

## YORK ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB - 1977 REPORT

### CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Members are reminded that our Club Report represents a "shop-window" to prospective new members and, consequently, it is of paramount importance that its contents are both interesting and accurate.

This year produced a record number of contributors and several others involved in survey work. To these people I extend my grateful thanks.

A special mention to B. Pepper for editing the Report and to D. Braithwaite for supplying the drawings.

Several new species have been recorded, for the area, and spectacular "counts" are an outstanding feature.

Finally, in order that the picture may be made complete, please do not "under record" the more common species.

G. SMITH.

### SECRETARY'S REPORT

1977 was another successful year, with good attendances at both indoor and outdoor meetings. We had 15 outdoor excursions, two more than usual. Indoor meetings were held as usual, at the Community Centre, 10, Priory Street, with the exception of the December meeting which was held at the Yorkshire Museum, where Mr. T. M. Clegg gave a second showing of the bird skin collection, our thanks are extended to him.

Illustrated lectures for the year included:

Birds of Afghanistan

Birds of Tunisia

Wheldrake Ings

New Mexico

Muriel Pirozek and family kindly prepared a Wine & Cheese Party, our thanks to them all for a very profitable and enjoyable evening.

Both the club Dinner and Quiz were very successful. The Photographic Competition held in October contained fifty entries, a decline in number, in comparison with the last two years, but the quality of the photographs is still certainly improving. The first prize went to Laura Mosely, our congratulations to her, and our thanks to all other entrants.

Common Bird Census work was carried out for the first time at Askham Bog between April 1st and mid-June, this was undertaken by four club members. The survey is organized by the British Trust for Ornithology with liaison with the Yorkshire Naturalists' Trust, and is to be repeated in future years.

At the Annual General Meeting held in November some new officers were elected, namely Mr. Geoff. Smith as Chairman, Mrs. June Pepper as Treasurer, Dr. John Lawton as Excursions' Secretary and two committee members, Mr. Brian Caffrey and Mr. Dave Waudby. Our warmest thanks to Mr. Willie Wilson, retiring Chairman and Mr. Robert Hardcastle, retiring Excursions' Secretary.

Let us hope that 1978 proves to be as successful as 1977.

T.D. CHARLTON

### SUMMARY FOR 1977

An increase in field work with a record number of contributors, which stands at approximately 50, has no doubt been partially responsible for the highest number of species ever recorded in one year within the clubs area. 164 and two subspecies, of which nine had never been previously recorded since our records began in 1966.

Numbers of wildfowl in the Lower Derwent Valley were again high, with counts of Shoveler particularly so. A Red-breasted Merganser at Stamford Bridge on 5th February was only the third record. By the 16th March Wheatear and Chiffchaff had returned with Sand Martin arriving on the 20th.

Gadwall bred for the first time at Wheldrake Reserve, Pied Flycatchers and Dipper almost certainly bred, which would also have been first if proven. April was a remarkable month, with the bird of the year being an immature Common Crane, arriving at Wheldrake Reserve on the 24th and remaining into May. Other birds of interest during April were: Scaup at Wheldrake Ings; Sanderling at North Duffield Ings was the area's first and the only sighting of a Great Grey Shrike this year was from a York suburb.

Interesting birds continued to occur during May with Hawfinch at Heslington, up to six Black Tern in the Lower Derwent, an Osprey stopped to feed at Castle Howard and a Wryneck at Strensall Common was unprecedented. A Little Gull was present at Wheldrake Ings for two days and a Sandwich Tern passed through on 7th June. Yet another rare bird from Strensall Common, a male Golden Oriole on 24th June and on the same day a Twite at Ryther was the first since 1968. A dead Wood Warbler was picked up in the city centre on 8th August, which kept the interest going.

Wader passage brought the usual, some of which included; Greenshank, Spotted Redshank, Turnstone, Ruff, Oyster Catcher, Grey Plover, Little Ringed Plover, Ringed Plover, Whimbrel, Common, Green and Wood Sandpipers. Two Common Scoter which occurred at Dringhouses Pond on 12th August were new to our list of wildfowl. The highlight of September was the appearance of a Goshawk over York on 8th. A male Black Redstart near Acomb on 9th October was another first for the area and coincided with a fall some week earlier on the coast. Crossbills were of note in late October and Snow Buntings in early November. Wheldrake saw another new species, four Bearded Tits on 20th November. The month also produced two Ferruginous Ducks and a Red-throated Diver at Castle Howard.

An exceptionally late Yellow Wagtail was observed in the Lower Derwent on 27th November and an over wintering Chiffchaff at Strensall Common during the last week of the year was rewarding, along with all the other species that had made this another outstanding year.

Records of all species, especially the common one's, which were again high this year, were gratefully received and I would like to thank all those concerned. Selection of records for publication has meant that others have had to be left out, however all notes submitted are kept and filed for future reference. Details of all species mentioned above can be found in the classified list.

BRIAN PEPPER

#### ASSISTANT RECORDER'S NOTES

Dabbling ducks are familiar birds to the Vale of York, and the lower Derwent floods from Wheldrake Ings south through Ellerton, Aughton and North Duffield to Bubwith Ings are of national importance as a refuge for wintering and breeding waterfowl. But it is the wintering populations of dabbling duck that shall be under consideration here. For several years Wheldrake Ings has been a nature reserve and under the careful management of the Yorkshire Naturalists' Trust, having one of their two professional wardens. I look forward to the day when the whole of the flood plain from Wheldrake to Bubwith becomes a sanctuary for birds, as it no doubt must become. The importance of the whole area has to be made clear and there is a real need for informed management techniques designed for habitat preservation as are practised already at Wheldrake. It becomes easy for even a layman to understand that if you have a protected and undisturbed habitat the birds will look after themselves. The following notes are in brief to give a potted history and population status of several species of dabbling ducks, all of the genus *Anas*, that regularly use the Derwent floods throughout October, November, December, January, February and March. The very palatable quality of such species has meant that they have been important both culinarily and economically for some time and thus their history has been well documented. However, it is to the more recent history of the ten winters from 1966/67 to 1975/76 that greatest emphasis will be given as more accurate annual data for these years exists in the York Ornithological Club annual reports. As always many variables affecting these statistics exist and comments have been made in the light of this, nevertheless this does not make

those notes invalid as indications of population status of certain duck species wintering in the Lower Derwent valley.

The Mallard, *Anas platyrhynchos*, 'Grey Drake' or 'Wild Duck' has been described as "The most ubiquitous and abundant duck in Britain at all times of the year", (Atkinson-Willes 1963). The Mallard has its history founded in its importance as a table delicacy and in the ordinances issued by a Royal Proclamation as to the price of food in the City of York in the year 1393 the 'Wild Duck' was put down at four pence (Nelson 1907).

Snowden Sleights a famed wildfowler who shot the Derwent floods in the latter part of last century and the early part of this, bagged two unusually pure white birds at East Cottingwith. On the 5th December 1849 the York Naturalists' Club recorded a rare Mallard x Pintail hybrid which was more probably identified on the kitchen table rather than in the field. However, as has been shown by the Wildfowl Trust, conservation programmes can work in harmony and not antagonism with wildfowling interests. The size of the national summering population of Mallard has been put at 350,000 (Fisher 1940) and the annual winter peak at 500,000 (Atkinson-Willes 1963). Recoveries of ringed birds indicate that British Mallard are resident and to a large extent sedentary, moving but short distances from the breeding area, although under stress of weather movements to the coasts and southwards may take place but rarely go beyond the British Isles (Witherby et. al. 1943). Atkinson-Willes (1963) does point out that the immature birds generally undergo dispersal from where they were bred regardless of weather conditions. In the winter peak the population size along the Derwent is probably 0.02% of that of the national population, at which time the indigenous population is augmented by immigrant birds. These are mainly from the Netherlands, Germany and the countries around the Baltic (Atkinson-Willes 1963). It appears that such immigrant birds are more numerous on the eastern side of the British Isles than on the west, as might be expected from their countries of origin. Once at their wintering quarters the immigrants move little and return to the same wintering areas in successive years (Boyd and Ogilvie 1961). From this it might be reasonable to assume that a large proportion of the 1,000 to 2,500 Mallard wintering along the Derwent are continental birds.

The Teal, *A. crecca*, in the same ordinances issued in 1393 in the City of York when Mallards were put down at four pence, were priced at a penny. At a great banquet given at Cawood in 1466, in honour of the Archbishop of York, amongst the provision made were 4,000 'Mallardes and Thales' (Nelson 1907). Nelson (1907) expressed some concern for the apparent decline in numbers of both resident and immigrant Teal. Atkinson-Willes (1963) places the winter population along the Derwent at between 1,000 and 2,500; the average population for the ten winters between 1966/67 and 1975/76 recorded by the York Ornithological Club was only 500. However Teal habitually conceal themselves amongst reeds and sedge vegetation making it difficult to estimate accurately population sizes, subsequently numbers recorded may tend to be conservative. But it is reasonable to assume that since the advent of efficient land drainage in the middle of the nineteenth century suitable 'Tealish' habitat has been lost wholesale, and in the light of this population decline can hardly be surprising. The Derwent winter population is probably in the region of 0.07% of the national winter population but might well be in need of more detailed study. British Teal are generally resident yet some birds under stress of weather have been recorded in northern and central France (Witherby et. al. 1943). In winter the indigenous birds are outnumbered by visitors, in the main coming from Norway, the countries surrounding the Baltic, Holland and northern France (Witherby et. al. 1943). The extent of immigration and onward movements may vary from year to year; Atkinson-Willes (1963) points out that this may not always be associated with severe weather. Certainly along the Derwent it seems that the annual populations are subject to large fluctuations.

The Wigeon, *A. penelope*, or 'Whew Duck' is by far the most numerous duck inhabiting the Derwent floods in the winter months. Throughout the nineteenth and this century its expansion as a breeding bird in the British Isles has been marked. Although Wigeon now breed regularly in north western England they as yet do not breed regularly in Yorkshire. Thomas Nelson (1907) did however note that on 1st May, 1897 there was reasonable evidence to show that a pair may have bred at Skipwith Common.

Unlike its congeners the Wigeon is not a true dabbling duck as such, it is in fact for the bigger part a grazer. Possibly the first person to realise this was Waterton in the early part of the nineteenth century. He entered in his notes: "The Wigeon procures its food in the daytime, and that food is grass" (Waterton, edtd. Moore 1871). No work has been done on the feeding habits of the wildfowl on the Derwent but it is likely that the expanses of flood water are used as safe roosting areas, the ducks leaving to feed nocturnally on the surrounding farmland. Any long term conservation scheme must therefore account for this rather specialised feeding requirement of the species. The total figure for the national winter population has been put at 250,000 (Atkinson-Willes 1963), the average Derwent winter population from 1966/67 until 1975/76 was 2,500, 1% of the national population. Most of the visitors come from northern Russia and Siberia with relatively few from Scandinavia. Icelandic birds tend to be less mobile than their Russian relatives and it is probable that most of the Wigeon wintering on the Derwent floods are from behind the 'Iron Curtain'. If any species of bird were to disappear from the Ings along the Lower Derwent, God forbid, the Wigeon would be the one I would most - those loose skeins of whistling ducks have become as much a part of my winter as Christmas pud.

The Pintail, *Anas acuta*, is often the pride of the wildfowlers bag. Thomas Allis in 1844 noted, that Pintail were sometimes 'obtained near York. Nelson in 1907 mentioned that the species had been taken' at East Cottingwith. Chislett (Ca. 1950) in his commentary on the birds of Yorkshire notes that, "Since 1906 the Pintail has probably not changed much in status except for having bred at Skipwith in 1932 and 1938". He makes no mention of the lower Derwent. However, in the ten winters from 1966/67 to 1975/76 the lower Derwent has had the largest concentrations of Pintail in Yorkshire with an annual average for the ten years of 65 birds. Dickens and Mitchell (1977) acknowledge the lower Derwent visitor". It appears then that these most elegant of all dabbling duck are increasingly becoming to rely upon the lower Derwent as an essential part of their wintering quarters, it would be truly a shame if they were to be let down.

The Shoveler, *Anas clypeata*, or 'Spoonbill' as some vernacular has it, is rather an unlikely yet strangely beautiful bird. Nelson (1907) notes that in 1896 a pair bred at Skipwith, all but three of the young were unfortunately taken by pike, and in 1900 a nest with twelve eggs was found on 12th May. He also mentions that on the Derwent at East Cottingwith it is "occasionally killed in winter". As a breeding bird the Shoveler has greatly increased and extended its range during the last century and is continuing to do so (Bannerman 1958). The British breeding birds are summer residents arriving with passage migrants at the end of February or in March and leaving in August and September (Witherby et al. 1943). Chislett (1950) to some degree did not uphold this view of the British breeding birds being migratory, he pointed out that birds were seen in winter on the same waters where broods had been seen the previous summer, this he saw as evidence that the birds may have been resident. However, such a conclusion claim from this evidence is seemingly tenuous. Whatever the case the Derwent over the ten winters from 1966/67 to 1975/76 has seen a dramatic increase in the number of Shoveler recorded.

Graph showing 0 in 66/67, 10 in 67/68, 40 in 71/71, 60 in 73/74 and 100 in 75/76

Conditions that affect the total numbers of duck using the Derwent floods during the winter months appear to be complex, but the state of the flood water certainly plays a part. If ever a conservation scheme were to be applied along the Derwent below Wheldrake Ings then fullest control of the winter water level is of major importance.

Atkinson-Willes 1963 "Wildfowl in Great Britain

Bannerman 1958 "The Birds of the British Isles".

Boyd & Ogilvie 1961 "The Distribution of Mallard Ringed in South England" Wildfowl Trust, 12, 125-136

Chislett, H. 1950 "Yorkshire Birds".

Dickens & Mitchell 1977 "Birdwatching in Yorkshire".

Fisher, J. 1940 "Watching Birds".  
Nelson, T. 1907 "The Birds of Yorkshire".  
Waterton, C. 1871 "Natural History Essays" edited by Moore, N.

DAVE BRAITHWAITE

### CLASSIFIED LIST

#### RED-THROATED DIVER *Gavia stellata*

One at Castle Howard Lake on 24th November (pa) and an immature on 27th, was presumably the same individual. (BGP, cii, nc, SM). The latter flew in from the north, circling the lake twice before departing to the southeast.  
Plumage; forehead, crown, hindneck, throat, sides of tipper neck and, wings were dark. cheeks, foreneck, chest, breast and belly were white, bill was slender (BGP).

#### GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus*

Bred at Dringhouses Pond where a pair produced 3 young (MR), and Castle Howard where probably four broods were reared (GET).

Records from Castle Howard were; six in March (GET, DW), nine in April (Dw), eight in May (SM,), a pair with chick on 6th June (sMw, JFW), six pairs on 13th August (ia~~), up to 24 in September (MR, SW• }, CDT) and October (SM, GET) and 12 on 13th November. Other records were, singles at: the River Ouse at Acaster Malbis from 1st to 8th March, Dringhouses Pond on 6th (Dw), River Ouse at Naburn on 1st and 2nd April (TED, EBB), and also recorded on the river at Fulford, Bishopthorpe, Acaster Nalbis and Naburn until year end (TC, DIF, TED, EBB): records might well be of the same bird as none of the dates overlap.

A pair had taken up residence at Dringhouses Pond on 17th July (DW). Two at Wheldrake Ings on 11th June (as, BC) where one present on 16th July (D~T), and two adult birds at Wiganthorpe Pond on 17th (DW).

#### LITTLE GREBE *Podiceps ruficollis*

Bred at Brandsby, Lower Derwent and Skipwith Common.

Up to eight birds recorded at Wheldrake Ings and up to three at: Acaster Malbis (D~F), River Foss at Earswick (iiic~r), Nun Monkton, Appleton Roebuck, Dringhouses Pond (n~i), University Lake (Mac. JILL), Strensall Common (nw), Castle Howard (DE, JO, Mit, BGP, us) and Naburn. A bird found on the River Derwent had its feet tangled in fishing line, it was successfully freed (us, BC).

#### CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*

One at Wheldrake Ings on 6th March (TMC) and also at Castle Howard on 13th November (CDT).

Addition to 1976 Report: One on the River Ouse at Naburn from 21st September to 8th October.

#### GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea*

Bred at the Lower Derwent.

Up to five were recorded from: Moreby Hall, Askham Bog, Wheldrake Ings, Wharfe Ings, Haxby, Naburn Sewage Works, Wheldrake, Gilling and York University Campus, 13 were recorded regularly throughout the summer months at Castle Howard.

#### MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*

The first ducklings were recorded at York University on 1st April (JJT). A very late brood of eight ducklings was reported at Askham Richard on 10th November (Yorkshire Evening Press, 10th November).

Maxima were: in early part of year, 320 University Lake (U11ll~), 500 at Castle Howard, and up to 500 at Wheldrake Ings.

In August: 130 on River Ouse at York, 600 at Castle Howard and 300 at Wheldrake Ings. From September until year-end: 110 at Wharfe Ings, 1,000 at Castle Howard and 750 at Wheldrake Ings.

Other smaller concentrations were noted at: Dringhouses Pond, Brandsby area and Terrington Lake.

#### TEAL *Anas crecca*

Bred at Lower Derwent and Strensall Common (Dw).

Maxima counts were: Lower Derwent, 250 in February; 700 in March and 600 from October to the year-end. with a maximum of 1,000 on 2nd November (TED, EBB, JJT). Castle: 40 on 23rd August (DW), 51 on 16th October (TED, EBB), 44 on 13th November (CBT) and 20 on 28th December. Wharfe Ings: 16 in April up to 75 in November and 200 in December (Dw5. 25 at Strensall]. Common on 10th September (mi), 40 at Newburgh on 16th October (TED, EBB), up to 50 at Skipwith Common throughout the year (as). 100 at Ryther on 22nd November (JMPa) and up to 12 birds on suitable waters throughout the area. Addition to 1976 Report: a pair bred on Elvington Airfield (TED, EBB).

#### GARGANEY

A drake in the Lower Derwent on 28th April.

#### GADWALL *Anas strepera*

First breeding record for the area came from Wheldrake Reserve.

Up to 12 present in the Lower Derwent from February to November; two at Castle Howard on 30th May (nj~i), three on 20th September (GET), five on 19th November (EGP, DE, JC, Cs) and two on 27th (BGP, CS, BC, SM). A single at the University Lake on 15th and 28th October (GET).

#### WIGEON *Anas penelope*

3,000 at Wheldrake Ings in January (mi), 1,000 on 27th February (as), 3,000 on 12th March and 700 on 16th April (as), numbers reduced to 20 on 23rd (TED, EBB). Five birds during the summer months (CS), up to 1,500 from October to year end. A leucistic drake on 13th March (ma).

One at Castle Howard on 30th January (DW), two on 12th March, 17 on 16th October (GET), 12 on 5th November (Jww) 18 on 13th (CBT) and 9 on 27th. Five at Acaster Malbis on 5th February (DW), four at Askham Bog on 19th (DA, DF), three at Terrington Pond on 9th October (SI!), five at Newburgh on 16th (TED, EBB), one at Dringhouses Pond on 29th (Dw), four at Wharfe Ings on 20th November and 12 on 29th (w). A wild female at the University Lake from September to year end (GET).

#### PINTAIL *Anas acuta*

80 in the Lower Derwent on 6th February was maximum, with up to ten throughout the year (as).

Three drakes on Acaster Malbis flood water on 3rd February, a female on Pocklington Canal near Melbourne on 1st October (TED, EBB), one at Castle Howard on 19th and 27th November, (BGP, BC, SM, CS, JC, CS, DB).

#### SHOVELER *Anas clypeata*

Bred in the Lower Derwent and Naburn Sewage Works (as).

200 at Wheldrake Ings on 1st January and 30 from 27th March to 16th April (as).

Approximately five pairs during breeding season (TED, EBB). 17 on 28th September (BGP, DB) and up to 150 during October, November and December.

Two at Castle Howard on 5th February and 11th April, one on 29th May, three on 1st June (mi), seven on 23rd September (CBT), ten on 9th October (SM), 26 on 16th, 40 on 22nd (CBT), 21 on 5th November (JFW et. al.), 40 on 13th (CBT), 40 on 27th (PT, BGP), 17 on 17th December (CBT) and seven on 27th (IJR). 11 flew northwest over Naburn Sewage Works on 22nd July (TED, EBB). A single at Dringhouses Pond from 16th to 21st

August (mr).

**MANDARIN Aix galericulata**

A female at Askham Bog on 1st and 9th October (DA, DF).

Published with the escape proviso.

Second record for the area.

**SCAUP**

A female was present in the Lower Derwent from January to 1st May.

**TUFTED DUCK**

Bred in the Lower Derwent, with six pairs present on 1st May, 12 young on 29th June (as, TED, EBB, SM). Two pairs bred at Wiganthorpe Pond (mi).

Wheldrake Ings: had up to 80 in February (Ttw, BEE) and 100 during March and April (SM, a.-). 24 at Castle Howard on 5th February, four on 12th March, five on 11th April, eight on 1st and 2nd June (Ed), 18 on 5th July (HJW), 3 on 27th August (DW), two on 23rd September (GET), seven on 27th November (BGP, as, SM, BC), one on 17th December (CDT) and two on 27th (Mit). Up to 20 at Dringhouses Pond in January, ten in February, four on 29th March; up to six during October, 11 in November and 17 in December (nw).

Three at Naburn on 9th January (MKW) and a pair on 3rd May (TU0, EBB). 37 at Wiganthorpe Pond on 12th March (CBT), 14 on 11th June (sin) and eight on 9th October (SM). Ten at Acaster Malbis flood water 28th January and a pair on the River Ouse near Acaster Malbis from 31st March to 3rd May (Dii). 13 at Skipwith Common on 23rd March and two pairs on 18th May (Mi?). Up to seven at Sand Hutton Pond during April, ten at Stearsby Pond on 18th June and five at Wharfe Ings on 13th November (Dw).

**POCHARD Aythya farina**

Bred in the Lower Derwent (as).

Up to 460 in the Lower Derwent during winter months. Castle Howard had up to 64 in February (DJ), Dringhouses Pond had 14 on 2nd January with only two remaining on 29th, a pair on 20th March and a single still present on 29th (Dir). 21 at Acaster Malbis in January and 36 in February (Dir). 18 wild birds at the University Lake on 10th February (JHL), three at Dringhouses Pond on 10th April; Sand Hutton Pond on 11th (Di!) and Skipwith Common on 14th May (ARP). Castle Howard had three on 23rd September, 21 on 16th October, 16 on 13th November (GET), 44 on 19th, 72 on 27th, 71 on 17th December (CBT) and 22 on 28th.. Up to three at Dringhouses Pond in October, seven in November and 21 in December.

**FERRUGINOUS DUCK**

Two at Castle Howard on 13th November (CBT).

Published with the escape proviso.

First record for the area.

**GOLDENEYE**

A pair at Wheldrake Ings during January and February with numbers increasing to ten by 13th March (RH, as) and 30 at Aughton the same date (D13). A single still present on 15th April (SN). Two at Castle Howard on 30th January; singles on 5th February, 12th March (Dw) and three on 13th April (nap, JIJP). Two at Dringhouses Pond on 27th February (Dii), a female on the River Ouse near Ouse Bridge, York from 21st June to 15th August (nap, h1J1). One at Howsham Bridge on 3rd September (~cw), a single at Wheldrake and Wharfe Ings on 13th (DW, DB), four at Castle Howard on 19th and three on flood water near Ryther on the same day (JNPa), 15 on the River Ouse south of Acaster Selby on 20th and six on 27th (Dw).

Singles at Dringhouses Pond in late November and 4th, 18th and 24th December; one at Wheldrake Ings during December and Wharfe Ings on 31st.

**COMMON SCOTER** *Melanitta nigra*

Two immatures at Dringhouses Pond on 12th August (EU).

First record for the area.

**RED-BREASTED MERGANSER**

A drake on the River Derwent at Stamford Bridge on 5th February (TMC).

Third record for the area.

**GOOSANDER** *Mergus merganser*

Four red-heads flew north up river at Naburn on 2nd January. A drake and a red-head at Castle Howard on 5th (ic), and one at Naburn on 10th (ET). Four at Castle Howard on 5th February and 13 on 14th (GET). Two in the Lower Derwent on 5th March (Tim, EBB), seven at Castle Howard on 12th (GET), four at Bubwith on 13th (Ru, as), one at Wheldrake on 17th (si~s) and three on 25th (PED, EBB). Three at Cawood on 27th (EII), a drake at Wheldrake Ings on 25th and 26th April (SM, os) and a red-head on 18th May (as). One flew west over Ryther on 12th November (JI~a), a red-head at Castle Howard on 19th (BGP, DE, JC, Cs), two on the River Ouse south of Acaster Selby on 20th, one circled Dringhouses Pond on 26th, two on River Wharfe at Wharfe Ings on 11th December (DW) and two at Castle Howard on 28th (BGP, jiw).

**SHELDUCK** *Tadorna tadorna*

Two pairs bred at Wheldrake Ings (TED, EBB).

A pair of free flying birds arrived at the University Lake and reared two young (JILL).

Present throughout the year in the Lower Derwent with a maximum of 12 on 30th April (us).

**GREY GEESE** *Anser* sp

30 flew west over Burton Stone Lone, York on 16th September (IvIIGI) and 12 over Askham Bog on 25th (DA, B?).

**GREYLAG GOOSE** *Anser anser*

27 at Castle Howard on 8th January (Wa), 26 on 14th February (CDT), 17 on 12th March (CDT, Wa), 13 on 17th April (Jim), 35 on 6th July (SM) 33 on 23rd September, 36 ~on 22nd October (CDT), 74 on 19th November (BGP, DE, CS, JC) and 58 on 17th December (CaT) were maxima counts.

Wheldrake Ings had one on 19th February, six on 1st May (ARP) and 10th April (SM, us), up to eight from 6th April to 9th May and ten on 14th.

**PINK-FOOTED GOOSE** *Anser brachyrhynchus*

One in the Lower Derwent on 22nd January (Er) and two on 13th February (as). One at Bubwith on 2nd March (TED, EBB) and two on 17th April (SM, as). One at Aughton on 24th (as) and 19 at Castle Howard on 22nd October (CDT).

Singles at Wheldrake Ings on 6th November (r~uu~i), Acaster I4alb1s on 8th (CDT), Castle Howard on 27th (BGP, US, BC, SM, DB) and Lower Derwent on 27th December (~ucw).

Addition to 1976 Report: 17 flew west over Wheldrake on 26th December (Tern, EBB).

**BARNACLE GOOSE** *Branta leucopsis*

One feral bird at Castle Howard in spring and three from 16th October to the year-end.

**CANADA GOOSE** *Branta canadensis*

Bred at Newburgh Priory, Castle Howard, University, Stearsby, Acaster Malbis and Wheldrake Ings where three broods were reared (CDT). A pair reared five young at Sand Hutton Pond (DW).

Castle Howard maxima were: 149 in January (Dw), 111 in February, 89 in March (CDT), 140 an July (SLI), 115 in September, 245 in October, 232 in November and 210 in December.



Six over Askham Bog on 27th May (DA, DF), nine over Haxby on 8th June (per AMW) and 12 on 9th (~iw, jww). 16 at Wheldrake Ings on 12th August (SM), increased to 27 by the year-end. Six resident birds at the University were joined by ten wild birds in October and remained until the year-end (TED, EBB).

An adult found dead at Castle Howard had been ringed there as an adult on 6th July 1968. Canada hybrids Canada x Anser were observed at Castle Howard with singles on 14th February and 12th March (CDT), two on 3rd September (ARP), 16th October, 13th November (GET) and 27th. A single was present at Wheldrake Ings from 9th to 27th December.

#### SWAN sp

17 flew over Rufforth Aerodrome in a southwesterly direction on 27th December (JC).

#### MUTE SWAN

Bred successfully on the River Ouse, River Wharfe, near Bolton Percy and Pyther, also River Foss in the Lower Derwent.

#### WHOOOPER SWAN

Three flew over Clifton Ings on 13th January (Lilt), six adults at Acaster Malbis floodwater on 3rd March (Dw) and two at Wheldrake Ings on 10th April (as). A single bird summered for the second year at Ings. One flew west over Ryther on 12th November (JNFa). Four on the River Derwent near Bubwith on 20th November (SM, aS), with a build-up to eight by the year-end (as).

Addition to 1976 Report: One with resident bird at Wheldrake Ings on 26th April and 9th May.

#### BEWICK'S SWAN *Cygnus bewickii*

All records came from the Lower Derwent.

Up to 94 in January (RH), 110 in February (GB), 111 on 13th March included only 11 immatures (as, RH, DB). Most birds departed on this date and the last were five at Bubwith Bridge on 27th March (SM).

First of the Autumn were: ten on 20th November (as). Numbers increased from 40 on 3rd December to 146 including 28 immatures by the year-end (as).

#### BUZZARD *Buteo buteo*

Singles at Clifton Ings On 1st March (MR), Howsham Bridge on 18th June (mc) and a bird flew south over York Railway Station at 08.40 hrs. on 24th August (Jw).

#### ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD

Two soaring over Strensall Common on 2nd October were occasionally mobbed by Carrion Crow *Corvus corone corone* (MRa, jn).

#### SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus*

Successful breeding occurred at Brandsby, Strensall Common, Skipwith Common and Howsham Bridge.

Sightings continue to increase with birds regular in the Lower Derwent, Stamford Bridge, Buttercrambe, Acaster Malbis, Stub Wood, Moorlands, Millington Woods, Heslington Common, Askham Bog, New Earswick, Acaster Selby, Wharfe Ings, Elvington and Castle Howard.

#### GOSHAWK *Accipiter nisus*

One flew over York on the evening of 8th September whilst being mobbed by a party of ten Starlings *Sturnus vulgaris* (DE).

Accepted by the Y.N.U. Reports Committee.

#### HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus*

A ringtail at Wharfe Ings on 27th November (D;i), a male at Wheldrake Reserve on 28th and 30th (JILL) and two ringtails in the Lower Derwent from 26th to 31st December (as).

Addition to 2976 Report. A ringtail at Naburn on 27th November.

#### OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus*

One at Castle Howard on 30th May.

#### MERLIN *Falco columbarius*

Singles at Cawood and Wheldrake Reserve on 30th January (an), Cliffe Common on 17th March, Aughton on 28th November (JILL), Wheldrake Reserve on 28th December (RH) and Skipwith on 30th.

#### KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus*

Bred in all squares.

A bird was observed taking a pheasant chick from a family party at Crockey Hill (as).

#### RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE *Alectoris rufa*

Breeding at Stearsby, Gale Lane (P11),

B.S.C.'s development area and Rufforth to Askham Bryan (LR). Coveys of up to 30 in squares south of York (as).

#### GREY PARTRIDGE *Perdix perdix*

At least 50 pairs in SE 55 (MB), up to 20 in the Lower Derwent (as), 37 at Grange Lane (iin three at Tang Hall Tip York on 11th April (BGP) and one at York Railway Station on 19th (MB).

Un to 30 near Ryther on 20th August, 21 on 6th September, 25 on 12th October and 70 on 12th November (J~Pa). Coveys at Wharfe Ings of 27 on 4th December and 18 on 11th.

#### PHEASANT *Phasianus colchicus*

30 pairs at Grange Lane, Rufforth and Knapton area (KR). Ten at Askham Bog throughout the year (DA, DF) and 50 at Strips Wood (KR).

#### CRANE

At Wheldrake Reserve on 24th April at 0.800 hrs. B.S.T., S. Maitland noticed a rather large bird in the distance, on closer observation he found it to be an immature Crane.

He was later joined by F. Oates.

The bird often left the Reserve to feed and later returned to roost at variable times from 18.45 to 20.30 hrs B.S.T. when fragments of the courtship dance were noted. This usually occurred after severe mobbing by Black-headed Gulls, (this was probably displacement activity evoked by mobbing). It was last observed on 9th May at 15.00 hrs.

#### WATER RAIL

Bred at Wheldrake Reserve and Pocklington Canal.

An increase this year with records from seven sites. One at Clifton Water Works on 8th March (MR), two calling at Fulford Ings on 23rd, 24th and 25th June (BaP, JMP). A juvenile at Coats Bridge Pocklington Canal on 25th June (Ti~'1C). Singles calling at Strensall Common on 29th June (ow) and Fulford Ings on 5th July (Fy10). One at Wheldrake Ings on 14th August (DB) and 18th October. Up to four at Naburn Sewage Works in mid-November. One at Ryther on 18th and 19th November (JLiPa) and one flushed at Aughton on 26th December (as).

#### SPOTTED CRAKE *Porzana porzana*

A male calling south of York from 21st May to 15th June.  
First record for the area.

**MOORHEN** *Gallinula chloropus*

Ten pairs bred at York University Campus (U.Y.N.H.S.). Four at Askham Bog (Common Bird Census). 27 at Wheldrake Ings on 5th October and 35 at Wharfe Ings on 4th December (mi) were maxima.

**COOT** *Fulica atra*

Maxima were: up to 67 at Dringhouses Pond during January (D1), 59 at Castle Howard in February (CDT), 74 at Wheldrake Ings (DW), up to 51 at Dringhouses Pond during October, 59 in November and 78 in December.

**OYSTERCATCHER** *Haematopus ostralegus*

One in the Lower Derwent on 6th March (Tnc) and one at .B.5.C. development area on 7th April (ilit). Three at Beningbrough on 10th, two at Wharfe Ings on 24th increased to eight on 28th (n;'). All other records were from the Lower Derwent, up to two birds from 24th April to 17th July (TsD, LEE, CS, SM, ARE). One flew south over Ryther on 4th May.

**LAPWING** *Vanellus vanellus*

Largest concentrations during the winter months were: 2,000 at Grimston Bar, 2,000 at Wharfe Ings, 1,000 at Bishopthorpe, 2,000 at Acaster Malbis, 1,030 at Barton Hill (D~~), 3,000 in the Lower Derwent (as). Smaller counts were of: 200 at Askham Bog (BA, nw), 300 at Strensall Common and 600 at Stockton-on-the-Forest (nap, JruP).

First post breeding flocks were: 100 at Knapton on 17th June (ith), 500 at Acaster Malbis on 27th July, 500 at Bolton Percy on 20th August (Dd), 1,000 in the Lower Derwent on 31st (SM), 300 at Malton on 3rd September, 400 at Stamford Bridge on 4th (I.), 300 at Middlethorpe Ings on 18th (DW), 300 at Knapton on 7th October (ME) and 1,500 at Acaster Malbis on 30th (DW). Up to 400 at Ryther in November and 500 in December (JMPa).

**RINGED PLOVER** *Charadrius hiaticula*

One flew west along the river near Ryther on 30th April, seven in the Lower Derwent on the 30th and singles there throughout May (as). A juvenile was present on 28th August (as). Singles all occurring at Wheldrake Ings on 17th, 18th and 25th September (Mci, SM, AEP). Addition to 1976 Report: three at Wheldrake Ings on 9th May (TED, EBB).

**LITTLE RINGED PLOVER** *Charadrius dubius*

A pair attempted to breed in SE 55 but were unsuccessful.

Displaying birds in the Lower Derwent on 30th April and throughout May (as).

One at Wheldrake Ings on 13th March (THC), two at Askham Bog on 29th April (DA, DF). Singles at Acaster Malbis on 16th and 26th April (mi), Naburn Sewage Works on 1st May (idllcf), Crockey Hill on 31st (EBB). Two at Crockey Hill on 19th (as).

**GREY PLOVER** *Pluvialis squatarola*

The only record was of a single at North Duffield on 24th April (as).

**GOLDEN PLOVER** *Pluvialis apricaria*

Up to 1,000 during the winter months in the Lower Derwent (as), 120 at Stockton Lane on 30th January (Bar). Up to 900 in the Bishopthorpe/Acaster Malbis/Acaster Airfield area in January, 1,000 in February and 200 in March, increasing again to 300 on 13th April, 600 on 14th, 750 on 19th then falling to 350 on 20th and 18 on 21st were the last (DW).

The majority of birds observed throughout April showed characteristics of the northern race *altifrons* (DW).

325 at Bishopthorpe on 17th August (DW), 250 on 25th October (Mlc~i). Up to 100 at Acaster Malbis during September, increasing to 1,500 in October (DW), 400 at Bishopthorpe

on 12th October. From Bishopthorpe west of the River Ouse to the River Wharfe and Nun Appleton there were 2,100 on 13th November, 1,860 on 20th, 1,510 on 27th and 2,100 on 31st (DW). Up to 300 at Ryther in November and 500 in December.

TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres*

One in the Lower Derwent on 14th August (as).

SNIPE *Gallinago gallinago*.

Bred in SE: 53, 54, 63, 64, 73, 74, 65, 66 (as).

Maxima counts were: 190 at Clifton Water Works (14R), 68 at Acaster Malbis flood water (DW) 300 at Fulford Ings (D~i), 100 at Clifton Ings (LR), 52 at Wharfe Ings (~i) and 200 in the Lower Derwent (us).

JACK SNIPE *Lymnocyptes minimus*

An increase this year with records from five sites.

Singles at Askham Bog on 16th January and 27th February (DW), Wheldrake Ings on 13th March (TMC), Clifton Water Works on 17th and 18th with two on 19th (NH). One at Naburn Sewage Works on 2nd April (TC) and Wheldrake Ings on 1st October (as). Three at Kirkby Wharfe on 6th November (JMPa) and singles at Naburn Sewage Works on 16th and 18th (ThD, EBB), Askham Bog from 24th to 31st December (DA, D1P).

WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola*

Breeding occurred at Grange Lane Wood, Strips Wood (Ida), Skipwith Common and Escrick (as).

Two at Moreby Hall on 2nd January (MJG), singles at: Brockett Wood on 10th January, 19th March and 7th April (DW). Three at Askham Bog on 29th March (DA, 1?) and five roding at Skipwith Common on 22nd June. Singles at Naburn Sewage Works on 15th November and Naburn on 25th, also at Scackleton Woods on 20th (BT), Brockett Wood on 16th December and Rufforth Aerodrome on 31st (AT?, JP).

CURLEW *Numenius arquata*

Bred at Strensall Common, Lower Derwent (as), Bramble Lane (Ma), Killingbeck (IT), near Askham Bryan and Askham Bog (DA, DP). Displaying at: Acaster Airfield, Askham Bryan, Beningbrough, Strensall Common, Nun Monkton, Acaster Selby, Wharfe Ings, Nun Appleton, Bolton Percy, Appleton Roebuck, Sand Hutton and Castle Howard (Dw). 80 at East Cottingwith on 3rd April was maximum (RH).

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus*

Four at Heslington Common on 26th April (To), five at Lower Derwent on 10th May (as) with two on 17th July (TED, EDB) and one over Huntington Road, York on 5th August (Nm).

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus*

Singles at: Bishopthorpe on 13th February (i~c'i), Acaster Malbis on 1st March (i~t) and Naburn Falls on 17th April (sw). Two at Naburn Sewage Works from 23rd to 25th July. Singles at: Wheldrake Ings on 30th July (Di), Stamford Bridge on 14th August, Howsham Bridge on 3rd September (TMC) and Stockton-on-the-Forest on 19th November (ml). One at Naburn Sewage Works on 7th November and seven on 15th. Naburn Village had one on 13th and 28th November ('riD, EBB).

Addition to 1976 Report: two at Naburn on 1st November (TED, EBB).

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola*

Singles at: Crockey Hill on 28th May, Wheldrake Ings on 4th June (as) and Castle Howard on 18th August (HJW).

COMMON SANDPIPER *Tringa hypoleucos*

Singles in April and May at Stamford Bridge (TVIC), Acaster Selby, Bolton Percy, Castle Howard (v~i), Lower Derwent (~ua), Fulford Ings, University Lake and Clifton Ings (MM). Four at Castle Howard on 19th and 20th July (ic, HJ~l), Fulford Ings and Naburn Sewage Works on 24th (i~w, TED, EBB).

Singles at Poppleton to Millingbeck during July (PT). Castle Howard had one on 2nd August, two on 9th and four on 18th (AUP, HJW) and one on 23rd (JiLi). One at the Lower Derwent from 9th August to the month-end. Two at Ryther on 12th September (JKPa).

Addition to 1976 Report: all records from Naburn Sewage Works; three on 2nd May, two on 9th, two on 16th September and singles on 13th, 23rd and 29th.

#### REDSHANK *Tringa totanus*

Bred at Fulford and the Lower Derwent.

Displaying at: up to eight at Fulford Ings (i~xr), three at Acaster Selby (mi), eight at Wharfe Ings and six at Bolton Percy (ijj).

Addition to 1976 Report: five pairs bred at Elvington Airfield (T~.u, SEE).

#### SPOTTED REDSHANK

Only two records this year both from the Lower Derwent.

Singles on 30th April (as) and 17th July (JC, TDC).

#### GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*

Two in the Lower Derwent on 9th April, a single on 30th (as), one on 22nd May (as, SM), two on 28th and one on 11th June (as). Singles at: Pocklington Canal on 28th July (TMC), over Heworth on 20th August (JiLi) and the Lower Derwent on 1st and 9th October (as).

#### DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*

Two at Askham Bog on 2nd January (DA, DF). 15 flew north along the river at Naburn on the same date (11Kw). Up to nine at Acaster Airfield in January and up to ten at Acaster Malbis in the same month (nil). 36 at East Cottingwith on 5th January (TED, EBB). 52 at Bubwith Bridge on 13th February, 100 on 20th and 265 on 27th (SM, RH). 120 at Wheldrake Ings in 6th March (mc), 60 on 17th and 30 on 25th (TEI, Ebb). 350 in the Lower Derwent on 23rd April (as), five at Acaster Malbis on 26th (DW), six in the Lower Derwent on 14th May, 3 on 16th July (Jill) and seven on 28th August with numbers building up to 200 by the year-end (as). 22 at Wharfe Ings on 20th November and 12 on 31st December (Dt'T). One at York University Campus on 30th November (JJT, Ja).

#### SANDERLING *Calidris alba*

One feeding in a flooded meadow at North Duffield on 24th April (as).

First record for the area.

#### RUFF *Philomachus pugnax*

Singles over-wintered in the Lower Derwent (as).

One at Wharfe Ings on 24th April. All remaining records came from the Lower Derwent.

One on 6th March, five on 20th (mc), one on 10th April, five on 24th (CM, TED, RBB), seven on 26th and four on 30th (a:;). One on 1st May (di, TED, 1mb), two on 14th (CL), a single on 30th July (Dd) and one from 9th August to the month end (as) and two on 25th September (i~KW).

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

Recorded all months except January, May and June.

Two at Acaster Malbis on 13th February (Dw). An immature was found dead in the Lower Derwent on the same day (CL). One flew west over Fulford Ings on 27th March. Two at

Acaster Selby on 17th April, Wharfe Ings on 26th Askham Bog Tip 24th July. Singles at Ashfield School fields in July and August. One at Askham Bog Tip on 10th September, Middlethorpe Ings on 18th (DW), Wheldrake Ings on 25th (i41~U) and Castle Howard on 1st October. Three at Clifton Aerodrome, one at Fulford and two at Wheldrake on the 2nd October. One at Askham Bog on 29th (BA, ui') and one flew east over Acaster Malbis on 30th (u~). Five flew W.S.W. over Woodthorpe, York on 13th November (D:i). 48 over Clifton Water Works on 17th (i~rn), one at Askham Bog on 13th and 23rd and two on 27th (DA, DF) and three at Rufforth on 26th (DB). Up to 23 S.S.W. over Clifton Water Works during December (NB) and up to three at Wharfe Ings in December (D1). Up to 12 in the Lower Derwent during the winter months (as).

#### LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus*

Recorded in all months with August giving maximum.

Birds observed on seven dates during January at Acaster Malbis with 11 flying north west on 3rd and ten east on 9th (mi). Five sightings in February at Acaster Airfield were mainly singles. Only one in March at Fulford Ings on 27th. Five dates in April at Wharfe Ings with three on 24th (D:1). Westerly passage occurred over Askham Bog from 22nd April (BA, DF). Two at Tang Hall Tip on 11th April (BOP, JMP). Two singles at Wharfe Ings in May and four in June (Dwt5. One on the River Ouse, York from 15th to 18th July (BGP). Up to 50 at Askham Bog Tip in July, August and September (Dw). Up to 30 at Ashfield School fields in July and up to 97 in August (D~[]). One at Castle Howard on 5th and 12th July, two on 19th and five on 9th August (HJW). Four over Ryther on 8th September (J~a). Up to four on six dates in October at Ashfield School fields (.i)w), four at Castle Howard on 9th (SM) and five on 16th (TED, EBB). 13 dates in November at Acaster Malbis with a maximum of seven on 15th, one at Castle Howard on 19th and 27th (BGP, DE, JC, Cs), eight at Tillmire on 27th (I~llcW). Six dates in December at Wharfe Ings with five flying west on 29th being maximum (me).

Up to ten in the Lower Derwent throughout the year (as). Birds arrived early morning and departed on evenings near Askham Bog during July, August and September were almost definitely from the roost at Fairburn Ings (me) Two records of probably the same bird showed characteristics of the Scandinavian race *L. f. fuscus* at Askham Bog Tip on 20th July and Ashfield School fields on 13th August.

#### HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus*

Up to 30 at the Lower Derwent in winter months (as). Two near Askham Bog on 16th January, singles at Acaster Airfield in January and February, Castle Howard on 26th March, Acaster Malbis on 12th April and Dringhouses Pond had two on 18th. One at Wheldrake on 1st May, 150 S.S.W. over Acomb, York on 8th (Nil), one flew up the River Ouse at York on 25th June. Singles at Strensall Common on 11th July, Acaster Malbis on 13th and three at Ashfield School fields on 18th. Askham Bog Tip had up to four in July and up to five at Ashfield School fields during July and August. One at Castle Howard on 27th August, two at Ashfield School fields on 3rd September and three near Askham Bog on 10th. Records in November were: nine at Acaster Malbis on 16th, one at Wharfe Ings on 20th, two at Acaster Malbis on 22nd, five at Acaster Airfield on 27th and three on the same date at Wharfe Ings. All above records were from DW who noted that, 58 were adults, 18 immature birds of which six were identified as second year and four were third year birds. An adult and two immatures at Castle Howard on 28th December.

Herring/Lesser Black-backed Gull were recorded flying E.S.E. over Heslington during many evenings in August and September. A specific count was made one evening which produced 480 birds (CBT).

#### COMMON GULL *Larus canus*

Up to 350 at Acaster Malbis during January and February (DW). 330 flew southwest over Acomb, York on 8th March (DiR), 200 at Knavesmire on 27th (DW), up to 40 at Ashfield

School fields in July (DW). Up to 300 regularly over Clifton Water Works during November and 600 at Castle Howard on 27th December (Mn).

LITTLE GULL *Larus minutus*

One in the Lower Derwent on 28th and 29th May (as).

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Larus ridibundus*

Breeding at: Wheldrake Ings, North Duffield, Strensall Common and Skipwith Common. Two large assemblies in January and February with 2,000 birds at Acaster Malbis and up to 2,000 Castle Howard (DW), Up to 5,000 in the Lower Derwent during winter months (as). 100 at Castle Howard on 12th July built up to 244 by 19th (MW). 500 at Wheldrake Ings on 16th August (DB) and 1,700 on 13th December (TED, EBB). 200 at Castle Howard on 19th November (DB, JC, BGP, Cs) had increased to 3,000 by 28th December.

BLACK TERN *Chlidonias niger*

Four at Wheldrake Reserve on 14th and 15th May (SM, ~nw, us) increased to six on 24th (as). One at Dringhouses Pond at 08.00 hrs to 08.05 hrs on 19th June (MR).

COMMON/ARCTIC TERN *Sterna hirundo/paradisaea*

Singles at Wheldrake Ings on 24th April (TED, EBB) and 6th May (JC). Four at Naburn on 17th June (TED, EBB).

Addition to 1976 Report: two at Naburn on 18th September (TED, EBB).

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo*

Four at Wheldrake Ings on 22nd April and one on 26th. Singles flew down river on 4th, 26th and 29th May (as). One flew up the River Derwent at Stamford Bridge on 18th May (TMC). Three adults flew northeast from Castle Howard in August; an adult on 9th, an immature on 18th and another adult on 23rd (HJW). An adult at Dringhouses Pond on 2nd October (DW).

ARCTIC TERN *sterna paradisaea*

Three at Wheldrake Ings on 2nd May and four at Castle Howard on 6th July (SM). One in summer plumage was present for ten minutes at Wheldrake Ings on 21st August (11Kw).

SANDWICH TERN *Sterna sandvicensis*

One at Wheldrake Reserve on 7th June arrived from the southeast circled once and flew northwest (as).

Fifth record for the area.

Correction to 1976 Report: adult in winter plumage at Castle Howard on 12th September, not summer plumage (mi).

Addition to 1976 Report: singles at Naburn on 13th and 16th September and Wheldrake on 18th (TED, EBB).

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas*

Bred at Askham Bog (DA, DF) and Skipwith Common (as).

30 at Naburn on 28th February (TED, EBB), nine on Ashfield School fields on 11th July, six at Ryther on 31st July and 20th August (Jl~a). Six at Acaster Malbis on 5th October, 12 at Bishopthorpe on 17th November, 17 at Wharfe Ings on 27th and 14 on 4th December.

WOODPIGEON *Columba palumbus*

Maxima counts were: 409 at Askham Bog during winter months (BA, DF), 200 at the Lower Derwent (as), 300 at Moor Lane, Dringhouses in February. 250 at Castle Howard in June (Wa), 500 at Strips Wood on 28th September (MR), 500 roosting at Brockett Wood during October and November (DW) and 200 at Ryther during the same period (JLPa). 500 at

Wheldrake on 12th November (TED, EBB), 350 over Stockton-on-the-Forest on 19th (DW), 200 over York on 20th (DE) and 350 over Nun Appleton on 11th December (mi).

A leucistic bird was at Moor Lane, Dringhouses on 26th February, the mantle, wings, rump and tail were pinkish-buff, the crown was darker and the white collar was discernible.

Another leucistic at Castle Howard on 18th June was almost identical to the Moor Lane bird and could possibly have been the same individual (Dw).

#### TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur*

Bred at: Blackwoods, Skipwith Common, Crockey Hill (as), and Brandsby (PH).

First into the area was at the Lower Derwent on 30th April (as), East Cottingwith on 1st May (TED, EBB) and Brockett Wood on 4th (DW), Singles at Grimston Wood (APP), Askham Bog (DA, nF), Grange Lane, Acomb; Strips Wood, Clifton Water Works (Mn) and Acaster airfield (DU). Up to eight at Ryther in August (Jl.iPa).

An exceptionally late bird at Selby on 3rd November (RH).

#### COLLARED DOVE. *Streptopelia decaocto*

Continued spread of this successful species. 35 at Badger Hill was the maximum flock

#### CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus*

Earliest at Hob Moor on 15th April (ME), Wheldrake Ings on 25th and Acaster Airfield on 26th (Eu).

A juvenile at Askham Bryan on 5th September (DA, ER).

#### BARN ONL *Tyto alba*

Bred at: Cawood, Brandsby, Rufforth Aerodrome, Thicket Priory near Heslington and Warthill.

#### LITTLE OWL *Athene noctua*

Bred at Thorganby, SE 54 (MR) and Shipton. A pair with three young at Wheldrake.

Singles in all months at: Bolton Percy, Gate Helmsley, Cawood, Stamford Bridge (r-ic), Castle Howard, Wheldrake, Dringhouses, Bishopthorpe, Ashfield School, Acaster Airfield and Wharfe Ings (DJ).

#### TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco*

Breeding occurred at 21 sites throughout the area.

#### LONG-EARED OWL

Bred at Skipwith Common.

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

Records were again low this year.

One over Heworth, York was mobbed by two Carrion Crows *Corvus corono corone* and Black-headed Gulls *Larus ridibundus* on 27th January (Jill1). Two at Strensall Common on 19th March (JR, &da).

Singles in the Lower Derwent during the winter months (as).

#### NIGHTJAR

Bred at two sites this year; Skipwith Common where five pairs were present and also at Allerthorpe Common (as).

Addition to 1976 Report: a pair reared one young near Wheldrake (TED, EBB).

#### SWIFT *Apus apus*

Arrived a week earlier this year, with singles at Bolton Percy on 30th April (siT) and

Ouse Bridge, York on 5th May (DE). The main arrival occurred on 15th May. Numbers

increased at Woodthorpe from 500 on 31st July, 1,000 on 1st August to 2,000 on 2nd and a



complete dispersal on the 3rd (mr). The last was at Wheldrake Ings on 28th September (DB, BCP).

Addition to 1976 Report: one at Naburn Sewage Works on 2nd May was the first.

#### KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis*

Bred at Stillington Mill (PH), Naburn (TED, EBB) and Bishopthorpe.

Recorded in every month mostly singles at: Acaster Malbis, Middlethorpe Ings, University Lake, Stearsby Pond, Askham Bog, Fulford Ings, Dringhouses Pond (Dcl), Poppleton, Rawcliffe, Malton (PT), Lower Derwent, Fulford (nra), Newton-on-Derwent (TED, EBB), Foss Islands and Pocklington Canal (as).

#### GREEN WOODPECKER *Picus viridis*

Successful breeding at Strensall Common (mi), Brandsby (PH) and Skipwith Common (as).

One at Nun Monkton on 13th April and Sand Hutton Pond on 5th June (Dlr), Two at Flaxton on 27th July (IC). Singles in the Lower Derwent (as) and Burythorpe on 13th August (DW), Allerthorpe Common and Rob Moor on 15th.

#### GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER

Recorded in all months.

Bred at Bishop Wood, Strensall Common, Heslington, Brandsby, Askham Bog and Castle Howard.

Singles at Naburn, Bishopthorpe, Sand Hutton, Wheldrake, Moorlands, Stub Wood, Gilling Woods, St. John's College playing fields, Burythorpe, Dringhouses Pond, Acaster Malbis, Brockett Wood and Nun Monkton.

#### LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopus minor*

An increase in records this year.

Bred near Ampleforth (PH) and Askham Bog (Common Bird Census). Present at Moorlands in spring but breeding not proved.

Singles at Clifton Water Works on 14th March (na), Bishopthorpe Palace on 14th April (im), Askham Bog from mid-April until 31st July (BA, DF), Bishopthorpe Ings from 14th July to September (~nt~z, Ta), Pocklington Canal at Coat's Bridge on 28th July (me), Rowntree's Park on 15th September and Fulford on 16th (we).

#### WRYNECK

One at Strensall Common on 15th May.

First Record for the area.

#### SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis*

Maxima flock were 120 at East Cottingwith on 5th January (TED, EBB), 200 at South Ings from 9th to 16th, 100 at Middlethorpe Ings on 15th and 140 at Acaster Airfield on 26th. 80 at Acaster Malbis on 7th February, 400 at Acaster Airfield on 2nd October (IM) and 100 at Ryther on 15th (JlrTa).

#### SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*

The first was at B.S.C. development area on 9th April (tm), the next being Wheldrake (as) and Nun Monkton (D[l]) the following day. The main arrival occurred from the 17th to the month end.

A young white bird was in the nest at Cawood Bridge (MB). It is not known if the bird flew. 1,000 at Acaster Malbis on 8th September and from where 2,000 flew southeast between 1300 hrs and 1700 hrs on 23rd (Dw).

Many birds stayed into late October with six in Wheldrake village on 24th October (ARP) and where four were still present on 28th (TED, EBB)

#### HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbica*

First for the year were a single at the Lower Derwent on 16th April (as) and three at Naburn on 20th (TED, EBB).

250 at Castle Howard on 29th May, 100 at Dringhouses Pond on 6th June and 4th September. 200 at Dringhouses during October (EM) were maxima.

Two at Stockton Lane on 19th October (Lsn, PDS), three at Wheldrake on 22nd (Ja) and one at Dringhouses on 26th (EM) were the last.

#### SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia*

The first migrants were singles at Wheldrake Ings on 20th March and Stamford Bridge on 26th (TM-c). The main influx occurred on 17th April.

The last was at Grange Lane, York on 9th October.

#### GOLDEN ORIOLE *Oriolus oriolus*

A male flew south over Strensall Common on 24th June (JE).

First record for the area.

#### CARRION CROW

The only record of Carrion Crow was of 60 at Strensall Common on 27th February. Birds showing characteristics of the Hooded Crow *C. o. cornix* occurred in the Lower Derwent and at Castle Howard.

One at Castle Howard on 3rd January (Am?), three at Wheldrake and one at Bubwith on 16th. One at the Lower Derwent on 22nd (BT), four near Wheldrake Village on 20th February (SM) and two there until the 28th (as).

Singles at Wheldrake on 6th March and Thorganby on the 12th March and 2nd April.

#### ROOK

1,000 at Barton Hill on 5th February and 900 at Acaster Airfield from 30th October to the year-end were maxima (iN). A bird with a typically dark body, but pale mantle and wings was observed for the second year running at Thorganby on 12th November.

#### JACKDAW *Corvus monedula*

Still more information needed on this species.

65 at Acaster Malbis on 26th February with 100 on 30th October and 110 on 13th November. 50 at Naburn on 11th December and up to 100 from mid-summer to the year-end at Bad Bargain Lane (iIQ, JJGP, JMP).

#### MAGPIE *Pica pica*

15 at Askham Bog was maximum (D~i).

#### JAY *Garrulus glandarius*

Bred at: Askham Bog, Grange Lane, Bramble Lane, Brandsby and Skipwith Common.

Singles at Bishop Wood (hPP), Strensall Common (MR), Acaster Wood (p~uc) and Fulford Golf Course (&Kw, JWP).

Up to six at Acomb to Rufforth area, Black Wood, Newton-on-Derwent, Elvington Airfield and Moorlands.

#### GREAT TIT

12 pairs bred at Askham Bog (Common Bird census).

Ten at Naburn Hall on 13th February (i?!Kw), 14 at Bramble Lane on 11th May (IliR), 20 at Strensall Common on 25th June (MIW, JEw), 20 at Strips Wood on 5th September (14R) and up to 22 at Black Wood during October and December (T~u, EBB)

20 were ringed at Naburn in four weeks during November and December.

#### BLUE TIT *Parus caeruleus*

32 pairs bred at Askham Bog (Common Bird Census), (Bap, D'd, HJW, RDC).

Maxima were 45 at Brockett Wood on 18th July (DW), 40 at Stripes Wood on 5th September (MR), 60 at Askham Bog on 2nd October (nd) and 26 at Grange Lane on 9th (ME).  
51 were ringed at Naburn in four weeks during November and December (Ti~D, EBB).

#### COAL TIT *Parus ater*

Breeding at Grange Lane (Mn), Askham Bog (jw, DW), Strensall Common (Ab'i~i, JEW) and four pairs at High Wood (PH).

Single birds at Clifton Water Works, Bramble Lane (MR), Castle Howard, St. John's College playing fields (Du). 12 at Skipwith Common on 6th January (FdGC), two at Rowntrees Park on 27th April (DB), five at Grange Lane on 9th October (Mlt) and 100 were present at Black Wood during October to December (mu, EBB).

#### MARSH TIT

Present at: Stub Wood, Askham Bog, Castle Howard, Wigganthurpe, Brockett Wood, Nun Appleton, Scoreby Woods (DUD, Acaster Wood and Aversham Plantation. Two ringed at Naburn Sewage Works on 16th November.

#### WILLOW TIT

Breeding at: Dringhouses Pond, Skipwith Common (FtTo), Brandsby (PH) and three pairs at Askham Bog (Common Bird Census).

Present during breeding months at; Stub Wood, Strensall Common, Brockett Wood, Acaster Selby, Averhams' s Plantation (MIW) and Grimston Wood.

20 at Black Wood during October and December

#### LONG-TAILED TIT

Maxima were 30 at Brockett Wood on 4th January and 32 there on 31st August. 26 at Strips Wood on 5th September (Mn), 200 in flocks of up to 30 at Black Wood on 28th October (TED, EBB) and 37 at Castle Howard on 27th December (Mn),

#### NUTHATCH

Two at Moreby Hall on 2nd January, two at Naburn on 10th (ii~), two at Sand Hutton on 5th April (nW) and one at Bishopthorpe Palace on 14th.

Two at Castle Howard on 19th November and one on 27th. One at Gilling in early December.

Addition to 1976 Report: a pair bred at Elvington.

#### TREECREEPER

Bred at: Askham Bog, Castle Howard, Strensall Common (iw), Skipwith Common, Fulford and Brandsby (rn).

Mainly singles in winter months at Askham Bog, Castle Howard, Acaster Malbis, Knavesmire Wood, Beningborough Park, Sand Hutton, Grange Wood, Bishopthorpe, Brockett Wood and Nun Appleton.

#### WREN

53 breeding pairs at Askham Bog (Common Bird Census),

#### DIPPER

One at Barton Hill Bock near Barton-le-Willows in April (i-T) and one at Kirkham Abbey on 18th July

#### BEARDED TIT

Four at Wheldrake Ings on 20th November. One had a noticeably shorter tail, possibly due to the loss of its central tail feathers.

First record for the area.

#### MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus*

22 at B.S.C. development area on 26th September (Mn), 20 at Castle Howard on 19th November (BUP, DJ3, JC, as), 25 at York University sports field (as) and 50 at Naburn during November and December (TED, EBB) were maxima counts.

#### FIELDFARE

Winter maxima were 250 at Grange Lane (MR) 387 at Castle Howard, 800 at Moreby Park, 1,000 at Nun Appleton and 2,500 at Beningborough Park on 10th April (DW).

Two late records were three at Bolton Percy on 30th April (DW) and one at Naburn on 3rd May (TED, EBB).

The first autumn birds were, one at Askham Bog on 23rd September (DAm DF) and four over York on 27th (DB), the main arrival occurred in mid-October.

Roosting flocks at Wheldrake Ings were 340 on 27th October and 300 on 2nd November (TED, EBB). 500 at Wharfe Ings on 29th December (DW).

#### SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos*

20 pairs bred at York University Campus (U.Y.N.H.S.), and 10 pairs at Askham Bog (Common Bird Census).

27 at Clifton Ings on 15th June, 34 at Grange Lane on 9th October, 60 at Bramble Lane on 12th and 100 on 18th (i~m) and. up to 60 at Naburn during November and December.

#### REDWING *Turdus iliacus*

200 at Knavesmire on 8th January (EM) and 100 at Strensall Common on 30th (EUP, JFT). 400 at Lower Derwent on 8th April (as, BC). The last were one at Askham Bog on 16th (Da, DF) and two at Acaster Airfield on 21st (DW).

First of the autumn were 40 at Fulford Ings on 1st October (TC). The main influx occurred during the nights of the 7th, 8th and 9th of October. 500 at Wharfe Ings on 29th December was the maximum (Dw).

Correction to 1976 Report: 800 flew southwest between 11.00 hrs and 12.00 hrs at Castle Howard on 23rd October, not 22.00 to 23.00 hrs.

#### BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula*

Thirty pairs bred at Askham Bog (Common Bird Census) where a partial albino was present throughout the year (DA, Dli').

250 present at the York University Campus in the early part of the year (U.Y.N.H.S.). 50 at Wheldrake Ings on 6th January (nCC). A partial albino at Rowntree Park from 18th February to 4th March (nap, SMag).

40 at Clifton Water Works on 3rd October, 200 roosted near Grange Lane throughout the month (MR). Three 'Stockamsel Hemmungskeild' birds (yearling males in a brown, retarded plumage) were caught and ringed at Naburn Sewage Works in November and December. A partial albino male was caught at the works in December, where a normal bird was controlled on 4th, details of which are still not through. Up to 150 birds were present at the works in the later part of the year (TED, EBB).

#### WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*

One at the B,S.C. development area on 16th March had increased to three by 29th (Ma) comprising early records. Up to eight in the same area from 3rd April to 21st May with an exceptional 12 on 9th April (Ma). Two males at Mill Field on 10th April and two females at Tang Hall on 11th (T3GP, aip). Single males at: Acaster Malbis on 13th, Acaster Selby on 24th and at Acaster Airfield (nw) and Tilmire (~c) on 26th, Two males at Acaster Selby on 28th and a female on Acaster Airfield on 29th (DW). A male at Aughton (TED, EBB) and a single at Brandsby (PH) on 1st May. Three at Fulford Ings on 2nd (~c) and one at Elvington and North Duffield on 4th (cs). One at Clifton Water Works on 20th June (n). An immature

bird at Wheldrake on 17th July (TED, EBB). One at Crockey Hill on 9th August (as), the York University Campus on 15th (CBT), by York Station on 24th (MR), again at the University on 29th (GET) and at the B.S.C. development area on 31st (Ma). Six at the B.S.C. development area on 8th and 15th September (n), four at Wheldrake on 10th (mica), two at Acaster Airfield on 18th and one at Bishopthorpe on 24th (DW). 20 on Bootham Stray on 5th October.

#### STONECHAT

A male at Middlethorpe Ings on 2nd January (EM), a pair at Strensall Common on 22nd (JR, MRa) and at East Cottingwith on 30th (RH). a male at Strensall Common on 3rd February.

Two were recorded at the B.S.C. development area from 15th to 27th September, with an exceptional seven on the 22nd (MR). One at Wheldrake Ings on 1st November (r.ncw) and at Bubwith on 28th December (RH).

#### WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra*

Bred at Strensall Common where 19 pairs and a single male were located. A total of 11 juveniles were seen belonging to eight pairs, two other pairs were seen carrying food. From their behaviour it is probable that all the other pairs were breeding, the single male remained unpaired. (Dw). Also bred at Overton, where a nest and five young were found (Dw), and Allerthorpe Common (as).

Two at Aughton on 1st May (TED, EBB), a male at Wheldrake on 9th (SM), 15th and 26th (as) and at Elvington Airfield on 31st. A pair at Beningborough on 19th and 26th showed no signs of breeding (DW). One at Acaster Malbis on 12th July (no), a male at Wheldrake Ings on 16th and a juvenile on 17th (TED, EBB), a juvenile at Acaster Airfield on 29th and a single at Fulford Ings on 31st (TC). Two at Wheldrake on 14th August (DB). Nine at the B.S.C. development area (MR) and one at Acaster Malbis (Mn) on 8th September. Five at Askham Bog on the 10th had decreased to three by the 12th (DA, DiP), and 12, comprising of seven adults and five immatures at the B.S.C. development area on the 10th had decreased to five by the 27th.

#### REDSTART

Two pairs bred at Strensall Common (Dw).

A pair were present throughout the summer at Askham Bog (TED, EBB).

Single male birds at Acaster Selby on 17th April (DW), Dringhouses Pond on 20th (DW), Tillinire on 8th May (TO), Middlethorpe Ings on 2nd July (EM) and one at Wheldrake Ings on 5th August was in moult (i-ntw).

Single immature birds at: Dringhouses Pond on 12th August (Dw) and at St. John's College playing fields on 30th (DE).

#### BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros*

A bird identified as an adult male moulting into winter plumage was recorded at Grange Lane, Acomb on 9th October (i&iz).

First record for the area.

#### ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula*

50 pairs bred at Askham Bog (Common Bird Census). One collecting nesting material at Selby on 17th March (RI!).

Addition to Report A juvenile ringed at Lfgskiir in Finland on the 9th October 1976 was controlled at Eastmoor (2,300 Km s.s.w.) on 18th November 1976. This bird was only the second Robin controlled in Britain from Finland in the B.T.O. records (RAI).

#### GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia*

An increase in records this year. Singles singing in April at; Askham Bog, Wheldrake Ings (RH) and Bolton Percy (Dw).

Two singing at the Lower Derwent on 10th May (as) and one was found dead on the road at Appleton Roebuck on 23rd (Dw). Remaining records are of singles singing at: Wheldrake Ings on 31st May (TMC), Fulford Ings from 23rd to 25th June (BOP), Flaxton Tip on 26th and 29th (DW) and at Wheldrake on 8th July (DB,MR) and 6th August (mi).

#### REED WARBLER

Bred at Skipwith Common (as, BC). 18 pairs at Askham Bog (Common Bird Census), three pairs at Pocklington Canal (TMC) and two pairs at Clifton Water Works (NH). Also bred at Castle Howard, where seven birds were singing on 6th June (ANN, ~rFw).

Other singing birds were singles at: Strensall Common on 2nd July, Dringhouses Pond on 14th (mi) and Fulford Ings on 28th (PHo).

#### SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

A further increase in records this year.

Bred at Naburn Sewage Works (TED, EBB) and Appleton Roebuck. Nine pairs at Askham Bog (Common Bird Census), 12 pairs at the Lower Derwent (as), 14 pairs at Westfield Bog, seven pairs at Bramble Lane, six pairs at Dringhouses Pond and Clifton Water Works; five pairs at the B.S.C. development area and three pairs along Grange Lane (MR).

Single singing birds at: Middlethorpe Ings, Strensall Common, Bolton Percy, Elvington and Overton Pond. Two at Wharfe Ings and Fulford Ings, and three at Castle Howard (DW), First for the year were singles at Stamford Bridge (TJ.TC) and Askham Bog (DA, DI?) on 9th April.

#### BLACKCAP

Bred at Brandsby (PH) and Naburn (TED, EBB). Three pairs at Strips Wood, two pairs along Bramble Lane, one pair at the B.S.C. development area, Clifton Water Works and Grange Lane (ME). 14 pairs at Askham Bog (Common Bird Census).

First arrivals were: one at Stamford Bridge on 18th April (TMC) and a male at Dringhouses Pond on 24th (DW), Singles in May at: Grimston Wood (AI?P), Wheldrake Ings, B.S.C. development area (ME) and Skipwith Common (AEP).

An immature male caught and ringed at Sheriff Hutton on 5th April, when nine birds were caught out of a total of 11 for the year, was controlled on its way out of the country at Dungeness (360 Km S.S.E.) on 27th (Lii). A pair over-wintered at Crayke (PH).

#### GARDEN WARBLER

Proven breeding at High Wood near Brandsby (PH).

Singles at: Askham Bog on 8th May (DA, DI), Black Woods on 15th (as), Dringhouses Pond on 17th and 18th (DW). Three at the B.S.C. development area on 15th May and two there on 17th (ME). Two at Acomb on 3rd June (i~m), one at St. John's College playing fields on 31st July (DB), and at Dringhouses Pond on 13th and 19th August (DW, Mn).

#### WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis*

Bred at Naburn, Brandsby, Strensall Common, Skipwith Common, Terrington, Askham Bog, and Lower Derwent. Eight pairs at the B.S.C. development area, seven pairs along Grange Lane, four pairs at Bramble Lane, two pairs at Westfield Bog, three pairs at the York University Campus, three pairs at Askham Bog and a pair at Clifton Water Works.

Singing birds were: Acaster Airfield, Ashfield School, Sand Hutton Pond, Flaxton Tip, Castle Howard, Dringhouses Pond, Haxby, Braitheswaite Bridge, Acaster Malbis, Bishopthorpe Stearsby, Overton, Appleton Roebuck, Stub Wood.

Five at Brockett Wood and seven between Acaster Selby and Wharfe Ings.

The first was at Askham Bog on 26th April (DA, DF) and Thorganby on 28th (as).

#### LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca*

The first were: one at Bramble Lane on 11th May (ME) and at Heslington on 12th (as),

and two at Brockett Wood on 18th (DW), one of which was singing.  
Single singing birds at: Brieghton on 20th May (FWO), Askham Bryan on 28th (DB), Ackham Richard on 31st (DE), Appleton Woods on 12th July and Wheldrake Ings on 20th (~wo). A non-singing bird at Heworth on 20th August (JHL).

#### WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus*

70 pairs at Askham Bog (Common Bird Census).

The first were at Skipwith Common on 8th April (as), Askham Bog on 11th (DA, DF) and Bishopwood on 16th (ARP). The main influx appeared to be on 17th April with singing birds at eight localities.

The last bird was at Fulford Ings on 25th September (14Kw).

#### CHIFFCHAFF

Three March records could possibly be of over-wintering birds, the main arrivals occurring in mid-April.

One at Wheldrake (as) and at Askham Bog (DA, DF') on 12th March. Two at Askham Bog on 13th March (ml) and one at Stub Wood on 29th (~~o). Singles from 3rd to 14th April at eight localities.

An over-wintering bird at Strensall Common on 26th December (HJW, IF).

#### WOOD WARBLER

Singles at: Warthill on 21st May (BT), York University Campus on 17th July (CBT) and at Poppleton Road on 29th July (Mlt).

A dead bird, 'still fresh', was found at Toft Green, York, on 8th August (MW). After examination of the plumage the bird was subsequently aged as a yearling (EAI).

#### GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus*

Two at Averhams Plantation on 24th April (BGP, JMP). Singles at: Brockett Wood in May and June (ow), Stamford Bridge, Burythorpe, Skipwith and Warthill on 31st May (BT). Present during summer months at Black Woods (as), and all months at Brandsby (PH). 20 at the B.S.C. development area on 12th September (MR), four at Acaster Airfield on 6th October (DB), ten along Bramble Lane on 9th (MB) and at Tillmire on 23rd (TC). Six at Braitheswaite Bridge on 12th November, two at Coneysthorpe on 13th (ET), six at Castle Howard on 19th (CS, BOP, JC, DB) and at Skipwith on 20th (~iio, JC, DB). 500 present at Black Wood from October to year end (TED,EBB).

#### SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata*

An increase in breeding records with 11 new sites. Bred at: Wheldrake, Heslington Wood, St. John's College playing fields, York University, Gate Helmsley, Dringhouzes Pond, Brockett Wood, Grange Lane, Strips Wood, Strensall Common, Acaster Malbis, Escrick and Brandsby.

The first were at Brandsby on 22nd May, (pn), Brockett Wood on 25th (Dw) and Askham Bog on 26th (DA, DI").

#### PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hypoleuca*

A male at Brockett Wood on 2nd May (Dli), another male at Castle Howard on 4th August (JE). A pair plus three juveniles near Middlethorpe Hall, Bishopthorpe on 1st and 2nd September (EM).

#### DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis*

The Common Bird Census at Askham Bog produced 22 pairs.

#### MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*

Bred at the Lower Derwent (os), Appleton Roebuck (Dli) and the B.S.C. development area.

20 at Acaster Malbis on 15th March, 80 at Askham Bog and 32 at Middlethorpe Ings on 20th, 40 at Acaster Malbis on 21st (Dw), 50 at Rufforth on 22nd, 20 at Fulford Ings on 23rd and at Askham Bog on 29th indicated a large mid-March movement. 35 at Acaster Airfield on 2]st April.

200 flew west over the B.S.C. development area on 30th September (hifi) where there was up to 80 to the year end with an exceptional 130 in September. 30 at Acaster Airfield on 18th September and 30 at Dringhouses on 30th (DW). 20 at Naburn Sewage Works on 4th December (i~uw) and up to 200 there during the last three months of the year (TED, EBB).

#### TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis*

Bred at the York University Campus (U.Y.N.H.s.), Strips Wood (Ma), and two pairs at High Wood and Grimston. (PH).

First of the year was at Skipwith Common on 14th May (as, BC). One displaying at Castle Howard on 18th June. Ten displaying at Strensall Common during June and July. One at Brockett Wood on 4th September (DW), five at York University on 8th (jii), one at the B.S.C. development area on 17th and two there on 20th (biB).

#### PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba*

1,500 roosted on York Railway Station on 1st February (MR), and 132 at Middlethorpe Ings on 7th (DPi).

33 at Askham Bog on 10th September (DA, DI?). Up to 70 at Naburn Sewage Works from October to December (TED, EBB). 1,350 at York Railway Station on 22nd November (MU). Singles showing characteristics of White Wagtail *M. a. alba*, at East Cottingwith on 24th April and at Naburn on 30th (TED, EBB).

Addition to 1976 Report: a single showing characteristics of White Wagtail *M. a. alba* at Naburn on 14th September (TED, EBB).

#### GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*

Bred at Ampleforth (PH).

A continuation of last year's high numbers was noted with records from 14 areas.

Singles at: Fulford Golf Course on 9th January (MicW), Naburn on 29th (DW) and Tang Hall Beck on 20th February. A pair at Barton Hill Beck in April (PT), two at Kirkham Abbey on 18th July (DF) and at Clifton Water Works from 22nd to 25th August (Nit). Three at Askham Bog on 10th September and two to year end. One at Huntington on 17th September (i~uni), two at Fulford Ings on 18th and 25th and one there on 2nd October (DW, MKW). Singles at: Dringhouses Pond on 9th October (DW), River Ouse at Bishopthorpe Road on 4th November (111(W) River Foss at Castle Mills Bridge on 6th (DW), Acaster Malbis on 25th and 28th (DW) and two at Rowntrees Park on 10th December (TC). Single birds recorded at Brandsby in winter months.

#### YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava*

Bred at the Lower Derwent, Naburn Sewage Works and Strensall and Skipwith Commons.

First spring bird was a male at Beningborough on 16th April (mi). Singles in April at: Stamford Bridge (TMC), Stockton-on-the-Forest (BGP), Wheldrake (cs, BC) and the B.S.C. development area (KR). Seven at Askham Bog on 22nd April (DA, DF). A 'fall' produced 40 at East Cottingwith on 29th (TED, EBB) of which the male/female ratio was 2:1.

Singles at Haxby on 14th June (M~IW) and Fulford Ings on 25th (BGP, aip).

Two at Dringhouses on 8th September (KR), one at Middlethorpe Ings on 18th (nw) and at the B.S.C. development area on 26th (KR). Up to seven at York Water Works in late September (Mn) and one at Fulford Ings on 2nd October.

An exceptionally late record from Wheldrake Ings on 27th November (British Birds, Vol. 71, No. 2, p. 44).

#### GREAT GREY SHRIKE *Lanius excubitor*



One at Tang Hall on 18th April was being harassed by House Sparrows, *Passer domesticus* as it flew east along the Derwent Valley railway line.

#### STARLING

An 'albino' bird at Naburn Sewage Works on 24th July (MKW, TED, EBB). 2,000 roosted at Rufforth Airfield and a roost flight of 6,000 flew N.E. over Clifton Water Works in November (tm). A roost of 20,000 at New Earswick on 14th December.

#### HAWFINCH

One observed flying over Heslington Hall on 14th May (Jim). Two at Castle Howard on 19th November.

#### GREENFINCH

Autumn flocks of up to 50 along Grange Lane (Mn). 100 at Askham Bog on 5th November (DA, DF) and 100 birds at a roost at Skelton Moorlands on 10th December (MKW).

#### GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis*

An increase in records with charms of up to 120 birds. Up to 60 at BSC development area and Bramble Lane in May (MR). 20 at Gilling (PT) and Askham Bog in August and September (DW). 40 at Naburn Sewage Works and 22 juveniles at Acaster Airfield (DW) on 18th September and 60 at the B.S.C. development area between 26th and 29th (Mlt). 100 at Pulford Ings on 1st October (To), 120 juveniles at South Ings near Hereby Hall on 2nd (DW), 90 at the B.S.C.. development area on 6th (Mlt) and 25 at Naburn Sewage Works on 18th (TED, EBB). 35 at Brockett Wood on 3rd November (DW) and 30 at Clifton Water Works during the winter months (Mlt).

#### SISKIN

Three at the York University on 28th January (jffl~) and at Wheldrake on 6th March (THC).

Up to 50 at Askham Bog from October to the year-end (DA, DF, DW). Four at Castle Howard on 16th October (DE), 21 at Brockett Wood on 31st (DW) and two at Black Wood on 8th November (TED, EBB).

#### LINNET *Carduelis cannabina*

50 at Middlethorpe Ings on 15th January, 29 at Sand Hutton on 17th April (3W), and up to 100 at the BSC. development area during May (JaR).

Up to 140 at the B.S.C.. development area during September (Mlt). Other records from Acaster Airfield: 140 on 18th September, 200 on 2nd October (3W), 250 on 6th (DE), 130 on 30th and 90 on 11th December (DW).

#### TWITE *Acanthis flavirostris*

One at Ryther on 24th July (JMFa).

Third record for area, last was in 1968 at Skipwith Common.

#### REDPOLL *Acanthis flammea*

Bred at Brockett Wood (Dli), Askham Bog (DA, DF) and Brandsby (PH).

60 at Stub Wood and Acaster Malbis on 9th January (DW). 100 at York University in July (CBT), 60 at Strensall Common on 11th (MB).

80 at Strensall Common on 9th September (vffi), 120 at Middlethorpe Ings on 18th (Dw).

500 at Askham Bog from late September to mid-October (BA, DF, i~w). 100 at Grange Lane on 18th October (MR) and 50 at Naburn Sewage Works on 4th December (~ucw).

#### BULLFINCH *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Bred at York University (U.Y.N.H.S.), Brandsby (PH), St. John's College playing fields

(DB), Grange Lane and Dringhouses (i'm). Seven pairs at Askham Bog (Common Bird Census).

14 at Wheldrake Ings (SM) and nine at Stub Wood (Dli) on 9th January.

Six at the B.S.C. development area on 19th September (Mit) and at Wheldrake Ings on 27th November (Dci). 12 at Nun Appleton on 31st December (DW).

**CROSSBILL** *Loxia curvirostra*

Ten at Black Plantation near Wheldrake on 17th October and two there on 19th.

**CHAFFINCH** *Fringilla coelebs*

Flocks of up to 30 at Strensall Common, Castle Howard, Strips Wood, Harton, Bramble Lane, Brockett Wood and Acaster Malbis.

**BRAMBLING**

A large increase in numbers with over 20 records. 21 at Askham Bog on 23rd January (DW) and one at Castle Howard on 29th (APP). Up to 12 at the York University Campus from 30th January to 23rd February (JHL). A heavy crop of beechmast in Knavesmire Woods attracted up to 200 birds during January and February (EM). Six at Acomb Green on 3rd March (MKW), two at Bishopthorpe Road on 6th, seven at Knavesmire Wood on 27th (DW) and one at Askham Bog on 29th (DA, DF). Two at Tillmire on 4th April (IvllGi).

First of winter were in November with four at Skelton Moorlands on 4th (EM), three at Askham Bog on 5th (DA, DF), six at Naburn Sewage Works on 16th and one there on 18th (TED, EBB), two at Heslington Park on 20th (BT) and 25 at Tillmire on 27th (wcv), three at the Lower Derwent and one at Skipwith Common on 27th (as). One at Naburn Sewage Works on 27th and three at Skipwith Common on 30th. Up to ten at Brandsby during December (PH).

**CORN BUNTING** *Emberiza calandra*

Bred at Clifton Water Works, B.S.C. development area, Grange Lane, Bramble Lane, Strips Wood, Naburn, Cockey Hill, Wheldrake, Elvington, Warthill, Towthorpe, Osbaldwick and Nether Poppleton (PT, MB).

17 at Acaster Malbis on 14th March, 17 at Fulford Ings on 14th April and 20 at Middlethorpe Ings on 11th.

11 at Acaster Airfield on 6th October (DB,) and 25 there on 30th (Dw). 12 at Rufforth on 26th November (Dli), 14 at Stockton-on-the-Forest on 10th December and 10 at Acaster Selby on 29th (DW).

**YELLOWHAMMER** *Emberiza citrinella*

Bred at the York University Campus (U.H.N..H.S.) and Langwith being the only proven sites.

20 at Strensall Common on 30th January (BOP, JMP). 20 at a roost at Grange Lane on 18th October (Mit). 20 at Acaster Malbis on 22nd November and 40 at Acaster Selby on 27th (Dw).

**REED BUNTING** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Bred at: the Lower Derwent, Clifton Water Works with 20 pairs present and at the Westfield Bog area where 20 pairs were also present (MR). Four pairs at the York University Campus (U.Y.N.H.s.) and 13 pairs at Askham Bog (Common Bird Census).

20 at Acaster Malbis in March (DW) and up to 40 at Westfield Bog during October (MR).

**SNOW BUNTING** *Plectrophenax nivalis*

12 near Skelton on 4th November (EM).

**HOUSE SPARROW** *Passer domesticus*

Up to 150 at Tang Hall Tip in June (BGP).

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus*

50 at Middlethorpe Ings on 2nd January (DW), 250 at Acaster Malbis during January and February (Dw). 50 at the Lower Derwent on 8th April (as) and 100 at Acaster Malbis on 13th. A flock of 50 at Naburn during October and December (Ti~D, EBB).

#### CONTRIBUTORS

52 contributors which includes one group (Univ. of York NHS).