

YOC REPORT 2000

YORK ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB

This report has been compiled by members of the York Ornithological Club with nearly all the records submitted by members who are active in watching an area of 550 square miles around York which the Club is responsible for recording. The area covers wetlands (Lower Derwent Valley), deciduous woodland (Hambleton/Howardian Hills), coniferous woodland (Yearsley and Ampleforth), lakes (Castle Howard) and large agricultural areas of the vales of York and Pickering.

The club has a membership of about 70 and meets on the first Tuesday of the month (except July and August) in the Friends' Meeting House, Castlegate, York for a full programme of talks and discussions and for the informal exchange of information which birdwatchers find invaluable. In addition, excursions are arranged to areas of ornithological interest, usually outside the recording area.

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the Millennium edition of the YOC Report! We are pleased to include an account of the formation of the Club as well as the results of the York farmland bird survey. However, the 'official' records from the Lower Derwent Valley were not as comprehensive this time due to English Nature staff being office-bound for much of the year. Nevertheless, this has been offset by an encouraging increase in observers contributing records to the Report. Many thanks are due to all of them.

The species accounts have been compiled by Nigel Stewart (Divers to Ducks), Jim Pewtriss (Raptors to Crane), Peter Watson (Waders to Auks), Ruth Traynor (Doves to Dunnock), Peter Reed (Thrushes to Flycatchers) and Christine Jakeman (Tits to Buntings) and edited by Andy Booth. Muriel Pirozek has been responsible for the final production of this report. Andy Booth and Nigel Stewart have kindly provided the illustrations which enhance the text. The processing of the Report involves a great deal of unseen work which has been carried out voluntarily by the above persons to whom we are deeply grateful.

Thanks are also due to other members of the Committee who have worked hard throughout the year to ensure the successful running of the Club. Some of our best talks have been given by members of this Club, to whom we owe our sincere thanks, and we also thank members who have offered lifts to those without transport for our various outings.

We welcome all new members and wish to encourage others, particularly younger people, to join the Club. We aim to provide a report of interest which is as comprehensive and accurate as possible and encourage all members to submit their sightings, however insignificant they may seem. Guidelines for submitting records can be found in the 1998 Report and on the YOC website.

Records of scarce or rare birds need to be supported by a description. An updated list of species requiring written evidence is included in this report.

As we aim to have the Report available as soon as possible it would help us greatly if observers submit their records as soon as possible at the end of the year

Andy Booth

THE YORK ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB

The foundations of the Club can be traced to an Adult Night School Class held during the winter of 1958/59 at The Settlement, Holgate Hill, York. The subject was "British Birds" and the tutor the late Michael Clegg.

This was a highly successful class which had some 20 members and continued over two winter sessions. Part of the course involved field trips held on Sundays to such venues as Fairburn Ings Filey Brigg and probably the most memorable were the spring and autumn week-ends at Spurn. The party would gather at what was to become the traditional meeting place outside the Labour Exchange in Piccadilly on Friday evening after work. Armed with boxes of iron rations for the week-end, plus a sleeping bag and extra blankets, the party faced the perils of crossing the wastes of East Yorkshire and Holderness. At Spurn, spartan barrack room accommodation awaited. With a dawn start on the Saturday there was saturation bird-watching until Sunday p.m. when the return journey was made. Lifer lists increased out of sight and with memorable records. The nightly gathering in the Warren Cottage to read the log was an event. All this for 20p a night! Eventually, with a move back to Sheffield, the traveling to York to teach became too much for Michael and he had to give up the class. One of his last gestures was to suggest that those keen to keep the class together and continue the field trips might consider forming a

bird-watching group. So we owe the start to Michael Clegg, the epitome of commitment and enthusiasm.

Some dozen of Michael's class members struck out on this informal basis under the title of the York Ornithological Group. The main problem was transport, for in those days very few owned cars and even a small bird watching party required two vehicles. Sometimes not enough cars turned up and one or two disappointed birders had to be left behind. On one occasion there were no cars at all and the party made an ad hoc arrangement and travelled to Kirkham Abbey by bus! Given these difficulties it is not surprising that within a few years the number of stalwarts had reduced and for a time there was a struggle to survive. When the numbers got down to five or six it was time to take drastic action and to welcome a few new members drawn by personal recommendation and the reputation of the good bird-watching at the excellent selection of venues, which in those days were quite outside the knowledge of most people.

Numbers gradually grew and the informal organisation was put under such pressure that clearly a more formal structure had to be found. By that time I had become the Secretary and Overton Wallis the Chairman on the good old British basis of 'who can must'. A major difficulty was the practical limit of how many could be fitted into a private house for the occasional planning meeting. There too was a demand for indoor meetings and speakers. With a greater availability of cars the programme of field trips had become quite ambitious. I clearly recall a trip to Teesside in the days when there was still plenty of worthwhile interest in that place. The system was at breaking point, with more joining and demanding a clearer structure and a Constitution. It was this unavoidable strain of critical mass which brought about the first rupture. The stark choice was for members either to accept that this was a private club, limited in number and therefore in what could be attempted, or it had to convert into a proper Club with subscriptions, rules and responsibilities, and with the finance to rent a meeting room and produce reports, etc. When presented with these alternatives members chose the latter and so out of the informal York Ornithological Group was born the York Ornithological Club, but not without some sad departures.

The year 1965 saw another innovation with the first Annual Bird Report. Amateurish it may look today but better things were coming. The Club took part in the B.T.O. Atlas mapping project, accepting responsibility for 15 of the 10km squares around the Vale of York and beyond. Some members concentrated on saturation watching of favourite locations such as Naburn Sewage Farm, Skipwith Common, Wheldrake Ings, Strensall Common, etc., and these efforts began to reap rewards. Other contributed to the B.T.O. Census of Common Breeding Birds, mapping an area year by year and estimating populations and breeding success.

In addition to these activities members provided invaluable assistance when the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust acquired the Skipwith Common nature reserve and quite a few became voluntary wardens. In fact this reserve owes its existence to the scientific evidence provided by a small group who attended a public enquiry and secured victory over a proposed development next to the Common. Shortly after this it was a combined Club effort which provided much of the crucial information on which the Trust based its purchase of Wheldrake Ings nature reserve.

If, then, one was asked to pinpoint the precise start of the York Ornithological Club one would look to that small group of Michael Clegg's army which in 1958 formed the York Ornithological Group. So a belated happy 40th anniversary to York Ornithological Club and cany on the good work!

PS Some names from the past: Founder members - Overtoil Wallis, Peter Pearson, Tony Dennison and Ed Clark, with later joiners Jean Dennison, the late Geoff Smith, Colin Turner, Brian Pepper, Dave Wilson, George and Ena Clarke, Peter Hutchinson, Frances Elgee, Iris Lemare, Vic Pulleyn, Margaret Weeden, Sylvia White, John Ginnever, Laura Mousley, Frank Dates, the late Brian Caffrey, Ian Moorhouse, Terry Chilton and many others, to whom I apologise for omitting their names.

Peter Pearson
April, 2001

May I add that Peter has omitted the fact that he himself was the tutor at an evening class at Beckfield Lane School and suggested, when he was transferred away from York, that members of that class might care to join the York Ornithological Club. I believe I was the only class member to do so (and would ask that Club members please refrain from any comments!).

Muriel Pirozek

York Ringing Report 2000

A good year for ringing with an increase over 1999 due mainly to increased catches of House Martin Starling and Siskin. A new site at Thornton-le-Clay was started in October to be run as a winter-feeding station. Unlike last year no Cormorant were ringed this year however this was offset by 27 Heron pulli

ringed.

After last years targeting of wildfowl only Shelduck showed a marked increase with the number of Mallard well down. However a new species, Pintail, was added to the list. But as always in the LDV ringing of wildfowl and waders is subject to water levels during the year. This can be reflected in the increase in Moorhen numbers along the periphery of the water level whilst Snipe numbers were well down due to too little open muddy areas and no Jack Snipe caught.

A welcome increase in the number of Barn Owls ringed is no doubt due to the on going study of this species (see 1999 Report, p20) and the four Little Owls ringed were the first since 1994. Swift numbers are never usually high so 42 compared to only 15 ringed between 1994 and 1999 was a welcome change but are still below numbers ringed in the late eighties. Equally welcome was 116 House Martin compared to 136 during the same period.

Dipper was a welcome addition to the list considering the scarcity of the bird in the recording area.

Warbler numbers remained constant with a few small fluctuations but the decrease of Lesser Whitethroat continues. Only 22 have been ringed since 1994. Garden Warbler remains scarce although not many are ringed compared to Blackcap. Chiffchaff numbers increased and Willow Warbler numbers appear to have stabilised after numbers were substantially down in 1994.

Starling numbers showed a welcome increase but House Sparrow and Tree Sparrow numbers continual to fall. In 1994 the numbers ringed were 79 and 191 respectively. Despite winter feeding stations Chaffinch and Greenfinch numbers have slowly fallen with this years numbers low compared to last year and the 1994 totals of 435 and 661. Siskins are an unpredictable species and so the 2000 total accounts for nearly 30% of the ringing totals and almost double those since 1994.

Errata: The total number of Skylark ringed in 1999 should be 24 and not 27.

Our thanks to all those land owners who have given permission to local ringers, particularly English Nature and Forest Enterprise. The following ringers submitted totals and recoveries: Phil Bone, Mark Fletcher, Huddleston & Jackson partnership, Jim Pewtress, Peter Reid, Dave Turner, Richard Ward-Smith and English Nature.

CITY OF YORK FARMLAND BIRD SURVEY

City of York Local Biodiversity Action Plan Threatened Farmland Birds Survey 2000

Summary

Volunteers from the York Ornithological Club and the York RSPB Members' Group carried out a survey of eight species of farmland birds in the York area during the breeding season of 2000 for the City of York Council. This paper presents the results from this survey.

Introduction

The City of York Council has drawn up a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) for a number of bird species. However, there are limited distribution and status data available for the Greater York area for these threatened species. To improve this situation, the council invited the York Ornithological Club (YOC) to co-ordinate a survey of farmland birds during the 2000 breeding season.

Farmland birds were targeted as they are of prime concern following the large population declines in recent years of a number of commoner species such as the Skylark *Alauda arvensis* and Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* (Gregory *et al* 2000).

A sub-committee was set up consisting of Tom Lawson (YOC), Don Hoard (RSPB) and Rob Chapman (BTO Regional Representative) to plan and co-ordinate the survey. Volunteer surveyors came from the YOC and the RSPB (York) Members' Group.

The survey was based on the parishes of the City of York Council area outside the city itself (see Appendix A). This ensured coverage of most of the farmland in the council area. It was decided to keep the survey simple to encourage participation by volunteers. The primary aim

was to obtain distribution data for the target species but fieldworkers were asked to record habitat and, if they wished, other species.

Methods

Farmland species to be surveyed were selected from the widespread red-listed¹ BAP species following consultation between the council, their environmental consultants and the survey team. Linnet *Carduelis cannabina* was excluded due to its colonial habits. Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* was included due to its amber status, candidature for red listing and recent declines above 50% between 1970 and 1998 (Gregory *et al* 2000).

The list thus comprised Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*, Lapwing, Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*, Skylark, Tree Sparrow, Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*, Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus* and Corn Bunting *Miliaria calandra*.

¹ *Birds of Conservation Concern* red-listed species have undergone = 50% decline in UK breeding population or range over the previous 25 years, or a historical decline 1800-1995, or are species of global conservation concern. Species are amber-listed for several reasons, but particularly because they have undergone a 25-49% decline in UK during the last 25 years. (Gregory *et al* 2000)

The council supplied maps for 29 administrative parishes. Each volunteer was provided with survey instructions (see Appendix B) and two copies of the maps of the parish to survey: one for a visit in April and one for May. They were asked to cover the parish from public rights of way to avoid problems with landowner access permissions. Each record of the target species was marked on their maps using codes specified in the instructions; and, optionally, an indication of habitat (arable or grassland). An indication of which areas of the parish were covered was also requested. It was also permitted to indicate additional species on the maps if the fieldworker wished to do so.

Results

Results were returned for 28 out of the 29 parishes. The area covered varied between parishes, indicating that there were differences in the sampling effort between observers.

Distribution and abundance

Results for each species by parish are shown in table 1. The figures show the highest count of the two visits. This controls for double counting individual birds that may have been seen on both occasions. This technique is used in the analysis of the British Trust for Ornithology's Breeding Bird Survey data.

The results were also plotted on maps for each target species (figures 1 to 8). Parishes where the species was recorded are shaded grey. The data allow the lapwing and Skylark maps to indicate abundance as well as distribution; for these (figs 2 & 4) light grey indicates one to nine individuals, dark grey 10 to 25 and black more than 25 counted during at least one of the visits. Uncovered areas are marked with a cross.

The results show that both Skylark and Lapwing are widely distributed throughout the council area. Top parishes are Earswick, Heslington and Wheldrake for Lapwing and Strensall, Dunnington and Fulford for Skylark.

Other species were scarcer; especially Turtle Dove with isolated records. Grey Partridge occurred in scattered pockets. Tree sparrows were especially common in Strensall. Bullfinch was recorded mainly in the south and east.

Habitat use

Most observers indicated habitat, often in more detail than simply arable or grassland, which allowed some analysis of habitat preference. Records where habitat was not marked have had to be excluded. Table 2 shows results of this analysis.

It can be seen that lapwings were more often recorded on arable, especially where the crop was more open; e.g. bare earth, set aside or root crops. Skylark too was associated with arable but more so in cereals. There was not enough data to check whether there was a difference between autumn and spring sown cereals.

The remaining species had low counts so the results may not be significant. However, Bullfinch and Reed Bunting were associated with grassland, Corn Bunting with cereals and Grey Partridge with arable. Tree Sparrow occurred near arable fields where they were noted in hedgerows.

Digitized Version.

Diagrams and tables are published as a separate appendix due to formatting difficulties.

Discussion

The members of the YOC and RSPB Members' Group enthusiastically took up the survey and many indicated that they would be willing to take part in any follow-up surveys. The organisers hope that this will encourage people to visit their "local patch" more frequently.

No control was made for sampling effort or surveyors' skill and experience. It could be seen from the area covered, where marked on the maps, that there were differences in coverage. This implies that caution is required when basing conclusions on the abundance figures.

Lapwing and Skylark are widespread within the council area, although Lapwing was not recorded in some of the northern parishes. Tree Sparrow and Reed Bunting show a similar distribution to each other even though the former was recorded in or near arable and the latter in grassland areas. Conversely Grey Partridge occurs in parishes where Corn Bunting is absent but both are associated with arable. These apparent anomalies may be due to a mixed farming system within the York area; i.e. both arable and pasture occur within each parish.

Using parishes as the survey unit appeared to work well with the widespread species but could give a false impression of distribution when based on only a handful of records. Individual records perhaps should be presented for these less common species.

Feedback from observers suggested that the survey may have undercounted Turtle Dove, which does not arrive until late May, and corn bunting, which sings later in the breeding season (T. Weston verb. comm.). Some surveyors indicated that they would have been willing to attempt to cover Linnet and Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*; these could be considered for any future survey.

Supplementary records were extracted and compiled for publication in the YOC report for 2000.

There is concern nationally for the decline of farmland birds such as the Grey Partridge, Turtle Dove and Skylark. The government has included 20 species of farmland birds in its wild bird 'Quality of Life' indicator; indices for farmland species are down 40% since the mid-1970s (Gregory *et al* 2000). The lack of previous survey data within the York area does not allow any comparison of change with the national picture, but it is hoped that future surveys will be able to be compared with the results presented here.

Acknowledgments

Ian Bowes - City of York Council

Martin Hammond - Environmental consultant

All observers from the YOC and the York RSPB Members' Group

References

Gregory, RD; Noble, DG; Campbell, LH and Gibbons, DW (2000). The State of the UK's Birds 1999. RSPB and BTO, Sandy.

Appendix B: Instructions to observers

CITY OF YORK LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN -THREATENED FARMLAND SPECIES SURVEY

A. Introduction:

The City of York Local Biodiversity Action Plan has identified a number of bird species occurring in farmland which are in serious decline both nationally and locally. For example the breeding population of Skylark has nationally probably declined some 75% in the last 20 years. The distribution and abundance of a variety of farmland breeding species in the Greater York area is at present very poorly documented. The York Ornithological Club and the York Local Members Group of the R.S.P.B. have been asked by York City Council to conduct a breeding season survey of eight species thought to be particularly in decline in our region to provide baseline data on their present distribution. The survey is to be undertaken on a parish basis to encourage us all to look at our 'local patch'.

B Methodology:

a. The breeding species to be surveyed are as follows:

SPECIES	RECORDING CODE
Skylark.	S
Corn Bunting	C
Reed Bunting	R
Tree Sparrow	T
Lapwing	L
Grey Partridge	P
Bullfinch	F
Turtle Dove.	D

b. You will be provided with 2 parish maps, one for April observations and the second for May observations.

c. Walk, cycle or drive along public rights of way covering as much of the farmland area in your parish as possible during the spring. **DO NOT TRÉSPASS ON PRIVATE LAND.** Ideally two visits should be made to each area, one in mid-April and a second repeat visit in mid-May, to make sure no birds are overlooked, but any coverage in April or May will be useful.

d. Record on the map the presence of any of the target species, marking on the map, using the appropriate code letter, the location of the individuals. If possible an estimate of the actual numbers of each species at each location should be made. Please shade-in on the maps the areas you have actually covered.

e. Where any of the target species are recorded it would be helpful also to record on the maps the type of farmland on which the birds are occurring, whether it be Grassland (G) or Arable (A with, if possible, an indication of the crop).

f. Any other observations which you think might be of interest can be recorded on the reverse side of the maps. In particular if you came across any unusual birds do record these.

g. If you have any questions relating to the survey please feel free to contact any of the following:

CLASSIFIED LIST

The sequence and scientific nomenclature is that of Voous. K.H., List of Recent Holarctic Bird Species (1973 and 1977) B.O.U. 1977.

LITTLE GREBE *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Status: Resident breeder

11 birds in the Lower Derwent Valley on 3rd January increased to 21 by the end of the month. No records were received until the end of the year, but presumed that breeding had occurred.

In December extensive flooding forced many birds onto the Pocklington Canal with seven at

Three were at Castle Howard Lake on 19th March with singles there on 23rd September and 21st December and two on 30th December.

Elsewhere, there were two on the River Ouse between York and Bishopthorpe on 3rd January with one there on 10th May, one on the River Ouse at Clifton Ings on 6th January and two on the Ponds on 22nd December. A single was on the River Foss at Earswick throughout all November and December, with one on the River Foss at Strensall on 17th November and singles on a fish pond near West Ness on 2nd December and the River Ouse at Nun Monkton on 27th.

Bred at Sturges Pond and Ross Carr Pond.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus*

Status: Migrant breeder and passage visitor

One was on Rawcliffe Lake from 19th January with two there from 18th February. This pair attempted to breed later in the year but were thwarted by high water levels and both had departed by early June. A single was present from 20th November to 8th December.

Present all the year at Castle Howard Lake with 18 there on 5th March; at least two pairs

bred.

Elsewhere, one or two were on the River Ouse between York and Bishopthorpe from January to May, two pairs on University of York Lake on 8th April with a single there on 26th December. A pair on Yearsley Moor Ponds on 19th April with one there on the 24th October and five at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd July.

Bred at Sturges Pond and Buhner Pond, Heworth.

BLACK-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps nigricollis*

Status: Summer visitor

The only record received this year was of four birds at Aughton Ings on 1st May.

STORM PETREL *Hydrobates pelagicus*

Status: Vagrant

One stopped off at Bank Island on 1st November before continuing north up the floods. EN

CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Status: Passage and winter visitor and recently established resident

In the Lower Derwent Valley, 43 birds were present by the end of January and 22 pairs were building nests on Wheldrake Ings by the end of February. 39 pairs bred with a remarkable 145 birds noted in June. Up to 20 were roosting on Wheldrake Ings throughout December.

Present at Castle Howard Lake all the year with 11 from 26th March to 16th April and 16 on 21st December. Two were at Selby Toll Bridge on 29th March and one flew up river at Clifton Ings on 8th June., Five were on the River Ouse at Poppleton on 5th September with 12 roosting at Ross Carrs on 3rd November and an immature at Rawcliffe Lake on the 23rd December.

Up to five birds seen flying over the River Ouse between York and Naburn from April to August with one watched swallowing a large eel near Bishopthorpe Bridge on the 10th June.

Also noted along the River Rye at West Ness, Butterwick and the River Ouse near Beningborough with one flying over Nunthorpe Road, York on 1st August.

NIGHT HERON *Nycticorax nycticorax*

Status: Rare visitor

A summer plumage adult was found on the river bank at Wheldrake Ings on 16th February during a night-time survey of Water Rails *Rallus aquaticus*. After extensive searching, the bird was relocated roosting in willows the following day with a pair found the next day. Both birds remained until 27th March and were seen displaying during their stay (EN).

GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea*

Status: Resident breeder

Low numbers were recorded in the Lower Derwent Valley this year with no notable counts although there were 28 pairs in the Wheldrake heronry and several pairs nested along the Pocklington Canal again.

Small numbers were present throughout the year at Castle Howard Lake with a pair nesting we on 18th April and two pairs with young noted on 10th May. Five birds were at Ross Carrs on 20th May.

Birds were also reported from Askham Bog, the River Ouse between York and Bishopthorpe, Strensall, New Earswick, Rawcliffe Ings, Fryton and the River Rye near West Ness.

SPOONBILL *Platalea leucorodia*

Status: Vagrant

One flew south at Wheldrake Ings on 7th June with singles also noted on 29th July and 4th August (EN).

MUTE SWAN *Cygnus olor*

Status: Resident breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor

Large numbers wintered in the Lower Derwent Valley again with 100+ throughout January

and February while a single flock of 63 was at Hagg Bridge on 1st January. However, it was a poor breeding season due to several floods and only four pairs managed to raise young. Birds were widely dispersed throughout the site during December with a maximum of 155 on the 27th.

At Rawcliffe Lake, the female of the resident pair sadly died this year - apparently being unable to lay her eggs, they slowly poisoned her. However, the male had attracted a new mate by the end of the year,

A pair was present all year at Castle Howard Lake with six adults and three immatures there on 20th October and seven adults and five immatures from 19th November to the year end while a pair at Ross Carrs raised five young.

Elsewhere, five were on the River Ouse between York and Bishopthorpe on 3rd January with a pair seen on several dates throughout the year and a pair on the Ouse at Clifton Ings on 31st August. Also noted on the Ouse at Poppleton, Newburgh Priory, Pond Head (Oulston) and Yearsley Moor Ponds.

BEWICK'S SWAN *Cygnus columbianus*

Status: Winter visitor

Just three birds were seen in the North Duffield Carrs area during January and February until northbound birds swelled numbers to 61 on 16th February. In December, a family party of two adults and three immatures arrived on the 3rd, with numbers increasing to 15 by the year end.

WHOOPEE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus*

Status: Winter visitor

In the Lower Derwent Valley there were 83 at North Duffield Carrs from 1st-3rd January with 53 remaining into early February, then numbers increased to 62 on 6th February with 64 from the 20th to the month end while 40 were at Bubwith Bridge on 17th March. Just four birds were present at North Duffield during December but 25 at Aughton on the 19th increased to 51 by the 27th.

BEAN GOOSE *Anser fabalis*

Status: Winter visitor and late winter passage migrant

Three birds at Bubwith Ings on 4th January turned up at Wheldrake Ings on the 9th then reappeared at North Duffield Carrs on the 26th, remaining until 13th February.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Status: Winter visitor and passage migrant

In the Lower Derwent Valley, up to four birds were with the Greylag Goose *Anser anser* flock at Wheldrake Ings throughout January and February while large numbers passed through during the latter month with 350 pausing at North Duffield Carrs on the 14th and 560 on the 17th. A total of 1280 flew north over the valley on the 19th with 50+ at Wheldrake Ings from the 23rd increasing to 65 by 19th March and 36 were still present on 9th April; A single was at Bank Island on 2nd June then 54 at Wheldrake on 6th October were the first returning birds with 41 remaining on the 21st.

Elsewhere, one or two were noted at Castle Howard Lake early in the year, last seen on 10th May. A flock of 100 flew southeast over York City Centre on 3rd November and possibly the same birds were seen flying over Ross Carrs the same day; some were also heard passing over Osbaldwick on 25th October.

A first-winter bird showing characteristics of the Greenland race *flavirostris* was at Castle Howard Lake from 19th February to 16th April,

GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser*

Status: Resident breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor

Common throughout the year in the Lower Derwent Valley with 700-800 during the winter months. Up to 300 were at Castle Howard Lake early in the year with 540 on 11th February and 176 still present on 24th June. Later in the year, 50 on 20th October increased to 1000+ by 21st December.

Present throughout the year in the Skeldergate Bridge/Rowntree Park area of York with 90 there on 12th August and several broods totalling 26 young noted during April and May. Also, 60-70 were on the River Foss around Monk Bridge. Up to 40 were regular at Rawcliffe Lake with a maximum of 75 on 20th November. 49 were at York University Lake on 30th January with 18 there on 8th April and records were also received from Sand Hutton,

Strensall Common, Pond Head (Oulston), Beningborough, Earswick Moor and Yearsley Moor Ponds. Bred at Sturges Pond.

CANADA GOOSE *Branta canadensis*
Status: Resident breeder and winter visitor

Common throughout the year in the Lower Derwent Valley with up to 600 during the winter months.

At Castle Howard Lake there were up to 284 present early in the year including a bird showing characteristics of the smaller race minima from 15th January to 16th April. 172 remained on 24th June with up to 200 present from October until the end of the year.

Present all year in the Skeldergate Bridge/Rowntree Park area of York with a maximum count of 70 on 27th August.

Up to 30 birds were regular at Rawcliffe Lake with a maximum of 73 on 23rd December. 36 were at York University Lake on 30th January with five there on 8th April. Noted on the River Foss at Monk Bridge throughout the year with 88 present in December. Also reported from Yearsley Common, Pond Head (Oulston), Strensall Common, Sand Hutton Lake, Sutton-on-the-Forest and York Waterworks Ponds near Beningborough. Bred at Three Lakes, Selby and Sturges Pond where 16 birds were present on 8th July.

BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis*
Status: Winter visitor and feral wanderer

Four were seen at Wheldrake Ings on 9th January with one lingering throughout the month until 23 arrived on the 22nd, increasing to 36 on the 26th when a further 170 joined them, all birds flying off to the east before dusk. Seven were at Bank Island on 31st January and one at Wheldrake Ings on 19th August where two were present on 14th October, one remaining until 25th November.

At Castle Howard Lake, two birds were present from 1st January to 16th April with four there on 15th January, a single there from 6th May to 24th June and another on 30th September.

A flock of 20 was at York University Lake on 30th January and one or two were noted in the Rowntree Park area of York between 20th August and 9th September.

SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna*
Status: Winter visitor, migrant breeder and scarce autumn passage migrant

Wintering numbers in the Lower Derwent Valley increased from 20 in early January to 82 by the month end, peaking at 120 on 5th February. 75 pairs bred, the site being deserted by late summer as birds left to moult; 16 had returned to North Duffield Carrs by early December increasing to 73 by the year end.

Elsewhere there were three at Castle Howard Lake on 15th January, a pair on Newburgh Priory Lake during February and one on York Waterworks Ponds near Beningborough on 27th December. Birds were also noted flying over Strensall and New Earswick.

WIGEON *Anas penelope*
Status: Winter visitor, spring passage migrant and resident breeder

The usual high numbers wintered in the Lower Derwent Valley with a peak of 7510 on 16th January declining to 4000 by early March, birds making an early departure. At least four drakes summered at Wheldrake Ings then 30+ on 16th September were the first returning birds, building up to 9250 by 24th December.

A pair was at Castle Howard Lake on 11th March with 27 there on 23rd September, 18 remaining until the 30th and 40-50 on 19th November with 20+ staying through December.

Elsewhere there were two males on York University Lake on 30th January, four at Strensall Common on 4th November, two males at Newburgh Priory on 22nd December and 134 at the York Waterworks Ponds near Beningborough on the 27th.

GADWALL *Anas strepera*
Status: Winter visitor and migrant breeder

In the Lower Derwent Valley, wintering numbers remained stable early in the year with 100+ from January through to April. There were no breeding records received this year and it was reported that birds were scarce at the back end of the year until 161 arrived on 27th December.

Elsewhere, a male was on the River Ouse at Fulford Ings on 3rd January and a pair at Castle Howard Lake on 19th March with five there from 23rd-30th September and 15 from 21st December to the year end.

TEAL *Anas crecca*

Status: Winter visitor and resident breeder

In the Lower Derwent Valley, numbers peaked at 3530 on 16th January, then an early departure during February left just 1000 by the end of the month with 500 at North Duffield Carrs on 24th March. Again, no breeding records were received this year and numbers remained low until wintering birds started to return in mid-December, building up to 3400 by the year end.

Elsewhere, a male was at Askham Bog on 5th February while another flew north at Fulford Ings on 17th March. Three pairs were at Castle Howard Lake on 16th April, an adult with seven young seen on Strensall Common on 5th July, six birds on ponds near the River Rye at West Ness on 2nd December and five on the River Ouse at Beningborough on the 27th.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*

Status: Winter visitor and resident breeder

As to be expected, a common bird throughout the recording area with birds found in most areas holding water. In the Lower Derwent Valley, wintering numbers peaked at 2740 early in the year and exceptional numbers were attracted to the site during December with 4870 on the 26th being the highest count for many years.

Resident populations on rivers in York city centre, Rawcliffe Lake, Castle Howard Lake and Newburgh Priory remained stable throughout with breeding noted at all sites and a small influx of 400+ was noted at Castle Howard Lake on 30th December.

PINTAIL *Anas acuta*

Status: Winter visitor and scarce migrant breeder

The Lower Derwent Valley held 300+ birds until the end of January, numbers falling during February with 80 at North Duffield Carrs. An early returning bird was seen at Wheldrake Ings on 2nd September and good numbers were seen in December with 260 on the 19th increasing to 478 by the 26th.

Elsewhere, single drakes were at York University Lake on 30th January, over Huby on 19th July and at Castle Howard Lake on 30th September.

GARGANEY *Anas querquedula*

Status: Migrant breeder

In the Lower Derwent Valley, the first returning birds arrived at North Duffield Carrs on 18th March with 16 pairs in the valley by mid-May. Two broods were noted during the summer months and the last bird had departed by 12th September.

SHOVELER *Anas clypeata*

Status: Resident breeder and winter visitor

Only 50+ were wintering in the Lower Derwent Valley early in the year but better numbers were present in the latter part of the year peaking at 192 on 26th December.

At least one pair was noted at Castle Howard Lake for most of the year with a male at York University Lake on 30th January.

POCHARD *Aythya ferina*

Status: Winter visitor and migrant breeder

In the Lower Derwent Valley, wintering numbers remained at c. 100+ through the early part of the year but excellent numbers were attracted to the floods in December with 1000+ on the 3rd increasing to 3350 by the 26th when freezing weather forced birds to move on. 20+ were at Castle Howard Lake early in the year with up to 20 in October through to the year

end.

Elsewhere, there were three males and a female on the River Ouse between York and Bishopthorpe all year with up to seven wintering at Rawcliffe Lake and York University Lake. Singles were noted at Pond Head (Oulston), the Ouse near Beningborough and the River Foss in York city centre.

RING-NECKED DUCK *Aythya collaris*

Status: Vagrant

Two drakes with Tufted Ducks *Aythya fuligula* at Wheldrake Ings on 26 th December represented the sixth record for the site (EN). This record has been accepted by the YNU.

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula*

Status: Winter visitor and migrant breeder

Up to 100 were present in the Lower Derwent Valley early in the year, then the extensive flooding during December attracted large numbers with a peak count of 480 on the 26th. Small numbers were present throughout the year at Castle Howard Lake with a peak count of 150+ on 21st December but the species was fairly scarce at Rawcliffe Lake this year with only one or two birds wintering. Four males were at Bulmers Pond, Heworth on 22nd January with six there next day, three on York University Lake on the 30th and a pair on New Earswick Nature Reserve pond during February and March. One or two birds were on the River Ouse between York and Naburn from March to September with six there on 29th April and a pair was seen on Strensall Common on 5th April.

Also recorded at Newburgh Priory, Pond Head (Oulston), the River Rye at West Ness, the River Foss in York city centre and York Waterworks Ponds near Beningborough.

SCAUP *Aythya marina*

Status: Winter visitor and passage migrant in small numbers

A female was at Wheldrake Ings on 16th January moving to Bank Island from the 21st-24th. Another female was on floodwater at Aughton on 7th May and a juvenile at Wheldrake Ings on 14th October (KN).

GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula* Status:

Winter visitor and passage migrant

Small numbers were present in the Lower Derwent Valley early in the year with just 27 throughout January, but record numbers were attracted to the floods in December with 106 on the 29th.

Up to nine were at Castle Howard Lake throughout January and February with five remaining on 11th March and up to ten during December. Three were at Pond Head, Oulston on 22nd December with a single male at Newburgh Priory the same day and a female seen flying along the River Ouse near Beningborough on the 27th.

SMEW *Mergus albellus*

Status: Almost annual winter visitor

A pair was at Bank Island on 2nd January with a drake there on 23rd December and a male and two 'redheads' at North Duffield Carrs on the 31st (EN). A 'redhead' was reported on the River Ouse by Bishopthorpe Bridge on 31st December.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator*

Status: Passage and winter visitor

A 'redhead' at Bank Island on 9th January was the only record (EN).

GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser*

Status: Winter visitor and passage migrant

A poor showing in the Lower Derwent Valley this year with maxima of 53 in January and 61 in December - both at Wheldrake Ings. Castle Howard did not fare much better with 51 in January dropping to just 13 through February and March while nine returning in November increased to just 16 by the end of December.

Elsewhere there were four at Pond Head, Oulston on 7th January, up to three on the River Ouse between York and Bishopthorpe between 9th January and 24th March, two males and a female at Newburgh Priory Lake on 15th January with a male still present on 22nd February, six at Ross Carrs on 5th March and two at Forest Farm, Warthill on 28th May.

Later in the year, a female was on the River Ouse at Clifton Ings on 23rd November with a male and three females there on 29th December, a female on the River Rye near Nunnington Hall on 2nd December, a male at Pond Head, Oulston on the 22nd and two on the York Waterworks Ponds near Beningborough on 27th December plus four flying along the River Ouse the same day.

RUDDY DUCK *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Status: Migrant breeder

A male was at Wheldrake Ings throughout January and another at Aughton on 7th May while a pair at North Duffield Carrs the same day was joined by another two males on the 11th and at least four males were seen throughout the summer at Wheldrake Ings.

Up to 15 were seen throughout the year at Castle Howard Lake.

HONEY BUZZARD *Pernis apivorus*

Status: irregular summer migrant

Considering the large movement that occurred in Yorkshire and the rest of eastern Britain during September the only records were singles at Buttercrambe on the 24th, Elvington on the 27th, Bank Island on the 29th and two at Sutton from the latter date to 2nd October. No description has been received for the Buttercrambe record and the Lower Derwent Valley records have been rejected by the YNU.

RED KITE *Milvus milvus*

Status: Regular visitor

Two wing-tagged birds were between Norton and Stamford Bridge on 1st April (JT & DD) and a single flew north at Kexby Bridge on 18th June (GH).

MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus*

Status: Passage migrant and rare breeder

The first arrival in the Lower Derwent Valley NNR was on 1st April. Single birds were seen almost daily throughout the site, with three 'cream-crowns' remaining in the Ellerton/Aughton area from 1st June to 21st August. The last had departed on 27th September (EN).

HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus* Status:

Winter visitor and passage migrant

A 'ringtail' was observed at Wheldrake Ings on 6th, 14th and 15th October, Bank Island on the 17th and again at Wheldrake Ings on the 21st. Presumably a single bird was involved (EN).

MONTAGU'S HARRIER *Circus pygargus*

Status: Rare visitor

A male was reported between Cawood and Stillingfleet on 17th May (IC). This record occurred during a spring influx of this species into Britain and has been accepted by the YNU

SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus*

Status: Resident breeder and passage migrant

Widespread reports were received from 22 sites throughout the year but there were only two breeding records - at Brayton Barff and Sturges Pond. Mostly single birds were involved with the exception of three in the Wheldrake area on 30th April, two there on 25th May and up to three noted along the River Ouse between Fulford and Naburn throughout the year.

As usual this species appeared in both rural and urban gardens with the usual assortment of victims including Blackbird *Turdus merula* at Dunnington and Huby and a white-feathered House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* at Poppleton. The bid for freedom by a Canary *Serinus*

canaria at Norton came to an untimely end.

Interestingly, only five birds were specifically sexed so it is not possible to determine whether males or females are more frequent, although records would suggest that most are indeterminate females/juveniles.

COMMON BUZZARD *Buteo buteo*

Status: passage migrant and rare breeder

Two spring records came from Fulford Ings on 24th March (ABoo) and Grimston Park on the 30th. The only autumn record was of three over Hassacarr Nature Reserve on 21st September which coincided with the influx of Honey Buzzards *Pernis apivonis* (T & VW).

[ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD *Buteo lagopus*] Status: Vagrant

One was reported drifting east over Bank Island on 9th January (EN). No description received.

OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus*

Status: Regular passage migrant

Only two records were received this year, from Castle Howard on 27th April (PR) and Sand Hutton on 11th October (RH).

KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus*

Status: Resident breeder

The only breeding records came from Sturges Pond where one pair bred in a nest box and another pair was reported nesting in a broomstacker (mobile conveyor belt). Family parties Dunnington in August and September would suggest local breeding.

Reported from 20 sites throughout the area and regularly seen along the York ring road and A1079 to Pocklington as well as the Bishopthorpe and Fulford parishes and along the River Ouse. Most records were of single birds with two reported from Dunnington and Heslington on 27th April.

MERLIN *Falco columbarius*

Status: Passage migrant and winter visitor

Records this year were confined to the York area with singles at North Duffield Carrs on 15th (caught a Skylark *Alauda arvensis*), 18th and 21st January with one at Bank Island on the 26th. A male was at Sutton Farm on 21st March with the only record in the latter part of the year being a bird at Dunnington on 29th December flying towards a flock of Yellowhammers *Emberiza citrinella*.

HOBBY *Falco subbuteo* Status:

Increasing summer visitor

In the Lower Derwent Valley, the first bird appeared on 2nd May being seen regularly thereafter. Up to four pairs were thought to be present throughout the area and breeding may have taken place. As usual sightings increased during August and September with up to four birds at the Wheldrake Ings/Bank Island roost on several dates in August and three on 5th September. The last was one on 2nd October.

One was at Strensall on 28th August and one flew north at Dunnington on 16th September.

PEREGRINE *Falco peregrinus*

Status: Winter and passage visitor

Scarce during the early months in the Lower Derwent Valley reflecting the rather low number of Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* and Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*. One was seen at four favoured sites at Bubwith Ings and North Duffield Carrs throughout January and February with two on the 29th. Later in the year, one was at Wheldrake Ings on 16th September with another on 21st December.

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE *Alectoris rufa*

Status: Resident breeder

Pairs reported throughout the area undoubtedly bred but the only confirmed report was of an adult with nine young at Sand Hutton on 15th August. Two pairs were at Escrick Moor on 15th April with five pairs at Heslington on the 27th and the species was very common at Dunnington during the breeding season.

Up to six birds were reported from 16 sites with counts of eight at Terrington on 1st January, 17 at Fulford on 24th April and 11 there on 27th December.

GREY PARTRIDGE *Perdix perdix*

Status: Resident breeder

After last year's optimistic comments few records were received this year and all are listed below. There were, however, no official reports from the Lower Derwent Valley NNR.

Three were at Hovingham on 1st January with two at Bolton Percy on the 23rd as well as 23rd February. Two pairs were at Huby on 30th March, two at Poppleton on 15th April and a pair at Badger Hill on the 24th with two at Osbaldwick on 14th May, a pair at New Earswick on the 29th and one at North Duffield Carrs on 4th June.

A covey of seven was at Butterwick on 2nd December with ten at Poppleton on the 27th. 14 birds were reported during the York farmland bird survey but disappointingly there were no records from Dunnington again this year.

QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix*

Status: Summer visitor which breeds in good years

Another good year in the Lower Derwent Valley with a total of 70 'singing' birds located. The first appeared on 27th April with small influxes in mid-May and mid-June. Birds were heard calling throughout August with the last on 21st September.

One was on Dunnington Common on 12th July and 14th August. May have bred at this site as it is the third consecutive year that birds have been calling.

PHEASANT *Phasianus colchicus*

Status: Resident breeder

Due to the known numbers that are released on shooting estates it is not surprising that there are few records received.

WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus*

Status: Resident breeder and winter/passage visitor

The only reports from the Lower Derwent Valley NNR concern birds in January and February. At least five were in the car park area of Wheldrake Ings with six on 7th January when 14 were in the valley with three remaining to the month end. Four lingered by the car Park throughout February.

Elsewhere, singles were at Bishopthorpe Ings on 7th January, Castle Howard Lake on the 15th and Fulford Ings on 13th May.

SPOTTED CRAKE *Porzana porzana*

Status: Rare passage migrant & rare migrant breeder

A total of 16 'singing' males was located around the Lower Derwent Valley NNR with the first at Bubwith on 29th April. Other birds appeared at North Duffield Carrs, Aughton and the Low Grounds (EN). A record of a chick captured at Aughton Ings has been rejected by the YNU.

CORNCRAKE *Crex crex*

Status: Passage migrant and rare migrant breeder

One called briefly at Copmanthorpe in May with another calling on several nights during June near Newton Mask and one was reported to have been killed during sugar beet harvesting near Bielby.

MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus* Status:

Resident breeder and winter visitor

The only counts from the Lower Derwent Valley NNR were 200 on 6th January and 256 on the 16th with 100 on 19th February.

Elsewhere, up to 20 were reported from sixteen sites with 21 at York University Lake on 30th January and 30 there on 8th April, 20-30 on the River Foss between Strensall and York on 1st October and 50 at Castle Howard Lake on 21st December with 30 there on the 30th.

COOT *Fulica atra*

Status: Resident breeder and winter visitor

Counts from the Lower Derwent Valley NNR included 267 on 16th January, 310 on the 31st, 372 on 19th February and 487 on the 26th.

Concentrations at Castle Howard Lake included 70 on 19th January, 110 on 7th February, 140 on the 11th and 200 on the 13th with 500 there on 20th October declining to 100 by 19th November then increasing to 500 again on 21st December with 300 at the year end.

28 were at Kexby on 1st May and pairs with chicks reported from Pond Head, Oulston, the River Foss, Rawcliffe Lake and Strensall.

Reports also received from the River Ouse between York and Naburn, Rowntree Park (York), West Ness and Yearsley.

COMMON CRANE *Grus grus*

Status: Vagrant

One flew down the River Ouse at the Knavesmire, York on 16th June (AS) and took up residence in the Lower Derwent Valley where it was frequently sighted at Wheldrake Ings. It was at Melbourne on 4th December and remained for the rest of the month in the Pocklington Canal area (EN). Seventh record for the YOC recording area.

The Knavesmire record has been rejected by the YNU while the Lower Derwent Valley record has been accepted.

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus*

Status: Passage migrant and migrant breeder

Two at North Duffield Carrs on 6th February were the first to appear with five there by the 9th. Ten were scattered throughout the Lower Derwent Valley by the 13th with 16 by the 28th. Eight were at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd July with nine there on the 15th.

One was at Castle Howard on 12th February increasing to two by the 27th, both remaining into March.

Pairs were noted on a flooded field near Earswick on 30th April and 29th May, Dam Hill Farm on 16th and 30th March and Forest Farm, Warthill on 3rd and 28th May where the farmer found two late-hatching eggs. Three were at Poppleton on 30th March with two there on 5th and 7th May and three were on Middlethorpe Ings on 11th March while a series of records came from the Naburn Sewage Works area from 29th April to a maximum of up to six on 25th June. One to two were noted at Linton-on-Ouse, New Earswick Nature Reserve, Newburgh Priory, Strensall Common, Brecks Heath (Strensall) and Stockton-on-the-Forest while four were seen at Walbutts Lane.

Also noted during the York farmland bird survey at Dunnington (nesting), Kexby, Earswick, Naburn and Nether Poppleton.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius dubius*

Status: Passage migrant and migrant breeder

The first returning birds arrived at North Duffield Carrs on 3rd April with three pairs there by the month end. Passage during May peaked with 11 at this site and 13 at Bank Island on the 27th, with seven and five still at these respective sites on 6th June. Good numbers remained throughout the summer increasing with autumn passage to a maximum of 12 at Bank Island on 29th August.

Elsewhere, a flooded cornfield on Dunnington Common held a single on 29th April then a pair on 3rd May while a pair was on Middlethorpe Ings on 1st May.

RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula*

Status: Passage migrant

One was at Melbourne on 1st May with two at Aughton Ings on the 14th when a passage bird was near Osbaldwick.

Numbers peaked at North Duffield Carrs on 6th June when a total of 23 was present mirroring numbers not seen since the mid-eighties.

DOTTEREL *Charadrius morinellus*

Status: Rare visitor

A winter-plumaged bird was seen with 2000+ Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria* at North Duffield Carrs on 18th February (EN Description forwarded to YNU).

[AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis dominica*]

Status: Vagrant

An adult was amongst 2000+ Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria* at North Duffield Carrs on 18th February, sharing the flock with a Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus* (EN). No description received.

GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria*

Status: Winter visitor and passage migrant

In the Lower Derwent Valley, 2500 in early January increased with milder weather to 3400 by the 16th with 3000+ remaining until 13th February. Numbers then climbed rapidly from 4600 on the 18th to an impressive 8300 on the 22nd, with maxima of 3100 at North Duffield Carrs, 2000+ at Aughton and 2600 at Thorganby. North Duffield remained the favoured site with 2000+ daily until the month end. Later in the year, 20 were at Wheldrake Ings on 21st September and 3500 in early December fell to only 70 by the 19th while 3700 were present on the 24th but only 100 remained following the big freeze at the year end.

Elsewhere, notable records included 20 around New Earswick throughout January, 30 between Strensall and Haxby on the 2nd, 350 at Dunnington on the 8th, 200 at Towthorpe Bridge on the 14th, 200 along the York bypass at Acomb on 13th February, 250 at Riccall on 15th April and one flying over Strensall village on 4th May.

Later in the year, 40 were along the York bypass at Acomb on 30th September, ten flew east over Woodland Grove on 29th November, a large dense flock of c. 2000 was near Naburn Sewage Works on 27th November and 3rd December, 12 were at Clifton Ings on the 6th and 200 at Monks Cross on the 13th with 44 at Old Earswick and 600 at Bootham Stray during the month.

The only record from the York farmland bird survey was of seven in Naburn parish in April.

GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola*

Status: Passage migrant and winter visitor

A single bird was with Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria* at North Duffield Carrs on 13th and 22nd February to the month end. In May, one in almost full breeding plumage was at Aughton Ings on the 11th and two summer-plumaged birds flew north over Old Earswick on the 21st.

LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus*

Status: Migrant breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor

In the Lower Derwent Valley, 3000+ in early January increased to 3770 by the 16th with 3000+ remaining throughout the month into February, but with no influx like Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*. 50 were at Wheldrake Ings on 21st September while numbers in the Lower Derwent in December mirrored Golden Plover with 2300 on the 3rd, 1950 on the 19th and 3100 on the 24th.

Elsewhere, large numbers were near Grimston Bar with 100 counted on 6th January, 300 at Dunnington Common on the 8th, 130 at Askham Bog on the 22nd, 200 between Strensall and Haxby on 2nd January and 16th February, 300 at Strensall on 4th February when 15 were at Castle Howard, 120 at Sutton-on-the-Forest on the 23rd, 51 at Yearsley on the 11th and 100 at Riccall on the 15th.

Five were in breeding habitat near Naburn Wood on 13th March, five holding territory at Dunnington Common on 3rd May where a pair with young was seen on 12th June, two to three pairs breeding at Huby, a pair at Osbaldwick from 9th-14th April, a pair displaying at Poppleton on 5th May, various numbers between three and 26 at Earswick during April and

May and the first young were noted at Tollerton on 21st May. Noted as being regular in spring at Middlethorpe Ings with a maximum of 35 on 11th March and also regular at Rawcliffe Ings. Three were at Forest Farm, Warhill on 4th June with 20 at Selby on the 24th while three young were at East Cottingwith on 7th July with a flock near Linton on the 23rd.

A flock near Naburn Sewage Works from 20th August peaked at 300 on 3rd December while other records later in the year included 150 over Poppleton on 22nd October, 170 at Strensall on the 24th with 250 there on 3rd November, 500 at Clifton A flock near Naburn Sewage Works from 20th August peaked at 300 on 3rd December while other records later in the year included 150 over Poppleton on 22nd October, 170 at Strensall on the 24th with 250 there on 3rd November, 500 at Clifton Ings on 6th December, 500 at Monks Cross on the 13th, 100 at Slingsby on the 20th, 450 at New Earswick on the 27th, 16 in the Tillmire area on the 30th and 30 at Monks Cross on the 31st.

A total of 411 sightings was made in the York City Council area during the farmland bird survey.

KNOT *Calidris canutus*

Status: Winter visitor and passage migrant

Ten flew north at Wheldrake Ings on 19th February and three were at North Duffield Carrs on 11th December while ten flew north along the River Derwent at Thorganby on the 19th (EN).

SANDERLING *Calidris alba*

Status: Winter visitor and passage migrant

Five were at North Duffield Carrs on 2nd March (EN).

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea*

Status: Infrequent passage visitor

A single summer-plumaged bird at North Duffield Carrs on 6th June was rather unseasonal and coincided with other wader movements (EN).

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*

Status: Passage migrant and winter visitor

300 in the Lower Derwent Valley on 2nd January increased to 723 by the 16th with 500+ remaining until early February, then numbers increased to 1000 on the 18th - the influx coinciding with that of Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*. This was short-lived with numbers down to 400+ at the month end. 50+ were at Wheldrake Ings on 27th January with 200+ on the 28th.

One in breeding plumage was at Aughton Ings on 14th May and another bird at Wheldrake on 16th September.

Late in the year, numbers in the valley increased from 96 on 19th December to 637 by the 27th.

RUFF *Philomachus pugnax*

Status: Rare breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor

Up to 100 remained in the Lower Derwent Valley throughout January and February with 111 on 16th January being the maximum count.

A total of 23 lekking birds was present in the valley throughout April and May but there was no further evidence of breeding despite the presence of nine males and two females during the breeding season.

North Duffield Carrs and Bubwith Ings were the favoured sites with breeding-plumaged males at Wheldrake Ings on 6th May and Aughton Ings on the 11th. Two were at Wheldrake on 19th August with 11 on the 26th. September numbers grew from six on the 2nd to 15 on the 16th with 20+ on 21st October. Up to 100 again frequented North Duffield Carrs in December with 47 on the 19th and 61 on the 27th.

JACK SNIFE *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Status: Winter visitor and passage migrant

Two were seen from the Bank Island hide on 14th February with a single flushed on the 15th. One was at North Duffield Carrs on the 28th and in December, extensive flooding of the Lower Derwent Valley NNR forced birds into surrounding areas with three near Church Bridge at Melbourne on the 5th and one flying over there on the 30th (EN).

The only records outside the valley were of singles flushed at Fulford Ings on 24th March and 1st April (ABoo).

SNIPE *Gallinago gallinago*

Status: Resident and migrant breeder and passage visitor

Scarce in the Lower Derwent Valley during January, but 50 were at North Duffield Cans on the 23rd. Other records early in the year included six seen by Foss Walk, Marlon Abbey on 2nd January and four at Wheldrake Ings on 25th February. Birds were present at Fulford Ings from 3rd January to 1st April with a maximum of 12 noted on three dates.

Many birds were displaying at North Duffield Carrs on 15th April as water receded following spring flooding. 'Drumming' birds were noted at Heslington Tillmire on 24th April and 24th June and three were in a grassy area on Haxby Moor Lane, Strensall on 16th April.

Later in the year, 32 were at Wheldrake Ings on 12th August with 12 on 21st September and two on the 27th, four flew over Haxby on the 28th, eight were flying around Bishopthorpe on 1st October and six were seen along the River Rye near Lower Butterwick on 2nd December.

The only notable counts in the Lower Derwent Valley during December were up to 30 at Church Bridge, Melbourne on the 5th and 100 along the riverbank between East Cottingwith and Bubwith on the 19th.

WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola* Status:

Resident breeder and winter visitor

In the Lower Derwent Valley, only a single bird appeared in January flying over the car park area at Wheldrake Ings on the 22nd. Up to three were wintering in a small woodland area by this site during February.

Other records included one in Warren Wood, Dunnington Common on the 10th, one at Sutton Farm on the 27th and two flushed in Askham Bog on 31st March.

Breeding season records included up to three at Skipwith Common during June.

Late in the year, one flew over the Pocklington Canal at Thornton at dusk on 29th December and another was flushed on the Tillmire on the 30th.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa*

Status: Passage migrant and rare breeder

A single pair returned to North Duffield Carrs on 16th February and remained to the month end. Three birds were seen at this site on 12th March.

In the Lower Derwent Valley as a whole, up to four pairs lingered from 27th March until 5th May with display noted on several occasions. One pair again bred off-site appearing with a newly-fledged juvenile, incapable of travelling far, at Bank Island on 3rd June. This family remained until 5th August.

Counts from the Lower Derwent included 19 at Wheldrake Ings on 21st April, ten at North Duffield on the 22nd and an impressive 148 on Derwent Ings behind Aughton church on the 24th (T&VW).

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus*

Status: Passage migrant

The only records received were of two at North Duffield Cans on 1st May and one at Aughton Ings on the 7th,

CURLEW *Numenius arquata*

Status: Passage migrant, migrant breeder and winter visitor

The first two returning birds in the Lower Derwent Valley appeared on 23rd January with

one or two present in early February increasing to ten on the 9th, 41 on the 15th, 63 on the 18th and 84 on the 29th by which time one or two pairs were displaying.

Two birds were at Strensall Common on 10th March and 24th June with three at Poppleton on 26th March where a pair was present on 5th May. Birds were heard at Strensall Common throughout April and May while two were at Rufforth Airfield on 15th April, one was at Earswick Moor the same day and 17th May and another calling at Castle Howard on 6th May. Singles were near Naburn Wood on 24th June and Huby on 3rd July when one was at Wheldrake Ings with another there on 29th September while seven flew west over New Earswick on the 10th.

Up to three were seen in several parishes during the York farmland bird survey in April and May.

REDSHANK *Tringa totanus*

Status: Passage migrant, migrant breeder and winter visitor

Good numbers were present throughout January in the Lower Derwent Valley with 25 on the 2nd increasing to 400 by the 9th and 448 by the 16th; up to 400 remained throughout February.

One or two were seen or heard at Middlethorpe Ings from 17th March to 14th May while two were at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd July with three there on 29th September and one on 21st October following post-breeding dispersal.

In December, numbers in the valley increased to a record 582 on the 19th but this was dwarfed by 1350 on the 27th, representing 1% of the UK population. Birds had been attracted by flooding in the Lower Derwent as levels elsewhere had fallen.

Up to six were noted in several parishes during the York farmland bird survey in April and May.

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*

Status: Passage migrant and occasional winter visitor

A single at Bank Island on 26th February was what has become a normal appearance in that month. Spring records included four at Wheldrake Ings on 6th May with one at North Duffield Carrs on the 11th and seven at Aughton Ings.

Returning passage birds included two at Bank Island on 1st and 15th July, 12th August and 26th August as well as four there on two dates. One was at Newburgh Priory on 20th August with one at Sand Hutton on 22nd September.

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus*

Status: Passage migrant and winter visitor

One was at Bubwith on 2nd January with two on arable land adjacent to North Duffield Carrs on the 8th and 16th, feeding around a manure heap.

A series of records came from Wheldrake Ings with up to nine birds seen between 3rd July and 16th September. Four were at Bank Island on 1st July with two at Melbourne on 27th August and one on 8th October.

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola*

Status: Passage migrant

One at Bank Island on 14th May was the only record (EN).

COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleuca*

Status: Passage migrant and rare migrant breeder

One was by the River Foss between Dunthorpe and Strensall on 7th May while singles were seen along the River Ouse between Bishopthorpe and Naburn on 10th May, 20th August and 1st October. Other singles were at Clifton Ings on 18th August and Wheldrake Ings next day.

MEDITERRANEAN GULL *Larus melanocephalus*

Status: Passage migrant and winter visitor

A second-winter bird was at Wheldrake Ings on 19th February (EN).

LITTLE GULL *Larus minutus*

Status: Passage migrant

23 at Wheldrake Ings on 2nd May is the largest flock on record. An immature was at Bank Island on the 7th (EN).

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Larus ridibundus*

Status: Resident breeder, winter visitor and passage migrant

5000+ were at the Wheldrake Ings roost on 3rd January with 100+ on the 4th, 8000 on the 19th and 7000 on the 30th.

c.15 were on Osbaldwick playing fields in January and one had a full hood by the 30th. 40 were present from February to March with occasionally up to 80. A few had returned by mid-July and August and winter flocks built up by 20th October.

Common all year around New Earswick with a maximum of 80. Also common at Rawcliffe Lake during the winter months with 67 on 6th December and regular at Rawcliffe Ings. 3000 were at Castle Howard Lake on 11th February with 2000+ there on the 13th. Seen all year along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of 800+ during floods in November. 78 adults and 21 juveniles were at Strensall Common on 2nd July with smaller numbers seen around Strensall village. 42 were at Newburgh Priory Lake on 15th July. Large numbers were present at the Wheldrake roost during December, many birds feeding amongst flood debris during the month. A count on the 11th revealed 80,000+ roosting birds. 1000+ were at Castle Howard on the 21st. Of interest, a Finnish-ringed bird was found on the River Ouse in York on 9th February.

COMMON GULL *Larus canus*

Status: Winter visitor and passage migrant

Numbers were rather low in the Lower Derwent valley at the start of the year with 3000+ on 3rd January, 4000+ on the 4th and 3000+ at the month end.

Elsewhere, 1000 were at Castle Howard on 11th February and up to ten seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn, but not present during the summer months. Regularly seen in small numbers at Huby and seven were on Osbaldwick playing fields on 22nd January and regularly throughout the winter. Birds remained until the end of March after the Black-headed Gulls *Larus ridibundus* had left. 25 were present on 15th April but not seen after the 18th. One returned on 3rd August with seven present on 20th October.

Seen on the River Foss at New Earswick in November but scarce during the rest of the year and not recorded in May or October. 2000+ were at Castle Howard on 21st December.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus*

Status: Passage migrant and scarce winter visitor

A single adult on 4th January was the only record received for the Lower Derwent Valley!

Seen regularly flying over the River Ouse between York and Naburn from 20th August to 1st October with a maximum of 16 flying west on 16th September. Also regular in small numbers around Huby, but less regular than Black-headed *Larus ridibundus* and Common Gulls *Larus canus*. 21 were in a stubble field near Bolton Percy on 29th November and one was at Rawcliffe Ings on 10th December.

HERRING GULL

700+ were at the Wheldrake Ings roost throughout January with 1400 on the 19th. A leucistic bird at the roost on 18th September superficially resembled a second winter Glaucous Gull but was distinguished by an all pink bill, dark mottling on the mantle extending round the sides of the neck onto the underparts and a broken dark sub-terminal tail band.

Regularly seen flying over the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of 36 flying southeast on 16th March. Recorded in the New Earswick area every month except May, mainly flying east late in the evening - probably to the Wheldrake roost, but in the December freeze they flew south, possibly onto one of the rivers.

ICELAND GULL

A first-winter was at Wheldrake Ings on 8th and 14th January, with a second-winter on the 22nd. The second-winter roosted daily in February from the 10th with two there on the 14th and a first-winter and an adult on the 19th. A "superb" adult was at the roost on 18th March and one was also seen on the 22nd.

A second-winter at Wheldrake on 9th April allowed direct comparison with a similarly aged Glaucous Gull present at the same time.

GLAUCOUS GULL

A rather small second-winter bird appeared in the Wheldrake Ings roost on 4th January and was present with a third-winter on the 7th. The second-winter continued to appear at the roost throughout the month, being seen most evenings to the month end. Another third-winter was present on the 19th.

A third-winter was also seen from 1st to 5th February with an adult present on the 15th. A second-winter was seen on 9th April.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL

700 roosted at Wheldrake Ings on 2nd January. 300+ on the 4th, 900+ on the 19th and 500+ on the 30th.

Seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn during the winter months with a maximum of 12 flying west on 3rd December. c.20 flew west over Askham Bog on 2nd January while two birds were at Wheldrake Ings on 29th September.

KITTIWAKE

A tired looking adult was resting on the River Ouse towpath opposite Rowntree Park, York in the early morning of 13th May.

COMMON TERN

Two at Bank Island on 7th May were later seen over Swantail Ings at Wheldrake. Two were also at Bank Island on 13th and 14th May.

ARCTIC TERN

A slightly oiled individual was at Wheldrake Ings on 7th May and an adult was resting with gulls on floodwater near Terry's chocolate factory, York on 18th June before circling up and flying off south.

BLACK TERN

Four at Bank Island on 2nd May were the first, followed by a staggering 53 at Wheldrake Ings on the 5th with four at NDC the next day. Three appeared at Bank Island on the 11th and two were present on the 12th-14th.

One was seen briefly at Castle Howard on 10th May before continuing high to the north.

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas*

Status: Resident breeder

12 were on Dunnington Common on 24th February, two pairs in Poppleton on 7th April and a pair beside Cass Wood, Huby on 10th April. Seen along the River Foss between Blue Bridge and New Earswick in September and October. Six at New Earswick on 5th October were the most for this site, where birds were not present all year. Two or three pairs were resident on Clifton Ings and up to ten seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year.

In the York farmland bird survey, birds were recorded in the parishes of Bishopthorpe, Dunnington, Earswick, Fulford, Kexby, Naburn (where 12 were counted), New Earswick, Wheldrake and Warren House Farm (19 on 4th June).

WOOD PIGEON *Columba palumbus*

Status: Resident breeder

1000+ on Dunnington Common on 1st January was the highest count of the year while 120 were near Haxby on the 9th. 50+ were in a kale field near Gilling Castle on 13th February with 70+ on Clifton Ings on the 15th where good numbers were present all year. 20+ were in Rowntree Park, York on the 19th and at least 100 near Aughton Church, Lower Derwent on the 20th. 300 were between Haxby and Strensall on the 24th, 120 at Sutton Farm on 23rd March and 55 near Bishopthorpe on the 24th.

c.100 were in a large field at Wood House Farm, Strensall on 16th April while 66 were counted there on 13th May with 51 in a 1km square near Naburn Wood. On 8th July, a bird was found stuck in a chimney in Poppleton. It was rescued, minus its tail and seen around for several days. A nest with two young was blown out of a tree in a Huby garden on 11th September.

Large numbers were on Strensall Common during the summer and autumn while c.200 were in Poppleton on 29th October, 100 at Castle Howard on 19th November and 90 in farmland near Bolton Percy on the 29th.

Seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn and also at Askham Bog, New Earswick, in a Nunnington garden and along the River Foss. Common throughout Huby and the northern recording area. Also reported in the York farmland bird survey from Acaster Malbis, Kexby and Rawcliffe parishes.

COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto*

Status: Resident breeder

Seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn, with a maximum count of 22 on 3rd January. 15 were in gardens off Nunnery Lane, York on 8th January and four were at Sutton Farm on 15th March with one on a nest in the barn. The roost of over 12 in cherry plum trees in an Osbaldwick garden continued until March, apparently dispersed by the 16th while four were at Forest Farm, Warthill on the 22nd.

The most at New Earswick was 13 on 28th June but birds were common throughout this area, especially near human habitation, probably in larger numbers than in this count. Two were at Wheldrake Ings on 29th September.

In Osbaldwick, where birds were seen in a garden every day, only two came back to roost in the winter. However, there was a roost in taller trees near the Scout Hut. 18 were in Poppleton on 2nd December.

Recorded every day in the Dunnington area and in Strensall where two to four were seen regularly. Also noted at Askham Bog, near Askham bar, Rawcliffe Ings and along the River Foss. Common in Huby and throughout the northern recording area, with up to five in a garden at Nunnington.

TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur*

Status: Migrant breeder and passage visitor

A pair near Grange House Farm, Moor Lane, Haxby on 12th April was the first seen. The first bird at Brayton Barff was on 26th April with two pairs breeding there and still at least one present on 16th July. A bird was at Sturges Pond, Selby on 19th May. 'Purring' birds were heard from a farmland copse adjacent to Heslington Tillmire on 20th May and from riverside trees near Bishopthorpe on 10th June.

One flying over Dunnington Common on 16th July was the only record for Dunnington this year while a total of four was recorded during the York farmland bird survey in the spring. A wintering bird visited a bird table in Long Marston from the beginning of December (JK).

CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus*

Status: Migrant breeder

The first was heard in Earswick in mid-April with the next at Copmanthorpe on the 21st. On the 23rd, singles were in Appletree village, Wilberfoss and at North Duffield Carrs. Heard in Osbaldwick and Heslington on the 27th with singles at Hassacarr Nature Reserve, Nether Poppleton, Poppleton and Huby on the 28th and Wheldrake on the 30th.

Heard on Strensall Common from 1st May and on the River Foss near Strensall on the 4th. One was seen near Bishopthorpe on the 14th and calling birds seen or heard at Fulford on the 20th and near New Earswick on the 24th where two different birds were heard during May only.

Birds were seen and heard again in Huby on 18th and 20th May and heard near Bishopthorpe Palace on 18th June. Present at several sites around Selby during the breeding season. One from 27th-30th August at Hassacarr was the latest record for the reserve and the last for the recording area this year.

BARN OWL *Tyto alba*

Status: Resident breeder

There were regular sightings from the Bank Island car park and the bridge towards Wheldrake Ings towards dusk in January and February as well as over the reedbed. Several pairs had returned to nest sites by the month end.

One was at Sutton Farm on 13th April with another at Thornton from the 14th-18th. A bird disturbed by a lorry at 9.45am on the road north-west of Fangfoss flew along the hedge then up a farm drive. One was at Holtby on 2nd April and a pair was nesting in Kexby on the 7th. A bird carrying food back to a nest box about every ten minutes on Dunnington Common on the 10th was an early breeding record while one was seen in Poppleton on the 22nd. A pair bred at Forest Farm, Warthill with three owlets flown by 7th June. Seen at Bank Island and Wheldrake Ings in the summer; one seen on 12th August was carrying mammalian prey and one on the 19th was seen carrying a vole towards East Cottingwith. A bird was seen in the early morning on a housing estate in Huntingdon, York in September. One found dead on the Hull road at Dunnington in October had previously been ringed near Hornsea as a chick in July this year.

There were regular sightings along the Pocklington Canal area during December with several daytime sightings during cold weather towards the month end. Singles were seen in December along the River Foss and late in the evening in Huntingdon churchyard.

LITTLE OWL *Athene noctua*

Status: Resident breeder

One flushed from a holly hedge south of Manor Farm, Oulston flew along field boundaries pausing on fence posts. At least five pairs were around Sutton Farm during March while a single bird in April near the York-Scarborough railway line in New Earswick was the first for this patch. Another was seen near Plantation House, Sutton-on-the-Forest on 12th April.

Two birds were seen roosting in oak trees on The Brecks, Strensall during the period April through to August, birds being seen daily near houses. One was at Forest Farm, Warthill on 8th May and three pairs were present around the village of Dunnington with one pair rearing two young in an old apple tree. One was seen at the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust reserve, Walbutts Lane, Strensall on 14th July.

TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco*

Status: Resident breeder throughout the area

Two were sunning themselves in the morning light at North Duffield Carrs on 20th February. On the same day one was heard calling near Aughton Church in the late morning with a single at Hovingham.

One was on Strensall Common on 19th March and another roosting in a pine tree at Sutton Farm on the 27th. Two were calling in Poppleton on 14th April while one showed well on a telegraph pole in broad daylight by Bank Island car park on 18th June

LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus*

A single bird was at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd July. One flew over the Hassacarr Reserve on 21st September.

SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus*

Status: Casual breeder and passage and winter visitor

Two were seen quartering fields between Nunnington and Worableton crossroads on 30th April. One sitting on a fence post at Wheldrake Ings was later chased off by a Carrion Crow *Corvus corone* when it was seen to be in heavy wing moult.

NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Status: Migrant breeder

Two were 'churring' on Skipwith Common on 1st June with four on the 5th and 8th while one was seen 'churring' from a birch tree there on the 18th. A bird was heard and probably the same bird later seen in a cleared area next to the Forester's cottage on Yearsley Moor on 15th July.

SWIFT *Apus apus*

Status: Migrant breeder throughout the area

The first two were at Naburn Sewage Works on 29th April with two at Nunnington on the 30th. Two were over Strensall and one at Poppleton on 4th May while one was in Fulford on the 6th when around ten were at Wheldrake Ings and two in Osbaldwick with four there the following day.

Seen in York city centre on the 8th when six were back at nest sites in Poppleton. 30 were feeding over Bank Island on the 11th and noted as being numerous in Huby by mid-May. 40-50 were over Strensall Common on the 24th and 27th.

24 were in Poppleton on 8th June and 100+ at Naburn Sewage Works on the 10th when 100 were at Brecks Heath, Strensall. Eight were between Askham Bar and the River Ouse on 21st July.

Four were regular at Rawcliffe Lake throughout the summer and six over Strensall village, probably nesting there. Very low and noisy flight noted in Osbaldwick on the 27th and at least 500 were flying over Strensall on the 30th, hawking high at about 8pm. A small passage on 10th August was the last seen in Osbaldwick, with only one or two in Strensall by the 11th. Two were at Fulford Ings and one at Rowntree Park, York on the 27th. The last was a late bird in Selby on 12th September.

KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis*

Status: Resident breeder

A single bird was seen at Oulston reservoir on 7th January while one was observed taking a small fish at Newburgh Priory Lake on the 15th with one at Poppleton on the 21st and one at Hagg Bridge on the 25th. One at Castle Howard on 5th February was the sole record for this site.

Seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year, with three pairs on territory by 24th March. One was at Poppleton on 7th April. Seen at Stages Pond, Selby in the breeding season and at Wheldrake Ings. Present at Hassacarr Nature Reserve from August onwards with a male and a juvenile there on 13th October.

Singles were at Rawcliffe Lake on 1st November, along the River Foss in November, on Rawcliffe Ings on 10th December and at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on the 31st. Seen throughout the year at Clifton Ings.

GREEN WOODPECKER *Picus viridis*

Status: Resident breeder but not widespread

The first report of the year was sadly a dead bird found on 11th January at the tennis club in Acaster Lane, Bishopthorpe. One was seen at the YWT reserve, Walbutts Lane, Strensall on 27th February with singles at Clifton Ings on 8th March and at Skipwith Common on the 27th.

One spent most of March at Hassacarr Nature Reserve then in April moved on to Warren Wood, Dunnington Common and another was in trees where Walbutts Drive meets Strensall Common YWT reserve on 9th April.

Recorded during the York farmland bird survey from Copmanthorpe parish, probably nesting there. A female was seen in Bishopthorpe Crematorium on 10th May and one was heard calling on Strensall Common on the 27th and 28th while another was in Stubbs Wood on 19th June with one at Clifton Ings on 19th-21st July.

Two were on Strensall Common on 13th September with one in the Clarence Street car park, York on the 18th and one in Knavesmire Wood on the 26th while another was at Rawcliffe Ings on 2nd December.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos major*

Status: Resident breeder throughout the area

A single was in Slingsby Banks Wood (Castle Howard estate) and another just east of Hovingham on 1st January with a male at Oulston reservoir on the 7th. A male was feeding on nuts in a garden in Upper Poppleton throughout the year while another was a regular visitor to a Bishopthorpe garden from the end of February to the end of March. One was seen at Poppleton on the 21st.

Present all year at Clifton Ings with three pairs noted on 3rd February while up to three were noted at Askham Bog early in the year. A male was in woods at the Strensall Common end of Brecks Lane on 9th April with a pair in trees either side of York Road, Towthorpe and two by the railway crossing on Strensall Common on the 15th. One was seen and another two heard drumming on Yearsley Moor on the 19th.

A male and a female were regular feeders on peanuts and fat in gardens around Dunnington Common and raised at least two young. A pair bred in West Bank Park, Holgate, York and one was in Heslington on 11th May. Seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn, with a juvenile noted at Bishopthorpe on 10th and a family party by Bishopthorpe Bridge on the 18*.

Singles were near Naburn Wood on 24* June and at Pond Head Farm, Oulston on 16th July. Two were seen at High Lions Lodge, Yearsley on 15th October and one was seen along the River Foss in November. A male was on Rawcliffe Ings on 2nd December with a female in Strensall on the 10th. Singles were seen infrequently near Sessions Wood, Huntington, near Huntington church, in several different locations on Yearsley Moor and regularly seen on Strensall Common.

LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos minor*

Status: Resident breeder

An immature male seen in Askham Bog on 22nd January was the only record (ABoo).

WOODLARK *Lullea arborea*

Eight were at Allerthorpe Common from 20th August to 7th September and may indicate local breeding (IA). Descriptive notes were included and forwarded to the YNU.

SKY LARK *Alauda arvensis*

Status: Resident breeder and winter visitor

There was a flock of 20 at Cherrygarth Farm, Fryton on 1st January while 70 were present at Aughton Ings on the 2nd with 95 in two flocks at Hagg Land, East Cottingwith on the 4th. 60 were feeding in stubble at North Duffield on the 8th with 60 at East Cottingwith on the 16th. Birds were widespread in the Lower Derwent Valley and noted singing from the 23rd. A flock of 50+ was at Clifton Ings on the 17th with up to 20 singing there on the 22nd, though only four or five pairs stayed to breed. 30 were at Poppleton on the 28th and nine in farmland at Bolton Percy on 23rd January and 23rd February.

One was in partial song on Caulkley's Bank on 30th January while two pairs were seen at Aughton Church on 20th February, with one bird singing. In York, singles were seen flying over Cherry Street on 11th March and Nunnery Lane on the 13th. 14 males were at Forest Farm, Warthill by the 15th with 12 pairs breeding there eventually. Eight were in Poppleton on 5th April with six pairs on 5th May.

The York farmland bird survey in spring produced a total of 420 birds, including at least four singing males in Osbaldwick parish, up to 27 birds in the north of Strensall, 28 birds in Bishopthorpe and Fulford and up to 12 birds in Earswick. Nine were over farmland along the River Foss between Strensall and Towthorpe on 15th April. Six were counted in a 1km square near Naburn Wood on 13th May and 24th June while 17 were in a 1km square near Riccall in spring.

Three pairs were seen near Bishopthorpe Bridge during the spring while one was feeding young in May in Copmanthorpe parish. 20 singing males were holding territory in Dunnington parish on 12th June and a maximum of six was near New Earswick on the 28th where birds were only seen in the spring despite efforts to locate them during the rest of the year.

Seen or heard on Strensall Common throughout the year where at least ten pairs nested on Brecks Heath. Seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of c.20 on 1st October. Over ten were in a field north of Strensall on 3rd November and 17 counted in Bolton Percy farmland on 29th November. A flock of 30 was at Clifton Ings on 29th December and 110 just outside the Castle Howard grounds on the 31st with 75 at Dunnington the same day being the highest count there. Also noted at Askham Bog and Rawcliffe Ings.

SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia*

Status: Migrant breeder and passage migrant

Six flying south over North Duffield Carrs on 25th March were the first, with 30 over Castle Howard the following day. Three were at Kexby on 7th April and two at Poppleton on the 16th. 150-200 were in a mixed flock with Swallows *Hirundo rustica* at Castle Howard on 18th April. About ten were on the River Ouse south of York on the 24th and 30+ at Naburn Sewage Works on the 29th. 400 were at Castle Howard Lake on 4th May.

Reported from Rawcliffe in April and May and from late April seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn until 29th July, with a small breeding colony in the riverbank at Fulford Hall, c.30 were seen flying around nest holes in the bank of the River Rye at Newsham Bridge on 6th May.

At least ten were with Swifts *Apus apus* and House Martins *Delichon urbica* over silver birch on Strensall Common on 27th May and six were inspecting nest holes in Poppleton on 14th June, c.20 pairs nested at Sand Hutton in artificial nest sites after parasite treatment of nest holes (none had nested the previous year). Three or four were over the River Ouse in York, between Lendal and Ouse bridges, on 9th July.

SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*

Status: Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first was at Bank Island on 1st April, with singles at Dunnington Common and Poppleton on the 7th and one in Osbaldwick on the 9th when three were flying around Strensall Common YWT reserve. One was at Earswick on the 15th, the same day as the first major arrival of birds in the Lower Derwent Valley when large numbers were observed over Bank Island

150-200 were in a mixed flock with Sand Martins *Riparia riparia* at Castle Howard on the 18th. Two were in Thorganby by the 19th, two at Yorkshire Waterworks, Fulford on the 20th and two in Nunnington on the 21st. One was near New Earswick on the 22nd when the first were seen in Huby. Four were at Strensall Common on the 23rd when the first arrived at a regular barn nesting site at Swinton where one pair nested successfully and one was at Rawcliffe Lake on the 25th.

Ten to 20 were seen over farmland north of Strensall on 4th May when 100 were over Castle Howard Lake. Seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn and more were seen this year around Murton than Osbaldwick. Good numbers present all summer on Clifton Ings with seven at Forest Farm, Warthill on 4th June and 12 over Strensall Common on the 24th.

The first fledglings were noted along the River Ouse on 25th June and 25 birds were counted at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd July with c.100 at Brecks Heath, Strensall on the 10th. Throughout the summer months it was not unusual to see up to 40 mixed with House Martins *Delichon urbica* flying around houses in Strensall.

180 were at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on 12th September with a small passage of adults and juveniles over Osbaldwick next day. The peak at Rawcliffe Lake was 16 on the 16th with particularly good numbers along the River Ouse the same day. Seen along the Foss between Blue Bridge and Earswick in September.

The last at Naburn were seen on 1st October; at Dunnington Common on the 5th and birds were still in New Earswick in early October. One at Bielby on the 12th was the last.

HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbica* Status:
Migrant breeder and passage migrant

Two over Strensall on 19th April were the first of the year followed by three over Osbaldwick on the 23rd, c.20 along the River Ouse south of York on the 24th, one at Huby on the 27th and one at Fulford on the 30th. Two were at Cropton Forest on 1st May with five at Kexby while two or three were between the River Foss and Duncombe Farm, Strensall on the 4th.

Present around New Earswick from early May and in good numbers, but not seen regularly in Osbaldwick until early June. Two were inspecting their nest site in Bishopthorpe on 6th May where eight nests were eventually occupied. Two were in a 1km square near Naburn Wood on the 13th and ten were at Forest Farm, Warthill on 4th June with 27 roosting on wires early in the morning.

Several pairs bred in Huby village. Four were in a 1km square near Naburn Wood on 24th June with 20 at Strensall Common and c.200 at Naburn Sewage Works the following day, then birds were seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn. Up to 20 pairs nested around Rawcliffe Lake and 12 pairs bred at a cottage in Warthill. 30 were at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd July, c.100 at Brecks Heath, Strensall on the 10th and 15 between Askham Bar and the River Ouse on the 21st.

Departed from Bishopthorpe in early August, much earlier than usual, with probably one to two broods at most not three as is sometimes the case. 20-30 were over Strensall on 11th August with large numbers in Tang Hall on the 17th, many in the Hovingham area on the 24th and an impressive count of 200+ over Clifton Ings on the 31st.

150 were over Hassacarr Nature Reserve on 9th September and particularly good numbers along the Ouse on the 16th. All were gone from Osbaldwick by 18th September, but at least 30 were around breeding sites at Scarcroft Primary School, York in late September. Seen along the River Foss between Blue Bridge and Earswick in September and October while one was seen by the Ouse on 1st October with another at Wheldrake on the 8th and the last birds around New Earswick early in the month. Two still remained in Strensall on the 21st - the last in the recording area.

TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis*
Status: Migrant breeder though numbers have declined recently

Present on Skipwith Common during the summer. Also observed on Strensall Common, one singing from silver birch then in song flight and another singing from wires near the sewage works on 27th May. One was also there on 5th July.

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*
Status: Resident and migrant breeder and passage migrant

Present in good numbers on Clifton Ings all year. One flew south-east over Scarcroft Primary School, York on 24th March while a male was seen in display flight over rough ground between the new houses and the River Foss, Strensall on 15th April and some were heard singing on most visits to Strensall Common in the spring. One was at Poppleton on 16th April and two near the River Foss, Strensall on 1st October.

Eight birds were seen on Brecks Heath, Strensall (an area c.10 acres in size which is a former local authority waste tip that has been filled, landscaped and grassed over). These birds nested and were seen throughout July and August.

Seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year, with a maximum of 20+ on 1st October. Also noted at Askham Bog, Bishopthorpe, Fulford, Kexby, New Earswick and Rawcliffe Ings.

ROCK PIPIT *Anthus petrosus*
Status: Irregular visitor

Four were located feeding along the floodbank between East Cottingwith and Bubwith on

19th December (EN).

WATER PIPIT *Anthus spinoletta*

Status: An irregular spring visitor

Singles were seen at Wheldrake Ings on 1st and 19th February and North Duffield Carrs on the 13th (EN).

YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava*

Status: Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first flew over Riccall Ings on 23rd April with three at Bishopthorpe on the 24th, one at Skelton on the 28th and a male on Dunnington Common on the 29th. At least three were seen around Naburn Sewage Works from 29th April to 29th July. A pair was near Riccall, in sugar beet, on 10th June with two males at Forest Farm, Warthill on 8th May and 4th June. A single bird near Huntingdon Church on the 28th was a surprise and a first for the area. A good year in the Dunnington area with three pairs possibly breeding. Two pairs bred successfully in a barley field at Pocklington School, with young present on the school fields until 10th September and one at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on 30th August was possibly a first for the reserve.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*

Status: Resident breeder

Up to six were present with roosting Pied Wagtails *Motacilla alba* at Bank Island during January. A female was at Castle Howard sewage farm on 22nd January with two birds present in January and February at Hassacarr Nature Reserve. Two were in Nunthorpe Street, York on 28th January' and up to two in the Micklegate area of York in February. There was a single in March on the River Foss near the Link Road Bridge with two there in June and another on 31st May in the centre of York, also near the River Foss. Two were on Queen's Staithe by the River Ouse, York on 9th July, with one between Askham Bar and the river on the 21st.

Three were seen in the vicinity of the stone bridge over Hovingham Beck, west of Hovingham Hall on 28th September. One was on the Foss at Yearsley Bridge, York on 1st October with two at Rawcliffe Lake on the 11th and one there on 20th November. Two were at the Coneysthorpe sewage works, Castle Howard on 20th October.

Seen along the Foss in September, October and November, two birds being seen in the latter months. Two were feeding on a newly-ploughed field at Brecks Lane, Strensall on 4th November and at least one bird wintered on Clifton Ings. One was feeding in a ditch beside Pottery Lane, Strensall on 10th December, with one in Poppleton on the 16th and another at

Rawcliffe Ings on the 31st. Up to five were regularly seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year.

PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba*

Status: Resident breeder

270 were noted at the Bank Island roost on 9th January with 180+ from the 16th to the month end. Present all year along the River Ouse between York and Naburn where there were up to ten, at Forest Farm (Warthill), along the River Foss, in the Aldwark area of York, in the Huby area, at Rawcliffe Ings and on Clifton Ings with 42 at the latter site on 8th March. 30 were roosting at Sand Hutton during March with 150 there on the 15th. A pair was at Manor Farm, Towthorpe on 15th April with another pair at the Tannery, Strensall on the 16th. Four juveniles were at Pond Head Farm, Oulston on 16th July.

Numbers built up in the Naburn Sewage Works area in late August, most of these being juveniles and 12 were on Dunnington playing fields on 8th September.

The largest flocks in the New Earswick area were from September onwards, with birds coming from outside the area to roost. A party of ten was in a pig field on the eastern outskirts of Huby on the 28th. Two or three were in fields by Brecks Lane, Strensall on 5th November where there were numerous sightings. A pair was regular on garden feeders in Strensall in the autumn. Six were in Walbutts Lane, Strensall on 17th November and five were adjacent to Tollerton Road near Huby on 6th December. Also reported from Nunnington, Acaster Malbis, Heslington and Kexby.

WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus*

Status: Occasional winter visitor

A single bird was on Bishopthorpe cycle track on 1st January.

The large invasion into the country over the Christmas period brought three into the hedge along Green Lane, Clifton on 27th December, eight to Sutton-on-Derwent on the 30th and three at Elvington the same day.

WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Status: Resident breeder throughout the area

At least five were roosting in a House Martin *Delichon urbica* nest in Bishopthorpe in February while a pair was observed taking great interest in an old nest in a field hedge at The Ruddings, south of Hushwaite on 15th January.

Present all year at Rawcliffe Lake, New Earswick, Strensall (where there were numerous sightings in woodland), Askham Bog, Huby and the northern recording area, Nunnington, Kexby, along the River Foss, Clifton Ings and the River Ouse between York and Naburn, amongst many other places.

33 were counted on Brayton Barff on 23rd March while one was seen carrying nesting material in an Osbaldwick garden on the 26th. Seven were counted in Bishop Wood, Cawood on 8th April and four were near Rufforth on the 15th. Nine were counted in a 1km square near Naburn Wood on 13th May with 12 there on 24th June and two birds were continually feeding in a Strensall garden from September to December.

DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis*

Status: Resident breeder throughout the area

A party often was seen in Slingsby on 1st January and song was heard in Poppleton on 16th January. Present all year at Rawcliffe Lake, along the River Foss, at Clifton Ings, New Earswick, Strensall, Copmanthorpe, Dunnington, Kexby, Huby and Elm Park View, York with large numbers on the Osbaldwick cycleway as usual and four were regular in a Nunnington garden.

Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of ten birds counted in February and six birds singing on the 13th. 33 were counted on Brayton Barff on 23rd March.

The first fledgling along the Ouse was noted on 6th May while an adult was feeding a juvenile in a Strensall garden on 8th July and a single juvenile was at Pond Head Farm, Oulston on the 16th. There were numerous sightings in the area of Walbutts Sewage Works and Walbutts Farm, Strensall during the summer and autumn and song was heard on 19th December in Osbaldwick.

ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula*

Status: Resident breeder throughout the area

Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with the first song noted on 8th January. At least ten birds were seen during the year with up to six singing.

Seen daily around Huby throughout the year and common throughout the northern recording area. Noted as numerous at Oulston reservoir on 7th January. Six were between Gilling East and Ampleforth on 13th February with 23 around the village of Dunnington on the 15th.

About five were seen at Askham Bog on the 18th and one was near Aughton Church on the 20th, while 23 were counted on Brayton Barff on 23rd March and also present at Forest Farm, Warthill and in York on the same date.

Cawood Bishop Wood North held three on 9th April while one pair was in a paddock by York Road, Towthorpe on 15th April when three were along a track behind the golf course at Strensall Common. Recorded in the parishes of Dunnington, Kexby, Naburn and Rawcliffe during the York farmland bird survey and between Askham Bar and the River Ouse on 21st July while a juvenile was seen at Pond Head Farm, Oulston on 16th July.

Present on monthly walks in the autumn between Blue Bridge, York and the bypass bridge at Old Earswick and there were numerous sightings in Walbutts Lane, Strensall during the summer and autumn.

Generally common and present all year in the New Earswick area with a maximum of 12 on 27th December and also present all year at Rawcliffe Lake and Clifton Ings with one regularly all year in a Strensall garden with two there on 30th January and a pair on 18th February.

Two were by Castle Howard Lake on 19th November with one present at Rawcliffe Ings on 31st December.

REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* Status:

Migrant breeder and passage visitor

One at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on 30th August was a first for the reserve (T & VW) and there was a single passage bird at Clifton Ings on 27th September (NS).

BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Status: Very rare visitor

A female was seen feeding along a fieldside hedge behind the Hartrigg Oaks development, New Earswick for about 30 minutes on the afternoon of 30th March, but was not relocated after 5pm (NE & WHBR).

WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra*

Status: Casual migrant breeder and passage visitor

A male was briefly observed at the remaining breeding site at Strensall Common on 28th May and one was on Dunnington Common on 30th July. A rather late individual joined a Stonechat *Saxicola torquata* at Wheldrake Ings on 21st October.

STONECHAT *Saxicola torquata* Status:

Casual breeder and passage visitor

A first-year female at Sutton Farm on 16th and 17th March and one at Wheldrake Ings on 21st October were the only records.

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Status: Summer visitor

One was at Strensall Common on 31st March and a male and female were seen on set-aside land at Moor Lane, Wiggington on 12th April. Two pairs were in Poppleton on 19th April with two females on Dunnington Common on the 22nd after heavy rain and another three on Strensall Common on the 23rd while two were between Haxby and Strensall in a bean field on the 27th and three were seen on Dunnington Common on the 29th. Another was seen in a field near Woodhouse Farm, Strensall on 4th May while two were at Forest Farm, Warthill on the 8th and one was on Strensall Common on 12th July.

Also recorded in the parishes of Naburn, Nether Poppleton and Haxby during the York farmland bird survey.

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula*

Status: Resident breeder, winter visitor and migrant

Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of 110 (54 in Rowntree Park) counted on 8th January when the first song was heard. Two females were seen fighting there on 4th March. The first song was heard in York city centre on 17th January. In January, a Strensall garden held up to three males and three females all month and this was the commonest bird to visit gardens during the year in Dunnington where 78 were recorded on 15th January. 15-20 fed in an Upper Poppleton garden between January and the end of April and c.25 were on the school playing field there on 22nd May and 1st July. About five were in Askham Bog on 18th February.

In the north of the area, numerous birds were seen at Oulston reservoir on 7th January with 20 between Gilling East and Ampleforth on 13th February, seen daily around Huby throughout the year and common throughout the northern recording area with up to 16 seen in Nunnington during the year.

Heard during the dawn chorus on 17th March in Osbaldwick and a female was seen flying into pampas grass carrying food there the next day, with the first juvenile seen on 17th April. Females were seen nest-building in Elvington on 16th March and at Sutton Farm on the 28th with birds counted at Brayton Barff on the 23rd.

On 9th April, one was present at Cawood Bishop Wood North and a male with distinctive white marks was seen at Willow Farm, Towthorpe on the 15th.

This species successfully nested in a Strensall garden with birds seen carrying food in April and two juveniles seen on the 27th. The first fledglings were noted along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on 6th May and a male was vigorously chasing a Grey Squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis* around the branches of a tree there on 10th June. Seven pairs were seen on Monk Stray on 1st June and 24 were counted in a 1km square near Naburn Wood on 13th May with 15 there on 24th June. Song had ceased by the end of June in Osbaldwick.

Recorded in the parishes of Acaster Malbis, Dunnington, Kexby, Naburn and Rawcliffe during the York farmland bird survey.

One or two were seen regularly in a Strensall garden between August and December with three frequently in another Strensall garden during the summer through to December. Present on monthly walks in the autumn between Blue Bridge, York and the bypass bridge at Old Earswick. Over 20 occurred in hedges along Brecks Lane, Strensall on 5th November and a flock of 25 birds was seen feeding on hawthorn berries at Walbutts Lane, Strensall on 17th November.

Present all year at Rawcliffe Lake, New Earswick and Clifton Ings with an impressive 250+ at the latter site on 22nd November, while six were by Castle Howard Lake on the 19th and one was heard singing during mild weather on 11th December in Osbaldwick. Numbers significantly increased in the winter months at New Earswick with a maximum of 112 there on 27th December while 100 were counted with winter thrushes on Fulford Golf Course on the 30th.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris*

Status: Winter visitor

Flocks were seen in many areas in the early part of the year with 60+ at Moor House Farm near Hovingham on 1st January, 100+ on the Foss Walk at Marton Abbey on the 2nd, 20+ along the River Ouse south of York on the 3rd and 125 at Dunnington on the 14th. c.200 were in a field beside Thornton Lodge Farm, south of Oulston on the 15th, 120+ in Poppleton on the 21st and 300 at Hagg Bridge on the 25th.

Present on Clifton Ings during the winter with a peak of 250 on 22nd February while 35 flew west over Askham Bog on the 5th, four east over Priory Street, York on 13th March and three north-west over the River Ouse on the 16th.

In the Huby area, flocks of c.100 were beside Cass Wood on 21st February, 100+ on the 23rd, 50+ on 23rd March with another flock near Cass Wood on 3rd April and another of 20 on the 10th.

100 were at Selby on 19th February with another 100 near Bolton Percy on the 23rd and they were the most numerous species feeding in a thrush flock in rough grass between East Cottingwith and Ellerton on the 20th. 40 flew north at Poppleton on the 27th while another eight flew north there on 17th March.

Small numbers were present in January, February and March in the New Earswick area while 16 flew north at Appletree village, York on 20th March and one was near Heslington on the 5th.

At least 50 were at Strensall Common on 10th March while c 500 were mixed with c100 Redwings *Turdus iliacus* at High Roans, Sheriff Hutton road on the 24th and were still present next morning. 30 flew west over Strensall on the 25th and 15 flew north over Sutton Farm on the 27th.

Between 30 and 100+ Fieldfares and Redwings were seen on the Upper Poppleton school field on various dates between January and April with the last being six Fieldfare on 28th April.

Other parties consisted of 26 near Wood House Farm, Strensall on 6th April, 50 near Rufforth on the 7th, 20 in trees along the north-west side of Strensall Common YWT reserve on the 9th, c.20 in a stubble field opposite Strensall Barracks, Towthorpe on the 15th while one was seen at White House Farm in Fulford parish on the 24th.

Recorded during the York farmland bird survey in the parishes of Kexby (70 on 7th April), Nether Poppleton (c.50 on 15th April) and Dunnington where 61 on 3rd May were the last of the spring.

The first autumn records were 30 at Skelton on 28th October followed by a party often on Easingwold Road, Huby on 3rd November, 50 at Bishopthorpe tennis club on 7th November and three at East Lilling House near Strensall on the 17th. c.20 were by the River Ouse near Bishopthorpe on the 19th while 12 flew over Poppleton on the same date and c.50 were there on the 27th.

Flocks of c.25 were at Gracious Street and Easingwold Road, Huby on 25th November with 20 seen in flight near Sheriff Hutton on 2nd December when five were spread out next to the River Rye near West Ness and a flock of 25 was at Butterwick.

200 were at Melbourne on 26th December and a widely-dispersed mixed flock of 500+ Fieldfares and Redwings was between Thickpenny Farm and Moor Monkton the following day. Fulford Golf Course held 25-30 on 30th December and 50+ were at Heslington Tillmire the same day.

Present during a walk in December between Blue Bridge, York and the bypass bridge at Old Earswick and other sightings in December consisted of six at New Earswick on the 27th, four on Upper Poppleton school field on the 29th with others at Rawcliffe Ings and Nunnington on the 31st.

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos*

Status: Resident breeder but in decline in some areas

The first song in Osbaldwick was heard on 10th January and by the month end four or five were singing between Osbaldwick and York city centre. However, birds were not recorded in Dunnington village during January and February, then a small increase in singing males occurred during the spring months.

Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum count of 18 (12 singing males) on 28th February. The first song was heard there on 23rd January with two birds singing at Fulford Ings. Three were singing in Osbaldwick village on 9th March with

six on Osbaldwick Lane at dusk on 15th March and one was seen with food in an Osbaldwick garden on 16th April.

In Strensall, singing was noted from 1st February with two frequently heard from early March and three at separate sites in the village on 15th April while another four individuals were in the village on 4th May.

Single birds were seen singing or feeding at Gilling Castle, Gilling East and Castle Howard Lake on 13th February, York on 1st March, Straylands Grove, York on 23rd February and 17th April, Redwing Farm, Strensall on 6th April with two singing at Aughton Hall on 20th February.

Other records consisted of three at Brayton Barff on 23rd March with one at Cawood Bishop Wood North on 9th April and also recorded in the parishes of Dunnington, Heslington, Kexby, Naburn and Rawcliffe during the York farmland bird survey.

Seen regularly around Huby throughout the year and also regular throughout the northern recording area. In New Earswick, present throughout the year in low numbers with a maximum of four on 27th July but much harder to find at the end of the year, even in the usual haunts. Also recorded all year at Rawcliffe Ings, Nunnington and Clifton Ings with 40+ at the latter site on 22nd November.

One was singing at Selby on 3rd December and early song was also heard in Osbaldwick from the 11th in very mild weather, but stopped on the 15th with colder weather. Also present in November and December between Blue Bridge, York and the bypass bridge at Old Earswick and one was seen at Rawcliffe Ings on 31st December.

REDWING *Turdus iliacus*

Status: Winter visitor

Up to seven were seen along the River Ouse between York and Naburn early in the year with up to two birds subsinging in Rowntree Park, York during March while the last in this area were two at Fulford Ings on the 26th.

c.20 were with a large flock of Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris* in a field beside Thornton Lodge Farm, south of Oulston on 15th January with c.50 beside Cass Wood, Huby on 21st February and four to five birds in a large party of Fieldfare near Huby on the 23rd. In the New Earswick area, small numbers were noted in January and February with five at Slingsby on 1st January, two at Nunnington on 9th February, one between Gilling and Ampleforth on the 13th and also present at Clifton Ings during the winter months.

70 were at Castle Howard on 19th January and 142 were there next day while 13 were in trees north of Castle Howard Lake on 13th February and c.100 seen with Fieldfares at High Roans, Sheriff Hutton road on 24th March.

2000 were at Hagg Bridge on 25th January and 10-20 were with c.100 Fieldfare feeding in a rough grass field between East Cottingwith and Ellerton on 20th February while three were in a field near Heslington on 5th March. 200 at Selby on 28th March was the last sighting of the winter.

Return autumn passage was first noted over York University on 10th October and Osbaldwick from the 26th and a flock of c.50 was on the Castle Howard Estate on the 31st.

Along the River Ouse, return passage was late with c.100 near Bishopthorpe on 19th November and smaller numbers seen thereafter.

Present in November and December between Blue Bridge, York and the bypass bridge at Old Earswick and one was in a hedge on Pottery Lane, Strensall on 3rd November with eight on farmland near Bolton Percy on the 29th.

A flock of 50+ was at Butterwick on 2nd December and 15 were next to the River Rye near West Ness the same day with five in woods beside the bottom pond at Pond Head Farm, Oulston on the 22nd.

At New Earswick, the maximum during the autumn was 35 on 27th December while a widely-dispersed mixed flock of 500+ Redwings and Fieldfares was between Thickpenny Farm and Moor Monkton on the 27th. 40 were at Fulford Golf Course on the 30th with other thrushes and 37 were at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on the 31st with one at Rawcliffe Ings.

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus*

Status: Resident breeder and winter visitor

Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with the first song heard on 8th January and three pairs on territory by the 30th. Four were at Askham Bog on 5th February with two singing and up to ten were seen in the Naburn Sewage Works area during the summer.

The first song recorded in Osbaldwick was on 13th January and single singing birds were heard near Gilling Castle and Ampleforth College on 13th February, Strensall Common on

10th March and 15th April with up to five singing at Brayton Barff on 23rd March. One or more individuals were also recorded in the early part of the year at High Leys Farm near Newburgh Priory on 15th January, Nunnington on 11th February, Ampleforth College and near Castle Howard Lake on 13th February, Monk Stray, York on 23rd February, High Roans, Sheriff Hutton Road, Strensall on 24th March, Cawood Bishop Wood North on 9th April and Pottery Lane fishery, Strensall on 6th April and 4th May.

Breeding records included one carrying food at Fulford Ings on 22nd April and a family party of four at St George's Field, York on 1st May. Birds were also seen at Park House Farm, Strensall on 4th May, Strensall Common YWT reserve on 27th May, four in a field east of Strensall Common on the same date and three at Castle Howard on 24th June.

Three birds were seen at Castle Howard Arboretum on 22nd September while Clifton Ings held flocks of 30 on 14th September and 20 on 4th October. Present in October, November (seven) and December between Blue Bridge, York and the bypass bridge at Old Earswick and also at Pottery Lane fishery with one at Sheriff Hutton Road, Strensall on 3rd November and four in Poppleton on 2nd December. Early singing birds were along York city walls on 4th November, Brecks Wood, Strensall on the 17th, Selby on the 21st and near Sheriff Hutton in mild weather on 2nd December.

Present in the New Earswick area throughout the year in varying numbers with a maximum of 14 on 5th October. Also present at Clifton Ings and Rawcliffe Ings and seen daily in Huby all year where more common than Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*.

The species was seen regularly throughout the northern recording area and also noted in the parishes of Dunnington, Heslington, Kexby and Naburn during the York farmland bird survey.

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Status: Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first record of the year was a male seen at Wheldrake Ings on 21st April followed by two heard singing at Fulford Ings on the 24th. Later, five were heard singing at Ross Carrs on 4th May and up to 14 were singing at Fulford Ings on the 10th. Singles were also recorded at Poppleton on the 1st, Rawcliffe Lake on the 8th, Castle Howard on the 13th, Strensall Common on the 16th and at the end of Broadway West in Fulford on 9th June. Two pairs bred at Clifton Ings while two were seen at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd July and birds were seen at Acaster Malbis during the York farmland bird survey. Two birds were displaced when vegetation was cut at Fulford Hall on 8th July and the last record was of two at Fulford Ings on 20th August.

REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Status: Migrant breeder and passage migrant

Three singing males were heard at Wheldrake Ings on 6th May and five were singing there on the 10th while Ross Carrs held 21 singing males on the 20th. Singing individuals were also heard by the River Ouse at Riccall on 10th June and at Fulford Ings on 4th June and 1st July.

LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca*

Status: Migrant breeder

One singing male at Wheldrake Ings on 21st April was followed by a pair at Fulford Ings on the 22nd. One was in Bishopthorpe parish on the 24th and two were singing along the edge of Fulford golf course on the 24th with another at North Duffield Carrs the same day. Singing birds were also found at Fulford Ings (three) and Melbourne on 1st May, Aughton Ings on the 14th and New Earswick on the 24th with other sightings at Wheldrake parish on 30th April, Forest Farm, Warhill on 1st May and Rawcliffe Lake on the 10th. Birds were also present during the breeding season at Brayton Barff and Dunnington with four to five pairs at Clifton Ings. One at Fulford Ings on 20th August was the last for the year.

WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis*

Status: Migrant breeder

The first returning birds were single singing males at North Duffield Carrs and Riccall on 23rd April followed by at least five birds in Bishopthorpe and Fulford parishes the next day. Two were at Poppleton on 27th May with one on the 29th and three singing between Strensall and Earswick on 30th April. Other sightings consisted of singles at Wheldrake on the latter date, Osbaldwick and Park House Farm, Pottery Lane, Strensall on 4th May and six pairs at Poppleton on the 5th. Eight were singing at Fulford Ings on 29th April, increasing to 12 by 6th May and two were singing at Middlethorpe Ings on 6th May and Castle Howard on

the same date and again on 24th June. Birds were seen at Rawcliffe Lake from 8th-10th May with two there on the 22nd, Naburn Wood on 13th May and 24th June, New Earswick on 24th May, Strensall Common on the 16th and 27th and near Sutton-on-the-Forest on the 20th. Four were at Coneysthorpe on 24th June with four heard regularly along the cycleway at Osbaldwick where young were seen on 12th July with a family group on 3rd August. Four were at Potteries Lake, Strensall on 11th July with a group of eight at Wheldrake Ings on the 3rd and 10-12 pairs on Clifton Ings was a good record.

Other records consisted of singles at Sutton-on-the-Forest on 17th and 19th July, Fulford Ings on 27th August and a few in the Dunnington area during the year.

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin*

Status: Migrant breeder

One at Brayton Barff on 27th April was the first record followed by singing males at Wheldrake Ings on the 29th then Bailie Hill, York and Broadway West, Fulford on 1st May. Four were in the Selby area on 7th May and one at Wheldrake Ings on the 10th with three singing along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on the 13th and another in York on the 14th. At least one pair was on Clifton Ings and a single bird was seen beside Pond Head Farm, Oulston on 16th July.

BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla*

Status: Migrant breeder and winter visitor

The first record was of one singing at Fulford Road on 16th March with others at Poppleton on the 24th, Sturges Ponds on the 25th and York University on 8th April. Thereafter numerous sightings were made across the area during April and May with records of single birds from Strensall, Riccall, York, Earswick, Castle Howard, Naburn and Rufforth. A total of c.20 were singing in Bishopthorpe and Fulford parishes on 24th April with about ten in the Fulford Ings area on the 29th. Eight birds were seen in Kexby on 1st May, three at Naburn Wood on the 13th and four along the cycleway between Osbaldwick and York on the 2nd with 17 birds heard singing at Brayton Barff from the 4th-9th. The first fledglings at Fulford Ings were seen on 10th June and there were five to six pairs on Clifton Ings. Single birds were seen around the New Earswick area at two locations during June, July and August and a single male was seen in the woods beside Pond Head Farm, Oulston on 16th July.

CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita* Status:

Migrant breeder and passage migrant

An overwintering bird seen on 17th January in riverside gardens, York was very greyish and thought to be possibly of the Siberian race *tristis*. The first spring arrival was one singing at Fulford Ings on 16th March and up to three were singing there by the 19th. Singing birds were in Askham Bog and Huttons Ambo on the 18th with two at Wheldrake Ings the same day and another on the 19th. Three were singing at Sand Hutton on the 20th and another three at Hagg Wood, Dunnington on the 21st and five were singing along the River Ouse south of York on the 23rd. St Nicholas Fields, York held one on 22nd March but it was not heard there again until 14th July, with the last on 28th September.

After 25th March and into April, one to three were recorded at many locations including Wheldrake Ings, York (Fulford, Appletree village, Skeldergate Bridge, Monk Stray, Dewsbury Terrace, Clifton Moor), Sutton Farm, Castle Howard, Cass Wood (Huby), Strensall and Strensall Common. Numerous birds were on Skip with Common on 9th April and 11 were singing at Brayton Barff from 27th April to 7th May with a single in the New Earswick area on 16th May being the only record there. Strensall Common held three on 27th May and birds were seen in Naburn parish in May during the York farmland bird survey. Two were seen at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd July with a single singing at Osbaldwick Lane on 6th July and another at Walbutts Lane, Strensall on 12th July.

A juvenile was singing at Fulford Ings on 5th August and up to eight birds were seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on 16th September with another at Wheldrake Ings. Seen and heard at Yearsley Moor on 4th September and Wheldrake Ings and Strensall Common on the 27th while the last were at Fulford Ings and Naburn Sewage Works on 1st October. A small passage occurred at Rawcliffe Lake with single birds seen throughout September and a possible bird of the Siberian race *tristis* was on Clifton Ings on 22nd November (NS). The last record was one seen by the River Foss at the Castle Museum, York on 17th December.

WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Status: Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first was one heard in Yearsley on 1st April with two at Hull Road Park, York on the 8th and another at Wheldrake Bridge the same day. Numerous on Skipwith Common on the 9th

with one singing near the sewage works by Strensall Common the same day and others at Fulford and Poppleton on the 11th. Five males were heard at Ellis Wood, Strensall and Hoptrove on the 16th, St Nicholas Fields and Yearsley Moor on the 19th and Wheldrake Ings on the 21st. Larger numbers were noted in late April with 20 singing along the River Ouse south of York on the 20th and 12 at Fulford Ings on the 22nd with a total of c.30 heard singing in Bishopthorpe and Fulford parishes on the 24th. 15 were heard singing at Brayton Barff on the 29th, ten singing at Sturges Pond on 7th May and, on 27th May, nine were around Strensall Common and three in the wood near St Wilfred's Church, Strensall.

Three pairs bred at Rawcliffe Lake and many birds were present on Clifton Ings throughout the summer while in the New Earswick area the maximum number of four was recorded on 28th June. Fledglings were noticed on 29th July at Fulford Ings and other sightings in July were two at Wheldrake Ings on the 3rd, Walbutts Lane, Strensall on the 12th and Pond Head Farm, Oulston on the 16th. Also recorded at Naburn and Rawcliffe during the York farmland bird survey. Singles were in an Osbaldwick garden on 1st August, Poppleton on the 10th and Strensall on the 12th with the last record by the River Foss in Huntingdon on 1st October.

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus*

Status: Resident breeder and winter visitor

Ten were noted at Askham Bog early in the year and males began singing along the R' Ouse between York and Naburn on 26th February. A pair was seen regularly on the edge of New Earswick Nature Reserve and 12 were counted at Brayton Barff on 23rd March with several at Yearsley Moor on 19th April and 4th September. Two birds were seen at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd July, three at Walbutts Lane, Strensall on the 12th and singles found at several locations in the woods around Pond Head Farm, Oulston on the 16th with a juvenile at Fulford Ings the following day. Four birds were in a spinney on the Foss Walk at Walbutts Farm, Strensall on 17th November and over ten were seen in a family group at Cass Wood, Huby on the 26th.

Singles were also recorded at Castle Howard, Clifton Ings, Nunnington, Naburn, Towthorpe, Strensall Common and various areas in York during the year.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata*

Status: Migrant breeder and passage visitor

The first record was of four counted at Brayton Barff on 11th May with three at Wass Wood on the 13th and two at the western end of Strensall Common on the 27th. One at Bishopthorpe Palace on the 14th was also present on 20th and 24th June and another was also seen at Naburn Wood on the 24th with three at Castle Howard the same day.

A pair nested in a Huby garden from mid-May but the date they left is not known due to the observer's absence. A juvenile was seen being fed by an adult near a nest at Brayton Barff and a family party of at least five birds was seen at Bishopthorpe Crematorium on 29th July. Two adults fed three juveniles which had just fledged at Wheldrake Ings on 19th August. One was seen at Fulford Hall on 9th September with the last at Wheldrake Ings on the 16th.

LONG-TAILED TIT *Aegithalos caudatus*

Status: Resident breeder

Along the River Ouse, good numbers were present throughout the year at Clifton Ings with up to 20 between York and Naburn. Up to 30 were at Askham Bog early in the year and small parties were also in South Wood (Hovingham), Banks Wood (Castle Howard), Manor Farm (Oulston) and along the River Foss. In February, Grimston Wood had a party of 21 and 30 were in Warren Wood, Dunnington Common. Parties visited various gardens early in the year with ten in a Huby garden on 9th January, 16 in Poppleton feeding on peanuts on the 12th and seven similarly feeding in Sim Balk Lane, Bishopthorpe for several days in February.

Pairs were nest building by Wheldrake Ings car park on 18th March and at Sutton Farm, Sutton-on-Derwent on the 29th and five were along Brecks Lane, Strensall on the 19th. Nest building was also observed at Strensall Common on 9th April. Other sightings in April and May included birds at Naburn, Rawcliffe Ings, Dunnington, Cawood Bishop Wood North and Heslington. Fledglings were seen along the River Ouse between York and Naburn from 13th May and two family parties were along the track behind the golf course, Strensall Common on the 27th. Six were at Monk Stray, York on the 20th. In July, nine were at Wheldrake Ings on the 3rd, c.20 at Walbutts Lane, Strensall on the 12th and c.20 in trees near Bleak House Farm, Heslington on the 13th. A family party was in woods near Pond Head Farm, Oulston on the 16th and two were between Askham Bar and the River Ouse in York on the 21st.

A family party was at Yearsley Moor on 4th September and 12 were at Wheldrake Ings on the 21st. In November and December, 69 were counted along the River Foss between Blue Bridge in York and the ring road bridge at Earswick while 34 were in the New Earswick area on 13th November, c.30 were on Strensall Common and family parties of at least ten were at Firth Wood, Castle Howard and at Cass Wood, Huby during November. Similar parties were

at Black Fir plantation, Pond Head Farm, Oulston on 22nd December. Also present at Rawcliffe Ings on the 31st and small numbers returned to gardens in the Poppleton area with at least ten feeding on nuts on 25th November and throughout December.

MARSH TIT *Parus palustris*

Status: Resident breeder

Present all year at Yearsley Moor with up to ten at Askham Bog early in the year. A party of at least ten was in Slingsby Banks Wood, Castle Howard Estate on 1st January. In March, one or two were singing along the River Ouse near Bishopthorpe with one or two seen there later in the year. One was near cottages at Common Lane, Strensall Common on 15th April and two were in Naburn Wood on 26th June. A single was in woods beside Bottom Pond, Oulston on 16th July and individuals were seen regularly in the Beck Wood area of Strensall Common during the summer and autumn. In November, one was by Sheriff Hutton Road, Strensall on the 3rd and several were along the Entrenchment Ridge, Castle Howard on the 5th.

In December, several were in a mixed tit flock in woods at Oulston Moor on the 22nd, one was near the River Foss between York and Earswick and four were in Warren Wood, Dunnington Common feeding on burdock seeds.

WILLOW TIT *Parus montanus*

Status: Resident breeder

Only a few records from the Dunnington area was a disappointment as the species used to be a common bird even going into gardens to feed on peanuts. Up to about five were in Askham Bog early in the year and one was in Cawood Bishop Wood North on 9th April. One was at East Cottingwith on 1st September and several were along the Entrenchment Ridge, Castle Howard on 5th November.

COAL TIT *Parus ater*

Status: Resident breeder

Seen throughout the year at Clifton Ings and along the River Ouse between York and Naburn where up to three were seen or heard. A regular visitor to gardens in Upper Poppleton and Nunnington all year and two regularly fed on peanuts on Dunnington Common during the winter months. Up to ten were at Askham Bog early in the year. Other reports came from Slingsby Banks Wood, Castle Howard Estate on 1st January, one at Yearsley Moor Woods on 13th February and eight at Brayton Barff on 23rd March. In April, one was at Forest Farm, Warthill on the 6th, three were in Cawood Bishop Wood North on the 9th and one was near the railway line across Strensall Common on the 15th. There were also reports from Dunnington and Rawcliffe on the 30th.

A group of ten, including juveniles, was on farmland in Fulford parish on 24th June. Throughout the year there were sightings in a Huntingdon garden and close to New Earswick Nature Reserve with evidence of breeding at both sites and a maximum of four seen on 27th June. A juvenile was at Pond head Farm, Oulston on 16th July. Also seen regularly in the Beck Wood area of Strensall Common during the summer and autumn.

One was in a Strensall garden on 9th September and 20th October. Individuals were near the River Foss between York city centre and the ring road and by Castle Howard Lake in October. In November, one was on Strensall Common on the 5th, two were in a Poppleton garden on the 7th and two were by Castle Howard Lake on the 19th. Several were in a mixed tit flock in woods at Oulston Moor on 22nd December. Although seen all year at Yearsley Moor, the maximum flock was of 20 on 31st December.

BLUE TIT *Parus caeruleus*

Status: Resident breeder and winter visitor

Seen throughout the year at Huby, Strensall, Strensall Common, Askham Bog, Clifton Ings, the River Ouse between York and Naburn, Nunnington and Rawcliffe Lake where five or six pairs were present. A common bird in the Dunnington area with 20 there on 24th February. Also present in the Ampleforth, Gilling East and Yearsley Moor Wood areas with more than ten there on 13th February. Ten were around Aughton Church on the 20th. 56 were counted at Brayton Barff on 23rd March and an individual was observed carrying nesting material into a bat box at New Walk, Fulford on the 26th. Other spring reports came from Cawood Bishop Wood North, Heslington and Kexby where there were seven on 7th April and two on 1st May. Seven were in a 1km square near Naburn Wood on 13th May and 24th June. In Fulford parish, the first fledglings were seen on 24th June and nesting occurred in a Huby garden nest box.

Seen regularly near Walbutts Lane, Strensall during the summer until the year end and three

were between Askham Bar and the River Ouse in York on 21st July. In the autumn, four or five were by Castle Howard Lake on 20th October and at least 12 were there in a flock of tits and finches on 19th November. At least ten were in hedges along Brecks Lane, Strensall on 5th November and several were in a mixed tit flock in woods at Oulston Moor on 22nd December. Seen regularly along the River Foss between Blue Bridge in York and the ring road from September to December and in the New Earswick area in suitable gardens, hedges and wooded areas with a maximum of 42 on 27th December.

GREAT TIT *Parus major*

Status: Resident breeder and winter visitor

A common bird throughout the recording area found in all suitable habitat. Regularly seen all year at Huby, Askham Bog, Strensall Common, Nunnington and on Clifton Ings with two or three pairs at Rawcliffe Lake.

Also resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn though much less common than Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*. In January, two were at Castle Howard on the 1st, two at Oulston Reservoir on the 7th and a male was singing in Strensall on the 13th. Three or four were singing around Aughton Church on 20th February. 26 were counted at Brayton Barff on 23rd March, two in Cawood Bishop Wood North on 9th April and pairs at Towthorpe and Strensall Common on the 15th. In April and May, birds were reported in the parishes of Dunnington, Heslington, Kexby (five on 7th April) and Rawcliffe. Five were in a 1km square near Naburn Wood on 13th May.

Along the River Ouse between York and Naburn the first fledglings were seen on 9th June. At least 12 were with other tits and finches at the north end of Castle Howard Lake on 19th November and several were in a mixed tit flock in woods at Oulston Moor on 22nd December.

Seen regularly along the River Foss between Blue Bridge in York and the ring road from September to December and in the New Earswick area in suitable gardens, hedges and wooded areas with a maximum of 17 on 27th December.

NUTHATCH *Sitta europaea*

Status: Resident breeder

Most reports came from the Castle Howard Estate: one was at Slingsby Banks Wood on 1st January and singles were at Castle Howard on 8th and 15th January, 19th February, 19th March and 16th April.

Other reports consisted of one near York Crematorium on 22nd March, two at Wass Wood on 13th May and one at Low Wood, Ampleforth the same day. A single was at Black Fir Plantation, Pond Head Farm, Oulston on 22nd December.

TREECREEPER *Certhia familiaris*

Status: Resident breeder

One to three were regularly seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year, with two pairs noted on 26th February. Also present all year at Clifton Ings with up to eight at Askham Bog early in the year. A single was at Slingsby Banks Wood, Castle Howard Estate on 1st January with two on Strensall Common on 27th February, one on 10th and 19th March and on 15th April when one was unfortunately found dead. Three were at The Stripe Woods, Stillington on 4th March, five at Brayton Barff on the 23rd and one at Cass Wood, Huby on the 26th. One was at Cawood Bishop Wood North on 9th April and two were at Wass Wood on 13th May. Adults carrying food were seen along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on 29th April and 6th May. Between October and December singles and pairs were at various locations including Castle Howard Lake, Walbutts Lane (Strensall), a Nunnington garden, Black Fir Plantation (Pond Head Farm, Oulston), Dunnington Common, Link Road Bridge in New Earswick and Rawcliffe Ings.

JAY *Garrulus glandarius*

Status: Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

Between January and April one to three were at various locations including Askham Bog, Yearsley Moor Wood, Strensall Common and Cass Wood, Huby. Pairs were at Pond Head Farm, Oulston on 16th July and Yearsley Moor on 4th September and 24th October. Up to four were at various locations from October until the year end, including Castle Howard, Buttercrambe, Scackleton and Strensall Common.

MAGPIE *Pica pica*

Status: Resident breeder

Seen daily throughout the year around Huby with good numbers at Clifton Ings and three to four at Rawcliffe Lake. Fairly common along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with family parties noted from the summer. Nest building was observed on the cycleway in Tang Hall, York on 4th January and one was prospecting nest sites at Grimston Lodge on 21st February. Three pairs were near the golf course at Strensall on 9th April and three birds were in Kexby on the 7th.

Also present in Dunnington and Rawcliffe during the summer months and two were between Askham Bar and the River Ouse in York on 21st July. An adult with two juveniles was in Strensall on 25th July while four birds harassed ducklings on Poppleton village pond and probably took one or more on 13th August. Widespread throughout the New Earswick area with a maximum of 16 on 5th October.

In November, six were in a field by Brecks Lane, Strensall on the 5th and 12 were there on the 17th. Up to 18 roosted at Dunnington Common and between September and December they were present along the River Foss between York and the ring road.

JACKDAW *Corvus monedula*

Status: Resident breeder

Seen at various locations throughout the year including Clifton Ings, Sutton-on-the-Forest, Easingwold and Nunnington where there were up to nine, c.30 were near Aughton Church on 20th February. A pair was prospecting the chimney of an office in St Andrews Lane, York on 22nd March. 33 were at Kexby on 7th April and they were also present in Acaster Malbis, Dunnington and Naburn parishes during April and May. Two were near Naburn Wood on 13th May and three were there on 24th June. A mixed flock of 40 Jackdaws and Rooks *Corvus frugilegus* was at Wheldrake Ings on 29th September and flocks of 100+ were on Dunnington Common during the autumn.

They were widespread in the New Earswick area all year, especially near human habitation, with a maximum of 21 on 5th October. Seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of about 100 on farmland south of Bishopthorpe on 3rd December. Also present along the River Foss between York and the ring road from October to the year end.

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus*

Status: Resident breeder

Three large flocks were present along the A1079 between Dunnington and Barmby Moor and at least 30 were at Clifton Ings all year. Seen regularly throughout the year around Huby and in the New Earswick area, especially in cultivated fields around Haxby Road Farm and Kettlestring Farm, c.20 were near Skirpenbeck on 1st January and they were numerous at Oulston Reservoir on the 7th. 20 were at Gilling Castle on 13th February. Nest building activity was observed at Dam Hill Farm on 21st February and near Skeldergate Bridge, York on 1st April where up to five pairs possibly bred. The rookery at The Old Rectory, Strensall had 11 active nests on 9th April and there were seven in Lawrence Street, York. There were at least 200 nests in the Dunnington area. Between April and May, they were present in Naburn, Rawcliffe and Kexby where there were 27 on 7th April and 30 on 1st May. 16 were in an area near Naburn Wood on 13th May and four were there on 24th June. Seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum count of c.300 on farmland south of Bishopthorpe on 3rd December.

Also present along the River Foss between York and the ring road from September to December and large flocks of up to 1000 were in the Dunnington area in the winter months.

CARRION CROW *Corvus corone*

Status: Resident breeder

Seen regularly throughout the year at Huby, Yearsley Moor, New Earswick, Dunnington and Clifton Ings with up to six present at Rawcliffe Lake. Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a count of 20 together in a field near Bishopthorpe Bridge on 19th March. Numerous at Oulston Reservoir on 7th January and about five were in Askham Bog on 18th February. In April and May reports came from Cawood Bishop Wood North, Earswick Moor, Kexby, Naburn, Rawcliffe, Rufforth and Dunnington. Also observed feeding on a dead Red Fox *Vulpes vulpes* at Linton-on-Ouse on 20th May. A juvenile with white spots was in Poppleton on 31st July. Birds were present along the River Foss between York and the ring road between September and December, with 27 counted in the New Earswick area on 5th October.

STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris*

Status: Resident breeder and winter visitor

Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn, around Huby and throughout the

New Earswick area with a maximum of 100. Present all year at Rawcliffe Lake with peak counts of 70 on 25th-28th April, 46 on 11th October and 84 on 8th December. Up to 16 visited a Nunnington garden during the year and c.20 were regular visitors to a Strensall garden in January and February. 18 were on the Elmpark Estate, York on 5th January and large pre-roost displays were seen near Clifton Moor on the 16th. c.400 were between Haxby and Strensall on 24th February while 55 were in Rowntree Park, York on 17th March and a flock of 65 flew east over the Millennium Bridge, York on the 24th. During April and May reports came from Acaster Malbis, Kexby, Naburn and Rawcliffe. c.100 were on a school field at Upper Poppleton on 1st and 2nd April and 20 were in a stubble field at York Road, Strensall on the 15th - in both cases feeding with Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*. Nest building activity was observed in Osbaldwick on 7th April, at York University and Hull Road Park, York on the 8th and under the eaves of a Huby house, c.100 were feeding in a sheep field near New Earswick on 24th May and 20-30 were in fields at the east end of Strensall Common on the 27th. 50 juveniles were at Naburn Sewage Works on 25th June and 25 including at least three juveniles were in a Strensall garden on 14th July. 32 were between Askham Bar and the River Ouse in York on 21st July. Up to 20 fed in Strensall gardens from August to the year end and they were present along the River Foss between York and the ring road.

Though not a normal visitor to an Osbaldwick garden, they came as usual in September to eat the elderberries.

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus*

Status: Resident breeder

Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn and in the Huby and New Earswick areas with a maximum count of 20 in the latter. Up to 30 were present all year at Rawcliffe Lake and seen regularly in Strensall gardens with 25+ seen on 7th February. Up to 17 visited a Nunnington garden during the year with 30+ at Thornton Lodge Farm, south of Oulston on 15th January and four were near Aughton Church on 20th February. Present in Acaster Malbis, Naburn and Rawcliffe in April and May with 18 along Brecks Lane, Strensall on 9th April and six in Kexby on 1st May. Two broods were produced during the summer in a Huby garden nest box that had previously been used by Tree Sparrows *Passer montanus*. A brood with unusual plumage was first seen in a Poppleton garden on 25th June: one had ginger tones, one was almost white and three had varying amounts of white. Up to 20 including fledglings/juveniles were in a Strensall garden during July and August and six were at Brecks Heath, Strensall on 1st July. At least 100 gathered in mature hedges round a wheat field behind Bleak House Farm, Heslington on 13th July. Two were between Askham Bar and the River Ouse in York on 21st July. Strensall gardens held good numbers in the autumn with up to 30 seen on some days and 30-40 were in a hedge north of the nearby River Foss on 1st October. A flock of c.50 were at Brecks Lane, Strensall on 17th November. Numbers were noticeably lower in Osbaldwick in the autumn, but seemed to pick up in the centre of York in December. This species was the most common bird recorded in the Dunnington Village survey with 2526 visits to gardens. Also present along the River Foss between Blue Bridge in York and the ring road from September to December and in a roadside hedge at Rawcliffe Ings on 25th December.

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus*

Status: Resident breeder and passage visitor

13 fed in an Upper Poppleton garden throughout January, with 20 there in February and March. Up to four visited a Nunnington garden during the year and small numbers wintered at Clifton Ings with one or two pairs staying on to breed. Up to eight wintered in two gardens in New Earswick, departing by mid-April and five were seen once elsewhere in New Earswick. Five were near Sutton-on-the-Forest Cemetery and six were in Huby on 23rd February. Four fed in a farm garden near Haxby on the 24th. c.40 were at Sutton Farm, Sutton-on-Derwent throughout March. 12 were at Park House Farm and one at Buncombe Farm, Strensall on 6th April while three were at Warbutts near Strensall Common on the 9th. On the 15th, c.20 were in a hedge and field by Brecks Lane, Strensall (where they were seen regularly throughout the summer and autumn) with a further eight in a conifer hedge near the sewage works. Three singing males were at Riccall on the 23rd and at least 14 were on farmland in Bishopthorpe and Fulford parishes on the 24th with a male singing at Fulford Hall from 29th April until 13th May.

During April and May there was a total of 109 sightings during the York farmland bird survey.

Dunnington is still a stronghold for this species with four different breeding colonies and counts of 50 birds are not unusual. This species was the fourteenth most common bird feeding in gardens in the Dunnington Village survey. A pair was in Poppleton on 5th May and one near Naburn Wood on the 13th with two there on 24th June. At least ten were on farmland in Bishopthorpe parish on 14th May and 18th June while a male was singing in Fulford parish and five were at Woodhouse Grange on 20th May. Three fledglings were in an Upper Poppleton garden on the 23rd and two adults were at Manor House Farm, Sutton-on-the-Forest on the 26th. A small flock of up to ten was around the Sheriff Hutton Bridge

Cricket Club from May to September and a small flock was at Riccall on 10th June. 40 were in the field edge by the Sustrans cycle track at Cawood on 23rd August. Two fed in an Upper Poppleton garden on 6th October and five were present there from 2nd November until the year end. A party of about ten was at Gracious Street, Huby on 3rd November and three were there on the 25th. At least 16 were by Brecks Lane, Strensall - with at least one at Warbutts Farm nearby - on the 5th and five were at Tally Hill, Huby on the 25th. 20+ were at Pear Tree Cottage near Skipwith on the 26th. Five were at Chestnut Avenue, New Earswick by mid-December, with the number steadily increasing to 20 by the 30th. The flock was more mobile than in previous winters with small parties flying off occasionally and five in nearby Hawthorn Terrace were assumed to be from the same flock. Parties of up to c.60 were seen regularly in the Thornton area with a maximum count of 200 on 22nd December. They were associated with an outdoor pig unit where they were presumably feeding. Also present at Rawcliffe Ings on the 10th.

CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs*

Status: Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

Up to 20 were along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year. Good numbers were on Clifton Ings all year as well as on farmland in Bishopthorpe and Fulford parishes and around Huby and Strensall Common. Up to nine visited a Nunnington garden during the year and up to ten were in Askham Bog early in the year. Four were near Skirpenbeck on 1st January and c.30 were at Oulston reservoir on the 7th. 30-40 were in an old hedge near a dismantled railway north of Yearsley Moor Wood on 13th February and at least 12 were around Aughton Church on the 20th. In March, reports came from Stillington and Strensall with the first singing male in Osbaldwick on the 9th. 86 were at Sutton Farm, Sutton-on-Derwent and 23 were counted at Brayton Barff on the 23rd. Present in Acaster Malbis, Dunnington, Heslington, Naburn and Rawcliffe parishes in April and May, with 19 at Kexby on 7th April and 11 there on 1st May. Four were in Cawood Bishop Wood North on 9th April and about ten with Tree Sparrows *Passer montanus* at Brecks Lane, Strensall on the 15th while 20 were near Naburn Wood on 13th May with 17 there on 24th June

In the Strensall area, about ten were at Pottery Lane Fishery on 3rd November and c.100 were in a hedge and field north of Strensall Common on the 5th. At least 30 were in a field by Brecks Lane on the 5th and were feeding off hawthorn there on the 17th. c.12 were with a tit flock feeding on beech mast at the north end of the Great Lake and c.20 at Firth Wood, Castle Howard on the 19th. Present along the River Foss between York and the ring road from November to December, on Rawcliffe Ings on 31st December and around the New Earswick Nature Reserve with a maximum of 11 there on the 27th.

Very numerous at Yearsley Moor with a flock of 100+ on the 31st while up to 250 visited the feeding station by the Geoff Smith hide at North Duffield Carrs throughout the month.

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla*

Status: Winter and passage visitor

One was on the riverside track at Wheldrake Ings on 7th January with five in the car park there on the 8th and 9th. Up to 13 remained in the car park lane throughout February with 16 there on the 19th. Scarce elsewhere in the Lower Derwent Valley NNR with five at Thorganby on the 18th. 40 were in the Wheldrake Ings car park area on 5th March with a single there on the 10th. Six, including a male coming into breeding plumage, were at Sutton-on-Derwent on the 23rd and 150 were in the same area on the 28th. Three were at Clifton Ings on 29th September while two were feeding on beech mast, with Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*, at the north end of Castle Howard Lake on 19th November with 13 there on 7th December. One on 14th December was the only record for Dunnington.

GREENFINCH *Carduelis chloris*

Status: Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

Good numbers were at Clifton Ings all year with a flock of 150 there on 29th February. Up to ten were at Rawcliffe Lake all year, with similar numbers along the River Ouse between York and Naburn. Up to 13 visited a Nunnington garden during the year and they were seen daily around Huby. 15-20 fed in an Upper Poppleton garden daily from January to the end of April. Also heard at Askham Bog and seen in the Museum Gardens, York on 9th January. Two to three were between Gilling East and Ampleforth and two males were singing along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on 13th February. A flock of 25 was near Aughton Church on the 20th and a male was displaying at King's Square, York on the same day while eight were near Haxby on the 24th. c.100 were at the Three Lakes, Selby on 9th March and at least 200 roosted at Fulford Golf Course on the 10th. Five or six were at the Strensall Common end of the Lane on the 15th. Present in Acaster Malbis, Copmanthorpe, Dunnington, Kexby, Naburn and Rawcliffe parishes during April and May, with 13 in Heslington parish on 27th April and three there on 11th May. Six were near Naburn Wood on 13th May and 24th June while three were on Strensall Common on 27th May with four there on 24th June. Also seen regularly visiting a Strensall garden during the summer and on to the year end. One was between Askham Bar and the River Ouse in York on 21st July and seen regularly in the New Earswick area all year with a maximum of 50 on the 27th. Ten

returned to an Upper Poppleton garden in August and 25-30 fed there daily throughout November and December.

Up to 100 visited the feeding station at North Duffield Carrs during December and also present along the River Foss between Blue Bridge in York and the ring road from September to December.

GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis*

Status: Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

300+ were at Dunnington Common on 1st January, this being the highest count for the year. Up to ten were at Askham Bog early in the year with similar numbers regularly seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn all year. At least 30 were at Oulston reservoir on 7th January and a single visited a Strensall garden on the 13th. Seen regularly around Huby and up to 15 were at Rawcliffe Lake all year and there were good numbers on Clifton Ings with a flock of 60 there on 29th February. A maximum of 20 was in the New Earswick area in February, mostly feeding in the agricultural areas in the north and west. In this area they moved back into gardens from late September. Other reports in February came from Buttercrambe, Gilling East, Ampleforth, Rowntree Park (York) and Bolton Percy with 30 at Wheldrake Ings on the 25th. In March, 25 were at Stillington on the 4th and five were at Strensall Common on the 19th. Two occasionally fed in an Upper Poppleton garden from March to May and in a Bishopthorpe garden in mid-March. In April and May reports of up to eight came from the parishes of Dunnington, Kexby, Naburn, Rawcliffe and Heslington as well as Cawood Bishop Wood North, Strensall Village and Strensall Common. Five were near Naburn Wood on 24th June, three at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd July and five between Askham bar and the River Ouse in York on the 21st. Present along the River Foss between Blue Bridge in York and the ring road from September to December. Parties of eight were by the River Foss in Huntingdon and at St George's Field, York on 1st October while 15 were at Yearsley Moor Woods on the 15th. 11 were on Strensall Common on 4th November and six or seven were at Castle Howard on the 19th. A Poppleton garden was visited by one bird on 7th November and five on 2nd December. A 'charm' of 50 was at Yearsley Moor on 31st December and c.100 remained at East Cottingwith during the month.

SISKIN *Carduelis spinus*

Status: Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

Up to 200 fed on alders in Askham Bog early in the year, most having departed by 18th March. Up to 20 were at Rawcliffe Lake throughout January until early February and up to 25 were along the River Ouse between York and Naburn during the winter months, with males singing in Rowntree Park on 19th February and at Fulford Ings on 17th March. Up to six were in the Old Foss Woods, New Earswick in January and March while 30 were at Warren Wood, Dunnington on 24th February and seven were at Yearsley on the 27th.

One or two visited garden feeders in various areas from January to March including Huntingdon, Strensall, Upper Poppleton and Appletree Village, York. Three were at Allerthorpe Common on 12th and one was singing at Strensall on the 27th and 28th. In April, 17 were in Cawood Bishop Wood North and two males were with two females near St Strensall Sewage works on the 9th. A pair was also with Redpoll C. flammea near Wilfred's Church, Strensall on the 15th.

Two flocks, with at least 50 in each, were at separate locations at Yearsley Moor on 24th September and c.50 flew over Castle Howard Lake on the 30th. A flock of at least 30 was feeding in the top of a tall conifer in Strensall on 2nd November. Four were in the Old Foss Woods, New Earswick in November with eight there by December. By the 27th numbers had increased to 25, feeding on alder near the Old Sewage Works. Eight were at Rawcliffe Lake from the end of November while 209 were at Melbourne on 7th December and they made up to about two thirds of a mixed flock of at least 200 with Goldfinches *Carduelis carduelis* on alders by the Pocklington Canal at Melbourne on the 22nd.

Two flocks of at least 100 and another of at least 50 were at separate locations at Yearsley Moor on 31st December.

LINNET *Carduelis cannabina*

Status: Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

Up to 11 were along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year. 21 were near Skirpenbeck on 1st February and 15 near Haxby on the 24th with 12 there on 15th March. In April and May, parties of up to 14 were at various locations including Aughton Ings, Bishopthorpe, Copmanthorpe, Dunnington, Earswick, New Earswick, Fulford, Heworth (Without), Kexby, Naburn, Poppleton, Strensall and Wheldrake. Males were singing at Strensall on 6th April and Osbaldwick on the 15th.

During the summer months there were small numbers at both Clifton Ings and Rawcliffe Lake. In June, two were calling from the Cygnet Pub, Bishophill, York on the 12th, two near

Naburn Wood on the 24th and fledglings noted in Fulford parish the same day. A pair was near Huby on 3rd July and about ten at Pond Head Farm, Oulston on the 16th. One was between Askham Bar and the River Ouse in York on the 21st while two were in fields north-east of New Earswick on the 25th. Five were on farmland at Bolton Percy on 29th November and six were on Strensall Common on 29th December.

REDPOLL *Carduelis flammea*

Status: Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

Two were in the Old Foss Woods, New Earswick in January and up to 20 were in Askham Bog early in the year, in both cases with Siskin *Carduelis spinus*. Two were at Skipwith Common on 10th January and a flock of c.50 at Cass Wood, Huby on 21st February where three remained on 26th March. One was calling from Dove Street, York on 22nd March and singing males were in the Bishopthorpe area on the 24th and 25th. Four were in Cawood Bishop Wood North on 9th April and five were with Siskin in young trees near St Wilfred's Church, Strensall on the 15th. Singing males were also on the edge of Fulford Golf course on 24th June. Two to three were at Rawcliffe Lake and up to c.20 along the River Ouse between York and Naburn during the winter months.

CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra* Status:

Casual breeder and passage visitor

Five were on Skipwith Common on 10th January and a maximum of 20 frequented Allerthorpe Common during the month. Several were also seen at the latter site on visits up until March.

BULLFINCH *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Status: Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

Up to eight were seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn and five to six seen regularly at Clifton Ings throughout the year. Three males and one female were at Rawcliffe Ings on 1st January and a singing male at Oulston reservoir on the 7th. Six on 8th January was the highest count for Dunnington and two males with one female fed on the buds of a flowering cherry in a Strensall garden on the 10th. Also on the 10th, three males and a female were on Skipwith Common and about ten were at Askham Bog on the 22nd. A male was near Gilling East on 13th February while a pair was at Stripe Wood, Stillington on 4th March with a male calling at Castle Howard on the 5th. During April and May a total of 34 sightings was reported in the York City Council area during the farmland bird survey. Other reports during this period came from Cawood Bishop Wood North, Yearsley Moor and Rufforth while a pair was seen mating near Terry's chocolate factory, York on 29th April.

Two to three pairs bred at Fulford Ings where fledglings were noted from 25th June and a ringed male was seen there on the 9th. Up to four pairs were thought to be in the New Earswick area where four individuals were seen on 25th June. A pair was in woods near Pond Head Farm, Oulston on 16th July and a male was unfortunately found dead by the road in Stillington on the 24th. A female was at Yearsley Moor on 4th September while a single was along the River Ouse between Blue Bridge in York and the ring road in October with two there in December. A pair was near Haxby on 31st October and a single heard in an Osbaldwick garden on 22nd November. Another pair was at Dunnington on 2nd December and two males with one female fed on honeysuckle berries in a Dunnington Common garden on the 16th. One or two pairs were regularly seen from the Osbaldwick cycle track during the winter.

YELLOWHAMMER *Emberiza citrinella*

Status: Resident breeder and winter passage visitor

At least four were along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year. Pairs and singles were also noted in the hedgerows around Huby throughout the year, regularly forming parties of up to ten during the winter months. In the Dunnington area, three separate flocks of c.35 gave a total of over 100 and some fed in gardens until the end of May. In January, two were near Strensall on the 14th and about ten south of Oulston on the 15th with 30+ in hedges and stubble fields near Husthwaite the same day. 40 were in the Poppleton area on the 21st.

In February, between two and 12 were between East Cottingwith and Ellerton, at Bolton Percy, Haxby and Gilling East. c.40 were at Sutton Farm, Sutton-on-Derwent throughout March and at least 20 in the meadows and hedgerows between Stillington and Huby on the 4th. This species is a winter visitor to Clifton Ings with 25 present there on 8th March and four were at Forest Farm, Warthill on the 15th. Nine were at Sheriff Hutton Bridge on the 14th and at Stillington on the 27th while a mixed flock of 16 with Skylarks *Alauda arvensis* was near Brown Moor Farm, Sheriff Hutton on the 25th. In April and May, counts of up to 18 came from various locations including the parishes of Acaster Malbis, Bishopthorpe, Copmanthorpe, Dunnington, Earswick, Fulford, Heslington, Heworth (Without), Kexby,

Naburn, Naburn Wood, New Earswick, Rawcliffe, Strensall and on Strensall Common. Four were near the railway line in New Earswick on 28th June, two at Walbutts Lane, Strensall on 14th July and two between Askham Bar and the River Ouse in York on the 21st. Also seen regularly in Brecks Lane, Strensall during the summer and autumn. In the Strensall area, two males were north of the River Foss on 1st October, three on 3rd November and four or five with Chaffinches *Fringilla coelebs* at Brecks Lane on the 5th. Nine were on farmland at Bolton Percy on the 29th with flocks of at least 20 near Sheriff Hutton on 2nd December and at Pond Head Farm, Oulston on the 22nd. Other December reports of up to six came from Strensall, Rawcliffe Ings and New Earswick. A Merlin *Falco columbarius* was noted on 29th December flying towards a flock of c.35 in the Dunnington area.

REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Status: Resident breeder and passage visitor

Seen or heard regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year, with up to six singing males at Fulford Ings and further singing males noted near Bishopthorpe and Middlethorpe Ings. This species is mainly a winter visitor to Clifton Ings with a few pairs staying to breed. Two were on Rawcliffe Ings on 1st January and in the Poppleton area on the 21st. 36 were in a mature hedge between East Cottingwith and Ellerton with a few Yellowhammers *Emberiza citrinella* and Chaffinches *Fringilla coelebs* on 20th February and five were at Wheldrake Ings on the 25th. Seven sang at Ross Carrs Ponds on 5th March and one at Castle Howard on the 19th. During April and May a total of 28 sightings was reported in the York City Council area during the farmland bird survey, including four in birches on Strensall Common in April and three males singing there on 25th May. Singles were near Forest Farm, Warthill on 6th April and at Poppleton on the 7th and 19th while one sang by Castle Howard Lake on 6th May. In June, one was near the River Ouse at Riccall on the 10th and one sang in a barley field at Castle Howard on the 24th. Another was on Strensall Common on 5th July. One in a flock of Yellowhammers on 29th December was the only record for the Dunnington area. A single was caught and ringed at North Duffield Carrs feeding station on the 28th and 200-300 roosted in a small reedbed at Melbourne on the 29th when 60 were caught and ringed.

CORN BUNTING *Miliaria calandra*

Status: Resident breeder

Up to five wintered on Clifton Ings and 11 were on Rawcliffe Ings on 1st January. Two were at Stillington Road, Huby on 23rd February. During March and April, one was seen regularly at Forest Farm, Warthill and another was near Huby on 25th March. 75 were on Dunnington Common on 3rd April while at least two singing males were on farmland south of Bishopthorpe from 24th April with at least five (including females) there on 18th June. Two were singing near Earswick on 27th April. During April and May a total of 18 sightings was reported in the York City Council area during the farmland bird survey, including a singing male near Duncombe Farm and two near Park House Farm - both in the Strensall area. One was in the Poppleton area on 5th May and singing males were near Selby on the 13th, Sutton-on-Derwent on the 14th and Earswick on the 23rd. Two pairs were on Dunnington Common on 12th June and two males sang near Strensall on the 13th. A single was south of Huby on 3rd July and one was singing at Potteries Lake, Strensall on the 11th. One was at Stillington Road and a pair at Tally Hill, Huby on 25th November. 115 were part of a large winter flock of Yellowhammers *Emberiza citrinella* and Skylarks *Alauda arvensis* on Dunnington Common on 29th December. On the same day, a flock of 45 roosted with Reed Buntings *Emberiza schoeniclus* at Melbourne when three were caught and ringed - the first for the site.

ESCAPES/INTRODUCTIONS

WHITE STORK *Ciconia ciconia*

Individuals seen flying over Long Marston on 7th May and Strensall on 16th June were probably free-flying birds from Harewood House.

BLACK SWAN *Cygnus atratus*

One was resident at Castle Howard Lake throughout the year. A single with Mute Swans *Cygnus olor* at Aughton on 4th January was presumed to be the same bird that flew north at Wheldrake Ings later that day. One was on the River Derwent at Buttercrambe on 20th March.

MANDARIN DUCK *Aix galericulata*

A male was on the River Derwent at Kirkham Priory on 30th January.

GOLDEN PHEASANT *Chrysolophus pictus*

One was seen at Crook Moor, Thorganby on 13 March.

PEACOCK *Pavo cristatus*

One visited a Nunnington garden on 1st April.

BARBARY DOVE *Streptopelia roseogrisea* var. 'risoria'

An 'odd-looking' Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* showing a very pale wash all over with white scalloping or blotches was with other 'normal' Collared Doves in Huntingdon gardens during October, November and December. It was first assumed to be a colour variant, but was subsequently suggested to be a possible Barbary Dove (PD & RT).

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