

**YORK ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB
REPORT 2005**

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CONTENTS

Committee	4
York Ornithological Club	5
Editorial	5
Highlights of 2005	7
Classified List	16
Contributors	109
Earliest and latest dates for migrants	110
Pilot BTO Atlas Survey in SE54; Part 1: 2005	112
Species in York recording area since 1966	119
Guidelines for the submission of records	123
The need for field descriptions	125

Cover Illustrations

Front Cover: Common Snipe *Terry Weston*

Inside Back Cover: Little Grebe *Terry Weston*
Greenshank *Terry Weston*

Outside Back Cover: Fieldfare *Terry Weston*

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YORK ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB

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

Having been involved in the production of the 2003 and 2004 Bird Reports I was asked by the YOC Recorder, Andy Booth, with the support of the Committee, if I would be prepared to take on the editing of the annual report starting with the issue for 2005. A major part of this move was the hope that by splitting Andy's role as recorder and editor it would allow us to bring the publication schedule up to date. That remains the aim though we still have some way to go. This report will be published in 2008 with, hopefully, the 2006 report following by the end of the year. Then we expect the 2007 report to be published in the first half of 2009 followed by the 2008 report by the end of that year if possible

Editing this report has been a considerable learning experience. I had not anticipated just how much work and effort was involved and I would like to express my appreciation of all the work that Andy has contributed to previous reports, and to acknowledge his continuing support and expertise in ensuring that this report maintains the standard of those which have gone before.

Hopefully there will also be improvements. I have spent quite a lot of time checking and standardising on site names to ensure that they are consistent through the report. In the future we hope to include a comprehensive gazetteer of sites within the YOC area.

Future reports will adopt the latest version of the British List published 2007 with regard to order and nomenclature of species in the systematic list and reflect the latest designation of races and species. The various species lists which appear at the end of this report have already been updated in this respect, though the changes here are few. More significant changes have taken place with regard to scientific names.

I hope readers will find this report for 2005 of interest. It is, probably, the largest report (in the number of pages) that the YOC has produced. This very much reflects the increasing numbers of records received. I have also included the first part of an article by the York Region BTO representative, Rob Chapman, on provisional BTO survey work carried out in the winter of 2005/06. This is extremely apposite as we are currently coming to the end of the first year of recording for the full BTO Atlas Project which will continue to 2010 covering both winter and summer periods. Part two of this article will appear in the 2006 YOC report.

The species accounts have been compiled by Nigel Stewart and Malcolm Douglas (Wildfowl to Crane), Peter Watson (Waders to Auks), Ruth Traynor (Doves to Dunnock), Peter Reed (Thrushes to Flycatchers) and Paul Doherty (Tits to Buntings). Mike Williams has edited the report with significant help from Andy Booth, while Nigel Stewart has been responsible for its final production. Andy Booth, Nigel Stewart and Terry Weston have kindly provided the illustrations which enhance the text. Last, but not least, a big 'thank you' to all who have submitted the records on which this report is based.

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 freely by members 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 always welcome new members and would encourage all with an interest in birding in the York area to join the Club. We provide a regular programme of indoor talks and outdoor meetings. Recording the birds of the York area is our primary aim and we try to provide an annual report which is as comprehensive and accurate as possible. All members (and others) are encouraged to submit their sightings, and we also invite submission of relevant photos to illustrate the report. Records for each year should be submitted to the recorder as soon as possible after the end of each year and preferably by the end of March of the following year.

Many thanks to all for your continued and valued support.

Mike Williams

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2005

January

The month was very mild and changeable throughout but nevertheless quite dry. The year started with 150 Pink-footed Geese flying north over the Lower Derwent Valley on the 1st, though only a few individuals were seen there subsequently. The same day a Merlin was seen at Strensall Common while a Blackcap was in the New Earswick area on the 3rd with another at Dunnington on the 12th. A male Brambling arrived in the New Earswick area on the 4th and others followed at the same location with at least 30 by the 30th. Six Waxwings flew over CSL on the 5th and five were seen briefly at JRTNR the same day. Further records of Waxwings included 50 on the 13th in central York. A Peregrine was at Wheldrake Ings on the 9th with another reported over CSL on the 11th and again there on the 18th.

A female Scaup was found on the River Derwent at Thorganby on the 11th. Two Glaucous Gulls were at the Wheldrake Ings gull roost on the 19th and another was to the west of the A1237 on the 22nd together with a first-winter Iceland Gull. Two more sightings of Merlin came from Dunnington Common mid-month. On the 13th over 40 Pink-footed Geese flew south at New Earswick. An immature Goshawk circled Bank Island on the 15th. A flock of over 200 Skylarks was found near Huby on the 18th, the largest flock noted anywhere during the year. A single Mediterranean Gull was present at Wheldrake Ings on the 19th. Wigeon numbers between Thorganby and North Duffield grew steadily reaching 8,000+ by the 20th. The first Oystercatcher record for the year was one at North Duffield Carrs on the 20th. A Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was heard calling at Strensall Common on the 23rd. More geese were reported late in the month with 200 Pink-footed Geese over Huby on the 30th and a single White-fronted Goose of the *albifrons* race with Greylags at Castle Howard on the same date. A Kumlien's Gull was seen briefly at Harewood Whin on the 31st.

February

The weather for the first half of the month continued the mild theme of January but the second half of the month was much colder with frost by night and snow showers by day. A male Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was seen at Dunnington on the 1st. There were further records of

Bramblings in the New Earswick area with birds remaining through into March and April. Also on the 1st three Iceland Gulls and one, possibly two, Glaucous Gulls were present at Harewood Whin with a further Glaucous Gull later in the month at Wheldrake Ings. Large numbers of Pink-footed Geese were seen early on with flocks totalling around 2,000 birds moving generally northwest in the first week. Flocks of over 1,000 Golden Plover were noted through the month at various locations in the Lower Derwent Valley and also at Bootham Stray. Eight Goosander were at Wheldrake Ings on the 3rd with fluctuating numbers there through into March. A Peregrine was again at Wheldrake Ings on the 3rd and an immature male Goshawk was watched for several minutes at North Duffield Carrs on the same date. Small numbers of Goldeneye were noted at Wheldrake Ings staying until early April. The first record of Ruff for the year was of two seen at Wheldrake Ings on the 3rd. A very early Turtle Dove reported to be visiting a garden in Skipwith was taken by a Sparrowhawk.

A Water Rail was heard calling at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 5th and the 6th and on other dates there through the year. A Wood Lark was singing at CSL on the 7th and heard there subsequently. A female Marsh Harrier flew southeast over North Duffield Carrs on the 8th and a Merlin was at Bubwith on the same date with further sightings at Slingsby and Wheldrake later in the month. A Water Pipit was at a Strensall site on the 20th and again on the 23rd, the only reports for the year. A Long-eared Owl was heard calling at Terrington on the 22nd while a female Black Redstart, located at CSL on the same date, stayed until March. Three White-fronted Geese were at North Duffield Carrs on 22nd. Wigeon numbers in the Lower Derwent Valley reached 10,215 by the 8th but then decreased to 9,000 by the 25th while Teal numbers peaked at 6,200 before falling to 4,350. The Whooper Swan flock in the Lower Derwent reached a peak of 65 birds counted at North Duffield Carrs and Bubwith Ings on the 27th.

March

For the first two weeks cold northerly winds predominated but in the second half of the month winds were often from a southerly direction bringing warm and mostly dry weather. A flock of 71 Pink-footed Geese was present at Wheldrake Ings on the 1st, with a further 21 north at Thorganby on the 12th. There were further records of Waxwings during the month including 15 in Rowntree Park, York on the 2nd and seven at Wheldrake on the 19th. The first Common Sandpiper of the year was

at CSL on the 3rd. A Peregrine was seen at Wheldrake Ings on the 8th while a Red Kite was independently reported from both Aughton Ings and North Duffield Carrs on the 9th. Shelduck numbers increased to 22 by the 12th. Up to 9,000 Wigeon were still present in the Lower Derwent Valley throughout the month but decreasing in numbers. Teal numbers also decreased falling to 3,270 by the 11th. Water Rails were heard on Skipwith Common and on Strensall Common later in the month, and at Wheldrake Ings on the 30th. A Spotted Redshank flew over Wheldrake Ings on the 12th. A drake Scaup was at Bank Island from the 12th–15th with two drakes and a female at North Duffield Carrs on the 16th, and again from the 18th–25th. A Merlin was seen at Full Sutton on the 14th with another over Thorganby on the 19th.

The first Chiffchaff record of the year came from Wheldrake Ings on the 17th soon followed by records from other sites while the first Black-tailed Godwits were four at Aughton Ings on the 18th. Further flocks of up to 60 birds were recorded through March and April. The first Ring Ouzel of the year, and the first in the YOC recording area since 1999, was one at New Earswick on the 20th. Three House Martins appeared over the JRTNR on the 21st, an early date, while an Osprey headed north at Thorganby on the 23rd. Whooper Swan numbers declined to just 12 at North Duffield Carrs by the 24th, while several flocks of up to 56 were noted flying over at different locations. A summer-plumaged Black-necked Grebe was seen from the 25th at Wheldrake Ings where there was also a rare spring sighting of Green Sandpiper on the same date. Ringed Plover were in the Lower Derwent Valley late in the month while the first Sand Martins were ten at Bank Island on the 29th. Likely an early migrant, a male Blackcap was in the New Earswick area on the 29th and a Willow Warbler was at CSL on the same date. Further records of both species soon followed at other locations. A Short-eared Owl was at Copmanthorpe from the 29th to the 31st, but not seen again.

April

April 2005 was quite wet and changeable with brief spells of both cold and warm weather. Three Knot were at Wheldrake Ings from the 1st to the 6th. Another Short-eared Owl was seen, this time from a train near Wressle on the 2nd, and another was at Strensall Common on the 21st. A Wood Lark was recorded at Strensall Common on the 2nd, and on subsequent dates, while 120 Pink-footed Geese passed over Wheldrake the same day. A White Stork flying over Healaugh on the 3rd was presumed a wanderer from the Harewood Estate, Leeds.

Bramblings were recorded on the York University campus from the 3rd to the 13th, with other records at Strensall, CSL and Allerthorpe Gravel Pits. A Red Kite was over Bank Island on the 3rd. Two Long-tailed Ducks were seen briefly at North Duffield Carrs on the 4th before flying off north. An early Swallow was noted over Bootham Stray on the 4th but others soon followed throughout the YOC recording area. A Grey Plover was at North Duffield Carrs on the 5th with another at Aughton on the 20th. A Black-necked Grebe continued to be seen at Wheldrake Ings early in the month with others at North Duffield Carrs on the 5th and 7th, and an amazing group of eight on the River Derwent at Brighton on the 8th.

The first Wheatear of the year also appeared on the 8th, seen at North Duffield Carrs, with another at Castle Howard on the 10th. Also on the 8th an Osprey flew over Elvington, the second of only two spring records. Waxwings continued to be seen in the York area in good numbers throughout the month. A Redstart was seen in the New Earswick area on the 10th with another in Yearsley Woods on the 29th. A pair of Garganey appeared at North Duffield Carrs on the 11th and were seen there again on the 14th. The first Yellow Wagtail of the year was at Wheldrake Ings on the 12th while the first Cuckoo was at Strensall Common on the 13th with three there by the 16th and heard or seen subsequently at other locations. A Common Crane was seen between Wressle and Brighton on the morning of the 15th. The first Whimbrel at the Wheldrake Ings spring roost appeared on the 16th with numbers increasing to a peak of 129 birds on the 29th. Two Avocets were seen briefly at Wheldrake Ings on the 19th with another by the Pocklington Canal on the 27th. The first Greenshank of the spring was recorded on the 21st at Thorganby.

A Whitethroat was in Fulford on the 22nd followed by Sedge Warbler, Reed Warbler and Lesser Whitethroat all seen at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 23rd. A Wood Warbler was also watched for five minutes at Fulford on the 23rd. A possible Grasshopper Warbler heard in Fulford on the 24th was the only record received in 2005. The first spring record of Turtle Dove was at Full Sutton on the 25th with another calling at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 30th and on subsequent dates. Six Swifts appeared at Bank Island on the 26th. The last Whooper remained in the area from the 22nd–30th while Shelduck numbers peaked at 91 throughout the Lower Derwent Valley early in the month. One adult and two first-winter Little Gulls were at Wheldrake Ings on the 29th. A Marsh Harrier drifted southeast over Fryton Wood on the 18th with another at North Duffield Carrs on the 22nd and a female near Sheriff Hutton on the 29th. The first Whinchat of spring was at Wheldrake Ings on the

29th and a Garden Warbler was at Huby on the same day. A Spotted Flycatcher also put in an appearance on the same date at Wass Woods in the north of the recording area.

May

Temperatures overall were near normal, but with more sun and less rain than usual; the second half of the month was distinctly unsettled at times. Ten Waxwings over Fulford on the 1st were the last of many records while on the same date a Redstart was discovered at Naburn Sewage Works. A Red Kite flew over Strensall Common on the 2nd and another was seen over Kirkham Priory on the 21st. A Grey Plover and a Turnstone were seen at Wheldrake Ings early in the month but a record of Kentish Plover at North Duffield Carrs was not substantiated by a description. A Whinchat was observed at Castle Howard on the 2nd. An immature Marsh Harrier was at Bank Island on the 3rd, later seen at North Duffield Carrs, while another bird was at Bank Island on the 21st. A Turtle Dove was seen and heard at Yearsley Moor on 3rd and the 29th and an early Quail was heard calling on the 3rd with a small influx to Ellerton Ings and East Cottingwith Ings at the end of the month.

Four Pink-footed Geese resident in the Lower Derwent Valley most of the winter were last seen at Wheldrake Ings on the 5th. Two Arctic Terns were present at Bank Island on the 8th. A single Wood Sandpiper was noted at Bank Island on the 11th and 12th with another there from the 15th to the 17th while a summer-plumaged Curlew Sandpiper was at Bank Island from the 16th to the 20th. A single Sanderling was seen at Bank Island on the 24th. A Hobby passing through Bank Island on the 21st was the only spring record. A drake Scaup reappeared at North Duffield Carrs on the 23rd remaining into June. Up to 56 pairs of Shelduck occupied the Lower Derwent Valley with juveniles at Bank Island on the 27th. Further sightings of Garganey occurred at Bank Island and a male Crossbill was at Yearsley Moor on the 29th.

June

The weather was dominated by high pressure systems bringing cool weather at first but followed by warmer spells in the last two weeks. Two Quail were calling at North Duffield Carrs on the 1st with further singles at Aughton Ings and Thornton Ellers, and up to 11 calling males in the Lower Derwent Valley as a whole by the third week. The male Scaup

was last seen at North Duffield Carrs on the 7th. Four Goosander were, unusually, seen on the River Ouse at Clifton on the 7th and three were in moult on the same river at Fulford later in the month. Two Avocets were watched at Bank Island on the 8th; on the same date a Nightjar churred intermittently at Yearsley Moor and more prolonged churring was noted at the same location on the 21st when a female flew out of trees there. Another Nightjar was churring between Flaxton and Strensall on the 18th and again in July. A duck Pintail with seven newly hatched ducklings was found on the 11th in the Lower Derwent Valley, the first record of successful breeding since 1998, while confirmation of Garganey breeding came with the discovery of eight newly-hatched ducklings at Bank Island on the 16th and a second brood seen there on the 18th. Also on the 18th three juvenile Long-eared Owls were heard calling at Strensall Common.

July

The weather was changeable for the first week, then settled, warm and sunny. From mid-month cooler northwesterly winds affected all parts and the month finished on a very unsettled note. Quail were occasionally heard calling at the start of the month with breeding confirmed at Ellerton Ings when three chicks were found during the hay cut. A Little Egret flying south over Elvington on the 11th was later seen at North Duffield Carrs. A Spotted Crake calling at dusk at Wheldrake Ings was the only record of this species for the year. A single Avocet was seen briefly at Wheldrake Ings on the 26th. Two Little Egrets were at Bank Island on the 27th and one, maybe one of these, was seen at Bubwith Ings on the 28th remaining until 6th August. A Marsh Harrier flew north along the River Derwent at North Duffield Carrs on the 31st.

August

August's weather was near normal in most respects and often anticyclonic but more unsettled in the third week. A Quail calling at Thornton Ellers on the 1st was the last of the year for the YOC area. A juvenile Redstart was at Clifton Park on the 2nd. An eclipse drake Garganey was at Wheldrake Ings from the 3rd–8th while a female type bird was seen at CSL on several occasions during the month. A Hobby was seen at Wheldrake Ings on the 3rd. A Crossbill flew over York Minster on the 3rd while a flock of 30+ was recorded at Yearsley Moor on the

4th and a further three were at Wheldrake Woods on the 6th. A male Black Redstart was located at York Minster on the 5th and was seen again near Stonegate on the 25th and 26th before being photographed on 1st September. A Water Rail was found at Wheldrake Ings on the 6th. It was a good month for raptors with a female Merlin south along the River Ouse at Bishopthorpe on the 6th, an Osprey drifting east over Castle Howard on the 7th and a juvenile Marsh Harrier at Wheldrake Ings on the 8th, this bird being seen again a couple of days later at Bank Island. Another Osprey was seen over the Pocklington Canal on the 15th while an adult Honey Buzzard drifted west at Thornton Ellers on the 25th. Another juvenile Marsh Harrier with a heavily moulting adult were at Wheldrake Ings on the 25th. A Water Rail was heard calling at Thorganby village pond on the 28th while the first Wigeon of the autumn arrived at North Duffield Carrs on the 29th.

September

High pressure influenced the weather for much of the month which was warm, dry and sunny though more changeable towards the end. Raptors were again prominent with a Red Kite near Castle Howard on the 1st and a Honey Buzzard soaring over Bank Island on the 2nd. On the same day both Hobby and Peregrine were seen west of Wheldrake, with further Hobbies reported from Dunnington Common on the 8th and 29th. The last Sand Martins reported were 30 at Allerthorpe Water Park on the 2nd while the last Swift of the year was seen at Dunnington on the 3rd. A single Turnstone was over Wheldrake Ings on the 5th with a remarkable flock of eight over Thorganby on the 7th. A party of five Whinchats at Clifton Ings on the 9th was the only autumn record. A juvenile Pectoral Sandpiper was reported from North Duffield Carrs on the 16th but no description was received. The first Pink-footed Geese of the autumn occurred on the 16th with 43 south at North Duffield Carrs and 60 southeast at Ellerton. A Ring Ouzel was in the New Earswick area on the 17th following the spring record there. The Black Redstart at York was reported again on the 21st but not seen thereafter. The first Redwings of the autumn were seen in Copmanthorpe on the 24th. Wigeon numbers increased steadily and the first Pintail of the winter, a female, was at North Duffield Carrs on the 30th. There was evidence of an influx of Jays into the region late in the month with significant additional records through October and continuing up to the year's end.

October

October 2005 was unusually warm with winds often from a southerly direction; the second half was also very wet resulting in total rainfall some 50% above average. A Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was at Askham Bog on the 1st with another, possibly an immature, in an Acomb garden on the 10th. Single Marsh Harriers were seen on several dates at Bank Island and Wheldrake Ings early on. A single drake Mandarin was at Castle Howard early in the month with a female Scaup at this site in the same period. During this period a second Mandarin drake was at North Duffield Carrs where a late Wheatear was also located, on the 2nd. The first Whoopers of the autumn were seen over Askham Bog on the 1st with three at North Duffield Carrs from the 3rd and up to 48 by the 28th. Two flocks of Pink-footed Geese totalling over 550 birds headed south over North Duffield Carrs on the 3rd with further movements of 230 west on the 7th and 370 west on the 9th, while 100 flew over Dunnington Common on the 13th. Large flocks of Golden Plover and Lapwing were noted at a variety of sites. Jack Snipe were recorded throughout the month from North Duffield Carrs with a number being caught and ringed.

A juvenile Marsh Harrier was at Aughton Ings on the 4th with a late bird at Skipwith on the 14th. A White Stork was seen at various sites around York from the 5th to the 7th. A juvenile Gannet was an unexpected find, seen on the 8th flying over the M62 near Asselby and later the same day at Barmby-on-the-Marsh. The last Swallows of the year, at several locations, were noted on the 10th and the last House Martins, 12 or more, were at Sheriff Hutton on the same date. Two Crossbills flew over North Duffield Carrs on the 11th with another over Wheldrake Ings on the 16th. The first Fieldfares of the autumn appeared in the New Earswick area on the 17th. A Merlin was at Hob Moor, York on the 17th with another over Askham Bog on the 29th. Three Water Rails were discovered at Bank Island on the 21st during management work, and two were heard at Wheldrake Ings on the 31st. Three Goldeneye were on Rawcliffe Lake on the 23rd.

November

The first half of the month was quite warm but the weather was much colder in the last two weeks with snow affecting Yorkshire on the 28th. Four Bewick's Swans flew south at North Duffield Carrs on the 2nd. A male Hen Harrier flew south over Bubwith Ings on the 3rd. On the 6th a

first-winter Glaucous Gull was seen at Harewood Whin while two late Ring Ouzels were seen by the car park at North Duffield Carrs on the 9th. A Water Rail was heard calling near the centre of Stillingfleet on the same date when two Oystercatchers by the River Ouse also at Stillingfleet were unusually late records but there were even later records on the 14th and 29th elsewhere. Ten Goldeneye had returned to Castle Howard Lake by the 12th increasing to over 20 by the end of the year. Two flocks of Pink-footed Geese, one of 100 and one of 70, flew over York on the 13th. Pintail numbers built up with 40 at Wheldrake Ings, 25 at North Duffield Carrs and 50+ at Bubwith Ings. A Mealy Redpoll was with Lesser Redpolls at Wheldrake Ings from the 18th to the 30th. A Hawfinch was seen northeast of Skipwith on the 18th. A first-winter Little Gull was following the plough with Black-headed Gulls near Wheldrake on the 21st, an unusual record for this time of year. A Merlin flew over North Duffield Carrs on the 24th while a male Goshawk flew west at this site on the 26th. Wigeon numbers at North Duffield Carrs increased dramatically reaching 6,400 by the 26th. Three Waxwings at Slingsby on the 30th were the first of the second winter period.

December

December was a quiet month for weather, generally settled and sunny, and quite dry. Two female Goosander dropped onto the JRTNR pond on the 5th with five birds over Beningborough park on the 26th and a female flying along the Pocklington Canal on the 29th. The Whooper Swan flock was up to 73 by the 7th while a single adult Bewick's Swan was found among the Whoopers on the 11th. Wigeon numbers at North Duffield Carrs increased to 13,800 by the 14th. On the same date a Hawfinch was located at Acomb Moor and another was at Escrick Park on the 18th. Seven Crossbills flew out of a conifer plantation at Dunnington on the 13th. A female/immature Merlin was seen over Strensall Common on the 25th while two Peregrines were seen hunting together over Wheldrake Ings on the 26th. The sight of ten Oystercatchers at Newburgh Priory lake on the 26th was an exceptionally late record. Three Waxwings feeding on berries in a Dunnington garden on the 30th was the only December record for this species. Two female Scaup were present at Castle Howard Lake on the 31st.

Mike Williams

CLASSIFIED LIST

The sequence and scientific nomenclature follow that of the British List maintained by the British Ornithologists' Union. The British List was changed in 2002 and places Anseriformes and Galliformes at the start of the list.

Where appropriate the following abbreviations appear in the report:

CSL = Central Science Laboratory, Sand Hutton

EN = English Nature (now Natural England)

JRTNR = Joseph Rowntree Trust Nature Reserve, New Earswick

NEBR = New Earswick Bird Report (covering Huntington School NR, JRTNR, Fireman's Leap NR and Sessions NR)

NR = Nature Reserve

RNHSBR = Ryedale Natural History Society Bird Report

SHBR = Sand Hutton Bird Report (from CSL)

WWT = Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust

YNU = Yorkshire Naturalists' Union

YOC = York Ornithological Club

YWT = Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

The following nature reserves appear as sites in the report (apart from those listed above):

Cornfield NR (Rawcliffe Ings)

Fireman's Leap (part of the JRTNRs)

Hassacarr NR (Dunnington)

Huntington School NR (part of the JRTNRs)

Sessions NR (part of the JRTNRs)

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Resident breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor

Flocks of 20–30 could be encountered throughout the Lower Derwent Valley during the winter months, with at least two to three pairs breeding along the Pocklington Canal in summer.

Present all year at Castle Howard Lake with up to 12 noted during January; also two to three throughout the year at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits. Four were at Newburgh Priory lake on 1st February with a pair on the top pond at Pond Head Farm, Oulston the same day. A pair was on the York University lake on 14th April while two birds were on the River Ouse at Fulford on the 22nd. A pair was seen there with four cygnets from 18th May to 8th July while the adults were seen again on 23rd August. A pair was seen on one of the pools at Strensall Common on 18th May and another pair was on the River Foss at New Earswick from 3rd July to 1st September. At Clifton Ings a pair was on the River Ouse from 9th–15th September and then seen on and off up to 11th December at least. A single bird dropped in on the JRTNR pond, New Earswick on 13th November and two were at Newburgh Priory lake on 26th December. In addition, a couple of birds commuted around two or three farms in the Terrington area throughout the year.

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

Declining winter visitor and passage migrant

Four flew south over North Duffield Carrs on 2nd November while a single adult was found amongst the Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus* herd on 11th December (EN).

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Winter visitor

As usual the herd in the Lower Derwent Valley was based around the North Duffield Carrs and Bubwith Ings area with up to 56 there early in the year. In February a maximum of 48 birds was counted on fields to the south of North Duffield Carrs on the 19th, and a total of 69 birds counted at North Duffield Carrs and Bubwith Ings on the 27th. Birds were on the move by late March with 15 flying north at Thorganby on the 20th and 56 northwest over New Earswick the same day. The following day a flock of 42 flew over New Earswick and 28 were over the CSL pond. Twelve birds still remained at North Duffield Carrs on 24th March and an immature was seen there on 21st April. In addition a single bird was at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits from 22nd–30th April.

In the second winter period six birds flew over Askham Bog on 1st October and three had returned to North Duffield Carrs by the 3rd; eight flew north over Ellerton on the 14th while further movements in the Lower Derwent Valley during October included 31 south on the 21st and 44 southeast on the 28th. Five flew south at Bielby on 1st November and 25 were at Thorganby on the 14th while the herd at North Duffield Carrs had built up to 60+ by the end of the year with a peak of 73 counted on 7th December. Also in December, five birds were colour-ringed in a joint project between YNU and WWT.

[Taiga Bean Goose *Anser fabalis fabalis*
Scarce winter visitor

Seven were present on the flood bank at North Duffield Carrs before flying north up the River Derwent to Ellerton, then gaining height and continuing north up the Lower Derwent Valley (EN). No date given]

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*
Winter visitor and passage migrant

The year opened with a skein of 150 passing north over the Lower Derwent Valley on 1st January with 13 present at Thorganby lngs on the 8th. Up to four birds lingered in the valley thereafter amongst the grey goose flocks. A large movement from wintering sites, probably from the Humber and North Norfolk, took place from late January into February commencing with a skein of 220 northwest over North Duffield Carrs on 30th January. Three skeins totalling 599 passed over the Derwent valley on 3rd February and were followed by five skeins totalling 845 birds on the 4th while a further 437 moved northwest on the 7th. As well as the four long-staying/resident wintering birds, 12 were present at North Duffield Carrs from the 11th to the 26th, presumably left over from this movement. A flock of 71 was present at Wheldrake lngs on 1st March while 21 flew low northwards past Thorganby lngs on the 12th. A further flock of 100+ paused at Wheldrake lngs on 1st April while 120 passed over Wheldrake lngs on 2nd April. The four wintering birds remained in the valley but were last seen at Wheldrake lngs on 5th May.

At Castle Howard Lake up to nine were with the goose flock from January through to early April while 41 flew south over New Earswick on 13th January. Birds were also heard calling over Osbaldwick on 28th January with 200 over Huby on the 30th. In February, 120 flew east over the CSL pond on the 4th while 250 flew northwest over New Earswick on 10th March.

The first returning birds of the autumn were 43 south over North Duffield Carrs and 60 southeast over Ellerton, both on 16th September. Two skeins totalling 560 birds headed south over North Duffield Carrs on 3rd October followed by 230 west on the 7th and 370 west on the 9th. Elsewhere the first returning birds were 100 over Dunnington Common on 13th October while three flew west over Wheldrake Ings on 10th November with skeins of 100 over the Knavesmire, York and 70 over Naburn on the 13th.

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Winter visitor

A single bird of the Eurasian race *albifrons* was with Greylag Geese *Anser anser* at Castle Howard Lake on 30th January. Three were at North Duffield Carrs on 22nd February.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Resident breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor

A common goose, mainly of feral origin, regularly encountered throughout the recording area. Present all year in the Lower Derwent Valley although the only counts received this year were of 90 on the pool at Wheldrake Ings on 29th July with 370 there on 12th August and 100 at Bank Island on 4th December. Winter numbers at Castle Howard Lake remained constant at around 250 birds well into July with 500+ there in late December. At Allerthorpe Gravel Pits, 230 on 20th August rose to 342 by 16th September before dropping to 250 through to the year's end. The usual feral flock commuted between various sites around York. However, a ringing study has revealed that individuals sometimes come and go from as far away as Teesside, something which could explain the large numbers sometimes encountered during late summer.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Resident breeder and winter visitor

Another common goose of feral origin recorded widely throughout the recording area. At the start of the year 120+ were in fields between Sutton-on-the-Forest and Sheriff Hutton while around 400 remained at Castle Howard Lake through January with 250 still present in July. Present throughout the year in the Lower Derwent Valley although no significant counts were received this year. The only other counts of note were 130 at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 14th August and 150 at Rowntree Park, York on 13th November. The year ended with 40 on Newburgh Priory lake on 26th December.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*
Winter visitor and feral wanderer

One flew north over Bank Island on 21st March and possibly the same bird was seen at Wheldrake Ings on 9th April. Another single bird with Greylags *Anser anser* was at Wheldrake Ings on 31st October after which it moved to Bank Island where it remained until 14th November.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Winter visitor, migrant breeder and scarce autumn passage migrant

Four birds which had arrived in December 2004 remained in the Thorganby area early in the new year. Elsewhere in the Lower Derwent Valley 14 were at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd January while 17 arrived at North Duffield Carrs on the 18th, but Thorganby was the favoured area with 22 from 12th March peaking at 55 on 23rd April.

Following a maximum of 91 throughout the Lower Derwent Valley in early April, a total of 56 pairs was located during the breeding season. However, breeding success appeared low and only a single brood of seven newly hatched ducklings was present at Bank Island on 27th May. Breeding also took place at Wheldrake Ings with juveniles noted at the end of July.

The first three returning wintering birds were present at Ellerton Ings on the typical date of 16th November and remained there throughout the month and into early December. An additional single was present at North Duffield Carrs on 26th November. Numbers then increased slowly with eight at North Duffield Carrs on 4th December, six at Bubwith Ings on the 7th and seven at North Duffield Carrs on the 11th.

Elsewhere, two were at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 6th February, two were on a pond at Strensall Common on the 14th, a pair was at Allerthorpe Common on 4th April and one flew northeast over Huby on 2nd May. A pair was at North Ings Farm, Terrington on 5th May while two were on floods at Strensall on 21st and a pair was on a flooded field between Sutton-on-the-Forest and Sheriff Hutton from 17th May to the end of the month with two juveniles there on 28th and 29th July. A single was at Castle Howard Lake on 7th October.

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

Scarce visitor mostly in the winter period

Single drakes were at Castle Howard Lake from 1st–7th October and at North Duffield Carrs on 29th September and 3rd October (EN) with maybe the same wandering individual at Bank Island on 4th December.

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Winter visitor, spring passage migrant and resident breeder

The largest concentrations frequented the River Derwent between North Duffield Carrs and Thorganby Ings with 7,560 present on 18th January and 8,000+ on the 20th increasing to a peak of 10,215 by 8th February. Numbers remained high throughout February, decreasing to 9,000+ by the 25th and further still by the month's end with the onset of extensive flooding. Other large concentrations during the month included 4,000+ at Wheldrake Ings on 8th February, 6,300 on the River Derwent at Aughton Ings on the 11th and 14th with 3,100 at Thorganby Ings and 1,000+ at North Duffield Carrs on the 25th. Up to 7,500 remained into March, increasing to 8,750 on the 11th including 2,500 at Wheldrake Ings and 2,400 at Thorganby Ings. Numbers decreased to 5,100 by the end of the month and more quickly during early April with falling water levels. Just 1,800 were still present throughout the valley on the 3rd with 986 on the 10th. A total of 50 remained at Wheldrake Ings on 19th April and up to 27 lingered at Bank Island until the 30th with 17 still there on 1st May.

A single drake on the pool at Wheldrake Ings on 22nd July bore a wing tag marked 'EB'.

The first returning birds were four at North Duffield Carrs on 29th August increasing to 15 there on 1st September, 130+ by the 5th and 250 by the end of the month. Numbers increased with 500+ birds present on 7th October, 595 on the 16th and 1,200 on the 26th. A rapid increase followed in November with rising water levels, a total of 2,500 on the 7th increasing overnight to 5,400 on the 8th and further to 6,400 by the 17th. Numbers then increased dramatically following further flooding in early December with 8,000+ on the 1st, 10,000+ by the 11th and 13,800 by the 14th.

There were also some good counts at Castle Howard Lake in the winter periods with 250+ in January and 100+ in December. Elsewhere, a drake was on the River Ouse at Clifton Ings on 14th January, another on the CSL pond on 17th October, a female on Rawcliffe Lake 23rd–25th October and five on floods at Fulford Ings on the 29th.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Winter visitor and migrant breeder

In the Lower Derwent Valley 17 were at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd January with 60 through March into April. Small numbers were noted at North Duffield Carrs on various dates between mid-February and mid-April while six were noted there on 28th May. At Wheldrake Ings 12 were present on 29th September.

Up to 20 were seen at Castle Howard Lake throughout January and singles were noted at the CSL pond on 28th February, 17th June and between 5th–26th August, with two drakes present there from 7th–31st October.

Common Teal *Anas crecca*

Winter visitor and resident breeder

There were the usual wintering numbers of this species in the Lower Derwent Valley with a count of 500+ at Bank Island on 6th February. Birds generally favoured the North Duffield Carrs and Thorganby areas at this time with peak counts of 5,430 on 3rd January increasing to 6,200 by 11th February before falling again to 4,350 by the 25th and to 3,270 by 11th March.

Known to have bred at North Duffield Carrs where one pair raised five young, at Ellerton Ings where a single pair hatched four ducklings, and at Bank Island where three pairs raised a total of 17 young.

Up to 40 were seen throughout the summer at Wheldrake Ings with numbers increasing to 380 by 12th August then 500+ from September through to the end of year while a further 1,100 were noted at Aughton Ings on 8th December.

There were up to 100 at Castle Howard Lake throughout January but no further records there until ten on 1st October with 50+ to the year's end. Single birds were noted regularly through the year at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits. At Clifton Ings two were on floods on 13th January with eight there the next day while 25 were seen flying up-river there on the 21st with another 20 on floods on 26th February. Thirty birds were on the top pond at Pond Head Farm, Oulston on 1st February and five were on floods at Strensall on the 5th with two remaining to 13th March.

A few pairs bred again on Skipwith Common.

Two birds were present on Rawcliffe Lake on 2nd September and a pair on JRTNR pond, New Earswick on the 9th had increased to eight the next day with three remaining the day after and another six there on 8th October. Five were present at the CSL pond from September through to November while single drakes were at Naburn Marina on 19th November and Newburgh Priory lake 26th December.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Winter visitor and resident breeder

A common species recorded widely throughout the recording area with breeding at many sites. There were the usual wintering numbers throughout the Lower Derwent Valley although no significant counts were

received this year. Castle Howard Lake also held good numbers through the year with 400+ there during January. On the York University lake 166 were counted on 23rd June. At the CSL pond 21 broods produced 154 ducklings although less than 10% survived while a peak count of 131 was made there during October. It was also a good breeding season at the JRTNR pond, New Earswick resulting in 100+ birds there from September through to November. Other peak counts of 100+ were reported from both Fulford Ings and Newburgh Priory pond during December.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Winter visitor and scarce migrant breeder

Numbers in the Lower Derwent Valley were rather less than in recent years although still quite good with peak counts of 70+ at Bank Island on 6th February, 80+ there on the 7th and 91 at North Duffield Carrs on the 14th. Numbers then declined with 55 at Wheldrake Ings on 30th March though six were still at North Duffield Carrs 8th April and a single drake lingered at Bank Island from 18th to 25th April.

A pair was also present at Aughton Ings on 3rd May but there were no further sightings until a duck was found on the ditch network there with seven newly hatched ducklings on 11th June (EN). This is the first time this species has bred successfully in the Lower Derwent Valley since 1998.

The first returning bird was a female at North Duffield Carrs on 30th September with up to five birds present in the area throughout October, commuting between North Duffield Carrs, Wheldrake Ings and Skipwith Common. Numbers increased dramatically at the onset of winter flooding with 40 at Wheldrake Ings in November increasing to 60+ by the end of the year while a further 25 were at North Duffield Carrs and 50+ at Bubwith Ings, both on 13th November.

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

Migrant breeder

The first return sighting was a pair at North Duffield Carrs on 11th April (EN) and again on the 14th when a pair was also at Church Road Bridge, Melbourne on the Pocklington Canal. This or another pair was at East Cottingwith on the 23rd moving to Bank Island from 7th–17th May, the drake remaining to the 29th. Confirmation of breeding came with the discovery by ringers there on 16th June (EN) of a female with a brood of eight newly-hatched ducklings, one of which was caught and ringed. The brood of eight was again seen on 18th June when a second female with a brood of seven was present and again a single duckling

from this brood was caught and ringed. A single pair remained in the North Duffield Carrs area until mid-May with only occasional sightings of a single female thereafter until 21st June. A female was also at Bank Island on 14th July and an eclipse drake was seen at Wheldrake Ings from 3rd–8th August. A female type with a lot of white in the wing was seen at the CSL pond on a couple of occasions during August with a more typically plumaged bird there on 8th September.

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Resident breeder and winter visitor

In the Lower Derwent Valley 36 were at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd January with 120 there through March while a further four pairs were at North Duffield Carrs. There were still around 70 present at Bank Island in early April with a few pairs remaining through the summer. Two were still at North Duffield Carrs on 21st April but with no further records until 8th August when 15 birds were at Wheldrake Ings and remained to the year's end. The only records away from the valley were from the JRTNR pond, New Earswick where two males and a female were present on 21st March while a single drake dropped in on 29th October.

Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Winter visitor and migrant breeder

A poor showing in the Lower Derwent Valley this year with counts of just 20 at Aughton Ings and at Wheldrake Ings in March and just ten during the latter part of the year. From a peak count of 46 in the Lower Derwent Valley during January and February, numbers fell to 32 on 3rd March and only 17 remained by the 29th. Counts of 11 on 4th April and four on the 18th were the last in a poor winter period.

Castle Howard Lake, however, fared better with 150+ during January. In late October 32 were counted there peaking at 150+ by late December. Up to three birds were seen throughout the year on the River Ouse between York and Naburn while a drake was on the river by Clifton Ings on 9th January with another there from 22nd November to 21st December. A juvenile was on the JRTNR pond, New Earswick on 10th October.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Winter visitor and migrant breeder

A rather poor year in the Lower Derwent Valley with limited flooding in the early part of the year followed by rather dry conditions during the breeding season.

The year opened with a total of 86 on 3rd January which remained throughout the month, mainly frequenting ponds in the North Duffield Carrs and Thorganby Ings areas as well as the River Derwent generally. Numbers increased slightly in February with rising water levels to a monthly maximum of 129 on the 21st before spring passage through the valley brought further birds in early to mid-March. Almost daily counts at Bank Island showed numbers there increasing from 30 on 12th March to 40 on the 14th and 78 by the 22nd when a total of 171 was present throughout the valley. At Bank Island 96 were present on the 30th when other counts produced 80 at Wheldrake Ings, 51 at North Duffield Carrs and 23 elsewhere – a total of 250. Numbers decreased thereafter but 143 were still present on 4th April and 113 on the 29th.

A total of 48 pairs was present during the early breeding season with the first brood appearing at North Duffield Carrs on 27th May. Seven pairs bred successfully there hatching 30 young. Seven pairs also bred successfully (21 young) along the Pocklington Canal with two pairs at Bank Island (12 young), Wheldrake Ings (14 young) and a single pair at Ellerton (six young). This represents the lowest number of successful pairs in the valley since 1990.

Good numbers wintered at Castle Howard Lake with 100+ through January. In the second winter period 60 on 1st October increased to 100+ again by the end of the year. Birds were also present throughout the year at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits with a peak count of 86 on 30th January. Small numbers were present along the River Foss in York during the winter months and this species was also seen regularly throughout the year on the ponds around Strensall Common. A good spate of records came from the CSL pond with a pair there from 13th–17th June, a female from 4th–13th September and a male from 14th September to 24th October. One or two were also seen occasionally, mainly in spring and autumn, at the JRTNR pond, New Earswick. Six birds were on the Newburgh Priory lake on 3rd May and five in eclipse plumage were on the River Ouse at Naburn on 29th August, with a single drake there on 7th December and four on the 17th. Four were also on Hogg's Pond at Dringhouses, York on 13th November.

Greater Scaup *Aythya marila*

Winter visitor and passage migrant in small numbers

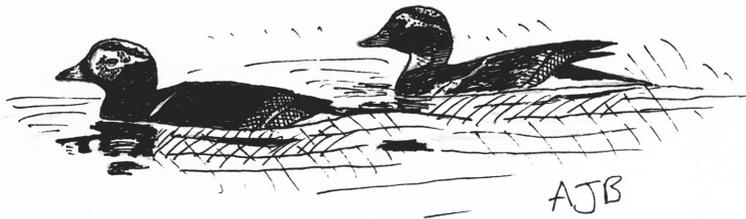
A lone duck found on the River Derwent at Thorganby on 11th January was the first of the year. A drake was at Bank Island 12th–15th March and again from the 18th–25th while two adult drakes and a duck were at North Duffield Carrs on the 16th. A single adult drake reappeared at

North Duffield Carrs on 23rd May before it was caught in a duck trap with Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula* on 2nd June, remaining until the 7th. A single adult female was at Castle Howard Lake on 1st and 2nd October with two there on 31st December.

Long Tailed Duck *Clangula hyemalis*

Very scarce winter visitor

Two birds appeared briefly at North Duffield Carrs on the evening of 4th April and then flew off north (EN).



Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

Nine were at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd February with four there throughout March and six on 1st April, plus a single at Bank Island from February through to 21st March. Eight birds wintered at Castle Howard Lake from January through to the end of March with a peak count of 12 on 16th January. Single females were at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 16th January and on the River Ouse at Clifton Ings on 15th February.

In the autumn three birds were on Rawcliffe Lake on 23rd October and ten birds had returned to Castle Howard Lake by 12th November increasing to more than 20 by the end of the year.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

Castle Howard Lake held the biggest wintering numbers this year with up to 20 through January and then, in the second winter period, a peak count of 27 on 28th October. Just small numbers were at Wheldrake Ings with eight on 3rd February and a maximum of 15 on 1st March. Three flew down-river at Bank Island on 16th March.

Six birds flew over Walmgate Stray, York on 17th January and 20 were on the ponds at Pond Head Farm, Oulston on 1st February with eight on Newburgh Priory lake the same day. Five were at the weir at

Buttercrambe on the 2nd and two drakes were on the River Ouse at Naburn Bridge on the 19th. Another pair was on the river at Clifton on the 24th plus a drake there from 22nd–24th March. A couple of rather unseasonal sightings were four on the River Ouse at Clifton on 7th June and three birds in moult on the same river at Fulford on the 21st. Two females dropped on to JRTNR pond, New Earswick on 3rd December and five birds were seen in flight over Beningborough Park on the 5th. Finally, a single bird was on Newburgh Priory lake on the 26th and a female was seen flying up the Pocklington Canal on the 29th.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Resident breeder

Up to five were present throughout the year at Castle Howard Lake with three pairs noted there on 17th April. Three birds were present at Bank Island through March and April with a drake remaining to 12th May. Probably the same birds visited the pool at Wheldrake lngs on a couple of occasions during this period. A pair was on the pools around Strensall Common from 30th April to 18th May and three or four were present at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits from April through to August.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Resident breeder

This species was reported in small numbers from a variety of locations in the recording area. Birds were seen frequently throughout the year around CSL while up to eight were present all year in farmland bordering the River Ouse between York and Naburn. Thirteen were near the windmill at Dunnington on 1st February with 11 at Pond Head Farm, Oulston on the 2nd and two at Stillington on the 5th. Two were at Welburn and four at Lilling Green Farm, West Lilling on 12th March and two pairs were at Huby on 2nd May with other pairs at Kilburn on the 11th and between Sutton-on-the-Forest and Sheriff Hutton on the 17th plus three birds at Bossall on the 21st. Coveys of six and 16 were at two different locations in Stillingfleet on 9th November with five at Acaster Aerodrome on the 17th.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Resident breeder

As with the previous species, reported throughout the year from most parts of the recording area. A pair was between Stillington and Easingwold on 31st January and another pair was in a field near the Harewood Whin landfill site on 2nd February. Ones and twos were at three different sites

near South Duffield on 27th February. One collided with a window at CSL on 1st April then flew off north. A single was in a field adjacent to the northern end of Rawcliffe Ings on the 16th. Three pairs were at Huby on 2nd May with a single at Strensall on the 18th, another pair at Bossall on the 21st and two present in the Naburn area from 9th May to 19th June. Other pairs were at Cape Farm, Sheriff Hutton on 14th June, Skewsby on the 15th and Yearsley on 3rd July with a single seen at Coxwold the same day. Two were at Sheriff Hutton on 12th August with a larger covey of 20 seen at Murton on 3rd September. Two coveys each exceeding ten birds were seen on a walk along a footpath between Huby and Sutton-on-the-Forest on the 26th and another covey of 22 birds was by Cass Wood, Huby on 27th October. A single bird was calling at North Duffield Carrs at dawn on 4th October and a covey of 19 birds was seen on arable land adjacent to North Duffield Carrs on 29th October, these remaining in the area until the end of the year. Small numbers were seen throughout the year in the Dunnington area with ten birds on a garden wall there on 5th November. Six were at Bolton Percy on 28th November and ten were at Aughton Ings on 11th December.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

Summer visitor which breeds in good years

The first returning bird was heard calling at Bubwith Ings on 3rd May (EN), a rather early and isolated appearance. A small influx occurred towards the end of the month with one at Ellerton Ings on the 27th, two calling males there on the 28th with four there on the 29th (EN), and three at East Cottingwith Ings on the 30th. Two singing males were then present at North Duffield Ings on 1st June with two there on the 2nd when single birds were also present at Thornton Ellers and Aughton Ings. A further influx then took place from 11th June when a single bird was calling near Escrick followed by singles at Hagg Bridge on the 12th and two singing birds at Thornton Ellers on the 13th. A total of 11 calling birds was present throughout the Lower Derwent Valley during the week preceding 24th June.

Activity typically reduced during July with a single bird at Bank Island on the 8th, plus one at each of North Duffield Carrs and Aughton Ings on the 11th. Proof of breeding came when a female was found with three small chicks at Ellerton Ings during the hay cut. Thanks must go to the local farmers who left an uncut strip around the birds until they departed the following day. The last record of the year in the Lower Derwent Valley involved a single calling male at Thornton Ellers on 1st August.

Elsewhere there were three records, all referring to single birds heard calling: one at night at White Carr near Strensall Common on 18th June, another at Cape Farm, Sheriff Hutton in June and one at Bank Island on 7th July.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Resident breeder

Common and widespread throughout the recording area in suitable habitat but the only counts received were of up to 15 between York and Naburn during the year and eight in Cornfield NR, Rawcliffe where breeding occurred.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Resident breeder

Regularly seen in the Lower Derwent Valley, particularly at Bank Island where three were noted on 12th March, four on the 15th, five on the 22nd and again on the 30th (when there were eight seen from Swantail Hide, Wheldrake Ings). Three pairs were present on 18th April but only a single bird was left by 11th May. Also present in front of the Garganey Hide, North Duffield Carrs on 19th and 27th February and on 24th March. Up to five birds were present on the Pocklington Canal in January with a maximum count in the Lower Derwent Valley of 23 birds on 21st January.

Also present at a number of locations outside the Lower Derwent Valley. Two birds were on the River Ouse by Rawcliffe Ings from 5th to 13th January with single sightings there on 14th February, 15th April, 27th October and 5th November. Other singles were seen on pools at Strensall Common on 26th/27th March and 2nd May, on a pool near Welburn on 14th May, and on the River Ouse at Fulford Ings on 23rd October. Two were seen on Castle Howard Lake on 2nd May and 1st October with four there on 29th October. An adult was seen feeding a small chick on Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 29th May and one was heard calling at Frog Hall, Allerthorpe Common on 30th May. Seen in Stillingfleet village on 9th November on a flooded stream while one was fishing in a patch of open water on the frozen Pocklington Canal on 29th December.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Resident breeder and passage visitor

Regularly seen in the Lower Derwent Valley, with single birds noted at Wheldrake Ings and Bank Island on 12th March. Also reported from Wheldrake Ings (number not noted) on 25th March. A pair was displaying

at Bank Island on 29th March with three noted there on the 30th and again on 19th April with two present on 17th, 23rd and 26th April.

Present throughout the year on Castle Howard Lake with six on 1st and 16th January, eight on 27th January, six on 13th March, four on 2nd July, 12 on 7th October and two on 24th December.

A single bird was present throughout the year at Rawcliffe Lake with a second bird joining it from late March. Breeding took place for the first time in many years with one chick seen on 7th July. Unfortunately it did not survive and the second bird departed by the end of the month.

A pair arrived at York University lake on 1st February and produced three chicks by 18th March; the female was on eggs again by 6th May with four chicks hatched by the 31st, and a third brood of just one youngster was noted by 20th July. An additional adult was seen on 19th April with the last remaining bird present on 23rd October.

Elsewhere a pair was present at Naburn Marina from 19th February to 18th June but no young were ever seen. Possibly the same pair was seen on the River Ouse near the Millennium Bridge at York on 8th July, where a single bird was reported earlier in the year (31st March). A single was at Newburgh Priory lake on 3rd May while an adult was seen feeding a fish to a nearly fully-grown chick on the bottom pond at Pond Head Farm, Oulston on 3rd July. There was a pair at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 10th April, 29th May and 25th June and a single bird was seen at Allerthorpe Water Park on 19th March and 31st May.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Former summer visitor and scarce breeder, now predominantly a passage visitor

A summer-plumaged bird was seen from Swantail Hide, Wheldrake Ings on 25th March and as it was heard making contact calls it is possible a second bird was also present. Presumably it was the same bird seen there over the weekend of 2nd/3rd April. A bird present at the same location on 4th April was seen to be carrying two blue colour-rings and had been ringed as an adult male at North Duffield Carrs in 2004. A single bird with two green colour-rings appeared at North Duffield Carrs on the 5th having been rung as a chick there in 2004 while an unringed bird was present there on the 7th. An amazing group of five birds was found on the River Derwent at Brighton on the 8th, feeding and slowly moving upstream as they were watched (EN).

Gannet *Morus bassanus*
Scarce autumn migrant

A single juvenile, seen flying west along the River Ouse over the M62 near Asselby Island on 8th October, was presumably the same bird seen passing the mouth of the River Derwent at Barnby-on-the-Marsh shortly afterwards (per EN). This location is just south of the YOC recording area.

This represents the eight record of the species in the area, following singles in 2003 and 2004. All relate to juvenile/first-winter birds with September and October accounting for seven of the eight records.



Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*
Passage and winter visitor and recently established resident breeder

Birds were present and roosting throughout the year in the Lower Derwent Valley and at Castle Howard. On 12th March 18 active nests were noted on Wheldrake lngs, with 12 adults and 11+ young noted on 17th April and a total of 49 birds there on 24th April. A party of 15 flew south over Bank Island on 10th August.

Numbers at Castle Howard fluctuated with 30+ on 1st January rising to 50+ on 16th January and 49 on 15th February, then decreasing into April when 15 were noted on the 12th. Later in the year numbers increased again with 45 on 2nd July, 70+ on 7th October and 50 on 24th December. Six active nests were noted here on 10th and 11th April with eight reported on 12th April and 16 on 6th June.

Elsewhere up to four birds were seen along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year while five were on the top pond at Pond Head Farm, Oulston on 1st February. A single bird of the continental race *sinensis* was seen flying up-river at Clifton Ings on 4th February. Six were seen flying over Sand Hutton on 8th February. Another single bird regularly perched in a dead tree by the River Ouse at Rawcliffe Ings throughout late June to early July and again in mid-August. There was also a single bird at Rawcliffe Lake from 2nd to 20th September. Further singles were seen over CSL on 15th, 23rd and 26th September, and on 12th October with eight flying west on 12th December. Two were seen flying over Bossall on 18th June. Single birds were seen periodically on the JRTNR pond in New Earswick through August to October.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Previously a rare vagrant but in recent years has become an annual if irregular visitor

One headed south over Elvington and was later seen at North Duffield Carrs on 11th July. Two birds were present at Bank Island early on 27th July with a single bird still present early evening. One, maybe the same bird, was seen on Bubwith Ings just upstream of Bubwith bridge on 28th July and remained between here and North Duffield Carrs until 6th August (EN).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Resident breeder

Single birds were generally noted along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year with three seen flying north together over Fulford Ings on 25th June and at least five counted along the river on 12th September. Recorded in ones and twos throughout the year in the Dunnington area, with four to five birds also seen regularly at Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings through the year, and a single bird at Rawcliffe Lake on 13th September.

Regular at Castle Howard Lake throughout the year with three there on 1st and one on 16th January, seven on 15th February, 12 on 13th March, five adults and two young on 12th April, two adults and four young on 2nd July, two on 7th October and one on 24th December. Two birds were on nests on 15th February with five nests noted on the 13th March while four nests were reported as active on 10th and 11th April.

Elsewhere, seen occasionally at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits, Bank Island, Barmby Moor, Kexby, Londesborough, Newburgh Priory lake, North Duffield Carrs, Osbaldwick, Oulston, Strensall, West Lilling and Wheldrake

Ings. There were 17 records for the year at CSL, mostly of single birds, with one seen to take a duckling on 11th May. Individual birds were seen in or around the JRTNR pond in New Earswick throughout July as well as in September and November.

White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

Scarce vagrant, but-free flying birds from the Harewood Estate near Leeds are also likely

One flying low over Healaugh at 13:15 on 3rd April (MW) was probably the same bird reported eight miles southwest of Bramham on BirdGuides the same day. A single was reported at several sites around York in early October including over Hogg's Pond, Dringhouses in York on the 5th and was present in fields near the A1079 on the 6th. It was then present at Low Cattton Ings on the 7th (EN).

Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

Irregular passage migrant and rare breeder

A single adult drifted slowly west along the moraine at Thornton Ellers on 25th August (EN). On 2nd September another passage bird was seen soaring to the north of Bank Island and later drifting westwards over Wheldrake village (RS).

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Irregular visitor from re-introduction schemes

A single bird was reported by independent observers from both Aughton Ings and North Duffield Carrs on 9th March while another was over Bank Island, Wheldrake Ings on 3rd April. An adult flew south over Strensall Common on 2nd May and later in the month one was seen over Kirkham Priory heading south on the 21st. One flew low over woods and fields at Nod Hill, High Gaterley Farm near Castle Howard on 1st September.

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Passage migrant and rare breeder

The first recorded for the year, a single female, flew southeast over North Duffield Carrs on 8th February. One drifted southeast along Fryton Wood on 18th April while another was seen feeding on the ground at North Duffield Carrs on 22nd April, and a female was seen at Dudley Hill Farm, Sheriff Hutton on 29th April. On 3rd May an immature male, initially seen at Bank Island, was later noted at North Duffield Carrs. On 21st May a cream-crowned bird moved through heading south at

Bank Island. A similar bird was seen flying north along the River Derwent at North Duffield Carrs mobbed by five Carrion Crows *Corvus corone* on 31st July. A juvenile male was seen over the pool at Wheldrake Ings on 8th August and presumably the same bird was seen at Bank Island on the 10th, when a second rather tatty piebald bird was seen briefly passing south. A juvenile and heavily moulting adult were seen in the vicinity of Swantail Hide, Wheldrake Ings on 25th August, both believed to be different birds to those seen on the 10th. Single birds were reported from Bank Island on 2nd (a juvenile) and 5th September, and over Wheldrake Ings on 2nd and 10th September and 1st October, with a juvenile at Aughton Ings on 4th October and a late individual at Skipwith on the 14th.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*
Winter visitor and passage migrant

The only record for the year involved a single male flying south over Bubwith Ings on 3rd November (EN). (A 'ringtail' was also reported at Rosemount Farm, Weaverthorpe on 3rd March (PB) – ten miles east of the YOC recording area.)

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*
Passage visitor and rare breeder

A single immature circled over Bank Island on 15th January whilst an immature male was watched at close range for several minutes on the flood-bank at North Duffield Carrs on 3rd February (EN). May have bred at a site in the north of the recording area, where several raptor-killed Wood Pigeons *Columba palumbus* and Carrion Crows *Corvus corone* were found in June, with one Goshawk seen on 14th October. A single male flew west at North Duffield Carrs on 26th November (EN).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*
Resident breeder and passage migrant

Up to three birds were generally seen on any single day along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year with three migrating south together over Naburn Bridge on 16th April. A pair was noted displaying over Fulford Ings on 2nd May with birds carrying prey noted from the 10th and an immature male seen on the 28th. A male mobbed frantically by a pair of Pied Wagtails *Motacilla alba* by the Millennium Bridge, York on 9th June was probably flying off with one of their young!

A second-year female was found dead at the JRTNR at New Earswick on 7th February. A pair was seen performing aerial displays over the adjacent Sessions NR during the first two weeks of March but no subsequent signs of breeding were seen. Another female was active on and around a nest in the northern part of New Earswick until 20th March after which there were no further sightings at that site. Three different birds were seen in separate locations around New Earswick on 1st April. From that date on to the end of the year a pair was seen regularly around the New Earswick nature reserves.

Single birds were seen regularly throughout the year in the Huby area. Recorded every month in the Dunnington area where reported as a frequent predator of small birds in one garden. A pair was seen regularly throughout the year in the Clifton Ings area.

Other sightings came from Allerthorpe Common, Castle Howard, Haxby Road in York and Sheriff Hutton in January; Allerthorpe Common (again) in February; Castle Howard estate, Strensall, Strensall Common and Terrington in March; and Strensall Common (three birds recorded during MOD survey on 18th), Terrington and York Minster in May.

Later sightings came from Strensall Common in July, The Brecks in Strensall in August with a female seen chasing a Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus* along Carr Lane near Strensall on 14th August. A single bird was seen at Yearsley Moor on 28th August. Several birds were reported to the west of Wheldrake over the moraine 'ridge' on 2nd September. A single was reported as buzzing a party of Common Buzzards *Buteo buteo* over Common Bottom Wood, Thorganby on 21st September. A female was seen soaring over Askham Bog on 22nd September. One was seen in an Acomb garden feeding on a House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* on 28th September. Further records included two mobbing a Common Buzzard over Stillingfleet village on 9th November, four counted during a three-hour visit to the Acaster Selby area on 20th November and three seen on a trip to the Lower Derwent Valley on 11th December.

Single birds were also reported from CSL in February, April, May (including one seen to catch a Sand Martin *Riparia riparia* on the 17th), June, August, September, November and December.

A male and female were seen either as a pair or individually at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on various dates in February, March, May, August, November and December. A female was present in a Strensall garden on 26th December.

A male tried repeatedly, and unsuccessfully, to take a Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major* feeding on fat balls in a Heslington garden on 31st December.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*
Passage migrant and scarce resident breeder

The trend over the last few years of increasing sightings has continued and it has now become established as a resident species thought to be breeding at a small number of locations within the recording area.

Many reports came from north of York, particularly in the vicinity of the Howardian Hills. The first report was of a single bird seen just south of the Malton by-pass (A64) on 23rd January. A pair was seen two miles southeast of Sand Hutton village on 27th February. Another pair was seen at Coneysthorpe on 28th March with one bird flying over Castle Howard Lake also on 28th March. Reported as resident and increasing in numbers in the Howardian Hills (DR) where birds were seen at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on 10th and 15th February and 8th and 19th March (pair displaying), Terrington on 17th April (pair) and at Grimston Moor, Terrington on 27th April (pair displaying). Four were seen over Pretty Wood, Castle Howard on 29th April and two over Castle Howard on 2nd October while one was seen at Coulton Moor Plantation on 15th October. One was being mobbed by two Sparrowhawks *Accipiter nisus* over Stillingfleet village on 9th November followed by one at Acaster Selby on the 20th. There were five records of single birds flying over CSL, on 5th April, 12th and 27th September, 12th October and 1st November, with a party of three also noted on 27th September.

The Lower Derwent Valley was another favoured area. Up to four birds frequented the Thorganby area throughout January with single birds at Escrick Duck Decoy on the 5th and 8th, and at Elvington on the 17th. Sightings continued in the Thorganby area during February with wandering individuals at Bank Island on the 3rd, Thornton Ellers on the 15th, Escrick on the 17th and Bank Island on the 24th. Sightings in March came from Canal Head on the 1st, Aughton Ings on the 4th, North Duffield Carrs on the 11th and 17th and Thornton Ellers on the 25th. A single flew high, southwestwards, over North Duffield Carrs on the 30th. Another was seen flying north over Wheldrake Ings on 10th April.

A total of five birds was displaying at two sites in late March and breeding was finally confirmed at two sites, a pair bred again in the Thorganby area raising three young and a single pair bred to the north of Elvington with at least one young fledged.

Following breeding up to five birds lingered in the Thorganby/Escrick area until the year end. Singles were present at Bank island on 1st and 5th August, Thornton Ellers on the 11th, three at Bubwith Ings and two at Crockey Hill on the 16th. Singles were present at Wheldrake Ings on the 23rd, Gunby on the 27th and Sutton upon Derwent on the 30th.

Another bird was to the west of Wheldrake over the moraine ridge on 2nd September. One flew west by Tower Hide, Wheldrake Ings and another over Broomhill Plantation on 18th September. On the 19th single birds were seen again over Broomhill Plantation and to the west of Wheldrake over the moraine ridge. At least seven birds were seen thermalling and periodically talon-grappling (while being buzzed by a Sparrowhawk) over Common Bottom Wood, Thorganby on 21st September, with five here on the 24th. Another was nearby on the 23rd with another at Skipwith on the 28th and at Wheldrake Ings on 29th. Two were then present at Bank Island on 2nd October with a single there on the 4th and with singles over Wheldrake on the 11th, North Duffield Carrs on the 14th and Thornton Ellers on 28th. Three were present together over North Duffield Carrs on 16th November.

Recorded from all areas of Dunnington Parish where three were observed displaying over Warren Wood on 31st March. Additional sightings of this species came from Askham Bog, Beningborough, Copmanthorpe, Garrowby Hill, York University and Youlthorpe.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*
Regular passage migrant

Spring passage started typically with a single bird in late March heading north along the River Derwent at Thorganby on the 23rd (EN). Another that flew over Elvington on 8th April (EN) was the only other spring record. One seen high over Castle Howard on 7th August (DR) slowly drifted off to the east. Another single bird was seen circling and hovering over the Pocklington Canal on 15th August (RS) before heading south.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*
Resident breeder

Regularly seen in the Huby area and common throughout the northern part of the recording area, frequently spotted hunting over roadside margins along the northern and southern York bypasses, and along the Wigginton – Sutton-on-the-Forest road. Reported throughout the year from several locations around New Earswick but unlike 2004 there was no evidence that they bred in the area during 2005. Reported as the commonest raptor in the Dunnington area where they bred on the Common (raising at least three young) and at Clock Farm. Seen regularly in the Clifton Ings area with a family party present in late summer. Believed to have bred in the Askham Bog area with a party of three flying over the trees there on 22nd September.

Up to four birds were generally seen along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year with family parties noted at two sites on 25th June and 9th July. There were regular sightings at CSL during the year. Single birds were seen at Askham Bog on 23rd January; Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 20th March; Strensall Common on 13th and 20th March, 27th April and 18th May; near Earswick in January, on 30th April and 16th May; at Sutton-on-the-Forest on 8th May; Towthorpe on 10th May; Skipwith Common on 11th June; and Bank Island and Wheldrake Ings on 2nd September and 4th December. At Allerthorpe Water Park three juveniles recorded on 10th July, and two on the 17th were observed hunting Sand Martins *Riparia riparia*.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Passage migrant and winter visitor

A single bird was seen flying over the northern part of Strensall Common on 1st January. Single birds were also reported from Dunnington where they were seen on the Common on 9th and 14th January and near Cottage Plantation on 1st February. One flew over the York northern bypass (A1237) 1km south of the Rufforth roundabout on 22nd January. One attempted to flush prey in wooded gardens on the edge of open farmland in Bubwith village on 8th February while another was seen at Slingsby on 20th February. A male was seen by Raker Lakes, Wheldrake on 25th February. A female/juvenile was seen at Full Sutton on 14th March while a single bird flew high over the Thorganby Ings viewing platform on 19th March.

A female flew rapidly south along the River Ouse at Bishopthorpe on 6th August causing panic among the local hirundines. One was seen at Hob Moor, York on 17th October with another over Askham Bog on 29th October. One was over the Geoff Smith Hide, North Duffield CARRS on 24th November. A female/immature was seen over Strensall Common on 25th December.



Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Passage and increasing summer visitor

A single bird flashed past low in front of the hide at Bank Island on 21st May. On 3rd August a single bird flew over the pool at Wheldrake Ings with another singleton west of Wheldrake over the moraine ridge on 2nd September. Single birds were also reported from Dunnington Common on the 8th and 29th of September. One was seen from Malton railway station swooping on a tight slow-moving flock of c.100 Swallows *Hirundo rustica* on 9th September.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Winter and passage visitor

Single birds were reported from CSL on 11th and 18th January, and at Wheldrake Ings on 9th January and 3rd February, with a male present there on 8th March when one (possibly the same bird) was also reported from Thorganby. An immature bird was seen over Clifton Park on 21st January. Singles were seen at the refuge area of Wheldrake Ings on 17th April and 28th May. Another was seen circling low over Strensall Common on 30th April. A single bird was to the west of Wheldrake over the moraine ridge on 2nd September with another singleton near Wilberfoss on 15th December. A pair was seen hunting in tandem over Wheldrake Ings on 26th December.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Resident breeder and winter/passage visitor

One to two birds were regularly heard calling at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits specifically on 5th and 6th February, 20th March, 29th October, 5th and 20th November and 10th December. Also, two birds were in 'song' on Skipwith Common on 12th March and heard calling on Strensall Common on 27th March. One was heard calling at Pool Hide, Wheldrake Ings while another was flushed near the bridge between Pool and Swantail hides on 30th March. Heard calling again at Wheldrake Ings on 1st April.

A single bird was seen to the left of Pool Hide at Wheldrake Ings on 6th August. A recently dead bird was found beside a pond at CSL on 12th August. Heard calling at Thorganby village pond on 28th August. The next record was of one heard calling from the reeds near to the bridge to Swantail Hide at Wheldrake Ings on 1st October, with three discovered during management work at Bank Island on 21st October. Two were heard calling from the pool at Wheldrake Ings on 31st October with another calling near the bridge onto Wheldrake Ings on 10th November

and two calling in the same area on 6th December. One was calling from reeds by the stream in Stillingfleet village on 9th November.

Spotted Crane *Porzana porzana*
Rare passage migrant and breeder

There was a single record of a singing male at the pool at Wheldrake Ings at dusk on 11th July. Despite other limited nocturnal survey work there were no other records to suggest that this or other birds had been present here and it is likely that this was a passage bird (EN).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*
Resident breeder and winter visitor

Widespread throughout the York recording area in a variety of habitats which can include open lakes/pools, farm ponds, flooded gravel pits, rivers, streams, farm drainage ditches and seasonally flooded ings adjacent to the Ouse, Derwent and Foss rivers.

Single birds and pairs regularly were seen when driving around the Huby, Sutton-on-the-Forest and Strensall areas, usually associated with wet ditches and/or small farm ponds (one with four young on such a pond a mile east of Huby on 2nd May). Present throughout the year at Castle Howard Lake with over ten on 1st and 20+ on 16th January, 100+ on 27th January, 12 on 13th March, 50 on 2nd July, c.40 on 7th October, and 50+ on 24th December.

Also resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of 20 birds (15 in Rowntree Park) on 19th November. Common around York University campus with 40 on 21st March and 35 birds plus six chicks on 23rd June. Present throughout the year at CSL where seven broods are thought to have been hatched by three pairs, with the highest count of 11 birds on 11th October. Present all year and bred at Rawcliffe Lake and in the Clifton Ings area. Found on ponds throughout Dunnington Parish and although they nested and laid eggs in the reserve, once again no young hatched. In the New Earswick area present all year round on the River Foss and in all the nature reserves where they bred successfully with counts in excess of 25 birds in early summer.

Elsewhere six on Newburgh Priory lake 1st February; 11 at Thorganby Ings on 26th February; pair with two young on the Pottery Fish Pond, Strensall 7th June; five at Pond Head Farm, Oulston 3rd July; one beside a temporary pool beside Carr Lane (back road from Sutton-on-the-Forest to Strensall) on 2nd August; 21 at Bank Island on 7th August; 12 in Hull Road Park, York on 5th and 30th November; 12 at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 5th November; and 25+ at Newburgh Priory lake on 26th December.

Coot *Fulica atra*

Resident breeder and winter visitor

Like Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* widespread throughout the York recording area but more dependent on areas of open water (lakes, pools, gravel pits, rivers and the seasonally flooded lngs adjacent to the Ouse, Derwent and Foss rivers). During the winter months numbers increase significantly, particularly at Castle Howard and within the Lower Derwent Valley. Counts from Castle Howard Lake included 150+ on 1st January, 300+ on the 16th and 400+ on the 27th, 30 on 13th March, 60 on 12th July, c.20 on 7th October and 20+ on 24th December.

Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of five birds in Rowntree Park on 22nd August. Also regular around York University campus with 32 on 22nd August and 37 birds plus seven chicks on 23rd June. Present all year and bred at Rawcliffe Lake. Newburgh Priory lake had ten on 1st February and 3rd May. There were ten adults plus three juveniles at Pond Head Farm, Oulston 3rd July. Records from Bank Island included 60+ on 23rd March, 80 on 30th March, 130 on 9th April, 80 on 9th May, 60 on the 11th, 90 on the 12th and an adult with two juveniles on 14th July. A pair with three young was on the Pottery Fish Pond, Strensall on 7th June. A long-staying bird was present at CSL from early July through to mid-November. Three were seen on a pool near Welburn on 14th May with one also at Strensall Common during an MOD survey on 18th May. There were 14 at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 5th November.

In the New Earswick area confined to the pond at the JRTNR. The six adults present at the end of 2004 were joined by additional birds on 17th and 22nd January and 17th February. One had left by 4th March leaving four pairs. One pair had nested by 25th March with the female sitting on three eggs. By 29th March a second pair had produced five eggs and a third pair showed signs of nest building. An adult female and second-year male were found dead floating on the pond on 4th April having possibly been killed by the other adults. The first chick was seen on 29th April and by 3rd May there were at least seven chicks from two nesting pairs with the third pair apparently having failed. Of these seven just two survived into August. However, on 1st August the third pair produced a late brood of three chicks all of which survived into adulthood up to the time they left the reserve along with two of the adults. By 7th October the population was down to four adults. A fifth adult arrived on 7th November but had left by the 14th.

Crane *Grus grus*
Scarce vagrant.

One was reported between Wressle and Brighton on the morning of 15th April (EN) remaining until mid-morning.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*
Passage migrant and migrant breeder

The first returning bird made an early appearance at North Duffield Carrs on 20th January. It was followed by another there from 4th February with two on the 11th. Numbers increased quickly with eight on the 12th, nine on the 19th, 11 on the 20th and 17 throughout the Lower Derwent Valley by the 28th. There were also three at Naburn Sewage Works on 19th February, then one at Thorganby Ings on 26th February and one at Bank Island on the 28th. Two birds remained from 19th February to 18th June at Naburn Sewage Works.

Records increased during March with two birds at Bank Island on the 8th, two at Thorganby on the 9th and two at North Duffield on the 12th. Other sightings were of two at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 13th March, a pair at Allerthorpe Water Park on the 19th, two at Bank Island on the 23rd, two at North Duffield Carrs on the 24th and 28th, with three at Bank Island on the 30th and two at Wheldrake Ings on the same day.

April records become more widespread with one over CSL on the 4th and 5th, one at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 4th and two at Castle Howard on the 8th.

At Thorganby 12 were observed 19th April and six on the 21st. On 17th April a single was seen over Strensall and two observed at North Duffield while Wheldrake Ings produced two on the 29th.

May sightings commenced on the 1st with one flying over Fulford Ings and a pair over Strensall. Two were observed over Huby on the 4th, a pair at North Ings Farm, Terrington on the 5th and a single at Moreby, Naburn on the 8th. Two flew over the CSL on 17th May and four were at Allerthorpe Water Park on the 31st. A walk along the Pocklington Canal from Canal Head to Hagg Bridge on 23rd May revealed several birds holding territories.

June records included a single at Barmby Moor on the 11th with two at CSL on the 17th and a single on the 29th. Four flew over Huby on the 25th and two were at Bank Island on the 30th. In July three were at the bottom pond, Pond Head Farm, Oulston with one at Newburgh Priory lake and three over Dunnington Common on the 3rd. Singles were seen over CSL on the 5th, 19th, 20th, 25th and 26th with two by the pond and one on the lawn on the 11th. Six were reported in the Gilling area on

8th July with one over Slingsby on the 18th and two seen at Allerthorpe Water Park on the 10th.

Later in the year, unusually, two were adjacent to the River Ouse at Stillingfleet on 9th November, one flew west at Bank Island on the 14th and one was near the River Derwent at East Cottingwith on the 29th. Lastly, Newburgh Priory lake hosted a surprising ten birds on 26th December (there are very few autumn records of this species).

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Rare visitor

Two were observed at Swantail Hide, Wheldrake Ings on 19th April, a single bird flew west along the Pocklington Canal at Hagg Bridge on 27th April while two at Bank Island on 8th June were flushed by a low-flying balloon. Finally, another single was present on the pool at Wheldrake Ings on 26th July, representing the first July record for the Lower Derwent Valley (EN), but its stay was also brief and it was not seen again.

[Kentish Plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*

Rare vagrant

A single adult male was reported amongst a flock of 16 Ringed Plovers *Charadrius hiaticula* at North Duffield Carrs on 3rd May. This represents the third record for the Lower Derwent Valley following single females in May 1981 and 1986 (EN). No description received.]

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Passage migrant and migrant breeder

The first for the year was at the north end of Wheldrake Ings on 10th April while another flew southeast over Thorganby Ings on the 26th. At Bank Island in May a single was seen on the 13th, two on the 16th and singles on the 17th and 20th.

On 10th July one was observed at Allerthorpe Water Park. At Pool Hide, Wheldrake Ings two juveniles were present on 6th August, and on the 7th one juvenile was seen to leave that location for the southwest.



Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*
Passage migrant

Records commenced in late March with one heard over Wheldrake Ings and one seen at Aughton Ings on the 25th. A single was seen at the refuge, Wheldrake Ings on 5th April with another at Wheldrake Ings on the 29th.

May at Bank Island produced 16 on the 16th and eight on the 17th with five remaining there until 21st May when two mixed flocks with Dunlin *Calidris alpina* passed through containing 13 Ringed Plovers in one group and two in the other.

Again at Bank Island, 17 were noted each day on 22nd and 23rd May, with 20 on the 24th and 22 on the 25th but numbers then dropped there to just three by the 28th. Many if not all of these birds were considered to belong to the larger northern breeding race *C.h.tundrae*, confirmed by the biometrics of one caught and ringed there on the 24th (EN).

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*
Winter visitor and passage migrant

On 3rd January 134 were observed at Wheldrake Ings and 92 at North Duffield, and then 14 noted at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 21st.

February produced 2,000 and 600 at Wheldrake Ings on the 3rd and 12th respectively. To the west of South Duffield c.1,000 were seen on 19th February with a few coming into summer plumage. On the 27th 1,000+ were seen at North Duffield.

In March there were 22 at Wheldrake Ings on the 1st, 1,200 at Thorganby Ings on the 2nd and 2,000 at North Duffield on the 8th. By 12th March there were parties of 50 and 20 at North Duffield, and several flocks of 50 there on the 15th.

April sightings included ten at Wheldrake Ings on the 2nd, 120 at Bank Island and 600 at Aughton on the 16th, 1,000 at Artis, Bubwith on the 20th, and 29 at Thorganby Ings on the 23rd.

No birds were noted in the Naburn/Bishopthorpe area in the first part of the year with the first returning autumn birds being a flock of about 20 on 28th August. Numbers then increased to c.100 the following day before peaking at c.800 on 1st October, declining rapidly thereafter with one bird only by 17th December.

At CSL flocks were seen in the winter months with, in February, 500 over on the 15th and 16th, 30 on the 21st, 200 on the 23rd and 300 on the 28th. Fifty were also noted here on 1st April. In the autumn six moved south on 3rd October with 60 on the 17th, one on the 28th and 20 on 10th November.

The huge numbers that were in the New Earswick area at the end of 2004 were still present at the start of the year and a new record count of 3,900 was made on New Year's Day. With such a tremendous start numbers were always likely to dwindle but nevertheless there were still 1,800 birds on Bootham Stray on 2nd February although, as usual, these had all disappeared by the end of the month.

Last year's autumn arrival date of 21st October was the earliest ever, but this year's would have been barely believable had the observer not seen it with his own eyes when 18 birds flew east over both New Earswick nature reserves on 9th September. These birds apparently failed to stop as the next record was a flock of 30+ on Bootham Stray on the more usual date of 11th November, the same day as a similar-sized flock was noted on the northern edge of this patch. By early December, in excess of 200 were regularly being seen and by Christmas Eve over 800 birds were present. One feature of the autumn was the mobility of the flocks with many smaller groups often in the air flying back and forth across the area in a manner not normally seen, the reason for which is obscure. A prime example was on Christmas Day when a flock of around 70 birds from the main flock on Bootham Stray continually passed over New Earswick and Huntington, from early morning until late afternoon.

Other autumn records included 120 from the Wheldrake moraine on 19th September, 290 at Raker Bend on the 23rd, about 50 by the A1237 near Foxwood on the 24th, 25 at Spaldington and 25 north of Wheldrake on the 27th.

In October 1,000 were seen at South Duffield on the 1st. Large numbers were seen at Wheldrake on the 8th, and several flocks passed over Wheldrake moraine, including groups of 40 and 150. On the 9th 50 were observed at Wheldrake Ings and 30 at North Duffield Carrs. On 15th October 1,500 were noted at Newton-on-Ouse with 50 at Sheriff Hutton on the 20th, 50 at Sutton upon Derwent on the 21st and a single at CSL on the 28th.

In November 2,200 were at Thorganby Ings on the 10th with 600 there on the 14th. At Pottery Lane, Strensall 100 were observed on the 13th and 300 at Selby on the 27th. December sightings included 150 in winter wheat opposite Bank Island car park on the 8th, 20 over the Tillmire, York on the 30th and 600 at North Duffield Carrs on the 31st.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*
Passage migrant and winter visitor

A single was seen at North Duffield on 5th April and at Aughton on

20th April while what was presumed to be a first-summer bird was seen on the refuge, Wheldrake Ings on 2nd and 4th May.

Additionally, one flew over CSL on 12th October.

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Migrant breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor

Sightings commenced on 3rd January with 800+ over Wheldrake Ings followed by 200 at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 21st. In February 1,000 were present at Wheldrake Ings on the 12th and at least 100 at North Duffield Carrs on the 27th. Ten were noted at the main car park at Castle Howard on 19th March with a pair at West Cottingwith on the 15th.

Small flocks frequented the flooded areas at Rawcliffe Ings during the spring while at CSL birds were noted in both spring and autumn with two on 12th February, five on the 25th, 30 on 1st March, 100 on the 11th, a single on 26th September, 20 on 31st October and 100 on 10th November.

Up to 50 birds were present at various times along the River Ouse between York and Naburn early in the year but these soon moved on before the breeding population at Middlethorpe Ings returned at the end of April, numbering up to eight pairs. However, few young were seen here but other pairs were noted at Naburn Sewage Works and below Terry's chocolate factory, both producing three young. Autumn flocks had built up again by 28th August when 300+ birds were counted in the Naburn/Bishopthorpe area, and numbers then quickly increased to about 500 birds in this area with counts remaining fairly stable through to the end of the year.

Small numbers were seen regularly throughout the year in the Huby area with possible breeding in a sugar beet field on the Stillington road.

Numbers were a little lower than normal at the start of the year at the New Earswick reserves with 100 in January and 200 in February being the highest counts. These, like the Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*, had cleared out by the end of February. In the autumn the first birds were 80 eastwards over the JRTNR on 5th September, an early arrival though not as early as last year. Unfortunately few were then noted until November when around 60 were seen on the 18th. Things improved only slightly in December with the highest count of 163 on the 10th being very poor while no more than 130 were left by the end of the year. Once again two pairs probably bred just outside the area.

Elsewhere there were ten pairs at North Ings Farm, Terrington on 5th May, two at Moreby on the 8th, two pairs at Towthorpe on the 10th and two pairs at Bank Island on the 18th.

Three territories at Bossall were noted on an RSPB Farm survey. Four birds were seen at Allerthorpe on 4th May and one adult with two juveniles was at Pottery Lane, Strensall on 21st May.

Nine were seen nesting with one juvenile at Mount Pleasant Farm, Crayke on the 9th with two adults and three small birds at North Ings Farm, Terrington on the 16th, 18 at Peel Woods, Brandsby on the 18th and 70+ on cut grass at Bank Island on the 28th.

July figures included 35 at Melbourne on the 8th, 70+ on cut grass at Wheldrake Ings on the 13th, 132 at Dunnington Common on the 14th, 16 at Bank Island on the 22nd, 100 between Bielby and Thornton on the 26th with 130 at Strensall and 40 at Sheriff Hutton on the same day, and 40 over Bank Island on the 31st.

On 2nd August 70+ were observed in a field beside Carr Lane on the Strensall to Sutton-on-the-Forest road.

Autumn numbers built up with 500 at Moxby Hall Farm, Stillington on 5th September, 210 at Raker Bend, Wheldrake on 23rd September and good numbers at Foxwood off the A1237 on the same date.

The next reports were of 1,000 at North Duffield on 1st October, 20 over Castle Howard Lake on the 7th, 100 at Sutton upon Derwent on the 12th, 40 at Garrowby Hill and Stamford Bridge on the 14th, 60 at Sheriff Hutton on the 20th and 40 at Sutton upon Derwent on the 21st.

November sightings included 300 opposite Bank Island, 200 at West Cottingwith Ings and 60+ between Wheldrake Village and Elvington on the 5th, 100 at Castle Howard on the 8th and 750 on winter wheat at Pottery Lane, Strensall on the 13th.

During December 100 were at Strensall on the 1st and 200 at Haxby on the 4th when c.750 were seen at North Duffield Carrs. There were 200 in a field by Bank Island car park on the 8th with 400 seen from Tower Hide the same day. Later in the month 60+ were present at Castle Howard Lake car park on the 24th and 300+ by North Duffield Carrs on 31st December.

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

Three were observed at Wheldrake Ings from 1st to 6th April (EN) with one elsewhere in the Lower Derwent Valley on 19th April and another at Wheldrake Ings on the 30th (RS).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

A single bird was seen at Bank Island on 24th May (RS).

[Pectoral Sandpiper *Calidris melanotos*
Vagrant

A single juvenile reported from North Duffield Carrs on 16th September may have been the same bird which arrived at Nosterfield the following day (seventh record of this nearctic wader for the Lower Derwent Valley) (EN). No description received]

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*
Infrequent passage visitor, usually in the autumn

An excellent record for the area was a summer-plumaged bird at Bank Island from 16th to 20th May.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*
Passage migrant and winter visitor

During February 180+ were at Wheldrake Ings on the 3rd with six at Garganey Hide, North Duffield Carrs on the 16th and 30 at Thorganby Ings on the 26th.

In March six were at Bubwith Bridge on the 12th with 45 at Aughton on the 26th and 20 at Wheldrake Ings on the 30th. Most records for the month came from Thorganby Ings as follows: 20 on the 2nd, 100 on the 5th, 45 on the 8th, 12 on the 9th and 120 on both the 12th and the 15th.

April records consisted of a singleton on the 12th and 15 on the 30th at Wheldrake Ings, two at Bank Island on the 2nd and a summer-plumaged bird on the 19th at Thorganby with a mobile bird there on the 26th.

At Wheldrake Ings in May a singleton was noted on the 1st and two on the 17th. Bank Island sightings included four on the 19th and 20th, a summer-plumaged bird on the 16th and 18th, and two further birds on the 17th. On the 21st there were five birds there when two mixed flocks passed through. These contained four and seven individuals in each with Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*. Further small groups were noted *viz.* ten on the 22nd and 23rd, six on the 24th and several again on the 25th. A single bird was present at Bank Island on 8th June.

In August two birds in summer plumage were noted at Bank Island with a juvenile there on the 10th, 11th and 26th. A singleton was present at Wheldrake Ings on 10th September while another circled overhead at Bank Island on 14th November.

In December the build-up started again with 15+ at Bank Island on the 4th, three at Ellerton/Aughton Ings on the 8th and ten at North Duffield Carrs on the 4th and 11th. At the end of the month 80 were at

Wheldrake Ings and 30 at Bank Island on 26th December, and two were at North Duffield Carrs on the 31st.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Rare breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor

Records commenced in February with two at Wheldrake Ings on the 3rd and 23 at Thorganby Ings on the 26th. In March, at Thorganby Ings, 30 were noted on the 2nd, 40 on the 8th, 50+ on the 9th and 65 on the 12th. These numbers then dwindled to 12 on the 15th followed by a report of several on the 18th, four on the 19th and six on the 21st.

Also in March there were 15+ at Aughton on the 25th while at Wheldrake Ings there were 20+ on the 1st and 5th and 25+ on the 6th. However, only ten were still present there on 12th March.

On 12th May a black and white male was present at Bank Island and a single bird was also there on the 13th.

Birds returned in July with a single at Bank Island on the 27th and a male there on the 28th. A male and female were seen on the 29th with two birds there on the 30th.

A male was observed in August at Bank Island on the 2nd, then a male and juvenile on the 3rd, a juvenile male on the 6th and 7th, 20 adults on the 8th, three juveniles on the 10th and six juveniles on the 12th. Three juveniles were noted there on the 14th and 15th with four adults on the 16th and two on the 28th.

At Wheldrake, a juvenile male was seen on 23rd August while three juveniles were present on the 25th and 31st.

Autumn produced a juvenile male at Raker Bend, Wheldrake on 23rd September followed by five adults at Thorganby Ings on 14th November.

In December five were present at North Duffield Carrs on the 4th, 23 between Ellerton and Aughton on the 8th and eight at Thorganby the same day. There were 35 in the Lower Derwent Valley on 11th while on 26th December 40 were noted at Wheldrake Ings and 35 at Bank Island. The final report of the year was of five at North Duffield Carrs on the 31st.

Jack Snipe *Limnocyptes minimus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

The first returning bird arrived at North Duffield Carrs on 30th September while a single was flushed from the feeding station by the car park at this site on 7th October. A total of four was present on the

top pond at North Duffield Carrs on 8th October. Two were present on the scrape there on the 10th with five on the 12th and a minimum of seven on the 13th when four were caught and ringed. At least two remained on the 15th when a single was caught and ringed. Numbers then increased with 12+ present on the 21st while two additional birds were caught and ringed on the 22nd. Up to six birds were also present at Wheldrake Ings around this time. As water levels increased, birds moved to new sites within the valley and a total of 17 was present at Bubwith Ings on the 25th while a single was seen at Bank Island on the 30th.

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Resident and migrant breeder and passage visitor

A single was observed at Fulford Ings on 2nd January followed by 19 there on 19th February. Thirty were observed at Bank Island on 6th February.

Birds wintered at Clifton Ings with 30 seen on 26th February and 40 in late November.

On 12th March four were seen in a field beyond Triangle Meadow at New Earswick with another two adjacent to the Sports Club. Birds were present here throughout March with five on the 17th, three on the 19th and one on the 31st. April saw eight on the 3rd and there was a final sighting on the 10th.

Two were present along the Pocklington Canal on 27th March.

A bird was displaying at Bank Island on 11th April and one was 'drumming' at North Duffield Carrs on the 22nd. Birds were also displaying at Wheldrake Ings on 17th May and three pairs were at Strensall on the 18th. Ten were at Bank Island on 22nd July, and on a temporary pool in Carr Lane, Strensall a single bird was present on 29th July.

August sightings were varied, commencing with three at Wheldrake Ings on the 6th and seven on the 8th, then three at North Ings Farm, Terrington on the 10th and singles at Copse Farm, Sheriff Hutton on the 18th and Pottery Lane, Strensall on the 29th. At Bank Island 20+ were in evidence on the 10th, 65 on the 26th, 30+ on the 27th and 30 on the 30th.

Two flew over Dunnington Common on 1st September and another was flushed at CSL during the month. Five were noted at Wheldrake Ings on 20th September.

During October six were counted at North Duffield Carrs on the 20th and 40 on the 21st while 30 were counted at Bank Island on both the 30th and 31st.

On 18th November a bird flew over New Earswick with another flushed from the JRTNR. Five showed at Fulford Ings on 12th November while a single was at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 19th. Again, greater numbers were at Bank Island with 30 on 20th November.

During December, singles were seen at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 10th, Castle Howard on the 24th and Rawcliffe Lake on the 30th. The last sighting of the year was of seven by the Pocklington Canal on 30th December.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Resident breeder and winter visitor

A single was flushed at Askham Bog on 9th January, one was at Gilling on the 10th, a single flew into High Plumes at CSL on 18th January and a single was flushed at Hawthorn Farm, Terrington on 28th February. One was noted again at Askham Bog on 18th March.

Two were roding at Yearsley Moor on 29th May, and a pair and several singles were noted there on 8th June followed by three on 21st June.

The last sighting of the year was one at Clifton Park on 9th August.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Passage migrant and rare breeder

Sightings commenced in mid-March with four at Aughton Ings on the 18th and 39 there on the 26th before 56 arrived at Wheldrake Ings on the 29th increasing to 67 on the 30th and remaining to 3rd April.

Most records were in April when sightings at Wheldrake Ings included 60 on the 1st, 67 on the 2nd, 56 on the 4th and 41 on the 5th including a ringed bird with green/green on the right leg and green/yellow or green/white on the left. There were 61 on the 12th including some with green-coloured rings, two on the 17th and 14 on the 29th.

At Swantail Hide, Wheldrake Ings 60+ of the *islandica* race were noted on 5th April. One was colour-ringed, green/white on the right and green/green on the left plus a BTO ring. At the same location 41 birds were counted on the 9th but just five on the 19th.

Other April sightings were 25 of the *islandica* race at North Duffield on the 5th decreasing to 11 by the 18th with 46 at Thorganby Ings on the 19th including a new colour-ringed bird in its third spring. At Thorganby Ings there were 51 on the 21st including a colour-ringed bird (green/green right and green/yellow left), 31 on the 23rd, 28 on the 26th and six on the 27th. At Bank Island there were 41 on the 10th, 42 on the 11th and 40 on the 12th. At one time on the 12th there were ten at Bank Island and 61 at Wheldrake Ings totalling 71 birds. On the 19th at Bank

Island 46 were observed including a colour-ringed bird with orange or red on the left leg and green or white on the right. One bird was noted at Aughton on 23rd April with two at Wheldrake Ings on 4th May.

Five at Aughton Ings on 17th November was a noteworthy record as was a single bird present at Wheldrake Ings on 11th December.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Passage migrant

Monitoring of the nationally important spring roost at Wheldrake Ings commenced on 10th April with the first three birds appearing at the roost on the 16th. Once again variable water levels made counting difficult as the birds moved round the site, changing roost sites and roosting in two or three different locations. As such some counts may represent an underestimate of those present.

At Wheldrake Ings nine arrived on 18th April, 21 on the 19th, 13 on the 20th, 17 on the 21st, 30 on the 22nd, 29 on the 23rd and 39 on the 24th. Numbers then increased further with 72 on the 25th and 26th, 85 on the 27th, 64 on the 28th and a peak of 139 on the 29th (EN) while a single was heard over Storwood on 23rd April.

Numbers appeared to decline quickly thereafter with 56 on the 30th, 30 on 1st May and 21 on 9th May. One flew over Bank Island on 12th May, spiralled and landed, and four were noted flying west over Castle Howard on 2nd May.

There was one sighting later in the year when a single flew south over Bank Island on 23rd August.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Passage migrant, migrant breeder and winter visitor

On 3rd January 28 were present at Wheldrake Ings, then 58 were observed there on 1st March. Other March records were, at North Duffield, 12 on the 12th, 30 on the 14th, 12 on the 15th but just three on the 24th. Singles showed at Strensall Common on the 17th and 20th and at Grange Farm, Haxby on the 17th.

In April singles were seen at Rose Mount Farm, Weaverthorpe on the 1st and at Bank Island on the 17th but up to six were seen on different dates at North Duffield Carrs while 35 were in evidence at Wheldrake on the 6th and 15 on the 17th.

May records included a pair at North Ings Farm, Terrington on the 5th and two at Moreby on the 8th with two again at Moreby on the 18th and three on the 19th. Three pairs were noted at Strensall Common (MOD Survey) on 18th May.

Along the Pocklington Canal birds were holding territories on 21st May, and displaying at Wheldrake and Wheldrake Ings.

A pair was at Middlethorpe Ings on 1st May, displaying from the 25th and into June, and a young bird was spotted in the grass there on 8th June. A pair was also noted at Strensall on 22nd June while one was chasing a Heron *Ardea cinerea* at Middlethorpe Ings on 24th June. One was noted at Pond Head Farm, Oulston on 3rd July and a single at Carr Lane, Strensall on 28th July at a temporary pool.

Five were back at Wheldrake Ings on 4th December rising to 13 there on the 6th. Three were noted at Ellerton on 8th December and 11 in the Lower Derwent Valley on the 11th.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Passage migrant and occasional winter visitor

One flew northeast, calling as it went, on 12th March at Wheldrake Ings. One showed at Wheldrake Ings on 5th April and also at Bank Island on the 6th.

A single in near-summer plumage was seen Thorganby Ings on 19th and 21st April and at Wheldrake Ings on the 27th.

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Passage migrant, migrant breeder and winter visitor

Sightings commenced in February with two at North Duffield Carrs on the 19th. Thorganby Ings was host to 20 on 2nd and 12th March and several were present at Thorganby on the 18th. Two were noted at North Duffield Carrs on 24th March with 40+ at Aughton on the 25th and 55 there on the 26th. Also in March, ten were noted at West Cottingwith Ings on the 15th.

April produced 50+ at Wheldrake Ings on the 5th with 35 there on the 6th and 50 on the 12th. Four were at Fulford Ings on the 16th with 40+ at Thorganby Ings on the 19th and 21st, and between one and four on various dates at North Duffield Carrs up till 22nd April.

May sightings showed four pairs at Bubwith Ings on the 18th and a pair giving alarm calls on the 21st 1km from Hagg Bridge on the Pocklington Canal. A single was present at North Ings Farm, Terrington on 5th May and 20+ were at Bank Island on the 28th.

A single was present at Wheldrake Ings on 13th July and then six at Bank Island on the 28th and 30th.

In August four were at Bank Island on the 3rd and three at Wheldrake on the 6th and 8th. A single bird was present at Thorganby on 30th

September, then a single at Wheldrake on 16th October and seven at Thorganby on the 31st.

On 8th December eight were at Wheldrake Ings, ten at Ellerton and 11 at North Duffield Carrs. Ten were at Wheldrake Ings on 26th December and 20+ at North Duffield Carrs on the 31st.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Passage migrant and occasional winter visitor

The first sighting was on 21st April by the river at Thorganby. Two flew over the nearby Ferryboat Inn on 27th April and four were present at Wheldrake Ings on 29th, 30th April and 1st May with two present at Wheldrake Ings on 2nd May. Singles were noted at Bank Island on 10th, 11th, 16th, 17th and 21st May.

The next records were also at Bank Island but in July with two on the 22nd and one on the 27th. Singles also occurred at Wheldrake Ings on these dates.

The last sightings were of single birds at Wheldrake Ings on 31st July and at Bank Island on 16th August.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Passage migrant and winter visitor

As most bird-days were in July and August, one over Wheldrake Ings on 25th March was a rare spring sighting.

Wheldrake Ings then held three on 14th July, 15 on the 22nd, ten on the 27th, 11 on the 29th and ten on the 31st. At Bank Island one showed on 25th July and two on the 30th.

A temporary pool in Carr Lane, Strensall produced a series of sightings in July, August and September as follows: two on 31st July, then two on 7th August, three on the 8th and 13th, one on the 14th, three on the 20th and one on the 21st with, lastly, two on 3rd September.

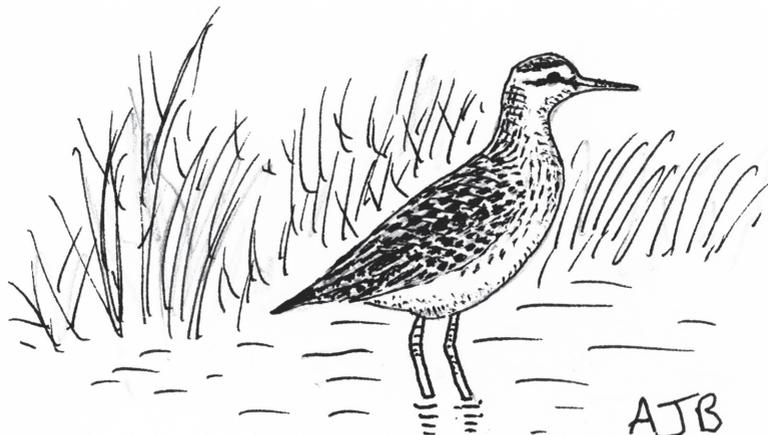
At Bank Island in August there were 18 present on the 1st, six on the 3rd, nine on the 6th with two each day on the 10th, 12th and 16th. At Wheldrake Ings in August there were nine on the 8th and one on the 23rd.

One was present at Naburn Sewage Works on 28th August with two there on 29th October. Two were present at Thorganby Ings on 21st September with three at Wheldrake Ings on the 27th and 29th.

The last sightings were in October, with singles at Wheldrake Ings on the 1st and 3rd and at Bank Island on the 31st.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*
Passage migrant

A single was noted at Bank Island on 11th and 12th May. A crisper bird was there on 15th to 17th May.



Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleuca*
Passage migrant and migrant breeder

The first record was of a single at the CSL on 3rd March followed by one at the York University lake on the 6th and at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 8th. One was noted at Rawcliffe Lake on 4th May and another was heard at Naburn Marina on 28th May.

Three were on the River Ouse by the York sugar beet factory on 15th July and a single was at Wheldrake Ings on 27th July. Also on the 27th one was present at the JRTNR from 15:00 to 18:00, the first record for this site since 1972.

One was at Wheldrake Ings on 21st August with two at CSL on 9th September and 5th October, and four at Newton-on-Ouse on 11th September.

Rawcliffe Ings produced a single on 23rd June and 13th July, and two on 9th September.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*
Passage migrant, usually in spring

A single flew northeast shortly before dusk at Wheldrake Ings on 2nd May (EN), falling neatly into the established pattern of occurrences.

Another single flew northeast over Wheldrake Ings on 5th September having circled the pool several times (RS). This was followed by an extraordinary flock of eight which flew north over Thorganby on 7th September (EN).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*
Passage migrant and winter visitor

A single was present at Wheldrake Ings on 19th January (EN).

Little Gull *Larus minutus*
Passage migrant

A single adult and two first-winter birds were present at Wheldrake Ings on the typical date of 29th April.

A first-winter bird observed with Black-headed Gulls *Larus ridibundus* following the plough off Broad Highway at Wheldrake on 21st November was unusual for this time of year (EN).

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*
Resident breeder, winter visitor and passage migrant

At Castle Howard in January 100+ were counted on the 1st with 4,500 on the 16th, 5,000 on the 17th, 3,000 on the 26th and 1,600 on the 27th while 6,000 were noted on 15th February. Equally early counts were 11,400 at Ellerton, 1,350 at Bubwith and 7,150 at Wheldrake Ings on 19th January and 100 at Newburgh Priory lake on 1st February. There were 60 over the River Ouse between Fulford and Naburn early in the year with an autumn peak of 800 there on 29th October.

At Osbaldwick playing fields 30 were present on 12th January and 20 on the 26th with two juveniles. By 5th March many had black heads. Eleven were still present on 8th March but all had gone by the 24th. Only a few appeared during the breeding season with three back on the 26th and up to 15 later in the month in company with Common Gulls *Larus canus*.

At New Earswick birds were recorded in every month with spring and autumn maxima of about 200.

Apart from the breeding season, large numbers were present over Dunnington throughout the year heading to roost sites in the Lower Derwent Valley. Small numbers were noted at Rawcliffe Ings when flooded and also regularly at Huby.

As the year progressed 20 were observed at Strensall on 18th May and 20 were breeding at Skipwith Common on 18th June. One was noted at Moreby on 18th June and birds were regularly seen at CSL throughout the year with 20 passing over on 13th September.

At Wheldrake Ings birds were making steady passage north on 31st July.

Late autumn found 156 at Full Sutton on 31st October, 50 at Allerthorpe on 5th November and, on 13th November, 76 on the Knavesmire, York and 40 at Hogg's Pond, Dringhouses.

Final counts were of 1,400 at Castle Howard on 24th December and 500 at Newburgh Priory on 26th December.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

A bird first recorded in 2001 feeding on scraps from a bird table in Dunnington was still visiting on most days of the year except for a short while during the breeding season. This bird is believed to be at least eight years old.

On 1st January 100+ were observed at Castle Howard Lake. At least 2,000 were seen in the evening gull roost at Castle Howard on 16th January with 5,000 counted on the 17th and 500 at the roost on the 27th. Small flocks were regularly observed over gardens in Huby throughout the year.

In the Lower Derwent Valley on 19th January there were 590 at Ellerton Ings, 121 at Bubwith and 1,147 at Wheldrake Ings.

Up to ten were present during the winter months at Rawcliffe Lake and small numbers were present with Black-headed Gulls *Larus ridibundus* on Clifton Ings during times of flooding.

At Osbaldwick there were seven with Black-headed Gulls on 26th January and eight in February. Numbers fell to three on 2nd April and all had gone by the 6th. A juvenile was seen on 28th August and then from 19th October numbers built up again to ten birds.

At New Earswick birds were regularly seen during June, July and August with a maximum of 160 at one time.

On the River Ouse at Fulford three were present on 2nd January then singles until three were seen again on 4th August, with a maximum count of 20 birds on 29th October.

At CSL birds flew over on 19th and 25th February, 14th April and 26th August, with juveniles in evidence on 18th July.

Other records included 20 at Newburgh Priory lake on 1st February and good numbers at Harewood Whin on the 22nd. Four were counted on a pool off Carr Lane, Strensall on 7th August and 150 including one juvenile were present on a wet field near Holme Tip on 22nd August.

On 13th November 23 were on the Knavesmire, York and 12 at Hogg's Pond, Dringhouses.

The final reports were of 2,000+ at the evening roost at Castle Howard on 24th December and 50 at Newburgh Priory lake on 26th December.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*
Passage migrant and scarce winter visitor

Wheldrake Ings hosted a large roost of gulls in January, including several of the Scandinavian race *intermedius*. Three were at Wheldrake Ings on 19th January and a single, with a good number of large gulls, was at Harewood Whin on 22nd February.

On the River Ouse between Fulford and Naburn a single was seen on 19th March with 12 flying west on 6th August and a maximum of 35 on 1st October.

Small flocks were seen over Huby during the year while two were present at Newburgh Priory lake on 3rd May. Three were noted at Wheldrake on 23rd May, including a first-summer bird colour-ringed with a large red darvic ring on the left leg, having white lettering 'UHU'.

Two were observed at Moreby on 28th June with eight there on the 19th. Birds were present at New Earswick on 3rd July, 3rd August, 24th September, 5th October, 12th November and 5th December.

During August 30 were present at North Ings Farm, Terrington on the 11th, a single at Osbaldwick on the 14th and around 20 over Bank Island the same day. Good numbers were seen over Dunnington in August and September including 225 on 18th August.

The last records of the year were two observed at Murton on 2nd September with a single over CSL on the 7th and ten at Grimston Bar on the 14th.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*
Winter visitor and passage migrant

A good number were present at Harewood Whin during the winter months. In the Lower Derwent Valley roosts on 19th January totalled 114 at Ellerton, 121 at Bubwith and 1,147 at Wheldrake Ings.

Up to 15 were regularly seen in the early months flying over the River Ouse between York and Naburn. With just singles showing in the summer months numbers started to build again in the autumn to a maximum of 30 in November and December.

Small flocks flew regularly over Huby, whilst at the JRTNR in New Earswick four were noted in January, nine in February and March, and four in April and August.

At CSL a single was observed on 1st February, 20 on 9th May, 20+ on 19th May and four on 29th July.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*
Scarce winter visitor

Two were noted at the Wheldrake Ings gull roost on 19th January and a single was observed in a field to the west of the A1237, 1km south of the Rufforth roundabout, on 22nd January. One or two were also present at Harewood Whin on 1st February. A third-winter bird was seen at Wheldrake Ings on 18th February.

A first-winter bird was seen at Harewood Whin on 6th November.

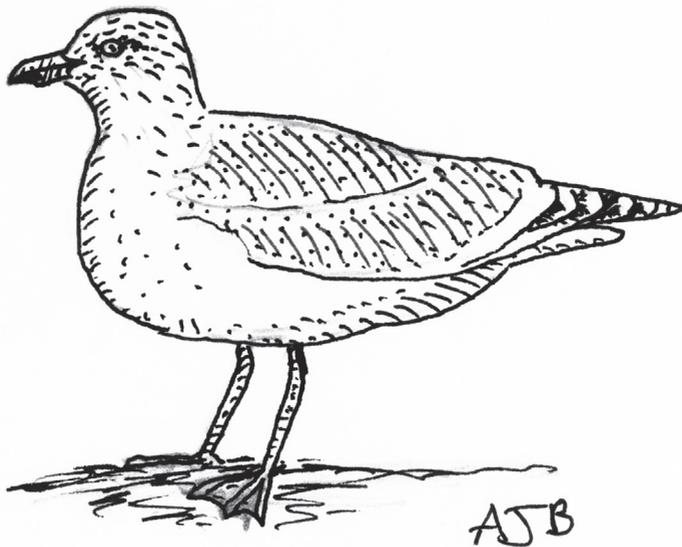
Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*
Scarce winter visitor

A first-winter bird was noted on a field west of the A1237, 1km south of the Rufforth roundabout on 22nd January. During February three were observed at Harewood Whin (Rufforth Tip) on the 1st with a single adult there on the 22nd.

A single adult was at Wheldrake Ings on 17th December.

Kumlien's Gull *Larus glaucoides kumlieni*
Rare winter visitor

An adult was seen briefly at Harewood Whin on 31st January (AH).



Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*
Winter visitor and passage migrant

At winter roosts in the Lower Derwent Valley on 19th January there were 94 at Bubwith, 132 at Ellerton and 815 at Wheldrake Ings.

On the River Ouse between Fulford and Naburn up to 12 were counted in the first part of the year with singles there in the summer months after which numbers increased again to a maximum of 50 on 7th December.

At the New Earswick reserves around three were noted in January, February, May, September, October and December. Five were over Dunnington on 6th March.

This gull was regularly seen at CSL through the year with the following reports: one on 1st February and six on the 14th, one on 4th June, seven on 13th July, two each day on 3rd, 4th and 26th August, two on 12th September and 25 on 13th September.

At the end of the year two were present at the Castle Howard gull roost on 24th December and a first-winter bird was at Newburgh Priory lake on 26th December.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*
Passage migrant and rare migrant breeder

A single was noted at Wheldrake Ings on 17th April followed by two there on the 29th (EN).

On 7th May two were briefly at Bank Island but then flew off to the north, one carrying a fish. Again at Bank Island in May, two were noted on the 11th, one being ringed on both legs. A different pair with no rings was there on the 12th with two again on the 13th, 21st and 22nd. Two were also at Moreby near Naburn on 9th May.

Summer produced a pair and a single at Bank Island on 30th June and 27th July respectively, and one on the River Ouse at Rawcliffe on 29th June.

At Allertorpe Water Park in July two were present with three juveniles on the 29th and three with three juveniles on the 30th. An adult was over the River Derwent at North Duffield Carrs on 31st July.

Two juveniles were at Naburn Marina on 28th and 29th August and one was over Elvington on the 30th.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*
Passage migrant

Two were present at Bank Island on 8th May.

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

Resident breeder

Seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with particularly large numbers in the more urban areas of York and a small resident breeding population at Naburn Bridge. Odd ones were often seen round CSL. The commonest 'species' seen in the centre of York. Seen in every month in New Earswick in varying numbers. A flock of over 200 was feeding on Dunnington Common for five days starting on 11th November, possibly part of the Bempton Cliffs population which has started to wander, possibly due to predation by Peregrines *Falco peregrinus*.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Resident breeder

Recorded in small numbers in most areas. A party of 20 was in a field opposite Goose Farm Caravan Park, Sutton-on-the-Forest on 26th January. One was in song at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on 16th February while another was seen at North Duffield and six were seen at Thorganby on 6th March. Two were seen at North Duffield Carrs on 2nd May and one was beside the Huby-Stillington road the same day. Four were recorded on Strensall Common during an MOD survey on 18th May. Twenty were at Moreby near Naburn on 9th May with eight there on 19th June.

A pair bred in an owl box in the field centre at Hassacarr NR and in other boxes in the Dunnington area. One was at New Earswick in July while a pair was at Carr Lane, near Strensall on 14th and 20th August with five beside Gracious Street, Huby on 4th October and eight counted during a BTO survey near Bolton Percy on 26th November. Generally up to about ten birds were seen along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year, with a maximum of 20 counted on 13th November. Occasional records also came from CSL with three over on 15th July. Five to six pairs were resident in the Clifton Ings area.

Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*

Resident breeder

There were 200 at Garrowby Hill on 23rd January while 300 were in fields to the east of CSL on 24th and 25th January, with 400 on 13th February and c.200 in trees to the east on the 24th. Two hundred were at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 13th February and 300 at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on the 16th. Forty-six were at Moreby near Naburn on 9th May with 73 there on 19th June. Two nests were found at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits with 45 noted there on 29th October.

Resident in good numbers along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with 70 at Bishopthorpe on 13th November being the largest flock noted. About 200 were in the east field near CSL on the 10th and 200 were at Garrowby Hill on the 20th. A pair was regular in a Strensall garden most of the year. Numbers appeared to have increased in the New Earswick area with counts over 100 not unusual. Present throughout the year on Clifton Ings with some fairly large gatherings during the winter months. A common bird in the Dunnington area, seen daily around Huby throughout the year and generally widespread throughout the whole recording area.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*
Resident breeder

Eleven were counted in a Slingsby garden on 29th January and 18 in Fangfoss on 2nd February. One was seen nest building at Pocklington on 5th February while a pair was seen in woodland at High Lodge, CSL on 10th March. A pair was also seen by the Bee Units at CSL during May and June, possibly nesting, and there were other records from this site but not apparently daily; birds may have bred there, in the southeast corner.

Seven were seen on the roof of a house in Osbaldwick and six on a neighbouring house on 27th September. Twenty-five were in Fangfoss on 31st October. Seen daily around Huby and Strensall throughout the year being regular visitors to bird tables. Widespread throughout the northern part of the recording area and common in the New Earswick area, particularly near human habitation. Common in the Dunnington area, particularly around farms and feeding stations. Up to ten birds were seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year.

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*
Migrant breeder and passage migrant

One was reported visiting a garden in Skipwith very early in the year until taken by a Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* in February (per RS). One was at Full Sutton on 25th April and another was calling at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 30th, and on other dates there up to 12th June (PB). Seen and heard at Yearsley Moor on 3rd and 29th May. One was in a garden on Towthorpe Road, Haxby on 25th May and another was seen at Gilling on 30th May. Two were singing at Grimston Moor in June, one was heard calling adjacent to the Geoff Smith Hide, North Duffield CARRS on 8th July while two were at Bank Island on 22nd July. One was on

Skipwith Common on 21st August and the last recorded was between Coulton and Gilling on 6th September (BP).

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Occasional visitor

The only record this year was of one that flew over CSL in September (SHBR).

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Migrant breeder

The first was on Strensall Common on 13th April (MG). One was at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 16th and was heard there on other dates. Three were on Strensall Common on the 16th being frequent thereafter. One was heard from the car park at Wheldrake Ings on the 18th and was heard again on the 26th. On the 21st, one was heard at CSL and noted again on the 29th in the east trees. One was calling near Church Lane Bridge, Thornton on the 23rd with another calling on Dunnington Common on the 25th. Birds were noted at Dudley Hill Farm, Sheriff Hutton and Storwood, East Cottingwith on the 27th with one at Wheldrake Ings on the 29th. Three were seen and at least four, probably six, heard at Skipwith Common on 1st May. Two were heard beside the Huby-Stillington road on 2nd May with others seen and heard on Yearsley Moor on the 3rd. One was calling at CSL on the same date and heard there on other days in May. Four were at Moreby near Naburn on the 9th with one heard at Wheldrake Ings on the 17th and another at Osbaldwick the same day being heard occasionally thereafter. During the MOD survey of Strensall Common on the 18th, two birds were present with a single heard calling from 21st to 28th May at The Brecks, Strensall. One was at Frog Hall, Allerthorpe Common on the 29th while one flew over New Earswick in May but was not seen again. One seen on Strensall Common on 25th June, not calling, was the last (IT).

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Resident breeder

One was at North Duffield on 1st January with another near South Duffield the same day. Another was hunting over Skipwith Common in bright sunshine on 23rd January. In March one was seen in New Earswick on the 12th, one at North Duffield Carrs on the 24th with one seen in flight low over Yellowtop Country Park Holiday Village at Foggathorpe on the 28th. A single bird was seen late evening near Woodhouse Farm, Strensall on 9th April while one flew over the northern part of Strensall

Common on the 21st. At least two were noted hunting at Wheldrake Ings in the evening of 9th May with one there on the 17th. One was hunting in broad daylight by the Pocklington Canal near Hagg Bridge on the 21st at 10:30 and again at 15:30, seen carrying prey. One or two were at Bank Island on the 12th and on other dates while the species bred on Dunnington Common.

One flew over the York by-pass near Monk's Cross on 16th June with singles seen hunting over Fulford Ings on several evenings during June and July, one carrying prey on 26th June. One was seen flying over the Hopgrove roundabout on 1st July while singles were seen at North Duffield Carrs on the 8th and 31st. There were three sightings at Pocklington Canal on the evening of 2nd August with one at Wheldrake Ings on 5th August and another seen near Grimston Bar roundabout late evening on the 26th.

One was seen sitting in a tree hole near Fangfoss on 8th September while a road casualty was seen on the A64/A19 junction near the Designer Outlet on the 20th. A single bird was seen at Wheldrake Ings on 9th October with another sitting on top of a hawthorn hedge by the A1079 at Scoreby Lodge on 5th November. One flew out of the owl box at the field centre at Hassacarr NR on 7th December, a first for that site. There were regular sightings in various parts of the Lower Derwent Valley, Full Sutton and Pocklington Airfield while the species was also seen at Allerthorpe Water Park, Buttercrambe, Garrowby Hill, Holme-on-Spalding-Moor, Thornton and Weaverthorpe.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Resident breeder

Two were calling at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on 16th February with one seen there again on the 23rd in the snow while two were calling at Wiganthorpe on the 22nd. One was at Prospect House Farm, Terrington on 4th April while another was seen in the ash trees to the right of the viewing platform at Thorganby on 29th April. One was at North Ings Farm, Terrington on 5th May when one was at Langton while another was at Wheldrake Ings on the 17th. Bred successfully at CSL but not easily seen. A single bird was seen at Chanting Hill, Welburn on 26th May with other singles at Bank Island on 8th June and Coneysthorpe on the 11th. One was on farm buildings near Bossall on 21st May and again on 18th June. Bred in a paddock along Eastfield Lane, Dunnington where they raised two young, and at Clock Farm where three pairs raised at least three young. However, they failed to breed in the usual pear tree and ash tree in Dunnington for the first time in many years.

Three young were in an owl box at Forest Farm, Stockton on the Forest on 13th June and the species also bred at Storwood and Thorganby. A single bird was seen perched on a tombstone in Sutton-on-the-Forest cemetery on the 26th. A juvenile was sitting on the roof of one of the aviaries in Block 25 at CSL on 6th July looking quite bemused and causing great distress and consternation to several Blackbirds *Turdus merula*. One was calling at Allerthorpe Water Park on 10th July and one was found dead on the Foss Walk footpath at Cornborough Farm near Sheriff Hutton on 12th August. A single bird was seen on two occasions near Wilks Plantation, Flaxton. One was seen perched by the roadside near South Duffield on 1st September and one was calling in Common Bottom Wood, Thorganby on 21st September. Resident at Huntington Church and Kettlestring Farm, New Earswick, breeding successfully in both locations.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Resident breeder throughout the area

One was heard hooting in bright sun at around 14:30 in Hagg Wood, Dunnington on 20th February. In March four individuals were recorded on Skipwith Common on the 12th and birds were heard calling in Sessions NR but otherwise not heard in the New Earswick area. Juveniles were heard in Osbaldwick on 21st April while a rufous bird was at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 29th. On the same date at least four birds were heard at Yearsley Moor and another was seen near Crayke. Two were in Warren Wood, Dunnington on 2nd May with four calling on Yearsley Moor on 8th and 21st June. One was heard at Skipwith Common on 11th June with a fledgling flushed from Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 16th.

One was flushed off the viewing platform at Bank Island on 30th July! A single bird was on electricity wires over the road beside Goose Farm Caravan Park, Sutton-on-the-Forest on 14th July. On 4th August what were believed to be recently fledged birds were heard mewling and creaking (not squeaky enough for Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*) at Yearsley Moor. Heard calling in Osbaldwick at 11:00 on 14th September. A bird was sitting out in the open at Wheldrake Ings in the late afternoon of 30th December.

Singles were seen or heard at several locations along the River Ouse between York and Naburn during the spring and summer. Heard regularly, and occasionally seen, through the year in the Huby area. Heard calling regularly throughout the year at Clifton Park, Osbaldwick and at various sites in Dunnington. Also reported from Bank Island, Frog Hall, Fryton Wood, Wiganthorpe and various farms near Terrington.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Resident breeder and winter visitor

One was heard calling at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on 22nd February; the local gamekeeper reported he had been watching an owl with ears for the last three months (PB). Three juveniles were calling in trees at Strensall Common on 18th June and 1st July, and another juvenile was in a separate area the same day (PeR). There was also a report in the Parish magazine of a pair breeding in the grounds of the Sutton-on-the-Forest vicarage (no further details available).

Short-Eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Casual breeder, passage and winter visitor

One was at Earfitt Lane, Copmanthorpe from 29th to 31st March, but not seen on subsequent visits. A single was seen from a train near the banks of the River Derwent at Wressle on 2nd April (EN) while another was seen hunting over Strensall Common on 21st April (NS).



Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Scarce migrant breeder

A male churred intermittently for five minutes from 22:25 near to the Foresters Cottage, Yearsley Moor on 8th June. On the 21st, a male started prolonged churring at 22:55 at the same place while a female flew out of the trees below the clearing 15 minutes later (MD). One male was churring at Worlds End Plantation between Strensall and Flaxton on 18th June and again on 1st July, with churring also heard on the Common itself, the first recorded there for many years (PeR). None was heard on Skipwith Common however.

Swift *Apus apus*

Migrant breeder

The first of the year were six at Bank Island on 26th April (RS) with seven on the 27th over Strensall Common. On the 28th singles were at CSL, Fulford and New Earswick with seven over Allerthorpe Gravel Pits

and one with Swallows *Hirundo rustica* at Newhay, south of Cliffe. Three arrived at their breeding site in Sheriff Hutton on the morning of the 29th, and birds had returned to Heslington in the evening of the same day when two were also at East Cottingwith. At Wheldrake Ings on the 30th there were 150 with 100+ there on 1st May. On the same date about 30 birds were counted along the River Ouse between York and Naburn, a single over the car park at the Folk Hall, New Earswick and the first over Strensall. A few were seen in Osbaldwick on 2nd May while at least seven were at Clifton Park on the 3rd and two were over New Earswick on the 5th but few other sightings there in May. The first over Clifton Ings was on the 7th with two in Fulford on the 8th and then 23 by the 9th. On the 8th there were 300 at Bank Island while on the 9th a partial-albino bird with white rump and white undertail coverts flew north at Wheldrake Ings. Huge numbers estimated at over 2,000 were over Bank Island on the 10th with 200+ still there on the evening of the 23rd (RS).

It was a good year for this species at Hassacarr NR, with eleven birds present on 11th May rising to 30 on 2nd July. Seven were in flight over houses in Welburn on 26th May. Thirty birds were feeding over the filter beds at Naburn Sewage Works on the 30th when eight were at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits rising to 45 there on 11th June. Ten were counted over Monument Farm, Welburn on 8th June with four at Moreby near Naburn on the 18th. Up to seven were seen together at CSL but more often just one. Five were flying low round Osbaldwick on 9th June with many seen there on the 19th and many more around early in July. Also in July, 30 were over Stillington on the 10th and 45 were over Pocklington on the 18th.

Numbers in New Earswick were rather lower than the previous year's exceptional figures, but only slightly fewer than normal. Numbers peaked in July and tailed off rapidly in August. On 24th July 100 were over Allerthorpe Gravel Pits with small numbers moving south. Six flew south over CSL on 29th July when 67 were at Warren Wood, Dunnington. A movement of 200+ was observed from the observation platform at Bank Island on 2nd August. On the same day fewer than usual were noted in Osbaldwick but many were present on the evening of the 7th with House Martins *Delichon urbica*, and many passed over very high on the 9th. Nine flew west over CSL on the 3rd, with two on the 4th. Most had left Clifton Ings and Fulford by early August with only one or two birds seen thereafter but there were 100 over Pocklington on the 9th. The last few over Osbaldwick were on the 13th and the last in New Earswick were on the 18th. Two were at Terrington Moor on the 19th, two in Fulford on the 22nd and one flew south over Fulford Hall on the 29th. The last was one at Hassacarr NR on 3rd September (T&VW).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*
Resident breeder

One was seen flying under Bubwith bridge on 27th February, with another on the YWT reserve at Strensall Common on 6th March. On 13th March one was at Foss Island in York and another was along the Pocklington Canal on the 27th. One was seen by the River Rye by Nunnington Hall on 25th May and a pair nested near there. One was at Frog Hall, Allerthorpe Common on 2nd June, one was seen by the Pocklington Canal on 2nd August and another was beside a farm ditch at North Ings Farm, Terrington on 11th August.

Up to five were regularly seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year with a family party noted at Fulford Ings on 3rd June. There were frequent sightings at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits with a juvenile there on 9th July. For the second consecutive year no breeding sites were confirmed along the River Foss in York, although one pair was active. A single bird was seen on the River Foss at Walbutts Farm, Strensall on 7th September. In October singles were recorded at Melbourne on the 3rd and at North Duffield Carrs on the 3rd, 5th and 21st. A survey of the Pocklington Canal corridor produced a total count of seven on the 10th. There were regular reports of one bird frequenting the pond at CSL from 11th July to 2nd December. A pair was in the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area throughout the year. Present also at Hassacarr NR all year – in the spring birds were seen carrying food (sticklebacks) along the dyke towards the A1079 York to Hull road, so probably bred in this area (T&VW). Also seen at Melbourne and Howthorpe Farm, Terrington.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*
Resident breeder but not widespread

One at Skipwith Common on 23rd January was followed by another seen flying into Warren Wood, Dunnington on 1st February. Two birds were heard calling in Great Wood near Strensall Common on 10th March, and a further two were heard calling in the same area on the 20th and on other dates thereafter. The wintering bird at Clifton Ings from last year was seen regularly till 11th March while another was seen flying at Thorganby on the 15th. Further singles were seen on 2nd April at Foggathorpe, searching for insects, and on the disused railway line between Foggathorpe and Holme-on-Spalding-Moor, with one at Allerthorpe Common on the same date. One was at Moreby near Naburn on 9th May, another at Frog Hall, Allerthorpe Common on the 28th, with one heard on Yearsley Moor the next day and again on 4th August when a second bird was also heard. One was also seen at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits during June and July.

Single birds were seen again at Clifton Ings on 6th June and 23rd August, and near the old filter beds beside the River Foss in Strensall on 3rd September with one heard at Askham Bog on 4th December. Resident on Strensall Common and seen or heard on most visits during the year. Seen regularly at CSL throughout the year, possibly breeding there, with juveniles seen on 30th August and 7th September.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*
Resident breeder throughout the area

One was heard drumming at Frog Hall, Allerthorpe Common on 30th January. Heard calling and drumming in woods beside the ponds at Pond Head Farm, Oulston on 1st February and seen at Wheldrake Ings on the 12th, drilling into dead wood, and again in October. Another was heard drumming at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on 16th February. Regularly seen in the CSL grounds, with one drumming in Nursery Wood in March and May, one drumming at High Lodge in April and a pair seen there on 21st December. Three were seen together in Clifton Park late in March and one came to peanuts in a Strensall garden in June.

Up to three birds were seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year with a drumming male noted on 3rd April and the first fledged juvenile seen on 30th May. At least three were seen and heard on Yearsley Moor on 29th May. Seen throughout the year in the New Earswick area, with breeding confirmed at two nature reserves. One or two pairs were seen in Clifton, mainly around Clifton Park, but quite regularly encountered throughout the Clifton Ings area. Regularly seen at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits and seen almost daily in the Dunnington area, feeding in woodland and at feeding stations in gardens, with two young regular in a garden in June and July. Also reported from Askham Bog, Bolton Percy, Bossall, Buttercrambe Weir, Castle Howard, Hagg Bridge, Laytham, Moreby near Naburn, Pretty Wood, Rawcliffe Meadows, Seaton Ross, Strensall Common and Terrington woods.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor*
Resident breeder though localised and elusive

One was heard calling in oak trees at Strensall Common on 23rd January while a male was seen in Warren Wood, Dunnington on 1st February with another reported from The Retreat, York on 26th March. One was at Askham Bog on 1st October while on the 10th, one fed for about an hour on a large apple tree in a garden in Acomb. This appeared to have an all-black cap, possibly an immature.

Wood Lark *Lullula arborea*

Resident colonist in small numbers

One was singing over the pond at CSL on 7th February and was heard there from then on. Three were seen there in allotments on 18th March with three there again on the 29th. At least one pair raised young at this site with the last song heard on 15th June. Up to three birds were recorded singing at another site near York from early April to late June. The last bird of the year was seen at CSL in August.

Sky Lark *Alauda arvensis*

Resident breeder and winter visitor

A flock of over 200 was in stubble (along with large numbers of Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra* and Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*) beside the footpath between Stillington Road, Huby and Sutton-on-the-Forest cemetery on 18th January. Several were singing on the 26th at CSL. Two were singing near Sheriff Hutton on 1st February when 40 were counted in a meadow at Lilling Green Farm near West Lilling. One was singing at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 5th while the first song along the River Ouse was heard on the 19th.

The numbers counted at Riccall in the Breeding Bird Survey were slightly less than previous years. Small numbers bred on Clifton and Rawcliffe Ings. A nest with three small young was found at North Ings Farm, Terrington on 5th May and there were at least ten pairs on territory there. Eight were at Moreby near Naburn on the 8th with 11 there on 19th June. Along the Ouse south of York six birds were singing by the 10th and the first fledged juveniles were noted on the 28th. A resident breeder with a fairly stable population in the New Earswick area, the highest count being 14 on Bootham Stray in April. Seventeen were recorded singing during the MOD bird survey of Strensall Common on 18th May. Eighteen territories were recorded on a farm near Bossall during an RSPB farm survey. At least 40 pairs bred in the Dunnington and Grimston area.

Around 20 were over the south field at CSL on 29th September with two singing there on 25th October, and eight at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 29th with one in song. Thirty-three were counted around the Acaster Selby area in a three-hour visit on 20th November. Over 20 wintered at Cornfield NR with 52 there during the cold spell on 29th December. Winter flocks in the Dunnington area were in excess of 100. Seen regularly throughout the year in the fields around Huby and on most visits to Strensall Common.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*
Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first of the year were ten flying south at Bank Island on 29th March (RS). Singles were then seen at CSL on the 31st, at Clifton Ings on 1st April and at Fulford Ings on the 3rd, with twenty at Bank Island on the 4th. Six were at the CSL on the 5th when 100+ were over Wheldrake Ings followed by 150+ there next day, but only 30+ on the 10th and 15 on the 20th. Fifteen were at Castle Howard on 7th April, one at Bishops Wharf in York on the 14th and four at Scarborough Bridge, York on the 20th. About 15 birds were noted along the River Ouse between York and Naburn from the 23rd. Three were at Rawcliffe Meadows on the 29th and birds bred at this site.

Sixty-five were seen at Allerthorpe Water Park on 2nd May where 150 nests were found with 200 birds seen there on 17th June, 250 on the 26th (in light rain) and 300 on 10th July. About 50 pairs probably bred at CSL and breeding also took place on the River Foss behind the Castle Museum, York. Around 30 were over the pool at Wheldrake Ings on 31st July. The small breeding population at Fulford Hall was again present with the last bird seen on 29th August and the last at CSL on 1st September. Numbers dropped off at Allerthorpe Water Park in July with the final 30 there on 2nd September (PB).

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*
Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first was one heading north over Bootham Stray on 4th April (NEBR), a record early arrival for the area. Two were at Wheldrake Ings on the 5th, one flew past CSL on the 6th, one was at Clifton Ings the same day and two were at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 10th. Four were at West Lilling on the 12th, on wires next to their usual breeding barn, and seven were counted over Castle Howard Lake on the same date. A single was at Walmgate Stray, York on the 14th when one flew over Intake Lane, Dunnington. One was at Clifton Ings on the 15th while c.30 birds were feeding over Naburn by the 16th when 12 were at Bank Island with others in New Earswick. Six were at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 17th with one also at Thorganby the same day, and one at Claxton with another at Terrington on the 18th. On the 22nd a flock was over one of the main pools on Skipwith Common while 23 were at Wheldrake Ings on the 24th, at least seven in Fulford on the 25th and one over the pond at CSL on the 29th.

Present in small numbers around Huby and Sutton-on-the-Forest by 1st May when at least five were near Imphal Barracks in Fulford. Ten

were at Moreby near Naburn on 9th May with 12 there on 19th June. Ten were counted at Monument Farm, Welburn on 8th June. Seen regularly over the pond at CSL in June with five there including a juvenile on the 23rd. Nested in a range of buildings on Strensall Common and also in Swinton. There was a good showing in the Clifton Ings area during the summer while many were seen in Osbaldwick on 19th June, flying before a storm. In July a pair which had nested at CSL lost their chicks in a spell of wet weather. Over 200 appeared to be roosting in long grass on the refuge at Wheldrake on 13th July while 47 were counted at Dunnington Common on the 28th.

Up to six were at CSL on 4th August with 50 roosting on the 11th, 30 on the 15th and c.20 on the 31st. Fifty were counted over Cornborough Farm, Sheriff Hutton on the 12th when 200+ were at Bank Island. Numbers built up along the River Ouse between York and Naburn in August and September with a maximum of c.100 counted on two days. Numbers in New Earswick peaked in late August but were perhaps 25% down on average. Fifty were at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 14th with 73 at Dunnington Common on the 28th, and 30 were counted with 15 House Martins *Delichon urbica* at Woodhouse Farm, Strensall on the 29th. Good numbers were in Osbaldwick village on the 17th and 20th with 18 seen on telephone wires by a house there on the 21st and some still present on 24th September. A mixed hirundine flock mobbed a Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* at Wheldrake Ings on 5th September. Some 1,200 were roosting in maize fields at Dunnington Common on the same date. Around 100 were at Scackleton on the 6th while c.50 were at CSL in a mixed hirundine flock on the 1st, 12th and 21st with 30 there on the 26th, two on the 29th and c.20 on the 30th.

On 9th September, 500–600 were seen in a huge flock from Malton railway station feeding over the river, stables, paddocks and waste ground, possibly including House Martins. Still present at Clifton Park on the 13th with movement seen during the day on the 16th and many passing over Fulford on the 18th and Clifton Park on the 19th. On this date 50 were seen at Elvington but reducing to 25 there by the 24th. Reasonable numbers were also present in New Earswick throughout September.

A party of six flew south down the Ouse at Fulford on 1st October when six also flew over Wheldrake Ings. Twelve juveniles headed south over the JRTNR on the 3rd. Five were at the CSL on the 3rd and 4th when one was seen in Huby, while two passed over Osbaldwick shops on the 8th. A single was over Wheldrake Ings and three were at North Duffield Carrs on the 9th with two there on the 10th. On the same date

ten were seen over Slingsby. This was the last date when this species was seen with, additionally, one over the pond at the CSL, one at Sheriff Hutton and two over the Ouse at Newton-on-Ouse.

House Martin *Delichon urbicum*
Migrant breeder and passage migrant

Three passing northeast over the JRTNR, New Earswick on 21st March (NEBR) were the first, 26 days earlier than the previous record for this area. One flew north over the Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 9th April and one flew west over Walmgate Stray, York on the 12th. Four were at Thorganby on the 17th with two at Allerthorpe, one at Castle Howard and one at Bank Island on the 21st, a few over a pool at Skipwith Common on the 22nd, and the first local birds in New Earswick on the 24th with at least 13 round the village. Four were feeding over the River Ouse behind St Peter's School, York on the 30th.

Present in small numbers around Huby and Sutton-on-the-Forest by 1st May. Numbers in Fulford quickly built up towards the end of April with up to c.50 feeding over Naburn Sewage Works during May. Two were prospecting the previous year's nest site at Cliffe on 2nd May when 16 were at Pocklington with 20 there on the 28th. Seven or eight were high above Osbaldwick on the 7th. Some 300 were at Bank Island on the 16th with 50 there on the 23rd. Several investigated the gutters of a house in Osbaldwick on the 25th but failed to stay and apparently bred further down Osbaldwick Lane. Seen in Lilling on the 29th.

The breeding colony at Rawcliffe Lake continued to do well with birds also present in the Clifton Ings area. Up to 100 were at Naburn Sewage works during June while 32 were counted at Pocklington on 7th June with 50 there on 8th August.

Many were seen with Swifts *Apus apus* on 7th August in Osbaldwick and hunting high with Swallows *Hirundo rustica* on the 17th with a few still left on the 24th. At CSL several were seen with Swallows on the 11th with 50 over the pond on the 14th. Eight were over The Brecks, Strensall on the 20th. At Londesborough there were 200 on the 21st. However, numbers were fewer in Dunnington with 18 the largest count on the 23rd August. The maximum count of the year along the River Ouse between York and Naburn was c.150 on 29th August with c.70 on 12th September being the last there. The last in Osbaldwick were on 14th September and the last in Strensall on the 24th. The peak count in New Earswick was 40 in early September after which numbers fell rapidly. Thirty were at Rawcliffe Lake on the 3rd, 60 in Pocklington on the 4th, three at Clifton Park on the 6th and 40 feeding over Rawcliffe Meadows on the 7th. Fifty

were on the roof at CSL on the 11th with several remaining on the 13th and the last there on the 30th. At least three were at Clifton Park on the 13th with three in Fulford on the 17th, still feeding there on the 18th and 19th when again present at Clifton Park. Thirty were at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 24th with 40 in Pocklington on the 26th. Ten were still at Clifton Park on 3rd October and a lone bird was over New Earswick on the 4th. Over a dozen were at Sheriff Hutton in October, at least until the 10th, this being the last record for the year (IB).

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Migrant breeder though numbers have recently declined

Two singing at Fryton Wood on 18th April were the first (PB). Two were singing at Strensall Common on the 27th with four singing birds there on 2nd May and one displaying there on the 7th. During the MOD bird survey of 18th May at this site eight birds were recorded singing. Single birds were also seen there in three different locations on the 22nd with at least six there on the 25th, singing and displaying. Single birds were seen at two separate locations at Yearsley Moor on the 3rd and in three locations on 21st June (MD).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Resident and migrant breeder and passage migrant

Over 20 were in a stubble field (along with large numbers of Skylark *Alauda arvensis*, Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra* and Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*) beside the footpath between Stillington Road, Huby and Sutton-on-the-Forest cemetery on 18th January. Nine were on Dunnington Common on 1st February and six in accommodation fields near Tang Hall, York on 10th February. Good feeding at Naburn Sewage Works attracted a maximum of c.60 birds on the 19th. In March 34 were on Bootham Stray on the 12th, the peak count for the year there, with numbers always in double figures at this site. Elsewhere the highest count along the River Ouse between York and Naburn was 30+ on 3rd April, but generally single figures were the norm here.

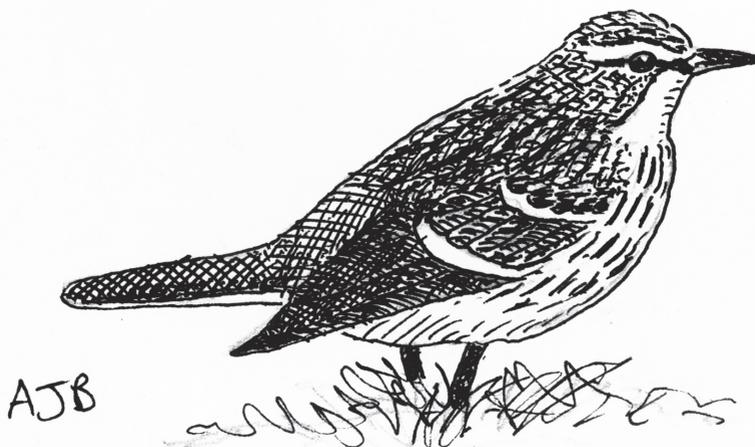
The first confirmed nesting was reported on 24th April at Bootham Stray. Two were recorded during the MOD survey of Strensall Common on 18th May while four were at Allerthorpe Water Park on the 31st. One was at Moreby near Naburn on 19th June.

Later in the year one flew over CSL on 2nd September, only the fourth record for this site. Small numbers were seen from Cape Farm, Sheriff Hutton on 8th September heading south, with three moving south over Haxby on the 11th. Twenty were noted on Strensall Common on the

20th while a walk across the meadow at Wheldrake Ings on 1st October flushed 30. Seen on most visits to Strensall Common in the non-wooded areas throughout the year (especially in the vicinity of the sewage works on the south side) with numbers increasing through the winter months. Good numbers were present at the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area all year, and birds bred there.

Water Pipit *Anthus spinoletta*
Rare winter visitor and passage migrant

The only report was of one at Strensall on the filter beds of the sewage works opposite the Towthorpe Civic Amenity Site, York on 20th February, also seen on the 23rd (DS/RS).



Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*
Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first was at Wheldrake Ings on 12th April while another was heard at Aughton on the 16th and one was at Dudley Hill Farm, Sheriff Hutton on the 29th. On 2nd May singes were at the Mausoleum near Castle Howard, at Crambeck, in a rape field beside the Huby-Stillington road and at Allerthorpe Water Park. One was beside Newburgh Priory lake the next day with another at North Ings Farm, Terrington on the 5th. Four were at Allerthorpe Water Park on the 31st. Birds were seen or heard at Naburn Sewage Works from 10th May with a maximum of three counted along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on 18th June.

A pair was seen at Cape Farm, Sheriff Hutton and another at Forest Farm, Stockton on the Forest on 14th June. Three pairs were at Clock Farm, Dunnington on the 15th while two pairs with a juvenile were seen at Cawton on 23rd June, another pair bred at Bank Island and two territories were recorded on a farm near Bossall in an RSPB farm survey.

Adults with young were seen at South Duffield on 8th July while two were in a pea field on the Naburn to Escrick road on the 25th. Two juveniles were on Dunnington Common on the 29th and three to four (mostly juveniles) were in a field beside Carr Lane, between Sutton-on-the-Forest and Strensall, on 29th and 31st July, and on 2nd August. Singles were at Bank Island on various dates in August. Eighteen were at East Moor, Sutton-on-the-Forest on 12th August, three juveniles were at North Ings Farm, Terrington on the 14th and 15 were at East Moor, Sutton-on-the-Forest on the 18th. Small numbers were seen moving south at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 20th. Varying numbers were at Carr Lane pool near Strensall in August and September, with a maximum of two adults and three juveniles on 14th August. One was in the fields south of Bubwith on the 16th with further singles flying over the Millennium Bridge, York and at Naburn Sewage works on the 28th while four were by the river at Thorganby. One was at CSL on 1st September and another flew over the next day. Small numbers were moving south over Cape Farm, Sheriff Hutton on the 8th and three flew south over Haxby on the 11th. One flew over the meadow at Wheldrake Ings on the 20th while one over the cricket pitch in Wheldrake was the last (RS).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Resident breeder

One was at Bank Island on 3rd January. In York, a female was present from the start of the year in New Earswick, favouring the area along the West Beck in Fireman's Leap. Up to five were wintering at Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings early in the year with two remaining through the summer at the sewage works. One was at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 6th February with another in the centre of York the same day. One was at the sewage works opposite Towthorpe Civic Amenity Site on the 20th while another was seen at Bubwith bridge on 12th March. On 2nd May one was at Castle Howard where a pair nested in the Atlas fountain and were seen carrying food on the 31st. A pair had returned to Gilling by 8th May and two were seen at the scrape at Pottery Lane, Strensall on the 21st.

Seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year as well as on the York University campus. A pair

was seen feeding young at a nest in the bank of the River Foss in Strensall on 25th June while the first fledged young were two juveniles at the Millennium Bridge, York the next day. A pair was seen feeding young at Castle Howard Lake on 2nd July while at least one juvenile was in Fireman's Leap by early August. One bird was by the bridge at Wheldrake Ings on 27th September with further singles seen in a garden in Huby on 29th September and again on 29th December, at CSL on various dates in September and October, by the Millennium Bridge, York on 3rd October and at the Hassacarr NR during October, November and December. In early October seven birds were present in the Clifton Ings area with one or two seen regularly up to the end of the year. One was seen at Kirkham Priory on 23rd October with another at Bank Island on 31st October and 4th December while a first-winter bird remained in New Earswick to the year's end. Singles were also seen in the centre of Stillingfleet on 9th November and by a dung heap at Acaster Aerodrome on 17th November.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*
Resident breeder

Over 20 were in a stubble field (with large numbers of Sky Lark *Alauda arvensis*, Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra* and Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*) beside the footpath between Stillington Road, Huby and Sutton-on-the-Forest cemetery on 18th January. Two hundred roosted at CSL on 20th January with 300 there on 1st February. Regularly seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year with a maximum of c.100 at Naburn Sewage Works on 19th February.

A pair bred in a tractor at Warren Farm, Dunnington (the farmer kindly refrained from using the machine until they had safely fledged). Several juveniles were at CSL on 6th June (including one brood of three with parent) and later in the year there were 18 at this site on 12th August. A pair was seen at Castle Howard Lake on 2nd July. There were up to 35 at North Ings Farm, Terrington 12th August and 28 at East Moor, Sutton-on-the-Forest on the same date. Groups of up to four birds were seen in gardens at The Brecks, Strensall between August and December. A pre-roost gathering of 45 birds was at the CSL on 27th October and 200 roosted there on 11th December. A flock of 100+ was north of Sutton-on-the-Forest cemetery on 4th December while at least 50 were coming into roost in Parliament Street, York on the 5th. Regular on Strensall Common especially in the vicinity of the sewage works. Seen regularly around Huby throughout the year and widespread in the northern part

of the recording area. Also reported from Newburgh Priory lake, Pond Head Farm at Oulston, Moreby near Naburn and Strensall (in a garden late December).

A male of the nominate race *alba* (White Wagtail) was seen at Wheldrake Ings on 10th April with one also seen at CSL on 29th June.

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

Occasional winter visitor though more regular in recent years

Six flew across the pond at CSL on 5th January when five were seen briefly in poplars at the western end of the JRTNR, New Earswick. Four were in trees by the CSL entrance on the 13th with 50 on the corner of Nunnery Lane and Bishopthorpe Road, York on the same date, but with just seven there the next day. Singles were seen at the York University campus on the 9th and nearby on Heslington Lane on the 30th. Fifteen were in Rowntree Park, York on 2nd March with nine there on the 5th. Seven were in North Lane, Wheldrake on the 19th March and around 100 were seen briefly in Fishergate, York opposite Cemetery Road on 9th April with at least 30 birds still there the next day followed by two males heard calling overhead in Walmgate, York on 11th April. A week later, on the 19th, 32 were seen in trees along Shipton Road, Rawcliffe with over 50 in Boroughbridge Road, York near to Manor School playing fields and on a cotoneaster in a front garden there. Twenty-six were at Rawcliffe Meadows on the 23rd and c.20 were in Rowntree Park on the 30th. Ten flying over Wenlock Terrace, Fulford on 1st May were the last of the winter (AB).

The only records from the second winter period were three at Slingsby on 30th November (BP) and three feeding on hawthorn berries in a garden in Dunnington on 30th December (T&VW).

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Resident breeder throughout the area

Resident on the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a BTO survey there giving counts of 40 on 2nd May and 62 on 18th June. At Moreby near Naburn counts were of 13 on 9th May and six on 19th June. The first fledged young were noted on 25th June. Five were counted along a half-mile stretch of the River Foss at Strensall on 23rd December. Eleven were counted around the Knavesmire and Dringhouses areas of York in a three-hour visit on 13th November, and eight were counted around Acaster Selby in a three-hour visit on the 20th. Seen daily round Huby throughout the year and widespread throughout the northern part of the recording area. Often seen at CSL, regular in Strensall,

widespread in New Earswick and present throughout the year in the Clifton/Rawcliffe lngs area and at Rawcliffe Lake. Common in all habitats in the Dunnington area.

Dunnoek *Prunella modularis*

Resident breeder throughout the area

Song was first heard on 11th January in Osbaldwick where birds were subsequently seen fighting at an allotment on the 23rd. The highest count in Dunnington was seven on the Common on 1st February. One was in song at Dudley Hill Farm, Sheriff Hutton on the 2nd with two singing at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 5th. Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn where BTO survey counts revealed 11 birds on 2nd May and seven on 18th June with the first fledged young noted on 10th June. Sixteen were counted around the Knavesmire and Dringhouses area of York on 13th November while seven were counted around the Acaster Selby area in a three-hour visit on the 20th. Seen daily around Huby and Strensall throughout the year, widespread throughout the northern part of the recording area and in New Earswick though nationally there has been a decline of this species. A regular visitor to the bird table of a garden in Strensall between October and December, and common at CSL. Present throughout the year in the Clifton/Rawcliffe lngs area and at Rawcliffe Lake. Heard singing in Osbaldwick on 22nd November.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Resident breeder throughout the area

Seen daily around Huby and widespread throughout the northern part of the recording area. Present throughout the year in the Clifton/Rawcliffe lngs area as well as at Rawcliffe Lake. Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with BTO survey counts of 33 on 2nd May and 21 on 18th June. The highest count on Dunnington Common was 20 on 1st February and one was seen on a garden feeder in Osbaldwick during snowy weather on 20th February. Sometimes heard singing at night in Osbaldwick and song restarted there in August.

One nested in a wooden box in Strensall and laid two eggs but deserted during incubation and birds also bred at Hassacarr NR raising two broods. Three were at Moreby near Naburn on 8th May and the first fledged young along the River Ouse south of York were seen on 10th June.

Thirteen were counted around the Knavesmire and Dringhouses area of York in a three-hour visit on 13th November and another 13 were in the Acaster Selby area in a three-hour visit on the 20th.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Very rare visitor

One female was at CSL plots on 22nd February to 1st March (SHBR) and there was a possible bird singing in the goods yard of York railway station on 19th March (AS per RCy). This may have been linked to another record of a first-summer male on 5th August at York Minster (RCy). This bird was eventually seen again on 25th and 26th August on rooftops behind Stonegate (AL). On 1st September the same observer was able to take some good photos through her workplace window. Later it was notified again by a tour guide on 21st September who alerted the club via the website to a 'strange bird' at Goodramgate Church (anon), but it was not found again despite searching by many YOC members.

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Migrant breeder and passage visitor

A male was in a hedge behind Hartrigg Oaks for just over an hour on 10th April (NEBR) and one was near the lake at Yearsley Moor on 29th April (DS). A female was seen fly-catching from a hedge opposite Naburn Sewage Works on 1st May (AB) and a juvenile at Clifton Park on 2nd July was presumably an early migrant (NS).

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Casual migrant breeder and passage migrant

One male was in the area of the wind pump at Wheldrake Ings on 29th April (DS and TD) and another was in an oilseed rape field at Castle Howard on 2nd May (DR). There was also a party of five at Clifton Ings on 9th September (NS).

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

Casual breeder and passage visitor

Frequently recorded on most visits to Strensall Common during the year with three pairs and a male there on 2nd April and a female seen carrying food to a presumed nest site on the 16th. During the MOD bird survey of Strensall Common on 18th May four pairs were estimated breeding and some had at least two broods in the season. Four juveniles were also recorded on 18th May and two pairs and three young were present on 25th June.

Other records consisted of one male at Wheldrake Ings on 31st October and 2nd November, and two or three birds at North Duffield Carrs on 4th and 8th December with one seen on the 11th.

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*
Summer visitor and passage migrant

One was seen from Garganey Hide at North Duffield Carrs on 8th April (MW) and a female was recorded near Castle Howard on the 10th. Two were at Cornfield NR at Rawcliffe on the 27th with another there on 7th May. Two females and one male were on Strensall Common on 27th April, another on the 28th and two males on the 29th. During the MOD survey on 18th May an adult male was seen feeding before being chased by a Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* but managed to escape! The last spring record was of one at Bank Island, Wheldrake on 22nd May.

The next sighting, on 6th September, was of one at CSL where a juvenile was found dead on 4th November (SHBR). One was in a stubble field at Haxby on 11th September and another was found at North Duffield Carrs on 2nd October, the last of the year.

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*
Rare passage migrant

A good year for this species with the first sightings since 1999.

The first record of this species for the New Earswick area was on 20th March when a male was found close to the railway line north of the village. It took flight but was relocated a few minutes later behind Hartrigg Oaks and was photographed before flying away. There was amazingly a second record on 17th September when a male and female attempted to feed on rowans in New Earswick but were chased off by the local Blackbirds *Turdus merula* (NEBR).

There were also two by the car park at North Duffield Carrs on 9th November (RS).



Blackbird *Turdus merula*
Resident breeder, winter visitor and migrant

Thirty were at Dunnington Common on 1st February with 16 along Intake Lane on the 8th. The first song was heard in Osbaldwick also on

the 8th, and several were singing at dusk by 11th March with full dawn chorus there by the 15th, dying away during June and finishing by the end of the month.

Two, sitting on nests at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 4th April, fledged young on the 30th, the same date as young were also first seen in Strensall. At CSL birds were seen frequently, with a maximum of ten on 1st March while food collection was observed on 11th April and the first juvenile was seen on the 18th.

Present throughout the year in the Huby and Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area and at Rawcliffe Lake, and along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of 55 there on 9th June while the first fledged juvenile was noted there on 25th May. Many young were in Osbaldwick in June with many others on the sports field. It was also a common breeder on the New Earswick nature reserves.

Higher counts included 14 at Moreby near Naburn on 8th May, 15 there on 18th June and c.20 on 12th October at CSL.

During the autumn, 50–60 were feeding on haws around Fulford Golf Course on 4th October and 51 were counted around the Knavesmire and Dringhouses area of York in a three-hour period on 13th November, with 69 around the Acaster Selby area in the same time period on the 20th. Nine were at Hassacarr NR on 8th December.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Winter visitor

Present throughout the winter months in the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area with good numbers also along the River Ouse between York and Naburn, the maximum being c.80 at Middlethorpe Ings on 2nd January. There were c.50 at Castle Howard Lake on the 1st followed by 100 at Bank Island, c.20 at North Duffield Carrs, c.30 at Bubwith with Redwing *Turdus iliacus*, and 127 at Wheldrake Ings on the 3rd.

In Dunnington, 150 were recorded on 1st February and c.250 were seen together with Redwing in a frozen meadow in Breck's Lane, Strensall on the 6th. During the month various parties of 26–80 were around Allerthorpe with 50–150 at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington. Groups of c.20 were recorded at both North and South Duffield on the 27th with large numbers (not counted) at Thorganby on the same date.

Sixty were at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 6th March and the same number at Thorganby on the 12th with 50 at Lilling Green Farm, West Lilling the same day. At least 200 were at Bank Island on the 24th with the last on Bootham Stray on the 28th.

Elsewhere numbers tailed away in April with 15 at Castle Howard on the 7th, two on the 11th and one still present at Ganthorpe on the 10th. One was at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on the 18th and two at Middlethorpe Ings on the 23rd were the last for this period (AB).

The first of the autumn were at JRTNR on October 17th (NEBR) but only low numbers were recorded there for the rest of the year. The next sightings were c.20 at Walmgate Stray, York on the 23rd. Forty-five were at Fangfoss the following day when 200 were counted at CSL throughout the afternoon with other small groups recorded there during the autumn. At Dunnington Common 124 were counted on 25th October with 100+ near Bolton Percy on 26th November plus smaller groups of up to 12 on other dates.

Counts of up to 50 birds were made between York and Naburn in the latter part of the year and 188 were counted around the Acaster Selby area in three hours on 20th November. Other larger counts were c.25 at North Duffield Carrs on 24th November, c.200 in stubble near Cliffe on 5th December, 30 near Huby on 25th December, 50 near Heslington on the 30th and a mixed flock of 50+ with Redwing at West Cottingwith Ings on the 31st.

Song thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Resident breeder but in decline in some areas

Seen most days around Huby and widespread throughout the northern part of the recording area including Castle Howard, Sheriff Hutton and Welburn. Also present throughout the year in Strensall as well as the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area and Rawcliffe Lake.

Birds were first heard singing in Osbaldwick on 11th January, CSL on the 12th, Hull Road, York on the 17th, Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 5th February and in Osbaldwick on the 8th. One regularly fed in a Strensall garden from 6th to 18th February and at least five singing males were around New Earswick in the spring; breeding took place at or near all three nature reserves. Generally about ten birds were recorded along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of 25 counted during a BTO survey on 18th June. The first song heard here was on 19th February with 16 birds singing along this stretch on 10th May and the first fledged juveniles noted on 6th August.

Two were at Hassacarr NR on 4th April and on the same day two were sitting on nests at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits with one pair feeding young in a nest there on 23rd July. A juvenile was in an Osbaldwick garden on 17th June and singles were noted singing near Welburn on 14th May and during the MOD bird survey of Strensall Common on the 18th.

One was found dead by the CSL restaurant window on 18th September while at least ten were feeding on haws around Fulford Golf Course on 4th October. One was attempting to sing in Strensall on 15th and 29th November and two were at Clock Farm, Dunnington on 13th December.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Winter visitor

About 20 birds were recorded along the River Ouse between York and Naburn in the first part of the year and throughout the winter months in the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area.

On 6th February, 45 were counted with 250 Fieldfares *Turdus pilaris* in a frozen meadow in Breck's Lane, Strensall and singles were at Osbaldwick on the 20th and Askham Bog on the 23rd. In the New Earswick area Bootham Stray also held large flocks during February with at least 60 there on the 7th but numbers then fell rapidly with only 20 remaining by 12th March and the last was seen at Fireman's Leap on the 30th.

About 30 were at Thorganby on 12th March with a few still with Fieldfares on the 27th. Other late spring records included three at Rowntree Park, York on 19th March and at Castle Howard on 7th April while a single there on the 11th was the last for the first winter period (PB).

Around 20 flying over a garden in Copmanthorpe on 24th September (TD) were the first of the autumn with further sightings of two at Pocklington on 5th October, ten at Bank Island on the 7th and two or three suspected at Sheriff Hutton on the 10th. On 15th October, six were at Heslington and another 30 flew west there later in the day. At least six were in bushes near the radio mast field in Fulford on the 16th with many also at Heslington on the 16th and by the 18th 200 were in the area.

At Poppleton eight were eating elderberries on 18th October and c.50 were at Fulford Ings on the 23rd while 400+ were counted flying over Walmgate Stray, York in half an hour later that morning, mostly heading south and west. The following day c.100 were seen passing through North Duffield Carrs. The first record at New Earswick was of 50 flying south on the 15th with other parties of around 20 doing the same over the next two days. Only 25 were present there at the end of October and sightings were infrequent thereafter, the maximum being 30 on 14th December.

A large flock of over 200 was on Dunnington Common on 25th October and 50 were at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 29th. A few occurred at CSL during the winter, the maximum number being 40 in a mixed flock on 1st December. A mixed flock of 50+ was with Fieldfares at West Cottingwith Ings on the 31st.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*
Resident breeder and winter visitor

Widespread throughout the northern part of the YOC area where seen daily around Huby, and seen throughout the year at New Earswick and in the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area. Generally up to about ten birds were recorded along the River Ouse between York and Naburn during the year with a maximum of about 20 in the Fulford area on 10th September. Records from CSL included a maximum of 13 on 15th February.

First heard singing in the Fulford area on 2nd January and in Osbaldwick on the 22nd while seven were recorded singing during the MOD bird survey of Strensall Common on 18th May. It was a widespread, successful breeder in the Dunnington area; the largest summer roosting count on Dunnington Common was 12, well down on 2004. The first fledged juveniles along the River Ouse between York and Naburn were noted on 25th June and four were in a set-aside field at Flaxton on 12th August.

Ones or twos were recorded during the year at Pretty Wood, Castle Howard on 12th March, Moreby near Naburn on 8th May and 18th June, Towthorpe on 10th May and Castle Howard on 2nd July. High numbers were noted at Sheriff Hutton on 10th October.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*
Scarce migrant breeder

One possible bird heard 'reeling' in Danesmead Copse, Fulford on 24th April (DL) was the only record.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*
Migrant breeder and passage migrant

One at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits was the first on 23rd April (PB) with two singing at Wheldrake Ings on the 24th and one near the University Boat House, Fulford Ings the same day. Other April records came from Bank Island on the 25th, Fulford Ings on the 27th and Wheldrake Ings on the 29th with 30+ there the following day.

Birds were noted in May at Castle Howard on the 2nd, Thornton/Bielby on the 3rd and Rawcliffe Lake on the 4th while one singing at CSL from 6th May might have bred in the adjacent oilseed rape field.

At Allerthorpe Gravel Pits numbers increased to seven singing males by 29th May with a recently fledged juvenile noted on 30th July. Similarly the maximum number recorded singing at Fulford Ings was four on 30th May with three still singing there on 9th July. One was singing during the MOD bird survey of Strensall Common on 18th May.

The species becomes more secretive during the summer but several were noted at Fulford Ings on 28th June, one at Bank Island on 14th July and three along the Pocklington Canal at Melbourne on 2nd August. A juvenile was at Rawcliffe Meadows flood basin on 16th August while two at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 20th (PB) were the last.

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first was at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 23rd April (PB) rising to eight singing there on 29th May and 12 on 18th June. One was at Castle Howard and at least three were in reedbeds at Wheldrake Ings on 2nd May, two were at Strensall Common on the 18th and 30 were recorded along the Pocklington Canal between Hagg Bridge and Canal Head also on the 18th. Unusually, a bird was singing in a hedge at Rawcliffe Lake on the 24th and another was sub-singing in the reeds by the small pond at Rawcliffe Bar Country Park on 26th July.

Birds were seen and heard at Wheldrake Ings on 14th July and several were heard along the Pocklington Canal at Melbourne on 2nd August with two at Skipwith Common on 20th August.

Adults were observed feeding two fledglings at Castle Howard on 4th September and the last record was of two in reedbeds at Wheldrake Ings on 18th September (RS)

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Migrant breeder

One was singing near Church Road Bridge, Melbourne on 23rd April (RCy) when another was at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits (PB), where up to five were singing by the 29th. Up to four sang there during May and June while the last was recorded on 14th August.

Another was singing in the Fulford area of York on 27th April and was followed by others singing at Naburn Bridge on 1st May, North Duffield Carrs on 3rd May and Bank Island on the 8th and 17th. A singing male also took up residence on Middlethorpe Ings during the spring and summer.

A bird at Rawcliffe Lake on 11th May was seen or heard over the next couple of months and possibly bred, and one was recorded singing during a farm survey near Bossall on 21st May with others singing at Castle Howard on 11th June and Huby on 26th June.

The species was noted as generally scarce in the Wheldrake Ings area; during the summer there were only singles at Bank Island, Thorganby and Wheldrake village. Two birds at Fulford Ings on 23rd August were the last recorded (AB).

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Migrant breeder

The first of the year was a male in the Fulford area on 22nd April (AB) followed by one singing at Wheldrake Ings on the 23rd, three near Triangle Meadow, New Earswick on the 25th, at Dunnington on the 26th and at Grimston Moor on the 27th with others at Thornton/Bielby, Lilling and Wheldrake Ings on the 29th.

During May, six were seen near Huby on the 2nd, one was at CSL on the 3rd, three were along Osbaldwick cycle track and St Nicholas Fields on the 6th and two were near Welburn on the 14th.

Numbers increased to 20 singing males along the River Ouse between York and Naburn by 9th June and seven or eight pairs were present throughout the summer in the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area. Up to four were singing in the Gilling and Slingsby areas on 23rd and 26th June. Breeding was noted at CSL with a juvenile on 5th July and at Triangle Meadow, New Earswick where the last was seen on 18th August.

Four were singing in Danesmead Copse, York on 14th June, one fed in a garden in Strensall on the 15th, three were at Moreby near Naburn on the 18th and several were at Fulford Ings on the 28th. Others were recorded during the summer at Dudley Hill Farm, Sheriff Hutton; Mowthorpe Lane, Terrington; Allerthorpe Gravel Pits; Skipwith Common and Hassacarr NR. Others were recorded at Bank Island on 14th July with three at Fulford Ings on 12th September, the last being one at Strensall Common on the 20th (PeR).

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*

Migrant breeder

The first of the year was one singing in the Fulford area on 29th April (AB) followed by one at Cass Wood, Huby on 2nd May while at least six were at Yearsley Moor on the 3rd and another was at Wheldrake Ings on the 5th and 12th.

Other sightings came from CSL on 9th May and 7th June, Osbaldwick on 22nd May, Yearsley Moor where there were two or three on 21st June, and at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits between 15th May and 14th August. Birds were also noted along the River Ouse between York and Naburn until 25th June and in a hedge by Cornfield NR at Rawcliffe on 13th–21st May. During June, two were at Moreby near Naburn on the 18th and one was at the YWT reserve at Strensall Common on the 21st.

Sightings declined during the summer with two in Clifton Park on 22nd July and 21st August, another at Skipwith Common on 20th August and the last was recorded at Clifton Park on 3rd September (NS).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Migrant breeder with some birds overwintering

A female was at Fireman's Leap, New Earswick on 3rd January with a male there on 29th March, the first of the spring at this site (NEBR). Another wintering bird was one around the feeding stations at Hassacarr NR on 12th January.

Two males were at Sessions NR on 30th March while other arriving birds were at Strensall, Healaugh and five along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on 3rd April, Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 4th, a Cliffe garden on the 8th, Bank Island on the 9th and 11th, CSL on the 11th and four in Pretty Wood, Castle Howard on the 12th.

Other arrivals included two at Clifton Park, York on 13th April, one heard in Osbaldwick on the 24th and five at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 30th.

The species soon became widespread throughout the area but larger site numbers included 22 at Sessions NR on 3rd May, at least ten seen or heard at Yearsley Moor on the same date, five at Moreby near Naburn on the 8th and several heard in fields at Osbaldwick on the 12th. Four were counted along the Osbaldwick cycle track and St Nicholas Fields on the 6th, six were at Welburn on the 14th, five were noted at Wheldrake Ings on the 17th and three were singing during the MOD bird survey of Strensall Common on the 18th.

Regularly seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with five singing males being recorded on 3rd April building up to a maximum of 25 birds on 2nd May. Bred at Hassacarr NR and in surrounding woodland while seven to eight pairs were present throughout the summer in the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area. A juvenile was at CSL on 27th June and another on 26th August.

The last, at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits, was on 3rd September and three males were still present at Fulford Ings on the 12th (AB). Late or overwintering birds included a female bathing in a birdbath at Heslington on 17th November, one at the JRTNR on the 21st and two males at Cornfield NR on 5th December.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Scare passage migrant which used to breed

A presumed female was watched preening for five minutes in riverside willows at Fulford Hall on 23rd April before flying up to the tops of adjacent tall trees and calling several times (AB).

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Migrant breeder and passage migrant with some birds overwintering

The first of the year was one at Wheldrake Ings on 17th March (RS) followed by others at New Earswick on the 19th, Hassacarr NR on the 20th, York University on the 22nd and at Askham Bog, Bishopthorpe, Sessions NR and Wheldrake Ings on the 23rd. Others followed at Clifton Ings and Gilling on the 24th, Strensall Common on the 25th and Clifton Park and CSL on the 31st when seven singing males were also at the JRTNR.

The first at Osbaldwick, Strensall Common and along the River Ouse between York and Naburn were on 2nd April, at Askham Bog and Helaugh on the 3rd with six in Terrington Wood on the 6th. By this time, birds were widespread throughout the YOC area.

By the beginning of May at least 18 birds were present at JRTNR and breeding took place in several locations there, but numbers during the summer suggested breeding was less successful than usual. Seven were recorded singing during the MOD bird survey of Strensall Common on 18th May and birds were abundant at Yearsley Moor and around Pond Head Farm, Oulston during the summer. Also seen and heard in Hull Road Park, York during June and July and at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits, Castle Howard, Huby and Welburn during year.

A juvenile was at CSL on 4th August, six adults at Skipwith Common on the 20th and another juvenile was near the River Ouse between York and Naburn on the 28th with a yearly maximum of ten birds there on 17th September. One was found dead by the restaurant window at CSL on 15th September and two were still present there on the 31st. The last at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits and JRTNR were recorded on 24th September.

Eight were along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on 1st October with stragglers still singing at York University on the 4th, Heslington on the 16th and Wheldrake Ings on the 27th (RCy). Small numbers moved through the Clifton Ings area from late August well into November (NS).

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The earliest of the year was one by the pond at CSL on 29th March (PB) with at least two at Wheldrake Ings on the 30th. During April the first were by the River Ouse between York and Naburn on the 3rd, Rawcliffe Meadows on the 5th, three at Wheldrake Ings by the 6th, two at Terrington on the 10th and at Hagg Wood, Dunnington on the 14th.

By mid-April birds were widespread and noted singing at Sessions NR, New Earswick and Burnholme, York on the 16th, Riccall on the 17th,

and by the River Ouse between York and Naburn where a maximum of ten birds were singing on 10th May.

Breeding was recorded at Dunnington, where noted as declining, along the Osbaldwick cycle track and St Nicholas Fields on 6th May and at Pretty Wood, Castle Howard on 14th May. Around ten pairs were present throughout the summer in the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area with two pairs also at Rawcliffe Lake. During the MOD bird survey of Strensall Common on 18th May 24 were recorded singing while several were noted at Fulford Ings on 28th June.

Also recorded during the year at Allertorpe Gravel Pits, Fyton Wood, Huby, CSL and Yearsley Moor.

There were a few records during August with 30 noted at Skipwith Common on the 20th, two at Yearsley Moor on the 28th and one singing along the River Ouse on the 29th. One was at CSL until 9th September and another in a garden in Copmanthorpe on the 24th (TD).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Resident breeder and winter visitor

Seen in mixed tit parties at Askham Bog on 23rd January while one was singing at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on 16th February. Up to four birds were noted along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year with song first heard on 19th February.

Regular in pines on Strensall Common and at Yearsley Moor. It was also a good year for the species around the New Earswick nature reserves with additional records during the year from Castle Howard, Huby and Thurtle Wood, Terrington.

One was at Bank Island on 3rd and 19th September while small numbers moved through the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area as well as Rawcliffe Lake from September. Six were recorded at Allertorpe Gravel Pits on 29th September while an influx on 29th October brought at least 20 birds into the River Ouse area between York and Naburn.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Migrant breeder and passage visitor

One was at Wass Woods on 29th April (DS) and two were by the pond at Rawcliffe Meadows on 19th May with another in a garden at Sheriff Hutton the same day. On the 25th two pairs were seen from the bridge over the River Rye at Nunnington Hall feverishly catching flies.

One was singing at North Ings Farm, Terrington on 2nd June and an adult was first seen at Bishopthorpe Palace on the 25th with a family party including at least three juveniles seen at this site on 6th August. Another

was first seen in a garden in Huby on 27th May and was observed later taking food to a nestbox on 28th June.

Singles were at Bank Island on 8th July and in Huntington School NR on 12th July.

Autumn sightings included birds at Clifton Park in August and September with the last there on 12th September (NS).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Resident breeder

Present throughout the year in the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area and also at CSL with a maximum of five there. A poor year at New Earswick for this agile little bird where counts in excess of 20 would normally be expected at any season and often more than double this in winter, but numbers in 2005 rarely got into double figures and at times they were difficult to locate at all. Seen regularly in a garden in Huby throughout the year with a party of at least ten birds seen on 1st January. Seven were feeding in a Strensall garden on 2nd January with 19 in Warren Wood, Dunnington on the 23rd. Resident at Yearsley Moor and Strensall Common where seen on most visits during the year including 20 at Strensall Common on 17th December. Seen in mixed tit parties at Askham Bog on 23rd January with a small party at Castle Howard Lake on 27th January, 12 at Frog Hall, Allerthorpe Common on 13th February, eight at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on 15th February and a pair by the Pocklington Canal on 19th March. Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of c.30 on 24th June. Two pairs were observed nest building at Fulford Ings on 22nd April with the first fledged broods noted by 25th May. A family party was seen near Tang Hall Lane, York on 10th September with 15 at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 20th November and 14 around Acaster Selby the same day. Regular in a Strensall garden during the winter months while a party of at least ten was seen at Castle Howard Lake on 24th December.

Marsh Tit *Parus palustris*

Resident breeder

Resident at Yearsley Moor and seen on most visits there during the year. Seen in mixed tit flocks at Askham Bog on 23rd January with a party of about ten at Wood Head Farm, Husthwaite on 1st February. One was singing at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 30th January with two at Frog Hall, Allerthorpe Common on the same date and one calling there on 13th February. Three were on the edge of Hagg Wood, Dunnington on 8th February with one singing at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on the

15th, one coming to a bird feeder at Rose Cottage Farm, Terrington on the 23rd, and one singing at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 6th March. Two birds were seen at Castle Howard on 28th March with one at Fryton Wood on 18th April and another in Wass Woods on the 29th followed by one at Pretty Wood, Castle Howard on 14th May. Further singles were noted at Skipwith Common on the 20th August, Yearsley Moor on 28th August and Wheldrake Ings on 4th December.

Willow Tit *Parus montanus*

Resident breeder

Noted at Askham Bog on 23rd January with one seen in Hagg Wood, Dunnington on 20th February, two in Warren Wood, Dunnington on 6th March, two at Strensall Common on 2nd April and a further two in Hagg Wood, Dunnington on 13th April. One was seen in Wass Woods on 29th April with two at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits in March, July and October. One was at Beningborough Hall on 22nd May with a single bird seen in Pretty Wood, Castle Howard on the 26th. In the second winter period one was seen at Wheldrake Ings on 4th December with another at Oswaldkirk on the 23rd. Only one record was received for this year (on 15th July) from CSL.

Coal Tit *Parus ater*

Resident breeder

Two or three were seen regularly throughout the year at Clifton Park with an influx of ten on 14th September. Frequent on Strensall Common during the year and regular in a Strensall garden. Seen often around Huby and at CSL throughout the year. Resident at Yearsley Moor and seen on most visits. No real change at New Earswick with a stable population of around six pairs. Seen in mixed tit flocks at Askham Bog on 23rd January. Up to four birds were seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year while eight were recorded in Warren Wood, Dunnington on 29th July. Also noted at Castle Howard.

Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*

Resident breeder

Present throughout the year in the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area and at Rawcliffe Lake. Frequent on Strensall Common during the year and regular in a Strensall garden while birds were seen daily around Huby where a pair bred in a garden nestbox. Seen regularly at CSL during the year and resident at Yearsley Moor where noted on most visits. Seen in mixed tit flocks at Askham Bog on 23rd January with eight in Pretty

Wood, Castle Howard on 2nd March, six at the YWT reserve at Strensall Common on 10th March and eight in bushes beside Castle Howard Lake on 13th March.

A spell of cold, wet weather in the middle of their breeding season proved disastrous at New Earswick and led to the poorest year on record. However, this remains the commonest New Earswick resident bird, 537 individuals having been ringed in the last four years.

Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with BTO survey counts of 33 on 2nd May and 18 on 18th June. One which frequented gardens in Wilberfoss during April/May had an elongated beak. Both mandibles were as long as the eye-stripe (i.e. not quite as long as the head), and the upper mandible was slightly longer than the lower and noticeably decurved – like a sunbird! The first fledged juveniles were noted on 10th June. Six were at Moreby near Naburn on 8th May with two there on the 9th, six on 18th June and eight on 19th June. A post-breeding flock of 23 was in Warren Wood, Dunnington on 29th July.

Thirty-five were counted around the Knavesmire and Dringhouses area of York in a three-hour visit on 13th November with 36 counted around the Acaster Selby area in a similar three-hour visit on 20th November.

Great Tit *Parus major*
Resident breeder

Present throughout the year in the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area and at Rawcliffe Lake. Frequent on Strensall Common during the year and regular in a Strensall garden. Seen daily throughout the year around Huby where a pair bred in a garden nestbox fledging at least four young on 27th May. Seen regularly at CSL during the year and a common and widespread breeder at New Earswick, second only to Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus* and House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*. Resident at Yearsley Moor and seen on most visits during the year. Seen in mixed tit flocks at Askham Bog on 23rd January with ten counted in Pretty Wood, Castle Howard on 2nd March, six at the YWT reserve, Strensall Common on the 10th and eight at Great Wood, near Strensall Common on the 20th.

Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a BTO survey count of 28 on 2nd May while the first fledged young were noted here on 6th June. Six were at Moreby near Naburn on 8th May with three on 18th June while three juveniles were at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 12th June. Six were counted around the Knavesmire and Dringhouses area of York in a three-hour visit on 13th November with 13 similarly counted around Acaster Selby on 20th November. On 8th December 15 were counted in Warren Wood and 12 in Cottage Plantation, both at Dunnington.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

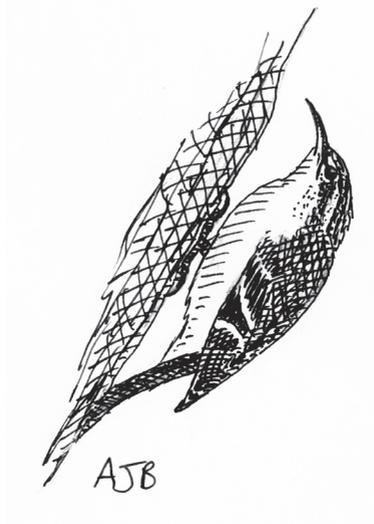
Resident breeder

Most records were from the Castle Howard area with one there on 13th January, two on 10th April and a single bird seen near Monument Farm, Welburn on 12th April. Two were at Castle Howard on 17th April and seen in Wass Woods on 29th April with one at the Gatehouse, Castle Howard on 2nd May and another at Crambeck on the same date. Singles were also noted at Pretty Wood, Castle Howard on 14th May and the Arboretum feeding station, Castle Howard on 2nd July. A bird heard calling at Bishopthorpe Palace on 12th September was the only record for that site in the year while one was at Kirkham Priory on 23rd October.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Resident breeder

Present throughout the year in the Clifton/Rawcliffe lngs area. A pair was in a Huby garden on 1st January and a pair and a single were seen at Askham Bog on 23rd January. A single bird was at Strensall Common on 26th January and again on 2nd February. Seen just twice during the year at CSL but it was an excellent year for this species at New Earswick, and was regularly seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with song noted from 1st January! The maximum count here was of ten birds on 18th June with the first family party noted at Fulford lngs on 3rd June.



Two were seen in woodland near Grange Farm, Haxby on 17th March and one was seen inspecting a hole at Strensall Common on 2nd April. Two were at Wheldrake Ings on 17th April while four were noted during the MOD bird survey of Strensall Common on 18th May.

One to two were recorded at Askham Bog on 4th December when a single bird was also seen at the YWT reserve at Strensall Common and another was at Yearsley Moor on the 26th.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor

Often seen during the year at CSL. Three birds were seen on Strensall Common on 1st January with two there on the 26th. Two were at Clifton Park on 5th January with singles there on 2nd, 6th and 12th February and again on 15th March. Heard at Askham Bog on 23rd January with one at Skipwith Common on 12th March. Birds were calling at Strensall Common on 27th March with three there on 2nd April and two noted during the MOD bird survey on 18th May. One was at Escrick on 9th June with one at Wigginton on 5th July and four at Bank Island on 15th August.

There was evidence of a major influx in the autumn with one in the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area on 23rd September, then three there on the 28th and at least two remaining to the year's end. A single bird was to the north of Strensall on 28th September while two birds were present at Hassacarr NR during October, November and December feeding on acorns. Seen twice near Sheriff Hutton in early October and along the York-Selby cycle track between Naburn Sewage Works and Naburn Bridge on 1st October, 19th November and 7th December. One was flying over Strensall village on 9th October and others were at Clifton Park, York on 10th and 19th October with at least one seen on four occasions on 25th October, and again on 27th October and 14th December. One was at Stamford Bridge on 10th October

Birds became increasingly obvious in the Lower Derwent Valley during October with two at North Duffield Carrs on the 3rd and singles at Bank Island and Melbourne on the 4th and at Thorganby on the 5th. A single was caught and ringed at the North Duffield Carrs feeding station on the 10th, only the third Jay to be ringed in the valley. Two were at Thorganby on the 13th followed by two at North Duffield Carrs on the 15th with singles at Melbourne and Thorganby with three between South and North Duffield the same day. Three were at Wheldrake on the 21st with a single at North Duffield Carrs on the 21st and 22nd.

One was at Ampleforth on 18th October with another at Laytham on the 21st. Further singles were at Gilling on 7th November, Skipwith on the 9th, Thornton on the 20th, one heard in Steeton Whin, near Bolton Percy on the 26th with one at Whitehill Mine near Cliffe Common on the 27th and two at Strensall Common on the 30th.

Two were seen at Lilling Green Farm, West Lilling on 4th December with two at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 10th, one at Kexby on the 12th, four at Storwood on the 14th, two on Strensall Common on the 17th and 27th and two in a Huby garden on the 20th. One was seen heading west over New Earswick on 24th December with two birds on Yearsley Moor on 26th December.

Magpie *Pica pica*

Resident breeder

Present throughout the year in the Clifton/Rawcliffe lngs area and at Rawcliffe Lake. Up to three were seen in Strensall village and on the Common. Frequent and widespread at New Earswick.

Seen often during the year at CSL and daily around Huby with the species widespread across the northern part of the recording area. Six were at Dunnington Common on 3rd January with 23 at Bubwith playing fields on the 22nd. Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of 15 birds counted on 24th June. Eighteen were counted around the Knavesmire and Dringhouses area of York in a three-hour visit on 13th November. Groups of up to seven birds were a common sight near the sewage works along Breck's Lane, Strensall at the end of the year.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

Resident breeder

Up to 30 were present throughout the year in the Clifton/Rawcliffe lngs area. Regular in Strensall village and on Strensall Common and common and widespread in New Earswick.

Often seen flying over CSL and regular around Castle Howard estate, Easingwold, Huby, Nunnington and Sutton-on-the-Forest throughout the year. Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of c.50 on 29th October. One was noted at Moreby near Naburn on 9th May and then eight on 18th June. At Dunnington Common, 153 were counted on 23rd August and 17 at Acaster Selby on 20th November.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*
Resident breeder

Up to 80 were present throughout the year in the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area with a rookery at the northern end of Rawcliffe Ings. Seen daily around Huby throughout the year and widespread across the northern part of the recording area. Regularly seen along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with most birds residing on farmland in the Bishopthorpe area where up to 100 were seen on several dates. Common on farmland just outside New Earswick with a stable population. Flocks of 12–30 birds were always present at Great Wood near Strensall Common. A count of 490 was made at Dunnington Common on 23rd January.

On 12th April 37 nests were visible at Monument Plantation, Castle Howard while at Moreby near Naburn 24 birds were counted on 8th May but just one on 18th June. Approximately 100 were seen near Comborough Manor, Sheriff Hutton on 12th August.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*
Resident breeder

Up to 70 were present throughout the year in the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area and also at Rawcliffe Lake. Regular in Strensall village and on Strensall Common. Often seen during the year at CSL where it was recorded predating ducklings on the pond. Could be seen daily around Huby throughout the year and widespread across the northern part of the recording area. Common and apparently increasing around New Earswick. Up to 35 birds were present throughout the year at the sewage works off Breck's Lane, Strensall.

Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with 42 at Middlethorpe Ings on 23rd April being the largest gathering. There were 27 in fields along Hagg Lane, Dunnington on 14th January with 30 at Wheldrake Ings on 16th April, ten at Moreby near Naburn on 9th May and 11 there on 18th June. Forty-seven were counted around the Knavesmire and Dringhouses area of York in a three-hour visit on 13th November and 16 were counted around the Acaster Selby area in a similar visit on 20th November.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*
Resident breeder and winter visitor

Present throughout the year in the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area and at Rawcliffe Lake though no notable counts were obtained. Often seen during the year at CSL with up to 100 birds recorded flying over. Common and widespread around New Earswick and regular in Strensall with flocks

of up to 30 recorded. Can be seen daily around Huby throughout the year and widespread across the northern part of the recording area.

Fifty were at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 16th January while one at Tang Hall, York was carrying nest material on 22nd January. One hundred flew southeast at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on 10th February. Twenty were at Pocklington on 28th May with 15 at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 29th May and three at Moreby near Naburn on 18th June. Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of c.500 (300 at Naburn Sewage Works) on 29th August. The first fledged juveniles were noted on 25th May.

A flock of 70 was seen near Cornborough Manor, Sheriff Hutton on 12th August while on the 22nd 200+ were at Brighton Airfield. A flock of c.300 was seen near Woodhouse Farm, Strensall on 29th August and 80 were at Pocklington on 19th September. Up to 500 were alongside the Wheldrake-Escrick road on 24th September with 200+ on Dunnington Common on 10th November. Thirty-eight were counted around the Acaster Selby area in a three-hour visit on 20th November while c.300 flew east at North Duffield Cams on 4th December

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Resident breeder

Around 30–40 were present throughout the year at Rawcliffe Lake. Could be seen daily around Huby throughout the year and widespread across the northern part of the recording area. Common and widespread around New Earswick with increasing numbers at the JRTNR. Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of c.50 on 4th August while the first fledglings were noted there on 30th May. A maximum of ten was counted in the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch on 29th January in an Osbaldwick garden, the most numerous species there, but less prominent during BBS counts at Riccall. Five were recorded in a Strensall garden during a 'garden birdwatch' on 23rd January and up to 30 were seen near another Strensall garden. Twenty were noted at Dunnington on 1st February with 30 counted near Chanting Hill, Welburn on 12th March. A pair bred three times in a 'semi-detached' nestbox in Strensall during the summer and there were the usual healthy numbers in the village. Eight were counted at Monument Farm, Welburn on 8th June while young were seen in Osbaldwick in July in large numbers.

On 12th August 40 were counted feeding on spilt wheat at a farm in West Lilling village with 20 counted at Cornborough Farm, near Sheriff Hutton and c.150 counted close to the public footpath entering Sheriff Hutton. This flock of 150 birds included 50 Tree Sparrows *Passer montanus*.

An estimated 100 were in several small flocks at Melbourne on 21st August with a flock of 40 in fields near Towthorpe on 3rd September and ten counted around the Knavesmire and Dringhouses area of York in a three-hour visit on 13th November. Twenty-six were similarly counted at Acaster Selby on 20th November.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*
Resident breeder

Small numbers were present throughout the year in the Clifton/Rawcliffe lngs area with a good number wintering at Cornfield NR peaking at 40+ in late November; at least two or three pairs bred. Can be seen daily around Huby throughout the year and widespread throughout the northern part of the recording area. A decline in numbers was noted at New Earswick and the usual wintering population at Chestnut Grove was absent. Two breeding colonies were located on the outskirts of Cliffe and the species was generally quite common between there and South and North Duffield throughout the year. The Dunnington and nearby Grimston area was also a stronghold for the species with up to 1,000 birds present in the post-breeding season when a flock of 152 was feeding in a pea field at Clock Farm, Dunnington on 19th July.

There were 15 by the car park at North Duffield Carrs on 1st January while up to 30 were recorded at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits during the year. A flock of c.150 was in a hedge near Thornton on 20th January with five or more at Dudley Hill Farm, Sheriff Hutton on 2nd February. Three or four were seen near Bad Bargain Lane, Osbaldwick on 20th February and five counted in the lane beside Wilks Plantation near Flaxton on 21st March.

Seen at Landing Lane, Riccall on 17th April with two at Terrington on 17th April, three at Moreby near Naburn on 9th May and three again on 19th June. Two territories were recorded on a farm near Bossall during an RSPB farm survey. Three birds were near Towthorpe on 10th May with one on 3rd September while four birds were at Allerthorpe Water Park on 31st May. Up to three birds were seen feeding in a Strensall garden from May to December. Four were at North lngs Farm, Terrington on 10th August with 20 at East Moor, Sutton-on-the-Forest on 12th August and ten at Cornborough Farm near Sheriff Hutton the same day.

Fifty were counted together with a flock of House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* close to the public footpath entering Sheriff Hutton on 12th August while two were in fields at the edge of Murton on 3rd September. Regular in a Cliffe garden from October to December with a maximum of 12 on 10th November. Two were noted near Osbaldwick on 3rd

September. Regularly seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with maxima of ten birds in the Naburn Sewage Works and Bishopthorpe areas on 13th November. While just a few were at Thorganby on 5th November, as many as 40 were counted in hedgerows with Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris* (10), Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus* (2) and Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella* (4) at Acaster Aerodrome on 17th November.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor

Present throughout the year in the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area and at Rawcliffe Lake. Often seen around CSL with a maximum of ten recorded. Could be seen daily around Hubby throughout the year and widespread across the northern part of the recording area. Increasing numbers recorded at New Earswick were probably helped by the feeding programme at the JRTNR; winter numbers were noticeably up. Regularly seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of 23 birds counted during a BTO survey on 2nd May and seen regularly around Strensall village. Notable counts included a flock of 25 seen at Lilling Green Farm, West Lilling on 1st January, 50+ at Dunnington Common on 1st February, 27 at Moreby near Naburn on 9th May and 11 there on 19th June.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

At New Earswick a single male arrived in the JRTNR on 4th January and remained all month. A male and two females were in Fireman's Leap on the 23rd and on the 30th a flock of at least 30 was in the same location, these remaining in the area until 10th February when the majority moved on. After this date about half a dozen birds were constantly mobile around all three nature reserves and Fireman's Leap until the end of March. April saw only two sightings, a single in the JRTNR on the 5th and another on the 10th, both of which would have been record late stayers had it not been for the exceptional spring of 2004. Other records included a male at Bishop Wilton on 23rd January, up to two birds frequenting the central car park area of York University between 3rd February and 13th April while three were present there on the 9th April. A male was found dead by a roadside in Strensall on 14th February. In the autumn one was at CSL on 28th October with two at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 20th November and again on 10th December. A fine male was seen by the River Derwent near Bank Island on 11th December.

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor

Present throughout the year in the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area and at Rawcliffe Lake with a wintering flock of up to 60 at Cornfield NR from the end of September to the year's end. Often seen during the year at CSL with up to 15 recorded at any one time. A good year at New Earswick for this species; numbers around the patch were well up with several flocks into double figures seen in many areas. The JRTNR regularly had up to 30 birds present which was reflected in the increasing numbers showing up in the ringing returns.

Seen daily around Huby throughout the year and widespread throughout the northern part of the recording area. Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn where generally up to 30 birds were seen although the aftermath of a hemp crop produced a maximum count of c.150 at Naburn Sewage Works on 1st October. In Osbaldwick a maximum of eight was counted in the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch on 29th January. Six were counted at Moreby near Naburn on 9th May with two on 19th June and regularly seen around Strensall village with flocks of up to 23 birds. A mixed flock of about 50 finches at Lilling on 10th October consisted mainly of this species, plus a few Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis* and Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*, while 16 were at Dunnington Common on 25th October. A flock of at least 250 was at Bielby on 1st November while at Allertorpe Gravel Pits there were up to 40 in February and March, 100 on 13th August and 50+ on 10th December while two juveniles were seen here on 18th June. Ten were at Allertorpe Water Park on 17th June while seven were at Moreby near Naburn on 8th May with four there on 18th June, and 15 at CSL on 12th September. Seven were counted around the Knavesmire and Dringhouses area of York in a three-hour visit on 13th November with 11 at Acaster Selby on 20th November.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor

Present throughout the year in the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area and at Rawcliffe Lake though there were no notable flocks this year. Often seen during the year at CSL with up to 30 recorded together. Seen regularly around Huby throughout the year while up to four birds were regular visitors to a garden feeder in Strensall at the end of the year. A fairly common resident at New Earswick seen at garden feeders in the winter and moving out to the fields and hedgerows in summer. Numbers showed the first increase for some time and this delightful little bird could

be seen and heard throughout the patch, even finding its way into a mist net for only the second time ever.

Seven were seen at the YWT reserve at Strensall Common on 5th May with two near Welburn on 14th May while young were noted at Fulford on 31st May. Five were at Moreby near Naburn on 9th May with six on 19th June. Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of c.35 on 29th August while the first fledged juvenile was noted on 28th May. There were c.50 in alders near Sutton Wood, Sutton upon Derwent on 27th January, ten at Allerthorpe Water Park on 17th June, three at Moreby near Naburn on 18th June, 18 at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on 12th August with six counted at Cornborough Farm near Sheriff Hutton and six seen at Lower Lilling Farm. West Lilling also on 12th August, a flock of 30 in fields near Towthorpe on 3rd September and a flock of 200+ feeding on fat hen seeds next to Hassacarr NR on 1st October.

Ten were at the Tillmire, York on 4th October, 40+ in riverside alders at Newton upon Derwent on 16th October, 60+ near Wilberfoss on 31st October, 20 at Wheldrake Ings on 31st October and four around a Strensall garden from early November to the end of the year. Ten were counted around the Knavesmire and Dringhouses area of York in a three-hour visit on 13th November with six at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 10th December.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Resident breeder in small numbers, passage and winter visitor

There were occasional records at CSL with 15 flying over on 22nd February and 17 near the pond on 17th November. No records were made at New Earswick in the first winter period but 18 arrived in the JRTNR on 19th October and by the month's end at least 25 were present. In December a flock in excess of 30 commuted between the two nature reserves. At least ten birds were at Yearsley Moor on 27th February while two juveniles with rather short tails, seen at Strensall Common on 7th August, may have indicated local breeding!

Later in the year six birds were seen in riverside alders near the old Terry's chocolate factory, York on 1st October with about five remaining till the year's end. Two were at the Tillmire, York on 4th October, two in Heslington in early October, 40 at Askham Bog on 22nd October, a flock of 16 by Cornfield NR at Rawcliffe on 23rd October, one at Kirkham Abbey the same day, 40+ in riverside alders at Sutton upon Derwent on 11th November, eight at Welburn Sewage Farm on 12th November and at least three at Askham Bog on 17th November. In December

500+ were seen in alders by the Pocklington Canal, Melbourne the 3rd and 60+ in alders at Seavy Carr, Thornton on the same date. A small flock of c.20 birds was feeding on alder seeds at Hassacarr NR on 8th December. On 27th December 15 were counted feeding in alder trees at the old filter beds beside the River Foss at Strensall and a single bird was seen at a niger feeder in a garden in Strensall. A couple were at Rawcliffe Lake in mid-December with four there on 30th December.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor

Present throughout the year in the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area with good numbers wintering at Cornfield NR peaking at 200+ during November. Often seen during the year at CSL with up to 40 recorded together. At Dunnington Common 220 were counted on 3rd January with 50 at East Moor, Sutton-on-the-Forest on 19th January.

During a BBS count in Riccall 'plenty' were noted on 17th April while a pair was at Sutton-on-the-Forest cemetery on 2nd May. One was singing in St Nicholas Fields, York on 6th May with two at Moreby near Naburn on 8th May, three on 9th May, four there on 18th June and five on 19th June. During the MOD bird survey of Strensall Common on 18th May ten territories were recorded while two territories were recorded on a farm near Bossall during an RSPB farm survey. Ten were near Towthorpe on 10th May with ten near Welburn on 14th May. Up to 20 were at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits from April to June while five were at Allerthorpe Water Park on 18th June. Up to ten birds were seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year with a single bird seen feeding in a garden at Strensall on 25th June.

Four were at Pond Head Farm, Oulston on 3rd July with three in Pottery Lane, Strensall on 7th August, 15 at East Moor, Sutton-on-the-Forest on 12th August and 70 at North Ings Farm, Terrington on 18th August. Between South and North Duffield c.120 were along the roadside on 30th September with 18 at Acaster Selby on 20th November.

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis cabaret*

Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor

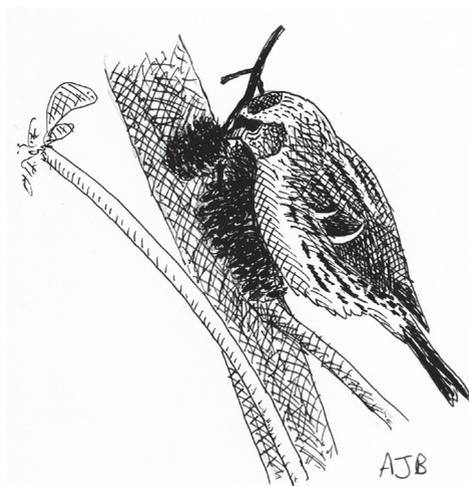
The year started with three at New Earswick JRTNR on 1st January followed by one at Castle Howard on 17th January. About 20 birds frequented alders around the York University campus during the early part of the year while two were seen at Yearsley Moor on 27th February.

In the second winter period there were seven at Bank Island on 18th September and five plus at Wheldrake Ings on 20th September. Seen

at Castle Howard on 2nd October with 15 at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd October and 30 there on 16th October. Around 250 were at the Tillmire, York on 4th October with one at Kirkham Abbey on the 23rd and two at Allertorpe Gravel Pits on the 29th. Seven were at Dunnington on 9th November with three or more at Askham Bog on 17th November and 60+ at Wheldrake Ings on 20th November. Two birds were also seen along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on 7th December, with c.50 counted in the Lower Derwent Valley on the 11th. There was only one record this year at CSL, a single flying over on 1st December. Other late autumn counts included 13 in Warren Wood, Dunnington on 8th December, c.30 by the River Derwent at Bank Island on 11th December, ten in the Rawcliffe Bar Country Park on 21st December and two seen at the old filter beds beside the River Foss at Strensall on 27th December. Finally there were two at Rawcliffe Lake on 30th December.

Mealy Redpoll *Carduelis flammaea*
Scarce winter visitor

One was with Lesser Redpolls *Carduelis cabaret* at Wheldrake Ings from 18th to 30th November (RS).



Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*
Casual breeder and passage migrant

A male was at Yearsley Moor on 29th May while another flew northeast over York Minster on 3rd August. A flock of 30+ was near the main entrance to Yearsley Moor, and other smaller parties were seen and/or

heard on 4th August. Three were at Wheldrake Woods on 6th August while two flew west over North Duffield CARRS on 11th October and one flew over Wheldrake Ings on 16th October. Seven birds flew out of a conifer plantation at Clock Farm, Dunnington on 13th December.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor

Present throughout the year in the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area and often seen during the year at CSL with up to eight recorded together. Regularly seen in a garden at Osbaldwick with over a dozen pairs present at New Earswick. One male and two females were along a footpath behind the golf course at Strensall Common on 1st January while at least three were in Bank Island car park on the 3rd. One was at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on 16th February while five males and three females were seen near Pretty Wood, Castle Howard on 2nd March.

One was at the Pocklington Canal on 19th March while the rarely heard song of the male was just about audible at Fulford Ings on 16th April. A single male was at Yearsley Moor on 3rd May while a female was by the pond at Rawcliffe Meadows on 23rd May and a male was at Allerthorpe Water Park on 17th June. Up to ten birds were regularly seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year with the first fledged juveniles noted on 28th June. One was at Clifton Park on 9th August with another at Coulton on 4th July, one at Skipwith Common on 20th August and one at Yearsley Moor on 28th August. Singles were seen in the Castle Howard, Ellerton, Melbourne and Thornton areas in the summer months with others at Storwood throughout the year including three there on 20th November.

A female was seen in Breck's Lane, Strensall on 31st October with eight at Hassacarr NR on 12th November. Four were counted around the Acaster Selby area in a three-hour visit on 20th November while six were noted at Wheldrake Ings on 4th December. One male and one female were in a Strensall garden on 17th December with three males and two females beside the River Foss, Strensall on 23rd December. Two males were beside the footpath between Skates Lane and Gracious Street, Huby on 26th December with a single at Rawcliffe Lake on 30th December.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Rare winter visitor

One at Crook Moor (northeast of Skipwith) on 18th November (per EN) was followed by another near Acomb Moor on 14th December (PW). One was also at Escrick Park on 18th December (RS).

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Resident breeder, passage and winter visitor

Good numbers wintered at Cornfield NR towards the end of the year peaking at 60+. At New Earswick, birds were seen regularly around Triangle Meadow and the JRTNR while up to two were seen during the year at CSL and the species probably bred there. Seen regularly around Huby throughout the year with flocks of up to 30 birds common in the winter months along Robin Lane, Gracious Street and between Skates Lane and Sutton-on-the-Forest cemetery. Early in the year there were 200+ in a stubble field (along with large numbers of Sky Lark *Alauda arvensis* and Corn Bunting *Miliaria calandra*) beside the footpath between Stillington Road, Huby and Sutton-on-the-Forest cemetery on 18th January while 40 were at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on 15th February. Regularly seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with the aftermath of a hemp crop attracting a maximum count of c.100 birds to Naburn Sewage Works on 19th February. Between Bowthorpe Hall and North Duffield seven separate males were seen in about three miles of hedgerows on 27th February. Six were counted at Lilling Green Farm, West Lilling on 12th March and five were counted on power lines near Great Wood, Strensall Common on 21st March.

On a BBS survey 'plenty' were seen in Riccall on 17th April. Four males were singing on Middlethorpe Ings on 1st May with 13 at Moreby near Naburn on 8th May, 20 on 9th May and 16 there on 19th June. Three were near Welburn on 14th May while four territories were recorded on a farm near Bossall during an RSPB farm survey and four territories were also recorded during the MOD bird survey of Strensall Common on 18th May. Seen at Fulford Ings on 28th June while two were seen at South Duffield on 8th July. On 31st July 'plenty' were in fields near Hovingham while two pairs were in a set-aside field near Wilks Plantation, Strensall Common on 16th August. A pair was also seen at Lilling Green Farm, West Lilling on 4th December.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Resident breeder and passage visitor

Present throughout the year in the Clifton/Rawcliffe Ings area with 50+ observed going to roost throughout January and February at a small pond in Clifton Park that had become choked by reedmace. Several dozen were feeding in Cornfield NR towards the end of the year and good numbers bred there again this year. Only singles were seen at CSL but the species almost certainly bred though there was no winter flock this year. At New Earswick this species has benefited from the feeding

programme, birds now being regularly seen in and around the JRTNR particularly using the open-fronted feeding boxes; in addition sightings on Bootham Stray have increased. Resident on Strensall Common and seen on most visits during the year.

Two were along Hagg Lane, Dunnington on 14th January while 20+ were in a stubble field (along with large numbers of Sky Lark *Alauda calandra*, Corn Bunting *Miliaria calandra* and Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*) beside the footpath between Stillington Road, Huby and Sutton-on-the-Forest cemetery on 18th January. A pair was seen at Skipwith Common on 22nd January and a single bird was in a Strensall garden on the 30th.

Seven were on farmland along Hagg Lane, Dunnington on 1st February with 40 roosting at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 6th, one singing at Bank Island on the 12th, two at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on the 16th and 12 at Strensall on the 20th while two males were seen on Strensall Common on 27th February. Thirty were roosting at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 6th March while four were counted in bushes beside Castle Howard Lake on 13th March.

A singing male was at Thornton on 29th April while one territory was recorded on a farm near Bossall during an RSPB farm survey. Regularly seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of six singing males on 10th May. Fourteen males were singing during the MOD bird survey of Strensall Common on 18th May while six birds were at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 29th. Two were at Strensall Common on 25th June with a single at Fulford Ings on the 28th and at the Pocklington Canal on 2nd August while ten were at Skipwith Common on 20th August.

Twenty-seven were at Hagg Lane, Dunnington on 8th December with 20 noted roosting at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 10th and 35 seen at Clock Farm, Dunnington on the 13th. A pair seen at Strensall Common on 17th December was the last record for the year.

Corn Bunting *Miliaria calandra*
Resident breeder

Over 100 were in a stubble field (along with large numbers of Sky Lark *Alauda calandra* and Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*) beside the footpath between Stillington Road, Huby and Sutton-on-the-Forest cemetery on 18th January. Another 70 were at East Moor, Sutton-on-the-Forest on the 19th with one seen in the YWT reserve at Strensall Common on the 30th. Fifty-one came in to roost in trees bordering Rawcliffe Meadows on 1st March with 30 there on the 7th and 8th but just six on 1st May. A flock of 25 was noted at Lilling Green Farm, West Lilling on 12th March.

Three birds were seen on farmland down Moor Lane, Bishopthorpe on 19th March and on the same date one was singing at Bielby. Two singing males were at Sutton upon Derwent on 2nd April with two at Thorganby on the 26th. A pair and two single birds were seen at different locations along the Huby-Stillington Road on 2nd May. Around 100 were recorded at Dunnington Common on 18th May while nine singing birds were recorded at Clock Farm, Dunnington on 15th June. Up to two singing males were present in fields south of the cycleway at Bishopthorpe from 10th May until 18th June with two at Moreby near Naburn on 19th June. One was singing near Towthorpe on 10th May with another singing at Ellerton on 7th June and three heard at Riccall on a BBS survey on 11th June.

Seen in their breeding areas at Lilling Bottom with single males singing at Cape Farm, Sheriff Hutton on 14th June and at Allerthorpe Water Park in July. Three separate individuals were seen at South Duffield, including one carrying food, on 8th July while a juvenile was in a field beside Carr Lane (back road from Sutton-on-the-Forest to Strensall) on 2nd August. Fifteen were at East Moor, Sutton-on-the-Forest on 12th August and on the same date six were counted at Cornborough Farm, Sheriff Hutton with one at CSL on 7th September.

Two flocks of 20+ were recorded near the Stillington road to the east of Huby on 26th September with two birds in the same area on 4th October. One was between North and South Duffield on 17th November with seven counted at Lilling Green Farm, West Lilling on 4th December and 21 counted at the MOD sewage works, Towthorpe Moor Lane on 17th December. Two birds were at Cornfield NR on 15th November with numbers increasing to 74 on 26th December.

INTRODUCTIONS/ESCAPES

Black Swan *Cygnus atratus*

One was at North Duffield Carrs on 24th March.

Yellow-crowned Amazon *Amazona ochrocephala*

One was present at Haxby in early October.

African Grey Parrot *Psittacus erithacus*

One was at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd October.

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with apologies for any accidental omissions

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Brian Pepper	Sand Hutton CSL Bird Report (SHBR)
Paul Reed (PaR)	YOC website reports

Earliest and latest dates for summer visitors/passage migrants

Species	Arrival date/ first reported	Last Reported
Garganey	11th April	8th September
Quail	3rd May	1st August
Corncrake	Not recorded in 2005	
Marsh Harrier	8th February	14th October
Hobby	21st May	29th September
Oystercatcher	20th January	26th December
Little Ringed Plover	10th April	7th August
Whimbrel	16th April	23rd August
Wood Sandpiper	11th May	17th May
Common Sandpiper	3rd March	11th September
Common Tern	17th April	30th August
Turtle Dove	25th April	6th September
Cuckoo	13th April	25th June
Nightjar	8th June	1st July
Swift	26th April	3rd September
Sand Martin	29th March	2nd September
Swallow	4th April	10th October
House Martin	21st March	10th October
Tree Pipit	18th March	21st June
Yellow Wagtail	12th April	20th September
Redstart	10th April	2nd July
Whinchat	29th April	9th September
Wheatear	8th April	2nd October
Grasshopper Warbler	24th April	
Sedge Warbler	23rd April	20th August
Reed Warbler	23rd April	18th September
Lesser Whitethroat	23rd April	23rd August
Whitethroat	22nd April	20th September
Garden Warbler	29th April	3rd September
Blackcap *	29th March	12th September
Chiffchaff	17th March	27th October
Willow Warbler	29th March	24th September
Spotted Flycatcher	29th April	12th September

* Overwintering birds seen on 3rd January, 17th & 21st November and 5th December.

Earliest and latest dates for winter visitors/passage migrants

Species	Last reported in Spring	First reported in Autumn
Whooper Swan	30th April	1st October
Pink-footed Goose	5th May	16th September
Goldeneye	31st March	23rd October
Goosander	24th March	28th October *
Golden Plover	23rd April	28th August
Jack Snipe		30th September
Green Sandpiper	25th March	14th July
Fieldfare	23rd April	17th October
Redwing	11th April	24th September
Brambling	13th April	28th October

* Peak count so probably present earlier than this.

Pilot BTO Atlas Survey in SE54

Part 1: 2005

By Rob Chapman
BTO Regional Representative for the York region

Introduction

As it is about a decade and a half since the last national breeding atlas and it is even longer since the winter atlas at the end of the 1970s, the BTO and other bodies have planned a new atlas to cover both breeding and winter periods. Distribution and abundance will be measured by fieldwork commencing in late 2007 and running through to 2011.

The breeding season work will generally follow the methods used in the last atlas except that birds will be counted as well as listed during timed visits. Since it is so long since the winter atlas, the use of similar methods for the winter survey needed to be validated. For instance, the survey designers needed to understand whether effort would be better spent visiting many tetrads or intensively searching fewer tetrads.

To test proposed methods for the winter component, the BTO ran a Pilot Atlas Survey over the winter of 2005–06 in a number of the BTO regions. In the York Region, the 10km square SE54 was chosen as it contains a number of different habitat types and is easily accessible from York.

SE54 is area southwest of York, east of Tadcaster, north of the River Wharfe and roughly west of the River Ouse. It includes Bishopthorpe, Copmanthorpe, and some of the southern suburbs of York but the remainder is primarily rural.

This article presents a summary table of results from Timed Visits during the first part of the winter, that is in 2005. Second visits to tetrads were made in 2006 and the results of these will be written up for the 2006 report.

Methods

The Timed Visits method is designed to provide data that can be analysed to give information on abundance, that is, where a species is commoner and where it is scarcer.

Volunteer surveyors made two visits to tetrads in the 10km square; one in November or December 2005 and one in January or February 2006. A tetrad is a square 2km by 2km, that is four of the smaller squares on an Ordnance Survey Landranger or Explorer map.

Table 1: Species recorded in SE54, November/December 2005

Species	Total	Average count per tetrad	Rank abundance	Maximum count	Number of tetrads	Rank distribution
Little Grebe LG	5	0.24	56	4	2	52
Great Crested Grebe GG	1	0.05	61	1	1	59
Grey Heron H.	1	0.05	61	1	1	59
Greylag Goose GJ	23	1.1	41	17	2	52
Canada Goose CG	7	0.33	52	4	2	52
Mallard MA	334	15.9	11	64	14	22
Pochard PO	1	0.05	61	1	1	59
Tufted Duck TU	41	1.95	37	21	4	43
Sparrowhawk SH	22	1.05	42	4	15	19
Buzzard BZ	2	0.1	59	1	2	52
Kestrel K.	15	0.71	47	2	12	27
Red-legged Partridge RL	69	3.29	29	22	9	34
Grey Partridge P.	54	2.57	33	20	7	39
Pheasant PH	81	3.86	25	20	13	24
Water Rail WA	1	0.05	61	1	1	59
Moorhen MH	71	3.38	28	33	13	24
Coot CO	10	0.48	50	6	3	45
Oystercatcher OC	2	0.1	59	2	1	59
Golden Plover GP	430	20.48	7	270	3	45
Lapwing L.	32	1.52	38	22	3	45
Black-headed Gull BH	306	14.57	14	116	16	17
Common Gull CM	81	3.86	26	39	5	40

Species	Total	Average count per tetrad	Rank abundance	Maximum count	Number of tetrads	Rank distribution
Stock Dove SD	26	1.24	40	14	3	45
Woodpigeon WP	1686	80.29	1	265	20	5
Collared Dove CD	180	8.57	15	49	15	19
Little Owl LO	4	0.19	58	3	2	52
Green Woodpecker G.	1	0.05	61	1	1	59
Great Spotted Woodpecker GS	19	0.9	43	3	10	32
Skylark S.	63	3	31	33	9	34
Meadow Pipit MP	11	0.52	48	5	3	45
Grey Wagtail GL	7	0.33	52	5	3	45
Pied Wagtail PW	100	4.76	23	56	17	12
Wren WR	95	4.52	24	14	19	9
Duncock D.	110	5.24	19	16	19	9
Robin R.	125	5.95	18	13	21	1
Blackbird B.	597	28.43	4	73	21	1
Fieldfare FF	882	42	2	186	14	22
Song Thrush ST	19	0.9	43	4	11	29
Redwing RE	101	4.81	21	31	11	29
Mistle Thrush M.	52	2.48	35	9	16	17
Goldcrest GC	54	2.57	33	19	12	27
Long-tailed Tit LT	101	4.81	22	20	11	29
Marsh Tit MT	1	0.05	61	1	1	59
Coal Tit CT	19	0.9	43	5	8	37
Blue Tit BT	307	14.62	13	36	21	1
Great Tit GT	156	7.43	16	19	17	12

Species	Total	Average count per tetrad	Rank abundance	Maximum count	Number of tetrads	Rank distribution
Nuthatch NH	1	0.05	61	1	1	59
Treecreeper TC	5	0.24	56	1	5	40
Jay J.	11	0.52	48	4	5	40
Magpie MG	104	4.95	20	22	20	5
Jackdaw JD	310	14.76	12	68	15	19
Rook RO	770	36.67	3	151	17	12
Carion Crow C.	413	19.67	8	87	20	5
Starling SG	536	25.52	5	88	20	5
House Sparrow HS	378	18	9	71	17	12
Tree Sparrow TS	68	3.24	30	45	8	37
Chaffinch CH	355	16.9	10	55	21	1
Greenfinch GR	438	20.86	6	220	18	11
Goldfinch GO	126	6	17	21	17	12
Siskin SK	19	0.9	43	14	2	52
Linnet LI	79	3.76	27	30	9	34
Lesser Redpoll LR	10	0.48	50	5	2	52
Bullfinch BF	28	1.33	39	7	10	32
Hawfinch HF	1	0.05	61	1	1	59
Yellowhammer Y.	58	2.76	32	12	13	24
Reed Bunting RB	7	0.33	52	3	3	45

All birds seen or heard were counted during a 3 hour visit to each tetrad. Each visit was divided into 20-minute periods and a separate list was made for each period. Observers could cut short the visit if after covering four 20-minute periods no new species were added in the subsequent period; however, this did not occur very often. Birds flying over were not counted and it was permissible to stop the clock to count large flocks.

The method as tested here is much more intensive than it will be in the Atlas itself. The visit length then will be shorter and listing will be done by hourly rather than by 20 minute periods.

The Roving Recorders method was also trialled but data from this method was not collated by year. These will be presented in part 2 in the 2006 report. This method was used to list bird species seen or heard in order to build as complete a list as possible. There were no time limits.

Results

Results are presented from 21 tetrad visits (out of the 25 tetrads in the 10km square) from the first half of the winter (i.e. in 2005). Three tetrads were not covered and results from a fourth were sent direct to the BTO and were not available for analysis.

A total of 70 species was recorded and 10,075 individual birds were counted.

Table 1 shows data for all species recorded arranged in the order, with names and codes, as used by the BTO on the survey sheets:

- Total individuals counted;
- Average count per tetrad;
- A rank of abundance, with 1 being the most common;
- Maximum count in any one tetrad;
- Number of tetrads in which the species was recorded (e.g. Blue Tit in 21 tetrads); and
- Rank of distribution (e.g. Blue Tit ranks 1, the most widely distributed).

Table 2 shows data for the tetrads in SE54.

- Total individual birds counted and the rank when ordered.
- Number of species (diversity) per tetrad and the rank when ordered.

Table 2: Tetrads recorded in SE54, November/December 2005

Tetrad	Location	Total birds per tetrad	Rank birds per tetrad	Species per tetrad	Rank species per tetrad
A	Kirkby Wharfe	654	6	33	7
B	Oxton	No data		No data	
C	Catterton	No data		No data	
D	Healaugh	343	15	33	7
E	Angram	450	13	29	14
F	Bolton Percy	No data		No data	
G	Brumber Hill	274	17	28	16
H	Street Houses	108	21	24	20
I	Bilbrough	505	11	29	14
J	Askham Richard	429	14	34	5
K	Holme Green	No data		No data	
L	Appleton Roebuck	570	8	27	18
M	Colton	222	19	30	12
N	Askham Bryan College	605	7	28	16
P	Askham Bryan	817	1	40	2
Q	Acaster Selby	786	2	39	3
R	Acaster Airfield	536	10	30	12
S	Copmanthorpe Wood	709	3	34	5
T	Copmanthorpe	453	12	33	7
U	Woodthorpe	687	4	47	1
V	Stillingfleet	335	16	39	3
W	Stub Wood	120	20	17	21
X	Acaster Malbis	242	18	27	18
Y	Bishopthorpe	681	5	31	11
Z	Knavesmire	549	9	33	7

Discussion

The results are presented here for the record and caution should be exercised if trying to read anything significant into these in isolation. They should be viewed as a snapshot from one winter with a small sample size but could be put together with other information to form part of a bigger picture.

Woodpigeon was the most abundant species with a density of almost twice that of Fieldfare, which was ranked second. Rook, Blackbird and Starling completed the top five. Greenfinch, Golden Plover, Carrion Crow, House Sparrow and Chaffinch were the next five ranked species. Interestingly more than half of the Greenfinches counted were from a single tetrad where there was a field margin sown with winter feed for birds. The same was true for Golden Plover indicating an uneven distribution pattern, probably resulting from flocking behaviour.

Blackbird, Chaffinch, Blue Tit and Robin were noted in all tetrads. Woodpigeon, Starling, Carrion Crow and Magpie were recorded in 20 of the 21 tetrads with Dunnock and Wren in 19.

Unusual species recorded included Water Rail, Woodcock, Marsh Tit, Nuthatch and, notably, Hawfinch. Two Buzzards were recorded, four Little Owls, 15 Kestrels and 22 Sparrowhawks.

The tetrads with the most individual birds were P (Askham Bryan), Q (Acaster Selby), S (Copmanthorpe Wood) and U (Woodthorpe). Their rank owed much to large numbers of Woodpigeon, Fieldfares or Golden Plover. These four tetrads were also in the top 5 with the largest number of species. Tetrad V (Stillingfleet) had as many species as Q, yet only 40% of the number of individual birds, owing to the smaller numbers of these three species. Tetrad U includes much of Askham Bog, which is well known to local birders, but the data from this survey, albeit limited in scope, have highlighted other areas with potential for finding birds in winter.

Results from the second half of the pilot survey will be written up in the 2006 report.

Rob Chapman

[At the date of publication of this YOC Report work on the new Bird Atlas 2007–11 is well underway. The methodology for Timed Tetrad Surveys is much simpler than that undertaken in the pilot surveys described, and individual records can also be submitted as Roving Records. For further information on the Bird Atlas in the York region email Rob Chapman at robert.chapman@tinyworld.co.uk – Ed]

Species in York recording area since 1966

This is a list of species recorded in the YOC area since 1966. Uncommon birds are marked in **bold**. Species included in the YNU Rare and Scarce Birds Report are marked * with those requiring descriptions underlined. Species considered by BBRC are marked R and all require descriptions. Regular breeding birds are marked **B** and occasional breeders (**B**). Regular winter visitors are marked **W** and regular passage migrants **P** while regular non-breeding summer visitors are marked **S**. Brackets indicate species of dubious origin or subspecies.

In recent years the British List has been revised and updated as a result of taxonomic changes, and new species have been added to the official British List. All of these changes (up to the end of 2007) will be adopted for future YOC Bird Reports. These changes include revisions to the order of species, changes to the names (English and scientific) of species and will reflect the most recent splits (of races into full species). The list below reflects the revised order of species.

Recent taxonomic changes mean that Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* is now treated as three separate species, Caspian Gull *Larus cachinnans*, American Herring Gull *Larus smithsonianus* and Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* which includes the Scandinavian *argentatus* and British *argenteus* sub-species.

If anyone can think of any species which should have been included in this list then please contact the YOC Recorder.

Mute Swan B	(Wood Duck)
Bewick's Swan W	Eurasian Wigeon (B)?
Whooper Swan W	American Wigeon <u>R</u>
Bean Goose *	Gadwall B
Pink-footed Goose P	Common Teal B
White-fronted Goose	Green-winged Teal *
(Lesser White-fronted Goose) <u>R</u>	Mallard B
Greylag Goose B	Pintail (B)?
(Snow Goose)	Garganey B
Brent Goose	Blue-winged Teal <u>R</u>
Barnacle Goose	Shoveler B
Canada Goose B	Red-crested Pochard *
(Egyptian Goose) *	Pochard (B)
(Ruddy Shelduck) *	Ring-necked Duck *
Shelduck B	Ferruginous Duck <u>R</u>
(Mandarin Duck) *	Tufted Duck B

Scaup
Common Eider
Long-tailed Duck *
Common Scoter
Velvet Scoter *
(Barrow's Goldeneye) R
Goldeneye W
Smew
Red-breasted Merganser
Goosander (B)?
Ruddy Duck B
Red-legged Partridge B
Grey Partridge B
Quail (B)
Pheasant B
(Golden Pheasant) *
Red-throated Diver *
Black-throated Diver *
Great Northern Diver *
Little Grebe B
Great Crested Grebe B
Red-necked Grebe *
Slavonian Grebe *
Black-necked Grebe (B)
Fulmar
Manx Shearwater
European Storm-petrel *
Leach's Storm-petrel *
Gannet
Cormorant B
Shag
Bittern (B)? *
Night Heron R
Cattle Egret R
Little Egret *
Great White Egret R
Grey Heron B
Purple Heron *
White Stork *
Spoonbill *
Honey Buzzard *
_

Black Kite R
Red Kite
Marsh Harrier
Hen Harrier
Montagu's Harrier *
Goshawk B
Sparrowhawk B
Common Buzzard B
Rough-legged Buzzard *
Osprey *
Kestrel B
Red-footed Falcon R
Merlin
Hobby (B)?
Peregrine
Water Rail B
Spotted Crake (B) *
Corncrake (B) *
Moorhen B
Coot B
Common Crane *
Oystercatcher B
Black-winged Stilt R
Avocet
Stone Curlew *
Little Ringed Plover B
Ringed Plover
Kentish Plover *
Dotterel *
American Golden Plover R
Golden Plover W
Grey Plover
Lapwing B
Knot
Sanderling
Little Stint P
Temminck's Stint *
White-rumped Sandpiper R
Baird's Sandpiper? R
Pectoral Sandpiper *
Curlew Sandpiper

Dunlin W & P
Buff-breasted Sandpiper *
Ruff (B)
Woodcock B
Jack Snipe W
Common Snipe B
Black-tailed Godwit (B)
Bar-tailed Godwit
Whimbrel P
Curlew B
Common Sandpiper B?
Green Sandpiper P & W
Spotted Redshank P
Greenshank P
Wood Sandpiper P
Redshank B
Turnstone
Red-necked Phalarope *
Grey Phalarope *
Great Skua
Pomarine Skua *
Arctic Skua
Sabine's Gull *
Kittiwake
Black-headed Gull B
Little Gull
Mediterranean Gull
Common Gull W & P
Ring-billed Gull? *
Lesser Black-backed Gull S & P
Herring Gull W & P
Yellow-legged Gull *
Iceland Gull *
(Kumlien's Gull)? R
Glaucous Gull *
Great Black-backed Gull W
Little Tern
Caspian Tern R
Whiskered Tern R
Black Tern
Sandwich Tern

Roseate Tern *
Common Tern (B)?
Arctic Tern
Guillemot
Little Auk *
Puffin
'Feral Pigeon' B
Stock Dove B
Woodpigeon B
Collared Dove B
Turtle Dove B
(Ring-necked Parakeet) *
Cuckoo B
Barn Owl B
Little Owl B
Tawny Owl B
Long-eared Owl B
Short-eared Owl
Nightjar B
Common Swift B
Alpine Swift R
Kingfisher B
Bee-eater *
Hoopoe *
Wryneck *
Green Woodpecker B
Great Spotted Woodpecker B
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker B
Wood Lark B?
Sky Lark B
Sand Martin B
Swallow B
House Martin B
Red-rumped Swallow R
Richard's Pipit *
Tree Pipit B
Meadow Pipit B
Rock Pipit
Water Pipit
Yellow Wagtail B
(Blue-headed Wagtail)

Grey Wagtail B
Pied Wagtail B
(White Wagtail)
Waxwing
Dipper B?
Wren B
Dunnock B
Robin B
Nightingale *
Black Redstart (B)?
Redstart (B)?
Whinchat (B)?
Stonechat
Northern Wheatear
Ring Ouzel
Blackbird B
Fieldfare W
Song Thrush B
Redwing W
Mistle Thrush B
Cetti's Warbler _
Grasshopper Warbler B?
Sedge Warbler B
Reed Warbler B
Marsh Warbler _
Blackcap B
Garden Warbler B
Barred Warbler _
Lesser Whitethroat B
Common Whitethroat B
Wood Warbler (B)?
Chiffchaff B
(Siberian Chiffchaff)
Willow Warbler B
Goldcrest B
Firecrest *
Spotted Flycatcher B
Red-breasted Flycatcher _
Pied Flycatcher (B)?
Bearded Tit
Long-tailed Tit B

Blue Tit B
Great Tit B
Coal Tit B
Willow Tit B
Marsh Tit B
Nuthatch B
Treecreeper B
Golden Oriole _
Red-backed Shrike *
Great Grey Shrike *
Jay B
Magpie B
Jackdaw B
Rook B
Carrion Crow B
Hooded Crow *?
Raven
Starling B
Rose-coloured Starling _
House Sparrow B
Tree Sparrow B
Chaffinch B
Brambling W
Greenfinch B
Goldfinch B
Siskin B?
Linnet B
Twite
Lesser Redpoll B
Mealy Redpoll
Common Crossbill B?
Bullfinch B
Hawfinch (B)?
Lapland Bunting
Snow Bunting
Yellowhammer B
Cirl Bunting _
Reed Bunting B
Corn Bunting B

Guidelines for the submission of records

One of the most important functions of the York Ornithological Club is the publication of the Annual Report. The value of this publication depends on members submitting records of their sightings within the Club recording area. All members are encouraged to submit records, whatever their ability.

Records received by the Recorder are split into sections which are distributed to the Assistant Recorders who compile reports for their particular section which are then returned to the Recorder for editing before a draft of the Annual Report is produced. In order to ease their task and speed up the production of the Report please follow the guidelines given below.

1. Records should be submitted at the end of the year and certainly by the end of March to guarantee appearance in the Annual Report. The records must be in the **new taxonomic order** issued by the British Ornithologists' Union – a revised list of species recorded in the YOC area since the Club's inception in 1966 can be found elsewhere in this Report (or contact the Recorder who can also supply of full list of British birds in the new order). Records should also be split into the following sections to facilitate distribution to the YOC Assistant Recorders:
 - Mute Swan to Pheasant
 - Red-throated Diver to Common Crane
 - Oystercatcher to Puffin
 - Feral Pigeon to Dunnock
 - Robin to Pied Flycatcher
 - Bearded Tit to Corn Bunting
 - Introductions/Escapes
2. For each species, records should give the site and date with numbers of birds provided where possible. Counts are preferable to terms such as 'few', 'several' or 'many' as these terms are very subjective and actual numbers enables the comparison of populations between years. The counts do not have to be too accurate – approximate numbers will do. This particularly applies to flocks of birds such as wildfowl and waders.
3. Records of scarce or rare birds will need a description for consideration by the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union Reports Committee and, if necessary, the British Birds Rarities Committee. Descriptions

should be submitted to the Recorder as soon as possible after the sighting. A list of species and subspecies needing written supporting evidence can be found elsewhere in this Report or contact the Recorder for guidelines or rarity forms. The importance of such descriptions for the validation of rare records cannot be overemphasized.

4. Please do not forget to include your name, address and telephone number – if you have one – with you records.
5. If you wish, you can submit your records in electronic format as attachments to email. MS Word or Excel is preferred, but we may also be able to handle other formats. Submit electronically to recorder@yorkbirding.org.uk

An example is given below of the best way to submit records.

BIRD RECORDS FOR 2005 – Andy Booth

Greylag Goose

47 at Rowntree Park, York on 8th November.
*c.*70 on River Ouse by Skeldergate Bridge, York on 25th November.
48 at Rowntree Park, York on 13th December.

Canada Goose

54 at Rowntree Park, York on 14th August.
43 at Rowntree Park, York on 29th November.
22 at Rowntree Park, York on 13th December.

Barnacle Goose

One with Canada Geese at Rowntree Park, York on 29th November.
One with Canada Geese at Rowntree Park, York on 13th December.

Cormorant

One flew NE over Nunnery Lane, York on 19th April.

The need for field descriptions

To enable us to present our reports with complete accuracy, contributors are reminded that records of certain species must be supported by descriptions taken in the field or as soon as possible after the sighting – preferably before reference to textbooks. The updated list given below is of species for which the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union Reports Committee (YNU) require descriptions before acceptance for publication in their annual report. **It would help both the YOC Recorder and the YNU if descriptions were submitted as soon as possible after the sighting.** Forms for species considered by the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC) or the YNU can be obtained from the YOC Recorder or any YNU vice-county recorder.

In addition to species considered by the BBRC (which has now 'dropped' a number of more regular rarities from its remit), the following uncommon or difficult species/subspecies require descriptions for consideration by the YNU:

Bean Goose – both races
American Wigeon
Green-winged Teal
Ring-necked Duck
Ferruginous Duck
Surf Scoter
Cory's Shearwater
Great Shearwater
Balearic Shearwater
Wilson's Storm-petrel
European Storm-petrel
Leach's Storm-petrel
Night Heron
Little Egret
Great White Egret
Purple Heron
Honey Buzzard
Black Kite
Montagu's Harrier
Rough-legged Buzzard
Golden Eagle
Red-footed Falcon

Spotted Crake
Corncrake
Common Crane
Kentish Plover
American Golden Plover
Temminck's Stint
White-rumped Sandpiper
Pectoral Sandpiper
Buff-breasted Sandpiper
Red-necked Phalarope
Grey Phalarope
Sabine's Gull
Ring-billed Gull
White-winged Black Tern
Roseate Tern
Black Guillemot
Alpine Swift
(European) Bee-eater
(Greater) Short-toed Lark
Red-rumped Swallow
Richard's Pipit
Tawny Pipit

Red-throated Pipit
Grey-headed Wagtail
Black-bellied Dipper
Cetti's Warbler
Aquatic Warbler
Marsh Warbler
Icterine Warbler
Melodious Warbler
Barred Warbler
Dartford Warbler
Subalpine Warbler
Greenish Warbler

Pallas's Warbler
Radde's Warbler
Dusky Warbler
Red-breasted Flycatcher
Woodchat Shrike
(European) Serin
Arctic Redpoll
Common Rosefinch
Cirl Bunting
Ortolan Bunting
Rustic Bunting
Little Bunting

In view of the increasing number of records of locally uncommon species being received and in the light of certain anomalies (e.g. regularly occurring birds such as Bean Goose and Spotted Crake require descriptions by the YNU whereas species not recorded in the YOC area like Sooty Shearwater and Razorbill do not), the recorders feel that some substantiation of records of some other species is needed.

Accordingly, contributors **MAY** be asked to provide details for the following species/subspecies (but observers should be expected to be asked to submit notes for the species given in **bold**):

White-fronted Goose
Snow Goose
Brent Goose – all races
Egyptian Goose
Ruddy Shelduck
Garganey
Red-crested Pochard
(Greater) Scaup
(Common) Eider
Long-tailed Duck
Common Scoter
Velvet Scoter
Red-breasted Merganser
Black Grouse
Quail
Golden Pheasant
Red-throated Diver
Black-throated Diver

Great Northern Diver
Red-necked Grebe
Slavonian Grebe
Black-necked Grebe
Fulmar
Sooty Shearwater
Manx Shearwater
Gannet
Shag
(Great) Bittern
White Stork
Spoonbill
Red Kite
Marsh Harrier
Hen Harrier
Goshawk
Osprey
Merlin

In addition, the Recorder may ask contributors to provide some supporting evidence for some species not listed here, taking into account such factors as observer experience, out-of-season occurrences and unusual or difficult plumages, etc. This will be at the Recorder's discretion and the list of species requiring descriptions is under constant review.

Hobby
Stone Curlew
 Little Ringed Plover
 Dotterel
 Knot
 Sanderling
 Little Stint
Pectoral Sandpiper
 Curlew Sandpiper
Purple Sandpiper
Buff-breasted Sandpiper
 Jack Snipe
 Black-tailed Godwit
 Bar-tailed Godwit
 Whimbrel
 Spotted Redshank
Great Skua
Pomarine Skua
Arctic Skua
Long-tailed Skua
Sabine's Gull
 Kittiwake
 Little Gull
 Mediterranean Gull
 Lesser Black-backed Gull
 (^ of Baltic race *fuscus*)
Yellow-legged Gull
 Iceland Gull
 (^ including Kumlien's Gull)
 Glaucous Gull
Little Tern
 Black Tern
 Sandwich Tern
 Arctic Tern

Guillemot
Razorbill
Little Auk
Puffin
 Ring-necked Parakeet
 Long-eared Owl
Hoopoe
Wryneck
 Wood Lark
Shore Lark
 Rock Pipit
 Water Pipit
 Yellow Wagtail (scarce races)
Bluethroat
 Nightingale
 Black Redstart
 Ring Ouzel
Yellow-browed Warbler
Firecrest
 Bearded Tit
Crested Tit
Golden Oriole
Red-backed Shrike
 Great Grey Shrike
Chough
Raven
Twite
Mealy (Common) Redpoll
 (Common) Crossbill
Scottish Crossbill
 Hawfinch
Snow Bunting
Lapland Bunting

YOC Website

The YOC maintains a website at www.yorkbirding.org.uk which contains details of all the club's activities and summaries of local sightings. Records of birds seen within the YOC area can also be submitted through the club's website.