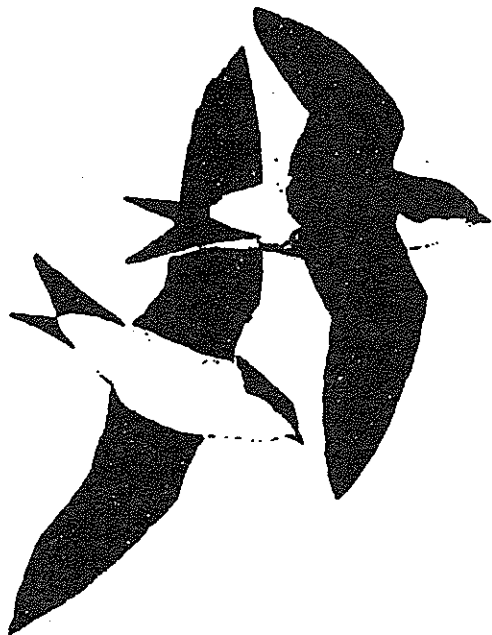


YORK ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB REPORT



PUBLISHED BY THE YORK ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB 1991

Edited by: J. Pewtress, D. Anderson, T. Dixon, C. Hayes, M.  
Leakey.

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# COMMITTEE

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## YORK ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB

This Report has been compiled by members of York Ornithological Club and nearly all the records have been submitted by members, who are active in watching an area of about 550 square miles around York which the club is responsible for recording.

The Club has a membership of about 70 and meets once a month (except July and August) in The Friends Meeting House, Castlegate, on the first Tuesday of the month, for a full programme of talks and discussions - and for the informal exchange of information which bird-watchers find invaluable.

In addition, on the first Sunday of each month, there is a Club excursion to an area of ornithological interest, usually outside the recording area.

### EDITORIAL

Thanks are due once again to all those members and non-members who have submitted records for this report. The production team of Tim Dixon (Divers to Wildfowl), Christ Hayes (Raptors to Coot), Mike Leahey (Waders to Woodpeckers), Jim Pewtress (Doves to Warblers) and Denise Anderson (Flycatchers to Buntings), have compiled the species accounts. Muriel Pirozek has been responsible for the final production of the Report and illustrations have kindly been provided by Andy Booth, Mike Leahey and Nigel Stewart.

The processing of records places a time consuming and often repetitive workload on the above persons, who have given their time and effort freely to produce this Report and our grateful thanks are due to them.

Our thanks also go to the members of the committee for the work they have done during the year, our travelling members who kindly share with us their intrepid expeditions and those members who offer lifts to those without transport on club outings.

#### REVIEW OF THE 1980s

The eighties saw a consolidation of club membership, however there has been a drop in the number of contributors to the club's annual report. This does not appear to have lessened the number of records received as most sites are now well watched and indeed a few new sites have come to prominence, but set against this is the fact that records have diminished from the more northern and western areas. The trend was briefly reversed during work for the club's Breeding Bird Atlas, but since this was finished it has returned.

The club was deeply shocked and saddened by the sudden death of our Chairman, Geoff Smith in 1985 (see 1984 Report), and it was a fitting tribute to him that the club raised the money to finance the building of a hide at North Duffield Carrs for the pleasure of all birdwatchers, at a site that would have given Geoff a lot of pleasure over the years.

In the early 1980s there was a small recording team under the recorders B.G. Pepper, D. Braithwaite and T. Dixon, however in recent years the team has been expanded by T. Dixon and now with J. Pewtress we have four assistant recorders and an assistant who gives many hours of work to the publication of our report. We must not forget all the members who have in one capacity or another been a member of the committee and least of all to you the member without whom this report would not be available.

We have been very fortunate that during this period the valuable Derwent Ings has been protected from drainage and development; however the prospect of navigation along one of our cleanest and most unspoilt rivers gives cause for concern. We hope that the results of the House of Lords' Appeal hearing will be in favour of the organisations and individuals who have fought to protect this quiet stretch of river.

The eighties proved an exciting time in the club area with many new species being added to our ever increasing list.

1980 produced a Snow Goose in the area for three weeks in April and a male and female Ring Ouzel at Wheldrake Ings. A long overdue Peregrine flew over Wressle Castle in December.

1981 proved a remarkable year with no fewer than eleven new species. The year began with an unexpected Purple Heron at Wheldrake Ings on 4th January. Continuing its spread north a Ruddy Duck put in an appearance at Wheldrake Ings on 22nd March, with two present from 5th to 12th April. A Brent Goose was present on 7th and the month was rounded off nicely with a Ring Necked Duck from 14th to 23rd and a Great Skua harassing a Heron in poor weather on 26th. May brought us two continental overshooters, a Kentish Plover at North Duffield Carrs on 22nd and, much to the delight of Geoff Smith, a dashing Bee-eater flew south along the River Ouse at Wheldrake Ings. In September, Red-backed Shrikes graced the area with an immature at York University on 2nd and a fine male at Heworth Golf Club on 7th. A Golden Pheasant at Naburn Sewage Works on 19th and 24th October was taken into captivity.

The normally quiet month of November produced a Bean Goose at Wheldrake Ings to the year end, a Green-winged Teal on 1st and 4th and a Rock Pipit was at Naburn Sewage Works from 7th to 14th.

What could 1982 bring us? Well a near arctic wader in May with a Baird's Sandpiper at Castle Howard on 15th. An unexpected disorientated Guillemot flew east over Wheldrake Ings during a thunder storm on 29th June and a Stone Curlew, a rare visitor to Yorkshire these days, was there on 9th August and briefly at Elvington the following day. Most unexpected were two female Long-tailed Ducks which arrived at Stearsby on 27th October and stayed until the year-end. An immature was at Riccall on 27th November.

1983 proved to be a spectacular year with 196 species seen and nine distinct sub-species. Added to this, a marvellous breeding season and six new species! A Whiskered Tern at Castle Howard on 4th June and in September a Barred Warbler betrayed its presence at Anchor Plain on 4th by flying into a mist net. A whirring Puffin along the River Ouse at Fulford Ings on 5th must have been stared at in disbelief, as was the Manx Shearwater sitting at the side of the A64 at Stockton-on-the-Forest on 15th (it was later released at the coast). Our third near arctic wader, a White-rumped Sandpiper, was at Melbourne on 26th. A light phase Arctic Skua flew south at Wheldrake Ings on 21st October.

The only new species of 1984 was a juvenile Red-necked Phalarope at Wheldrake Ings on 18th August. However, there were five new sub-species: a Great Snow Goose, 'Yellow legged' Herring Gulls of the northern and southern races, a Scandinavian Rock Pipit and a 'tristis' Chiffchaff.

A small invasion into Britain of Arctic Redpoll during the winter 1984/84 saw a bird at Heslington from 28th to 30th January 1985. The only other newcomer was an American Wigeon from the 28th May to 9th June, at Wheldrake Ings.

A White Stork at Foggathorpe on 11th June 1986 must have been a fine sight and an immature Marsh Warbler at Roscarrs from 25th September to 4th October would have tested identification skills. The Great Northern Diver at Castle Howard on 26th November to 21st December posed few problems with fine views of this splendid diver.

In 1987 a fine Reeve's Pheasant graced Scrayingham on 5th May. Increasing numbers of Red-footed Falcons coming to Britain in recent years produced a juvenile in the Roscarrs/Barlow Grange area on 16th September. A female Barrow's Goldeneye at Wheldrake Ings from 2nd to 14th November still awaits the nod from the relevant records committees.

The club meeting on 3rd May 1988 could well have ended in disarray when it was announced that a Caspian Tern had flown past the Geoff Smith Hide only an hour before. Alas, it was not seen again.

A rather tatty Raven in need of a few wing and tail feathers was seen at Wheldrake Ings on 30th May and 12th June.

What a pity that the end of the eighties could not produce a new species, however a new sub-species, Greenland Wheatear, was added. So at the end of an exciting decade thirtyfive new species were added to our list, bringing the grand total to 252. It goes to show that you do not need to travel too far to get good birds. Let's hope that the 1990s produce as good a crop as the 1980s.

Jim Pewtress

First Sightings 1990

MARCH	12TH	CHIFFCHAFF	SKIPWITH COMMON
	16TH	WHEATEAR	WHELDRAKE INGS
	17TH	SAND MARTIN	WHELDRAKE INGS
	24TH	GARGANY	WHELDRAKE INGS
APRIL	1ST	WILLOW WARBLER	ESCRICK
	7TH	LITTLE RINGED PLOVER	WHELDRAKE INGS
	8TH	BLACKCAP	BRANDSBY
	11TH	SWIFT	OSWALDKIRK
	12TH	SWALLOW	ACASTER MALBIS & W/INGS
	15TH	YELLOW WAGTAIL	CAWOOD PARK & W/INGS
	16TH	REDSTART	NORTH DUFFIELD CARRS
	17TH	CUCKOO	SKIPWITH COMMON
	17TH	TREE PIPIT	SKIPWITH COMMON
	17TH	RUDDY DUCK	WHELDRAKE INGS
	19TH	WHITETHROAT	POPPLETON
	21ST	BLACK-TAILED GODWIT	WHELDRAKE INGS
	22ND	WHIMBREL	STORWOOD
	23RD	COMMON SANDPIPER	CASTLE HOWARD
	23RD	HOUSE MARTIN	ESCRICK
	26TH	LESSER WHITETHROAT	WHELDRAKE INGS
	29TH	SEDGE WARBLER	STORWOOD & BISHOPTHORPE/NABURN
	30TH	GRASSHOPPER WARBLER	POPPLETON & NABURN SEWAGE WORKS
MAY	2ND	TURTLE DOVE	WHELDRAKE INGS
	3RD	WOOD WARBLER	WASS
	4TH	COMMON TERN	CLIFTON LAKE
	4TH	GARDEN WARBLER	POPPLETON
	4TH	WHINCHAT	SUTTON RUSH
	7TH	OSPREY	CASTLE HOWARD
	7TH	REED WARBLER	SKIPWITH COMMON
	10TH	BLACK REDSTART	RAILWAY CARRIAGE WORKS
	10TH	SPOTTED FLYCATCHER	BISHOPTHORPE
	14TH	RING OUZLE	CLIFTON LAKE
	25TH	WOOD SANDPIPER	NABURN SEWAGE WORKS



POCKLINGTON CANAL WBS 1990

	<u>Sec.1</u>	<u>Sec.2</u>	<u>Sec.3</u>	<u>Sec.4</u>	<u>Sec.5</u>	<u>Total</u>
Mute Swan	1pr	1pr	1pr	✓	1pr	4pr
Shelduck	-	-	-	✓	✓	?
Gadwall	-	-	-	2+pr	✓	2+pr
Mallard	4m	2m	4m	12m	3m	25m
Shoveler	-	-	-	2pr	1+pr	3+pr
Tufted Duck	-	-	-	2pr	6pr	8pr
Red-legged Partridge	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	?
Grey Partridge	-	✓	-	-	✓	?
Moorhen	3pr	8pr	1pr	14pr	11pr	38pr
Coot	-	-	-	-	✓	?
Oystercatcher	-	-	✓	✓	-	?
Lapwing	-	8pr	1pr	3pr	8pr?	20pr?
Snipe	-	✓	2dr	25dr	9dr	36dr
Curlew	-	✓	3pr	5+pr	2+pr	10pr
Redshank	-	-	1pr	7+pr	3+pr	11pr
Turtle Dove	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?
Wood Pigeon	6pr	1+pr	✓	✓	4+pr	11+pr
Collared Dove	✓	✓	✓	✓	2pr	2+pr
Stock Dove	-	1pr	-	1+pr	-	2+pr
Cuckoo	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?
Kingfisher	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?
G.S. Woodpecker	-	✓	-	✓	-	?
Skylark	6m	4m	6m	8m	7m	31m
Meadow Pipit	-	✓	4m	3+pr	1+pr	8+pr
Grey Wagtail	✓	2pr	-	1pr?	-	3pr?
Pied Wagtail	1pr	2pr	✓	✓	1pr?	4pr?
Wren	22pr	10pr	6pr	16pr	14pr	68pr
Duncock	5m	1m	5m	5m	6m	22m
Robin	8m	1m	4m	2m	6m	21m
Blackbird	13+pr	5pr	6pr	5pr	17pr	46pr
Song Thrush	3m	✓	1m	1pr	2+pr	7+pr?
Mistle Thrush	-	1pr?	-	1pr?	-	2pr?
Sedge Warbler	10m	10m	10m	29m	20m	79m
Reed Warbler	5m	7m	10m	12m	4m	38m
Whitethroat	4m	4m	2m	11m	7m	28m
Blackcap	4m	1m	-	1m	3m	8m
Willow Warbler	15m	8m	14m	12m	20m	69m

Long-tailed Tit	1pr	1pr	-	1pr	1pr?	4pr?
Willow Tit	✓	-	-	1pr	✓	1+pr
Blue Tit	7+pr	3+pr	3+pr	4+pr	5+pr	22+pr
Great Tit	1pr?	1pr?	1pr?	2pr?	1pr?	6pr?
Tree Sparrow	1pr	1pr	1pr?	1pr?	-	4pr?
Chaffinch	20pr	12pr	9pr	9pr	17pr	67pr
Greenfinch	3+pr	✓	4pr	✓	✓	7+pr
Goldfinch	✓	✓	✓	✓	2+pr	2+pr
Bullfinch	2+pr	✓	-	✓	✓	2+pr
Yellowhammer	10pr	3pr	5pr	✓	2pr	20pr
Reed Bunting	7pr	12pr	6pr	16pr	14pr	55pr
Corn Bunting	-	1+pr	✓	2pr	2pr	5+pr

- Section 1 Canal Head to Walbut Bridge  
2 Coat's Bridge to Walbut Bridge  
3 Walbut Bridge to Melbourne  
4 Melbourne to Hagg Bridge  
5 Hagg Bridge to River Derwent

Preliminary analysis

31 January 1991

TED/AW

# CLASSIFIED LIST

The sequence and scientific nomenclature used is that of VOUS, K.H., List of Recent Holarctic Bird Species (1972 and 1977) B.O.U., 1977.

## LITTLE GREBE *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

As usual the majority of records from the Lower Derwent Valley where probably eight pairs bred. Up to three birds here in February with an influx of breeding birds from third week of March. The last of the breeding population was a single on 3rd August, then no more until wintering birds arrived with up to four from 19th November to year end.

Elsewhere, two pairs bred at Brandsby Dale. Birds present during the breeding season but with no other indication of breeding at Skipwith Common, Cawood, Poppleton and Castle Howard. The only winter record away from the Lower Derwent Valley was a single on the Ouse at Poppleton on 18th December.

## GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus*

Two pairs bred successfully at Castle Howard and single pairs bred successfully at Lower Derwent Valley, Drinhouses Pond and Sand Hutton Ponds and unsuccessfully at Clifton Lake.

A scattering of spring passage birds in the second half of May with one at University on 16th, one at Poppleton on 21st, a pair at Wiganthorpe on 22nd, a pair at Red House on 25th. Autumn birds were an immature at Poppleton on 7th July with two immatures there on 10th, an adult and two immatures at Pond Head and the last, an immature at Clifton Lake on 28th September.

At Castle Howard one or two in January and February until six on 24th February, up to 14 in March, eight in April and 16 in May. Up to 10 in August to October, four on 6th November and one on 7th December.

## SLAVONIAN GREBE *Podiceps auritus*

A single on the River Ouse at Poppleton from 14th to 19th December (IWR,CR,DA).

## BLACK-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps nigricollis*

A full summer plumaged adult in the Lower Derwent Valley at Wheldrake Ings from 28th April to 3rd May, where it is now an almost annual spring migrant.

## FULMAR *Fulmarus glacialis*

One on the road between Escrick and Wheldrake at mid-day on 8th December flew off north low over fields into driving snow (CR).

MANX SHEARWATER     *Puffinus puffinus*

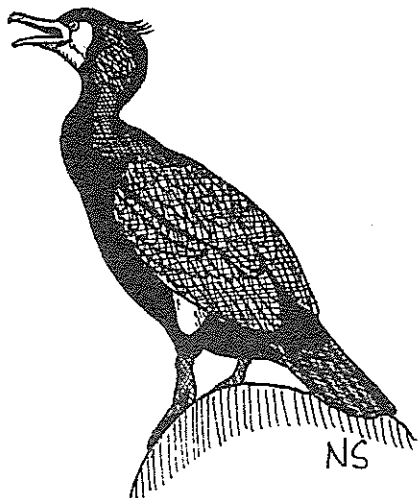
One picked up unharmed in a field at Laytham on 8th October was transported to Spurn, ringed and released next morning when it flew off strongly (TED).

CORMORANT     *Phalacrocorax carbo*

On the Ouse above York, two at Poppleton on 11th January, four there next day and seven at Red House Reservoir on 14th.

A generally poor showing in the Lower Derwent Valley with an adult from 3rd to 24th February. In March three on 10th; an adult from 3rd to 23rd, joined by an adult showing characteristics of the continental race *sinensis* on 18th which remained to 27th with a third bird present on 23rd. Further singles on 30th April, 25th October and 30th December.

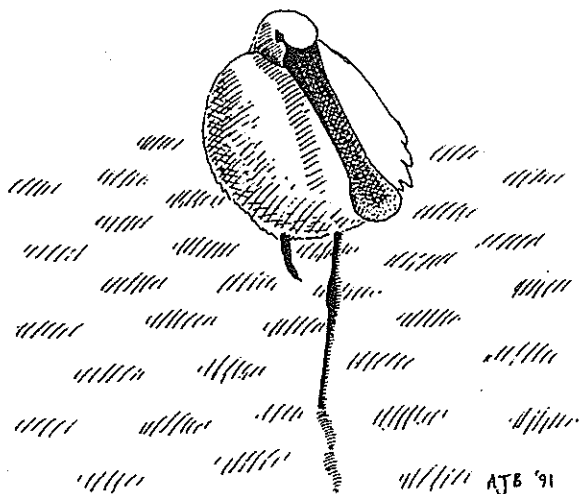
Elsewhere: a second-summer bird at Castle Howard on 23rd April and 13th May, three flew north-east over Woodthorpe on 26th April, a first winter bird was at Castle Howard from 8th August to 7th December with two first winters on 1st December. One at the university on 8th December and an adult and first winter at Acaster South Ings on 30th.



GREY HERON     *Ardea cinerea*

Bred in Lower Derwent Valley but the heronry not counted. Monthly maxima of eleven in May, 20 in June, nine in July, 15 in August, seven in September and six in October. Seen regularly elsewhere in all months and throughout the area.

**SPOONBILL**      *Platalea leucorodia*



An adult in the Lower Derwent Valley on 20th and 21st May left to the north at 17.50 hours in 21st (TED et al.).  
First record for the area and long overdue!

**MUTE SWAN**      *Cygnus olor*

Seven pairs bred in the Lower Derwent Valley/Pocklington Canal where there were up to 12 in February and 15 in December.

Very scarce elsewhere: at Clifton Lake, a single in January, up to two in February, seven in March, singles in April and May, three in June and singles in November and December. One at Naburn sewage Works on 3rd January, a pair at Newburgh on 15th, singles at Castle Howard on 23rd April and 2nd May. A pair at Howsham on 10th July and a pair at Stearsby attempted to breed but failed.

**WHOOPEE SWAN**      *Cygnus columbianus*

Twentyfive flew north over Brandsby on 28th March, otherwise all records from Lower Derwent Valley where birds were seen as follows. Up to 50 in January, 47 in February and 46 in March with 14 on 31st the last. First of the autumn were four on 24th October, then up to ten in November and 20 in December.

BEWICK'S SWAN      *Cygnus bewickii*

All records from Lower Derwent Valley where numbers were again disappointingly low. Up to 50 in January and 19 in February with 18 on 4th March the last.

First returning bird was an adult on 27th October with up to six regularly to year end.

BEAN GOOSE      *Anser fabalis*

The usual late winter/spring records from the Lower Derwent Valley. The first were two on 4th March with up to four regularly during the month. Up to nine regularly during April declining to one by the month end. One on 10th May and two on 13th.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE      *Anser brachyrhynchos*

In the Lower Derwent Valley, one on 10th February with up to five in March and seven in April, one or two regularly to 13th May. Twelve on 29th October, eight on 1st November and a single on 31st December.

Elsewhere: singles at Castle Howard on 5th, 13th, 15th and 22nd May, 2nd October, 30th November, 1st, 7th and 17th December and 47 flew south-east

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE      *Anser albifrons*

All records from the Lower Derwent Valley where two on 4th March, a single on 18th April and presumably the same party of four birds on 29th October, 1st November and 14th December.

GREYLAG GOOSE      *Anser anser*

Around forty pairs bred in the Lower Derwent Valley. Monthly maxima were 103 in January, 60 in February, 95 in March, 70 in April, 200 in May, 220 in July 155 in August, 508 in September, 143 in October, 400 in November and 550 in December.

Elsewhere: four pairs bred on Skipwith Common. At Castle Howard 302 on 27th January, 311 on 3rd March, 291 on 7th April, 110 on 1st August, 123 on 3rd September, 296 on 30th November, 464 on 7th December. One hundred grey geese which flew north-east over Red House Reservoir on 7th March were thought to be this species.

CANADA GOOSE      *Branta Canadensis*

Around 20 pairs bred in the Lower Derwent Valley where monthly maxima were 140 in January and February, 125 in March, 120 in April, 80 in May, 17 in June, 135 in July, 91 in August, 50 in September and October, 300 in November and 700 in December. A bird present from 27th October to 16th November was one of

the small migratory races probably minima.

Elsewhere: singles pairs bred at Crockey Hill, York Foss and Stearsby. The only significant other counts were 38 at Clifton Lake on 7th January and 115 at Castle Howard on 27th January with 90 there on 3rd March and 282 on 3rd September.

**BARNACLE GOOSE**      *Branta bernicla*

In the Lower Derwent Valley, 19 on 24th February with 20 next day. Singles on 24th and 30th April, 3rd, 13th and 24th May with two from 4th to 12th May. Three on 28th August, and five from 31st October to 2nd December with four from 4th to 29th.

Elsewhere: up to three regularly at Castle Howard from 13th January to 5th May, with 138 (presumably feral) on 19th September.

**EGYPTIAN GOOSE**      *Alopochen aegyptiacus*

Singles at Acaster South Ings on 5th and 7th February and in Lower Derwent Valley on 12th May.

**SHELDUCK**      *Tadorna tadorna*

Around 20 pairs probably bred in Lower Derwent Valley where up to 23 in January, 18 in February and 32 in March. Most breeding birds had departed by mid-July but one juvenile remained to 24th August. First wintering bird to return was on 13th October, increasing to three by mid-November and 11 by 31st December.

Elsewhere: two at Riccall on 6th January, two at Ryther on 13th February and two at Cawood on 25th with four there on 5th March and singles on 18th May and 7th June. Two juveniles at Castle Howard on 1st August.

**MANDARIN**      *Aix galericulata*

Two drakes on the Ouse at Poppleton on 5th May (IWR,CR).

**WIGEON**      *Anas penelope*

Five drakes and four females summered in the Lower Derwent Valley and probably bred but as usual no proof obtained. Monthly maxima here were 3000 in January, 5000 in February and March declining to 200 by 17th April and 50 by 29th. Up to 14 in September, 450 in October, 520 in November and 4000 by year end.

No significant counts from elsewhere.

An apparent Wigeon/American Wigeon hybrid at Wheldrake Ings on 21st and 31st March.

GADWALL     *Anas strepera*

Probably ten pairs bred in the Lower Derwent Valley where the first young appeared on 21st June. One on 31st January increased to 10 by 7th February, 47 on 15th 55 on 25th and 60 on 6th March, 27 still present at month end with up to 20 during April. Birds remained until two on 30th August. First wintering bird was on 3rd October with four on 24th, a single on four days in November and two to four on three days in December.

The only other record was of a drake at Acaster South Ings on 5th January and a drake at Castle Howard on 6th November.

TEAL     *Anas crecca*

Four pairs probably bred in Lower Derwent Valley and one pair at Bishophthorpe. Monthly maxima in Lower Derwent Valley were rather low with 1500 in January, 3500 in February, 236 in March, 300 in April, 400 in August and September, 430 in October, 200 in November and 1500 in December.

Elsewhere: 40 at Ozendyke Ings on 30th January with 62 there on 1st March. At Castle Howard, 23 on 19th August, 32 on 6th September and 33 on 11th November. One hundred and fifty at Skipwith Common on 13th October.

A drake of the race *A.c. carolinensis*, Green Winged Teal in Lower Derwent Valley from 14th to 16th April (DAR,TED).

MALLARD     *Anas platyrhynchos*

Rather low counts again from the Lower Derwent, with monthly maxima of 1500 in January, 2000 in February, 2000 in March, 400 in June, 140 in July, 550 in August, 150 in September, 400 in October, 200 in November and 250 in December.

The only significant counts from elsewhere were 200 at Skipwith Common on 15th September and 250 at Castle Howard on 19th August.

PINTAIL     *Anas acuta*

In the Lower Derwent Valley up to 12 in January, 74 in February, 166 in March, 20 in April, a drake throughout May to 2nd June. A female on 28th July, two on 7th August with a female on 28th. A single on 30th September, up to four in October from 13th, up to five in November and up to 17 in December.

The only other records were from Castle Howard where there were singles on 6th, 13th and 27th January, 17th March, a pair on 21st September and a drake on 17th December.

GARGANEY     *Anas querquedula*

Probably bred in Lower Derwent Valley. The first was a drake



on 24th March with birds present regularly from 6th April. Up to four drakes and three females present throughout the breeding season with the last a female on 14th August.

**SHOVELER**      *Anas clypeata*

The only significant records were from the Lower Derwent Valley where around 60 pairs bred. Monthly maxima here were, 15 in January, 150 in February, 250 in March, 11 in August, two in September, five in October, 17 in November and 26 in December.

**POCHARD**      *Aythya ferina*

Three pairs probably bred in Lower Derwent Valley where winter maxima were, 60 in January, 700 in February, 22 in March; one in October, three in November and 310 in December.

Elsewhere: 41 at Castle Howard on 13th January with 40 there on 27th. One hundred and six at Cawood on 30th January, 133 there on 1st February with 100 on 13th and 105 on 15th and 50 on 1st March. One hundred and twenty at Acaster Ings on 22nd February with 94 at Dringhouses Pond on 24th. Smaller numbers at Clifton Lake with up to 17 in January, 14 in February, 14 in November and 18 in December. Twentythree at Castle Howard on 1st December.

**TUFTED DUCK**      *Aythya juligula*

Around 40 pairs bred in Lower Derwent Valley where winter maxima were 10 in January, 110 in February, 150 in March; singles from September to November and 40 in December.

Other records included 18 at Poppleton on 6th February and 10 at Cawood on 15th. Twentytwo at Castle Howard on 1st December and 35 at Dringhouses Pond on 9th.

**SCAUP**      *Aythya marila*

In the Lower Derwent Valley a female on 23rd September and five female/immatures on 30th December.

**COMMON SCOTER**      *Melanitta nigra*

A female/first winter bird on the Ouse at Acaster on 9th December (DP).

**GOLDENEYE**      *Bucephala clangula*

Most records from Lower Derwent Valley where up to eight in January, 14 in February, 29 in March and 30 in April to the last, two drakes, on 16th. Three drakes on 25th November and up to 10 in December.

Elsewhere: three at Poppleton on 4th January, a drake at

Ryther on 30th, two red-heads at Cawood on 29th October and 6th November and one at Castle Howard on 30th November and 11th December.

GOOSANDER      *Mergus merganser*

Bred at Butterwick where 10 juveniles were seen on 27th June (JK).

In Lower Derwent Valley up to six in January, 37 in February, 25 in March, four on 7th April, one on 27th May, nine on 31st October, singles on three days in November and up to 25 in December.

At Castle Howard up to 20 in January, seven in February and 15 in March. Up to 11 in October from the first, a single, on 2nd, 43 in November and 106 in December.

A few records of up to seven birds during the winter months from Cawood, Poppleton and Acaster on the Ouse.

RUDDY DUCK      *Oxyura jamaicensis*

In the Lower Derwent Valley a drake on 15th April, a female on 13th May and a drake on 18th May were the only records.

MARSH HARRIER      *Circus aeruginosus*

Male flying south at Wheldrake Ings 15th April (TED).

Also at Wheldrake Ings in May a cream-crown on 10th (TED), females on 16th (TED,DR) and 17th (TED) with a single on 21st (TED,DR). A male at Wheldrake Ings on 11th September (TED).

HEN HARRIER      *Circus cyaneus*

A male at North Duffield Carrs 20th to 24th June (TED,FWO,NS) and between Howden and Bubwith on 8th September (BC).

A male present at Wheldrake Ings on 14th October and from 19th to 13th November (TED,CR,NS,DR) with a 'ring-tail' on 7th (TED), 26th and 30th December (RSS).

MONTAGU'S HARRIER      *Circus pygargus*

An adult female seen at Stillingfleet/Acaster Aselby on 3rd June (DP).

GOSHAWK      *Accipiter gentilis*

Sightings at Wheldrake Ings were: a male on 4th January (DP); females on September 2nd (TED,CR), 8th and 13th (CR), October 13th (TED,CR) and 15th (TED), a male on November 3rd (TED,CR) and 13th (TED) and a female on 14th and 29th, 30th and 31st December (TED).

Elsewhere: a single at Skipwith Common on 6th July flew off West (FWO). A female was seen to take a moorhen on Escrick

Beck on 29th September (CR) and a female was seen on Bank Island on 30th (TED).

**SPARROW HAWK**      *Accipiter nisus*

A widespread and common breeding bird throughout the area. Present in Acomb and Holgate areas of York and at Poppleton all year. Daily visitor to garden at Moor Monkton through winter months (I.McD). Well established breeding species in five 10km square: SE57, 67, 77, 56 and 66, where present throughout season. Bred lower Derwent Valley/Pocklington Canal area, Knavesmire area of York, Selby, Dunnington Common.

Monthly bird-days in the Lower Derwent Valley/Pocklington Canal area were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
6	4	10	7	2	5	8	6	20	9	15	8

100 days compared to 68 in 1989 and 100 in 1988, with evidence of a small spring and autumn passage.

**BUZZARD**      *Buteo buteo*

Singles at Skipwith Common on 27th January (FWO,SO) and 17th February at Brandsby Heights (PH). Also Brighton on 23rd August (WT,VMW) and Sheriff Hutton on 18th December (JP). A bird was seen in the southern part of the area regularly from 6th March until 20th June and a pair at Castle Howard on 10th August (PH).

**OSPREY**      *Pandion haliaetus*

Singles at Castle Howard on 7th May (DP), Bonnygate on 10th (PH) and west at Wheldrake Ings on 12th (TED). An immature female at Wheldrake Ings from 28th August to 5th October (TED,CR,AJB et al.). Same bird seen at Escrick on 7th September (CR).

**KESTREL**      *Falco tinnunculus*

Widespread throughout the area. Known to have bred at Dunnington Common (WT,VMW) and Escrick, where three young were raised (CR).

Addition to 1989 Report

**RED-FOOTED FALCON**      *Falco vespertinus*

Single at Howden Station on 28th May (PR). Third record for the area.

**MERLIN**      *Falco columbarius*

A rather poor showing. Singles at: Babthorpe on 5th January; North Duffield Carrs 8th February; Poppleton 31st March and Wheldrake Ings 4th April; two females were seen flying north

at Ellerton on 14th

Singles at Wheldrake village on 22nd September, Wheldrake Ings on 23rd and Bubwith on 27th October. A female at Escrick on 5th November and one flying between Askham Bog and Askham Bryan and over Acomb Green on 18th, also at Melbourne Ings on 14th December and possible record between Woodthorpe and Acomb on 17th December.

**HOBBY**      *Falco subbuteo*

A poor show compared with recent years.

In June, singles at Terrington (MP) and North Duffield Carrs/Bubwith on 2nd (CR), Strensall Common on 14th & 15th (SB), Melbourne on 21st (TED) and an adult at Thornton Ellers on 27th (TED).

An adult was seen hunting House Martins at York Carriage Works on 2nd July (DP) and singles at North Duffield Carrs/Bubwith on 17th and 19th (CR).

One seen chasing House Martins above Blackwood Rig Farm near Skipwith on 10th August (FWO,AM); singles on 10th, 11th, 23rd and 28th at Wheldrake Ings (CR,DR,TED,DH) and on 3rd September (CR) and 7th (TED).

**PEREGRINE**      *Falco peregrinus*

Single seen eating a pigeon at Cawton Heights on 17th March (PH,RH).

An adult male at Wheldrake Ings on 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 12th and 15th April (DDP,TED,CR) and singles at Skipwith Common on 8th and 10th (TED) and Newburgh Priory on 14th (JP).

On 9th September a young male and adult female were seen at Selby (PR); single bird seen twice on 17th November at Brandsby village (PH,RD) and one at Wheldrake Ings on 24th and 26th December (RSS).

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

Bred Lower Derwent Valley/Pocklington Canal (TED) and common throughout the year at Heslington (TC).

Covies noted were: 12 at Thornton Ellers on 7th January when five near Riccall with 32 near Deighton on 13th.

Three at Hagg Lane on 1st February and 17 near Skipwith Common on 20th and eight there again on 21st.

Fourteen at Acaster Airfield on 17th October and 14 at Bubwith on 27th. Twentyfour at Cawood Marsh on 6th November. Twelve at Naburn on 22nd December, 15 at Elvington on 28th and 27 on Dunnington Common on 30th.

**GREY PARTRIDGE**      *Perdix perdix*

No counts but seems to be picking up slightly in Lower Derwent Valley, where bred (TED).

A few pairs seen at Heslington where reasonable numbers shot, probably increasing in area (TC).

Covey of 12 at Hagg Bridge on 7th January; two at Poppleton on 29th March; six at Brandsby Bank on 8th April and two at Poppleton on 19th. Two pairs at Middlethorpe Ings on 9th May; two chicks at Butterwick on 5th July. Covey of 16 at Poppleton on 13th and 16th September and 4th October. Eight at Escrick on 22nd December.

QUAIL      *Coturnix coturnix*

An unexpected winter bird with one at Thornton Ellers on 30th (ML) and 31st January (TED).

Males singing at Wheldrake Ings (TED) and Storwood (ML) on 23rd May. Two males singing at North Duffield Carrs on 13th June (TED) and 14th (NS) with singles on 20th (TED,NS) and 21st (TED) and a single at Butterwick on 28th (IC). A singing male at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd July, three on 6th and a female with 12 day-old chicks by windpump there on 7th; a male at North Duffield Carrs on 12th and one at Wheldrake Ings on 18th (TED) with a single on 11th September (TED).

PHEASANT      *Phasianus colchicus*

Widespread throughout the area with many being released by shooting syndicates.

Forty at Elvington on 28th December.

WATER RAIL      *Rallus aquaticus*

Singles at York Water Works on 1st January and 14th March. Heard calling at Skipwith Common on 23rd March and 6th April. Single at York Water Works on 19th December.

At Wheldrake Ings: singles on 12th and 29th April; 3rd May; 26th to 31st July; 1st and 3rd August; 2nd and 13th September; 8th, 9th, 22nd and 27th October; 20th and 21st November and 11th and 14th December. Elsewhere in Derwent Valley: heard at North Duffield Carrs on 2nd and 22nd September and 24th November. A single at Melbourne Ings on 14th December, Church Bridge Melbourne on 15th and Bielby Bridge on 22nd. Presumed to have bred in Lower Derwent Valley/Pocklington Canal and a pair may have bred at York Water Works.

CORNCRAKE      *Crex crex*

Singing male at Wheldrake Ings on 20th June (TED).

MOORHEN      *Gallinula chloropus*

Largest counts: 15 at Wheldrake Ings on 29th August; 10 at Castle Howard on 4th September, 47 at Melbourne Pools on 14th and 58 there on 26th November.

Bred in Lower Derwent Valley (no counts taken), the first chicks being seen at Wheldrake Ings on 7th May and 38 pairs counted on Pocklington Canal (TED). At Manor Farm Pond, Poppleton, six chicks seen on 5th April with another seven on 3rd June and a further four on 25th July. A pair with two well-grown juveniles and four chicks seen at North Duffield Carrs on 31st July (ML). Several pairs bred at York Waterworks; seven pairs at Escrick Ponds with 21 young seen. An adult on the nest at North Duffield Carrs on 21st June escaped a fox which took two young juveniles (ML).

One fell prey to a cat at Fulford Ings on 3rd December (ML).

COOT      *Fulica atra*

About 150 pairs bred in Lower Derwent Valley and Pocklington Canal. A nest at Wheldrake Ings was occupied on 29th March and the first young there were seen on 29th April. On 30th April a clutch of 22 was found at Wheldrake Ings, possibly dumped (TED). Also bred along River Ouse at Bishopthorpe Palace and Poppleton.

Largest counts at Wheldrake Ings: 50 on 8th February, 400 on 25th February; 200+ on 27th March and 329 (paired) on 17th April (TED).  
Six seen at Newton on 9th September.

OYSTERCATCHER      *Haematopus ostralegus*

Bred in average numbers in the Lower Derwent and Pocklington Canal. The Lower Ouse/Wharfe provided a number of March records (i.e. three at Cawood and two at Ozendyke Ings on 8th) but no subsequent confirmed breeding. At the site of last year's successful breeding at Naburn, two females were sitting on 22nd April but no juveniles were seen. The Ouse above York yielded pairs at Red House on 1st March and Poppleton on 18th (probably on passage).

Spring arrival was heralded by three at Wheldrake Ings and one at Bank Island on 18th February. Nine bird-days in Lower Derwent prior to main influx on 14th March.

Following two over Strensall Common on 11th post-breeding movement was confined to the end of July and early August. Maxima were eight at Naburn on 22nd July; six at Red House on 27th and seven at Wheldrake Ings on 28th. Last of the autumn one at Wheldrake Ings on 6th August.

A single at Bishopthorpe on 22nd December constituted the York Area's fourth record for that month (DP).

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER      *Charadrius dubius*

Once again an undistinguished breeding performance, with none of the four pairs reported raising young. Breeding attempted at Naburn Sewage Works, York Waterworks, British Sugar and probably North Duffield Carrs.

Spring passage was unspectacular: Wheldrake Ings provided 30 April bird-days after the first two of the year on 4th (CR). No more than a handful were recorded at North Duffield Carrs, Riccall, Cawood and Clifton Lake.

In Autumn an adult and three juveniles at Riccall on 25th July may possibly have been of local origin. The last of the year were singles on 4th and 28th August (TED).

RINGED PLOVER      *Charadrius hiaticula*

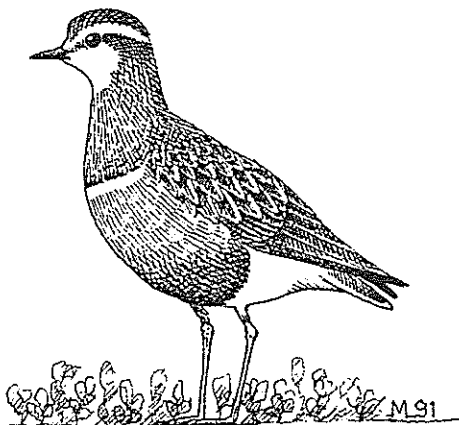
No breeding was attempted.

An encouraging (and early) start to spring passage was reported from Wheldrake Ings: a single on 22nd March was followed by 10 the next day, one on 27th and two on 29th. However, April had only a single bird-day here and May four. Elsewhere: four near Skipwith Common on 10th April and two near Cawood on 15th were the only records. North Duffield Carrs provided an interesting seven bird-days in early June.

Return passage was confined to Wheldrake Ings and comprised five bird-days, with the last on 27th August.

DOTTEREL      *Charadrius marinellus*

Five on northward  
passage at  
Snargate near  
Brandsby on 20th  
April constitutes  
an excellent  
record for the  
York area (PH).



#### AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER

One was found in a flock of 50 Golden Plover on Bubwith Ings on 31st July.

First record for the area (if accepted) and the icing on the cake of an excellent year for the larger plovers (TED).

#### GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria*

Following a disappointing January, February and March yielded some spectacular counts. Subsequent spring passage was unremarkable, however, and return movement similarly average. A few reasonable flocks were reported in the York and Pocklington districts in October-November but not until December did significant numbers re-occupy the Lower Derwent.

The only large January flocks comprised 1500+ at Old Earswick on 1st and 1200 at Wheldrake Ings on 30th. In February the Lower Derwent regularly held over 4000 birds, with the peak being 6050 on 1st. On 3rd 1700 were counted at Copmanthorpe. March maximum in the Lower Derwent was 5100 on 20th; 850 were at Ryther on 10th. The only three figure April counts came from Cawood (118 on 3rd), Wheldrake Ings (235 on 10th) and Ryther (142 on 15th). The last individual of spring paused at Wheldrake Ings on 10th May (TED).

Southward passage began on 10th July with one at Bishopthorpe (DP) and 15 at North Duffield Carrs on 12th. Thereafter until the end of September double figure counts came from Riccall, Naburn, Copmanthorpe and many sites in the Lower Derwent. Larger flocks comprised 300 at North Duffield Carrs on 17th July, 100 at Wheldrake Ings on 9th August and 150 at Bubwith on 11th September.

October brought up to 200 to the Copmanthorpe/Askham Bryan district and a notable 24 at Hvingham on 4th, but by far the largest flock was 640 at Shipton on 31st. November records included 300 at Tilmire on 5th, 500 on Pocklington Airfield on 21st, 700 on North Duffield Ings on 19th and 300 at Askham Bryan on 26th. By 5th December the Shipton flock had swollen to 1600 and Wheldrake Ings held 1000 on 11th with Lower Derwent having a respectable 3000 by 31st.

#### GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola*

The year brought a remarkable sequence of spring passage birds to Wheldrake Ings, concentrated into a six-day period in early May. Following five on 3rd, eight were present on 4th and 5th, a single on 6th and four on 8th (TED, MH, ML, CR, DR).

#### LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus*

January yielded few large counts but good numbers were recorded in February and March. Bred in normal numbers in the Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal but rather few reports came from elsewhere. Late summer and early autumn numbers were rather low but wintering flocks built up satisfactorily in the last two months of the year.



In January 1000 were at Copmanthorpe on 6th and a maximum of 2500 at Wheldrake Ings on 30th. The Lower Derwent produced its annual maximum on 1st February when 5350 were counted; 4600 present on 8th while 3250 were logged on 14th March.

Birds were on territory at Brandsby and Moor Monkton by 17th March and by 2nd April were incubating at Whitemoor Mine where three broods of chicks were noted on the early date of 28th.

The first post-breeding flock comprised 25 individuals at North Duffield Carrs on 20th June, increasing to 150 by 24th. Some 600 at this site on 17th July proved to be the largest of several three-figure aggregations in the Lower Derwent in the period July-September. The only October flocks reported involved up to 100 at Wheldrake Ings and up to 200 in the Askham Bog-Knapton area. November opened with an excellent 1300 on Tilmire on 5th and continued with 300 at Poppleton on 8th, 600 at Marton on 17th, 290 at Clifton and 500 at North Duffield Ings on 19th and 300 at Askham Bryan on 26th. Predictably, numbers increased in December, maxima being 1800 at Shipton on 5th, 3500 at Wheldrake Ings on 18th and 1200 at Ellerton/Aughton on 30th.

#### CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris*

A winter-plumaged individual at Wheldrake Ings on 14th-16th May constitutes the first spring record for the York area (MH, TED, DR).

More typical in date were the five juveniles present at the same site from 23rd to 26th August (MH, TED, DR). A good year.

#### DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*

In the Lower Derwent, wintering flocks in the early months of the year were rather disappointing and spring passage merely average. August-September brought a trickle of southbound birds to Wheldrake Ings, but not until December did large numbers return.

January maximum was a mere 10 birds at North Duffield Carrs on 28th. In February the Lower Derwent held 90 on the 4th and a healthy 230 on 15th, while 220 were counted on 14th March. Thereafter numbers declined and flocks became concentrated at Wheldrake Ings, where 40 remained on 27th March and 10-20 present regularly throughout April. May yielded 12 bird-days, the last being a single on 24th (TED).

The first of autumn was a single at Wheldrake Ings on 21st July (DR) followed by six August bird-days from 20th. September provided 43 bird-days here until 30th, the maximum being seven on the 11th. The sole November record concerned five at Wheldrake Ings on 26th. December Lower Derwent counts increased from 47 on 10th to 80 on 18th and 240 on 30th.

Elsewhere: two were at Ryther on 1st March, up to four graced Castle Howard in September, one was present at Melbourne on 22nd and 23rd and three were found at Stillingfleet on 9th December.

RUFF      *Philomachus pugnax*

Numbers were low in the early months of the year but recovered somewhat in March so spring passage could be described as average. Lekking was noted on several dates in late March and April, but no subsequent proof of breeding was obtained. Return passage was sparse and virtually confined to August. Reasonable wintering numbers returned to the Ings in November - December.

Monthly maxima in the Lower Derwent were: 10 on 30th January, 29 on 8th February, 57 on 14th March, 31 on 19th April and 30 on 3rd May. The last of spring was a Reeve on 13th May.

Wheldrake Ings held a single on 14th July and yielded 11 bird-days between 1st and 20th August. One was present on 23rd September. On this site 30+ on 14th November heralded the arrival of the Lower Derwent's wintering population, which in December increased from 41 on 17th to 75 on 30th.

Elsewhere: three were noted at Castle Howard on four mid-August dates, two were present at Linton Lock on 24th August and two paused at Melbourne on 26th September. The Ouse below York then provided some interesting records, comprising nine at Bishopthorpe on 6th November and up to five at Acaster South Ings from 19th December to the year end.

JACK SNIFE      *Lymnocyrtus minimus*

Wintering populations in the York Area continue to be at a very low ebb, with a mere four records received.

Three were at Strensall Common on 1st April and one near Crayke on 10th October. In November singles were noted at Wheldrake Ings on 1st and near Ampleforth on the 17th.

SNIFE      *Gallinago gallinago*

Breeding numbers in the Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal appeared unchanged. Elsewhere three to four pairs probably bred at Fulford Ings, up to four pairs at Bishopthorpe and two pairs on Clifton Ings. All breeding records outside the Derwent should be submitted in future.

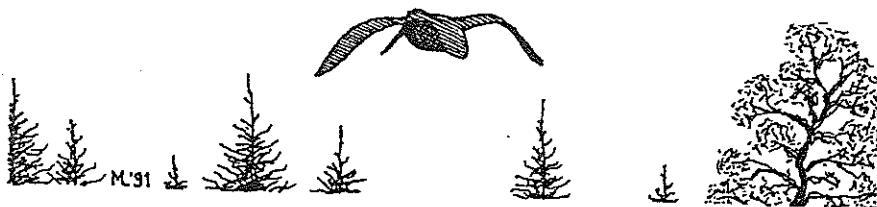
No significant counts were received for January or February. In March, the first drumming individual was noted at Bubwith on 14th. Elsewhere, 16 were at Ozendyke Ings on 13th March, 76 at Fulford Ings on 27th and 32 at Cawood on 29th. April records included 23 at Ryther on 1st and 30 at Newton Mask on 9th.

Newly hatched Snipe chicks were noted at East Cottingwith on 5th July, a late date, probably indicating a second brood. Such nests would obviously be vulnerable to destruction by hay cutting.

Post-breeding counts at Wheldrake Ings in July were regularly in double figures, the maximum being 22 on 28th. Subsequently

monthly maxima here comprised 20 on 11th August, 24 on 11th September, 10 on 10th October and 16 on 22nd November. In December, 30 were present on the Pocklington Canal near Melbourne on 22nd. Elsewhere, Castle Howard amassed 17 bird-days in August-September, four were at Riccall on 3rd-4th August and six were at Poppleton on 11th November.

WOODCOCK      *Scolopax rusticola*



Species bred or possibly bred at Skipwith Common, Askham Bog, Buttercrambe Wood, two sites near Brandsby, and Yearsley Moor.

Twelve were present at Thornton Ellers on 14th March, while at first light on the 3rd of that month one was noted feeding on a lawn near Skipwith Common.

Post-breeding dispersal is suggested by records of three at Wheldrake Ings on July 24th and two at Escrick on 6th August.

October-December records came from Gilling, Wheldrake Ings, Walmsgate Stray, Fulford Ings and Melbourne. In December, two were flushed from a Bishopthorpe hedge by a Kestrel on 8th while an individual at Escrick Beck reappeared for its third successive winter.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT      *Limosa limosa*

Following an early arrival spring passage was again sparse and although occasional display was noted no breeding was

attempted. Autumn records are generally few and far between so the virtually continuous presence of a handful of birds at Wheldrake Ings in September and early October was unexpected.

A winter-plumaged bird appeared at North Duffield Carrs on 25th February and was followed by a summer-plumaged individual on 4th March and two from 10th to 22nd. At Wheldrake Ings what was probably the last-named pair were in residence from 23rd March to 9th April. Singles noted here on eight subsequent April dates and a flock of nine paused briefly on 19th; last of spring was one on 8th May.

All autumn records came from Wheldrake Ings. August yielded two on 7th and one on 18th. Three arrived on September 11th, one of which remained until 6th October.

**BAR-TAILED GODWIT**      *limosa lapponica*

An excellent year for the species with all six records coming from Wheldrake Ings.

An unprecedented flock of 17 on 30th April was followed by the following May records: two on 3rd (associating with Whimbrels) and singles on 4th and 7th.

In July three flew south on 6th while one on 11th September arrived with three Black-tailed Godwits; the fifth and sixth autumn records for the area.

**WHIMBREL**      *Numenius phaeopus*

Spring passage numbers at the Wheldrake Ings roost were equivalent to those of 1989 despite incomplete observer coverage. First of spring were four on 10th April, the month yielded 321 bird-days with a maximum of 136 on 29th. May produced 191 bird-days, maximum 100+ on 3rd (observed with a night-sight borrowed from the Army) and the last a single on 25th.

Elsewhere: single individuals were noted over Storwood on 22nd April and Escrick on 1st May.

Return passage typically fell in the last few days of July and the month of August. Wheldrake Ings recorded 31 bird-days between 28th July and 17th August, the maximum being a disappointing five on 14th August.

Away from the Derwent, August records came from Heslington Common (two on 11th) and Selby (three flying west on 12th and two on 26th).

**CURLEW**      *Numenius arquata*

Bred in normal numbers in the Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal. Elsewhere breeding or probable breeding records came from Skipwith Common (where successful), South Ings Acaster, Claxton, Strensall, Wigginton, Poppleton, Moor Monkton and several sites in our three northernmost 10km squares. One remaining territory was reported within the York outer

ring-road in rough pasture north of Bootham Stray (a site earmarked for development) (MH).

The Lower Derwent supported healthy wintering populations at both ends of the year and post-breeding flocks were a decided improvement on those of 1989.

In the early months Lower Derwent maxima comprised 42 on 12th January, 55 on 1st February and 120 on 20th March. Up to 15 were present in the Ouse/Wharfe confluence district in late February.

Many local breeders had re-occupied territories by mid-March but passage continued through the Derwent well into April. Even so, flocks of up to 20 at Wheldrake Ings in the last week of May are difficult to interpret.

Post-breeding aggregations in late June included 35 at Wheldrake Ings on 21st and 50 there the next day. In July, this site and North Duffield Carrs both regularly attracted double figures, respective maxima being 21 on 16th and 23 on 9th. The August peak at Wheldrake Ings involved 21 on 18th, with East Cottingham yielding 10 on 1st. Elsewhere during the month, three were at Castle Howard on 22nd and three over Farlington on 27th.

All subsequent records came from Wheldrake Ings, where September's maximum was six on 23rd. A pronounced influx came in the second half of October with 24 on 17th and 31 on 24th. The November peak comprised 52 birds on 13th while in December 57 were counted on 31st.

#### SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus*

The poorest showing for many years with no autumn records. A transitional plumaged bird at Wheldrake Ings on 9th and 10th April, with a single there on 5th May.

#### REDSHANK *Tringa totanus*

The Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal continues to maintain a good breeding population of approx. 120 pairs. Elsewhere birds held territory at Acaster Ings, Bishopthorpe Ings, Naburn, Naburn Sewage Workd and Fulford Ings, although the bird is considered to be near extinct as a breeding bird in York (MH).

In the Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal area numbers were scarce in January with maximum of seven on the 20th. Early February had 12 on 1st, 41 on 4th, 29 on 8th and 49 on 15th; thirty were present from 25th until 4th March. Spring passage occurred early with 83 on 14th March and 50 on 20th; thereafter few records as birds dispersed.

Wheldrake Ings held a post-breeding flock of 150 on 15th July, however mainly single birds were observed throughout August, September and October. The only counts in the latter part of the year were three at Wheldrake Ings on 1st November, six on 17th December, nine on the 18th, 12 at Ellerton/Aughton on 30th and 10 at North Duffield on 31st.

Elsewhere: singles at Riccall, Cawood, Middlethorpe Ings and two at Poppleton.

**GREENSHANK**      *Tringa riebularia*

A poor year with a poor spring passage. A single at Wheldrake Ings on 17th March, three on 3rd May and singles on 4th, 5th, 23rd and 24th. At North Duffield Carrs a single from 4th to 9th June and on the 18th. Single returning birds were at Wheldrake Ings on 16th, 17th and 28th July and throughout August with the exception of four on 1st, two on 6th, 20th, 24th and 25th (34 bird days). September produced 20 bird days with four on the 1st and 2nd, three on the 9th, with the last on 13th.

Elsewhere: singles at Riccall on 20th July, Clifton Lake on 18th August, with six bird days at Castle Howard.

**GREEN SANDPIPER**      *Tringa ocropus*

January to March produced only 9 bird days from Cawood Marsh, Hagg Bridge, North Duffield Carrs and Thornton Ellers.

An early returning bird at North Duffield Carrs from 20th to 30th June was also seen at Wheldrake Ings. Passage began with a single at Breighton on 8th July, at Wheldrake Ings on 10th, 15th and 17th with three on 24th and two on 26th and 27th. An adult was at Riccall from 25th to 28th and Poppleton on 31st. Seven were at Melbourne on 29th. (25 bird days.) August yielded 31 bird days with 20 at Wheldrake Ings (max. of five on 30th), and four at Riccall and Castle Howard. September produced 23 bird days at Wheldrake Ings (max. three on 7th), with a single at Thornton Ellers on 1st and five at Melbourne on 6th. Four were at Skipwith Common on 1st October, with singles at Wheldrake Ings until 8th. Up to five were at Melbourne from 25th November until year end.

**WOOD SANDPIPER**      *Tringa surcola*

The decline continues with the only records of singles at Wheldrake Ings on 30th May (TED) and at Riccall on 3rd and 4th August (SB).

**COMMON SANDPIPER**      *Actis hypoleucur*

Once again a very poor spring passage, with no evidence of breeding, although two juveniles were seen on the River Ouse between Poppleton and Benningborough in July.

The first returning bird was at Hagg Bridge on 27th March. Then there was a long gap until a single at Castle Howard on 23rd April and two at Poppleton on 27th. Records in May were scattered with singles at Scarborough Bridge, York on 2nd, Melbourne on 4th, Poppleton on 5th, East Cottingham on 10th, Wheldrake Ings on 13th and 14th and Clifton Lake on 16th. One at Wheldrake Ings on 16th June.

Autumn passage totalled 39 bird days between 10th July (two at Poppleton) and 29th August (one at Castle Howard). July produced 10 bird days with five at Poppleton and August 29, with 17 at Castle Howard (max. of three on 14th and 15th).

Elsewhere: two at North Duffield Carrs on 2nd August and Riccall on 3rd, three at Melbourne on 12th and one at Moor Monkton on 13th.

**PECTORAL SANDPIPER**      *Culidris melanotos*

A single at Wheldrake Ings on 7th September (TED). The third record for the area, with the first at Roscarrs on 6th August 1976 and the second at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd September 1984.

**MEDITERRANEAN GULL**      *Larus melanocephalus*

A first-winter bird at North Duffield Carrs on 10th February (TED) and Wheldrake Ings on 7th April (DR).

**LITTLE GULL**      *Larus minutus*

Spring records came from Wheldrake Ings with a winter-plumaged adult on 17th March, a sub-adult on 29th April with two adults and a sub-adult on 30th. An immature and sub-adult were present on 3rd May.

**BLACK-HEADED GULL**      *Larus ridibundus*

The only significant counts in a poor year were: 8,000 at Wheldrake Ings on 31st January with 3,500 on 1st February, 1,500 on 7th August, 1,500 south-west on 22nd October and 5,500 roosted on 29th December with 7,000 on 31st.

Elsewhere: 650 at Naburn Sewage Works on 30th April, 300 at Escrick on 12th August, 1,500 at Castle Howard on 8th and 116 at Clifton Lake on 16th December with an average winter roost of 50 to 80 birds.

An individual at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd March was pure white apart from a wedge of black undersurface of inner primaries (DR).

**COMMON GULL**      *Larus canus*

Again a very poor year with the only records in the first half of the year being 1,000 at Wheldrake Ings on 31st January and a single on 26th April.

Returning birds were a single at Wheldrake Ings on 11th July, Acomb Green on 20th, with 15 at North Duffield Carrs and 150 south-east at Bubwith Ings on 31st. 300 at Castle Howard on 8th August increased to 100 on 15th. Three were at Clifton Lake during July to September, with an average winter roost of 10 to 50, with 70 on 16th December. 120 were at Scrayingham

on 9th and 800 roosted at Wheldrake Ings on 29th with 530 on 31st.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL      *Larus fuscus*

As always scarce during the winter with very little spring passage. Up to 10 flew north over Selby in January and February. Two adults and an immature were at Wheldrake Ings on 4th February; a '*fuscus/intermedius*' on 10th and an adult and sub-adult '*fuscus/intermedius*' on 29th March. Two were there on 12th April and an adult at North Duffield Carrs on 28th.

Autumn passage began with single figures daily at Wheldrake Ings from 27th June to 8th July.

Elsewhere: three sub-adults including '*fuscus/intermedius*' at Thornton Ellers on 2nd and 13 sub-adult at East Cottingwith. Two flew south at North Duffield Carrs on 3rd, 80 sub-adults were at Ellerton on 4th, four at Wheldrake Ings on 8th and 60 flew south-east at Bubwith Ings on 31st. Thirteen flew north-west at Castle Howard on 8th August, a single at Clifton Lake from 10th to 13th, 10 at Wheldrake Ings on 18th and Castle Howard on 19th. One at Clifton Lake on 23rd August and 2nd September, with 15 at Castle Howard on 5th. Seven flew east at Wilberfoss on 15th and 300 at Castle Howard on 16th. Singles at Clifton Lake on 13th October, Red House on 2nd November, with three at Wheldrake Ings on 26th.

An individual regularly coming to a garden in Selby since a juvenile, returned on 25th August (PR).

HERRING GULL      *Larus argentatus*

Another poor year with the only records in the early part of the year of 120 at Wheldrake Ings on 31st January, 15 on 10th February and one at Poppleton on 14th. Three were at Wheldrake Ings on 26th April, one at North Duffield Carrs on 28th and Wheldrake Ings on 3rd May with two adults on the 6th.

In the latter part of the year, singles at Wheldrake Ings on 13th August, Poppleton on 15th September with two on 18th November. One at Clifton Lake on 23rd December and up to 500 at Wheldrake Ings from 25th to year end.

ICELAND GULL      *Larus glaucoides*

A first-winter bird flew over London Bridge Garage on 15th February (T&VW).

GREATER BLACK-BACKED GULL      *Larus marinus*

During the early months, 300 at Wheldrake Ings on 31st January, 105 on 10th February, 15 on 25th March and 12 on 26th April.

No further records until a single at Poppleton on 13th



September, then 72 at Wheldrake Ings on 17th December increasing to 400 by year end. A single at Wilberfoss on 27th.

**KITTIWAKE**     *Rissa triductyla*

A poor year with the only spring record of two adults and first-winter at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd March and a late adult on 5th May.

**COMMON TERN**     *Sterna hirundo*

A small spring passage began with eight at Naburn Marina on 2nd and 3rd May (DP), a single at Wheldrake Ings and Castle Howard on 3rd, Clifton Lake on 4th, two at Naburn Marina on 6th and a single on 7th. Two flew north-west over Selby on 12th and two were at Wheldrake Ings on 29th. Presumably non-breeding birds were a single at Wheldrake Ings on 8th July and five at North Duffield Carrs on 14th.

A series of records from Naburn Marina/Naburn Lock areas may suggest local breeding. Two adults were feeding two well-grown juveniles on 28th to 30th July. Two adults and a juvenile were present in 2nd August and were joined by three juveniles on 3rd. Three adults remained until 14th.

**ARCTIC TERN**     *Sterna paradisaea*

An appalling year with the only record of a single flying west at Wheldrake Ings on 23rd May.

**'COMIC TERN'**     *Sterna hirunda/paradisaea*

Two flew north at Melbourne on 13th May.

**BLACK TERN**     *Chilidonias niger*

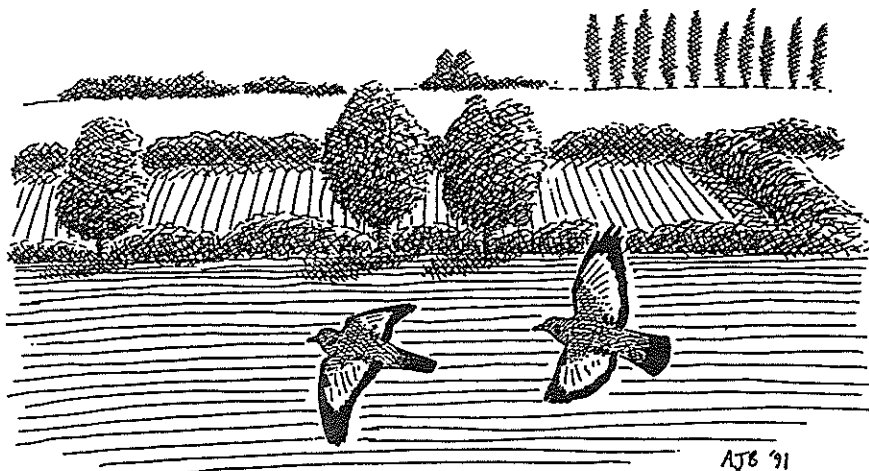
An early spring influx into Britain was also noted in the area, otherwise a poor spring passage. Eighteen were at Wheldrake Ings on 30th April (TED) and 1st May. Eighteen were seen feeding in the evening at Range Pools, Strensall Common on 2nd, three were at Castle Howard on 3rd when five were at Wheldrake Ings, with four on 4th. Three were at Wheldrake Ings on 13th when one at Castle Howard with the last there on 21st (DR).

The only autumn record was a juvenile at Castle Howard on 24th August (DR).

**LITTLE AUK**     *Alle alle*

A bird picked up at Wheldrake on 23rd December was released at the coast next day (TED).

STOCK DOVE     *Columba oenas*



Bred at Bishopthorpe Palace, Escrick, Stillington, Yearsley and York Water Works.

The only counts were from well-watched areas: 20 at Cawood on 6th April. Eightyfive at Bank Island on 24th December, 22 at Acaster Ings on 30th and 39 at Wheldrake Ings on 31st. Undoubtedly an under-recorded species.

WOODPIGEON     *Columba columbus*

In the early part of the year, 2500 at Escrick on 3rd January with 3000 on 6th. Six hundred at Wheldrake Ings on 10th February and 650 at Cawood on 6th April.

650 were at Whitemoor Mine on 19th November, 1200 at Castle Howard throughout November, 700 there on 9th December after a gale, when 300 at Kexby, and 1000 at Bielby on 11th.

COLLARED DOVE     *Streptopelia decaocto*

The largest counts were 85 at New Park, Huby on 15th January, 21 at Escrick on 12th February, 40 at Thorganby on 3rd October, 53 at Escrick on 13th, 18 at Wilberfoss on 18th and 67 at Thorganby on 31st. Thirtyone were at Cawood Marsh on

6th November, 35 at Skipwith on 26th and 30 there on 1st December.

**TURTLE DOVE**      *Streptopelia turtur*

Bred Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal, and present during the breeding season at Brayton Barff, Castle Howard, Cawood, Coxwold, Hovingham, Riccall, Skipwith Common, Stainer Wood and Sturge's Pond.

The first returning bird was at Wheldrake Ings on 2nd May (SAB). Early sightings, confined to the Lower Derwent and Skipwith Common, were mainly of singles except two at Wheldrake Ings on 17th May and North Duffield Carrs on 26th, with pairs at Skipwith Common on 14th June and East Cottingwith on 20th.

Four were at Wheldrake Ings on 1st August, eight on 3rd and four at North Duffield Carrs on 24th with three at Wheldrake Ings on 28th. The last were eight at Riccall on 4th September (SAB).

**CUCKOO**      *Culculus canorus*

The first reported bird was one at Skipwith Common on 17th April (FWO). Singles were present throughout the area by 9th May when two were at Stockton Lane, with two at Bolton Percy on 25th. Seven were in the Selby area on 5th June. A rufous phase female was at Wheldrake Ings and surrounding area from 19th May until 14th June. A similar (or same) bird was present in 1989 from 2nd May to 9th June. The last was an immature at Wheldrake Ings on 15th August (CR).

An interesting article by Patrick Oldfield appeared in the Weekender Magazine on 8th May, prompted by a letter from Mr Frank Oates, about the first arrival date of this year's Cuckoo. Taken from YOC Reports for the last 20 years, the mean annual arrival date is the 19th April. The earliest date being 4th April in 1981 and the latest 27th April in 1975. We are grateful to Mr Oldfield who over the years has given valuable publicity to this Club and particularly the Annual Report.

**BARN OWL**      *Tyto alba*

Bred Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal (14 pairs), Moor Monkton, South Duffield and Wigginton, with birds reported in the breeding season from Breighton, Heslington and Naburn.

Outside the breeding season, singles were reported from 11 sites, with the exception of two hunting at Wressle Castle on 22nd and 23rd January and a pair at Heslington on 17th March. Three were at Brind on 30th September, two at Moor Monkton on 5th and a pair at Bulmer on 16th (this being the only record from the Northern area).

Three road casualties were reported from Wheldrake Lane, Naburn and Fulford By-pass: these bring the road casualty total to 14 during the 1980s.

**LITTLE OWN**      *Athene noctua*

Two were present throughout the year at Appleton Roebuck and Naburn. Singles were reported at 12 sites in the York/Lower Derwent Valley area.

It is encouraging that six sites were found in the North of the area, at Alne, Brandsby, Crayke, Easingwold and Snaregate.

**TAWNY OWL**      *Strix aluco*

Remarkably few records this year. Bred at Dunnington Common, Grimston, Hovingham and Skipwith Common and possibly at Brayton Barff, Holgate and Stainer Wood.

A single was calling at Skipwith Common on 31st January, with two there on 10th March and a single at Brandsby on 18th. One at Wheldrake Wood on 13th May and at High Wood on 22nd June.

**LONG-EARED OWL**      *Asio otus*

Bred at Skipwith Common where an adult and calling young were seen on 21st May. A juvenile there on 12th June and two hunger-calling on 20th. Two juveniles were also seen at Wheldrake Wood on 13th May.

The roost at Skipwith Common comprised of a single on 26th March, three on 27th and a single on 3rd April.

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

In the Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal area a relatively poor year. Two were present from 13th January to 31st when there were seven, then a single until 8th April.

In the latter part of the year a single at Wheldrake Ings from 10th November to 21st and two were at Seavy Carr throughout November and December.

Elsewhere, a single at Melbourne on 27th March.

**NIGHTJAR**      *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Two, possibly four, were in the clear-felled area of Yearsley Wood on 26th May. At their traditional site, Skipwith Common, seven singing males were present on 20th June and three on 8th August. Seventeen singing males were present during the breeding season.

It is encouraging that new sites are being found and it is worth investigating any clear-felled areas in any vicinity.

SWIFT      *Apus apus*

A very early bird was a road casualty at Oswaldkirk on 11th April (JP). The next was a single at Wheldrake Ings on 30th. Birds were spread throughout the area by 1st June but nowhere were there any large numbers. A passage at Wheldrake Ings on 7th May and 10 at Wheldrake Ings and East Cottingwith on 10th were the only double figure counts until 50 at North Duffield Carrs on 7th and 11th June.

Southerly passage started with 60 at Stuge's Pond on 4th July, 500 at Dunnington Common on 20th and 85 at Brandsby on 21st, with 250 at Crockey Hill on 23rd. Fifty were at Escrick on 3rd August and 15 at Wheldrake Ings on 6th. The last were two at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd September (TED). An aberrant bird at Wheldrake Ings on 30th June had a white tail and patch around the eye (TED).

KINGFISHER      *Alcedo atthis*

Bred at Escrick (two pairs), Fulford Ings (two pairs), Sutton-on-Derwent, Thornton and Wheldrake Ings (two pairs)., six pairs bred within the York Outer Ringroad. Frequency of birds at seemingly unsuitable sites would suggest a surplus of non-breeding birds unable to find unoccupied riparian territories, or the necessity for breeding birds to fish further afield due to increasing competition. Intensive competition angling now poses a serious threat to riverbank habitat at Middlethorpe Ings (MH). Possible breeding at Elvington, Poppleton and Stamford Bridge.

One hundred and twentyone records were received from 25 sites, mostly ones and twos, with the exceptions of four at Wheldrake Ings on 14th March, four pairs along the River Ouse between York and Newton-on-Ouse on 8th April and three pairs along the River Ouse between York and Bishopthorpe on 22nd. Three were at Hagg Bridge on 28th May and at Wheldrake Ings on 9th August with four there on 4th September. Eleven were at Escrick on 12th August and three at Fulford Ings on 24th December. The only record from the north of the area was one at Tollerton Ings on 14th August.

GREEN WOODPECKER      *Picus viridis*

Bred Newbrugh Priory and Skipwith Common. Present during the breeding season at Strensall Common (three on 14th June), Blackmore, Kirkham Gorge and Lodge Wood. Singles were also reported from Brayton Barff, Sturge's Pond and Wheldrake Ings, outside the breeding season.

Addition to 1988 Report

One at Hovingham High Wood on 15th April.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER      *Dendrocopos major*

Bred Castle Howard, Claxton, Highwood, Moorlands, Newbrugh Priory and Terry Carr. Heard or seen at a further six sites

during the breeding season.

Singles were reported throughout the year in all areas with two at Sand Hutton on 22nd March, three at Wheldrake Ings on 13th April and two at Bishopthorpe on 22nd.

LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER      *Dendrocopos minor*



Singles reported throughout the year at Archbishop's Palace, Askham Bog, Crockey Hill, Escrick, Newbrugh Priory, Skipwith Common, Strensall Common, Wheldrake Ings and York Water Works where a pair present on 16th March.

Addition to 1989 Report

Two at Askham Bog on 15th and 18th January.

SKYLARK      *Alauda arvensis*

Two or three pairs bred at Hobmoor.

The only records received were: 150 at Hagg Bridge on 2nd January, 55 at Whitemoor Mine on 13th October, 50 at Wilberfoss on 12th December, 100 at Thornton on 22nd, 120 at Ellerton/Aughton on 30th when 10 at Acaster Airfield.

SAND MARTIN      *Riparia riparia*

Bred at Acaster, Clifton Ings, Fulford, Middlethorpe Ings, Naburn, Poppleton and York City Centre. An indeterminate number at a transitory excavation at British Sugar and on the former Dringhouse Tip site (MH).

The first arrival was at Wheldrake Ings on 13th March (DR), with six there on 17th and one at York Water Works on 18th. Numbers were relatively low with the exceptions being 100 at Wheldrake Ings on 12th April, 40 at Stamford Bridge on 17th, 60 at Naburn Lock on 6th May and 20 at Fulford Ings on 12th. One hundred and fifty were at Moor Monkton on 7th August. Fifty at Wheldrake Ings on 14th August began a passage in the Lower Derwent, with 300 on 15th, 500 on 16th and 3000 on 23rd. Thereafter, single figures until 26 on 19th September with the last being six on 8th October (CR).

Elsewhere: five at Clifton Lake on 17th August, 30 at Castle Howard on 20th; 20 at Clifton Lake on 2nd September, two at Riccall on 4th and at Fulford Ings on 8th October (CR).

A severe decline in occupied nests at Middlethorpe Ings due to disturbance, whilst some 30 burrows were occupied in 1989 less than that number of individuals were present in the area in later summer (MH).

SWALLOW      *Hirundo daurica*

The first birds were at Acaster Malbis (DP) and Wheldrake Ings (TED) on 12th April. Numbers were nowhere high with 30 at Wheldrake Ings on 26th and 10 at Clifton Lake on 4th May being the only double figure counts. The first eggs hatched at Moor Monkton on 15th May.

The 3000 at Wheldrake Ings on 23rd August increased to 20,000 on 24th, during a thunder storm, reducing to 5000 on 28th and 4000 on 29th and 30th. There were 1000 there on 9th and 13th September with 4000 on the 15th, declining to 500 by 26th.

Elsewhere: 300 at Castle Howard on 6th September, 56 at Clifton Lake on 15th, with the last at Wilberfoss on 26th October (AW).

HOUSE MARTIN      *Delichon urbica*

The first arrivals were rather late this year with seven at Escrick on 23rd April (CR), and singles at Wheldrake village on 28th and Storwood and York on 29th and nine at Escrick on 30th. Reported late arrival at Bishopthorpe on 3rd May, with fewer sites occupied.

One thousand at Wheldrake Ings on 5th September did not herald the expected passage and the only other counts were 100 at Castle Howard on 23rd, 250 at Wilberfoss on 3rd October, 50 at Wheldrake Village on 5th, with the last being at Haxby on 22nd (AW-W).

RICHARDS PIPIT      *Anthus novaeseel andiae*

A single bird at North Duffield Carrs on 20th (NS) and briefly on 26th (GO) June.

First record for the area.

TREE PIPIT      *Anthus trivialis*

The first was a singing male at Skipwith Common on 17th April (FWO); four were present there on 28th when one at North Duffield Carrs. Three were at Brayton BNarff on 6th May, 10 at Skipwith Common on 26th with three at Strensall Common on 14th June and four at Skipwith Common on 23rd. Five were at Yearsley on 1st July. Singles were reported from Bishopthorpe, Naburn Sewage Works and Snaregate. The last flew south-west over Naburn Sewage Works on 28th August (JL).

MEADOW PIPIT      *Anthus pretensis*

Bred in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal area, Hobmoor and St. Nicholas Field.

The only early year records were: 50 at Thornton Ellers on 7th January, 20 at North Duffield Carrs on 17th March and six at Claxton on 22nd.

Post-breeding flocks were: 80 at East Cottingwith on 5th July, 200 at Whitemoor Mine on 10th when 30 at Skipwith Common. Fortynine roosted at Wheldrake Ings on 8th October and 30 were there on 10th.

WATER PIPIT      *Anthus spinoletta*

A summer-plumaged bird at North Duffield Carrs on 13th May (CR/TED).

YELLOW WAGTAIL      *Motacilla flava*

Bred in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal area and possibly at Cawood Marsh where six were present between May and August,



and at Sturge's Pond. Present at Clifton Ings in summer but no evidence of breeding. Appears to be nearing extinction as a breeding bird in York (MH).

First returning birds were two at Cawood Park (SAB) and a single at Wheldrake Ings (TED) on 15th April. Singles at Aughton on 16th, Nether Poppleton on 21st, Naburn on 23rd; seven at North Duffield Carrs on 28th and three at Storwood on 29th.

Birds became widespread during early May with three at Brandsby Heights on 7th, a single at Oliver Hill on 9th when two at Strensall Common; five at North Duffield Carrs on 26th increased to eight on 7th June.

Post-breeding flocks were 12 at Pocklington Canal on 15th July, 30 at Naburn on 23rd and 10 at Bubwith Ings on 31st when four were at North Duffield Carrs. One or two reported from Brighton, Clifton Lake, Clifton Ings and Escrick in August, 20+ at Melbourne on 28th, with 15 at Wheldrake Ings on 30th and 14 on 31st. Three north over Acomb on 1st September, eight at Thornton Ellers on 4th, five at Wheldrake Ings on 8th, three on 13th and one on 15th. A single at Riccall on 9th. The last was a single at North Duffield Carrs on 24th (TED).

#### GREY WAGTAIL      *Motacilla cinerea*

Bred at Ampleforth, Eastness, Escrick, Castle Howard, Millhill Meck, Nunnington Hall, Pocklington Canal and River Ouse in York City Centre. A pair during the breeding season on River Foss, Haxby and singles at Clifton Ings, Naburn Marina, Old York Evening Press building, Strensall and York University.

In the early part of the year singles were reported from eight sites, with three at Nature Conservancy Council offices at York University on 23rd January, a pair at Millhill Beck on 17th February and Dunnington on 24th March

In September singles were reported from seven sites with two at Wheldrake Ings and Melbourne on 22nd and four at Castle Howard on 29th. Ones or twos reported from 20 sites during the remainder of the year, with the exception of eight at Naburn Sewage Works on 26th November.

#### PIED WAGTAIL      *Motacilla alba*

Bred at Pocklington Canal (four pairs), Brandsby, Clifton Lake area, Escrick and Holgate.

Maximum numbers in early months were: 30 at Thornton Ellers on 7th January and 77 at Poppleton on 20th. One hundred and forty at High Farm Brandsby on 27th March and 25 at Wheldrake Ings on 12th April.

Post-breeding flocks of 63 at Naburn Sewage Works on 27th July, 60+ at Melbourne on 12th August. 45 at Castle Howard on 3rd September, 60 at Melbourne on 6th where 25 on 15th increased to 74 on 23rd. Thirtytwo were at Bank Island on 8th

November and 96 at Naburn Sewage Works on 26th December.

Birds showing characteristics of White Wagtail *M. a. alba* were as follows: a single at York University on 21st March, several at Claxton on 22nd, four at Wheldrake Ings on 23rd and singles at York University on 24th and Wheldrake Ings on 27th. Singles at Naburn Sewage Works on 12th and 22nd April with three on 30th.

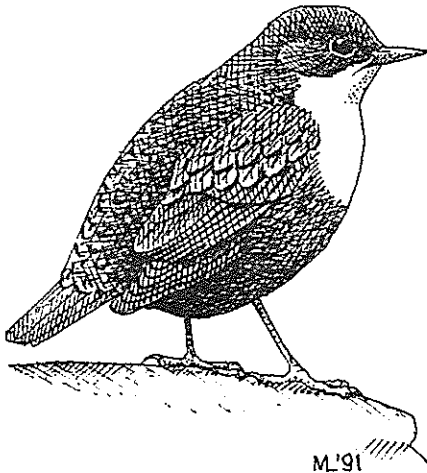
An early arrival at Wheldrake Ings on 30th August and 2nd September and one on 28th October.

**WAXWING** *Bombycilla garrulus*

Fortyseven were near Kilburn on 7th November to 12th (PH). An adult at Fulford Ings on 2nd December, two on 3rd and 4th (CR), two at Brandsby on 24th (PH) when one was at Wheldrake Ings (TED).

**DIPPER** *Cinclus cinclus*

Bred at West Ness (two juveniles) (JP). An immature at Nunnington on 3rd June and an adult on 4th may have been from the same family.



A bird showing characteristics of the Black-Bellied Dipper (*C. c. cinclus*) was in Bielby/Pocklington Canal area on 10th and 12th December (TED). First record for the area.

WREN      *Trogladytes trogladytes*

Sixtyeight pairs bred in Pocklington Canal area.

Numbers reported: 23 at Stainer Wood on 18th June, seven at Wheldrake Ings on 27th October and Fulford Ings on 3rd December with six there on 5th. Fourteen were along 2km of Pocklington Canal on 13th, 12 at Wheldrake Ings on 15th and 10 in Bielby Bridge area on 22nd. One roosted in a hanging basket at Escrick (CR).

DUNNOCK      *Prunella modularis*

The only record of note was 10 at Dunnington Common on 11th February.

ROBIN      *Erithacus rubecula*

Only counts received were 22 at Stainer Wood on 18th June, seven at Wilberfoss on 5th September and eight at Fulford Ings on 28th November.

A white bird was at Wheldrake Ings on 22nd March (TED), and a part albino with white back, rump, chin to lower breast and wing bars, with the rest normal plumage on 27th and 29th (CR, TED).

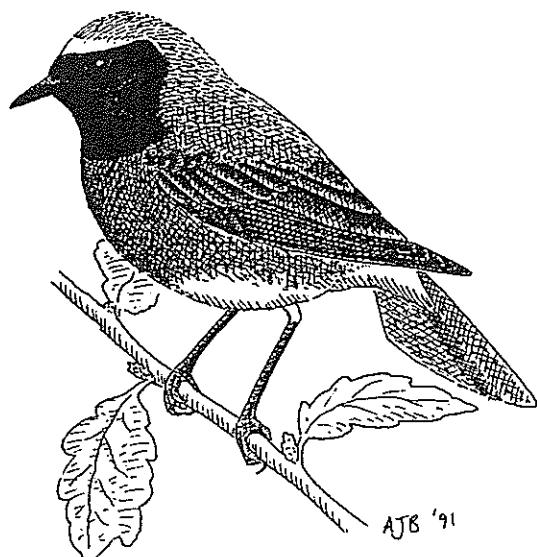
NIGHTINGALE      *Luscinia megarhynchos*

Singles at East Cottingwith Ings on 14th June (TED) and Hollicarrs on 18th (CR).

BLACK REDSTART      *Phoenicurus ochruros*

A singing male at York Carriage Works on 10th and 11th May (HK), two on the 20th and one on 2nd July (DP).

REDSTART      *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*



The first returning bird was one at North Duffield Carrs on 16th April (T&VW). No others reported until singing males at Skipwith Common and Strensall Common on 17th June. A single female/immature at Thronton Ellers on 18th July, an immature at Bank Island on 6th August and an adult female and immature at Wheldrake Ings on 7th. A pair was present there on 18th and at Healaugh Church. The last was a late bird at Copmanthorpe on 13th October (JAD)

WHINCHAT      *Saxicola rubetra*

A pair bred at Pocklington Canal.

The first arrivals were one at Sutton Rush on 4th May (SAB), a female at Snargate Quarry on 11th, a single at Heslington Tilmire on 23rd. Two singing males were at Strensall Common on 14th June.

In the Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal area: a juvenile on 7th

July, two adults and two juveniles on 15th, two adults and four juveniles on 30th to 15th August with two adults and three juveniles on 17th. Three juveniles remained until 21st. Five were there on 17th and three juveniles on 21st. Three remained until 1st September.

Elsewhere: an adult male at Acaster Malbis on 16th July, one at Hobmoor on 18th August two at Moor Lane Terminus on 29th and the last at Dunnington Common on 8th September (T&VW).

STONECHAT *Saxicola torquata*

A male at Ellerton on 1st April (TED), at Yearsley on 4th May (PH) and an immature at Church Bridge, Pocklington Canal on 11th and 12th December (TED).

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*

The first arrivals were singles at Wheldrake Ings on 16th and 18th March (TED). A pair at Low Towthorpe on 23rd, a male at North Duffield Carrs on 1st April and Naburn Sewage Works on 23rd. A pale-coloured male at Shipton on 1st May. A male at Thornton Ellers on 3rd and 10th May, two at Wheldrake Ings from 10th to 12th when three were at the Knavesmire. A pair at Wheldrake Ings on 13th and a single on 19th. The autumn passage of a few years ago seems to have receded, with only singles at East Cottingham on 11th July and at Ellerton on 17th and the last at Hob Moor on 18th August (MH). Birds showing the characteristics of the Greenland race *O.o. leucorrhoa* were a male at Wheldrake Ings on 12th July with a pair there on 13th (CR).

RING OUZEL *Turdus forquatus*

A single at Clifton Lake on 14th May (NS).

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula*

No records were received from the early part of the year. Seventeen were at Stainer Wood on 18th June. An influx occurred at Wilberfoss on 1st October but no numbers were recorded. Seventeen at Escrick on 15th October, 40 at Fulford on 13th November and Cawood on 25th. Eightynine at Fulford on 3rd December, with 100 there on 5th and 60 on 12th, when 80 were at Bielby. A bird at York University in May had a white left wing (CR). A male was observed to catch and eat a Banded Demoiselle dragon fly by the River Ouse in York on 15th June (MH).

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris*

Maximum counts in the early part of the year were: 500 at North Duffield Carrs on 3rd and 4th February, 350 at Scrayingham on 9th March and 550 at Wheldrake Ings on 23rd.

Thirty were at Benningborough on 21st April with eight at Burnholme being the last (BGP).

The first returning birds were two at Wheldrake Ings on 8th September (CR). In the Lower Derwent numbers increased gradually from 37 on 8th October to 500 on 22nd, 1000 on 25th and 3000 on 28th, thereafter reducing to 800 on 15th November, 300 on 19th and 26th with a small influx of 500 on 6th December and 700 on 9th.

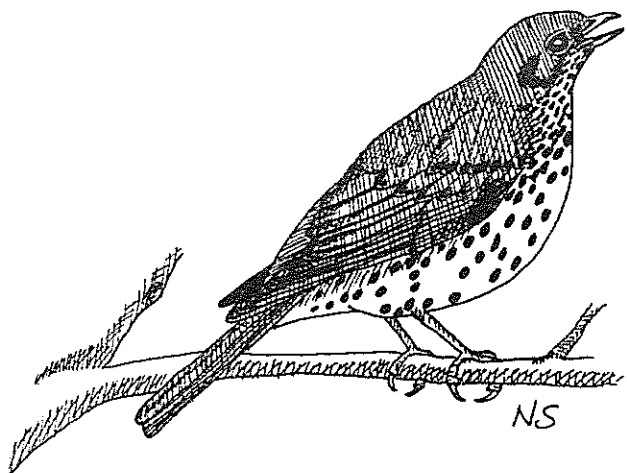
Elsewhere: One hundred and fifty flew north-west at Escrick on 8th October, several hundred over Acomb on 20th and 400 were at Hessay on 31st. Fivehundred at Escrick on 5th December, 700 at Castle Howard on 9th and 1200 at Bielby on 11th. Wintering numbers on Clifton Backies/Bootham Stray of 1500 in late December.

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos*

No significant counts were received although considerable numbers of migrants were involved in thrush numbers around 20th October.

Early nesting birds were on eggs at Escrick on 11th March with a late nesting pair there on 16th August. Fledged young were at Wheldrake Ings on 29th April.

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus*



Males were in full song at Escrick Church on 13th January (FWO) and Dunnington Common on 28th November (T&VW). Twelve were at North Duffield Cricket ground on 7th July.

**REDWING**      *Turdus iliacus*

The only records in the early part of the year were 63 at Wilberfoss on 20th January, six at Wheldrake Ings on 10th April with the last at Benningborough on 21st (AJB).

The first returning birds were two at Wheldrake Ings on 30th September (TED). Passage was noted at Osbaldwick on 1st October but numbers were nowhere large, with the maxima being 150 at Wheldrake Ings on 10th. Despite nocturnal passage over York on 12th no records were received until 90 at Hessay on 31st and 350 at New Earswick on 1st November.

**GRASSHOPPER WARBLER**      *Locustella naevia*

The first arrivals were at Wheldrake Ings on 28th and 29th April (TED) with one at Naburn Sewage Works and Wheldrake Ings on 30th, and Skipwith Common on 4th May where one was present on 14th June. Other than one at Bishop Wood on 22nd July all other records refer to Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal area. Two on 30th June, with at least four males present during July with two on 1st August and the last being two on 15th (JL).

Numbers are just being maintained, but the range is contracting to the Lower Derwent Valley, especially Wheldrake Ings.

**SEDGE WARBLER**      *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Seventynine pairs bred: Pocklington Canal and Lower Derwent. Three pairs at Bishopthorpe/Naburn, two pairs at Clifton Ings with at least nine territories on Fulford Ings. Possibly bred at Holgate Beck, Roscarrrs and St. Nicholas Field. The first returning birds were six at Wheldrake Ings on 28th April (TED) with four at Storwood on 29th. Singles were at Skipwith Common and Wheldrake Ings on 4th May, Copmanthorpe on 6th, when 18 were at Wheldrake Ings. Two at Strensall Common on 9th and 20 between Hagg Bridge and East Cottingwith on 10th with 25 there on 23rd. Three were at Bishopthorpe on 12th and two at Clifton Ings on 29th. Six were at Barlow Grange on 5th June. The last was a single at Wheldrake Ings on 18th August (TED).

**REED WARBLER**      *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Thirtyeight pairs bred Pocklington Canal and Lower Derwent. Possible breeding at Roscarrrs and Sturge's Pond.

The first were five singing males at Wheldrake Ings on 29th April (TED). A single at Skipwith Common on 7th May, three at East Cottingwith on 10th, a single at Castle Howard on 11th

and Cawood Marsh on 25th. Twenty were at Roscarrrs on 5th June and four at East Cotingwith on 26th. Two adults and two juveniles at Wheldrake Ings on 25th August with the last being a single there on 30th (TED).

LESSER WHITETHROAT     *Sylvia curruca*

Bred Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal area and Chapman's Pond (Dringhouses).. Pairs were present during the breeding season at Acaster, Bishopthorpe, Bolton Percy, Brayton Barff, Clifton Backies, Clifton Ings, Copmanthorpe, Fulford Ings, Dringhouses sidings, Naburn Sewage Works, Oxtun, Skipwith Common and Sturge's Pond. Appears to be increasing in suburban areas with territorial fighting noted among ornamental Whitebeam along Fale Lane, Acomb in early May.

The first arrival was a singing male at Wheldrake Ings on 26th April (DR,TED) and the last at Whitemoor Mine on 15th September (FWO,ML).

WHITETHROAT     *Sylvia communis*

Twentyeight pairs bred Pocklington Canal and Lower Derwent, Skipwith Common, along the cycle track between Bishopthorpe and Escrick, Clifton Ings, Fulford and probably at Sutton-on-the-Forest. There were many breeding territories around York with a minimum of 28 territories within the York Outer Ringroad, including six plus pairs at Clifton Backies and Fulford Ings and three at St. Nicholas Field. However, many are in small areas of scrubland threatened by development. A former major site in the Piggeries scrub near Askham Bog now lost to scrub clearance and some broods were lost at Fulford Ings due to hedge cutting.

The first arrival was at Poppleton on 19th April (CR,IW). Two were between York and Benningborough on 29th, when three were at Storwood and an early nest-builder at Skipwith Common. Four were at Copmanthorpe on 6th May, a single at Strensall on 9th, six between Hagg Bridge and East Cotingwith on 10th and a singing male in an oil seed rape field at Bolton Percy on 23rd.

A single was at Wheldrake Ings on 14th September, two at Thornton Ellers on 5th, a juvenile at Wheldrake Ings on 7th, two on 8th and singles on 9th and 18th being the last (TED).

GARDEN WARBLER     *Sylvia borin*

Bred in the Lower Derwent Valley.

The first arrivals were at Askham Bog (JL) and Wheldrake Ings (TED) on 28th April. Few records were received this year. A single was at Skipwith Common on 16th May, two pairs displaying at Wheldrake Ings on 23rd, a singing male at Bolton Percy on 25th and five singing males at Skipwith Common on 26th. The only June records were a single at Skipwith Common



on 1st with eight at Brayton Barff on 8th being the last (DRC). It is quite remarkable that no further records were received after this date.

**BLACKCAP**      *Sylvia atricapilla*

Bred in the Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal area. Singing males were reported from four sites and observed on a further eleven sites during the breeding season. One winter record of a male at Gilling Castle on 6th February (JP).

The first spring arrivals were at Brandsby on 8th April (PH), five at Wheldrake Ings on 12th and one at Cawood on 13th. Five were in the Knavesmire on 9th May and 17 at Brayton Barff on 5th June. The last was at Wilberfoss on 26th October (AW).

**WOOD WARBLER**      *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

The only records were three at Wass on 3rd May and a single at Brayton Barff from 4th to 6th. (DRC).

**CHIFFCHAFF**      *Phyllascopeus collybita*

A single at Bank Island on 9th January over-wintered from 1989 (CR).

An early influx began with one at Skipwith Common on 12th March (FWO) and by the end of the month were widespread throughout the area. Count were: four at Wheldrake Ings on 22nd, five at Skipwith Common on 27th, 16 at Holliscarrs on 9th April and eight at Yearsley Moor on 15th.

A small movement at Wheldrake Ings began with a single on 27th August, two on 8th September, four on 13th, two on 15th, three on 19th and two on 25th, with singles until the end of the month then two on 3rd October and three on 6th being the last (CR).

Elsewhere: a single at York University on 26th September and five at Escrick on 5th October.

**WILLOW WARBLER**      *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Sixtynine pairs bred along Pocklington Canal and Lower Derwent.

Birds arrived early this year with the first at Escrick on 1st April (CR), two at Sturge's Pond on 2nd, a single at Wheldrake Ings on 4th, two at Castle Howard on 7th and a single at Bishopthorpe Crematorium on 8th. Birds arrived in the northern part of the area with three at Yearsley on 15th, 13 were at Wheldrake Ings on 24th and ten on 26th. Fortythree were at Brayton Barff on 4th June and 17 at Sturge's Pond on 5th. Five were at Wheldrake Ings on 29th August, four at Riccall on 13th September and the last was a single at Wheldrake Ings on 23rd (TED).

Addition to 1989 Report

First bird was singing male at Askham Bog on 30th March (AF).

**GOLDCREST**      *Regulus regulus*

Bred in suitable habitat in the Brandsby area (PH). Singing birds in the Museum Gardens in early spring but no indication of breeding. At West Park, Acomb, up to five singing males in late April, with fierce defence of territories.

The only records were of 25 at Dunnington Common on 30th December and present throughout the year at Askham Bog and Knavesmire Wood.

**SPOTTED FLYCATCHER**      *Muscicapula striata*

The first record was of one at Nunnington on 4th May (JP) followed by a pair at Bishopthorpe on 10th and Brandsby on 19th. During June and July one or two seen at Healaugh, Poppleton and Thornton Ellers. One was feeding regularly from aereals in York City centre. Three were at Wheldrake Ings on 12th August and a family party in Askham Bog on 29th. The only other breeding reports came from Brandsby and the Lower Derwent Valley/Pocklington Canal.

The last two seen were at Thornton Ellers on 4th September (TED).

**BEARDED TIT**      *Parus biarmicus*

Two were at Wheldrake Ings on 8th November (TED) and a female with a flock of Reed Bunting on 18th (CR,TED).

**LONG-TAILED TIT**      *Aegithalos caudatus*

Early in the year flocks at Wheldrake Ings (40), Acomb (16), Stubbs Wood (10), Clifton Backied (c20), Claxton Moor (25), Askham Bog (15) and Skipwith Common (20-30).

A pair were nest building on Skipwith Common on 23rd March (FO) and breeding was recorded at Poppleton, Askham Bog, Copmanthorpe, Fulford, Holgate, the Lower Derwent Valley and Pocklington Canal. They also probably bred at New Earswick Nature Reserve Chapman's Pond, Hobmoor, Acomb and Brandsby.

Post-breeding parties were, 14 at Bank Island on 8th August, 20 at Escrick on 12th and 22 at Wheldrake on 14th. In the latter part of the year the largest flock numbers were: c10 on Skipwith Common on 22nd September, 32 on Wheldrake Ings on 22nd October, 25 at Brandsby on 18th November and 35 on Dunnington Common on 30th December.

**MARSH TIT**      *Parus palustris*

A single at Moreby Park on 14th January, at Skipwith Common on 18th February, Thornton Ellers on 20th, Skipwith Common on 17th March and Wheldrake Ings on 22nd.

Three plus pairs were at Yearsley Moor on 15th April and a single at Brandsby on 11th May. 'An anxious pair' were at Sutton-on-the-Forest on 19th June, two at Yersley in July but confirmed breeding came only from Thornton Ellers. One or two seen during the rest of the year at Wheldrake Ings, Copmanthorpe, Skipwith Common, New Earswick Nature Reserve and Bielby, but an unusually large flock of 10+ at Pond Head on 18th November (RS).

**WILLOW TIT**      *Parus montanus*

Two were at Poppleton on 14th January, two in Askham Bog on 30th and two on Skipwith Common on 3rd February.

Bred at three sites near Brqandsby, Lower Derwent Valley/Pocklington Canal, Hob Moor, Strensall Common where juveniles were seen on 30th July, and probably at Selby.

From September onwards four were at Riccall and Wheldrake Ings and one or two at Skipwith, Black Woods, Wheldrake, Haxby, Bielby and Melbourne.

**COAL TIT**      *Parus ater*

Bred at two sites at Yearsley Forest, Sutton-on-Forest and Wheldrake Wood where they were seen feeding young, and two or three pairs at West Park, Acomb. Seen at Askham Bog, Brandsby, Poppleton and Skipwith Common. The larger flocks reported were: c25 at Black Wood on 17th November and c10 at Bishop Wood on 25th.

**BLUE TIT**      *Parus eneruleus*

Bred at Acomb, Poppleton and Escrick.

Forty were at Acomb on 16th January, 22 at Escrick on 30th September with 25 on 1st October, and 30 at Dunnington Common on 30th December.

**GREAT TIT**      *Parus major*

The only significant sighting was a flock of 30+ at Thurtle Wood, Castle Howard on 9th December.

**NUTHATCH**      *Sitta europaea*

Bred at Acomb Wood, Brandsby and Poppleton and present in the breeding season at Bishopthorpe and Castle Howard. Seen also

during the year at Archbishop's Palace, Escrick, Moreby Park and Thicket Priory.

TREECREEPER     *Certhia familiaris*

Bred in the Howardian Hills and probably at Poppleton, Rawcliffe, Skipwith Common and the Bishopthorpe Crematorium. Seen at Dunnington, Black Wood, Wheldrake and Bishop Wood.

JAY     *Garrulus glaridarius*

Thinly spread reports throughout the year and throughout the area. Breeding reports came from two sites in Brandsby and in Askham Bog a pair were feeding three fledglings.

Five were at Moorlands on 2nd and 14th January and at Askham Bog on 30th. Four were at Skipwith Common on 3rd February. Up to three birds during the year at Bishop Wood, Escrick, Strensall Common and Wheldrake Ings.

MAGPIE     *Pica pica*

Large counts were: c13 at Poppleton on 30th March and Riccall on 4th September and 26 at Fulford Ings on 5th December.

JACKDAW     *Corvus monedula*

No significant records received.

ROOK     *Corvus frugilegus*

Large counts were: 1,100 at Hogg Lane on 1st August, c250 Thorganby on 1st August when 250 were at Escrick. One hundred and twenty at Poppleton on 15th December and birds were congregating on old nests at Brandsby on 22nd.

CARRION CROW     *Corvus corone*

No significant records received.

STARLING     *Sturnus vulgaris*

A flock of c2,000 were roosting near Bilborough in January and 'thousands' were seen at Poppleton in August. A pair were feeding juveniles on Fulford Ings on March 27th.

HOUSE SPARROW     *Passer Domesticus*

Maximum counts were: 250 at Woodthorpe from 15th to 30th July and 100 at Thornton Ellers on 15th with sixty at Poppleton on 21st October.

TREE SPARROW      *Passer montanus*

Bred at Bootham Stray, Dunnington, Lower Derwent Valley, Osbalwick, Rawcliffe Copse, Terrington and Outgang. Probably bred: two pairs at Poppleton and four pairs on Middlethorpe Ings. A pair raised three broods of five, five and four in a nest box at Escrick, while in Selby young were predated by a Great Spotted Woodpecker.

The largest early winter flocks were: 150 at Wiblitoft on 14th January, 45 at Poppleton on 21st, 50 at Healough on 8th February, 30 at Bishopthorpe on 14th and 82 at Wilberfoss on 4th April.

Later in the year, 50 at Acaster Airfield on 17th October, 70 at Melbourne on 22nd, 50 at Haxby on 1st November, 20 at Brandsby on 18th and 26 at Fulford Ings on 28th. Thirtysix were at Elvington on 28th December.

CHAFFINCH      *Fringilla collebs*

This common breeding bird was only recorded as such in Poppleton and Holgate.

The largest flocks were: 130 at Riccall on 7th January, 200 on Skipwith Common on 23rd, 30 at Healaugh on 8th February and 60 on Skipwith Common on 26th, 500 on North Duffield Carrs on 1st December and 100 at Bielby on 22nd.

BRAMBLING      *Fringilla montifringilla*

Only a scattering of records this year: two females in West Park Acomb on 13th January, two in Acomb on 11th March and 15 at Wass on 16th (JP).

At the year end the first returning bird was at Wheldrake Ings on 17th October (TED). Five were there on the 1st November and 120+ on the Terrington/Hovingham Road (IM) on 16th-18th with 20+ at Pond Head on 18th, with singles at Acomb and Escrick at the end of the month. Two in Knavesmire Wood on 5th December, 17 at Pocklington on 13th and three in Knavesmire Wood on 24th. A very poor showing.

Addition to 1989 Report

Ten at Seavy Carr on 2nd January and 50 at Allerthorpe Common on 5th March.

GREENFINCH      *Carduelis chloris*

The larger flocks recorded were:- 300 at Bank Island on 16th March, 100+ at Poppleton on 1st September, 300 at North Duffield Carrs on 1st December and 400 were feeding on thistle and sugar beet seeds at Selby.  
A breeding report came from Holgate.

**GOLDFINCH**     *Carduelis carduelis*

Breeding reports came from Holgate, Dunnington and the Lower Derwent Valley/Pocklington Canal area. Four pairs were at Poppleton in the breeding season.

The only charm counted in the early months were 30+ at Old Earswick on 27th March.

Post-breeding flocks were: eight at Geoff. Smith Hide on 25th August rising to 120 by 24th September. Fiftyone at Thornton Ellers on 6th September, 19 at Sutton on 22nd, 80 at Wheldrake Ings on 23rd and 50 at Wilberfoss on 25th. Sixty on Clifton Ings on 16th October and 40 at Poppleton on 8th November.

**SISKIN**     *Carduelis spirus*

A flock of 120 at Askham Bog on 2nd January had risen to 160 by 4th February; 50 at Thornton Ellers on 31st January; 80 at Sand Hutton on 2nd February; 20 at Yearsley Moor on 5th March declining to 10 by 10th April, being the last spring record (ML). Small numbers were at Acomb and Brandsby during the early months of the year.

The post-breeding return passage began with 20 at Wheldrake Ings on 23rd September (TED) and 140 at Ampleforth on 21st October. Twenty at Askham Bog on 11th November, rising to 65 by 9th December, of which 50+ were seen bathing in the brook. Eighty were at Thornton Ellers on 24th December, 100 on Yearsley Moor on 2nd December, 70 on Melbourne Ings on 14th with 60+ at Bielby Bridge on 15th. Smaller numbers were seen during November and December at Haxby, Acomb and Ellerton/Aughton.

Addition to 1989 Report

A singing male at Blackwood, Wheldrake on 29th March and at Askham Bog on 30th.

**LINNET**     *Carduelia cannabina*

No records for Jan/March but there were 21 at Cawood on 3rd April, 40 on North Duffield Carrs on 28th and four pairs at Poppleton on 25th May with 70 at Elm Haggy on 3rd June. At Escrick a pair nested in a garden conifer and laid four eggs from 21st July which hatched on 5th August; on 11th the young were thrown out of the nest by a Tawny Owl (CR).

Fifty were at Poppleton on 1st September rising to 70+ by 4th November. The final count for the year was 30 at Bielby on 11th December.

**REDPOLL**     *Carduelis flammea*

Breeding records came from Acomb and Dunnington.

Two hundred were feeding in Birch at Selby early January but elsewhere only small numbers during that month at Moreby Park (20), Poppleton (5) and Askham Bog (5). A male was singing on Skipwith Common on 27th March, two at Bishopthorpe Crematorium on 12th May and Middlethorpe Ings on 3rd June.

Year end flocks were of 39 at Skipwith Common on 10th November, 40 at Melbourne on 22nd December with smaller numbers at Wheldrake Ings (14) and Askham Bog (up to 14).

A bird showing the characteristics of a Mealy Redpoll (*c.f. flammea*) at Skipwith on 16th December 9TED).

Addition to 1989 Report

300 at Thornton Village on 2nd January and 200 on 8th.

CROSSBILL      *Loxia curvirostra*

The first record for the year was one seen feeding on cones on Skipwith Common on 13th June (FO) followed by a count of nine there on 17th. Thirty were on Yearsley Moor on 1st July with 18+ on 15th. A male was flying N.W. at Naburn Sewage Works on 2nd August and six were on Wheldrake Ings on 30th (first in Lower Derwent Valley) (TED).

Two at Escrick on 6th September increased to a male with three females on 11th. Thirteen were on Yearsley Moor on 8th while 39 were seen flying north at Castle Howard on the same day. Wheldrake Woods held nine males and five females on 30th October. A count on Yearsley Moor on 18th November produced 10 birds but on 2nd December 112 were seen (RS). Thirtle Wood, Castle Howard had 50+ on 1st December, one at Skipwith common on 16th with six males and two females at Terrington on 23rd December.

We had our share in this irruptive year.

Addition to 1989 Report

Family party with streaky juveniles at Harrington High Wood on 25th April.

BULLFINCH      *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

January: one to three at Brighton, Stubb Wood, Skipwith Common and Poppleton. February: three at Grimston Wood, several feeding on bramble on Skipwith Common and six at Claxton. April: six at Yearsley Moor with pairs at Poppleton and Haxby.

During the breeding season seen at Poppleton, Skipwith Common and Sutton-on-Forest with confirmed breeding at York Water Works, Brandsby and Escrick where two pairs raised six young.

Post-breeding:- six were at Wheldrake Ings on 7th August, four at Poppleton on 14th September. Wheldrake Ings held nine on 27th October, 11 at Fulford Ings on 31st; eight were on

Skipwith Common on 10th November, six in Bishop Wood on 25th and a flock of 12 at Askham Bog on 9th December.

**HAWFINCH**      *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Bred at Escrick where a pair was seen with nesting material on 3rd May. Two juveniles on 2nd August, an immature on 12th September and an adult on 26th November (CR).

A single was at Archbishop's Palace on 3rd January, a sick bird found at Oxtun on 17th July died the next day. A single again at Archbishop's Palace on 11th November and nine were feeding on Hornbeam seed in Knavesmire Wood on 21st(MH). Three were still there on 5th December and one was in Moreby Park on 15th.

**YELLOWHAMMER**      *Emberiza citrinella*

There were 20 at Haxby on 1st January, 80 at Bank Island on 4th, six at Healaugh on 8th February 41 on Fulford Ings on 3rd March. Singing males on Skipwith Common on 16th March and two on the Knavesmire on 9th May.

On 24th June young were being fed with blue damselfly on Skipwith Common. Males were still singing on Strensall Common on 13th August.

Post-breeding flocks of 30 at Wilberfoss on 29th September, 20 at Cawood on 6th November, 20 at Bielby on 11th December, 43 at Bank Island on 21st and 64 at Elvington on 28th.

**REED BUNTING**      *Emberiza schoeniclus*

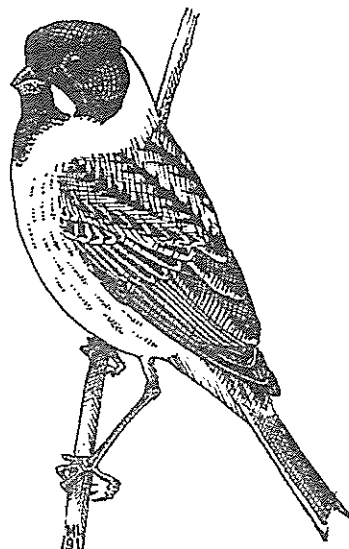
A poor showing this year with either a poor year or, more than likely, under recorded.

There was a pair at Clifton on 21st January, five at Skipwith Common on 3rd February. A single male on Strensall Common on 9th May.



Bred in five urban sites  
round York.

Twentyseven at Wheldrake  
Ings on 15th November  
when three pairs were at  
Fulford Ings.



CORN BUNTING     *Miliaria calandra*

Flock sizes have declined quite markedly in the last few years. Perhaps the national trend of decline has finally caught up with our area or, more hopefully, that records have not been forthcoming from certain areas as in previous years.

Thirtyfive at East Cottingwith on 23rd February, 30 at Melbourne on 27th March. Seventeen at Crockey Hill on 13th April and up to eight during April at both Hagg Bridge and North Duffield Carrs.

Singing males at Hagg Bridge, Stillington, North Duffield and Poppleton. Breeding confirmed in the Lower Derwent Valley/ Pocklington Canal area.

Autumn flocks were: 40 at North Duffield on 19th November, six at Bielby on 11th December and 27 at Riccall on 22nd.

Escapes

Black Swan *Cygnus atratus*

Two resident all year at Castle Howard Lake.

Bar-Headed Goose *Anser indicus*

One at Geoff. Smith Hide, North Suffield Carrs on 5th May.

Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*

Two introduced to the University Lake on 4th October (CR).

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

Two males and two females on Bishopthorpe Ings on 28th December (DP).

Chiloe Wigeon *Anas sibilatrix*

Two males and two females on Bishopthorpe Ings on 28th December (DP).

Cockateel *Nymphicus hollandicus*

One at Poppleton on 14th November (IWR).

The following species have also been recorded in the area since 1966 but did not appear in 1990:

Red-throated Diver	Little Stint
Black-throated Diver	Sanderling
Great Northern Diver	White-rumped Sandpiper
Slavonian Grebe	Curlew Sandpiper
Red-necked Grebe	Pectoral Sandpiper
Fulmar	Baird's Sandpiper
Manx Shearwater	Turnstone
Gannet	Grey Phalarope
Storm Petrel	Red-necked Phalarope
White Stork	Stone Curlew
Shag	Arctic Skua
Bittern	Great Skua
Night Heron	Glaucous Gull
Purple Heron	Kittiwake
Lessrs White-fronted Goose	Little Tern
Brent Goose	Sandwich Tern
Egyptian Goiose	Roseate Tern
Mandarin	Whiskered Tern
Russy Shelduck	Caspian Tern
American Wigeon	Puffin
Blue-winged Teal	Guillemot
Red-crested Pochard	Ring-necked Parakeet
Ferruginus Duck	Alpine Swift
Ring-necked Duck	Bee-eater
Common Scoter	Hoopoe
Velvet Scoter	Wryneck
Barrow's Goldeneye	Woodlark
Red-breasted Merganser	Red-rumped Swallow
Eider	Marsh Warbler
Long-tailed Duck	Barred Warbler
Black Kite	Firecrest
Red Kite	Red-backed Shrike
Red-footed Falcon	Great Grey Shrike
Honey Buzzard	Pied Flycatcher
Rough-legged Buzzard	Red-breasted Flycatcher
Crane	Golden Oriole
Golden Pheasant	Snow Bunting
Corncrake	Cirl Bunting
Spotted Crane	Twite
Kentich Plover	Lapland Bunting
Temminck's Stint	

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