

YOC REPORT 1984

GEOFF SMITH, 1936 — 1985

The sudden death of Geoff Smith at the age of 49 was a stunning blow to York Ornithological Club. He had just started his seventh term as Chairman and this was a measure of his popularity among members. Previously he had served as Secretary of the club.

Geoff carried out the duties of his office in a style that was entirely his own, based on personal qualities of warmth and friendliness, boundless good humour and tremendous enthusiasm. The success of the club owes much to him.

A few words from Geoff made the shyest newcomer feel at home and he was especially generous with the help and encouragement he gave in the field to birdwatchers who did not possess his skill in identification. He was an expert and particularly sharp-eyed observer who rarely missed anything.

His patch was the Lower Derwent Valley — he was there the morning before he died — which he knew intimately after countless hours of watching in all weathers. He took a leading part in the winter wildfowl counts which led to the designation of the area as an SSSI. He was also an active worker in the censusing of breeding birds. Because of Geoff's love of the Lower Derwent, and its great ornithological interest, the club has decided that the most appropriate memorial to him would be a public hide for local and visiting birdwatchers on one of its richest sites.

The club has launched a £ 1,000 appeal to build it and the hope is that the Geoff Smith Hide will be up and in use before the end of the winter of 1986–87.

So far about half of this target figure has been raised. Further fund-raising events are planned but more donations would be welcomed. They should be sent to Val Weston, Pleasant View, The Common, Dunnington, York.

YORK ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB

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

The Club has a membership of about 80 enthusiasts. It meets once a month in the Priory Street Sports And Community Centre,

usually on the first Tuesday of the month, for a full programme of talks and discussions and for the informal exchange of information which birdwatchers find invaluable.

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

EDITORIAL

Once again it is our pleasure to thank all the members and non-members who have submitted records both for the report and the atlas.

It was gratifying to learn during the year that the proposed pumped drainage scheme at North Duffield Carrs was refused M.A.F.F. grant aid by the Minister for Agriculture. The long term future of the Derwent Ings now seems assured. The York Ornithological Club has played no small part in the protracted battle to safeguard this extraordinarily rich site. However another major battle now looms on the horizon, this time to safeguard the River Derwent itself. Boating interests have initiated a High Court action against four landowners in order to prove a claimed right of unfettered navigation on the river above Sutton-upon-Derwent. The effects on the ecology of arguably Britain's most important river system could prove disastrous. A River Derwent Appeal has been launched to raise funds to fight the case. The list of organisation supporting the aims of the Appeal reads like a Who's Who of British wildlife conservation. However, High Court actions are incredibly expensive and much money needs to be raised. The York Ornithological Club will certainly play its part and hopefully in next year's editorial you will read of a successful outcome.

Finally, thanks are due to the artists whose work graces the following pages—Richard Gregory, Mike Leakey and Simon Rickell, and also to Muriel Pirozek and Alan Potter for much needed assistance in producing this report.

ORNITHOLOGICAL HIGHLIGHTS

During 1985 a total of 184 species and 12 further distinct sub species were seen in the club recording area. Only one new species was seen, a Red-necked Phalarope at Wheldrake Ings on 8th August. However no fewer than five new sub-species were noted. These were, an Eastern race Snow Goose, A.c. atlanticus, from September to the year end; "Yellow legged" Herring Gulls of the southern sub-species L.a. nichahellis/cachinnans on 24th February and of the northern sub-species L.a. argentatus on 14th August; a Scandinavian Rock Pipit, A.s. littoralis from 1st to 4th April. All the foregoing were in the Lower Derwent. Finally a Chiffchaff of the Siberian subspecies P.c. tristis was caught and ringed at Anchor Plain on 16th December and remained until 27th. The year opened with a Merlin in the Lower Derwent on 1st January where up to 112 Bewick's Swans, 4267 Wigeon, 2278 Teal, Scaup, Mediterranean and Glaucous Gulls, several Kittiwakes, Hooded Crow, Twite and Snow Bunting were noted during the month.

Other interesting birds included a Chiffchaff at Strensall on 8th and a Twite at the University on 20th. Hurricane force winds on 13/14th followed by blizzards next day produced several interesting records. On 14th, eight Kittiwakes were in the Lower Derwent, next day another Kittiwake was at Clifton and there were some notable passerine records with 200 Meadow Pipits at Clifton Ings. Skylarks moved south on the Lower Derwent at 500/hour, Fieldfares and Redwings were much in evidence with the former moving between south and southwest all day at Batterwick, 2200 over the Lower Derwent and 500 over Hobmoor. Of the latter 650 moved over the Lower Derwent and 400 were at Clifton Ings. 300 Bramblings were at Buttercrambe and on 16th a Little Auk was in a garden at Tockwith.

The last day of the month produced several good birds with a Slavonian Grebe and Great Grey Shrike in the Lower Derwent, a Rough-legged Buzzard at Low Catton and a Peregrine at the University. Interest in February centred mainly on the Lower Derwent and the Lower Ouse below York. In the Lower Derwent there were up to 145 Bewick's Swans, 5836 Wigeon, 3000 Teal, 2250 Pochard, two Red-crested Pochards, at least two Great Grey Shrikes, several Merlins, Hen Barrier, 2000 Golden Plover, 120 Dunlin, 45 Redshank, 1 Greenshank, several Knot, Grey Plover and Ringed Plovers, two Iceland and two Glaucous Gulls and a Kittiwake. On the Lower Ouse there was another Red Crested Pochard, Mandarin, 100 Dunlin, a Snow Bunting and a Jackdaw of the Scandinavian sub-species, *C.m. monedula*. Elsewhere there was yet another Red-crested Pochard at Stamford Bridge, which remained until late April. Four Red Crested Pochards arriving within a space of nine days points to wild rather than escape origin; were they perhaps the progeny of the successful breeding in the Upper Derwent the previous year?

March was marked mainly by some interesting wader records in the Lower Derwent with 4500 Lapwing, 2120 Golden Plover, 610 Dunlin, 415 Snipe, 111 Redshank, 88 Curlew, 16 Bar-tailed Godwits, 11 Ringed Plover, seven Black-tailed Godwits, two Spotted Redshanks and single Knot and Turnstone. Other interesting birds there included a dead Bittern, 19 Pink-feet and a Greenland White-front, eight Kittiwakes, a Mediterranean Gull, two records of Merlin and another Great Grey Shrike. Notable birds elsewhere included seven Ringed Plovers at Anchor Plain and 49 Goosander at Castle Howard where the first spring migrant, a White Wagtail, was seen on 31st.

April saw the arrival of many spring migrants with Little Ringed Plover on 1st, Chiffchaff on 5th, Swallow on 8th, Sand Martin and Willow Warbler on 10th, Wheatear on 12th, Turtle Dove, House Martin and Yellow wagtail on 15th, Blackcap on 17th, Arctic Tern on 18th, Tree Pipit next day, Common Sandpiper and Whinchat on 20th, Cuckoo on 22nd, Black Tern and Lesser Whitethroat next day, Sedge Warbler, Reed Warbler, Wood Warbler and Whitethroat on 25th, the only Grasshopper Warbler of the year on 27th, Garganey and Swift next day and Redstart on 30th. Waders in the Lower Derwent continued to provide interest with up to 65 Black-tailed Godwits, 18 Whimbrel, seven Little Ringed Plover, several Spotted Redshank, Greenshank and Bar-tailed Godwits, and Knot, Grey Plover, Turnstone and Wood Sandpiper. Also of note were the first record for the area of Scandinavian Rock Pipit, *A.s. littoralis*, Little Gull, Little Tern and Twite. Elsewhere a Shag spent most of the month in the Foss in York, before being found dead, White Wagtails were seen at Castle Howard and Naburn Sewage Works, a Guillemot was found dead under wires at Wilberfoss, a late Jack Snipe was at Strensall Common on 25th where there was yet another Bar-tailed Godwit on 28th.

May was an exciting month with more Bar-tailed Godwits, Spotted Redshanks, Knot and Grey Plover in Lower Derwent where there were up to five Wood Sandpipers, a Little Gull, two Mediterranean Gulls, two records of Marsh Harrier, a late Scaup and a Crane which arrived five minutes after kick-off on F.A. Cup Final day and left at half-time. Perhaps not surprisingly it was seen by only one observer. Other good birds included two Black-necked Grebes at Castle Howard, a late Short-eared Owl at Strensall Common, a Turnstone at Middlethorpe, an Osprey at Nunnington and Spotted Crakes at Fulford Ings and on the Pocklington Canal. The 13th was a good day at Anchor Plain and produced the only records for the year of Stonechat and Pied Flycatcher, both males, and the first recovery in Britain of a Belgian ringed Tree Pipit.

June was very quiet with Marsh Harrier in the Lower Derwent, Osprey and Black Tern at Castle Howard, Short-eared Owls at Strensall Common and Appleton Roebuck and a Nightingale at Naburn Sewage Works. The only birds of note during July were the first returning migrant waders - Golden Plover, Little Ringed Plover, Greenshank, Dunlin, Little Stint - and three Black Terns, all in the Lower Derwent.

The pace quickened in August with pride of place going to the areas first Red-necked Phalarope in the Lower Derwent on 8th, other waders there included 13 Greenshank and four Spotted Redshank as well as a Hobby. Elsewhere 17 Whimbrel were seen at Osbaldwick, a Hobby was at Castle Howard and a Merlin at Bishopthorpe and a Guillemot was on the Ouse at Ross Carrs.

September opened with yet another interesting wader in the Lower Derwent, this time a Pectoral Sandpiper, the second record for the area, the Lower Derwent also hosted Little Stint, Curlew Sandpiper and Merlin. A Buzzard was seen at Heslington, 19 Whinchats were on the Knavesmire and a large tit flock at Ampleforth on 28th comprised 104 Blue, 62 Great, 21 Coal, 16 Marsh and eleven Treecreepers. The only Quail of the year was seen sitting in the middle of the road at Hovingham on 21st, after a torrential downpour. Most summer visitors had left by the month end, by which time Goosander, Scaup, Siskin and Redwing had already arrived.

October was quiet with the few birds of interest mainly in the Lower Derwent where there were up to 38 Curlew, 200 Dunlin, a Long-eared Owl and a Rock Pipit. An immature drake Garganey was at Castle Howard on 23rd. The last Yellow wagtails, Swallows and House Martins were seen on 25th, 27th and 29th respectively and the first Fieldfares and Goldeneye on 16th and 27th.

November was an interesting month in the Lower Derwent where there was a Rock Pipit, two Kittiwakes, a male Hen Harrier, 3000 Fieldfare, 17 Ruff, 28 Curlew and 80 Redshank. Wildfowl began to build up with 125 Bewick's Swans, 2500 Wigeon, a drake Ferruginous Duck and nine Pink-footed and two White-fronted Geese. A flurry of

very late migrants produced a Black Tern at Dringhouses Pond on 5th, a Common Sandpiper at Poppleton on 8th and a Swift at Acomb next day. Other birds of note were two Scaup and 31 Goosander at Castle Howard, a Buzzard at Bishop Wilton, Hen Harrier at Riccall, a Merlin at Wintringham and four Snow Buntings at Rawcliffe. Ampleforth produced good counts of 140 Goldcrests and 260 Siskins.

December brought an increase in Wigeon in the Lower Derwent to 5190 and also 100 Dunlin, 44 Redshank, 27 Curlew, 18 Ruff, a Grey Plover, Mediterranean Gull and Hen Harrier. Goosanders at Castle Howard increased to 29. Chiffchaffs were at Selby and Anchor Plain, the latter bird was caught and ringed and transpired to be of the Siberian sub-species *P.c. tristis*. Riccall produced a Hen Harrier, a Rough-Legged Buzzard and a Lapland Bunting. A Merlin was at Stearsby, a White-fronted Goose at Strensall Common and the last day of the year saw a Buzzard at the University.

T.E.DIXON

CLASSIFIED LIST

The sequence and scientific nomenclature used is that of Professor K.H. Voous, 1977, List of Recent Holarctic Bird Species. The three figures which follow the scientific name of many species indicate breeding status and refer to the number of tetrads in which breeding was considered possible, probable and confirmed respectively. The figures refer only to the 164 tetrads surveyed for the Atlas Project so far and not to all breeding records.

LITTLE GREBE *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Bred in Lower Derwent where up to six pairs were present, Strensall Common (three pairs), Brandsby Dale (two), Riccall (two) and Skipwith Common. Present in the breeding season on the River Derwent at Malton.

Up to seven recorded mainly in winter months at Lower Derwent, Pocklington Canal, Howsham, Poppleton, York-Ouse, York-Foss, Bishopthorpe, Middlethorpe, Fulford, Dringhouses Pond and Castle Howard.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus*

Bred at Castle Howard (nine pairs raised 17 young), Pond Head (two pairs), Newburgh, Wiganthorpe, Dringhouses, Foggathorpe and North Howden. Probably bred at Selby.

The largest numbers were again at Castle Howard with maxima of five on 25th February, 20 on 17th and 31st March, 18 on 21st May, 36 on 2nd June, 12 on 15th July, ten on 8th August, 11 on 25th September, six on 18th October and three on 13th and 19th November. The usual spring passage birds in Lower Derwent with four on 11th March increasing to eight on 15/16th April, four on 25th, three on 27th, two on 28th and one on 30th. Nine at Dringhouses Pond on 21st October declined to three on 2nd December. One or two in winter months at Lower Derwent, Sand Hutton, Fulford and Poppleton.

SLAVONIAN GREBE *Podiceps auritus*

One at North Duffield Carrs on 31st January (TED, TB). Fourth record for the area.

BLACK-NECKED GREBE

Two in summer plumage at Castle Howard on 1st May. Fourth record for the area.

CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*

A sub-adult at Clifton Ings on 29th January. In the Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal an adult from 24th to 27th March, three on 4th April, an immature on 13th, and adult on 30th and one on 18th May. One at Castle Howard on 18th May.

SHAG *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

One on the River Foss in York from 5th April until picked up dead on 24th. Third record for the area.

GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea*

Thirteen pairs bred at the Lower Derwent Heronry. Birds were recorded from all districts throughout the year. Maxima were 11 at Wheldrake Ings on 17th April with 12 on 19th May and 18th June and 14 on 25th July. 17 at Castle Howard on 28th July, 14 on 15th August and 12 on 15th September.

BITTERN *Botaurus stellaris*

One found dead in Lower Derwent on 2nd March (TED)

SWAN sp *Cygnus* sp

Five flew northwest over York on 7th January and two northeast over Strensall Common next day.

MUTE SWAN

Bred successfully at Riccall and Pocklington Canal and unsuccessfully in Lower Derwent.

As usual recorded almost exclusively in the south of the area, mainly in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal with maxima of six in January, 12 in February, 11 in March, 21 in April, 14 in May, eight in November and a record count of 41 on 16th December. Up to five in winter months at Dringhouses Pond, Bishopthorpe, York—Ouse, Strensall Common, Poppleton, Cawood, Ross Carrs and Acaster Malbis.

BEWICK'S SWAN

Monthly maxima in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal of 112 in January, 145 in February and 121 in March with ten on 25th the last. First returning birds were three adults increasing to 125 by 20th November which remained to year end.

Elsewhere two at Naburn on 1st January, One at Ryther on 5th February with two on 11th/12th (with Whoopers) , four at Castle Howard on 4th March and two at Riccall on 13th December.

WHOOPER SWAN *Cygnus cygnus*

Monthly maxima in Lower Derwent of 16 in January, 22 in February, 19 in March with 13 on 13th April the last. First returning bird was on 20th October with up to four to month end, up to 30 in November and up to seven in December.

Elsewhere up to 24 at Ryther in February, 14 at Wharfe Ings on 25th March, four south at Anchor Plain on 28th October, 7 at Poppleton on 13th November and one at Sand Hutton Pond on 24th.

GREY GOOSE SP.

95 northwest over Bishopthorpe on 6th March.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus*

In the Lower Derwent, one on 5th January and 19 north on 3rd March. Singles on 15th and 18th November, seven on 20th and nine on 24th/25th with one or two from 27th to year end. 120 at Bishopthorpe 12th December. At Castle Howard, one from 17th March to 14th April. One on 23rd October with two or three regularly from 28th to year end.

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons*

A bird showing characteristics of the Greenland race (*A.a. flavirostris*) in Lower Derwent from 7th March to 3rd April (TB, OR, OW et al.).

Two adult nominate birds in Lower Derwent from 20th November, increasing to three adults from 1st December to year end (PG, TED, TB et al.) One adult nominate bird at Strensall Common on 19th December (DW).

GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser*

Bred at Castle Howard and several sites in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal. Monthly maxima at the two main haunts were as follows

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Lower Derwent	280	200	104	12	55	12	115	N/C	124	131	310	293
Castle Howard	137	152	140	27	N/C	91	107	N/C	67	115	N/C	181

Significant counts from elsewhere included 160 northwest over York University on 6th March, 24 west at Moor Monkton on 14th June and 45 west at Melbourne on 8th September with 100 northeast there on 25th.

Grey Lag x Canada hybrids were seen regularly at Castle Howard and Lower Derwent from July to year end. A presumed Grey Lag x Snow Goose hybrid thought to originate from York University was in Lower Derwent from 28th August to at least 4th October.

SNOW GOOSE *Anser caerulescens*

Two nominate race, white phase birds in Lower Derwent from 28th to 30th August (TED, TB) . A large adult white phase bird there from 26th September to year end was thought to be of the Eastern race, *A.c. atlanticus*, colloquially known as the Greater Snow Goose (DR et al.) . Two adult white phase birds of unknown race were present on 1st December (per TED)

CANADA GOOSE *Branta canadensis*

The only breeding records submitted were from Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal (several pairs) . Stearsby (four pairs) and single pairs at Dringhouses pond, Castle Howard and New Earswick.

Monthly maxima at the two main haunts were as follows

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal	328	236	115	78	70	56	62	N/C	N/C	11	290	363
Castle Howard	N/C	13	24	N/C	N/C	36	52	177	139	102	N/C	N/C

As in 1983 large numbers again at Dringhouses Pond in autumn with 36 on 3rd September increasing to 103 on 25th and 133 on 13th October, decreasing to 124 on 21st, 80 on 25th and only three on 3rd November. The figures suggest a post moult gathering at Castle Howard and Dringhouses Pond followed by a movement to the Lower Derwent during the winter months. As in 1983 a leucistic bird wintered in Lower Derwent to 29th March and bred successfully at Stearsby.

The only significant counts elsewhere were 18 at Sand Hutton Pond on 28th February and 60 there on 28th May, 30 flew NNW at Acaster Airfield on 13th August, 31 at Strensall Common on 16th September and 25 on Naburn Ings on 18th.

BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis*

All birds recorded were presumably escapes.

30 at Castle Howard on 25th February with 32 there on 26th and 3rd/4th March (DR, OW, PP) presumably the Flamingo Park flock. One in Lower Derwent from 14th May to 3rd July with three from 4th July until 9th August (TB, PP et al.)

SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna*

Bred at Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal (20 - 25 pairs) and one pair at York University. Probably bred at Wharfe Ings and Riccall.

Up to seven birds in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal in January, with the main influx in February with 63 on 12th and 71 on 26th. Thereafter gatherings of up to 34 in March, 32 in April and 34 in May. The first young appeared on 19th May. Most had left by early July but an injured juvenile remained until early November. Two were present on 4th November and one on 24th with two on 3rd December, five on 4th/5th and three on 8th. Elsewhere, one at Ross Carrs on 9th February, a pair at Fulford Ings on 24th and 4th and 25th March, one at Castle Howard on 3rd March, nine at Elvington Airfield on 28th/29th and a pair there on 15th April. Two flew southeast over York on 9th April. A juvenile at Dringhouses Pond on 20th July and another at Strensall Common on 24th and 28th.

MANDARIN *Aix galericulata*

A female at Middlethorpe Ings on 11th February (DW) was probably the same as that at Dringhouses Pond, York in December 1983.

Eighth record for the area.

WIGEON

Bred unsuccessfully in Lower Derwent with up to four males and three females in late May, five males and two females in June and two pairs in July.

Monthly maxima in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal were 4267 in January, 5836 in February, 4607 in March declining to 300 by end of April. Up to three in August, 27 in September, 33 in October, 2500 in November and 5190 in December.

Elsewhere up to 45 recorded in winter months from Ryther, Wharfe Ings, Bolton Percy, Naburn, Clifton Ings, Poppleton and Castle Howard.

GADWALL *Anas strepera*

One pair bred in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal, rearing five young and two further pairs probably bred.

Recorded regularly in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal from 4th January to 18th September mainly in low single figures, but six on 9th and 12th February, 22 on 24th, 24 on 26th, 31 on 2nd March, 26 on 3rd, 20 on 11th, 14 on 20th and 12 on 25th. Eight on 9th and 25th April and seven on 8th August.

Elsewhere, a drake at Castle Howard on 4th February and 5th May and a pair at Dringhouses Pond, York on 5th December.

TEAL *Ana crecca*

Probably bred at tower Derwent/Pocklington Canal, Skipwith Common and Strensall Common.

Monthly maxima in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal of 2279 in January, 3000 in February, 2500 in March, 900 in April, 200 in September, 160 in October, 1000 in November and 1114 in December.

Smaller numbers, up to 75, were recorded from Naburn S.W., Bolton Percy, Bulmer, Bishopthorpe Ings, Poppleton, Ryther, Wharfe Ings, Wiganthorpe, Newburgh, Strensall Common, Dringhouses Pond, Castle Howard and Ross Carrs.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*

A widespread breeding species. One pair bred in a car park in central York (JP)

Monthly maxima in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal were rather low this year with 1988 in January, 1659 in February, 682 in March, 200 in April, 100 in May, 230 in August, 250 in September, 180 in October, 1025 in November and 706 in December. up to 200 recorded in winter months from Newburgh Priory, Bishopthorpe Ings, Skipwith Common, Middlethorpe Ings and Wiganthorpe Pond. With 593 at Castle Howard on 7th January, 226 there on 7th September, 742 on 14th and 356 on 31st October. 324 on York Ouse on 25th January, 350 at Acaster Malbis on same day and 300 at Newburgh Priory on 27th September.

PINTAIL *Anas acuta*

One pair possibly bred in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal.

In Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal up to 47 in January, 69 in February, 21 in March and 24 in April. First returning bird was a male on 15th September with one or two to end of October then up to nine in November and 21 in December.

Elsewhere, single males at Sand Hutton Pond on 15th February and Heslington Tilmire on 22nd April.

GARGANEY

Probably bred in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal where up to two pairs seen regularly from the first on 28th April to end May with a male to 10th July (GS,BC,TB et al.). Display noted on 10th May.

An immature male at Castle Howard on 23rd October (nR)

SHOVELER *Anas clypeata*

Probably around 60 pairs bred in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal where the first young were seen on 10th May. Probably bred at Castle Howard with birds present regularly from early March to early November and display noted by two males on 10th June.

The largest counts were in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal with maxima of 27 in January, 32 in February, 70 in March and 80 in April; 30 in November and 25 in December.

Elsewhere two at Clifton Ings on 3rd/4th February, a pair at Wiganthorpe on 10th April, A male at Strensall Common on 25th April, five at Skipwith Common on 12th May, two males at Strensall Common on 18th July and up to 20 at Castle Howard during September.

RED-CRESTED POCHARD *Netta rufina*

An extraordinary influx into the area in February with a first year male at Stamford Bridge from 4th February to 26th April (DW et al.). A female at Bank Island, Wheldrake on 11th February and males at Wheldrake Ings and Wharfe Ings next day (per TED,DB). Fifth to eighth records for the area.

POCHARD

Probably bred at Lower Derwent / Pocklington Canal and Strensall Common where single pairs were present throughout the summer.

Again large numbers in Lower Derwent in the early part of the year with 700 in January, 2250 in mid—February declining rapidly to 150 in March and 90 in April. The only significant autumn count was of 85 on 9th November.

Elsewhere up to 60 in winter months at Castle Howard, Bishopthorpe Ings, Fulford, Stearsby, Wiganthorpe, Dringhouses Pond, Ampleforth, Acaster Malbis, Clifton and Riccall with 70 at Naburn on 11th February and 110 next day, and 91 at Wharfe Ings on 11th with 200 next day.

FERRUGINOUS DUCK

An adult drake at Wheldrake Ings and Pocklington Canal from 24th November to year end (DB,TB,PP et al.). Fourth record for the area.

TUFTED DUCK

Bred at Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal with around twenty pairs at least six of which were successful, mainly on the canal. First young were on 21st June. Five pairs bred at Newburgh and at Wiganthorpe, and single pairs at Stearsby and Brandsby Dale. Present during the breeding season but not proved to breed at Strensall Common (four pairs) , Red House (four pairs) and Castle Howard (two pairs).

Maxima in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal of 400 in January, 390 in February and 120 in March.

Elsewhere up to 35 largely recorded in winter months from River Ouse at York, Fulford, Clifton, Poppleton, Naburn, and Red House, Wharfe Ings, Newburgh, Pond Head, Ampleforth, Castle Howard, Wiganthorpe, Brandsby Dale, Stearsby, Strensall Common, York—Foss and Dringhouses Pond with 180 at Tollerton in February.

SCAUP *Aythya marila*

A female at Bank Island, Wheldrake on 4th and 13th January and 5th February (TB,TED) . A female at Wheldrake Ings from 9th to 13th May was paired with a Tufted Duck (*aythya fuligula*) and display was noted on several occasions.

Three immatures at Castle Howard on 20th September with one first winter on 13th November and two on 16th (DR)

GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula*

The largest counts were again in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal although smaller than in recent years, with up to 13 in January, 27 in February, 28 in March and 21 in April. At least four different birds present to mid May with an immature male remaining to 24th. Up to seven in November and eight in December.

First returning birds were single female immatures at Brandsby Dale and Newburgh Priory on 27th October (PH,TB) . Elsewhere up to eight in winter months at Acaster Malbis, Clifton Ings, Wharfe Ings, Sand Hutton Pond, Dringhouses Pond, Castle Howard and Riccall.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER

Nine at Castle Howard on 29th February (PH) was the largest party yet recorded.

GOOSANDER

Monthly maxima at the two main haunts of Castle Howard and Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal as follows:

	J	F	M	A	N	D
Castle Howard	22	31	49	5	31	59
Lower Derwent/ Pocklington Canal	8	4	8	10	3	7

Last spring bird at Castle Howard on 13th April (DW) and first of the autumn at Wheldrake Ings on 7th September (PP) with one or two occasionally at Castle Howard from 2nd October to month end.

Elsewhere singles at Barmby Moor on 16th January and Poppleton on 21st, two at Wharfe Ings on 11th/12th February, 12 at Wiganthorpe on 25th, two at Riccall on 29th and at Bolton Percy on 17th March with three at Riccall on 23rd with 14 there on 13th December. 112 at Castle Howard 15th December. The Castle Howard counts are a sudden return to the levels recorded in the early to mid 1970s.

RUDDY DUCK *Oxyura jamaicensis*

A female at Wheldrake Ings from 25th April to 28th May (DR et al.) and a first year male from 15th to 28th May (TB,PP et al).

HEN HARRIER

In Lower Derwent a ringtail on 18th February (TED) , a male on 14th and 22nd November (D.RC,PP) and a ringtail on 28th December (PP)

A ringtail at Riccall from 26th November to year end (UP)

MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus*

Single females in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal on 18th and 23rd May and 8th June, possibly only one bird involved (TED)

GOSHAWK *Accipiter gentilis*

A bird displaying at one site on 20th and 23rd February and a male over another site on 20th April. Localities and observers withheld.

SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus*

Mainly singles recorded from 45 sites throughout the area, still maintaining its presence in York suburbs. No records for June and August and only one in July.

One took a Stock Dove (*Columba oenas*) at Brandsby on 15th September (PH)

BUZZARD *Buteo buteo*

One west over university and then south over Walmgate Stray and Fulford Golf Course on 5th September (JHL) . One near Bishop Wilton from early November to year end (TB). One flushed from a tree on Walmgate Stray flew east over University on 31st December (JHL)

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD

One southeast over Low Catton on 31st January (per TED) and one southwest over Riccall Ings on 13th December (TB)

Fifth and sixth records for the area.

OSPREY

A bird which fed at a fish farm at Harome roosted farther down river at Nunnington for several days in mid May (PH). One at Castle Howard on 15th June (DW)

KESTREL

Breeding proved at Wass, Naburn, Middlethorpe, Fulford, Bielby, Riccall, Aughton, Melbourne, Elvington and Clifton Airfield. An adult and three juveniles on York Minster on 1st July (FWO) Noted at a further 31 sites throughout the area and the year, with up to seven seen in Lower Derwent during winter months.

MERLIN *Falco columbarius*

Singles in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal on 1st, 2nd and 11th January; 6th, 16th, 24th and 28th February; 10th and 20th March and 15th September.

Elsewhere singles at Thorpe Willoughby on 13th January, Bolton Percy on 18th, Hobmoor—York on 24th, Dringhouses—York on 28th and Riccall on 30th. One south at Bishopthorpe on 31st August and singles at Wintringham on 24th November and Stearsby on 2nd December. The last bird was seen to take a Redwing (*Turdus iliacus*) (PH)

HOBBY *Falco subbuteo*

A male near Brighton on 23rd August (NB) and an adult hawking insects at Castle Howard next day (OW).

PEREGRINE *Falco peregrinus*

A bird stooped at Black-headed Gulls (*Larus ridibundus*) at York University on 31st January, before flying off south (per JHL).

Sixth record for the area.

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE

The largest coveys were: 20 at East Cottingwith on 4th February, 27 at Coxwold on 27th September, 20 near Wheldrake Ings on 1st October and 25 at Dunnington Common on 20th November. Regarded as less common than the following species in the north of the area (PH)

GREY PARTRIDGE *Perdix perdix*

Notwithstanding the comment above, the decline of this species has not improved, with reports of another poor year in the southern part of the area. Counts in SE65 showed this species to be out numbered 5:1 by Red-Legged Partridge (BGP) . There appears to be a stable population in the north of the area and a small pocket of birds in the Bishopthorpe/Middlethorpe/Naburn area from the few records received (OW,PGWC).

The largest coveys were: 20 at Newburgh Priory on 22nd January, 16 at Coxwold on 29th, 19 at Naburn S.W. on 12th July, 16 at Kilburn Thicket on 8th August, 21 at Middlethorpe Ings on 23rd September and 15 at Bishopthorpe on 26th November.

A wing-tagged bird shot at Hagg Bridge in January had been marked by the Game Conservancy at Anlaby, North Humberside (35Km E.S.E.) in July 1980.

QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix*

One near Hovingham on 21st September (JP) . This bird was sitting in the middle of the road at 05.15 hours. There had been very heavy rain from 00.00 hours to 04.45 hours and it had presumably been forced down on passage.

A rapid return to the status pre-1981 when the species was a less than annual visitor.

PHEASANT

142 near Terrington on 30th October (JP) and 150 at Butterwick on 5th November (T and VW) were probably fresh from release pens.

An all white bird at Ampleforth on 24th October and two melanistic birds at Terrington on 30th (JP)

WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus*

Bred at Fulford Ings (JG)

Singles at Fulford Ings on 7th January, Anchor Plain on 22nd, Welham Pond on 5th February, calling at Strensall Common on 13th May and at Pocklington Canal on 16th.

An immature at Strensall Common on 9th September, one calling at Wheldrake Ings on 4th November and one at Naburn S.W. on 19th. Three at Wheldrake Ings and Singles at Fulford Ings and Naburn S.W. throughout December. One at Bubwith on 8th December.

SPOTTED CRAKE *Porzana porzana*

A singing male on Pocklington Canal on 4th May (TED), another on Fulford Ings from 29th May to 1st June (VG et al.) and for several evenings in June (TC).

Fourth and fifth records for the area.

MOORHEN

40 pairs bred along the Derwent between Elvington and Kexby (T & VW) Maximum counts were 14 at Acaster Malbis on 21st January, 17 at Yearsley—York on 25th, 14 at Castle Howard on 31st October and 21 there on 19th November.

COOT *Fulica atra*

Maxima in various parts of Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal of 400 on 3rd/4th January, 377 on 15th, 500 on 12th February, 200 on 2nd March, 415 on 20th, 160 (Aughton) on 9th April with 100 next day. 100 (Wheldrake Ings) on 17th, 250 on 25th, 500 on 27th with 200 still there on 13th May. At Aughton Ings and Wheldrake Ings a total of 125 pairs are estimated to have bred. These areas form around 20% of the Ings land along the Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal. If similar nesting densities appertained over the rest of the Ings the 1984 nesting population would have totalled an astonishing 625 pairs.

At the end of the year 75 in Lower Derwent on 18th November with 250 on 16th December.

CRANE *Grus grus*

A sub-adult flew into Wheldrake Ings at 15.05 hours on 18th May and left eastwards at 15.45 hours (DW). Fourth record for the area.

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus*

Eight or nine pairs bred along Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal. Bred at Beningborough where two adults were seen accompanied by two newly fledged juveniles. Probably bred at Strensall Common where an agitated adult was mobbing an observer on 12th June.

First returning bird in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal was on 25th February with up to five in March and up to nine in April by which time all birds were holding territory. Most breeding birds had left by late June but passage birds moved through from early July to 28th August with maximum six on 3rd July.

Elsewhere one calling over Dringhouses, York on 9th April, three northeast over Strensall Common on 26th, one on the Ouse at Red House on 1st May, one at Strensall Common next day, four at Barmby Moor on 21st June, one north at Brandsby on 24th, singles at Strensall Common on 7th July, Poppleton on 25th, Moor Monkton on 26th and Fulford on 27th.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER

Probably bred at Lower Derwent, Brighton Airfield and York Waterworks where display/mating seen but no young seen at any of these sites.

First was in Lower Derwent on 1st April (TB) with up to three there regularly from 8th to month end and seven on 25th (22 bird days) Present throughout May to 29th with maxima of seven on 7th and 9th (95 bird days) . Singles on 10th and 27th July and 1st, 22nd and 27th August.

Elsewhere singles at Elvington Airfield on 15th to 17th and 21st April, up to three at Clifton Airfield from 26th April to 3rd May and the last, a juvenile, at Strensall Common on 16th September.

RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula*

The usual predominance of spring over autumn records and again an early arrival. In Lower Derwent singles on 24th/25th February, one on 4th March, two next day, one on 18th, eight on 20th and one on 25th. In April, two on 8th, three on 9th, two on 10th and singles on 11th, 12th and 16th. Three from 28th to 14th May with one from 15th to 23rd (85 bird days) . One on 13th July and three on 22nd August.

Elsewhere seven north at Anchor Plain on 4th March, and singles at Elvington Airfield on 16th April and Strensall Common on 12th May.

GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria*

In January, 800 at Tockwith Airfield for first two weeks, 400 in Lower Derwent on 5th, 150 at Bolton Percy on 8th, 250 at Acaster Malbis on 8th, with 413 on 21st when 130 at Askham Bryan. In February, 200 at Askham Bryan on 4th, 250 at Pocklington Canal and 150 at Ulleskelf next day, 180 at Lower Derwent on 9th, with 280 next day, 100 at Bishopthorpe on 11th, 1200 at Spaldington on 25th, 2000 in Lower Derwent next day with the same number on 1st and 5th March and 1200 on 7th; 226 at Acaster Airfield on 9th with 1000 there on 18th, 1300 in Lower Derwent on 18th with 2120 on 20th and 1500 on 25th; 200 there on 4th April with 1000 from 7th to 22nd. 200 at Acomb on 7th April, 1100 at Wharfe Ings on 14th, 240 at Cawood on 16th with 250 on 18th and 100 on 24th, 800 at Church Fenton on 18th. The vast majority of the April birds were of the Northern race (p.a. *altifrons*) . The last of the spring birds were three in Lower Derwent on 3rd May, but one in a beet field at Poppleton on 2nd June, thought to be a female or first summer *altifrons* (DW)

First returning bird was a single in Lower Derwent on 4th July (TB) followed by a small July passage — one at Strensall Common on 8th, 12 over Heworth on 13th, six at Riccall on 14th, one in Lower Derwent on 15th and 27 on 18th, one south over Strensall Common on 28th. Then no more until one in Lower Derwent on 23rd August, one west at Strensall Common next day, with six there on 26th. Larger numbers from early September with 80 at Appleton Roebuck on 2nd, 100 in Lower Derwent on 4th, 200 at Barlow Grange from 9th to 18th 200 at Wharfe Ings on 15th, 200 at Barlow Grange from 23rd to month end; 1200 at Riccall on 30th. In October, 198 at Bishopthorpe on 4th, 100 at Brind on 5th, 500 in Lower Derwent on 12th, 100 there on 22nd, 250 on 23rd, 550 on 6th November, 404 on 20th, 1104 on 24th, 1600 on 25th, 600 on 30th, 596 on 1st December. 200 at Bishopthorpe on 4th December, 2000 at Ross Carrs on 6th, 400 in Lower Derwent on 10th, with 320 on 14th when 400 at Ross Carrs and 300 at Riccall Ings; 250 in Lower Derwent on 31st.

A partial albino with white secondaries in Lower Derwent on 2nd and 14th December and at Pocklington Airfield on 7th December.

GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola*

One in Lower Derwent on 19th February and possibly the same bird at Elvington Airfield from 21st to 23rd. One in Lower Derwent on 3rd April another from 19th April to 3rd May, with a different individual from 24th to 27th and another different bird on 6th May. A late bird there on 6th December.

LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus*

In Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal 2000 on 2nd January, 1450 on 12th February, 2300 on 26th, 4500 on 1st March (all on North Duffield Carrs), 3000 on 35d, 1500 on 5th, 3500 on 20th, 500 on 24th; first nest and eggs next day but flocks of 250 on 14th April and 150 on 12th May presumably Northern British/Scandinavian birds. 100 on 25th May presumably non-breeders and 300 on 10th June the first post-breeding flock. Sample breeding counts at Wheldrake Ings (58 pairs) and Aughton Ings (30 pairs) extrapolate to around 450 pairs in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal.

In autumn, 150 at Naburn S.W. on 13th July, 170 at Sheriff Hutton on 5th August, 400 in Lower Derwent on 4th September, 130 at Naburn S.W. and 300 at Spaldington on 26th. 500 at Spaldington on 4th October, 400 at Brind next day, 1000 at Poppleton on 8th, 1500 in Lower Derwent on 12th, 446 there on 15th, 300 on 23rd, 1800 on 6th November, 875 on 11th, 3000 on 13th, 1413 on 20th, 1500 on 23rd, 3030 on 24th, 4100 on 25th, 1200 at Naburn on 24th. 1940 in Lower Derwent on 1st December, 2500 there on 4th/5th, 1000 at Ross Carrs on 6th, 2000 in Lower Derwent on 8th, 2500 there on 10th, 1500 at Riccall on 11th with 1200 there on 14th, when 500 at Ross Carrs, and 1000 in Lower Derwent on 18th.

LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta*

Two at Wheldrake Ings on 29th July and a juvenile there from 18th to 26th September (DR, DW et al.).

PECTORAL SANDPIPER

A juvenile at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd and 4th September (TB, PP, DR et al.) Second record for the area.

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea*

A juvenile at Wheldrake Ings on 22nd September (TB, different juvenile from 23rd to 28th (TB,PP,DR,DW). Sixth and seventh records for the area.

KNOT *Calidris canutus*

Three at Aughton on 12th February (BC,GS) and singles at Elvington Airfield on 28th (TB) , Wheldrake Ings on 3rd March (TB), Aughton on 3rd April (TED) and Wheldrake Ings on 5th May (TED).

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*

In Lower Derwent, 110 on 4th January, 120 on 26th February, 610 on 3rd March, 600 on 5th, 500 on 7th, 540 on 18th, 230 on 27th, 110 on 3rd April, 90 on 10th, then 60 to 80 to month end; 60 on 3rd May declined to 54 on 10th and to 18 on 17th with four on 20th the last.

First returning bird was one on 24th July, with four on 28th (surprisingly the largest July flock ever seen) . Up to five from 15th August to month end (26 bird days). One on 1st September, seven on 4th and one on 25th. Three on 18th October, five on 3rd November increased to 100 by 20th and 200 on 24th/25th. 100 on 1st December declining to 20 on 5th and singles on 14th and 16th.

Elsewhere, one at Naburn on 1st January, 100 at Acaster Malbis on 10th February, 20 on Middlethorpe Ings on 25th March, one on Strensall Common on 2nd September and one at Stamford Bridge on 6th October.

RUFF *Philomachus pugnax*

Probably bred in Lower Derwent with six males lekking at one site and four at another.

In Lower Derwent, singles on two days in January, up to three on four days in February (six bird days) , up to six mainly males throughout March (49 bird days), up to 20 throughout April (119 bird days), single figures throughout May (34 bird days) and singles on three days in June.

In autumn, singles on 13th and 18th August, 5th, 6th and 24th to 28th September; five on 8th October and one on 29th. Up to 17 throughout November (90 bird days) and up to 18 throughout December (94 bird days)

Elsewhere, four at Wharfe Ings on 11th February, One at Escrick next day, two at Strensall Common on 28th July with one next day and one on 21st August; two at Appleton Roebuck on 2nd September and one next day, and one at Riccall from 11th to 16th December.

JACK SNIFE *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Two at Fulford Ings on 7th January, one at Welham Pond on 5th February and at Ellerton Ings on 5th March, two at Fulford Ings on 19th March, one at Riccall on 23rd, two at Fulford Ings on 3rd April with one there on 10th and one at Strensall Common on 25th.

In the autumn, one at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd November, one at Aughton Ings on 6th; four at Wheldrake Ings on 7th December and singles at Riccall Ings on 13th, Brighton Airfield on 19th and Melbourne on 28th.

SNIFE *Gallinago gallinago*

Bred as usual in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal — see previous Reports. Sample counts were 28 drummers at Wheldrake Ings and 12 at Aughton Ings. Probably bred at Laytham, Strensall Common, Wharfe Ings and in a clear felled area of Bishop Wood.

Winter maxima at the two main haunts of Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal and Fulford Ings are shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal	215	140	415	154	36	60	232	36
Fulford Ings	68	52	70	49	29	N/C	N/C	6

The count of 415 in Lower Derwent on 20th March is the highest yet recorded but only represents a fraction of the true number present. In March to early April most of the separate Ings and Carrs produced counts of 100+ with 200 at Wheldrake Ings and 90 at Pocklington Canal suggesting that around 1200 birds were present. This in itself is probably a very conservative estimate as no attempt was made to count birds probably present, that is an overall density of one bird per acre of suitable habitat.

Other significant counts were 60 at Clifton Ings on 15th January, 30 at Wharfe Ings on 25th March, 70 at Middlethorpe Ings on 27th, 39 at Newton Mask on 1st April, 30 at Wharfe Ings on 6th April and 17 at Strensall Common on 23rd December.

WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola*

Bred at usual sites — see previous Reports.

Outside the breeding season rather few records received, with mainly singles at Bielby, Laytham, Newburgh, Askham Bog, Brandsby, Pond Head, Strensall Common, Acaster Wood, Sand Hutton, Brayton Barff, Fulford Ings and the York suburb of Heworth.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa*

All records from Lower Derwent, where there was a good spring passage. Seven on 3rd March, one south on 8th, one on 24th. Two on 2nd April; on 4th four came in high from south and were joined by a grounded singleton and then by grounded flocks of 40 and 20. All 65 birds then left to southeast. A further four birds were

grounded elsewhere in the valley giving a record total of 69 birds. Ten on 5th April, two on 8th, one on 13th, five on 15th, six on 16th, three on 17th, 18th, 20th and 25th, and one on 27th and 29th. A total of 118 bird days. A pair were copulating on 18th April.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica*

All records in Lower Derwent unless otherwise stated.

Twelve on 1st March (TED), two on 3rd (TB), singles calling nocturnally on 3rd (EBB) and 6th (TED), one on 27th April (DR), one at Strensall Common on 28th (DW), in Lower Derwent, three on 29th (TB,DR,DW) and 30th (TED), one on 1st May (TB) and five on 2nd (TB, DR). At least eight birds involved in late April/Early May ranging from full summer to full winter plumage. In view of only 12 previous records, this represents an extraordinary influx.

WHIMBREL

In Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal present almost daily from 13th April to 16th May, with higher counts of six on 17th April, 17 on 20th, 12 on 22nd, 18 on 26th, seven on 28th and 3rd May and six on 2nd and 5th. One on 30th May. A total of 108 bird days.

In autumn, one on 10th July, two on 15th, singles on 5th to 8th August, 15th and 16th, three on 17th and singles on 18th, and on 2nd and 11th September.

Elsewhere, one at Strensall Common on 13th May, 17 WSW over Osbaldwick, York on 18th August and one south over Strensall Common on 27th.

CURLEW *Numenius arquata*

Bred as usual in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal — see previous Reports. Also bred at Laytham (eight to ten pairs), Wharfe Ings (four) and Strensall Common (three or four). Probably at Haxby, Brandsby, Byland, Coxwold, Wass, Kilburn and Acaster Malbis. In Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal, one on 21st January, up to 12 in February from 15th (35 bird days), the main arrival coming in March with 88 on 3rd and 56 on 18th. Most birds established in territory by the month end, with occasional passage flocks in April with 28 on 10th and 20 on 14th. First young birds on 2nd July with post—breeding and passage flocks from month end, with maxima of 17 on 31st July, 22 on 7th August, 38 on 24th, 28th and 30th September. Unusually, birds stayed in large numbers to year end with up to 38 in October (159 bird days), 28 in November (136 bird days) and 27 in December (133 bird days).

Elsewhere the only significant record was of one at Skewsby on 27th December.

SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus*

A good year with all records in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal.

Singles on 6th, 7th and 11th March, 7th and 28th April, with two on 29th and 30th. Two on 1st May, four on 2nd, one on 3rd, two on 4th and one on 13th.

In autumn, one on 12th August, a different bird on 14th and two further different birds on 16th.

REDSHANK *Tringa totanus*

Bred as usual in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal; sample counts were 15 pairs at Wheldrake Ings, ten pairs at Aughton Ings. Also bred in Fulford area (three pairs), Wharfe Ings (five pairs), Bolton Percy Ings (one pair) and Heslington Tilmire (one pair). Probably bred at Naburn S.W. and Strensall Common.

As usual the vast majority of records from the Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal, where winter numbers continue to increase. In January up to six on three days (nine bird days), in February up to 45 on five days (70 bird days), some large counts in March with 60 on North Duffield Carrs on 1st, 61 at Aughton/Ellerton on 5th, 111 in whole valley on 20th and 75 at Bubwith on 24th. In April, 85 on 3rd, 70 at Aughton/Ellerton on 7th, 80 at Aughton on 10th and 100 at Bubwith on 14th. Thereafter passage stopped and birds were well established on territory by late April. First young were on 22nd June and all birds had gone by 5th August. As usual autumn passage was very small with four on 24th August, one on 25th September and two on 22nd October. Incoming winter birds commenced with one on 5th November increasing to 17 on 13th, 40 on 20th and 80 on 24th; 44 still present on 5th December, with one on 14th the last.

The only significant records from elsewhere were one at Byland Abbey on 25th March (one of only a handful of records ever in the north of the area), 15 at Middlethorpe Ings on 27th March and one at Riccall on 13th December with two next day.

A melanistic bird at Bubwith Ings on 5th December was a very dark colour generally with an almost pure black belly (RG).

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*

A good spring passage in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal, with a very early bird on 5th February (BC,GS) then up to three on six days in April from 15th (11 bird days). In May up to five (on 2nd) daily from 1st to 11th (25 bird days). Singles on 2nd June and 24th July. In August up to three on 15 days from 5th with 13 on 13th (37 bird days). In September, one on 1st, four from 2nd to 4th, and singles from 5th to 8th and on 12th, 25th, 29th and 30th.

Elsewhere, one at Castle Howard on 12th August, with singles at Strensall Common on 12th, 21st, 23rd and 24th, and three on 26th. One flew south over Dringhouses Pond, York on 4th September.

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus*

Smaller numbers than in recent years.

As usual the majority of records from Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal with two on 8th/9th and one on 18th/19th February, two on 9th March, one on 30th April, two on 3rd May and one on 5th. In autumn one from 3rd to 11th July, and 25th, 26th and 31st. Five on 3rd August, one from 4th to 9th, two on 12th/13th, six on 14th, five on 16th, two on 17th, one on 10th to 20th, three on 21st, one on 22nd, 23rd and 25th, two on 26th to 28th, and seven next day. In September, three on 2nd, one on 3rd/4th, two on 5th and one from 13th to 23rd and on 25th, with two next day. Singles on 17th and 27th October and 22nd December.

Elsewhere, two at Appleton Roebuck on 7th July, one at Poppleton on 16th, three at Strensall Common on 20th, one there on 22nd and 29th. One at Fulford on 2nd August, two at Strensall Common on 4th, four there on 12th, three on 14th, six on 21st, three on 22nd and 24th, two on 25th, three from 26th to 28th and 2nd September, one over Woodthorpe, York on 15th and one at Strensall Common on 22nd/23rd.

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola*

All records from Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal.

An extraordinary spring passage, the best ever. One singing on 15th April, one on 19th and 30th. Two on 1st to 3rd May, with single singing and displaying males on 2nd and 3rd, four on 4th and 5th, five on 6th, four on 7th to 9th and three on 10th and 11th.

In autumn, one on 3rd August.

COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleucos*

Probably bred at Howsham.

A poor spring passage. In the Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal singles on 20th, 27th, 29th and 30th April. In May! two on 2nd and 3rd and singles from 4th to 10th, and on 19th and 23rd.

In autumn, singles from 10th to 15th and 26th to 30th July! 2nd and 13th August with two on 16th, one from 17th to 21st, three on 22nd, one on 24th, four from 26th to 29th and three on 31st. On 1st September also three, four on 3rd, five on 4th and one on 5th. Elsewhere, singles at Riccall on 23rd April, at Fulford on 28th and at Newburgh Priory on 1st May, three at Nun Monkton on 4th, two at Poppleton on 7th with one there on 19th. One at Castle Howard on 8th August, three at Dale Pond, Brandsby on 12th, singles at Strensall Common on 21st and 22nd with two on 24th; three at Red House on 24th. In September, two at Strensall Common on 2nd, one at Naburn S.W. on 3rd, five at Castle Howard on 4th, two at Poppleton on 6th with one on 8th, singles at Strensall Common on 9th, Naburn S.W. on 10th, Poppleton on 12th, Naburn S.W. on 22nd and the latest bird yet recorded at Poppleton on 8th November (DA).

TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres*

Singles at Aughton on 5th March (TB), Wheldrake Ings on 25th April (TED,AP) and Middlethorpe Ings on 3rd May (TB).

Ninth, tenth and eleventh records for the area.

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE *Phalaropus lobatus*

A juvenile on the pool at Wheldrake Ings on 8th August (DR). The bird was present from 18.10 to 19.50 hours and fed actively in characteristic manner.

First record for the area.

LITTLE GULL *Larus minutus*

Single first summer birds in Lower Derwent on 16th April (PP) and from 2nd to 15th May (TB,PP,DW et al.)

MEDITERRANEAN GULL

An extraordinary year with all birds at Wheldrake Ings. A first-winter bird on 2nd January (Pr) , an adult in full summer plumage on 28th March (Dw) , a first-summer bird on 9th and 14th May (TB,TED) with a different first-summer bird on 10th (TED) and a second-winter bird on 8th December (TB).

Sixth to tenth records of the area.

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Larus ridibundus*

Bred at Skipwith Common (no counts, but see previous Reports) Lower Derwent (150 pairs reared at least 85 young) and Strensall Common (60 pairs at two sites reared at least 47 young).

No counts from the Wheldrake Ings roost, which was present in usual numbers (see previous Reports) . Larger counts received included 1100 at Clifton Ings on 15th January; 550 at Ellerton Tip on 24th included three pink-flushed birds, two particularly so, and 1500 at Clifton Ings on 29th. 2200 at Acaster Malbis South Ings on 11th February, 1700 at Bubwith Ings on 3rd March, 550 at Barton-le-Street on 28th and 1500 at Bubwith Ings on 14th April.

In autumn, 400 at Barlow. Grange on 27th October, 1660 at Wheldrake Ings on 13th November, 3800 roosting at Castle Howard on 18th, 1000 at Naburn on 29th and 400 at Dringhouses Pond on 11th December.

COMMON GULL *Larus canus*

No roost counts received from the Wheldrake Ings Roost.

Elsewhere 300 at Clifton Ings on 15th January, 600 at Ellerton Tip on 24th, 500 at Clifton Ings on 29th, 106 at Byland Abbey on 31st, 400 at Castle Howard on 21st February, 1350 roosting at Castle Howard on 26th when 200 at Stamford Bridge. The last flock of spring was 76 at Bulmer on 28th March. Occasional records of first-summer birds from 3rd to 16th June, with occasional adult flocks moving through thereafter, such as 74 in York on 27th June and 28 at Hobmoor, York on 5th August. The main influx of wintering birds came from early November, with 150 at Acklam on 5th, 42 at Hobmoor, York on 7th, with 182 there on 18th; 300 roosting at Castle Howard on 19th, 103 at Hobmoor on 5th December and 1000 flying south on 23rd.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus*

Very few records received. Up to four, mainly in Lower Derwent in January, one or two there on two days in February and March. Two immatures in Lower Derwent on 6th May. An adult at Castle Howard from 10th July to 15th September. A typical autumn passage with 86 at Ellerton Tip on 14th August, 14 at North Howden on 22nd, ten at Ross Carrs on 28th, 57 at Ellerton Tip on 4th September, 83 there on 6th, 18 at Askham Bog Tip on 23rd, 61 at Ellerton Tip on 30th, 30 at Askham Bog Tip on 2nd October and 19 at Dringhouses Pond on 16th. Up to three in Lower Derwent occasionally in November. One at Poppleton on 31st December. A bird showing characteristics of the Scandinavian sub-species *L.f. intermedius* at Ellerton Tip on 14th August (TB).

HERRING GULL

A very few records received. Up to 200 roosting at Wheldrake Ings and up to 130 at Ellerton Tip in January, 153 at Strensall Tip on 28th February and ten at Wheldrake Ings on 10th March. No summer records. Up to six from early August to mid-November on Ouse below York and Lower Derwent then roosting birds at Wheldrake Ings built up with 48 on 26th November, 71 on 29th, 46 on 10th December, 125 on 18th and 80 on 24th. Two birds at Ellerton Tip on 24th February showed characteristics of one of the southern European subspecies *L.a. michahellis/L.a. cachinnans* (TB). A bird there on 14th August showed characteristics of the northern Scandinavian subspecies *L.a. argentatus*, formerly known as *L.a. omissus* (TB). First records for the area for either of these groups of "yellow legged" Herring Gulls.

ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucoides*

A first winter bird at Ellerton Tip on 2nd, 3rd and 5th February (TB,EBB,TED) with an adult there on the last date (EBB,TED,CR,DR).

GLAUCOUS GULL *Larus hyperboreus*

In Lower Derwent a pale individual, superficially a second-winter but with a first—winter bill pattern was present from 18th January to 8th February with an oiled first—winter bird from 6th February to 2nd March and another second—winter type from 6th to 8th February.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus*

Few records received, but an increase in numbers. Maxima were, 150 at Ellerton Tip on 7th January when 300 were at the Wheldrake Ings' roost with 360 there on 8th and 290 on 14th when 200 at Ellerton Tip. 150 at Ellerton Tip on 24th January and 200 there on 9th February. In autumn, 55 at Ellerton Tip on 26th July, 70 on 8th November, 50 on 24th, 74 at the Wheldrake roost on 10th December, with 148 on 18th and 110 on 24th.

KITTIWAKE

An extraordinary year with more records than ever before. At the Wheldrake roost, an adult on 4th/5th January, a first—winter on 8th, seven adults and a first-winter on 14th, an adult on 18th, three first—winters on 12th February, an adult on 19th. Three adults on 3rd March, a second—winter on 4th, an adult on 5th, one un-aged on 7th, a second—winter on 11th and an un-aged bird on 18th April. Two adults on 18th November. Elsewhere, an adult at Clifton Ings on 15th January and a dead second—winter at Castle Howard on 22nd February.

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo*

In Lower Derwent, singles on 4th, 5th and 6th May, two on 2nd/3rd June. Singles in September on 1st, 5th and 23rd. Elsewhere, singles at Castle Howard on 5th and 30th June. Juveniles at Dringhouses Pond, York and Castle Howard on 23rd August and one south at Bishopthorpe on 29th.

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea*

In Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal singles on 16th, 18th and 27th April with two on 29th and one on 6th May.

LITTLE TERN *Sterna albifrons*

One at Wheldrake Ings on 27th April (TEO,EBB). Fifth record for the area.

BLACK TERN *Chlidonias niger*

Three at Wheldrake Ings on 23rd April with five on 27th. Singles at Castle Howard on 9th and 16th June. Three at Wheldrake Ings on 10th July and a very late bird northwest over Dringhouses Pond, York on 5th November (OW)

GUILLEMOT *Uria aalge*

One found dead under wires at Wilberfoss on 13th April (per TED)
A juvenile at Ross Carrs on 28th August (ORC)
Second and third records for the area.

LITTLE AUK

One in a garden at Tockwith on 16th January (per TED) . Weather conditions prior to this had been severe with Force 12 winds on 13th/14th, blizzards on 15th and Force 10 storms on 16th.

STOCK DOVE

Very few records received, mainly single figures except 38 at Askham Bryan on 21st January with 17 there on 21st February and 45 at Brighton on 12th October.
One was taken by a Sparrowhawk at Brandsby on 15th September.

WOOD PIGEON *Columba palumbus*

Maxima were 1500 at Storwood on 4th January, 750 roosting at Askham Bryan on 6th, 1200 at Ellerton Tip on 24th, 4500 on winter sown rape at Fulford next day after heavy snow; 2000 at Poppleton on 2nd/3rd February, 800 roosting at Buttercrambe on 5th when 1150 were at Melbourne, 1500 at Poppleton on 9th, 800 at Nun Monkton and 800 at Hessay on 18th, 1000 at Poppleton on 20th and 1000 at Melbourne on 8th March.
The only flocks of note in later months were 300 at Acklam on 5th November and 170 at Archbishop's Palace on 25th December.

COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto*

Few large counts received, up to 40 regularly at Aughton in winter months at both ends of the year, 19 at Newburgh on 22nd January, 200 at Selby BOCM works on 10th March, 25 at Ross Carrs on 11th October, 30 at Poppleton next day, and 60 at Clifton Airfield from 20th November to 12th December.

TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur*

Breeding records from Atlas work suggest that this species is fairly common in the south of the area but more localised in the north.

First was one at Fangfoss on 15th April (RS) with birds at Aughton on 27th, Brayton Barff on 30th, Thorganby on 3rd May, Stearsby on 4th and Brighton on 5th. Eight at Wharfe Ings on 28th August was the only party of note. Birds left early this year with one at Brayton Barff on 18th September the last (ROC).

CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus*

First returning birds were two brown phase at Storwood on 22nd April (GS,BC) when one was at Strensall Common, with one at Melbourne next day and further birds at Aughton, Leavening, Wheldrake, Naburn S.W., Brayton Barff, Selby, Hagg Bridge and Poppleton by month end. An early departure, with an immature at Melbourne on 10th September (ID) the last.

BARN OWL *Tyto alba*

Bred at Brighton, Bubwith, Aughton, Storwood, Wheldrake, Thorganby, Melbourne, Skipwith, Escrick, Riccall, Dunnington, Heslington, Tilmire, Strensall Common, Seaton Ross, Scackleton and South Duffield. Possible breeding at Wressle, Hagg Bridge, Hessay, Colton, Wilberfoss, Sheriff Hutton, Ellerton, Elvington and Laytham. Twelve of the foregoing 26 sites are along the Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal and indicate the extreme importance of this area for this species.

Outside the breeding season noted at the following additional sites, North Duffield, Thorpe Willoughby, Naburn, Crockey Hill, Spaldington, Fulford, Moor Monkton, Barnby Moor, Woodall and Escrick.

LITTLE OWL *Athens noctua*

Fewer records received this year. Proved breeding at Dunnington Common, Brandsby area (three pairs) , Laytham, Riccall, Storwood, Elvington, Aughton, Heslington and Langwith. Present in the breeding season at Whenby, Huttons Ambo, Clifton Airfield, Brighton Airfield, Crockey Hill, Wheldrake, Poppleton, Tilmire and Fulford Golf Course. Outside the breeding season noted at East Lilling, Ryther, Flaxton, Wharfe Ings and Strensall Common.

TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco*

Present throughout the area and throughout the year. Some counts were, three pairs at Laytham, four pairs at Brayton Barff and five pairs at Bishop Wood.

LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus*

A good year with breeding proved at Skipwith Common, Allerthorpe Common, Strensall Common, Anchor Plain and Stearsby.

Other records were one at Anchor Plain on 22nd January, one ringed there on 28th. One at Clifton Airfield during April, one northeast over Wheldrake Ings on 9th October flew into Broomhill Plantation and three roosting at Strensall Common on 19th December.

SHORT-EARED OWL *Asia flammeus*

In the early part of the year, up to three at Poppleton from January to 1st April, at least five individuals in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal in January and February and one regularly at Skelton in January. Singles Strensall Common on 1st May and 12th June and at Appleton Roebuck on 16th June. Singles at Wheldrake Ings and Hagg Bridge on 6th August, then singles in Lower Derwent from 16th November to year end, at Riccall from 29th November to year end and at Skipwith Common on 8th December.

NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus europaeus*

The first bird was at Skipwith Common on 1st June (JB) where only two pairs bred this year. One singing male was present on Strensall Common. No records were received from Allerthorpe Common.

SWIFT

First returning birds were at Castle Howard (TB), North Duffield (EBB), Naburn S.W. (DW) and Strensall Common (DW) on 28th April, with the major influx over the following fortnight. Larger counts were 100 at Wheldrake Ings on 8th May, 90 at Castle Howard on 21st, 170 at Bulmer on 23rd, 150 on Pocklington Canal at Melbourne on 26th, 250 at Castle Howard on 28th and 100 at Elvington on 4th June. Most birds had left by early August with two at Castle Howard on 7th September, three there on 14th, one at York on 15th and an extremely late bird over Acomb, York on 9th November (HR)

KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis*

Bred in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal (three pairs), Fulford/Naburn (two pairs), Scrayingham and Poppleton. Present in the breeding season at Newton Mask, Anchor Plain and Beningborough. Noted elsewhere outside the breeding season at Clifton Ings, University, Askham Bog, Acaster Malbis, Dringhouses Pond, New Earswick, Stamford Bridge, Hobmoor, Castle Howard and Newburgh Priory. One brought in by a cat at Heworth, York on 27th August was released unharmed.

GREEN WOODPECKER *Picus viridis*

Few records received this year. Breeding season records from Bishop Wood, Hovingham Wood, Strensall Common and Byland Abbey. Outside the breeding season noted at Wheldrake Ings, Allerthorpe Common, Coxwold, Newburgh Priory and Brayton Barff.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER

Bred at eleven sites with probable and possible breeding at a further 21 sites. Noted outside the breeding season at a further nine sites. Five drumming at Askham Bog on 29th April and four at Brayton Barff on 25th June.

LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos minor*

Bred at Archbishop's Palace.

Other records were singles at Bishopthorpe Church on 22nd January, Fulford Ings on 24th February, calling at Sutton-on-the-Forest on 1st March, at Castle Howard on 4th, Acaster Wood on 9th, Knavesmire Wood on 6th April with birds drumming there on 14th/16th May, a calling male at University on 30th April with a drumming bird on 20th May. Singles at Melbourne on 1st October and 13th November.

SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis*

A common breeding bird throughout the area. Winter flocking perhaps creates the illusion of the species being less widespread at that season.

On 5th January, 550 flew SSW at Wheldrake Ings and 51 were nearby at Hagg Bridge. On 15th, during blizzards, birds flew south all morning at a rate of 500/hour. 75 at Ellerton on 22nd. Flocks of between 20 and 50 were noted in January at Melbourne, Fulford and Askham Bryan.

Autumn flocks recorded included 20 at Wheldrake Ings on 16th October and 80 there on 22nd when 50 were at Aughton Ings. 55 at East Cottingwith on 16th December.

SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia*

A conspicuously late arrival, with numbers extremely low; a pattern reflected throughout the country and indicating a dramatic population crash.

First record was of two birds at Wheldrake Ings on 10th April (TB) with seven at Naburn S.W. next day. Birds continued to arrive in small numbers over the following fortnight with no discernible in flux. Largest parties were 11 at Castle Howard on 14th April and ten at Wheldrake Ings on 22nd. No other counts exceeding six individuals were received for the first half of the year.

Clear evidence of a sudden drastic decline was provided by counts of occupied burrows at breeding colonies; only two nests at the East Ness colony on the River Rye (six nests in 1983), two holes out of ten occupied at Poppleton, none out of 12 at Bubwith, only four pairs along the Ouse between Fulford and Naburn. However, 65 pairs were reported breeding at a site in SE76. Four juveniles fledged at Poppleton on 17th June and the colony was deserted by 23rd July.

Few autumn counts and none involving more than two birds, apart from a group of 12 in Lower Derwent on 1st September. The last birds of the year were at the same locality with one on 25th September and two south on 30th (TED).

Two reports of possible sand Martin x House Martin hybrids were received: at Wheldrake Ings on 20th August and 18th September (OW) possibly relating to the same individual.

SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*

Slightly late in arriving with the first, at Howsham, not until 8th April (IM). Singles at Naburn S.W. the next day and Newburgh Priory on 10th. small numbers reported in the following four days from several sites in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal and Castle Howard. The main influx was from 15th April when 62 were at Wheldrake Ings (with another observer reporting 20 flying south there!) and 30 at Storwood. By the end of the month all breeding sites were occupied in apparently normal numbers.

The only roost count was of 500 in phragmites at Strensall Common on 16th September. Fewer October records than usual, although there was some late breeding; two young hatched at Nunnington on 10th/11th October for example. Ten at Brayton Barff on 18th October with 12 in Lower Derwent on 21st where birds present to 24th. Last birds were eight at Brayton Barff on 27th (nRC).

HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbica*

First spring records were singles at Wheldrake Ings on 15th April (TB,AM) and on 16th (when one was at Naburn S.W.) with three on 22nd. Becoming widespread during the last week of April and first few days of May, with records from Poppleton (24th), Bishopthorpe (25th), Brayton Barff (27th), Melbourne (29th), and Newburgh Priory (1st May). 30 at Naburn S.W. on 28th April, 400 at Wheldrake Ings on 8th May, 100 at Castle Howard on 21st May and up to 75 continuously on the Pocklington Canal at Melbourne during the second half of May. Autumn flocks were very small. The maximum at Hobmoor, York was of 30 on 5th August. In September, flocks of 50 to 60 occurred at Castle Howard (15th and 22nd) and Stamford Bridge (31st). Most birds had gone by early October, but 45 were at Castle Howard on 2nd, 50 at Poppleton on 5th and 20 at Selby on 11th. One was at Poppleton on 21st and the last was at Brighton on 29th (an). An albino martin with House Martins at York Water Works on 6th September was considered to be probably this species (TC)

TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis*

Present in the breeding season and probably bred at Bishop Wood, Blackmoor (Brandsby), Stillingfleet Wood, Gilling, Fulford Golf Course, Brayton Barff, Skipwith Common, Alne Wood, Strensall Common and Allerthorpe Common. One observer commented on a paucity of records in the three northernmost 10Km squares of the recording

area. Even so an incomplete survey of Strensall Common on 13th June revealed 13 singing males. The first was at Bishop Wood on 19th April (oW), one caught at Anchor Plain on 13th May carried a ring placed on its leg ten days previously in Belgium. Two at Wheldrake Ings on 28th May were presumably late migrants. The last birds were two at Brayton Barff on 17th September (DRC)

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*

Few breeding records received this year. Bred at Lower Derwent, Pocklington Canal, Fulford, Naburn, Brayton Barff and West Ness and presumably many other places.

Larger flocks included, 70 at Aughton on 2nd January. 200 at Clifton Ings on 15th, 90 at Naburn S.W. on 20th, 24 at Elvington on 5th February, 40 at Clifton Ings on 11th, 50 at Melbourne on 9th March, 19 at Stearsby on 21st and 24 at Wheldrake Ings on 1st April.

Autumn flocks included 40 at Poppleton on 16th September, and 25 at Wheldrake Ings on 28th. In December, 30 at Osbaldwick S.W. on 3rd, 50 at Skipwith Common on 8th and 25 at Brayton Barff on 14th decreasing to 15 by year end.

ROCK PIPIT

All records from Lower Derwent, with one from 1st to 4th April showing characteristics of the Scandinavian race, *A.s. littoralis* (TB,PP,~W) the first record of this race. One on 19th October was of the race, *A.s. petrosus* (PP).

One flew north on 1st November (TED).

Sixth, seventh and eighth records for the area.

YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava*

Numbers much reduced this year. Bred or probably bred at Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal, Poppleton, Fulford, Naburn, Selby Canal and Ross Carrs.

A small simultaneous arrival on 15th April when eight birds at three sites in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal and three at Naburn S.W. with four in Lower Derwent on 16th and seven on 17th. Five at Strensall Common on 25th August and a single at Stearsby Pond on 11th September were the only records from the northern part of the area. September counts included 14 at Wheldrake Ings on 13th and nine on Knavesmire on 9th. One at Knavesmire on 19th September was the last until two very late birds at Hobmoor, York, on 25th October (IM). A female showing characteristics of the Blue-headed race *M.f. flava* was at Naburn S.W. on 15th and 17th April (JG).

GREY WAGTAIL

Good numbers of wintering birds at both ends of the year. During the first three months singles were recorded at Clifton, Poppleton, Askham Bryan, Church Fenton, Elvington, Melbourne (in a garden) and Castle Howard with two birds at Naburn S.W., Clifton Ings, Strensall S.W. and Newburgh Priory. One at Poppleton on 7th May, one at

Sutton-on-Derwent on 8th and two at Poppleton on 9th.

One at Wheldrake Ings on 24th July, a female and two juveniles at Byland Abbey on 15th August (possibly locally bred) , six at Elvington on 29th. In September singles at Castle Howard, Rawcliffe Ings and York Foss. Singles in October at Wheldrake Ings, Melbourne, Askham Richard, Dringhouses, York University, York Ouse, York Foss and Castle Howard. Singles in November at North Duffield, York University, Dringhouses Pond and York Ouse, with four at Naburn S.W. on 19th. In December singles at University, Stearsby and Naburn S.W.

PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba*

In the early part of the year the only large counts were of 120 at Naburn S.W. on 20th January, 91 on Clifton Ings on 8th February, 36 at Strensall S.W. on 28th and 200 at Naburn S.W. on 3rd March.

During August and September up to 40 roosted regularly at Strensall Common, 50 at Naburn S.W. on 4th August, 96 at Knavesmire, York on 9th September, 30 at Poppleton on 16th and 105 on Knavesmire on 19th. The only double figure counts in the last quarter of the year were; 12 at Brayton Barff on 10th October, 45 at Naburn S.W. on 19th November, 63 at Dunnington Common on 26th December and 40 at Naburn S.W. on 28th.

Birds showing the characteristics of white Wagtail, *M.a.alba*, were present as follows, singles at Castle Howard on 31st March and 7th April (TB,DAR) and Naburn S.W. on 9th April (JG), two at Wheldrake Ings on 13th (TB,Dw) , a pair at Sutton-on-Derwent on 10th May (TED) and one at Moor Monkton on 12th May (Dw).

DIPPER *Cinclus cinclus*

A pair bred at Crambeck (TED) . Breeding was also proved at West Ness, a new site, where a pair were feeding young on 5th June (JP)

WREN

Common everywhere throughout the year.

Counts in double figures were; 14 at Bottom Lake, Ampleforth on 29th September, 11 at Dunnington Common on 10th October and 24 at Yearsley Moor on 30th November.

DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis*

A widespread and abundant breeding bird.

The only significant records were gatherings of 10 birds at Hobmoor, York and 17 at Brayton Barff on 8th March.

ROBIN

Ubiquitous. The only double figure counts were 16 at Abbey Bank Wood, Wass on 29th February, 10 at Bottom Lake, Ampleforth on 29th September and 10 at Acklam on 5th November.

NIGHTINGALE *Luscinia megarhynchos*

Only one reported, a typical record of one at Naburn S.W. on 30th June (JG).

REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Rather few records this year. Sustained searches of known sites in the three northernmost squares produced no records. Possibly bred at Bottom Lake, Ampleforth where a male was present on 1st May, 30th May and 11th July. Otherwise, two females at Brighton on 30th April, a singing male at Skipwith Common on 8th May, another at Askham Bog on 21st, a male at Strensall Common on 28th and three singing at a different site there on 13th June.

WHINCHAT

Bred on Strensall Common where one pair seen feeding five young. Coverage here was not thorough, but one observer commented on the species absence from many recent breeding sites on the common, believing this absence partially attributable to the spread of birch scrub (DW). Possibly bred at Fulford where up to three birds were present from July to mid-September. Probably bred at Dunnington Common where a female with a brood patch was present on 3rd July.

Single spring males were at Marton on 20th April (PH) , Strensall Common on 26th April, Hagg Bridge on 26th May and Skipwith Village on 6th June.

A good autumn showing with records from seven localities. One at Wheldrake Ings on 11th July, six at Hagg Bridge on 21st August, One at Wheldrake Ings next day, nine at Hagg Bridge on 27th (ID) , five at Acaster Selby next day and the same number at Full Sutton on 1st September and at Copmanthorpe next day and at Hagg Bridge on 5th, a female at Wheldrake Ings from 6th to 21st, 19 at Knavesmire, York on 9th (IM) , one at Fulford Ings on 10th and two at Hagg Bridge next day.

STONECHAT

A male at Anchor Plain on 13th May (RAI) was the only record.

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*

The first was a male at Brighton on 12th April (JB) with the main spring passage noted in the ten days from 15th April. present at Elvington Airfield from 15th to 20th with a maximum of eight on 16th. Singles and small groups of up to five between 15th and 25th April from Brighton, Aughton, Storwood, Stanford Bridge, Riccall,

Strensall, Marton and Terrington. A female at University on 31st May. A total of 70 bird days on spring passage. In autumn, singles at University on 19th July, Brighton on 27th and 14th August with two there on 15th and eight next day. Up to nine at Clifton Airfield from 16th August to 3rd September. Two at Ross Carrs on 22nd August, singles at Strensall Common on 24th, Wheldrake on 26th and Riccall on 28th, two at Acaster Selby on 28th and at Knavesmire, York on 2nd September, with the last, a single at Brighton on 23rd (JB).

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula*

Fewer records received this year. In the early months flocks of 25-50 noted at Fulford Ings, Hobmoor (York), Drayton Barff, Castle Howard and Elm Hagg.

Nest building was noted at Poppleton on 7th March, and feeding young there on 24th April. 29 were on Hobmoor on 23rd May. 31 at Hobmoor on 26th August increasing to 63 on 7th November and 129 (the annual maximum here coinciding with an unquantified influx in Lower Derwent on 18th November) declining to 83 by 16th. Up to 200 on Clifton Airfield during December.

FIELDFARE

Hard weather in January produced some large counts and movements. 600 at Storwood on 10th with 150 at Wheldrake Ings next day. On 13th/14th winds were WNW and hurricane force. On 15th the wind had moderated to Force 7/8 but brought blizzards all day and 2200 moved SSW over Wheldrake Ings, 550 flew south west over Hobmoor, York in parties of 40 to 80, and birds moved south over Butterwick all day. On 22nd 'large flocks' were reported moving south over York and 1700 were at Anchor Plain and 550 at Poppleton. The only February report concerned a count of 761 in SE65 on 8th. Birds returned from early March with 300 at Wheldrake Ings on 2nd and 4th with 200 at High Kilburn on 13th. Thereafter numbers declined although 150 were at Wheldrake Ings on 7th April and 60 at Butterwick on 15th. A single at Melbourne on 6th May with a singing male accompanied by a female at a site in Lower Derwent on 8th and two pairs there next day. One at Moor Monkton on 11th the last (DW)

One observer reported "flocks returning in good numbers in the first week of October", but the first count received was of 60 southwest over Melbourne on 16th October (ID) with an influx into the Lower Derwent soon after with 60 on 18th and 260 on 22nd and 31st. In November, 100 at Poppleton on 1st, 260 at Acklam on 5th, 3000 at Aughton Ings, 250 at Willitof, 200 at north Howden and 150 at Ross Carrs on 6th, 500 at North Duffield Carrs on 8th, 580 east over Newburgh priory on 9th and 145 west over Wheldrake Ings on 13th, 900 in Lower Derwent on 18th and 200 there on 25th. Only three counts in excess of 100 birds in December; 600 at Hagg Bridge on 16th, 111 at Fulford Ings on 25th and 350 on Pocklington Canal at Melbourne at year end. An individual at Wheldrake Ings on 4th November had a completely white head (TB).

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos*

No significant counts received. At Bottom Lake, Ampleforth one was seen to eat a small frog on 11th July (JP).

REDWING *Turdus iliacus*

Some good counts in first quarter of the year. In January a regular flock of up to 100 at Fulford Ings peaked at 110 on 15th. 300 at Wheldrake Ings on 5th January and 650 SSW there on 15th (along with large numbers of Fieldfare, q.v.) Also on 15th, 400 were at Clifton Ings, 78 at Hobmoor, York on 29th. Numbers then declined somewhat; 255 were in SE65 on 8th February but this apart the largest counts barely exceeded 100 birds. In late February, 53 were on Hobmoor on 23rd, 101 at Castle Howard on 26th, 50 at Fulford Ings and 30 in a Melbourne garden on 28th. March records included 110 on Railway Institute playing fields, York on 15th, 95 at Hobmoor and 60 at Fulford Ings on 19th and 90 at Elvington on 31st. In April, a flock of 40 at Fulford Ings on 3rd included several birds in subsong and one in full song (MBL), 100 north over Byland Abbey on 6th with 80 at Wheldrake Ings next day. Thereafter singles at Storwood on 8th, York on 13th and the last at Naburn S.W. on 24th (JG). Five September records indicated a small early influx; four northwest at Wheldrake Ings on 24th (TB,DR), three northwest there next day when three were at Heslington; four at East Cottingham on 28th and two at Melbourne on 29th. As usual the species became widespread after the first week of October but the only counts exceeding 20 were 50 at Melbourne and 160 west at Dringhouses on 6th, and 30 at North Duffield Carrs on 22nd. November brought records of 80 at Acklam on 5th, 150 at Bubwith Ings next day, 197 east over Newburgh Priory on 9th and 50 at Clifton Airfield on 12th. 100 at Fulford Ings on 1st December, 62 at Hobmoor on 5th and 94 in Lower Derwent on 16th.

Nocturnal passage at Dringhouses on 6th October, North Duffield on 16th, 18th, 5th November and 11th; York on 13th and North Duffield on 19th.

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus*

As usual song noted in midwinter; for example, at Acaster Malbis on 10th January and from "early" January at Brandsby.

Post breeding flocks were small; 20 at Peel Park, Brandsby on 1st July with 18 there on 9th and 11 at Stearsby on 14th August. Songsters reported in the early winter period at Wiggington Road, York on 8th November and at Brayton on 14th December.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia*

Only one record received; a single reeling at Brighton Airfield on 27th April (JB). The species is apparently rapidly heading for extinction in the recording area.

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Bred in Lower Derwent/Pocklington Canal (with six singing males along two km of the canal in May, the only count), Fulford, Bishopthorpe, Naburn, Sturges Pond (Selby), Selby Canal, Ross Carrs, Beningbrough and Castle Howard.

First birds were on Lower Derwent, Pocklington Canal with one on 25th April (TED,DAR), three on 28th and five on 29th. Most birds arrived in early May and most had gone by late August with the last, two at Wheldrake Ings on 20th September (DW).

REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Bred at Pocklington Canal (at least 20 pairs) , Wheldrake Ings (eight pairs), Ross Carrs(no counts), Strensall Common (three pairs) Castle Howard Lake (three pairs), Naburn S.W. (one pair) and Fulford Ings (one pair).

First spring bird was at Wheldrake Ings on 25th April (TED), with the main influx in the first two weeks of May. A pair was feeding a juvenile cuckoo at Wheldrake Ings on 7th to 12th August. Two well grown juveniles at Hagg Bridge on 18th September were the last (ID).

LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca*

Bred at Anchor Plain, Fulford, Dunnington Common, Aughton and Sturges Pond, Selby. Probably and possibly bred at Heslington, Wressle, Ellerton, Red House Wood, Melbourne, Wheldrake Ings, Acaster Selby, Acaster Airfield and Dringhouses Pond.

First were at Hagg Bridge (TB) and Heslington (GS) on 23rd April and the last at Wheldrake Ings on 15th September (PP).

WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis*

Several observers commented on the relative scarcity of this species in 1984. This was reflected in the few records received with proved breeding recorded only at Fulford, Bishopthorpe, Naburn, Dunnington Common, Selby Canal, Sturges Pond (Selby) , Aughton, Ellerton, Bubwith, North Duffield and Anchor Plain.

Reported elsewhere from a further 12 sites mainly in the south of the area.

First birds were at Brayton Barff (DRC) and Wheldrake Ings (TED) on 25th April with the main arrival 29th. Last bird was at Wheldrake Ings on 29th September (MBL).

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin*

Breeding proved at Skipwith Common, Brayton Barff, Anchor Plain and at five sites near Brandsby. Reported elsewhere from a further eleven sites where possibly or probably bred.

One at Elm Hagg, Wass on 1st May (JP) was the first record. Usually an unobtrusive autumn migrant, so two September records are noteworthy; singles at Clifton Airfield on 10th (PUC) and at Brayton Barff on 25th (DRC)

BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla*

In January, single males on garden bird tables at Heworth on 14th and 24th and Acomb on 29th (JHL,HR).

The first spring migrant was noted on 17th April at Naburn S.W. (JG) with the main influx from 27th onwards.

Widely distributed as a breeding bird with records from many sites.

Three September records, then a single at Wheldrake Ings on 1st October. Two at Brayton Barff on 30th October and one at Hobmoor on 15th November were presumably incoming wintering birds.

CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita*

One caught and ringed in a Strensall garden on 18th January (RAI).

The first spring records was of two at Sturges Pond, Selby on 5th April (DRC) followed by birds at Brandsby on 7th, Naburn S.W. on 10th and Bishop Wood on 12th. More widespread from mid-month but rather few records received and breeding confirmed at only two sites near Brandsby. September records from Castle Howard (22nd) and Wheldrake Ings (23rd) with two at Brayton Barff on 5th October (nRC).

One at Sturges Pond, Selby from 6th to 8th December (DRC) . One caught and ringed at Anchor Plain on 16th December remained to at least 27th and showed characteristics of the Siberian subspecies, *P.c. tristis* (Rfl). First record for the area of this subspecies.

WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Intensive searches in the north of the area proved worthwhile with breeding birds found at Ampleforth, Newburgh and Gilling (PH). Six singing males at Wass on 1st May, with three there and one at another site at Wass on 5th June (JP). Elsewhere the only records were singles at Brayton Barff on 25th April (DRC) and at Askham Richard on 8th May (FWO).

WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus*

A widespread breeding bird — the only count received concerned ten pairs at Naburn S.W.

First bird was at Kilburn Thicket on 10th April (JP) followed by birds at Naburn S.W. and Breighton on 12th, Bishop Wood, Wheldrake Ings and Dringhouses Pond on 14th and Skipwith Common, Elvington, Hobmoor and Anchor Plain on 15th, after which the species arrived in force. Most birds had gone by end August with one at Wheldrake Ings on 1st October the last (TB).

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus*

Widespread as a breeding species, present in almost all suitable areas.

Very few counts received. 12 at Bottom Lake, Ampleforth on 31st January and ten at Brayton Barff on 8th March. 30 at Bottom Lake, Ampleforth on 28th September with a large count of 140 there on 30th November. Brayton Barff held 11 on 14th December.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata*

Reported to be unusually scarce in the north of the area this year, although four broods seen at Castle Howard. A late arrival with only two May records, at West Ness on 21st (JP) and Castle Howard on 28th. Several well scattered records in August and September with the last at Brayton Barff on 25th September (DRC).

PIED FLYCATCHER

The only record was of a male caught and ringed at Anchor Plain on 13th May (JP).

LONG-TAILED TIT *Aegithalos caudatus*

The only large flock noted was of 25 at Dunnington Common on 23rd February (TW).

MARSH TIT *Parus palustris*

Widely distributed as a breeding bird in the north of the area. More scattered in the south with birds present regularly in Fulford/Naburn area, seven at Askham Bog on 21st January and two at Strensall Common on 2nd February. Largest count was of 16 at Bottom Lake, Ampleforth on 29th September.

WILLOW TIT *Parus montanus*

Widely distributed as a breeding bird, apparently more numerous in the south of the area. One singing in an overgrown garden in Acomb on 13th June had penetrated well into the city. The largest gathering was of seven at Brayton Barff on 27th October.

COAL TIT *Parus ater*

The only significant counts were 30 at Sand Hutton on 2nd February and 21 at Bottom Lake, Ampleforth on 29th September.

BLUE TIT *Parus caeruleus*

40 at Hobmoor, York on 26th January, 38 at Elm Hagg, Wass on 31st, 75 at Dunnington Common on 23rd February, 32 at Abbey Bank Wood, Wass on 29th and 53 at Brayton Barff on 8th March. In autumn, 21 at Hobmoor on 15th September and 104 at Bottom Lake, Ampleforth on 29th September.

GREAT TIT *Parus major*

Few counts received. 14 at Abbey Bank Wood, Wass on 29th February, eleven at Hobmoor, York on 8th March when 23 were at Brayton Barff. The largest count of the year was of 62 at Bottom Lake, Ampleforth on 29th September.

NUTHATCH *Sitta europaea*

Probably bred at Archbishops Palace where there were several records in April and May, and at Slingsby Bank Wood where three males were singing on 28th April.

Elsewhere, two at Elm Hagg on 31st January, one at Sand Hutton on 8th February, two at Nun Monkton (one of which was singing) on 18th, two at Castle Howard on 26th and 4th March, singles at Sutton—on—Forest on 1st and 5th March with two on 6th, one at Castle Howard on 15th September and four at Slingsby Bank Wood on 3rd November.

TREECREEPER *Certhia familiaris*

Widely distributed throughout the area at all times of year. Four pairs at Strensall Common was the only breeding count. Eleven at Bottom Lake, Ampleforth on 29th September with seven there on 30th November.

GREAT GREY SHRIKE *Lanius excubitor*

A confusing series of reports from the Lower Derwent in the early months; referring to at least two and possibly three individuals. Singles at Elvington on 31st January (OS), Sutton -on- Derwent on 4th February (ID) and 7th (per TED) and at Bank Island on 12th (TB, TED) presumably refer to the same individual. An adult female at East Cottingwith on 19th February (GS) was believed to be a different bird. An adult male in the Elvington/Sutton-on-Derwent area from 29th March to 8th April (TB, BGP, BR, OS) may have been a different bird from the first individual.

JAY *Garrulus glandarius*

A fairly widespread, if rarely numerous breeding bird. One observer noted continued persecution, but despite this the species shows no obvious decline.

Maxima were eight at Brayton Barff on 8th March, five at Poppleton on three dates in April and five at Dunnington Common on 16th December.

MAGPIE *Pica pica*

Generally abundant. Records of gatherings of more than ten birds together were as follows. Ten at Stubb Wood on 5th January, 80 into roost at Askham Bog on 6th, 13 at Selby Canal on 15th, 16 at Beningborough on 6th February, 60 at Thornton on 9th when ten at Sturges Pond, Selby and 20 at Moreby Wood, Stillingfleet on 11th. Later in the year, 21 at Naburn S.W. on 13th September, ten at Clifton Airfield on 10th December and eleven at Dunnington Common on 16th.

JACKDAW *Corvus monedula*

Large roost counts in early months included 355 leaving Stittenham Wood at dawn on 10th January and 200 regularly at Buttercrambe Wood in February. 150 at South Ings, Nun Appleton on 11th February and 120 at Stamford Bridge on 26th. In autumn, 64 at Castle Howard on 22nd September and a pre-roost gathering of 500 at Aughton on 22nd October.

One at Wheldrake Ings on 14th January had a bright blue wing tag - origin unknown (TB).

One at Nun Appleton on 11th February showed characteristics of the Scandinavian sub-species, *C.m. monedula*.

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus*

Largest counts were 520 at a Stittenham roost on 10th January, 260 at East Lilling on 2nd February when 200 were at North Duffield, 1100 at Storwood on 19th and 420 at Stamford Bridge on 26th. In autumn, 1500 at Aughton on 22nd October and 180 at Wheldrake Ings on 13th November.

CARRION CROW *Corvus corone*

Maxima were 22 at Clifton Ings on 1st January, 23 at Wass on 31st January and 38 at Ross Carrs on 6th December.

A bird showing characteristics of Hooded Crow, *C.c. cornix*, was noted in Lower Derwent on seven dates between 4th January and 28th March (TB, TED, PP, WS).

Two instances of single Carrion Crows attacking and killing small passerines were reported. One at Clifton on 11th May killed a House Sparrow which was feeding alongside it, carried it to a nearby playing field and ate it (PWR). One at Appletree Village, York attacked a juvenile Starling on a roof top and eventually flew off with it in its bill pursued by three Magpies and 12 starlings (BGP)

STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris*

Only two counts of over 1000 birds were received. A roost at Wheldrake Ings held c. 8000 birds during July and August and 1600 at a Castle Howard roost on 16th November.

Two identical aberrant birds were in the Wheldrake Ings roost; one from 3rd to 20th August and one from 3rd August to 9th September. Both were light milky brown in colour with white secondaries (TB, PP).

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus*

The only significant count received was of 150 at Hobmoor, York on 15th August.

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus*

Maxima were 80 at Holtby on 8th January, 35 at Ellerton on 15th, 33 at Heworth (at a bird table) on 31st, 50 at Willitofth on 9th February, 35 at Brayton Barff from 27th November to 5th December, 30 at Osbaldwick on 3rd, 75 at Poppleton on 16th and 170 at Dunnington Common on 26th.

One on eggs at Storwood on 25th March was very early (GS)

CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs*

Large flocks in the early period were noted as follows; 120 at Upper Helmsley on 6th February, 80 at Sand Hutton from 25th February to 19th March, 59 at Abbey Bank Wood on 29th February with 75 at Pond Head on the same date, 250 at Brandsby in mid-March and 100 at Gams Farm, Ampleforth on 6th April. Flocks of 20 to 50 birds were also seen at Crockey Hill, Hobmoor, Askham Bryan, Lilling Green, Byland Abbey, Yearsley and Kilburn Thicket.

Smaller flocks in the autumn with 80 at Brayton Barff on 17th September, 47 at Bottom Lake, Ampleforth on 29th, 42 at Castle Howard on 30th October and 30 at Knavesmire Wood on 1st December.

BRAMBLING

A large number of records received in the early part of the year, most referring to parties of less than 20 birds. Recorded from twelve sites in January with maxima of 57 at Crockey Bill on 4th, 300 in a Buttercrambe kale field on 15th, 35 at Averhams plantation on 18th and 250 at Buttercrambe on 21st. Reports from nine sites in February, largest numbers were 50 at Riccall from 3rd to 7th, 100 at Barton Hill on 4th increasing to 150 on 12th and 200 on 22nd. 60 at Barton-le-Willows on 24th and 70 at Sand Hutton next day. Five March flocks were reported, by far the largest being 126 at Yearsley on 27th. In April, 25 at Hobmoor on 1st and 14 there on 4th. A female at Osbaldwick on 12th May was the last (CR) First of the autumn was a single at Castle Howard on 13th November (DR). Then four parties of two to twelve birds and a flock of 300 at Buttercrambe on 26th December.

GREENFINCH *Carduelis chloris*

Maxima were 100 at Barton Hill on 15th January, 40 at Naburn S.W. on 20th, 120 at Riccall on 7th February, 85 at a Melbourne roost on 5th March, 38 at Hobmoor, York on 8th and 25 at Yearsley on 27th. 28 at Fulford Ings on 28th May, 35 at Selby Canal on 25th June with 60 there on 13th September. 34 at Barton Hill on 16th October, 150 at Spaldington on 21st and 127 at Ellerton on 18th November.

GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis*

Large flocks were confined to the post breeding period. 85 at Riccall on 28th August, 45 at Fulford Ings on 3rd September, 100 on Walmgate Stray in early September peaking at 120 on 14th and flocks of 40 at both Wharfe Ings and Hobmoor on 15th. Later there were flocks of ten to 20 birds between October and December at North Duffield Carrs, Wheldrake Ings, Melbourne, Walmgate Stray, Strensall Common and Castle Howard.

SISKIN *Carduelis spinus*

Numbers were small in the early months with only four flocks in excess of ten birds; 20 at University on 5th January, 18 at Acaster Malbis on 25th January and 30 at Sand Hutton on 29th February. A flock of 20 at Bishop Wood on 16th April included two males in full song flight, one of which pursued and postured to a female in the lower branches of a conifer. Breeding in the area is a distinct possibility.

First of the autumn were seven at Melbourne on 20th September (ID) generally rather scarce with no discernible influx until late November when a huge flock of 260 at Bottom Lake, Ampleforth on 30th (JP), the largest flock ever recorded. Thereafter 50 at Brayton Barff on 14th December, 40 at Riccall on 23rd when 30 were at Scrayingham, 25 at Brandsby on 25th when 20 were on the Pocklington Canal at Melbourne with 30 at the latter site on 26th and 31st.

LINNET *Carduelis cannabina*

Very scarce during the early months with the only record received being twelve at Naburn S.W. on 20th January. An obvious passage in April with 50 at Aughton on 15th, 164 there on 16th, 17 at British Sugar Works, York on 17th, 80 at Aughton on 25th and 25 at Ross Carrs on 26th.

Post breeding flocks included 180 at Aughton on 15th August, 120 at Poppleton on 16th September, 35 at Brayton Barff on 17th, 70 at Wheldrake Ings on 23rd. 75 at Acklam on 5th November and 77 at Fulford Ings on 18th December.

TWITE *Carduelis flavirostris*

Hard weather in January brought one at York University on 20th (TB) and 15 at Walbut Bridge, Pocklington Canal next day (ID). Two spring passage records, two at Aughton Ings on 16th April (TED) and seven at Riccall on 2nd May (PP).

REDPOLL *Acanthis flammea*

Numbers generally small in the early months, but some larger flocks reported at year end.

In January, 32 at Fulford Ings on 1st, 20 at Crockey Hill on 7th, 30 at Averhams Plantation on 10th, 75 at Walbut Bridge, Pocklington Canal on 21st and 18 at Acaster Malbis on 25th. Twenty at Sand Hutton on 29th March. One September flock of 22 at Hobmoor On 15th. Numbers at Brayton Barff increased from twelve On 2nd October to 30 On 28th and 70 on 27th November. 100 at Fulford Golf Course on 20th October increased to 120 On 1st December and 150 on 22nd. 40 at Riccall on 23rd December and 18 at Dunnington Common on 26th.

CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra*

A pair at Escrick Park on 1st June was the only record (per TC)

BULLFINCH *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

The largest counts were; seven at Brayton Barff on 17th September, 14 at Bottom Lake, Ampleforth on 30th November and eleven at Sturges Pond, Selby on 6th December.

HAWFINCH *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

The recent trend towards the more thorough recording of this retiring species continues with records of at least 16 individuals from nine localities. Four at Scrayingham on 2nd January, with two there on 5th February when one was at Stamford Bridge. Singles at Sand Hutton On 20th February and at Averhams Plantation on 27th March. A pair at Oldstead on 28th April, two at Bishopthorpe on 3rd May. Singles at Escrick Park on 1st June and Heslington Tilmire On 10th. Three at Castle Howard on 10th October.

YELLOWHAMMER *Emberiza citrinella*

More records received this year. In January, 81 at Aughton on 2nd, 30 at Askham Bog on 6th, 200 at East Cottingwith and 80 at Wheldrake on 7th and 32 at Ellerton on 18th. In February, 25 at East Lilling on 2nd, 120 at Askham Bog on 4th, 120 at Upper Helmsley on 7th, 40 at Willitof on 9th, 30 at Church Fenton on 11th, 35 at Nun Monkton on 18th and 25 at Pond Head on 29th. 22 at Brayton Barff on 8th March and 30 at Cans Farm on 6th April.

In autumn, 26 at Wiganthorpe on 30th October and 92 at Dunnington Common on 26th December. Several flocks of up to 40 at Riccall in November and December.

REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus*

The only double figure counts were 40 at Willitof on 9th February and ten at Wheldrake Ings on 18th November.

CORN BUNTING

The largest counts were: 150 at East Cottingwith on 7th January, 30 at Upper Helmsley on 2nd February, 28 at Brighton on 17th April and 45 at a roost at Strensall Common on 22nd. 50 at Strensall On 9th September, 37 at Riccall on 11th December, 31 at a Strensall Common roost on 19th and 16 at Ross Carr Farm Lock, Pocklington Canal on 26th.

LAPLAND BUNTING *Calcarius lapponicus*

A male at Riccall Ings from 11th December to year end (PP,TB,DR,JG). Second record for the area.

SNOW BUNTING

Two female/immatures at Ellerton Tip on 24th January, a female at Wharfe Ings on 12th February (per TED) and four at Rawcliffe Moor Farm on 25th November (PH).

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