

Shoreham District  
Ornithological  
Society

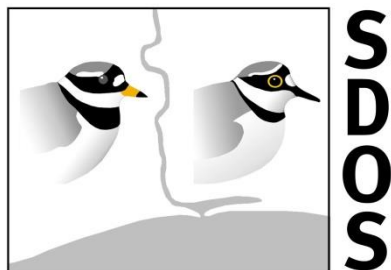


Annual Report 2012

No. 60



**The Adur Osprey by Wendy Ball**



# ANNUAL REPORT 2012

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*Front cover image: Kestrel by Dorian Mason*

*Inside back cover: SDOS Area Map by Terry Hicks & Brian Clay*

*Back cover: Fieldfare by Wendy Ball*

## EDITORIAL

I am pleased to report that our Society has enjoyed another successful year. Membership numbers have remained stable and a full programme of indoor meetings and field outings has again been very well supported. Clive Hope's Birding Highlights summary on page 3 encapsulates the year's best birding. When I update the Systematic List index each year I become very aware of the losses and gains. Out go species such as Barred Warbler, Dotterel and Willow Tit but in come Desert Wheatear, Bittern and Hawfinch. The unexpected nature of our hobby is just one aspect that makes it so rewarding.

While browsing in a bookshop in Lewes, I came across a book entitled *The Bird Man of Blatchington* which contains a summary of the diaries of the Reverend Robert Nathaniel Dennis. This Blatchington is the one now subsumed into Seaford rather than the one enveloped by Hove and so technically is out of our 'area'. However there are references to birds within our area including Shoreham and Brighton. The diaries were written between 1846 and 1869 and one of the challenges is to work out exactly what species a Purre or a Saddleback or a Mountain Sparrow is – I won't give the game away! But the real shock of the book is the extent of the extermination. Of course I knew that birds were shot but the scale of the slaughter is quite an eye-opener. A sample and fairly typical entry is "*Great Tit. Shot a couple on the dead apple tree in my garden, 14 October. Several others were flying about searching the trees for insects. Their movements are very quick and lively and the birds themselves beautiful*". Not quite Garden BirdWatch as we know it!

At the last AGM (February 2013) we welcomed Stephen Simpson on to Council as Recorder. The Recorder has the responsibility for leading the team that converts a vast amount of data into the summaries that form the Systematic List; the heart of this Report. Stephen has taken over from Clive Hope who has so ably undertaken this complex task since 2004. I'd like to offer my personal thanks to Clive for all his support and assistance during my term as Editor. Stephen has produced this year's Systematic List and you will no doubt notice how smoothly Stephen has picked up the reins! My sincere thanks also go to the writers of the individual species accounts and also to the authors of the other articles that make up the rest of this Report.

John Reaney has once again supplied the drawings; twelve entirely new ones specially commissioned for this Report. They are delightful and we are very grateful to John. We are also indebted to all the photographers who have submitted their photographs for inclusion. We are lucky to be sent more than we can accommodate in the Report and it is a very difficult process selecting the ones to include. We try to favour birds photographed within the SDOS area. We are especially looking for pictures of birds that haven't featured in the Report previously, including shots of any rarities that turn up in our area in the relevant year. There is no doubt that these photographs enhance the Report tremendously.

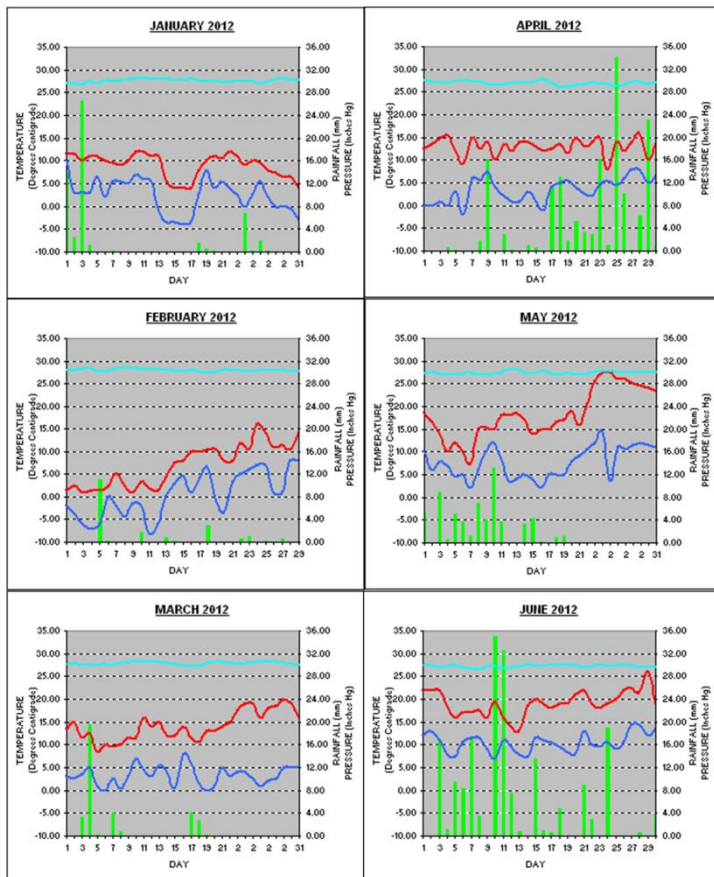
Once again special thanks go to Brianne Reeve and Val Bentley for their proof reading expertise but of course the final responsibility is mine! Having now edited five Reports, I shall be passing on the baton to a new Editor, once we have found one, and I wish my successor well.

Brian Clay

# WEATHER SUMMARY - JANUARY to JUNE 2012

Rainfall is shown in green  
 Maximum temperatures are shown in red  
 Minimum temperatures are shown in blue  
 Maximum and minimum pressures are shown in turquoise

Total rainfall for 2012 was 1221.60 mm (48.09 inches) which was 165.28% of the 30 year average figure for the months covered.



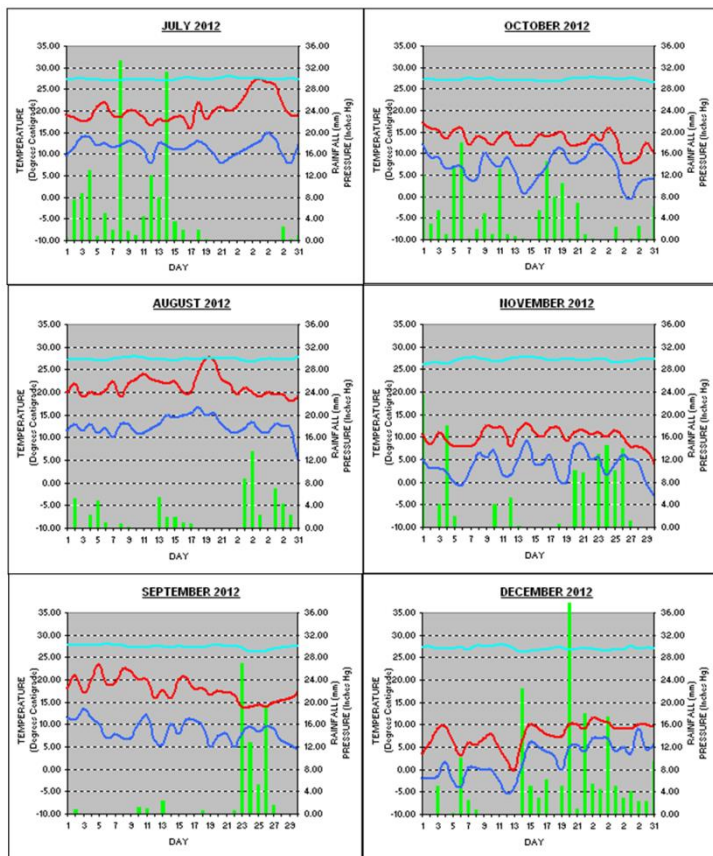
# WEATHER SUMMARY (continued) - JULY to DECEMBER 2012

Rainfall is shown in green

Maximum temperatures are shown in red

Minimum temperatures are shown in blue

Maximum and minimum pressures are shown in turquoise



## BIRDING HIGHLIGHTS 2012

### January

Two Snow Buntings from 2011 remained at Widewater until Feb 21<sup>st</sup>. On 1<sup>st</sup> six White-fronted Geese flew west at Widewater where a Merlin was also seen. At Worthing beach 18 Velvet Scoter moved west on 9<sup>th</sup> and four Long-tailed Ducks likewise on 12<sup>th</sup>. Seven Short-eared Owls were at Beeding Brooks on 29<sup>th</sup>.

### February

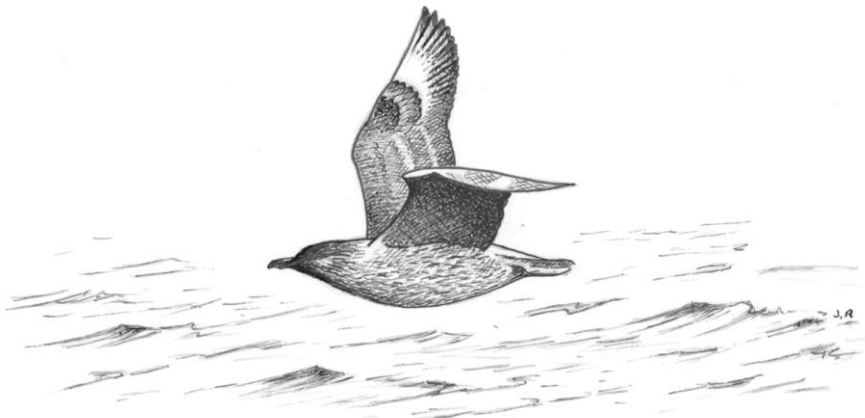
There were five Woodcock at Cissbury on 4<sup>th</sup> and thirty Golden Plover on 5<sup>th</sup> at Steyning Levels. Three Goosanders appeared on the Adur at Steyning Levels on 9<sup>th</sup> then four by the Airport on 11<sup>th</sup>. Four Tundra Bean Geese were between Beeding Brooks and Henfield Levels from 11<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>. An Iceland Gull was reported at Shoreham on 19<sup>th</sup>. Up to three Red-necked Grebes on the sea off Goring from 21<sup>st</sup> into March attracted interest. Merlins were seen in the Lower Adur on 4<sup>th</sup> and over Ferring beach on 21<sup>st</sup>. Five Avocets flew west on 27<sup>th</sup>. A popular Yellow-browed Warbler was found in central Worthing on 26<sup>th</sup> and remained until Mar 14<sup>th</sup>.

### March

Ten Slavonian Grebes were on the sea off Goring/Ferring on 1<sup>st</sup> and seven Garganey passed Ferring and Worthing on 10<sup>th</sup> with the same number flying inland at Hove on 14<sup>th</sup>. 460 Brent Geese flying past Worthing on 16<sup>th</sup> was the spring maximum.

### April

An arrival of 21 Wheatears on 3<sup>rd</sup> landed at both Goring Gap and Worthing beach. A good sea-watch in strong SSW winds on 25<sup>th</sup> yielded 42 Arctic Skuas, three 'Poms', an area record 107 Great Skuas as well as 48 Little Gulls, 16 Black and 1079 'Commic' Terns. A Wood Warbler was at Wild Park on 30<sup>th</sup> and two Barnacle Geese passed Worthing beach that day.



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## May

42 Little Terns on 1<sup>st</sup> at Worthing was the spring peak. Two or three Ospreys were seen at Tarring and Shoreham between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. A big arrival of spring migrants occurred on 4<sup>th</sup> when a Hoopoe was seen near Storrington and on the coast Redstarts, Wheatears, Whinchats, several species of warbler and good numbers of Swallows came in from the sea. Two Quail were on the Downs near Cissbury through to July. A Tawny Pipit showed at close range on the beach at West Worthing to a fortunate few on 20<sup>th</sup>. Nine Red Kites were over Brighton 22<sup>nd</sup>.

## June

Little Egrets bred again near Coombes raising 16 young. A Balearic Shearwater flew west off Worthing on 1<sup>st</sup>. Great Crested Grebes again bred at Patching Pond – two young were there on 9<sup>th</sup>. A year high of 70 Manx Shearwaters moved west at Worthing on 24<sup>th</sup>. Two White Storks flew over Findon on 25<sup>th</sup>, part of a group touring southern England. The only summering Turtle Doves were at Edburton. Fifteen young Barn Owls fledged.



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## July

Another 28 Manx Shearwaters passed west on 2<sup>nd</sup>.

## August

A Marsh Harrier was near Chantry Hill on 7<sup>th</sup> but an Osprey from 10<sup>th</sup> to Oct 10<sup>th</sup> in the Lower Adur valley attracted much attention and became the longest staying bird on record in our area. Nearby, the year's maximum of 18 Common Sandpipers were on the Adur near the Cement works. Willow Warblers peaked at Cissbury on 23<sup>rd</sup> with 65 counted. On 28<sup>th</sup> A juvenile Long-tailed Skua flew east at Worthing on 28<sup>th</sup>. An elusive Wryneck was seen at Cissbury on 29<sup>th</sup>.

## September

Autumn peaks were of 35 Redstarts at Cissbury on 4<sup>th</sup> and seven at Wild Park next day when there were nine Whinchats at Sheepcote, then 20 Spotted Flycatchers at Cissbury on



6<sup>th</sup>. A massive 203 Mediterranean Gulls were counted on the foreshore between Goring and Ferring on 20<sup>th</sup>. Three Balearic Shearwaters flew east at Worthing on 23<sup>rd</sup> when the peak of Swallow passage consisting of 2000 also moved east.

### October

On 6<sup>th</sup> a Merlin was seen at Findon and a Ruff was on the Adur; a scarce bird in our area. A Marsh Harrier was over Goring Gap on 7<sup>th</sup>. A colour-ringed Shag from the Farne Islands

was found at the Marina on 9<sup>th</sup>. The last Hobby was at Wild Park on 10<sup>th</sup>. At Brooklands a Yellow-browed Warbler was present from 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>. A very approachable Sabine's Gull was on Hove seafront on 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. A splendid Desert Wheatear was found at Splash Point Worthing on 24<sup>th</sup> and stayed for a couple of days. The last Northern Wheatear was present at Worthing beach on 26<sup>th</sup>.



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### November

A Merlin was at Steep Down on 1<sup>st</sup>. The last two House Martins were over Wild Park on 5<sup>th</sup> and the last Swallow at Goring beach on 15<sup>th</sup> when inland on this date at Pyecombe, a Pallas's Warbler was caught in a mist net and ringed.

### December

The year's only Little Auk flew west at Worthing on 9<sup>th</sup>. Seventeen Bewick's Swans at Beeding Brooks in mid month were the year's highest count. A good movement of 256 Wigeon flew west at Worthing on 8<sup>th</sup>. About ten Waxwings were noted between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> at six localities before 24 on 21<sup>st</sup>.

Clive Hope



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## SYSTEMATIC LIST 2012

This systematic list of birds in the Shoreham district recording area is based upon records submitted by members of the SDOS together with additional records (and these are the great majority) obtained from the database of the Sussex Ornithological Society (SOS) (by courtesy of John Newnham) and covers species in Categories A and C of the British Ornithologists' Union (BOU) checklist. Escapes are listed separately. The current status of each species **in the SDOS area** is highlighted after the name. The order in which the list has been compiled follows that of the 2011 Report. Records have been extracted from the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) BirdTrack, some Breeding Bird Surveys (BBS) (not all could be included due to late arrival of records) and Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) data as well as those individual observers who submitted information. No BTO Garden Birdwatch data is included.

A total of circa 16,500 records from around 150 sources were received that were relevant to SDOS. In a few cases, where records are rather unusual in date or occurrence and the observer(s) are unnamed or unknown to us, they have been omitted from the published report. Note that bracketed initials represent acceptance by the Sussex Ornithological Society (SOS) Records Committee as far as is known.

References to Worthing in sea-watch data include all sites between Lancing and Ferring unless separately identified. Lower Adur refers to the river and associated banks and saltings south of the A27 to the footbridge from Shoreham town to Shoreham Beach. Wild Park includes the whole of the Local Nature Reserve namely Hollingbury Camp, Woods, Golf Course and Moulsecoomb Wild Park. The Marina refers to Brighton Marina. Other locations are referenced in the SDOS recording area index and map on the inside back cover of this report. The three main ringing sites in the area are identified as Ladywells (Coombes), The Mumbles at Steyning and Cissbury (North Scarp).

The following is a list of contributors who were members of the SDOS in 2012:

VP Bentley, N Biddulph, N Bond, RC Bradbury, M Brown, D Buckingham, BR Clay, PJ Clay, C Corrigan, J Crix, B Easlea, JA Feest, BF Forbes, CJ Fox, MP Hall, T & J Holter, CE Hope, RA Ives, R Knight, C Leeves, JM Maskell, DR Mason, JA Newnham, BR Reeve, SP Simpson, DI Smith, A Thomas, AB Watson, PJ Whitcomb, CH Wright.

I am indebted to the following writers who have assisted with summaries for the systematic list: VP Bentley (finches and sparrows), BR Clay (warblers), CE Hope (game birds to Spoonbill, chats and buntings), JA Newnham (thrushes), DI Smith (Kittiwake, terns & skuas), MA Snelling (Cuckoo to woodpeckers, crests and tits), CH Wright (raptors & Raven).

Stephen Simpson

## ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE SYSTEMATIC LIST

**ad** adult, **BBRC** British Birds Rarities Committee, **BBS** Breeding Bird Survey, **BTO** British Trust for Ornithology, **E** East, **f** female, **GC** Golf Course, **imm** immature, **juv** juvenile, **LNR** local nature reserve, **m** male, **mo** many observers, **N** North, **ob** on beach, **os** offshore, **pr** pair, **RG** Ringing Group, **S** South, **SOS** Sussex Ornithological Society, **s/p** summer plumage, **SWBS** Sussex Winter Bird Survey, **W** West, **WeBS** Wetland Bird Survey, **w/p** winter plumage, **yr** year.

### **MUTE SWAN** *Cygnus olor*

#### **Fairly common resident**

Some monthly peak counts from selected sites were as follows:

	<b>J</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>
Henfield Levels	49	45	-	-	20	-	7	-	-	22	52	45
Steyning Levels	-	6	1	-	4	15	42	-	-	14	9	19
Beeding Brooks	10	-	-	13	11	9	27	39	3	14	-	32
Lower Adur	3	3	-	7	2	12	-	7	10	5	8	2
Brooklands	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	2
Widewater	7	9	6	6	7	7	7	7	8	7	7	10

Two adults with four cygnets were at Wiston on May 9<sup>th</sup> and two adults were seen with three cygnets at Henfield Levels on Jul 11<sup>th</sup>. At Widewater a pair raised five cygnets which were recorded from May 17<sup>th</sup>. A pair was seen with a nest and two eggs at Brooklands on May 17<sup>th</sup>.

On Jan 2<sup>nd</sup>, 69 were counted along the Adur Valley from Ashurst to Bramber. One was at Shoreham Harbour on Jan 9<sup>th</sup>, six were at Old Salts Farm on Feb 19<sup>th</sup> and two there on May 5<sup>th</sup> and Jun 16<sup>th</sup>, two were inside Brighton Marina on Mar 23<sup>rd</sup> and two were at Woods Mill on Apr 3<sup>rd</sup>. One was at The Marina on Nov 17<sup>th</sup>. At Worthing beach birds were reported on five dates between January and April, maximum two, and a single bird from there on Sep 21<sup>st</sup> and two on Nov 28<sup>th</sup>.

### **BEWICK'S SWAN** *Cygnus columbianus*

#### **Scarce but regular visitor in varying numbers**

In the first winter period, five were seen at Steyning, Steyning Levels and Beeding Brooks on Jan 2<sup>nd</sup> and two at Henfield Levels on Jan 6<sup>th</sup>. At the end of the year there were seven at Henfield Levels on Dec 16<sup>th</sup> and 13 at Steyning Levels on 17<sup>th</sup>, including three first year birds. Ten birds were at Beeding Brooks on Dec 10<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> but between these dates 17 birds, including six juveniles, were at this site and Upper Beeding from 24<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup>.

**WHOOPEE SWAN** *Cygnus cygnus***Very scarce winter visitor**

The long staying feral bird was seen on the Upper Adur Levels and at Henfield Levels in January and February then again on May 7<sup>th</sup>.

**TUNDRA BEAN GOOSE** *Anser fabalis fabalis***Very scarce winter visitor**

Four birds were seen by a number of observers at Upper Beeding, Beeding Brooks and Henfield Levels between Feb 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> (SOS).

**WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE** *Anser albifrons***Scarce winter visitor**

Six flew W at Widewater and Lancing beach on Jan 1<sup>st</sup>.

**GREYLAG GOOSE** *Anser anser***Uncommon but increasing introduced resident**

Some monthly peak counts from selected sites were as follows:

	Feb	Apr	May	Oct	Dec
Henfield Levels	100	20	10	10	11
Steyning Levels	70	-	-	45	-
Beeding Brooks	56	2	1	-	126
Upper Beeding	2	-	2	-	30

One was at Queens Park (Brighton) on Jan 15<sup>th</sup> and Feb 12<sup>th</sup>, three E at Brighton Marina on Feb 25<sup>th</sup>. One was at Worthing beach on Apr 6<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. A pair was at Patching Pond on Mar 31<sup>st</sup> and May 7<sup>th</sup>. Two were at Wiston on Jun 2<sup>nd</sup>. One was at Poynings on May 2<sup>nd</sup> and two there on 10<sup>th</sup>. Two were at Queens Park (Brighton) on Sep 16<sup>th</sup>.

**CANADA GOOSE** *Branta canadensis***Introduced resident increasing in area**

At Henfield Levels there were 18 birds on Feb 15<sup>th</sup> and 30 on Apr 2<sup>nd</sup>. Breeding was confirmed at Storrington where two adults were seen with six juveniles on May 24<sup>th</sup>. 60 flew W at Worthing beach on Oct 31<sup>st</sup>. At Beeding Brooks there were ten on Sep 30<sup>th</sup>, 13 on Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>, 23 on Dec 26<sup>th</sup> and 40 on 28<sup>th</sup>. At Henfield Levels there were 100 on Dec 16<sup>th</sup> and 30 on Dec 30<sup>th</sup>. Maxima of four birds at a time were recorded from these and other sites throughout the year.

**BARNACLE GOOSE** *Branta leucopsis***Very scarce winter visitor and feral resident**

Two flew past Worthing beach on Apr 30<sup>th</sup>.

**DARK-BELLIED BRENT GOOSE** *Branta bernicla bernicla***Common passage migrant and occasional winter visitor**

Monthly totals from Worthing were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	S	O	N	D
E	210	214	1280	141	3		4	21	17	264
W	42	90	1	-	-		17	230	82	77

Peak counts were 114 on Jan 15<sup>th</sup>, 150 on Feb 28<sup>th</sup>, 460 on Mar 16<sup>th</sup>, 71 on Apr 8<sup>th</sup>, 130 on Oct 7<sup>th</sup>, 233 on Dec 24<sup>th</sup>. On Jan 15<sup>th</sup> 141 flew E at Goring Gap and one flew in off the sea onto the field there on 29<sup>th</sup> which was repeated by another bird on Oct 23<sup>rd</sup>. At Brighton Marina there were 71 E on Jan 14<sup>th</sup> and in Mar 5 E on 13<sup>th</sup>, 885 E on 16<sup>th</sup> and 178 E on 23<sup>rd</sup>. Five were at Widewater on Jan 8<sup>th</sup> and four on 26<sup>th</sup>. Twelve were on the Lower Adur on Oct 16<sup>th</sup>.

### **COMMON SHELDUCK** *Tadorna tadorna*

**Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor – may breed.**

Monthly totals from Worthing were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
E	-	4	13	2	4	3	6	-	-	-	-	-
W	34	35	5	6	10	-	-	-	-	-	10	10
On beach	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-

One was at Brighton Marina on Jan 5<sup>th</sup> and three W on Mar 22<sup>nd</sup>. At Goring Gap there were five W on Jan 8<sup>th</sup>, six E on May 5<sup>th</sup> and later three E on Oct 26<sup>th</sup>. Elsewhere, there were two at the Tollbridge on Feb 12<sup>th</sup>, two at Henfield Levels on May 7<sup>th</sup> and two at Beeding Brooks on Dec 28<sup>th</sup>.

### **EURASIAN WIGEON** *Anas penelope*

**Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor**

Monthly totals from Worthing were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	J	A	S	O	N	D
E	36	7	2	3		-	-	-	-	1
W	4	12	-	-		5	20	22	28	305
Offshore	-	5	-	-		-	-	-	1	-

130 flew W past Shoreham Harbour on Jan 8<sup>th</sup>. At Upper Beeding 14 on Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> had risen to 60 on Feb 11<sup>th</sup> before falling to eight on 24<sup>th</sup>. In Dec at Henfield Levels there were 54 on 16<sup>th</sup> and 30 on 30<sup>th</sup> and at Beeding Brooks 50 on 30<sup>th</sup>. Coastal records in December included at Widewater 70 W on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 40 moving W on 28<sup>th</sup>, 48 moving W at Shoreham Harbour on 28<sup>th</sup>. A peak count of 256 W passed Worthing beach on Dec 8<sup>th</sup>.

### **GADWALL** *Anas strepera*

**Uncommon in the area**

One was at Upper Beeding on Jan 9<sup>th</sup> and six were there on 23<sup>rd</sup>. Eight (four males and four females) were on the river at Steyning Levels on Feb 9<sup>th</sup> and two were at Henfield Levels on 13<sup>th</sup>. One bird was seen later in the year at Steyning on Dec 20<sup>th</sup>.

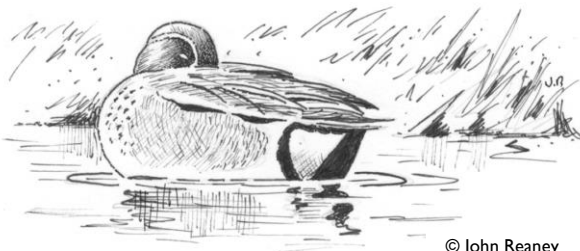
**EURASIAN TEAL** *Anas crecca***Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor**

Maximum counts from the main sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	/	Oct	Nov	Dec
Ferring Rife	4	19	-		-	-	2
Henfield Levels	24	14	-		-	-	10
Upper Beeding	10	18	1		-	-	-
Widewater	4	18	18		12	-	8
Lower Adur	92	109	-		24	48	84

At Ladywells there were five on Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>, nine on 16<sup>th</sup> and one on Mar 24<sup>th</sup>. At Steyning Levels there were 40 on Feb 6<sup>th</sup> and 14 on 9<sup>th</sup>. One was at Brooklands on 9<sup>th</sup>. From Brighton Marina, 3 E on Mar 13<sup>th</sup> and 12 on 23<sup>rd</sup>. Two were at Ladywells on Nov 23<sup>rd</sup> and 12 were at Steyning on Dec 11<sup>th</sup>.

Monthly totals from Worthing were as follows (including 175 W on Dec 8<sup>th</sup>):



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	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	/	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
East	-	2	5	14	18		-	-	8	1	29
West	27	-	-	4	-		13	22	-	7	200

**MALLARD** *Anas platyrhynchos***Common resident and winter visitor**

Maximum counts from the main sites were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Steyning Levels	-	4	4	-	-	-	12	-	-	1	-	2
Beeding Brooks	-	-	-	3	11	4	3	9	-	-	-	8
Poynings	18	21	8	17	1	14	9	23	14	40	6	30
Lower Adur	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	11	5	2
Brooklands	14	25	13	17	10	29	56	49	55	69	35	39
Widewater	20	11	2	1	4	-	-	-	-	2	7	5
Ladywells	4	2	4	6	1	2	2	-	8	6	4	-

Breeding was confirmed at Brooklands and Woods Mill where ducklings were seen.

Other records came from Kingston Gorse, East Kingston (Ferring), Patching Pond, Ferring, Sandgate Park, Worthing beach, Washington, Broadwater (Worthing), Steyning, Old Salts Farm, Upper Beeding, Henfield Levels, Tollbridge, Shoreham Adur, Woods Mill, Clayton and Queens Park (Brighton).

Domestic types were recorded from seven sites, with the most records from Widewater and then Brooklands.

#### **PINTAIL** *Anas acuta*

##### **Regular passage migrant and occasional winter visitor**

Monthly totals from Worthing were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sep	Dec
East	-	-	8	2	-
West	3	1	-	-	8

Four were at Henfield Levels on Jan 6<sup>th</sup> and a pair was there on 9<sup>th</sup>, six on Feb 13<sup>th</sup> and seven on Mar 9<sup>th</sup>. Three W at Goring Gap on Jan 8<sup>th</sup>. One was at Widewater on Feb 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. In December two were at Henfield Levels on 16<sup>th</sup> and eight on 30<sup>th</sup>. Two flew W past Widewater on 28<sup>th</sup>. There were 60 at Beeding Brooks on 30<sup>th</sup>.

#### **GARGANEY** *Anas querquedula*

##### **Scarce passage migrant**

Seven were seen off Ferring and flying E at Worthing beach on Mar 10<sup>th</sup>. Seven were seen flying inland at Hove on Mar 14<sup>th</sup>.

#### **SHOVELER** *Anas clypeata*

##### **Regular spring passage migrant and winter visitor in small numbers**

Four were at Henfield Levels on Jan 6<sup>th</sup> and three were at Ferring Rife on Feb 8<sup>th</sup>. At Upper Beeding in January there were five on 9<sup>th</sup> and six on 23<sup>rd</sup>, and in February two on 11<sup>th</sup> and three on 24<sup>th</sup>. At Worthing beach there were 16 E on Feb 13<sup>th</sup> and 5 E on 23<sup>rd</sup>. Two flew E at Brighton Marina on Mar 23<sup>rd</sup>. A pair was at Henfield Levels on May 7<sup>th</sup> and at this site in December two were seen on 16<sup>th</sup> and 20 on 30<sup>th</sup>. Also in December at Beeding Brooks there were four on 26<sup>th</sup>, 12 on 28<sup>th</sup> and 50 in groups of 20 and 30. Seawatches at Worthing beach in December produced six W on 8<sup>th</sup> and four W on 29<sup>th</sup>.

#### **COMMON POCHARD** *Aythya ferina*

##### **Regular winter visitor in very small numbers**

A pair were at Widewater on Feb 5<sup>th</sup> with five there on 12<sup>th</sup>. Otherwise almost all of the records were from Brooklands with maxima per month of three in January and nine in February and, later in the year at this site, two in November and five in December. On Aug 11<sup>th</sup> a female flew E at Worthing beach.

**TUFTED DUCK** *Aythya fuligula***Uncommon resident and declining winter visitor**

First recorded at Brooklands on Feb 6<sup>th</sup> when three were seen, rising to 11 on 9<sup>th</sup> followed by nine on 21<sup>st</sup> and a male was there on Mar 30<sup>th</sup>. Twelve were at Widewater on Feb 12<sup>th</sup> when a male was also seen on Southwick Canal. One bird was at Patching Pond on 17<sup>th</sup> and a pair there on Mar 22<sup>nd</sup>. At Worthing beach one was offshore on Mar 6<sup>th</sup> and there were two E on May 1<sup>st</sup>. One was at Steyning on May 24<sup>th</sup>. At Wiston there were 15 on May 9<sup>th</sup> and 13 on Jun 2<sup>nd</sup>. Two were on Ferring Rife on Jul 11<sup>th</sup> which is an unusual site for this species. In autumn Brooklands held two on Sep 13<sup>th</sup>, one on Oct 12<sup>th</sup> and two on Nov 5<sup>th</sup>. Final record of the year was two birds at Patching Pond on Dec 27<sup>th</sup>.

**COMMON EIDER** *Somateria mollissima***Decreasing passage migrant and winter visitor**

At Worthing beach there was a total of 11 E and seven W on four dates between Mar 3<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> with a maximum of seven on 8<sup>th</sup>. Also, two E, five W and one offshore there on three dates between May 8<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, with a maximum of five W on 17<sup>th</sup>. In December there was one offshore at Widewater on 10<sup>th</sup> and two W at Worthing beach on 26<sup>th</sup>.

**LONG-TAILED DUCK** *Clangula hyemalis***Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor**

Four flew W at Worthing beach on Jan 12<sup>th</sup>.

**COMMON SCOTER** *Melanitta nigra***Common passage migrant and uncommon winter visitor**

Monthly totals from Worthing were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
East	17	6	12	387	648	146	257	24	29	50	39	97
West	10	-	8	-	1	49	8	-	25	27	60	16

Peak days were Apr 11<sup>th</sup> with 66, May 1<sup>st</sup> with 282, Jun 3<sup>rd</sup> with 80, Jun 7<sup>th</sup> with 136 and Jul 4<sup>th</sup> with 136, when a flock of 90 were seen. Thirty-two were offshore on Jun 29<sup>th</sup>. Counts from Brighton Marina included 50 on Jan 5<sup>th</sup>, 19 E on Mar 16<sup>th</sup> and 30 E on May 7<sup>th</sup>. At other sites, 28 from Widewater on Jan 8<sup>th</sup>, 23 off Goring Gap on the same day, with seven there on Feb 12<sup>th</sup>, individual birds from Shoreham Harbour on Jan 14<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> and 15 from Brighton Pier on Apr 25<sup>th</sup>. Later in the year, individual birds were seen at Brighton Marina on Sep 16<sup>th</sup> and Nov 17<sup>th</sup>, 17 E at Goring Gap on Oct 26<sup>th</sup> and from Widewater, 30 on Nov 10<sup>th</sup>, 80 offshore in two flocks on Nov 26<sup>th</sup>, 20 offshore on Dec 10<sup>th</sup> and 100 on Dec 17<sup>th</sup>.

**VELVET SCOTER** *Melanitta fusca***Scarce passage migrant**

All records were from Worthing beach. 18 flew W on Jan 9<sup>th</sup>. In spring there were two E on Apr 25<sup>th</sup> and two E on 29<sup>th</sup>. In May, four E on 1<sup>st</sup>, one W on 2<sup>nd</sup> and three E on 8<sup>th</sup>.



**COMMON GOLDENEYE** *Bucephala clangula***Uncommon winter visitor**

One W at Worthing beach on Jan 1<sup>st</sup> and two offshore there on Feb 4<sup>th</sup>.

**RED-BREASTED MERGANSER** *Mergus serrator***Common winter visitor**

Monthly maximum day totals of birds offshore from Worthing were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	/	Oct	Nov	Dec
60	119	60	2		2	1	20

In the first winter period birds were also recorded offshore at Goring Gap and Ferring but not exceeding these totals. A maximum of 10 was recorded at Widewater on Jan 3<sup>rd</sup>. In April at Worthing beach a total of 9 E and 7 W birds on passage were recorded. One was seen at Brighton Pier on Apr 25<sup>th</sup>.

The first autumn record from Worthing beach was one W on Sep 28<sup>th</sup>, in October there was a total of two E and three W, in November a total of five E and 21 W with a maximum on 18 W on 6<sup>th</sup> and a total of 12 E and five W in December. Nine were at Goring Gap on Oct 26<sup>th</sup>. There were winter records from Widewater beginning with three on Nov 23<sup>rd</sup>, rising to a maximum of 12 on Dec 23<sup>rd</sup> ending with nine on 28<sup>th</sup>. Four were at Goring Gap on Dec 16<sup>th</sup>, seven were at Shoreham Harbour on 20<sup>th</sup> and a pair was on Southwick Canal on Dec 30<sup>th</sup>.

**GOOSANDER** *Mergus merganser***Scarce winter visitor**

One was at Small Dole on Jan 14<sup>th</sup>. In February, three (two males, one female) were on the river at Steyning Levels on 9<sup>th</sup>, four were at Shoreham Airport on 11<sup>th</sup> and one was offshore at Goring beach on 12<sup>th</sup>.

**RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE** *Alectoris rufa***Introduced resident. Status uncertain but numbers augmented by captive bred stock.**

Records came from 17 sites, all on the Downs, but with just one to four birds at 12 of these. Lower Standean remains the stronghold with 18 in Jan, seven in March, 11 in August and 130 in September. Elsewhere, seven were at Ditchling Beacon on Jan 25<sup>th</sup>, six at Cissbury on May 28<sup>th</sup>, 17 at Clayton Windmills on Sep 9<sup>th</sup> and 12 at Highdown near Worthing on Oct 27<sup>th</sup>.

**GREY PARTRIDGE** *Perdix perdix***Decreasing resident.**

Eight were at Lower Standean on Jan 12<sup>th</sup> and 12 at Patcham on Feb 21<sup>st</sup>. Breeding at Findon Park Brow was probable and three pairs were calling there on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Eight were noted at nearby Cissbury on 28<sup>th</sup>. A covey of five was in stubble near Broadwater on Aug 27<sup>th</sup>. Four at Cissbury Ring on Oct 14<sup>th</sup>. Other sites with birds present were Round Hill, Steyning Round Hill, Ditchling Beacon and Steep Down.

**QUAIL** *Coturnix coturnix***Rare summer visitor.**

A return to normal numbers with birds only noted from Cissbury and Park Brow, Findon. Records from the former were from May 12<sup>th</sup> with two calling and then one or two heard there until Aug 4<sup>th</sup> with three on Jul 27<sup>th</sup>.

A single bird heard at the latter site on May 23<sup>rd</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>.

**COMMON PHEASANT** *Phasianus colchicus***Common introduced resident. Numbers augmented by captive bred stock.**

Recorded in 31 tetrads out of the 94 in the SDOS area but breeding only proved at Newtimber Hill. Highest counts were 15 at Broadwater in Feb, ten at Lower Standean in Mar, 11 at Worthing Golf Course in Jun and 25 at Ladywells in Oct and 20 there in Nov.

**RED-THROATED DIVER** *Gavia stellata***Regular passage migrant and winter visitor**

Monthly totals from Worthing sea-watches were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	/	O	N	D
East	26	27	17	4	9	1		1	11	22
West	72	76	20	-	-	-		3	14	104

Maxima were 25 on Jan 7<sup>th</sup>, 30 on Feb 11<sup>th</sup>, 19 on Mar 6<sup>th</sup> and 33 on Dec 8<sup>th</sup>.

Twelve were seen off Shoreham Harbour on Jan 8<sup>th</sup>. Seven were noted flying E off The Marina on two dates in March. One or two were on the sea off Widewater and Shoreham Harbour in December.

**BLACK-THROATED DIVER** *Gavia arctica***Fairly scarce passage migrant, rare in winter**

Monthly reported totals from Worthing were:

	J	F	M	A	M	/	O	N	D
East	-	-	-	2	5		1	1	3
West	7	1	-	2	-		-	2	-

One flew E off Brighton Marina on Mar 13<sup>th</sup>.

**DIVER Species**

Totals logged from Worthing in addition to the above were:

	J	F	M	A	/	N	D
East	1	2	3	23		-	8
West	2	3	-	2		3	7

**LITTLE GREBE** *Tachybaptus ruficollis***Winter visitor and occasional breeder**

Records were received from the following regular sites (maximum counts):

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Lower Adur*	1	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	2
Brooklands	3	2	5	-	5	8	-	5	18	9	10	6
Widewater	26	24	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	24
Poynings	1	3	1	2	1	-	1	-	1	2	1	1
Ferring Rife	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	4
Southwick Canal	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2

\* Includes Cuckoo Corner

Also, two at Henfield Levels on Jan 15<sup>th</sup>, ten at Old Salts Farm on Feb 19<sup>th</sup>, three at Wiston Pond on Jun 2<sup>nd</sup>, two at Beeding Brooks on Jul 16<sup>th</sup>, one at Clayton on Sep 9<sup>th</sup> and two on Steyning Levels on Dec 24<sup>th</sup>.

Two pairs bred at Brooklands raising four young. A very late juvenile was seen being fed there on Nov 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **GREAT CRESTED GREBE** *Podiceps cristatus*

**Common, mainly winter, visitor to the coast**

Maximum numbers recorded offshore were:

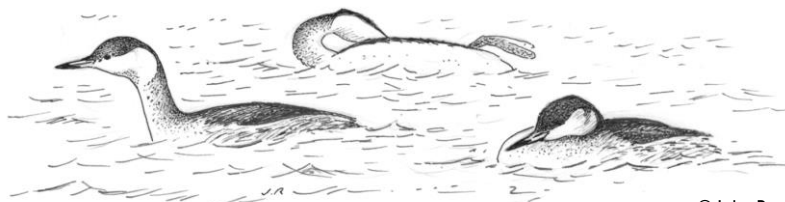
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Worthing	30	224	245	4	5	2	2	-	-	-	50	62
Widewater (on sea)	1	8	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Goring Gap	27	145	125	4	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
The Marina	4	-	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

There were additionally 34 off Brooklands on Feb 9<sup>th</sup> when the above February count at Worthing was made and two on the Adur also on this date. Seventeen were off Ferring on Mar 19<sup>th</sup>. Two were on Henfield Levels on Jun 17<sup>th</sup>, the first record for the regular observer at this site. A pair bred again at Patching Pond hatching four young but only one adult and two juveniles were seen on Jun 9<sup>th</sup>.

### **RED-NECKED GREBE** *Podiceps grisegena*

**Scarce winter visitor**

Over the period Feb 21<sup>st</sup> to Mar 20<sup>th</sup> there were one to three birds on the sea between West Worthing and Ferring, an unusual number for our area.



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**SLAVONIAN GREBE** *Podiceps auritus***Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor**

In the first winter/early spring period, above average numbers were noted from the sea between Worthing and Ferring. In February, two on 9<sup>th</sup> increasing to four on 25<sup>th</sup> and in March, a remarkable ten on 1<sup>st</sup> reducing to three on 6<sup>th</sup>, then one on 9<sup>th</sup> and two on 22<sup>nd</sup>. Two flew E on Apr 27<sup>th</sup> off Worthing beach.

One was present off Goring Gap on Oct 26<sup>th</sup> and it or another off Splash Point, Worthing next day.

**BLACK-NECKED GREBE** *Podiceps nigricollis***Scarce passage migrant**

Two records this year. One was off Goring Gap on Feb 29<sup>th</sup> and one was in Southwick Canal on Nov 17<sup>th</sup>.

**FULMAR** *Fulmaris glacialis***Common passage migrant nesting just outside the area**

Monthly totals of birds logged at Worthing were:

	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	/	D
East	2	7	76	9	4	1	11		-
West	2	-	23	3	7	6	14		6

Peak day was Apr 29<sup>th</sup> when 55 flew E and four W. Also, 34 flew E at Brighton Pier on Apr 25<sup>th</sup>. One was seen flying over the Downs at Beeding Hill on Jun 5<sup>th</sup>!

**MANX SHEARWATER** *Puffinus puffinus***Uncommon passage migrant and summer visitor**

A good year for the species as the following table for birds logged off Worthing shows:

	Apr	/	J	J	A	S	O
East	6		96	25	2	-	-
West	2		88	34	3	4	1

Peak days were Jun 24<sup>th</sup> with 70W and 7E and Jul 2<sup>nd</sup> with 28W and 4E.

**BALEARIC SHEARWATER** *Puffinus mauretanicus***Rare summer visitor**

One flew W off Worthing beach on Jun 1<sup>st</sup> (DIS) and five flew E there on Sep 23<sup>rd</sup> (RAI, DIS, JAN & DRM).

**GANNET** *Morus bassanus***Present offshore all year**

Monthly totals of birds logged at Worthing were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
East	30	50	106	874	719	417	177	338	280	107	38	132
West	236	752	104	165	189	290	210	196	786	365	356	602
Offshore	-	-	2	60	160	15	8	-	-	-	-	-

Maxima were 58 on Jan 13<sup>th</sup>, 377 on Feb 18<sup>th</sup>, 81 on Mar 4<sup>th</sup>, 422 on Apr 25<sup>th</sup>, 252 on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 180 on Jun 3<sup>rd</sup>, 71 on Jul 16<sup>th</sup>, 65 on Aug 11<sup>th</sup>, 305 on Sep 11<sup>th</sup>, 123 on Oct 31<sup>st</sup>, 113 on Nov 19<sup>th</sup> and 427 on Dec 24<sup>th</sup>.

Small numbers also recorded off Shoreham Harbour, Widewater, Goring Gap and the Marina. Birds were frequently seen following trawlers.

### **CORMORANT** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

#### **Common at coastal and some inland roost sites**

The inland roost at Steyning Levels/Beeding Brooks held maxima of 50 in Jan, 29 in Feb, two in Mar, five in Apr, two in May, 29 in Jun, 60 in Jul, 55 in Aug, ten in Sep, 61 in Oct, 59 in Nov and 25 in Dec. Numbers on the coast this year were generally small with the highest day counts being 20 on Jan 17<sup>th</sup> at East Worthing, 45 (32E 13W) off the Marina on Mar 23<sup>rd</sup>, 25 off Brooklands on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 97 (29E 68W) passing Worthing beach on Jul 14<sup>th</sup>, 25 at Goring Gap on Sep 2<sup>nd</sup>, 34 off Kingston Gorse on 21<sup>st</sup>, 38 at Goring Gap on 24<sup>th</sup>, 47 on the Brooklands exposed outflow pipe on Oct 7<sup>th</sup>, 39E at Worthing on 11<sup>th</sup>, 63W at Worthing on 18<sup>th</sup> and 67 on the sea or roosting on the outfall at Brooklands on Dec 6<sup>th</sup>. Unusual records were seven in Ferring Rife on Aug 31<sup>st</sup> and in flooded woodland at Strivens reed bed, Steyning on Dec 20<sup>th</sup>. There were many records of one to six birds at some 20 sites across the area.

### **SHAG** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

#### **Regular winter visitor and scarce passage migrant**

Single birds at Worthing beach and the Marina between Jan 25<sup>th</sup> and Mar 5<sup>th</sup>. Two flew W off Worthing on Apr 26<sup>th</sup> and one E on 29<sup>th</sup>. In August, one E there on 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> and one at the Marina on 17<sup>th</sup>. Another W at Worthing on 26<sup>th</sup>. One was in Shoreham Harbour on Sep 2<sup>nd</sup>.

One at the Marina on Oct 9<sup>th</sup> had been colour-ringed as a chick on The Farne Islands, Northumberland on Aug 8<sup>th</sup>. Most local Shags stay to winter in the north-east but some are reported in the southern North Sea. Very few of these (ringed) northern birds wander as far as the English Channel.

### **BITTERN** *Botaurus stellaris*

#### **Rare winter visitor**

One was present in a small reed-bed at Edburton from Mar 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>.

### **LITTLE EGRET** *Egretta garzetta*

#### **Increasingly common resident and passage migrant**

Maxima per site were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Ferring Rife/ Kingston	-	1	1	-	4	-	-	-	-	13	-	-
Goring beach	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	13	6	2	-
Worthing	-	-	-	2	1	4	4	4	17	9	-	-
Widewater	6	4	4	1	3	3	3	8	6	7	4	2
Henfield Levels	2	2	3	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Steyning Levels	-	3	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Ladywells	4	4	2	2	1	1	-	-	2	-	-	-
Lower Adur*	1	1	1	4	12	12	16+	15	12	1	4	1
Shoreham Adur	3	1	-	1	2	2	-	2	-	2	2	1
Beeding Brooks	2	2	2	2	-	-	11	1	-	1	-	-

\*includes Cuckoo Corner and see account below of breeding in the area.

Also two at Lancing Old Salts Farm in February, one at Woods Mill on single dates in May, June, August and October, one over Sompting Downs on Oct 10<sup>th</sup>, two over Broadwater on 12<sup>th</sup> and another one there on Nov 28<sup>th</sup>.

Breeding again occurred near Coombes in the Lower Adur Valley. The first bird was noted by the original 2011 nest on Mar 7<sup>th</sup> and by Apr 5<sup>th</sup> two nests were occupied. This increased to six by May 12<sup>th</sup> and by a further two away from the others on 31<sup>st</sup>. As a result 16 juvenile birds fledged and were observed until July 26<sup>th</sup> in close proximity to the site. They then dispersed using trees at Cuckoo Corner and by Nov 16<sup>th</sup> only one bird remained in the colony. None were seen at the former breeding site of Wyckham Wood near Henfield.

## **GREY HERON** *Ardea cinerea*

### **Fairly common resident**

Records of more than two birds at a site were three at Ferring on Jan 11<sup>th</sup>, three on Steyning Levels on Feb 15<sup>th</sup>, three at Beeding Brooks on Jun 10<sup>th</sup>, eight there on Jul 15<sup>th</sup> and three on the Adur between the rail and Toll bridges on Aug 18<sup>th</sup>.

Unusual locations of single birds were the woods behind Patcham Place (Brighton), Waterhall (Brighton), Newtimber near Poynings, flying over Highdown near Worthing, Broadwater, Clayton Windmills, Wild Park, Sompting Downs, Park Brow (Findon) and Steyning. Breeding comprised three nests at Wyckham Wood, Henfield and four at Coombes. At the latter six young were in nests in May but just three fledged juveniles were seen in July.

## **WHITE STORK** *Ciconia ciconia*

### **Rare vagrant**

Two flew over Worthing at 0930 on Jun 25<sup>th</sup> (SOS). These were part of a group of five previously seen at Lidsey near Bognor and had been touring southern England!

This is the first area record since 1990.

**SPOONBILL** *Platalea leucorodia***Very scarce visitor**

Three flew E off Ferring and Worthing on Mar 22<sup>nd</sup> at 1036/1040 (DIS, JAN). Six were photographed at Tollbridge on Oct 9<sup>th</sup> with five there on Oct 24<sup>th</sup> and six nearby on Nov 4<sup>th</sup>.

**RED KITE** *Milvus milvus***Increasing but scarce visitor**

Monthly totals were as follows:-

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
No. of birds	1	0	23	3	24	1	-	0	7	1	-	-
No. of sites	1	0	7	3	9	1	-	0	3	1	-	-

Mostly single birds but two at Wild Park on Mar 23<sup>rd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, seven over Brighton Borough on 26<sup>th</sup> then two on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. Two again at Brighton Borough on May 20<sup>th</sup> then a year high of nine on 22<sup>nd</sup>. Also on this date two at Kithurst Hill and Foredown/New Barn, then two at Upper Beeding on May 27<sup>th</sup>. Final multiple sighting was of five at Chantry Hill on Sep 7<sup>th</sup>.

**MARSH HARRIER** *Circus aeruginosus***Scarce passage migrant**

A poor year with just two sightings – at Chantry Hill on Aug 7<sup>th</sup> and at Goring Gap on Oct 7<sup>th</sup>.

**HEN HARRIER** *Circus cyaneus***Passage migrant and winter visitor**

Just three records – at Ditchling Beacon on Jan 25<sup>th</sup>, No Man's Land on Feb 11<sup>th</sup> and Waterhall on Apr 27<sup>th</sup>.

**SPARROWHAWK** *Accipiter nisus***Fairly common resident**

Monthly totals were as follows:-

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
No. of birds	20	19	13	24	13	9	18	33	23	25	13	13
No. of sites	13	15	10	12	10	8	10	13	9	14	10	8

Confirmed breeding occurred at Woods Mill, Foredown/New Barn, Ladywells, Worthing Broadwater and Church Hill. Three were ringed at The Mumbles and two at Ladywells.

**COMMON BUZZARD** *Buteo buteo***Increasing breeding resident and passage migrant**

Monthly totals were as follows:-

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
No. of birds	42	41	80	51	59	22	21	44	54	71	13	13
No. of sites	16	13	22	21	21	10	7	16	17	20	6	10

High counts of seven on Jan 2<sup>nd</sup> between Ashurst and Bramber, ten on Jan 10<sup>th</sup> at Michelgrove, seven on Mar 10<sup>th</sup> at Stanmer Park, at Waterhall on 22<sup>nd</sup> and at Washington on May 9<sup>th</sup>. Juveniles were reported from Sandgate Park, Woods Mill and Anchor Bottom.

### **OSPREY** *Pandion haliaetus*

#### **Scarce passage migrant**

One was at West Tarring (Worthing) on May 3<sup>rd</sup> and the only other spring record was from the Tollbridge area on 8<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>.

However, a bird seen circling over Ladywells at noon on Aug 10<sup>th</sup> (JAN) turned out to be the longest stayer ever in our area. Although not reported at the time a lady from the cottages by Applesham Farm had photographed the bird on the same day as it consumed a large fish on a telegraph pole in her garden!

It was soon being reported daily and would be identified by a notch in its wing. It was seen several times at Woods Mill and was a regular visitor to Passies Ponds (near Coombes). The last report from Shoreham was on Oct 10<sup>th</sup>, a total of 62 days, although it remained outside our area in the vicinity of Warnham LNR until Oct 27<sup>th</sup>.

### **COMMON KESTREL** *Falco tinnunculus*

#### **Fairly common resident**

Monthly totals were as follows:-

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
No. of birds	19	31	16	14	25	35	30	34	23	32	25	27
No. of sites	15	12	14	11	17	15	13	18	12	13	11	17

At Woods Mill the pair in the nest-box fledged six young. Breeding was also confirmed at Applesham (nr Coombes) and at Clayton Halfway where two of the four young were sadly found dead. Single young birds were ringed at both The Mumbles and Ladywells.

### **MERLIN** *Falco columbarius*

#### **Scarce but regular mainly in autumn and winter**

A very small individual, probably a male, was reported from Lancing beach and Widewater on Jan 1<sup>st</sup>. The only other early year record was from the Lower Adur on Feb 4<sup>th</sup>.

In September one was at Edburton on the 15<sup>th</sup> and a female was seen at Ferring on the 21<sup>st</sup> that took a small bird from the beach and flew out to sea with it. One at Canada Bottom (Findon) on Oct 6<sup>th</sup>, another at Steep Down on Nov 1<sup>st</sup> and the last at Clayton Halfway on Dec 8<sup>th</sup>.

### **HOBBY** *Falco subbuteo*

#### **Regular passage migrant and summer visitor – has bred**

The only April record was from Mill Hill on the 20<sup>th</sup>.

Sightings by month were as follows:-



A	M	J	J	A	S	O
1	8	3	2	7	5	2

The only juveniles reported were from Tegdown Hill (Brighton) and Broadwater (Worthing). The last record was from Wild Park on Oct 10<sup>th</sup>.

#### **PEREGRINE** *Falco peregrinus*

##### **Scarce breeding resident**

Monthly totals were as follows:-

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
No. of birds	13	21	24	16	23	10	11	10	10	8	5	8
No. of sites	8	8	4	9	10	2	4	5	8	5	5	3

Breeding records were incomplete but fledged young were seen at Sussex Heights in Brighton (three), Power Station and Beeding Cement Works (three).

#### **WATER RAIL** *Rallus aquaticus*

##### **Regular winter visitor**

In January and February, one at Ladywells, one at Cuckoo Corner and two at Ferring Rife. One at Newtimber Place on Feb 16<sup>th</sup> and one at Ferring on Mar 10<sup>th</sup>.

In the autumn a young bird was trapped at The Mumbles on Sep 27<sup>th</sup>. Then two were at Ladywells in November with one by Ferring Rife in the observer's garden on 30<sup>th</sup>. One was calling at Brooklands on Dec 12<sup>th</sup> and up to three were present at The Mumbles during the same month.

#### **MOORHEN** *Gallinula chloropus*

##### **Common resident and winter visitor**

The maximum counts from six regularly monitored sites were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Brooklands	39	45	42	15	9	12	10	12	28	45	53	68
Poynings	6	13	12	6	2	1	5	14	3	14	7	8
Ladywells	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	-
Beeding Brooks	3	-	-	3	2	2	1	1	14	13		19
Steyning Levels	-	3	2	1	1	1	1	-	-	8	8	18
Lower Adur	2	6	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	2	3	3

Fifteen other sites reported from one to six birds. Eight were noted at both Patching Pond and Queen's Park (Brighton) and ten at Washington.

Breeding was confirmed in five tetrads.

**COOT** *Fulica atra***Common resident and winter visitor**

Peak monthly counts from Brooklands and Poynings were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Brooklands	77	74	37	35	34	42	51	52	88	54	70	60
Poynings	12	5	5	3	3	4	11	10	10	7	8	8

Noted at ten other sites during the year including eight in January at Queen's Park, (Brighton), up to five at Patching Pond and four at Wiston Pond in May and June. One in Shoreham Harbour on Dec 20<sup>th</sup> was unusual. Breeding occurred at Brooklands where four nests were recorded. At Newtimber Place one pair was seen with four young and another with three. In a woodland pond in Longlands Wood (Small Dole) five young were seen with a pair of adults on Jul 1<sup>st</sup>.

**OYSTERCATCHER** *Haematopus ostralegus***Common winter visitor and passage migrant, scarce breeder**

Maximum numbers at Worthing, Goring and Shoreham through the year were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Worthing beach	4	15W	2E + 5W	21W	7E + 9W	4E + 5W	2W	1E + 8W	-	19 + 1E	-	4
Goring Gap/beach	9	3 + 6E	6	-	-	-	-	-	15	3	5	1
Shoreham	2	2	-	-	2	-	5	3	-	-	2	2

The Shoreham records include a pair which was seen on a nest and subsequently with three and then one young. Elsewhere three were at Brighton Marina on Jul 3<sup>rd</sup> and 11 were at Ferring on Oct 11<sup>th</sup>.

**AVOCET** *Recurvirostra avosetta***Uncommon passage migrant**

At Worthing beach there were five W on Feb 27<sup>th</sup>, two E along the shoreline on May 26<sup>th</sup> and four W on Dec 8<sup>th</sup>. Elsewhere one bird was seen at the Tollbridge on Apr 14<sup>th</sup>.

**LITTLE RINGED PLOVER** *Charadrius dubius***Scarce passage migrant**

One was seen calling at Worthing beach on Apr 8<sup>th</sup> before flying away NE (DIS).

**RINGED PLOVER** *Charadrius hiaticula***Common winter visitor and passage migrant, occasional breeder**

Monthly peaks from the main sites were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Goring Gap / beach	15	2	-	-	-	-	-	54	69	32	37	7
Worthing beach	30	20	5	-	-	-	-	45	30	50	18	50
Brooklands beach	30	17	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	73	95	35
Widewater	30	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Shoreham (Tollbridge to Harbour)	18	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	24	21	6
Brighton Marina	-	27	10	-	2	-	-	15	-	-	-	-

Additional records in the first winter period were 30 at Kingston Gorse on Jan 15<sup>th</sup> and eight at Black Rock (Brighton) on Mar 12<sup>th</sup>. Later in year at Ferring 28 were seen on Aug 15<sup>th</sup> and 40 on Oct 7<sup>th</sup>. There were 20 at Kingston Gorse on the same day.

### **GOLDEN PLOVER** *Pluvialis apricaria*

#### **Fairly common winter visitor**

One flew W at Worthing beach on Jan 20<sup>th</sup>, 30 were at Steyning Levels on Feb 5<sup>th</sup>, one was at New Erringham Farm on Feb 11<sup>th</sup> and five were at Upper Beeding on Feb 12<sup>th</sup>. In May one E at Worthing beach. In Oct nine flew N over Steep Down on 4<sup>th</sup>, one near Keymer on the same day, one was on Worthing beach on Oct 12<sup>th</sup> and up to three there on 31<sup>st</sup>. One was at Steep Down on Nov 6<sup>th</sup>.

### **GREY PLOVER** *Pluvialis squatarola*

#### **Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant**

Monthly maxima at regular sites were:

	J	F	M	A	M	/	S	O	N	D
Goring Gap	24	3	2	-	-		-	14	-	3
Worthing beach	6	100	-	-	4		5	34	40	40
Shoreham	2	6	-	-	-		-	-	4	7

Other records were from Kingston Gorse, one on Jan 15<sup>th</sup>, and from Ferring, 30 on Feb 15<sup>th</sup> and six on Oct 7<sup>th</sup>.

### **LAPWING** *Vanellus vanellus*

#### **Common winter visitor and declining breeder**

Peak counts at the following sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Shoreham (including Airfield)	1140	91	-	1	-	1	-	-	27	108	234	210
Henfield Levels	45	-	8	5	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	70

In January, 200 flew N at Ladywells on 7<sup>th</sup> and at Findon Park there were 72 on 17<sup>th</sup>, 52 on 31<sup>st</sup>, and 22 on Feb 8<sup>th</sup>. Also in February, 18 at Cissbury on 9<sup>th</sup>, 30 at Steyning Levels on 9<sup>th</sup>, 90 at Broadwater (Worthing) on 11<sup>th</sup>, 30 at Upper Beeding on 11<sup>th</sup>, 26 at Beeding Brooks on 12<sup>th</sup> and 30 at Steyning Levels on 30<sup>th</sup>. Single birds were at Wyckham Farm on Mar 9<sup>th</sup> and Woods Mill on Apr 9<sup>th</sup> and two at Findon Park on May 30<sup>th</sup> where in autumn eight flew W on Oct 10<sup>th</sup>. One flew over Ladywells on Oct 24<sup>th</sup> and one flew W at Round Hill on Nov 18<sup>th</sup>. Twenty were at Upper Beeding on Dec 4<sup>th</sup> and two were at Findon Park on 12<sup>th</sup>. The peak December count at Beeding Brooks was 101 on 27<sup>th</sup>.

### **RED KNOT** *Calidris canutus*

#### **Regular passage migrant and uncommon winter visitor**

One was at Shoreham Adur on Jan 7<sup>th</sup> and one was seen at Widewater on Feb 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>. One was at Kingston Gorse on Feb 24<sup>th</sup>. A total of 17 E were seen on passage from Worthing beach on four dates between May 2<sup>nd</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, maximum of nine on 3<sup>rd</sup>. A single bird flew E at Goring Gap on Oct 26<sup>th</sup>.

### **SANDERLING** *Calidris alba*

#### **Common winter visitor and passage migrant**

Maximum counts at the following sites were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Kingston Gorse	25	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-
Goring Gap / beach	60	48	57	-	-	-	2	21	12	20	-	27
Worthing beach	250	45	100W	60	28E	3W	-	7E	-	65	25	10
Brooklands beach	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	136	39	14
Widewater	40	51	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	65

Single birds were seen at the Adur on Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> and Feb 4<sup>th</sup>, one at Old Salts Farm on Feb 19<sup>th</sup>, one at Ferring on Mar 19<sup>th</sup>, nine at East Worthing on Mar 23<sup>rd</sup>. At Worthing beach 13 were on the beach on May 27<sup>th</sup> and the monthly total for birds seen migrating was 73 E. Five were at Ferring on Aug 15<sup>th</sup>, and at West Worthing, 50 on Sep 10<sup>th</sup> and 23 on Nov 14<sup>th</sup>. Two were at Shoreham Harbour on Dec 20<sup>th</sup>.

### **PURPLE SANDPIPER** *Calidris maritima*

#### **Local winter visitor in small numbers**

Peak monthly numbers at Brighton Marina and Shoreham Harbour were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Oct	Nov	Dec
Shoreham	7	5	-	1	3	12
Marina	4	21	6	-	8	-

### **DUNLIN** *Calidris alpina*

#### **Common winter visitor and passage migrant**

Peak monthly totals at the main sites were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Ferring/Kingston Gorse	60	200	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Goring	50	7	2	-	-	-	4E	6	40	-	62	15
Worthing	150	100	6E	-	60E	-	1	8E	2	12	250	300
Brooklands beach	500	400	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	135	30
Widewater	20	11	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	50
Shoreham (Tollbridge to Harbour)	8	131	-	20	-	-	-	-	2	20	19	5

Single birds were at Ferring Rife on Feb 11<sup>th</sup>, Beeding Brooks on Jul 17<sup>th</sup>, Brighton Marina on Feb 25<sup>th</sup> and Aug 15<sup>th</sup> and two there on 20<sup>th</sup>.

**RUFF** *Philomachus pugnax*

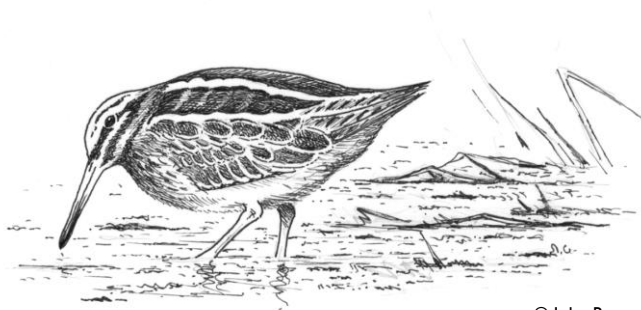
**Scarce passage migrant**

One was at Shoreham Adur on Oct 6<sup>th</sup>.

**JACK SNIFE** *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

**Scarce winter visitor**

One was seen at Ferring Rife on Jan 17<sup>th</sup> and Feb 11<sup>th</sup>. Also, single birds by the Adur at Coombes on Feb 10<sup>th</sup> and at Lower Adur later in the year on Nov 15<sup>th</sup>.



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**COMMON SNIFE** *Gallinago gallinago*

**Common but declining winter visitor**

Maxima from the following sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	/	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Beeding Brooks	-	14	-	-		-	-	-	1
Henfield Levels	8	4	-	1		-	-	10	-
Lower Adur	32	4	-	-		-	6	75	85

Two were at Ferring Rife on Jan 18<sup>th</sup>. In February single birds were at Ditchling Beacon on 1<sup>st</sup>, Ferring Rife on 5<sup>th</sup>, Broadwater (Worthing) on 11<sup>th</sup> and Ladywells on 12<sup>th</sup>. Two were at Upper Beeding on 11<sup>th</sup>. At Beeding Brooks on 19<sup>th</sup> a perched bird was seen being attacked by a Kestrel. Later in the year 19 birds were at Steyning Levels on Dec 13<sup>th</sup>.

#### **WOODCOCK** *Scolopax rusticola*

##### **Winter visitor and uncommon passage migrant, may breed**

In January single birds were at Stanmer Park on 5<sup>th</sup> and Cissbury on 11<sup>th</sup>. In February one was at Broadwater (Worthing) on 3<sup>rd</sup>, five at Cissbury on 4<sup>th</sup> and one there on 9<sup>th</sup>, one at Ferring on 5<sup>th</sup>, one at Edburton on 11<sup>th</sup> and one at Stanmer Park on 28<sup>th</sup>. Towards the end of the year one was at Wild Park on Oct 30<sup>th</sup>. Single birds were at Cissbury on Nov 17<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> and two were there on Dec 1<sup>st</sup>. One bird was at Stanmer Park on Dec 8<sup>th</sup>.

#### **BLACK-TAILED GODWIT** *Limosa limosa*

##### **Uncommon passage migrant and occasional winter visitor**

Two birds flew E at Ferring on Jun 20<sup>th</sup> and a single bird was at Shoreham Adur on Oct 5<sup>th</sup>.

#### **BAR-TAILED GODWIT** *Limosa lapponica*

##### **Common passage migrant and occasional winter visitor**

Monthly totals at Worthing were:

	Feb	Apr	May
East	-	304	678
West	3	1	1
On beach	13	-	1

Peak days were 141 on Apr 23<sup>rd</sup>, 114 on 25<sup>th</sup>, 204 on May 2<sup>nd</sup> and 434 on 3<sup>rd</sup>. Thirty were at Ferring on May 7<sup>th</sup>, one was at Goring Gap on Sep 2<sup>nd</sup> and one was at Shoreham Adur on Oct 7<sup>th</sup>.

#### **WHIMBREL** *Numenius phaeopus*

##### **Common spring passage migrant**

Passage at Worthing is shown thus:

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
East	5	51	80	-	1	-
West	-	4	11	1	6	1
On beach	-	1	1	-	-	-

Peak April and May days were 24 on 27<sup>th</sup> and 33 on 3<sup>rd</sup> respectively. One was heard over Hove on Mar 11<sup>th</sup>. At Cuckoo Corner there were three on Apr 18<sup>th</sup> and five on 29<sup>th</sup>. Eight were at Brighton Pier on Apr 25<sup>th</sup> and three at Lower Adur on 27<sup>th</sup>. In Aug one was at Lower Adur on 15<sup>th</sup>, two at Cuckoo Corner on 21<sup>st</sup> and one at Lancing on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**CURLEW** *Numenius arquata***Common late summer passage migrant; uncommon otherwise**

Single birds were at Ferring on Jan 13<sup>th</sup>, Henfield Levels on Feb 13<sup>th</sup>, Goring Gap on Mar 31<sup>st</sup> and the Adur at Shoreham on Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> and Feb 20<sup>th</sup> with two being recorded on Feb 9<sup>th</sup>. Monthly totals at Worthing beach were three E in Jan, six E in Mar, three E and two W in Apr, three E in May, 71 W in Jun and 25 W in Jul. Later in the year one was heard calling at Cissbury on Sep 1<sup>st</sup> and one was seen on the beach at Goring on Oct 5<sup>th</sup>. At the Adur there were two on Sep 17<sup>th</sup> and single birds on Oct 16<sup>th</sup>, Nov 15<sup>th</sup> and Dec 15<sup>th</sup>.

**COMMON REDSHANK** *Tringa totanus***Common winter visitor and occasional breeder**

Peak counts from main sites were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Goring Gap	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	7
Widewater	3	3	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	2	1
Adur at Shoreham	61	21	-	2	-	1	-	-	47	73	76	75

One was at Ferring on Jan 9<sup>th</sup>, two were at Old Salts Farm on Feb 19<sup>th</sup> and three W at Worthing beach on Feb 17<sup>th</sup>. Six were at Henfield Levels on May 7<sup>th</sup>. Single birds were seen at Worthing beach on three dates in November and two W on Dec 8<sup>th</sup>.

**GREENSHANK** *Tringa nebularia***Uncommon but regular passage migrant**

One E at Worthing beach on May 17<sup>th</sup> and Aug 23<sup>rd</sup>. Also single birds at Lancing on Aug 22<sup>nd</sup> and at the Adur on Aug 24<sup>th</sup>.

**GREEN SANDPIPER** *Tringa ochropus***Regular winter visitor in small numbers**

One was on Oreham Common on Jan 2<sup>nd</sup>, and at Woods Mill single birds were seen on Apr 2<sup>nd</sup>, Aug 10<sup>th</sup>, Sep 9<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> and three on Oct 1<sup>st</sup>. Two flew E over Broadwater (Worthing) on Jul 22<sup>nd</sup>, one was at Wild Park on Jul 27<sup>th</sup> and one was at Beeding Brooks on Aug 24<sup>th</sup>.

**COMMON SANDPIPER** *Actitis hypoleucos***Common passage migrant and local winter visitor**

As usual, the Adur between Upper Beeding and the Tollbridge hosted birds as follows (maximum counts):

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
2	2	2	2	15	-	16	18	10	4	3	3

Most other records were from Beeding Brooks; one on Apr 19<sup>th</sup>, a maximum of three in August and two on Sep 30<sup>th</sup>. Also, one at Brighton Marina on Aug 20<sup>th</sup> and one at Lancing on Aug 22<sup>nd</sup> and Sep 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**TURNSTONE** *Arenaria interpres***Common passage migrant and winter visitor**

Maximum counts at regular sites were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Kingston Gorse / Ferring	3	30	6	-	-	-	-	75	5	12	-	-
Goring Gap / beach	50	31	17	5	-	-	14	16	48	38	4	91
Worthing beach	10	30	-	10	2W	-	-	-	2	30	20	45
Worthing Brooklands	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	21	3	7
Widewater	15	23	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	50
Adur	67	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	58	33	4	28
Shoreham Harbour	11	6	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Brighton Marina / Black Rock	35	5	49	-	-	-	-	17	25	5	40	-

Also, 24 at Lancing beach on Jan 11<sup>th</sup>, 35 on the beach at Southwick Canal on Mar 23<sup>rd</sup> and three at Hove on Oct 8<sup>th</sup>.

**POMARINE SKUA** *Stercorarius pomarinus***Regular spring passage migrant**

It was an average to poor spring for this species and all birds were recorded in April, all moving in an easterly direction. The following represents all records: -

First of the year were three past Worthing beach on Apr 25<sup>th</sup> with five past Shoreham on Apr 29<sup>th</sup>. A further five flew past Worthing beach on Apr 30<sup>th</sup>.

Just one was noted in autumn when a juvenile passed W at Worthing beach on Oct 1<sup>st</sup> (DIS).

**ARCTIC SKUA** *Stercorarius parasiticus***Regular spring and autumn passage migrant**

There were no early winter records. First of the year was one E at Worthing beach on Apr 14<sup>th</sup> followed by singles E there on Apr 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. Monthly totals from Worthing beach are summarised in the table below:

	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
East	85	3	1	-	1	2	-	-	-
West	2	1	1	-	9	1	2	1	-

Peak movements were 42 E on Apr 25<sup>th</sup> and 21 E on Apr 23<sup>rd</sup>. Additional records involved seven passing Brighton Pier on Apr 25<sup>th</sup>, two passing Hove on Apr 30<sup>th</sup>, and one E at Ferring beach on Jun 20<sup>th</sup>. Last of the year was one W at Worthing beach on Nov 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**LONG-TAILED SKUA** *Stercorarius longicaudus***Rare passage migrant**

One, a probable juvenile, flew E then SE at Worthing beach between 10:27 and 10:32 hours on Aug 28<sup>th</sup> (DIS), in a force 6 southerly wind.





Above  
Desert  
Wheatear  
at  
Worthing  
by  
Tricia Hall



Left  
Albinistic  
Grey Plover  
By  
Tricia Hall



Left

Goldfinch  
by  
Dorian Mason

Below

Nuthatch  
by  
Dorian Mason



**GREAT SKUA** *Stercorarius skua***Regular passage migrant usually in small numbers**

First of the year was a remarkable record of six on the beach at Worthing on Jan 15<sup>th</sup> and presumably the same birds present there on Jan 16<sup>th</sup>. Thereafter there were five further early-winter records during January and February, two involving two birds and three involving singles. The only record in March was a singleton W at Worthing beach on 16<sup>th</sup>. The first probable passage migrant flew W there on Apr 6<sup>th</sup> after which 11 passed E on Apr 18<sup>th</sup>. On April 25<sup>th</sup> there was a huge count at Worthing beach of 107 E in eight hours during a force five increasing to seven SSE wind, and easily breaking all previous local day records. Similar numbers on the day were noted at other Sussex seawatch sites. The summary of monthly totals at Worthing beach is as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
E	1	-	-	152	5	-	1	-	-	-	1	-
W	1	2	1	7	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
Offshore	6	-	-	6	19	4	1	-	-	-	-	-

As can be seen from the above table numbers returned to normal after April with most birds recorded loafing offshore. Away from Worthing 23 passed Brighton Palace Pier on the 'big day' of Apr 25<sup>th</sup>. Autumn proved uneventful, and the last of the year was one E past Worthing beach on Nov 8<sup>th</sup>.

**MEDITERRANEAN GULL** *Larus melanocephalus***Increasing regular visitor throughout the year**

Birds passing Worthing beach were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
East	1	3	19	32	5	16	2	-	6	4	2	2
West	1	3	1	14	4	22	73	2	56	13	4	14

Peak counts from Goring Gap and Goring and Worthing beaches were:

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
7	8	5	-	-	-	-	3	203	3	4	3

Following a count of 103 on Sep 18<sup>th</sup>, there was a huge count of 203 on Sep 20<sup>th</sup> on Goring and Ferring beaches, mostly adults, but including a few 2<sup>nd</sup> winter and seven juv / 1<sup>st</sup> winter birds. Records from elsewhere were as follows. In Mar one was at Canada Bottom (Findon) on 1<sup>st</sup>, one flew over Kithurst Hill car park on 1<sup>st</sup>, two flew E at Widewater on 15<sup>th</sup>, two adults were seen with Common Gulls at Lower Standean on 19<sup>th</sup>, 20 E at Brighton Marina on 23<sup>rd</sup> and two at Wild Park on 28<sup>th</sup>. Two were at Wiston on Jun 2<sup>nd</sup> and four adults were observed calling as they flew over Woods Mill on Jun 30<sup>th</sup>. Two were at Beeding Brooks on Jul 17<sup>th</sup>. One was at Brooklands on Oct 23<sup>rd</sup> and one was at Brighton Marina on Dec 28<sup>th</sup>.

**LITTLE GULL** *Hydrocoloeus minutus***Scarce visitor and passage migrant**

All records from Worthing beach as follows: four W on Feb 5<sup>th</sup>, two E on Apr 23<sup>rd</sup>, 48 E on Apr 25<sup>th</sup>, one E on May 1<sup>st</sup>, one W on Oct 30<sup>th</sup> and one W on Nov 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**BLACK-HEADED GULL** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus***Abundant passage migrant and winter visitor**

Peak counts from the following sites were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Goring Gap	268	95	100	-	-	-	180	35	200	112	100	300
Steep Down	-	-	200	-	-	-	-	5	-	100	-	300
Brooklands	97	220	35	-	1	-	11	48	78	35	151	94
Beeding Brooks	3	-	-	-	-	-	410	60	3	-	-	600
Henfield Levels	800	-	-	-	-	-	25	-	-	-	-	200
Widewater	350	86	31	-	-	1	4	91	17	31	32	167
Tollbridge	90	-	-	2	4	-	-	200	-	-	-	50
Waterhall	70	50	-	-	-	-	61	26	9	23	46	-
Brighton Marina	-	80	58	-	-	-	-	30	-	-	-	-

Recorded in at least 48 tetrads, there were also 250 at Shoreham Adur in early January and 150 at Upper Beeding on Jan 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**COMMON GULL** *Larus canus***Common winter visitor and passage migrant**

Peak counts from well recorded sites:

	J	F	M	/	J	A	S	O	N	D
Goring Gap and beach	158	26	100		2	2	1	7	9	120
Brooklands	24	40	-		-	-	-	40	6	12
Waterhall	350	350	94		-	-	1	8	24	-

The highest count of the year was 1200 at the Adur on Jan 16<sup>th</sup>. Other high January counts were 400 at Cissbury on Jan 11<sup>th</sup>, 301 at Church Hill on Jan 13<sup>th</sup> and 172 at Findon Park on Jan 17<sup>th</sup>. In February there were 350 at Waterhall on 24<sup>th</sup> and the next highest total was 80 at Round Hill on 19<sup>th</sup>. March saw 650 at Lower Standean on 19<sup>th</sup>, 500 at Lychpole Hill on 1<sup>st</sup> and 200 at Steep Down on 12<sup>th</sup>. The only April total in three figures was 100 at Cissbury on 16<sup>th</sup>. Numbers started to build again in October with 50 at Shoreham Adur on 6<sup>th</sup> and 60 at Round Hill on 28<sup>th</sup>. 170 were at Newtimber Hill on Nov 9<sup>th</sup>. In December 100 were at Steep Down on 1<sup>st</sup>, 185 at Lychpole Hill on 18<sup>th</sup> and 250 at Beeding Brooks on 25<sup>th</sup>.

**LESSER-BLACK BACKED GULL** *Larus fuscus***Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor, small numbers breed**

Peak counts from the following sites were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Goring Gap	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	1	12
Brooklands	-	-	-	-	8	1	1	-	-	-	-	-

Recorded in low numbers in 24 tetrads, although breeding was not confirmed. Totals of eight or more were recorded only three times. There were 55 at Beeding Brooks on Dec 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **HERRING GULL** *Larus argentatus*

#### **Common breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor**

This species was found in at least 59 tetrads and was the species with by far the most records in the year.

Peak counts from the following sites were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Goring Gap	53	40	100	50	200	1	57	10	91	54	50	130
Brooklands	125	190	80	24	80	10	28	105	44	8	120	120
Widewater	200	6	4	12	18	5	64	24	10	18	20	18
Tollbridge	240	-	-	70	230	-	-	100	-	-	-	100
Shoreham Adur	500	25	-	37	17	4	-	-	-	12	-	100

Other high counts included 220 at Brighton Marina on Feb 17<sup>th</sup>, 200 at Henfield Levels on May 7<sup>th</sup>, 200 at Cissbury on May 13<sup>th</sup>, 195 at Beeding Brooks on Jul 17<sup>th</sup>, 390 at Round Hill on Sep 1<sup>st</sup>, 250 at Cissbury on Sep 1<sup>st</sup>, 250 at Church Hill on Sep 16<sup>th</sup> and 600 at Burnthouse Bostal (Keymer) on Oct 4<sup>th</sup>. The highest count was 1500 at Steep Down on Oct 4<sup>th</sup>. Breeding was confirmed at Patcham (Brighton) and at several sites across Worthing.

### **ICELAND GULL** *Larus glaucoideus*

#### **Rare winter visitor**

Single birds were reported from the Shoreham Adur area on Feb 19<sup>th</sup> and Apr 29<sup>th</sup> (SOS).

### **GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL** *Larus marinus*

#### **Common winter visitor and passage migrant, recent breeding resident**

Peak counts from the following sites were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Goring Gap	28	2	3	4	12	-	5	-	8	30	39	20
Brooklands	3	4	1	-	14	-	1	-	3	8	7	6
Tollbridge	120	-	-	7	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Shoreham Adur	20	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	23
Brighton Marina	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	5	-

50 flew E at Worthing beach in April and on the beach there were 40 on Jun 27<sup>th</sup> and 76 on Jul 4<sup>th</sup>. Breeding was confirmed in Brighton where a pair hatched three chicks between Jun 16<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> which appeared ready to fledge on Jul 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **SABINE'S GULL** *Xema sabini*

#### **Very scarce autumn migrant, mostly recorded after stormy weather**

A juvenile was at Brighton and Hove seafront on Oct 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> (SOS).

### **KITTIWAKE** *Rissa tridactyla*

#### **Common winter visitor and passage migrant**

First report of the year was four at the Marina on Jan 4<sup>th</sup>. Apart from a very few fairly large autumn movements it was an average year for sightings of this species. The monthly totals of birds passing Worthing beach are shown in the following table:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
East	30	35	3	55	3	9	2	5	-	-	28	11
West	36	226	72	-	8	2	7	8	-	974	746	224

Peak movements were 972 W on Oct 31<sup>st</sup>, 464 W on Nov 3<sup>rd</sup>, 151 W on Nov 4<sup>th</sup>, and 109 W on Dec 29<sup>th</sup>. Away from Worthing beach, records include 20 E at the Marina on Mar 13<sup>th</sup> with one in the Marina on Feb 25<sup>th</sup>, and four past Brighton Pier on Apr 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **SANDWICH TERN** *Sterna sandvicensis*

#### **Common passage migrant**

First of the year was one past Ferring beach on Mar 10<sup>th</sup>, after which noted mainly at Worthing beach in low numbers to the month's end. A rather quiet spring for the species with regular but mainly light passage throughout, numbers only reaching three figures on a single day. An interesting record was one at Old Salts Farm on May 5<sup>th</sup>. The monthly totals for Worthing beach are shown in the following table:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
E	-	-	37	309	415	198	67	102	73	6	-	-
W	-	-	4	77	58	166	126	134	140	5	-	-

Peak movements were 108 E on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 65 E on Apr 25<sup>th</sup>, and 76 W on Aug 27<sup>th</sup>. Away from this site additional spring records included 14 past the Marina on Mar 23<sup>rd</sup> and 23 past Brighton Pier on Apr 25<sup>th</sup>. Roosting birds in autumn were again noted from the Goring Gap fields with one on Aug 23<sup>rd</sup>, 10 on Sep 17<sup>th</sup> rising to 23 on Sep 20<sup>th</sup> and reducing to 11 on Sep 26<sup>th</sup>. Twenty passed the Marina on Aug 20<sup>th</sup>. Sixteen were on the Lower Adur on Aug 27<sup>th</sup> with ten there on Sep 14<sup>th</sup>. Shoreham Harbour recorded 25 on Sep 2<sup>nd</sup> and two on Sep 14<sup>th</sup>. Last of the year were three E at Worthing beach on Oct 13<sup>th</sup>. There were no early or late winter records.

## **COMMON TERN** *Sterna hirundo*

### **Common passage migrant**

First sighting of the year was of seven E at Worthing beach on the comparatively late date of Apr 14<sup>th</sup> after which low numbers of specifically identified Common Terns were noted on spring passage. The monthly totals of birds passing Worthing beach are as follows:

	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O
E	-	10	50	27	22	15	1	1
W	-	8	-	8	10	5	1	-

Peak movements were 28 E on May 21<sup>st</sup> and 14 E on May 5<sup>th</sup>. Four were on the Lower Adur on Aug 15<sup>th</sup>, 18 passed the Marina on Aug 20<sup>th</sup> and eight were in Shoreham Harbour on Sep 2<sup>nd</sup>. Last of the year was one E at Worthing beach on Oct 16<sup>th</sup>.

## **ARCTIC TERN** *Sterna paradisaea*

### **Scarce passage migrant**

Few specifically identified Arctic Terns were noted, the first of the year being four E at Worthing beach on Apr 25<sup>th</sup>. Thereafter only five further records for the year. Two flew E at Worthing beach on Apr 29<sup>th</sup> with three E there on Jun 28<sup>th</sup>. In the autumn months ten roosted inside Brighton Marina on Aug 20<sup>th</sup> with two in Shoreham harbour on Sep 2<sup>nd</sup>. The last of the year was one W at Worthing beach on Sep 20<sup>th</sup>, an early date compared to some very late records of recent years.

## **"COMMIC" TERN**

Records of terns not specifically identified as either Common Tern or Arctic Tern comprise this category. As usual the vast majority were thought to be Common Terns. The table of monthly counts from Worthing beach follows: -

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
E	-	-	-	1,993	913	7	-	20	-	-	-	-
W	-	-	-	7	-	3	-	60	11	5	-	-

Peak movements were 834 E on Apr 23<sup>rd</sup> then 1,079 E on Apr 25<sup>th</sup>, 631 E on May 1<sup>st</sup> and 135 E on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. As can be seen from the above table the autumn months produced low numbers at Worthing beach. Additionally 20 flew E at Brighton Marina on Aug 20<sup>th</sup>.

## **LITTLE TERN** *Sterna albifrons*

### **Fairly common passage migrant**

All records were from Worthing beach. First of the year were two E on Apr 11<sup>th</sup> with one E there on Apr 14<sup>th</sup> and eight E on Apr 25<sup>th</sup>. Three more were noted passing E in that month plus one W. Peak passage occurred on May 1<sup>st</sup> with 42 E, easily the highest day total of the spring. The only other day to produce double figures was May 3<sup>rd</sup> with 14. Thereafter only three further birds were recorded during May. There were only two further records for the year, one E on Jun 3<sup>rd</sup> and the last of the year was one W on Jun 27<sup>th</sup>. There were no autumn sightings. The paucity of numbers again reflects a declining British breeding population.

**BLACK TERN** *Chlidonias niger***Scarce but regular passage migrant**

The following represents all records received. First of the year were two E at Worthing beach on Apr 23<sup>rd</sup> with one E on Apr 24<sup>th</sup>, and 16 E there on the 'big day' of Apr 25<sup>th</sup> (see e.g. Great Skua). Three flew E at Worthing beach on Apr 29<sup>th</sup>. There were no sightings in May.

There were two autumn records. Singles flew W at Worthing beach on Aug 17<sup>th</sup> and Sep 23<sup>rd</sup>, the latter being the last of the year.

**COMMON GUILLEMOT** *Uria aalge***Regular winter visitor and passage migrant**

Very few noted this year. Just single birds on five dates off Worthing in January and four in February with two on 21<sup>st</sup>, one in March, one in June, two on Sep 25<sup>th</sup>, one in November and singles again on two dates in December. Twelve off Widewater on Jan 8<sup>th</sup> when also two in Shoreham Harbour and one off Hove. One in Southwick Canal on 30<sup>th</sup> and at the end of the year one at the Marina on Nov 11<sup>th</sup> and singles off Widewater on Dec 10<sup>th</sup> and Goring beach on 16<sup>th</sup>.

**RAZORBILL** *Alca torda***Regular winter visitor and passage migrant**

As has been the case in the last few years, this species was far more numerous than the previous one in our area. Worthing records were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	S	O	N	D
East	5	113	1	-	2	2		1	-	6	4
West	21	222	12	1	1	-		-	-	4	10

Offshore records there were 45 on Jan 11<sup>th</sup>, 20 on Feb 25<sup>th</sup> and one on Mar 10<sup>th</sup>.

Elsewhere, 20 were off Shoreham Harbour on Jan 8<sup>th</sup>, one on the Adur at Shoreham on Feb 9<sup>th</sup>, one in the Marina on 17<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> and on Mar 13<sup>th</sup>. Late in the year one was off Goring Gap on Nov 18<sup>th</sup> and one off Widewater on Dec 10<sup>th</sup>.

**LITTLE AUK** *Alle alle***Very scarce autumn passage migrant and winter visitor**

One flew W at Worthing beach at 1140 on Dec 9<sup>th</sup> (JAN).

**AUK species**

Reported from Worthing beach where monthly totals were:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	S	O	N	D
East	106	676	6	2	17	8		5	33	226	54
West	74	3082	159	4	9	-		13	7	240	193

Peak days were Jan 28<sup>th</sup> with 74, Feb 5<sup>th</sup> with 804, 65 on Mar 5<sup>th</sup>, 150 on Nov 9<sup>th</sup> and 72 on Dec 9<sup>th</sup>. At the Marina, 38 logged on Jan 14<sup>th</sup> (10E 28W).



## **FERAL PIGEON** *Columba livia*

### **Common resident**

Recorded in 40 tetrads. However, breeding was not confirmed anywhere. Highest counts throughout the year were in Brighton where there were 102 at Preston Park on Feb 13<sup>th</sup>, 85 at Whitehawk on Jun 27<sup>th</sup> and towards the end of the year in the centre of Brighton 160 on Sep 19<sup>th</sup>, 160 on Oct 4<sup>th</sup>, 210 on Nov 2<sup>nd</sup> and 280 on Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>. At Steep Down there were 80 on Feb 26<sup>th</sup> and 100 on Nov 6<sup>th</sup>.

## **STOCK DOVE** *Columba oenas*

### **Resident and passage migrant**

Recorded in 35 tetrads, which is more than 1/3 of the 94 tetrads in the SDOS area. Breeding was confirmed at Ladywells where an occupied nest was recorded in June and July. Sixty were recorded flying W with Woodpigeons at Steep Down on Nov 6<sup>th</sup>. The next highest count was of 14 birds at Newtimber Hill on Apr 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **WOODPIGEON** *Columba palumbus*

### **Abundant resident and late autumn passage migrant**

Recorded in 60 tetrads. Breeding was confirmed at West Tarring (Worthing) where an occupied nest was recorded in April and June and subsequently adults were seen with juveniles. Highest counts were 600 W at Worthing beach on Oct 27<sup>th</sup>, 500 at Steep Down on Nov 1<sup>st</sup>, 460 at Round Hill on Oct 28<sup>th</sup> and 350 at Park Brow on Dec 4<sup>th</sup>.

## **COLLARED DOVE** *Streptopelia decaocto*

### **Common resident**

Recorded in 38 tetrads, although breeding was only confirmed at one site. Highest counts were 18 at Brooklands on Dec 6<sup>th</sup>, 16 at Portslade on May 19<sup>th</sup>, 15 also at Portslade on Jan 7<sup>th</sup>, 15 at Old Salts Farm on Jun 16<sup>th</sup>.

## **TURTLE DOVE** *Streptopelia turtur*

### **Scarce summer visitor, declining**

The first record of the year was from West Tarring (Worthing) on Apr 17<sup>th</sup> followed by other single birds at Lancing on May 5<sup>th</sup> and Edburton on May 11<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> where there were three on 19<sup>th</sup>. Singing males were present at this site into July with the final record of two birds on Jul 27<sup>th</sup>. Between one and three birds were at Woods Mill on various dates between May 11<sup>th</sup> and Aug 14<sup>th</sup>. Elsewhere two were at Portslade on May 17<sup>th</sup> and single birds were at Shoreham on May 19<sup>th</sup>, Henfield Levels on May 24<sup>th</sup> and Oreham Common on Jun 4<sup>th</sup>.

## **CUCKOO** *Cuculus canorus*

### **Fairly common summer visitor**

There were 33 reports of Cuckoos in our area in 17 tetrads. The first sighting was on Apr 16<sup>th</sup> at Waterhall and there were just two other April records, at Woods Mill on Apr 21<sup>st</sup> and at Beeding Brooks on Apr 27<sup>th</sup>. Adult birds were regularly reported at Woods Mill between Apr 21<sup>st</sup> and Jun 10<sup>th</sup> with two birds flying together there on May 24<sup>th</sup> and two males calling there on May 27<sup>th</sup> and Jun 10<sup>th</sup>. Two birds were noted at Beeding Brooks on May 12<sup>th</sup> and at Highden Hill (Washington) on May 15<sup>th</sup>. The only other sighting of multiple

birds was on May 27<sup>th</sup> at Steyning Levels where two birds were seen flying together. All other sightings were of single birds. One juvenile was seen at Woods Mill on Jul 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **BARN OWL** *Tyto alba*

#### **Uncommon breeding resident**

Birds were reported from 16 sites during 2012. Breeding was confirmed in seven of these sites and fifteen young birds were seen at nests. In the first winter period birds were reported only from near Steyning. During the second winter period reports came from Steyning Levels, Beeding Brooks, Henfield Levels and the final sighting of the year was of one bird at Upper Beeding on Dec 29<sup>th</sup>.

### **LITTLE OWL** *Athene noctua*

#### **Fairly common resident**

There were 17 reports this year from 12 sites. The first record of the year was from the Lower Standean area on Jan 12<sup>th</sup> and one was at Stanmer Park (near Brighton) on Feb 21<sup>st</sup>. Breeding was confirmed at one site. One flew over Botolphs (near Bramber) on Nov 7<sup>th</sup> and the last bird seen during the year was at Findon Park on Dec 27<sup>th</sup>.

### **TAWNY OWL** *Strix aluco*

#### **Fairly common resident**

There were 36 reports of these widespread residents throughout the year. Confirmed or probable breeding was reported from two locations. Most reports were of single birds calling but there were records of three birds from near Poynings and two from Woodmancote, Washington, Lychpole Hill and Ladywells. A fledged young bird was reported at New Erringham Farm.

### **LONG-EARED OWL** *Asio otus*

#### **Scarce winter visitor and breeding resident**

There were reports from four locations during the year. On Apr 20<sup>th</sup> one bird was sitting upright and alert on the eastbound carriageway of the A27. There was much traffic at the time so the prognosis was not good. During May young birds were heard on three occasions at a traditional downland location and on the fourth visit two young birds and one adult were flying. One day later an adult and two young birds were seen flying at a nearby location. The last report for the year was on Nov 8<sup>th</sup> at a different site.

### **SHORT-EARED OWL** *Asio flammeus*

#### **Migrant and occasional winter visitor**

This was another good year for Short-eared Owls in our area. There were 40 reports from 11 tetrads. The first sighting was of one bird at Henfield Levels on Jan 2<sup>nd</sup>. In January birds were reported from Henfield Levels, Beeding Brooks and by the River Adur at Shoreham. The largest number seen was seven at Beeding Brooks on Jan 29<sup>th</sup>. During February there were 14 reports from seven locations with a highest count of four birds at Beeding Brooks on three occasions. From Mar 9<sup>th</sup> to May 22<sup>nd</sup> there were a further 15 reports from nine locations. Most of these reports were of single birds although two birds were seen at Upper Beeding on Apr 11<sup>th</sup>. In the second winter period single birds were seen on four occasions with the final sighting on Dec 17<sup>th</sup> at Steyning Levels.

**COMMON SWIFT** *Apus apus***Common summer visitor**

The first Swifts seen in our area were two at Brighton Waterhall on Apr 16<sup>th</sup> and there were eight other April sightings. During the summer they were reported from 48 tetrads and confirmed or probable breeding was noted in 11 of them. During May there were 45 sightings. The highest number seen was 40 at Brooklands on May 2<sup>nd</sup> and the same number occurred again at Goring Gap on May 4<sup>th</sup>. In June there were 39 sightings and the highest counts were 100 at Steyning on Jun 4<sup>th</sup> and also 100 at Steep Down on Jun 26<sup>th</sup>. The largest counts seen during July were 78 at Goring Hall (Worthing) on Jul 17<sup>th</sup> and 70 at Whitehawk on Jul 27<sup>th</sup>. There were a further 20 sightings in August with 27 birds being seen at Wild Park on Aug 9<sup>th</sup>. There were two September sightings of single birds. The last bird was seen at Durrington on Sep 9<sup>th</sup>.

**KINGFISHER** *Alcedo atthis***Uncommon resident and winter visitor**

During the first winter period there were 32 sightings from ten tetrads. Most of these records were of single birds, although two birds were seen at Widewater on Feb 12<sup>th</sup>. There were no breeding records but the two birds ringed at The Mumbles were young birds. During the summer months birds were seen only at Woods Mill where they were recorded on seven occasions. All reports were of single birds except on Apr 8<sup>th</sup> when two birds were seen. During August to December there were 14 reports and in six of these two birds were recorded. These six locations were Ferring Rife, Beeding Cement Works, Cuckoo Corner, The Mumbles, River Adur at Shoreham, Steyning Levels and Stretham Manor. The last bird was seen at Henfield Levels on Dec 18<sup>th</sup>.

**HOOPOE** *Upupa epops***Rare migrant**

Only one of these handsome birds was seen in our area this year, at Storrington on May 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>.

**WRYNECK** *Jynx torquilla***Scarce passage migrant**

There was only one sighting of this elusive bird this year. This sighting was at Cissbury Ring on Aug 29<sup>th</sup>.

**GREEN WOODPECKER** *Picus viridis***Common resident**

These attractive birds were regularly reported throughout the year. There were 183 reports from 43 tetrads but in only six of these were there records of confirmed or probable breeding, although they will probably have bred in many other areas. From the ringing reports 12 birds were handled at Ladywells of which five were young. At The Mumbles nine birds were caught of which six were in their first calendar year and at Cissbury the two birds ringed were both adult.

## **GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER** *Dendrocopos major*

### **Common resident**

There were very many sightings of these birds during the year from Jan 2<sup>nd</sup> to Dec 27<sup>th</sup>. The reports came from 40 tetrads and confirmed or probable breeding was reported in only four tetrads, although they will probably have bred in many other areas. Ringing reports from Ladywells confirmed that twelve birds were caught during the year of which five were young. At The Mumbles nine birds were handled of which six were young and at Cissbury one of the two birds trapped was in its first calendar year.

## **LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER** *Dendrocopos minor*

### **Scarce resident**

There was only one report during 2012. One bird was seen in Broadwater (Worthing) on Jan 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **WOODLARK** *Lullula arborea*

### **Scarce passage migrant**

One was at Ditchling Beacon on Jan 25<sup>th</sup> and then in September single birds were at Cissbury on 7<sup>th</sup> flying W and on the ground on 12<sup>th</sup>.

## **SKYLARK** *Alauda arvensis*

### **Common resident**

The first record of the year was of four birds at Beeding Brooks on Jan 2<sup>nd</sup> and birds were singing at Steep Down on Jan 11<sup>th</sup>. Singing birds were also included in the 27 present at Round Hill on Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> where 85 were recorded on Feb 19<sup>th</sup>. Recorded in at least 45 tetrads, breeding was confirmed at Steep Down on Jun 26<sup>th</sup> when fledged young were observed in a total count of 35. Higher summer counts were at Burnthouse Bostal (Keymer) with 40 on Jun 17<sup>th</sup> and at least 50 on Jul 22<sup>nd</sup>. There were 60 at the same site on Oct 4<sup>th</sup> and, elsewhere in autumn there were 40 at Cissbury on Oct 15<sup>th</sup> and 54 at Round Hill on Oct 28<sup>th</sup>. Highest counts of the year were at Steep Down where there were 100 on Nov 6<sup>th</sup> and 150 on Dec 1<sup>st</sup>. The final record of the year was of 45 at Round Hill on Dec 30<sup>th</sup>.

## **SAND MARTIN** *Riparia riparia*

### **Summer visitor and passage migrant**

The first record was from Worthing beach where two flew N on Mar 26<sup>th</sup>. It was over a month before the next record, from Broadwater on Apr 27<sup>th</sup>. This was followed by 32 N at Worthing beach on Apr 29<sup>th</sup>, which was the final spring record. The first bird on return migration was at Beeding Brooks on Jul 15<sup>th</sup>. Ten were seen at Cuckoo Corner on Aug 26<sup>th</sup>, five at Henfield Levels on Aug 26<sup>th</sup> and 40 at Wild Park on Sep 14<sup>th</sup>. At other sites no more than two were seen and the final bird was one E at Ferring Rife on Oct 13<sup>th</sup>.

## **BARN SWALLOW** *Hirundo rustica*

### **Common summer visitor**

In March four birds were at Oreham Common on the 16<sup>th</sup>, Worthing beach on 26<sup>th</sup>, Ditchling Beacon on 26<sup>th</sup> and Goring beach on 31<sup>st</sup>. The highest counts in April were 12 at Cissbury on 13<sup>th</sup>, 10 at Woods Mill on 15<sup>th</sup>, 15 at Waterhall on 16<sup>th</sup>, 30 at Patching Pond

on 18<sup>th</sup> and 28 at Worthing beach on 20<sup>th</sup>. On May 4<sup>th</sup> 120 were seen arriving from the sea. Breeding was confirmed at two sites, at Findon Park and Coombes. Peak autumn migration days were 2000 E at Worthing beach on Sep 23<sup>rd</sup> and 1000 on Oct 5<sup>th</sup> with other high counts of 400 at Beeding Brooks on Sep 23<sup>rd</sup> and at Worthing beach 550 on Sep 21<sup>st</sup>, 500 E on Oct 9<sup>th</sup> and 650 on Oct 24<sup>th</sup>. November birds were one at Broadwater (Worthing) on 2<sup>nd</sup>, two over Brighton on 3<sup>rd</sup>, two at Cissbury on 7<sup>th</sup>, three at Ladywells on 7<sup>th</sup> and finally one E at Goring beach on 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **HOUSE MARTIN** *Delichon urbicum*

### **Common summer visitor**

The first records of the year were from Woods Mill, one on Apr 5<sup>th</sup> and three on 7<sup>th</sup>, then at Beeding Brooks six on 12<sup>th</sup> and one on 19<sup>th</sup>. Double figure counts in May were 12 at Ladywells on 12<sup>th</sup>, 25 at Beeding Brooks on 18<sup>th</sup>, and in June, 11 at Beeding Brooks on 10<sup>th</sup> and 10 at Shoreham on 17<sup>th</sup>. Breeding was confirmed at Oreham Common and Myrtle Grove Farm. At Steyning Levels 100 were present on Jul 25<sup>th</sup>. Further high counts in autumn were 400 at Cissbury on Sep 21<sup>st</sup>, 500 E and 200 W at Worthing beach on 21<sup>st</sup>, 500 at Beeding Brooks on Sep 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, 400 E at Worthing beach on 23<sup>rd</sup>, 600 W at Sheepcote Valley on Oct 6<sup>th</sup> and 400 at Cissbury on Oct 10<sup>th</sup>. There were four at Whitehawk (Brighton) on Oct 22<sup>nd</sup>, five E at Worthing beach on Oct 24<sup>th</sup> and the final record was of two at Wild Park on Nov 5<sup>th</sup>.

## **TAWNY PIPIT** *Anthus campestris*

### **Very scarce visitor**

One was watched for two minutes from a distance of 25m on vegetated shingle at Worthing beach from the shelter at the end of George V Avenue on May 20<sup>th</sup> (DIS, RAI, DRM).

## **TREE PIPIT** *Anthus trivialis*

### **Decreasing, formerly fairly common passage migrant**

One spring bird was at Cissbury on Apr 13<sup>th</sup>. In autumn, ten were there on Aug 23<sup>rd</sup> and one on 24<sup>th</sup>, and in Sep, three on 4<sup>th</sup>, three on 6<sup>th</sup> and two on 9<sup>th</sup>. At Wild Park, two on Aug 10<sup>th</sup>, four on 19<sup>th</sup> and one on Sep 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. Single birds were at Cuckoo Corner on Aug 26<sup>th</sup> and Beeding Brooks on Aug 30<sup>th</sup>. Three flew W at Sheepcote Valley on Sep 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **MEADOW PIPIT** *Anthus pratensis*

### **Locally common resident and common passage migrant**

Found in 39 tetrads. 21 were at Beeding Brooks on Jan 2<sup>nd</sup>. In February there were 25 at Steyning Levels on 6<sup>th</sup>, 45 at Kingston Gorse on 11<sup>th</sup> and 18 at Round Hill on 19<sup>th</sup>. At Worthing beach there were 226 N between Apr 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> with a peak of 210 on 8<sup>th</sup>. Breeding was not confirmed. Summer double figure counts included ten at Burnthouse Bostal (Keymer) on Jun 17<sup>th</sup> and 20 there on Jul 22<sup>nd</sup>. At Cissbury 65 were noted on Aug 3<sup>rd</sup> and 30 were there on 15<sup>th</sup>. High counts during September autumn passage included 30 W at Worthing beach on 18<sup>th</sup>, 24 at Wild Park on 19<sup>th</sup>, 92 W at Worthing beach on 19<sup>th</sup>, 60 at Sheepcote Valley on 19<sup>th</sup> and 35 N at Worthing beach on 22<sup>nd</sup>. In October there were 80 at Steep Down on 4<sup>th</sup>, 244 W at Worthing beach on 5<sup>th</sup>, 130 at Sheepcote Valley

on 6<sup>th</sup>, 28 at Wild Park on 10<sup>th</sup>, 30 at Steyning on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 40 E at Worthing beach on 24<sup>th</sup>. The highest December count was of 41 at Beeding Brooks on 26<sup>th</sup>.

### **ROCK PIPIT** *Anthus petrosus*

#### **Regular winter visitor, occasionally breeds**

A single bird was at Widewater on Jan 1<sup>st</sup>, two on 9<sup>th</sup> and one on 14<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. One was at Shoreham Harbour on 3<sup>rd</sup>, increasing to four on 9<sup>th</sup> and the final first winter period record from this site was of two on Feb 25<sup>th</sup>. Single birds were at Worthing beach on Jan 30<sup>th</sup>, Goring Gap on Mar 1<sup>st</sup> and Brighton Marina on Mar 13<sup>th</sup>. Records from the second winter period began on Oct 23<sup>rd</sup> with three birds from both Brooklands and the Marina. Records from Shoreham Harbour began on Nov 20<sup>th</sup> and ended on Dec 28<sup>th</sup> with a maximum of two. Two were at Widewater on Nov 20<sup>th</sup>. At Worthing beach, one E on Nov 30<sup>th</sup> and two on Dec 19<sup>th</sup>.

### **YELLOW WAGTAIL** *Motacilla flava*

#### **Rather uncommon spring but common autumn passage migrant**

At Worthing beach, one N on Apr 8<sup>th</sup>, two N on May 1<sup>st</sup> and one E on May 9<sup>th</sup>. The only other spring record was from Steyning Round Hill on Apr 14<sup>th</sup>. The first autumn migrants were seen on Aug 21<sup>st</sup>, two at Cuckoo Corner and two at the Tollbridge. Five were at Upper Beeding on Aug 31<sup>st</sup>, six flew over Cissbury on Sep 1<sup>st</sup>, four W at Sheepcote Valley on Sep 5<sup>th</sup>, three W at Goring beach on Sep 20<sup>th</sup> and four at Worthing beach on same day. No more than two for other records. The final record of the year was a bird seen over central Brighton on Oct 20<sup>th</sup>.

### **GREY WAGTAIL** *Motacilla cinerea*

#### **Local resident and winter visitor; passage migrant**

Monthly totals were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Min no. of birds	6	3	1	2	3	4	1	1	7	11	2	7
No of sites	5	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	7	7	2	4

All the records except for two were of one or two birds. At St Ann's Well Gardens a juvenile was seen in a party of three on Jun 21<sup>st</sup> and on other dates. Four birds were at King's Barn on Dec 10<sup>th</sup>.

### **PIED WAGTAIL** *Motacilla alba*

#### **Common resident**

There were 186 records from 51 tetrads throughout the year. Six were at Hove on Jan 10<sup>th</sup> and 20 were feeding round cattle at Steep Down on 11<sup>th</sup>. At Steyning there were 40 on Feb 5<sup>th</sup>, increasing to 60 on 12<sup>th</sup>. Twelve were at Shoreham Harbour on 25<sup>th</sup>. Breeding was confirmed at Oreham Common on Jun 21<sup>st</sup> where a nest was observed. Fifteen were at Ladywells on Sep 10<sup>th</sup>. In October 12 flew W at Worthing beach on 5<sup>th</sup> and 12 were seen at Goring Gap on the same day, 14 were at Varndean (Brighton) on 6<sup>th</sup>, 25 E and four W at Worthing beach on 9<sup>th</sup>, and 21 E there on 10<sup>th</sup>, ten at Brooklands on 23<sup>rd</sup>, 40 E at Worthing beach on 24<sup>th</sup> and 62 at Beeding Brooks on 28<sup>th</sup>, which was the highest count of

the year. At least 50 were roosting in a reed bed at Steyning on Nov 18<sup>th</sup> and eight were at Patching Pond on Dec 27<sup>th</sup>.

**WHITE WAGTAIL** *Motacilla alba alba*

**Scarce passage migrant**

One was at Goring Gap on Apr 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**WAXWING** *Bombicilla garrulus*

**Rare winter visitor**

All records were from December. Single birds were at Beeding Brooks on 2<sup>nd</sup>, Brighton on 6<sup>th</sup>, Shoreham on 7<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> and Oreham Common on 13<sup>th</sup>. Two were at Portslade on 7<sup>th</sup> and at Hove there were two on 7<sup>th</sup> and 24 on 21<sup>st</sup>.



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**WREN** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

**Very common resident**

Recorded in at least 50 tetrads with breeding confirmed, through the presence of fledged young, in five; at Coombes Church (nest in the door!), Cissbury, Ladywells, Waterhall and Patcham (Brighton).

**DUNNOCK** *Prunella modularis*

**Very common resident**

Found in at least 46 tetrads. Breeding was confirmed in five, including Cissbury, Ladywells, West Tarring (Worthing), Findon Park and Steep Down.

**ROBIN** *Erithacus rubecula*

**Very common resident**

Recorded in at least 54 tetrads with breeding confirmed in eight, including West Tarring (Worthing), Portslade, Cissbury, Newtimber Hill, Ladywells, Brighton, Sompting and Worthing. A bird singing at night was heard in Lancing on Jan 9<sup>th</sup> and Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**COMMON NIGHTINGALE** *Luscinia megarhynchos*

**Summer visitor and passage migrant**

The first record of the year was from Woods Mill on Apr 7<sup>th</sup>. Two were there on the 12<sup>th</sup> including a singing male, rising to five birds on 29<sup>th</sup>. Other April records of single birds were from Oreham Common on 14<sup>th</sup>, Steyning on 24<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, and Ditchling on 29<sup>th</sup>. Eleven singing males were recorded at Edburton on 27<sup>th</sup>. On May 2<sup>nd</sup> there were observations from six different sites, two at Edburton, one at Poynings, one near Small Dole, five at Woods Mill, three at Oreham Common and one at Fulking. Further records in May were at sites already recorded and another site at Small Dole. One at Preston Park on Jun 9<sup>th</sup> was believed to be a bird on migration. Five were at Woods Mill on Jun 10<sup>th</sup> and the final record from there was of a male on Jul 30<sup>th</sup>. Two birds were ringed at The Mumbles on Jul 28<sup>th</sup> and Aug 18<sup>th</sup> and one bird was at Cissbury also on Aug 18<sup>th</sup>.

## **BLACK REDSTART** *Phoenicurus ochruros*

### **Regular passage migrant, winter visitor, has bred**

Possibly three birds in the early winter period. There were records of single birds at Widewater and Lancing on four dates in January. At Southwick there was one record per month from January to March and a female at Hove on Jan 10<sup>th</sup>. A female was at New Erringham Farm on Feb 11<sup>th</sup> and two records from Steyning on Feb 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. Birds on passage were indicated by records from Wild Park on Mar 12<sup>th</sup>, Lancing on Mar 27<sup>th</sup> and Cissbury on Apr 12<sup>th</sup>. There were no records from May to September except for a juvenile on the beach at Southwick on Aug 9<sup>th</sup> which may indicate local breeding. One was at Lancing on Oct 23<sup>rd</sup> and a female was at Ferring on Oct 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. One was at East Worthing on Oct 26<sup>th</sup>. Two birds were at Shoreham on Nov 3<sup>rd</sup> and there were more records of single birds in November and December. There were records from Brighton on Nov 17<sup>th</sup> and in early December, and single birds were at West Tarring (Worthing) on Nov 29<sup>th</sup> and Southwick on Dec 18<sup>th</sup>.

## **COMMON REDSTART** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

### **Fairly common passage migrant, especially in autumn**

Spring records were from Cissbury on Apr 12<sup>th</sup>, a male at Wild Park on 13<sup>th</sup>, two at Steyning Round Hill on 13<sup>th</sup>, two at Steyning Bowl on 13<sup>th</sup> and two at Goring Gap on May 4<sup>th</sup>. The first returning migrant was at Wild Park on Aug 10<sup>th</sup> from where there were further records up to Oct 10<sup>th</sup> with a peak of seven on Sep 5<sup>th</sup>. One was at Cissbury on Aug 18<sup>th</sup> and this site also produced a series of records with high counts of 14 on Aug 23<sup>rd</sup> and 13 on 24<sup>th</sup>, 12 on Sep 2<sup>nd</sup>, a peak of 35 on 4<sup>th</sup>, 25 on 6<sup>th</sup>, 11 on 9<sup>th</sup> and the final record on 17<sup>th</sup>. Records from Sheepcote Valley included a maximum of seven on Sep 7<sup>th</sup>. Single birds were at Goring Gap on Aug 19<sup>th</sup>, Woods Mill on Aug 31<sup>st</sup>, Ladywells on Sep 1<sup>st</sup>, Round Hill on Sep 1<sup>st</sup>, Patcham (Brighton) on Sep 5<sup>th</sup> and from Ditchling Beacon on Sep 8<sup>th</sup>. One was at Brooklands on the late date of Oct 23<sup>rd</sup>. Higher counts were four at Coombes on Aug 31<sup>st</sup>, five at Chantry Hill on Sep 4<sup>th</sup>, three at Broadwater (Worthing) on Sep 5<sup>th</sup> and two at Long Furlong on Sep 22<sup>nd</sup>. One winter record was of a single bird at Lancing on Dec 26<sup>th</sup>.

## **WHINCHAT** *Saxicola rubetra*

### **Common passage migrant**

The first spring record was a stunning male at Ferring Rife on Apr 24<sup>th</sup> with a further record from there on May 4<sup>th</sup>. Also on May 4<sup>th</sup> one flew N at Worthing beach. Single birds were at Beeding Brooks on May 13<sup>th</sup>, Shoreham Harbour on Jun 14<sup>th</sup> and an early autumn migrant at Edburton on Jul 22<sup>nd</sup>. August and September records were from ten sites, all from Aug 13<sup>th</sup> to Sep 17<sup>th</sup>. High counts included nine at Sheepcote Valley on Sep 5<sup>th</sup>, seven at Steep Down on Sep 3<sup>rd</sup>, seven at Chantry Hill on Sep 4<sup>th</sup> and five at Wild Park on Sep 8<sup>th</sup> with records also from Clayton Mills, Cissbury, Coombes, Round Hill, Truleigh Hill and Myrtle Grove Farm. In October four were at Sheepcote Valley on 10<sup>th</sup>, one at Wild Park on 10<sup>th</sup> and a final record from Brighton on 22<sup>nd</sup>.



**STONECHAT** *Saxicola torquata***Regular winter visitor and local breeding resident**

In January three were on Beeding Brooks and one on Henfield Levels. A pair were at New Salts Farm on Feb 12<sup>th</sup> and one at Steep Down on 26<sup>th</sup>. A newly arrived migrant was on Worthing beach near the pier on Mar 3<sup>rd</sup> and one was at Canada Bottom, Findon on 29<sup>th</sup>. Pairs holding territory were established at Cissbury and Steep Down in April, Henfield Levels and Mile Oak in May and Anchor Bottom and Beeding Brooks in June. None were then reported in July but in August three were in the Lower Adur Valley. Just a single bird remained at Steep Down throughout September. Successful breeding occurred at Cissbury with three juveniles seen on 17<sup>th</sup> when two, increasing to three birds on 19<sup>th</sup>, were in Sheepcote Valley. One was at Coombes on Oct 7<sup>th</sup>. By the 10<sup>th</sup> five were present on Steep Down. Wild Park held one on this date (from 4<sup>th</sup>) as did Sheepcote and near Lancing Ring. A female returned to Ferring Rife on 20<sup>th</sup>. November records were of one at Steep Down on 1<sup>st</sup>, three in the Lower Adur on 10<sup>th</sup> and one on Steyning Levels on 17<sup>th</sup>. By Dec, four were on Beeding Brooks on 2<sup>nd</sup>, two on Henfield Levels on 8<sup>th</sup>, two on Steyning Levels on 13<sup>th</sup>, and singles at Cissbury on 16<sup>th</sup> and Round Hill on 30<sup>th</sup>.

**NORTHERN WHEATEAR** *Oenanthe oenanthe***Common passage migrant**

The first spring arrival was on Kithurst Hill on Mar 15<sup>th</sup> followed by one at Goring Gap next day and singles at Worthing beach and Wild Park on 17<sup>th</sup> with three at the latter on 18<sup>th</sup>. Another 12 were noted in this month. There was an arrival on Apr 3<sup>rd</sup> of 21 at both Goring Gap and Worthing beach. Seven were inland at Cissbury on 12<sup>th</sup>. On 24<sup>th</sup>, 12 were seen in paddocks west of the Ferring Country Centre and the peak count of five at Wild Park was on 27<sup>th</sup>. The spring's best day for passerine arrivals occurred on May 4<sup>th</sup> along the West Sussex coast and 20 were on Goring Gap beach, 14 on Worthing beach (12 next day) and four by Southwick Canal. Seven were counted at Cissbury on 12<sup>th</sup>, the last of the spring. A juvenile at Findon Park on Jul 17<sup>th</sup> surely had been bred locally. Migrants appeared from 28<sup>th</sup> with two at Goring Gap. In August and September one to four were noted at 22 different sites with six at Ladywells between the farm and the valley on Sep 19<sup>th</sup>. There were October records from 11 locations, all of single birds, the last being a male on Worthing beach on 26<sup>th</sup>.

**DESERT WHEATEAR** *Oenanthe deserti***Very rare vagrant**

One was on the beach at Splash Point (Worthing) from Oct 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> (SOS). This was the first record for the SDOS area.

**RING OUZEL** *Turdus torquatus***Regular passage migrant**

Eight birds were seen on six dates between Apr 7<sup>th</sup> and May 5<sup>th</sup>; one at Shoreham on Apr 7<sup>th</sup>, up to three were at Cissbury between Apr 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, two at Washington on Apr 30<sup>th</sup> and a pair at Anchor Bottom on May 5<sup>th</sup>. During the autumn a minimum of 12 birds were noted from five sites on 11 different dates. One on the scarp slope of Truleigh Hill on Sep 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> was the only September record but three were at this location on Oct 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. Most were recorded at Cissbury with up to five between Oct 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>,

four on Oct 21<sup>st</sup> and one on the 26<sup>th</sup>. Single birds at Sheepcote Valley on the 14<sup>th</sup>, near Wild Park on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and at Round Hill on the 28<sup>th</sup> completed the autumn records.

### **BLACKBIRD** *Turdus merula*

#### **Very common resident**

With the end of the national and county atlas surveys in 2011 it is not surprising to detect a decline in the recording of this widespread species. Blackbirds were noted in 57 of the 94 tetrads in the society's recording area but in only 22 tetrads was some indication of breeding recorded. The highest counts in the first winter period were 43 at Washington on Jan 14<sup>th</sup> and 27 at Patcham on Mar 13<sup>th</sup>. The species was recorded in all 13 Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) squares although was absent from the survey in Hove on Jun 23<sup>rd</sup>; the highest count for the two x 1km transects being 30 in West Worthing on May 20<sup>th</sup>. Other high spring counts included 42 at West Blatchington on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 36 near Poynings on May 10<sup>th</sup> and 34 at Preston Park on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. The highest counts later in the year were 53, very mobile and nervous birds, near Devil's Dyke on Oct 28<sup>th</sup>, 45 at Preston Park on Nov 6<sup>th</sup> and 35 at Sheepcote Valley on Oct 20<sup>th</sup>. Ringing at the three regular sites produced totals of 55 different birds at Cissbury, 64 at Ladywells and 78 at The Mumbles of which 29, 28 and 49 respectively were young birds.

### **FIELDFARE** *Turdus pilaris*

#### **Common winter visitor**

During the first winter period approximately 500 were noted from 21 different locations. The highest counts were 100 stripping a cotoneaster bush in Bramber on Feb 8<sup>th</sup>, 80 on the Henfield Levels on Feb 13<sup>th</sup> and 70 near Devil's Dyke on Jan 12<sup>th</sup>. The last two in the spring were at Chanctonbury Ring on Mar 29<sup>th</sup>. During October there were just three records; one at Lancing on the 21<sup>st</sup>, 22 flew east over Ferring on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 12 at Beeding Brooks on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Less than 80 were noted from 11 locations during the last two months with the only double figures counts being 20 on Steyning Levels on Nov 27<sup>th</sup> and 35 at Beeding Brooks on Dec 28<sup>th</sup>.

### **SONG THRUSH** *Turdus philomelos*

#### **Fairly common resident**

This species was well recorded with sightings coming from 50 of the 94 tetrads containing land in the society's recording area but in only 20 tetrads were there records including evidence of breeding. The highest count, by a large margin, in the first winter period was 36 at Beeding Brooks on Feb 12<sup>th</sup>; there were four other counts between ten and 13 birds, otherwise single figures prevailed. Song Thrushes were recorded in just eight of the area's 13 Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) squares, mostly in low numbers with a maximum of five being recorded at both Toad's Hall Valley (Hove) on Apr 9<sup>th</sup> and at Patcham on May 29<sup>th</sup>. Nineteen in Preston Park on Apr 20<sup>th</sup> and 15 in good song around Withdean Park on May 3<sup>rd</sup> suggests some good populations in the green areas of the urban conurbation. Autumn counts were low with 15 in Sheepcote Valley on Oct 19<sup>th</sup> and 13 near Devil's Dyke on Oct 28<sup>th</sup> being the only double figure counts. Ringing totals from the three local sites were 35 different birds at Cissbury, 15 at Ladywells and 20 at The Mumbles of which 21, 4 and 15 respectively were young.



Whimbrel on the Adur by Michael Ball



Lapwing by Janet Derricott



The Adur Osprey by Wendy Ball



Iceland Gull by Dorian Mason



Redshank  
by  
Dorian  
Mason

**REDWING** *Turdus iliacus***Common winter visitor**

During the first winter period a minimum of just over 400 birds were recorded from 26 different sites with the highest counts being 100 at Beeding Brooks on both Jan 12<sup>th</sup> and Feb 15<sup>th</sup> and 52 at Washington on Jan 14<sup>th</sup>. The last two in the spring were seen at the Wild Park on Mar 31<sup>st</sup>. Seven at this location on Oct 7<sup>th</sup> were the first recorded during the second winter period followed by 12 at Cissbury on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Thereafter the species was recorded in small numbers on a further 31 dates from 21 different sites before the end of the year. The highest count was 150, flying over Ladywells in small flocks of up to 40 birds, on Oct 24<sup>th</sup>.

**MISTLE THRUSH** *Turdus viscivorus***Fairly common resident**

As in recent year this species was recorded in each month with a fairly widespread collection of records from 36 different tetrads. Numbers involved, however, were small with the highest counts being seven at Preston Park on Aug 28<sup>th</sup> and six at three sites; Newtimber Hill on Jan 21<sup>st</sup> and Mar 3<sup>rd</sup>, Cissbury on Aug 15<sup>th</sup> and at Broadwater on Sep 1<sup>st</sup>.

**CETTI'S WARBLER** *Cettia cetti***Very scarce resident, passage migrant and winter visitor**

The first for the year was noted at Beeding Brooks on Feb 15<sup>th</sup>, followed by a sprinkling of records each month, apart from August and October, until the last for the year was again at Beeding Brooks on Dec 27<sup>th</sup>. Other regularly favoured sites were New Salts Farm, Steyning Levels and Ladywells with just singles at all locations apart from Beeding Brooks where no more than two occurred. Birds were present at all four of these sites during the breeding season but breeding was not confirmed.

**GRASSHOPPER WARBLER** *Locustella naevia***Generally scarce passage migrant**

Beeding Brooks produced a spring record with one there on May 13<sup>th</sup>. More usual autumn observations were of one at Edburton on the edge of a barley field on Aug 10<sup>th</sup> then, in close succession, two on the south-east side of Cissbury; one on Sep 4<sup>th</sup> followed by another there two days later.

**SEDGE WARBLER** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus***Declining summer visitor and passage migrant**

Ringers at Ladywells found the first arrival on April 11<sup>th</sup> with another there on 20<sup>th</sup>. Others, that were clearly migrants, were one singing in a downland garden at Edburton on Apr 30<sup>th</sup> and another that flew into a Worthing beach shelter and perched on a seat on May 4<sup>th</sup>. Meanwhile at Beeding Brooks birds were present from Apr 15<sup>th</sup> onwards. June and July records came from Beeding Brooks as well as Steyning Levels, Brooklands and Shoreham Adur. No breeding confirmation was obtained. First indication of autumn passage was one ringed at The Mumbles on Jul 21<sup>st</sup> where a further ten were ringed up to Sep 1<sup>st</sup> on four days with a maximum of five on Jul 28<sup>th</sup>. Small numbers were seen at other sites in July and August including Beeding Brooks, Wild Park, Woods Mill, Broadwater and Cuckoo Corner. In September the last for the year were recorded at Sheepcote Valley with four there on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and another two on the 13<sup>th</sup>.

## **REED WARBLER** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

### **Fairly common summer visitor**

The first to arrive was one at Woods Mill on Apr 8<sup>th</sup> but there was then a gap of 12 days before the next was noted at Ladywells. Thereafter records became more frequent with birds occurring at breeding sites as well as others still on passage in unlikely locations such as one singing near a Garden Centre at Poynings on May 10<sup>th</sup> and another in full voice in a garden at Southwick on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. However one singing in the Pavilion Gardens, Brighton on May 17<sup>th</sup>, that might have been considered a migrant was possibly the same one still singing there from the same bush on Jul 9<sup>th</sup>!

Breeding season records were mostly from the Adur Valley with counts of up to 14 at Beeding Brooks, 12 at Ladywells and five at Woods Mill. Smaller numbers, of no more than two, were noted at Ferring Rife. Ringers at Ladywells caught a total of 36 birds between May 19<sup>th</sup> and Sep 19<sup>th</sup> of which 18 were adults and 18 were young. Comparative figures for The Mumbles were a total of 55 birds caught between Apr 21<sup>st</sup> and Sep 22<sup>nd</sup> of which 37 were adults and just 18 were young. The high proportion of adults in the catch confirms the very poor breeding season when many of the nests were swamped. Confirmed breeding was only recorded by the presence of fledged young at Ladywells although a note was made of an adult with four fledglings at Woods Mill on Jul 15<sup>th</sup>.

Although some early returning migrant birds possibly mixed with the locals at the breeding sites a single bird seen at Sheepcote Valley on Aug 18<sup>th</sup> was no doubt a migrant. In the latter part of August small numbers were seen at Cuckoo Corner, Woods Mill and Beeding Brooks. Ringing revealed the September birds with 10 at Ladywells on the 1<sup>st</sup> reducing to one by the 19<sup>th</sup> and the last one for the year was at The Mumbles on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

## **BLACKCAP** *Sylvia atricapilla*

### **Common summer visitor, regular in winter**

The New Year had hardly begun before one arrived on Jan 1<sup>st</sup> in the early morning at a Goring garden. Another was in St Ann's Well Gardens the same day. Thereafter one or two birds were noted throughout the winter from 13 coastal and/or urban locations in January and February. Four were in a West Tarring garden on Mar 10<sup>th</sup> and also four in a West Worthing garden on Mar 21<sup>st</sup>. Many of these winter records were from gardens with birds feeding on provided food or natural berries including Honeysuckle and Ivy. There is inevitably an overlap between arriving and departing birds but one, a male, at The Mumbles on Mar 18<sup>th</sup> was thought to be newly arrived as were two at Wild Park on Mar 29<sup>th</sup>. In the first week of April many records were received, including a number from downland sites where Blackcaps are absent during the winter. In June and July newly fledged young were seen at Cissbury, Ladywells, Waterhall and Wild Park. Highest counts during this period were also at these sites, though no count exceeded 12. Lower numbers were at Highden Hill (Washington), Poynings, Highdown, Newtimber Hill and Burnthouse Bostal (Keymer).

An initial indication of return passage was a count of 30 at Cissbury on Sep 6<sup>th</sup> where numbers had risen to 65 by the 9<sup>th</sup>, the peak count in our area for the autumn. At Sheepcote Valley 48 were present on Sep 15<sup>th</sup>, but numbers at Cissbury had dropped to 26 by the 17<sup>th</sup>. In early October Cissbury held 26 and Wild Park 27 but ten at both Ladywells and Sheepcote Valley on the 10<sup>th</sup> were the last significant counts. Sightings of just one or

two continued to the end of the year, although three were in a West Tarring garden on Dec 10<sup>th</sup>. Last for the year was a male in a West Worthing garden on Dec 13<sup>th</sup>.

At The Mumbles, between Mar 18<sup>th</sup> and Oct 13<sup>th</sup>, 194 new birds were ringed and 13 were retrapped from previous years. Of these 39 were adult birds and 165 were juveniles. At Ladywells comparative figures between Mar 24<sup>th</sup> and Oct 24<sup>th</sup> were 71 new birds and 12 retraps of which 43 were adults and 39 were juveniles. The team at Cissbury ringed 208 new birds, retrapped 23 from previous years between May 8<sup>th</sup> and Nov 11<sup>th</sup> and of those that were aged, 63 were adult birds and 158 were juveniles.

### **GARDEN WARBLER** *Sylvia borin*

#### **Fairly common summer visitor**

First encountered at Poynings, two were there on May 2<sup>nd</sup> followed two days later by singles in a Goring garden, at Goring Gap and at St Ann's Well Gardens. By the 10<sup>th</sup> one was in a net at Cissbury, after which records of single birds became more widespread during the remainder of the month, including one resting on the shingle at Worthing beach on the 20<sup>th</sup>. During June and early July the only records received were from ringers at Cissbury, where the presence of fledged young confirmed successful breeding, and also at Waterhall on Jun 20<sup>th</sup> following an earlier sighting there in mid May.

On Jul 21<sup>st</sup> at The Mumbles an adult was caught; the first of fifteen in total that were ringed until the last on Sep 8<sup>th</sup>, with the maximum seven there on Aug 10<sup>th</sup>. Of those that were aged, four were adult birds and ten were young. At Ladywells the only bird for the year, also an adult, was ringed on Aug 3<sup>rd</sup>. After their first on May 10<sup>th</sup>, Cissbury ringers continued to catch birds until Sep 6<sup>th</sup> with the total amounting to 14 of which 8 were adult birds and 6 were young. From mid August and away from the ringing sites no more than two were recorded at any one site with Cissbury the best place for observations. Migrants were noted at just three other sites: Round Hill, Broadwater and Wild Park. Fittingly the last for the year was at Cissbury on Sep 9<sup>th</sup>.

### **LESSER WHITETHROAT** *Sylvia curruca*

#### **Fairly common summer visitor**

Three singing males at Oreham Common on Apr 22<sup>nd</sup> were the first to be noted. By the end of the month single birds were also at Broadwater and Cissbury. Then, during the first week of May, records became more widespread, including sites such as Edburton, Poynings, Small Dole, Wild Park, Goring Gap, Highdown and Lychpole Hill. On May 4<sup>th</sup> one landed in the short vegetation on Worthing beach. The only confirmed breeding was the presence of fledged young at Ladywells on July 12<sup>th</sup>, but during June and July small numbers, no more than three, were heard or seen at many downland locations as well as Beeding Brooks, Botolphs (Bramber), Henfield Levels, Ferring Rife and Steyning, although five were at Anchor Bottom on Jun 13<sup>th</sup>.

Birds were present at the Cissbury ringing site from mid May until Aug 11<sup>th</sup> where just five new birds were ringed, only one of which was a first year bird. On Jul 1<sup>st</sup> the only bird for the year, a juvenile, was ringed at The Mumbles whereas ringers at Ladywells had to wait until Jul 12<sup>th</sup> for their first catch, a recently fledged juvenile, but they then caught two more on Jul 21<sup>st</sup> and Aug 3<sup>rd</sup> both of which were adults. Elsewhere during August reports of up to three birds were noted from downland sites, Broadwater and Beeding Brooks. The first



ten days of September produced almost daily records of no more than two birds from exclusively downland sites, although Cissbury, which was either well favoured or well watched or both, held six birds on Sep 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. The very last for the year was at Preston Park (Brighton) on Sep 22<sup>nd</sup>.

### **WHITETHROAT** *Sylvia communis*

#### **Common summer visitor**

Joint honours for the first of the year go to both Steyning Round Hill and Woods Mill with two at the former site and one at the latter on Apr 14<sup>th</sup>. Reports quickly became more widespread and numbers at Sheepcote Valley increased from five on Apr 19<sup>th</sup> to 20 by the 26<sup>th</sup>. Other significant counts were of seven at Waterhall on Apr 16<sup>th</sup>, 20 at Ferring Rife on May 4<sup>th</sup> and eight at Lychpole Hill the same day. By mid May reports were widespread, particularly from downland sites, although possible breeding birds were also at Upper Beeding and Beeding Brooks, Steyning and Steyning Levels, Woods Mill, Ferring Rife and Old Salts Farm. Confirmation of breeding was established at Steyning, Ladywells, Cissbury, Steep Down, Waterhall and Wild Park. Breeding season counts of note were 14 in display flights at Steep Down, ten singing at Burnthouse Bostal (Keymer) and 21 at Round Hill.

Twenty counted at Cissbury on Aug 10<sup>th</sup> were thought to be migrants with numbers increasing thereafter to peaks of 33 at Round Hill and 30 at Sheepcote Valley on Aug 18<sup>th</sup> with another 30 at Cissbury on Aug 23<sup>rd</sup>. Thirty were again counted at Sheepcote Valley on Sep 3<sup>rd</sup> with the last significant total being 25 at Cissbury on Sep 12<sup>th</sup>. Last for the year was one at Beeding Brooks on Sep 23<sup>rd</sup>.

At Cissbury, between May 8<sup>th</sup> and Sep 6<sup>th</sup>, 40 new birds were ringed and two from previous years were retrapped. Of these 15 were adult and 27 were first year birds. At The Mumbles comparative figures between May 19<sup>th</sup> and Sep 8<sup>th</sup> were 21 new birds and no retraps of which six were adults and 15 were young birds. Ringers at Ladywells ringed 15 new birds between May 19<sup>th</sup> and Sep 12<sup>th</sup> of which 5 were adult and 10 were first year birds.

### **DARTFORD WARBLER** *Sylvia undata*

#### **Scarce autumn migrant, rare winter visitor**

There were no records of this species in 2012.

### **YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER** *Phylloscopus inornatus*

#### **Rare autumn vagrant.**

One was present in central Worthing between Feb 26<sup>th</sup> and Mar 14<sup>th</sup> (SOS) and later in the year one was in a willow stand at Brooklands between Oct 16<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> (RAI, DIS). These records have been accepted by the SOS Records Committee.

### **PALLAS'S LEAF WARBLER** *Phylloscopus proregulus*

#### **Very scarce visitor; mostly in late autumn.**

One, considered to be an adult female, was caught and ringed at a downland site at Pyecombe on Nov 15<sup>th</sup> (PM). This record has been accepted by the SOS Records Committee.

## **WOOD WARBLER** *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

### **Scarce passage migrant**

Two records in 2012 of a single bird in Wild Park on Apr 30<sup>th</sup> and again on May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

## **CHIFFCHAFF** *Phylloscopus collybita*

### **Common summer visitor, with small wintering population**

A garden near Ferring Rife and Broadwater produced the first for the year on Jan 13<sup>th</sup>. During the remainder of January and throughout February a scattering of records in both coastal and downland locations were most probably of wintering birds. However seawatchers noted one on Worthing beach on Feb 4<sup>th</sup> which perhaps was a very early arrival. Throughout March the volume of records increased as the new arrivals dispersed with significant early counts being 8 at Ladywells on Mar 23<sup>rd</sup>, six at Cissbury on Mar 29<sup>th</sup> and on Apr 1<sup>st</sup> nine at Wild Park and seven on Newtimber Hill. By Jun 25 the first breeding confirmation was noted at Ladywells with fledged young present. More were seen at Cissbury the following day. No other breeding confirmation was noted apart from these two ringing sites but records remained widespread throughout July and August.

The first large count logged as migrants was at Cissbury on Sep 6<sup>th</sup> when 20 were counted with another six at Coombes the same day. Numbers then steadily increased to a peak of 62 on Cissbury on Sep 28<sup>th</sup> with smaller peak counts at Brooklands (25), Ladywells (15), Round Hill (11), Sheepcote Valley (11) and Wild Park (14) during September. From the beginning of October numbers generally declined although 15 were counted at Burnthouse Bostal (Keymer) on Oct 4<sup>th</sup>. By mid October the best locations were the damper, lower-lying habitats with 15 at Ladywells on the 10<sup>th</sup>, another 15 at Goring Gap on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 18 at Brooklands on the 18<sup>th</sup>. Thereafter no more than six were seen at any location and no doubt late departers were mingling with wintering birds. The last for the year was one at The Mumbles on Dec 15<sup>th</sup>.

At The Mumbles, between Mar 18<sup>th</sup> and Dec 15<sup>th</sup>, 119 new birds were ringed and three from previous years were retrapped. Of those that were aged, 30 were adult and 85 were first year. At Ladywells comparative figures between Mar 24<sup>th</sup> and Nov 23<sup>rd</sup> were 65 new birds and three retraps from previous years of which 20 were adults and 46 were young birds. Ringers at Cissbury ringed 129 new birds and retrapped four from previous years between May 8<sup>th</sup> and Oct 13<sup>th</sup> of which 19 were adult and 106 were first year birds.

## **WILLOW WARBLER** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

### **Declining summer visitor and passage migrant**

Ringers found the first for the year in a net at The Mumbles on Mar 31<sup>st</sup>. There followed an almost continuous stream of records over the next six weeks. Nearly all of these reports were likely to be passage migrants and certainly the higher counts of four at Ladywells on Apr 11<sup>th</sup>, three at Ferring Rife and five at Patcham on Apr 12, six at Goring Gap on May 5<sup>th</sup> and also six at St Ann's Well Gardens the same day fall into that category, as well as those seen at West Tarring and Cissbury. There was little breeding evidence, the best being of one holding territory near Ashington and a pair noted on the Steyning Levels.

Birds in the nets at Ladywells on Jul 12<sup>th</sup> and Cissbury on Jul 24<sup>th</sup> marked the beginning of autumn dispersal and migration. In total Ladywells ringers processed 30 birds between Apr 11<sup>th</sup> and Sep 12<sup>th</sup> of which 26 were first year and 4 were adult birds. Peak catch was of nine

on Aug 3<sup>rd</sup>. Following their first for the year in March the team at The Mumbles ringed a further 35 birds of which four were aged as adult and 26 as first year birds, the other being of undetermined age. The best day here, with a total of ten, was Sep 1<sup>st</sup>. With no birds captured on spring passage, the first for the year at Cissbury was on Jul 24 and by Sep 20<sup>th</sup> 58 had been ringed. Of those that were aged, 56 were young birds and one was an adult.

Cissbury proved to be the best site to witness visual migration with daily totals rising from 30 on Aug 3<sup>rd</sup> to 50 by the 10<sup>th</sup> before reaching a peak of 65 on Aug 23<sup>rd</sup>. From then numbers reduced to 15 by the 28<sup>th</sup>. The only other significant counts were at Sheepcote Valley with 30 there on Aug 19<sup>th</sup> followed by another 30 on Sep 5<sup>th</sup>. The majority of the other autumn sightings were from downland locations although single birds trickled through a Tarring garden throughout Aug and other birds were seen at Goring Gap, Beeding Brooks, Ferring Rife and Woods Mill as well as one feeding amongst the seaweed at Brighton Marina on Aug 20<sup>th</sup>. Final sightings for the year were a single bird at Sompting on Sep 9<sup>th</sup> followed by two at Steep Down the next day.

#### **GOLDCREST** *Regulus regulus*

##### **Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor**

There were regular, widespread reports of these birds throughout the year. Reports came from 40 tetrads although confirmed or probable breeding was noted in only one tetrad. The three ringing locations reported that 120 different birds were handled and, of these, 95 were young birds. Normally sightings were of small family parties but the largest numbers reported were both from Cissbury where 20 birds were noted on Sep 21<sup>st</sup> and 30 were seen on Oct 15<sup>th</sup>.

#### **FIRECREST** *Regulus ignicapilla*

##### **Regular passage migrant in small numbers, occasionally winters**

There were 26 sightings of these attractive birds during the year. They were recorded from 16 tetrads almost entirely during the first and second winter periods. In the first winter period there were only six sightings, two of which were in an Edburton garden. One bird was seen during the summer at Highden Hill (Washington) on May 15<sup>th</sup>. No breeding was reported but the three ringing sites handled four birds, of which two were young birds. In the second winter there were 19 sightings between Sep 28<sup>th</sup> and Dec 21<sup>st</sup>.

#### **SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** *Muscicapa striata*

##### **Common passage migrant and declining summer visitor**

First reported from Goring Gap with one on May 4<sup>th</sup>; this was followed by five more in the month at three different locations. Two at Whitehawk on Jun 27<sup>th</sup> were possibly breeding locally. An adult at Woods Mill on Jul 1<sup>st</sup>. Autumn passage began with singles there and at Sheepcote Valley on Aug 16<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. Some 25 birds were noted in the remainder of the month with a maximum of 15 at Cissbury on 24<sup>th</sup>. This site remained the favourite in September with 20 on 6<sup>th</sup> but there were also six at Devil's Dyke on this date. Three on 8<sup>th</sup> at Wild Park were the autumn maximum there. On 9<sup>th</sup> there were 16 at Cissbury. Thereafter, just one or two at eight sites until the last on Oct 10<sup>th</sup> at Ladywells. Three young birds were trapped at Ladywells and one at The Mumbles.

**PIED FLYCATCHER** *Ficedula hypoleuca***Regular but uncommon passage migrant**

In August, single birds at Devil's Dyke on 9<sup>th</sup>, a female/immature plumage at West Worthing on 18<sup>th</sup>, Wild Park on 19<sup>th</sup> and Hove on 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. In September, present at Ditchling Beacon on 8<sup>th</sup> and one at Hove on 25<sup>th</sup>.

**LONG-TAILED TIT** *Aegithalos caudatus***Common resident**

There were 181 reports of these birds during the year from 44 tetrads. Confirmed or probable breeding was reported from seven tetrads. The highest counts were of 25 birds at Woods Mill on Aug 17<sup>th</sup> and 20 at Cissbury Ring on Sep 21<sup>st</sup>. At the ringing sites 67 different birds were handled of which 22 were definitely juvenile birds.

**BLUE TIT** *Cyanistes caeruleus***Abundant resident**

There were widespread and regular reports of these birds throughout the year. They were reported from 50 tetrads although confirmed or probable breeding was only noted in six of them. At the ringing sites 550 different birds were handled, of which 253 were young birds. The highest counts were 40 seen at Washington on Jan 14<sup>th</sup> and 36 seen at Patcham on Jan 11<sup>th</sup>.

**GREAT TIT** *Parus major***Very common resident**

There were 270 reports of these birds from 47 tetrads during the year. In seven of these tetrads confirmed or probable breeding was reported. The highest counts were of 32 birds at Washington on Jan 14<sup>th</sup> and at Northbrook Farm (Worthing) on Feb 12<sup>th</sup>. At the ringing sites 244 different birds were handled of which 82 were young birds.

**COAL TIT** *Periparus ater***Fairly common but local resident**

This year there were 51 reports of these birds from 15 tetrads. There were records in every month of the year. The largest number reported was of three singing males at Goring on Jan 30<sup>th</sup> and three were also seen at West Tarring (Worthing) on Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>. There was no record of confirmed breeding but in one tetrad probable breeding was reported. One young bird was ringed at The Mumbles on Jul 21<sup>st</sup>.



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**MARSH TIT** *Poecile palustris***Fairly uncommon resident**

There were 19 records this year from six sites. All reports were of one or two birds. The records came in virtually every month of the year. The only sites regularly reporting these birds were Woods Mill and Steyning. There were no reports of breeding.

**NUTHATCH** *Sitta europaea***Uncommon resident**

Records came from thirty sites, several of which were 'new' e.g. Whitehawk, Coombes, Hove Town Hall, Portslade New Barn, Patcham Place Wood. The species appears to be extending its range southwards. Maximum counts were of five at Newtimber Hill in February and four at Woods Mill and Goring Gap in April. Proven breeding occurred at Ladywells and Cissbury Ring. At Goring Gap the two pairs excavated nest holes, one of which was taken over by a Green Woodpecker; no young were subsequently reported. Eight birds, all young, were ringed at Ladywells; seven of them on May 12<sup>th</sup>. Two were also ringed at The Mumbles and one at Cissbury, the first to be ringed there in 25 years.

**TREECREEPER** *Certhia familiaris***Uncommon resident**

Reported from seventeen locations but mostly of single birds and no proven breeding records although a nest hole at Goring Gap was observed on Mar 29<sup>th</sup>. Three at Woods Mill in April were the most at one site. Two at Wild Park on Mar 31<sup>st</sup> were considered unusual. Eight adults and one young were ringed at Ladywells, one of each at The Mumbles and one adult at Cissbury.

**JAY** *Garrulus glandarius***Fairly common resident and winter visitor**

Recorded in 49 tetrads although with no confirmed breeding records. Three high counts were recorded, all in October. In Wild Park 32 flew over in four flocks on 4<sup>th</sup>. At Sheepcote Valley on 6<sup>th</sup> 24 flew over, mostly N, including a tight flock of 18. On 10<sup>th</sup> at the same site there were 26 W.

**MAGPIE** *Pica pica***Very common resident**

Found in at least 52 tetrads with breeding confirmed in four, at Findon Valley, West Tarring (Worthing), Preston Park (Brighton) and Patcham (Brighton). Wild Park held the highest single total, 28 on Mar 26<sup>th</sup>.

**JACKDAW** *Corvus monedula***Very common resident**

Recorded in at least 47 tetrads. Breeding was confirmed at Findon Park and Steyning where there were three occupied nest boxes. At Sheepcote Valley 2,000 were seen, mostly NW, on Sep 7<sup>th</sup>, which was by far the highest total seen. Other high counts of 150 and over were at Steyning Levels, 300 on Feb 6<sup>th</sup>, 500 in November and 200 in December. At Beeding Brooks there were 250 on Jan 12<sup>th</sup> and 400 on Dec 17<sup>th</sup> and 150 at Round Hill on Dec 30<sup>th</sup>.

**ROOK** *Corvus frugilegus***Very common resident**

Found in at least 40 tetrads with breeding confirmed by occupied nests in rookeries at seven including Ladywells, Small Dole, Clapham, Patching, Findon and Findon Valley. There were high counts of 225 at Lower Standean on Jun 28<sup>th</sup>, 200 at Small Dole on Feb 24<sup>th</sup>, 200 at Steep Down on Oct 10<sup>th</sup> and 150 at Round Hill on Feb 19<sup>th</sup> and later in the year on Dec 30<sup>th</sup>.

**CARRION CROW** *Corvus corone***Very common resident**

Found in at least 58 tetrads with breeding confirmed in four. Occupied nests were seen at Brooklands, Findon Valley and Steep Down with fledged young recorded at West Tarring (Worthing). The highest single total was at Steep Down where 100 were seen in November. At Park Brow (Findon) there were 64 on Feb 21<sup>st</sup> and 50 were at Worthing beach on Feb 5<sup>th</sup>.

**RAVEN** *Corvus corax***Very scarce breeding resident**

Reports were received from throughout our area, mostly of single birds, but four flying W over Cissbury Ring on Jul 12<sup>th</sup> was the highest count and there were two soaring high over Sheepcote Valley on Jul 15<sup>th</sup>.

The pair in our area fledged three young.



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**COMMON STARLING** *Sturnus vulgaris***Abundant resident and winter visitor**

Recorded in at least 54 tetrads with breeding confirmed in three, at Foredown, Findon Park and West Tarring (Worthing). Roosts at the two Brighton Piers held monthly maxima as follows:

	Jan	/	Nov	Dec
Palace	13,500		11,500	10,500
West	2,000		-	-

Two thousand were also recorded roosting in Brighton at Black Rock on Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>. Other high counts were 3,000 feeding in stubble and cattle pasture at Steep Down on Jan 11<sup>th</sup> and 2,500 at Beeding Brooks on Dec 24<sup>th</sup>. At Steep Down there were further counts of 2,000 on Feb 26<sup>th</sup> and 1,000 on Oct 25<sup>th</sup> and Nov 1<sup>st</sup>. One thousand were near Lancing Ring on Feb 26<sup>th</sup>, 1000 E over Ladywells on Jan 7<sup>th</sup> and around 800 were feeding at Round Hill on Oct 28<sup>th</sup>.

## **HOUSE SPARROW** *Passer domesticus*

### **Very common resident**

During January and February reports in excess of 20 birds came from eight sites, including 27 between the Adur Tollbridge and rail bridge on Jan 11<sup>th</sup>, 28 at Washington on 14<sup>th</sup>, 30 at Easthill Park (Portslade) on the 21<sup>st</sup>, 28 at West Tarring on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 41 in a 1-km square Sussex Winter Bird Survey (SWBS) at Northbrook Farm (Worthing) on Feb 12<sup>th</sup>. Counts in a tetrad at Patcham found 35 on Jan 11<sup>th</sup>, 41 on Feb 9<sup>th</sup> and 47 on Mar 14<sup>th</sup>. The first breeding evidence came from West Tarring on Mar 23<sup>rd</sup>, when a male was seen nest building in a rose arbour, and a white-winged female was also noted there. In the same garden three were seen coming out of a Swift box in March; calls of nestlings were heard emanating from the box on May 10<sup>th</sup>, and the first fledglings there were seen on Jun 1<sup>st</sup>. Another brood was heard in a nest there in the latter half of July. In two BBS visits to a 1-km square at Old Salts Farm 58 were found on May 5<sup>th</sup> and 48 on Jun 16<sup>th</sup>. An unusual site for a nest was a hole in a telegraph pole at Steyning, which a bird was seen entering on Jun 4<sup>th</sup>. A post-breeding flock of 26 was at Wild Park on Aug 27<sup>th</sup> and a flock of 13 in a Preston Park garden on Sep 4<sup>th</sup> was the largest group seen there for a decade. Later in the month there were 40 at Goring beach on the 21<sup>st</sup>, and on Oct 11<sup>th</sup> 26 were counted in the regularly watched Patcham tetrad. In November there were 20 at Goring beach on the 8<sup>th</sup>. A roost of 100 on Nov 11<sup>th</sup> by the railway at Elm Grove (Brighton) was the only three-figure count. The second winter count for the SWBS found 29 at Northbrook Farm on Dec 5<sup>th</sup>, but no other records of more than ten birds were received that month.

## **TREE SPARROW** *Passer montanus*

### **Very scarce former resident and passage migrant.**

For the third year running, and the fourth since 2000, there were no records of this species.

## **CHAFFINCH** *Fringilla coelebs*

### **Very common resident**

During 12 SWBS visits to different 1-km squares in January and February, all counts were ten or less except for a total of 30 found in a square near Devil's Dyke on Jan 12<sup>th</sup> and 11 at Northbrook Farm on Feb 12<sup>th</sup>. In regular tetrad counts, 60 were found at Lower Standean on Jan 12<sup>th</sup>, 38 near Devil's Dyke on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, 29 at Round Hill on Feb 19<sup>th</sup>, and 22 at Newtimber Hill on Mar 1<sup>st</sup>. On May 13<sup>th</sup> a total of 13 were heard singing at Goring Gap, and 32 were counted in a tetrad at Waterhall on the 18<sup>th</sup>. The first fledglings were recorded on Jun 17<sup>th</sup> at Patcham; more were seen at Findon Park and Waterhall in July, and a total of 23 counted in the Waterhall tetrad in August. At The Mumbles, 114 different birds were trapped, of which 91 were new birds and 13 were ringed in previous years, the oldest being from 2009; No new birds were caught there between Apr 21<sup>st</sup> and Jul 21<sup>st</sup> when a juvenile male was ringed (Steyning RG data). The team at Ladywells trapped 67 different birds, of which 58 were new. Only six birds were ringed at Cissbury this year, but on Jul 1<sup>st</sup> two adults trapped could not be ringed as they were suffering from scaly legs. On Sep 9<sup>th</sup>, groups of six, eight and ten were among a total of 28 at Waterhall, while the monthly maxima at Sheepcote Valley were 17 on Sep 15<sup>th</sup> and 50 on Oct 10<sup>th</sup>. Small flocks at Ladywells numbered 15 on Oct 24<sup>th</sup> and 20 on Nov 14<sup>th</sup>. Winter numbers were very low, with December reports just in single figures apart from 12 at Canada Bottom on 18<sup>th</sup>, 15 at Steep Down on 26<sup>th</sup>, ten at The Mumbles on 29<sup>th</sup> and 12 at Round Hill on 30<sup>th</sup>.

**BRAMBLING** *Fringilla montifringilla***Regular passage migrant and uncommon winter visitor**

There were no reports this year until Oct 15<sup>th</sup> when six were at Cissbury. Singles at Wild Park on Oct 23<sup>rd</sup>, at Coombes on 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, a striking winter male at Brooklands on Nov 6<sup>th</sup>, and at the ringing site at Cissbury the following day were the only other records. In this century only 2001 also produced no early year records, but autumn/winter sightings that year were far more numerous.

**GREENFINCH** *Chloris chloris***Very common resident**

There were a total of 16 in a tetrad at Patcham on Jan 11<sup>th</sup>, 17 at West Blatchington (Hove) on Feb 15<sup>th</sup> and 14 at Waterhall on 24<sup>th</sup>. The largest group seen was 30 in a Hove garden in early January (SDOS Garden Bird data). SWBS visits located 14 at Cissbury on Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> and 11 at Northbrook Farm (Worthing) on Feb 12<sup>th</sup>. At Wild Park 16 were seen on Feb 27<sup>th</sup> and 17 on Mar 26<sup>th</sup>. Other counts over 20 were 29 at West Blatchington on Mar 11<sup>th</sup>, 20 at Patcham on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 25 at Ferring on 14<sup>th</sup>. At The Mumbles 60 different birds were trapped, similar numbers to 2011, comprising 58 new and 2 which had been ringed in December 2011. None were caught between Mar 18<sup>th</sup> and Aug 18<sup>th</sup>, when four juveniles were among the five trapped (Steyning RG data). At Ladywells 27 birds were trapped, under half the 2011 total, of which 23 were new. The first fledged young were reported from Ladywells on May 19<sup>th</sup>, another was in a West Tarring garden on Jun 9<sup>th</sup> and others were seen at Easthill Park (Portslade) and Waterhall. August maxima were 15 at both Waterhall and Sheepcote Valley and 19 at Lower Standean. Twenty at Wild Park on Sep 5<sup>th</sup>, and 21 at West Tarring on Oct 8<sup>th</sup> were the highest numbers reported in the following two months. In November and December the only records in double figures were 12 at Lancing Ring on Nov 14<sup>th</sup>, 13 at Brooklands on Dec 6<sup>th</sup> and 11 at West Tarring on 15<sup>th</sup>, though during the last three months of the year an average of 13 were recorded each week in a Mill Hill garden, with a maximum of 18 in mid-November (SDOS Garden Bird data).

**GOLDFINCH** *Carduelis carduelis***Fairly common resident and passage migrant**

During January numbers seen were generally in single figures, though there were 12 at Beeding Brooks on the 12<sup>th</sup>, the same number recorded in a SWBS at Washington on 14<sup>th</sup>, and a total of 23 were trapped at The Mumbles on 21<sup>st</sup>. On Apr 8<sup>th</sup> 46 were noted heading west in 3.3 hours at Worthing beach. The first report of fledged young was from Waterhall on Jul 26<sup>th</sup> and two adults with two young were seen in bushes by a pond at the same site on Aug 8<sup>th</sup>. Larger groups were seen from August; monthly maxima were c60 in a single flock at Waterhall on 20<sup>th</sup>, 28 at Wild Park on the 21<sup>st</sup>, 30 at Steep Down on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 35 at Sheepcote Valley on the 31<sup>st</sup>. September numbers included 100 at Wild Park on the 2nd and 200 at Chantry Hill on the 4<sup>th</sup>. October flocks in three figures were 120 at Burnt house Bostal (Keymer) on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 100 at Sheepcote Valley on the 10<sup>th</sup>, while at Worthing beach the highest numbers recorded in the seawatching log were 474E in 1.8 hours on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 600E on the 24<sup>th</sup>. In 30.1 hours of watching at this site 1,395 birds were counted, compared with 1,727 in 30.7 hours in 2011. In November and December there were few reports of more than a dozen birds though 40 were at Steyning Round Hill on Nov 12<sup>th</sup>, 16 at Lancing Ring on the 11<sup>th</sup>, and 30 at Steep Down on Dec 26<sup>th</sup>. During the year 200 different birds were trapped at The Mumbles, comprising 177 new birds and 23



ringed in previous years, the oldest of which had been first captured on Mar 17<sup>th</sup> 2007. Most were found while artificial feeding was in place, and only singles were trapped on sessions between April and the end of September. An adult male ringed at the site on Jan 21<sup>st</sup> 2010 was controlled 17km away at Hardham on Mar 2<sup>nd</sup> this year. A reverse journey was made by another male ringed at Hardham on Apr 14<sup>th</sup>, which was trapped at The Mumbles on Dec 21<sup>st</sup> (Steyning RG data).

### **SISKIN** *Carduelis spinus*

#### **Fairly common passage migrant and local winter visitor**

There had only been one December report in 2011, and there were no sightings this year until a single bird at Woods Mill on both Apr 2<sup>nd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>. Other individuals were at Cissbury on April 13<sup>th</sup>, at Durrington on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, and at Lancing on May 12<sup>th</sup>. No more were seen until Aug 8<sup>th</sup> when ten were recorded at Lancing Ring. The next report, of a single bird, was at Cissbury on Sep 4<sup>th</sup>; other September records were mainly of one or two birds, but included eight at Sheepcote Valley on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16 at Wild Park on the 28<sup>th</sup>. The species was more numerous in October, with the largest groups recorded being 45E at Worthing beach on the 9<sup>th</sup>, the same number at Wild Park on the 10<sup>th</sup>, 40 at Cissbury on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 25 at Sheepcote Valley on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Five birds were trapped at The Mumbles and one at Ladywells. Records came from five sites in November and December, the final one being of 14 at Steep Down on Dec 26<sup>th</sup>.

### **LINNET** *Carduelis cannabina*

#### **Locally common resident and passage migrant**

During January and February the only reports of flocks comprising more than ten birds were of 25 at Round Hill on Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> and 40 at Findon Park on Feb 28<sup>th</sup>. Two pairs were seen at Henfield Levels on Mar 21<sup>st</sup>, ten birds were in a mixed flock with Goldfinches at Woods Mill on Apr 15<sup>th</sup> and three pairs were at Sheepcote Valley on the 21<sup>st</sup>. A total of 60 found at Burnthouse Bostal (Keymer) on Jul 22<sup>nd</sup> were in groups of five or six, so likely to be families. Flocks reported in August were 120 at Chantry Hill and 65 at Steep Down on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 40 at Cissbury on the 15<sup>th</sup>. In September two flocks, totalling 70 birds, were seen at Clayton Windmills on the 9<sup>th</sup>. Burnthouse Bostal (Keymer) held the largest flock of the year on Oct 4<sup>th</sup>, when 300 were found. Forty-five flew E at Worthing beach in 1.8 hours on Oct 24<sup>th</sup>, but in the remaining 28 hours of sea-watching there that month only one more was seen. There were seven more reports during November and December; 20 at Lancing Ring on Nov 14<sup>th</sup> and 12 at Steep Down on Dec 1<sup>st</sup> were the only ones in double figures, and numbers were much lower than in the same period in 2011.

### **LESSER REDPOLL** *Carduelis cabaret*

#### **Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor**

There were only three records in the early part of the year; two were in a garden in Henfield on Jan 10<sup>th</sup>, three flew north at Durrington on Mar 25<sup>th</sup> and one was in a High Salvington garden the same day. From then until the end of September when one was at Wild Park, a single bird at Portslade on Jul 21<sup>st</sup> was the only sighting. A group was regularly seen at Wild Park in early October, with a maximum of 14 on the 10<sup>th</sup>, but none were reported at the site after that date. A total of 43 new birds were trapped at the three ringing sites during October to December, 15 at Cissbury on Nov 11<sup>th</sup> being the maximum for any one day. Two birds ringed during 2011 were controlled elsewhere, one in Hertfordshire in December and the second in Belgium on Feb 22<sup>nd</sup> (Steyning RG data). In

December records from six sites included ten birds at Clayton Windmills on 21<sup>st</sup> and 25 birds at Park Brow on 22<sup>nd</sup>, greater numbers than in December 2011.

#### **COMMON CROSSBILL** *Loxia curvirostra*

##### **Scarce visitor, more common in irruption years**

There were few records in 2012, the first being a single bird flying over a garden in Edburton on Jun 19<sup>th</sup>. A group of eight flew east at Wild Park on Jul 26<sup>th</sup>, two flew over Mill Hill on Aug 14<sup>th</sup> and single bird was heard at the Cissbury ringing site on the 21<sup>st</sup>. In September two were recorded at Wild Park on three different days, with singles at Cissbury on two days plus two birds on the 7<sup>th</sup> and five flew over Edburton on Sep 9<sup>th</sup>. The only report in the final quarter of the year was of five at Wild Park on Oct 21<sup>st</sup>.

#### **BULLFINCH** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

##### **Fairly common resident**

To the end of April records had been received from 14 sites, mostly of single birds though three were seen at Newtimber Hill on Jan 21<sup>st</sup>, at Woodmancote on the 28<sup>th</sup> and on Henfield Levels on Feb 23<sup>rd</sup>. Two males seen in a scrubby field near Patcham (Brighton) was the first time the observer had recorded the species at this site. Numbers found at both of the Steyning RG sites this year were well under half those of 2011. At the Mumbles where 26 were trapped in 2011 there were only seven different birds, one of which had been ringed the previous year, and of these four were young birds. At Cissbury 21 different birds were handled, compared with 49 in 2011, but only nine were young birds, the first of which was ringed on Aug 11<sup>th</sup>. At least one juvenile bird was reported at Wild Park on Aug 19<sup>th</sup>, suggesting successful breeding at the site. Reports continued until the end of the year from Beeding Brooks, Beeding Cement Works, Cissbury, Findon, Ladywells and Pyecombe, with the final record being a first year bird ringed at The Mumbles on Dec 30<sup>th</sup>.

#### **HAWFINCH** *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

##### **Rare passage migrant**

Three were seen heading west near Cissbury on Aug 9<sup>th</sup>. This was the only report in the year, the first since 2008. This species has been recorded in six of the 13 years of this century.

#### **SNOW BUNTING** *Plectrophenax nivalis*

##### **Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor**

Two long staying birds at Widewater from 2011 were joined by a third from Jan 14<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> and were last recorded on Feb 23<sup>rd</sup>.

#### **YELLOWHAMMER** *Emberiza citrinella*

##### **Locally common resident**

Records came from 37 sites. They were reported from five locations in January, all on the Downs, with 32 at Round Hill by far the largest count. This site held the maximum numbers in all months with the exception of May and July when none were logged. However, ten in Jun and 13 again in August suggests breeding occurred there. Steep Down and Beeding Brooks both held birds in nine of the 12 months and at these sites as well as at Cissbury where a female was seen carrying nest material, breeding was probably attempted. Burnthouse Bostal (Keymer) also looked a good contender with seven in June and 14 in July, followed by ten in October.

At the year-end largest counts were 55 at Round Hill and 13 at Beeding Brooks. Yellowhammers were a garden visitor to Woodmancote. Three were ringed; two adults at The Mumbles and an immature bird at Cissbury.

#### **REED BUNTING** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

##### **Locally common resident**

It would appear that only trapping, combined with regularly stocked feeders, reveals the true abundance of this species. No less than 172 different birds were caught at The Mumbles in 38 sessions over the year of which 139 were new and 33 had been previously ringed. Maximum count was 37 on Feb 19<sup>th</sup>. Being adjacent to a reed-bed no doubt had a bearing on this total. No site counts exceeded the six at Beeding Brooks on Jul 15<sup>th</sup>, Steyning Levels on Nov 27<sup>th</sup> and five at Woods Mill on Jun 5<sup>th</sup> that included four fledglings. The remaining fourteen localities held from one to four birds.

#### **CORN BUNTING** *Emberiza calandra*

##### **Fairly common but local resident**

The two sites holding the majority of birds were Steep Down and Round Hill. At the former, 40 were counted on Jan 11<sup>th</sup>, 15 on Feb 26<sup>th</sup> and 25 on Jun 26<sup>th</sup> and Aug 7<sup>th</sup>. At the latter, peak days were Aug 18<sup>th</sup> with 18 and Oct 28<sup>th</sup> with 22. Forty were at Mile Oak on May 17<sup>th</sup> and at Edburton on Aug 10<sup>th</sup>. At Burnthouse Bostal (Keymer) ten on Jun 17<sup>th</sup> and 11 there on Jul 22<sup>nd</sup> were likely breeders in addition to the 15 sites holding birds in June and July out of 26 in total during the year.

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## **ESCAPES AND FERAL BIRDS 2012**

#### **Helmeted Guineafowl**

One to three at Ladywells between Feb 12<sup>th</sup> and Sep 1<sup>st</sup>.

#### **Muscovy Duck**

One at Widewater on Jan 25<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Red-breasted Goose**

One on four dates between Dec 13<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> at Beeding Brooks.

#### **Saker Falcon**

One at Steyning on Mar 21<sup>st</sup>.

## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE OF SUMMER MIGRANTS 2012

Species	Arrival		Departure	
	Date	Location	Date	Location
Garganey	Mar 10	Worthing beach	-	-
Manx Shearwater	Apr 25	Worthing beach	Oct 18	Worthing beach
Osprey	May 3	Worthing	Oct 10	Shoreham
Marsh Harrier	-	-	Oct 7	Goring Gap
Hobby	Apr 20	Mill Hill	Oct 10	Wild Park
Whimbrel	Mar 11	Hove	Aug 23	Lancing
Arctic Skua	Apr 14	Worthing beach	Nov 3	Worthing beach
Pomarine Skua	Apr 25	Worthing beach	Oct 1	Worthing beach
Sandwich Tern	Mar 10	Ferring	Oct 13	Worthing beach
Common Tern	Apr 14	Worthing beach	Oct 16	Worthing beach
Little Tern	Apr 11	Worthing beach	-	-
Black Tern	Apr 23	Worthing beach	Sep 23	Worthing beach
Turtle Dove	Apr 17	Worthing	Aug 14	Woods Mill
Cuckoo	Apr 16	Waterhall	Jul 24	Woods Mill
Swift	Apr 16	Waterhall	Sep 9	Durrington
Sand Martin	Mar 26	Worthing beach	Oct 13	Ferring Rife
Swallow	Mar 16	Oreham Common	Nov 15	Goring beach
House Martin	Apr 5	Woods Mill	Nov 5	Wild Park
Tree Pipit	Apr 13	Cissbury	Sep 15	Sheepcote Valley
Yellow Wagtail	Apr 1	Worthing beach	Oct 20	Brighton
Nightingale	Apr 7	Woods Mill	Aug 18	Cissbury
Common Redstart	Apr 12	Cissbury	Dec 26	Lancing
Whinchat	Apr 24	Ferring Rife	Oct 27	Brighton
Wheatear	Mar 15	Kithurst Hill	Oct 26	Worthing beach
Ring Ouzel	Apr 7	Shoreham	Oct 28	Round Hill
Grasshopper Warbler	May 13	Beeding Brooks	Sep 6	Cissbury
Sedge Warbler	Apr 11	Ladywells	Sep 13	Sheepcote Valley
Reed Warbler	Apr 8	Woods Mill	Sep 22	The Mumbles
Lesser Whitethroat	Apr 22	Oreham Common	Sep 22	Brighton
Whitethroat	Apr 14	Steyning Round Hill and Woods Mill	Sep 23	Beeding Brooks
Garden Warbler	May 2	Poynings	Sep 9	Cissbury
Willow Warbler	Mar 31	The Mumbles	Sep 10	Steep Down
Spotted Flycatcher	May 4	Goring Gap	Oct 10	Ladywells
Pied Flycatcher	-	-	Sep 25	Hove

## RINGING REPORT FOR 2012

After the superlative year for local ringing in 2011 it was almost inevitable that 2012 would be disappointing. A wet and windy summer not only caused many species to have a poor breeding season but also reduced opportunities for ringing. Although there was a 43% reduction on 2011 the year total of 3,336 was well above the average 2,746 for the years since the Society's inception in 1953 and ranked 18<sup>th</sup> of the 60 years of records. As usual most birds were trapped in mist nets and ringed as fledged birds but 84 (2.5%) of 10 different species were ringed as nestlings; these comprised mainly Blue Tits (35), Barn Owls (26), Great Tits (8) and Nuthatches (7).

The pattern of recent years was maintained with the Steyning Ringing Group (SRG) ringing about 70% of the area total; a portion which remains remarkably constant from one year to the next. The group, including Phil and Brian Clay, Val Bentley, Ralph Hartfree, Matt Aeberhard and Tom Flower, operated their usual two sites at Cissbury and The Mumbles, Steyning. The mist-netting at Phil Clay's Mumbles reserve was the most productive location with a total of 1,473 including large numbers of Blue Tits (221), Blackcaps (194) and Goldfinches (176) but also the area's only Water Rail, Sedge Warblers, two Common Nightingales, Coal Tit and Grey Wagtail. Blackcap (203) and Chiffchaff (127) were the leading species from the ringing on the northern slope of Cissbury where the total of 828 also included a Nuthatch and four Common Redstarts. In the Ladywell valley the team, comprising John Newnham, John Crix, Janet Derricott, Chrissi White, Adam Webster and Sue Walsh also experienced a marked decline from 2012 with a total of 711. Here too Blue Tit (114), Blackcap (70) and Chiffchaff (65) were the most frequently caught species but a single Barn Swallow and Jackdaw were the only ones trapped in the area. Pam Mears ringing on a downland site near Pyecombe added 197 to the area total and this included the first Pallas's Leaf Warbler to be ringed locally. On a more mundane note she also contributed the only House Sparrow and Linnet for the year. Barrie Watson joined in the ringing at Ladywell on several occasions and he also ringed 109 birds, including all the Barn Owls, to contribute to the grand total for the year. Finally 18 birds were ringed in the author's West Worthing garden.

Along with a decline in the number of birds ringed there were five fewer species trapped and **Table A** shows the numbers of each of the 50 species ringed in the area during 2012. Despite this there were still five species, indicated with an asterisk, where an area record was either created or equalled. Of the 44 species ringed in both 2011 and 2012 nearly 80% (35) were ringed in lower numbers presumably related to poor success during the breeding season. Apart from those species marked by an asterisk just two species, Common Redstart and Jay, bucked this trend but both of these are normally ringed in insufficient numbers in this area to be significant.

Right

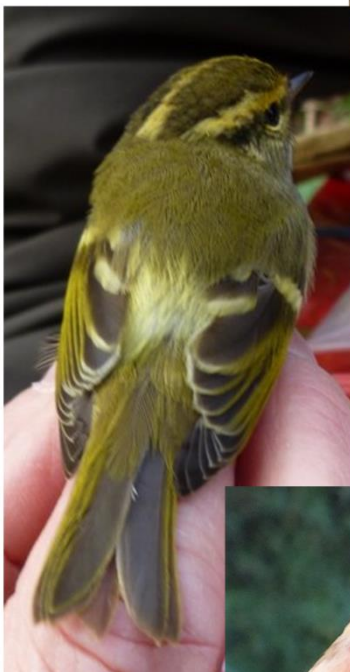
Black-headed  
Gulls  
by  
Janet Derricott



Below

Purple  
Sandpiper  
by  
Dorian Mason





Above top left and right -  
Pallas's Leaf Warbler at Pyecombe by Ann Hasler

Above right – Lesser Redpoll at Cissbury by Val Bentley

**Table A – List of Species ringed in 2012.**

Sparrowhawk	4	Long-tailed Tit	93	Spotted Flycatcher	4
Kestrel	2	Pallas's Leaf Warbler	*1	Robin	137
Water Rail	*1	Chiffchaff	331	Common Nightingale	2
Woodpigeon	2	Willow Warbler	136	Common Redstart	6
Barn Owl	28	Blackcap	478	Dunnock	94
Kingfisher	3	Garden Warbler	29	House Sparrow	1
Green Woodpecker	7	Lesser Whitethroat	10	Grey Wagtail	1
Great Spotted Woodpecker	*19	Common Whitethroat	83	Chaffinch	155
Magpie	2	Sedge Warbler	10	Greenfinch	102
Jay	6	Reed Warbler	79	Goldfinch	211
Jackdaw	1	Nuthatch	*13	Siskin	6
Goldcrest	128	Treecreeper	4	Linnet	1
Firecrest	4	Wren	89	Lesser Redpoll	43
Blue Tit	427	Common Starling	9	Bullfinch	26
Great Tit	172	Blackbird	159	Yellowhammer	3
Coal Tit	1	Song Thrush	65	Reed Bunting	*139
Barn Swallow	1	Redwing	8	<b>Total</b>	<b>3,336</b>

Each of the ringing teams regularly report and discuss their activities on the Society's Yahoo group site and these details remain available for interested readers.

This is now the 60<sup>th</sup> ringing report to be published by the society and, for the most part, the records are fairly complete; therefore it is perhaps interesting to reflect briefly. A grand total of 165,308 birds have been ringed with an annual range of just 256 in 1953 to 6,168 in 1981 and an overall average of 2,755 birds per year. Over this period 122 different species have been trapped; this too varies from year to year from just 23 in 1953 to 62 in 1975 and an average of 48, very similar to 2012. Clearly there is a different mix of species depending on ringing activities in the area thus few gulls have been ringed in recent years and it is even longer since shore waders appeared on the local ringing lists. Twenty species, not all rarities, have only been ringed once in the area and only 12 species, shown in the following table, have been ringed in each of the 60 years.

Blue Tit	Common Whitethroat	Robin
Great Tit	Wren	Dunnock
Chiffchaff	Blackbird	Chaffinch
Willow Warbler	Song Thrush	Greenfinch

As expected nine of these species are amongst the top 15 in terms of numbers of birds ringed and the following table shows those species where approximately 4,000 or more have been ringed locally. It will still be some years before the results of the winter gull ringing are overtaken by either Blue Tit or Blackcap!

Black-headed Gull	19,071	Willow Warbler	9,543	Common Starling	5,014
Blue Tit	15,848	Great Tit	6,698	House Martin	4,991
Blackcap	14,878	Greenfinch	6,531	Reed Warbler	4,719
Chiffchaff	9,959	Robin	5,669	Song Thrush	4,065
Blackbird	9,664	Dunnock	5,135	Goldfinch	3,959



During this time not far short of 100 people have been involved with local ringing; many seriously committed, other training in the skills before moving on whilst some have come along only for a relatively short period. Four local ringers are still providing regular local records after 40 or more years and another three current ringers have at least twenty years history.

### Recoveries and Controls

The British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) has continued to present both national and county ringing statistics and display a good selection of recovery information on its website (<http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/ringing/publications/online-ringing-reports>).

Amongst the tables there will be other movements and recoveries from within our recording area but the following is a selection either from this website or reported by local ringers. With about 60 recoveries and movements of ringed birds recorded this was a good year.

An adult **Greylag Goose** ringed at Sevenoaks Wildlife reserve in June 2005 was found, freshly shot, at Small Dole on Nov 16<sup>th</sup> 2012; this is very similar to a recovery report last year and as this species increases in number in the county perhaps more fairly local movements will be recorded. A few **Gannets** ringed elsewhere have been found on local beaches and one ringed as a nestling at Les Etacs, Alderney in 2006 and found long dead at Hove on Jul 7<sup>th</sup> 2012 comes from one of the nearest gannetries to Sussex. Few seabirds, apart from gulls, have been ringed in the county so most information from ringing, like the Gannet, derives from birds ringed elsewhere and subsequently found locally. Two **Shags** ringed as nestlings earlier in 2012, one on the Farne Islands and the other on the Isle of May, were found at Brighton Marina later in the year; the first detected from colour rings recorded in October and the second found dead in November.

Two locally nesting female **Peregrines** which were ringed in 2011 were both found dead in May 2012, one only four km from the ringing location and the other at Goodwood Park. By the time this report is read it may be known whether new females had been recruited to these eyries. Two late reports involve species not previously referred to in the context of ringing recoveries; a male **Water Rail**, ringed in the Pas de Calais, France in October 2009 was hit by a car in Bramber on Mar 4<sup>th</sup> 2010 and an adult **Sanderling**, colour ringed in Iceland in May 2010, was seen amongst the waders at Goring Gap in February 2011 and again on Hayling Island, Hampshire in September 2011. A **Barn Owl** hatched at Woods Mill in 2012 was found breeding 6km south.

Ringed gulls continue to generate some interest; the long saga of **Black-headed Gull** EP36792 has, so far, not provided a chapter for 2012 although, since the last report, it was seen back in Denmark in April 2011. More typical was notification of one ringed on Sompting refuse tip in December 1989 and seen in Sweden on Apr 6<sup>th</sup> 2012, 22¼ years after ringing and 1,221 km away. Far more unusual, and another area first, was a **Little Gull** ringed in Sweden as a nestling in June 2010 and found dead by a pond in Worthing during cold weather in February 2012. All the reports of **Herring Gulls** were produced from colour rings being read in the field. A bird nesting on a West Worthing roof-top and seen regularly between April and June 2012 (and again in 2013) was originally ringed as an

adult at a landfill site on Guernsey. The ringer commented “Amazingly it is the first observation since ringing in June 2009! It is very interesting that this gull is nesting on a roof top in Worthing as, with very few exceptions, gulls have not yet acquired the roof nesting habit in Guernsey.” Others have been seen sooner after ringing and have developed a history; one initially ringed in October 2011 at King’s Lynn, Norfolk was seen on the River Adur in April 2012 and then in the Pas de Calais, France in October 2012. Another gull ringed in Gloucester in November 2005 was seen at Ryde, Isle of Wight in August 2008 and November 2011, Goring-by-Sea in June 2012 and finally at Varnham, Horsham in December 2012. A **Great Black-backed Gull**, colour ringed as a nestling in Norway in July 2010, was identified at Shoreham on Mar 18<sup>th</sup> 2012 revealing a fairly typical movement for this species.

Not so typical and perhaps the most unexpected recovery was a young female **Firecrest** which was ringed at Steyning on Sep 28<sup>th</sup> 2012 and was caught by a ringer operating near Land’s End (Cornwall) on Oct 21<sup>st</sup>, nearly 400 km WSW and just three weeks later. In most recent years there have been reports of **Blue Tits** moving short distances; 2012 was no exception as an adult ringed at Tandridge, Surrey in December 2011 was regularly retrapped at The Mumbles between Nov 3<sup>rd</sup> and Dec 21<sup>st</sup>.

Warblers traditionally provide most recoveries in these reports and the details of those in 2012 are tabulated below. Three recoveries for Chiffchaff were notified during the year; with 19 Sussex ringed Chiffchaffs subsequently found in France this is the most common foreign country for this species to be recovered in.

08/09/2012	Juv	Steyning	29//09/2012	Messanges, Landes, France	791 km S
26/08/2012	Juv	Llangorse Lake, Powis	13/10/2012	Cissbury	231 km ESE
14/04/2011	1 <sup>st</sup> yr	Ladywell	01/07/2012	Cissbury (also 06/09/2012)	6 km NVV

As previous stated it is not surprising that several movements of **Blackcaps** were recorded, large numbers are ringed and all are shown in the following table. Twenty two Sussex ringed Blackcaps have been recovered in Algeria and 39 in France but only eight in the Netherlands. Only Spain (42) and Morocco (40) account for more county recoveries of Blackcaps than the two first cited nations.



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30/04/2012	1 <sup>st</sup> yr F	Steyning	17/02/2012	Tizi Ouzou, Algeria	1607 km SSE
30/08/2011	1 <sup>st</sup> yr M	Charente-Maritime, France	19/05/2012	Ladywell	551 km N
29/09/2011	1 <sup>st</sup> yr F	Cissbury	01/07/2012	Groningen, Netherlands	536 km ENE
31/08/2011	1 <sup>st</sup> yr F	Ladywell	25/04/2012	Saint-Malo, France	272 km SSW
21/06/2012	Juv	Rutland Water, Rutland	06/09/2012	Cissbury	210 km S
06/09/2012	FG M	Tattingstone, Suffolk	29/09/2012	Cissbury	162km SW
24/09/2011	1 <sup>st</sup> yr F	Sandwich Bay, Kent	24/02/2012	West Worthing	135 km WSW
01/09/2012	FG F	Steyning	07/04/2012	Rye Meads, Hoddesdon, Herts	101 km NNE
14/06/2012	Juv	Icklesham, East Sussex	06/09/2012	Cissbury	74 km W
28/07/2012	Juv	Steyning (until 18/08/2012)	06/09/2012	Silwood Park, Windsor	62 km NNW
15/07/2011	Juv M	Ladywell	08/05/2012	Cissbury	6 km NW
27/08/2012	1 <sup>st</sup> yr F	Steyning (also 01/09/2012)	11/09/2012	Cissbury	5km WSW

Movements of **Common Whitethroats** are less frequently reported. The individual which switched from Ladywell to Cissbury was the male of a breeding pair in the centre of the former site. Perhaps it also attempted breeding at Cissbury.

11/08/2010	1 <sup>st</sup> yr	Worplesdon, Surrey	01/09/2012	Cissbury	46 km SSE
19/05/2012	Ad M	Ladywell (also 29/05 & 05/06)	26/06/2012	Cissbury (also 10/07 and 01/09)	6 km NW

**Reed Warblers** regularly feature in these reports and those tabulated below, in descending order of distance between ringing and second capture site, are fairly typical.

28/06/2008	Juv	Steyning	04/05/2012	Dorchester (Dorset)	151 km W
12/06/2009	Ad male	Rye Meads, Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire	02/06/2012	Steyning	101 km SSW
25/06/2012	Juv	Ladywell	03/08/2012	Icklesham (Sussex)	70 km E
16/08/2011	Juv	East Bedfont Lakes, Greater London	08/09/2012	Steyning	62 km S

Few **Redwings** are trapped in the area so one found in Portugal in February 2012 having been ringed on Cissbury in November 2010 was of interest. Redwings tend to spend subsequent winters in widely different areas and this is the third Sussex ringed Redwing to be recovered in Portugal. A male **Rock Pipit**, wearing colour rings, was seen on Worthing beach on Nov 29<sup>th</sup> 2012 and had been originally ringed in More og Romsdal, Norway on Mar 23<sup>rd</sup> 2012. Two male **Goldfinches** exchanged locations as one ringed at Steyning on Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> 2010 was controlled at Hardham, near Pulborough on Mar 2<sup>nd</sup> 2012 and one ringed at Hardham in April 2012 was at Steyning in December. The call-back luring of first year **Lesser Redpolls** into mist-nets at Cissbury during October and November 2011

produced two recoveries; one from Wibrin, Luxemburg, Belgium in February 2012 and the other from Elstree, Hertfordshire in December 2012. Thirty five of the 42 Sussex ringed Lesser Redpolls which have been recovered abroad have come from Belgium.

Three **Reed Buntings** ringed at Icklesham, East Sussex were subsequently controlled at Steyning; two ringed on Jul 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> 2010 and with ring numbers one apart were controlled on Feb 19<sup>th</sup> and Dec 8<sup>th</sup> respectively whilst another ringed on Sep 28<sup>th</sup> 2009 was at The Mumbles on Oct 20<sup>th</sup> 2012. There were, as usual other local recoveries and like previous years, there were several birds retrapped in successive years at each of the regular ringing sites; many of these have been referred to in the regular bulletins posted by the ringing teams onto the Society's Yahoo site during the year.

Regularly updated information about the national ringing scheme can be found at <http://www.bto.org.uk/volunteer-surveys/ringing/ringing-scheme>.

John Newnham

**Reference:** -Robinson, R.A. & Clark, J.A.(2013) The Online Ringing Report: Bird ringing in Britain & Ireland in 2012 BTO, Thetford (<http://www.bto.org/ringing-report>, created on 15-August-2013)

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## LADYWELL RINGING 2012

The percentage reduction (2012 vs. 2011) in the total of new birds caught at Ladywell reflected a national picture of a poor breeding season due to adverse summer weather:

Year	No. of sessions	Total new birds	Total Retraps/ Controls	Overall total	Average catch per session
2010	35	1,202	689	1,891	54.0
2011	40	1,602	1,116	2,718	68.0
2012	32	711	739	1,450	45.3

With productivity per box significantly down from the previous year, the nest boxes monitored by the Ladywell ringing team provided a similar picture:

Year	No. of boxes	Boxes occupied	Average no. fledglings per occupied box
2010	23	11	6.8
2011	23	18	5.6
2012	24	14	3.4

Here the only good news was that in 2012 one of the Ladywell nest boxes was occupied by a family of Nuthatches for the first time.

But weather and breeding productivity aside - and the affected species will surely bounce back - the Ladywell story for 2012 is generally good, particularly on the training/personal development front:

- In February Sue Walsh was formally taken on as a Trainee and the fact that by May she was off ringing in NE Turkey was a clear indication that she was not planning to waste any time progressing as a ringer.
- In July, after a period of rigorous assessment ringing with moult specialist Steve Norman in Gibraltar, John Crix's application for a full 'A' ringing permit was approved by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO).
- In October Chrissi White obtained her intermediate 'C' permit and by the end of the year had fledged from the Ladywell nest to concentrate on solo ringing activities.

In addition to these individual successes, in September the Ladywell team's initiative to provide Lancing College students with the opportunity to assist with ringing - and thus gain valuable CV-enhancing fieldwork experience - gained major momentum with the establishment of a term-time Wednesday afternoon Field Ornithology group. This enabled five Lower Sixth-formers to participate in ringing sessions for the remainder of the year and into 2013.

One knock-on effect of this increased student involvement was the realisation that young people were probably not well equipped to cope with the damp and cold often 'enjoyed' by team members during autumn and winter ringing sessions. The purchase and deployment of a wood-burning/charcoal brazier was an initial part solution and a wind-resistant pop-up gazebo was later to make a welcome appearance in the valley. Some members of the team still live in hope that we shall eventually obtain permission to establish something more solid and weather-resistant - i.e. a ringing hut - in the valley.

On the science front, throughout the year the team placed a special focus on evaluating a method of determining the age of Treecreepers originally published by Finnish ornithologists Suorsa and Hakkarainen. Albeit with a fairly small sample, we were able to confirm this method and now regularly use it. Coincidentally in 2012 the BTO started an initiative to encourage ringers to explore such 'new' methods of determining species age and sex - with a view to updating the work by Lars Svensson (last revised in 1992) which is currently our main reference source.

In April/May the team undertook an RSPB Volunteer & Farm Alliance bird population survey of a number of square kilometres of Applesham farm land. The Ladywell ringing site is partly on Applesham land but the area we were asked to survey is up on the Downs and rich in species such as Wheatear, Corn Bunting, Skylark and Meadow Pipit - very different from Ladywell catches. For some members of the team this was a pleasant introduction to survey work.

In October the first Siskin ever caught in the valley brought the total of species ringed at Ladywell to 50. Total number of species ringed in 2012 was 38.

In summary, 2012 was disappointing in terms of catch sizes - it can be quite demoralising to spend upwards of an hour rigging nets and then a further three or four hours mainly standing around hoping the catch will reach double figures. The weather was generally also pretty miserable. But this was very much outweighed by the team's emphasis on education and personal development: our enjoyable interaction with the College students; our members' development as ringers; even the Treecreeper study, which is indicative of an ethos of enquiry and openness to new ideas.

It is almost a tradition to conclude this annual report with large thank-yous to our landlords, Jon Hutcheon (Lancing College Farm Manager) and Hugh Passmore (who farms Applesham), for letting us operate the ringing site on their land for yet another year. May the pleasant and productive relationship we have with Jon and Hugh continue for many years to come! And this year the Ladywell team would also like to extend its thanks to Phillippa Faulkner (Lancing College Head of Biology) who played a major enabling role in the Field Ornithology initiative, and also to Mark Taylor and Sue Davies (from the College's Design & Technology department) who provided considerable week by week assistance with this project.

John Crix

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## **RINGING AT CISSBURY 2012**

After last year's euphoria of reaching our highest total of birds ringed at the site since 1993, hopes were high for 2012, but the poor weather during the breeding season led to fewer numbers of both resident and migrant species at the site.

Ringling at Cissbury does not continue through the whole year, but commences in April or May, and the group operates on an unofficial Constant Effort Site (CES) basis (for explanation re CES, see 2010 Report) until the end of August, after which CES constraints no longer apply. No preliminary visit was made, and so the first ringing attempt on May 8th was in the first Constant Effort period. It resulted in the capture of 50 birds including a Robin, a Blackbird and a Song Thrush, all ringed as first year birds in 2007, and a Blackcap ringed as an adult female in 2007, hence at least six years old. Another Blackcap found that day had been ringed as a juvenile the previous year at Ladywells and other migrants ringed were six Chiffchaffs, two Garden Warblers and four Whitethroats. The session also brought our first ever spring Treecreeper; normally we only see them when the juveniles start to explore the local area in the autumn.

The second CES session was carried out on May 13<sup>th</sup>, when two Lesser Whitethroats were ringed and of five Blackcaps retrapped one was originally ringed in 2007, one in 2008 and one in 2009, but were not regular captures, so probably returning birds using the same migration route as in previous years. At the end of May a small surprise in the nets was a male Goldcrest; though we have ringed over 1700 of this species, this was only the third spring adult captured. Four Blackcaps, one Robin and one Whitethroat were females with

brood patches, and one male Blackbird turned up for the first time since being ringed at the site in September 2008.

The session on Jun 9<sup>th</sup> had to be hastily curtailed when orienteers hurtled through the site, probably not helping the efforts of our nesting birds who had already been trying to contend with a period of wet and windy weather. However, another Lesser Whitethroat was ringed, together with the first juvenile, a Blackbird, and the following week juvenile Robins and Whitethroat were trapped while the first young Blue Tits, Chiffchaffs and Dunnocks were found on Jun 26<sup>th</sup>.

A rare sunny day on July 1<sup>st</sup> brought the first young Blackcaps and Long-tailed Tits, and we were very pleased to hear a Quail calling from the nearby fields. In the rest of July four more sessions were held, although one had to be cut short; numbers caught were well down on our usual July expectations, with an average of only 27 trapped, compared with an average of 48 in the years 2000-2011, which ranged from a low of 26 in 2008 to 73 in 2004. A female Blackcap, ringed as a first year bird on Aug 15<sup>th</sup> 2006, was retrapped on Jul 24<sup>th</sup> and on the same date the first passage Willow Warblers arrived. For the second year running this latter species was not present at the site during the breeding season, as it had been all other years since 1984.

In August four visits were made, with similar results to those from July, in that the average catch of 42 was even lower than in 2008 when it was 45, and significantly less than the preceding 12 years average of 67. Aug 21<sup>st</sup> produced a total of 80 birds including the largest catch of Willow Warblers for the year at 27, and one of the five Long-tailed Tits retrapped had originally been ringed in 2009, a fairly venerable age for these birds.

September is usually the busiest month, with passage Blackcaps in abundance, but the run of smaller catches continued, again likely to be due to the effect of poor weather on breeding attempts. Average September catches from 2000-2011 were 95 per session, but this year were only 48. The maximum daily "new bird" total for Blackcap was 29 on Sep 11<sup>th</sup> and for Chiffchaff just 15 on 29<sup>th</sup>; the totals for both species were one-third of those in 2011.

#### **Totals of Four Main Passage Species (as percentages of total number of birds ringed)**

<b>Years</b>	<b>Blackcap</b>	<b>Chiffchaff</b>	<b>Whitethroat</b>	<b>Willow Warbler</b>
2000-2004	25.5	13.7	6.9	6.8
2005-2009	30.6	15.9	5.0	5.8
2010	25.7	11.8	8.3	11.5
2011	34.9	20.9	5.4	5.7
2012	24.1	15.3	4.5	7.0

Some of our residents suffered too. We trapped eight adult female Bullfinches, three with brood patches, during the breeding season, but only nine juveniles/first years were ringed, compared with 35 in 2011. Seven female Blackbirds with brood patches were found, and 18 juveniles, five of which were caught again before the end of the season; interestingly no new young Blackbirds were caught between 6<sup>th</sup> September and 7<sup>th</sup> November, when individuals presumably started to move in from other areas. We found just one female

Robin with a brood patch, but there must have been others there somewhere, as before the end of August 26 juveniles were ringed. Two female Dunnocks, possibly being looked after by five males, produced at least 13 juveniles, while two female Song Thrushes brought off at least nine young.

Apart from Willow Warblers the only non-resident summer visitor caught during passage was Redstart, of which there were four between Aug 24<sup>th</sup> and Sep 1<sup>st</sup>. The autumn however brought more visitors, in the form of 76 new Goldcrests between Sep 6<sup>th</sup> and our last session on Nov 17<sup>th</sup>, plus 34 new Lesser Redpolls, one Redwing and two Firecrests, one of which had been ringed exactly one year and one day previously, and was at the same net site as before.

Residents ringed in small numbers were one each of Green Woodpecker, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Treecreeper and Jay. A Great Spotted Woodpecker ringed in October 2009 was retrapped, as were a Green Woodpecker ringed as a first year bird in August the previous year and a Treecreeper first seen as a juvenile on Jul 28<sup>th</sup> 2011.

Of the returning Blackcaps ringed more than a year earlier, nine were from 2010, four from 2009, two from 2007 and the faithful female who was ringed in 2006 was the oldest known individual trapped during the year. Long-lived Blackbirds consisted of one ringed in 2007, two from 2008 and three from 2009.

Predictably, with the Ladywells team operating slightly further east, several of our controlled birds came from there; one each of Blackbird, Whitethroat, Blackcap and Chiffchaff. From further away were a Whitethroat ringed in Surrey in 2010, Blackcaps from Rutland Water in Suffolk, and a Chiffchaff from Llangorse, Wales, all ringed earlier in the year. We also received the following reports of our birds which had been found elsewhere during the year. A Blackcap ringed on Sep 29<sup>th</sup> 2011 was controlled in the Netherlands on Jul 1<sup>st</sup>; two of the Lesser Redpolls from the previous year were controlled, one in Hertfordshire on Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>, the other in Luxembourg on Feb 22<sup>nd</sup>; sadly, a Redwing ringed on Nov 2<sup>nd</sup> 2010 was shot dead in Portugal on Feb 19<sup>th</sup>.

Almost all species were fewer in number than in 2011; the only exceptions for the more frequently ringed species were stable numbers of Blackbirds, Garden Warblers and Goldcrests, and a slight increase in Song Thrushes. One new species was added to the site list, a female Nuthatch ringed on Sep 29<sup>th</sup>.

The group carried out 28 sessions, eight fewer than the previous year, and in all 937 different birds were handled, of 29 species, consisting of 828 new birds and 109 from 2010 or earlier.

Ringers operating at Cissbury during the year were Val Bentley, Brian Clay, Phil Clay, Tom Flower and Ralph Hartfree, with additional help from Ed Tooth. We remain grateful to the National Trust for their permission to ring at the site, and to the owners of the track for allowing vehicular access.

Val Bentley

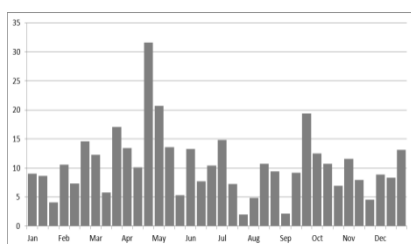


## WORTHING SEA-WATCHING REPORT FOR 2012

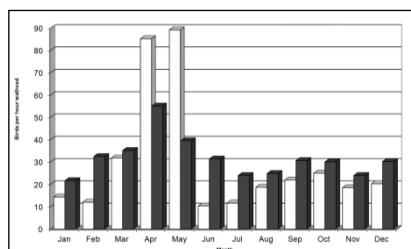
### Introduction

The sea between Worthing and Ferring was watched on 266 days with a total of 380 hours logged during 2012. Observations were recorded on 26 more days than in 2011 and comprised 28 more hours; overall an average of nearly 1½ hours for each day watched. The following table shows April was watched on all except two days and Figures 1 and 2 demonstrate, in keeping with other years, that the spring months were the best covered but clearly both April and May were watched for considerably fewer hours than the long term average whilst all the other months were better covered.

	<b>J</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>Total</b>
Days watched	22	25	26	28	22	24	18	22	18	23	19	19	266

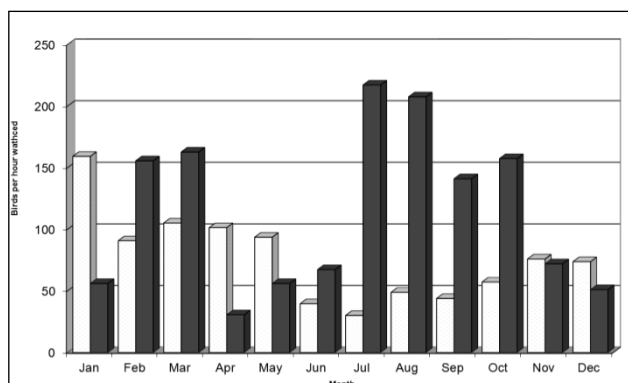


**Figure 1:-** The number of hours sea-watching at Worthing in 10-day periods during 2012.



**Figure 2:-** The monthly effort for 2012 (black) compared with the average for 1978 - 2011 (white).

Figure 3 shows that once again the numbers of birds recorded in April and May was lower than expected but considerably more movements recorded between June and October.



**Figure 3** The monthly rates of passage of all non-passerines at Worthing in birds/hour watched, 1978 - 2011 average (white) & 2012 (dark).

The following table presents the overall data in a different way and, like last year, the total of non-passerines recorded sits roughly in the middle of the order; 17<sup>th</sup> out of the 35 years of computed data held.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Hours watched	22	33	35	55	40	31	24	25	31	30	24	30	380
Total birds	1,215	5,727	2,217	5,211	4,328	1,727	1,194	1,011	1,544	2,103	2,054	2,556	30,887
Birds/hour	56	176	63	95	109	55	50	41	50	70	86	84	84

As usual, most observations took place from one of the shelters in West Worthing or from Goring and Ferring beaches where Clive Hope, Dorian Mason and Dave Smith regularly watched. As before occasional records were gleaned from the society's Yahoo group e-mails but often these lacked details of times, flight directions and only recorded some of the more interesting species. 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:- C.E.Hope, R.A.Ives, D.Mason, J.A.Newnham, D.I.Smith and R.Tofts.

## CHRONOLOGICAL ACCOUNT and DISCUSSION

The foregoing tables and graphs clearly show that the first winter period in the year can be interesting; in 2012 January was less productive, in terms of numbers of birds, than February. As usual the dominating species recorded at this time of year are divers, Gannets, Kittiwakes and auks with grebes and Red-breasted Mergansers on the sea. There were seven dates in February, in two distinct periods, when three figure counts of auks were recorded with the peaks being 804 (655 W and 149 E) on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 631 (603 W and 28 E) on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. In keeping with recent years Razorbills outnumbered Common Guillemots on the days when the birds were close enough to specifically identify. The highest count of Gannets was 377 on Feb 18<sup>th</sup> and the maximum number of Kittiwakes was a lowly 66 on Feb 22<sup>nd</sup>. Most divers were identified as Red-throated Divers with a peak count of 30 on Feb 11<sup>th</sup>. This species' prevalence is clearly demonstrated in the following table showing the combined total of all observations of flying and offshore birds.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Red-throated Diver	99	124	37	4	9
Black-throated Diver	7	2	-	4	5
Unidentified diver	3	6	3	26	-

Red-breasted Mergansers, feeding offshore, reached a peak of 119 on Feb 9<sup>th</sup> but had mainly dispersed by mid-March as the last high count of 60 was on 11<sup>th</sup>. Great Crested Grebes were also numerous during this period with 11 dates between Feb 6<sup>th</sup> and Mar 9<sup>th</sup> when more than 100 birds were seen culminating in a peak of on Mar 6<sup>th</sup>. Inevitably other scarcer grebes were seen at the same time; up to 3 Red-necked Grebes on 11 days between Feb 21<sup>st</sup> and Mar 19<sup>th</sup>; Slavonian Grebes on ten dates including ten birds on Mar 1<sup>st</sup> and a Black-necked Grebe on Feb 29<sup>th</sup>. More unusual birds encountered in the first winter period were a Goldeneye on Jan 1<sup>st</sup>, 18 Velvet Scoters flying west on the 9<sup>th</sup>, four Long-tailed Ducks flying west on the 12<sup>th</sup>, two more Goldeneyes on Feb 4<sup>th</sup> and five Avocets on Feb 27<sup>th</sup>.

It is often difficult to draw a clear line between the end of winter and beginning of spring but the sight of seven Garganey flying east on Mar 10<sup>th</sup> and parties of eastbound Brent Geese certainly heralded warmer weather. More typical harbingers of the spring were the first Northern Wheatear on Mar 17<sup>th</sup> and the first Sandwich Terns on the 24<sup>th</sup>. No large movements of wildfowl were seen; 460 and 365 Brent Geese on Mar 16<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> respectively were the best days and month totals of just 20 Common Scoters and single figures only for the marsh ducks tells the poor story. Perhaps the most exciting observation of the month was of three Spoonbills which flew east on Mar 22<sup>nd</sup>.

As usual the hours spent watching the sea increased through April and May with these not only being the best covered months in 2012 but also the months, bar February, when most birds were seen. The following table shows the totals for 16 regularly recorded species seen during the two main spring months (with the average 1978-2011 in brackets) and the peak count for these months. Those counts with more than 30% above the long-term average are shown in bold whilst those showing less than 70% of the long term averages are shown in italics and marked with an \*. At a glance the table shows more notably low figures than those that are above the long term average. A poor visible passage of waders contributed several examples of low numbers and the extraordinary seawatch of Apr 25<sup>th</sup> is very evident.

	<b>April Total</b>	<b>May Total</b>	<b>Apr/May max</b>
Divers all	33 (59)	14 (37)	10 on April 25 <sup>th</sup>
Brent Goose	141 *(514)	3 *(51)	71 on April 8 <sup>th</sup>
Common Scoter	387 (1,248)	649 (734)	282 on May 1 <sup>st</sup>
Velvet Scoter	4 *(18)	8 (8)	4 on May 1 <sup>st</sup>
Sanderling	14 *(84)	73 *(293)	28 on May 25 <sup>th</sup>
Dunlin	1 *(91)	76 (155)	60 on May 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Bar-tailed Godwit	305 *(1,243)	679 (826)	434 on May 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Whimbrel	55 *(269)	91 (222)	33 on May 3 <sup>rd</sup>
Pomarine Skua	8 (6)	0 *(30)	5 on April 30 <sup>th</sup>
Arctic Skua	<b>87 (30)</b>	4 *(35)	42 on April 25 <sup>th</sup>
Great Skua	<b>159 (9)</b>	<b>7 (4)</b>	107 on April 25 <sup>th</sup>
Little Gull	50 (41)	1 *(31)	48 on April 25 <sup>th</sup>
Sandwich Tern	386 *(1,386)	473 (855)	108 on May 1 <sup>st</sup>
Commic Tern	<b>2,024 (1,135)</b>	963 (2,530)	1,079 on April 25 <sup>th</sup>
Little Tern	14 *(82)	78 (233)	42 on May 1 <sup>st</sup>
Black Tern	<b>22 (5)</b>	0 (33)*	16 on April 25 <sup>th</sup>

The highlight of the month was the extraordinary passage of skuas noted as low pressure systems passed over southern England. These exceptional movements, particularly of Great Skuas, along the southeast coast resulted in record numbers being recorded not only locally but also in the rest of Sussex, Hampshire and Kent (British Birds 105: 626-629). However, Pomarine Skuas, a species normally encountered in more settled weather, were very scarce during the spring. Unusual records from these months included a Little Ringed Plover on Apr 8<sup>th</sup> and two Barnacle Geese on the 30<sup>th</sup>. Twenty one Northern Wheatears were watched arriving and feeding on the beach on Apr 3<sup>rd</sup> but later in the spring more atypical species of passerines were seen foraging amongst the sparse beach top vegetation including a Sedge Warbler, Common Whitethroat, Lesser Whitethroat and Whinchat on May 4<sup>th</sup>, a Garden Warbler on May 20<sup>th</sup> and, most extraordinary, a Tawny Pipit on the same day.

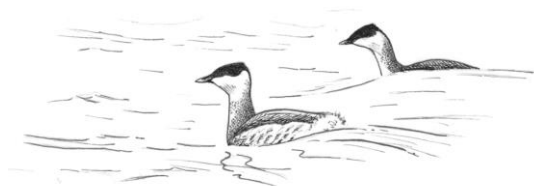
The seawatching effort often drops considerably in June but the figures and tables show that the sea was watched regularly, albeit for short periods, throughout most of the summer and early autumn with the effort in June and July being well above the average for the previous years. A Hobby arriving from the sea on Jun 4<sup>th</sup> and a Red-throated Diver on the 9<sup>th</sup> were unusual but the month was most notable for the number of Manx Shearwaters seen. During the month the species was seen on eight dates with totals of 96 E and 88W; the best count being 77 (70 W and 7 E) on the 24<sup>th</sup> and a further 59 were seen in July. A single Balearic Shearwater was seen on Jun 1<sup>st</sup> but no others were seen until five on Sep 23<sup>rd</sup>. Although Gannets were frequently seen offshore and at least 305 passed on Sep 11<sup>th</sup> there were no large seabird movements noted during the late summer and autumn. However surprises occurred; a juvenile Long-tailed Skua flew SE on Aug 29<sup>th</sup>, a massive count of 199 Mediterranean Gulls were on the beach between Goring and Ferring on Sep 20<sup>th</sup>, a juvenile Pomarine Skua flew west on Oct 1<sup>st</sup> and a flock of 60 Canada Geese flying west on Oct 31<sup>st</sup>.

Migrating passerines are often most obvious in the autumn; during 2012 numbers were not spectacular but the month totals recorded are shown in the following table.

	September	October		September	October	November
Sky Lark	0	28	Pied Wagtail	0	133	0
Sand Martin	2	1	Northern Wheatear	8	2	0
Barn Swallow	2,729	1,734	Common Starling	0	0	398
House Martin	1,220	295	Goldfinch	0	1,395	0
Meadow Pipit	189	335	Siskin	0	91	0
Yellow Wagtail	13	0	Linnet	0	46	0
Grey Wagtail	1	0	Lesser Redpoll	0	6	0

Two large movements of Kittiwakes occurred on Oct 31<sup>st</sup> (927 W) and Nov 3<sup>rd</sup> (464 W) but the main return passage of Brent Geese was clearly missed. An interesting westward movement of 61 Great Crested Grebes was seen on Dec 1<sup>st</sup> and on the 8<sup>th</sup> 256 Eurasian Wigeon, 175 Eurasian Teal, 33 Red-throated Divers and four Avocets flew west. The following day a Little Auk flew west. As usual the Christmas period produced some interesting birds as 427 Gannets and 233 Brent Geese were seen on Dec 24<sup>th</sup> and 109 Kittiwakes on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

John Newnham



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## GARDEN BIRD SURVEY 2012

The total number of members participating in the Garden Bird Survey this year remained steady at 31, with an average of 29 each quarter. However the number of different species seen was slightly down on 2011, at 54, and rather fewer than the bumper year of 2010 when 66 were recorded. As 2012 proved to be a poor breeding season, the number of migrants passing through was no doubt considerably reduced, so there would have been fewer chances of a casual sighting by our garden observers, and there were no records of migrant Spotted Flycatchers or Lesser Whitethroats this year. However, Bullfinch, Linnet and Lesser Redpoll all returned to the list, the first two species by both being recorded in just one week in one garden apiece, while Lesser Redpoll fared slightly better and turned up in one garden in the first quarter and two in the final one.

Listed below are the most frequent garden visitors for each quarter

### **First Quarter (January – March 2012)**

<b>Species (2011 place in brackets)</b>			<b>% of gardens used</b>	<b>Maximum number seen</b>	<b>Average seen per garden</b>
1=	Blackbird	(1=)	100	8	2.01
1=	Blue Tit	(1=)	100	10	2.26
1=	Robin	(1=)	100	3	0.98
4=	Great Tit	(4)	94	5	1.29
4=	Woodpigeon	(5)	94	9	2.18
6	Dunnock	(6=)	90	4	1.05
7=	Magpie	(6=)	84	7	0.92
7=	Chaffinch	(8=)	84	10	1.33
7=	Wren	(-)	84	2	0.40
10=	Collared Dove	(10=)	81	5	1.05
10=	Goldfinch	(-)	81	8	1.21

Thirty-one forms were returned for this quarter and 42 different species recorded, six less than in the same period in 2011. Song Thrush did not appear in the top ten, only being seen in 58% of gardens, compared with 73% in 2011 and 91% in 2010. Wrens were seen more frequently, and were back to 2010 levels

The following species were only seen at a single site:

- Fieldfare (John Ford)
- Lesser Redpoll (Brian Clay)
- Treecreeper (John Cooper)
- Kestrel (Peter Whitcomb)
- Nuthatch (Brian Clay)

John Ford's Fieldfare, a single bird on Feb 11<sup>th</sup>, was his first garden record of this species. Brian Clay recorded just one visit from both Lesser Redpoll and Nuthatch, while a female Kestrel was just the second garden record for Peter Whitcomb in 30 years in the same house. Stanley Allen noted that in previous years cold spells had brought winter thrushes, Skylark, Reed Bunting and Linnet to his garden at Mill Hill, but they were absent this quarter. However, Redwing did turn up in seven different gardens, regularly at John &

Shena Maskell's, and Reed Bunting in six, including two males seen on a feeder by Reg Bradbury on Mar 30<sup>th</sup>.

Starling and House Sparrow frequency was similar to 2011, with some recorders seeing none, and others seeing reasonable numbers. A single Starling in John Ford's garden brought the response "Yes, a Starling!", while more than 35 seen by Phil Jemmett in Hove at the end of February was the largest flock seen. The most House Sparrows recorded was 20, by Audrey Wisdom at the start of January and by Shirley Downs at the end of the month.

Wintering Blackcaps were recorded in 14 gardens (45%), representing a minimum of ten birds in any one week, and were regularly seen by Brian Clay and Janet & Gordon Paterson, both at High Salvington, John & Shena Maskell, Marion Taylor and Martin Wilson. The maximum recorded was four by John & Shena in the first two recording weeks of March.

## **Second Quarter (April - June 2012)**

	<b>Species (2011 place in brackets)</b>	<b>% of gardens used</b>	<b>Maximum number seen</b>	<b>Average seen per garden</b>
1=	Blackbird (1=)	100	6	1.80
1=	Blue Tit (1=)	100	3	1.65
1=	Duncock (6=)	100	4	0.97
1=	Woodpigeon (3=)	100	11	2.27
5=	Great Tit (5)	96	8	1.13
5=	Robin (1=)	96	3	0.99
7=	Collared Dove (6=)	89	4	1.02
7=	Magpie (-)	89	5	0.95
9=	Chaffinch (-)	86	4	0.73
9=	Goldfinch (8=)	86	5	0.94
9=	Greenfinch (8=)	86	18	1.53

This quarter there were 28 forms received, and 42 different species seen. Greenfinches obviously approve of Stanley Allen's garden as he once again had the maximum for this quarter, and Stephen Simpson also retained the Starling maximum with 80 in the final week of June.

Blackcaps were recorded in a third of the gardens, but only Laurie Keen recorded them throughout the quarter, with male and female both visiting a bird bath, though they were not actually nesting in his garden. House Sparrows were slightly more numerous than in 2011 and were seen in 79% of gardens, and Martin Ford reported that a pair took over a nest box used by Blue Tits in the previous two years, and raised two broods. Audrey Wisdom noted good numbers of both House Sparrows and Starlings in her hedgerow and feeding station. However, Blue Tits deserted a box in Laurie Keen's garden after prolonged rain and low temperatures, the first time in 30 years they had been unsuccessful there.

Some of the species recorded in just one garden this quarter were:

- Bullfinch (Brian Clay)
- Linnet (Cyril & Maureen Leeves)
- Willow Warbler (John & Shena Maskell)
- Garden Warbler (Jay Cooper)
- Mallard (John Cooper)

Two “almost” garden birds were a Nightingale heard from dense bushes in a field at the end of John Cooper’s garden on Apr 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> and again on May 7<sup>th</sup>, and a Red Kite seen overhead on May 20<sup>th</sup> by Noranne Biddulph, being mobbed by noisy crows.

A Jackdaw came down into Stanley Allen’s garden at the beginning of May – the first since 1975 not to fly straight over! Noranne Biddulph managed to rescue a fledgling Blue Tit which had a very strong cobweb wound around its leg and was hanging upside down from a branch. Another unusual rescue story was of a Swift found by David Tomalin on Jun 25<sup>th</sup>; it was lying stunned on a garden path, eyes closed and wings outspread, apparently dead. He stroked its head and its eyelids moved slightly. He lifted it up and put it on a hedge, and returned twenty minutes later expecting it to have passed away. However, it had stretched out a wing, so he picked it up, with some trepidation launched it into the air and it flew away strongly.

### **Third Quarter (July – September 2012)**

	<b>Species (2011 place in brackets)</b>	<b>% of gardens used</b>	<b>Maximum number seen</b>	<b>Average seen per garden</b>
1	Blackbird (1=)	100	7	1.56
2=	Blue Tit (2=)	97	25	3.91
2=	Robin (2=)	97	4	0.74
2=	Woodpigeon (2=)	97	12	1.77
5	Great Tit (7=)	93	4	0.98
6	Collared Dove (5)	90	8	1.18
7	Dunnock (6)	86	4	0.76
8=	Magpie (9)	79	6	2.80
8=	Greenfinch (10)	79	15	1.49
10	Goldfinch (-)	72	8	0.90

The 30 recorders this quarter reported 40 different species, including a few migrants moving through. As well as Laurie Keen’s “resident” Blackcaps, who brought two of their young to the bird bath in August, others were seen in September by Martin Ford, John & Jeannette Simpson and Martin Wilson. Chiffchaffs were seen in eight gardens, Willow Warblers in seven, though Whitethroat was only recorded by Martin Ford. There were also two of the less common migrants. The first was a Pied Flycatcher which perched on an old pear tree on Aug 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, to the delight of Noranne Biddulph. Second was a Redstart which alighted on Reg Bradbury’s fence then flew off low from the garden, affording an excellent view of the orange tail.

The largest group of Blue Tits was noticed by Brian Clay towards the end of August, 25 at John & Shena Maskell’s was the maximum number of House Sparrows, and Reg Bradbury reported at least 90 Starlings in the last week of August.

#### Fourth Quarter (October – December 2012)

	Species (2011 place in brackets)	% of gardens used	Maximum number seen	Average seen per garden
1=	Blackbird (1)	100	5	2.05
1=	Blue Tit (2=)	100	12	2.67
1=	Dunnock (5=)	100	4	0.80
1=	Robin (2=)	100	4	1.08
5	Woodpigeon (5=)	96	44	2.57
6	Great Tit (2=)	93	4	1.33
7	Magpie (7=)	89	4	1.01
8=	Chaffinch (7=)	85	9	1.41
8=	Goldfinch (7=)	85	41	1.60
10	Crow (-)	81	4	0.65

In this final quarter 27 forms were returned, and 44 species recorded. As in the second quarter Dunnock was once again recorded in every garden, a fairly unusual occurrence for this species. House Sparrow numbers were generally down on the same quarter in 2011, and the average weekly maximum at Audrey Wisdom's garden in Shoreham dropped from 11.5 in 2011 to 9.7 this year. However, some fairly large flocks of Starlings were seen from mid-November; 34 by Reg Bradbury, 40 by Audrey Wisdom and John & Jeannette Simpson, and 50 by Stephen Simpson. An albino or leucistic Starling was seen regularly by John & Jeannette from the end of September through to mid-November. Forty-four Woodpigeons in Stanley Allen's garden on one day in mid-November cannot have left much room for other species. Seen at just one site were:

- Lesser Black-backed Gull (Gordon & Vera Tickler)
- Reed Bunting (Sheila Marshall)
- Siskin (John Ford)
- Redwing (Brian Clay)
- Waxwing (John Cooper)

Jim & Judith Steedman and Brian Clay were the only ones to report Lesser Redpoll; possibly one of the two seen by Brian was a Common Redpoll, but he could not be sure. Two Siskins seen by John Ford in mid-October were the only garden records of this species in 2012. Blackcaps were seen in 14 gardens, including three by John & Shena Maskell in the week of Dec 9<sup>th</sup>. The birds of the quarter however, were definitely the 15-20 Waxwings disturbed by John Cooper in his garden in Steyning on Dec 7<sup>th</sup> and which flew off to the south.

For the sixth year in a row, only Blackbird was reported from every garden in each quarter. Dunnocks were seen more frequently than in previous years, rising from being recorded in an overall average of 84% of gardens in 2011 to 94% in 2012; Carrion Crows and Magpies were also reported from more gardens, averaging 81% and 89% respectively over the year, compared with 63% and 76% in 2011. Greenfinches recovered slightly to 79%, Goldfinches improved to 81% and Song Thrushes to 41%, though this latter figure is still low.

*Thank you to all the following who faithfully submitted their quarterly returns on which the above is based: S Allen, N Biddulph, R Bradbury, J Carder, B Clay, Jay Cooper, John Cooper, M Darby, S Downs, J Ford, M Ford, C Hope, H Jackson, P Jemmett, L Keen, C & M Leeves, S Marshall, J & S Maskell, J & G Paterson, A Robinson, A Sandison, J & J Simpson, S Simpson, J & J Steedman, M Taylor, G & V Tickler, R Titcomb, D Tomalin, P Whitcomb, M Wilson and A Wisdom.*

Val Bentley



## A SPECTACULAR, UNFORGETTABLE DAY

*The following extract was taken from Brian Easlea's 1990 Diary. He wasn't a 'twitcher' in the true sense, far from it, but he loved birds and butterflies and generally was just as excited seeing good views of common species as he was with rarer ones. Brian passed away at the end of 2012. Copies of his book 'Birdwatching at the Seaside' were donated to SDOS funds.*

SHOREHAM - Friday 20 April 1990

On a damp, cloudy day and a cold north easterly wind, I decided to try to see the Great Spotted Cuckoo at Shoreham. Was it still there? Caught the 9.13am bus to arrive at The Red Lion, Old Shoreham at 9.55am. The driver incidentally telling me he had seen the cuckoo!

As I walked across the Tollbridge and the Adur I saw two people looking through a telescope and I almost ran towards them, fearing that the cuckoo would depart suddenly before I arrived – and this after waiting 12 days! Yes, they were looking at the cuckoo!! I was invited to look through their telescope. Not too good a view. Then the cuckoo flew to feed on caterpillars on brambles by the side of the A27, quite unperturbed by the noise of the traffic. Marvellous, marvellous views of the cuckoo only 20 yards away swallowing caterpillars by throwing back its head. One thing was certain – it might have been a cold, somewhat wet Great Spotted Cuckoo but it wasn't a hungry one!

The two other birders left, leaving me alone with the cuckoo. At 10.30 it flew into a bush to shelter from the wind and was still there when I left at 11.15am, just occasionally preening and scratching itself. What a handsome bird just coming into its first summer plumage, no grey cap but a beautiful, very distinct dark brown one, and what a glorious buff-yellow and again very distinct collar extending almost right round its neck – quite unlike the illustrations in my field guide.

As I watched the cuckoo sitting motionless, no doubt wondering what it was doing in Shoreham, a pair of Linnets were building a nest behind me in the brambles, the male standing guard as the female dived into the brambles with building material – a handsome fellow but giving the nest site away! Occasionally the Linnets were watched by Goldfinches, as Blue and Great Tits occasionally inspected the cuckoo!

Wandered around the Adur estuary for an hour or so, an Oystercatcher was feeding in the mud, then went back to see the cuckoo but it had disappeared despite anxious searching of a dozen or so 'twitchers' – like myself! I left at 1.15pm, assuring the twitchers that, yes, the cuckoo was around somewhere!

After lunch I walked to Widewater Lagoon. Lots of Ringed Plovers surely nesting, but couldn't see any chicks. However, one Ringed Plover several times had a go at a glorious male Wheatear! Also two Ringed Plovers eventually saw off a Black-headed Gull that landed on their 'territory'. I left at 3.30pm and got back to the flat at 4pm.

WHAT A SPECTACULAR, UNFORGETTABLE DAY.

Brian Easlea

## FIELD OUTINGS 2012

The following field outings were held during 2012

<b>Jan. 8<sup>th</sup></b>	Henfield Farmland and River Walk
<b>Jan. 15<sup>th</sup></b>	Beeding Brooks
<b>Feb. 24<sup>th</sup>*</b>	Tree planting at Downslink
<b>Feb. 26<sup>th</sup></b>	Rackham Woods & Downs
<b>Mar. 17<sup>th</sup></b>	Warnham L.N.R.
<b>Apr. 21<sup>st</sup>*</b>	Early morning walk – Saltings Field
<b>Apr. 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	Goring Seawatch
<b>May 4<sup>th</sup></b>	Nightingale Walk at Woods Mill
<b>May 16<sup>th</sup></b>	Knepp Castle
<b>May 26<sup>th</sup></b>	Anchor Bottom
<b>Jun. 8<sup>th</sup></b>	Wiggonholt Common for Nightjars
<b>Jun. 16<sup>th</sup></b>	Warnham LNR
<b>Jul. 8<sup>th</sup></b>	The Burgh
<b>Aug. 4<sup>th</sup></b>	Summer picnic at Coombes
<b>Aug. 10<sup>th</sup>*</b>	Mill Hill
<b>Aug. 18<sup>th</sup></b>	Chantry & Kithurst
<b>Aug. 21<sup>st</sup>*</b>	Mill Hill
<b>Aug. 24<sup>th</sup></b>	Pulborough Brooks for Waders
<b>Aug. 31<sup>th</sup></b>	Adur Valley - river walk
<b>Sep. 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	Cissbury Ring
<b>Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>*</b>	SDOS seat erected opposite old Cement Works
<b>Oct. 13<sup>th</sup></b>	Cissbury Ring
<b>Oct. 21<sup>st</sup></b>	The Burgh
<b>Nov. 27<sup>th</sup>*</b>	North wall – Pagham
<b>Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>*</b>	The Burgh
<b>Dec. 28<sup>th</sup></b>	Seasonal Gathering along Shoreham Beach

\* indicates an impromptu outing held in 2012

Full details of all field outings are published annually in a Programme of Events.  
There are also several impromptu outings posted on the SDOS Yahoo Usergroup.

## INDOOR MEETINGS 2012

The following indoor meetings were held during 2012.

<b>January 10<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Through the seasons in a Sussex woodland</b> by Reg Lanaway
<b>February 14<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>AGM followed by North Stars:</b> <b>Wildlife of Svalbard and the Arctic</b> by Robert Yarham
<b>March 13<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Birds Britannia:</b> <b>What have birds ever done for us?</b> by Stephen Moss
<b>April 10<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Horsham – An urban wilderness</b> by Jacob Everitt
<b>October 9<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Guyana – The last true wilderness</b> by Mike Russell
<b>November 13<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Nightjars: New technology and migration studies</b> by Graham Appleton
<b>December 11<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Members' Evening and Christmas Social</b> contributors Wendy & Michael Ball, Chris Wright, Peter Wyld, Peter Casebow and Gill Peters

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## A GUIDE TO RECORDING BIRDS IN THE SDOS AREA

Stephen Simpson, SDOS Recorder

Please consider sending in some records at the end of the year, even if in the past you have not done so. You can submit your records by one of the following methods:

- i. Send records on-line via BirdTrack organised by the British Trust for Ornithology - see [www.bto.org](http://www.bto.org)
- ii. By email to [sdosrecorder@virginmedia.com](mailto:sdosrecorder@virginmedia.com). Please supply the species, date, location, Grid Reference if possible and any other relevant information.
- iii. Send electronic records to the Sussex Ornithological Society (SOS) - see [www.sos.org.uk](http://www.sos.org.uk)

It is most important that all national rarities should be submitted to the SOS Recorder with a full description. But please also let me know, as 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.

The boundaries of the SDOS recording area are shown on the map on the inside back cover of this report.

## RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT- YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2012

	2012	2011
	£	£
RECEIPTS		
Balance brought forward	4,702.60	4,419.53
Subscriptions* and visitors entry fee	2,261.00	1,998.00
* (2012: £1,697 + £564 [2013])		
(2011: £1,518 + £480 [2012])		
Sale of books, reports and car stickers	34.00	40.50
Net refreshment receipts	60.34	51.35
Net raffle receipts	176.00	161.00
Bank interest	1.86	1.57
Donations	12.00	-
	<b>7,247.80</b>	<b>6,671.95</b>
PAYMENTS		
Printing and art work	285.82	1,030.31
Postage and stationery	287.77	240.01
Hire of hall	420.00	-
Speakers fees	467.50	195.00
Insurance	102.38	102.38
BTCV membership	38.00	38.00
Donation to MND Association	50.00	-
Travel expenses	23.80	61.40
Donations transfer to Jubilee Account	-	72.30
Website registration	26.35	96.46
Birdwatchers Year Book	-	14.50
Christmas Meeting Refreshments	71.00	118.99
Balance carried forward	5,475.18	4,702.60
	<b>7,247.80</b>	<b>6,671.95</b>

John M Maskell (Hon. Treasurer) Dated: 8<sup>th</sup> January 2013

### INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS' REPORT

In accordance with instructions given to us we have examined, without carrying out an audit, the above receipts and payments account and compared it to the accounting records of Shoreham District Ornithological Society. We believe that the above receipts and payments account is a fair reflection of the activities of the organisation for the period concerned.

David Green & Helen Bryett

Dated: 15<sup>th</sup> January 2013

## GOLDEN JUBILEE ACCOUNT

### RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2012

	2012	2011
RECEIPTS	£	£
Balance brought forward	203.96	128.52
Sale of Jubilee book	28.00	-
Bank interest	-	0.55
Donations	787.00	255.54
	<b>1,018.96</b>	<b>384.06</b>
PAYMENTS		
Anchor Bottom benches	117.69	180.10
Downslink – tree planting	145.57	-
Balance carried forward	755.70	203.96
	<b>1,018.96</b>	<b>384.06</b>

John M Maskell (Hon. Treasurer)

Dated: 8<sup>th</sup> January 2013

#### INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS' REPORT

In accordance with instructions given to us we have examined, without carrying out an audit, the above receipts and payments account and compared it to the accounting records of Shoreham District Ornithological Society. We believe that the above receipts and payments account is a fair reflection of the activities of the organisation for the period concerned.

David Green & Helen Bryett

Dated: 15<sup>th</sup> January 2013

## SOCIETY OFFICERS

(Officers in post following the A.G.M. of 12th February 2013)

**President: Bernie Forbes**

Tel: 01903 753876

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email: bernieforbes@talktalk.net

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Tel: 01273 452497

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BN15 0RS

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24 Chancellors Park, Hassocks, BN6 8EZ

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**Treasurer: Tim Holter**

15 Victoria Road, Shoreham-by-Sea BN43 5LA

sdos.treasurer@yahoo.co.uk

**Council Member: Audrey Wende**

Tel: 01444 471358

Sunbeams, Green Road, Wivelsfield Green,  
Haywards Heath RH17 7QD

email: mauwende@delta18.plus.com

**Council Member: Clive Hope**

Tel: 01903 700498

22 Upper West Drive, Ferring, Worthing  
BN12 5RG

email: clivehope@btinternet.com

## USEFUL ADDRESSES, TELEPHONE NUMBERS & WEBSITES

(correct as at October 2013)

The SDOS website is at: [www.sdos.org](http://www.sdos.org)

**Booth Museum of Natural History** 194 Dyke Road, Brighton, E. Sussex,  
BN1 5AA Tel: 03000 290900 Access webpage via [www.virtualmuseum.info/](http://www.virtualmuseum.info/)

**Brent Lodge Wildlife Hospital** Cow Lane, Sidlesham, Chichester,  
W. Sussex, PO20 7LN Tel: 01243 641672 [www.brentlodge.org](http://www.brentlodge.org)

**British Trust for Ornithology (BTO)** The Nunnery, Thetford, Norfolk,  
IP24 2PU Tel: 01842 750050 [www.bto.org](http://www.bto.org)

**Chichester Harbour Conservancy** The Harbour Office, Itchenor, Chichester,  
W. Sussex, PO20 7AW Tel: 01243 512301 [www.conservancy.co.uk](http://www.conservancy.co.uk)

**Natural England** Natural England (South East), Guildbourne House, Chatsworth Road,  
Worthing, BN11 1LD Tel: 0300 060 0300 [www.naturalengland.org.uk/regions/south\\_east](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/regions/south_east)

**Pagham Harbour Local Nature Reserve** Visitor Centre, Selsey Road, Sidlesham,  
Chichester, W Sussex PO20 7NE Tel: 01243 641508  
<http://www.rspb.org.uk/reserves/guide/p/paghamharbour/>

**Police Wildlife Officer** Police advice is initially to ring 0845 60 70 999 (the main non-emergency police contact number) to ensure appropriate routing of the call.

**Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)** Head Office The Lodge, Pottton  
Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL Tel: 01767 680551 [www.rspb.org.uk](http://www.rspb.org.uk)  
Regional Office, 1st Floor, Pavilion View, 19 New Road, Brighton, BN1 1UF  
01273 775333

Pulborough Brooks Reserve Upperton's Barn, Wiggonholt, Pulborough, W Sussex, RH20  
2EL Tel: 01798 875851. [www.rspb.org.uk/reserves/guide/p/pulboroughbrooks](http://www.rspb.org.uk/reserves/guide/p/pulboroughbrooks)

**Rye Harbour Nature Reserve** Lime Kiln Cottage, Rye Harbour Rd, Rye, E Sussex,  
TN31 7TU Tel: 01797 227784. [www.wildrye.info](http://www.wildrye.info)

**Sussex Ornithological Society (SOS)** Secretary: Val Bentley, Chetsford, London  
Road, Henfield. W. Sussex BN5 9JJ Tel: 01273 494723. [www.sos.org.uk](http://www.sos.org.uk)

**Sussex Wildlife Trust** Woods Mill, Shoreham Road, Henfield, W Sussex, BN5 9SD  
Tel: 01273 492630 [www.sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk](http://www.sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk)

**WADARS** Rescue & Rehoming. Tel: 0300 30 30 999 [www.wadars.co.uk](http://www.wadars.co.uk)

**Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT)** Head Office Slimbridge, Gloucestershire,  
GL2 7BT Tel: 01453 891900 [www.wwt.org.uk](http://www.wwt.org.uk)

Arundel Wetland Centre Mill Road, Arundel, W Sussex, BN18 9PB Tel: 01903 883355  
[www.wwt.org.uk/visit-us/arundel](http://www.wwt.org.uk/visit-us/arundel)



Jackdaws at Upper Beeding by Wendy Ball



Little Egret by Janet Derricott





Osprey and Red Kite by Michael Ball



Starlings at Brighton Pier Wendy Ball

## ABOUT THE SDOS / MEMBERSHIP FORM

The Shoreham District Ornithological Society (SDOS), based in Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex, was founded in 1953 making it 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, on the second Tuesday of the month. Non-members are welcome to attend on payment of a £2 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. Some previous issues of our report are also available for purchase by members or non-members. Our 'User Group' is a members-only e-mail discussion group which has been set up to keep all who wish to enrol, informed of the latest wildlife sightings in the area and other matters which may be of interest.

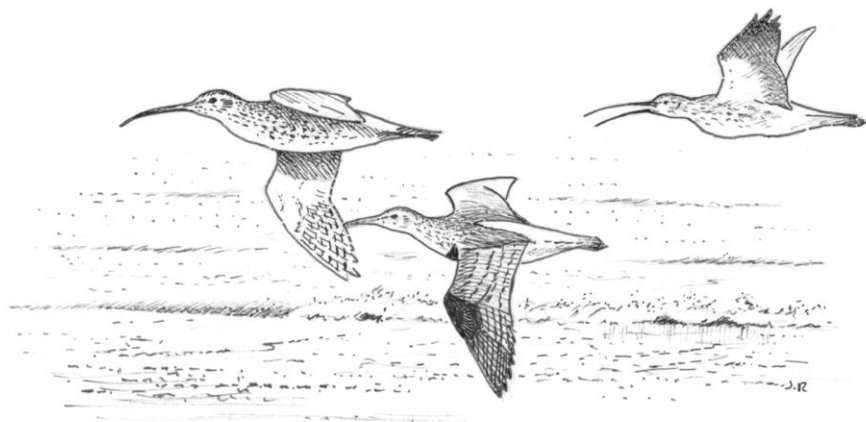
New members are very welcome. If you would like to join, please photocopy, complete and return the form below.

<b>APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP</b>	
I/we apply to join the Shoreham District Ornithological Society and enclose my/our annual subscription of (please tick appropriate box):	
Single	£12 [ ]
Couple/Family	£18 [ ] – at the same address.
Junior	£5 [ ]
Life membership terms on application to the Membership Secretary	
Standing Orders for regular subscriptions would be appreciated.	
Cheques should be made payable to SDOS	
Title	Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms
Name/s	
Address	
Postcode	
Telephone	
Email	
Please send to Mrs Shena Maskell, SDOS Membership Secretary, 41 St. Lawrence Avenue, Worthing, West Sussex, BN14 7JJ.	

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© John Reaney

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To locate a site (e.g Brighton Marina - code BM at TQ3303) find the Eastings, the first two numbers (33), along the bottom edge of the map. Then find the Northings, the last two numbers (03), along the left-hand edge of the map. The site code will be located near where the two grid lines intersect.

SITE	CODE	GRID	SITE	CODE	GRID	SITE	CODE	GRID
Anchor Bottom	AB	TQ2009	Hove Lagoon	HL	TQ2604	Shoreham Fort	SF	TQ2304
Aplesham Farm	AF	TQ1907	Hove Park	HP	TQ2806	Shoreham Harbour	SH	TQ2304
Beeding Brooks	BB	TQ1911	King's Barn	KB	TQ1811	Spithandle Lane	Sp	TQ1514
Beeding Cement Works	BC	TQ2008	Kithurst Hill	KH	TQ0812	St Ann's Well Gardens	AW	TQ2904
Beeding Hill	BH	TQ2109	Ladies Mile LNR	LM	TQ3109	Stanmer Down	SD	TQ3411
Blackpatch Hill	BI	TQ0909	Ladywells	La	TQ1906	Stanmer Park	SP	TQ3309
Brighton Marina	BM	TQ3303	Lancing Ring	LR	TQ1806	Steep Down	St	TQ1607
Brooklands	Br	TQ1703	Long Furlong	LF	TQ1007	Steyning Bowl	SB	TQ1609
Castle Goring	CG	TQ1005	Lychpole Hill	LH	TQ1507	Steyning Levels	SL	TQ1912
Chantonsbury Ring	CR	TQ1312	Mathouse Meadow	MM	TQ1605	Steyning Round Hill	SR	TQ1610
Chantry Hill	Ch	TQ0812	Michelgrove	Mi	TQ0808	Stretham Manor	SM	TQ2013
Church Hill	Ch	TQ1108	Mill Hill	MH	TQ2107	Sullington Warren	Su	TQ0914
Cissbury	Ci	TQ1408	Myrtle Grove Farm	MG	TQ0808	Tegdown Hill	Te	TQ3110
Clapham Wood	CW	TQ1006	New Erringham Farm	EF	TQ2108	The Mumbles	TM	TQ1811
Claydon Hill	Cl	TQ3013	New Salts Farm	NS	TQ2004	Thundersbarrow Hill	TH	TQ2208
Clayton Mills	CM	TQ3013	Newtimber Hill	NH	TQ2712	Tollbridge	To	TQ2005
Cockroost Hill	Co	TQ2408	Newtimber Place	NP	TQ2613	Tottington Wood	TW	TQ2112
Cuckoo Corner	CC	TQ2006	No Man's Land	NM	TQ1509	Truleigh Hill	Tr	TQ2210
Devil's Dyke	DD	TQ2511	Old Salts Farm	OS	TQ1904	Wappingthorn	Wt	TQ1713
Ditchling Beacon	DB	TQ3313	Oreham Common	OC	TQ2214	Warren Hill	WH	TQ1113
East Kingston	EK	TQ0802	Pangdean	Pa	TQ2911	Waterhall	Wa	TQ2909
Ferring Rife	FR	TQ0802	Park Brow	PB	TQ1508	Widewater	Ww	TQ2004
Findon Park	FP	TQ1309	Patching Pond	PP	TQ0805	Wild Park	Wi	TQ3208
Flood Arch	FA	TQ2004	Piercing Hill	PH	TQ2410	Windmill Hill	Wh	TQ2010
Forsdown	Fo	TQ2507	Power Station	PS	TQ2404	Wiston Estate	WE	TQ1512
Golding Barn	GB	TQ2010	Rock Common	RC	TQ1213	Wiston Pond	WP	TQ1612
Golf Course - Worthing	GC	TQ1406	Round Hill	RH	TQ2608	Wolstonbury Hill	Wo	TQ2813
Goring Gap	GG	TQ1001	Sandgate Park	Sg	TQ1014	Woods Mill	WM	TQ2113
Harrow Hill	HH	TQ0809	Shaves Wood	SW	TQ2514	Woodvale Cemetery	Ww	TQ3205
Henfield Levels	He	TQ2014	Sheepcote Valley	SV	TQ3404	Worthing Crematorium	WC	TQ1109
Highdown Hill	Hi	TQ0904	Shoreham Adur	SA	TQ2104	Wyckham Farm	WF	TQ1913
Hollingbury Fort	HF	TQ3207	Shoreham Airport	Sa	TQ2005	Wyckham Wood	WW	TQ1914

\* Please note that the Index and Map are only a rough guide and not definitive. Also note use of both upper and lower case letters in the codes.

## SDOS RECORDING AREA MAP

