noted from Golding Barn, Keymer Bostal, Michelgrove and Patching Hill but the only confirmed breeding was 2 pairs at Wildpark. By far the largest count was 86 in a shooting area near Stump Bottom on Nov 8. A surprise was a female at Lancing beach on Oct 9.

0407 WATER RAIL Rallus aquaticus

Regular winter visitor, may breed

In spite of mild winters at both ends of the year a good number were reported. Singles were at Brooklands, Beeding Brooks and Steyning Levels in Jan, increasing to a maximum of 6 at Beeding Brooks on Feb 17 and 1 still there on Mar 30. Unusually 1 spent several days in flower beds in the Royal Pavilion gardens at the end of Mar. Late-year records were 1 or 2 at Cuckoo Corner in Sep/Oct; 1 at Cokeham reedbed in Oct; 1 at Brooklands in Nov; and a maximum of 2 from the Sanctuary in Nov/Dec.

0424 MOORHEN Gallinula chloropus

Common resident and winter visitor

Monthly maxima from WeBS areas were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Brooklands	21	27	15	6	2	4	4	11	4	16	16	28
Henfield Levels	4	8	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
Lower Adur	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	2

Elsewhere, recorded from dew ponds at Ditchling Beacon and Tegdown Hill. The only confirmed breeding was a pair at Ferring but may have also bred at Beeding Fish Farm.

0429 COOT Fulica atra

Common resident and winter visitor

Monthly maxima for Brooklands were Jan -47, Feb -30, Mar -24, Apr -21, May -23, June -35, July -51, Aug -72, Sep -57, Oct -82, Nov -44 and Dec -52. Ones and twos only were from Beeding Brooks and Lower Adur.

0433 CRANE Grus grus

Rare visitor

2002 - One was at Rye Farm, Henfield Levels on Jun 10 (VB). Accepted by SOS.

0450 **OYSTERCATCHER** Haematopus ostralegus

Common winter visitor and passage migrant, no longer breeds

This conspicuous and noisy wader has a surprisingly low number of records. Beach counts were received mainly from the western end of the region but rarely reached double figures. The highest count was 30 at Goring Gap on Oct 12. Some passage was noted from Worthing with 18 in Mar, 33 in Apr and 19 in May.

0456 AVOCET Recurvirostra avosetta

Uncommon, but regular passage migrant

First were 4E recorded from Worthing, Hove, then Marina on Mar 15. Thereafter the

monthly totals from Marina were Mar - 12 and Apr - 3; and from Worthing Mar - 5 and Apr -3. A rather poor showing for this elegant species.

0469 LITTLE RINGED PLOVER Charadrius dubius

Rare passage migrant. Has bred

Two records of single birds in spring were from the Storrington/Washington area.

0470 RINGED PLOVER Charadrius hiaticula

Common winter visitor and passage migrant; attempts to breed

The following table gives the monthly peaks from the main sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Adur Saltings	25	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	102	103	-	-
Goring	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	45	34	37	22
Lower Adur	60	35	-	-	-	-	-	-	48	22	22	87
Marina	40	-	-	2	4	~	-	-	35	-	-	65
Shoreham	60	-	4	-		- 1	-	64	65	-	-	-
Worthing	16	4	9	9	3	-	2	50	30	20	20	110

An odd record was 1 in the Royal Pavilion gardens at 8.55am on Feb 27. Two pairs bred unsuccessfully at Marina and 1 pair with 2 eggs at Worthing was found in Jul. Small numbers from Widewater in most months of the year but there were no breeding attempts confirmed. Passage birds included peak 6W/125E at Worthing on Aug 25.

0485 GOLDEN PLOVER Pluvialis apricaria

Fairly common winter visitor

Varying numbers up to a peak of 6 were noted in Jan/Feb from around the Airfield/ Tollbridge area. Overflying birds were 1 over Wildpark on Feb 28, 40W at Cissbury on Oct 4, and 1 over Lychpole Hill on Nov 9.

0486 GREY PLOVER Pluvialis squatarola

Common winter visitor and passage migrant

Beach and roost monthly maxima were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Goring	154	-	-	-	-	- 1	-	14	16	13	104	-
Adur Saltings	12	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	1
Lower Adur	33	11	-	-	-	- 1	-	-	-	-	-	19
Worthing	45	90	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	200

Seawatching totals were 62E in Mar and 31E in Apr from Worthing; and at Marina 13E in Mar and 197E in Apr, with a maximum of 58 on 26th. The only late-year count was 60W at Worthing on Sep 10.

0493 LAPWING Vanellus vanellus

Common winter visitor but declining breeder

Well over 2000 birds were in the area during Jan with peaks of 1237 on Lower Adur on Jan 27, 472 on Henfield Levels and 295 around the Airfield. Numbers remained through Feb diminishing slightly to 842 on Airfield on 24th. A good number of breeding reports

were received: Botolphs – 1pair, Harrow Hill – 3pair, Steep Down –1pair, Steyning Levels –1pair, and Tegdown Hill – 1-2 pairs. These records include sitting birds as well as some sightings of chicks at various sites. Birds were also present in the breeding season from Beeding Hill and near Clayton windmills. Of interest was a single bird in off the sea at Marina and landing on the beach on Apr 12. A flock of c.120 was around Henfield Levels in Jul/Aug but had dispersed before the winter period. Late-year counts were well below average with 100 at Highdown Hill and up to 320 in Lower Adur, both in Dec.

0496 KNOT Calidris canutus

Regular passage migrant

Up to 2 birds were resident in Lower Adur during Jan/Feb. Seawatching figures from the Marina were 73E in Mar, with a peak of 53 on 23rd, 51E in Apr; and at Worthing 69E in Apr, with a peak of 31 on 25th. The only autumn record was a single on Shoreham Adur on Sep 7, then 15W on Widewater beach on Nov 11.

0497 SANDERLING Calidris alba

Common winter visitor and passage migrant

Monthly peaks from the main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Adur Saltings	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-
Goring	33	170	39	40	-	-	-	1	11	119	-	11
Widewater	59	5	31	-	-	-	-	-	-	33	33	-
Worthing	2	4	42	24	-	-	-	15	5	4	20	20

Spring seawatching totals from Marina were 62E in Mar, 19E in Apr and 27E in May; and passage counts at Worthing were 53E in Mar, 108E/17W in Apr and 61E/15W in May. A single bird was present up-river near the Tollbridge on Sep 19.

0510 PURPLE SANDPIPER Calidris maritima

Regular winter visitor in small numbers

Monthly maxima at the main sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	10	10	10	10	3	-	2	2	2	7	11	12
Shoreham Fort	5	5	5	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	4	3
Widewater	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-

Final spring date at Marina was 3 on May 6 and first returning bird was on Jul 14, with 2 by the end of that month remained for over a month until 5 on Sep 1, and then larger counts in late-year. A bird with Turnstones was a surprise on Goring Beach on Sep 12.

0512 DUNLIN Calidris alpina

Common winter visitor and passage migrant

Peak counts from beaches and riverside were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Adur Saltings	120	200	3	17		-	-	17	-	-	1	-
Goring	240	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4	45	60
Worthing	500	300	100	-	-	-	-	10	-	6	200	300
Tollbridge	356	95	12	-	-	-	-	-	18	7	-	102

Elsewhere insignificant numbers turned up sporadically at Widewater or passing Marina.

0517 RUFF Philomachus pugnax

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

A single was noted on Shoreham Adur on Jan 25, then 8 to 9 birds for a period during the second half of Feb, generally in the area south of the Tollbridge.

0518 JACK SNIPE Lymnocryptes minimus

Scarce winter visitor in small numbers

Singles were reported from Beeding and Henfield Brooks during Feb, then 2 at the usual Ferring Rife site in early Mar. A single was at the latter site during Dec.

0519 SNIPE Gallinago gallinago

Common winter visitor

All the early-year records were from the Adur valley with peak 148 on Jan 3 from Adur Saltings, and numbers ranging between 30 and 40 from Beeding Brooks and Henfield and Steyning Levels in Feb. Groups of over a dozen were still at Botolphs and Henfield Levels in Mar. One flew through Wildpark on Apr 6. Returning birds were first noted with 4 at Beeding Brooks on Oct 23. Unusually, one seen in a flock of migrating Wood Pigeons at Sheepcote on Nov 8. The highest winter count was 84 from Lower Adur in Nov but considerably lower numbers reported during Dec from Ferring Rife and the Adur valley.

0529 WOODCOCK Scolopax rusticola

Winter visitor and passage migrant

One was on a Hove garden patio on Jan 11 and another at Lychpole Hill the same day. Further singles were seen at Cissbury and Warren Hill in late Jan and 1 flying down Bear Road, Brighton in daylight on Mar 21. Late-year singles were at Findon in Oct, Wildpark in early Nov and 2 at Sheepcote on Nov 8.

0532 BLACK-TAILED GODWIT Limosa limosa

Uncommon passage migrant and occasional winter visitor

First were 3E at Marina on Mar 18 then a single at Shoreham on Apr 24. Normally very scarce on seawatches, a series of birds on passage were logged from Worthing with 4W on Jul 26, a total of 70E on 6 dates in Aug with a peak of 27 on 30th, 20 E on Sep 9 and 5E on Nov 11. A single was feeding at Lower Adur on Jul 31.

0534 BAR-TAILED GODWIT Limosa lapponica

Common passage migrant and irregular winter visitor

A single remained in Lower Adur through Jan into early Feb. The seawatching totals were as shown below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	-	-	24	1093	284	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Worthing	-	-	-	1144	244	-	-	-	4	-	3	-

First at Marina were 5E on Mar 21 and later reaching peak counts on Apr 25/26 with 375E/262E at Marina and 593E/433E at Worthing respectively. Very small numbers were recorded on Goring Beach in Oct/Nov.

0538 WHIMBREL Numenius phaeopus

Common passage migrant

Monthly seawatching totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	-	-	-	1381	177	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Worthing	-	-	1	900	37	-	4	2	-	-	-	-

The first bird was 1E at Worthing on Mar 23, the next not passing until Apr 8 with 5E there. Peak counts occurred typically at the end of Apr with Marina logging 185E on Apr 23, 298E on Apr 25 and 218E on Apr 26. Peak count at Worthing was 257E on Apr 28. Birds stopping off included 2 on Adur from Apr 17 to May 6; 5 at Henfield Levels on Apr 26; 1 heard at Stepping on May 6; and 1 at Shoreham Adur on Sep 29.

0541 CURLEW Numenius arquata

Common passage migrant

Compared to the previous species, Curlew are noted less frequently on seawatches. The low numbers reflected in maximum counts of 12E on Feb 23 and 35E on Apr 23 from Marina in spring. Recorded from Worthing during Oct and Nov but in low numbers. Elsewhere singles were on Shoreham Adur in Feb and at Beeding Brooks in Mar, whilst overflyers were 2E at Broadwater in Feb and 2 at Cuckoo Corner in May.

0545 SPOTTED REDSHANK Tringa erythropus

Very scarce passage migrant or winter visitor

Excellent close views were given to two observers of a single feeding on mud near the Lady Jane pub, Shoreham Adur on Nov 4 (SRA, JCS)

0546 REDSHANK Tringa totanus

Common winter visitor

Monthly maxima from the main winter sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Adur Saltings	189	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	76	72	104	91
Goring Gap	7	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	17	17
Tollbridge	20	13	27	-	-	-	-	-	-	91	-	15
Steyning Levels	8	-	3	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	3	-

Monthly totals from seawatching sites reflect the sparse numbers seen of this relatively common wader: Worthing -8W in Jan, 3 in Mar, 2 in Jul and 3 in Nov; and 13E from Marina in Apr. There were no records further north than the Cement Works.

0548 GREENSHANK Tringa nebularia

Regular passage migrant

All records were: 1 at Henfield Levels on Apr 26; 1 present on Lower Adur in early Aug; 2 on Shoreham Adur on Oct 3 and 1 near bypass bridge on Nov 6.

0553 GREEN SANDPIPER Tringa ochropus

Regular winter visitor

The early winter period produced a single on Steyning Levels and a maximum of 2 birds on the Beeding Brooks area to mid Feb. The only migrant was 1 flushed from dewpond at Wildpark on Aug 18. Only singles were recorded from Henfield during the late-winter period, the more popular site this year seeming to be Steyning Levels with a maximum of 3 in Dec. A rather poor year.

0556 COMMON SANDPIPER Actitis hypoleucos

Common passage migrant, occasionally winters

Repeating the wintering status of this species in recent years, there were up to 3 in Lower Adur during Jan and 1 near Upper Beeding on Jan 2. First incoming passage was at the Marina with 1E on Apr 16 followed by monthly totals of 2E in Apr, 10E in May and 1E in Jun, much lower numbers than usual. Other spring sightings were singles at Worthing beach and Widewater. Lower Adur had 1 or 2 birds during Jul and apart from a maximum count of 16 on Aug 16, similar numbers were recorded at the Airfield, Marina, Lower Adur and Upper Beeding to mid-Oct. Late-winter birds included singles at Henfield Levels, Lower Adur and Worthing beach.

0561 TURNSTONE Arenaria interpres

Common passage migrant and winter visitor

Maximum counts at favoured areas are shown below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Lower Adur	19	6	6	-	-	-		-	11	23	32	29
Goring	2	-	14	-	-	-	-	20	8	19	10	9
Shoreham Fort	18	-	15	-	-	-	-	-	12	-	-	2
Widewater	21	30	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	9
Worthing	53	7	10	-	-	-	-	4	-		-	-

Very few passing birds were logged from seawatching sites, with 5 on rocks at the Marina, and elsewhere 10 on Southwick Beach in Nov.

0566 POMARINE SKUA Stercorarius pomarinus

Regular spring passage migrant

First of the year from the Marina were 10E in over 7 hrs of watching on Apr 14. Other day highs were 12E in 14 hrs at Worthing on Apr 25 and 22 at the Marina on May 4. Monthly totals from the Marina were Apr - 47, May - 43; and from Worthing Apr - 21, May - 18. Most of the higher counts occurred in light winds in the NE/SE sector. The optimum period for sighting this species has always been the last week of Apr, and the first two weeks of May (see page 66).

0567 ARCTIC SKUA Stercorarius parasiticus

Regular spring and autumn passage migrant

First were 2 offshore at Widewater on Mar 29, followed nearly a month later by the usual passage, commencing with 2E at Worthing on Apr 12, then 22E at the Marina the following day. Monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	-	-	-	259	111	-	-	Ξ.	3	-	-	-
Worthing	7 2	-	-	84	31	-	-	1	3	-	-	-

High counts from the Marina were 59E on Apr 21, 35E on Apr 25 and 26E on Apr 26, with 15 at Worthing also on this date. Off-season sightings were 1E in Aug and 5W on two days in Sep.

0569 GREAT SKUA Catharacta skua

Regular passage migrant in small numbers

Monthly totals from the main seawatching sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	7	1	1	42	19	-	1	÷	1	-	1	1
Worthing	-	-	-	12	3	~	1	-	-	1	-	-

There were no day counts higher than 5 at either site. All late-year birds were going W.

0575 MEDITERRANEAN GULL Larus melanocephalus

Regular passage migrant and increasing winter visitor

With a marked increase in breeding numbers in the SE of England it is not surprising to see higher numbers recorded on seawatches. Whilst it is not possible to log all plumages seen, a good number of first-year and second-year birds were noted in addition to the adults. Monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina					8			2.00				1
Worthing	-	3	2	50	6	2	1	-	-	-	-	-

A record day-count of 29E at the Marina on Apr 16 was followed by 27E the next day, 18E on Apr 22 and 19E on Apr 26. The peak at Worthing of 12E corresponded to the high count at the Marina. Noted elsewhere with single adults in Mar at Brooklands, Hove Lagoon and Shoreham Adur. Passage birds were also noted in small numbers along the coast in Apr, Jun and Jul. An inland record of 2 at Storrington on Sep 8, then a few winter birds with singles at Widewater in Nov and several lingering around Brighton in Dec.

0578 LITTLE GULL Larus minutus

Regular on spring/autumn passage, occasional winter visitor

The seawatching monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	18	8	6	1160	3	-	-	-	1	185	-	-
Worthing	-	-	-	219	1	-	-	-	-	4	4	1

Some high counts at the Marina were 73E on Apr 16, a typical day figure for the time of year, but then 285E on Apr 21 and 564E on Apr 26 which is a record count for Sussex. This huge movement was also monitored at Worthing with 163E. Strong E winds brought 108 offshore to the Marina on Oct 17, with 65 still there the following day. Small numbers were also recorded during the year from off Widewater, and included 2W on Nov 2.

0579 SABINE'S GULL Larus sabini

Very rare autumn visitor

A juvenile was present just W of Brighton's derelict West Pier on Nov 4-5 (SOS, RAI). Another was off the Marina on Nov 14 (IJW). Both accepted by SOS.

0582 BLACK-HEADED GULL Larus ridibundus

Common winter visitor and passage migrant

Early-year gatherings included a peak of 2000 on Goring beach on Jan 1 and 900 at the Marina on Jan 17. Seawatching logs included 250W at Worthing on Jan 3, 400E at the Marina on Feb 23 and 344E on Apr 15. Apart from these and 500 at Shoreham Adur on Mar 15 there were many smaller counts from Brooklands and some inland sites. Seawatching at Worthing produced counts for all months up to Jul, and thereafter very few significant numbers from anywhere, with just 100 from Shoreham Adur in Dec.

0590 COMMON GULL Larus canus

Common winter visitor

Numbers of 2500E on Jan 9 and 2000E on Jan 11 from the Marina far outweighed any other counts, the next highest being 700E on Mar 23 and 1158 on Apr 15. At Worthing the Apr total was 236. Lounging flocks elsewhere included 312 on Adur in Jan, and a peak of 2000 there on Mar 9. March seems to be the peak month for numbers as indicated by inland birds, with 200 at Golding Barn and smaller groups along the eastern end of the Downs. The only significant flocks late-year were modest 50s at Adur and Cissbury.

0591 LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL Larus fuscus

Common passage migrant, now breeding in small numbers, scarce in winter

More or less absent early in year except for singles at Brooklands, then 105 on Feb 23 near Tollbridge and 40 there on Mar 5. At the start of the breeding season a group of 10 on a Bingo Hall roof, near Brighton College just shows how many nest in the Kemp Town area. Two or more pairs nested on rooftops near Brighton Station, but no detailed surveys were submitted. Parks are used for lounging or preening with regular reports of small numbers at Preston Park. At the western end of the area small numbers noted from Worthing, peak 26 at Worthing on Apr 12, but again no breeding records were received. At Marina there were 20 juvs on Aug 20. Also at Marina was a Norwegian blue-ringed 1cy of the race *intermedius* on Sep 20. The only late-year count was 6 at Brooklands.

0592 HERRING GULL Larus argentatus

Common, expanding breeding population

Widely reported from all around the area during the first 3 months; peaks 700 at Marina on Jan 20 and 86 on the grass at University of Sussex on Mar 10. Also noted from tips near Washington, and uncounted groups at Brooklands. Although there were no breeding records received, there is the suggestion that urban nesting is on a slight increase. This is born out by up to 600 on the beach at Worthing in Jun and 430 juvs at Marina on Aug 1. Vastly under-recorded late in the year, the only high count being 270 on Adur in mid Oct.

0593 YELLOW-LEGGED GULL Larus argentatus michahellis

Regular visitor in summer and autumn, scarce in winter

A single was at Shoreham Adur on Feb 12, but then no further reports until 2 adults on Jun 30 and singles in mid-Jul, increasing to 5 on Jul 17. Away from this area there were 3 at Sheepcote on Jul 20 and 6 at Southwick beach on Jul 27. Thereafter records were concentrated from the Tollbridge area with 13 on Jul 30, 7 adults on Aug 12, 11 adults and 1 juvenile on Sep 10, and a peak of 29 on Oct 8. There was an unusually high count of 10 birds in Shoreham Harbour on Aug 5. After the Oct peak, numbers declined to just 5 in Nov with 3 remaining into Dec.

0599 GLAUCOUS GULL Larus hyperboreus

Rare visitor

A first-summer was present on Widewater and nearby Adur on at least May 20 and 21 (BFF et al). Accepted by SOS.

0600 GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL Larus marinus

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant, rare breeder

A few reports of singles from mid-Feb were from the Worthing and East Brighton areas. Seawatching at Worthing accounted for 16 on 4 dates in Apr. In central Brighton 3 pairs

raised 7 young and another pair bred with unknown success. Late in the year gatherings included 35 loafing on the miniature golf course at Brooklands in Nov, 200 at the Marina on Nov 15 and a similar number at Shoreham Adur on Nov 17. The bird with an 'orange C' ring from Jersey was seen again at both Marina and Shoreham.

0602 KITTIWAKE Rissa tridactyla

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor

Some above-average counts are shown in the monthly totals below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	3182	1564	1750	1104	648	124	4	-	15	64	1050	1519
Worthing	502	207	53	72	43	2	-	2	3	6	420	27

At the Marina there was heavy passage during Jan with peaks of 380E on 1^{st} and 710W/50E on 13^{th} . Other high counts there were 400E on Feb 23, 595E on Mar 16 and late in the year 500W on Nov 25 and 400E on Dec 9. At Worthing the peaks were 250 fishing offshore on Jan 29 and 200W on Nov 25.

0611 SANDWICH TERN Sterna sandvicensis

Common passage migrant

First of the year was an early bird at the Marina on Feb 22 followed by a single on Mar 7 and 6 on Mar 14. Small flurries occurred as usual during the last week of Mar from Goring and Widewater but the main passage in Apr is shown in the monthly totals as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	-	1	194	3840	999	66	22	-	70	-	-	-
Worthing	-	-	8	2245	292	30	74	171	164	23	-	-

Peak counts at the Marina were 479E on Apr 13, 432E on Apr 14 and 400E on Apr 21; and at Worthing 383E/16W on Apr 25. Few were noted in mid-summer but 20E off Widewater on Jul 19 and 2 inland over Cissbury on Aug 16 were noteworthy. Groups of up to 26 roosted with gulls and waders at Goring Gap in Sep. Passage continued well into Oct from Shoreham and Worthing, the last being at Worthing on 25th.

0614 ROSEATE TERN Sterna dougallii

Very scarce spring migrant

The only records this year were 1 passing Worthing with Common Terns on Apr 25 (PMB, JAN); another off Marina on May 4 and 3 off Marina on May 15 (IJW). All accepted by SOS.

0615 COMMON TERN Sterna hirundo

Common passage migrant

First of the year was 1E at the Marina on Mar 30, followed by the usual passage counts in Apr/May as shown below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	-	-	1	1830	678	-	6	-	18	1	-	-
Worthing	-	-	-	414	-	-	1	85	7	-	-	-

Peak counts at the Marina were 271E on Apr 16, 633E on Apr 24 and 294E on May 15. The peak at Worthing was 237E on Apr 26. The last were 2 off the Palace Pier on Oct 8 with a single at the Marina on Oct 10.

0616 ARCTIC TERN Sterna paradisaea

Scarce passage migrant

First of the year was 1E at the Marina on Apr 8. Monthly totals of identified birds were Apr - 24 and May - 44, with a peak of 20E on May 4. At Worthing there were 3E on Apr 25. The only autumn record was 1 off the Marina on Sep 30.

COMMIC TERN

Monthly totals of terns not specifically identified as Common/Arctic are shown below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marina	-	-	-	4235	437	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Worthing	-	-	1	3382	143	-	2	49	37	-	-	-

First bird was 1E on Mar 26. Large eastward movements were recorded from both sites on Apr 26 with 3048 from Marina and 2699 at Worthing. The last was 1W/1E on Sep 25.

0624 LITTLE TERN Sterna albifrons

Fairly common passage migrant

Spring passage commenced with 1E at Worthing on Apr 12. Typically the peak movements were during the last week of Apr, with the 25th producing 28E at the Marina and 75E at Worthing. Monthly totals were 87 from the Marina and 133 from Worthing; and in May the totals were 51 at Marina and 8 from Worthing. There were no autumn sightings.

0627 BLACK TERN Chlidonias niger

Scarce but regular passage migrant

First were 2E off Shoreham Beach on Apr 15. At the Marina there were 12E during Apr on 4 dates, with a maximum of 5 on 16th; and at Worthing 19E on 3 dates in Apr, with a maximum of 13 on 26th. May records included 6E at the Marina on 15th. The only autumn record was 1 feeding off Worthing pier on Sep 16.

0634 GUILLEMOT Uria aalge

Regular winter visitor and passage migrant

Quite low numbers were reported from along the coast during the first three months, the peaks being 50 off Widewater on Feb 2 and 29 still there the next day. During the last three months the high counts were 12E off Worthing on Oct 23, 40 off Shoreham on Nov 24 and 58E at Worthing the same day. Most records by far were from the sea off Lancing/ Worthing.

0636 RAZORBILL Alca torda

Regular winter visitor and passage migrant

An exceptional 2000 were offshore at the Marina on Jan 31, and good numbers continued in the Brighton area for the next fortnight. Other counts included 200 off Palace Pier on Feb 3, 800 offshore the Marina on Feb 8, 800W at the Marina on Feb 10 and 900 offshore on Feb 11. Strangely there were few counts from further west during this period. Latewinter records were generally low, with peaks occurring at the end of Nov with 30 at Worthing on 23^{rd} , 40 off Shoreham on 24^{th} , and 15 off the Marina on Dec 6.

0647 LITTLE AUK Alle alle

Very rare late-autumn visitor

2002 - 2E at the Marina on Jan 28, 2E there on Nov 12 and 1E the following day. An-

other off the Marina on Nov 20 then a further 6 between Nov 24 to Dec 14, including one inside the Marina on Nov 26 which was photographed (all IJW).

2003 - One 300 yards offshore at Widewater on Dec 5 has been submitted to SOS (SRA).

0654 PUFFIN Fratercula arctica

Very rare spring passage migrant

2002 - 1E at the Marina on Apr 26 and another on May 12 (IJW) have been accepted by SOS.

2003 - One off the Marina on Mar 26 has been accepted by SOS (IB).

AUK Species

Phenomenal numbers were logged at the Marina where some of the daily counts were higher than those for a normal year's total. In Jan the monthly total was 17,316E/27,776W with peaks of 65E/2675W on 7th, 1900E/10,680W on 13th and 160E/3850W on 17th. Worthing's peak was 3000W on 13th. Almost as many were logged in Feb, with a total of 22,558E/6,640W and 3,300 offshore at the Marina, the peaks being 6000E and 2000 offshore on 13th, and 2900E and 500 offshore on 16th. Winter movements tail off in Mar the peak reducing to 967E on 13th from a total of 3839, and with 402 in Apr and 302 in May. The odd bird or two was noted in Jun/Jul and Sep, but movements did not recur at the Marina until Nov, with 40E/490W on 24th out of a month's total of 1128. The peak in Dec was 25E/1220W on 21st from a total of 3208.

0665 FERAL PIGEON Columba livia

Common resident

Early and late nesting was recorded at Henfield Levels in Mar and in Brighton during Nov. A count of 100+ came from Preston Park, Brighton in May.

0668 STOCK DOVE Columba oenas

Declining resident

The only significant early-year numbers included 27 at Lancing Clump and 8 at University. At the Marina there was 1E on Jan 5. Two pairs bred at Stanmer Park and Wildpark, and probably breeding occurred at Golding Barn, Goring, Tegdown Hill and University. The all-year peak at Wildpark was 7 in Sep, with 8W there with a pigeon movement on Oct 19. The only late-year count was 80 in the Lychpole Hill/Steep Down area on Nov 8.

0670 WOODPIGEON Columba palumbus

Abundant resident, common late-autumn passage migrant

Early-year flocks included 100 near Golding Barn in Jan; 2000 at Three Corner Copse,



In Jan; 2000 at Three Corner Copse, Hove in Feb; and up to 800 in Mar at the University. The only breeding count received was 71 pairs at Wildpark, but known to have bred at Patcham, Tegdown Hill and Sanctuary, where 1 was ringed at the latter site in Aug. Autumn movement included 2650 over Wildpark on Oct 25 and 1287 on Nov 9. Peak numbers occurred on Nov 7 with 30,000 over Brighton, 1100 at Ferring Rife and 3000W at Sheepcote. An autumn total approaching 90,000 was logged over Brighton. Roost counts at Wildpark were 342 on Nov 15 and 150 on Dec 24. Surprisingly there were no late-year flocks reported from around the region.

0684 COLLARED DOVE Streptopelia decaocto

Common resident

Nest building was observed at Goring in Jan, but the only confirmed count was 38 pairs at Wildpark. BTO figures showed probable breeding at Patcham, Tegdown Hill, University and Whitehawk Hill. Other counts included 20 in St Mary's churchyard, Shoreham in Oct, and 43 at Lee Farm in Dec.

0687 TURTLE DOVE Streptopelia turtur

Scarce summer visitor, declining

First arrivals were at Ditchling Beacon on Apr 27 with 2 at Stanmer Park on Apr 29. A number of sightings at Henfield, Lower Adur, Sompting Downs, Tegdown Hill and University of Sussex may have indicated breeding. Singles additionally reported from Broadwater, Cissbury and Sheepcote in May/Jun. The only returning birds were singles at Three Corner Copse, Hove and Sheepcote, both on Sep 21.

0712 RING-NECKED PARAKEET Psittacula krameri

Scarce, once bred

One was seen at the University of Sussex on Feb 19. Five crows were mobbing one at Lancing on Jun 26, and a third report came from 1E at Sompting on Oct 7. It is likely these birds were escapes rather than birds moving away from breeding areas in nearby Kent and Surrey.

0724 CUCKOO Cuculus canorus

Fairly common summer visitor

The first was a really early bird at Cokeham reedbed on Mar 31 (RB), a fortnight earlier than singles at Beeding Brooks, Sandgate Woods, Spithandle Lane and Westmeston. May have bred at Cissbury, Sandgate Park and Tegdown Hill where a number of reports were received in the breeding season. Last was 1 at Cissbury on Aug 30.

0735 BARN OWL Tyto alba

Scarce winter visitor and rare breeding resident

Early-year records came from the Shoreham area with 1 seen at the west end of the Airfield on Jan 11, then a road casualty near the Cement Works on Jan 28. Another was seen regularly in late Jan feeding over fields near the Sanctuary. There were no breeding reports from nestboxes where they had been successful in recent years. The only late-winter bird was 1 again at the Airfield during Dec.

757 LITTLE OWL Athene noctua Fairly common resident

A pair regularly reported from Standean/Tegdown Hill area from Feb into the breeding season, and another pair raised 3 young at Findon. Elsewhere singles noted from Annington, Brooklands, Cement Works, Ditchling Beacon, Sheepcote and Steyning Roundhill.

0761 TAWNY OWL Strix aluco

Fairly common resident

Birds seen or calling from scattered sites during the first half of the year and may have

indicated breeding from Cissbury, Ditchling Beacon, urban Patcham, Stanmer Park and University of Sussex.

0767 LONG-EARED OWL Asio otus

Scarce winter visitor, has bred

A single bird was noted from a lowland site during Feb/Mar and 2 birds were seen from a downland area close to a previous breeding site. One was flushed from a tree on Hollingbury Hillfort on Apr 24 (PT).

0768 SHORT-EARED OWL Asio flammeus

Migrant and occasional winter visitor

One or two birds were seen around the Beeding Brooks area during Feb, staying until at least Mar 2. Migrants were 1N over Hollingdean on Mar 17 whilst another was at Devil's Dyke on Mar 28. In the autumn some passage was noted with 1E at Shoreham Adur on Sep 26, singles passing through Airfield, Sheepcote and Whitehawk during Oct, and lastly 1W in off the sea at Worthing Beach on Nov 16.

0778 NIGHTJAR Caprimulgus europaeus

Rare summer migrant, formerly bred

A male in off the sea on May 7 repeated a remarkable run of incoming birds seen at the Marina over the last few years (IJW). A second record was 1 churring from a tree at 9.10 am at Cissbury on Jun 1 (DG).

0795 SWIFT Apus apus

Common summer visitor and passage migrant

The first arrival was at University on Apr 23 followed the next day by singles at Goring, Marina and Worthing. Main arrival was, as usual, in early May with 15 at Wildpark on 4th and 36 over Waterhall on 5th. There were very few counts received from urban breeding areas, just 40+ from Brighton and Worthing, and smaller counts from Steyning and Storrington. Largest counts were 130 at Stanmer Park and 100 over Devil's Dyke, both in late May. Some early return movement was noted with 120 at Wildpark on Aug 2 and 150 over Broadwater the next day. Most local birds had dispersed well before the end of Aug, with just a handful of Sep records, the last few being at Wildpark on 14th, Steyning on 15th and Worthing on 16th.

0831 KINGFISHER Alcedo atthis Scarce resident and winter visitor

Early in the year singles were reported from Adur Saltings, Henfield Levels, Lower Adur, the Marina and Widewater. Likely to have bred at Beeding Levels where 2 birds were seen in Jun. A bird at the Marina on Jun 22 was then resident until the end of the year, and was joined by a second bird from Oct. One was ringed at Mumbles on Jul 19, and re-trapped on Aug 2. The only multiple count was 3 at Harbour on Sep 7, then ones and



twos were regularly seen from various areas in the Adur Valley and also from Brooklands and Widewater from Sep to Dec.

0856 GREEN WOODPECKER Picus viridis

Common resident

Widely reported from around the region. Confirmed breeding was Cissbury -2 prs, Findon -3 prs, Steyning -1 pr, Storrington -1 pr, Sullington Warren -1 pr and Wildpark -3 prs. Also regularly seen from other areas where it is reasonable to assume they bred: Clapham Wood, Highdown Hill, Patcham, Small Dole, Standean, University of Sussex and Westmeston. At the Sanctuary there were 5 ringed, the highest total in over 50 years.

0876 GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER Dendrocopus major

Common resident

As with the previous species, widely reported with a good number seen feeding in members' gardens. Breeding pairs were notes at Findon, Goring, Steyning, Storrington, with 2 pairs at Wildpark, but probably also bred in other areas such as Cissbury, Highdown Hill, Patcham, Tegdown Hill, University of Sussex and Wyckham Wood. Three were ringed at the Sanctuary, again the highest annual total from the site.

0887 LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER Dendrocopus minor Scarce, has bred

A male was seen on Upper Adur Levels on Feb 19 (BFF) and a possible was heard drumming from Warren Hill in Apr (JCS).

0974 WOODLARK Lullula arborea

Rare passage migrant

Autumn migrants included 3N at Sheepcote on Oct 11, with another over this area on Oct 12; 1E at Widewater on Oct 12 and 1SW over a Goring garden on Oct 18.

0976 SKYLARK Alauda arvensis

Common resident

The song of the Skylark remains one of the wondrous sounds of birding and we are lucky to continue to get so many records for an apparently declining species nationally. There were few winter groups reported early in the year, with a maximum of 18 on the Downs above Keymer and 17 at Tegdown Hill, both in Mar. Breeding pairs included Golding Barn – 1, Goring Gap – 1, Highdown Hill – 5, Patching Hill – 2, Stanmer Park – 2, University of Sussex – 2 and Wildpark – 10. Autumn passage was noted from Wildpark with 560 from Sep 24 to Nov 7, the maximum being 65 on Oct 24. The peak at Sheepcote was 110 on Oct 16 with also 80 in off the sea at the Marina on Nov 6, and 350W there on Nov 15. Late-year flock counts included 100 in the Lychpole Hill/Cissbury area and up to 400 at Chantry Hill, both in Nov.

0981 SAND MARTIN Riparia riparia

Summer visitor and common passage migrant

The first arrival was at Shoreham Fort on Mar 23, with a small flurry in mid-Apr from seawatching sites and 40 at Sandgate Park. In a generally poor year for this species, it was nice to hear of 50 pairs nesting at Sullington sandpit, but there was negative news from nearby Washington pit. Very few dispersals were noted, i.e. just 19 from Worthing beach on only 3 dates in Aug, even fewer in Sep, and the last was at Goring on Oct 5.
0992 SWALLOW Hirundo rustica

Common summer visitor

An early arrival was at Airfield on Mar 5, well ahead of the next at Ditchling Beacon on Mar 22. Then noted from numerous sites into Apr, but in very small numbers, the only mini influx being 109 in off the sea at Worthing on 27th and similar numbers on 29th, with a late arrival there of 150N on May 20. No breeding records were submitted. An indication of a poor autumn was shown at Wildpark with a total of only 1195 from Aug 1 to Oct 26; and not much better figures at Worthing where 515E on Sep 27 was the peak from a month's total of 1604. The highest day-count was 700 at Sheepcote on Oct 15. A surprising number of Nov birds were seen, with singles at Tollbridge and Widewater early in the month, then at Southwick Beach on 18th, and 2 flying fast through Beeding Brooks 'as if there was no tomorrow', and the last at Steyning on 28th.

1001 HOUSE MARTIN Delichon urbica

Common summer visitor

A single at Steyning on Mar 29 was a week or two earlier than usual. Two followed at University of Sussex on Mar 31. Others were slow in arriving, with small numbers by mid-Apr at Brooklands, Patcham and Upper Beeding. Reported breeding pairs were Sandgate Park – 2, Steyning – 2, and West Durrington – 6. However, regularly reported from other areas but no nesting details submitted. First returning birds were noted from Newtimber Hill and Wildpark in Aug. Peak counts at Wildpark were 304 on Sep 9 and 520 on Sep 13, and elsewhere numbers were picking up later with 200E at Worthing on Sep 27 and similar numbers at Cissbury and Whitehawk Hill in early Oct. The only significant count in a poor year was 1000 through Sheepcote on Oct 12. Last birds were 4 at Worthing on Oct 17 and 3 at Golding Barn on Oct 22.

1009 TREE PIPIT Anthus trivialis

Fairly common passage migrant

The only spring record was 1 over Brighton on Apr 1. In a very poor autumn only 18 were logged at Wildpark between Aug 16 and Sep 14, and elsewhere only ones and twos from Cissbury, Mill Hill and Sanctuary in Aug, the last being over Mill Hill on Sep 17.

1011 MEADOW PIPIT Anthus pratensis

Locally common resident

Early-year numbers were sparsely reported, with flocks of 20 to 30 at Beeding Brooks and Stretham Manor in Feb. Passage numbers occurred at many sites during Mar with a peak of 83 from Tegdown Hill, 66 at Whitehawk Hill and 45 in off the sea at the Marina. Display flights noted from Beeding Hill, Devil's Dyke, Ditchling Beacon and Golding Barn and can be added to confirmed breeding at Chantry Hill – 1 pair, Highdown Hill – 1 pair, Wildpark – 2 pairs and Wolstonbury – 2 pairs. Autumn passage was lower than normal, the first being 100 at Steyning Roundhill on Sep 11, followed by 300 at Upper Beeding and 200 at Cissbury on Oct 4. At Wildpark the peak count was 190 on Oct 11 from a total of 1280 between Sep 6 and Nov 9. Other counts included 50 at Widewater and a peak of 80 at Worthing beach in Oct, but most reports were considerably lower. Even in late winter, flocks couldn't muster more than 9 in Lower Adur and even smaller groups at a handful of beach and downland sites.

1014.02 ROCK PIPIT Anthus petrosus

Regular winter visitor, occasionally breeds

Rather fewer numbers than usual reported early in the year with 1 or 2 on the beaches at

Shoreham Fort and Goring, which included a possible '*littoralis*' bird on Jan 14. May have bred at the Marina but no confirmation received. Others were noted from beaches at Hove Lagoon and Widewater from Sep to Nov and also from Goring and Worthing late in the year, and only 1 from the beach and groynes at Shoreham Fort where numbers are generally somewhat higher. A description of a Scandinavian bird '*littoralis*' at Widewater on Mar 17 was submitted to SOS for ratification (JC).

1017 YELLOW WAGTAIL Motacilla flava

Common passage migrant

A sprinkling of spring records included singles at University of Sussex on Apr 3, and another at Widewater the following day, and then 3 at Wildpark on Apr 16 and 3 at Worthing Beach in May. The end of Aug signalled the start of autumn movement with 45 feeding with cattle at Chantry Hill and 8 at Wildpark. Numbers were generally quite low with a total of only 16 at Worthing Beach, the maximum being 5 on Sep 25, and 5E there on Oct 1 were the last of the year.

1019 GREY WAGTAIL Motacilla cinerea

Noted on passage, may breed, regular in winter

During the first two months this species was noted from a number of sites including singles at Goring, High Salvington, Patcham, Shoreham Adur and Wyckham Wood, and 2 birds were seen at New Salts Farm and central Worthing. Singles continued to be reported in Mar from Brooklands, Ferring Rife, Patcham and University of Sussex, whilst 1 flew E at Worthing on 21st. The only confirmed breeding was near St Anne's Well Gardens, Hove with 2 juvs and the parents seen in Jul (BE). This must be one of the only urban breeding records in our area. Others were seen in the breeding season at Storrington and Washington. Singles were next reported from central Brighton and the Sanctuary in Aug and a few migrants from well-watched sites during Sep and Oct from Worthing Beach and Wildpark but in rather insignificant numbers. At Brooklands 1 to 3 birds seemed regular during Oct and Nov and others were seen at Goring, Shoreham, Upper Beeding, Whitehawk Hill and Widewater. Birds were also constantly reported from urban areas in Brighton and Hove.

1020 PIED WAGTAIL Motacilla alba

Common resident

Generally reported in small numbers from around the area. Higher counts from beaches included 21 at Shoreham Fort in Jan and 30 at Goring Gap in early Mar. The only breeding reports were pairs at the Marina and at Wildpark, the latter being the first record in over 12 years. Autumn saw considerably higher counts with passage birds including 40E at Whitehawk Hill on Oct 3, 80 over Sheepcote on Oct 12 and a peak of 90E at Worthing Beach on Oct 17. Birds flying to roost were 50NE at Shoreham on Oct 3 and 34 at Durrington on Oct 13.

The only White Wagtails (*M. alba alba*) were singles at Widewater on Apr 3 and at Goring Gap on Oct 29.

1045 WAXWING Bombycilla garrulous

Rare winter visitor

This winter visitor was admired by just one observer moving through St Mary's churchyard, Shoreham on Jan 12 (CC). This is the first record since 1996.

1066 WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes* Very common resident

Breeding pairs included Cissbury – 2, Sanctuary – 2, Wildpark – 103 and regular sightings to BTO Migration suggested at least 9 pairs around University, 2 pairs at Patcham, 6 pairs at Tegdown Hill and 6 pairs at Whitehawk Hill. At Cissbury 14 new birds were ringed whilst at the Sanctuary there were 66 handlings involving 43 different birds, the maximum being 9 on Jun 26.



1084 DUNNOCK Prunella modularis Verv common resident

Reported across the area with breeding pairs: Cissbury – 5, Sanctuary – no count and Wildpark – 59. BTO figures indicated 4 pairs at Patcham, 4 pairs at Tegdown Hill and 12 pairs at University of Sussex. Ringing numbers were 35 at Cissbury and 47 at Sanctuary.

1099 ROBIN Erithacus rubecula

Very common resident

An early-year count was 26 around Washington Warren. Confirmed breeding pairs were Cissbury -7, Golding Barn -4, Storrington window box -1, and Wildpark -152. BTO figures showed up to 14 pairs at University, 4 pairs at Patcham, 4 pairs at Tegdown Hill, 5 pairs at Westmeston and 3 pairs at Whitehawk Hill. Ringing summaries were 29 birds at Cissbury and 93 at the Sanctuary. There was an indication of autumn passage with 50 at Sheepcote on Oct 26.

1104 NIGHTINGALE Luscinia megarhynchos

Passage migrant, breeds most years in small numbers

The first date was Apr 15 with a bird singing in bushes near Preston Park, Brighton and another at Woods Mill. Other incoming birds were noted on 20th at Cokeham reedbed and the Marina, and further singles on 3 dates at ASDA bushes, the Marina and at Sheepcote. Probable breeding occurred with 4 or 5 at Oreham Common and 2 at Woods Mill. A juvenile and an adult were ringed at Mumbles on Jul 19 and Aug 16 respectively. Only 2 returning migrants were logged, in Aug at Sheepcote and Whitehawk Hill.

1121 BLACK REDSTART Phoenicurus ochruros

Regular autumn/winter visitor, has bred

The usual favoured wintering areas of Marina, Southwick Beach, Shoreham Fort and Widewater all had singles reported in Jan. Inland sites in winter are quite unusual so singles at Swandean Hospital and University in Feb were notable. First sign of migrants were 1 at Sheepcote on Apr 1 and a couple at Cissbury on 2 days in Apr. There was confirmed breeding near Shoreham Power Station with first singing, then sightings of parents and a fledged juvenile in Jun. Autumn migrants were at Whitehawk Hill on 2 dates in Oct

and included a good garden tick at Hollingdean on Oct 21. Wintering birds from Nov again favoured the earlier sites with additional birds in central Brighton and at Ferring.

1122 **REDSTART** Phoenicurus phoenicurus

Fairly common passage migrant, especially in autumn

2002 - Late bird on Nov 6 at Ferring accepted by SOS.

2003 – The only spring migrants were singles at Patcham and University, both on Mar 28. Most of the autumn records came from three regularly watched areas, where peaks were 4 at Wildpark on Sep 3, 6 at Cissbury on Sep 7 and 5 at Sheepcote on Sep 21. Smaller numbers were at Chantry Hill, Findon and Whitehawk Hill, and the last was at Sheepcote on Oct 18.

1137 WHINCHAT Saxicola rubetra

Common passage migrant

Like the previous species, this was quite uncommon in spring with singles at University on Apr 30 and another at Ditchling Beacon on May 4. First of the autumn were 3 at Harrow Hill on Aug 15. At Wildpark a total of only 13 noted from Aug 17 to Sep 3, with a maximum of 5 on Aug 30. Largest counts were 10 at Cissbury on Aug 30 and 6 at Sompting on the same date; 30 at Sheepcote on Sep 5 and 25 there on Sep 9. Smaller groups were at Shoreham, Sompting, Steyning Roundhill and Three Corner Copse. The final date was Sep 23 with 6 at Sheepcote.

1139 STONECHAT Saxicola torquata

Regular winter visitor, occasionally breeds

Nearly a dozen sites were represented during the first two months equally split between lowland sites at Widewater and the Adur valley and at downland sites where some probably remained on or near breeding territories. Definite breeding came from Beeding Hill – 1 pair, Steep Down – 2 pairs and Stump Bottom – 1 pair and probably also bred at Ditchling Beacon, Mill Hill, Sheepcote and Tegdown Hill. Favoured sites in the autumn were Steep Down and Sheepcote with peak counts of 8 and 12 respectively. Peak at Wildpark was 5 on Oct 11 and again on Oct 30. Similar counts were from Cissbury and Whitehawk Hill. Late-year birds included up to 4 at Steyning Levels, 2 at Widewater and singles at Ferring Rife and Southwick Beach.

1146 WHEATEAR Oenanthe oenanthe

Common passage migrant

First beach arrivals were 2 at Brooklands on Mar 4 followed by singles at Goring and Worthing over the next few days. There were flurries of 4 to 6 birds at Wildpark, Tegdown Hill and Worthing Beach but no real falls except 14 at Shoreham Beach on Mar 30 and the same number at Worthing Beach a full month later! Autumn passage started building up at the end



of Aug with 6 at Harrow Hill, 8 at Wildpark and 11 at Cissbury. Many records followed from so many sites that it is impossible to mention them all, but peaks were 20 at Stump Bottom on Sep 18 and the same number at Worthing Beach on Sep 30. The total at Wildpark was 33 from Aug 4 to Aug 28. Last of the year was 1 at Whitehawk Hill on Oct 14 and 3 on Airfield on Oct 15.

1186 RING OUZEL Turdus torquatus

Regular passage migrant

Spring migrants included a male around Cissbury/Lychpole Hill area on Mar 29, then singles at Sheepcote on Apr 11, Tegdown Hill on Apr 20, Poynings on Apr 21 and University on Apr 28. The first autumn bird was at Sheepcote on Sep 21 where the Oct total of 12 was reported as poor, with a maximum of 4 on Oct 17. Peak counts were 8 at Cissbury on Oct 18 and 6 there the following day. Others were reported from High Salvington, Mill Hill, Tegdown Hill, Wildpark and N Hove. The last was at Sheepcote on Nov 5.

1187 BLACKBIRD Turdus merula

Very common resident

Recorded from all around the area with additional numbers reported through the BTO scheme. Breeding counts were Brooklands – 5 pairs, Cissbury – 7 pairs, Three Corner Copse – 4 pairs, Wildpark – 116 pairs (the lowest for over 10 years). Failed results were reported from 2 of these sites. Also bred at the Sanctuary where 55 were ringed during the season. Only 31 were ringed at Cissbury, whilst 18 were ringed at Mumbles on Jun 21, suggested good numbers in the Steyning area. There were no obvious autumn influxes, perhaps 37 at Whitehawk Hill on Oct 13 being the only candidate.

1198 FIELDFARE Turdus pilaris

Common winter visitor

Early- and late-year numbers were equally split. In Jan, most seemed to prefer the levels around Beeding, Steyning and Henfield, with a peak of 200 on Jan 19, whilst other flocks included 200 at Edburton Sands in Feb and 80 at Buncton in Mar. Birds were still being recorded into Apr with 43 at Westmeston on 13th and finally 7 at Cissbury on 15th. The first arrival in the autumn was at Whitehawk Hill on Oct 14, followed by an easterly movement of over 800 at Sheepcote on Oct 20 and smaller numbers the same day from Wildpark. Other counts included 80W at Chantry Hill and 110 on Henfield Levels, both in Nov. Generally numbers were quite low with only the occasional report from gardens.

1200 SONG THRUSH Turdus philomelos

Fairly common resident

Breeding pairs were Brooklands -4, Cissbury -2, Sandgate Park garden -1, Three Corner Copse -1 and Wildpark -15. Ringing records were a total of 15 new birds at Cissbury, 11 at Mumbles on Jun 21 and a total of 11 in 27 sessions at the Sanctuary. The only autumn fall was 15 at Whitehawk Hill on Oct 13.

1201 REDWING Turdus iliacus

Common winter visitor

In Jan flocks of 100 were in stubble at Michelgrove and in fields near Wyckham Wood. Similar numbers were recorded in Feb from Ladies Mile reserve and Steyning Levels. Smaller flocks elsewhere were seen up to Apr 3. First of the autumn were 4 at Brooklands on Oct 3. Small numbers occurred elsewhere but a peak of only 52 at Whitehawk Hill on

Oct 13 showed what a poor autumn it was for this species. A small flock was semiresident on Beeding Brooks late in the year.

1202 MISTLE THRUSH Turdus viscivorus

Common resident

Sparsely reported, with a maximum of 12 at Cissbury in May and peak counts from regularly watched areas of only 4 at University and 6 at Patcham. There was no breeding at Wildpark for the first time in over 12 years of recording there. It would be interesting to determine whether this species was poorly reported or, perhaps more seriously, suffering a worse decline hereabouts than national surveys indicate?

1236 GRASSHOPPER WARBLER Locustella naevia

Generally scarce passage migrant

A rather poor year with just singles at Whitehawk Hill on 2 days at the end of Jul and another at Sheepcote on Sep 7. None was ringed at any of the ringing stations in the area.

1243 SEDGE WARBLER Acrocephalus schoenobaenus

Fairly common summer visitor

The earliest date was at Beeding Brooks on Apr 20, followed by singles in early May from Adur, Wildpark, and another at West Durrington on May 26. There were no breeding records received, but all 6 of the birds ringed at the Sanctuary were young birds. At Mumbles 25 were ringed on Aug 2. Very few were noted in the autumn, the last being singles at Wildpark on Aug 30, Cissbury on Sep 2, Sompting on Sep 11 and the Sanctuary on Sep 12.

1251 REED WARBLER Acrocephalus scirpaceus

Fairly common summer visitor

Early arrivals were at Ladies Mile reserve and Woods Mill on Apr 15. Probably bred at the Sanctuary where the first arrival was not recorded until Apr 27, followed by the second highest ringing total of 124 birds in 27 sessions from May 11 to Oct 19, with a peak of 14 on Aug 21. A good number were ringed at Mumbles, their peak being 47 on Aug 2. Only 1 was ringed at Cissbury on Sep 27, and generally very few others were noted during autumn passage.

1262 DARTFORD WARBLER Sylvia undata

Scarce autumn migrant, rare winter visitor

A single was at Sheepcote on Oct 14 (IJW), and then another bird was resident on Hollingbury hillfort from Oct 24 to Nov 11 (PT, PJW et al)

1274 LESSER WHITETHROAT Sylvia curruca

Fairly common summer visitor

The wintering bird in an East Worthing garden remained well into Apr. First migrants were at Sheepcote and Whitehawk Hill on Apr 19, followed by 2 at Wildpark on 21st and 1 at Whitehawk Hill on 22nd. Numbers were generally poor with only 2 pairs breeding at Wildpark, 3 pairs at Cissbury and singles at Botolphs and Sheepcote. Probably bred at Tegdown Hill and University. The Cissbury ringing total was 7, and 13 were ringed at the Sanctuary. Autumn peak counts were 7 at Wildpark and 6 at Cissbury in Aug, and 15 at Findon Valley on Sep 2. The last was at Cissbury on Sep 24.

1275 WHITETHROAT Sylvia communis

Common summer visitor

The first arrival was recorded on the early date of Apr 8 at University. The main arrival was not until Apr 15 when birds were noted from 5 different sites. Maximum spring counts were 20 at Wildpark on Apr 21, 12 at University on Apr 30 and 13 at Whitehawk Hill on Apr 24. Breeding counts were 23 pairs at Wildpark, 4 pairs at Cissbury and 1 pair at Kithurst Hill, but this species is obviously widespread and under-recorded. Lower numbers than usual were ringed at Cissbury with a total of just 35, and even fewer at the Sanctuary with only 16. Peak autumn counts were 30 on 2 days at Wildpark in Aug, 26 at Whitehawk Hill and 20 twice at Cissbury. Numbers dropped drastically in Sep with 15 at Cissbury and 10 twice at Sheepcote. The last seen were 2 that were recorded at Lancing Clump on Oct 10.

1276 GARDEN WARBLER Sylvia borin

Fairly common summer visitor

First arrival was on Apr 19 at Patcham, but numbers were reported from only a handful of sites and were quite low, the maximum being 5 at University of Sussex on Apr 29. Breeding was confirmed with 2 pairs at Cissbury and 1 pair at Wildpark, though they probably also bred at Tegdown Hill and University where birds were noted through May into Jun. Ringing numbers were: Cissbury – 12 birds and reported as a poor year; Mumbles – 5 ringed on Aug 2; Sanctuary – only 8 handlings in 27 sessions to Aug 31. Only sparsely recorded in the autumn, the last dates on which the species was seen being at Wildpark on Sep 6 and at Sheepcote on Sep 11.

1277 BLACKCAP Sylvia atricapilla

Common summer visitor, regular in winter

Wintering birds were regular in gardens at Broadwater, up to 6 at Durrington, Findon, Patcham, 3 in Steyning, Storrington, Upper Beeding, West Blatchington, and West Worthing, and included birds feeding on nuts and seeds. Singing birds and probable incoming migrants were seen at Hollingbury Woods from Mar 4 and definite migrants from Mar 29 at Wildpark, where none wintered. A few influxes were noted with 15 on Apr 22 and 17 on Apr 25 from University, and a max of 17 at Sheepcote on Apr 25. Breeding included 6 pairs at Cissbury, 2 pairs at Stanmer Park and 13 pairs at Wildpark. Also bred at Sanctuary where 162 were ringed involving 141 different birds. At Cissbury 117 birds were ringed at Mumbles on Aug 2. Autumn passage seemed low with a total of only 110 at Wildpark, the max being 10 on Sep 7, and elsewhere double figures only from Findon and Mill Hill. Last were a single at Sheepcote on Oct 15 and 3 at Wildpark on Oct 26. Wintering birds again reported during the last 2 months from Brighton, Brooklands, Hove, Steyning, Storrington and Worthing.

1298 PALLAS'S WARBLER Phylloscopus proregulus

Very rare visitor, mostly late autumn

One was at Sheepcote on Oct 31, and it or a second bird was at the same site on Nov 4 and 5 (IJW). Accepted by SOS.

1300 YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER Phylloscopus inornatus

Rare autumn vagrant

One was at Sheepcote on Nov 8 (IJW) and was accepted by SOS.

1308 WOOD WARBLER Phylloscopus sibilatrix

Scarce passage migrant

The usual smattering of sightings, the first being in Stanmer Woods on Apr 15, followed by 4 at Wildpark on 4 dates. Noted in autumn with singles at Wildpark on Aug 8 and at St Anne's Well Gardens, Hove on Aug 20.

1311 CHIFFCHAFF Phylloscopus collybita

Common summer visitor, with small wintering population

Fewer than the usual wintering numbers with singles in Jan from Pavilion Gardens, Brighton and West Worthing; and from Brighton, Broadwater and University in Feb. It is difficult to assess Mar birds as being wintering or passage, but there was certainly an increase in numbers and a definite arrival from 16th. The maximum spring count was 24 at University on Apr 5. Good numbers were reported from around the region during the breeding season, though confirmed only from Cissbury 1-3 pairs, Golding Barn - 3 pairs, Sanctuary - no count, a Storrington garden, Whitehawk Hill - 3 pairs, Wildpark - 14 pairs and Woods Mill - 2 pairs. Ringing numbers were 91 at Cissbury to Oct 11 and 225 from Sanctuary involving 187 different birds. The maximum here was 32 on Aug 27, and the overall total was the highest in over 50 years. Peak autumn counts commenced with 20 in Findon Valley on Sep 2 and 28 at Wildpark the next day. Then much higher counts, with 40 at Cissbury on Sep 24 and again on Sep 28, and then peaks of 60 at Sheepcote on Oct 2 and 80 at Brooklands on Oct 7. There were still 40 at Brooklands a week later and up to 30 at Cissbury and Goring Gap to 18th. The Wildpark total from Sep 2 to Oct 30 was 406, 3 to 4 birds continued to be present at both Brooklands and Sanctuary through Nov, with at least 1 bird wintering into Dec at Brooklands.

1312 WILLOW WARBLER Phylloscopus trochilus

Declining summer visitor and passage migrant

The year started with singles at Stanmer Park on Mar 27 and another the next day on the downs near Keymer Bostal. Three were in bushes behind the Marina ASDA on 30th. There were very few significant counts in spring, with peaks of 16 at University and 8 at Whitehawk Hill. Failed to breed at Cissbury and Wildpark, and the only probable breeding were birds still singing in May/Jun at Tegdown Hill and University. At Cissbury 37 new birds were ringed, most in Aug, whilst at Sanctuary 54 were ringed, with a max of 17 on Aug 3. Early-autumn peaks included 30 at Cissbury and 22 at Wildpark. Passage was reported as poor from both Waterhall and Sheepcote. The last was at Sheepcote on Oct 28.

1314 GOLDCREST Regulus regulus

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor

The first couple of months produced the usual scattering of winter birds, but in spite of the relatively mild conditions there seemed lower numbers than normal. Peak counts were 5 at Warren Hill and 4 at University, whilst during this period only a single was reported from Wildpark. Numbers were swelled by migrant birds in Mar with peaks of 6 at White-hawk Hill and 12 at University. May have bred at Sanctuary and Warren Hill, and probably at Patcham and Preston Park. Birds ringed from Jul 13 to Oct 26 at Sanctuary totalled 15, and 16 were ringed at Cissbury. Well reported in autumn from a dozen sites, with peaks of 18 at Wildpark on Oct 3, 20 at Sheepcote on 2 dates in Oct and 14 at Whitehawk Hill on Nov 6. Brooklands produced a peak of 12 at the end of Nov but very few were reported from anywhere during Dec excepting garden visits at Broadwater and Steyning.

1315 FIRECREST Regulus ignicapillus

Regular passage migrant in small numbers, occasionally winters

The only wintering bird was 1 throughout Jan at St Anne's Well Gardens, Hove. The end of Mar is the prime time to see passage birds in their spring finery. There were singles at Whitehawk Hill on 4 dates from Mar 17 to Apr 14, and another nearby at Sheepcote on Apr 1. Autumn birds were singles at Sompting on Sep 11, and Cissbury on Oct 8, with a maximum of 4 at Sheepcote on Oct 23 where the Oct total was 16. Even higher numbers were at Sheepcote in Nov where the peak day was 11th with a high count of 10 from a month's total of 30. One was ringed at Sanctuary on Oct 19 and 1 frequented a Hove garden for about a week in mid-Nov. Late-year birds were reported from Brighton, St Anne's Well Gardens and Sheepcote.

1335 SPOTTED FLYCATCHER Muscicapa striata

Fairly common summer visitor and passage migrant

Not a particularly abundant visitor in the spring, the first being at Sanctuary on Apr 30, followed by 2 at Saddlescombe and singles at Durrington, Patcham and Beeding Brooks. A pair bred at Stanmer Woods. A good number of reports of returning birds towards the end of Aug with 11 at Cissbury and 30 at Chanctonbury. These continued into early Sep with 10 at Findon Valley on 2 dates and a peak of 15 at Sheepcote. Birds were also seen in gardens in Hollingbury and Worthing, and 1 was ringed at Cissbury on Sep 13. The autumn total at Wildpark was 40, with a peak of 8 on Sep 3. The last was at Whitehawk Hill on Sep 24.

1349 PIED FLYCATCHER Ficedula hypoleuca

Regular passage migrant

The only spring record this year was 1 at Southwick on Apr 20. A better than average showing in autumn made up for the lack of spring records with singles at Worthing, 1 ringed at Cissbury and another in a Hollingbury garden – all these in early Aug. Mainly ones and twos thereafter from various sites, with a peak count of 5 at Wolstonbury Hill on Aug 22. Last birds were 2 at Findon and at Wildpark on Sep 3.

1437 LONG-TAILED TIT Aegithalos caudatus

Common resident

Very few flocks were encountered early in the year, and these included 8 at Goring Gap and 11 at University. Garden records were from Upper Beeding and Lancing. Breeding pairs included 5 at Wildpark, 2 at St Anne's Well Gardens, Hove (but deserted) and 1 at Cissbury. Probably bred at other sites including Golding Barn, Patcham, Sanctuary, Small Dole and University, but of note was a nil count from Sandgate Park. Ringing records were 28 new birds at Cissbury and 75 handlings at Sanctuary. This latter total was the second highest in over 50 years and included a good number of young birds. Some sizeable flocks late in the year included 23 at Swandean Hospital in Oct, 20 at Brooklands in early Nov and 13 at Wildpark in Dec.

1440 MARSH TIT Parus palustris

Fairly uncommon resident

Records during Feb included 2 at Small Dole and 6 at Patching Hill. Likely to have bred in the Patching/Michelgrove area, and possibly at Clapham and Stanmer Woods where birds were noted during the breeding season. Other sightings came from Cissbury, Kithurst Hill and Warren Hill. At the Mumbles, 2 were ringed on Oct 4 and a single on Nov 9.

1442 WILLOW TIT Parus montanus

Rarely reported resident

It is pleasing to report 2 pairs at Patching Hill just prior to the breeding season (BFF, JCS). This species is declining in Sussex and can be quite difficult to identify, so it is rather surprising that it has not to be added to the list of those requiring descriptions.

1461 COAL TIT Parus ater

Fairly common resident

Reported with some regularity only from the Storrington/Warren Hill area and at University where the peak count was 13 at the end of Apr. Also seen at Patching Hill and Broadwater, and a family party went through a Steyning garden in Jun. Birds of the continental race were recorded as follows: 3 in Brighton on Oct 18 and 1 at Sheepcote on Oct 25 (both IJW).

1462 BLUE TIT Parus caeruleus

Abundant resident

A bird was observed roosting in a house martin box during Jan/Feb in Steyning. BTO Survey counts swelled the usual number of reports, suggesting approx breeding pairs as follows: Patcham -4, Tegdown Hill -6, University -12 and Whitehawk Hill -5. At least 6 pairs bred at Warren Hill and other breeding counts were 3 pairs at Cissbury, 4 pairs at Three Corner Copse and 61 pairs at Wildpark. Ringing numbers were 41 new birds at Cissbury, and 106 handlings involving 76 birds at the Sanctuary.

1464 GREAT TIT Parus major

Very common resident

Survey counts suggested approximate breeding pairs as Patcham -4, Tegdown Hill -5, University -14 and Whitehawk Hill -3. Confirmed breeding was Cissbury -3, Golding Barn -2, Storrington garden nestbox -1, Three Corner Copse -1, Warren Hill -4, and Wildpark -49. Also bred at the Sanctuary where about half the 47 handlings were young birds. Cissbury's ringing total was 30.

1479 NUTHATCH Sitta europaea

Uncommon resident

It is pleasing to report a good number of sightings and probable breeding. These were from wooded areas such as Clapham Devil's Wood. Dyke. Patcham. Patching Hill, Stanmer Woods. the Storrington/Warren Hill area and Woods Mill. Of interest was one seen working along a wooden at Michelgrove fence checking out cracks for insects.













Great Spotted Woodpecker -Stanley Allen





SDOS former Presidents Stanley Allen and John Stafford



The SDOS Current President Bernie Forbes



The Mumbles in the 1970s

The Mumbles in 2002





The embankment between the Mumbles and Striven's reedbed

The Mumbles' open day in 2001. At the table Val Bentley and Brian Clay. *Phil Clay*





The Sanctuary Stream from the West - John Newnham



The Sanctuary from the water works access road - John Newnham

1486 TREECREEPER Certhia familiaris

Uncommon resident

Seen at two non-breeding sites in Feb/Mar from Whitehawk Hill and Wildpark. A long list of breeding-season records included birds at Clapham Wood, Ilex Walk, Patching Hill (probably 2 pairs here), Stanmer Woods, University, Westmeston and Woods Mill. Some post-breeding movement was noted, with 6 ringed at the Sanctuary and singles seen at Cissbury, Goring Gap, Preston Park and Sheepcote. Two were ringed at the Mumbles on Oct 2, 1 was reported as a garden tick in Storrington, and a good record was 1 in an urban park in Hove during Dec.

1539 JAY Garrulus glandarius

Fairly common resident and winter visitor

Three pairs bred at Wildpark. Elsewhere this species was reported in small numbers with some regularity from Goring Gap, University, Warren Hill, Withdean and Whitehawk Hill. At the Sanctuary 5 were ringed including 2 young birds, and 1 was ringed at the Mumbles in Jun. Autumn records came from Cissbury, Upper Beeding and Wildpark but there was no obvious migration reported.

1549 MAGPIE Pica pica

Very common resident

An early-year roost count at Wildpark logged 290 birds, and 45 pairs bred there. BTO figures suggest breeding pairs as follows: Patcham -2, Tegdown Hill -4, University -6 and Whitehawk Hill -3, and the species was reported from many other areas throughout the year, with 17 in Mar at Swandean Hospital being the only significant count, except of course for the large concentrations at Wildpark, where late-winter roosts were 257 in Nov and 271 in Dec.

1560 JACKDAW Corvus monedula

Common resident

The only double-figure winter counts were 60 at Michelgrove and 22 at University in Feb. Confirmed breeding was 3 pairs at High Salvington and 1 pair at Wildpark, but bred in many other areas and was well reported from both urban and rural habitats. Large numbers were seen at Cement Works, and also at Golding Barn chalkpits, with a max of 50 in Oct.

1563 ROOK Corvus frugilegus

Common resident

Nest counts at rookeries around the region included Broadwater -12, Clapham -51 at 3 sites, Findon -142 at 7 sites, Findon Valley -38, Michelgrove -15, Titnore Lane -7, University -35 and Wyckham Wood -50+. Apart from the above, this species is greatly under-recorded, the only flock count outside the breeding season of any significance being 80 at Golding Barn in Sep.

1567 CARRION CROW Corvus corone

There were good numbers reported from the BTO Survey areas, but the only confirmed breeding was 18 pairs at Wildpark. Some of the higher flock counts included 70 at West Worthing and 65 at Keymer Bostal in Mar; and a roost count of 42 at Wildpark in Dec. Apart from these, very few large groups were reported.

1572 RAVEN Corvus corax

Very scarce breeding resident

The pair bred again in the Cement Works. Unfortunately two of the five young were shot in the nest but the remaining three survived to flying stage. Not surprisingly there were sightings from close by at Beeding Hill, as well as at Cissbury and Steyning to the west, and at Ditchling Beacon to the east. Birds were noted flying over the Brighton area on three occasions inc 1E in Sept. One was by the beach huts at Widewater on Nov 11.

1582 STARLING Sturnus vulgaris

Abundant resident and winter visitor

Pre-roost gatherings were 700 at Beeding Brooks in Feb and 2000 around New Salts Farm in Mar. Reported in good numbers from the BTO Surveys, but the only confirmed breeding counts was 29 pairs at Wildpark. There were no winter roost counts at the Marina or West Pier, but flocks flying W at Sheepcote included peaks of 900 on Oct 20 and 1200 on Nov 1, and also 5500W over Brighton on Nov 13. The only other flock counts were 200 at Cissbury in Nov and 500S at Beeding Hill on Dec 18.

1584 ROSE-COLOURED STARLING Sturnus roseus

Rare vagrant

2002 – An adult male was found on Brighton's West Pier on the evening of June 18 (IJW). It was part of an unprecedented influx of this species into the UK during the summer. Accepted by SOS, it is only the second record for this area following another adult present at Coldean in 1995.

1591 HOUSE SPARROW Passer domesticus

Very common resident

Sixty-three reports were received from across the area through the year. Maxima in the first half were 28 at Tegdown Hill near Brighton and 24 at Sussex University in Feb and over 20 at Warmdene, Patcham in Feb, Mar and Apr. 16 pairs bred in Wild Park, Brighton and a pair at Henfield. Once again not one was ringed at the Sanctuary in 27 sessions. Flocks of 40 at Hove (in a garden) and Widewater and 50 at Goring were the largest in the second half, down on last year. In West Worthing, the species was virtually absent from a garden which had previously attracting 15 to 20 birds.

1598 TREE SPARROW Passer montanus

Scarce resident

Three were at Tegdown Hill near Brighton on Feb 16 and one flew W at Sheepcote Valley on Oct 14.

1636 CHAFFINCH Fringilla coelebs

Very common resident

The largest flocks in the early months were of 52 at Tegdown Hill near Brighton on Feb 22 and 48 at Sussex University on Mar 25. Otherwise small numbers were noted from many sites (90 reports in total). 43 pairs bred at Wildpark, Brighton and 2 at Cissbury where 6 were ringed in total (to Oct 11). 8 birds were ringed at the Sanctuary, Shoreham (6 young and 2 adult) in 27 sessions through the year. In December, a flock of c.400 assembled with other finches and buntings in a maize and millet game-cover crop at Lee Farm, south of Kithurst Hill and remained for much of the winter.

1638 BRAMBLING Fringilla montifringilla

Regular passage migrant

There were records from 10 sites but three at Tegdown Hill near Brighton on Feb 16 were the only ones in the first half of the year. In the second half, there were 4 at Wildpark on Oct 11 and singles at Lancing Clump and Mill Hill on 16th and 17th. A maximum of 120 out of 220 in the month flew over Sheepcote Valley on Oct 20 followed by 25 on Nov 7 out of 60 for the month. Also 10 over the Marina on Nov 6 and singles at Steyning and Brooklands on 11th and 13th. The finch flock (see Chaffinch) at Lee Farm was estimated to contain up to 150 in December and was probably the largest Brambling flock ever recorded for our area.

1649 GREENFINCH Carduelis chloris

Very common resident

The regular wintering roost at Old Steine, Brighton held 70 on Jan 1. Other notable gatherings were 16 at Upper Beeding on Jan 21, 20 in a Henfield garden, 26 at Sussex University on Apr 3, 14 at Patcham on Mar 22 and 24 at Tegdown Hill near Brighton on Apr 20. Thirty-eight pairs or singing males were in Wild Park, Brighton. Seven nests at Brooklands, Worthing contained 27 young. None were trapped at the Sanctuary. Up to 20 were in a Henfield garden in Sep. The Shoreham Harbour flock contained 200 on Oct 2 decreasing to 100 by 11th and just 16 by Dec 10. At Lee Farm (see Chaffinch) the mixed finch flock held about 100 in December

1653 GOLDFINCH Carduelis carduelis

Fairly common resident

The second-most reported finch, with 95 reports received but only two records for Jan with 8 each at a West Worthing garden (feeding on niger seed) and in a Steyning garden. Just small numbers recorded from then until late April when passage at Worthing beach totalled 97 flying east on 10 dates. Seven pairs bred in Wildpark and two pairs at Waterhall (both in Brighton). None were ringed at the Sanctuary. Autumn flocks included 45 at Durrington on Sep 11, 40 at Highdown on 14th and 30 at Ferring in early Oct. Passage involved 1000E at Widewater on Oct 12, 126 E at Whitehawk and 250 E at Worthing on 13th, 300 at Shoreham Airport on 15th and 700 E at Sheepcote and 495 E at Worthing on 16th. Another 533 moved E there on the next day with 115 E on the 18th (the total for the month at Worthing was 1402). Just four reports for Nov and Dec from Widewater, the Lower Adur, Upper Beeding and Worthing totalled 49 birds.

1654 SISKIN Carduelis spinus

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor

Records from eight sites up to Apr 6, the most being 9 at Hassocks at the end of Jan and 6 at both Washington Common and Patcham, Brighton. Then not recorded before Sep 27 at Wildpark where there were 130 up to Nov 4, with a peak of 23 on Oct 11. Sixty flew E at Widewater on 12th, 28 E at Whitehawk on 13th, 7E on 14th, 16E on 15th and 250 E at Sheepcote Valley on 16th. Three at Old Steine, Brighton (an unusual site) on Nov 12 and one at Chantry Hill on Dec 15 were the last records.

1660 LINNET Carduelis cannabina

Locally common resident and passage migrant

Over 100 reports were received across the area throughout the year. In Jan there were 30 on the Adur saltings and 100 at Steep Down. Over 40 remained at Tegdown Hill near

Brighton in Feb and Mar and another 42 were on the Downs near Westmeston on Mar 28. The month's total at Worthing beach was 52. In April, the flock at Westmeston contained 220 on 27th. At Worthing beach 3737 were logged in 75 hours on 14 dates between 7th and 25th, with a maximum of 54 on 16th. The peak spring count at Wildpark was 58 on Apr 26. Ten pairs bred in Wildpark, 2 to 4 pairs at Cissbury and a pair at Ashurst. Again none were ringed at the Sanctuary. A flock of 40 comprised mainly of immatures was at Devil's Dyke on Jul 23. Large autumn flocks were of 150 in total at Stump Bottom on Sep 18, 200 on vegetated shingle at Shoreham Harbour on Oct 2, 120 in bare fields to the north of Cissbury on 8th and 200 at Upper Beeding on Nov 30. Passage observed at Worthing beach totalled 62 E in Sep (in 22 hrs) and 15E in Oct (in 23 hrs). No records were received from Sheepcote in this period or, strangely, from anywhere in Dec.

1663 LESSER REDPOLL Carduelis cabaret

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor

Two at Brighton Wildpark on Apr 8 were the only ones, before small numbers occurred at eight sites in the autumn between Oct 12 and Nov 30. Maxima were 10 over Sheepcote Valley on Oct 15 and 22 at Wildpark on 24th. Otherwise 5 at Brooklands on Nov 7 and one to four birds at Whitehawk, Shoreham Sanctuary (where one was ringed on Oct 26), Mill Hill, Ferring Rife, Storrington (2 in a garden in Dec) and Clapham Wood.

1666 COMMON CROSSBILL Loxia curvirostra

Scarce visitor, more common in irruption years

Only recorded in Brighton at four sites with a maximum of 40 on Mar 14 flying N over Preston Park Station. Two flew NE over Wild Park on 18^{th} , 12 flew E over Hollingdean on 21^{st} , another 12 E over Preston Park Station on 25^{th} with 15 W over Hollingdean on Jun 21 and 15 N over Hollingdean on Aug 3.

1710 BULLFINCH Pyrrhula pyrrhula

Fairly common resident

Pairs or single birds were at eleven sites between Jan 12 and Dec 15. Otherwise there were 4 at Upper Beeding on Jan 12, 4 at Sussex University on Feb 22 and Apr 25 and 3 at Cissbury on May 13. At the latter site, 18 were ringed up to Oct 11 and 2 at the Sanctuary on Aug 22. Two pairs bred at Wildpark and 3 pairs at Cissbury, based on brood patches observed when ringing. A visitor to three gardens in the area (Upper Beeding, Henfield and Storrington).

1717 HAWFINCH Coccothraustes coccothraustes

Very scarce passage migrant

One at Sheepcote Valley on Oct 14 (IJW).

1850 SNOW BUNTING Plectrophenax nivalis

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor

A male at Hill Barn, Worthing on Jan 2, a female at Widewater on Jan 12 and one at Southwick beach on Dec 7 were the only records.

1857 YELLOWHAMMER Emberiza citrinella

Locally common resident

Fifteen were at Steyning Round Hill on Jan 3. In Feb, 32 were at Tegdown Hill near Brighton from 16th to 22nd and 31 at nearby Ditchling Beacon on the latter date. Up to 44

were on the downs near Westmeston in Feb, Mar and Apr and small numbers at a dozen other sites in the first half of the year, mainly on the downs and in the Adur valley. In Jun 11 were at Tegdown Hill between 3rd and 26th and 14 at Sussex University on 17th. Ten pairs bred in Wildpark, Brighton and others probably did so at Cissbury. None were trapped at the Sanctuary. In the second half of the year, there were 25 at Stump Bottom on Sep 18 and 20 at Chantry Hill on Oct 5, rising to 38 there on Dec 15. These formed part of the mixed finch and bunting flock at Lee Farm. The only other double-figure count came from the lower Adur valley with 13 on Nov 6. Finally there were 3 at Steyning Bowl on Dec 15.

1866 ORTOLAN BUNTING Emberiza hortulana

Very scarce, mainly autumn, visitor

One at Upper Beeding on Sep 13 (ARK). This is the first bird in the SDOS area since 1 at Wildpark also in Sep in 1994.

1874 LITTLE BUNTING Emberiza pusilla

Very rare vagrant

One at Sheepcote Valley on Oct 1 (IJW) has been accepted by SOS. This is the first definite record for the area, the only other record being 1 at Roedean in 1864 which was at the time the first for Britain, but there is some doubt as to whether it was inside our recording area.

1877 REED BUNTING Emberiza schoeniclus

Locally common resident

Just one record received for Jan with a bird at Ferring on 26th and then at ten sites in the first half-year with 38 at Edburton on Feb 22 being by far the largest flock seen. One in a Hove and two in a Ferring garden in Jan/Mar. Eleven at New Erringham Farm on Mar 9 was the only other double-figure group reported. None were trapped at the Sanctuary. In the autumn, 30 flew E at Sheepcote Valley on Oct 11, a total of 15 were recorded at Wildpark between Sep 27 and Nov 8, 15 in the Chantry Hill/Lee Farm area on Dec 15 and just 1 to 5 at six other Adur valley and downland sites

1882 CORN BUNTING Miliaria calandra

Fairly common on downland but local and thought to be in decline

More widely reported than for some years. In Jan 16 were at Lancing Clump on 1st and 20 at Steyning Round Hill on 3rd. At Tegdown Hill near Brighton monthly maxima were 17 in Feb, 12 in Mar, 24 in Apr and 8 in Jun. Forty-five were at New Erringham Farm,



Shoreham on Mar 9 and 40 in or near the old Beeding Cement works on 15th. Otherwise there were up to 8 birds at various downland sites from Feb to Jun. These included 8 singing males at Steep Down, Harrow Hill and Cissbury. There were 30 on Mill Hill on Aug 6 and 35 at Lychpole Hill near Cissbury on Nov 8 and 9. Finally two were at Steyning Bowl on Dec 30.

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ESCAPES AND FERAL BIRDS FOR 2003

BLACK SWAN

Various records around the Adur valley; from Henfield Levels on Jan 5 and Apr 4 and Shoreham Adur between Jun 21and Jul 30.

RUDDY SHELDUCK

A bird was present at Brooklands and mainly Widewater during the first 3 months of the year. It occasionally wandered up-river to the Tollbridge in Feb.

SHARP-WINGED TEAL

One at Steyning Levels Jan 25-26.

HARRIS'S HAWK

One reported in N Worthing and Broadwater on Mar 15 and Mar 27.

RED-TAILED HAWK

One at Worthing on Apr 30

COCKATIEL

One at Marina on Jan 26; 1 at Worthing Beach on Apr 20 and again the following morning; and 1 at Shoreham Aug 20.

YELLOW-CROWNED AMAZON

One flew in to a roost of Magpies at Wildpark on Nov 15 and was promptly chased off N.

RED-RUMPED PARROT

One in a Worthing garden on Jul 20.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Since I took over editing this Report five years ago, I seem to have added a lot of 'bits and bobs' - two indexes (one alphabetical and one, which also serves as an annual personal checklist, in systematic order), a set of tide tables for the year and a couple of pages of bird-related 'useful addresses', and I have considerably revamped the Gazetteer of notable local birding sites. I have more or less run out of ideas for improvements so I think it is high time that I handed the task of Editor over to fresh blood. I will be around (I hope) to give your new Editor, Penny Green, a helping hand with the 2004 Report should she need it.

You will have a new Recorder too as Clive Hope, a familiar face in our society, will also be taking over from Peter Whitcomb, who has held the job of Honorary Recorder for even longer than I have held mine. Enormous thanks are due to Peter who has, for seven years, combined the task of writing the majority of each Report with an arduous job involving daily commuting to London. Clive has been assisting in the task of writing some of the Report's species accounts for the last few years and so already has some idea of the tasks involved, and our thanks go to him as well for the work he has done for us so far. I have mentioned before how lucky we are to have John Reaney, a professional wildlife artist and member of the Society of Wildlife Artists, to provide our illustrations. Each year he draws some of these especially for us; the others were first produced for the SOS *Continued on page 87*

·		Arrival		Departure
Species	Date	Location	Date	Location
Garganey	Mar 16	Marina		
Osprey	Mar 12	Woods Mill	Sep 9	Tollbridge
Hobby	Apr 6	Sussex University & Widewater	Oct 4	Cissbury
Whimbrel	Mar 23	Worthing	Sep 29	Shoreham Adur
Arctic Skua	Mar 19	Widewater	Sep 10	Marina
Sandwich Tern	Feb 22	Marina	Oct 25	Worthing
Commic Tern	Mar 26	Worthing	Oct 10	Marina
Little Tern	Apr 12	Worthing		
Black Tern	Apr 15	Shoreham	Sep 16	Worthing
Turtle Dove	Apr 27	Ditchling Beacon	Sep 21	Hove & Sheepcote
Cuckoo	Mar 31	Sompting	Aug 30	Cement Works
Swift	Apr 23	Sussex University	Sep 16	Worthing
Sand Martin	Mar 23	Shoreham Fort	Oct 5	Goring
Swallow	Mar 5	Airfield & Ditchling Beacon	Nov 28	Steyning
House Martin	Mar 29	Steyning	Oct 22	Golding Barn
Tree Pipit	Apr 1	Brighton	Sep 17	Mill Hill
Yellow Wagtail	Apr 3	Sussex University	Oct 1	Worthing
Nightingale	Apr 15	Preston Park & Woods Mill	Sep 28	Sheepcote
Redstart	Mar 28	Patcham & Sussex University	Oct 18	Sheepcote
Whinchat	Apr 30	Sussex University	Sep 23	Sheepcote
Wheatear	Mar 4	Brooklands	Oct 15	Airfield
Ring Ouzel	Mar 29	Cissbury	Nov 5	Sheepcote
Sedge Warbler	Apr 20	Upper Beeding	Sep 12	Sanctuary
Reed Warbler	Apr 15	Woods Mill	Oct 19	Sanctuary
Lesser Whitethroat	Apr 19	Sheepcote & Whitehawk Hill	Sep 24	Cissbury
Whitethroat	Apr 8	Sussex University	Oct 10	Lancing Clump
Garden Warbler	Apr 19	Sussex University	Sep 11	Sheepcote
Wood Warbler	Apr 15	Stanmer Woods	Aug 20	St Anne's Well Gardens
Willow Warbler	Mar 27	Stanmer Woods	Sep 28	Sheepcote
Spotted Flycatcher	Apr 30	Sanctuary	Sep 24	Whitehawk Hill
Pied Flycatcher	<u>^</u>		Sep 3	Findon & Wildpark

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE OF MIGRANTS IN 2003

RINGING REPORT FOR 2003

During 2003 a total of 2726 birds were ringed in the area; this is just seven more than last year and is comparable to the totals recorded in recent years. The number ringed as nestlings was also similar to previous years, as this year's total of 237 compares with 207 in 2002 and 205 in 2001. Most nestlings ringed were Blue Tits (101) and Great Tits (31) from nest-boxes, but there were 30 Blackbirds, 15 Song Thrushes and 27 Greenfinches ringed as *pulli*. The remaining 91+% were mist-netted and ringed as fledged birds.

Once again the Steyning Ringing Group (SRG), operating from their usual three sites, contributed the largest total. At Phil Clay's Mumbles reserve the total of 1095 shows how this has developed into an excellent site with a good range of species trapped. The activity at the Mumbles provided the area's only ringed Kingfishers, Nightingales, Redwing, Nuthatch, Goldfinches and Reed Buntings. Migrant highlights were both Redstart and Pied Flycatcher, which also appeared in the total of 572 ringed at Cissbury. Fewer birds were ringed at Cissbury due to fewer ringing sessions in September and October but the area's only two Linnets were ringed at this downland site. The SRG's total was made up of 55 *pulli* ringed either at Wiston or Sompting Abbotts. Activities at the Sanctuary, described elsewhere, produced 821 new birds with high numbers of Blackcaps and

Sparrowhawk	4	Song Thrush	98	Marsh Tit	8
Peregrine	1	Redwing	1	Blue Tit	420
Woodpigeon	1	Sedge Warbler	33	Great Tit	139
Collared Dove	2	Reed Warbler	144	Nuthatch	1
Barn Owl	2	Lesser Whitethroat	24	Treecreeper	11
Kingfisher	4	Whitethroat	66	Jay	7
Green Woodpecker	4	Garden Warbler	27	Magpie	3
Great Spotted Woodpecker	4	Blackcap	361	Starling	12
Swallow	14	Chiffchaff	371	Chaffinch	61
Wren	88	Willow Warbler	123	Greenfinch	55
Dunnock	81	Goldcrest	39	Goldfinch	78
Robin	124	Firecrest	1	Linnet	2
Nightingale	3	Spotted Flycatcher	3	Redpoll	1
Redstart	2	Pied Flycatcher	2	Bullfinch	28
Blackbird	174	Long-tailed Tit	81	Reed Bunting	18
				Total	2726

List of species ringed in 2003

Chiffchaffs and the area's only Sparrowhawks, Firecrest and Lesser Redpoll. The year's total was reached by 183, mainly nestlings, ringed by Barrie Watson and John Holt.

Remarkably, like 2002, 45 different species were ringed and the annual totals for these are shown in the table above. As ringing activities vary little from year to year it is not surprising that this table does not change much. Lower numbers of all the *Sylvia* warblers, Wrens, Dunnocks and Robins are probably reflective of less activity at Cissbury, although both species of *Phylloscopus* warblers showed small increases.

Recoveries and Controls

Thirty-seven recoveries or controls were reported during the year and the following is a selection of the more interesting ones.

1) Kestrel:- Few of this species are ringed locally so the following is of interest:

30-Jun-98	Pullus	Applesham, near Shoreham		
31-Jul-03	Found dead	Steyning	1857 days	6km

2) Black-headed Gull: There were just four reports of this species, all now involving quite aged birds. The life story of EP36792 was related in last year's report but additional to this there were further records from Damhussuen, Copenhagen in March 2002 and again at Radipole Lake, Weymouth in Feb 2003. The other three reports were:

1-Dec-82	Adult	Worthing, West Sussex			
10-May-03	Sight record	Near Dresden Germany	7465 days	984 km	99 deg
23-Feb-83	Adult	Worthing, West Sussex			
10-Aug-03	Dead	Lancing, West Sussex	7473 days	4 km	181 deg
16-Feb-91	Adult	Washington, West Sussex			
15-Feb-03	Found	Newport, Isle of Wight	4382 days	62 km	247 deg

3) Herring Gull:- Two Herring Gulls, one ringed in January 1982 and the other in December 1989 at Sompting Refuse tip were found in Brighton and Worthing in March and June respectively.

4) Razorbill:- During the past few winters unusually large numbers of auks have been seen offshore and on several occasions most have been identified as Razorbills. The following recovery sheds some light on the origin of these birds.

25-Jun-92 Pullus	Sanda Island, Kintyre,			
25-Jun-92 Pullus	Scotland			
17-Mar-03 Found dead - oiled	East Worthing Beach	3917 days	606 km	145 deg

5) Wren:- Most Wrens are fairly sedentary but occasional long distance movements have been reported for this species which is better equipped for foraging in thick undergrowth than distant flying. The following was reported too late for inclusion in last year's report.

1-Jul-01	Juvenile	Shoreham Sanctuary			
15-Sep-02	Controlled	Beachy Head, East Sussex	441 days	39 km	107 deg

6) Sedge Warbler:-An interesting collection of movements from the Mumbles include the area's third French bird.

2-Aug-03	Juvenile	Mumbles, Steyning			
16-Aug-03	Controlled	Treogat, Finestere, France	14 days	439 km	222 deg
1-Jun-03	Pullus	Hoddeesdon, Hertfordshire			
19-Jul-03	Controlled	Mumbles, Steyning	48 days	101 km	193 deg
4-Sep-02	Juvenile	Icklesham, East Sussex		_	
2-Aug-03	Controlled	Mumbles, Steyning	332 days	69 km	269 deg
23-Jul -03	Juvenile	Hollesley, Suffolk			
2-Aug-03	Controlled	Mumbles, Steyning	10 days	179km	224 deg

7) Reed Warbler:-Two, fairly typical, movements were recorded in 2003; interestingly both controlled after 15 days and the bird from Reculver was amongst the last Reed Warblers to be recorded in the county in 2003.

4-Oct-03	Juvenile	Reculver, Kent				
19-Oct-03	Controlled	Shoreham Sanctuary	15	days	119 km	240 deg
28-Aug-03	Juvenile	Wintersett Res, Wakefield, West Yorks.				
12-Sep-03	Controlled	Shoreham Sanctuary	15	days	319 km	166 deg

8) Blackcap:- Additional to those detailed below there were movements between the Shoreham Sanctuary (21-Aug-03) and Icklesham (20-Sep-03), Icklesham (27-Aug-00) and Cissbury (3-May-03), Cissbury (4-Oct-98) and Westergate, Chichester (12-Apr-03) and Beachy Head (4-Oct-03) and the Mumbles (18-Oct-03). The recovery from Morocco is the third from birds ringed in this area, but unfortunately the reporter did not specify the date on which the bird was actually found.

27-Sep-98	First-year fema				
	Found dead	Swansea, Glamorgan	1705 days	282 km	288 deg
23-Jul-94	Juvenile	Shoreham Sanctuary			
9-Feb-04	Reported	Taghzout, Morocco	3488 days	1814 km	191 deg

9) Willow Warbler:-There have been several movements recorded between northern England and this area. The following therefore is fairly typical of these.

7-Aug-02	First year	Shoreham Sanctuary			
13-May-03	Controlled	Flamborough Head, Humberside	279 days	365 km	2 deg

10) Chiffchaff:- As well as the movement, detailed below, a first-year bird ringed at Icklesham on 4-Aug-03 was controlled at the Mumbles on 4-Oct-03.

28-Sep-02	First year	Shoreham Sanctuary			
31-May-03	Controlled	Ipswitch, Suffolk	245 days	170 km	39 deg

11) Long-tailed Tit:- Usually a fairly sedentary species the following. is, therefore, a little unusual.

22-Aug-01	Full grown	Shoreham Sanctuary			
3-Feb-03	Taken by cat	Seaford, East Sussex	530 days	29 km	101deg

As in previous years there were several local recoveries and birds retrapped in successive years at each of the regular ringing sites; all help to build information on movements, population sizes and the biology of each species.

John Newnham



STEYNING RINGING GROUP REPORT FOR 2003

Mumbles

In 2003 most of the physical side of reserve management was directed at the rubbish tip bank, along which is a 340-foot-long ride-cum-path. This is also used on the open days to form part of the Nature trail guided walk.

The path borders the part of the old Steyning rubbish tip which was sold off the previous year. It was delightfully neglected and covered with nettle and teasel. All this was duly cleared, and then the whole lot was ploughed up, right up to within a millimetre of the boundary. It was then re-seeded with grass; great, just what the wildlife needs.

The path was right on the fence line, and in order to create some cover and separation, the whole path was moved over 10 to 20 feet away from the fence and the resulting gap then planted up with a good mix of natural scrubby bushes and trees, Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Oak, Spindle, Elder and Dog Rose. I had carefully put rabbit guards around each plant, so then a deer then came along and sliced the top off each one! David King kindly gave me some tree shelters and these have allowed the saplings to get away. I could have saved some money by purchasing smaller plants, though.

Another essential job also related to this track; just after I purchased "The Mumbles" in 1981, a neighbour very kindly hijacked a digger from a nearby rubbish tip on the downs to help tidy up all the rubbish that had been left exposed on the bank, but the ground was very wet so the machine made giant ruts and then got stuck. The tracks were inconveniently at right-angles to the path, so I spent many a happy weekend last winter levelling them all out, to make the way more comfortable under foot, particularly for the visitors on the open days.

Much of the pruning and lopping was left unfinished but enough was done to maintain the height of the vegetation near the net sites. The remainder of the old Aspen was finally cleared away but only after cuttings had been taken to plant out later.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Sessions	0	2	1	0	1	2	1	3	2	3	1	0	16
New	0	130	48	0	4	64	75	353	128	234	59	0	1095
Retrap	0	60	36	0	11	41	13	93	58	114	27	0	453
Total	0	190	84	0	15	105	88	446	186	348	86	0	1548

During the year a total of 16 ringing sessions were held with monthly totals of birds as follows as follows:

The number of species handled in the year was 35, and the total was the highest annual total for the site.

The peak catches were typically in the autumn with 33 Willow Warblers in August, 44 new Blackcaps in September and 44 Chiffchaff in Octobers, with a most surprising catch of 15 Sedge Warblers in one sitting on the 2^{nd} of August, including 3 controls, bearing in minds that the year-total for this species had not been into double figures since the 1970s. The controls came from Suffolk, Hertfordshire and Rye Harbour (ringed as *pulli*).

To cap it all, a Mumbles-ringed Sedge Warbler was controlled in Finistere, France, 14 days after ringing; did it really need to go to the "End of the Earth" to get away from us?

Another astonishing figure was the 4200 grammes of Song Thrushes that were caught; [that being 60 (new) birds, with an average weight of 70g each]: here again this species total usually struggles to get into double figures.

The individual highlights included a Great Spotted Woodpecker for June, Green Woodie for July and Kingfishers in July and August; 3 separate Nightingales were caught in each of July/August and September, with a Redstart on the 6th of that month also. A Pied Flycatcher also turned up in August.

The winter feeding stations produced a total of 65 new Goldfinches.

Water Rails are ever present, usually heard but not seen, during the winter months. Grey Wagtails are also a regular visitor. The first Nightingale was on song on the 12th May and it was still around on the 7th June. A Nuthatch was ringed at The Mumbles on the 19th July, a first for the site, and a "Once upon a time" breeder, Spotted Flycatcher was noted on 6th September.

That was the Open Day that was, the 6th September, when a gathering of Sussex ringers are able show to the assembled birders some of those elusive little brown jobs in a little more close up.

The matter of access was not helped by the ploughing up of the old tip just the week before. However, it was levelled off and seeded just in time to allow free passage for the visitors over. Went the day well and 61 birds of 15 species were shown, the highest total being Blackcap with 22 individuals. Three Chiffchaffs, a Redstart and a Nightingale added a little colour in the tail department and a Jay provided a little bulk and needed some careful handling.

Visitors were gathered together in groups and at intervals given a 30-minute grand tour around the site. The nets are situated in rides away from the nature trail so as to minimise disturbance.

Then on the 20th September a Grey Wagtail was back and there were a few Redpoll buzzing about on each of the remaining autumn sessions, a Millennium Sparrowhawk livened things up on 12th October, (it had been ringed previously on 14th October 2000), a Redwing was caught also on the same day in 2003; and so as the year drew to close, it was back to the digging, cutting, burning, planting, fencing, bridge building, etc, etc......

Phil Clay

Cissbury

From January to March the ringing group members keep warm on cold winter days by scrub bashing, usually beside a roaring bonfire. For those not in the know, scrub bashing at Cissbury involves cutting back or removing overgrown or over-dense shrubs such as Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Wayfaring Tree, native Privet, Dogwood and Elder. This is essential work to ensure that the scrub remains at or below net level: otherwise the birds would simply fly over the top of the net. The thinning also encourages the birds to fly between the nets and maintains diversity in the plant layer which otherwise gets shaded out.

The other major task is to keep the Sycamore and Ash at bay. Where the ground has been bare a multitude of Ash and Sycamore seeds germinate and within just a few years have put on sufficient growth to create a canopy and shade out the other vegetation. This is a major problem. Within the ringing site we have removed most of the mature seeding trees apart from one wooded area. There are also a few individual trees that the National Trust want retained for their landscape value. Of course these trees are of some value for some of the birds but if all the saplings were left to mature the site would be nothing but a Sycamore/Ash wood. We would lose the diversity of bird species, especially the scrub warblers, and be left with just a good population of Chaffinches no doubt! It's all a bit like painting the Forth Bridge but we do improve the habitat year by year, working on different sections on a rotational basis.

During April we let the site settle down and then in May we start our constant effort ringing. Once again we managed all 12 session between the beginning of May and the end of August. Each session is undertaken at approximately ten-day intervals, weather permitting. Each session lasts exactly 6 hours and we use the same nets in the same net sites every time. This means we have the best chance of comparing the results year by year. For 2003 these showed a continuing recent increase in the numbers of adult resident birds in the breeding season. Number in the mid-1990s were better, followed by a noticeable decline at the end of that decade. Populations of Robin, Blackbird, Blue and Great Tit all showed increases this year. After the breeding season the residents appeared to desert the site because the numbers present in July and August were amongst the lowest we have recorded. Perhaps this was because the numbers of juveniles they produced was lower. Early broods were good but juvenile numbers for July and August were well down on the usual figures.

Numbers of adult migrants were poor in May and June, particularly Whitethroat, with even poorer numbers in July and August apart from Chiffchaff; a total catch of 7 being a site record for this time of year. Not surprisingly juvenile numbers mirrored the adult population with declines all round. Exceptions were Chiffchaff, not surprisingly, where a total catch of 29 was another site record, and 21 young Whitethroat that, whilst not a record, was well above recent averages. This was against expectations given the low number of adults.

Our late autumn ringing totals – September to November – were very poor due to a serious lack of activity. In fact we managed just three sessions, two in September and one in October, so no meaningful comparisons can be drawn. These are usually the most productive months, particularly for Blackcap and Chiffchaff, so our overall totals for the year were very low, just 749 birds being processed of which 572 were new and 177 had previously been ringed. The fewer the birds ringed the fewer the highlights but a Redstart, a Pied Flycatcher and a couple of Spotted Flycatchers enlivened their respective sessions.

Now and again, when the ringing gets quiet, we lift out heads up from the ringing table and do some proper bird watching. Regulars that did not turn up in the net included Kestrel, Sparrowhawk and Green Woodpecker. Less regular but usually on our annual list were Turtle Dove, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Peregrine and Buzzard. Unusual were a couple of Sandwich Terns that appeared above the hillside on 16th August, calling as they went.

Thanks go to the National Trust for continuing to give permission to ring on their land and to Val Bentley's son Nick who brought along a team of very welcome volunteers to help with the scrub bashing.

SANCTUARY REPORT 2003

This, the fifty-first annual report of the activity at the Sanctuary, is based on the records from the notebooks of Dr Barrie Watson and myself. Like most recent years the copse was visited in excess of 60 days; my notebook records 26 visits to either watch or work in the sanctuary with 27 sessions for mist-netting. Details of several of the short visits and all of the mist-netting sessions were posted on the Society's UserGroup and the tables and analysis can still be found on this computer site. Trapping sessions were confined to the summer and autumn months with the sessions spread between 11 May and 26 October but September was particularly well covered with nine visits. The total of 1161 birds trapped, of 33 different species, comprised 814 new birds, 345 retraps and two controls (bird ringed elsewhere and subsequently trapped at the Sanctuary). The table below, which is extended from recent years, shows that this was the most successful year for ringing at the Sanctuary since 1990 with the most sessions since 30 sessions in 1986.

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Number of sessions	19	19	9	13	16	14	16	16	13	18	21	17	20	22	27
Average catch	50	52	31	32	31	37	38	27	25	34	30	34	36	41	43
Year best	135	94	56	53	49	70	66	55	46	55	61	55	49	79	74

Summary of ringing effort and results of mist-netting for 1989 - 2003

The average of 43 birds trapped per session is an improvement on recent years and mornings, as expected, proved more productive with an average of 46 birds (n=23) compared to the average of 26 birds for the 4 afternoon sessions. Like 2002 good numbers of warblers were trapped in areas of the copse which had become infested with aphids feeding on the coppiced osier and in 2003 the most productive mist-nets were in the copse rather than on the hillside with the very old site in the centre (amongst the coppiced sallow and osier) being the best and nearly 4 times as productive as some of the other net locations.

Overall the year's activity produced the highest ringing numbers for seven species (Sparrowhawk, Green and Great Spotted Woodpeckers, Chiffchaff, Blackcap, Treecreeper and Jay), and for two others (Reed Warbler and Long-tailed Tit) 2003 was the second-best year recorded. Perhaps the maturing woodland habitat accounts for more of the prospering species although nationally Chiffchaff, Blackcap and Long-tailed Tit populations are doing well. However, there are a number of species missing from the year's ringing list and included (numbers in parenthesis are the totals ringed) Collared Dove (176); Kingfisher (58); Swallow (690); House Martin (2596); Redwing (126); Mistle Thrush (69); Starling (328); House Sparrow (86); Greenfinch (2875); Goldfinch (1706); Linnet (565); Yellowhammer (303); Reed Bunting (52) and Corn Bunting (245).

As usual there was little activity in the first few months apart from the completion of some of the winter gardening tasks. A Barn Owl was seen regularly hunting over the nearby fields and two Little Grebes frequented the main dyke during late January. On 2nd February the Marsh Marigolds were in flower and later in the month many of the shrubs were starting to sprout. The copse was invaded by sheep in February, a season when squirrels seemed more abundant than birds and there were regular sightings of Foxes and Roe Deer. On 22nd March a Badger was found freshly dead in the copse. A Chiffchaff was singing on 20th March with probably three present by the 22nd but in keeping with recent years there were insufficient trips to the copse to adequately plot the arri-

val of the summer migrants. After a splendid early spring in which the meteorologists described March as the "best" for forty years the summer and autumn were also settled, dry and often hot. No ringing sessions were cancelled on account of bad weather although some, particularly during the autumn, were conducted on blowy days. On 15th June, a very hot day, about a dozen people visited the Sanctuary and were shown the ringing activities. All enjoyed a typical June mix of eleven species for the Sanctuary. Thanks to Judith the mist-nets were kept clear and there was plenty of time to show all the various features of plumage and the techniques used in ringing and measuring.

Summer soon drifted into autumn as the first Willow Warbler was noted on 13th July, the first Garden Warbler on 19th July and numbers of passage warblers generally increased. Despite plenty of Reed Warblers in the ditches the first Sedge Warbler of the year was not recorded until 21st August. Two days later a Little Egret was seen flying over the copse; although not the first to be recorded in the Sanctuary area, this was the first seen by the author. Finches and buntings remained few and far between but in late July a lepidopterist visiting Mill Hill chanced upon a pair of Cirl Buntings in the hedge just north of the copse.

September was very successful from the ringers' viewpoint but visible migration seemed very light with only small flocks of hirundines noted moving eastward. A Spotted Flycatcher was trapped on the 3rd, the first for several years, and the same afternoon the first of several Treecreepers was trapped. Two Bullfinches, now an unusual species in the copse, were trapped on the 6th and on the 27th a record number of 32 Chiffchaffs were caught. The first of the autumn's Siskins was seen on the 5th October and the first Redpoll a week later on the 12th. On the same day a 'fly-over' of 70 Canada Geese was an unusual sight and sound for the Sanctuary. A Firecrest was trapped on the 19th October and during the same morning the last Reed Warbler, a rather bedraggled juvenile ringed at Reculver, Kent a fortnight earlier, was feeding on the aphids in the reed and willow. Chiffchaffs lingered on into late autumn with four still present on 30th November and one on 7th December. Up to two Water Rails were occasionally heard but never seen.

The copse remained very dry throughout the autumn. The once well-tended lawn of the Pumping Station had largely degenerated into a nettle patch. No Bee Orchids were found this year and only one poor spike of Autumn Ladies Tresses was recorded. The dry streams were a great help in November when the annual cutting and clearing of the osier took place. Originally a "conservation" party was planned for 2nd November but due to inclement weather this was postponed until the 16th when a party of 15, including many members of the Worthing Conservation Volunteers, coppiced and cleared all the main areas of Sallow and osier. The coppicing programme produces a vigorous growth of willow and this new growth tends to be that which attracts the aphids.

Access to the Sanctuary remained difficult. The gate to the private waterworks road was moved near to the main road in the early summer and remains locked and all the gates accessing the copse remain padlocked. In the early part of the year Mark and Lorna (with their enormous Rottweiller) moved into the cottage and I would like to express the Society's thanks to them and to the staff of Southern Water for their help and co-operation throughout the year. Later in the year Julie and Pauline, the tenants of the grazing pasture on the south side of the copse, moved their horse to other stables – they were always interested in the wildlife of the area and their presence and news will be missed. I thank the Worthing Conservation Volunteers and members of the society for their help in the conservation work and thank Dr Barrie Watson, Judith Baker and Pam Mears for help with maintenance and the ringing activities.

John Newnham

WORTHING SEA-WATCHING REPORT FOR 2003

Introduction

The sea at Worthing was watched, albeit on some days for a very short time, on 256 different days in 2003; an increase of 25% on the 204 days recorded in 2002. Observers produced records for 28 days in November, 25 days in March and 24 in both April and August with May, the traditional "best" month, being watched on just 21 different days. Likewise the total of hours watched showed an increase of about 35% to 310 hours, making 2003 the best-covered year since the early 1990s (see graph on page 60 of last year's Report).

Once again the watching effort from Worthing was overshadowed by that from Brighton marina (425+ hours) in the east and Selsey Bill (586 hours) in the west. The pattern of watching, as shown in the following graphs, was similar to previous years, with the spring months being the time when observers are prepared to spend most time watching the shore. Once again the watching effort in the last third of the year was more consistent due to the regular early-morning watches done by Alan Carter.



With the increased observation it is not surprising that the number of non-passerines recorded increased by about 61% on the total recorded in 2002. Once again January, with over 500 birds per hour watched, produced the highest rate of passage but most birds were recorded in April when the 75 hours logged over 13,000 birds, a marked increase on the poor 41 birds/hour recorded in April 2002. May, however, was again disappointing

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Hours	14	18	29	75	51	8	11	21	22	23	25	16	310
Total birds	7237	3467	1784	13107	1965	208	228	773	628	945	2499	1280	34121
Birds/Hour	536	198	62	175	38	27	22	37	29	41	102	82	110

with few good watches and the 51 hours producing less than 2000 birds. As usual these figures and the above table excludes birds recorded feeding offshore and the large numbers of passerines which can be seen moving along the coast, particularly in the autumn months.

The following plot compares the monthly rate of passage in 2003 (black) with the average for the years 1978-2002 (hatched) and shows, like last year, the exceptional numbers of



birds recorded in the first winter period, with a good April and November but disappointing May and early autumn.

As in 2002 no daily log was used during the spring but, as usual, most observations took place from the shelter opposite Marine Gardens, West Worthing. In spring several watchers were present but particular thanks go to the following observers who have contributed records which form the basis of this report: P.M.Brayshaw; A.Carter, S.Cross, M.P.Hall, C.E.Hope, R.A.Ives; J.A.Newnham; M.G.Prince, R.J.Sandison; D.I.Smith; and R.Tofts.

Chronological account and discussion

In keeping with the past few years the highlights of the winter months were the notable numbers of divers, Kittiwakes and auks recorded. Cold weather and short days ensured most watches during this time of year were brief but often the number of birds recorded was considerable. January 3rd was one of the impressive days when in nearly four hours watching a total of 238 divers, of which 119 were Red-throated and one Great Northern, a selection of seven wildfowl species and 1774 auks passed westward. A further 3000 auks were counted moving west, along with 200 Kittiwakes and 150 Gannets, in 1.3 hours on the 13th, and on the following day 760 were recorded. Later in the month there were 250 Kittiwakes offshore on the 29th. The maximum count of Red-breasted Mergansers feeding offshore during this first winter period was 150 on January 13th whilst the largest

count of Great Crested Grebes was 20 on February 22nd. The significant days in February were the 1st, 22nd, 23rd and 25th; the last three dates were with winds between southeast and south whilst on the 1st a NW wind was recorded. Once again divers and auks predominated the 2.3-hour watch on the 1st with the total of divers being 31W and 281E; the observer commenting "several parties of about 20 birds between 10-11hrs; most of the closer birds 'Red throated" whilst for auks, of which there were 30W and 640E, these were mainly in small parties and 95% were considered to be Razorbills. The better watches later in the month were dominated by the start of the return passage of wildfowl with counts for Brent Geese being 507E on the 22nd, 177E on the 23rd and 437E on the 25th. Unusual records for this winter period included a single Velvet Scoter on January 1st, a Red-necked Grebe offshore on February 24th, and, on the following day, there was a Slavonian Grebe offshore and 3 eastbound White-fronted Geese.

The return passage of Brent Geese is one of the first signs of the approaching spring and the following figure demonstrates the timing of these movements. The darker columns represent the average passage rates for the most-recent 13 year period compared with the same data gathered between the years 1978 and 1990. The figure shows that movements occur throughout the winter but are at a maximum from late February until late March. The figure also suggests that more birds per hour have been recorded in the recent run of springs whilst comparable numbers have been recorded in the autumns. In 2003 the largest number was recorded earlier than usual in February.



Average rates of Brent Goose passage in 10-day periods at Worthing in two thirteen-year periods

March was generally uneventful with few marsh ducks recorded, just 624 Brent Geese noted, and a total of 179 Common Scoters and 56 Sandwich Terns. The more-interesting records included a Peregrine and the first Wheatear on the 7th, both a Great Northern Diver and Slavonian Grebe offshore on the 9th, single eastbound Avocets on the 16th, 17th and 18th with two westbound birds on the 20th, and the first Whimbrel recorded on the 23^{rd} .

April started quietly but during a period in mid-month the winds blew from the east or south-east and on several days a good selection of species was recorded. A similar period later in the month however, was much more productive with many of the month's maxima occurring on the 25th or 26th; this was helped by the 14.5 hours watching on the former day and nearly 8 hours watching on the 26th. Month totals and maxima of the well recorded species were 1282 Common Scoters (max 282 on 26th), 27 Velvet Scoters (max 10 on 13th), 1144 Bar-tailed Godwits (max 593 on 25th), 900 Whimbrels (max 257 on 28th), 21 Pomarine Skuas (max 12 on 25th), 84 Arctic Skuas (max 15 on 26th), 50 Mediterranean Gulls (max 12 on 16th), 219 Little Gulls (max on 172 on 26th), 2245 Sandwich Terns (max 399 on 25th), 3382 Commic Terns (max 2699 on 26th) and 133 Little Terns (max 75 on 25th). Throughout the month there was a scattering of interesting records with a further 3 Avocets recorded on the 19th and, on the 25th, a Long-tailed Duck and Roseate Tern. The following day 13 Black Terns were recorded, a species recorded in fewer numbers in recent years, as the following graph of the five-year rolling mean rate of passage suggests.



The above figures and tables suggested May, usually thought to be the most exciting month for sea-watching, was disappointing. These figures are supported by poor numbers of birds seen, with month totals of 486 Common Scoters, 143 Commic terns and 292 SandwichTerns, all figures which can be regularly surpassed in just one day's watching. Bar-tailed Godwit, with a total of 244, was the only wading species to reach three figures. At least some skuas were seen with 18 Pomarine and 31 Arctic Skuas and the only other notable records were 22 Velvet Scoters on the 2^{nd} , a Black-necked Grebe offshore on the 10^{th} , 2 Balearic Shearwaters on the 17^{th} and an arriving Hobby on the 25^{th} .

One spring differs from the rest but using the same analysis shown above for Brent Goose it is possible to compare the rates of passage for some regular species in two 13-year periods to see whether any changes are occurring. The following sequence of diagrams only show the spring months but involve data from nearly 6000 hours watching (3863 hours from March to early June in 1978-1990 and 2094 hours for the same periods from






1991 to 2003). The axes have been adjusted to make them comparable.

As well as demonstrating the advancement of the arrival date of Sandwich Terns (*SxBR* 50:182-196) I have also previously shown that the numbers of Sandwich Terns recorded in March have been increasing (*SDOS* 47;60) – this is reiterated here. However the overall pattern of passage appears to have changed with the 1978-90 period showing a rise to a peak in mid-April whilst latterly the increase has been more protracted to produce a higher peak in late April; both periods showing a steady decline into May. May is the month one would expect to see most Common Terns (the species which dominates amongst those recorded as Commics) and this was certainly the case in the early period.



In recent year a similar peak occurred in late April with a notably fewer recorded in late May and virtually no passage recorded into June.

Skuas always make a watch more interesting and it would appear that the peak of Arctic Skua passage has moved forward whilst possibly Pomarine Skuas, always less numerous than Arctics, have a slightly later peak.

The figures for these two waders demonstrate the impressive late April and early May coastal passage of the Bar-tailed Godwit. Numerically this species is six times greater than Whimbrel. My impression from recent years' watching was of a decline in numbers of godwits seen but the figure suggests there has been little change. Although Whimbrels have been recorded more regularly in March the figure suggests fewer have occurred in



early April in recent years but the species has become more numerous in late April and early May.

Two scarcer species have shown different trends. Little Gulls are recorded in large numbers off the East Sussex coast (*Birds of Sussex*) but a similar smaller passage has been noted from Worthing; here too the peak of passage has moved forward. The passage of Black Terns is traditionally associated with SE winds in early May but numbers in recent



years have fallen (see above). In the first 13-year period displayed the passage started abruptly in early May falling off thereafter, but in recent years more have been recorded in late April, rising to a smaller peak in mid-May.

Returning to 2003 the mid-summer and early autumn was typically, for sea-watchers off these shores, very quiet. However, unusually large numbers of Black-tailed Godwits were recorded with a total of 70E on 6 dates between 16th and 31st August and a maximum of 27 on the 30th with a further 20E on 9th September. For the rest of September a few terns, small numbers of passerines and up to 6 Little Egrets were recorded. Passerine records were generally low, with the exception of Goldfinches, which totalled 1402 in October with peaks of 250 on the 13th, 495 on the 16th and 533 on the 17th. The first Brent Goose was noted on 24th September, the first Red-breasted Merganser on 13th October and first Goldeneye on the 16th October. The best Gannet movements of the autumn included 159W on 6th October, 2002E on 23rd October and 830W in a single hour on 12th November. There were regular records of 2 Velvet Scoters, suggesting these remained nearby offshore for several days. A Short-eared Owl on 16th November and a Scaup on 25th November were the only other unusual species recorded later in the year. By December there were good numbers of Red-breasted Mergansers offshore with the peak of 221 on the 21st, while auk and diver numbers were lower with the peak of 171 auks noted also on the 21st and 25 diver species seen on the 22nd.

John Newnham

INDOOR MEETINGS 2003

A fine array of speakers graced our Anniversary year. Dr. Kevin Briggs made a return visit in January to take us back to his beloved Forest of Bowland in Lancashire. On this occasion his subject was Hen Harriers, Merlins and Peregrines and again he made us aware of the problems arising from the management of such environmentally sensitive areas with the huge demands of people with conflicting interests. It was clear that without grouse shooting the area would not exist in its present form but many issues had to be resolved between game conservers, educational advisors and wardens.

We finally managed to secure the services of Derek Moore, Director of the Wildlife Trusts of South and West Wales, and also a regular broadcaster on Radio 4. He entertained us in February with his talk on Bird migration at Cape May. Derek was an enthusiastic and able speaker who covered his subject very thoroughly, not only showing us what could be enjoyed at Cape May but also including visits to surrounding areas. Many members found this a mouth-watering prospect.

Our March meeting had to be changed at short notice following the untimely demise of Chris Mead. However John Newnham ably stepped into the breach and delivered a fascinating talk on the Sanctuary. John works on the premise that time spent sleeping is several hours wasted! He certainly puts many of his waking hours to good use for the Society. His collection of slides from the earliest days of the Sanctuary forms a vital archive of historical importance. Some members have not visited the Sanctuary and this talk aroused a great deal of interest. He had obviously spent considerable time preparing this lecture which was very well received by the large audience.

After the AGM in April another excellent lecture was delivered by Tony Prater who came to tell us 'More about Waders'. Tony is the Conservation Manager for the RSPB in Wales and has been involved in several major species recovery programmes, some of which were relevant to us in the south-east. He spoke about the implications of climate change, and the search for renewable energy sources and their effects on birds, and also told us about his involvement in large-scale habitat restoration projects. A very thought-provoking talk.

For the first meeting after the summer recess we were privileged to welcome Jeffery Boswall whose talk was entitled 'Answering the calls of nature'. It was slightly disconcerting to find that the only equipment required by Jeffery was a conventional, everyday audio cassette player. However we need not have worried as the talk was heavily illustrated with sounds including live instrumental renderings employing blowers and suckers, whistles and pipes, bubblers and scrapers. To start with, it all seemed a little chaotic but with Jeffery's experience in television and radio there was method in his madness as he took us on an ornithological frolic with serious scientific and cultural undertones. The talk was unusual in format, original in content and very entertaining.

The 1993 Report tells us that at the end of Tony Marr's lecture marking our 40th Anniversary he promised to come back to help us celebrate the 50th, and we made sure that he kept his word when he visited us in November. He requested a very long title for his talk: 'Fifty years on the magic carpet ride of birdwatching from Shoreham-by-Sea to the Ant-

arctic Peninsula.' He took obvious pleasure in addressing his old Society which had started him on a lifetime of enjoying birds.

He recalled many memorable moments for the large audience which included several guests, ex-members of the Society, who have achieved much in the field of ornithology. However even they struggled to put names to some of the people shown on Tony's slides. Once again it was a wonderful talk, full of humour and warmth and praise for the way the Society had enthused youngsters in the early days. Fifty years later this enthusiasm was in no way diminished. It was a superb evening with everyone sharing reminiscences which crowned our Anniversary year.

Last but by no means least we had another old friend in Bob Edgar to speak to us in December about the Beachy Head Ringing Station. Bob works for English Nature and attended the first Widewater committee meeting when he put forward a strong case for habitat restoration. His talk showed us much of the important work that is undertaken at what is the largest ringing station in the County. With the number of ringers available at Beachy Head someone is usually on hand to take pictures and we were able to benefit from the results. Bob's slides ranged from the frequently recorded species through the rarities to the occasional 'mega'! His talk was always interesting and provided a fine way to bring down the curtain on Fifty Years of Birdwatching.

At every Indoor Meeting refreshments are provided by Diane and Terry Hicks, a variety of nibbles and drinks and a pleasant break in the evening when conversation flows, showing that we are the friendly Society we claim to be! Our thanks go to Diane and Terry and to all those who help with the washing up and clearing away.

Chris Wright

FIELD OUTINGS 2003

Although it is a long winter's day, the outing to Dungeness has proved to be a very popular opening to each year's events. This was again the case when Bernie Forbes and Richard Ives faced more than 40 people for the joint meeting with the SOS on a crisp, bright and calm day in January.

A short seawatch was slightly disappointing as the close Kittiwakes and Guillemots were mostly badly oiled. A lovely pair of Long-tailed Duck graced the Burrowes Pit with 2 Smew (one male), and many Ruddy Duck and Goldeneye. The ARC pit opposite also had Goldeneye, male Smew, and Red-throated Diver, and some members managed to find male and female Goosander. In the RSPB Reserve the group split up to minimize disruption in the hides, but both groups saw two Bitterns, Whooper Swans, Common Buzzard and Slavonian Grebe, while Richard's group had excellent views of Bearded Tit. Other raptors seen included Marsh Harrier, Hen Harrier and Merlin. Scotney was packed with duck but we managed to pick out 3 Scaup and a Black-necked Grebe. There were 2 Green Sandpipers and then the bird of the day flew in and landed on a wire above our heads — a Tree Sparrow. In fading light at Pett we saw many Common Scoter and a nice Black Redstart. Bernie and Richard managed to add a Short-eared Owl at Hooe on the long drive home but everyone had experienced a fabulous day's birding.

Another long journey for our second trip of the year, this time to Shellness. A good start to the day for the 24 members who joined Richard Ives was provided by a Merlin sitting on a bush until it was disturbed by a male Hen Harrier. Marsh and Hen Harriers were visible for most of the day. There was little around on the sea apart from a few Red-throated Divers and Great Crested Grebes but the shoreline was well-populated with Knot, Sanderling, Oystercatchers, Redshank, Turnstone and a few Bar-tailed Godwits. Excellent viewing conditions allowed detailed study of these species. We moved to the Harty Ferry Road for lunch and more Harriers were seen plus an extremely large falcon which Richard eventually identified as a Laggar (a falcon from India). A flock of 600 White-fronted Geese were constantly vigilant as raptors appeared and we saw 2 more Merlins before the bird we had been seeking hovered into view — a superb Roughlegged Buzzard. Despite a shortage of owls this was another fine day's birding in this bleak but atmospheric area.

Much closer to home 33 members met Dave Smith and Richard Ives on a sunny day at East Head in March. The brisk wind did not deter the dog-walkers but made birding more difficult. A Snipe was seen in the reeds and Chiffchaffs were calling. At the corner of the road to Snowhill Marsh a Cetti's Warbler called and eventually everyone heard it. On the incoming tide Greenshank, Redshank, Curlew, Dunlin and Shelduck were seen. On the walk to the headland there were many people out enjoying the sunshine and there was a lot of boating activity. However a Great Northern Diver could be seen bobbing about on the Thorney side of the channel and Great Crested Grebe, Oystercatcher and Sanderling were added to our lists. Dave found a group of about 20 Red-breasted Mergansers with some birds displaying. Members who called in at Ferry Pool on the way home were delighted to see Little Gull and a female Black Redstart.

The popular venue of Burton Pond in early April produced a record turnout of 42 for this joint meeting with the SOS. Three Grey Wagtails, Mandarin Duck, Great Crested Grebe and Blackcap were noted around the Pond. Several Common Buzzards and a Peregrine were also seen, along with an exotic Ethiopian Blue-winged Goose. After lunch at Ambersham Common several pairs of Stonechat and Dartford Warbler were found and also many Crossbills, and a few Siskin, Woodlark and Lesser Redpoll.

Peter Whitcomb took us to West Dean Woods towards the end of April when we were a bit late for the early floral display of wild Daffodils and yet too early for most of the migrants which had been slow to arrive this year. The best bird was undoubtedly a Willow Tit and we did see a few House Martins and heard a Garden Warbler, with two Hares and several Green-veined White butterflies providing the supporting cast.

Conditions were far from ideal for the Goring Seawatch on May 4th but John Newnham managed to find us several Arctic Skuas and there were small parties of Bar-tailed Godwit and many Common Scoter. He was also able to help us identify a few Velvet Scoter, other birds seen including Grey Plover, Gannet, Wheatear and two Little Terns. Telescopes are a vital part of seawatching and it is always helpful for the less experienced to be directed onto the bird in question by a leader with knowledge and expertise.

The annual trip to the New Forest at the beginning of June was concentrated on the Pig Bush area, where we were joined by members of the SOS. A showery morning hindered the birding but eventually we managed to locate Redstart, Spotted Flycatcher, Wood Warbler, Hobby, Tree Pipit and displaying Snipe. A Hawfinch was seen briefly in flight and Garden Warblers were in evidence around the car park. The sight of a group of youths hanging around the Car Park brought the outing to a premature end as we were fearful for the safety of our vehicles and nearby car parks were full to overflowing.

For the Nightjar outing we decided to go back to Ambersham Common this year and it proved to be a good choice. We had time to do a circular walk during which we saw a male Redstart, several Tree Pipits, a few Woodlark, Spotted Flycatcher, many Stonechat, and had pleasing views of Dartford Warbler, Tawny Owl, Woodcock and several Nightjars to finish an excellent evening's birding.

John Newnham gave us an entertaining morning at the Sanctuary on June 15th. We were able to see how our records are compiled and realized how much effort goes into a morning spent at the Sanctuary. Birds seen in the hand included Chiffchaff, Blackcap, Dunnock, Robin, Blackbird, Wren, Reed Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat, Blue Tit, Long-tailed Tit and Song Thrush. This was a rare opportunity for some of us to look at the birds we are used to seeing in the field at very close quarters. Their size and plumage is something we can easily forget when we rely so much on our binoculars. Special thanks to John and to Judith Baker for all the work they do in the Sanctuary and for giving us a morning full of interest.

Wet and windy weather conditions faced us for the walk to Cissbury Ring on 22nd June. A Little Owl brightened our mood as we undertook the trek from Beggars' Bush up to the Ring. The weather relented as we made our way around the Ring and both Cuckoo and Garden Warbler were heard. The total of 35 species was good in the circumstances and Comma and Ringlet butterflies were welcome additions to our list. A thunderstorm broke as we reached the shelter of our cars.

The Grove Ferry outing on August 10th was led by Bernie Forbes as Richard Ives was indisposed. Nobody could remember an outing on a hotter day. The heat haze made 'scoping impossible but Green and Common Sandpipers, Ruff and Dunlin were seen plus several Little Ringed Plover and parties of Bearded Tits. A few Yellow Wagtails were in the fields and a Water Rail was eventually seen by all.

We watched Turtle Doves as we sat by the river eating our lunch and then moved off to Oare



Marshes where a hint of breeze made life a little more comfortable. We had close views of Black-tailed Godwit, Little Ringed Plover, Dunlin, up to five Curlew Sandpipers and a lone Avocet and some of the party also managed to get onto a Little Stint. Two Marsh Harriers (one a superb male) showed well before a walk along the sea-wall produced a feeding party of Little Terns and a single Common Tern. Several groups of Whimbrel and a Yellow-legged Gull rounded off an exhausting but memorable day.

Twenty-seven members met Bernie Forbes for the walk on Selsey Westfields at the end of August. Yellow Wagtails were found feeding amongst the cattle and in the hedgerows Common Whitethroats were joined by a Lesser Whitethroat. Several Common Buzzards were seen and at least 4 Sparrowhawks plus a Merlin and a Peregrine. After lunch on the beach Wheatear, Whinchat and Mediterranean Gull were added to the list. Back at the Information Centre some members also saw a Spotted Flycatcher.

A joint outing with the SOS to Birling Gap was led by Peter Whitcomb at the beginning of October. Although the sun did not put in an appearance 24 members braved the NW wind which was a predominant feature. Nevertheless over 40 species were recorded including Merlin and Peregrine. At least a hundred Gannets were off Belle Tout and interestingly, whilst House Martins and Swallows were noted, the first Redwing of the winter was also seen. Ten species of butterfly were recorded including 3 or 4 Clouded Yellows.

The visit to Amberley Wild Brooks in November was abandoned owing to torrential rain. Although weather conditions were better than forecast, strong winds were still a hindrance for Stanley Allen's Seasonal Saunter on December 27th . Seeking what little shelter there was at the west arm of Shoreham Harbour we were rewarded with good views of 3 Purple Sandpipers and a few Turnstones. In the calmer surroundings of Adur Recreation Ground a Little Egret was feeding and a party of 14 Turnstones were finally dislodged by the incoming tide. Twelve Grey Plovers were on the opposite shore and at least 2 Kingfishers were seen, one of which gave prolonged views as it dived under the Railway Bridge. A party of Linnets fed close by and 2 Stonechats and 2 Reed Buntings were also noted.

And so another year of outings has been accomplished, which seem to be appreciated by all those who join the groups. Special thanks must go to all the leaders involved who take their responsibilities very seriously and provide us with so many memorable days.

Chris Wright

GAZETTEER NOTES

On the Gazetteer of notable sites in the SDOS area provided on page 76, the numbers given in bold italics indicate sites which have been described in some detail in the series of articles entitled 'Know Your Area Better' that have appeared in previous Reports. These articles were as follows:

- 1 'Sompting Brooks' by Paul Brayshaw (1995 Report, pages 60 to 61).
- 2 'The Lower Adur' by Bernie Forbes (1996 Report, pages 58 and 59).
- 3 'Hollingbury Camp' by Peter Whitcomb (1997 Report, pages 69 to 71).
- 4 'The North and West' by Bernie Forbes (1999 Report, pages 69 to 71).
- 5 'Around Brighton' by Peter Whitcomb (2000 Report, pages 72 to 74).

A quick look through the list of sites that have not yet been covered indicates that there is room for quite a number of future articles along the same lines, so if you feel that you can write a similar piece about any group of these sites for inclusion in a future Report, please let me know. Jim Steedman

GARDEN BIRD SURVEY - 2003

Records of birds seen in the gardens of 26 members were submitted for the year, A total of 62 species was recorded, with records for the whole year being submitted in quarterly returns. Most species in a quarter (29/12/02 - 29/03/03), 30, were recorded in the Ford's Ferring garden and in the quarter (30/03/03 - 28/06/03) at Graham Smith's garden in Henfield.

Blackbird was the only species present in every garden in each quarter. Most gardens recorded Collared Dove, Blue Tit and Robin at some time throughout the year. An interesting addition to the list of birds recorded since 1999 was Lesser Spotted Woodpecker in Keith Herbert's Isfield garden.

House Sparrow fared fairly well and was recorded in 23 gardens with a maximum count of 40 in Sylvia Denman's Hove Garden. However, another Hove garden recorded a zero return as did gardens in Storrington and Findon. Starling was recorded in good numbers generally and was recorded in 25 gardens with a maximum count of 100, again in Sylvia Denman's garden.

Winter thrushes were sparsely recorded, with five gardens recording Redwing and two recording Fieldfare. Four gardens recorded Siskin and a single Ring Ouzel appeared in Sylvia Denman's Hove garden.

Migrants included single records for Common Whitethroat, Lesser Whitethroat, Pied Flycatcher and Firecrest. Chiffchaff and Willow Warbler were recorded in 11 and 8 gardens respectively. Blackcap was noted in 11 gardens with several records for the months of December, January and February.

Other sightings included Corn Bunting (in 1 garden), Reed Bunting (2), Tawny Owl (1), Redpoll (1), Linnet (4), Bullfinch (4), Stock Dove (1), and Marsh Tit (1). Sparrowhawk took advantage of the prey possibilities and was recorded in 16 gardens.

The tables opposite show the top birds recorded each quarter and indicate how these are related to the percentage of gardens used and the maximum number of these species recorded.

Participants were : S. Allen, C. Allistone, R. Bradbury, E. Chadwell, Jay Cooper, S. Denman, M. & P. Ford, V. Hancock, K. Herbert, C. & P. Hope, H. Jackson, L. Keen, C. Leeves, J. & S. Maskell, C. Nichols, A. Robinson, E. Robinson, R. Sandison, J. & J. Simpson, G. Smith, J. & J. Steedman, R. Titcomb, M. Taylor, P. Watson, P. Whitcomb and C. Wingate.

Martin Ford

Season	Top birds	Percentage of gardens used	Maximum number	Average of maximum numbers
Winter 2003	Blue Tit Blackbird	100.0 100.0	7 11	3.6 3.8
	Collared Dove	100.0	29	4.4
(29/12/2002 to	Starling	96.0	50	16.0
29/03/2003)	Greenfinch	92.0	16	6.1
	Dunnock	92.0	4	2.2
25 gardens	Robin Wood Pigeon	92.0 88.0	3	1.8
recording	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	88.0	20	3.0 7.7
50 species	House Sparrow Chaffinch	84.0	10	3.2
	Song Thrush	84.0	2	5.2 1.1
	Wren	84.0	2	1.1
C	Collared Dove	100.0	12	3.0
Spring 2003	Blackbird	100.0	7	3.8
(20/02/2002 +-	Starling	100.0	42	13.1
(30/03/2003 to	Greenfinch	95.5	12	4.9
28/06/2003)	Wood Pigeon	95.5	4	2.4
22 condone	Blue Tit	90.9	6	3.5
22 gardens	Dunnock	90.9	6	2.1
recording 49 species	Great Tit	90.9	5	2.5
49 species	House Sparrow	86.4	18	7.9
	Robin	86.4	5	1.8
	Collared Dove	100.0	14	3.2
Summer 2003	Blue Tit	100.0	11	4.4
	Blackbird	100.0	7	4.0
(29/06/2003 to	Greenfinch	95.5	20	5.1
27/09/2003)	Robin	95.5	3	1.5
1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	Great Tit	90.9	6	2.3
22 gardens	Wood Pigeon	90.9	5	2.2
recording	House Sparrow	86.1	40	13.9
42 species	Dunnock	86.1	4	1.6
	Starling	77.3	70	16.7
	Blackbird	100.0	7	3.7
Autumn 2003	Robin	100.0	3	1.5
Autumn 2003	Blue Tit	95.5	9	4.1
(28/09/2003 to	Starling	90.9	100	20.5
27/12/2003	Collared Dove	90.9	20	5.0
21112/2000/	House Sparrow	81.8	30	11.0
22 gardens	Dunnock	81.8	5	1.9
recording	Chaffinch	77.3	6	4.8
44 species	Great Tit	77.3	6	2.2
	Greenfinch	68.2	19	4.8
	Wood Pigeon	68.2	5	1.7
	Wren	68.2	2	0.7

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

For the year to 31 December 2003

	2003	2002
RECEIPTS	£	£
Balance brought forward	3,940.94	4,709.65
Subscriptions and visitors entry fee	1,323.00	1,083.50
Sale of books, reports, cards and stickers	13.00	12.50
Net raffle and refreshment receipts	134.71	110.37
Bank interest	34.39	46.82
Donations	29.30	-
Donations for Golden Jubilee		2,000.00
Sale of computer	-	50.00
	5 475 24	012.04
DAVATANTO	5,475.34	8,012.84
PAYMENTS	202 2 2	
Printing	602.35	938.10
Postage and stationary	175.17	153.61
Honorarium payment	-	-
Hire of hall	-	-
Southern Water Authority	4.00	4.00
Speakers fees	383.00	436.20
Insurance	186.20	165.00
Purchase of computer equipment	-	349.99
BTCV Membership	25.00	25.00
Transfer to Jubilee account	-	2,000.00
Raffle prizes	18.00	
Gifts	117.50	-
Balance carried forward	3,964.12	3,940.94
	5,475.34	8,012.84
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John M. Maskell (Hon. Treasurer) Dated 8th February 2004

ACCOUNTANTS' REPORT

In accordance with instructions given to us, we have prepared without carrying out an audit, the above receipts and payments account from the accounting records of Shoreham District Ornithological Society and from information and explanations supplied to us.

BAKER TILLY, Chartered Accountants, BRIGHTON.

Date: 10th February 2004

TIDE TABLES FOR SHOREHAM-BY-SEA 2005

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E TABLES FOR SHOREHAM-BY-SEA 2005 JUNE JUNE JUNE AUGUST	Morning Afternoon Day & Morning Afternoon Day & N	Time m date Time m Time m date Time m Tin	1 07 30 5.2 20 08 5.4 Fr 1 08 04 5.1 20 36	h 2 08 38 5.3 21 10 5.5 Sa 2 09 08 5.1 21 34 5.2 Tu 2 10 39 5.0 22 56 5.0	r 3 0937 5.4 22 03 5.6 Su 3 10 04 5.2 22 25 5.3 We 3 11 22 5.2 23 37 5.2	4 10 28 5.6 22 49 5.7 Mb 4 10 53 5.3 23 11 5.3 Th 4 *****	5 11 13 5.7 23 30 5.7 Tu 5 11 36 5.4 23 51 5.4 Fr 5 00 13 5.4	6 1153 5.7 ***** *** We 6 ***** *** 12 15 5.5 Sa 6 00 46 5.5	u 7 00 09 5.7 12 31 5.7 Th 7 00 29 5.5 12 51 5.5 Su 7 01 18 5.7 13 38 5.8	le 8 00 45 5.7 13 07 5.7 Fr 8 01 04 5.5 13 26 5.6 Mp 8 01 49 5.7 14 09 5.8	h 9 01 20 5.6 13 43 5.6 Sa 9 01 39 5.5 14 00 5.6 Tu 9 02 21 5.7 14 41 5.8	10 01	11 02 32 5.4 14 57 5.3 Mb 11 02 48 5.4	12 03 11 5.2 15 37 5.2 Tu 12 03 24 5.3 15 48 5.4	13 03 52 5.0 16 20 5.0 We 13 04 04 5.2 16 30 5.3 Sa 13 04	14 04 38 4.9 17 09 4.9	15 05 30 4.8 18 04 4.9 Fr 15 05 38 5.0 18 09 5.1	16 06 28 4.8 19 03 4.9 Sa 16 06 37 5.0 19 11 5.0	17 07 30 4.9 20 04 5.0 Su 17 07 45 5.0 20 19 5.1 We 17 09 48 5.4	3 18 08 32 5.1 21 02 5.3 Mb 18 08 56 5.2 21 26 5.3 Th 18 10	19 09 30 5.3 21 57 5.5 Tu 19 10 01 5.5 22 28 5.6 Fr 19 11	20 10 25 5.7 22 48 5.8 We 20 11 01 5.9 23 24 6.0 Sa 20 00	21 11 17 6.0 23 39 6.1 Th 21 11 55 6.2 ***** *** Su 21 00 52 6.7 13 19	22 ***** *** 12 07 6.2 Fr 22 00 17 6.3 12 46 6.5 Mb 22 01 38 6.8 14 03	23 00 28 6.2 12 57 6.4 Sa 23 01 07 6.5 13 36 6.6 Tu 23 02 23 6.7 14 47	24 01 18 6.3 13 47 6.4 Su 24 01 56 6.6 14 24 6.6 We 24 03 07 6.4 15 31	25 02 08 6.3 14 39 6.4 Mb 25 02 45 6.5 15 13 6.5 Th 25 03 52 6.0 16 16	26 02 59 6.2 15 31 6.2 Tu 26 03 33 6.3 16 02 6.2 Fr 26 04 40 5.5 17	27 03 53 6.0 16 26 5.9 We 27 04 24 5.9 16 53 5.8	28 04 50 5.7 17 25 5.7 Th 28 05 18 5.5 17 48 5.4 Su 28 06 42 4.6	29 0551 5.5 1827 5.4 Fr 29 0617 5.2 1849 51 Mb 29 0806 4.5 20	06 57 5.2 19 32 5.3 Sa 30 07 25 4.9 19 58 4.9 Tu 30 09 25 4.	Su 31 08 38 4.8 21 07 4.8 We 31 10 21 4.8 22 39 4.9	me from 27 March to 30 October, and Greenwich Mean Time otherw	Tidal predictions for Shoreham-bv-Sea. West Sussex. Times and heights are approximate only. COPY RGHT.
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Tidal p	predic	Iidal predictions for Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex	r Shorel	han	P-by-S	Sea, W	lest Su	ISSEX.		Time	ss and	I heig	jhts are	appr	imes and heights are approximate only	only.			0	DOPY RIGHT	H.
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TIDE TABLES FOR SHOREHAM-BY-SEA 2005

USEFUL ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

RSPB: Head Office: The Lodge, SANDY, Beds, SG19 2DL.
[∞] 01 767 680 551 Regional Office: 2nd Floor 42 Frederick Place, BRIGHTON, E.Sx, BN1 4EA. [∞] 01 273 775 333 Brighton Members Group Leader: Marion Couldery, 81 Hove Park Road, HOVE, BN3 6LN. [∞] 01 273 555 750 Local Reserve: Upperton's Barn, Wiggenholt, Pulborough, RH20 2EL. [∞] 01 798 875 851

BTO: *Head Office*: The Nunnery, THETFORD, Norfolk, IP24 2PU. [™] 01 842 750 050 fax: 01 842 750 030 *Regional Representative*: Dr Barrie Watson, 83 Buckingham Rd, SHOREHAM-BY-SEA, W.Sx, BN43 5UD. [™] 01 273 452 472

SOS: Secretary: Richard Cowse, Beavers Brook, The Thatchway, ANGMERING, West Sussex, BN16 4HJ. 🕾 01 903 770 259

WWT: Head Office: SLIMBRIDGE, Gloucs, GL2 7BT. 201 453 890 333; fax 01 453 890 827 Local Reserve: Mill Road, ARUNDEL, W.Sx, BN18 9PB. 201 903 883 355; fax 01 903 884 834

Sussex Wildlife Trust: Woods Mill, Shoreham Road, HENFIELD, W.Sx, BN5 9SD. [™] 01 273 492 630; fax 01 273 494 500

Pagham Harbour LNR:

Information Centre, Selsey Road, Sidlesham, CHICHESTER, W.Sx, PO20 7NE. 201 243 641 508

English Nature:

Howard House, 31 High St, LEWES, E.Sx, BN7 2LU. 201 273 476 595; fax 01 273 483 063

Chichester Harbour Conservancy contact:

Anne de Potier, Harbour Office, Itchenor, CHICHESTER, W.Sx, PO20 7AW. 2 01 243 512 301

Booth Museum of Natural History: 194 Dyke Road, BRIGHTON, E.Sx, BN1 5AA. 🕾 01 273 292 777

Brent Lodge Wildlife Hospital: Penny Cooper, Cow Lane, Sidlesham, CHICHESTER, W.Sx, PO20 7LN. [™] 01 243 641 672

Rye Harbour NR: Dr.Barry Yates, 2 Watch Cottages, Nook Beach, WINCHELSEA, E.Sx, TN36 4LU. 🕾 01 797 223 862

Police Wildlife Liaison Officer:

Police advice is initially to ring 08456 070 999 and they will pass the call on as appropriate. Our local Wildlife Liaison Officer and his assistant are based at Worthing but *any* officer can act in an emergency.

Birdline South-East [∞] 09 068 700 240 (Please report sightings on Freephone [∞] 08 000 377 240 or 07 626 933 933) Rare Bird News 🕾 09 063 888 111

Met.Office: Weathercall national 7-day weather forecast: 🕾 09 068 500 400

Weathercall local 7-day forecast for Sussex, Surrey & Kent : 20 068 500 402

To obtain bird news on a mobile phone, contact:

Birdnews: 101 603 763 388 e-mail info@birdnews.co.uk or visit www.birdnews.co.uk Birdcall (via Focalpoint): 20 07 092 247 392 or visit www.birdcallonline.com Birdcall (via Birdguides): 20 0800 919 391 or visit www.birdguides.com Rare Bird Alert: 20 01 603 456 789

USEFUL WEBSITES

Sussex Ornithological Society (SOS): www.sos.org.uk

Has Sussex rare bird sightings page updated frequently. Also Sussex gazetteer of 2800 sites with an automatic link to www.streetmap.co.uk, so that a location map for any site can be displayed (and printed).

Shoreham District Ornithological Society (SDOS): www.sdos.org

Bird Guides: www.birdguides.com (Has national rare bird sightings)

Hampshire Ornithological Society: www.hants.gov.uk/hos

Kent Ornithological Society: www.kentos.org.uk

Focalpoint: www.birdcallonline.com (Has rare bird news)

Birdline SE: www.southeastbirdnews.co.uk

WSCC: www.westsussex.gov.uk

ESCC: www.eastsussexcc.gov.uk

General Portal (i.e. starting point for national & international sites): birding.start4all.com

BBC online weather centre: www.bbc.co.uk/weather (also has tide tables for many birdwatching sites along the south coast)

Meteorological Office weather maps: www.findafishingboat.co.uk/weather.htm

BIRDING PUBLICATIONS

British Birds (monthly): The Banks, Mountfield, ROBERTSBRIDGE, E.Sx, TN32 5JY. 20 580 882 039 or visit www.britishbirds.co.uk

Bird Watch (monthly): Solo Publishing Ltd, 3D/F Leroy House, 436 Essex Rd, Islington LONDON, N1 3QP 20 077 049 495; fax 02 077 042 767 or visit www.birdwatch.co.uk

Bird Watching (monthly): Apex House, Oundle Rd, PETERBOROUGH, PE2 9NP. © 01 733 898 100: fax 01 733 466 843 or visit www.birdwatchingmagazine.co.uk

Birding World (monthly): Stonerunner, Coast Road, Cley next the Sea, HOLT, Norfolk, NR25 7RY. fax 01 263 741 173 or visit www.birdingworld.freeserve.co.uk

Rare Birds Weekly: Lee G.R.Evans, 8 Sandycroft Rd, Little Chalfont, AMERSHAM, Bucks, HP6 6QL. 🕾 01 494 763 010 or visit www.uk400clubonline.co.uk

Birds Illustrated (quarterly):Buckingham Press, 55 Thorpe Park Road, PETERBOROUGH, PE3 6LJ. 🕾 01 733 561 739

Birdwatcher's Yearbook and Diary (annual): Buckingham Press, 55 Thorpe Park Road, PETERBOROUGH, PE3 6LJ. 🕾 01 733 561 739

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13 Chanctonbury	TQ1312	43 Mumbles, The	TQ1	rq1811	73 5	73 Stump Bottom	
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19 Cockroost Hill	TQ2408	49 No Mans Land	4 TQ1	TQ1509	79 V	Washington Bostal	TQ1212
20 Cote Street	TQ1106	50 Old Erringham Farm	TQ2		80 V	Washington Sandpits	TQ1213
21 Cuckoos Corner	TQ2006	51	TQ1		81 V	Waterhall	TQ2808
22 Devil's Dyke	TQ2511	52 Oreham Common	TQ2	TQ2214	82 V	Widewater	4 TQ2004
23 Ditchling Beacon	TQ3313	53 Patching Pond	100	rq0805	83 \	83 Wild Park	5 TQ3207
24 Ferring Rife	4 T00901	54 Power Station	TQ2	rQ2404	84 V	Wiston Pond	TQ1612
25 Flood Arch	T02004	55 Rock Common	TQ1	FQ1213	85 V	Withdean Park	TQ3007
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27 Golding Barn	TQ2110	57 Sandgate Sand Pit	TQ1	TQ1014	87 \	87 Woodvale Cemetary	TQ3205
28 Goring Gap	4 TQ1001	58 Sheepcote Valley	5 103	TQ3404	88 \	88 Wyckham Farm	TQ1913
29 Halewick Tip	TQ1706	59 Shoreham Airport	4 102	TQ2005	Furt	Further notes relating to this list are given	list are given
30 Highdown Hill	TQ0904	60 Shoreham Fort	<i>2</i> TQ2	TQ2004	on po	on page 71.	



SOCIETY OFFICERS SDOS OFFICERS AS AT 1ST JANUARY 2005

Mr. Bernie Forbes President Chairman of the Council and Hon. Secretary Tel: 01 273 452 497 The Old Rectory : Coombes : LANCING : West Sussex : BN15 0RS Hon. Field Secretary Tel: 01 903 814 859 6 Shoreham Road : UPPER BEEDING : West Sussex : BN44 3TN Treasurer 41 St. Lawrence Avenue, WORTHING : BN14 7JJ Hon. Recorder Tel: 01 273 500 416 99 Barnett Road : BRIGHTON : BN1 7GJ Mr. Jim Steedman Hon. Report Editor Tel: 01 903 814 923 e-mail: jim.steedman@virgin.net 18 Manor Road : UPPER BEEDING : West Sussex : BN44 3TJ

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Sanctuary Committee Dr. John A. Newnham Dr. A. Barrie Watson

Other Council Members Mrs. Diane Hicks Mrs. Shena Maskell

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Society's AGM is held annually in April. The date is notified in the Society's annual calendar which is sent to all Members. The meeting begins with a report from the President on the previous calendar year's activities. Members present at the meeting are cordially invited to raise any questions arising from the President's report. If, however, any Member wishes to raise any specific point about any matter affecting the Society, which may or may not be covered in the President's report, would the Member concerned be kind enough to notify the Honorary Secretary in writing, at least 14 days before the AGM, so that such questions may be adequately dealt with at the AGM.

Mr. Chris Wright

Mr. John M. Maskell

Mr. Peter J. Whitcomb

Mrs. Brianne Reeve

PERSONAL CHECKLIST FOR 2005 (with systematic-list page numbers)

Species

Red-throated Diver Black-throated Diver Great Northern Diver White-billed Diver Little Grebe Great Crested Grebe Red-necked Grebe Slavonian Grebe Black-necked Grebe Fulmar Cory's Shearwater Sooty Shearwater Manx Shearwater **Balearic Shearwater*** Storm Petrel Leach's Petrel Gannet Cormorant Shag Bittern American Bittern Little Bittern Night Heron Squacco Heron **Cattle Egret** Little Egret Great White Egret Grey Heron **Purple Heron** Black Stork White Stork Glossy Ibis Spoonbill Mute Swan Bewick's Swan Whooper Swan Bean Goose Pink-footed Goose White-fronted Goose **Greylag Goose** Snow Goose Canada Goose **Barnacle Goose** Brent Goose **Red-breasted Goose** Egyptian Goose

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Species
Ruddy Shelduck
Shelduck
Mandarin
Wigeon
American Wigeon
Gadwall
Teal
Green-winged Teal
Mallard
Pintail
Garganey
Blue-winged Teal Shoveler
Red-crested Pochard
Pochard
Ring-necked Duck
Ferruginous Duck
Tufted Duck
Scaup
Lesser Scaup
Eider
Long-tailed Duck
Common Scoter
Surf Scoter
Velvet Scoter
Goldeneye
Smew
Red-breasted Merganser
Goosander
Ruddy Duck
Honey Buzzard
Black Kite
Red Kite
White-tailed Eagle
Marsh Harrier
Hen Harrier
Pallid Harrier Montagu's Harrier
Goshawk
Sparrowhawk
Common Buzzard
Rough-legged Buzzard
Osprey
Kestrel
Red-footed Falcon
Merlin



Species

Hobby Gyrfalcon Peregrine Black Grouse **Red-legged Partridge Grey Partridge** Quail Pheasant Golden Pheasant Water Rail Spotted Crake Sora Rail Little Crake Baillon's Crake Corncrake Moorhen Coot Common Crane Little Bustard Great Bustard Oystercatcher Black-winged Stilt Avocet Stone-curlew **Collared Pratincole Oriental Pratincole** Black-winged Pratincole Little Ringed Plover **Ringed Plover** Killdeer Kentish Plover Lesser Sand Plover Greater Sand Plover Dotterel American Golden Plover Golden Plover Grev Plover Sociable Plover Lapwing Knot Sanderling Semipalmated Sandpiper Little Stint Temminck's Stint Least Sandpiper White-rumped Sandpiper Baird's Sandpiper Pectoral Sandpiper **Curlew Sandpiper** Purple Sandpiper

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Species

Dunlin Broad-billed Sandpiper Stilt Sandpiper Buff-breasted Sandpiper Ruff Jack Snipe Snipe Great Snipe Long-billed Dowitcher Woodcock Black-tailed Godwit Bar-tailed Godwit Whimbrel Curlew Upland Sandpiper Spotted Redshank Redshank Marsh Sandpiper Greenshank Greater Yellowlegs Green Sandpiper Wood Sandpiper Terek Sandpiper Common Sandpiper Spotted Sandpiper Turnstone Wilson's Phalarope Red-necked Phalarope Grey Phalarope Pomarine Skua Arctic Skua Long-tailed Skua Great Skua Mediterranean Gull Laughing Gull Franklin's Gull Little Gull Sabine's Gull Bonaparte's Gull Black-headed Gull Slender-billed Gull **Ring-billed Gull** Common Gull Lesser Black-backed Gull Herring Gull Yellow-legged Gull*** **Iceland Gull** Glauceous Gull Great Black-backed Gull Kittiwake



Species	Page	1	2	3	4	5	6	Species	Page	1	2	3	4	5
Ivory Gull		F						Woodlark	34	-	-	-		-
Gull-billed Tern								Skylark	34		-	-		-
Caspian Tern								Shore Lark		-	-	-		-
Lesser Crested Tern							-	Sand Martin	34			-		-
Sandwich Tern	29							Crag Martin		-	-			-
Roseate Tern	29					-		Cliff Swallow		-		-		-
Common Tern	29	-						Swallow	35	-	-	-		-
Arctic Tern	30						-	Red-rumped Swallow		-	-	-	-	-
Sooty Tern				-			-	House Martin	35	-	-	-	-	-
Bridled Tern						1	-	Richard's Pipit			-	-	-	-
Little Tern	30						-	Blyth's Pipit			-	-	-	-
Whiskered Tern						+	-	Tawny Pipit		-	-	-	-	-
Black Tern	30					+	-	Olive-backed Pipit		-	+	-	-	-
White-winged Black Tern			+		1	+	1	Tree Pipit	35	-	+	-	+	-
Guillemot	30		+			+		Meadow Pipit	35	-	+	-	+	-
Razorbill	30		+	+	+	+	-	Red-throated Pipit		-	+	-	+	-
Black Guillemot			1	+	+	+	-	Rock Pipit	35	-	+	+	-	-
Little Auk	30		+	+	+	+	-	Scandinavian Rock Pipit		-	+	+	-	-
Puffin	31	1	+	+	+	+	-	Water Pipit		-	+	-	+	-
Black-bellied Sandgrouse		+	+	+	+	+	-	Yellow Wagtail	36	+	+	+	+	-
Pallas's Sandgrouse		+	+	+	+	+	-	Grey Wagtail	36	+	+	+	+	_
Feral Pigeon	31	+	+	+	+	+	-	Pied Wagtail	36	+	+	+	+	-
Stock Dove	31	+	+	+	+	+	-	Waxwing	36	+	+	+	+	-
Woodpigeon	31	+	+	+	+	+	-	Dipper	50	+	+	+	-	-
Collared Dove	32	+	+	+	+	+	-	Wren	37	+	+	+	+	-
Turtle Dove	32	+	+	+	+	+	-	Dunnock	37	+	+	+	+	_
Ring-necked Parakeet	32	+	+	+	+	+	-	Alpine Accentor	51	+	+	+	+	-
Great Spotted Cuckoo		+	+	+	+	+	-	Rufous Bush Chat	ŀ	+	+	+	+	_
Cuckoo	32	+	+	+	+	+	-	Robin	37	+	+	+	+	_
Yellow-billed Cuckoo		+	+	+	+	+	-	Thrush Nightingale	51	+	+	+	+	-
Barn Owl	32	+	+	+	+	+	-	Nightingale	37	+	+	+	+	_
Snowy Owl	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	Bluethroat	51	+	+	+	+	-
Little Owl	32	+	+	+	+	+	-	Black Redstart	37	+	+	+	+	-
Tawny Owl	32	+	+	+	+	+	-	Redstart	38	+	+	+	+	
Long-eared Owl	33	+	+	+	+	+	-	Whinchat	38	+	+	+	+	_
Short-eared Owl	33	+	+	+	+	+	-	Stonechat	38	+	+	+	+	_
Nightjar	33	+	+	+	+	+	-	Siberian Stonechat	30	+	+	+	+	_
Swift	33	+	+	+	+	+	-	Wheatear	38	+	+	+	+	
Alpine Swift		+	+	+	+	+	-1	Pied Wheatear	30	+	+	+	-	_
Kingfisher	33	+	+	+	+	+	-	Black-eared Wheatear	-	+	+	+	+	
Bee-eater		+	+	+	+	+	-	Desert Wheatear	-	+	+	+	+	-
Roller	H	+	+	+	+	+	-	Rock Thrush	-	+	+	+	+	-
Ноорое	ŀ	+	+	+	+	+	-	White's Thrush	-	+	+	+	+	-
Wryneck	ŀ	+	+	+	+	+	-	Ring Ouzel	39	+	+	+	+	-
Green Woodpecker	34	+	+	+	+	+	-	Blackbird	39	+	+	+	+	-
Great Spotted Woodpkr	34	+	+	+	+	+	-	Black-throated Thrush	39	+	+	+	+	-
Lesser Spotted Woodpkr	34	+	+	+	+	+	-	Fieldfare	20-	-	+	+	+	_
White-winged Lark	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	Song Thrush	39	-	+	-	+	-
Short-toed Lark	H	+	+	+	+	+	-	0	39 39	+	+	+	+	4
Crested Lark		-	_	-	_			Redwing	39					

Species

Cetti's Warbler Grasshopper Warbler Savi's Warbler Aquatic Warbler Sedge Warbler Paddyfield Warbler Marsh Warbler **Reed Warbler** Great Reed Warbler **Booted Warbler Icterine Warbler** Melodious Warbler Dartford Warbler Subalpine Warbler Sardinian Warbler **Barred Warbler** Lesser Whitethroat Whitethroat Garden Warbler Blackcap Greenish Warbler Pallas's Warbler Yellow-browed Warbler Hume's Leaf Warbler Radde's Warbler **Dusky Warbler** Western Bonelli's Warbler Wood Warbler Chiffchaff Willow Warbler Goldcrest Firecrest Spotted Flycatcher **Red-breasted Flycatcher Collared Flycatcher Pied Flycatcher Bearded Tit** Long-tailed Tit Marsh Tit Willow Tit **Crested Tit** Coal Tit Blue Tit Great Tit Nuthatch Wallcreeper Treecreeper Penduline Tit **Golden Oriole** Isabelline Shrike





Red-backed Shrike Lesser Grev Shrike Great Grey Shrike Woodchat Shrike Jay Magpie Nutcracker Chough Jackdaw Rook **Carrion Crow** Hooded Crow Raven Starling Rose-coloured Starling House Sparrow Tree Sparrow Chaffinch Brambling Serin Greenfinch Goldfinch Siskin Linnet Twite Lesser Redpoll Mealy Redpoll Common Crossbill Parrot Crossbill Trumpeter Finch Scarlet Rosefinch Bullfinch Hawfinch Black-and-white Warbler Blackpoll Warbler White-throated Sparrow Dark-eyed Junco Lapland Bunting **Snow Bunting** Yellowhammer Cirl Bunting **Rock Bunting Ortolan Bunting Rustic Bunting** Little Bunting **Reed Bunting** Pallas's Reed Bunting Black-headed Bunting Corn Bunting Northern Oriole



Index to Personal Checklists.

1....
2....
3....
4....
5....
6....
Notes: The species listed in the foregoing checklist, which also acts as an index to the Systematic

List descriptions given on pages 9 to 49, correspond to all those that are recognised by the Sussex Ornithological Society as having occurred in Sussex in the wild or in a feral state. Thanks are due to the SOS for providing this information, which is based on the Checklist published by the Society in 2003, to which reference should be made for more-detailed information.

*** Yellow-legged Gull is not yet recognised as a full species.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Continued from page 50.

Annual Report and are reused by us with their permission. For this Anniversary Report, he has also produced for us a beautiful specially-painted cover.

For many years, John Newnham has prepared three annual articles, one on the ringing that takes place throughout our area, one on local sea-watching and one on our own reserve, Shoreham Sanctuary, and each year these arrive with a promptness that leaves all the rest of us to shame - if we were all as efficient, this Report would theoretically appear six months earlier than it actually does! Separate accounts of the ringing that takes place at the Mumbles and at Cissbury are provided by Phil and Brian Clay, and Martin Ford painstakingly tabulates and describes the results of our annual Garden Birds Survey. Last but by no means least, our Indoor and Field Trips Organizer Chris Wright describes the many and varied events that he arranges for us throughout the year. All these people, and also your Committee, work very hard on our behalf and without them this Report could not be produced.

In this special issue we have also incorporated a fine-art insert, the preparation of which has been entrusted to Terry Hicks who, with Brianne Reeve, jointly produced our splendid book describing in detail aspects of "50 Years of Birdwatching" in the SDOS area. Brianne also plays a major role in the production of each Annual Report, especially since it is no longer printed by Adur Council, and she organizes all the production arrangements with Evonprint, our present printers who are located at Small Dole.

My grateful thanks go to all these people and those others who have helped and supported me during my time as Editor.

I should finally add my usual caveat regarding the tide tables. These are calculated using a widely-available software package and hence may be slightly less accurate that the 'official' sets of tables sold to anglers, etc. Spot checks indicate that the high-water times may differ by a few minutes from those that appear in such published tables, but any differences are negligible and anyway are outweighed by the effects of wind and weather. The addresses, telephone numbers and website information on pages 78 and 79 are correct to the best of my knowledge but if you come across any errors please let me know.

Jim Steedman

ABOUT THE SDOS AND MEMBERSHIP

The Shoreham and District Ornithological Society (SDOS), based in Shoreham by Sea, West Sussex, was founded in 1952 and is the oldest birdwatching society in Sussex. As well as covering Shoreham itself, the SDOS recording area extends to Brighton, Worthing, Steyning and Storrington, and our membership also includes a number of people who live outside the recording area.

We hold monthly indoor meetings from October to April at St Peter's Church Hall in Shoreham usually on the first Tuesday of the month. Non-members are welcome to attend on payment of a small fee.

We also arrange a programme of field outings throughout the year to birdwatching sites around the south-east. Members receive three newsletters a year as well as this annual report. A members-only e-mail discussion group has also been set up to keep all those members who wish to enrol, informed of latest wildlife sightings in the area and other matters of that may be of interest.

New members are very welcome. If you would like to join, please complete and return the joining form below. Some previous issues of this report are also still available from the Hon Secretary for purchase by members or nonmembers.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

I/we apply to join the Shoreham and District Ornithological Society and enclose my/our annual subscription of £10 Single, \pm 15 for a couple or family, and £4 for a Junior.

Cheques should be made payable to SDOS

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms

Names.... Address..... Postcode.... Tel No Please send to SDOS Membership Secretary, 7 Berberis Court, SHOREHAM-BY-SEA, West Sussex, BN43 6JA.





