

YORK ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB  
REPORT 2001

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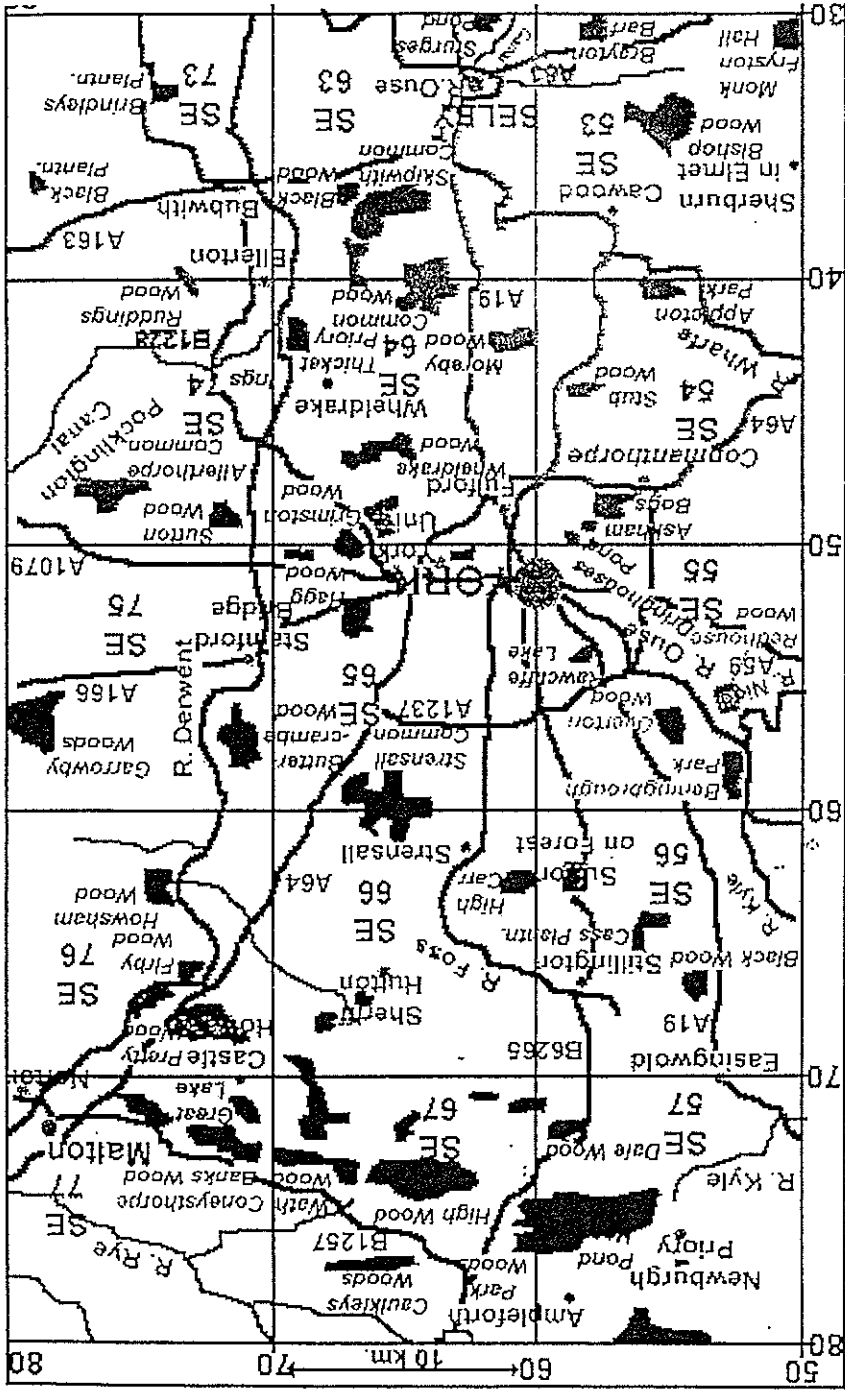


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# COMMITTEE

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CLUB RECORDING AREA

## YORK ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB

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

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

## EDITORIAL

Welcome to the belated (!) 2001 YOC Report. We apologise for the late publication of this report which was due to a variety of reasons, not least waiting for promised records from English Nature which were not forthcoming. Regrettably, the official recording of birds in the Lower Derwent Valley has been much diminished due to other work commitments at English Nature and so we will have to rely more on members visiting this area and submitting their own records in future. Unfortunately, in addition, the foot and mouth disease crisis had a negative impact on the recording of birds at the start of the year and, no doubt, some important records would have been missed as a result. The unnecessarily prolonged closure of some footpaths and reserves by certain authorities and organizations was very frustrating for most people. Nevertheless, we have been able to produce a reasonable report in the circumstances and we thank all observers who have contributed their records.

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

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

We welcome all new members and wish to encourage others, particularly younger people, to join the Club. We aim to provide a report of interest which is as comprehensive and accurate as possible and encourage all members to submit their sightings, however insignificant they may

seem. Guidelines for submitting records can be found in the 1998 Report and on the YOC website. As we aim to have the Report available as soon as possible it would help us greatly if observers submit their records as soon as possible at the end of the year.

Records of scarce or rare birds need to be supported by a description. A list of species requiring written evidence is included in the 2000 Report.

Andy Booth

## HIGHLIGHTS OF 2001

### January

The cold spell at the end of December 2000 continued until the third week of January. An Atlantic influence then resumed with southwesterly winds and rain. Floods remaining from the year 2000 attracted large numbers of waterbirds, especially in the Lower Derwent Valley, although flooding of the site of the former Stillington Lake also produced a good run of records early in the year.

Highlights from the Lower Derwent included Red-necked Grebe, Bittern, up to 11 Scaup, up to eight Smew, the Common Crane remaining from 2000, a record count of Ruff, singles of Spotted Redshank, Green Sandpiper and Turnstone, three Iceland Gulls and two Glaucous Gulls.

Wintering raptors included Goshawk, Merlin and Peregrine while it was a good 'return to form' for Short-eared Owl. The wintering Turtle Dove remained at Long Marston and the only report of Lesser Spotted Woodpecker for the year came from Wheldrake Ings while a few wintering Wood Larks were reported as well as several Waxwing flocks.

Several species of songbird began to sing from mid-month and three Blackcaps were noted while scarcer finches included Brambling and Twite.

### February

The first part of the month was unsettled and mild with heavy rainfall causing some further flooding. High pressure then dominated with mainly dry conditions and overnight fog and frost. The Lower Derwent Valley maintained most interest this month with a good selection of waterbirds including Bittern, Brent Goose, Green-winged Teal, up to ten Scaup, returning Oystercatchers, a Grey Plover and good numbers of other waders but no unusual gulls were reported. A Green Sandpiper remained at Clifton Ings as did the Turtle Dove at Long Marston before a cold snap prompted its departure or demise.

Short-eared Owls were still much in evidence with no less than seven in the Elvington Airfield/Heslington Tillmire area! Other wintering species included Waxwing, Blackcap, Chiffchaff, Brambling and Mealy Redpoll while evidence of early breeding activity came in the form of 'roding' Woodcocks and singing Sky Larks. Meanwhile, the Melbourne reedbed roost

held good counts of Reed and Corn Bunting.

## March

March was unsettled, but temperatures and rainfall were about average.

There was rather a dearth of records this month as the foot and mouth restrictions hit hard. Thus there were no reports from inaccessible nature reserves as birdwatchers were limited to areas around towns or viewing from roadsides.

What little highlights there were included a Common Buzzard over Haxby, the Green Sandpiper at Clifton Ings, Wood Larks at Sand Hutton, scattered flocks of up to 400 Fieldfares and 200 Redwings, Bramblings in Strensall and the first migrant Sand Martins, Wheatear, Blackcaps and Chiffchaffs. Meanwhile, the Waxwing invasion continued unabated providing a welcome and colourful diversion from the frustrations of the foot and mouth crisis.

## April

The month was generally cool and unsettled and a cold northerly airstream dominated the mid-month period.

There was a welcome run of records this month as some access restrictions were lifted and summer migrants flooded in, although most breeding surveys had to be cancelled.

A Common Crane flew over Sheriff Hutton on the 3rd and lingering winter visitors included Pintail, Fieldfare and an impressive build-up of Waxwings in the York area. More unusual was a Lapland Bunting flushed from Rawcliffe Cornfield Nature Reserve on the 18th.

Newly-arrived summer migrants included Black-necked Grebe, Little Ringed Plover, Turtle Dove, Cuckoo, Swift, Swallow, House Martin, Redstart, Lesser Whitethroat, Whitethroat, Garden Warbler and Willow Warbler. Meanwhile, Sand Martins, Blackcaps and Chiffchaffs became widespread and there were further sightings of Wheatears.

## May

The first half of the month was dominated by high pressure and a cool north-northeasterly wind. It then became unsettled but warmer again towards the end of the month.

May was dominated by the continuing influx of summer visitors with the first Garganey and Common Sandpiper (both being the only records of these species for the year!), Tree Pipit, Yellow Wagtail, Whinchat, Grasshopper Warbler (only record), Sedge Warbler, Reed Warbler, Wood Warbler and Spotted Flycatcher.

Passage migrants included Ringed Plover, Spotted Redshank, Little Gull and Common Tern while Cuckoos, Swifts and Whitethroats became widespread and there were further records of



Turtle Dove, Wheatear, Lesser Whitethroat and Garden Warbler.

## June

June was generally warm and humid with frequent thunderstorms mid-month.

With breeding activity well underway, this was the main focus for many observers with 'roding' Woodcocks and 'churring' Nightjars located at Yearsley Moor and Tree Pipits and Nuthatches noted feeding young elsewhere.

More unusual records include two Red Kites over Wheldrake on the 21st, Common Tern at Escrick on the 25th and possibly the same Rose-coloured Starling seen at Grimston roundabout, York on the 22nd and Haxby on the 30th.

The first post-breeding Lapwing flocks were noted by the end of the month.

## July

A mainly unsettled month with low pressure dominating and some heavy, thundery rain at times. High pressure persisted during the last week and a heatwave ensued.

This is traditionally the time when breeding species become quiet and elusive while the return passage of waders gets underway and true to form it was a quiet month with passage wader reports being few and far between, the only notable records being the last reports of Turtle Dove, Cuckoo, Reed Warbler and Lesser Whitethroat.

## August

August was generally warm and often humid with frequent thunderstorms during the middle of the month.

An immature Marsh Harrier was seen at Wheldrake Ings on the 15th- surprisingly the only record for the year - while two Hobbies were at Dunnington Common on the 28th. 17 Grey Partridges at Seaton Ross was the largest covey noted this year while a pig field in the Strensall area attracted large numbers of Lesser Black-backed Gulls but there were still no significant wader reports.

Most Swifts had departed by mid-month as the last reports were received for Yellow Wagtail, Sedge Warbler, Garden Warbler and Willow Warbler while a post-breeding flock of Siskin was found at Yearsley Moor.

## September

The first half of the month was dominated by cool, strong northwesterly winds but more of a

northeasterly air stream became established during the second half with warmer weather by the end of the month as the winds turned southwesterly. Rainfall was generally heavy.

The coming and going of migrants was the main focus this month with the first reports of Pink-footed Goose, Redwing and Brambling balancing the departure of Hobby, Redstart, Whitethroat and Spotted Flycatcher. A southerly passage of Sky Larks was noted while a juvenile Common Buzzard was seen and post-breeding flocks of Lapwing, Goldfinch and Linnet were evident.

## **October**

Mainly south or southwesterly winds made this the warmest October on record but rainfall was well above average.

Returning winter visitors included the first Whooper Swans and Fieldfares while the last Sand Martins, Swallows, House Martins, Whinchat, Wheatear, Blackcaps and Chiffchaffs were noted. Further movements of Pink-footed Goose, Golden Plover, Lapwing and Sky Lark were also evident as numbers of Black-headed Gull began to build up. Interesting raptors included Goshawk and Merlin while a Wood Lark was seen at Foston on two dates and there was an impressive count of 250 Goldfinches at Clifton Ings on the 4th as a widespread movement of Crossbills was noted from the 17th.

## **November**

November was dominated by Atlantic low pressure systems with generally south or southwesterly winds making it exceptionally mild.

This was a busy month as numbers of waterbirds increased, particularly in the Lower Derwent Valley. The first Bewick's Swan was seen on the 23rd as the Whooper Swan flock returned to North Duffield Carrs. Scarcer raptors included Hen Harrier and Peregrine and the pick of the waders was a Grey Phalarope found at North Duffield Carrs on the 20th.

A pair of Stonechats was at Strensall Common on the 11th while Fieldfare numbers built up but there were only small flocks of Redwing noted.

Two records of Blackcap may have referred to wintering birds and there were two reports of Nuthatch but only small flocks of Tree Sparrow. A few reports of Brambling were received while the main arrival of Siskin was noted.

## **December**

Another extremely mild month with generally southwesterly winds but a northerly airstream at the end of the month brought a cold snap with significant snowfall and severe frosts.

There was a rather quiet end to the year with few significant reports although highlights included Goshawk at Melbourne, Stonechats at Strensall Common and Wheldrake Ings, flocks of up to 145 Fieldfares in the Naburn/Bishopthorpe area, 60 Redwings in the Strensall area, an

impressive count of 87 Lesser Redpolls at Dunnington, three Crossbills over Sand Hutton and up to 36 Corn Buntings at Rawcliffe Meadows.

Andy Booth

#### Earliest and latest dates for migrants

Species	Arrival date	Last reported
Black-necked Grebe	29th April	28th May
Garganey	26th May	-----
Hobby	-----	24th September
Little Ringed Plover	20th April	-----
Common Sandpiper	13th May	-----
Common Tern	14th May	25th June
Turtle Dove	28th April	22nd July
Cuckoo	25th April	10th July
Nightjar	23rd June	-----
Swift	25th April	1st September
Sand Martin	31st March	1st October
Swallow	1st April	? October
House Martin	14th April	? October
Tree Pipit	?8th June	?8th September
Yellow Wagtail	12th May	23rd August
Redstart	24th April	6th September
Whinchat	11th May	10th October
Wheatear	29th March	9th October
Grasshopper Warbler	9th May	-----
Sedge Warbler	7th May	20th August
Reed Warbler	13th May	3rd July
Lesser Whitethroat	27th April	25th July
Whitethroat	27th April	22nd September
Garden Warbler	30th April	10th August
Blackcap	?15th March	?13th October
Wood Warbler	2nd May	-----
Chiffchaff	9th March	20th October
Willow Warbler	3rd April	22nd August
Spotted Flycatcher	23rd May	28th August

### Recent rarity decisions

The following constitute recent decisions on rare records by the YNU and BBRC. Observers should be aware that publication of records in the YOC reports does not necessarily mean official acceptance by the YNU or BBRC unless stated otherwise.

1999

**Pectoral Sandpiper**, Aughton, 7th July: no full description received so not considered.

**Pomarine Skua**, Wheldrake Ings, 11th March: no description received so not considered.

**Richard's Pipit**, North Duffield Carrs, 5th October: no full description received so not considered.

**Savi's Warbler**, North Duffield Carrs, 1st-3rd June: brief notes not worth forwarding to BBRC.

**Marsh Warbler**, Thornton Ellers, 23rd-26th June: Rejected.

**Golden Oriole**, Wheldrake Ings, 6th June: no description received so not considered.

2000

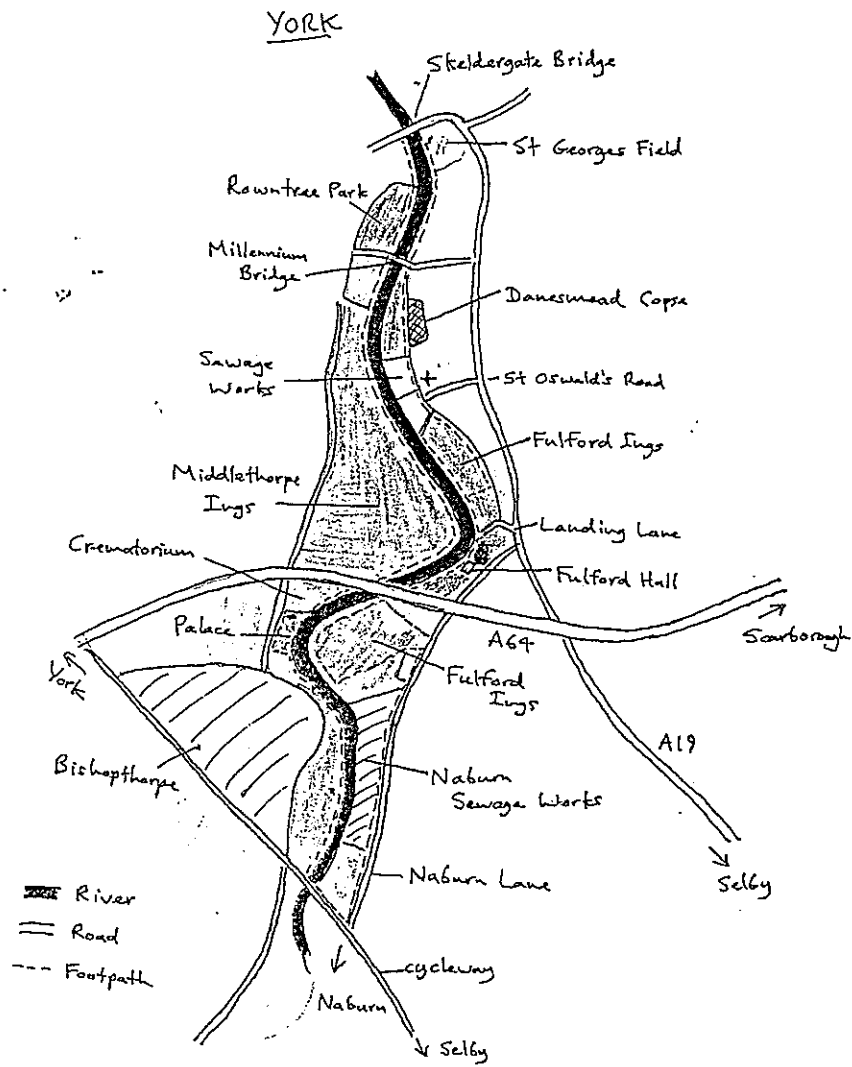
**Storm Petrel**, Bank Island, 1st November: Rejected.

**Night Heron**, 1-2 Wheldrake Ings, 16th February-27th March: no decision from BBRC.

**Montagu's Harrier**, Cawood/Stillingfleet, 17th May: Rejected by YNU on second circulation.

## LOCAL PATCH GUIDES

### 1. River Ouse between York and Naburn



### Local patch guides:

#### 1. River Ouse between York and Naburn

##### Habitat

This section of the River Ouse flows out from York, meandering south through parkland, floodplains and farmland. It is a slow-moving river (normally!), about 60 metres wide on average and is liable to flooding, particularly in the winter months. The river is lined by trees (mostly willows) for most of its length with the best areas for birds being Fulford Ings, Middlethorpe Ings, the flood meadows to the east of Bishopthorpe, farmland adjacent to Naburn Sewage Works and to the south of Bishopthorpe, the grounds of Bishopthorpe Palace and Rowntree Park.

##### Species

A good variety of species can be seen or heard at any time of year with it usually being possible to record about 50 species on a morning walk. My current list for the area (covering several years) stands at 120 species.

The river itself attracts several species of waterbirds throughout the year with feral Greylag and Canada Geese resident in and around the city of York while Mallard are obvious all year and Moorhen and Kingfisher can be seen anywhere along the river. Great Crested and Little Grebes are occasional visitors and Cormorant and Grey Heron regular while Mute Swan sometimes breed. Species of duck other than Mallard are more likely in the winter months, especially during hard weather, and include Teal, Pochard, Tufted Duck, Goldeneye and Goosander. Coot are regular but rarely breed while several species of gulls can be seen, mostly outside the breeding season. A few Sand Martins breed (usually seen around Skeldergate Bridge and Fulford Hall) as do one or two pairs of Grey Wagtail while Common Sandpiper can be seen on passage.

Fulford Ings is perhaps the richest area with breeding species including Stock Dove, Song Thrush, Sedge Warbler, Whitethroat, Blackcap, Chiffchaff, Willow Warbler (infact ten species of warbler have been recorded here!), Goldcrest, four species of tit, Treecreeper, Bullfinch, Greenfinch, Goldfinch and Reed Bunting. Snipe and a few Jack Snipe are regular in winter, depending on water levels, but seeing them is another matter! Water Rails are occasionally heard and no doubt breed while Fieldfare and Redwing are often present at the right time of year.

The farmland adjacent to Naburn Sewage Works holds breeding Red-legged Partridge, Sky Lark, Meadow Pipit, Yellow Wagtail (often elusive), Linnet and Yellowhammer with Oystercatcher becoming more regular in recent years. Winter flocks of Golden Plover and Lapwing are often seen as are Black-headed Gulls. Winter thrushes (mainly Fieldfare) favour the grassy fields here as well as those south of Bishopthorpe to which Golden Plover and Lapwing often commute. This area is good in summer for Corn Bunting and a walk further into the farmland to the west will reveal Curlew and Tree Sparrow.

The flood meadows east of Bishopthorpe and Middlethorpe Ings hold breeding Meadow Pipit

and Reed Bunting while the latter site also has breeding Lapwing, Sky Lark and Yellowhammer. Floodwater on the Ings at any time of year will additionally attract a variety of waterbirds and is always worth a look.

The grounds of Bishopthorpe Palace often have breeding Spotted Flycatchers in the summer, but these are usually hard to see. In the past this was a good site for Lesser Spotted Woodpecker and Nuthatch, so I am led to believe...

The only resident species of diurnal raptor are Sparrowhawk and Kestrel, but anything can pass over so it's always worth looking up (...and down - mind where you stand!!).

### Timing

A morning walk is best as birds are more active then and there is less human disturbance. It is possible to complete the whole walk (York to Naburn and back) in about four hours (my pace!) and it is worth spending more time in the more productive areas. Shorter walks are also worthwhile - eg. York to Bishopthorpe Bridge or just doing a circuit of Fulford Ings itself. A visit at any time of year will produce a good run of species and every walk is different!

### Routes and access

My usual walk begins at Skeldergate Bridge in York (parking is available at St Georges Field) down the east side of the river following the towpath south to the Millennium Bridge then following the footpath/cycleway continuing south - with a diversion through Danesmead Copse (a good scrubby area) - past the sewage works and onto Fulford Ings. There is a choice of paths around the Ings although some of these can be a bit damp (especially early morning and during the winter!). You then pass south under Bishopthorpe Bridge and can either take the gravel track to the left leading to Naburn Lane or follow the river round (but this takes longer and is often overgrown in early summer). Then follow Naburn Lane (the main road to Naburn) south past the sewage works. This can be a busy road although a footpath/cycleway is now being made (June/July 2003). This brings you to the York-Selby cycle route where you turn right and follow the cycleway over Naburn Bridge (an old railway bridge across the River Ouse) and continue along to view the farmland to the south, just before which there are some steps which lead down to a narrow gravelly path that takes you back to the river where you can pick up the footpath on the west side, following this north back to York. You will pass boat moorings along the river with flood meadows on your left and eventually come to the grounds of Bishopthorpe Palace where you will have to turn left and follow the path round the grounds along the main road (you cannot follow the river here!). Then turn right down the gravelly path between the palace grounds and the crematorium and you will rejoin the riverside path turning left past the crematorium and under Bishopthorpe Bridge where you continue northwards through Middlethorpe Ings. Eventually, after passing over a few stiles, you will come to a tarmac footpath/cycleway which leads back up to the Millennium Bridge and back to York. Here you can continue to follow the riverside path or take a detour through Rowntree Park (if it is open!).

An alternative, shorter, walk is to go south from York to Bishopthorpe Bridge down the east side of the river and turn back, doing a circular route around Fulford Ings, following the 'Millennium Walk' signs, returning to York by crossing over the Millennium Bridge, if you wish.

To visit Fulford Ings itself, turn down Landing Lane off Fulford Road (the A19) and drive down to the end to park or do likewise down St Oswald's Road.

Please note that access may be severely restricted during periods of flooding!!!

## **Calendar**

### **All year**

Great Crested Grebe, Cormorant, Grey Heron, Mute Swan, Greylag Goose, Canada Goose, Mallard, Sparrowhawk, Kestrel, Red-legged Partridge, Pheasant, Water Rail, Moorhen, Coot, Lapwing, Black-headed Gull, Feral Pigeon, Stock Dove, Wood Pigeon, Collared Dove, Barn Owl, Tawny Owl, Kingfisher, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Sky Lark, Meadow Pipit, Grey Wagtail, Pied Wagtail, Wren, Dunnock, Robin, Blackbird, Song Thrush, Mistle Thrush, Goldcrest, Long-tailed Tit, Coal Tit, Blue Tit, Great Tit, Treecreeper, Magpie, Jackdaw, Rook, Carrion Crow, Starling, House Sparrow, Tree Sparrow (farmland only), Chaffinch, Bullfinch, Greenfinch, Goldfinch, Lesser Redpoll (infrequent), Linnet, Yellowhammer, Reed Bunting (scarce in winter).

### **Winter (October-March)**

Pochard, Tufted Duck, Goldeneye, Goosander, Golden Plover, Dunlin, Jack Snipe, Snipe, Common Gull, Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Fieldfare, Redwing, Brambling (in good years), Siskin.

### **Spring and Summer (April-August)**

Oystercatcher, Curlew, Common Sandpiper, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Cuckoo, Swift, Sand Martin, Swallow, House Martin, Yellow Wagtail, Sedge Warbler, Reed Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat, Whitethroat, Garden Warbler, Blackcap, Chiffchaff, Willow Warbler, Spotted Flycatcher, Corn Bunting.

### **Occasional/Rare**

Little Grebe, Pink-footed Goose, Barnacle Goose, Wigeon, Gadwall, Teal, Scaup, Smew, Common Buzzard, Peregrine, Grey Partridge, Little Ringed Plover, Woodcock, Redshank, Green Sandpiper, Yellow-legged Gull, Iceland Gull, Glaucous Gull, Kittiwake, Common Tern, Arctic Tern, Turtle Dove, Green Woodpecker, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Tree Pipit, Waxwing, Wheatear, Grasshopper Warbler (have bred), Marsh Warbler, Marsh Tit, Willow Tit, Nuthatch (reputedly), Great Grey Shrike, Jay.

These records are based on my personal sightings and one or two reports from other people. If anyone has recorded any species in this area in addition to those listed I would be delighted to hear from you.

Andy Booth



The following species have been recorded in the York area since 1966  
but were not seen in 2001

Red-throated Diver	Black-throated Diver	Great Northern Diver
Fulmar	Manx Shearwater	Storm Petrel
Gannet	Shag	Night Heron
Cattle Egret	Little Egret	Purple Heron
Spoonbill	White Stork	(Lesser White-fronted Goose)
(Egyptian Goose)	(Wood Duck)	American Wigeon
Blue-winged Teal	Red-crested Pochard	Ring-necked Duck
Ferruginous Duck	Eider	Long-tailed Duck
Common Scoter	Velvet Scoter	(Barrow's Goldeneye)
Red-breasted Merganser	Honey Buzzard	Black Kite
Montagu's Harrier	Rough-legged Buzzard	Osprey
Red-footed Falcon	Quail	(Golden Pheasant)
Water Rail	Spotted Crake	Corncrake
Black-winged Stilt	Avocet	Stone Curlew
Kentish Plover	Dotterel	Knot
Sanderling	Little Stint	Temminck's Stint
White-rumped Sandpiper	(Baird's Sandpiper)	Pectoral Sandpiper
Curlew Sandpiper	Black-tailed Godwit	Bar-tailed Godwit
Whimbrel	Greenshank	Wood Sandpiper
Red-necked Phalarope	Pomarine Skua	Arctic Skua
Great Skua	Mediterranean Gull	Sabine's Gull
(Ring-billed Gull)	Kittiwake	Caspian Tern
Sandwich Tern	Roseate Tern	Arctic Tern
Little Tern	Whiskered Tern	Black Tern
Guillemot	Little Auk	Puffin
Long-eared Owl	Alpine Swift	Bee-eater
Hoopoe	Wryneck	Red-rumped Swallow
Richard's Pipit	Rock Pipit	Water Pipit
(Blue-headed Wagtail)	(White Wagtail)	Dipper
Nightingale	Black Redstart	Ring Ouzel
Cetti's Warbler	Marsh Warbler	Barred Warbler
Firecrest	Red-breasted Flycatcher	Pied Flycatcher
Bearded Tit	Golden Oriole	Red-backed Shrike
Great Grey Shrike	Hooded Crow	Raven
Hawfinch	Snow Bunting	Chl Bunting

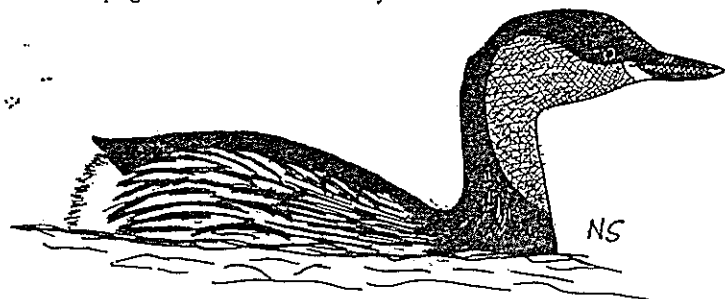
## CLASSIFIED LIST

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

### Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Status: Resident breeder

In the Lower Derwent Valley 17 birds present throughout January increased to 24 by the end of February with a return to breeding sites noted mid-month. Although no records were forthcoming thereafter it would be presumed that the usual numbers bred at the usual sites and numbers built up again towards the end of the year.



Up to six birds were present in late March at the flooded site of the old lake at Stillington and two pairs stayed on to breed. Two to three pairs were present at Allerthorpe from May to October with three at Castle Howard Lake on 24th March and a single there on 5th August while two to three birds were seen regularly on the nearby Arboretum Lake from March to June.

Elsewhere, a single bird was noted on and off throughout the year at Newburgh Priory Lake and others were seen on the River Foss at Strensall on 2nd February, Sand Hutton on 14th August, on the River Ouse at Clifton Ings on 2nd November, on the Ouse near the Millennium Bridge on 2nd December and on the Foss at New Earswick in late December.

Bred at Sturges Ponds.

### Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Status: Migrant breeder and passage visitor

Elsewhere, one was on the River Ouse between York and Bishopthorpe on 28th April with a pair there on 30th June and a single on York University Lake from 16th-18th July.

Up to six birds were present all year at Castle Howard Lake with 11 there on 5th

October and at least two pairs bred. A pair at Rawcliffe Lake on 15th June soon departed with

singles there on 20th August and from 15th-26th November. The only records from the Lower Derwent Valley were of one at North Duffield Carrs on 28th June and four at Bank Island at the beginning of May, though again it would be presumed that the usual numbers bred.

Bred at Sturges Ponds and Yearsley Moor Bottom Pond.

**Red-necked Grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*

Status: Scarce winter visitor

A winter-plumaged bird was seen at Bubwith Ings on 4th January and Thorganby on the 6th (EN).

**Slavonian Grebe** *Podiceps auritus*

Status: Scarce winter visitor

Two birds moulting out of summer plumage were seen at Castle Howard Lake on 9th November (MD).

**Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigricollis*

Status: Summer visitor

A single at Bank Island on 29th April with another on the pool at Wheldrake Ings on 28th May were the only reports.

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Status: Passage and winter visitor and recently established resident

In the Lower Derwent Valley, 30 birds at the turn of the year increased to 47 by the end of January with 65 at the Wheldrake Ings colony in February, but no records received thereafter. Present at Castle Howard Lake all year with a peak of 25 on 29th October and at least two pairs bred. Also seen flying over the nearby Arboretum Lake throughout the year.

Elsewhere, singles were regularly seen flying up and down the River Ouse at Clifton Ings with 11 on 18th April, up to three along the river between York and Bishopthorpe between January and July, four at Ross Carrs on 13th February, six flying over Hassacarr Nature Reserve on 26th June, one on Sturges Pond on 9th September and two at Newburgh Priory Lake on 19th December.

**Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris*

Status: Scarce winter and spring visitor

One was flushed by the Pocklington Canal at Bielby on 15th January and another was seen flying over North Duffield Carrs on the 24th with one at Elvington on 7th February (EN).

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

Status: Resident breeder

Low numbers in the Lower Derwent Valley again this year with no notable counts but four pairs were noted in the Wheldrake heronry by the end of February. Five to six were present throughout the year at Castle Howard Lake with eight on 3rd April and at least two pairs bred while 12 were noted at nearby Arboretum Lake during March with birds nesting in trees near Atkinson's Bog. Four pairs bred at Bishop Wood and birds were also reported from Hassacarr Nature Reserve, along the River Ouse between York and Naburn, Escrick, Foston, New Earswick, Sand Hutton and the flooded site at the former Stillington Lake.

**Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*

Status: Resident breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor

Wintering numbers in the Lower Derwent Valley fell from 146 at the start of the year to 71 during January, rising again to 101 by the end of February at which time birds were noted pairing off.

At Rawcliffe Lake, a pair was present all year but no breeding was attempted. Birds were also present all year at Castle Howard Lake with two pairs breeding and pairs also bred at Allerthorpe, Newburgh Priory Lake and on the Selby Canal. A pair was on Yearsley Moor Bottom Pond from 17th February to 18th November and another pair on the River Ouse in York city centre between March and April. A single bird was on the River Ouse at Poppleton on 29th January with up to three between York and Bishopthorpe between February and April and 28 in a flooded field near the River Rye at Haverford House on 16th February. Two birds were at the flooded site of the former Stillington Lake this spring with three there on 31st March and one at the Joseph Rowntree Trust Reserve at New Earswick mid-April. Later in the year, two flew over Hassacarr Nature Reserve on 23rd November, two were on the River Foss at New Earswick on 29th December and three adults and two immatures at Newburgh Priory Lake on 31st.

**Bewick's Swan** *Cygnus columbianus*

Status: Winter visitor

A once regular winter visitor has now become scarce and elusive in the Lower Derwent Valley and 15 birds in January proved to be very elusive indeed although a movement mid-month saw 68 passing through on the 20th. Another 30 passed through in early February with just seven noted on the 12th, 11 on the 21st and nine on the 28th. A rare sighting away from the Lower Derwent involved seven birds with Mute Swans *Cygnus olor* in a flooded field near the River Rye at Haverford House on 16th February.

The only report in the latter half of the year was of a single flying north at East Cottingham on 23rd November.

**Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus*

Status: Winter visitor

35 birds frequented the North Duffield Carrs area throughout January and February with a maximum of 62 in the Lower Derwent Valley on 21st January. Seven put in a brief appearance at Castle Howard Lake on 29th October with a single there on 9th November. 36 had returned to North Duffield Carrs by 4th November with 50 at East Cottingwith on the 23rd and three at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd December.

**Bean Goose** *Anser fabalis*

Status: Winter visitor and late winter passage migrant

In the Lower Derwent Valley, 18 were at Bank Island briefly on 29th January with four at Storwood the same day, three at Ellerton on 14th February and two at North Duffield Carrs on the 19th, where 13 arrived on the 28th and lingered into March.

It would be appreciated if observers could attempt to identify birds of this species racially where possible.

**Pink-footed Goose** *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Status: Winter visitor and passage migrant

There was a noticeable movement of 620 birds through the Lower Derwent Valley on 7th January as 14 moved south at Wheldrake Ings on the 10th and 31 were present at Thorganby on the 13th with one or two lingering to the month end. Another large movement occurred in February when 700 passed north over Wheldrake Ings on the 9th and 500 flew over Thorganby on the 16th with 300 over North Duffield Carrs the same day. A single bird was with Greylag Geese *Anser anser* at Castle Howard Lake on 1st April.

Returning birds were first noted on 8th September when a skein of 20 was seen flying over Fulford. Another 130 flew east at East Cottingwith on 13th October and up to 100 were noted flying over York on 2nd and 3rd November. Singles were again at Castle Howard Lake on 19th October and at Newburgh Priory Lake from 4th-7th November.

**White-fronted Goose** *Anser albifrons*

Status: Winter visitor

18 flew north at North Duffield Carrs on 2nd January with 21 there briefly on 12th February and four from 22nd-24th February. It would be appreciated if observers could attempt to identify birds of this species racially where possible.

**Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

Status: Resident breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor

A common goose, recorded from and breeding on many bodies of water throughout the

recording area. In the Lower Derwent Valley, the large wintering numbers peaked at 921 on 27th January and large numbers were also present at Castle Howard Lake with a maximum of 600 on 10th March.

Other peak counts included 140 along the River Ouse south of York on 8th September, 62 over Selby on 11th November, 87 at Rawcliffe Lake on 26th November, 150 at Storwood on 29th November and 170 at Sutton Farm on 13th December.

**Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

Status: Resident breeder and winter visitor

Another common goose recorded from and breeding on many bodies of water throughout the recording area.

In the Lower Derwent Valley, the large wintering numbers peaked at 713 on 12th February and up to 200 could be seen during the winter months at Castle Howard Lake.

Other peak counts were 73 at Rawcliffe Lake on 3rd January, 120 along the River Ouse south of York on 8th September, 161 at Allerthorpe on 15th September, 35 on Sand Hutton Lake on 16th October and 550 at Wheldrake Ings on 30th December.

**Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

Status: Winter visitor and feral wanderer

A single bird ranged throughout the Lower Derwent Valley with a Canada Goose *Branta canadensis* flock throughout January with two at Bank Island on 26th February. One was with Canada Geese at Castle Howard Lake on 3rd April with another there on 4th July and a feral bird was seen at many sites in the York area throughout the year. A flock of was 20 present at Rowntree Park from 28th August to 8th September.

**Brent Goose** *Branta bernicla*

Status: Scarce winter visitor and spring passage migrant

A single dark-bellied individual *Branta bernicla bernicla* was at North Duffield Carrs on 12th February (EN).

It would be appreciated if observers could attempt to identify birds of this species racially where possible.

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

Status: Winter visitor, migrant breeder and scarce passage migrant

Early in the year up to 83 were present in the Lower Derwent Valley with a maximum of 104 on 12th February and two birds were at the flooded site of the former Stillington Lake from

February to late April with three there from May to mid-June. A couple of birds were seen at York University Lake on 10th April and again on 18th July and a pair was on Selby Canal on 7th June.

At the back end of the year up to 14 were noted at Wheldrake Ings during November and December.

**Wigeon** *Anas penelope*

Status: Winter visitor, spring passage migrant and resident breeder

The usual high numbers wintering in the Lower Derwent Valley peaked at 12000 on 19th January and returning birds had built back up to 2000 at Wheldrake Ings by the end of the year.

Away from the Lower Derwent, small numbers were reported from Castle Howard Lake during the months of January, March, April and November, a drake was on the River Ouse at Fulford Ings on 7th January and two were at Allerthorpe on 22nd September. Ten birds were at Newburgh Priory Lake on 29th September with three there on 30th October and two remaining on 18th November while a female was at Rawcliffe Lake on 15th November.

**Gadwall** *Anas strepera*

Status: Winter visitor and migrant breeder

In the Lower Derwent Valley, 110 on 14th January increased to 197 by the 28th and increased further through February to 246 by the 28th.

At Castle Howard Lake, 20 on 7th January decreased to 12 by the 13th with three remaining until 24th March and a pair there on 29th October.

Elsewhere, a male was on the River Ouse at Fulford Ings on 7th January and a pair on Sturges Pond on 9th March.

**Common Teal** *Anas crecca*

Status: Winter visitor and resident breeder

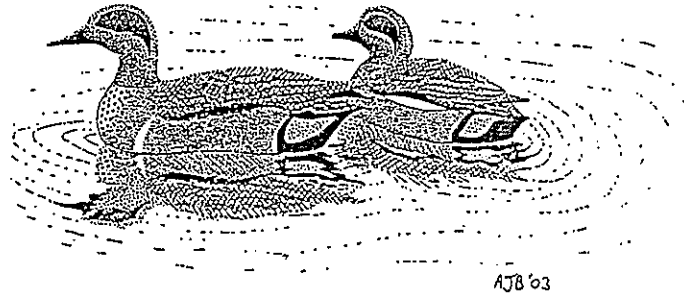
5000+ were in the Lower Derwent Valley during the early part of the year and also present at Castle Howard Lake during the winter months with peak counts of 30 on 13th January and 40 on 1st November. Also present early in the year at Fulford Ings with a peak of 11 on 3rd March. Four birds were at the flooded site of the former Stillington Lake on 14th March and nine were at Newburgh Priory Lake on 30th October with three remaining on 18th November while 100 were seen at Wheldrake Ings on 4th November.

**Green-winged Teal** *Anas carolinensis*

Status: Vagrant

A drake of this recently split species was with Common Teal *Anas crecca* at North Duffield

Carrs on 18th February(EN). This record has been accepted by the YNU.



**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

Status: Winter visitor and resident breeder

As to be expected, a common bird throughout the recording area with birds found in most areas holding water.

In the Lower Derwent Valley, wintering numbers remained high early in the year after last December's exceptional numbers with a peak of 4130 on 12th February. Other peak counts included 100 along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on 1st January, 450 at Castle Howard Lake on 6th January, 103 at Allertorpe on 15th September, 350 at Newburgh Priory Lake on 5th October, 300+ at Castle Howard Lake during October and November, 130 at Stamford Bridge from 30th October to 24th November, 129 on the River Foss at New Earswick in December and 100+ at Walbutts Sewage Works, Strensall on 31st December.

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

Status: Winter visitor and scarce migrant breeder

390 were counted in the Lower Derwent Valley on 1st January and 300+ remained through January and February with a flock of 200 at Bubwith Ings on 28th February, a pair at East Cottingwith on 28th March and Bubwith Ings on 29th April and another pair at York University Lake on 10th April.

Two at Allertorpe on 15th September was the only record for the back end of the year.

**Garganey** *Anas querquedula*

Status: Summer breeder

One on the pool at Wheldrake Ings on 26th May was the only record received this year.

**Shoveler** *Anas clypeata*

Status: Resident breeder and winter visitor

In the Lower Derwent Valley, 100 throughout January increased to 295 by the end of February but no records were received thereafter. The only records away from the Lower Derwent were



of four males and three females at the flooded site of the former Stillington Lake on 7th April and three birds at Castle Howard Lake on 15th September.

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina*

Status: Winter visitor and migrant breeder

3000 in the Lower Derwent Valley in early January fell to 1000+ by the 14th and remained at that level to the end of February but no records were received thereafter.

At Castle Howard Lake, there were 30 wintering early in the year then 60 on 29th October increased to 100+ by 9th November. 12 birds were at the flooded site of the former Stillington Lake in mid-February and up to seven wintered at Rawcliffe Lake. Odd birds were noted on the rivers in York throughout the year with 15 on floodwater near Bishopthorpe on 15th February and two at Allerthorpe on 14th October.

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

Status: Winter visitor and migrant breeder

400+ were present in the Lower Derwent Valley throughout January and February, but no records were received thereafter. Up to 100 were at Castle Howard Lake early in the year with a few staying through the summer and 150 present from October to the year end while up to eight were on the nearby Arboretum Lake from February to June.

Half a dozen were on the River Foss near Monkbridge during January and February with up to three throughout the year along the River Ouse between York and Naburn. Five were on the pond in New Earswick Nature Reserve during February and 16 were at the flooded site of the former Stillington Lake in mid-March with 11 still there on 22nd April.

A pair bred at Allerthorpe with 24 birds there on 14th October, seven at Wheldrake Ings on 30th December and eight on the lagoons at Walbutts Sewage Works, Strensall.

**Scaup** *Aythya marila*

Status: Winter visitor and passage migrant in small numbers

An excellent set of records started with two drakes at North Duffield Carrs on 2nd January with a female there on the 4th. Two pairs were at Aughton on the 7th with two females at Bank Island on the same day and three there from the 12th-14th when a wildfowl count revealed up to 11 birds throughout the Lower Derwent Valley. Four were at Aughton on 1st February, two at North Duffield on the 5th, three females at Bank Island on the 7th and a drake graced Wheldrake Ings from the 8th-17th with two at Aughton on the 17th.

Outside the valley, a female was at Castle Howard Lake from 13th-15th January.

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula*

Status: Winter visitor and passage migrant

A peak count of 96 in the Lower Derwent Valley on 14th January with 72 remaining to the month end and 57 still present on 18th February, then numbers fell rapidly as birds started to depart.

Elsewhere, small numbers were reported from Castle Howard Lake during the winter months with two flying over the Arboretum Lake in March. Three were on the River Ouse near Bishopthorpe on 1st January with a drake on Newburgh Priory Lake on the 17th and another on the Ouse at Poppleton from 2nd-4th February while two birds were at Wheldrake Ings on 30th December.

**Smew** *Mergus albellus*

Status: Almost annual winter visitor

A 'redhead' was on the River Ouse near the Millennium Bridge, York on 1st January with another at North Duffield Carrs the same day and still present on the 3rd with two there on the 6th. Another 'redhead' was at Low Catton on the 14th while two plus a drake were at Bank Island on the 21st, moving to Wheldrake Ings on the 25th. Another 'redhead' was at Bank Island from 6th-9th February with one at North Duffield on the 18th.

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

Status: Winter visitor and passage migrant

The roost at Wheldrake Ings peaked at 111 on 30th January and remained at around 100 birds until the end of February at least.

A pair was on the River Ouse at Clifton Ings on 2nd January with a 'redhead' at Poppleton on the 12th while Fulford Ings numbers peaked at 11 on the 7th. Five males and four 'redheads' were on the Ouse at Clifton Ings on 2nd February with a single male there on 1st March while a pair at Rawcliffe Lake on 16th March moved onto the river at Poppleton the next day. Further down river, seven birds were at Ross Carrs near Selby on 13th February with a pair there on 2nd March plus three birds at Sturges Pond on 22nd February.

At Castle Howard Lake, numbers remained low early in the year but some large counts were received at the back end peaking at 92 on 9th November while birds were also seen on the nearby Arboretum Lake with five in January and three in February. The only record from the Lower Derwent Valley late in the year was of two 'redheads' at Wheldrake Ings on 4th November.

**Ruddy Duck** *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Status: Migrant breeder

Up to eight were seen throughout the year at Castle Howard Lake and on the Arboretum Lake

from March to August. Nine were at Wheldrake Ings throughout January with two males at Bank Island from the 7th-19th. Two birds turned up at the flooded site of the former Stillington Lake on 13th May and two pairs were reported to have bred at Allerthorpe.

**Red Kite** *Milvus milvus*

Status: Irregular visitor

Two flew over Wheldrake village on 21st June (PB).

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

Status: Passage migrant and rare breeder

An immature at Wheldrake Ings on 15th August (NS) was the only report.

**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

Status: Winter visitor and passage migrant

A 'ringtail' was seen at Strensall Common (PR) and Wheldrake Ings (AB/NS) on 18th November.

**Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

Status: Passage visitor and rare breeder

Sightings were confined to the Lower Derwent Valley with one hunting Teal *Anas crecca* at Wheldrake Ings on 7th and 8th January, one at Elvington on the 24th (EN), an immature at Wheldrake on 16th October and a female at Melbourne on 9th December (NS).

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

Status: Resident breeder and passage migrant

The most common raptor in the area.

Widespread reports were received from 33 sites around the area but only recorded breeding at New Earswick where a pair fledged two young. Pairs were noted at Dunnington Common on 2nd April, Foston on 16th May and Yearsley on 30th October. Three, an adult and two juveniles, were along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on 7th May while two were recorded in York city centre with a male at Lendal Bridge on 30th March and a bird eating prey on a rooftop at St Saviour's Place on 31st July.

Specific identification was received of five males, seven females and three juveniles. Eleven of the sites reported birds occasionally, regularly, every month or throughout the year.

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

Status: Passage migrant and rare breeder

In the early months, singles were at Melbourne on 6th January, Elvington on 17th February (EN) and over Moor Lane, Haxby on 4th March (J & TM).

A juvenile was at Terrington on 11th September (PB).

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Status: Resident breeder

13 were in the Lower Derwent Valley on 14th January, three at Bishopthorpe on 13th July with two at Pond Head, Oulston on 3rd November and Strensall on 16th December. Singles were reported from nine other locations. A pair bred on a pylon and a female roosted in an owl box on Dunnington Common.

Reported as frequent and throughout the year from seven other locations and seen particularly along the inner and outer ring roads around York.

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

Status: Passage migrant and winter visitor

A female was at Elvington on 17th January (EN), a single at Dunnington Common on the 18th (T &

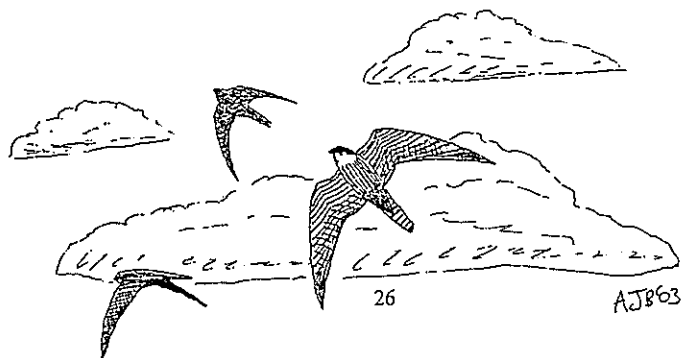
VW) and a female at Sutton upon Derwent on the 21st. Two immatures were hunting together at Thorganby on 18th February with a single at Elvington on the 19th and 21st with the last at Sutton upon Derwent on the 28th (EN).

The only autumn records were of individuals at Blue Coat Farm, Foston on 8th, 23rd and 25th October (PB).

**Hobby** *Falco subbuteo*

Status: Increasing summer visitor

Two were at Dunnington Common on 28th August with a single there on 24th September (T & VW).



**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

Status: Winter and passage visitor

Two were at Wheldrake Ings on 1st January, a male at Thorganby on the 18th and 21st with a female at Elvington on the 28th. Two remained in the Lower Derwent Valley throughout February, especially at North Duffield Ings (EN).

One chased Wood Pigeons *Columba palumbus* at Middlethorpe Ings on 24th November (AB) with a male at East Cottingwith on the 28th (PB). A large falcon flying over Nunthorpe Road, York on 2nd December was thought to be this species (AB).

**Red-legged Partridge** *Alectoris rufa*

Status: Resident breeder

The largest covies were: 14 at Dunnington Common on 18th August, 27 at Storwood on 14th September, 19 at Dunnington Common on 3rd October, 13 at Blue Coat Farm, Foston on the 18th and 38 at Storwood on 28th November. Up to seven were reported from 14 other sites.

**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

Status: Resident breeder

All records are included: 13 at Seavy Carr on 28th January, eight at Barlow Grange on 3rd February, twos at Dunnington Common on 12th March, East Cottingwith on the 28th, Crayke on 3rd April and Dunnington Common on the 20th, one at Grange Farm, Wigginton on 6th August, 17 at Seaton Ross on the 28th, 15 at East Cottingwith on 16th October, six at Foston on the 25th and 17 at Kettlestring Farm on 15th November.

Only one was seen at Rawcliffe Cornfield Nature Reserve, perhaps marking the demise of a small population which has clung on around the northern urban fringe of York using allotments and increasingly dwindling and fragmented patches of rough grassland and farmland.

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

Status: Resident breeder

Large numbers are still to be seen in areas that have large shooting estates. Five were in Askham Bog on 6th January and eight at Poppleton on 10th March. Three melanistic birds were at Cum Hagg Wood on 18th September with eight birds at Naburn Sewage Works on the 17th and 23 at Dunnington Common on 19th December. One at Clifton Ings from 14th-30th November was the first record for the site!

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

Status: Resident breeder and winter visitor

The only counts from the Lower Derwent Valley NNR were 280 on 28th January and 320

throughout February.

Numbers at Castle Howard have decreased with 30 on 3rd April being the highest count with other counts being only up to ten. Ten were also recorded at Stillington in the spring and at Newburgh Priory on 10th August. 32 were along the River Foss between Strensall and York on 25th February while 20 were at Allerthorpe on 15th September and 16 along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year with most in Rowntree Park.

Six were at Rawcliffe Lake throughout the year with at least one pair breeding. A pair hatched eight eggs at Hassacarr Nature Reserve, two adults and two chicks were seen at Poppleton on 2nd May and one bird was on a nest with a small chick at Layerthorpe on 2nd July. Small numbers were recorded elsewhere but despite birds being seen in virtually any location within range of water few are reported.

**Coot** *Fulica atra*

Status: Resident breeder and winter visitor

The only counts from the Lower Derwent Valley NNR were 980 on 31st January and 1120 on 28th February.

Castle Howard Lake held 100 on six dates with 280 on 6th January, 200 on 18th February, 110 on 11th July and 150 on 29th October. Up to 20 were at Newburgh throughout the year with 25 at Stillington on 24th February and 22 there on 22nd April, four or five pairs attempting to breed.

20 were at Allerthorpe on 15th September with small numbers reported elsewhere. Ten pairs were at Rawcliffe Lake throughout the year with at least three pairs raising young.

Five pairs were noted during the breeding season at Sturges Pond and two pairs at New Earswick hatched young which failed to survive.

**Common Crane** *Grus grus*

Status: Vagrant

The bird remaining in the Lower Derwent Valley from 2000 was last seen at Barmby-on-the-Marsh on 21st January (EN).

One flew south at Sheriff Hutton on 3rd April (BP).

Both records have been accepted by the YNU.

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

Status: Passage migrant and migrant breeder

The first returning bird was seen at North Duffield Carrs on 21st February followed by a pair

there on the 26th. Three pairs had returned by the month end.

In the Castle Howard area, two birds were present on 24th March and 1st April with a party of three there on 5th August.

A pair was in a flooded field at Carr Lane, Strensall from 10th March to 12th April. Singles were at Dunnington Common on 6th April, in a flooded field near Sutton-on-the-Forest on 13th April and over Clifton Ings on 13th June. Five were at Newburgh on 9th June with four in flooded set-aside near Upper Helmsley on the 23rd and two at Escrick on 5th July. Birds were heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on 30th June and 14th July and along the Pocklington Canal on 3rd July. A single was at Ellerton on 8th May with two at Bielby on 3rd August. One pair nested in a sugar beet field near Forest Farm, Warthill during May and June with three chicks seen by the farmer.

**Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*

Status: Passage migrant and summer breeder

One flying over Sturges Ponds on 20th April was the only report (DC).

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

Status: Passage migrant

Six were seen in the Stillington area on 28th and 29th May (GB).

**Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

Status: Winter visitor and passage migrant

In the Lower Derwent Valley, 1004 were present on 1st January dropping to only 70 by the 14th. Birds began to return late in the month with 3100 at North Duffield Carrs on the 23rd and 4000+ there on the 28th. Numbers remained high throughout February, but birds were mobile due to flooding with counts of 8200 on the 12th and a record 10200 on the 17th.

Elsewhere, 430 in the New Earswick area in January increased to 1200 in February but none was then seen until November when 400 arrived, climbing to 650 in December. 100 were at Barlow Grange on 3rd February with 250 there on 28th October while 400 were at Ross Carrs on 9th February. 32 were at Naburn Sewage Works on 1st January with 2000+ there on 27th October.

Other records included 25 at Monks Cross on 3rd January, 180 at Clifton Ings on 2nd February, 30 near Haxby on the 20th, 100 at Sim Balk Lane, Bishopthorpe on the 21st, 200 at Ellerton on 4th October, six at Allerthorpe on the 14th, 1500 over Dunnington Hall on the 22nd when 100 at Flaxton. 30 at Dunnington Common on 3rd November, 40 at North Duffield Carrs and 900 at Bubwith Ings on the 4th, 500 at East Lilling House Farm near Strensall on 2nd December when 72 were at Poppleton declining to 106 by the 9th and 600 at Woodhouse Farm, Strensall on the 20th.

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

Status: Passage migrant and winter visitor

A single bird was with 3000 Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria* at North Duffield Carrs during February (EN).

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

Status: Migrant breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor

In the Lower Derwent Valley, 2000+ remained throughout the site at the start of the year with 2100 present on 14th January. As with Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*, numbers increased towards the month end with 4200 present on the 28th. This number rose further to 6100 on 12th February with 7800 by the 17th. 5000+ lingered to the month end with several birds seen displaying from the 21st.

Elsewhere, 100 at Ross Carrs on 9th February increased to 450 by the 13th with 80 near Sturges Ponds on 2nd March. 170 were with Golden Plover at Monks Cross on 3rd January with 180 in arable fields near Norton on the 26th when 150 were seen at Murton Grange. 40 were at Naburn Sewage Works on 1st January with c.300 along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on 15th February, decreasing thereafter until 500 arrived at Naburn Sewage Works on 8th September with a similar number there on 19th November declining to 100+ towards the year end.

In the New Earswick area, maximum monthly counts were 200 in January, 820 in February, 200 in November and 750 in December. 100 were with Golden Plover near Flaxton on 3rd March.

Two were displaying near Sutton-on-the-Forest on 13th April with two at Westhall on 19th May and 5th June. 60 were in flooded set-aside near Upper Helmsley on 23rd June with a pair at Poppleton on 20th May. Birds were present throughout the year at Dunnington with two pairs breeding on the common while two pairs reared young in fields to the east of Furniture Makers Walk, Castle Howard.

In the latter part of the year, 400 were at Castle Howard on 14th September, remaining for two weeks.

Other counts included 400 at Tollerton on 27th September, 1000 over Dunnington Hall on 22nd October, 100 near the Alne turn-off on the A19 on the 25th, 500 at Wheldrake Ings, 400 at North Duffield Carrs and 15 at Bubwith Ings - all on 4th November. 24 were at Poppleton on 28th October with 117 there on 2nd December, 200 at Linton-on-Ouse on 1st December, 500 with Golden Plover at East Lilling Farm, Strensall on the 2nd and 16th, 20 at Woodhouse Farm, Strensall on the 20th and 30 again at East Lilling Farm, Strensall on the 29th.

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

Status: Passage migrant and winter visitor

The only records came from the Lower Derwent Valley where 700 in early January increased to



1000+ by the 11th and 1300 by the 28th, 1000 remaining during the first week of February with 800+ on the 12th and 500+ on the 28th.

30 were at Wheldrake Ings on 18th November.

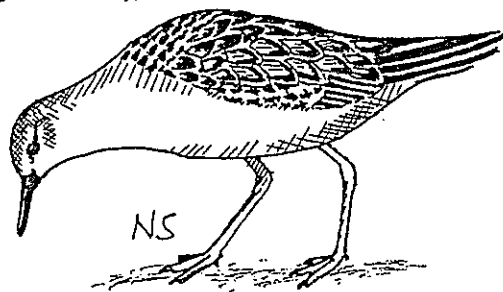
**Ruff** *Philomachus pugnax*

Status: Rare breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor

Up to 100 present in the Lower Derwent Valley in early January increased to 265 on the 14th - a reserve record - with 150+ remaining into February, but birds became mobile due to extensive flooding.

100+ were present throughout with 162 on the 12th.

Five were at Wheldrake Ings on 18th November.



**Jack Snipe** *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Status: Winter visitor and passage migrant

Three or four birds lingered in the Elvington Airfield/Heslington Tillmire area throughout January while falling water levels brought an impressive 17 back to Seavy Carr on 23rd February.

A single was flushed at Fulford Ings on 1st January with one to two there on the 7th. One was at Rawcliffe Meadows on the 8th.

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

Status: Resident and migrant breeder and passage visitor

In the Lower Derwent Valley, numbers remained low during January due to extensive flooding with a maximum of 100 at Thorganby on the 17th and 300+ also present between Elvington Airfield and Heslington Tillmire. 300+ remained in February along the floods between East Cottingham and Bubwith with scattered birds feeding on other small areas of higher land. 300 also returned to Seavy Carr on the 23rd when an estimated 720+ were present throughout the valley.

Elsewhere, one to two at Fulford Ings in early January increased to 20 on the 24th with five

there on 21st April. 27 at Clifton Ings on 15th January rose to 70+ on 2nd February with 40 there on 28th March. Ten were flushed from rushy pasture near Langton on 12th April with one at the Joseph Rowntree Nature Reserve, New Earswick on the 18th and one 'drumming' at Storwood on 6th June.

Later in the year, up to three birds were at Barlow Grange on 28th October with singles at Ellerton on the 4th, Strensall Common on three dates in November, Haxby Road Farm on the 15th, Coxwold on 19th December, in a ditch at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on the 30th and in stubble at Brecks Lane, Strensall on the same date.

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

Status: Resident breeder and winter visitor

Three were flushed in Askham Bog on 6th January while 'roding' started early in the Lower Derwent Valley with two birds at Thornton Ellers on 21st February. A single was at Wheldrake Ings at dusk on the 23rd and also at Ellerton on the 27th. Singles were at Sturges Ponds on 15th March and scuttling across a garden lawn in Huby at dusk on the 23rd with two singles and a pair seen at separate locations on Yearsley Moor on 23rd June.

Others were at Rawcliffe Meadows in November and Rabbit Warren Wood, Dunnington on the 9th with two there on 19th December while further singles were at Brayton Barff on 15th November, Yearsley Moor on the 18th, Sand Hutton on the 20th and Wheldrake Ings on 30th December.

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

Status: Passage migrant, migrant breeder and winter visitor

The first returning bird was in a flooded field at East Cottingwith on 14th January with one at Thorganby on 9th February and three at North Duffield Carrs on the 19th increasing to c.20 by the month end. A single was at Newburgh on 31st March with a pair on Dunnington Common in late March and early April. One was heard 'singing' over Strensall Common on 8th and 30th April with singles at Terrington Bank and Hagg Bridge on the 24th. Five were noted at Castle Howard during April with twos at Severalls Wood and Silver Vista while one flew over the Arboretum on 23rd June. A bird was heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on 13th May with an adult and two juveniles seen at Thornton on 27th June and a single along Pocklington Canal on 3rd July.

**Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*

Status. Passage migrant and occasional winter visitor

A winter-plumaged bird was on the riverbank at Thorganby on 14th January (EN) while a summer-plumaged bird was at Bank Island on 2nd May (NS).

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

Status: Passage migrant, migrant breeder and winter visitor

Following record counts in the Lower Derwent Valley during December 2000 the 1500 at the start of January decreased to 748 by the 14th. c.500 were at East Cottingwith while numbers throughout the valley in February declined slowly from 645 on the 12th to 500+ on the 28th.

Elsewhere, singles were seen or heard at Middlethorpe Ings in the first half of the year with five on a flooded area around Barlow Grange Farm on 28th October.

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

Status: Passage migrant and winter visitor

One was on the Pocklington Beck at Bielby on 7th January (EN) with another at Clifton Ings from 23rd January to 28th March (NS).

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

Status: Passage migrant and rare summer breeder

Surprisingly the only record was of one in the Stillington area on 13th May (GB).

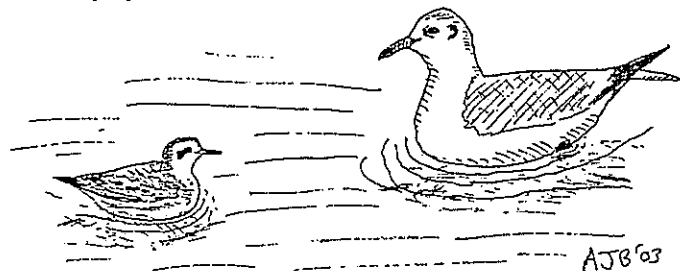
**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

Status: Rare visitor

A single at East Cottingwith on 13th and 16th January was later seen on the riverbank at Thorganby on the 19th (EN).

**Grey Phalarope** *Phalaropus fulicarius*

Status: Vagrant



One was swimming with a Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus* at North Duffield Carrs on 20th November (DB). This appears to be the fourth record for the YOC recording area and has been accepted by the YNU.

**Little Gull** *Larus minutus*

Status: Passage migrant

Two adults and a first-winter were seen in the Lower Derwent Valley on 7th May (GD).

**Black-headed Gull** *Larus ridibundus*

Status: Resident breeder, winter visitor and passage migrant

At Wheldrake Ings, the year started with 20000 birds at the regular roost, peaking at 29000 on 19th January but no further records were received from the Lower Derwent Valley.

Birds were seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the winter months with a maximum of 600+ on 25th February. Reported as common in winter at Rawcliffe Lake with a count of 54 on 16th January. Monthly figures for the New Earswick area peaked at 230 in February and 500 in August. Other counts included 80 at Castle Howard on 6th January, 150 at Dunnington Common on the 16th, 100+ at Castle Howard Lake from February to April, c.50 around Stillington on 28th March and 20-50 regularly around a flooded field in Carr Lane, Strensall during April.

The usual winter flock in Osbaldwick averaged c.30 birds early in the year, sometimes up to 100, with smaller numbers during the summer and rising again later in the year to c.40 by the end of November. Counts elsewhere in the latter part of the year included 150 at Barlow Grange on 24th October and 150 at Castle Howard on the 29th while 1000 flew over Hassacarr Nature Reserve on 10th December.

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

Status: Winter visitor and passage migrant

5000+ were at the Wheldrake Ings roost in January but no further records were forthcoming from the Lower Derwent Valley.

Seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn outside the breeding season with a maximum of 16 on 25th February and present at Rawcliffe Lake during the winter with a peak of 18 on 16th January. 100 were seen flying over Dunnington during the winter months to roost either on the Derwent Ings or the Humber. 50 were on York racecourse on 13th February while monthly counts in the New Earswick area peaked at 50 in February and 25 in November. 10-20 were reported from Castle Howard outside the breeding season with a maximum of 60 on 16th April.

Birds were present as usual in Osbaldwick with Black-headed Gulls *Larus ridibundus* making up about a third of the flock, with a peak of 40 on 26th March. Also reported from Askham Bog, Barlow Grange, Newburgh Priory Lake and Strensall.

A remarkable record received from Dunnington was of a bird on a garden bird table on 24th October (T & VW).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus*

Status: Passage migrant and scarce winter visitor

A single of the British race *graellsii* was in the Wheldrake Ings roost on 21st January.

Up to three were seen regularly flying over the River Ouse between York and Naburn from April to September with six in a flooded field beside Carr Lane, Strensall on 22nd April; 50-100 were seen in a pig field in this area from 7th-16th August while 50+ were in a field one mile north of Huby on the 10th. 350 flying over Dunnington Common on 26th August was the highest count from this site with the only other report being 19 at Foston on 16th September.

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus*

Status: Winter visitor and passage migrant

The Wheldrake Ings roost held 500+ on 1st January with up to 1300 from the 14th to the month end. No further records were received from the Lower Derwent Valley.

Birds were seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn outside the breeding season with a maximum of 20 flying west on 24th November. 12 flew over Dunnington Common on 16th January while monthly counts from the New Earswick area peaked at 316 in March and 250 in August with birds seen flying east and occasionally south to roost late in the evening.

**Iceland Gull** *Larus glaucoides*

Status: Winter visitor

A first-winter bird roosted at Wheldrake Ings daily from 5th-21st January with a second-winter there on the 19th and an adult on the 30th (EN).

**Glaucous Gull** *Larus hyperboreus*

Status: Winter visitor

An adult roosted at Wheldrake Ings on 1st January with a first-winter there on the 7th (EN).

**Great Black-backed Gull** *Larus marinus*

Status: Winter visitor and passage migrant

In the Lower Derwent Valley, counts from the Wheldrake Ings roost included 900+ on 1st January, 1250 on the 12th and 1400 on the 30th. No records thereafter.

Elsewhere, two flew over Skipwith Common on 8th January and birds were seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of c.70 flying west on 28th April. Six were in a field west of Crayke on 30th October with five over Dunnington Common on 19th December.

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

Status: Passage migrant and rare summer breeder

Four were at Castle Howard Lake on 14th May (JP) with singles at Foston the following day (PB) and Escrick on 25th June.

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

Status: Resident breeder

In the Lower Derwent Valley NNR, this species had an encouraging start to the year with numerous small parties throughout the site. The largest flocks included 48 in linseed adjacent to North Duffield Carrs on 7th January and 30 at East Cottingwith on the 14th. Flocks seemed to break up during February with numerous pairs seen throughout the area, many returning to favoured nesting sites by mid-month.

Elsewhere, nine were at Ross Carrs on 9th February and a pair was 1.5 km east of Huby on 26th March with four birds in a pig field beside Carr Lane, Strensall on 12th April. Two pairs were near Sutton-on-the-Forest on the 13th and a pair in a Huby garden on the 18th when breeding was noted at Allerthorpe. A single was with Wood Pigeons *Columba palumbus* feeding in a garden in Upper Poppleton from 25th May to 7th July and six were at Stockton-on-the-Forest on 23rd June. Two or three pairs were resident on Clifton Ings and up to 12 regularly seen along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year. In New Earswick, up to three were recorded each month and birds are probably under-recorded here; generally they were seen with flocks of Wood Pigeon in the northern and western edges of the area. A small flock of 15 birds was on Dunnington Common on 3rd October and three were round Poppleton on the 28th with five there on 10th December. Also reported from Askham Bog and Forest Farm, Warthill.

**Wood Pigeon** *Columba palumbus*

Status: Resident breeder

Large numbers were in the Lower Derwent Valley in January following the exceptional influx late last year. Several flocks in excess of 500 were found during the month with over 9000 present in the area on the 12th, the biggest single flock being 1500 at East Cottingwith. 100+ were counted under the groups of trees along the drive south of Castle Howard, feeding there when everywhere else was frozen. In New Earswick, the highest winter count was 310 in February.

One was seen nest building near Terrington on 11th September and 35 were in stubble fields at Blue Coat Farm, Foston on 3rd October with 130 there on the 18th and 19th. 1000+ were on Dunnington Common on the 27th and c.50 were at Sand Hutton on 8th November with 156 by the River Ouse at Bishopthorpe on the 17th and at least 200 on farmland north of Strensall Common on the 22nd. One recently fledged bird allowed close approach, down to three metres, near East Cottingwith on the 29th while 100 were at Woodhouse Farm on 13th December with 200 near Walbutts Lane, Strensall on the 16th.

There were good numbers all year on Clifton Ings while a pair was seen regularly all year in a

Strensall garden with two to four birds in a Poppleton garden. Also seen daily around Huby and resident along the Ouse between York and Naburn. Flocks of 20-30 were seen regularly throughout the year on farmland near Brecks Lane, Strensall and also common in the New Earswick area where the largest concentrations were around Kettlestring Farm.

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*  
Status: Resident breeder

Seen daily in an Osbaldwick garden during the first part of the year and observed mating on 26th April. However, after a two week absence in October with no feeding noted, birds temporarily deserted the site until the end of the month. The winter roost consisted of only two birds, much reduced from last year. 27 birds feeding near the Costcutter offices was the largest count in Dunnington while 36 were counted around farm buildings at Storwood on 5th November. Common and probably under-recorded in the New Earswick area with a maximum count of ten in December. Regularly seen in gardens in Huby, Poppleton and Strensall where they made good Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus* fodder! Up to ten were seen along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year. Also reported from the Derwent at Howsham Bridge.

**Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia turtur*  
Status: Migrant breeder and passage visitor

The wintering juvenile at Long Marston remained until February and disappeared during a cold spell (JK).

The first returning migrant was at Sturges Ponds on 28th April while one was heard 'purring' at Allerthorpe on 7th May and again on the 13th. A pair at Brayton Barff on 10th May remained throughout the breeding season with another pair present along the Selby Canal near Brayton Bridge. A single bird was on Pocklington airfield on 23rd June and two were seen at Escrick on 5th July with a pair at Allerthorpe on the 22nd being the last.

**Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus*  
Status: Migrant breeder

The first bird was seen in flight at Seaton Ross on 25th April with another seen in a tree at Thornton next day. One was heard in Haxby in the early morning of the 29th when two were on Dunnington Common. Heard in Osbaldwick on 2nd May and in Strensall during the early morning of the 5th and 11th when one was also at Sand Hutton. Two were at Dunnington Common on the 13th when one was at Holtby with further singles at Hassacarr Nature Reserve and Thornton-le-Clay. Heard at Frog Hall on the 14th, Poppleton on the 15th and Foston on the 16th.

A dreadful year for this species in the New Earswick area with only one report of a single near Huntington church in May. Fewer were also noted in the Towthorpe area with birds only occasionally heard there with one at Forest Farm, Warthill on 5th June. Four were together

along Selby Canal near Brayton Bridge on the 7th and the last was at Dunnington Common on 10th July.

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

Status: Resident breeder

Regular throughout the Lower Derwent Valley in January with birds frequently seen hunting towards dusk at Bank Island. Several pairs had already returned to breeding sites by the month end. A single was seen flying at Clifton Moor at 22.45 hours on 26th January and also seen there in November while another flew across York Road, Escrick after dusk on 6th February. Seen almost daily at Melbourne in February with three there on the 17th while pairs continued to return to breeding sites in the Lower Derwent during the month. Singles were in Dunnington on 18th April and at Aughton on the 25th while a pair nested at Forest Farm, Warthill and was seen taking food to the nest hole on 23rd June. This pair later fledged two young, according to the farmer. One bird was hunting at Escrick at 15.00 hours on 9th July with another hunting there at 10.00 hours on the 11th. Heard calling at Escrick on 2nd August and also seen there in December. Birds were seen hunting at Wheldrake at 05.30 hours on 2nd August. Recorded throughout the year at Dunnington where a pair reared two young on the common. A single was seen near Stockton-on-the-Forest on the 29th with another hunting near Melbourne on 16th September and again on the 23rd while one was seen at 05.00 hours flying beside the A19 one mile north of Shipton on 3rd October with another at East Cottingham on the 30th. Heard calling at Stockton-on-the-Forest on 12th December.

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

Status: Resident breeder

One was at Aughton on 2nd February and two were at Storwood on 15th March with one there on various dates in April. An amazing six pairs were found in the Dunnington area with proof of breeding at one site on the common. One was near Strensall on the 16th when another was at Foston. Further singles were at Nunnington on the 26th, Wilberfoss on the 27th and in oak trees at the rear of a house at The Brecks, Strensall on the 31st.

One was seen daily on Poppleton School field from 15th June to 12th July while a juvenile was sitting on the ground in a horse paddock in Strensall on 5th July when birds were also heard calling. Also heard calling at Escrick on 2nd August and at Aughton the next day. One was flying from Brockfield Park towards New Earswick just before dusk on 5th October with another being mobbed by Blackbirds *Turdus merula* at East Cottingham on the 15th.

A dead adult found on a footpath in South Wood, Hovingham on 5th November showed no obvious cause of death.

Several birds were heard in the Lower Derwent Valley in November while singles were seen at Kettlestring Farm (New Earswick), and Towthorpe Farm (Haxby), Blue Coat Farm, Strensall Golf Club, Sand Hutton, Terrington and the Buckles Inn on the A64.



**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

Status: Resident breeder throughout the area

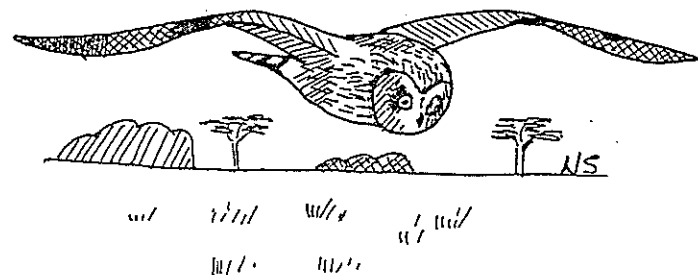
Active in Heworth during the early evening of 8th February and seen and heard in a Huby garden on 29th April with one perched in a tree beside Stillington Road at 07.30 hours on the 30th. A single was found roosting during the day near the road past Bishopthorpe Palace on 13th May with another being mobbed at Frog Hall, Allerthorpe the following day. A bird was seen in Sessions Nature Reserve, New Earswick chasing a Blackbird *Turdus merula* early one May morning with another seen dead by the roadside at Hazelbush crossroads, Stockton-on-the-Forest on 18th June. Birds were heard calling at Buttercrambe at 14.00 hours on 21st June and in Huby on the 22nd and 23rd with two birds noted at separate locations on Yearsley Moor. Five males and two females were heard calling at Escrick on 2nd August while young birds were heard in Osbaldwick during the month.

Heard throughout the autumn in various locations in the Lower Derwent Valley and at other places including Huby. A single was hunting in Walmgate, York on 5th December while three were calling in Stockton-on-the-Forest on the 11th. A pair seemed to be in residence somewhere near Lock Cottage, New Earswick with several birds seen and heard calling there from November to the end of the year. Also observed at Brayton Barff.

**Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*

Status: Casual breeder and passage and winter visitor

A single at Hagg Bridge on 6th January was the first for some time. Hopes for a good winter in the Lower Derwent Valley were realised later in the month with two at Wheldrake Ings on the 21st.



Three birds were also present on Elvington Airfield with another on the nearby Tillmire. In February, up to seven frequented the Elvington Airfield/Heslington Tillmire area, moving between the sites according to disturbance levels. One of the best showings since mid-1980s (EN).

**Nightjar** *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Status: Migrant breeder

Two males were heard 'churring' from separate locations (but not at the same time, so could be one bird that moved) and a female seen in the cleared area next to the Forester's cottage,

Yearsley Moor on 23rd June (MD). No reports were received from Skipwith Common.

**Swift** *Apus apus*

Status: Migrant breeder throughout the area

The first bird was at New Earswick on 25th April, slightly earlier than last year, with two over Bishopthorpe Bridge on the 28th, two in the Lower Derwent Valley on the 29th and one in Osbaldwick on the 30th. Five were over South Parade, York on 1st May with birds over Bootham Crescent, York on the 3rd and the first at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on the 5th, when the first also appeared at their nesting site in Poppleton. First reported from Strensall the following day with five there on the 12th where a pair was seen to nest under house eaves. Nine were over Stockton Lane, York on the 18th.

Common in Huby from mid-May and frequently seen feeding over floodwater near Stillington late in the month with a maximum of ten birds. Six or seven were over Castle Howard South Lake on 8th June with 100+ hunting insects over Rabbit Warren Wood, Dunnington on the 15th. In Osbaldwick, numbers were low in May but much higher by July. Up to 30 were seen along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with good numbers there on 14th July. In New Earswick, the monthly maxima were six in May, 70 in June and 20 in July. 500 were over Barlow Grange on 9th July and 27 over Wheldrake and Thorganby on the 27th.

Through the summer, ten were seen regularly in Strensall and four were at Rawcliffe Lake.

In August, 40+ at Poppleton on 1st was the maximum count there during the year. Seen feeding over Castle Howard Great Lake on 5th while the last in Poppleton were six on the 9th with the last in central York over Fishergate on the 10th. 15 birds were seen with Swallows *Hirundo rustica* and House Martins *Delichon urbica* at Allertorpe Common on the 11th while the last birds in Dunnington were 25 over the common on the 15th. Seen less frequently in Osbaldwick throughout the month. 24 in Strensall on the 1st decreased to just two by the 21st while birds departed from New Earswick by the end of the month.

The last was in Osbaldwick on 1st September.

**[Alpine Swift** *Apus melba*]

Status: Vagrant

One was reported flying northwest over Cawood on 7th October (CA). This record was rejected by BBRC.

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Status: Resident breeder

At least one pair was seen regularly on Clifton Ings all year and noted on floods there on 8th February. Two were on the River Foss at Foss Islands, York on the 9th while a pair displayed on Blue Beck at Rawcliffe Meadows in late March but with no subsequent evidence of breeding.

In New Earswick, a pair was very active in and around the Joseph Rowntree Trust Nature Reserve, but again there was no evidence of breeding. One was on the River Ouse at Fulford on 1st April and another at Poppleton on the 22nd. Further singles were by the River Derwent at Kexby on 3rd June, along Selby Canal on the 7th, along Pocklington Canal on 3rd July and at Newburgh Lake on the 13th.

Present at Hassacarr Nature Reserve from 4th September to the year end while two were at Sturges Ponds on 9th September. Seen at Allerthorpe on the 15th and also noted there later in the year. Others were near Melbourne on 16th September, at Bubwith on 28th October and Scoreby on the 31st while up to five were seen or heard along the Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year.

#### **Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

Status: Resident breeder but not widespread

A single flew over floods at Ellerton on 12th February and another was heard at the north end of Castle Howard Lake on 10th March. Present throughout the year at Brayton Barff and Sturges Ponds with singles recorded from Hassacarr Nature Reserve and Rabbit Warren Wood, Dunnington. Others were at Strensall Common on 23rd May and 11th and 18th November. A juvenile was at East Ness on 8th July while others were at Allerthorpe Common on 11th August, Escrick on the 23rd and the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust reserve at Strensall on the 25th. An adult was at Thornton-le-Clay on 6th October with others at Blue Coat Farm, Foston on the 11th, Strensall Common on the 14th and East Cottingham on the 27th.

#### **Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

Status: Resident breeder throughout the area

At least three were in Askham Bog on 6th January with four at separate locations on Skipwith Common on the 8th. Three pairs were vocally active at Brayton Barff on 3th February, a male and a female at Lodge Farm on the 12th and a single at York racecourse on the 13th. One was seen 'drumming' and another heard on Yearsley Moor on the 17th. A male came to nut feeders at Sim Balk Lane, Bishopthorpe irregularly for a few weeks in April with one in a Hubby garden on the 1st. Bred in Rabbit Warren Wood, Dunnington and a male was feeding on nuts in a garden in Upper Poppleton most days during May and June. Four birds were seen in Bishop Wood on 8th June while one was seen entering a nest hole on the north side of New Earswick Nature Reserve on the 9th. A pair with two young were feeding on peanuts in a garden at Dunnington Common on the 18th. Heard along Pocklington Canal on 3rd July while a juvenile seen in New Earswick Nature Reserve in July suggested successful breeding there.

One was at Pond Head Farm, Oulston on 3rd November while one at Rawcliffe Lake on the 12th was a new bird for the site. A single was at Walbutts Lane, Strensall on the 14th with two seen in a garden in the village on the 30th. Another was calling near Stockton-on-the-Forest on 19th December. Also reported from Allerthorpe, Castle Howard Lake, Escrick, Frog Hall, Gilling, Hagg Wood, Sand Hutton, Sheriff Hutton and Scoreby. Present all year at Clifton Ings while up to three were seen or heard regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year.

**Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos minor*  
Status: Resident breeder although localised and elusive

A single seen in the car park lane at Wheldrake Ings on 9th January was the only record (EN).

**Wood Lark** *Lullula arborea*  
Status: Rare breeder and scarce passage visitor

A single singing male was found over set-aside at Thorganby on 21st January with another unsexed bird being present at the site. In addition, at least one pair returned to Skipwith Common during the month. One was at Sand Hutton on 1st March and also present from the 7th-9th and on the 27th. One at Blue Coat Farm, Foston was heard calling with Sky Larks *Alauda arvensis* on 17th October and singing on the 26th.

**Sky Lark** *Alauda arvensis*  
Status: Resident breeder and winter visitor

Scarce in the Lower Derwent Valley at the start of the year with birds returning from mid-January. 30 at East Cottingwith on the 14th were followed by 45 at Sutton upon Derwent on the 15th, including three singing males. No large flocks thereafter, but singles and pairs were scattered throughout the area. 12 were at Barlow Grange on 3rd February with 120 singing birds noted adjacent to the Lower Derwent Valley NNR on the 12th and four singing along the River Ouse on the 15th. One singing over fields west of Strensall on the 17th and one near Castle Howard Lake on the 18th. 40 flew east over Thornton on the 17th and 65 were present on stubble at Sutton upon Derwent on the 21st. Numerous small parties of ten to 20 were noted throughout the Lower Derwent Valley during the month. One was singing near Oakbutts Farm, Strensall on the 25th while several were with a flock of Yellowhammers *Emberiza citrinella* in a ploughed field then in stubble by the River Foss. The maximum count along the Ouse between York and Naburn was 35 on 3rd March.

Around ten birds were heard singing in a field near Strensall from March and throughout the summer while song was also heard near Castle Howard Lake, at Coulton, Escrick and Terrington throughout the spring. Four were near Lilling on 8th April and birds were seen or heard at regular intervals in fields between Huby; Stillington, Sheriff Hutton, Strensall and Sutton-on-the-Forest on the 22nd. Fewer birds than last year were seen in the usual location on Bootham Stray from April through to July, disappearing as soon as the hay was cropped. At least six pairs were on set-aside at Foston, two nests being found with three and four eggs. There were 19 territories occupied at Forest Farm, Warthill during May and June and five to six pairs bred on Clifton Ings with several pairs on Barlow Common.

Small numbers were moving south over Allerthorpe on 22nd September with 100 moving southwest in small parties throughout the day at Blue Coat Farm, Foston on 1st and 3rd October. Ten were feeding in stubble fields at East Cottingwith on the 12th with 40 there on the 16th while on the 14th small numbers were again moving south over Allerthorpe. 15 were near Poppleton on 11th November and 40 remained near East Cottingwith at the end of the month. Nine were over fields near Pottery Lane, Strensall on 8th December.

On Dunnington Common, 75 was the highest winter count while 35 were at Clifton Ings on 22nd December. On the 31st, a flock of c.160 birds was feeding in a stubble field in Brecks Lane, Strensall with Yellowhammers and Chaffinches *Fringilla coelebs*. Two were seen in a ploughed field beside the Foss in Strensall the same day.

**Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*

Status: Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first birds were at Castle Howard Lake on 31st March with 50 there next day and 100+ on 3rd April. Birds returned to Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 2nd April where an estimated 50-60 pairs bred in the artificial nest site. Up to three were at Ouse Bridge, York on the 4th and again on 1st May and 25th June. c.80 were over Castle Howard Lake on 16th April with 150 there on the 22nd. Up to ten were seen along the River Ouse between York and Naburn from 15th April to 29th July while six or seven were over the South Lake at Castle Howard on 8th June.

Present in good numbers all summer on Clifton Ings with one or two seen occasionally at Rawcliffe Lake. Two over Dunnington Common on 2nd September was the only record for this site. Ten at Castle Howard Lake on the 15th were the last in the north while 30 were near Melbourne on the 16th and four moving south with Swallows *Hirundo rustica* over Foston on 1st October were the last in the recording area.

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

Status: Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first was one feeding with Sand Martins *Riparia riparia* over Castle Howard Lake on 1st April. Two were in Gilling on the 3rd and two over floodwater in the Stillington area on the 5th rising to 20+ there by the end of the month. One was seen at Storwood on the 17th when two were over New Lane, Huntington with one at Sutton upon Derwent on the 19th and another at Melbourne on the 21st when the first were in Dunnington and Osbaldwick villages. A few more were at Castle Howard Lake next day and up to 20 were seen along the River Ouse between York and Naburn from then until 8th September. The first in Huby was on 27th April with one in York city centre on the 30th. 20+ birds were seen all summer over houses and a field near Brecks Lane, Strensall.

Fairly scarce this year at Clifton with hardly any at Rawcliffe Lake and not many on Clifton Ings. There was a maximum of 18 in the New Earswick area in July and 24 in August. Seen feeding over Castle Howard Lake on 5th August while 20 were with 200 House Martins *Delichon urbica* in a meadow beside the River Derwent at Kirkham Abbey on the 8th. Also noted feeding low over Osbaldwick sports field on 6th September while the last in Fulford were ten on the 9th. One late brood was just fledging at Allerthorpe on the 14th with a roost of 500+ near Melbourne on the 16th and c.50 over Castle Howard Lake on the 18th, mixed with House Martins. All were gone from Osbaldwick by the 23rd while a peak of 106 was noted in the New Earswick area during the month and c.20 were flying south over Blue Coat Farm, Foston on 1st and 2nd October with just five on the 9th. 20 were in Thornton on the 3rd and two still in Huby

on the 6th. Six were at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on the 17th while the final stragglers had left New Earswick by the end of the month.

**House Martin** *Delichon urbica*

Status: Migrant breeder and passage migrant

First seen in Wigginton on 14th April with one at a farm near Malton on the 22nd. Also noted over floodwater near Stillington on the 27th when also seen in Huby. The first in Osbaldwick were on the 30th with one at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on 1st May and the first birds in Huntington on the 5th (unusually late) and in Fulford on the 8th. Seen regularly in Osbaldwick from mid-May while the first arrived in Sim Balk Lane, Bishopthorpe on 21st May, later than usual; here there were five nests on the house, less than usual and also noted at Forest Farm, Warthill on 31st May.

Birds were seen collecting mud by Tang Hall Beck on 5th June and there were at least four nests on the south front of Castle Howard with adults seen feeding over the South Lake on the 8th. 70 were at Newburgh Priory lake on 9th June with at least 100 over floodwater and mud near Stillington the same day. Up to 12 pairs nested around Rawcliffe Lake and good numbers were seen throughout the New Earswick area. Wigginton seemed to have a healthy population with at least a dozen nests on a small number of houses. Meanwhile, 50 were feeding over Terrington on 11th July and 20+ were noted regularly around Brecks Lane, Strensall during the summer. On 8th August, 200 were seen with Swallows *Hirundo rustica* in a meadow beside the River Derwent at Kirkham Abbey with 100 at Castle Howard Lake the same day. c.200 were flying around houses and a small lake at 'Lakeside' in The Brecks, Strensall on the 11th.

Still present in large numbers in Osbaldwick during August and early September. By then only one nest was still occupied in Sim Balk Lane, Bishopthorpe while 35 were over the River Ouse near Rowntree Park, York on the 7th with plenty still there on the 9th. 200+ along the Ouse between York and Naburn on the 8th were the last in that area with the maximum count in the New Earswick area being 91 during the month. 150+ were feeding with Swallows over Castle Howard Lake on the 18th. Seen hunting around Old Malton church on the 21st when three were still in Strensall. Gone from Osbaldwick by the 23rd while the last at Dunnington Common were on the 24th with 15 at Newburgh on the 29th being the last in the north. Six were flying over Blue Coat Farm, Foston on 2nd October and last seen in Wigginton on the 7th, a week earlier than normal. All had departed from New Earswick by the month end.

**Tree Pipit** *Anthus trivialis*

Status: Migrant breeder though numbers have declined recently.

A territory was occupied at White Dyke Plantation, Sand Hutton (MH) while one bird was seen with food in Bishop Wood on 8th June (DC). Two possibles were seen along the River Ouse near Bishopthorpe on 8th September (AB).

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

Status: Resident and migrant breeder and passage migrant

A single bird was seen at Lodge Farm, Sheriff Hutton on 13th January with one feeding on scraps in a Strensall garden from the 14th – 17th. The peak count at Rawcliffe Meadows was a roost of 18 on 8th February while 26 were in a grassy field near Terry's chocolate factory on the 13th. One was seen at Ellerton on 8th March with two there on the 28th.

A pair bred at Rawcliffe Cornfield Nature Reserve with a few birds on Bootham Stray until the start of the hay crop in July. An adult was seen carrying food at Naburn Sewage Works on 29th July.

Autumn movements consisted of ten moving south over Terrington on 11th September, 50 over Allerthorpe on the 22nd, 100+ southwest over Blue Coat Farm, Foston on 1st and 3rd October, 20 over Allerthorpe on the 14th and more on the 24th over Foston. Ten were on Strensall Common on 18th November with four on the 22nd. Five were by the River Foss in Strensall on the 17th with a maximum count of 34 in the New Earswick area that month. 42 birds at Dunnington Common on 31st December was the highest number recorded for that area. Up to five were seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year.

Addition to 2000 Report: Ten to 12 pairs bred at Hob Moor, Acomb.

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava*

Status: Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first was one at East Cottingham on 12th May with another near Naburn Sewage Works the following day and again on 30th June. Three pairs were at Foston on 17th May with one pair at Forest Farm, Warthill during May and June. Two pairs were at Barlow Grange on 26th May and a pair was along Selby Canal on 7th June with one bird at Tockwith on the 20th. A family party of five at Dunnington Common on 13th July was proof of breeding there. A single was at Sand Hutton on 3rd and 18th August with another at Escrick on the 14th while six flying east over Escrick on the 23rd were the last.

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Status: Resident breeder

A single bird was noted with Pied Wagtails *Motacilla alba* at the Bank Island roost on 4th January with two there on the 2nd and up to three present throughout the rest of the month. Two were at Thornton, by Pocklington Canal, on the 9th frequenting the canal throughout January and February. A single was near Woodhouse Farm, Strensall on 12th January with another beside Newburgh Priory Lake on the 17th. Two were at Hovingham House Park on 15th February with singles on the bank of the River Foss near Oakbutts Farm, Towthorpe on the 25th when one was also on the Foss in New Earswick with another at Ampleforth on 25th April.

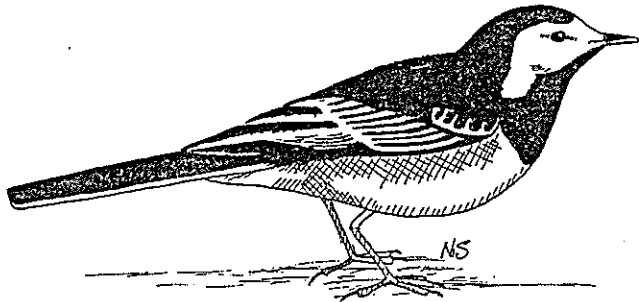
One was seen in a meadow near Woodhouse Farm, Strensall on 14th August while at least one

bird wintered on Clifton Ings early in the year and again from 19th December. One was at Queens Staithe, York on 28th April and also seen there on 10th October. A juvenile was on the bottom pond at Yearsley Moor on 10th August while three birds were at Newburgh on 16th September. Three were in a Micklegate (York) garden on 26th October and two seen with Pied Wagtails on the rooves of buildings at Burton House Farm, Pond Head (Oulston). One was at Walbutts sewage treatment works, Strensall on 30th December with up to three seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year. Up to three were also noted in the New Earswick area, all within half a mile of Lock Cottage, possibly suggesting a resident pair but sightings were too infrequent to be certain. Individual birds were present around Hassacarr Nature Reserve and in the Selby area during the winter.

**Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba***

Status: Resident breeder

The Bank Island roost next to the car park held 60 on 4th January, 110 on the 21st and 123 on the 28th while 60 on 2nd February decreased to 50 from the 14th to the month end. 15 at Dunnington Common on 18th January was the highest count there with two seen on York racecourse on 3rd February.



Three juveniles were near Naburn Sewage Works on 24th June while a single seen coming to scraps in a Strensall garden on 6th August continued to be a regular visitor for the remainder of the year with another noted as a garden visitor in Strensall only in December. 12 were at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on 24th September with 200 watched coming into roost at Sand Hutton on 12th October and 30 roosting in willows above the River Derwent at Thorganby on the 17th. Also in October, 150 flew west over the New Earswick area late in the evening, presumably to roost.

Two were seen with Grey Wagtails *Motacilla cinerea* on rooves of buildings at Burton House Farm, Pond Head (Oulston) on 3rd November while four were around fields north of Strensall on 8th December and two in a flooded meadow at East Lilling House on the 31st. One was feeding regularly in the shopping centre car park in Wigginton throughout December and birds were present all year at Clifton Ings, Huby, Rawcliffe Lake and Wigginton where singles occasionally visited a garden in winter. Up to ten were seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year and also reported from Castle Howard, Coneysthorpe, York city centre and a resident breeder in the New Earswick area.



**Waxwing** *Bombycilla garrulus*

Status: Occasional winter visitor

Four were in Thorganby on 1st January with a single in Elvington on 2nd while 28 were present in Riccall from 3rd - 6th and five at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on the 5th. Two were at Elvington on the 10th when two were also at Melbourne and three at Dunnington Common with three at Pocklington from 11th - 14th and two were at Wheldrake on the 17th. Eight at Rawcliffe Lake on the 23rd increased to 11 on 30th with two still present on 18th February. Two were at Melbourne on the 8th and four at Wheldrake on 9th, while on 25th 24 birds flew north from the direction of York ring road along the River Foss, settled briefly on berry bushes in a hedge then flew off towards Haxby. 25+ were outside Nestlé's chocolate factory on 10th March with 11, possibly from the same flock, in the grounds of Bootham Park Hospital later that day. Six were in Strensall on 31st March and 1st April with 15 on 2nd, c.30 on the 4th and four on the 5th when there was a maximum of 45 in the car park of the 'Six Bells' pub, with 8 there on the 8th. Three flocks totalling 60+ birds were seen flying around the Clifton area on 21st April while three on TV aerials in Poppleton on the 27th were the last of the influx.

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Status: Resident breeder throughout the area

16 were at Dunnington Common on 5th January and noted as being abundant at Skipwith Common on the 8th. 11 were at Sturges Ponds on 16th April with five singing on the 1st between Castle Howard and the Great Lake where there was a family party of at least six on 5th August. Also bred at Hassacarr Nature Reserve.

Nine were on Yearsley Moor on 18th November and six at Strensall Common on the 22nd. Birds were singing throughout November and December along the River Ouse where resident. Five were counted along a half-mile stretch of the River Foss at Strensall on 20th December with three in the Strensall Common reserve on the 29th. Present all year at Clifton Ings, Huby, in the New Earswick area, at Rawcliffe Lake and in Strensall where they occasionally visited a garden. Also reported from Allerthorpe Common and York.

**Dunnoek** *Prunella modularis*

Status: Resident breeder throughout the area

19 were at Dunnington Common on 5th January. Heard singing in Osbaldwick from 18th January and on 17th February near Strensall New Bridge. Eleven frequented the feeding station at North Duffield Carrs during February while six were at Sturges Ponds on 16th April. Regularly seen in a Strensall garden with a pair on 5th and 26th April and one adult with two fledgelings on 6th July. 12 at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on 25th September was the highest count there.

Noted singing by the River Ouse on 8th December and present all year at Clifton Ings, Huby, in the New Earswick area, at Rawcliffe Lake and along the Ouse between York and Naburn. Also reported from Allerthorpe Common, Castle Howard Lake, Coneysthorpe Woods, Yearsley Moor and York.

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

Status: Resident breeder throughout the area

Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with about ten singing on 28th January and noted as being 'common' on Skipwith Common on the 8th. Birds were singing near Castle Howard Lake on the 28th, Brayton Barff on 13th February and New Bridge, Strensall on the 27th. Up to nine frequented the feeding station at North Duffield Carrs during February with four singing males in Wheldrake Ings car park lane towards the month end and three singing around Castle Howard estate on 1st April.

On 11th May a pair was seen mating at Moorlands NWT Reserve and one lucky family in Sessions Nature Reserve was successfully fledged after the top of the tree in which they were nesting blew down and left their nest completely exposed. Prompt action with a flower pot, a black bin bag and some sellotape saved the nest and the female was back feeding the chicks within an hour!

Juveniles were seen in a Strensall garden on 15th and 27th June and first noted between York and Naburn on the 24th. Five eight-day-old chicks were seen in a nest in a flower bed at Sand Hutton on the 29th and fledged three days later. Common as breeding birds in the Dunnington Common area with 14 on 25th September being the highest count.

Birds were singing again by late September in Osbaldwick as well as along the Ouse between York and Naburn throughout November and December and in Heworth on 12th December. During November, at least seven were seen around the Castle Howard estate, two along Walbutts Lane, Strensall and singles at Pond Head Farm, Oulston on the 3rd, Yearsley Moor on the 18th and Strensall Common on the 22nd. On 8th December four were around farms north of Strensall, a single at Brecks Lane, Strensall on the 16th and three at the YWT reserve at Strensall Common on the 29th.

Present all year at Castle Howard Arboretum, Clifton Ings, Huby, New Earswick and in Strensall and York gardens.

**Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Status: Migrant breeder & passage visitor

A pair was seen near Castle Howard Arboretum visitors' gate in April (RSPBYMG) and a female was at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on 6th September (T & VW).

**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

Status: Casual migrant breeder and passage visitor

A passage bird was at Clifton Ings on 11th May (NS) with another along Askham Lane, York on 10th October (DS).

**Stonechat** *Saxicola torquata*

Status: Casual breeder and passage visitor

A pair was at Strensall Common on 11th November (PR) with singles also seen there in early December (RC/MH) and at Wheldrake Ings on 30th December (PR) when a pair was at Riccall (DT).

A female was also in stubble fields at Blue Coat Farm, Foston on 9<sup>th</sup> October (PB).

**Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Status: Summer visitor

The first migrant was a male at Ellerton on 29th March (BP) followed by others at Clifton Ings on April 27th (NS), near Lilling Low Lane, north of Strensall on the 30th (C & DJ) and a female at Forest Farm, Warthill on 13th and 19th May (PR).

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

Status: Resident breeder, winter visitor and migrant

Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with maxima of c.60 on 28th January and 60+ on 24th February. The highest count at Dunnington Common was 30 on 5th January and recorded as being 'common' at Skipwith Common on the 8th. Up to 30 frequented the feeding station and hedge at North Duffield Carrs during January with up to 20 there during February. The Wheldrake Ings roost held 70+ on 3rd February.

15-20 fed in an Upper Poppleton garden from January to April and three were seen in a Strensall garden during January and February with five in a York garden on 11th March.

In Osbaldwick, the first song was heard on 9th February but a full dawn chorus was not noted until 20th March; a female was later noted carrying food on the 26th and a juvenile seen on 2nd April. A pair attempted to nest in pampas grass and birds were seen sitting on 11th April but the nest was abandoned by the month end. Another pair nested in clematis on a house wall but a cat took one of the chicks. Singing was less noticeable in Osbaldwick by the end of June.

Birds commenced nesting in Huby in late March and two juveniles were seen on 30th April while in a Strensall garden, juveniles were seen on 13th April with two noted in another garden there on 21st June. Various other pairs and young were seen during the spring in Strensall and a male with a white crescent on its chest was at Towthorpe on 10th June.

During November four were around the Castle Howard estate on the 1st, three pairs at Brecks Lane, Strensall on the 11th and seven around Strensall Common on the 22nd. A pair ate cotoneaster berries in a Strensall garden during December and ten birds were seen around farmland north of Strensall during the month while 20 were at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on the 31st.

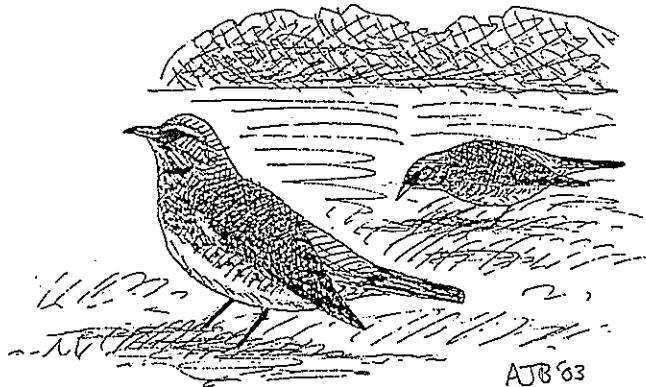
In the New Earswick area, there was a maximum of 43 early in the year decreasing in the

summer then building up again to 96 in December. Noted all year at Castle Howard Arboretum, Clifton Ings, Huby and Rawcliffe Lake.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Status: Winter visitor

Large numbers were seen early in the year at Castle Howard Arboretum with 30 near the visitors' gate and 300-400 near Ganthorpe Gate in March and at least 40 in a field near the Great Lake on 18th February and 10th March.



Five were at Skipwith Common on 3rd January and c.100 in fields nearby on the 8th while up to 30 were along the River Ouse between York and Naburn early in the year with c.55 flying northwest over Askham Bog on 28th January and c.25 at York racecourse on 13th February.

Up to 30 were in fields along Wigginton Road, York in early January with a similar number at Old Earswick on the 17th and 18th, 100+ between Huby and Sutton-on-the-Forest on the 23rd and 250-300 there on 16th February. A maximum of 69 was seen in the New Earswick area in the early part of the year with 30 at Barlow Grange on 9th February, 15 at Towthorpe Lane between the 11th and 15th and 100 in trees at Brayton on the 16th. Flocks of 24 and 50+ were near Strensall and 100+ near Crayke on 17th February with one near Earswick on the 25th.

During March, 14 were in Poppleton on the 2nd, 40-50 near Strensall on the 8th and 40 at Storwood on the 27th with four at Strensall and 100+ west of Stillington on the 29th. Present on Clifton Ings during the winter months with a peak of 400 there on 21st March and 131 at Dunnington Common on the 20th was the highest winter count there.

Birds lingered or were on passage during April with 12+ near Castle Howard Lake on the 1st, 20 at Poppleton and eight at Sheriff Hutton on the 3rd, ten near Lilling and c.20 over Forest Farm, Warthill on the 8th. 200+ were spread over several fields northeast of Huby on the 13th with six near Strensall on the 22nd. The last in the first part of the year were two at Brayton Barff on the 27th.

The first of the autumn were seen on 12th October when 70 roosted on the ground near East Cottingwith and the following day 24 flew south over Allerthorpe. By the 17th, 100 were at Blue Coat Farm, Foston and 500 feeding there two days later with another 200 moving southwest, but most were gone by the following week. 80 were at Flaxton and 12 at Wigginton on the 18th with 90 at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on the 22nd while mixed thrush flocks flew over York on the 23rd and 24th. At least one bird had returned to the River Ouse between York and Naburn by the 27th with numbers rising to c.110 by 2nd December.

A total of 76 was at Castle Howard Arboretum during November and at least seven were feeding in hedges near Bog Hall, Castle Howard on the 1st while 20 were with Redwings *Turdus iliacus* near Pond Head Farm, Oulston on the 3rd. Other parties consisted of 105 near Brayton Junction on the 4th, 75 and 126 at Poppleton on the 11th, 180 there on the 25th and 16 over Yearsley Moor on the 18th. To the north of Strensall, flocks were seen on nine dates during November and December often mixed with Redwings, the highest count being 260 in four flocks on 22nd November. One bird visited an Osbaldwick garden on the 30th and 140 were near Naburn Sewage Works on 8th December with 145 near Bishopthorpe the same day. 77 were recorded during December at Castle Howard Arboretum, up to 45 in New Earswick and about ten near the Entrenchment Ridge, Osbaldwick on the 30th.

#### **Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos***

Status: Resident breeder but in decline in some areas

Singles or pairs were noted in the Lower Derwent Valley in January where the species was thought to be increasing of late. Also resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of 24 (14 singing) on 15th February; the first song was heard there on 28th January and others were heard in Osbaldwick from the 15th, Strensall from the 29th and Poppleton from 3rd February. Six were counted in song along the Osbaldwick cycleway on 15th February with one near Castle Howard Lake on the 18th, five singing at Brayton Barff on the 24th, four along the River Foss between Strensall and York on the 25th and five at Sturges Ponds on 27th March. Birds were seen frequently in Castle Howard, Strensall and York during the spring and summer and seen carrying nest material in a Strensall garden on 29th May with two birds carrying nest material along the Ouse between York and Naburn on 14th April.

Appeared to be doing well in Wilberfoss with probably six territories in the village where seen regularly all year while birds played havoc with snails in a garden there during May and June and were also seen using an 'anvil' in Strensall on 3rd August. An adult and a juvenile were at Dunnington Common on 10th July and also recorded as breeding in Sessions Nature Reserve, New Earswick.

This species usually becomes secretive during the late summer, but towards the end of the year birds were singing in Osbaldwick in November, present at Yearsley Moor on the 18th and on farmland north of Strensall on 8th December with two singing along the Ouse between York and Naburn on the 15th.

Present all year at Clifton Ings and Rawcliffe Lake with 'good numbers' at the former site and also noted all year in the New Earswick area where numbers were thought to be generally lower than last year. Also present all year at Castle Howard Arboretum with a maximum of 11 in

March and seen daily around Huby and occasionally around Haxby and Wigginton.

**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

Status: Winter visitor

Seen along the River Ouse between York and Naburn until 3rd March with a maximum of c. 40 at Fulford Ings on 7th January. Present on Clifton Ings during the winter months while 63 along Hagg Lane was the highest count in Dunnington.

Up to 20 were in fields along Wigginton Road in early January with c.25 at Earswick on the 17th and 18th, at least three with a Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris* flock near Strensall on 17th February, two with Fieldfares near Castle Howard Lake on the 18th and 100 at the arboretum in February. A flock of 200+ was near Sutton-on-the-Forest on 17th March and there were up to 60 in the New Earswick area during the month. The last in the first part of the year were ten at Storwood on 27th March.

In the autumn, small numbers passed overhead in York on 21st September and the first over Selby were on the 24th with two at Thornton-le-Clay on the 30th. Four flew overhead at Blue Coat Farm, Foston on 8th October, 50 moved south during the day at Allerthorpe on the 14th and five flew west over Nunnery Lane, York on the 24th with a maximum of 30+ along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on the 27th. Passage also noted overhead in York on 17th October and 80 were moving southwest in small parties over Blue Coat Farm, Foston during the morning of the 19th.

At Castle Howard Arboretum, 76 were recorded in October, ten in November and four in December. Three fed below beech trees at the north end of Castle Howard Lake on 15th November and five were seen with 20 Fieldfares near Pond Head Farm, Oulston on 3rd November. There was a monthly maximum of 23 in the New Earswick area in November after which they became 'muscle out' from scarce food sources by Fieldfares and retired to the nature reserves. Near Strensall, flocks were seen on nine dates during November and December, often mixed with Fieldfares, the highest count being 60 on 1st December.

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

Status: Resident breeder and winter visitor

One was at Skipwith Common on 3rd January and another near Castle Howard Lake on the 28th with one singing in Heworth the same day. Singing was also noted at Wigginton on 3rd February, Murton livestock market on the 17th, Nestle's sports field, York on 8th March, near Castle Howard on 1st April and occasionally in Osbaldwick until April. Two were near Earswick on 25th February and one near New Earswick on 8th March.

A pair was feeding three fledgelings near Link Road, New Earswick on 1st May and others were seen in a York garden on the 12th, a pair at Heworth on 17th June and three birds at Forest Farm, Warthill on the 23rd. Large numbers bred in the tall trees of Lime Tree Avenue leading to the obelisk on Castle Howard estate.

Summer flocks began to be noted on 8th July with four at East Ness, 15 at Clifton Ings on the 15th, three at Allerthorpe Common on 11th August and 15 at Dunnington Common on 21st September. A maximum of 30 fed along the row of cherry trees in Cherry Vista at Castle Howard during August.

During November, four were around Castle Howard estate on the 1st with singles at Pond Head Farm, Oulston on the 3rd, Poppleton on the 18th and Strensall Common on the 22nd. Others were heard singing at Brayton Barff and in Osbaldwick during the month while 11 flew over Yearsley

Moor on 18th November and singles were seen in Strensall during December.

Present for most of the year at Castle Howard Arboretum, Clifton Ings, Huby and New Earswick where there was a monthly maximum of 18 in October and along the River Ouse between York and Naburn where there was a maximum of five.

**Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella naevia*  
Status: Rare migrant breeder

One singing at Askham Bog on 9th May was the only record (RCr).

**Sedge Warbler** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*  
Status: Migrant breeder and passage migrant

Three singing at Fulford Ings on 7th May were the first with up to seven singing there by the 29th and about ten birds on 14th July declining to just two singing males by the 29th. Also recorded singing at Castle Howard Lake on 12th May, Poppleton on the 13th and along Selby Canal between Burn Bridge and Brayton Bridge where there were nine on 7th June

Others were seen at Forest Farm, Warthill on 23rd June and Pocklington Canal on 3rd July while two were at Castle Howard on the 4th with another on 5th August. Two flightless fledglings by the riverside path at Wheldrake Ings on 20th August indicated a late or second brood.

**Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*  
Status: Migrant breeder and passage migrant

Seven pairs were at Allerthorpe on 13th May with 16 singing males at Ross Carrs on the 26th. Nine were singing along Selby Canal between Burn Bridge and Brayton Bridge on 7th June with one singing from willows along the River Ouse near Terry's chocolate factory, York on the 24th and three along Pocklington Canal on 3rd July.

No reports were received from Wheldrake Ings but presumed to have bred there.

**Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca*

Status: Migrant breeder

The first was one at Brayton Barff on 27th April with two there on 2nd May and one north of Huby on 28th April.

Birds were singing near the Millennium Bridge, York and at Middlethorpe on 5th May with another

at the latter site on the 8th. Up to four were then seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn until 30th June.

One was at Bottomley Grove, York on 12th May and another at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on 25th July. Four to five pairs were present on Clifton Ings.

**Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis*

Status: Migrant breeder

The first bird was at Osbaldwick fields on 27th April followed by singles at Fulford Ings and Huby on the 28th and New Earswick on the 29th.

A male was singing along Towthorpe Lane, Haxby on 7th May and was still there in early June while seven were singing along the York to Riccall cycle track on 8th May, six at Brayton Barff on the 10th and two near Stockton Lane, York on the 12th. Singles were also noted at Thornton on the 12th and Aughton and Foston on the 14th with six at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on the 18th. Singing birds at Fulford Ings increased to six by 12th May with up to eight along the River Ouse between York and Naburn, the last being on 8th September. An influx was noted at Poppleton on 13th May and one was seen carrying nest material there on the 20th. Several nested along the cycleway at Osbaldwick and were still singing on 8th July with the last there on 21st August.

Birds were seen or heard in several locations in the New Earswick area until the end of July and breeding was strongly suspected in the old sewage works woods, close to the sports field and near Triangle Meadow. Recorded mid-May to early July near Strensall tip and seven males were along Selby Canal between Burn Bridge and Brayton Bridge on 7th June.

There were 11-12 pairs on Clifton Ings during the summer and two birds were at Forest Farm, Warthill on 19th May with another there on 5th June. On 9th June one was seen carrying food at Newburgh and another was by the old railway line, New Earswick Nature Reserve. Others were along Pocklington Canal on 3rd July and at Poppleton on 19th August with the last two at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on 22nd September.

**Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*

Status: Migrant breeder

The first was east of Huby on 30th April with one singing along Sustrans track near



Cawood/Escrick on 9th May and two singing along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on 7th and 13th May.

Six were singing at Brayton Barff on 10th May with one near Warthill on the 31st and another heard calling at dusk at Castle Howard Arboretum during the month. Singles were also recorded at Bishop Wood on 8th June, Newburgh on the 9th, Pocklington Canal on 3rd July, Dunnington Common on the 27th and Yearsley Moor on 10th August.

At least one pair was on Clifton Ings during the summer.

#### **Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

Status: Migrant breeder with some birds overwintering

Overwintering birds were seen in Dunnington on 1st January and Wigginton on the 7th where one was feeding on a bird table. A female was recorded almost daily in Poppleton from 8th January to 5th February and 1st-28th March feeding on Mahonia pollen for about an hour.

One was in Rabbit Warren Wood, Dunnington on 15th March, a male in a Fulford garden on the 16th and a female in Sessions Nature Reserve, New Earswick on 7th April. Singing birds were noted at Sturges Ponds and St Nicholas Fields, York on 12th April and in an Osbaldwick garden on the 21st where it continued singing until 20th July. Four males were at Fulford Ings on 13th April with up to ten thereafter singing along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with the last there on 8th September.

A pair was noted near Triangle Meadow, New Earswick Nature Reserve on 29th April and up to five were then seen regularly until the end of June while three seen in September may have been bred locally or were on passage. 11 were at Brayton Barff on 27th April increasing to 18 on 23rd May with up to 20 on the 28th. One was singing and feeding on ivy berries at Sim Balk Lane, Bishopthorpe for three days at the end of April with another male northeast of Huby on the 28th and seven birds including two pairs at Moorlands YWT Reserve on 11th May. A male was near Stockton Lane, York on the 12th with another two in York on the 18th, two singing at the north end of Castle Howard Lake and two by the lake path on the 12th, five heard in the arboretum during May and four recorded there in June.

Breeding was noted at Hassacarr Nature Reserve and Sessions Nature Reserve with two or three singing in New Earswick Nature Reserve on 9th June and five to six pairs were present on Clifton Ings. 30 were singing in Bishop Wood on 8th June and two juveniles were along Pocklington Canal on 3rd July.

Late birds were recorded at Brayton Barff on 13th October, Dunnington Common on 5th November and a male was trapped with a tit flock at Allerthorpe on 23rd November.

#### **Wood Warbler** *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Status: Summer migrant which seems to be lost as a breeding species

One was singing at Brayton Barff on 2nd May (DC).

**Addition to 2000 Report:** One was seen at Brayton Barff on 4th May (DC).

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

Status: Migrant breeder and passage migrant with some birds overwintering

A wintering bird was seen in gardens on Millfield Road, York on 9th February while the first migrant was at Sturges Ponds on 9th March with two there on the 15th, one at Rawcliffe Lake on the 28th and two at Castle Howard on the 31st.

Numbers increased quickly in April with two at Strensall and Castle Howard Lake and one at Fulford on the 1st, singles at Ampleforth, Bishopthorpe, St Nicholas Fields (York) and Yearsley Moor and two by Castle Howard Lake on the 3rd and four at Sturges Ponds on the 4th with six there on the 16th. The earliest in a Yearsley Grove garden was on 7th April with two in New Earswick Nature Reserve on the 8th, two more there on the 9th and then present in the area until autumn while two were in Rabbit Warren Wood, Dunnington on 6th April. The earliest at Fulford Ings was on the 7th, increasing to three by the 21st and up to four were singing thereafter along the River Ouse between York and Naburn.

During the spring and summer, birds were noted frequently throughout the recording area with reports from Bishop Wood (24 on 8th June), Bishopthorpe, Brayton Barff (12 on 26th April), Castle Howard Arboretum, Huby, Moorlands YWT Reserve (four on 11th July), Pond Head Farm (Oulston), Strensall and Woodlands Grove (York). A total of at least six singing birds was present in the New Earswick area during the summer with three in the vicinity of Haxby Road Farm and one in the centre of Huntington village.

A single was in gardens in Wigginton on 26th August and Poppleton on 10th September with the last bird along the Ouse between York and Naburn on 8th September. Late birds were also seen at Allertorpe on 22nd September, Rawcliffe Lake on 1st October, Hassacarr Nature Reserve on the 9th and Yearsley Grove on the 20th.

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Status: Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first returning bird was one passing through an Osbaldwick garden on 3rd April while two at Sturges Ponds on the 12th increased to eight by 6th May. Three were in New Earswick Nature Reserve on 8th April with the last seen there on 20th August while breeding took place at Triangle Meadow. The first in Fulford were three singing birds on 13th April and up to ten were singing along the River Ouse between York and Naburn thereafter with the last bird seen on 8th September.

16 were at Brayton Barff on 27th April and seven were recorded at Castle Howard Arboretum during the month with 12 in May, six in June, three in July and seven in August. Meanwhile, 22 singing birds were counted along the Riccall to York cycle track on 8th May and 16 were singing in Bishop Wood on 8th June. Also recorded during the summer at Huby, Pond Head (Oulston), St Nicholas Fields and Stockton Lane (York), Warthill and Yearsley Moor.

Two pairs bred at Rawcliffe Lake and many were present on Clifton Ings throughout the summer. A post-breeding male burst into brief song during a visit to a Wigginton garden on 5th August. Also seen along the Osballdwick cycleway on 21st August and again on the 22nd when three were at Hassacarr Nature Reserve.

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

Status: Resident breeder and winter visitor

Two were seen at Skipwith Common on 3rd January and at least five were present in Askham Bog on the 6th with another at Strensall while one was at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on the 17th.

A single was at Woodlands Grove, York on 24th June and another at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on 22nd October.

Individuals were present all year at Castle Howard Arboretum (up to four), Clifton Ings, Fireman's Leap, New Earswick Nature Reserve (up to three), Rabbit Warren Wood (Dunnington), along the River Ouse between York and Naburn and Sessions Nature Reserve (New Earswick).

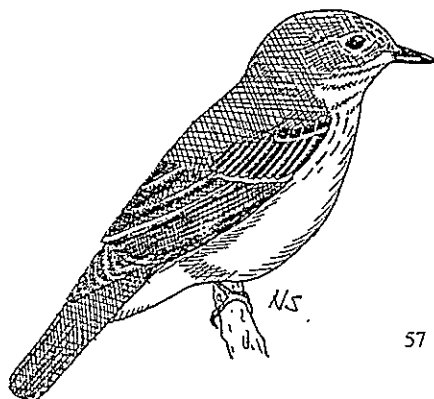
On 1st November, at least eight were in woods north of Coneysthorpe while two were heard calling near Pond Head Farm, Oulston on the 3rd and singles were present in a Wigginton garden on the 4th and a Strensall garden on the 13th and 18th.

Singles were also in shrubs at Clifton Moor shopping centre on 16th November and in Fulford on the 18th while at least ten were around Yearsley Moor with smaller numbers there on 26th and 31st December.

**Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*

Status: Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first birds were two at Brayton Barff on 23rd May where the species was thought to be declining and at Hassacarr Nature Reserve where there was one on 8th June, three on the 12th, one on the 15th and two on the 19th.



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A pair bred in a nest box in a Huby garden raising two broods with three birds fledging on 18th June and two fledging on 8th August.

Singles were at Foston on 23rd July and Castle Howard on the 27th with a juvenile at Allerthorpe on 22nd September and two birds along Pocklington Canal on 3rd July.

At Castle Howard Arboretum, one bird was recorded in April with a pair beside the lake in August.

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caudatus*  
Status: Resident breeder

Along the River Ouse, 'good numbers' were present throughout the year on Clifton Ings and between York and Naburn where there was a maximum count of c.50 on 24th November and the first juveniles were noted on 30th June. Also present all year in the New Earswick area with a maximum of 33 in September and at Castle Howard Arboretum with a maximum of 21 in March.

Four were at Skipwith Common on 3rd January, c.30 in Askham Bog on the 6th and two at Storwood on the 21st while four were in trees by the River Foss at Yearsley Moor on 25th February and a flock of 12 fed on nuts in an Upper Poppleton garden on the 6th with five there on the 20th and 25th then numbers fell to three in March and two in April. In March, a pair was in Clarence Gardens (York), two pairs at Nestle sports ground on the 8th and a pair in a Huby garden on the 17th. A pair was carrying nesting material in a Poppleton garden on 9th and 27th April with another pair at Moor Lane north of Huby on the 13th.

A family party was in Triangle Meadow, New Earswick Nature Reserve on 9th June and small parties were present at Rawcliffe Lake throughout July and into September while 20 birds were in the Thornton-le-Clay area on the 22nd. Reports during October included 20 at Frog Hall, Allerthorpe, three in a York garden and a sighting in an Osballdwick garden which was rare for the area. During November post-breeding flocks of between six and 20 were in woodland around the Castle Howard estate, in Cass Wood (Huby), on Strensall Common, in the Allerthorpe and East Cottingwith areas and in larches along The Avenue, Gilling Castle.

Two were at Strensall Common on 2nd December and ten were in Brecks Lane, Strensall on the 16th while 26 in Rabbit Warren Wood on the 23rd was the highest count for the Dunnington area. A flock of c.20 was at Yearsley Moor on the 26th and two were in the YWT reserve at Strensall Common on the 29th.

**Marsh Tit** *Parus palustris*  
Status: Resident breeder

At least five were in Askham Bog on 6th January with three in Wass Wood on the 17th. At Castle Howard Arboretum, one was recorded in January, three in February and two in March and May. One was in Sessions Nature Reserve, New Earswick on 8th March and was heard again a few days later while in the Dunnington area the species still hangs on as a breeding bird in Rabbit Warren Wood with four there on the 27th. A pair was at the north end of Castle Howard Lake on 1st April.

Later in the year, a single was at Yearsley Moor on 10th August while one was at Frog Hall, Allerthorpe on 11th October and small numbers were at Yearsley Moor on the 30th. Four were in woods near Coneysthorpe on 1st November and birds were present in Hagg Wood,

Dunnington on the 2nd while seven were around Yearsley Moor on the 18th and a single was by the River Ouse near Bishopthorpe on the 24th. In December, one was at Park House Farm, Strensall on the 8th and two were at Yearsley Moor on the 26th.

**Willow Tit** *Parus montanus*

Status: Resident breeder

At least three were in Askham Bog on 6th January, two at Brayton Barff on the 17th and three in Cass Wood, Huby on 30th April. During the year there were five sightings from Castle Howard Arboretum with singles in March, August and September and a pair feeding on thistle seeds in November.

Once a common bird in the Dunnington area but now rare, the only report was of two at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on 25th September. Three were at Allerthorpe on 14th October and two were in the Strensall Common YWT reserve on 2nd December.

**Coal Tit** *Parus ater*

Status: Resident breeder

Seen throughout the year at Clifton Ings and resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn where up to three were seen or heard. Also present all year in New Earswick Nature Reserve and nearby Sessions Nature Reserve with a maximum of five counted in December. Resident in Castle Howard Arboretum with 12 recorded in March. A regular visitor to gardens in Huntington, New Earswick, Osbaldwick, Strensall and Upper Poppleton and seen around the Huby area all year. In January, two were on Skipwith Common and about five were in Askham Bog while February records included singles at Castle Howard Lake and by the River Foss east of Haxby. One was on York Road, Strensall on 8th March while two were in a York garden on 19th April and another two at Moorlands YWT Reserve on 11th May.

A family party was at New Earswick Nature Reserve on 9th June and an adult with one juvenile in a Strensall garden on the 15th. An adult was carrying food near the River Ouse between York and Naburn on 29th July and several birds were seen at Yearsley Moor on 10th August including a flock of 20+ adults and juveniles.

In October, one was in a York garden on the 12th with another at Rawcliffe Lake on the 15th and again on 10th December being a new bird for the site. Reports in November included two in woods north of Concesthorpe and singles at Pond Head Farm (Oulston), Strensall Common and Yearsley Moor with two at Strensall Common in December. Five in Rabbit Warren Wood, Dunnington on the 11th was the highest count for this area during the year.

**Blue Tit** *Parus caeruleus*

Status: Resident breeder and winter visitor

Seen throughout the year along the River Ouse between York and Naburn and at Clifton Ings. Also noted at Huby, New Earswick, Osbaldwick, Strensall and Rawcliffe Lake where five or six

pairs were present all year. Resident in Castle Howard Arboretum with a maximum of 51 during August. The species was reported as being 'common' at Skipwith Common in January and four were between New Bridge, Strensall and Towthorpe on 17th February. 20+ were between Castle Howard and the Great Lake on 1st April and they were 'numerous' at Moorlands YWT Reserve on 11th May.

Three pairs used nest boxes at Frog Hall, Allerthorpe in May and a pair carried on feeding young at Hassacarr Nature Reserve field centre while the extension was being completed with another pair using a nest box in a Huby garden. In an Osbaldwick garden, a pair nested in a gap behind wooden fencing with young hatched on 8th June. A juvenile was in a Strensall garden on 12th July and two were at Allerthorpe Common on 11th August.

In November, at least seven were in woods north of Coneysthorpe on the 1st with two at Oulston Reservoir on the 3rd, six at Strensall Common on the 14th, three in Walbutts Lane, Strensall on the 17th and two with other tits at Yearsley Moor on the 18th. Also in the Strensall area, three were in Brecks Lane, three in Pottery Lane and two by the River Foss in December while in the Dunnington area the highest count was of 20 in Rabbit Warren Wood. Ringing in New Earswick Nature Reserve over a five-week period between December and January 2002 produced a total of 61 individuals - this resulted in a high count of 65 for December.

#### **Great Tit *Parus major***

Status: Resident breeder and winter visitor

Regularly seen all year at Clifton Ings, Huby, New Earswick and Rawcliffe Lake where two or three pairs were resident. Also resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn and in Castle Howard Arboretum with a maximum of 30 there during March. Two were at Skipwith Common on 3rd January and a male was singing in Strensall on the 28th while the highest count for the Dunnington area was 18 on the 5th. 12 males were singing at Brayton Barff on 13th February and one was singing near New Bridge, Strensall on the 17th. Ten were with a mixed finch flock feeding on beech mast at the north end of Castle Howard Lake on the 18th and a pair was by the River Foss at Towthorpe on the 25th.

In the New Earswick area, several nesting sites were noted during the spring, the most unusual being in New Earswick Nature Reserve where a small mammal box was used. This box was very small compared to conventional bird boxes, had a very well-concealed rear entrance and was mounted only a few inches off the ground! A single was in a York garden on 29th March and three were singing in the Castle Howard Lake area on 1st April while a female was in a Strensall garden on 11th May and a pair nested in a Huby garden. Two were at Allerthorpe Common on 11th August.

One or two occasionally visited a Strensall garden between September and December while in November at least four were in woods north of Coneysthorpe on the 1st, two at Oulston Reservoir on the 3rd and two at Yearsley Moor on the 18th. In December, the Strensall area had one on Brecks Lane, four on the common, two on farmland north of the village and two by the River Foss. Ringing in New Earswick Nature Reserve over a five-week period between December and January 2002 produced a total of 36 individuals - this resulted in a high count of 45 for December.

**Nuthatch** *Sitta europaea*

Status: Resident breeder

One was at Brayton Barff on 13th and 20th February while another in mature limes at Castle Howard on 1st April appeared to be competing for nest holes with Blue Tits *Parus caeruleus*. A pair was noted at Brayton Barff on 27th April, 2nd May and 7th June when they were observed at a nest hole; young were being fed there by the following day and were seen several times subsequently. A single was near Castle Howard Arboretum car park in November and another heard calling at Pond Head Farm, Oulston on the 3rd.

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

Status: Resident breeder

Up to two were regularly seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year with one singing on 24th February. Also present all year at Clifton Ings while one or two were at Wheldrake Ings on 3rd and 7th January with about five in Askham Bog on the 6th. In February, one was at Yearsley Moor, four at Brayton Barff and two in Rabbit Warren Wood, Dunnington. Present from January to April in Castle Howard Arboretum and also recorded there in August, October and December.

In the New Earswick area, one was nest building by the River Foss near Lock Cottage during March but the site was never occupied. Sightings also came from New Earswick Nature Reserve and nearby Sessions Nature Reserve where breeding probably occurred. Breeding was also noted in the old sewage works wood. Also in March, one was in a Huby garden on the 17th and on 4th May with another at Cass Wood, Huby on 29th March. In May, there was a single at Moorlands YWT Reserve on the 11th and one was feeding young in a nest in Askham Bog on the 20th. The maximum count in the New Earswick area was four in June while two singles and a pair were seen at separate locations at Yearsley Moor on 10th August.

Between October and December, singles and pairs were at various locations including Bog Hall, (Castle Howard), Brecks Lane (Strensall), Escrick, Frog Hall (Allerthorpe), Pond Head Farm (Oulston), Stockton-on-the-Forest and Strensall Common.

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

Status: Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

In January and February reports included at least five in Askham Bog, three at separate locations on Skipwith Common and singles at Wass Wood and Yearsley Moor. Present in Castle Howard Arboretum from January to March, in August and from October to December.

Breeding was reported from Rabbit Warren Wood, Dunnington and there were sightings during the breeding season at Brayton Barff and Sturges Ponds. One was at Strensall Common on 27th April and 3rd August.

From October to December there were reports of between one and three from Allerthorpe, Bishopthorpe Palace, Clifton Ings, Coneysthorpe, Ellerton, Foston, Hassacarr Nature Reserve,

Huby, Melbourne, Sand Hutton, Scoreby and nearby Kexby, Strensall Common and the northern York bypass.

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

Status: Resident breeder

Seen daily throughout the year around Huby with good numbers at Clifton Ings and three to four at Rawcliffe Lake. Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn and a common and widespread bird in the New Earswick area with a maximum count of 23 in December. A roost of 18 at Dunnington Common on 18th January was the highest count for that area. In Castle Howard Arboretum only two were observed in February and one in October.

In April, a pair was in Strensall and another pair fed young in a nest at Foston on the 30th. Two were near Stockton Lane, York on 12th May with six there on 2nd July. Seven birds amused observers in a Poppleton garden on 27th July when they all tried to get into an 18 inch birdbath (!) while five were at Duncombe Lane, Strensall on 8th December.

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

Status: Resident breeder

Seen at various locations throughout the year including Castle Howard, Clifton Ings, Easingwold, the New Earswick area and Sutton-on-the-Forest. Seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with counts of 30+ on 1st January and c.100 on 25th February. c.100 were also at Dunnington Common on 17th January and about ten were at York racecourse on 13th February. Present in a York garden from March to June while in April 38 were in the main car park and nearby fields at Castle Howard and appeared to be nesting in the ancient oaks in the car park. Two pairs bred on a pylon at Dunnington Common and a pair was building a nest in an ash tree at Foston on 16th May.

A mixed flock of c. 2000 Jackdaws and Rooks *Corvus frugilegus* went to roost in woodland at North Ross Farm, East Cottingham on 12th October. In November there were c.100 at Oulston Reservoir on the 3rd and 160 at Castle Howard on the 4th. In the New Earswick area the largest concentration was on Kettlestring Farm with a flock of 200+ present.

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

Status: Resident breeder

Three large flocks were present along the A1079 between Dunnington and Barmby Moor and 30+ were at Clifton Ings all year. Seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of c. 300 south of Bishopthorpe on 25th February. Seen regularly all year around Huby and recorded in small numbers in the New Earswick area with the largest count being 40 in ploughed fields in the north of the area. The highest count at Dunnington Common was 550 on 18th January while 30 were at York racecourse on 13th February and 70 in fields south of Woodhouse Farm, Strensall on the 17th. Present all year in the Castle Howard Arboretum area with flocks of 100+ in January.



Six nests were in a tree near the convent in Lawrence Street, York and five nesting pairs were between the River Foss and York Road, Strensall in March with 100+ in nearby fields while 91 were recorded at Newburgh on 31st March. In May, four pairs nested near Skeldergate Bridge, York with juveniles first noted on the 7th and 300 birds were at Castle Howard on 13th July.

In October, 80+ were at Blue Coat Farm, Foston on the 3rd and a mixed flock of c. 2000 Rooks and Jackdaws *Corvus monedula* went to roost in woodland at North Ross Farm, East Cottingham on the 12th. Reported as 'numerous' around the Castle Howard estate on 1st November.

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

Status: Resident breeder

Seen regularly throughout the year at Castle Howard, Clifton Ings, Dunnington. Huby and New Earswick with up to six present at Rawcliffe Lake. Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a count of c. 50 at York racecourse on 13th February. A pair was at Monk Stray, York on 16th January and 29th March while 17 at Dunnington Common on 20th March was the highest count for that area.

A flock of 15 was near Brayton Barff on 13th April and a juvenile visited a garden bird table in July with two adults and three juveniles at Castle Howard on the 13th.

c.20 were feeding in stubble at Dunnington on 13th November and overall this was the commonest corvid in the New Earswick area with a maximum count of 80 in November.

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

Status: Resident breeder and winter visitor

Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn and around Huby and Osbaldwick where nest material was being collected in early April. Abundant in the New Earswick area and generally more numerous than in 2000.

From June to October counts of between 120 and 300 were recorded, but the highest count was of 680 in February. Present all year at Rawcliffe Lake with peak counts of 67 on 27th February, 64 on 26th March and 68 on 1st November. 20-30 were seen regularly throughout the year at Clifton Ings and present in Castle Howard Arboretum from March to May and from October to December with a maximum of 50 at the end of the year.

Ten to 15 were regular visitors to a Strensall garden from January to May while 16 were in hedges and 40 in a field with Fieldfares *Turdus pilaris* by the River Foss in Strensall on 17th February with 30 in a similar area on 8th March. The highest count for the Dunnington area was of 56 on the common on 22nd March while up to five juveniles visited a Strensall garden in June with three in July.

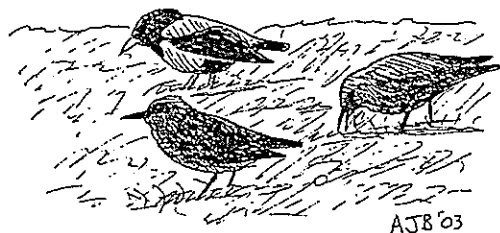
Between September and December, up to ten visited a Strensall garden if food was provided while 150 were feeding in stubble fields at East Cottingham on 12th October with 50 there on

28th November. A flock of 200 was near Sturges Ponds on 29th October and c. 25 visited a York garden on 4th November.

**Rose-coloured Starling** *Sturnus roseus*

Status: Very rare visitor

An adult was at Grimston roundabout, York briefly on 22nd June (BP) with probably the same bird visiting a Haxby garden on the 30th (EM). This appears to be a new species for the YOC recording area and both records have been accepted by the YNU.



**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

Status: Resident breeder

Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn and in the Huby, Osbaldwick and New Earswick areas. In the latter area, the species was reported to be common and widespread especially near human habitation with a maximum count of 62 in August. Up to 40 were present all year at Rawcliffe Lake and birds were seen regularly in Strensall gardens with a maximum of 30 in September. Ten or more were in a hedge between the River Foss and houses by New Bridge, Strensall on 17th February and 'several' were near Robert Wilkinson Junior School on the 25th. Five or six were in a York garden on 11th and 26th March.

Six juveniles were with adults in a Strensall garden on 17th June and a pair nested in a box in a Huby garden. In August, a flock of 30 was in the main street at Foston, a flock of 20 fed in Thornton-le-Clay and a further flock of 25 was at Flaxton on the 9th. 25 were in a Poppleton garden on the 17th and two flocks of 100+ and c. 40 were in hedges along Bull Lane north of Moorlands YWT Reserve on the 24th. A flock of 30 was at Beningborough Hall on the 27th.

20 were at Blue Coat Farm, Foston on 12th October and 40 were in the area on the 14th. In November, c.150 were around farm buildings at Storwood on the 5th and a flock of 30 was at Moorlands YWT Reserve on the 20th. A number were observed stripping pampas grass in Osbaldwick on the 17th and about ten were along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on the 24th. During the period 30th November to 29th December, a flock of 12-18 was regularly noted in a mature hawthorn/blackthorn hedge in Brecks Lane, Strensall while a flock of c.100 was opposite the Costcutter offices in Dunnington during the winter.

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

Status: Resident breeder and passage visitor

Small numbers wintered at Clifton Ings with one to two pairs staying on to breed; the peak count was of 50 on 31st October. A flock of five fed daily in an Upper Poppleton garden from January to June and returned from September to the year end while a flock of 20+ was at Stillington Road, Huby on 1st January. 200+ remained at Thornton Ellers throughout January and February as did a flock of 80 at Ellerton. Also in January, 40 were at Sutton upon Derwent on the 15th with 45 at Wressle on the 16th. Up to five frequented the feeding station at North Duffield Carrs in February while six were near Haxby on the 3rd and two were with House Sparrows *Passer domesticus* in a hedge between the River Foss and houses near New Bridge, Strensall on the 17th with one at Oakbutts Farm, Strensall the same day. A flock of 32 at Dunnington Common on 23rd March was the highest count for that area and four were at Ellerton on the 28th.

In the New Earswick area, the wintering population at Chestnut Grove had decreased to ten by the end of February, but some lingered on until early July with at least one seen carrying nesting material over several days during April and at least two young seen in late May and early June; there were two family parties with up to seven young in gardens along Hawthorn Spinney in June and two were in a flock of House Sparrows at Kettlestring Farm in July. Five were at Allerthorpe on 7th May including one pair nest building in a box and two were in a hedge on the back lane between Strensall and Haxby the same day. In June, two pairs were in a hedge along Selby Canal at Brayton Bridge on the 7th and ten were at Escrick on the 28th.

Two were at Brayton Barff on 13th October while November reports included a flock of ten at Brayton Junction on the 4th, one at Scoreby on the 7th, two in the Poppleton area on the 25th and four at Brecks Lane, Strensall on the 30th. A party of at least 12 was at Park House Farm, Pottery Lane, Strensall on 8th December and a small flock was near Thurtle Wood, Castle Howard on the 30th.

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

Status: Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

Up to 20 were along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year and 'good numbers' were on Clifton Ings. Seen daily around Huby and resident at Castle Howard Arboretum with most reports in March. Up to 200 frequented the North Duffield Carrs feeding station during January and February; otherwise widespread in small numbers in the Lower Derwent Valley with the exception of 100 near South Duffield on 6th January. In the New Earswick area, maximum counts of 20 were in February and December, but these figures are probably lower than the true population as at least 21 different individuals were trapped during the ringing programme in New Earswick Nature Reserve during the latter part of the year. 120 were in Rabbit Warren Wood, Dunnington on 18th January while in February, ten were singing at Brayton Barff on the 13th increasing to 13 on the 24th. Males were also singing at Osbaldwick on the 14th and at Middlecroft Grove, New Bridge and Oakbutts Farm - all Strensall - on the 17th while a pair regularly visited a Strensall garden from 10th March through to May and a female was there in June. Four were singing at Sturges Ponds on 16th April. November reports included eight in woodland north of Coneysthorpe, a flock of 20 at Walbutts

Lane, Strensall, six with other finches at The Avenue, Gilling Castle and at least five with Fieldfares *Turdus pilaris* and Goldfinches *Carduelis carduelis* at Woodlands Farm, Strensall Common. In December, 20 were in the Poppleton area on the 2nd and 20+ around the cowshed at Woodhouse Farm, Strensall on the 8th. 60 were at Woodhouse Farm, Sutton upon Derwent on the 13th and c. 70 were in a mixed flock with Linnets *Carduelis cannabina* and Yellowhammers *Emberiza citrinella* near Warhill on the 18th. On the 19th, counts of 40 came from the Stockton-on-the-Forest area and Cottage Plantation, Dunnington while a flock of 20 flew over the River Foss, Strensall on the 20th.

**Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*

Status: Winter and passage visitor

14 were with mixed finches at Aughton on 3rd January and three were with Great Tits *Parus major* and Chaffinches *Fringilla coelebs* feeding on beech mast at the north end of Castle Howard Lake on 18th February. At least five were in conifers along Alexandra Road, Strensall Camp on 8th March.

One flying over Dunnington Common on 5th September was the only record for that area while in October one flew west, calling, at Blue Coat Farm, Foston on the 11th, one was calling at East Cottingham on the 16th and at least five were at Escrick on the 17th. Another was heard calling overhead at Scoreby on the 29th and 30th with November reports of two in West Wood, north of Coneysthorpe on the 1st and at least two with a mixed finch flock along The Avenue, Gilling Castle in the 18th. Four were at Scackleton on 14th December.

**Greenfinch** *Carduelis chloris*

Status: Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

'Good numbers' were on Clifton Ings and up to ten at Rawcliffe Lake all year. Also seen daily around Huby and resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with up to ten noted. Common and widespread all year in the New Earswick area, being a frequent visitor to gardens and birdtables where sunflower seeds were provided; the maximum count in this area was of 53 in August. 20-30 fed daily in an Upper Poppleton garden with smaller numbers in July and August. Up to 250 frequented the North Duffield Carrs feeding station during January and February while 40 were at Ellerton on 14th January with 230 there on 14th February. In the Dunnington area, the highest count was of 80 in Rabbit Warren Wood on 18th January and also seen in Castle Howard Arboretum from January to September.

In the Strensall area, a flock of 50+ was at Great Wood near the common on 7th February. Also seen in Strensall gardens from January to September with males singing in February, April and May and juveniles seen in June, July and September. Up to 17 regularly fed on scraps from September to December. As usual, very vociferous in Osbaldwick and York by late March.

Present at Brayton Barff throughout the breeding season while 24 were in trees by the South Lake, Castle Howard on 24th March and 12+ were around the Great Lake on 1st April. A pair collected nesting material at Wass on 9th June and three birds were at Allerthorpe Common on 11th August. In September, 65 were at Terrington on the 11th and in November a roost of 300

was observed in hedgerows at Sutton Farm, Sutton upon Derwent on the 15th with at least 20+ in a mixed finch flock at The Avenue, Gilling Castle on the 18th while on the 26th a flock of 100 was at Storwood and 20 were at East Cottingwith on the 27th. In December, three were at Robert Wilkinson Junior School and one at Pottery Lane, Strensall on the 8th, 20+ at Woodhouse Farm, Sutton upon Derwent on the 13th and ten at Stockton-on-the-Forest on the 19th.

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

Status: Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

In the Lower Derwent Valley NNR there were estimated to be 2000+ around the site during January and February; the largest single 'charm' of 800+ was in the East Cottingwith area but smaller 'charms' were also at Bank Island, Ellerton, Melbourne, North Duffield Carrs, Seavy Carr, Sutton upon Derwent and Thornton. The flocks were mainly feeding on unharvested linseed, but c. 50 frequented the feeding station at North Duffield Carrs in late February.

'Good numbers' were present on Clifton Ings and up to 15 were at Rawcliffe Lake all year. Also seen regularly around Huby and resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with up to about ten noted. A fairly common resident in the New Earswick area, seen at garden feeders in the winter and moving out to the fields and hedgerows in summer. Flocks of 70 and 20 were seen in the Castle Howard Arboretum area in January, some feeding in stubble fields and also seen in this area from February to August and in October. Small flocks of five to ten were along Towthorpe Lane, Strensall from January to March and from October onwards. 20 were at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on 16th January and at least four were in a hedge where the York ring road crosses the River Foss on 25th February. In March, a flock of 60 was at Pocklington Industrial Estate on the 1st and three were by Nestle chocolate factory, York on the 8th. A flock of c.100 was at East Cottingwith from 28th March to 26th April and a flock of c. 50 flew over Castle Howard Lake on 16th April.

Up to four visited Strensall gardens from April to September and males were singing in April and May with two juveniles seen on 14th September. Ten adults were at Newburgh on 9th June and a pair was in an Upper Poppleton garden on the 14th. Three birds were at Allerthorpe Common on 11th August.

The largest counts in the New Earswick area were of 54 in September and 22 in October, feeding on thistle seeds. At Clifton Ings there were flocks of 150+ on 6th September and 250 on 4th October while 28 were at Dunnington Common on 25th September. c. 200 were part of a mixed finch and bunting flock at East Cottingwith on 12th October. In November, three were north of Coneysthorpe and one in the village on the 1st while ten were at Scoreby on the 8th. At least two were in a mixed finch flock at Gilling Castle on the 18th and at least 20 at Woodlands Farm, Strensall Common on the 22nd. 50 were at East Cottingwith on the 26th and birds were observed feeding on lavender seed heads in a Poppleton garden during the winter with 13 there on 16th November. December reports consisted of a pair feeding on niger seed in an Upper Poppleton garden daily, a flock of 30 on Strensall Common, 40 at Sand Hutton and eight at Wheldrake Ings.

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

Status: Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

In January, a flock of c. 40 flew over Castle Howard Arboretum and c.15 were near Bishopthorpe Bridge on the 1st with a few in Askham Bog on the 6th. A flock of 30 at Clifton Ings on the 25th was the only record for that area this year while in the New Earswick area small numbers were noted early in the year with up to eight around Huntington Church which had departed by the beginning of March. A single female fed on peanuts in a Strensall garden on 20th January with three birds there on the 28th and one again fed on 1st February with two on the 4th. A flock of c. 90 together with Goldfinches *Carduelis carduelis* fed on alder seeds beside Castle Howard Arboretum during the month and 40 were at Brayton Barff on the 8th. In the Lower Derwent Valley, 12 flew east at North Duffield Carrs on the 12th and there were 40 at Seavy Carr and 38 at Thornton Ellers on the 18th. A pair was at Yearsley Moor on the 17th while a flock of at least 30, including some juveniles, were in this area on 10th August.

At the end of the year, 25 at Hassacarr Nature Reserve on 3rd November was the highest count for that area while c. 20 were with a mixed finch flock along The Avenue, Gilling Castle on the 18th and c. 20 at Hagg Wood, Dunnington on the 23rd. In the New Earswick area, the first winter arrivals were three in Sessions Nature Reserve on 22nd November with a flock of 40 present by the end of December commuting between there, New Earswick Nature Reserve and Old Foss Woods. Elsewhere in the area, up to six were in the Riverside Environmental Park and nearby gardens. On 24th November and 2nd December, calls were heard at Bishopthorpe Palace while a flock of 30 fed on alders in Brecks Lane, Strensall on 9th December and a female fed on peanuts in a Strensall garden on the 24th.

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

Status: Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

Up to ten were seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year. In the Lower Derwent Valley, 40 were at Hagg Bridge on 6th January, 100+ at East Cottingwith on the 14th and 250+ at Ellerton on the 15th. c. 30 were at York racecourse on 13th February while four were at East Cottingwith on 8th March with two there on the 28th. Two were at Sheriff Hutton on 2nd April and the highest count in the Dunnington area was of seven on the common on the 15th. A pair was at Brickyard Farm north of Strensall and three individuals near Goose Wood caravan site on the 22nd. Two were on Stillington Road east of Huby on the 27th with four there on the 30th.

In May, four pairs were around Castle Howard Arboretum, two birds in Poppleton on the 20th and three at Forest Farm, Warthill on the 19th with a pair there on 5th June. A pair was also at Heworth Cricket Club on 17th June and four were near the River Derwent north of Kexby on the 24th. During the summer months, there were 'small numbers' at both Clifton Ings and Rawcliffe Lake while in the New Earswick area, most records came from farmland north of Huntington church with occasional birds in the churchyard; the maximum counts were five in July and seven in August. One was in a garden at Beech Glade, Huntington in July while six pairs were around Pond Head, Oulston on the 13th. A pair was at Ganthorpe Gate, Castle Howard Arboretum in August.

Autumn records included 30 at Terrington on 11th September with 100 at Blue Coat Farm, Foston on 24th October while singles were near Oulston Reservoir on 3rd November and at Strensall Common on the 22nd.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*  
Status: Scarce winter visitor

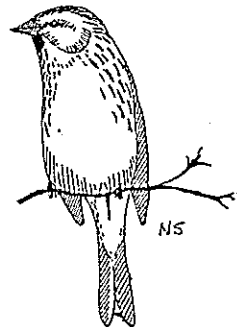
11 were with a mixed finch flock at Hagg Bridge in the Lower Derwent Valley on 6th January (EN).

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis cabaret*  
Status: Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

In January, calls were heard in Askham Bog on the 6th and c. 50 were at Thornton Ellers on the 11th. Up to four were seen at Rawcliffe Lake throughout the month with six there on 28th March while 18 were at Brayton Barff on 17th January with ten there on 1st March. Three were near Huntington church on 11th February and the Lower Derwent Valley held 22 at Seavy Carr and 60 at Thornton Ellers on the 18th.

Later in the year, eight were at Clifton Ings on 21st September while 12 were at Brayton Barff on 13th October and two at Allerthorpe on the 28th. An excellent record of 87 came from Rabbit Warren Wood, Dunnington on 23rd December and two were in Vesper Walk near Huntington church in the first week of the month. Up to three were seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn, mostly during the winter months.

Mealy Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*  
Status: Scarce winter visitor



Eight at Rawcliffe Lake on 27th February was the only record of this recently split species (NS).

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*  
Status: Casual breeder and passage visitor

At least three were at Escrick on 17th October while 26 flew southwest over Sand Hutton on the

23rd with 16 seen there on the 26th. Calls were heard overhead at Scoreby on the 29th and nine were seen there on the 30th. There was a single sighting of a male in conifers by Castle Howard Arboretum Lake during the month while three flew over the Central Science Laboratory car park at Sand Hutton on 11th December.

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Status: Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

Up to three pairs were noted along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year and five to six seen regularly on Clifton Ings. Seen in the New Earswick area in most months of the year with pairs regularly reported from Sessions and New Earswick nature reserves, near Huntington church and in the Centenary Walk area; the maximum count for the whole area was of seven in December. January reports included a pair in Castle Howard Arboretum, two pairs along the Osballdwick cycle track, two pairs on Skipwith Common, a male on feeders at Dean's Garden Centre, York and a female in Brecks Lane, Strensall. Up to three pairs were in the Bank Island car park area during January and February and an impressive 36 birds in the Wheldrake Ings car park scrub on 28th February.

Three pairs were at Brayton Barff on 13th February and 23rd May with a pair near Roseberry Hill southwest of Stillington on 26th March and 13th April while two pairs were at Sturges Ponds on 16th April. In May, a pair was near Ganthorpe Gate at Castle Howard Arboretum with a single at Bielby. A female was noted carrying nesting material along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on 14th April and juveniles were seen by 14th July. Singles were at Fulford and Highthorn Lake, Huntington on 14th June and at Storwood on the 21st.

Pairs were noted at Allerthorpe Common and Yearsley Moor in August and individuals started to visit an Osballdwick garden on the 29th with juveniles recorded in September while visits continued throughout the autumn and winter. Two birds were at Blue Coat Farm, Foston on 23rd October and November reports included a female at Head Hag Wood, Castle Howard, a single at Wass, five birds at Brayton Barff and a female eating honeysuckle berries in a Strensall garden. A pair was in the YWT reserve at Strensall Common on 14th November and 2nd December. Also in December, one was at Rawcliffe Lake, a single male and a pair at Yearsley Moor and a male in Brandsby while in Strensall, single males were observed in gardens in Brecks Lane and Walbutts Lane. Ten were at Cottage Plantation, Dunnington on the 19th.

**[Lapland Bunting** *Calcarius lapponicus*]

Status: Very rare visitor

One was flushed from Rawcliffe Cornfield Nature Reserve, York on 18th April (MH). No description received.

**[Pine Bunting** *Emberiza leucocephalos*]

Status: Vagrant

One was reported with Yellowhammers *Emberiza citrinella* at Sutton upon Derwent around the



date of 9th February, but no details or description were received (per EN).

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citrinella*

Status: Resident breeder and winter passage visitor

Up to ten were seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year and regularly seen in the Huby area. A winter visitor in small numbers to Clifton Ings with 30+ at Rawcliffe Meadows by the end of January. Small flocks were scattered around the Lower Derwent Valley with up to ten at North Duffield Carrs occasionally visiting the feeding station in January. In February, 31 fed with Corn Buntings *Miliaria calandra* at Melbourne on the 7th and roosted in reedbeds nearby. 50 at Ellerton on the 14th were exceptional for the area in recent years while 20+ were at Wilberfoss with Corn Buntings on 17th January and c.100 were by the Poppleton Community Centre on the 23rd. Other February reports included four near Haxby, up to 15 at Barlow Grange, ten on farmland by Sherwood Grove, Acomb and four, including one singing, near Oakbutts Farm, Towthorpe on the 17th. c. 50 were in stubble by the River Foss east of Haxby on the 25th and also numerous in a flock of c. 50 Skylarks *Alauda arvensis* and finches in fields by the River Foss at Towthorpe. 50 were at Dunnington Common on 1st March and five around Castle Howard Arboretum during the month with two there in April. A flock of c.15 was near Low Roans Farm, Sheriff Hutton on 13th April.

In May, four sang along the back lane between Haxby and Strensall and another four sang along the Riccall to York cycle track. One sang along Towthorpe Lane for most of spring and early summer where a female was carrying nest material on 1st May. A male was near Stockton Lane, York and a pair fed in an Upper Poppleton garden while nine sang at Barlow Grange and five pairs were at Forest Farm, Warthill during May and June. Three were reported at Castle Howard Arboretum in May with one in June, two in August and one in October - all in the Ganthorpe Gate area. In June, four were by the River Derwent north of Kexby and four sang between Brayton and Brayton Barff. Three pairs were at Pond Head, Oulston on 13th July and four sang along Selby Canal on the 14th. Very rare in the New Earswick area with only two single sightings by the railway in March and May and eight at Haxby Road Farm in July. In August, 12 were singing along a route from Strensall to Castle Howard and a single was beside the River Derwent at Howsham Bridge.

October reports consisted of seven near Brayton Barff and six at Castle Howard while in November one was near Bog Hall, Castle Howard, three with a mixed finch flock at The Avenue, Gilling Castle and one flew west over East Mount Road, York. Six were in the car park of the Central Science Laboratory at Sand Hutton on the 19th and 21 were at Rawcliffe Meadows late in the month. 11 were in a stubble field along Pottery Lane, Strensall on 8th December and two were at Strensall Common on the 22nd while a flock of 20 was with Skylarks and Chaffinches *Fringilla coelebs* in a stubble field off Brecks Lane, Strensall on the 31st.

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Status: Resident breeder and passage visitor

In January and February, 400-500 were estimated to be using a roost at Melbourne while 15 fed

in stubble at Sutton upon Derwent on the 21st with 24 there on the 28th. A full survey of the Lower Derwent Valley on 18th February produced a count of 590, with numerous flocks of up to 50 feeding on arable land in mixed species flocks consisting mainly of Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*. Up to seven were seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year with up to two singing at Fulford Ings. A winter visitor to Clifton Ings and Rawcliffe Lake with a few pairs staying on to breed and part of a mixed finch and bunting flock that roosted near the Wilberfoss village sports field on 17th January. Ten were at Barlow Grange on 3rd and 13th February and at least three with Skylarks *Alauda arvensis* and Yellowhammers *Emberiza citrinella* on farmland by Sherwood Grove, Acomb on the 14th.

One was by Sata Pond, Castle Howard Arboretum in April and singles near Triangle Meadow, New Earswick Nature Reserve on 5th and 16th May while there were three pairs at Forest Farm, Warthill during May and June. A singing male was by a busy road at Poppleton from 20th May until 21st June and seven singing males were at Ross Carrs on the 26th. A single bird was near Forest Farm, Warthill on 31st May while one was on Dunnington Common on 6th June and six males were along Selby Canal between Burn Bridge and Brayton Bridge on the 7th. A single was on Haxby Road Farm, New Earswick on 15th July.

Later in the year, 20 were in a mixed finch and bunting flock at East Cottingwith on 12th October and one was at Blue Coat Farm, Foston on the 24th. A single was in Castle Howard Arboretum car park in December while a female fed in a Strensall garden on the 30th.

#### **Corn Bunting *Miliaria calandra***

Status: Resident breeder

In the Lower Derwent Valley, 150 fed with mixed finches at Melbourne in January where there was also a reedbed roost holding up to 80 into February. There were small flocks of 19 at Sutton upon Derwent and nine at East Cottingwith on the 14th including several singing males while two sang at Sutton upon Derwent on the 15th.

Over ten were near Sutton-on-the-Forest cemetery on 1st January and this species is a winter visitor to Clifton Ings with up to 12 early in the year and 20 on 19th December. The maximum count at Rawcliffe Meadows was 29 in January and 16 were still present on 18th April. A flock of 24 at Barlow Grange on 3rd February increased to 40 by the 13th while one was on farmland by Sherwood Grove, Acomb on the 14th. A winter roost was recorded regularly at Hob Moor, York in the early and late months of the year with a peak of 37 on 15th March while 11 on 16th April was the last pre-breeding count. At least 20 were at Wilberfoss on 17th January in a mixed finch and bunting flock which roosted near the village sports field. 100 at Dunnington Common on 1st March was the largest spring count recorded there.

April records included singles at East Cottingwith, by the Hull Road/Elvington turn-off, Stillington Road east of Huby and Thornton. On the 22nd, five were at Brickyard Farm north of Strensall with a single 4 km north of Strensall and two near Goose Wood caravan site south-southeast of Sutton-on-the-Forest. Three were along the Stillington Road east of Huby on the 30th. In May, a singing male was by a busy road at Poppleton from the 4th-26th, three singing along the Riccall to York cycle track on the 8th and single singing males at Towthorpe Lane, Strensall for two weeks and Allerthorpe on the 12th and 13th while five were singing at Barlow

Grange on the 26th. Two pairs were at Forest Farm, Warthill during May and June with singing males near Bishopthorpe, Buttercrambe, East Cottingwith, Escrick and Tockwith during June and at Strensall on 4th July. Two were at Lilling Low Lane north of Strensall with one male singing there on 5th August.

At least six were part of a mixed finch and bunting flock at East Cottingwith on 12th October with 40 there on the 16th and ten on 28th November. In December, seven were in a meadow at Woodhouse Farm on the 20th and five were in a ploughed field beside the River Foss, both near Strensall, on the 31st. 36 were at Rawcliffe Meadows late in the month.

### Addendum

The following records were received from English Nature too late to be included in the Classified List. They constitute the highlights of records from the Lower Derwent Valley for the months of March, April, June, September and October. Records for January and February are included in the Classified List. Unfortunately, records for the rest of the year were not forthcoming, despite constant promises.

#### Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Pair North Duffield Carrs 14th April, nest building 16th. Three pairs 26th April increasing to 13 pairs by 29th.

#### Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

44 nests Wheldrake Ings in April.

#### [Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*]

Single Thorganby 21st and 23rd June. First record for Lower Derwent Valley NNR but no description received.

#### Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

40 nests Lower Derwent Valley in April.

#### White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*

All records presumed to be free-flying birds from Harewood Bird Garden: two Bank Island and Wheldrake Ings 29th March, one Heslington Tillmire 8th April, two Elvington Airfield 25th and 29th April.

#### Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Three adults returned to Hagg Bridge 22nd October.

#### Garganey *Anas querquedula*

One to four Lower Derwent Valley from 30th March to 22nd September.

**Scaup** *Aythya marila*

Four Aughton 19th March, pair until month end, male there 3rd April, pair Aughton Ings 4th and 7th April.

**Common Scoter** *Melanitta nigra*

Male Wheldrake Ings 13th April. Female picked up exhausted Stronsall garden 12th April - released Filey same day.

**Smew** *Mergus albellus*

Male near Elvington 16th March.

**Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator*

Two females Wheldrake Ings 11th April.

**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

Male Bowthorpe/South Duffield area 30th March.

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

Male Wheldrake Ings 15th April. 'Cream-crown' North Duffield Carrs 21st April. Up to three 'remained' Lower Derwent Valley in September.

**Goshawk** *Accipiter gentilis*

Males Wheldrake Ings 4th April, Bank Island 6th April, North Duffield Carrs 22nd April.

**Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

Singles Elvington 3rd March, Heslington 19th March, NE over Bubwith Ings 31st March, E over Bubwith Ings 1st April, Ellerton 5th April, E over North Duffield Carrs 11th September, Thorganby 15th September.

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*

Two N over Bubwith 1st April, singles N over Lower Derwent Valley 8th and 15th April, immature S over Wheldrake Ings 17th September.

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

One North Duffield Carrs 11th September.

**Hobby** *Falco subbuteo*

Singles Wheldrake Ings 22nd April, Hagg Bridge 24th April, Elvington throughout June, near Skipwith 29th June, Wheldrake Ings 21st June. Up to three Lower Derwent Valley in September.

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*

Female Elvington 3rd April, immature male N over North Duffield Carrs 15th April, immature male Lower Derwent Valley 18th and 21st September.

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

16 'singing' males located Lower Derwent Valley in June.

**Common Crane** *Grus grus*

Adult over York 3rd April, presumably same Sutton 4th April - elusive but remained in area, seen East Cottingham 28th April.

**Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*

One Wheldrake Ings 24th April.

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

One near Ellerton 30th March.

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

Two Ellerton 2nd June, three there 21st, two Lower Derwent Valley 3rd September with singles present 24th 27th and 30th.

**Ruff** *Philomachus pugnax*

Male Wheldrake Ings 27th June.

**Jack Snipe** *Lymnocyptes minimus*

All October: five Bank Island 1st, six North Duffield Carrs and one Aughton 2nd, seven Seavy Carr 9th, nine Aughton 24th, three Melbourne 27th, adult caught and ringed Bank Island 20th.

**[Great Snipe** *Gallinago media*]

One flushed Ellerton 4th April. Rejected by BBRC.

**Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa*

12 in Lower Derwent Valley 4th April, at Wheldrake Ings on 6th with 22 by 9th - display and copulation noted.

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

Very early bird N over North Duffield Carrs 11th March, one Wheldrake Ings 1st April increasing to 101 by 30th.

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

One North Duffield Carrs 26th and 29th April, two Wheldrake Ings 1st-4th September with one there 5th, one North Duffield Carrs 23rd April.

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

Singles Wheldrake Ings 27th April and 1st June, Bank Island 9th June, N over North Duffield Carrs 18th June, Wheldrake Ings 22nd June. 11 Melbourne 5th September.

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

Two North Duffield Carrs 28th April with one there 29th; one Aughton 23rd September.

**Iceland Gull** *Larus glaucoides*

Adult Wheldrake Ings roost 16th April with two birds on 18th and one over on 24th.

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

Three N over North Duffield Carrs 26th April.

**Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia turtur*

Two 'purring' Bank Island 26th April with 19 'purring' males counted in Lower Derwent Valley in June; a pair along the car park lane at Wheldrake Ings on 1st September were the last.

**Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus*

One Elvington 15th April.

**Swift** *Apus apus*

One Elvington 25th April was the first with one Wheldrake Ings 16th September the last.

**Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*

Two Bank Island 12th March, four there 17th and 30+ Wheldrake Ings 31st.

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

Two North Duffield Carrs 3rd April.

**House Martin** *Delichon urbica*

One North Duffield Carrs 3rd April.

**Water Pipit** *Anthus spinoletta*

One feeding with Meadow Pipits *Anthus pratensis* and Pied Wagtails *Motacilla alba* Ellerton 2nd October.

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava*

Two North Duffield Carrs 12th April were the first with one there 8th October the last.

**[Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros*]

One Elvington Bridge 25th April. No description received.



**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

Singles North Duffield Carrs 2nd October and Thornton on 10th.

**Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Singles East Cottingwith 28th March and 1st April, male Seavy Carr 20th April, two near Newton-on-Derwent 24th April, one Thornton 10th October with another near Elvington next day.

**Sedge Warbler** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

One Wheldrake Ings 18th April was the first.

**Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Two Wheldrake Ings 30th April were the first with two late birds there 24th September the last.

**Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis*

Singing male North Duffield Carrs and two Bank Island 28th April.

**Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*

One singing Escrick 29th April.

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

Up to 14 were in the Wheldrake Ings area 15th April.

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

One singing Wheldrake Ings 11th March.

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Two Wheldrake Ings 1st April were the first with three North Duffield Carrs 19th September the last.

## ESCAPES/INTRODUCTIONS

### **White Stork** *Ciconia ciconia*

Two flying over Wheldrake village on 28th March were probably free-flying birds from Harewood House.

### **Black Swan** *Cygnus atratus*

A single was resident at Castle Howard Lake throughout the year.

### **Ruddy-headed Goose** *Chloephaga rubidiceps*

One was at Wigginton Pond, York from at least 3rd-6th March and was joined by another on the 4th.

### **Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea*

One was on York University Lake on 10th April and 18th July.

### **Mandarin Duck** *Aix galericulata*

Single drakes were at Newburgh Priory Lake from at least 17th January to 13th September and Howsham on 23rd April.

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