

CLASSIFIED LIST

The sequence and scientific nomenclature used is that of Professor K.H. Voous, 1977, List of Recent Holarctic Bird Species.

RED-THROATED DIVER *Gavia stellata*

An oiled bird on the Ouse in York 1st and 3rd February (per TED) and at Poppleton on 6th and 7th (DA). Fourth record for the area.

LITTLE GREBE *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Bred at Strensall Common where three pairs reared at least seven young; in Lower Derwent where up to five singing males and two pairs at Brandsby. A pair at Rosscarrs during the breeding season.

During the first three months up to nine at Bolton Percy on the Wharfe; up to six at Poppleton and up to five at Bishopthorpe. At least six on Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal and one or two at Sturge's Pond, Selby.

The usual April passage in Lower Derwent where up to eight present. Two pairs at Sturge's Pond on 17th.

Return passage in August with three at Sturge's Pond on 10th, singles at Castle Howard on 16th and 19th and in Lower Derwent on 18th and 29th.

The only September record was of four at Sturge's Pond on 8th.

Thereafter scarce with one at Sturge's Pond on 8th October; two at Dringhouses Pond on 30th; singles at Bishopthorpe on 11th November and Clifton Airfield on 14th December, and two at Dringhouses Pond on 23rd December.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus*

Bred at Castle Howard where only three pairs reared two young; at Sturge's Pond, Selby (two pairs, five young); Pond Head (three pairs, no young); Sand Hutton (one pair, three young); Dringhouses Pond (one pair, two young), Lower Derwent (one pair, no young) and single pairs with unknown success at Foggathorpe and North Howden Ponds.

In the first two months up to three in Lower Derwent, up to two at Dringhouses Pond and on Ouse between York and Naburn

The usual spring passage in March with up to 36 at Castle Howard and up to eight at Dringhouses Pond; five at Pond Head, two at University, Sand Hutton and Lower Derwent, and one at Fulford.

Birds were settling in to breed by April. Away from breeding sites, one at Clifton Airfield on 8th and two at Newburgh Priory on 24th.

Signs of return passage in July with two at Melbourne Ponds on 12th and one at Wigganthorpe on 21st.

Most breeding birds had left by mid-August, with one to three at Dringhouses Pond and Castle Howard to year end.

RED-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps grisegena*

A first winter bird on the Ouse at Fulford Ings on 26th January (DR) and the same bird at Poppleton from 26th to 28th (DA). One in Lower Derwent from 10th to 17th February (RS et al.). Sixth and seventh records for the area.

SLAVONIAN GREBE *Podiceps auritus*

One in Lower Derwent from 8th to 21st January. Fifth record for the area.

CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax oarbo*

In Lower Derwent, an immature on 12th January.

The usual spring passage birds with an adult from 22nd to 24th March. In April three on 3rd, two on 6th and 8th, three adults on 20th and one on 29th. A second year on 6th September.

Elsewhere, one at Rosscarrs on 23rd April, two at Strensall Common on 14th May with one at Castle Howard next day. One flew South over Howden Common on 11th November, an adult at Riccall

Ings on 1st December and one at Castle Howard on 20th.
A relatively good showing.

GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea*

Fourteen pairs bred in the Lower Derwent heronry. Birds were recorded from all districts throughout the year.

Maximum count was of ten at Castle Howard on 18th June. Post breeding counts were the lowest for ten years with seven at Castle Howard on 3rd August and eight in Lower Derwent on 28th September and eight on 14th October. Presumably reflecting a poor breeding season.

MUTE SWAN *Cygnus olor*

Single pairs bred in Lower Derwent and Pocklington Canal, and unsuccessfully at Rosscarrs.

Maxima in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal were 19 in January, 17 in February, 19 in March, 12 in April, 21 in May, 18 in June, two in July, ten in August, two in September, 15 in October, ten in November and nine in December.

Op to five at Bishopthorpe, York University, Poppleton, Newburgh and Riccall in the winter months with three immatures at Castle Howard from 10th to 12th June. The slowly increasing trend in non-breeding birds continues.

BEWICK'S SWAN *Cygnus columbianus*

Monthly maxima in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal as follows: 83 in January, 140 in February, 104 in March. 45 on 30th March was the last large flock, but one present from 11th to 15th April and another from 28th to 30th. First returning bird was a single on 10th October with six on 20th. Then up to 31 in November and 67 in December.

Elsewhere, one south-east over Norton on 16th April, one at Riccall Ings from 9th to 11th November, five west over the University on 19th December and five north-east over Hobmoor, York on 22nd.

WHOOPEE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus*

Monthly maxima in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal of 41 in January, 58 in February, 94 in March, with 22 on 2nd April and two next day the last. First returning bird was a single on 10th October with four on 26th and also 2nd November, then up to 34 from 6th December.

Elsewhere, three flew north-east at Poppleton on 13th March. The trend towards increasing numbers continues.

BEAN GOOSE *Anser fabalis*

An adult and immature in Lower Derwent from 10th to 24th March (DW et al.). Fourth record for the area. This species, which had not been seen prior to 1981 has now occurred in four of the last five years in the Lower Derwent

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus*

In Lower Derwent, two from 1st January to 17th May, fifteen on 10th November, five on 11th December, two on 26th and 27th and three on 29th. At Castle Howard, two on 2nd January with one from 2nd February to 26th May, 29 west there on 4th February and one on 16th and 20th December. 100 flew south-east over Cawood on 27th November and 120 flew south over Bishopthorpe on 12th December.

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons*

In Lower Derwent the three adult nominate birds from 1984 remained until 10th January when they were joined by a further 11 birds and by another on 26th. All fifteen birds remained until 17th March. An immature of the Greenland race (*A.a. flavirostris*) arrived on 24th March and remained to 28th April. Five nominate birds on 15th December. This species is now regular in Lower

Derwent.

GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser*

Bred in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal, Castle Howard and North Howden ponds.

Monthly maxima at the two main haunts were

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Lower Derwent	381	300	140	27	30	N/C	138	106	60	251	110	23
Castle Howard	159	152	183	145	97	71	101	90	N/C	N/C	211	233

A bird in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal on 28th September, 19th October and 7th December showed characteristics of the eastern race (*A.a. rubirostris*) (TED,DR,TB).

Elsewhere the only significant counts were 40 west at Brandsby on 27th September and 55 at Skipwith Common on 12th December.

SNOW GOOSE *Anser caerulescens*

The Eastern race (*A.a. atlanticus*) bird from 1984 remained in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal until 26th January. An adult white phase bird of unknown race there on 19th October and 10th, 13th and 23rd November.

A Greylag x Snow Goose hybrid was present in Lower Derwent on several dates in March and April.

CANADA GOOSE *Branta canadensis*

Bred in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal, Sand Button, Newburgh, Dringhouses Pond, Stearsby and Pond Head.

Monthly maxima at the two main haunts were as follows:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Lower Derwent	353	250	74	N/C	70	19	16	63	240	46	100	105
Castle Howard	31	54	42	N/C	N/C	20	65	131	137	N/C	110	N/C

This species continues to increase, the January count in Lower Derwent was the highest yet recorded there. Significant counts from elsewhere were, 26 north at Stamford Bridge on 21st May; 30 north at Bishopthorpe on 9th June, 20 at Sand Button on 23rd; 18 at Wiggantheorpe and 14 at Stearsby on 21st July, 20 south at Bishopthorpe on 29th August with 30 south there on 14th September; 20 at Dringhouses Pond on 25th with 40 on 27th and 33 on 30th.

One in Lower Derwent on 15th December was much darker on breast and flanks and may have been of the race *B.c. interior* (DR,RS).

BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis*

In Lower Derwent, one on 9th and 10th February, four on 6th May, one on 11th. Six on 26th October, seven on 27th and 2nd November; singles 24th November, 11th, 15th and 22nd December, with three from 24th to year end.

At Castle Howard three on 10th February, 71 plus four hybrids (the Flamingo Park flock presumably) next day (DW). Singles on 2nd, 3rd, 9th, 10th and 15th November.

EGYPTIAN GOOSE *Alopochen aegyptiacus*

Seven juveniles alighted at Castle Howard for 15 minutes on 29th July (DR,DW). Fifth record for the area.

SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna*

Bred in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal where 20 pairs had a poor season with only three broods seen, and at York University (one pair). After indications of breeding along the Wharfe since 1979, it was finally proved at Ryther where a female with fluffy ducklings was seen. Similarly breeding was also finally proven at Riccall (one pair), again after indications since 1979.

In Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal up to six in January increasing to 59 by 10th February and to 126 by 17th March. This latter count the largest yet. Birds were on territory by early April, the first

brood was seen on 21st May. Most birds had left by late June. Two juveniles on 16th July with singles on 14th August and 24th September. One returned on 17th December with two on 19th and 24th and three on 27th.

Elsewhere, the University pair returned on 18th February, a pair at Newburgh on 3rd April, a pair at Bolton Percy on 17th. Eight at Riccall on 28th July with one juvenile remaining to end September. Four flew south at Rosscarrs on 7th August, five juveniles at Castle Howard from 9th to 12th with one on 13th.

MANDARIN *Aix galericulata*

A moulting drake at Castle Howard on 2nd, 5th, 6th, 10th, 15th and 16th June (PP et al.). Ninth record for the area.

WIGEON *Anas penelope*

Four pairs present in Lower Derwent during the breeding season, probably bred although no broods seen. Monthly maxima in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal were, 4250 in January, in February the highest counts ever with 7000 on 4th, 7500 on 7th, 6855 on 10th and a splendid 8000 on 17th; 4000 in March, 500 in April declining to 100 by 28th. 20 on 25th August then up to 45 in September, 150 in October, 552 in November and 5000 in December. The only significant count from elsewhere was of 40 on the Ouse at Cliffe bend on 14th November.

AMERICAN WIGEON *Anas americana*

A drake going into eclipse in Lower Derwent from 28th May to 1st June and again on 3rd and 9th June (TB,DR,RS,PP,TED). First record for the area.

GADWALL *Anas strepera*

Three or four pairs probably bred at three sites in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal where up to two in January, up to ten in February, and up to seven in March. The breeding birds had mostly left by late June. Thereafter singles on 12th and 21st July and 18th August, five on 25th and two on 26th; a pair on 13th September, a drake on 15th October, five on 11th December and three on 26th.

Elsewhere, a duck at Bolton Percy Ings on 1st February, one at Riccall Ings on 14th March and a pair at Castle Howard on 2nd November and 25th/26th December.

TEAL *Anas crecca*

Bred at Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal (four pairs), and at Skipwith Common. Possibly bred at Strensall Common and Castle Howard.

In the Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal monthly maxima of 1966 in January, 1639 in February, 885 in March, 250 in April. 100 in August and September, 120 in October, 500 in November and 650 in December.

Elsewhere, 108 at Wharfe Ings on 1st February and 300 at Bolton Percy Ings on 2nd; 50 at Ross Carrs on 30th August and 7th September, 60 at Castle Howard from 26th October and throughout November increasing to 70 on 16th December. Up to 39 in winter months at Newburgh Priory, Bishopthorpe, Acaster Malbis, Strensall Common, Poppleton and Cliffe bend.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*

Monthly maxima in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal of 2071 in January, 2500 in February, 1000 in March, 520 in August, 350 in September, 120 in October, 353 in November and 50 in December.

Autumn numbers here were extraordinarily low, indeed the mid-December wildfowl count could produce only 16 birds. Numbers have been declining for several years now.

At Castle Howard, 320 in January, 189 in February, 56 in March, 212 in July, 475 in September, 600 in November and 487 in December.

Elsewhere, 128 on York Foss on 27th January, 220 at Bolton Percy Ings on 3rd February and 200 on Ouse at Poppleton on

23rd. 100 at Ross Carrs on 30th August with 150 there on 7th September, 200 at Bishopthorpe on 27th November and 100 at Dringhouses Pond on 30th December.

PINTAIL *Anas acuta*

Three pairs probably bred in Lower Derwent, where up to five in January, 165 in February and 49 in March. First returning birds were two on 10th September with two on 15th and one on 29th. One on 3rd November then up to 15 regularly from 16th December to year end.

Elsewhere one at Castle Howard on 11th September with one on 24th October, 23 on 23rd November and one on 30th November.

SHOVELER *Anas clypeata*

Bred in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal with c.45 pairs present early in the breeding season. However the abysmally wet and cold weather caused most pairs to desert and only two broods were seen, rather late on 22nd and 28th July. Outside the breeding season one or two in January, up to 35 in February, 12 in March, 40 in August, 30 in September, 29 in October, 12 in November and 20 in December.

The only significant counts from elsewhere were 10 at Castle Howard on 15th September, 15 there on 22nd, 37 on 29th; 35 on 20th October; 24 on 10th November and 20 on 22nd.

GARGANEY *Anas querquedula*

Probably bred in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal with a pair at one site regularly from 30th March to 19th May and again on 6th July, and at another site a pair on 25th April, a male on 1st May and a female on 20th May.

Later a female on 21st July and 29th August and a single on 15th and 18th September.

POCHARD *Aythya ferina*

In Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal, 24 on 1st January then 130 on 27th increasing rapidly with the onset of deep flooding with 240 on 30th. 1250 on 3rd February, 1678 on 10th declining rapidly to 60 on 17th then 300 on 24th; 60 on 3rd March; 15 on 18th April with one on 18th May the last. For the first time in several years there was no indication of breeding, presumably due to the terrible late spring weather. Only autumn records were of four on 17th August and two next day with 120 on 25th December.

Elsewhere, 43 at Bolton Percy Ings on 1st February, 20 at Castle Howard on 5th; 24 at Bishopthorpe on 21st, 25 at Dringhouses Pond on 8th March. 34 at Rosscarrs on 7th September, 22 at Castle Howard on 24th November and 37 at Dringhouses Pond on 28th and 29th December.

FERRUGINOUS DUCK *Aythya nyroca*

The 1984 bird remained in Lower Derwent to 5th January (TB).

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula*

Bred at Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal with around twenty pairs, Castle Howard (four broods totalling 18 young), Newburgh (9 pairs, success unknown) and Brandsby (3 pairs, success unknown). Maxima in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal of 117 in January, 227 in February, 100 in March and 150 in April.

In the Fulford/Bishopthorpe area up to 60 in January and 80 in February. 27 on York Foss on 14th and 29th January; 24 at Riccall on 10th February, 41 at Dringhouses Pond next day; 15 at Castle Howard on 24th November, 13 at Pond Head on 24th December and 27 at Dringhouses Pond on 29th.

SCAUP *Aythya marila*

In Lower Derwent, a female from 5th to 12th January; an immature male on 5th February; two females from 17th to 11th March and an eclipse male on 8th August.

At Poppleton, on the Ouse, a female from 22nd to 28th January with a male on 28th. In Bishopthorpe area an immature male from 26th January to 23rd February with a female from 31st January to 16th February.

A female and an immature male at Bolton Percy Ings on 3rd February, the male being the same bird as that in Lower Derwent on 5th. An immature male at Dringhouses Pond on 10th to 12th February (thought to be the Bishopthorpe bird).

A female at Castle Howard on 13th August and another at Dringhouses Pond on 17th December.

EIDER *Somateria mollissima*

A first winter female on the Ouse in York city centre from 21st to 23rd November (TB et al.). Third record for the area.

GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula*

In Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal maxima of 15 in January, 45 in February, 46 in March, 30 in April with 20 still present on 22nd and 6 on 29th. A male on 16th and 17th May. In autumn, one on 26th October, 5 on 30th November and one on 24th December. Elsewhere up to 5 at Dringhouses Pond, Castle Howard, Sturge's Pond (Selby), Nether Poppleton, Bolton Percy Ings, Acaster Malbis, Fulford, Bishopthorpe, Middlethorpe, Naburn, Beningborough, Howsham, Kexby and Stamford Bridge during January and February. One at Castle Howard on 28th April. Two there on 29th September; 20th and 26th October. 6 there on 2nd November with 3 on 8th, 4 on 22nd/23rd, one on 28th and 6 on 22nd December. Singles at Riccall, Fulford, Dringhouses Pond and Pond Head during December.

SMEW *Mergus albellus*

An unprecedented series of records. In Lower Derwent a male and three redheads on 20th and 21st January, a pair on 22nd and 3rd to 8th February, a male and two redheads from 9th to 14th with a male and three redheads on 10th and 16th to 19th, a male and 4 redheads on 20th and 23rd, 3 redheads on 24th, 1 redhead on 27th/28th (TED,PP,TB,DW et al.). At Nether Poppleton a male and 2 redheads on 18th January, 2 males and 5 redheads on 20th and 4 redheads on 21st (DA). Two redheads at Low Catton on 22nd January (RSS) and at Scrayingham on 5th February (TW,VW) were probably from lower down the Derwent.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator*

A redhead in Lower Derwent from 7th January to 23rd February with two redheads on 26th January. A male at Ross Carrs on 18th January and a redhead at Castle Howard from 2nd to 11th February.

GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser*

The high numbers at Castle Howard recorded in 1984 were maintained with up to 71 in January, 87 in February and 103 in March; a male on 1st April and two pairs on 28th. First returning birds were 5 on 26th October with up to 86 in November and 154 in December (15th). The December count was the highest ever recorded in the area and the highest count in England during the 1985/6 winter.

In Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal up to 18 in January and February, up to 12 in March, five on 2nd April, three on 3rd and two on 8th. Singles on 23rd November and 6th December, three on 15th, one on 17th, four on 21st, one on 22nd and two on 30th.

Elsewhere, in January up to 8 at Riccall, Bishopthorpe, Fulford, Acaster Malbis, Bolton Percy and Newburgh. In February, 6 at Newburgh on 1st, 15 at Bolton Percy on 3rd, 10 at Riccall on 14th and 3 at Newburgh on 25th. In March two at Nether Poppleton on 2nd and 6 at Riccall on 16th. Two drakes at Bolton Percy on 13th April and 7 at Riccall on 15th. A female at Nether Poppleton on 18th May. A female at Stamford Bridge on 1st, 3rd, 17th, 19th and 23rd July. One at Newburgh on 9th November, up to three at Nether Poppleton from 20th November to 28th December, one at Clifton Airfield on 14th, 14 at Wiggantherpe on 15th and 8 at Riccall on 29th.

RUDDY DUCK *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Bred again in Lower Derwent, where in immature male was present from 24th January to 10th February. A female arrived on 2nd April remaining to 8th May, next day two pairs were present increasing to two pairs and a male on 13th and two pairs and three males on 19th. Three drakes remained to 16th June and two females to 27th May; one female remained to 10th September and was seen with 3 ducklings from 30th June until 24th August, with one juvenile remaining to 15th September. A drake was at Castle Howard from 16th to 24th December.

HONEY BUZZARD *Pernis apivorus*

One on 11th June at a site where a Buzzard sp which was thought to be this species was seen on 3rd June. Site and observer withheld. A Buzzard sp at Skipwith Common on 8th and 10th June was thought to be probably this species (JHL). Third record for the area.

MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus*

In Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal a good series of records with single cream crowns seen as follows on 10th June, 10th, 11th, 16th, 17th, 19th, 27th July; 3rd and 29th August (with also an adult female on the latter date) and 1st September. At least four birds involved. A cream crown at Riccall on 23rd, 29th and 31st August with the same bird at Skipwith Common on 5th, 10th and 12th September (with a second cream crown on the latter date) and at Barlby on 20th. This bird was not the same as the Lower Derwent bird of 29th August and 1st September.

HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus*

A very poor year. The Riccall ringtail of 1984 remained to 10th February (PP). A ringtail at Bishop Wood on 15th March (TB) .

GOSHAWK *Accipiter gentilis*

At one site a displaying pair on 9th, 10th and 25th March, a male on 31st, a pair on 7th and 9th April and a male on 27th April and 2nd June. Locality and observers withheld.

SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus*

Recorded from 46 sites throughout the area and in every month. Apparently still increasing as a winter visiter to York suburbs.

BUZZARD *Buteo buteo*

One in Lower Derwent on 3rd April (TED).

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD *Buteo lagopus*

One in Lower Derwent on 2nd November (A O'N).

KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus*

Continues to prosper, common and widespread throughout the area. Bred as it has done for several years on York Minster.

MERLIN *Falco oolumbarius*

Singles in Lower Derwent on 7th and 16th February; 10th, 11th, 17th, 28th and 30th March, 6th September and 10th, 17th and 20th November.

Elsewhere singles at Riccall on 13th January, Skipwith Common on 16th; North Howden Ponds on 6th February, Allerthorpe on 2nd March, Hemingborough on 25th, Yearsley on 31st, Riccall on 6th April and 5th September.

HOBBY *Falco subbuteo*

One at Skelton on 26th May (EM).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

A good year for this species. In the Lower Derwent a female on 2nd January (DR), one on 27th (TED), a male on 4th February (TED) and a female on 6th (TED).

One at New Earswick on 26th October (PWR).

Seventh to eleventh records for the area, all since 1980 and eight of them in the Lower Derwent.

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE *Alectoris rufa*

Now the dominant partridge species in the north of the area (PH). Largest coveys were 25 at Wharfe Ings on 27th January; 14 at Whenby on 19th February; 17 at Ross Carrs on 18th October; 31 at Grimston Bar, York on 2nd November; 14 at Ross Carrs on 9th December and 16 at Skipwith Common on 19th.

GREY PARTRIDGE *Perdix perdix*

Still common in the north of the area but elsewhere apparently still in decline, with the Lower Ouse and Lower Derwent grasslands the only areas with reasonable populations. Largest coveys were 13 at Nether Poppleton on 12th January, 18 at Wharf Ings and 21 at Bolton Percy Ings on 27th, 15 at Bishopthorpe on 29th, 10 at Acaster on 30th, 22 at Ellerton on 8th October and 11 at Wilberfoss on 31st December.

PHEASANT *Phasianus colchicus*

No significant records other than an all white bird at Wheldrake on 13th February (TB).

WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus*

In Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal singles seen regularly during January and February with 3 on 7th January and two on 17th. One calling on 30th July; one on 20th September and 30th November.

Elsewhere singles at Acaster Malbis on 20th and 25th January, dead at Castle Howard on 10th February, Sturge's Pond, Selby on 22nd. Calling at Strensall Common on 26th May. Singles at Howden Common on 11th November and Castle Howard on 16th December.

Singles at Howden Common on 11th November and Castle Howard on 16th December.

CORNCRAKE *Crex crex*

One in Lower Derwent on 13th May (per TED).

MOORHEN *Gallinula ohloropus*

Very few records received. Maximum counts were 22 at Bishopthorpe on 5th January, 25 at Newburgh on 15th February and 20 at Bishopthorpe next day.

A Moorhen x Coot hybrid was in the Lower Derwent from 1st to 26th January.

COOT *Fulica atra*

In Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal maxima were 170 in January, 465 in February and 170 in March.

89 were at Pond Head on 24th December.

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus*

Quite a good year as regards breeding numbers, with at least 10 pairs in the Lower Derwent / Pocklington Canal area, plus outlying birds or pairs recorded at Bielby, Elvington Airfield, Kexby and Sand Button. The somewhat hesitant colonization of suitable sites along the Ouse and Wharfe continues, with two pairs present at Riccall (one of which definitely bred), and birds present in the breeding season at Copmanthorpe, Poppleton and Red House Reservoir, and by the Wharfe at Ozendyke Ings.

The first individual of the year flew downriver at Naburn on 27th February (PWC). Present at Wheldrake Ings from 2nd March, and up to four birds there subsequently during the month. Breeding territories were occupied from April to late June, after which came a series of records in the last fortnight of July, presumably involving passage birds of uncertain origin; 37 bird-days in the Lower Derwent in this period, with a maximum of eight at East Cottingwith on 17th July. Only one August record; at Barlow Grange on 7th. A single at Clifton Airfield on 8th September was the last of the year (SR).

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius dubius*

A poor year, with only three breeding pairs reported, one at Brighton Airfield and 2 at Riccall (one of which was successful). A probable pair at Clifton Airfield during the second half of April did not breed.

Low breeding numbers reflected a poor spring passage. The first birds appeared on 6th April: two at Wheldrake Ings (TED,DR,DW,PP) and two at Riccall (PP). April yielded only five bird-days in the Lower Derwent, and May a mere four.

Return passage was similarly disappointing: the only July record involved 3 at Melbourne on 9th and 10th, while August produced reports of up to 2 birds at both Riccall and Clifton Airfield. Two remained at the last-named site until 8th September, with the last of the year being a juvenile at Wheldrake Ings on 28th and 29th September (TB,TED).

RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula*

A pair at Riccall had juveniles in late June: this represents the first breeding record in the York Record ing Area. A third adult at the same locality during this period may have been paired. The species is a not unexpected addition to our list of breeding birds (see TED 'The Status of Waders in the York Area' in YOC Report for 1981, p.14).

In contrast to the previous species, a reasonable spring passage, as usual concentrated in the Lower Derwent; 21 bird-days in March, 45 in April and 3 in May. Continuously present at Wheldrake Ings from 20th March to 12th April, with a maximum of 6 there from 7th to 10th April.

An even larger preponderance of spring over autumn records than usual, with no autumn birds at all in the Lower Derwent. A single was at Riccall on 9th September, while two there on 25th September constituted the year's last record.

GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria*

Numbers wintering in the area were generally low in the first three months of the year, presumably as a result of spells of severe weather. Some reasonable flocks in early January, with 500 on North Duffield Carrs and 170+ at Wheldrake Ings on 4th, but no three-figure gatherings subsequently until 4th February, when 400 were at Bishopthorpe. A systematic count in the Lower Derwent on 7th February yielded only 400, a figure which had increased slightly to 650 by 6th March. North Duffield Ings held 116 on 12th March. A decline thereafter, with 271 birds present in the Lower Derwent on 17th March.

April saw the expected increase in numbers as 'Northern' birds of the race *P.a. altifrons* passed through. Notable flocks during the month included 652 at Ryther on 13th with 450 there on 17th and

361 on 30th; a maximum of 200 at Wheldrake Ings on 11th, and 253 at Bishopthorpe on 30th. Numbers declined rapidly in the first week of May, with the last birds of the spring being a group of 7 at Ryther on 7th.

The first returning individual was noted at Wheldrake Ings on June 30th. Numbers then built up very gradually through July, with 90 at East Cottingwith on 17th. At the month-end two large flocks were noted in the Lower Derwent: 350 ('altifrons' birds) at Aughton on 27th, and 600 at Bubwith on 30th. August was generally a quiet month, though 250 were at Barlow Grange on 29th. During September flocks of 200-500 were present at Ross Carrs, Barlow Grange, Riccall and Brighton Airfield. The last notable gathering of a typically-protracted autumn passage involved 650 on North Duffield Carrs on 8th October.

Winter numbers were slow to build up, but by December (which was rather mild) counts for the Lower Derwent reached four figures for the first time in 1985.120 were at Aughton on 29th October, while in November 400+ were at Acaster Malbis on 11th and 260 at Brighton Airfield on 16th. A total of 1180 were in the Lower Derwent on 6th December, increasing to 1900 by 15th. The last fortnight of the year produced easily the largest counts, with 800 at North Duffield Carrs on 17th increasing to 2000 on 19th and 3100 on 25th. Elsewhere 200 were at Bubwith on 22nd, 400 at Bishopthorpe on 15th and 500+ at Cliffe the next day.

An individual at Wheldrake Ings on 5th April had white primaries, but was otherwise normal (RS).

GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola*

Seven records were received, all from Wheldrake Ings; probably six individuals were involved. First was a single observed on 8th and 11th January. Then in late March came one on 24th to 25th, and three on 30th. A summer-plumaged bird was reported on 5th and 6th May.

This year's crop of records seem to bring us little nearer to discovering any pattern in the occurrence of this species. However, over 40% of", total bird-days have now been in spring (March-May).

LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus*

In early January, 1100 were at North Duffield Carrs and Ings (on 4th) and c.600 at West Ings (on 11th). No significant counts were made in the remainder of the month, no doubt a reflection of severe weather. However, by 7th February some 3000 were present in the Lower Derwent, and 900 had been counted at Wheldrake Ings on 5th. Elsewhere in February, flocks of 100-300 were noted at Bolton Percy Ings on 3rd; Bishopthorpe on 6th and 27th; Knavesmire on 7th, and Barlow Grange on 25th. As usual, numbers in the Lower Derwent declined through March, with 1300 on 6th falling to 300 on 17th.

Individuals holding territory were observed at Brandsby on the early date of 24th February, while chicks were still hatching in the Lower Derwent on the 27th June; extreme dates, possibly indicative of an unusually protracted breeding season. Only two counts of breeding birds were submitted: c.35 pairs in part of the Aughton-Ellerton stretch of the Lower Derwent, and 20+ pairs in the Bielby-Laytham district.

A group of 14 birds at Aughton on 30th May represented the first post-breeding aggregation, though a count in the Lower Derwent on 25th June produced a total of only 132. In July there were several flocks of 200-500 birds in the Lower Derwent, and a huge gathering of some 2000 at Aughton on 27th. The only other four-figure count of the autumn came from Wheldrake Ings, which held c.1500 on 4th August. No single flock exceeded 400 in the subsequent three months, apart from one of 650 at Riccall on 8th September.

A mere 560 birds were present in the Lower Derwent on 17th November: the only significant flocks reported in that month involved 250+ at Barlow Grange on 14th and 280 at Ross Carrs on 22nd.

Numbers built up satisfactorily during December, with 2550 in the Lower Derwent on 6th, followed by some huge flocks on North Duffield Carrs: 1500 on 17th, 1800 on 19th, 3000 on 22nd, a magnificent 5000 on 25th and 1000 on 27th. Elsewhere, 1000+ were at Cliffe on 16th December.

LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta*

Only a single record, but a typical one: a juvenile at Clifton

Airfield on 22nd September was characteristically tame, being observed at ranges down to 2m (SRi).

STINT Sp *Calidris minuta/temminckii*

On 28th December a stint flew north between East Cottingwith and Ellerton, passing within 30m of the observer, who commented on the bird's tiny size (in comparison with nearby Dunlin), white wing-bars and erratic flight. As the stint was adjudged not to be Temminck's, it would seem highly likely that it was Little (JHL).

A stint seen very briefly on 31st May at Wheldrake Ings was "almost certainly Temminck's" (TB).

KNOT *Calidris canutus*

Three records, involving 10 birds. On 6th February a party of 7 were on a marshy field at Norton Grove (RL). Two were noted at Aughton on 14th July (TED), and a juvenile was watched at Riccall on 16th September (PP). The bulk of the records in the York area have been in the period February to April and September, so the Norton and Riccall birds fit the pattern well. The Aughton record is the first for July.

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea*

A single juvenile was present at Wheldrake Ings from 10th to 13th September (DR,NS,PP,RS). It would perhaps have been surprising if the species had not put in an appearance, bearing in mind the exceptional influx of juveniles to eastern Britain in September 1985. Even so, Curlew Sandpiper remains an oddly erratic visitor to the York area; the above individual was only the third since 1980, and the eighth in all.

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*

As usual all large counts came from the LDV, and records fitted in well with the established patten, viz a sizeable wintering population departing in February-March to be replaced by a (racially distinct?) spring passage contingent peaking in April, a small return passage in autumn, and a build-up of wintering birds in November/December.

Counts in January included 120 into roost at Wheldrake Ings on 1st and 100 on North Duffield Carrs on 4th; 350 were on North Duffield Carrs on 5th February, with 200 at East Cottingwith and 150 at Storwood on 11th. Early March counts involved up to 100 birds (at Wheldrake Ings on 4th and North Duffield Carrs on 9th) but numbers declined rapidly so that only 28 were present on the Lower Derwent on 17th.

Spring passage was heralded by a flock of 60 at Wheldrake Ings on 26th March. Flocks of 30-50 were present at this site virtually throughout April, with maxima there of 75 on 8th, 60+ on 12th and 50 on 23rd. Forty present at Aughton on 14th April included a single 'southern' individual of the race 'schinzii'¹ (TED); presumably the rest were of nominate race 'alpina'. Numbers at Aughton peaked at 150 on 19th, with the last there being 40 on 24th. There were still up to 40 present at Wheldrake Ings during the first week of May, but numbers declined rapidly thereafter, with the last birds being 4 on 15th.

Early autumn passage was contrastingly sparse, with only three individuals recorded, all in July and all in the Lower Derwent. Next were 3 at Wheldrake Ings on 20th October, followed by a trickle of birds in November (maximum 15 at Aughton on 11th). The whole of the Lower Derwent held only 41 individuals on 6th December, but by 17th 220 had returned to North Duffield Carrs; this site held flocks of 400 on 19th and 350 on 25th.

Outside the Lower Derwent, small numbers were recorded at Wharfe Ings, Acaster Malbis and Castle Howard in early February.

RUFF *Philomachus pugnax*

Possibly bred in the Lower Derwent, where excellent numbers were present in April and into May; one site sometimes held 100+ individuals (119 on 22nd and 120 on 29th April being maxima): here 10 males and 5 females attended a lek on 15th May. A second site had up to 92 birds present in the second half of April, and here too lekking was observed. Eleven males and a female were present at a third site on 12th April.

Reasonable numbers in the Lower Derwent in the early months, with January maxima of 7 at Wheldrake Ings (on 9th) and 3 at Ellerton

on 22nd. A total of 30 were present in the valley on 7th February, while on 10th 17 were at Wheldrake Ings and 10+ at East Cottingwith. In March all records came from one site, with maxima of 17 on 11th and 16 on 24th.

Autumn passage was almost non-existent: at Wheldrake Ings two were present on 8th August and a single on 30th September. Thereafter no records were received until 6th December, when one was noted at Aughton. Wintering birds returned in fair numbers in the last fortnight of December, with 22 at North Duffield Carrs on 19th, 25 there on 25th, and 12 at East Cottingwith on 30th.

Away from the Lower Derwent records were as follows: an interesting report of 13 flying over Poppleton on 28th January (DA,MC) hints at the possibility of birds wintering along the Ouse north of York; and two autumn singles at Riccall, on 6th August and 5th September.

JACK SNIPE *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Few records this year, especially in the latter months (which were of course rather mild). However, this species is doubtless highly under-recorded. January produced singles on the University Campus on 8th and at Wharfe Ings on 23rd. Two were flushed from Fulford Ings on 7th February, while amazingly enough one at East Cottingwith on 11th February was the sole 1985 record to come from the Lower Derwent. One at Fulford Ings on four dates in March preceded the last of the winter, a single at Strensall Common on 8th April.

An individual was noted at Bielby on 6th December, and the last bird of the year was found at Dringhouses Pond on 29th December.

SNIPE *Gallinago gallinago*

Rather fewer records of drumming birds were received this year, though whether this reflects any real decrease in the breeding population is unclear. Certainly the species was described as 'breeding as usual' in the Lower Derwent, with a sample count of 30 pairs on Aughton and part of Ellerton Ings. Elsewhere, drumming individuals were noted at Wheldrake Ings, Laytham, Kexby, Bishopthorpe, Fulford Ings, Strensall Common and Newburgh Priory.

Wintering numbers were generally rather low once again, especially in the latter part of the year. Nevertheless, records were received from a large number of localities, indicating that the species is still widespread.

On 11th January 37 were at Wheldrake Ings, while 26 were counted at Fulford Ings the next day. On 14th, 44 were "probing through the snow" at Bishopthorpe. A marsh on Strensall Common somewhat unexpectedly provided the one really exceptional count of the year, with 260 on 7th February; 49 were at Fulford Ings the same day. Other high February counts came from East Cottingwith (90 on 11th) and Bubwith/Aughton (90 on 17th). A total of 65 were present at Wheldrake Ings on 4th March, while the monthly maximum at Fulford Ings was a disappointing 23 on 14th. Spring passage was similarly poor elsewhere, although a peak of 150 was attained at Westfield Farm, Melbourne on 20th March, and 110 were counted at Wheldrake Ings on 5th April.

The first post-breeding flock comprised 16 birds at Aughton on 29th July, while up to 20 were regularly present at Wheldrake Ings during August. Incredibly, not a single count, in double figures was submitted for the months of September and October. Indeed, the first significant flocks of the autumn apparently did not materialize until late November, with 32 at Newburgh Priory on 24th and c.60 at Bishopthorpe on 27th. Numbers were slow to build in December; 17 at Fulford Ings was that site's monthly maximum, while 20 were at Bubwith on 27th and 50+ at East Cottingwith on 30th.

In addition to the localities already mentioned, small numbers were recorded outside the breeding season at Ross Carrs, Sturge's Ponds, Hobmoor, Copmanthorpe, Clifton Airfield, Poppleton, Brandsby and Norton Grove.

WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola*

No proved breeding records were received. Breeding season records, the vast majority of which involved roding birds, came from Brandsby, Yearsley Woods, Crambeck, Sand Button, Stamford Bridge, Strensall Common, Askham Bog, Stub Wood, Acaster Wood, Elvington Airfield, Skipwith Common, Crookmoor, Bishop's

Wood, Brayton Barff and Sturge's Pond.

The species was noted outside the breeding season at several of the above sites, and also at Castle Howard Lake, Pond Head (Yearsley), Fulford Golf Course, Poppleton, Bishopthorpe, Allerthorpe and Dunnington. None of these records involved more than two birds and any late autumn influx went undetected. However, a report of a total of 12 falling to the guns of a shooting party at Scoreby on 28th December surely indicates the kind of winter densities involved in many of our suitable woodlands.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa*

A fairly typical series of records; all in spring/summer and all from the Lower Derwent.

First birds were a single on 17th March and 3 on 30th March. Present at three sites for much of April, though no more than 3 individuals were ever present at each site. The first few days of May saw a small but well-defined spring passage; one site held 14 on 1st, while another locality played host to 9 on 2nd and 7 on 3rd.

Two pairs bred in the Lower Derwent, with a third pair probably attempting to breed.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica*

Two flew into Wheldrake Ings on the afternoon of January 6th, and fed with Curlew (TB,DW,PP,RS). The first winter record in recent years (most have occurred in spring and early autumn).

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus*

An excellent spring passage in the Lower Derwent, quite easily the best on record (surpassing the large movements of 1983 and 1984), with birds more or less continuously present for over three weeks.

The first birds were not recorded until 18th April, when 4 arrived at Wheldrake Ings (TB,DR,TED), but the species was present daily at this site until 25th, with peaks of 20 on 20th and 11 on 23rd to 25th; up to 3 were noted at Aughton and a single at Ellerton during this period. A further record of 5 at Wheldrake Ings on 29th brought the April bird/day total to 8-1.

Passage continued well into May: 9 flew north over Melbourne on 4th, 10 were observed at Wheldrake Ings on 5th, and 17 were found at Aughton on 11th. Late in the month came an isolated record of a single at Wheldrake Ings (on 31st). May yielded a total of 43 bird/days.

The autumn passage seemed sparse in comparison, though was still perhaps slightly above average. Movement was highly concentrated, with all but two records falling within just eight days at the end of July. First were two at Aughton on 24th, followed by 3 there the next day. On 27th, 10 were at Aughton and a single at Wheldrake Ings. Two remained at Aughton on 28th. Then came singles at Hagg Bridge and Bubwith on 30th, and at Aughton on 31st, and 1st August. A bird was at Barlow Grange on 29th August, and an individual at Wheldrake Ings on 6th September brought to an end an autumn passage totalling 24 bird/days.

CURLEW *Numenius arquata*

Bred in apparently normal numbers in the Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal area, and also at Laytham ("several pairs"), Skipwith Common (1 pair), Strensall Common (3 pairs) and Brandsby (4 pairs). Probable or possible breeding records came from Wressle, Wharfe Ings/Bolton Percy Ings, Copmanthorpe, Acaster Malbis, Bishopthorpe, High Catton and East Ness.

The first ten days of the year saw a remarkable series of records from Wheldrake Ings, amounting to 70 bird/days, with a maximum of 18 on 9th. Fourteen were noted at Storwood on 22nd January, while 30 were at Wheldrake Ings on 30th. February's records were similarly confined to the Lower Derwent, but again involved good numbers; 95 bird/days, with a maximum of 40 at Wheldrake Ings on 12th. The first few days of March saw the expected influx of breeding birds (100 at Wheldrake Ings on 5th for example) and the subsequent re-occupation of territories (from 6th at Brandsby). Flocks at Wheldrake Ings later in the month and during April, probably of passage birds, included 48 on 20th March, 56 on 25th March; 28 on 1st April, 30 on 12th, 32

on 15th and 24 on 23rd.

Little evidence of post-breeding flocks came to hand, the largest July gathering reported being of 9 birds at Wheldrake Ings on 22nd. Autumn passage was extremely poor; the only double-figure counts received came from Aughton, involving 29 on 30th August and 20 on 5th September.

Interestingly, numbers in the Lower Derwent rose substantially from the end of November, underlining the trend towards increased wintering by this species. Fourteen remained at Bielby throughout December, while 11 were on Skipwith Common on 2nd of the same month. Twenty-two were counted at Bubwith on 15th, and 59 at North Duffield Carrs on 17th, with 16 remaining there on 27th.

SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus*

A rather poor year, with four records evenly-balanced between spring and autumn. Singles graced Wheldrake Ings on 24th April and Aughton on 26th May. Two August individuals at Wheldrake Ings on 12th and 18th.

REDSHANK *Tringa totanus*

Bred in fair numbers in the Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal area, as illustrated by a sample count of 22 pairs on Aughton and part of Ellerton Ings. Elsewhere, breeding was reported from Riccall (1 pair), Naburn Ings (1+ pairs), Bishopthorpe (1 pair), Fulford Ings (2 pairs), Wharfe Ings/Bolton Percy Ings (up to 8 pairs).

As usual, records for the first three months of the year almost all came from the Lower Derwent. January yielded 24 bird/days here, with a maximum of 12 at Bubwith on 25th. A single was at Bishopthorpe on 29th, and this or another was at the same locality on 14th February. There were 62 bird/days in the Lower Derwent in February, the maximum being 20 at East Cottingwith on 11th. Numbers were generally low during March, with only 34 in the valley on 17th, though elsewhere 5 at Fulford Ings the same day and 6 at Bishopthorpe on 24th indicated a return to breeding meadows. A record of 19 in a "tight flock" at Wheldrake Ings on 4th May doubtless refers to passage birds of one of the northern races.

As most local breeders had departed by the end of June, a flock of 20 at Aughton on 16th July probably involved migrants. This was not, however, to herald a good autumn passage; the remainder of the month yielded only 6 bird/days, and August a mere 3. Thereafter there were no records until November when there were 4 bird/days (including a single at Osbaldwick on 30th). December saw an influx of wintering birds into the Lower Derwent: up to 30 were on North Duffield Carrs for much of the second half of the month, while 50 were counted between Bubwith and Aughton on 22nd.

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*

An unprecedented April influx was the outstanding feature of a good spring passage. All records for the first half of the year came from the Lower Derwent. Counts from Wheldrake Ings were pre-eminent, with birds present continuously from 18th to 24th April (maximum 12 on 19th); five at Aughton on 24th; 8 at Elvington on 28th and 11 at Wheldrake Ings on 29th contributed to the month's excellent total of 63 bird/days. In contrast, May's records were all of singles, and amounted to only 8 bird/days. One bird was at Bubwith on 5th June.

Autumn passage in the Lower Derwent was rather thin; 15 bird/days in August (maxima 5 at Wheldrake Ings on 18th and 4 on 30th) and 10 in September (maxima 2 at Wheldrake Ings on four dates) culminating in a single at Wheldrake Ings on 5th October.

Surprisingly, more autumn birds were seen outside the Lower Derwent than within it. Riccall yielded 27 bird/days August between 9th August and 23rd October (maxima 5 on 14th August and 4 on 11th and 25th September). Three were at Barlow Grange on 29th August, and two at Castle Howard on 18th August. Elsewhere, September singles were noted at Ross Carrs and Skipwith Common.

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus*

Good numbers were present in early autumn, but the species was rather scarce at both ends of the year. One was at Barmby Moor for the first half of March, and another near Melbourne on 16th. A poor spring passage, all records coming in April; singles on two dates at Wheldrake Ings, and at Bolton Percy Ings on 12th. Two at Newburgh Priory on 28th constitutes the year's only record from the northern half of the recording area.

In contrast, a fine autumn passage. The species was present at

Melbourne from 10th July to 11th September, and totalled 446 bird/days at the site over this period. Of these, 187 were in July (maximum 11 on 15th), 221 in August (maximum 13 on 10th and 13th) and 38 in September. Many of the individuals involved appeared to be in moult.

Other July reports came from Allerthorpe and Stamford Bridge. August produced singles on several dates at Riccall, Seaton Ross and Castle Howard, while Wheldrake Ings held 3 on 28th and 2 the next day. Present in small numbers at Wheldrake Ings for much of September (maxima 3 on 13th and 23rd, and 4 on 25th) and as singles at Ross Carrs on 3rd and Riccall on 22nd and 25th.

October produced a total of 17 bird/days, with Riccall being responsible for 12 of these (maximum 4 on 23rd). Odd singles were noted at Ross Carrs on 28th and Earswick the next day. Singles at Wheldrake Ings on three dates earlier in the month were the last of the year in the Lower Derwent. The only November report was of one at Riccall on 17th, while in December there were two at Riccall on 1st and a single at Stockton-on-Forest on 15th.

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola*

A fairly poor year, with only four records received. Singles were observed at Wheldrake Ings on 11th and 13th May, while on the former date another was at Elvington. An individual at Sutton-on-Derwent on 16th June provided an unusual midsummer record. For the first time in several years there were no autumn reports.

COMMON SANDPIPER *Tringa hypoleucos*

No reports of confirmed breeding were received, but a pair held territory by the Ouse at Moreby Park, Stillingfleet for a week from late May, and a single by the Derwent near Kirkham on 6th June may have been nesting locally. An excellent year for passage birds, with a large number of records submitted for both spring and autumn. In addition, it is gratifying to report the first ever recorded instance of this species wintering in the York area.

The first of the year overflowed Dringhouses Pond on 15th April (DW), and was closely followed by singles at Newton-on-Derwent next day, and Aughton on 17th. Ross Carrs held birds from 22nd with a maximum of 6 on 27th; while ones or twos were present at Sturge's Pond, Riccall, Poppleton, Wheldrake Ings and Elvington. Altogether 26 bird/days were recorded in April, of which the Lower Derwent was responsible for nine.

Passage lasted throughout May, a month which yielded 27 bird/days (11 in the Lower Derwent). Most records were of singles though twos were at Ross Carrs on 2nd and 6th, at Wheldrake Ings on 9th, and at Aughton 15th; Bubwith held 3 on 10th. Other May records came from Riccall, Red House Reservoir, York City centre, Castle Howard lake, Moreby Park and Newburgh Priory.

In addition to the June records mentioned earlier singles were noted at Wheldrake Ings on 1st and Ross Carrs on 15th.

The onset of autumn passage was evident from mid-July; on 14th one was at Castle Howard while 3 were at Aughton. The month produced a total of 68 bird/days; Barlow Grange was responsible for 23 of these (from 19th), Poppleton for 16 (from 15th) and the Lower Derwent for a mere 3. Four were found at Clifton Airfield on 27th, 7 at Riccall on 28th, and 4 at Castle Howard the next day.

A fine total of 254 bird/days was achieved in August, of which 159 came from Riccall, 55 from Barlow Grange and only 21 from the Lower Derwent. Numbers at Riccall peaked at 10 on 6th. Maxima elsewhere included 3 at Red House Reservoir on 8th, 4 at Castle Howard on 19th and 5 at Ross Carrs on 20th.

The September total of 147 bird/days included 80 at Riccall and 41 at Barlow Grange. Maximum at the former site was of 5 birds on 2nd to 5th. Ross Carrs held singles on many dates with 2 present on 13th, while odd individuals were found at Castle Howard on three dates. A long-staying individual at Melbourne until 11th and three singletons at Wheldrake Ings towards the end of the month were September's only records from the Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal area.

A group of 3 birds remained at Riccall until 1st October. The next day one arrived at Wheldrake, and either the same or different individuals were noted there on 7th and 9th. On 20th singles were found at Selby and Castle Howard.

The occurrence of a party of 3 at Riccall on 17th November

must have surprised their observer; one of these birds remained until the year-end, providing the York area with an unprecedented winter record (PP) .

TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres*

Two records this year. On 26th May one was seen "flying north up the Derwent at Aughton at 3.15pm, and then ... flying south at 3.20pm " (JHL) . It is to be hoped that this apparently confused individual eventually made a successful reorientation!

An adult was present at Riccall on 6th August (PP) .

Fifteenth and sixteenth records for the area of a species which has become an annual spring passage migrant in the Lower Derwent in recent years.

MEDITERRANEAN GULL *Larus melanocephalus*

A return to normal after 1984's 'mini-avalanche' of sightings. An adult in full breeding plumage at Wheldrake Ings on 26th March (PP) was the sole record, but continues the species' unbroken four-year run of appearances in these Reports, and represents the 11th record in all for the area. Incidentally, in the present decade six out of the nine appearances have been in spring (26th March to 27th May).

LITTLE GULL *Larus minutus*

An average year but the continuation of a run of breeding season occurrences is encouraging. An adult put in an appearance at Wheldrake Ings on 9th June, while adult and first-summer individuals were claimed at the same site on 24th July.

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Larus ridibundus*

Bred in apparently normal numbers. No counts were made at the Skipwith Common gullery, but numbers appeared undiminished. Strensall Common held a healthy 60 pairs in two colonies, but no details of breeding success were received from either there or the other main colony, Wheldrake Ings, where upwards of 100 pairs bred. Two pairs attempted to nest at Elvington but failed owing to predation.

Few roost-counts were submitted for the early months of the year. Indeed, the only substantial flocks reported were 160 at Slingsby on 2nd January; 400 at Bishopthorpe on 13th February, and 280 at Stillington on 30th March.

August post-breeding gatherings included up to 200 regularly present at Ross Carrs; 350 at Castle Howard on 12th and 300+ at Newton-on-Derwent on 28th.

The year-end brought a number of respectable roost-counts, notably of 5000 at Wheldrake Ings on 22nd November and 3000+ at Castle Howard on 20th December. Four hundred roosted at Dringhouses Pond on 28th, while Clifton Airfield held 170 on 14th.

A colour-marked immature bird with a bright orange tail was noted at Bishopthorpe on 19th and 27th January (WC).

COMMON GULL *Larus canus*

Few notable counts were received for the period January - March. On 2nd January 309 were at Slingsby, while 170 flew to roost near Stillington on 30th March.

A spectacular flock of 1400+ (mostly adults) paused off-passage at Acklam on 2nd April, but numbers declined dramatically thereafter, and as usual almost invariably involved sub-adults. Two interesting records indicated spring movement of first-year birds; 60 flew north-west over Poppleton on 15th April, while 44 passed north-east over Strensall Common on 3rd May. During the rest of May odd birds were noted at Wheldrake Ings and Clifton Airfield. Mid-June produced more reports of first- and second-summer birds; 17 flying west at Wheldrake Ings on 9th, 45 at Buttercrambe on 14th, and a further 17 west at Wheldrake Ings on 19th.

The autumn saw a steady trickle of southbound birds, but no flocks of over 50 were recorded until November, when the main influx of winter visitors began. A count of 250 at the Castle

Howard roost on 10th November represented a big increase on the previous week's figure; numbers at this site reached 1000+ on 22nd November, and 3000+ by late December. The final month of the year saw typically-sized feeding flocks of 50-100 birds at such York sites as Hobmoor, Knavesmire and Clifton Airfield.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus*

Perhaps a slight increase in numbers on the previous year, but still a very poor year in comparison with 1982 and 1983.

Six were at Wheldrake Ings on 1st January, while Wharfe Ings held 2 on 1st February: up to two on dates at Wheldrake Ings in February, and a single at Castle Howard lake on 2nd March. A count of 10 at Wheldrake Ings on 29th March was virtually the only discernible sign of spring passage, though up to 2 were at the same site on two May days. All June records came from Wheldrake Ings; 7 on 1st, a pair seen to copulate on 22nd, and a single on 30th.

Autumn passage was rather sparse, although two good September flocks boosted the bird/day total. July yielded only one record-2 at Wheldrake Ings on 22nd. Numbers in August were generally disappointing, with one to six at Newton-on-Derwent, Wheldrake Ings, Low Catton and Selby, up to 30 on the playing fields of York Vllth Form College from 26th, and 11 at Hagg Bridge on 28th. In September, a flock at Bubwith numbered 160+ on 9th, 10 were at Howsham on 15th, 8 at Wheldrake Ings on 18th and 140 at Brighton Tip on 27th.

Wheldrake held singles on two November dates, and one at Poppleton on 27th December was the last of the year.

HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus*

Once again, rather few records were received. About 150 roosted at Wheldrake Ings on 1st January, 64 scavenged at Grimston Bar Tip on 8th, 30+ flew south at Stamford Bridge on 22nd, and 15 were over Brayton Barff on 24th. In February, 30 flew southwest at Castle Howard on 2nd, and 100 roosted at Wheldrake Ings on 10th. This last site held 40 birds on 3rd March, declining to 25 on 17th and 2 on 24th.

As last year, no summer records were submitted. The first of autumn was noted at Bishopthorpe on 24th July, but the following three months yielded only 4 bird/days; surely a measure of the degree to which this species continues to be under-recorded.

On 30th November, the Wheldrake Ings roost held 24 birds, while a count of 4 was made at Castle Howard the same evening. December produced the one outstanding flock of the year, a gathering of 400 at Brighton Tip on 26th. A single at Poppleton the next day and 3 to roost at Dringhouses Pond on 28th completed the year's records.

There were three colour-ringed birds at Wheldrake Ings early in the year. Two individuals seen on 12th and 14th February had been ringed at Burniston Tip, Scarborough in 1976. The other bird, seen on 26th January, could not be traced, but it had been present at Ellerton Tip during February-March 1983; only the second time a Herring Gull has been proved to return to the area in subsequent years (TB).

An adult at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd February had pure white primaries and could easily have been mistaken for a Glaucous Gull in flight, though appearing typical in all other respects. It was considered to be an albino rather than a partial hybrid (TB).

One of a flock of 24 at Wheldrake Ings on 30th November showed the characteristics of one of the larger darker-backed subspecies, probably the 'northern' race *L.a. argentatus* (DR).

GLAUCOUS GULL *Larus hyperboreus*

Only a single record this year; a first-winter at Wheldrake Ings and Ellerton Tip on 10th-11th February (TB, TED, PP, NS, JT).

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus*

Good numbers were again recorded in the mid-winter period, but autumn flocks were non-existent this year. In January, over 200 were present at Wheldrake Ings on three dates in the first week (maximum 220 on 4th), while Grimston Bar Tip held 49 on 8th. Later in the month, 40 flew south at Stamford Bridge on 22nd, and 10 passed north-east over Wharfe Ings on 27th.

An interesting movement took place at Castle Howard on 2nd February, when a total of 90 flew south-west between 9am and 10am; apparently the movement continued for much of the day, and was also noted by the same observer at York and Wharfe Ings. One is left to speculate as to the total number of birds involved.

Twenty-six at Wheldrake Ings on 10th February was the last significant count of the winter.

A notable midsummer record came from Ross Carrs, where 5 were present on 27th June. There were only 3 autumn records involving 3 to 5 individuals. In December, 33 were at Ellerton Tip on 16th, 400 at Breighton Tip on 26th (with 57 there on 30th) and 40 flying south at Loftsme Bridge on 30th.

The colour-ringed adult first seen at Ellerton Tip on 23rd January 1983 and observed at Wheldrake on 21st January 1984, reappeared for the third successive winter: at Wheldrake Ings on 12th February (TB).

KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla*

Another good year. Only five records, but the total of 21 bird/days compares well with 1984's corresponding figure of 27. First was an adult at Elvington on 11th February (TB). On 24th March a remarkable flock of 17 (16 adults and a first-year) appeared at Wheldrake Ings at 2.30pm, and remained for half an hour before departing to the south (TB,PP,RS). On 30th March a first-year flew north-west over Wheldrake Ings (TB,DR), while on 1st April an adult visited Dringhouses Pond (DW). A wandering juvenile put in an appearance on the Ouse in York on 28th August (per TED).

Most previous records in the York area have been in autumn and winter, and are probably related to severe and stormy weather. However, there have been several early spring occurrences, this year's late March flock echoes a record of six adults in Lower Derwent on 1st April 1981, for example - and such records give rise to speculation that the birds involved may be part of a regular cross-country movement to breeding colonies.

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo*

A good spring passage, the return movement being merely average. Especially encouraging was the presence of a pair at York University Lake from 8th to 21st May; the birds were seen displaying on two dates. Almost a carbon copy of the events of 1983.

The first of spring were rather early; four at Wheldrake Ings on 13th April (DR). At the same site 9 flew north on 29th, and a single was present on 30th. May records in the Lower Derwent comprised 1 on 13th; 5+ on 19th and 2 + on 20th. A single was at Wheldrake Ings on 5th June. Castle Howard produced singles on May 6th, 13th, 17th and 22nd, with 8 on 15th and 2 on 23rd. Odd birds visited Dringhouses Pond on May 15th and 31st. Other individuals were noted at Bishopthorpe on 21st May and University Lake on 13th June.

Autumn passage was confined to August. In the Lower Derwent there were two on 10th, 14th, 17th and 25th. Castle Howard provided the only other record, of a single on 14th.

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea*

As with the previous species, a good spring passage. On 5th May five flew south at Aughton, while later the same day a fine flock of 22 graced Wheldrake Ings (most of which subsequently departed to the north). Two were present briefly at Wheldrake Ings on 6th May, while at the same site singles were noted on 11th, 19th and 26th, with two on 31st. Five were in company with 8 Common Terns at Castle Howard on 15th.

Only one autumn record: a juvenile at Castle Howard on 24th August.

'COMMIC' TERN *Sterna hirundo/paradisaea*

One was observed fishing the Ouse at Poppleton on 6th May, and two were at Sturge's Pond, Selby on 5th August.

LITTLE TERN *Sterna albifrons*

A single at Bubwith on 16th May (TED) fits in well with the established pattern of occurrences. The seventh record for the area; the first was seen as recently as 1979, but the species has appeared in five of the six years since.

BLACK TERN *Chlidonias niger*

An average year. At Wheldrake Ings there were two on 15th May. two on 18th, and a single the next day. Castle Howard Lake attracted one on 22nd May, while two were observed there the following day. In June two were at Aughton on 6th, and two (adjudged to be second summers or moulting adults) at Wheldrake Ings on 13th.

Two at Wheldrake Ings on 19th July preceded a single in transitional plumage there on 14th August.

GUILLEMOT *Uria aalge*

One swam up the Ouse on the tide at Selby on 14th November; what was presumably the same individual was seen the same day at Cliffe Bend (TED,PP).

Fourth record for the area (all have been since 1982).

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas*

Once again rather few records were received. However, the species continues to be well distributed in the York area. Double-figure counts submitted included 31 at Acaster Selby on 27th January; 25 at Bubwith on 17th February; 14 at Poppleton on 17th March; 10 at Bubwith on 3rd April; 12 at Acaster Malbis on 5th; a fine flock of 73 at North Duffield Carrs on 25th September and 14 at Ross Carrs on 29th October.

Breeding was reported from Bielby, Laytham, Melbourne, Archbishop's Palace and Stearsby.

WOOD PIGEON *Columba palumbus*

Fewer large flocks were reported this year, especially in the early months. Notable counts included c.600 at Castle Howard on 27th February, 100 at Ross Carrs on 30th April. 200+ at Ross Carrs on 15th October; 1100 at Aughton and c.100 at Castle Howard on 10th November; 350+ at Wigganthorpe on 15th December, c.1500 at Murton on 20th December, 800+ at Upper Helmsley on 22nd December and c.500 at Coxwold on 25th.

An individual with white primaries at Hagg Bridge on 7th July was identical to one seen there in 1983 and was presumably the same bird (TB).

COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto*

Only five double-figure counts were received, although whether this reflects any real decline in numbers is debatable; certainly the species is apparently as widely-distributed as ever. "Large numbers" were reported from the BOCM Mill at Selby, but regrettably no counts were submitted from this important site.

Sixteen were at Copmanthorpe on 5th January, 20 at Bubwith on 27th March, 33 at Ross Carrs on 10th August, 19 at Sturge's Pond on 16th October, and 86 at Poppleton on 30th October.

At Brandsby on 7th April an individual of this species must have been quite a handful for its captor, a male Sparrowhawk (PH).

TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur*

A late arrival, with only one April record; a single at Skipwith Common on 28th (PP). Then came a pair at Grimston Cross on 1st May and two at Wheldrake Ings the next day, followed by five males at Aughton and a single at Anchor Plain on 5th. The 7th May saw a big influx into the Lower Derwent, but the first birds did not penetrate the extreme north of the area until 16th, when a single reached West Wood, Ampleforth.

Breeding season records were received from many areas, most in the southern half of the recording area. The only party of note was one of 12 at Menthorpe on 27th May.

Some observers commented on an early departure; there were only 12 bird/days in the second half of August. Only 3 September records were received, all from the extreme

south of the area; a single at Sturge's Pond on 6th and two at Wressle on 7th, while one at Sturge's Pond on 24th constituted the year's last record (DRC).

CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus*

The first of the year was at Poppleton on 21st April (per YEP), and was followed by individuals at Melbourne and Elvington Airfield on 24th. Recorded at Wheldrake Ings, Storwood and Sturge's Pond in the last four days of April, but the main arrival took place during 6th to 10th May, when up to four were at Bielby and singles at Nun Appleton, Copmanthorpe, Bishopthorpe and Fulford Ings. One at Ampleforth on 16th May was the first in the far north of the area.

Apparently an early departure once again, with most birds having left by late July. Following a single on 1st at Aughton, the only August records were of one flying south-west at Melbourne on 16th, and of a juvenile being fed by a Dunnock at Brighton on 18th (FWO). Single brown-phase birds were noted at Crook Moor (near

Skipwith) on 12th June and Sutton-on-Derwent on 20th June.

BARN OWL *Tyto alba*

Confirmed breeding records came from Bubwith/Brighton (3 pairs), Aughton, Melbourne (1 pair reared 1 young) and Gilling. Thus details of only six pairs were submitted, a figure which gives cause for concern. However, birds were reported in spring and summer from a further 13 sites (nine of them in the Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal area), and most of these individuals were probably breeding birds. Outside the breeding season records came from a further 11 sites.

Sadly, three reports of road casualties were received this year, with dead birds at Escrick in April, Buttercrambe in June and North Duffield in December; it is of course likely that the first two individuals were breeders.

LITTLE OWL *Athene noctua*

Bred at Bielby, Laytham, Menthorpe (successfully), Ellerton, Aughton, East Cottingwith, Storwood and Poppleton (2 young reared). Present during the breeding season and probably bred at Ross Carrs, North Duffield, Wheldrake, Melbourne, Elvington, Allerthorpe, Full Button, Grimston Bar, Upper Helmsley, Dunnington, Barton-le-Street, Spaldington, Bossal, Acaster Malbis, Castle Howard, Norton, Hovingham, Stillington and Brandsby (two sites). Outside the breeding season recorded at a further six sites.

It can be surmised that the species continues to maintain a healthy population level.

TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco*

Reports of confirmed breeding came from Strensall Common, Wheldrake Ings (3 young), Bubwith (2 young), Aughton, Bielby, Laytham and Norton Grove. Present in the breeding season at Brayton Barff, Melbourne, Skipwith Common, Bishopthorpe, Osbaldwick, Dunnington, City Walls at Nunnery Lane, York, Holtby, Claxton, Lilling and Coxwold. Outside the breeding season reported from Sturge's Pond, North Duffield, Acaster Malbis, Askham Richard, Poppleton, and Marlborough Street and Haxby Road, York.

LONG-EARED OWL *Asia otus*

One pair bred at Strensall Common, rearing one young. A pair at Skipwith Common produced two young. Also bred at Brandsby, and probably at Yearsley Moor, where a bird was calling in March.

The only autumn/winter records received were of calling birds, and came from North Duffield in October and near Kexby in November.

SHORT-EARED OWL *Asia flammeus*

Only an average presence in the early months, and no breeding records despite some encouraging May sightings. However, autumn saw quite an influx of wintering birds into the Lower Derwent.

An individual was present at Riccall from 1st January until 16th March, and was joined by a second from 17th to 19th January. Singles were noted at Poppleton on 26th January and at Strensall Common on 16th and 24th March, while one was observed at Leavening on 17th March.

In the Lower Derwent three at North Duffield Carrs on 4th January were followed by singles at Bubwith on 25th January, Menthorpe on 1st February and North Duffield Carrs again on 9th and 26th March. Spring records of single birds came from North Duffield Carrs on 16th April, Strensall Common on 3rd May, Wheldrake Ings on 5th May, East Cottingwith on 8th May and Aughton on 20th May.

A bird spent a couple of days on Brighton Airfield from 4th September, but it was October before the main body of wintering birds arrived; a single at Brighton on 10th remained until the year-end, and was joined by another on 15th and two on 27th November. Wheldrake Ings recorded its first bird of the autumn on 20th October; the species was regular here until mid-December, with two on several dates and three on 9th December. In the North Duffield/Bubwith/Aughton/Ellerton area the first arrived on 3rd November, and was followed by a single on 17th November and two on 6th December. From mid-December to the year-end birds were continuously present in this district, with maxima of 3 on 22nd and 4 on 27th.

Elsewhere, singles were observed at Poppleton on 17th November and 27th December; Cawood on 2nd November; Riccall on 4th November and 27th December, and Clifton Airfield on 1st, 3rd, 14th and 19th December.

NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus europaeus*

The first returning birds were not recorded until 25th May, when one or two were churring on Skipwith Common. Three pairs subsequently bred at this site. At least one and possibly two males held territory on Strensall Common. No reports were received from Allerthorpe Common. A rather poor year.

SWIFT *Apus apus*

The first of the year was very early: a single at Wheldrake Ings on 14th April (TB). This proved to be the sole April record, the main arrival taking place in the week 3rd to 10th May. Following 3 at Strensall Common on 3rd, two were at Wheldrake Ings and three at Aughton on 5th, and a single over York on 6th. The 7th saw a sizeable influx into the Lower Derwent, while two days later the first birds reached Castle Howard. The only large spring gatherings reported involved 85 at Bishopthorpe on 21st May and 120 at Castle Howard the next day.

Summer feeding flocks included 150 at Castle Howard on 12th June; 80 at Yearsley on 14th July; 60 at Wigganthorpe on 21st July and c.200 at Ross Carrs on 27th July.

The species was still present in numbers to mid-August, though as usual by the last week most birds had left. However, a flock of 120 was noted at Spaldington on 26th, and another observer commented on a "later than normal departure". The first nine days of September yielded 10 bird/days, and a single was at North Duffield on 23rd. In October individuals were noted at North Duffield on 5th (TED) and York on 8th (per AH).

KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis*

Single pairs bred at Sturge's Pond, Melbourne, Pocklington
Canal (Hagg Bridge), Wheldrake Ings, Sutton-on-Derwent, Newton-
on-Derwent, Wilberfoss, Howsham, Kirkham Gorge, Riccall,
Bishopthorpe and Poppleton.

Present in the breeding season and probably bred at Bielby, Kexby, Moreby, Acaster Malbis, Red House, Moor Monkton, New Earswick and Newburgh Priory.

Outside the breeding season birds were recorded at University Campus, Clifton Ings, Hobmoor, Dringhouses Pond, Anchor Plain, Strensall Common, East Cottingwith, Bubwith, North Duffield Ings, Ross Carrs and Welham Bridge.

With 12 pairs proved breeding and probable/possible breeding at a further 8 sites, the species seems finally to have recovered from the depletions wrought by the disastrous 1978/9 winter.

GREEN WOODPECKER *Picus viridis*

Confirmed breeding records came only from two sites near Brandsby, but reports of calling birds between late March and June are likely to indicate the presence of nesting pairs. Such reports came from Strensall and Skipwith Commons, Cum Hagg Wood (Castle Howard), Kirkham Abbey, Wass, Yearsley Moor and West Wood, Ampleforth.

Outside the breeding season birds were recorded at Brayton Barff, Wheldrake Ings and Brighton Airfield. A rather disappointing year, especially in the Vale of York.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopus major*

Recorded at 32 sites throughout the recording area, and in all months. The comments of one observer, though written in reference to the three northernmost 10km squares, are applicable to the whole area: "bred in all suitable woods ... still common".

One was reported as Sparrowhawk prey at Dalby on 24th December. Regular feeding in gardens was recorded by two observers.

LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopus minor*

Breeding was reported at Newburgh Wood and Yearsley Woods. Birds were present during the breeding season (most of which were calling and/or drumming) at Strensall and Skipwith Commons, Bishopthorpe Palace, Knavesmire Wood, Dringhouses Pond, Brandsby and Wheldrake Ings Lane. Outside the breeding season records came from Anchor Plain (where a juvenile was caught and ringed on 11th September and controlled eight days later) , Melbourne and New Earswick.

SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis*

The only breeding counts received were 16 pairs at Clifton Airfield and ten pairs at Strensall Common. As usual some early songsters recorded, with one in full song at Wheldrake Ings on 27th January and one in sub-song at Castle Howard on 30th.

Flocks were rather few and small this year. The more significant were 40 at Brighton Airfield on 3rd January, the same number at Brayton Barff on 7th and 24 at Wheldrake Ings on 11th. Later in the year, 42 at Wheldrake Ings on 27th October, 130 at Barlow Grange next day, 55 south-east over Acaster Malbis on 28th November, 35 at North Duffield on 23rd December, 133 at Kexby on 28th went east, and 350 at Bubwith on 30th. As usual the majority of flocks were recorded in the Derwent and Ouse valleys.

SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia*

Again the species was present in very low numbers. The only reports of breeding came from Butterwick, Little Habton and Bielby, although present during the breeding season on the Ouse above York at Nether Poppleton, Moor Monkton and Redhouse and at Menethorpe.

First of the spring was in Lower Derwent on 3rd April (PP), with single figure counts regularly there throughout the spring. The only double figure counts were ten at Castle Howard on 6th April, 30 there on 19th and 20 at Moor Monkton on 5th June.

The only autumn records received were of eight at Ross Carrs on 20th August and singles in Lower Derwent on 18th September and at Dringhouses Pond on 22nd (DW).

SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*

An average spring arrival with the first bird in Lower Derwent on 3rd April (TED) with birds there daily thereafter. Three at Butterwick on 4th were the first in the north of the area. Major arrivals in Lower Derwent on 18th April and 7th May.

No autumn roost counts received this year.

Several October records with birds at Nether Poppleton and Brayton Barff on 2nd, Dunnington Common on 11th, Selby and

Clifton Airfield on 13th, Yearsley and Claxton on 20th and Bishopthorpe on 26th. Daily in Lower Derwent to 14th October with 18 on 20th and two on 26th. Daily along Pocklington Canal to 20th when 30, with two on 27th. A pair of late nesting birds in York hatched four young on 27th September, with two young finally departing on 8th November (PWR). One in Lower Derwent on 2nd and 3rd November, two at Skipwith on 7th and the last a single in Lower Derwent on 9th (TED).

HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbica*

The earliest arrival ever with a single in Lower Derwent on 3rd April (PP) and almost daily thereafter. The first away from Lower Derwent was at Hobmoor, York on 20th with birds arriving in force throughout the area from then on.

The only large gatherings reported were of 200 at Ross Carrs ponds on 25th August and 350 roosting on a factory roof in Clifton from 19th to 25th September.

In October present daily at Nether Poppleton until the last -40 on 10th. Similarly at North Duffield with 30 on 14th October the last there; four at Bishopthorpe on 23rd. Two on Skipwith Common on 8th November the last of the season (TB).

TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis*

Bred at Skipwith and Strensall Commons and probably at Brayton Barff, Bishop Wood, Sand Button, Fulford Golf Course, Clifton Airfield and Yearsley.

The first was at Brayton Barff on 21st April (DEC) with birds at Ampleforth on 24th; Strensall Common on 25th and Yearsley on 27th. The main arrival was in the first week of May.

No autumn records received.

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*

Very few records received.

Reported breeding from Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal, Clifton Airfield (25 pairs) and Nether Poppleton. Display noted at Hobmoor, York.

The only notable flock counts received were 15 at Nether Poppleton on 13th January, 30 in Lower Derwent on 13th February, 18 and 35 at Ross Carrs on 17th and 22nd respectively, 30 at Riccall on 11th September and 104 roosting at Strensall Common on 3rd November.

The above is clearly a gross underestimate of the true status of this species: more records would be gratefully received.

ROCK PIPIT *Anthus spinoletta*

A bird attempted to land but then flew off at Dringhouses Pond on 23rd October (DW) and a single in Lower Derwent on 12th November. Both birds of indeterminate subspecies.

YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava*

Numbers were again very low this year. Bred or probably bred at Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal; Riccall (where six pairs feeding young on 15th June); Spaldington, Copmanthorpe, Grimston Bar Tip; Nether Poppleton; Healaugh, and Laytham.

First of the year was in Lower Derwent on 5th April with birds there almost daily thereafter; two at Ulleskelf south-west on 7th and two at Clifton Airfield on 16th with a more general arrival over the next few days.

Very few autumn gatherings noted. Nine at York Knavesmire on 14th August with six there on 8th September; 12 at Ross Carrs Ponds on 29th August. Most had gone by the end of August with five at Red House Reservoir on 8th September, singles at Lower Derwent on 11th, when 30 at Riccall, Barlow Grange, the next day; Ross Carrs on 17th; Lower Derwent on 26th and finally two at Askham Richard on 7th October (PM).

A male showing characteristics of the Blue-headed race, M.f. *flava*, in Lower Derwent on 17th May (TED).

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*

Bred successfully at Crambeck and Buttercrambe. Two juveniles at Wass on 8th June and also at Kirkham Abbey on 2nd July. A pair displaying at a lock on Pocklington Canal probably bred. A pair at Stamford Bridge throughout the year.

Early in the year singles in January at Clifton Airfield and Fulford and Bishopthorpe Ings; in February at York University and Pocklington south-west; in March at Strensall, Lendal Bridge, York, Dunnington (two) and Newburgh Priory (pair). One at Clifton Airfield on 8th May.

First autumn bird was in a Hobmoor garden in York on 23rd July, followed by one or two on York Foss from 12th September and singles on York Ouse and Pocklington Canal from 23rd.

Further singles in October at Pocklington Canal :(two sites) Lower Derwent (two sites), Brandsby, York Ouse, and Nether Poppleton.

In November at York (three sites) and Lower Derwent, and in December at York (two sites) and Bishopthorpe.

The Ouse in and around York, and the Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal are obviously the places to see this species outside the breeding season.

PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba*

No large counts received for the early part of the year. The usual August/September flocks as follows: 17 at Brayton Barff on 6th August, 45 at Knavesmire on 14th, 40 near University on 23rd and 125 at Knavesmire on 8th September.

17 at Brayton Barff on 7th November and a roost of 23 in Lower Derwent on 17th December.

A bird showing characteristics of White Wagtail, *M.a. alba*, at Redhouse Reservoir on 8th September (TB).

WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus*

One in York on 19th January. An adult female at Heslington between 22nd January and 24th February. One in Tadcaster Road, York on 24th January. A single at Dunnington Common on 6th December.

DIPPER *Cinclus cinclus*

This species maintained its tenuous hold as a breeding bird in the area with breeding proved at Crambeck (TED,RSS) and at West Ness (JP).

WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes*

No significant records received.

DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis*

The only significant record was of ten pairs breeding at Clifton Airfield.

ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula*

The only significant records were; nine pairs breeding at Clifton Airfield, and ten at Anchor Plain on 28th September.

REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

A male in the Lower Derwent on 30th April was the first (TED). Two at Strensall Common on 6th May, a female at Anchor Plain on 12th, a pair displaying at a nest hole at Castle Howard on 26th, four singing males at Strensall Common in late May. A singing male at Wass on 2nd June and on Strensall Common on 21st. A juvenile in Lower Derwent on 28th and 31st July; a family party at Pond Head on 4th August; a juvenile male at Anchor Plain on 21st and finally one at New Earswick from 19th to 21st September (PR).

BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros*
One at Bolton Percy on 28th March (per TED) and a male at
Stamford Bridge on 14th and 15th April (GH).
Sixth and seventh records for the area.
WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra*

Four pairs bred at Strensall Common, an increase on recent
years but still well below the level of the late 1970s. Possibly
bred on Pocklington Canal where a male on 11th and 15th May; a
pair on 19th July, a male on 23rd and on 12th August.

Two males at Brighton on 28th April; one at Grimston Bar Tip on
6th May; one at Riccall on 14th; a female at Skipwith Common on
10th July. Two at Bielby on 12th August; singles at Barlow
Grange and Lower Derwent on 27th. Five at Clifton Airfield on 8th
September and one there on 11th; one at Bielby on 20th.

STONECHAT *Saxicola torquata*

A female at Fulford Golf Course on 22nd January (JHL) and a
male at York Knavesmire on 29th December (ML).

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*

First were nine at Ross Carrs on 5th April (DRC) with singles at
Lower Derwent and Riccall next day; two at Clifton Airfield on
8th, singles at Ebor Way, York on 9th, Elvington Airfield on
14th, Brighton Airfield on 17th, Lower Derwent on 20th and Ross
Carrs on 28th. Single at Grimston Bar Tip on 5th May; nine at
Barlow Grange and one at Clifton Airfield on 6th, and a single at
Stamford Bridge on the 13th. 31 bird/ days on spring passage.

In Autumn, up to four at Barlow Grange from 14th August to 16th
September (32 bird/days in August, 19 in September). Five at Bielby
and four at Barlow Grange on 20th August, two in Lower Derwent on
24th, one at Nether Poppleton and three at Lower Derwent on
27th; two at Riccall on 2nd September and five at Clifton
Airfield on 22nd the last. A total of 73 bird/days in Autumn.

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula*

Very few records received.

200 in Bishopthorpe area on 31st January. 193 on Hobmoor, York
on 1st December, a flock of 30 grounded in fog at Aughton on 5th
and 40 at Fulford Ings on 12th.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris*

200 at Melbourne on 3rd January, 350 at Bubwith on 25th, 120 at
Low Catton on 28th; 80 at Aughton on 17th February, 350 at Brawby
on 25th; 350 at Storwood on 6th March, 100 at Healaugh on 9th,
380 at Newton-on-Derwent on 10th, 115 at Barlow Grange on
22nd. Most birds had left by late March with the only birds
thereafter six at Wressle and 400 at Storwood on 3rd April,
eight at Wheldrake Ings on 14th, 120 at North Duffield on 16th,
eight at Bubwith on 24th and one at Aughton on 3rd and 11th May
(TED).

The first bird of autumn was a single with Mistle Thrushes at
Selby on 16th July. Two at Anchor Plain on 11th September, 70
west over Clifton Airfield on 19th October, 40 at Aughton on
23rd, 50 at Melbourne on 25th, 1000 at Riccall on 26th when 40
were at Loftsome Bridge; 200 at Wheldrake Ings and 150 at Aughton
on 27th where 600 on 28th, and 200 on 3rd November. 600 at
Riccall on 9th November, 400 at Aughton on 10th where 120 on
12th and 500 on 17th. No large flocks reported in December.

23 of the 31 records above are from the Derwent system,
indicating the importance of extensive permanent pasture for this
species.

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos*

No significant records received other than a pair with fully
fledged young at Riccall on 12th April giving a first egg date
between 2nd and 10th March.

REDWING *Turdus iliacus*

Rather few birds seen this year.

60 at Stamford Bridge on 22nd January, up to 50 regularly at Brayton Barff from 12th February to 27th March, 70 at Clifton Airfield on 22nd February and 150 at Storwood on 6th March. Last birds were six at Bishopthorpe (PGWC) and three at Kirk-ham Abbey (RSS) on 2nd April.

First birds of the autumn were 20 at East Cottingwith (TED) and 20 at Clifton Airfield (SR) on 10th October, with one at Melbourne next day and 45 there on 13th; 100 at Coxwold on 27th when 60 at Aughton; 250 at Aughton on 28th and 100 there next day. Most birds obviously moved on as there were no more significant records until 600 at Oswaldkirk on 30th December.

Nocturnal passage at North Duffield on 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 23rd, 24th October; 8th November and 3rd and 4th December.

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus*

Only three reports of post-breeding flocks received: 23 at Black Plantation, Wheldrake on 17th July, nine at Hobmoor, York on 11th August increasing to 23 on 21st and 25 on 24th, 22 at Brayton Barff on 3rd September.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Looustella naevia*

Three singing males in Lower Derwent, at Brighton on 29th April, Aughton on 15th May and Wheldrake Ings on 26th May (TED). A singing male at Low Catton on 17th May (RSS) and at Riccall on 6th August (PP). Another very poor showing.

First spring birds were 2 at Sturge's Pond, Selby on 24th April (DRC) with no more until singles at Anchor Plain on 5th May, Laytham on 6th and a major arrival in Lower Derwent next day.

The only autumn bird recorded was a male at Copmanthorpe on 16th and 18th August (JAD).

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Seemingly declining as a breeding species in the area. Bred at Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal where sample counts of eight singing males at Wheldrake Ings and 6 singing males along 3km of the canal. Also bred at Middlethorpe Ings and probably bred at Rosscarrs, Sturge's Pond, Selby and at Castle Howard.

The spring bird was in the Lower Derwent on 24th April (TED) where there was a large arrival on 7th May, whereafter birds were noted at Strensall Common and Castle Howard on 8th, Rosscarrs on 11th, Anchor Plain on 12th and Low Catton on 14th.

Birds left very abruptly with the only September birds being singles on Pocklington Canal on 6th (ID) and Barlow Grange on 12th (TB).

REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Bred in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal (35 pairs), Rosscarrs (13 pairs) and Sturge's Pond. Probably bred at Castle Howard (2 pairs), Strensall Common (1 pair) and Riccall (2 pairs). First birds were two singing males at Rosscarrs on 28th April (DEC) followed by one in Lower Derwent on 7th May and a more general arrival from 8th.

Birds left very early with the last one in Pocklington Canal on 6th September (ID).

LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca*

Bred in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal and Anchor Plain. Present in breeding season and probably bred at Stamford Bridge, Bishopthorpe, Selby, Brayton Barff, Rosscarrs, Fulford Golf Course, University, Copmanthorpe, Fulford, Kexby, Skipwith Common and Laytham - a distinctly southern distribution.

First spring birds were two at Sturge's Pond, Selby on 24th April (DRC), with no more until singles at Anchor Plain on 5th May, Laytham on 6th and a major arrival

in Lower Derwent next day.

The only autumn bird recorded was a male at Copmanthorpe on 16th and 18th August (JAD).

WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis*

Rather few records received and again comments received suggesting that rather few birds were present. Confirmed breeding only at Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal, North Duffield, Coxwold, Anchor Plain and Copmanthorpe. Reported from a further 12 sites mainly south of York.

First spring bird was at Copmanthorpe on 22nd April (JAD) with the next at Selby on 2nd May and a major arrival from 7th.

Last bird was at Anchor Plain on 11th September (JP).

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin*

The first in Lower Derwent on 14th April (TED) was the earliest ever with the next at Brayton Barff not until 7th May followed by one on Skipwith Common on 11th with birds more widespread from 14th.

Bred at three sites near Brandsby and at Skipwith Common where there were 27 singing males on 16th May (PP). Present in the breeding season and probably bred at Lower Derwent, Askham Bog, Elvington, Brayton Barff (where ten singing males on 17th May (DRC)), Bishopthorpe, Ampleforth and Castle Howard (two sites). Birds had largely departed by mid-August with one at Copmanthorpe on 29th (JAD), the last until one found dead, having flown into a window at Acomb on 26th October (DW) - by far the latest bird on record.

BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla*

The only winter record was of a male at Bishopthorpe on 13th February (PGWC).

First spring birds were single males at Archbishop's Palace (ML) and Copmanthorpe (JAD) on 10th April with birds at several sites over the next few days and a more general arrival from 24th.

Bred throughout the area with some counts being, 17 singing males at Brayton Barff, seven in Knavesmire Wood and five at Howsham Wood.

Most birds had departed by late August with the later records being, one at Nether Poppleton on 2nd September, two at Castle Howard on 7th and one there on 11th and finally three at Brayton Barff on 14th October (DRC).

CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita*

One at University on 29th January showed characteristics of the Scandinavian subspecies *P.c. abietinus* (TB,PP). One at Moss Street in York the following day may have been the same bird (per TED).

First of the spring were three at Yearsley Moor on 31st March with five there next day (TB) followed by singles at Hobmoor, York on 3rd April, Askham Bog and Sand Hutton on 4th, Dale End on 5th and a more general arrival thereafter. Most birds had left by late August with the only later records being singles in Lower Derwent on 10th September, in song at Allertorpe Common on 17th and finally at Brayton Barff on 8th October (DRC).

WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

A relatively good year. Bred at Brandsby Dale (one pair) and at Wass where up to seven singing males. Other singing males at

Strensall Common on 6th May and at Thurtle Wood, Castle Howard on 8th June.

First birds of the spring were at Wass on 28th April (JP).

WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus*

First birds of the spring were two at Sturge's Pond, Selby on 4th April (DRC) with two at Clifton Airfield next day and singles at Lower Derwent, Riccall and Dringhouses Pond on 6th. A more substantial arrival came from mid-month.

Return passage was well under way by late July as evidenced by a party of 15 which arrived on Aughton- Ings during a 12 - hour period of heavy rain. Most birds had left by late August followed by birds at Barlow Grange, Brayton Barff and Nether Poppleton on 18th September, three at Clifton Airfield on 26th and one on Pocklington Canal at Melbourne on 10th October (TED) the last.

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus*

Only two counts of any note received, ten at Skipwith Common on 28th February and 18 at Hagg Wood on 18th November.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata*

First of the spring was in Lower Derwent on 15th May (TED). Bred at Lower Derwent, Laytham, Riccall, York Minster, Skipwith, Aldby Park (eight pairs) and Brayton Barff. Present in the breeding season and probably bred at Castle Howard, Newburgh Priory, Wass, Howsham and Stamford Bridge and presumably many other sites.

Ten birds were on Aughton Ings during a 12 - hour spell of heavy rain on 29th July and were presumably grounded passage birds. Most birds had left by late August with the only September records being one at Nether Poppleton on 2nd, two at Old Byland on 9th and one at Brayton Barff on 18th (DRC).

PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hypoleuca*

A male in song at Wass from 2nd to 11th June (DR, JP et al.).

BEARDED TIT *Panurus biarmicus*

A pair at a site in the south of the area from 13th November to year end.

LONG-TAILED TIT *Aegithalos caudatus*

Flock counts this year were rather few and small. A flock of 25 at Sutton Ings in the Lower Derwent on 19th June was rather early. Flocks of 15 at Wheldrake Ings on 22nd September and Melbourne on 30th, 20 at Brayton Barff on 16th October and 16 at Wheldrake Ings on 27th.

MARSH TIT *Parus palustris*

Rather few records received. Breeding confirmed at Hovingham Wood, Yearsley Common and Bishopthorpe. Elsewhere recorded at Castle Howard, Sand Buton, Strensall Common, Coulton Mill, Scrayingham, Kirkham Abbey, Wiggantherpe, Acaster Malbis and Archbishop's Palace. Probably bred at all the above sites as this is an extremely sedentary species.

WILLOW TIT *Parus montanus*

As usual a fair number of records received from sites in the south of the area at all times of year. The only record in the north was of a single at Kirkham on 12th October. Largest count was of five at Anchor Plain on 3rd August.

COAL TIT *Parus ater*

No significant records received. Please try harder next year!

BLUE TIT *Parus caeruleus*

The only significant records received were, ten pairs breeding at Clifton Airfield, 50 at Fulford Golf Course on 15th March and 18 at Nether Poppleton on 26th June.

GREAT TIT *Parus major*

Eight pairs bred at Clifton Airfield. The only significant counts were 16 at Skipwith Common on 28th April and 13 at Anchor Plain on 7th July.

NUTHATCH *Sitta europaea*

A good series of records this year with breeding season records of singles unless otherwise stated from Archbishop's Palace, Strensall Common, Brandsby, Kirkham., Stonegrave, Wass, Yearsley and in the Castle Howard area where birds seen at the Lake; Thurtle Wood, Head Hag Wood, Fryton Wood and Slingsby Bank Wood where six on 28th April and three on 11th May.

One at Aughton Ings, in the Lower Derwent, on 22nd December was an extraordinary record.

TREECREEPER *Certhia familiaris*

No significant records received.

GREAT GREY SHRIKE *Lanius excubitor*

One at Norton from 1st to 3rd January had been present in late December 1984 (RL). One at Skipwith Common on 19th December (TB).

JAY *Garrulus glandarius*

Maxima were a flock of 14 at Strensall Common on 7th February, five at Askham Bog on 4th March, seven at Yearsley on 7th April, five at Wheldrake Ings on 20th October, seven at Ross Carrs on 18th December and six between Newton upon Derwent and Elvington on 31st.

MAGPIE *Pica pica*

No records from the Askham Bog roost this year.

Flocks greater than ten were as follows: 17 near Howden on 5th January, 11 at Bishopthorpe on 9th; 31 at Grimston Bar on 8th February; 16 at Clifton Airfield on 12th September; 12 at Nether Poppleton on 9th November; 17 at Acaster Malbis on 7th December and 24 at Clifton Airfield on 14th.

JACKDAW *Corvus monedula*

Flock counts were low this year. The only significant flocks were 94 at Bishopthorpe on 29th January; 62 at Brandsby on 2nd February; 88 at Castle Howard on 5th; 100 at Coxwold on 10th March and a roost at Aughton held 700 on 17th December and 1400 on 26th.

Four pairs nested on the arms of a high tension electricity pylon at Melbourne.

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus*

The only rookery counts received were 22 nests at Naburn, 12 at Shandy Hall and 50 at Stamford Bridge. Flock counts were 700 at Bishopthorpe on 9th January, 225 at Castle Howard on 5th February; 168 at Gilling on 7th June, 300 at Wheldrake Ings on 25th August; 380 at Ross Carrs on 15th October; 200 at Hessay on 24th November; 750 at North Duffield on 15th December and 700 at Bubwith on 26th.

CARRION CROW *Corvus corone*

Maxima were 25 at Clifton Airfield on 8th April and 40 at Wheldrake Ings on 20th October.

One at Scarcroft Road, York was seen in flight carrying a juvenile Starling. It was pursued by other Starlings and presently dropped its fortunate victim to escape uninjured.

STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris*

Maxima were 4000 at Monkton Moor on 10th February, 550 at Brawby on 25th. 1000 roosting at Ross Carrs on 25th August and 4500 there on 13th September; 800 at Bishopthorpe on 11th November; 1000 at Nether Poppleton on 17th and 1400 at Osbaldwick on 30th December.

A leucistic bird at Stamford Bridge throughout the year (RSS).

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus*

No significant records received.

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus*

Maxima were 150 at Dunnington Common on 9th January, 60 at Stamford Bridge on 22nd and 20 at Bishopthorpe on 9th April.

CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs*

Flocks were relatively small this year.

26 at Nether Poppleton on 2nd January, 110 at Dunnington Common on 9th, 60 at Knavesmire Wood on 12th with 45 there on 7th February; 40 on 1st March and 30 on 4th; 50 males at Coxwold on 20th January; 40 at Castle Howard on 10th February and 60 at Barton-le-Willows next day.

Later in the year, 70 at Aughton on 3rd December, 150 at Skip-with Common on 19th and 70 at Full Sutton on 23rd.

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla*

Very few birds seen this year.

Significant counts were 15 at Knavesmire Wood on 12th January and 60 at Castle Howard on 10th February. Last birds were at Sand Hutton with two males from 9th to 16th April and a male on 9th May (DW).

First incoming birds were singles at Lower Derwent and Riccall (A O'N) (PP) on 26th October. Double figure counts thereafter were 40 throughout December at Bielby; 50 at Aughton on 3rd December and 80 there on 15th, 30 at Skipwith on 19th and ten at Catton Common, Wilberfoss on 31st.

GREENFINCH *Carduelis chloris*

Maxima were, 125 at Riccall on 26th January; 120 at Barton-le-Willows on 23rd February with 100 there on 9th March, 25 at Yearsley Moor on 20th April.

Later in the year, 50 at Aughton on 3rd December, 110 there on 15th, 40 at Full Sutton on 23rd, 80 at Aughton on 25th, 125 at Ross Carrs on 29th and 30 at Newton-upon-Derwent; 50 at Catton Common, Wilberfoss on 31st.

GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis*

Few flock counts received but of those submitted two were of unusually large size and presumably represented passage birds.

25 at University on 30th January; 180 at Yearsley Moor on 14th April; 40 at Clifton Airfield during early September, 42 at Barlow Grange on 16th September 24 at Ross Carrs on 24th, 60 at Riccall next day; 75 at Walmgate Stray on 2nd October and 170 at North Duffield Carrs on 8th.

SISKIN *Carduelis spinus*

Some good counts this year. In the first winter period, 50 in Lower Derwent on 9th January, 30 at Pond Head on 23rd, 28 at Brayton Barff on 24th, 30 at Scrayingham on 27th, 20 at University on 30th; 26 at Kexby on 3rd February, 108 at Scrayingham and 23 at Hagg Wood on 5th. At Yearsley Moor, 150 on 9th March including six displaying males, 130 there next day; 120 on 1st April, 60 on 7th including several in song, 20 on 9th and a pair on 27th.

The origin of 30 at Riccall on 18th July is unclear. More typical autumn arrivals were a single in Lower Derwent on 3rd September with three there on 10th; a juvenile female trapped at Anchor Plain next day, 25 on Pocklington Canal at Melbourne on 10th October, three at Melbourne on 6th November, six in Lower Derwent on 6th December, two at Fulford Ings on 18th, 11 in Lower Derwent on 28th and 50 at Archbishop's Palace on 29th.

LINNET *Carduelis cannabina*

No significant records in the first winter period until 80 at Ellerton Tip on 26th March and 30 at Nether Poppleton on 31st; 150 at Riccall on 28th April and 24 at Clifton Airfield on 8th May.

40 at Strensall Common on 2nd July, 20 at North Duffield on 26th August; 20 at Knavesmire on 1st September with 35 there on 8th; 45 at North Duffield Carrs on 8th October, 50 at Ross Carrs on 25th November and 80 at a roost on Strensall Common on 27th December.

A bird at Clifton Airfield on 23rd September had all-white plumage except for brown outer primaries (PWR).

TWITE *Carduelis flavirostris*

Two at Riccall on 21st January (PP) with singles in Lower Derwent next day (RG) and on 11th November (TED).

REDPOLL *Acanthis flammea*

An unusually large number of Mealy Redpoll's (*A.f. flammea*) this year. Maxima, with numbers of "mealies" in parentheses, were as follows: 21 at Fulford Ings on 2nd January, 34 (four) at Heslington on 29th; 45 ("several") at University next day, 90 at Upper Helmsley on 15th March, 100 at Brayton Barff on 19th, 50 at Yearsley Moor on 7th April and 60 at Sand Button on 10th.

55 at Yearsley Common on 14th July was an early and unusual post-breeding flock. 40 at Anchor Plain on 25th and 26th September; 35 in Lower Derwent on 8th October; 50 at Nether Poppleton on 13th, 40 at Sturge's Pond, Selby on 23rd, 50 (one) at Ross Carrs on 11th November remained to year end; 45 (one) in Lower Derwent on 17th with nine (three) there on 6th December, 25 (all "mealies") at University on 13th, 130 (17) at Riccall and 35 at Archbishop's Palace on 29th.

ARCTIC REDPOLL *Acanthis hornemanni*

A single bird in company with mealy and lesser Redpolls at Heslington from 28th to 30th January was seen by many observers. First record for the area

CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra*

A very good year. At Yearsley, singles on 10th March and 1st April, five on 3rd, one on 7th and nine on 9th. Later in the year; 48 there on 14th July, 11 on 25th August; three on 29th September and 20th October and four on 17th November and 5th December.

Elsewhere, 22 at King's Moor Plantation, Strensall on 2nd July, three at Wheldrake Woods on 15th, two at Riccall on 18th, one at Wheldrake Woods on 23rd, two at Norton on 25th; one at Allerthorpe Common on 18th September and three at Riccall on 23rd October.

As the extensive conifer plantations in the north of the area mature, breeding becomes a distinct possibility.

BULLFINCH *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

25 at Skipwith Common on 19th December and between six and eight at Sturges Pond (Selby), Bishopthorpe, Strensall Common, Acaster Wood, Anchor Plain, Lower Derwent, Brayton Barff and Nether Poppleton outside the breeding season.

HAWFINCH *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Another relatively good year. Seven at Scrayingham on 5th February, a female in Knavesmire Wood on 7th, singles at Archbishop's Palace on 16th, Fulford Ings on 24th, Upper Helmsley on 26th, 28th and 5th March. Three at Yearsley on 9th March, six there on 10th and five on 16th. Singles at Sand Button on 4th and 7th April with three at Yearsley on the latter date, three at Sand Hutton on 17th, three at Castle Howard on 28th; singles at Crambeck on 11th May and at Castle Howard on 8th June, two at Archbishop's Palace on 20th.

Two at Castle Howard on 3rd November, one at Yearsley on 17th, two at Castle Howard on 20th December and two at Scrayingham on 31st.

YELLOWHAMMER *Emberiza citrinella*

Maxima were 40 at Bubwith on 6th January, 50 there on 10th February when 60 were at Marston Moor, 20 at Nether Poppleton on 13th April and 25 at West Ness on 19th May.

50 at Coxwold on 19th October, 40 at Grimston Cross on 5th November; 35 at Clifton Airfield and 25 at Acaster Malbis on 7th December.

REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus*

The only double figure counts were 11 at Fulford on 12th December and 12 at Strensall Common on 27th.

CORN BUNTING *Miliaria calandra*

Few flock counts this year, the largest being 15 by the Pocklington Canal at Melbourne on 3rd January, 18 on Clifton Airfield on 18th; 40 at Grimston Bar on 9th February, 42 at Dunnington Common on 11th March; 14 at North Duffield on 14th April and 20th; 36 roosting at Strensall Common on 13th November and 10 roosting in Lower Derwent on 22nd December.

LAPLAND BUNTING *Calcarius lapponicus*

The male at Riccall Ings in December 1984 remained until 27th January (PP).

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis*

A male and two female/immatures in Lower Derwent on 5th February (RDG).