

YORK ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB REPORT 2004

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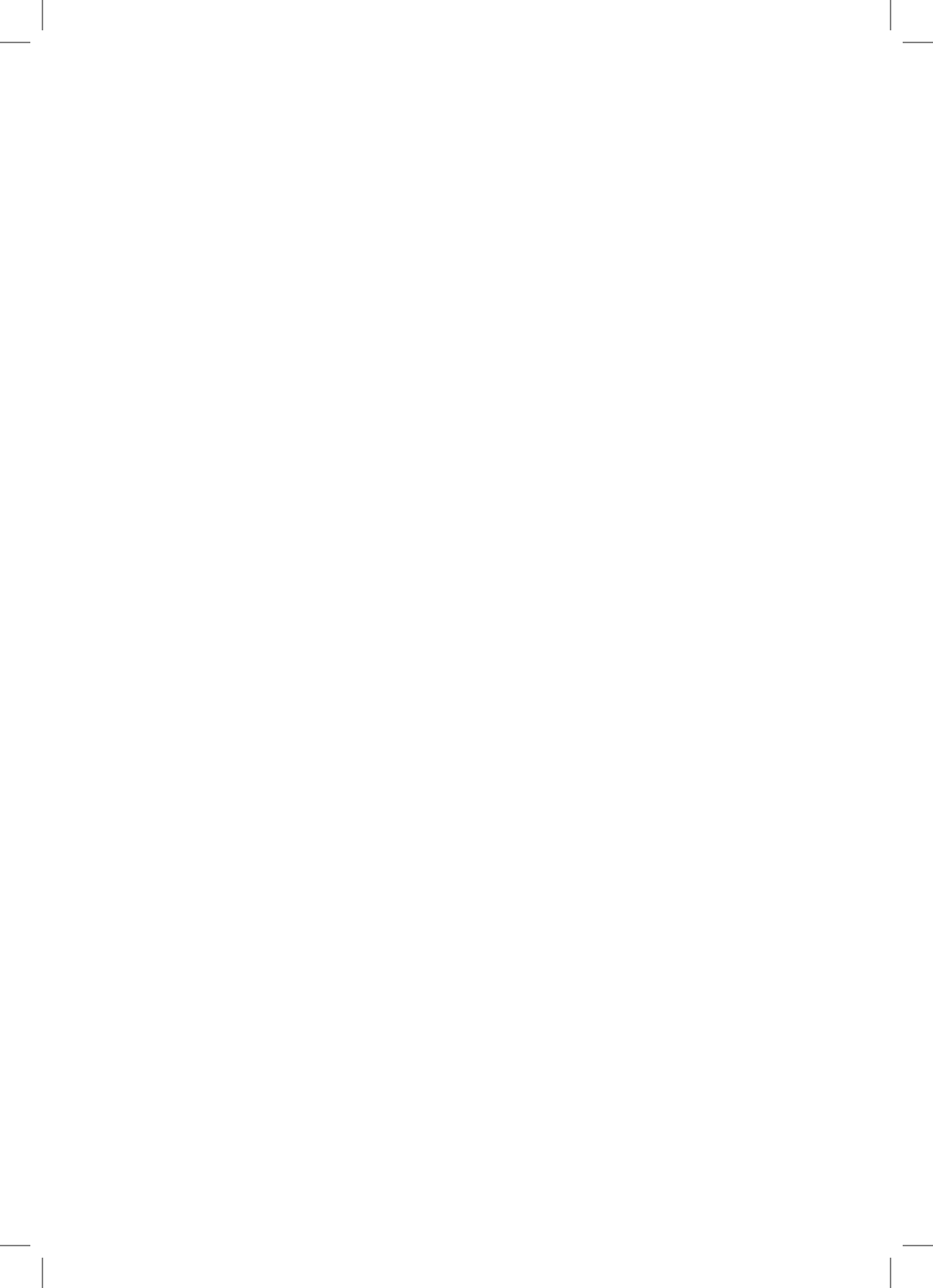
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COVER ILLUSTRATIONS

Front Cover: Kestrel, Fulford Ings. Andy Booth

Back Cover: Sedge Warbler. Nigel Stewart

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YORK ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB

This report has been compiled by members of the York Ornithological Club (YOC) with nearly all the records submitted by members who are active in watching an area of some 550 square miles around York which the Club is responsible for recording. The area covers wetlands (Lower Derwent Valley), deciduous woodland (Hambleton and Howardian Hills), coniferous woodland (Yearsley and Ampleforth), lakes (Castle Howard) and 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 2004 issue of the YOC Annual Report inside which we have included a selection of colour photographs of birds taken in the recording area, which further improves the appearance of the report following on from changes that were made for the 2003 issue.

Yet again, we must apologize for the lateness of this report but rest assured that the Committee is making every effort to reel in the backlog so that future reports are published on a timely basis – please bear with us in the meantime!

We hope that readers will find this report enjoyable and informative and that it is well worth the wait! Please pay particular attention to the revised records submission guidelines and description requirements included: you will note that the species list is now in the new taxonomic order introduced by the British Ornithologists' Union – this is basically the same as the old Voous order we have been used to except that the list now starts with wildfowl followed by gamebirds and then divers, grebes, etc. as before. To help members 'take in' this new order, a revised list of species recorded in the YOC area since 1966 is also included in this report.

No new birds were added to the YOC area list in 2004, but there were 'second helpings' of both Buff-breasted Sandpiper and Raven! The number of people submitting records continues to increase and this is mainly due to more observers sending their records via email.

The species accounts have been compiled by Nigel Stewart (Wildfowl to Gamebirds), Malcolm Douglas (Divers to Crane), Peter Watson (Waders to Auks), Ruth Traynor (Doves to Dunnock), Peter Reed (Thrushes to Flycatchers) and Paul Doherty (Tits to Buntings) while the report has been edited by Andy Booth. Mike Williams and Nigel Stewart have been responsible for the final production of this report with Andy Booth and Nigel Stewart providing the illustrations which enhance the text. The processing of the Annual 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 freely 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. As we aim to have the Report available as soon as possible it would help us greatly if observers submit their records as early as possible after the year in question.

Many thanks for your continued and valued support.

Andy Booth

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2004

JANUARY

The year started with unsettled weather but a cold snap during the last week of the month brought some snow.

The Lower Derwent Valley provided most of the birding interest during the month with the highlight being a winter-plumaged Red-necked Grebe at Wheldrake Ings on the 28th. The wintering Whooper Swan flock was fairly mobile early on, but had settled into a routine of roosting at North Duffield Carrs and feeding on surrounding arable land by the month end. A count of 34 on 3rd January slowly increased to 55 by the 29th. The only record of Bewick's Swan for the month was a single bird at Aughton Ings on the 1st. The valley also contained good numbers of Mute Swan with overall counts revealing 101 on the 17th and 83 on the 25th. Two Tundra Bean Geese were at Bank Island/Wheldrake Ings from the 9th–16th with one remaining at Storwood to the end of the month. Several Taiga Bean Geese were with a flock of Pink-footed Geese which passed through the valley early in January with one joining the two Tundra race birds at Bank Island from the 9th–12th, being last seen at Wheldrake Ings on the 18th. A single White-fronted Goose was present at Storwood from the 24th to the end of the month and other wildfowl were well represented in the valley with numbers increasing towards the end as flooding became more extensive. The WeBS count on the 25th revealed 9,681 Wigeon, 3,950 Teal, 2,372 Mallard, 195 Pintail, 42 Shoveler, 101 Pochard, 69 Tufted Duck, 33 Goldeneye and 37 Goosander. An adult female Scaup was seen on the River Derwent at Thorganby on the 16th and 17th while a pair of Smew dropped in at Wheldrake Ings shortly before dusk on the 23rd. An unusual looking Wigeon at Storwood on the 25th proved to be a drake Eurasian x American hybrid.

The Lower Derwent also produced a number of raptor sightings, notably a male Hen Harrier at Bank Island on the 14th, a female Goshawk over Ellerton Ings on the 10th, a female Merlin over Bubwith Bridge on the 2nd and a male at South Duffield on the 22nd. An adult female Peregrine frequented the southern end of the valley throughout the month while an adult male was seen at Ellerton Ings on the 16th and an immature male present in the Wheldrake Ings/Storwood area from the 20th to the end of the month. Highlights from the Wheldrake Ings gull roost included a second-winter Mediterranean Gull on the 19th and a second-winter Iceland Gull on the 21st while at least three

different first-winter Glaucous Gulls roosted regularly from the middle of the month. Two to three Mealy Redpolls associated with a flock of 90 Lesser Redpolls in the Lower Derwent Valley throughout the month, while on the 28th there was a large movement of 2,600 Fieldfare flying southwest over the valley, possibly moving off the Wolds and other high ground due to heavy snow. The most exotic January bird in the valley was a Ring-necked Parakeet which flew over North Duffield Carrs and Aughton Ings on the 2nd.

Outside the Lower Derwent, the highlight of the month was a flock of 31 Waxwings over Low Catton on the 3rd. There were also widespread sightings of flocks of up to 100 Fieldfare and smaller numbers of Redwing. An overwintering Chiffchaff was seen at the Old Sewage Works Woods and adjacent gardens in Woodland Place, York on the 24th and 25th. A single Twite at Dunnington Common on the 17th was a new record for the Dunnington area while twelve Crossbills were present at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on the 12th. A flock of 200 Pink-footed Geese flew north over Huby on the 10th and five skeins totalling c.800 birds flew west over Naburn Sewage Works on the 12th.

FEBRUARY

February was mostly very mild with south and southwesterly winds although, as last month, a cold spell during the last week brought more snow.

The highlight of the month was a drake Ring-necked Duck, first seen at Wheldrake Ings from the 14th–16th before relocating to the southern part of the valley where it commuted between North Duffield Carrs and Aughton Ings until the month end. It was caught and ringed on the 22nd, only the fourth bird to have been ringed in the UK. The only other duck of note was a single ‘redhead’ Smew on a small pond near Elvington on the 21st.

The herd of Whooper Swans remained in the Lower Derwent Valley, increasing to 61 birds by the end of the month with four Bewick’s Swans joining them from the 18th. There were several sightings of one to two Tundra Bean Geese during the month with four stopping briefly at Aughton Ings on the 16th. Several large movements of Pink-footed Geese included a count of 2,300 moving northwest over the valley on the 12th when seven White-fronted Geese paused briefly at Bank Island.

The most unusual raptor record for the month was an exceptionally early Osprey reported flying low east-northeast over Laytham on the 27th. Single Red Kites were reported from Appleton Roebuck on the 6th

and Elvington on the 8th; surprisingly these were the only records for the year, considering the successful reintroduction programme at Harewood House to the west of the recording area. A female Goshawk drifted over Acomb, York on the 15th while single male Merlins were reported on several occasions from the Lower Derwent with a single female seen in the Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory grounds on the 10th and another over fields to the west of Wheldrake Ings on the 27th. There were also periodic single sightings of Peregrine from various locations in the Lower Derwent, comprising at least three different birds, during the month.

Wader numbers picked up in the Lower Derwent as water levels fell in the second half of the month. Peak counts included 5,000+ Golden Plover and 3,000+ Lapwing at North Duffield Carrs on the 18th, 437 Dunlin at North Duffield Carrs on the 9th, 11 Jack Snipe at Low Catton Ings on the 21st and at least 363 Redshank present in the valley on the 10th. A single Spotted Redshank at East Cottingwith on the 21st was the only record for the year.

An adult Yellow-legged Gull was seen at Harewood Whin on the 7th and 8th and was probably the same bird seen at the Wheldrake Ings roost on the 18th and 22nd. White-winged gulls were well represented during the month with an adult Mediterranean Gull seen at the Wheldrake roost on the 14th and another adult reported on farmland near North Duffield Carrs on the 28th while two second-winter and two adult Iceland Gulls were seen on various dates during the month at the roost with one of the adults probably being the same bird seen at Fulford Ings on the 9th and 11th where a probable Kumlien's Gull was seen in flight on the 10th. Single sightings of first, second and third-winter Glaucous Gulls were reported periodically from the Wheldrake roost and North Duffield Carrs.

Other notable sightings during the month included a female Hawfinch present in a Wheldrake garden from the 9th–16th, a pair of Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers in Askham Bog on the 15th with the male again seen on the 22nd and a Long-eared Owl flushed from a dense pine stand on Skipwith Common on the 28th. Wood Larks returned to the traditional breeding site at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory where one was heard singing on the 2nd, some 18 days earlier than 2003. A presumed overwintering Blackcap was singing at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory at midday on the 19th, the same day a Chiffchaff was also reported singing at Scarcroft Green, York.

MARCH

A rather mild and unsettled month with frequent strong westerly and southwesterly winds and quite heavy rainfall.

The Whooper Swan flock in the Lower Derwent began to decrease in numbers during the month with 43 still present on the 17th while two Bewick's Swans were last seen with the flock on the 7th. The Storwood Tundra Bean Goose was last seen on the 7th and wintering wildfowl numbers in the valley generally declined during the month with just 700 Wigeon and 23 Pintail left at North Duffield Carrs on the 17th.

A single Peregrine was seen at Aughton Ings on the 7th while away from the valley, a male Merlin was seen mobbed by a Little Owl at Terrington on the 22nd. An adult Glaucous Gull on the 6th at North Duffield Carrs was the only notable gull species seen this month.

The second half of March saw the first of the returning summer visitors with sightings of Sand Martin, Swallow and Chiffchaff. Returning and spring passage migrant waders included four Little Ringed Plover at Bank Island, a single Ringed Plover at Aughton Ings and three Black-tailed Godwits at Wheldrake Ings, all on the 28th. Around 55 Ruff were present at Aughton Ings on the 7th with 72 there on the 28th. A female Ring-necked Parakeet was present in a Dunnington garden on the 27th.

APRIL

A very mixed month which started with very mild conditions and ended with unusually warm weather. In between, a northerly wind made things much cooler and it was generally very unsettled with heavy rainfall in many areas.

The influx of summer visitors continued with the first records of Cuckoo, Swift, House Martin, Tree Pipit, Yellow Wagtail, Sedge Warbler, Reed Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat, Whitethroat, Garden Warbler and Blackcap. There was a good passage of Wheatear with a pair at Cliffe on the 19th and 11 at East Moor near Sutton-on-the-Forest on the 20th where a male 'White Wagtail' was also present.

The month saw the departure of the last of the overwintering Fieldfares, Redwings and Golden Plover. Four Waxwings were seen in a Knapton garden on the 20th while there were 21 Whimbrel at the traditional Wheldrake Ings spring passage roost on the 18th. The first Garganey for the year was a drake at Castle Howard on the 7th with the

last Pintail being reported from Wheldrake Ings on the 19th. Whooper Swans were still present in the North Duffield Carrs area with 34 there on the 12th. Single Black-necked Grebes were seen at North Duffield Carrs on the 6th and 8th and Bank Island on the 20th. The first Marsh Harrier of the year was a female at Wheldrake Ings on the 19th while a late male Merlin was seen between Pool and Swantail hides there on the 29th. A party of eight Common Terns flying northeast over Haxby were the first of the year.

MAY

May was dominated by high pressure systems and was exceptionally dry in most areas with a cool northerly airstream predominating.

A single bird at North Duffield Carrs on the 1st was the last of the overwintering Whooper Swans. Passage waders included nine Whimbrel at Wheldrake and four at Ellerton on the 1st, two Greenshank at North Duffield Carrs and a single at Bank Island on the 2nd, two Common Sandpipers at Rawcliffe Ings on the 18th and 13 Black-tailed Godwits at Ellerton on the 1st with four at Wheldrake Ings on the 2nd. A Wood Sandpiper and a Sanderling at Aughton Ings on the 15th along with two Temminck's Stints on the 16th were the only records for these species during the year. Two male and three female Ruff were observed lekking from Swantail Hide at Wheldrake Ings on the 22nd. Woodcock began 'roding' during the month with records coming from Askham Bog and Yearsley Moor. Single Ospreys were seen over Wheldrake Ings on the 1st and catching fish at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 2nd.

The month saw the last of the regular summer visitors return with the first records of Quail, Hobby, Turtle Dove and Spotted Flycatcher. A pair of Black-necked Grebes was present at North Duffield Carrs on the 1st and 2nd while there was a first-summer Little Gull at Aughton Ings on the 15th and 16th. Ten Common Terns were noted in the Lower Derwent on the 1st, with pairs seen at North Duffield Carrs and Wheldrake Ings on the 2nd, while another pair took up temporary residence on the pond at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory from the 6th. A single Arctic Tern flying by Tower Hide, Wheldrake Ings on the 29th was the only record for the year. Wheatears continued to be reported on passage during the month with the peak count being four males and two females at Strensall Common on the 22nd.

JUNE

Following on from the previous month, the first three weeks were generally dry, settled and warm but the final week brought unusually autumn-like conditions with unsettled weather and heavy rainfall.

This month produced the only records of Nightjar for the recording area with a pair at the traditional site on Yearsley Moor on the 14th and 16th while another male was heard 'churring' at World's End Plantation, Strensall Common on the 15th, a new site for the recording area.

The occasional passage waders were reported from Bank Island including a single Greenshank on the 1st, single Whimbrel on the 6th and a party of 12 Black-tailed Godwits on the 12th. 'Roding' Woodcocks were reported from Height's Wood near Coneysthorpe, Skipwith Common and Yearsley Moor. A second first-summer Little Gull was seen with Black-headed Gulls at Wheldrake Ings on the 6th.

JULY

The first half of the month was very unsettled and rather cool though conditions gradually improved as high pressure became established bringing much warmer weather but also scattered thunderstorms.

Two juvenile Long-eared Owls were heard calling from pine trees on the MOD part of Strensall Common during a club evening field trip on the 6th. A female Mandarin Duck took up residence on the pond at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory, remaining into August. Little Ringed Plovers were confirmed as breeding at Allerthorpe Lakeland Park while two Greenshanks seen there on the 2nd and 3rd were early returning autumn passage birds. Reports of Common Tern from the Allerthorpe area on the 2nd, along with Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory and York Science Park on the 16th, were the last for the year. This month also produced the last records for the year of Wood Lark and Cuckoo. A first-year Wheatear at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory was the only autumn passage record for this species while a male Redstart at Terrington on the 7th was the first record of the year for the recording area.

AUGUST

The first two weeks of August continued with very warm and humid conditions and widespread thunderstorms. The rest of the month was cooler and very unsettled with above average rainfall.

This month saw the departure of many of the summer breeding birds with the last records for Quail, Sand Martin, Sedge Warbler, Reed Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat, Whitethroat and Garden Warbler. A Redstart at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on the 11th was the second (and last) record for the year. Autumn passage migrants included an immature Whinchat at Bootham Stray on the 15th, single Whimbrel at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 15th and 21st, and a single Golden Plover at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on the 14th. There were also several widespread sightings of Greenshank, Green Sandpiper and Common Sandpiper on passage. From the middle of the month, Swallows and House Martins were reported as beginning to gather in post-breeding flocks. A single Peregrine over the pond at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on the 11th was an unusual summer record, as was an adult Mediterranean Gull over Selby on the 8th.

SEPTEMBER

This month was dominated by a stream of Atlantic depressions bringing almost constant strong westerlies and frequent rainfall.

The highlight of the month was a Buff-breasted Sandpiper seen from the viewpoint at Thorganby from the 4th–9th. Other wader passage highlights included three to four juvenile Little Stints at Thorganby Ings from the 4th–7th and 12 Curlew Sandpipers with four Turnstones at Aughton Ings on the 4th. Returning and/or passage waders also included Black-tailed Godwit, Redshank, Greenshank, Green Sandpiper and Common Sandpiper. A Little Egret lingered in the Lower Derwent Valley during the first half of the month, being seen at various locations from the 4th through to the 12th.

Summer breeding birds continued to depart with the last records of the year for Garganey, Marsh Harrier, Hobby, Little Ringed Plover, Turtle Dove, Swift, Yellow Wagtail, Blackcap and Willow Warbler. A passage juvenile/female Whinchat at Thornton Ellers on the 9th was only the second record of the year. Bank Island produced the last sightings of Black-necked Grebe for the year with a juvenile present from 4th–12th, an adult on the 5th and 12th and two adults on the 9th. A female/immature Red-crested Pochard was at Wheldrake Ings on the 4th and 5th and then at Bank Island on the 9th while a 'redhead' Goosander on the River Foss near Fishergate from the 12th was the first of the returning winter birds. Other firsts for returning winter birds included a flock of 100 Pink-footed Geese over Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory and small numbers of Redwing passing overhead at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on the 29th.

OCTOBER

October was also dominated by low pressure systems with mostly westerly winds and frequent heavy rain although spells of southeasterly winds were also prominent.

This month produced only the second record of Raven for the recording area, with a bird being mobbed by other corvids over Cliffe on the 3rd.

The last House Martin and Spotted Flycatcher records were on the 6th, the last Chiffchaff on the 11th and the last Swallow on the 21st. A single Waxwing was seen over Fulford lngs on the 16th with a flock of 15 over Fulford Barracks on the 29th. Single Fieldfares recorded on the 21st were the first of the winter but flocks of up to 500 were reported towards the end of the month. A mixed flock of 200 Fieldfares and 200 Redwings was reported near Strensall on the 28th while the first Brambling of the winter was seen on the 25th. The first Whooper Swans seen were a party of 14 at Thorganby on the 18th and there was a steady passage of Pink-footed Geese through the recording area during the month.



NOVEMBER

Another varied month weather-wise but it was generally warm for the time of year although night frosts did set in.

The first Whooper Swans to return to the Lower Derwent Valley was a flock of 16 on the 16th while elsewhere two were seen at Castle Howard Lake on the 16th and four flew over Nunnery Lane, York on the 28th. Two Bewick's Swans at Castle Howard Lake on the 9th was the only record of this species for the end of the year. Two Tundra Bean Geese were present near Thorganby from the middle of the month and a single White-fronted Goose was in a flock of Greylag Geese at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on the 21st.

The only raptor record of note was a Peregrine seen over Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on the 7th while two Rock Pipits were noted between Bubwith and Aughton on the 28th. The first winter flocks of Waxwing were noted with eight in York and three in Selby. The numbers of wintering Fieldfare, Redwing and Brambling increased during the month and a Bittern was again seen at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 16th.

DECEMBER

The year ended with rather mixed weather comprising mild and wet conditions at either end of the month and interspersed by a cool period with frequent overnight frosts and light snowfall.

Waxwing sightings continued into this month with at least 45 in trees at York Technical College and along the cycle track at the back of Bishopthorpe on the 17th with 12 feeding on hawthorns in New Earswick on the 19th while a single bird was seen at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on the 23rd. The Whooper Swan flock at North Duffield Carrs had built up to 55 by the end of the month and Pink-footed Geese continued to be reported with the largest flock being 500 at Bank Island on the 30th. The only raptor of note during the month was a single Merlin at Buttercrambe on the 20th. Fieldfare numbers dropped during the month with a flock of 100 at Storwood being the largest, while flocks of 200 Redwing were noted at Bootham Stray and the New Earswick nature reserves on the 31st.

Malcolm Douglas

CLASSIFIED LIST (2004)

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

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Resident breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor

Good numbers present in the Lower Derwent Valley early in the year included 27 on the Pocklington Canal at Hagg Bridge on 1st January with 33 there on the 3rd and 17 on the River Derwent at North Duffield Carrs on the 6th while counts throughout the valley revealed 101 on the 17th and 83 on the 25th. Numbers continued to increase in February with 103 on the 15th and 117 on the 22nd, the largest concentrations being 41 between Hagg Bridge and Storwood and 36 at Bubwith Ings, both on the 22nd, plus 27 at Aughton on the 28th while many pairs were back on territory by early March. The only reports later in the year were of six birds at Bank Island on 7th September and six on the Pocklington Canal on 31st October.

Elsewhere, small numbers were reported from Castle Howard Lake throughout the year while five were at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 25th January with one or two seen through the year. A pair was at Newburgh Priory Lake from 17th February to early March with one remaining to 8th April, with a pair by the River Rye near Butterwick on 2nd March and two birds at Scampston Park on 2nd November. A pair was on the River Ouse at Naburn on 12th February with three immatures there on the 20th and the pair was seen again during May with two cygnets on the 31st and a single adult bird there on 6th June; what was probably the same pair was noted in York city centre on several dates from early August to early October returning to Naburn on 19th October. Three birds visited Rawcliffe Lake three or four times during the latter half of the year and were last seen flying upriver at Rawcliffe Ings on 27th December.

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

Winter visitor

A rare bird in the recording area these days with just a single at Aughton Ings on 1st January until four arrived at North Duffield Carrs on 18th February. They joined the Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus* herd and were still present on 1st March with two remaining to the 7th March.

The only record later in the year was of a single on the River Wharfe at Church Fenton on 18th November.

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Winter visitor

The herd in the Lower Derwent Valley was fairly mobile in early January but had settled into a routine of roosting at North Duffield Carrs and feeding on surrounding arable land by the month end. A count of 34 on 3rd January slowly increased to 55 by the 29th remaining through February with a small increase to 61 at the end of the month. Numbers then fell with 43 on 17th March, 34 on 12th April and just one remaining on 1st May.

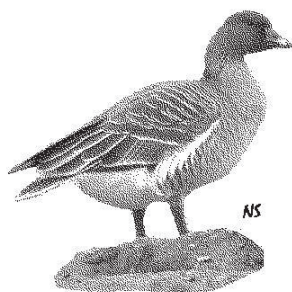
The first returning birds were 14 at Thorganby on 18th October with 21 at Bubwith on the 27th while seven were at North Duffield Carrs on 11th November, 25 at Ellerton on the 13th and ten at Wheldrake Ings on the 20th. Six birds at North Duffield Carrs on 20th December had adopted the feeding and roosting pattern from earlier in the year and had increased to 55 by the year end.

Elsewhere, three circled over floods at Clifton Ings on 24th October, eight flew east over the Central Science Laboratory pond, Sand Hutton on 2nd November; a juvenile flew southwest over Haxby Road Farm on the 17th and a single was in a flooded field by the Potterick Fish Pond at Strensall on 18th November.

Bean Goose *Anser fabalis*

Winter visitor and late winter passage migrant

Two of the tundra race *rossicus* were at Bank Island/Wheldrake Ings from 9th–16th January with one remaining at Storwood to the end of the month but it became fairly mobile being seen widely throughout the Lower Derwent Valley through February until 7th March while another four stopped briefly at Aughton on 16th February with two more at Bubwith on the 19th and 20th.



Several birds of the taiga race *fabalis* were with a flock of Pink-footed Geese *Anser brachyrhynchus* which passed through the valley early in January with one joining the two tundra race birds at Bank Island from 9th–12th and were last seen at Wheldrake Ings on the 18th.

Observers are requested to note the race of this species wherever possible.

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

Most sightings referred to skeins passing over the area although one or two lingered in the Lower Derwent Valley early in the year with 15 at Wheldrake Ings, two remaining to 1st May. Up to seven were with the goose flock at Castle Howard Lake early on and three were at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 20th March with one remaining to the 25th. During January, two skeins of 69 and 90 flew north at North Duffield Carrs on the 10th with another 200 over Hubby the same day, then five skeins totalling c.800 birds flew west over Naburn Sewage Works on the 12th and 42 moved north over Bank Island on the 18th. A large movement was witnessed during February when 2,300 moved northwest over the Lower Derwent Valley on the 12th with smaller numbers over the next few days: 574 on the 13th, 230 on the 14th and 47 on the 15th while a further 110 went west over Wheldrake Ings on the 29th, 50 flew east at East Cottingwith on 2nd April and two skeins of 75 and 40 passed over North Duffield Carrs on the 6th April .

The first returning birds were 100 over the pond at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 29th September followed by a steady passage through October which included an unknown number over Osbaldwick on the 3rd, 58 over Poppleton on the 8th, 300+ over Howthorpe Farm near Terrington the same day, 120 over Acomb on the 19th and 65 over Cape Farm, Sheriff Hutton on the 28th. A party of 11 spent a couple of days at Thorganby in early November with 93 over Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 7th, 112 over the Central Science Laboratory pond on the 8th, four at Castle Howard Lake on the 22nd and 55 over Heworth on the 25th. December saw 200 over Wass on the 9th, 500 over Bank Island on the 30th and finally 59 over New Earswick just before dark on the 31st.

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*
Winter visitor

The only records this year were of a single bird at Storwood from 24th January to 4th February and seven pausing briefly at Bank Island on 12th February.

Observers are requested to note the race of this species wherever possible.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Resident breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor

A common goose regularly encountered throughout the recording area although some sites reported less frequent sightings than usual. Present all year in the Lower Derwent Valley with up to 800 early in the year and a peak of 1,200 during November. Winter numbers at Castle Howard Lake peaked at 230 on 24th March and 146 on 22nd November while at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits there were peaks of 189 on 25th January and 150 on 25th September. Other notable counts included 80 over the pond at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 6th February, 180 (including 35 young) on the River Ouse between the York and Naburn on 6th June, 100 at Rawcliffe Lake on 8th August and 110 in a flooded meadow near Plantation Farm, Wigginton on 15th December.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Resident breeder and winter visitor

A widespread and common goose recorded from all suitable habitats throughout the recording area. Again, good numbers were present throughout the year at most sites and a peak of 594 in the Lower Derwent Valley early in the year included a flock of 200+ on floodwater at Hagg Bridge on 2nd January. At Castle Howard Lake, 220 in early January increased to 400+ by 7th April with subsequent peak counts of 180 on 16th July and 203 on 22nd November. Other notable counts consisted of 60+ at Rawcliffe Lake in early January, 120 (including 30 young) on the River Ouse between York and Naburn on 6th June with 100 birds there on 2nd October, 79 at Kettlestring Farm, New Earswick on 1st September, 130 at Wheldrake Ings on the 4th and 207 at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 23rd.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Winter visitor and feral wanderer

A single with Canada Geese *Branta canadensis* moved around the Lower Derwent Valley throughout January and February and was joined by a second bird on 20th February, both birds then favouring the southern end of the valley until the end of the month at least. Another single flew over Naburn with a flock of Pink-footed Geese *Anser brachyrhynchus* on 12th February while a feral bird was present at Castle Howard Lake from 30th July to 10th August. Another single was at Aughton on 6th November.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Winter visitor, migrant breeder and scarce autumn passage migrant

In the Lower Derwent Valley, 15 flew over North Duffield Carrs on 9th January, 21 roosted at Ellerton on the 18th with 30 there next day and 25 were counted throughout the valley on the 25th. Numbers increased throughout February as breeding birds began to return with 53 on the 10th, 72 on the 22nd and 84 on the 28th while up to 20 lingered until the end of May. The only report later in the year was of five at Wheldrake Ings on 11th November.

Elsewhere, six were on Newburgh Priory Lake on 17th February with three still there on 4th March and two on 8th April. A pair flew over Strensall Common on 12th May and a single over the Central Science Laboratory pond, Sand Hutton on 4th June.

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

Rare visitor with the possibility of escapes from captivity

A female of unknown origin was present on the pond at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory for five weeks during July and August (SHBR).

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Winter visitor, spring passage migrant and resident breeder

Over 5,000 were on the River Derwent at Thorganby on 4th and 5th January while large gatherings at Bank Island peaked at 7,200 on the 9th though a full count on the 25th revealed 9,681 throughout the Lower Derwent Valley. Birds dispersed throughout the site during February with the extensive flooding and another count on the 22nd recorded 13,171 including 2,720 at Wheldrake Ings, 2,565 at Bubwith Ings, 2,410 at Ellerton and 4,000+ at North Duffield Carrs before numbers fell during March with just 700 remaining at North Duffield Carrs on the 17th.

The first returning birds were 300+ at Wheldrake Ings on 18th September while the usual wintering population was at Castle Howard Lake with peaks of 29 on 8th February and 63 on 24th October. One hundred were at Tollerton on 5th February with a pair at Newburgh Priory Lake on the 17th and three at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 8th November.

A drake Eurasian Wigeon x American Wigeon *Anas americana* hybrid was identified at Storwood on 23rd January (EN).

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Winter visitor and migrant breeder

In the Lower Derwent Valley, numbers were low at the start of the year due to the lack of flooding with just 11 at Bank Island on 8th January

although there was a steady increase to 37 throughout the Valley by the end of the month and 188 by 22nd February, 136 of them at Wheldrake Ings. There were 26 at North Duffield Carrs on 17th March while a pair frequented Allerthorpe Gravel Pits from January through to April at least. Small numbers were seen throughout the year at Castle Howard Lake with peaks of 14 on 26th September and 12 on 24th October. Back in the Lower Derwent Valley, at least 15 were at Ellerton on 28th August with 20 at Wheldrake Ings on 4th September increasing to 45 by 11th November. A drake visited the pond at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 25th October.

Common Teal *Anas crecca*

Winter visitor and resident breeder

Up to 1,000 were spread along the River Derwent during early January with a large gathering of 3,145 at Bank Island on the 9th and 3,950 counted throughout the valley on the 25th increasing to 4,460 by the end of February. Over 600 were back at Ellerton by 28th August with 500 at Bank Island and 1,000+ at Wheldrake Ings in early September. There were 95 at Castle Howard Lake on 2nd January with 50 remaining on the 21st and 50 on floods at Fulford Ings on 11th February while four visited the floods at Clifton Ings on 2nd February with a pair remaining in the Rawcliffe Meadows flood basin throughout April. Six birds were present at Newburgh Priory Lake on 17th February with two pairs there on 4th March and four birds were flushed from an oxbow lake on the River Rye near Butterwick on 2nd March. A flock of 15 was on the ponds at Strensall Common on 17th March with one or two seen throughout April and a pair on the pond at rifle butts on 5th May. Another pair was at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 17th April with a single there on 20th November and further singles noted at the Central Science Laboratory pond, Sand Hutton on 17th September and Clifton Ings on 28th October. Forty-five were at Howthorpe Farm near Terrington on 8th October with a record 15 on the Joseph Rowntree Trust NR pond, New Earswick on the 10th while 30 birds were at Scampston Park throughout November. A few pairs bred on Skipwith Common.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Winter visitor and resident breeder

A common species recorded widely throughout the recording area with breeding noted at many sites. During the winter months, birds were widely dispersed throughout the Lower Derwent Valley producing maximum counts of 2,372 on 25th January and 2,080 on 22nd February with 1,000+ of these in the Thorganby area. Other counts of note included 120 on the River Ouse between York and Naburn on 3rd January, 250+ at

Castle Howard Lake on 21st January, 100+ at Newburgh Priory Lake on 18th May and a peak of 112 on the pond at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory in November while up to 57 roosted on the Joseph Rowntree Trust NR pond, New Earswick from August to the end of the year.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Winter visitor and scarce migrant breeder

Twenty at Bank Island on 1st January increased to 137 by the 10th which included 86 drakes while the WeBS count on the 25th revealed 195 to be present throughout the Lower Derwent Valley. At Wheldrake Ings 153 on 30th January increased to 186 by 15th February with a count of 573 throughout the valley on the 22nd including 141 at Wheldrake Ings and 181 at Aughton. North Duffield Carrs held 23 on 17th March with ten remaining at Wheldrake Ings on 19th April where 28 had returned by 4th September but numbers remained low to the end of the year. No reports away from the Lower Derwent Valley this year.

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

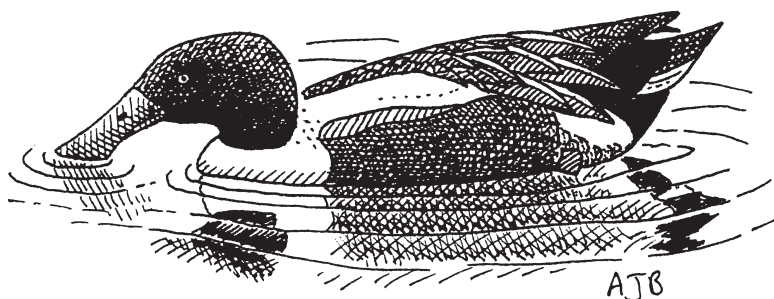
Migrant breeder

The first bird of the year was a drake at Castle Howard Lake on 7th April followed by two at Ellerton on 1st May which later turned up at Bank Island with a female on the 15th while a single drake commuted between there and Wheldrake Ings until the 29th at least and a pair was at the latter site on 6th June. A drake was seen at Wheldrake Ings on 8th August with two at Bank Island on 9th September.

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Resident breeder and winter visitor

One or two in the Lower Derwent Valley at the start of the year increased to 42 by 25th January and then 160 by 22nd February, 61 of



them being at Wheldrake Ings with 20+ present at North Duffield Carrs on 17th March. A few pairs remained through the summer, mainly in the Wheldrake Ings/Bank Island area where returning birds peaked at 100 on 18th September with 37 still present on 11th November. Up to five were at Castle Howard Lake throughout January with a drake there from 7th to 13th April. A pair was at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 23rd May with seven birds there on 8th November.

Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*

Rare visitor with the possibility of escapes from captivity

A female/immature of unknown origin was at Wheldrake Ings on 4th and 5th September and then Bank Island on the 9th (RS *et al.*)

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Winter visitor and migrant breeder

Forty-two in the Lower Derwent Valley early in the year increased with more extensive flooding to 101 on 25th January and numbers continued to increase during February with 1,000+ by the 11th, peaking at 2,515 on the 16th with 1,700 at Aughton Ings; numbers then decreased as the floods receded with only 600 remaining by the end of the month. Around 100 were at Castle Howard Lake from the beginning of the year through to March while 21 at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 25th January had decreased to two by 19th February. Up to four were at Newburgh Priory Lake throughout February with ten there on 4th March. Three birds wintered at Rowntree Park and a drake frequented the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year, possibly the same bird moving north of the city to the river by Clifton Ings on 22nd December. Forty had returned to Wheldrake Ings by 11th November and two were at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 18th December.

Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris*

Vagrant

A drake appeared at Wheldrake Ings from 14th–16th February, showing well from the Tower Hide in the company of other diving ducks. It was then relocated at North Duffield Carrs on the 19th and commuted between here and Aughton Ings throughout the remainder of the month. This represents the eighth record of this species in the Lower Derwent Valley and it was caught and ringed on the 22nd, only the fourth bird to have been ringed in the UK. Accepted by the YNU.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Winter visitor and migrant breeder

Small numbers were present in the Lower Derwent Valley in early January until flooding later in the month brought 69 into the area by the 25th. Numbers continued to rise through February with birds favouring the deeper floods at Aughton and Ellerton Ings, Bank Island, Wheldrake Ings and Bubwith; a full count on the 22nd produced 348 throughout the valley with the largest concentration being 148 at Aughton. A few pairs lingered through the summer with 20 at North Duffield Carrs on 14th August and 30 at Wheldrake Ings on 4th September.

Up to 40 wintered at Castle Howard Lake with a peak of 150 on 7th April and a few pairs staying on to breed with 22 seen on 30th July. Birds also wintered at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits with a maximum of 60 on 5th February and a few lingered into the summer with at least one pair breeding; numbers then built back up from early October with 32 present by end of November. A flock of 25 was on Walbutts Pond, Strensall on 29th February with a few pairs frequenting the various other ponds in the area throughout the spring while a female with six juveniles was seen at High Carr on 23rd July. At Newburgh Priory Lake, three birds were present on 12th February with two drakes remaining to 4th March and a pair there on 18th May. Three birds were also on the bottom pond at Yearsley Moor on 4th March with a pair there on 8th April. A pair was on the pond at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 28th January with singles there on 2nd March and 27th October. A pair also visited the Joseph Rowntree Trust NR pond, New Earswick on 8th January followed by single drakes on 2nd February and 12th March with two females there on 12th December. Three were on Rawcliffe Lake from 2nd–28th September and 14 were at Rowntree Park, York on 19th October with single bird sightings along the River Ouse between the city and Naburn during the winter months.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Winter visitor and passage migrant in small numbers

An adult female on the River Derwent at Thorganby on 16th and 17th January was the only record (EN).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

Up to 11 were on the River Derwent between East Cottingwith and Bubwith in early January with 11 at Bank Island on the 10th, 14 on the river at Thorganby on the 16th and 33 throughout the Lower Derwent Valley on the 25th; numbers remained fairly static throughout February

with 20 on the pool at Wheldrake Ings on the 15th being the largest gathering while three or four had returned here by November. Away from the valley, up to 16 wintered at Castle Howard Lake, a single female was at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits from 20th November to 18th December and a female also dropped into the Joseph Rowntree Trust NR pond, New Earswick one afternoon, the third record for the site, but it had gone next day.

Smew *Mergellus albellus*
Almost annual winter visitor

A pair dropped in at Wheldrake Ings with seven Goosander *Mergus merganser* shortly before dusk on 23rd January while there was a single 'redhead' on a small pond near Elvington on 21st February.

Goosander *Mergus merganser*
Winter visitor and passage migrant

In the Lower Derwent Valley, five flew over North Duffield Carrs on 5th January with low numbers roosting at Bank Island early in the month; increased flooding later on saw birds move to Wheldrake Ings although numbers remained low with just 37 on the 25th increasing to 46 by 13th February. Elsewhere, there were up to 14 birds wintering at Castle Howard Lake early in the year with two remaining on 2nd March, two flew over Fulford Ings on 11th February with ten over Naburn Sewage Works on 6th March and there was a drake on the River Wharfe at Church Fenton on 7th April. Later in the year, a 'redhead' was on the river Foss near Fishergate from 12th September to 2nd October, a drake flew over New Earswick on 26th November, two males and three females were at Buttercrambe on 15th December, a male and three females flew along the river at Newton-on-Ouse on the 17th and a drake was on the River Ouse at Cliffe on the 28th.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*
Migrant breeder

Up to four were present throughout the year at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits while two drakes had returned to Wheldrake Ings by 22nd February and 12 were recorded at Castle Howard Lake during April. A single drake was on the pools around Strensall Common from 9th–26th April with a pair from 28th February to 5th May, two pairs in the Huby area on 2nd May and five drakes at Bank Island on the 6th while four drakes were at Wheldrake Ings on 4th September.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Resident breeder

A party of 15 was at East Cottingwith on 5th February with three along Moor Lane, Bishopthorpe on the 20th and a single down Brecks Lane, Strensall on the 29th. Another single was at Butterwick on 2nd March with two birds reported from West Lilling on the 8th. A pair was just north of Skipwith on 19th April with two in Pretty Wood near Welburn on the 24th and birds were occasionally recorded in farmland by the river to the south of York throughout the year with nine counted there on 9th May while a single was seen east of Huby on the 17th. Birds were present throughout the year at Bishop Wilton and around the pond at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory and four were near Crayke on 27th December.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Resident breeder

Seven were at North Duffield Carrs on 7th January with eight at Thornton Ellers on the 10th and 11 there on the 13th while 'good numbers' were reported along the Pocklington Canal between Melbourne and East Cottingwith throughout the year. A covey of 22 was at Aughton on 21st January with ten at Hagg Lane, East Cottingwith on 6th February while a male seen near Naburn Sewage Works on the 12th was unusual and three birds were at Ellerton on 10th March with two there on 22nd April. Pairs were reported from 100 Acre Farm, Sutton-on-the-Forest from 16th–30th April, near the monument at Castle Howard on the 28th and on farmland near Acaster Malbis next day while another pair at High Carr, Strensall on 21st April was seen on the Common from 28th April to 12th May. During the summer, singles were reported from Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 3rd July and Bishop Wilton on the 15th with birds also seen throughout the year in the Huby area with a covey of ten on 7th August. During the latter part of the year there was a covey of 14 at Kettlestring



Farm, New Earswick during October, 15 birds at Howthorpe Farm on 6th October and four at Sutton-on-the-Forest on 27th November.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

Summer visitor which breeds in good years

Birds were heard calling in the Howardian Hills on 16th May, North Duffield Carrs on 12th June and High Roans, Strensall on 21st July while a single was flushed from the side of the road at Storwood on 19th August.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Resident breeder

Common and widespread throughout the recording area although the only counts received were of 20 along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on 26th April and 34 at Howthorpe Farm on 28th September. Two or three pairs have become resident in the Cornfield NR at Rawcliffe where 14 young were fledged this year.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Resident breeder

A single bird on the River Foss near Mill Hill from 1st January was joined by another later in the month with both remaining in the area until the end of March. Another single was seen on the Joseph Rowntree Trust NR pond, New Earswick on 10th and 11th January with two birds present throughout the month on the Pocklington Canal. Records from the Lower Derwent Valley included 12 on the river at Aughton and two between there and Sutton upon Derwent on 1st January, 24 birds between East Cottingwith and Bubwith on the 3rd with 23 counted there on the 25th and singles at Bubwith Bridge on the 11th and Bank Island on the 20th. Up to 26 birds remained along this stretch of the River Derwent in February with numbers dropping by mid-month as they dispersed to their breeding sites.

A pair was at North Duffield Carrs on 6th April with a single bird in the ditch behind Swantail Hide at Wheldrake Ings on the 19th and another at Bank Island on 5th May. A breeding-plumaged adult was seen at Bank Island on 20th April with five birds there (possibly a family party) on 12th September while three were present in front of Swantail Hide, Wheldrake Ings on 7th September.

One was at Castle Howard on 2nd January and 1st February with further singles at Walbutts Ponds near Strensall on 29th February and on pools at Strensall Common on 9th, 10th and 28th April as well as a pair on the ponds behind the rifle butts there on 5th May. A single was at Newburgh

Priory Lake on 4th March with others seen on a pool at Towthorpe Grange on 9th April and on a nest with eggs at Frog Hall, Allerthorpe Common on 16th May. Seen regularly at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits with two birds present on 25th January and 19th February, two on nests with eggs on 3rd and 16th May, six adults and three small young there on 23rd May, 11 on 6th June, ten adults and a juvenile on 15th August and six birds on 3rd October. Others were noted on a nest at East Moor, Sutton-on-the-Forest on 6th May and in the Joseph Rowntree Trust NR, New Earswick on 10th October with eight at Castle Howard on 24th October.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*
Migrant breeder and passage visitor

One to two were seen regularly throughout the year at Rawcliffe Lake while pairs were seen on a pond at Wistow on 14th February, at North Duffield Carrs on 17th March and at Bank Island on 27th April when two were in front of the Tower Hide at Wheldrake Ings with another two birds at Bubwith on 1st May. One was at East Moor, Sutton-on-the Forest on 6th May while a pair with two young was noted at Naburn Marina on the 16th. Another pair was on the bottom pond at Yearsley Moor on 16th June with two birds at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 30th May. One was on the River Ouse at Clifton on 10th July and a winter-plumaged adult on the Ouse between York and Naburn on 19th September with two at York University Lake on 30th October.

Up to at least five birds were present throughout the year at Castle Howard. They bred at this site with nest building noted on 13th April, a pair with two juveniles seen on 24th and 26th August and another pair seen with two young on 19th September.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*
Scarce winter visitor

A single winter-plumaged bird was seen at Wheldrake Ings on 28th January (EN).

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*
Summer visitor

Single birds were seen at North Duffield Carrs on 6th and 10th April, Bank Island on 20th April and Wheldrake Ings on 1st May. A pair was also seen at North Duffield Carrs on 1st and 2nd May while a summer-plumaged adult was at Bank Island on 20th April with a juvenile present at this site from 4th–12th September and a single adult on the 5th and 12th and two adults on the 9th.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Passage and winter visitor and recently established resident

Birds were present and roosting throughout the year in the Lower Derwent Valley. Up to 130 birds on the River Ouse downstream of the barrage at Howden Dyke during the early part of January were thought to have been birds displaced by the dry conditions from the Wheldrake Ings colony where they returned once the Ings started to flood on 20th January. Birds subsequently bred at Wheldrake Ings with at least 32 nests counted on 19th April. Double figures were present throughout the year at Castle Howard with a maximum count of 49 on 28th February where they bred on a small island with five active nests noted on 1st May.

Up to four were occasionally seen along the Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year, mostly as flyovers but sometimes fishing in the river. Singles were seen flying along the river at Clifton Ings regularly throughout the year with three together on 14th January and singles were noted at Rawcliffe Lake on 28th September and 3rd October. Four birds flew over New Earswick on 17th March with single birds recorded on 15th May as well as 20th and 30th October. Another single flew along Whitecarr Beck near Moor Farm, Sutton-on-the-Forest on 16th April with two on a farm pond at East Moor near Sutton-on-the-Forest on the 20th.

One was seen wing-drying on the island in the Joseph Rowntree Trust NR, New Earswick on 15th August with probably the same bird seen briefly on the pond two days later. Single birds were noted in flight over Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 16th January, 21st May, 31st August and 18th October with two on 6th October and three on 30th November. Other singles were present at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 3rd October and 8th November.

Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*

Rare but increasing visitor

One lingered in the Lower Derwent Valley during the first half of September being seen at Thorganby Ings on the 4th and 5th, Ellerton on the 5th, Wheldrake Ings on the 8th and 9th and Bank Island on the 11th and 12th.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Resident breeder

Present throughout the year in the Lower Derwent Valley with birds returning to the Wheldrake heronry from mid-February with at least 20 pairs present on the 22nd. Also present at Castle Howard with three active nests noted during April. Four to five birds were seen regularly in

the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area throughout the year and a single was at Rawcliffe Lake throughout April and again on 15th September.

Widespread within the recording area as a whole with single birds (usually in flight) recorded at Allerthorpe, Askham Bog, Bishop Wood, Buttercrambe, Elvington, Full Sutton, Grange Farm (Haxby), Leavening, along the River Foss at Lilling Green Farm (Strensall), Malton, New Earswick, Pocklington, Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory (16 records over the year), Seaton Ross, Seavy Carr (six seen on 4th February), Sheriff Hutton, Sutton-on-the-Forest, Terrington and York.

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

Increasing visitor following recent reintroductions in the country

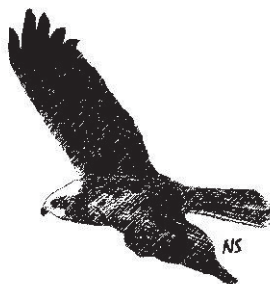
One was reported from Appleton Roebuck on 6th February (YOC website) while another flew west over Elvington on the 8th (EN).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Passage migrant and rare breeder

Seen regularly in the Lower Derwent Valley with the first bird of the year being a female near the Swantail Hide at Wheldrake Ings on 19th April. In total, there were at least five different individuals (probably more!) seen in the valley throughout the spring and summer on about 20 dates with the last being two juveniles watched hunting together at Bank Island on 12th September.

The only record away from the Lower Derwent was an adult male near the Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus* colony at Skipwith Common on 29th May (RC).



Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

A male flew west over Bank Island on 14th January (EN).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Passage visitor and rare breeder

A female was seen over Ellerton Ings on 10th January while an unusual urban record concerned another female being mobbed by Starlings *Sturnus vulgaris* and a Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* as it drifted over Danebury Drive near Acomb Green, York on 15th February (DS).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Resident breeder and passage migrant

Widely reported throughout the year with records from Allerthorpe, Askham Bog, Bishopthorpe, Castle Howard, Clifton Ings, Dunnington, Huby, Melbourn, New Earswick, Osbaldwick, Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory, Sheriff Hutton, Skipwith, Storwood, Strensall, Terrington, West Lilling and York University.

At least five different birds were seen along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year with a pair displaying over Fulford Ings on 27th March and a male seen carrying prey there on 9th May. Two birds were apparently migrating south together over Fulford Army Barracks on 1st October while two pairs were reported as holding territory in the New Earswick area and the regular pair in the Joseph Rowntree Trust NR fledging two young.

Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Passage migrant and rare breeder

The number of sightings has continued to grow suggesting that the species is now a firmly established resident within the recording area.

Singles flew west over North Duffield Cams on 1st and 5th January and 28th February while one was near Canal Head on the Pocklington Canal on 24th January. Single birds were seen regularly in the Terrington area throughout the year while others were seen distantly north of Cliffe on 22nd April and over the A64 near Sand Hutton on 24th May. One was being mobbed by corvids over Pretty Wood, Castle Howard on 27th May with others over Thurtle Wood, Slingsby on 22nd June and Fryton Wood, Slingsby on 27th July. One was at Garrowby on 17th August with two seen over Huttons Bank Wood, Huttons Ambo on 18th July and another soaring near Scrayingham on 15th August. September sightings included one at Thorganby Ings on the 4th with another flying over Thornton Ellers on the 9th, two over Terrington on the 26th and three at Garrowby on the 28th with another single being mobbed by corvids over South Wood at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory the same day. Further singles were seen over Bank Island on 18th October, being chased by crows to

the east of Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 25th October and heard at Fryton Woods, Castle Howard on 30th December.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Regular passage migrant.

An exceptionally early bird was reported flying low east-northeast over Laytham on 27th February (EN). Other singles were seen over Wheldrake Ings on 1st May (RS) and catching fish at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits the following day (PB).

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Resident breeder

Regularly seen throughout the recording area with birds frequently sighted hunting over busy roadside margins such as the northern and southern York bypasses and the Wigginton/Sutton-on-the-Forest road. Just an occasional visitor to the Clifton Ings area this year while one to two birds were seen regularly along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout with a maximum of six noted on 9th May. A pair was observed copulating at Fulford Ings on 26th April and the species was thought to have bred near Kettlestring Farm with birds regularly seen hunting over nearby Bootham Stray.

In the Strensall area, a pair was seen on the Common on 1st January with singles noted on 17th March, 4th and 6th July and 28th August while one remained at The Brecks from 13–18th February and an adult with three juveniles was seen in the YWT reserve at the Common on 13th July. Singles were also seen at Towthorpe on 9th March, 9th April and 28th October with others at Askham Bog on 26th April and Bank Island and the Pool Hide at Wheldrake Ings on 7th September. Seen at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on 27th July and 12th and 24th August with single birds also reported from Huttons Ambo on 18th July, Wheldrake Ings on 4th September and Sutton-on-the-Forest on 27th November. Reported regularly from Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory with single birds noted on 16 dates throughout the year.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Passage migrant and winter visitor

A female flew over the road by Bubwith Bridge on 2nd January with a male at South Duffield Ings on the 22nd. Single males were reported from North Duffield Carrs on 3rd, 4th and 21st February with another at Aughton on the 26th. A female was seen flying over the southeast corner of the Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory grounds on

10th February with another seen dashing low over fields to the west of Wheldrake Ings on the 27th. A male was observed being mobbed by a Little Owl *Athene noctua* at Terrington on 22nd March with another male between the Pool and Swantail hides at Wheldrake Ings on 29th April. Single birds were also noted at Bulmer on 22nd November and hunting Skylarks *Alauda arvensis* at Cape Farm near Sheriff Hutton on the 29th November with another at Buttercrambe on 20th December.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Passage and increasing summer visitor

A bird heading in a southeasterly direction between Sheriff Hutton and Terrington on 23rd May was the first (BP). The next sighting involved a single at North Ings Farm, Terrington on 8th June with a pair displaying at Fryton Wood, Slingsby on 22nd June. One was hunting Sand Martins *Riparia riparia* at Allerthorpe Lakeland Park on 3rd July with another hunting House Martins *Delichon urbica* over the observer's house in Selby on 8th August! A single bird flew over the Dean's Garden Centre car park (Stockton-on-the-Forest) carrying prey and being mobbed by a Swallow *Hirundo rustica* on 31st August with another seen hunting Swallows at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 1st September while a juvenile flew over that site on 27th September. An adult and two juveniles were seen at Wheldrake Ings on 4th September with another juvenile at Thorganby on the 5th. A single adult at Thorganby on 7th September was the last (MD).



Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Winter and passage visitor

An adult female frequented the southern end of the Lower Derwent Valley during January with sightings from Aughton, Ellerton and North Duffield Carrs. An adult male was at Ellerton Ings on 16th January and 4th February while an immature male was present in the Wheldrake Ings/Storword area from 20th January to the end of the month. On 7th February a large immature female was seen at Wheldrake Ings with males seen at both Aughton Ings and Wheldrake Ings on the 22nd and a single sub-adult male at Aughton Ings/North Duffield Carrs from the 26th to 29th. A bird was watched stooping on Wigeon *Anas penelope* at North Duffield Carrs on 18th February with other singles at Aughton Ings on 7th March and Ellerton on 8th September. A single flying over the pond at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 11th August was an unusual summer record.

A pair bred just outside the recording area raising one young with the juvenile and an adult seen there on 20th June.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Resident breeder and winter/passage visitor

The bird present in the Joseph Rowntree Trust NR, New Earswick in 2003 remained and was last reported on 2nd March. An adult was seen on the river-bank between Sutton upon Derwent and Kexby on 1st January with another seen by the Pocklington Canal at Hagg Bridge on the 3rd while one was heard calling from the river bank behind the Tower Hide at Wheldrake Ings on the 24th. Up to three birds were calling in the car park scrub at Wheldrake Ings throughout January and February with a single seen on 26th January. Further singles were noted at Thornton Ellers on 6th January and 11th February with birds also were present along the river bank at Wheldrake Ings on 7th, 13th and 21st February. Two were heard calling at Wheldrake on 18th April and three to four wintering birds were present at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits during January with further sight and/or sound records of one to two birds on 27th March, 8th November and 12th December. An adult gave excellent views during freezing conditions at Fulford Ings on 20th February with birds heard calling there on 22nd April. Later in the year one was heard at Wheldrake Ings on 4th September with three reported from the same area on 4th December.

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Resident breeder and winter visitor

Present all year and bred at Rawcliffe Lake and in the Clifton Ings area. Reported throughout the year at Castle Howard Lake with numbers varying between ten to 40 birds. Widespread in the Lower Derwent Valley throughout the year with an impressive gathering of 72 in a cowshed at Storwood on 3rd January while a total of 415 was recorded during the WeBS count on the 25th and 348 on 22nd February with most found along the Pocklington Canal and River Derwent. Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with most birds seen in Rowntree Park, the maximum count being 20 on 12th November while the first chick was noted on 9th May. Five birds were on the River Foss at Strensall on 29th January with six there on 30th July. In the New Earswick area birds were present all year round on the Foss and on the ponds in the Joseph Rowntree Trust and Sessions nature reserves as well as a small pond at Kettlespring Farm; breeding was reported from along the Foss and in both nature reserves. Resident at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory where three pairs reared at least five broods (15 chicks).

Can be found in all suitable habitats throughout the York recording area with other sightings coming from Allerthorpe Gravel Pits, Butterwick, Melbourne, Newburgh Priory, Strensall Common, Sutton-on-the-Forest, Thornton, Yearsley Moor and the River Foss in York.

Coot *Fulica atra*

Resident breeder and winter visitor

Present in the Lower Derwent Valley throughout the year, particularly at Bank Island where there were 31 on 18th January, 91 on 16th February and still up to ten on 20th April. Numbers peaked in February with 673 counted throughout the valley on the 23rd increasing to 823 by the 28th. Peak February counts at specific locations consisted of 231 at Wheldrake Ings on the 22nd and 182 at North Duffield Carrs on the 22nd with 211 there on the 29th. Adults were seen with young at North Duffield Carrs on 29th May.

Reported throughout the year at Castle Howard Lake with 140 on 2nd January down to 30 on the 17th while birds were also present all year at Rawcliffe Lake where breeding was confirmed. The four resident birds in the Joseph Rowntree Trust NR were joined by two more on 16th February with another present on 18th March but numbers were back to six birds by the 27th with two pairs nest building. One pair successfully fledged four young with the other rearing at least two but by the year end just six adults were present. Seen regularly along the River Ouse between York

and Naburn throughout the year with a maximum of eight birds (three pairs) on 20th February. Up to 25 were reported at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits during the same month with a pair at Frog Hall, Allerthorpe Common on 30th May. Three birds were at Walbutts Ponds near Strensall on 29th February with others seen regularly on the bottom pond at Yearsley Moor (two to four birds) and on Newburgh Priory Lake (ten or more).

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Passage migrant and migrant breeder

An early bird returned to North Duffield Carrs on 4th January with another single at Thorganby Ings on the 25th and two at North Duffield Carrs on 8th February. Six were present at Wheldrake Ings on the 13th while four were at Wheldrake and 11 at North Duffield Carrs on the 16th. Throughout the Lower Derwent Valley, 12 were present on the 22nd with 13 at North Duffield Carrs on the 27th.

A pair returned to Naburn Sewage Works on 20th February while back in the Lower Derwent, a pair was seen at North Duffield Carrs on 3rd March as well as the 10th and 17th.

Other pairs were at Newburgh Priory Lake on 4th March and Melbourne on the 6th while a lone bird was at Haxby Road Farm, New Earswick on 16th March with another noted flying west there on 23rd April. A single bird also flew over Fulford Ings on the 26th, possibly one of the birds from Naburn Sewage Works where they were last seen on 31st May.

Otherwise, April reports were widespread with birds regularly seen around the Forest of Galtres Golf Course, Skelton as well as Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory, especially into May. Specific records included a single at Castle Howard on the 7th with two there on the 9th and 27th while another was at Melbourne on the 22nd, four along Pottery Lane, Strensall on the 24th and three seen from the Tower Hide at Wheldrake Ings on the 29th.

May sightings included a single at Bank Island and two at Castle Howard on the 1st, one at North Duffield Carrs the following day and another at Newburgh Priory Lake on the 18th while a pair was seen regularly during May and June around the Forest of Galtres Golf Course, Skelton.

Several July records included four at Allerthorpe Lake Park on the 3rd and a single there on the 5th, one at Ellerton on the 20th and regular sightings around Sand Hutton. A single bird flying down Osbaldwick Lane, York on 7th July was said to be unusual.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Passage migrant and migrant breeder

Four were at Bank Island on 28th March (RS) with a single at Wheldrake Ings on 2nd May. An adult was seen in display flight at Bank Island on 1st June with three birds noted there on 4th June.

Meanwhile, at Allerthorpe Lakeland Park, a pair with young was noted on 2nd July, a nest containing four eggs found on 3rd July and a pair with a single chick seen on 27th July. The only autumn record involved two birds in the Lower Derwent Valley on 4th September (per RS).

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Passage migrant

The only spring record this year involved a single bird seen at Aughton Ings on 28th March and again on 16th May.

Four birds at Thorganby on 4th September included two individuals of the *tundrae* race while seven birds were noted at Aughton the following day with 11 counted in the Lower Derwent Valley on the 6th including the two *tundrae* birds. A single bird remained at Wheldrake Ings on the 9th.

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

In January, Lower Derwent Valley records included 174 at Cheesecake Farm on the 10th and 350 at West Cottingwith on the 13th with 600+ there on the 26th. Numbers were low in early February with only 80 counted in the valley on the 7th but 300 were at Wheldrake Ings on the 11th building to 5,000+ at North Duffield Carrs on the 18th with 60 there on 10th March.

Elsewhere, there were at least 20 near York Crematorium on 3rd January and four flew over Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on the 5th while 150 were at Clifton Moor on the 12th and 20 at Poppleton on the 18th.

Low numbers were recorded in the Naburn Sewage Works/Bishopthorpe area in the first part of the year with only five on 3rd January while 18 flew west on 12th February. Returning birds had reached c.200 by 19th September increasing to c.450 a month later before dropping to c.100 by the year end.

Sand Hutton CSL held 140 birds on 19th April while return migration was heralded by a single at Wheldrake Ings on 14th August but there were no further reports until 5th September when 200+ were at Aughton followed by 20+ at Thorganby viewpoint on the 7th and 28 mixing with 1,500 Lapwings *Vanellus vanellus* at Duncombe Farm, Strensall on the 28th when 40 were counted at Sand Hutton CSL.

Records increased from autumn into the winter months with October counts including 340 at Thorganby on the 24th and 210 there on the 26th. November saw 850 at Thorganby on the 6th when 350 were at Aughton and 1,000 at Thorganby again on the 7th while 2,500 were recorded at North Duffield Carrs on the 11th. Other November records included 50 at West Cottingwith and 150+ at Strensall on the 14th while 60 were at Sand Hutton CSL on the 19th with 36 flying over on the 24th and 12 noted at Bank Island on the 22nd. Also in November, several groups were seen around the York by-pass.

December produced 400 at Wheldrake Ings on the 4th, 30 over Clifton Ings on the 8th and 27 at Lilling Green Farm, West Lilling on the 15th. Later in the month, 1,000 were observed at Cliffe Common on the 20th and 140+ at Thorganby on the 28th.

Monthly totals for the New Earswick area were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
600	300	300	84	-	-	-	-	-	150	300	300

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Migrant breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor

Small parties were present in the Lower Derwent Valley during the first half of January with 50 at North Duffield Carrs on the 5th, 228 at Aughton on the 8th and 175 at Bank Island on the 9th with 75 there on the 12th. At Ellerton Ings, there were 2,500 present on the 20th but flooding attracted even more birds to the valley by the 21st with 2,100 at Wheldrake Ings and a grand total of 4,039 throughout the area. Other notable counts were 800 roosting at North Duffield Carrs on the 28th and 1,120 at Thornton Ellers on the 29th.

In early February over 2,000 birds were on farmland around the Lower Derwent Valley but these soon returned to the valley as floods receded. At Wheldrake Ings, 150 were observed on the 7th while on the 13th, 460 were at East Cottingwith, 1,000 at Thorganby Ings and 2,500 in the valley as a whole. At least 3,000 were at North Duffield Carrs on the 18th with a further 1,000 at Thorganby Ings the same day and 750 at East Cottingwith on the 19th. The WeBS total on the 22nd was 3,651 birds – there had been some movement out of the valley following snowstorms.

Elsewhere, a single was noted near Castle Howard Lake on 17th January while counts at Clifton Ings were 200 on the 12th and 70 on 14th with 70 at Walbut Bridge along the Pocklington Canal on the 17th. Just a single bird was seen at Naburn on 3rd January before flooding attracted 510 to Fulford Ings by 11th February with numbers hovering

around the 100 mark before birds dispersed to breed. Other February records included 24 at Castle Howard on the 1st and 40+ along Gracious Street, Huby on the 15th with 50 at Lilling Green Farm, West Lilling and four over White Carr, Flaxton on the 29th.

Up to 15 birds were present at the breeding site on Middlethorpe Ings from March to May, with the first chick noted on the 12th. Four birds were seen at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 15th March with eight there on the 18th while April reports included four pairs and a single at Poppleton on the 4th and two pairs displaying at Allerthorpe on the 17th. Ten adults and seven young were seen at Middlethorpe Ings on 24th May with two at Sand Hutton CSL observed in chasing flight on the 13th. Three young were reported from North Duffield Carrs in June while a pair with small young was noted at Allerthorpe on 3rd July.

Post-breeding flocks included 1,000 at Leavening on 20th July and 50 at Warhill on the 22nd while August reports increased slowly with 350 at Thorganby on the 14th, 400 at Low Mowthorpe on the 22nd, 1,200 at Ellerton on the 28th and a single over Sand Hutton CSL on the 25th. A further increase in records during September included 1,100 along the Pocklington Canal between East Cottingwith and Storwood on the 3rd with 90 present the following day when ten were at Bank Island. Over 200 were noted at Thorganby and 50+ at Bank Island on the 7th. Counts from Sand Hutton CSL were 28 on the 3rd, 17 on the 20th and 12 on the 30th.

Middlethorpe Ings held 600 birds on 19th September, but these had declined to 60 by the end of the year while 20 were seen at Garrowby and 250 at Beningbrough Hall on the 27th with 1,500 in a meadow at Duncombe Farm, Strensall the day after.

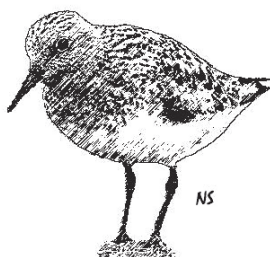
October reports included 100 at Sand Hutton CSL on the 1st, 40 at Thornton on the 16th, 400 at Thorganby on the 24th and 520 at Thorganby two days later while in November, 410 were reported at Wheldrake Ings on the 11th when 430 were at Thorganby. A flock of 170 was at Sheriff Hutton Ings on the 12th and 30 by the River Foss at Strensall on the 14th. Wheldrake Ings held 750 on the 20th and 80 were at Cheese Vat Farm, Sheriff Hutton on the 22nd. In December, 1,100 were counted at Wheldrake Ings on the 4th with 200 at Wood House Farm, Strensall on the 22nd.

New Earswick area monthly totals are given below:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
500	200	4	4	3	2	-	25	-	200	500	150

Sanderling *Calidris alba*
Winter visitor and passage migrant

An adult was at Aughton Ings on 16th May (DS).



Little Stint *Calidris minuta*
Passage migrant and rare winter visitor

Four juveniles were at Thorganby Ings on 4th September with three remaining there from the 5th–7th while a single was at Aughton Ings on the 9th.

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*
Rare spring passage migrant

Two adults at Aughton Ings on 16th May was the only record (RS).

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*
Infrequent passage visitor

Two juveniles were at Thorganby Ings on 4th September with presumably the same birds at Ellerton Ings the following day when 12 were at Aughton Ings, declining to six by the 9th. An impressive total of 17 was recorded throughout the Lower Derwent Valley on the 6th while there was only a single juvenile left at Bank Island on the 10th.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*
Passage migrant and winter visitor

Small parties flew north along the River Derwent past North Duffield Carrs during the afternoon of 2nd January with a total of 34 birds arriving during these movements. A count of 53 birds was made from Bubwith Bridge on 10th January with 40+ there on the 18th when c.50 were on floods behind the Pool Hide at Wheldrake Ings. In the Lower Derwent Valley as a whole, 200 were counted on the 16th, 17th and 25th while

a maximum of 220 was feeding in mud along the river bank at Bubwith Ings on the 29th with 60 observed at Thorganby Ings on 1st February. Numbers increased further with peak counts of 437 at North Duffield Ings on the 9th, 331 at Thorganby Ings on the 12th and 223 recorded during the WeBS count on the 22nd. At least 50 were at West Cottingwith on the 13th with the last birds of the spring noted in the Lower Derwent Valley on the 27th.

Return migration was heralded by two birds at Thorganby Ings on 14th August with at least ten seen from the viewpoint there on 7th September while a single juvenile was at Aughton Ings on the 9th and another bird seen with Lapwings *Vanellus vanellus* at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on the 17th. Two were at Wheldrake Ings on 18th September with ten at Thorganby on 18th October increasing to 50 there by 7th November. At Aughton, 42 were noted on 6th November with 66 counted on the 11th while 130 were recorded at Wheldrake Ings on 4th December.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper *Tryngites subruficollis*
Vagrant

A single, perhaps the bird present earlier at Blacktoft Sand RSPB reserve, was seen from the viewpoint at Thorganby on 4th, 5th, 7th, 8th and 9th September (RS *et al.*) and has been accepted by the YNU.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*
Rare breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor

A small arrival of birds was observed at North Duffield Carrs on 2nd January when rising water levels in the River Derwent in combination with a high tide at the Barrage resulted in single birds and groups of two or three arriving from the south. A total of 17 birds arrived during three hours of observation. Seven were roosting at Bank Island on the 7th, 8th and 9th while 62 were counted in the Lower Derwent Valley as a whole on the 10th. Seven birds were at Bank Island on the 9th with two there on the 12th while 73 were present in the valley on the 16th (40+ at Ellerton) with 82 noted the following day and a total of 99 recorded during the WeBS count on the 25th.

Meanwhile, 24 were noted from the Garganey Hide at North Duffield Carrs on the 26th with 20+ at West Cottingwith on 13th February, 62 at Thorganby on the 22nd and 30 at Aughton on the 29th. Around 55 were at Aughton Ings on 7th March where numbers rose to 72 by the 28th. The only sign of breeding activity, however, was two males and three females observed lekking at Swantail Ings on 22nd May.

Return migration began with a single at Aughton on 14th August but numbers quickly built up with 45 at Ellerton by the 28th. In September, 40+ were at Thorganby on the 4th with 80 counted throughout the Lower Derwent Valley on the 6th, 20+ at Thorganby Ings on the 7th and four at Wheldrake Ings on the 18th. Twenty were at Thorganby Ings again on 4th October as well as the 18th with five there on the 26th and 18 at Bubwith Ings on the 30th. Numbers at Thorganby had increased to 70 by 7th November with 25 on the 11th when 56 were seen at Aughton and a single was at West Cottingwith on the 14th while Wheldrake Ings held 30 birds on the 20th and seven on 4th December.

Jack Snipe *Lympocryptes minimus*
Winter visitor and passage migrant

Three were at Low Catton Ings on 1st January with a single at Thornton Ellers on the 4th, two at North Duffield Carrs on the 16th and three there on the 25th. Water levels fell in the second half of February and numbers increased in the Lower Derwent Valley with 11 birds flushed from Low Catton Ings on the 21st and 11 at Seavy Carr on the 22nd while a single was on the scrape at North Duffield Carrs on the 26th.

Elsewhere, two were near Copgrove on 10th January while singles were flushed at Fulford Ings on 20th February and 6th March with two birds there on 26th February, and a further vsingle at Rawcliffe Meadows 4th March. One was observed with Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago* at Riccall on the 29th with another bird flushed from the margins of a marshy pool adjacent to the River Rye near Lower Butterwick on 2nd March and one flushed from an old oxbow lake by the River Rye to the east of Butterwick on the same date.

Later in the year, the only record concerned one at Bank Island on 4th December (RS).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*
Resident and migrant breeder and passage visitor

Up to nine birds were present at Fulford Ings during the winter months with singles flushed at Askham Bog on 10th January and 7th February. Three were noted at Wheldrake Ings on 21st January with the same number at Strensall Common on the 28th. Following a dry autumn and then winter floods, early February was poor in the Lower Derwent Valley but numbers did build up during the month: six were at North Duffield Carrs on the 2nd with seven on the river bank at Thorganby on the 15th when five birds were along the Pocklington Canal while 43 were at Low Catton Ings and 110 at Seavy Carr on the 21st with four having been at

the latter site on the 7th. Melbourne/Thornton Ings held 220 by the 22nd while 269 were recorded throughout the valley the same day.

Elsewhere, birds were flushed from a site by the River Ouse 1km east of Riccall on the 29th while birds wintered on Clifton Ings as usual with 60 on 4th March being the peak count. Five birds were flushed from an oxbow lake by the River Rye at Butterwick on the 2nd while four flew over Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on the 11th and a single was seen along Brecks Lane, Strensall on the 24th. Three were flushed at Strensall Common on 20th April with singles noted at Poppleton on the 25th and Heworth next day with three there on 8th May.

Displaying birds were observed at North Duffield Carrs and Strensall Common on 5th May with another 'drumming' at Skipwith on 12th June and five displaying at North Duffield Carrs the same day.

Over 120 were observed at Ellerton on 28th August while birds became numerous and widespread during September with 650 at Wheldrake Ings on the 3rd, 30 there on the 4th and 300+ on the 18th while 600 were at Aughton on the 4th, 80 having been there on 28th August. Seavy Carr held 1,000 birds on 5th September while 2,000 were believed to be in the Lower Derwent Valley as a whole on the 3rd and 30 were at Bank Island the following day with 20+ there on the 7th when several flocks totalling at least 100 birds were flying around over the Pool Hide at Wheldrake Ings. Three were at Bubwith Ings on the 30th while there were 30 at Bank Island on 18th October and the same number at Aughton on 20th November. Bank Island was host to 40 birds on 4th December with one was observed at Wheldrake Ings on the same date.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*
Resident breeder and winter visitor

Two were found along the side of the river bank near Sutton upon Derwent on 1st January, presumably forced to feed here by lying snow over the nearby Ings. A single flew over the Bank Island car park on the 5th with possibly the same bird noted there on the 14th and 21st while another was seen from the Wheldrake Ings car park on the 11th and 12th. The favoured winter haunt of Thornton Ellers held only two birds on the 4th with a single there on the 6th and 17th although four were present on the 23rd, possibly the result of increased flooding in other areas of the Lower Derwent Valley.

Elsewhere, singles were flushed at Askham Bog on the 10th and 20th with two there on 7th February. Six were present at Thornton Ellers on 4th February with a single there on the 11th while another flew over the Wheldrake Ings car park at dusk on the 16th. Further singles were



observed by the newly created pond at Askham Bog and on Skipwith Common during the month.

Two were 'roding' at the latter site on 12th May with three to four 'roding' birds noted at Yearsley Moor on 14th, 16th and 18th May. Singles were also noted 'roding' at Height's Wood near Coneysthorpe on 8th June and Skipwith Common on the 15th with five at Yearsley Moor the following day and two at Skipwith on 22nd August.

A single was flushed at Hutton Bank Wood, Low Hutton on 17th November and another was at Thornton on 9th December.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Passage migrant and rare breeder

Three birds were at Wheldrake Ings on 28th March with numbers in the Lower Derwent Valley increasing during April from five at North Duffield Carrs on the 4th to 15 on the 6th and 29 at Wheldrake on the 10th rising to 39 by the 19th.

At Thornton Ellers, 11 were observed on 27th and 28th April with 24 at Wheldrake the following day and 13 at Ellerton on 1st May. Four were still at Wheldrake on the 2nd while 12 were noted at Bank Island on 12th June with seven flying over there on 3rd July.

In the autumn, two were at Aughton and Thorganby on 4th September and one again at Aughton on the 5th when two were at Ellerton. Four at Bank Island on the 9th was the last report for the year.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Passage migrant

The first report concerned 21 birds at the Wheldrake Ings roost on 18th April while a single flew over Thornton Ellers on the 27th. Nine were noted at Wheldrake and four at Ellerton on 1st May with one at Bank Island on 6th June.

Singles were seen, heading south and calling, at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 15th and 21st August.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Passage migrant, migrant breeder and winter visitor

In the Lower Derwent Valley, two were at Bank Island on 10th January with singles at North Duffield Carrs on the 12th and 19th while four were at Thorganby on the 24th with six there the day after. Three were at Bank Island on the 24th and 27th when a single was at Wheldrake Ings. Numbers increased slowly during February with seven at North Duffield Carrs on the 16th and 27 at the Wheldrake roost on the 28th while at Thorganby, 14 were present on the 20th, 48 on the 22nd and 64 on the 28th. Subsong was heard in the valley from the 16th and full song from the 29th. Ten at North Duffield on 10th March had increased to 34 by the 17th.

Elsewhere, a pair was noted at Poppleton on 28th March and 4th, 25th and 30th April while birds were heard at Ampleforth on the 8th. Two birds were at Strensall Common on the 22nd with four there on the 26th and 28th while two were seen at Bishop Wilton on the 24th and a single noted at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on the 27th.

Reports became widespread in May, ranging from pairs on territory at Bishop Wood in the south to Flaxton in the north. Other records included a sighting at North Duffield Carrs on the 2nd, two to three at Strensall Common on the 5th and a single at Huby on the 27th while the MOD survey of Strensall Common on 12th May produced a total of six pairs. The last reports concerned singles at Clifton Ings on 2nd June, North Duffield Carrs on the 12th, White Carr, Flaxton on the 13th and White Carr again on 4th July.

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Passage migrant and occasional winter visitor

A single at East Cottingwith on 21st February was the only record (DT).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Passage migrant, migrant breeder and winter visitor

Two were at Barmby Barrage on 3rd January while up to 60 were noted in the North Duffield Carrs/Bubwith Ings area from the 8th–10th. There were

110 birds scattered throughout the Lower Derwent Valley on the 16th, with 117 at Thorganby on the 17th building to 158 throughout the valley on the 25th. Meanwhile, 156 were mixed with Dunlin *Calidris alpina* at Bubwith Ings on the 29th with several birds at Thorganby on 1st February. At least 363 were present in the valley on the 10th including 65 at Bubwith Bridge while 186 were observed on the river bank at North Duffield Carrs on the 22nd. Also, three were at West Cottingwith on the 13th with six at North Duffield on 17th March. Birds were still common at Wheldrake Ings on 6th April but only five were counted in the Lower Derwent Valley on 27th May.

No more were noted until 7th September when 20+ were at Thorganby with 46 there and 30 at Aughton on 6th November when three birds were seen in a flooded field between Strensall and Sutton-on-the-Forest. At Aughton, 32 were noted again on the 11th with 30 there on the 20th.

Otherwise, the only record towards the end of the year concerned a single bird on the river bank at Rawcliffe Ings on 8th December.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Passage migrant and occasional winter visitor

Two were at North Duffield Carrs on 2nd May with singles at Bank Island the same day as well as 1st June and Allerthorpe Lakeland Park on 2nd and 3rd July.

August brought three to Wheldrake Ings on the 8th with singles at Aughton Ings on the 14th and 28th when five were at Ellerton. Singles were also noted at East Moor, Sutton-on-the-Forest on the 2nd and Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on the 9th.

The highest numbers were recorded in September, however, as follows: a single along the Pocklington Canal on the 3rd, three at Wheldrake Ings on the 4th, nine at Aughton on the 5th when seven were at Thorganby and three at Bank Island with four at this site on the 9th when four were also at Wheldrake with a single there on the 18th while a grand total of 25 was counted in the Lower Derwent Valley on the 6th.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Passage migrant and winter visitor

A single was ringed at North Duffield Carrs on 2nd January while two were present at Melbourne Scamland during the month with a wintering individual also noted along the Pocklington Canal throughout February.

Later in the year, two were observed high over Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 2nd August with four seen at Wheldrake Ings on the 8th and a single there on the 14th and one at Rawcliffe Meadows in November.

September provided the most records with two along the Pocklington Canal between East Cottingwith and Storwood on the 3rd, three at Wheldrake Ings on the 4th with 12 there on the 9th, three at Bank Island on the 5th with two there on the 12th, five at Ellerton on the 5th when a single was at Thorganby, three at North Duffield Carrs on the 11th and a single at Wheldrake again on the 18th. Finally, three were at Thorganby Ings on 18th October.

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Passage migrant

A single at Aughton Ings on 15th May was the only record received this year (RS).

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Passage migrant and migrant breeder

Two were by the River Ouse at Rawcliffe Ings on 18th May (NS) with one at Ellerton on 5th August, three at Wheldrake Ings and two at Thorganby on the 14th August and a single at Aughton on the 28th when two were at Ellerton.

At Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory, a single flew over on 13th August with one also seen there on the 23rd. During the early morning of 7th September there were seven around the pond, but only three by mid-morning.

A late bird was seen at Thorganby Ings on 18th October (RS).

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Rare visitor

Four flying north over Aughton Ings on 9th September was the only record this year (RS).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

Passage migrant and winter visitor

A second-winter bird roosted at Wheldrake Ings on 19th January with an adult seen at the roost on 14th February and another adult reported on farmland near North Duffield Carrs on the 28th (EN).

An adult also flew over Selby on 8th August (per PB).

Little Gull *Larus minutus*

Passage migrant

A first-summer was at Aughton Ings on 15th and 16th May (RS/DR) while another bird was seen with Black-headed Gulls *Larus ridibundus* at Wheldrake Ings on 6th June (PB).

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*

Resident breeder, winter visitor and passage migrant

At the roost on Castle Howard Lake, a count of 3,500 was estimated on 21st January together with 800 in a nearby field. A flock of 150 was present at Wheldrake Ings on the same date while birds were recorded at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 5th January, 6th February, 3rd March and 31st March with a maximum of 50 on 29th February. At Osbaldwick sports field, there were up to 100 on 9th January, 80 on 7th February, seven on 26th March and six on 10th July. In February, 3,000 were on floods near Church Bridge along the Pocklington Canal on the 4th and 300+ noted by the Tollerton road, 1km west of Huby on the 27th.

Between 100 and 300 were generally recorded along the River Ouse between York and Naburn during the winter months with at least 1,000 passing through Fulford Ings on 11th February when 700 were feeding on floods there but only singles were noted from April to September.

There were 50 at West Lilling on 28th September while over 1,000 were on floods at Clifton Ings on 28th October when 30+ were on farmland near the River Foss at Strensall as well as on 14th November. Fifteen were at Rawcliffe Lake on 18th November with smaller numbers noted there during the winter months while at least 2,000 were at the Castle Howard roost on the 22nd.

Around the city of York, 30 were at Rowntree Park on 18th December and 60+ at York Technical College fields on the 22nd. There were 50 at West Lilling on 28th September and 30 at Strensall on 28th October and 14th November.

New Earswick area monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
-	400	200	-	-	-	40	40	-	120	-	-

Twelve were noted in early spring on Strensall Common, but did not nest.

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

The roost on Castle Howard Lake was estimated at 1,500 birds on 21st January with 200 in fields nearby. Over 300 were noted in a mixed flock with Black-headed Gulls *Larus ridibundus* and a few Herring Gulls *Larus argentatus* next to the Tollerton road, 1km west of Huby on 23rd February. Many were observed with Black-headed Gulls at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 11th March while 60 flew over there on 15th and 28th September as well as 11th October.

Regular along the River Ouse in winter, the most being 20 on floods on 11th February. Generally absent during the breeding season although single, first-summer birds were recorded on a few days. Up to ten birds visited Rawcliffe Lake during the winter months.

Regular at Osbaldwick sports field with the gull flock, including 11 on 26th March and 5th April with two there on 20th July and 20 on 11th October. Also noted at Askham Bog.

New Earswick area monthly totals were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
40	100	60	-	-	-	-	-	-	180	-	-

An unusual record was received of a single bird feeding from a bird table in a Dunnington garden on 11th March (T&VW)!

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Passage migrant and scarce winter visitor

In the Lower Derwent Valley, 12 were noted at Thornton Ellers on 14th January and three at the Wheldrake Ings roost on the 19th, including two of the Scandinavian race *intermedius*.

Four were seen at the Wheldrake roost on 4th February, increasing to 11 on the 8th and 16 on the 15th, including one Scandinavian bird. Four were also seen at North Duffield Carrs on 23rd February.

Early in the year at other sites, an adult was seen at Castle Howard Lake on 8th February and three on floods at Fulford Ings during the month while single figures were seen along the River Ouse between York and Naburn from April to October with a maximum of eight flying west on 19th September.

In the New Earswick area, 100 birds were seen in a flock of 1,500 mixed gulls on 12th March and 400 with 1,800 mixed gulls on 22nd August. Several were seen over Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 23rd August while Osbaldwick produced three birds on 29th June, four adults and four juveniles on 22nd August and ten birds on the 27th. The last observation there was on 3rd October.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

In the Lower Derwent Valley, numbers increased throughout January with 250 at Bank Island on the 9th and 141 at Ellerton Ings on the 18th. A gull survey on the 19th produced 1,294 between Wheldrake and Ellerton with 1,147 at the Wheldrake Ings roost. Birds tended to concentrate here with 1,437 on the 22nd, 2,100 on the 23rd and 1,350 on the 24th.

Numbers appeared to drop at the weekend due to the closure of tips. Up to 1,400 were at the roost in early February with 500 at Ellerton Ings on the 9th. Numbers decreased during the second half of the month with 750 at Wheldrake Ings and 27 between Ellerton and North Duffield Carrs on the 22nd.

On floods at Fulford Ings in February there were at least 1,000 birds present with c.1,150 passing through on the 11th, including three of the Scandinavian race *argentatus*; otherwise regular along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of 65 flying west on 12th March.

At least 300 birds were observed at Harewood Whin on 10th February with many *argentatus* noted while at least 20 were observed along the Tollerton road, 1km west of Huby on the 23rd.

An infrequent visitor to Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory with 12 on 5th January and 'several' on 14th January and 10th October.

New Earswick area monthly totals are given below:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
40	-	1,000	5	-	-	-	1,200	-	-	6	1

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus cachinnans*

Rare visitor

An adult seen at Harewood Whin over the weekend of 7th and 8th February (DS) probably accounted for the bird noted at the Wheldrake Ings roost on the 18th and 22nd (EN).

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*

Winter visitor

At the Wheldrake Ings roost, a second-winter bird was noted on 21st January with a first-winter, two second-winters and two adults noted on several dates throughout February. Birds were also noted at North Duffield Carrs and Bank Island with at last five different individuals involved.

Some of these birds probably accounted for sightings elsewhere with an adult observed on floods at Fulford Ings on 9th and 11th February while a probable bird of the race *kumlieni* (Kumlien's Gull), also an adult, was seen well there in flight on the 10th. Birds were also seen in the Alne area during the first week of February.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

Winter visitor

In the Lower Derwent Valley, single first-winters were seen in the Wheldrake Ings roost regularly from mid-January involving at least three

different individuals, with one bird being much darker than the others and birds also visited Bank Island during this period. One continued to be seen in the Wheldrake area throughout February until the 21st with a second-winter noted on the 12th and 13th, a third-winter on the 19th, 20th and 27th and an adult on the 14th. A first-winter was also observed at North Duffield Carrs on 2nd February with a third-winter there on the 22nd and an adult on 6th March.

Elsewhere, a possible first-winter seen flying southeast over Fulford Ings on 11th February was probably heading towards Wheldrake while a single adult also flew over Rawcliffe Ings on 27th November.

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

At Bank Island numbers were low during the first week in January, increasing in line with the floods to 100 prior to roosting on the 8th and 300 on the 9th, a total of 400. At Ellerton Ings there were 200 on the 9th and 500+ on the 17th while 121 roosted there on the 18th and 243 on the 21st. The Lower Derwent Valley as a whole yielded a count of 947 on the 19th while the Wheldrake Ings roost numbered 635 on the 22nd and 750 on the 24th.

At Harewood Whin, numbers dwindled from 1,650 on 9th February to 585 by the 22nd with counts being lower at the weekend when the tip was closed.

At Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory, singles were seen on 19th May, 1st and 9th July, 5th August (a second-year bird) and 5th and 15th September.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Passage migrant and rare migrant breeder

The first birds were eight flying northeast at Haxby on 28th April. At least ten were noted in the Lower Derwent Valley on 1st May with a pair at North Duffield Carrs on the 2nd while two birds observed from the Swantail Hide at Wheldrake Ings on 2nd May were both ringed, one with a cream or light green ring on the right leg and a metal ring on the left and the other bird with just a metal ring.

A pair frequented the pond at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory from the 6th, sometimes sitting on the fountain! A pair was again at Sand Hutton on 16th July with two observed flying north, calling, at York Science Park the same day.

At Allerthorpe, two were noted at the Old Gravel Workings and three at the Lakeland Park on 2nd July.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Passage migrant

A single observed flying along the river by the Tower Hide at Wheldrake Ings on 29th April was the only record received (MD).

Rock (Feral) Pigeon *Columba livia*

Resident breeder

The commonest bird in urban areas such as central York with large flocks seen here and frequently noted along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with several pairs breeding at Naburn Bridge. Also recorded breeding at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory where many birds can breed all year round, raising five or six broods, but the availability of nest sites may be a limiting factor. Regularly seen in the New Earswick area, often in association with Wood Pigeons *Columba palumbus* and Stock Doves *Columba oenas*.

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Resident breeder

A feeding flock of 31 was present near North Duffield Carrs on 25th January with up to four seen at Bank Island early in the year. The largest flock in the Dunnington area was 27 on 11th March. Five were at North Duffield Carrs on 6th April when two were seen on Strensall Common and a pair was at Yearsley Moor on 18th May. A pair probably bred in a large dead tree near Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory in May with several sightings made there. Five or six pairs were resident in the Clifton Ings area and a maximum of 12 at Rawcliffe Cornfield NR in April. birds were regularly seen along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of 20+ on 9th May. Four were at Sand Hutton CSL on 18th November with Wood Pigeons *Columba palumbus*. Seen most months in the New Earswick area with the highest count being seven birds. Also reported from Kirkham Priory.

Wood Pigeon *Columba palumbus*

Resident breeder

A flock of 100 was feeding in an oilseed rape field at Sand Hutton on 5th January with 150 there on the 29th. Large flocks were seen in fields near Kirkham Priory on the 17th when over 2,000 were near the Pocklington Canal at Thornton. Large numbers were also noted in the Lower Derwent Valley during the month following a sizeable influx the previous autumn. Nine hundred were feeding on arable land near Thorganby on the 9th while 450 were present in maize near Ellerton on

the 16th and a roost in Sutton Wood on the 23rd involved 450 birds. Up to 2,000 were feeding near Elvington airfield on the 29th with a flock of 2,100 feeding in a set-aside field at Dunnington Common on the 30th.

Large numbers remained throughout the Lower Derwent in February with separate flocks of 600 and 320 in the Thorganby area on the 13th when 430 were at Elvington and 175 at North Duffield. Around 50 were at Fulford Ings on the 11th and 600 at Bishopthorpe on the 20th. Following overnight snow on the 26th, 3,000 flew east over North Duffield Carrs on the 27th between 09:00 and 10:00 with a further 4,000 moving through the valley later in the day while 1,000+ remained on the 28th. Two hundred were in an oilseed rape field at Sand Hutton on 16th March while the maximum count in the New Earswick area was 290 at Kettlestring Farm in March with 250 there in November. A flock of 120 was at Birch Wood, Strensall on 5th May while nests were seen in July at Allerthorpe and Terrington.

Present throughout the year on Clifton Ings with some fairly large gatherings during the winter months. On 1st October, 100 were on the south field at Sand Hutton with 150 at Frog Hall, Allerthorpe Common on 7th November and 100 in a field at Sand Hutton on the 24th with 150 on the east field and c.200 there on 16th December. A regular visitor to gardens in Strensall and seen daily around Huby, regular along the River Ouse and common throughout the northern part of the recording area.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Resident breeder

A large roost at Elvington throughout January held 82 birds. Seen every day in Osbaldwick where one pair nested in a conifer. Nest building was noted at Rowntree Park, York on 20th March and also in Holtby on 24th August while a pair was present in Askham Bog. A flock of 15 was at Cape Farm near Sheriff Hutton in October with 39 there on the 29th while birds regularly visited gardens in Strensall and elsewhere. The population in the New Earswick area was estimated at over 100 and birds were noted at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory only in the winter and spring, not in the autumn this year. Up to ten were regularly seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year with birds recorded daily round Huby and the species was widespread in the northern part of the recording area.

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*
Migrant breeder and passage visitor

Several sightings were made at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits during the spring with a pair noted carrying nesting material there on 9th May (PB) and song heard a number of times. Single birds were heard at three separate locations at Yearsley Moor on 18th May, 16th June and 16th July while one flew west at North Duffield Carrs on 27th May with another seen at Bank Island on the 29th. Two were at Towthorpe Farm, Terrington on 3rd August and one seen on other dates with the last being noted on the 12th. One at Bank Island on 4th September was the last of the year (RS).

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*
Occasional visitor with the possibility of escapes from captivity

A calling bird flew east over North Duffield Carrs and Aughton Ings on 2nd January (EN) while a female was seen resting in a birch tree in a Dunnington garden on 27th March having apparently been seen earlier on a peanut feeder (T&VW).

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*
Migrant breeder

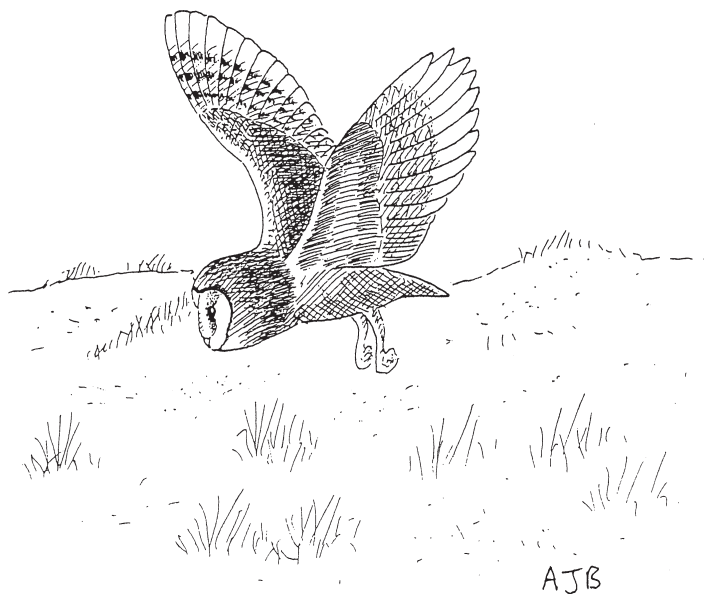
The first birds were heard on 17th April with one in Riccall (I&RT) and one in Elvington (BP). Another single was seen and heard on Strensall Common from the 20th with others at Melbourne on the 22nd, Osbaldwick on the 23rd and Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 25th while further singles were heard at Bishopthorpe, Huby, Naburn Sewage Works and Wheldrake Ings the next day with one at Sand Hutton on the 30th. Calling was regularly noted from 1st–21st May in Strensall while one was at Poppleton on the 2nd with five counted during the MOD survey of Strensall Common on the 12th. Also heard at Hagg Bridge in the Lower Derwent Valley and Yearsley Moor on the 18th with others in Strensall on 5th June and Wheldrake on the 6th. One flying over Brockfield Park on 4th July was the only record from the Huntington area with three in one tree at Strensall Common on 6th July while two near Bishop Wilton on the 15th the last (PR).

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*
Resident breeder

One was hunting at 14:30 near Hagg Bridge on 2nd January while up to four were seen daily at Bank Island early in the month although sightings decreased with extensive flooding during the last week. A

single bird was near the car park at Wheldrake Ings with another on the west bank of the River Derwent near Tower Hide on 18th January and birds were also seen hunting there on 30th January and 27th February. Another single was out hunting at 21:00 near Stripe Wood at Stillington on 25th January.

Birds continued to be seen regularly at Bank Island in February with sightings increasing towards the end of the month as floodwater receded. One was seen hunting around Huntington School on the evening of 2nd February while perhaps the same individual flew over the bypass near Haxby Road Farm at around 23:00 on 31st March. Another bird was seen hunting at midday near Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 1st March with one at Allerthorpe Common on the 6th while three showed very well during the late afternoon of the 7th in front of the Geoff Smith Hide at North Duffield Carrs. A male was seen dead on the slip road from the A64 to Flaxton on 24th March with singles noted to the north of Wheldrake village and at Bank Island on 19th April while two were in separate areas near Bishop Wilton on the 24th. Further singles were seen in the Lower Derwent Valley at Hagg Bridge and Wheldrake Ings on 2nd May, Bank Island on the 21st and from the Garganey Hide at North Duffield Carrs on 12th June while one was sitting on a fence post at Sheriff Hutton Ings on the 8th.



Also seen later on in the year at Cliffe Common on 24th October and at Bubwith on various dates. November records included a dead individual by the A64 at Barton Hill on the 5th and at Poppleton on the 7th, by the A64 northeast of York on the 20th with another at Strensall Common on 26th December. Also seen hunting on various dates at Buttercrambe, Ellerton, Flaxton, Howthorpe Farm (Terrington), Seavy Carr, Shiptonthorpe, Thornton Ellers and Yapham Grange.

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Resident breeder

Two were present throughout the year at Storwood with others frequently seen or heard at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory. One was seen at Upper Helmsley on 15th February while another was being mobbed by small birds in tall trees at York Science Park on 4th November with one sitting out in the sunshine at Buttercrambe on the 19th. Resident at Kettlestring Farm and in the vicinity of Huntington church in the New Earswick area where birds were seen in all months and bred successfully at both sites. Also reported from Canal Head (Pocklington), Cheese Vat Farm, Sheriff Hutton, Claxton, Dykelands Farm (Whenby), East Lilling and Terrington (two birds).

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Resident breeder throughout the area

Two birds were heard calling and seen hunting in the area of the nature reserves in New Earswick during the night of 13th January and several other nights up to the month end but there were no more records there until the autumn. Heard joining in the dawn chorus at Osbaldwick on 1st April where birds were occasionally heard throughout the year, more often in the winter.

A rufous adult was seen in Danesmead Copse, Fulford on 15th April with young heard calling nearby and a recently fledged bird seen there on the 20th with subsequent regular sightings of single adults and juveniles made until 5th June. Two or three were calling at Yearsley Moor on 22nd April and also in June with others heard that month at Heights Wood near Coneysthorpe and Worlds End Plantation, Strensall Common. Two chicks were ringed in a nest box in Nursery Wood near Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory – also in June – while four fledged young were calling from Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on 5th August. Four birds were also noted at Skipwith Common on the 22nd with one bird calling during the early afternoon – again at Howthorpe Farm – the following day.

A single bird was seen in daylight on 1st October, having apparently been driven out of the Joseph Rowntree Trust Nature Reserve, New Earswick, mobbed by two Black-headed Gulls *Larus ridibundus* and smaller birds. This bird had also been seen at the end of the September and several times in October with the last report on 2nd November. Also heard at Castle Howard and regularly at Clifton Park on summer evenings and Strensall in November with other reports during the year from Allerthorpe, Bishopthorpe, Full Sutton, the Lower Derwent Valley, Slingsby, South Bank in York and Sutton-on-the-Forest. A female was heard calling at night in Wenlock Terrace, York on 31st December.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*
Resident breeder and winter visitor

One was flushed from a dense pine stand at Skipwith Common on 28th February (DT) while two juveniles were calling from pine trees on the MOD area of Strensall Common on 6th July (PR).

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*
Scarce migrant breeder

A female was seen and a male heard churring near to the Forester's cottage at Yearsley Moor on 14th June with both seen in flight there on the 16th (MD). Another male was churring at World's End Plantation, Strensall Common during a BTO survey on 15th June, this location actually being just inside the City of York area (PR).

Swift *Apus apus*
Migrant breeder

The first was at Clifton Ings on 22nd April (NS) where there were good numbers again this year. Two were over Osbaldwick on the 25th, singles at Askham Bog on the 26th and Castle Howard Lake on the 27th when birds were also seen at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory and seven over Strensall Common on the 28th with one at New Earswick on the 30th. Five were at Wheldrake on 1st May when birds were also seen in Strensall where they were believed to have nested in at least two houses. Birds were back at their nest sites in Poppleton on the 2nd while a single was in Wigginton on the 3rd and three at New Earswick on the 6th with few noted there during the rest of the month. About 30 birds were seen along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on the 9th with subsequent regular sightings through into August. Six were over South Bank, York on the 15th and nesting was recorded at Wilberfoss.

There was an unprecedented influx into New Earswick on the evening of 5th July with over 150 birds at Kettlestring Farm, apparently pushed ahead of a severe storm from the southeast, and on the following morning at least 250 were present feeding over a field adjacent to the bypass. Varying numbers stayed in this particular area up to the 20th peaking on the 15th at more than 300, the highest count ever. Many were also present in Osbaldwick on the evening of the 6th and again on the 27th while 80 were over Rawcliffe Moor on the 7th with 20 over Bossall and 30 over Stockton-on-the-Forest the same day. A count of 231 was made over Fryton Wood, Slingsby with 50 over Thurtle Wood on the 12th while an unusually large flock of 100–150 birds was heading south over the northern York ring road between the Wigginton and Haxby roundabouts on the 18th when many were in Huttons Ambo. There were 100 over Stockton-on-the-Forest on the 22nd with small numbers moving through Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 24th.

Most had left the Clifton Ings area by early August and none were seen at Sand Hutton CSL after the 3rd though 15 were over Strensall on the 6th. Birds were still present in Osbaldwick on the 8th but had gone by the 10th after heavy rain while many were noted over the ring-road at Haxby on the 13th. The last seen in Strensall were on the 16th while a single bird was seen passing over Osbaldwick on the 18th in the company of House Martins *Delichon urbica* and another moved through the centre of York the following day. Small numbers were seen at Terrington in August until the 23rd when 52 flew south at 12:30 and another 70 at 13:30. Three were over Fulford Army Barracks and 20 at Buttercrambe that same day with three at Castle Howard the day after while 20 were flying over York St John College in York on the 31st. Around 40 stayed in the Bootham Stray area and around Huntington church in August with 30 still present on 1st September. A single flew southeast at Dunnington on the 11th while the last bird of the year was seen flying over Haxby Road Farm, New Earswick on the 16th (NEBR).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*
Resident breeder

Two birds were present at North Duffield Carrs on 2nd January with singles recorded on seven days after that date while one was seen along Osbaldwick Beck on 17th January. Other singles flew south along the Derwent at Aughton on the 19th and over Bank Island on the 24th before extensive flooding moved birds into the main part of the valley. One overwintered at Hassacarr Nature Reserve, Dunnington and could be seen most days.

Up to six were regularly seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year with probably three pairs occupying territory. One was seen on 1st April at Brown Moor Farm, Strensall while a bird was noted carrying a fish at Rowntree Park, York on 9th May. Another was on the River Foss near the Castle Museum, York on the 15th with one in Hull Road Park, York the next day while birds bred at Nunnington with four birds there on the 26th July. One or two birds were seen at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on various dates from July to the end of the year while a single bird flew along the east boundary dyke at Strensall Common on 14th December. Two birds regularly came into roost at the Joseph Rowntree Trust NR, New Earswick on most winter evenings.

One or two pairs were in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area throughout the year while two pairs at the most were present in the New Earswick area with no evidence of breeding. Also reported from Howthorpe Farm, Terrington, the Pocklington Canal and Tollerton.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*
Resident breeder but not widespread

One was feeding on grassland at Skipwith Common on 1st January with singles reported on various dates in the month from Bank Island, Elvington, Thorganby and Wheldrake Ings. One was seen at Castle Howard on the 1st and heard calling there on 28th February while at least three different individuals were heard calling at Strensall Common on the 18th and seen there on various other dates throughout the year. A single was heard calling and later seen at Dunnington Common on 28th March with another noted at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 2nd July and further singles at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on 3rd August and Skipwith Common on the 7th. Seen more often than previously at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory with records from late August through to December. A single was seen behind a Hubby garden on 4th September while one in the Clifton Ings area first noted on the 23rd was then seen regularly to the year end. One was at Allerthorpe Common on 16th October with another in Sutton Wood on 17th December being the first seen by the observer in this part of the Lower Derwent Valley – presumably a wanderer.

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

A single bird was in Gracious Street, Hubby on 4th January with 'drumming' heard at Skipwith on 14th February while two were 'drumming' and a single and a pair seen at Strensall Common on the 18th where

birds were reported throughout the year. A pair was seen in Askham Bog on the 26th and other dates with up to three individuals recorded there at any time while 'drumming' was also heard at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 27th. Three were in Pretty Wood, Castle Howard on 27th May with two nests found at Frog Hall, Allerthorpe Common on the 30th. A male was in a Bishopthorpe garden on 24th July with a juvenile there on the 27th pecking furiously at a rotten tree stump and teasel heads until driven off by the resident Blackbird *Turdus merula*! The remains of a plucked bird were found at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 6th October while a single bird was seen at Rawcliffe Lake on 9th November.

Birds were reported from woods in the northern part of Castle Howard estate, at Coulton and Strensall during the year with one on Stockton Lane in York on 1st November. One or two pairs were seen around Clifton Park in York and quite regularly encountered throughout the Clifton Ings area. Also seen at Allerthorpe Common, Melbourne, Storwood, along the river bank at Wheldrake Ings, North Duffield Carrs and other places in the Lower Derwent Valley. Seen in the woods by High Lodge near Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory with birds believed to be breeding in the vicinity. Definitely two, and possibly three, pairs were present in the Huntington and New Earswick area though sightings were less frequent than usual. Up to four birds were regularly seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year. Resident and seen regularly at Yearsley Moor.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor*

Resident breeder although localised and elusive

A pair was seen in Askham Bog on 15th February (LK) with the male seen again on the 22nd (DS) while a female at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on 25th June was watched for five minutes before it flew off towards Thurtle Wood (PB).

Wood Lark *Lullula arborea*

Recent colonist in small numbers

The species returned very early to the traditional breeding site at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory where one was heard singing on 2nd February; this was 18 days earlier than last year. Two pairs may have bred here where they generally have two broods. A 'controlled' bird had been ringed at this site in 2002 and the last song was heard on 23rd July. A male singing at another site near York on 14th July was the only other report received this year.

Sky Lark *Alauda arvensis*
Resident breeder and winter visitor

A large flock of c.200 was feeding amongst stubble at East Cottingwith on 1st January while a small movement of birds was noted in the Lower Derwent Valley on the 2nd and 3rd, involving singles moving west throughout the day, with 47 counted over North Duffield Carrs during three hours on the latter date. At least 80 were at East Cottingwith on the 10th with 15 at Wheldrake Ings on the 21st and 70 at North Duffield Carrs on the 23rd, by which time several birds were singing over the flooded Ings, while a flock of 220 was present at Thornton Ellers from the 25th to the month end.

Elsewhere, 14 flew over Dunnington Common on the 2nd January while at least 30 were in a winter wheat field south of Castle Howard Lake on the 17th with 40 at Lime Field Farm, Dunnington on the 22nd. 32 at Rawcliffe Cornfield NR on 26th January. A total of 180 was at Upper Poppleton on the 28th while 50 was the highest count on Haxby Road Farm, New Earswick in January with 25 the maximum there in February. Twelve were singing at North Duffield on 5th February when nine were at East Cottingwith with three in song and eight birds were at Mill Ruddings Farm, Storwood. Song was heard around the Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory area from the 6th while six birds were singing at East Moor, Sutton-on-the-Forest on the 16th. Birds were widespread and in full song in the Lower Derwent Valley from mid-February with 50 at Lilling Green Farm, West Lilling on the 29th.

On Dunnington Common, 43 was the highest count in March while up to ten birds were seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year, with the first song noted at Middlethorpe Ings on 27th March. The species still appeared to be numerous during surveys at Riccall and Bishop Wilton where 16 territories were recorded. Around six were on farmland at Acaster Malbis on 29th April while several pairs bred at Haxby Road Farm and on Bootham Stray, York. Seventeen were recorded singing during the MOD bird survey of Strensall Common on 12th May while small numbers bred on Clifton Ings and Rawcliffe Ings as well as the Cornfield NR there.

A count of 28 was made in stubble at Lilling Low Lane, West Lilling on 28th September with eight at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington the next day. Four birds flew southwest over York Science Park on 1st October while two were in song at Cheese Vat Farm, Sheriff Hutton on the 22nd and 50+ flew south at Bubwith Bridge on the 27th. One was singing near Towthorpe Road, Strensall on the 28th with 50+ present at Cape Farm near Sheriff Hutton on 29th November and another 50+ feeding in stubble near Thornton on 27th December. Also widespread on Strensall Common and Wheldrake Ings and reported from Cliffe.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first bird was seen along Terry Avenue by the River Ouse in York on 20th March (PB) with two at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on the 31st and 16 there on 6th April. Around 100 were at Castle Howard Lake on the 7th increasing to 500+ there by the 27th. Four were at nest holes near Poppleton on the 11th with five in the Fulford Ings/Middlethorpe Ings area on the 13th where numbers had built up to c.20 by the end of May. Birds were also seen at Cliffe on 17th April with small numbers flying around the Swantail Hide at Wheldrake Ings on the 29th.

About the same number of pairs bred at the Sand Hutton CSL site as previously though no count was made but 40+ were seen there on 26th April while there were 100 birds at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 1st July with 187 nests counted at Allerthorpe Lakeland Park. The last at Fulford Ings were about ten birds on the 10th while small numbers were along the River Ouse at Clifton Ings and Rawcliffe Ings with most having departed by early August. Over 100 were at North Duffield Carrs on the 19th and several at Sand Hutton CSL on the 23rd. The last was one at Castle Howard on the 24th (PB).

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

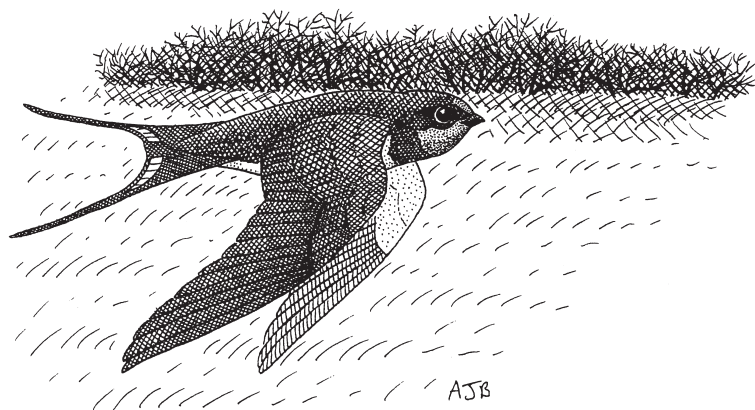
Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first of the year was one at Wheldrake Ings on 28th March (RS) followed by three or four at North Duffield Carrs on 6th April and a single bird at Castle Howard Lake on the 7th with two there on the 9th. Two were at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 13th when a male was at Middlethorpe Ings and another two were at Sand Hutton on the 15th when one was at Elvington. Further singles were seen at Bielby, Cliffe and over Haxby Road Farm, New Earswick on the 17th as well as Thornton and Ellerton on the 18th. Fifteen were at Wheldrake, two at East Cottingham and another single at Thorganby viewpoint on the 19th when one seen at Sutton upon Derwent. The first of the year in Huby was a pair over Gracious Street on the 20th when three were seen at Gilling. Two were at Strensall Common on the 22nd, Poppleton on the 25th and Askham Bog on the 26th with birds noted at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory from the 26th when three were over the pond. Pairs were seen collecting feathers there on the 30th and probably bred in farm buildings nearby. Over 100 were at Castle Howard Lake on the 27th with the species noted as being widespread at Strensall Common on 5th May. Around 20 were counted along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on the

9th while two were seen in the BTO Swallow Survey square near Riccall on 5th June with many more present on the second survey date of 17th July. There was a poor showing of this species in the Clifton Ings area this year.

Four young were seen in a nest at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 2nd July with two fledged young noted at Hagg Wood next day. There were 21 at Cotril Farm, Terrington on the 27th while 20 were counted flying around Welburn church and a further 30 flying around Chanting Hill at the east end of the village on the 30th. Five were at Skipwith on 3rd August and small numbers were seen moving south at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on the 12th while 50 were gathering to roost at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 14th. Several were flying round a house in Osbaldwick on 21st August with 30 counted together with c.150 House Martins *Delichon urbica* at Grange Farm, Haxby on 30th August. Over 30 were on wires in Stillington on 5th September while 100+ mixed hirundines were by the pond at Sand Hutton CSL on the 5th with c.200 on the 16th and some birds were seen on passage with House Martins over Cliffe on the 26th.

The maximum count in the New Earswick area this year was 70 in September while one was over Fulford Army Barracks on 1st October with three flying south over Fulford Ings the next day when two were seen at Cliffe and another two flew south over Bootham Stray. Up to three birds were seen in various parts of the Lower Derwent Valley during the first week of October with the last noted there on the 14th when singles were at Haxby and Sand Hutton CSL where another was seen flying south on the 19th with the last of the year noted at Bubwith on the 21st (PB).



House Martin *Delichon urbica*
Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first was seen flying north with other hirundines over fields near Strensall on 16th April (PB) with one at Storwood, six in Rowntree Park, York and two at Hagg Bridge the next day. One was seen from the Swantail Hide at Wheldrake Ings on the 19th with two in Gilling the day after and seven flying over houses in The Brecks, Strensall on the 21st when one was seen over a house in Osbaldwick but only occasional sightings were made there in early summer of a bird which used to be common. The earliest in the New Earswick area was one at the Folk Hall on the 17th but here too numbers never really built up at all and birds were much more scarce than usual with flocks of 20 or more proving exceptional. Rather scarce also around Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory in the breeding season with only one bird seen at Cliffe in April. Ten were at Bank Island on 2nd May when the first was in Strensall and around ten were over the ponds behind the rifle butts at Strensall Common on the 5th. Over 27 were seen along Sim Balk Lane, Bishopthorpe on the 3rd and birds had returned to their traditional breeding site by the 25th where four less nests were built than in previous years and only two occupied until mid-August with the other two used until the end of the month.

At least 25 were present along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on 9th May while the breeding colony at Rawcliffe Lake continued to do well with birds also present in the Clifton Ings area. Twenty were at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on 7th July with 50 at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 24th, 15 at Allerthorpe Lakeland Park on the 27th and six at Castle Howard Lake car park on the 30th. A count of 120 was made at Terrington on 3rd August with 15 at South Bank, York and 100 at Stockton-on-the-Forest on the 5th. Another 20 were at Bossall on the 10th while 70 were at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on the 23rd and 70 at Castle Howard the next day. A few were seen in Osbaldwick during August with occasional sightings still made there throughout September. On 30th August, 150 were counted together with 30 Swallows *Hirundo rustica* at Grange Farm, Haxby while up to 60 were noted with Swallows at Sand Hutton CSL in September with 20 passing over there on the 14th. A strong return passage was noted over Cliffe on the 26th and all had left Clifton Ings by early October. The last at New Earswick were on the 2nd with six at Pocklington on the 3rd while the last birds in the York recording area were seen on the 6th with two at East Cottingham and one at Thornton (BP).

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Migrant breeder though numbers have declined recently

A single was seen at Strensall Common on 20th and 25th April and 5th May with two there on the 8th. Seven singing birds were counted there during the MOD bird survey on the 12th (PR) while the only other record was of a single bird at Yearsley Moor seen on 22nd April, 18th May and 16th June (MD).

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Resident and migrant breeder and passage migrant

A flock of 70 was feeding amongst harvested beet near Hagg Lane, East Cottingwith on 1st January when one flew south at Allertorpe Gravel Pits. Unusually, one was feeding in leaf litter under trees in Rowntree Park, York on the 3rd (unfortunately not an Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni* or even a Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis* for which the habitat and behaviour would have been more appropriate!) (AB). A flock of 19 was on permanent pasture in Riccall on the 5th while birds became more obvious in the Lower Derwent Valley from mid-month as the water levels increased with 62 at North Duffield Carrs on the 16th, 21 at Thorganby Ings the next day, 40 feeding along the edge of the River Derwent at East Cottingwith on the 18th, 20 at Wheldrake Ings on the 21st and up to 15 at Bank Island from the 19th to the month end. Up to 64 were at Clifton Ings on 14th January, and a small flock of 16 was in a stubble field at Dunnington Common on the 17th with 110 present at Seavy Carr on the 26th and groups of 16 at both Bubwith Bridge and Ellerton Ings on the 29th. Up to ten were seen at Haxby Road Farm, New Earswick in January, with maxima of 23 in February and 37 in March. Two were seen in Brecks Lane, Strensall on 28th February and 12 counted the next day in a meadow in Lilling Low Lane, West Lilling. Up to 13 were attracted to floods at Fulford Ings during February while this species was regularly seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of 25 on the 12th. A small movement took place on the 27th in the Lower Derwent Valley with 15 at North Duffield Carrs, 30+ at Thorganby Ings and 27 at Bank Island. Thirteen birds were seen with Sky Larks *Alauda arvensis* at Dunnington Common on 11th March and 20 were at North Duffield Carrs on the 17th while five were at East Moor, Sutton-on-the-Forest on 16th April with seven near Thrush House, in the same area, that day. One was at Strensall Common on the 22nd with two there on the 28th and three on 12th May.

Good numbers bred on Clifton Ings and Rawcliffe Ings while an excellent breeding season was recorded at Bootham Stray with up to

20 birds seen. Three were in song along the River Ouse between York and Naburn by the end of May while one was making its way south at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on 16th July with ten at nearby Cotril Farm on the 27th. Small groups were also seen moving south at Howthorpe Farm on 13th and 27th August while only one was recorded from Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory, on 7th September. Another single was at Thornton on 8th October with two birds at Walmgate Stray, York on the 27th and six at Strensall Common on 31st October with 20 there on 6th November. Around 25 were in a stubble field by the River Foss at Strensall on 14th November with birds also recorded from Askham Bog and at Cheese Vat Farm and Cape Farm, both near Sheriff Hutton, in October and November.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first bird of the year was seen by the pond at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 15th April (SHBR) followed by a male at East Moor, Sutton-on-the-Forest on the 16th and two or three birds in fields near Cliffe on the 17th. One was seen over Newhay on the 23rd while a pair was at East Cottingwith on the 25th and two on farmland at Acaster Malbis on the 29th. Singles were also noted at Bubwith on 1st May, Wheldrake Ings the next day, Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 23rd and Naburn Sewage Works on the 31st. One was near Riccall on 5th June while a breeding pair was observed in an oilseed rape field near Sheriff Hutton Bridge the day after with the male seen carrying food and appearing agitated. A single was at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on the 22nd with four seen at East Moor on 22nd July.

The species was recorded on various dates at Howthorpe Farm again in August with single birds seen and heard heading south on the 24th while 25+ were at Thorganby on the 14th with 70+ there on 4th September, around ten on the 7th and two on the 12th. Singles were heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on the 5th and 19th with others recorded at Sand Hutton CSL in September, the last being on the 21st (SHBR).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Resident breeder

Two were along the Pocklington Canal at Church Bridge on 3rd January with a single at Welburn sewage treatment plant on the 11th and others at Bank Island on the 7th, 9th and 18th. A bird was observed feeding on dampened bread in an Escrick garden on the 29th with another in the

Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area on 28th February while further singles were recorded along the River Foss in York during January and February. Up to four were regularly seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn outside the breeding season while a singing male took up residence near Ouse Bridge, York during February and March and a single bird was seen at Hassacarr Nature reserve on 29th March. Another was at Monument Farm, Castle Howard on 28th April with a pair seen by the Foss in York during March and April, but only the female remained through to June and July and it was assumed that no breeding had taken place. However, it later transpired that a nest had been built at Sessions printing works and at least one egg was laid before the nest was abandoned. This is the first breeding attempt in the New Earswick area for many years!

An unseasonal bird was in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area on 10th June with another noted on 29th September and up to two seen regularly from then up to the end of the year. Two were at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on 14th July and seen again in August while one was on turf near Aughton on the 28th. Two were present by the Foss in New Earswick in September and October with a single at Coulton on 16th September and another at Welburn sewage treatment plant on the 19th. Further singles were on the pond at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 1st October, in Hull Road Park, York on the 3rd, on the Foss near Piccadilly, York on the 7th and by the beck in Osbaldwick the following day. Two were at Sand Hutton CSL on the 14th with one at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 24th and again on 8th November. Another single was at Rawcliffe Lake on 27th October and a pair was around the lagoons at Walbutts Sewage Works, Strensall on the 31st when one was seen along the Pocklington Canal. Two were on the River Foss in Strensall on 14th November while a single bird was seen at Lilling Green Farm, West Lilling on 13th December and singles were also seen at Askham Bog, Fulford Army Barracks and Walmgate Stray, York during the year.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Resident breeder and passage migrant

A total of 18 was feeding with Meadow Pipits *Anthus pratensis* amongst harvested beet at Hagg Lane, Dunnington on 1st January while 27 were at Bank Island on the 8th and 10th with up to 20 there throughout the rest of the month. Fifteen were counted along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on the 3rd with birds generally being in small numbers there throughout the year. Seventeen were present at

Thorganby Ings on the 17th while c.30 were feeding in a muddy sheep field at East Cottingwith on 16th January when a count of c.300 was made at the roost in Parliament Street, York. Up to about 200 roosted at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory in January and February while c.500 were counted roosting in Parliament Street, York on 3rd February and at least 30 birds were attracted to floods at Fulford Ings during the month with 14 feeding on a newly manured stubble field at Ellerton on the 15th.

Small numbers were present throughout the year in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area with 200+ roosting at the sewage works there on 10th March. A juvenile was at Sand Hutton CSL on 13th April while nine were feeding in a newly sown potato field near Moor Farm, Strensall on the 15th. A female was observed nest building at East Moor, Sutton-on-the-Forest on the 20th and two birds were seen in the Lower Derwent Valley on 27th May. Five juveniles were at Allerthorpe Lakeland Park on 2nd July while 50+ were seen from the Thorganby viewpoint on 14th August with 50+ there on 4th September and ten on the 7th. A maximum of twelve was on Bootham Stray in September with 14 the following month. Between September and December groups of up to six birds were seen in gardens at the Brecks, Strensall while c.200 roosted at Sand Hutton CSL again in October. Large numbers roosted in trees in Parliament Street, York in December with single birds reported from various other places.

A male of the race *alba* (White Wagtail) was reported from East Moor on 20th April (PB).

Waxwing *Bombus garrulus*

Occasional winter visitor though more regular in recent years

Scarce in the first part of the year with a flock of 31 flying west over Low Catton on 3rd January and four in a Knapton garden on 20th April being the only records.

A single bird flew north at Fulford Ings on 16th October with 15 flying south over Fulford Army Barracks on the 29th and nine south at Naburn Bridge on 12th November. Twenty-five were at New Earswick on the 25th with a flock of 40 in trees bordering Rowntree's sports field along Haxby Road in York on the 26th. Nine were feeding on hawthorn berries at Rawcliffe Meadows on 9th December. At least 45 were in trees at York Technical College and along the cycle track at the back of Bishopthorpe on the 17th while 12 were feeding on hawthorn berries along Willow Bank, New Earswick on the 19th with a single bird at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on the 23rd.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Resident breeder throughout the area

At least six were around the Castle Howard area on 17th January and song was first heard at Fulford Ings on 11th February. One was seen nest building in Brandsby on 20th April while four were counted during the RSPB trip to Bishop Wood on 8th May. Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with counts of 26 made on 11th February and 39 on 16th May while the first fledged bird was noted on the 31st. Two family parties were at the Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 6th June with eight birds there on 15th August while one was found in a nest box near Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 18th October. The species was a regular visitor to gardens in Strensall with birds seen daily around Huby throughout the year and widespread throughout the northern part of the recording area and New Earswick. Present throughout the year in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area and Rawcliffe Lake as well as Askham Bog and the Lower Derwent Valley.

Duncock *Prunella modularis*

Resident breeder throughout the area

Heard singing along Osbaldwick cycle track as early as 23rd January with song heard in Rowntree Park, York on 9th February. Along the River Ouse between York and Naburn, 48 were counted on the 12th while two nests with eggs were found at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 13th April. Fledglings were first noted at Fulford Ings on 24th May and six territories were recorded near Bishop Wilton during a farm survey. One regularly visited a Strensall garden all year where a juvenile was seen with an adult in July while song was heard briefly along the Osbaldwick cycle track again in November. Also noted as being common at Askham Bog, Castle Howard, Huby, the Lower Derwent Valley, New Earswick, Osbaldwick, Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory, Strensall, Yearsley Moor and many other places with the species being widespread in the northern part of the recording area and present throughout the year in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Resident breeder throughout the area

Frequent at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits, Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory and present throughout the year in Askham Bog, the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area, the Lower Derwent Valley and at Rawcliffe Lake. Seen daily around Huby throughout the year and widespread throughout the northern part of the recording area including sightings at Castle Howard and Yearsley Moor.

Also resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with 56 on 12th February being the highest count there which probably included continental immigrants. Singing birds were first noted on 11th February and were also heard at night on occasions in Osbaldwick where a pair was seen courtship feeding on 3rd April.

Regular in Strensall village gardens all year where a female was noted carrying nesting material on 28th March and the pair used a wooden box fledging five young. In another garden, one or two juveniles were present at the end of May, July and early August.

One was singing at Sand Hutton CSL on 18th November.

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Migrant breeder and passage visitor

A male was at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on 7th July (PB) with another bird at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 11th August (SHBR).

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Casual migrant breeder and passage migrant

An immature bird was seen at Bootham Stray on 15th August (NEBR) and a juvenile/female was in a hedge at Thornton Ellers on 9th September (RC).

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

Casual breeder and passage visitor

A single male remained at North Duffield Carrs throughout January and February and at times showed well in front of the hides. Two males and a female were near West Lilling on 29th February.

Present on Strensall Common in good numbers throughout the year with one or two pairs seen on many occasions, sometimes with up to four young. During the MOD survey of the common on 12th May three pairs were found to be breeding and some had at least two broods in the season. Singles were also seen on the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust reserve in the autumn and at nearby East Lilling House Farm on 17th November.

One male was again present at North Duffield Carrs on 16 October and 11th November.

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Summer visitor

During the spring passage, a male and female were in a horse paddock at Cliffe on 19th April (MW) and 11 were at East Moor near

Sutton-on-the-Forest on the 20th. Five were still present the following day with four on the 22nd and a single on 5th May. Another bird was at High Carr, Strensall on the 20th and a female near Bishop Wilton on the 24th. On Strensall Common, four males and two females were present on the 22nd, one male and one female on the 26th and three males on the 28th.

A first-year bird was at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 16th July (SHBR).

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Resident breeder, winter visitor and migrant

Present throughout the year in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area, at Rawcliffe Lake, Yearsley Moor and in the Lower Derwent Valley. Also seen daily around Huby throughout the year and widespread throughout the northern part of the recording area. Along the River Ouse between York and Naburn birds were present all year with the highest count being 26 on 16th May.

Up to 50 frequented Thornton Ellers throughout January while up to 30 roosted in blackthorn scrub at Church Bridge, Melbourne. Other notable counts were at least five in Askham Bog on 10th January and 20+ around Castle Howard on the 17th with 20 at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits and ten at Frog Hall, Allerthorpe Common on the 25th.

First heard in song at Rowntree Park, York on 2nd February and Osbaldwick on the 12th before becoming part of the full dawn chorus in Osbaldwick from 9th March. A female was nest building at Rowntree Park, York on 20th March and another was seen carrying nesting material in Strensall on the 27th while the partly white bird at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory remained from the previous year until the end of April and was seen nest building on the 15th with a male feeding young there on 6th May.

Nest building was also recorded at Sutton-on-the-Forest on 21st April and in Osbaldwick on 25th June while fledged young were noted at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 3rd May. In Strensall, one garden held two or three birds all year with one or two juveniles present at the end of May, July and early August.

In the autumn period, counts included ten in a hedge at Sand Hutton CSL on 30th September with seven males there on 29th November, 20 at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 24th October and eight in hedges near Strensall on the 28th. There were at least 25 at Thornton Ellers on 27th December while a survey of the New Earswick nature reserves on 19th December revealed a minimum of 260 birds compared to a total of 110 in June.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Winter visitor

Present throughout the winter months in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area and at Rawcliffe Lake with c.100 at Askham Bog on 20th January and 7th February. Smaller flocks were seen at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits, Aughton Ings, Bubwith Ings, Dunnington Bridge, East Cottingwith, Ellerton, Hagg Wood, Huby, Lilling Green Farm (West Lilling), Seavy Carr, Strensall, Sutton-on-the-Forest, Thornton and York Technical College in the early part of the year. Along the River Ouse between York and Naburn numbers were generally low but slowly increased to a maximum of c.150, mainly in the Bishopthorpe area, on 6th March. In the New Earswick area, about average numbers were present in the first part of the year but the usual decline through February and March was not seen with a total of 40 recorded in the latter month.

A large movement of 2,600 flew southwest over the Lower Derwent Valley on 28th January, possibly birds moving off the Wolds and other higher ground due to heavy snow. Twenty-one fed in a Dunnington garden on 30th January.

In February, 900 were present in the Lower Derwent Valley on the 27th, 1,100 on the 28th and 320 on the 29th when 55 roosted in willows by the River Ouse at Wistow.

Several flew over Osbaldwick in a mixed thrush flock on 26th March and flocks of up to 47 flew north over Dunnington Common on the evening of the 27th with 90 at Terrington on the 30th while 150 were at Low Carr Farm, Strensall and 15 at East Cottingwith on the 31st. Ten were at Poppleton on 4th April and the last of the winter were 23 at New Earswick Nature Reserve on the 10th (NEBR).

The first of the autumn were singles at Bolton and Yapham Grange on 21st October (PB) followed by 50 flying west at Strensall Forest and 30 at Anchor Plain on the 22nd. On the same date, 22 also flew west at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory and flocks of 150 and 200 flew east there on the 29th while smaller flocks inhabited the hedgerows from then until the end of the year. Fifty were at Walmgate Stray, York on the 27th while flocks of 150 and 200 were at Cape Farm, near Sheriff Hutton and 100+ north of Towthorpe Bridge the following day. About 500 passed over York Science Park and 150 flew southeast over Pocklington on the 29th and 31st when 200 were with a similar number of Redwing *Turdus iliacus* in a ploughed field near Strensall.

Over 500 birds were in one flock at Thornton on 2nd November, 30+ at Towthorpe on the 14th and 100 at Cliffe Common on 20th December. Ten were at Huby on 25th December and near Terrington on the 30th

with 100 also present at Storwood during the month. It was a poor autumn for this species in the New Earswick area where only eight were recorded in October and 12 in December.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Resident breeder but in decline in some areas

Seen on a fairly regular basis in Strensall and at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory throughout the year. Also present in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area and at Rawcliffe Lake as well as around Huby where the species was seen daily. Birds were also still widespread throughout the northern part of the recording area and were regularly seen and heard along River Ouse between York and Naburn, with song first recorded there on 11th February. A total of 24 birds was counted along that stretch the following day, the maximum for the year.

One landed on an office window ledge in York on 13th January and seven were singing along Osballdwick cycle track on the 23rd but only four were heard a few days later on a cold morning. Another sang for a few weeks from 4th February in a Bishopthorpe garden and was seen feeding on ivy berries there on the 25th. Eight were in full song along a half-mile stretch of road in Huby on the 15th and another was singing before 04:30 in Osballdwick on 5th March.

Pairs were seen at Strensall on 27th February and in a different area of the village on 23rd March, Flaxton on 29th February, Strensall Common on 10th April and Welburn village on the 28th. Five were recorded singing during the MOD survey of Strensall Common on 12th May and one held territory near Bishop Wilton during an RSPB farm survey. In the New Earswick area, the population seemed fairly stable during the year with at least six pairs spread across the reserves and it was thought they had had a good breeding season.

Birds were noted singing from 03:45 on 26th May in Strensall as well as in June. An adult fed a juvenile in a Bishopthorpe garden for several weeks from 25th July, but was almost always driven away by a male Blackbird *Turdus merula*.

One was in Strensall on 25th November and early singing was heard at Walmgate Stray, York on 2nd December, Osballdwick on the 7th and Monk's Cross, York on the 16th.

Also noted at Askham Bog, Castle Howard, Yearsley Moor and in the Lower Derwent Valley during the year.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Winter visitor

Following on from 2003, numbers in the New Earswick area were much lower than usual in January and February but had risen to a total of 60 birds in March. Only single figures were recorded along the River Ouse between York and Naburn in the first part of the year and two were at Huby on 4th January, six in the lime trees at Castle Howard on the 17th and five at Askham Bog on the 20th. There were only low numbers present in the Lower Derwent Valley during the early part of the year although 100 were counted at Thornton Ellers on 30th January, possibly birds moving off the Wolds and other higher ground due to heavy snow.

Other flocks included 20 together with Fieldfares *Turdus pilaris* in a meadow along the Pocklington Canal near Thornton on 17th January and ten with a large flock of Fieldfare near Sutton-on-the-Forest on 25th February.

Single figure records were noted at York Technical College playing fields on 29th January, New Earswick on 2nd March and Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 27th. Nine birds with a flock of Fieldfare in New Earswick on 10th April (NEBR) were the last of the winter.

The first recorded in autumn were small numbers moving overhead at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington between 06:00 and 06:30 on 29th September (PB) while two at Walmgate Stray York the following day increased to 60 there by the end of the year. October saw eight at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on the 8th, 14 at the Joseph Rowntree Trust NR, New Earswick on the 10th, 40 at Allerthorpe Common on the 16th, 100 at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 24th and c.30 in hedges by the River Foss at Strensall on the 28th. On the 31st, 200 were in a mixed flock with 200 Fieldfares in a ploughed field off Brecks Lane, Strensall and 12 were on Strensall Common.

Six birds were seen at Earswick on 14th November and another was at Terrington on 30th December. Flocks of 200 were noted at both Bootham Stray and in the New Earswick nature reserves on 31st December.

Up to ten were present on various dates at the beginning and end of the year at Sand Hutton CSL and also throughout the winter months in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Resident breeder and winter visitor

Present throughout the year in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area with up to 25 feeding on the freshly mown grass in late July. Also seen

daily around Huby and still widespread throughout the northern part of the recording area. Up to ten were regularly recorded along the River Ouse between York and Naburn and were fairly frequent at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory.

The first song was heard at Askham Bog on 10th January, Osbaldwick from the 15th, beside the River Foss at Strensall on the 29th, Bishopthorpe in early February and along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on 20th February. Singles were also noted at Dunnington and in the Lower Derwent Valley during the early part of the year.

A territory was recorded near Bishop Wilton during an RSPB farm survey and two were singing during the MOD survey of Strensall Common on 12th May. An adult was observed carrying food at Bishopthorpe Palace on 9th May with another feeding a juvenile at Sand Hutton CSL on 9th June. In the New Earswick area there was a slight increase from 2003 and it was assumed breeding was successful as a flock of 19 was around Huntington Church in August.

Autumn flocks included a party of 20 at Coneysthorpe on 10th August and five in a meadow beside the sewage works at Stillington on 9th October. Lower numbers were seen at Strensall and Towthorpe on 28th October, Earswick on 14th November and Hull Road, York on 10th December. Song was noted in Bishopthorpe village trees in early December and at Fulford Army Barracks on the 2nd.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first was one in song at Wheldrake Ings on 18th April (PB) with another at Bank Island on the 20th and birds seen there regularly in this area after that. An elusive individual gave brief bursts of song at Fulford Hall on the 26th and only one singing bird was recorded at Fulford Ings during the year being seen on two dates in July. Further singles were noted at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 26th April and 7th May and Castle Howard on 27th April.

Others were recorded singing during the breeding season at North Duffield Carrs on 2nd May, on ponds at Strensall Common on 7th May and 6th July, near Bishop Wilton on 15th May, Howthorpe Farm, Terrington in June and July, Malton on 7th July and Rawcliffe Ings Flood Basin on the evening of 13th June. Up to eight were in song at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits during the summer with a juvenile seen there on 15th August being the last for the year (PB).

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*
Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first was one on pools at Strensall Common on 26th April (PR) with two present there on 5th and 12th May. The first bird recorded at Wheldrake Ings was on 29th April with two singing there on 2nd May and singles also noted there on 27th May and 6th June. Another was heard at Bielby Bridge on 25th May and two were singing at Skipwith Common on 3rd July with eight there on 7th August and six on the 22nd (PB).

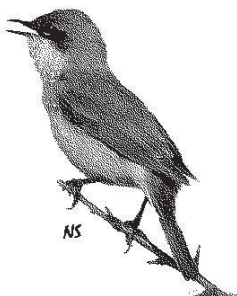
Also recorded frequently at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits during the summer with the earliest noted on 3rd May and 14 singing there on 6th June while two juveniles were seen on 2nd July. The last record at this site was of ten birds on 15th August.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*
Migrant breeder

The first of the year were two in song at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 25th April (PB) followed by another singing male at Terry Avenue caravan park, York next day.

Other singles were seen or heard at Huby on 2nd May, Sutton-on-the-Forest and Skelton on the 6th, Middlethorpe Ings and Naburn Sewage Works on the 9th, two birds at Middlethorpe Ings on the 12th and another at Fulford Hall on the same date. A single bird was noted at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 4th May, two at Bank Island on the 16th and further singles in the Fulford Ings/Middlethorpe Ings area on the 24th and at Bishopthorpe Palace on the 31st.

At Sand Hutton CSL, one was present on 3rd June and another on 2nd August with other singles recorded at Skipwith Common on 7th August and Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on the 11th. Also present during the summer at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits where singles were seen frequently with two birds on 15th August being the last (PB).



Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*
Migrant breeder

The first records were of singing males at Clifton Moor and Skelton on 22nd April (PB), Kettlestring Farm, York on the 24th and East Cottingwith, North Duffield, Poppleton and Riccall on the 25th. At least six were in Askham Bog and singles at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory and Wheldrake Ings on the 26th.

Numbers along the River Ouse between York and Bishopthorpe reached eight singing males by 26th April, peaking at 23 on 9th May before declining to ten by the end of May. Four were at Bank Island on 2nd May with four along the Osbaldwick cycle track on the 7th and two at Bishop Wood on the 8th. At least ten were counted along a hedge near Huby on the 2nd with a pair noted there on the 17th. Also in May, singles were recorded at Wheldrake Ings on the 1st, Hagg Bridge on the 4th, Strensall Common on the 12th and Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 30th.

A family party was at Fulford Ings on 5th June with single birds noted near Strensall on the 6th, Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on 25th June and 15th July and at Skipwith Common on 7th August. Two adults and two juveniles were seen beside the River Foss at Strensall on 1st August while three birds at the YWT reserve at Strensall on the 24th were the last for the year (J&TM).

Breeding was also confirmed at Bootham Stray, Kettlestring Farm, Riverside Environmental Park and Rowntree's Allotments (all York) during the year and seven to eight pairs were present throughout the summer in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*
Migrant breeder

The first was one at Monument Farm, Castle Howard on 28th April (J&TM) followed by others at North Duffield Carrs on 2nd May and several seen or heard at Bishop Wood on the 8th.

One was at Wass on 16th May, two or three at Yearsley Moor on 18th May and 16th June and six singing along the River Derwent at Wheldrake Ings on 27th May. Singles were noted in various areas at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory during the summer where they probably bred in High Lodge Plantation. One was seen carrying food at Worlds End Plantation, Strensall Common on 13th June and two were at Melbourne the same day.

Also recorded at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 2nd July and 15th August (PB).

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*

Migrant breeder with some birds overwintering

A male was singing at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory at midday on 19th February but the first spring arrivals were males at Danesmead Copse, Fulford on 4th April (AB) and Castle Howard Lake on the 7th. Four were in the Fulford area by the 13th with two at Burnholme, York and one at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits the same day and others at the Bailey Bridge, Wheldrake Ings and Bank Island on the 14th. Singles were also at St Nicholas Fields, York and Sand Hutton CSL on the 16th and Rowntree Park, York on the 17th when two were at Allerthorpe Common with others at Hagg Wood and Hassacarr NR (both Dunnington) and a pair near Wheldrake Ings bridge on the 19th. Thereafter birds were frequently recorded with numbers along the River Ouse between York and Naburn increasing to a maximum of 26 (24 males) on 9th May.

In the New Earswick area, a male was noted on 17th April and a female on the 24th with 11 males present in early May and 14 in early June. Breeding was confirmed at four sites and suspected elsewhere, but few young were seen. Breeding was also confirmed at Sand Hutton CSL with juveniles seen in July and beside the Great Lake, Castle Howard where four adults and one juvenile were seen on 30th July. During May and June birds were also recorded at Bishop Wood, North Duffield Carrs, along the Osballdwick cycle track, Strensall Common and Yearsley Moor while five to six pairs were present throughout the summer in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area.

Sightings declined later in the summer but two were at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits in July and August, one along the River Foss at Strensall on 1st August and others at New Earswick on 1st September and along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on the 5th (AB).

A male was in a garden at Cliffe on 2nd November and a female was captured in a mist net at the Joseph Rowntree Trust NR, New Earswick on 27th December. It was thought that this bird might be from the German breeding population which ringing data has shown now increasingly winter in Britain.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Migrant breeder and passage migrant with some birds overwintering

An overwintering bird was seen at Old Sewage Works Woods and adjacent gardens in Woodland Place, York on 24th and 25th January and one singing at Scarcroft Green, York on 19th February was presumably the same as a bird heard calling from gardens nearby on 5th March.

Presumed early migrants were one singing at Lock Cottage, New Earswick on 17th March (NEBR), Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on the 18th, 23rd and 26th, Terry Avenue, York on the 21st and Allerthorpe Gravel Pits, Clifton Ings and Strensall Common on the 24th. Further March sightings involved birds at Osbaldwick on the 26th (where they presumably bred), Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 27th and Ampleforth and St Nicholas Fields, York on the 29th with eight singing by the end of the month in the New Earswick area.

Three were also along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on 27th March, rising to 16 singing males by 26th April before dropping back to six by the end of May as birds settled into their territories. In the New Earswick area, numbers rose to 13 by the end of April and breeding was noted at several locations with a July total of at least 19 birds.

From the beginning of April and into May birds became widespread in the recording area being noted at many sites including Allerthorpe Common, Bank Island, Bank Wood (Welburn), Bishop Wood and Wheldrake Ings.

Present throughout the summer at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits where seven were noted on 15th August while at Strensall Common, ten were recorded singing during the MOD survey on 12th May.

Two or three were in a mixed tit and warbler flock along the river bank at Wheldrake Ings on 19th August and four were also there on 4th September. One was singing in a Dunnington garden on 11th September and others were noted at Thornton on the 28th and Osbaldwick on the 29th. There was a small passage at Clifton Ings from late August into early October and a few were moving through Rawcliffe Lake during September and October. The last along the River Ouse between York and Naburn were on 2nd October while others staying into October were at Walmgate Stray, York on the 1st, the Pocklington Canal at Melbourne on the 4th, Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on the 7th, Huntington School NR on the 10th and Hull Road, York on the 11th (I&RT).

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Migrant breeder and passage migrant

The first of the spring was a singing male at Danesmead Copse, Fulford on 4th April (AB) followed by others at Yearsley Moor on the 8th, Strensall Common and Wheldrake Ings on the 10th, Skipwith Common on the 13th, Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory and St Nicholas Fields, York on the 16th and Allerthorpe Common and Rowntree Park, York on the 17th. Four were also singing at Sessions NR, New Earswick on the 17th with four also in the Wheldrake Ings area on the 19th and at

Strensall Common on the 20th. Thereafter birds were heard or seen in many areas throughout the spring and summer.

At Allerthorpe Gravel Pits, the first was heard on 10th April and there were four on the 13th with many present in the spring and summer, the maximum being 20 on 25th April.

Many were noted at Bishop Wood on 8th May and ten singing males were noted along the River Ouse by 16th May with the first fledged young noted there on 10th July. Ten were counted singing during the MOD survey of Strensall Common on 12th May and 19 different males were on territory in the New Earswick area by the first week of May. Juveniles were seen at Sand Hutton CSL on 15th July and ten or 11 pairs were present throughout the summer in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area with another two pairs at Rawcliffe Lake. Also recorded during the year at Cass Wood, Huby.

In late summer, two were at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on 27th July and three were singing at Allerthorpe Common on 15th August. At Wheldrake Ings on the 19th, two or three birds were in a mixed tit and warbler flock along the river and one was at Low Mowthorpe on the 22nd with two at Skipwith Common. Singles were noted in Bishopthorpe on the 25th and Sand Hutton CSL on 1st September while six were also recorded along Lilling Low Lane, West Lilling in September and the last was one in New Earswick on the 15th (NEBR).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Resident breeder and winter visitor

Single figures were seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year with a maximum of eight on 12th February. Up to five were recorded at Askham Bog early in the year while others were noted at Strensall Common on 3rd January, near Ray Wood, Castle Howard on the 17th and in Brecks Lane, Strensall on 28th February.

A pair was at New Earswick on 2nd March and one was in song at the Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 17th April with a single at Huby on the 22nd. Singing was also noted in the Lower Derwent Valley during the spring.

Small numbers were moving through the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area and Rawcliffe Lake during September and October and two were in a Strensall garden in early November and another in Brecks Lane, Strensall on 20th–25th December. Other December records consisted of a single at Huby on the 29th and two or three in Fryton Wood, Castle Howard on the 30th.

Also regularly recorded on Strensall Common, Yearsley Moor and at Sand Hutton CSL during the year and the species was more noticeable

this year in the New Earswick nature reserves. There was a record count of seven there in December which suggested a good breeding season or may have been due in part to winter migrants bolstering the local population.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Migrant breeder and passage visitor

A single at Strensall Common on 12th May (PR) was the first of the year and one was noted there again on 4th July. Singles were also recorded at High Farm, Firby on 19th June, Nunnington on the 21st and 25th and at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 26th May, 15th July and 3rd September.

A single bird was seen in a Huby garden for a few days in mid-May but failed to breed for the first time since a nest box was first occupied in 1999. Two were near the church at Huttons Ambo on 18th July and a juvenile was observed flycatching at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 15th August.

Two were at Rawcliffe Meadows on 19th August and two birds were in a mixed tit and warbler flock along the river at Wheldrake Ings the same day.

Another was at Rawcliffe Meadows on 9th September while a late bird was at Clifton Park on 6th October (NS).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Resident breeder

Up to 12 birds frequented the car park and feeding station at North Duffield CARRS throughout January while 13 were present with a mixed tit flock at Thornton Ellers on the 10th. Nine observed feeding on ice along the edge of the flooded River Derwent at East Cottingwith on the 18th with Pied Wagtails *Motacilla alba* and Meadow Pipits *Anthus pratensis* represents an unusual and noteworthy record (EN).

Seventeen were at Escrick on 7th January with 12 near Dunnington sports field on the 25th when 25 were on Strensall Common with ten there on the 28th. A party of about six was in the ancient oak trees north of Ray Wood, Castle Howard on the 17th.

Up to at least 30 were seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year with the first fledged broods noted on 24th May. Up to about 30 birds were also present in Askham Bog early in the year. Common throughout the New Earswick area with numbers seemingly stable.

Present throughout the year in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area as well as Yearsley Moor and fairly regular in a Strensall garden during the

winter months. Also recorded on several dates at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory during the year but never more than two birds were noted.

Other reports included 26 at Skipwith on 22nd August and a family party of up to ten in Swinsey Carr Wood, north of Terrington on 30th December.

Marsh Tit *Parus palustris*

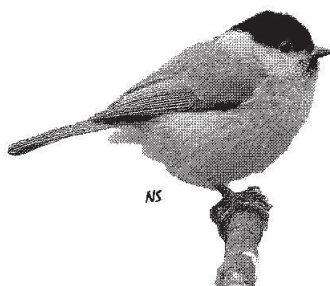
Resident breeder

Resident at Yearsley Moor and seen on most visits during the year.

At least six were in Askham Bog on 10th January with five of them in song and birds seen in Jeffrey Bog by the River Derwent on the 17th when a pair was in Lime Tree Avenue at Castle Howard. Three were at Strensall Common on the 25th while a single in a Dunnington garden on the 28th was the first seen there for many years. One was singing at Skipwith Common on 6th February with four singing at Askham Bog on the 22nd.

Later in the year, a bird was singing along the River Ouse at Bishopthorpe Bridge on 9th May with another at Strensall Common on the 12th. Three were noted at Skipwith Common on 7th July while a pair with one juvenile were seen at Huttons Bank Wood, Huttons Ambo on the 18th.

In the autumn, two birds were at Allerthorpe Common on 16th October while winter records included four at Strensall Common on 12th December and two in Fryton West Woods, Castle Howard on the 30th.



Willow Tit *Parus montanus*

Resident breeder

One was northeast of Castle Howard Lake on 17th January with another single seen in the YWT reserve at Strensall Common on 28th February.

A family party was at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 16th May while singles were noted at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on three dates during the year.

At least two birds were heard at Yearsley Moor on 16th June but this species was not noted in Askham Bog this year – one of its favoured haunts.

Coal Tit *Parus ater*

Resident breeder

A pair was in Lime Tree Avenue at Castle Howard on 17th January while the species was resident at Yearsley Moor and seen on most visits during the year. Frequent on Strensall Common during the year while one to two birds regularly visited a Strensall garden all year.

Single figures were regularly seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of nine (including birds in song) on 20th February while about ten were in Askham Bog on 7th February.

Two or three were seen regularly throughout the year at Clifton Park while two were at Rawcliffe Lake on 28th September. The least common of the resident tits in the New Earswick area with numbers generally stable. A bird in Sessions NR, New Earswick on 23rd March showed characteristics of the continental race *ater* (NEBR).

Two nest boxes were occupied at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory during the breeding season with seven chicks in each.

Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*

Resident breeder

Resident at Yearsley Moor and seen on most visits during the year. Also resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn where 15 were counted on 16th May which is likely to be a poor representation of the population. Common in Askham Bog and also recorded in the Lower Derwent Valley. Present throughout the year in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area and at Rawcliffe Lake. Regular on Strensall Common while one to two birds visited a Strensall garden all year.

The commonest bird in the New Earswick area with over 400 individuals having been ringed over the last three years in only a tiny proportion of the total patch. As only a small percentage are seen to carry rings, it gives some indication of the likely population size!

Seen in all suitable habitats around the Castle Howard Estate on 17th January with 14 counted at Strensall Common on the 25th and 20 at Skipwith Common on 14th February.

Three pairs nested at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory while about ten were along Alexander Road, Strensall on 28th October

Great Tit *Parus major*

Resident breeder

Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a count of 12 birds on 16th May being a poor representation of the numbers present there. Not as common as Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*, though, while birds were also recorded in Askham Bog and the Lower Derwent Valley as well as at Yearsley Moor.

A common and widespread local breeder in the New Earswick area and present throughout the year in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area as well as Rawcliffe Lake. Regular on Strensall Common during the year with nine counted on 25th January and 12 on 12th December.

Two birds were displaying at Seavy Carr on 14th January with one by the Great Lake and another in Lime Tree Avenue at Castle Howard on the 17th while ten were at Skipwith Common on 14th February.

Nine nest boxes were occupied at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory with five containing broods of up to eight chicks and four with clutches of eggs of which three had been abandoned while about ten birds were along Alexander Road, Strensall on 28th October.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Resident breeder

A single was at Castle Howard on 1st January but there were no further reports until 28th April when a pair was seen at the Arboretum feeding station there and appeared to be feeding young at a nearby nestbox. On the same day a single bird was seen nearby in Bank Wood, Welburn.

A male was singing from the top of a tall ash tree in a hedge at Fulford Ings during April with another singing at Sutton Park on the 21st.

In the autumn, two birds were seen in and around the grounds of Bishopthorpe Palace on 19th September while a single was at Ampleforth on 4th October.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Resident breeder

Up to six birds were seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year with two singing there on 20th April. At least six were also in Askham Bog early in the year and the species was seen on most visits to Yearsley Moor as well as being present throughout

the year in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area. Appears to be on the increase in the New Earswick area as evidenced by ringing returns with birds likely to be encountered in any suitably wooded habitat.

Three were counted in the YWT reserve at Strensall Common on 11th January with two in the ancient oaks north of Ray Wood, Castle Howard on the 17th. Singles were noted at Strensall Common on 28th January, 17th March, 6th April and 12th May while a juvenile at Poppleton on 23rd July landed on a house wall and then tried to fly through the window!

Autumn records included one at Melbourne on 8th November and six counted at Great Wood near Strensall Common on 12th December.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

Following last autumn's large influx, singles were present at Bank Island on 2nd, 4th and 8th January with two there on the 12th and 24th. Singles were also present here on the 16th with further birds at Wheldrake Ings on the 18th and 21st and North Duffield Carrs on the 22nd. Three were at Thornton Ellers on 2nd February with two birds again present at Bank Island on the 11th and 14th while at least two were frequenting gardens in North Duffield village on the 27th. Elsewhere, three were at Escrick on 5th January with two east of Ray Wood, Castle Howard on the 17th.

Two birds seen at the end of 2003 in and around Old Sewage Works Wood, New Earswick remained until 24th January after which presumably two different birds were noted in Triangle Meadow on 6th March and remained in the general area until 4th April.

A single remaining from last year in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area was seen regularly up to 1st April while one was at Dunnington on 28th March with another at Heworth Golf Club on 14th April. One to two birds were noted in the Fulford Ings/Middlethorpe Ings area during April when up to three were recorded along the River Ouse between York and Bishopthorpe.

One was at Melbourne on 13th June while, late in the year, another bird was seen at Castle Howard on 6th December.

One or two birds were also noted at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory and Strensall Common on various dates during the year while the species was resident at Askham Bog.

Magpie *Pica pica*

Resident breeder

Up to c.30 were recorded along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year with at least five seen in Askham Bog and

birds also noted in the Lower Derwent Valley. Present throughout the year in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area as well as at Rawcliffe Lake and widespread throughout the northern part of the recording area with birds seen daily around Huby.

A common and widespread bird in the New Earswick area with large numbers using the two nature reserves to roost, especially in the winter. Observations suggest this species is increasing here.

One occasionally visited a Strensall garden throughout the year while a group of up to seven birds was counted in Brecks Lane, Strensall on 30th December.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*

Resident breeder

Regularly seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year with a maximum of c.120 on 19th October. Most birds were generally seen feeding with Rooks *Corvus frugilegus* in fields to the south of Bishopthorpe although a notable flock of 50 was wheeling high over Fulford Ings on 20th February.

Common in the New Earswick area and generally increasing with large numbers regularly seen in agricultural habitats and smaller numbers in local gardens and on rooftops.

Numerous in a flock of about 200 with Rooks near the sewage works at Castle Howard on 17th January with eight counted near Bishop Wilton during the RSPB farm survey on 24th April.

Present throughout the year in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area and regular around the Castle Howard estate, Easingwold, Huby, Nunnington and Sutton-on-the-Forest. Also recorded in the Lower Derwent Valley.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*

Resident breeder

Abundant throughout the Lower Derwent Valley early in the year with 6,700 over Thornton Ellers on 2nd January and 800 in a mixed flock of corvids on the 14th. Large numbers flew over the valley during the month to join a large roost at Melbourne estimated in the order of 15,000–20,000 birds. Counts over Wheldrake of 11,200 on the 5th, 3,900 on the 7th and 7,400 on the 18th were thought to be birds heading for the same roost. Large numbers were also found feeding on the flooding ings with 2,300 at Wheldrake on the 19th and 1,700 at Hagg Bridge on the 21st with 980 in arable fields at North Duffield on the 24th and 740 at North Duffield Carrs on the 29th.

Large numbers remained throughout the area during February: 270 flew north over North Duffield Cams on the 10th when 480 were present at North Duffield Ings. A flock of 600 was present at Wheldrake Ings towards dusk on the 12th whilst 1,220 moved west over there on the 22nd to the Melbourne roost. This large roost still held over 7,000 birds during the month.

Regularly seen along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with most birds generally feeding in fields to the south of Bishopthorpe, often in the company of Jackdaws *Corvus monedula* with a maximum of c.120 on 12th November while the species was also noted as being common on agricultural land in the New Earswick area.

Numerous in a flock of about 200 with Jackdaws near the sewage works at Castle Howard on 17th January when 200 were at Dunnington Common while 1,700 were in the Hagg Bridge area on the 24th. Twenty-eight birds were counted with 16 nests visible at Monument Plantation, Castle Howard on 28th April with about 12 nests in the rookery at Strensall Rectory.

A pre-roost gathering of 2,000 birds were at Fangfoss on 26th and 27th October while the species was present throughout the year in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area and widespread throughout the northern part of the recording area with birds seen daily around Huby.

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*
Resident breeder

Up to c.30 were generally recorded along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year although a congregation of c.80 was in fields at Middlethorpe Ings on 12th November. Also present in Askham Bog and the Lower Derwent Valley. Present throughout the year in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area as well as at Rawcliffe Lake and widespread throughout the northern part of the recording area with birds seen daily in Huby. Described as the most widespread corvid in the New Earswick area while birds were seen regularly in Strensall and on the Common with up to 25 present throughout the year at Walbutts Sewage Works, Strensall.

Two or three pairs were around the Castle Howard estate on 17th January while a bird at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory caught and killed a Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* chick on 15th April.

Raven *Corvus corax*
Vagrant

One flew south-southeast mobbed by crows at Cliffe on 3rd October (MW). Only the second record for the recording area with the first being at Wheldrake Ings in May/June 1988.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Resident breeder and winter visitor

Small flocks of between 100 and 400 were present throughout January feeding on the partially flooded ings in the Lower Derwent Valley while c.300 were seen on overhead power lines near Huby on the 22nd.

Up to c.30 were regularly seen along the River Ouse between York and Naburn during the winter months with lower numbers noted during the summer. A maximum count of c.300 birds was made on 19th October with a flock of 200 feeding in fields south of Bishopthorpe while the first fledged young were seen on 24th May. A flock of 115 was at Dunnington Common on 31st March with 120 at Terrington on 27th July while 100+ were with Fieldfares *Turdus pilaris* on stubble fields north of Towthorpe Bridge and another flock of c.100 near New Bridge, Strensall on 28th October. A flock of 1,000+ was at Thornton on 2nd November with many more in the vicinity but the birds were constantly on the move and not possible to count in total while the peak figure recorded at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory was 100 on 13th December.

Birds regularly visited a bird table in a Strensall garden all year with 24 including eight juveniles there on 27th May. Widespread throughout the northern part of the recording area throughout the year with birds seen daily around Huby. Also abundant and widespread in the New Earswick area.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Resident breeder

Up to at least 20 birds frequented residential areas and farm buildings along the River Ouse between York and Naburn during the year. Also present in such habitats in the Lower Derwent Valley and at Yearsley Moor although flocks often venture out to feed on farmland crops after the young have fledged.

Up to 30 were recorded at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington while two at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 27th May was the only record there this year.

Up to 15 visited a Strensall garden all year with fledged juveniles noted from 4th June. Appeared to breed well in Osbaldwick with most of the birds visiting the feeders in the winter being juveniles.

Very common and widespread in the New Earswick area, especially around human habitation, and possibly second only to the Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus* in abundance. Widespread throughout the northern part of the recording area and seen daily in Huby where a party of six males and

three females was in a garden there on 4th May. Up to 38 were counted in a mature hawthorn/blackthorn hedgerow at Brecks Lane, Strensall during the year.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Resident breeder

The feeding station at North Duffield Carrs held 50+ birds on 1st January, 100+ on the 3rd and up to 80 throughout the remainder of the month. However, flock sizes were generally smaller than in recent years but there was an increase in the number of flocks attending and the species is generally regarded as on the up. A flock of 40 was present at Thornton Ellers on the 4th with 32 there on the 10th while several flocks of between 30–40 were also recorded from Aughton, East Cottingham, the Melbourne area and South Duffield with 21 at Bubwith on the 27th. Eighteen birds also frequented feeders in a garden at Ellerton, an increase on recent years.

Over 80 birds were present at Thornton on 3rd February with 150 at Thorganby on the 9th and 14th while 50+ were present around feeders in Wheldrake village and up to 90 frequented the North Duffield Carrs feeding station throughout the month.

Small numbers were present throughout the year in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area with a peak count of 30 at the Cornfield NR on 6th October where two or three pairs bred. Small numbers are also resident down Moor Lane, Bishopthorpe while up to 30 were recorded at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits during the year.

Elsewhere, 50 were at Dunnington Common on 17th January, four at Ganthorpe on 1st February and four at Lilling Green Farm, West Lilling on the 29th. Fifteen birds were feeding in a Dunnington garden on 11th March with three near Strensall on the 13th and four at Hagg Bridge on 15th April.

Two were at Coulton on 22nd June and six at Ellerton on the 26th with 20 counted feeding in a late harvest wheat field alongside the River Foss at Strensall on 1st August while a single flying over Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on the 3rd was the only record there this year. A flock of c.30 was at Cliffe on 1st October with four birds near Flaxton on 6th November and 15 near Sutton-on-the-Forest on the 27th.

In the New Earswick area, wintering birds in Chestnut Grove remained very scarce with a maximum of five in February. No birds were seen there after March and for the first time none were recorded in the autumn. On the plus side, however, sightings were once again up in other areas with birds seen regularly at Hartrigg Oaks and Kettlestrig Farm as well as on Bootham Stray with a new breeding colony discovered near the Bumper Castle which provided a new record count of 48 on 23rd October.

Widespread throughout the northern part of the recording area throughout the year and seen daily in Huby with at least 50 birds counted in a mixed bunting flock half way along the footpath between Stillington Road, Huby and Sutton-on-the-Forest cemetery on 25th December while c.30 were at New Bridge, Strensall on the 26th.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

Regularly seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of 25 on 3rd January while ten males were in song there on 6th March. Thirty-six were counted at Dunnington Common on 17th January with 50 there on 11th March while a flock of 250 was at the southern end of Skipwith Common on 21st February and 20 at Lilling Green Farm, West Lilling on the 29th.

Flocks of 100 were at Whitwell Grange, near Whitwell-on-the-Hill on 9th August and at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on the 23rd while another flock of 60 was counted at Ampleforth School sports field on 16th September with c.45 birds in a stubble field off Lilling Low Lane, West Lilling on the 25th. Around 100 birds, mostly males, were feeding on agricultural wasteland at the eastern boundary of Strensall Common on 14th December while a peak figure for the year of 20 at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory was recorded the following day.

Common in the New Earswick area, especially in the winter, but harder to find during the summer months. Regular in a Strensall garden during the autumn and winter and widespread throughout the northern part of the recording area with birds seen daily in Huby. Present throughout the year in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area as well as at Rawcliffe Lake and also recorded in Askham Bog and the Lower Derwent Valley.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Winter visitor and passage migrant

A single bird was in the Wheldrake Ings car park area on 2nd January with 33 still present near Skipwith Common on the 7th dropping to 17 by the 11th. A flock of c.30 was in association with 200+ Greenfinches *Carduelis chloris* at Yearsley Moor on the 9th and still present on 4th March. Two were at Dunnington Common on 17th January while one was at Castle Howard on 1st February with three at Ganthorpe the same day. Two were present at the North Duffield Carrs feeding station from the 14th to 20th with at least one remaining until the 27th.

In the New Earswick area, single birds were seen in Joseph Rowntree Trust NR on 8th February and 23rd March after which sightings increased

slightly with up to six birds noted by the end of the month. Early April still saw only single figure counts until the 6th when an unprecedented influx beat all previous records with a very mobile flock of at least 60 birds commuting between Fireman's Leap, the Joseph Rowntree Trust reserve and Triangle Meadow. Unfortunately most of these appeared to have moved on by the following day when only about a dozen could be found with three lingering in the Joseph Rowntree Trust reserve on the 22nd representing the latest ever spring record. After all this excitement autumn was a huge disappointment as for the first time ever there were no reports at all from this area, presumably due to milder weather than usual in the far north.

Two were by the horse paddock in Clifton Park with a mixed finch flock on 4th March with six seen at Lilling Low Lane, West Lilling on the 8th and 35 at Dunnington Common on the 11th. A late flock of c.50 birds was feeding high in sycamore trees at Rowntree Park, York on 22nd April with a number of males virtually in full breeding plumage (AB)!

In the autumn, one flew south over Fulford Army Barracks on 25th October (AB) with another passing over Walmgate Stray two days after that while singles were seen near Castle Howard Lake on 9th November and flying over Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on the 8th.

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

Resident along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with a maximum of 60 on 3rd January. Small numbers were also recorded in Askham Bog where a male was singing on 7th February. Present throughout the year in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area and at Rawcliffe Lake with a flock of up to 100 at the Cornfield NR from the end of September to the year end.

Following on from what was presumed to be a poor breeding season in the New Earswick area in 2003, numbers picked up remarkably from January onwards and showed a slight increase overall on the previous year while the species was noted as being widespread throughout the northern part of the recording area and seen daily around Huby.

Elsewhere, 127 were counted on wires south of Skipwith Common on 4th January with a flock of 200+ in the company of 30+ Bramblings *Fringilla montifringilla* at Yearsley Moor on the 9th and a similar number at Dunnington Common on the 17th.

Up to 80 lingered at the North Duffield Carrs feeding station throughout January with 120 at Hagg Bridge on the 3rd while up to 60 roosted at Elvington during January and 80 throughout February. A flock of 50 was at the southern end of Skipwith Common on 21st February with 42 there

on the 28th and 52 at Barby Sewage Works on the 29th. A flock of 150+ was still with 30+ Brambling at Yearsley Moor on 4th March and 150 at Dunnington Common on the 11th.

During the summer, 20 were at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington on 23rd August with 80 at Whitwell Grange near Whitwell-on-the-Hill on the 27th while counts towards the end of the year included c.50 at Mask Lane, Newton upon Derwent on 8th November and c.60 in maize game cover at East Cottingwith on 30th December with a wintering flock of up to 40 present in a garden at Wilberfoss.

The peak count at Rawcliffe Cornfield NR was 140 in November. Flocks of up to 21 birds were commonly seen feeding in gardens at The Brecks, Strensall and the species was often seen at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory and probably bred there.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

Regularly seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn with c.40 on 4th December being the highest count while the first fledglings were noted on 6th June. Present throughout the year in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area as well as at Rawcliffe Lake with a flock of 60 in Clifton Park on 29th September. Seen regularly around Huby during the year and also recorded in the Lower Derwent Valley.

Up to 14 birds were noted on a feeder at Poppleton on 24th January while five were feeding on alders in Askham Bog on 7th February and 30 present at Dunnington Common on 11th March.

Later in the year, at least 50 were on the Ampleforth School sports field on 16th September while similar numbers were at Everingham on 21st October and in riverside alders at Mask Meadow, Newton upon Derwent on 8th November. About 100 were also in riverside alders, upstream from Sutton upon Derwent, on 2nd December and 30–40 were part of a mixed finch and tit flock at Yearsley Moor on 27th December.

A fairly common resident in the New Earswick area where it is often seen on garden feeders in the winter before moving out to fields and hedgerows in the summer with the population seemingly stable. Birds were often seen at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory where breeding was confirmed.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

In the Lower Derwent Valley, 20 were at Thornton Ellers on 4th January with 110 near Seavy Carr on the 7th and a small flock of 14 feeding

in alders by the Pocklington Canal at Melbourne on the 12th. Another group of 26 was feeding in Thornton churchyard on the 17th when 23 were feeding in alders at Simpson's Wood, East Cottingwith Ings while a notable flock of 80 was at Thornton Ellers on 11th February.

Elsewhere, January counts included 11 at North Duffield Carrs and five at Dunnington Common on the 4th, 30 feeding in alder trees at the rear of The Brecks, Strensall on the 11th and 14 at the YWT reserve at Strensall Common on the 25th.

About ten in Askham Bog on 10th January had increased tenfold by 7th February while small numbers were noted along the River Ouse between York and Naburn early in the year with two males in song at Rowntree Park, York on 20th February and five birds at Strensall Common on the 29th.

In the New Earswick area, good numbers were present at the start of the year with 20 in Joseph Rowntree Trust NR on 10th January, six in Sessions NR on the 11th and at least two in the Old Village at Huntington. This theme continued throughout February and March with at least six birds still present in the Joseph Rowntree Trust reserve during the first week of April and the last sighting being a singing male and a female at this site on the 17th – the latest ever spring record here. However, the species was not seen later in the year, presumably due to mild conditions further north.

Two birds were seen on feeders in a garden along Dale Street, York on 8th March but no birds were recorded there later in the year while two were at Rawcliffe Lake from 16th–30th March, ten at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on the 27th and two singing at Dunnington on the 29th. Two were also at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on the latter date while a single here on 16th April was the last of the spring.

Later in the year, a flock of 50 was at Askham Bog on 7th November with 25 at Strensall Common on 27th December.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

Ten were at Ganthorpe on 1st January with c.100 in stubble at Wilberfoss on the 10th, 40 at Castle Howard on the 11th and 20 at Dunnington Common on the 17th. Ninety were at Castle Howard again on 1st February while c.80 were feeding in stubble near Thorganby on the 15th.

A wintering flock of 120+ at Rawcliffe Cornfield NR early in the year peaked at 200 on 18th February while 100 were at Dunnington Common on 11th March with six on Strensall Common on the 14th. Large numbers

roost around the Haxby Road roundabout in New Earswick during the winter with 180 on 19th February being a conservative estimate.

Over 360 were at Rawcliffe Cornfield NR on 26th January. Large flocks remained there into late winter, feeding on a hectare of unharvested oilseed rape. Numbers peaked at around 450 in March but at least 200 were still present throughout April. Up to three birds only were seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on five dates during the year while a single male was seen north of Coneysthorpe 13th April with a pair flying over Scarcroft Primary School, York on the 15th and seven recorded near Bishop Wilton during the RSPB farm survey on the 24th. The MOD survey of Strensall Common on 12th May produced a total of nine males and four females.

Later in the year, a flock of c.140 was seen in a stubble field at Lilling Low Lane, West Lilling on 25th September but this number had reduced to just four birds by the 28th while c.45 were at Thornton on 24th December.

Up to 50 were noted at Sutton-on-the-Forest during the year with up to 60 at Howthorpe Farm, Terrington and birds were often seen at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory where several pairs bred.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

Scarce winter visitor

One at Dunnington Common on 17th January was the first for the Dunnington area (T&VW).

Lesser Redpoll *Carduelis cabaret*

Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

Fourteen were present in silver birch by the Barmby Barrage on 3rd January with seven at Thornton Ellers on the 4th and again on the 14th. Two were present at Bank Island on the 27th while an impressive flock of 90+ remained near Skipwith Common throughout January, feeding amongst weedy stubble on fat hen seeds with 20 birds still present there on 21st February.

Reports from Castle Howard consisted of a single bird on 1st January, three on 11th January and three again on 1st February with singles on the 8th and 28th. Three were at Riccall Common on 24th January with a flock of c.50 in the hedge beside the drain on the eastern edge of Strensall Common on 18th February and ten at Fulford Ings on the 26th while four were at Rawcliffe Lake on 16th March.

A poor showing in the New Earswick area with only single figures recorded early on and none at all in the latter part of the year. Singles were noted along the River Ouse between York and Naburn on three

occasions early in the year while four birds were seen well at Fulford Ings on 20th February.

The only report from the second half of the year concerned 30–40 birds amongst a mixed finch and tit flock at Yearsley Moor on 27th December.

Mealy Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*

Scarce winter visitor

A flock of 90 Lesser Redpolls *Carduelis cabaret* in the Lower Derwent Valley during January contained one ‘classic’ and possibly two or three less obvious birds during the month, with one caught and ringed there on the 24th confirming the identity of the less obvious individuals (RS *et al.*).

Elsewhere, four were at Riccall Common on 24th January (PB) while a single bird found with Lesser Redpolls in Triangle Meadow, New Earswick on 29th March was presumably the same as that seen at Joseph Rowntree Trust NR on 1st April (NEBR).

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Casual breeder and passage visitor

Twelve birds were at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory on 12th January with two there on 9th February while eight were seen next to the Castle Howard–Terrington road about one mile from Castle Howard on 15th February.

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

Up to at least six birds were seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn throughout the year with two breeding pairs occupying territory on 26th April when a female was observed carrying nest material while the first fledged young were seen on 1st July. At least two birds were noted in Askham Bog early in the year while the species was present throughout the year in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area with up to nine birds seen at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits. Record numbers were seen in the New Earswick area during the year with the species described as ‘definitely on the up and up’!

Two or three individuals were seen regularly in the Wheldrake Ings car park area with nine counted on 26th January while the roost there held up to 15 birds throughout February and a pair was present on 19th April.

A single female was seen at the southeastern edge of Easingwold Golf course on 23rd February with a male in Strensall village on 13th March and a party of one male and two females along the footpath behind the golf course at Strensall Common on 20th April.

Three birds were at Allerthorpe Common on 16th October while the species was frequently seen at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory throughout the year where one or two birds nested and birds were also noted at Yearsley Moor.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

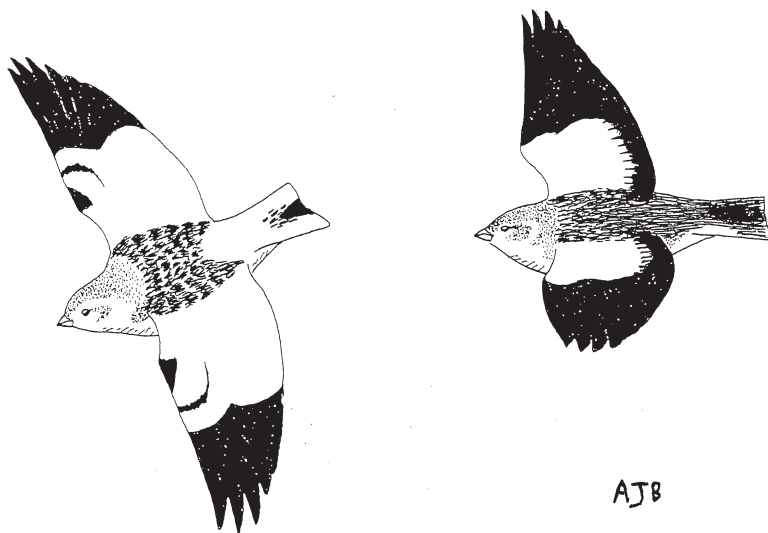
Rare visitor

A single female lingered in a Wheldrake garden from 9th till at least 16th February (per EN).

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Scarce winter visitor

Two flew north calling over Thorganby on 7th November (RS).



Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Resident breeder and passage and winter visitor

Six were present at North Duffield Carrs feeding station on 3rd January with 11 there on the 12th and 19 on the 23rd while up to 12 frequented the feeding station during February.

Elsewhere, 40 were at Ganthorpe on 1st January with six at Riccall the same day and 25 counted in a meadow near Thornton on 17th January. A flock of 33 was at South Duffield on 14th February and up to 26 at Skipwith Common on the 19th with 14 again at Riccall on 29th

February when 50 were at Lilling Green Farm, West Lilling with eight there on 8th March.

Along the River Ouse between York and Naburn, up to about ten birds were seen or heard throughout the year though a flock of 18 at Naburn Sewage Works on 3rd January was notable with at least ten still present on 4th April. Small numbers wintered in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area with a peak count of 20 on 4th March.

Two were noted at Strensall Common on 26th April where three males were recorded singing during the MOD survey on 12th May while six territories were recorded near Bishop Wilton during an RSPB farm survey on 12th May. Two pairs were seen in a meadow near the church at Welburn village on 30th July.

Approximately 80 birds were counted in a stubble field in Lilling Low Lane, West Lilling on 25th September with nine in a meadow near Moxby Hall Farm near Stillington on 9th October, c.20 at Mask Lane, Newton upon Derwent on 8th November and six near Sutton-on-the-Forest on the 27th. Forty were seen in a meadow near Lilling Green Farm, West Lilling on 13th December with c.20 near Thornton Ellers on the 24th and c.30 at East Cottingham on the 30th.

Up to 11 were seen at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits throughout the year with one or two noted at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory where breeding also occurred. A range expansion and increase in numbers was noted in the New Earswick area.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Resident breeder and passage visitor

Seen in small numbers throughout the Lower Derwent Valley although as usual the largest numbers were recorded from the main roost sites. The Church Bridge roost held 100+ on 4th January and 80+ on the 25th while the Wheldrake roost held only small numbers during the month with 30 on the 7th and 42 on the 11th, although 17 were present during the day on the 21st with 16 present in the car park there on the 9th.

Up to at least eight were seen or heard along the River Ouse between York and Naburn during the year with five singing males counted on 6th March. The first fledged young were noted at Fulford Ings – the main breeding site – on 10th July while a male singing from riverside willows by Rowntree Park, York for several days during April was an unusual record. Birds were also recorded in Askham Bog as well as at York Science Park.

Present throughout the year in the Clifton Ings/Rawcliffe Ings area with a peak winter count of 30 on 4th March and good numbers bred

this year. For example, nine territories were counted on Clifton Ings with four or five on Rawcliffe Meadows/Rawcliffe Cornfield NR. Up to 25 were noted at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits.

Three were at Ganthorpe on 1st January with 12 counted close to the Pocklington Canal near Thornton on the 17th. Two birds were at Castle Howard on 28th February while three males were singing at Strensall Common on 8th May where 12 were recorded singing during the MOD survey on 12th May. A male was noted at White Carr, near Flaxton on 13th June, 28th June and 4th July.

In the New Earswick area, occasional sightings were reported around Bootham Stray during March, April and May while a series of records in and around Joseph Rowntree Trust NR during December involving at least two males and two females may suggest local breeding. A maximum of nine were seen at Sand Hutton Central Science Laboratory where up to 20 were recorded the previous year.

Corn Bunting *Miliaria calandra* *Resident breeder*

The Melbourne roost held 61 birds on 4th and 8th January with numbers increasing thereafter to a peak of 120 on the 25th. Feeding flocks included 27 at Newton upon Derwent on the 4th with separate flocks of 30 and 23 near Sutton upon Derwent on the 25th and 31 at Newton upon Derwent again on the 26th. Four birds were at Barlby on the 4th while an early bird was in song at East Cottingwith on the 6th.

A count of 140 was made at the Church Bridge roost on 3rd February but numbers then declined with 45 there on the 15th although 61 came in to the roost during bad weather on the 28th. A new site was discovered at North Duffield Carrs on 27th February when 47 roosted on the ground amongst rank grassland; it seems likely that this roost had been overlooked previously. Three were back on territory and singing at Hagg Lane, East Cottingwith on 1st February with 24 at Thornton on the 16th and 40 at North Duffield Carrs on the 22nd.

Outside the Lower Derwent Valley, 16 came in to roost at Clifton Ings on 13th February while 40 were in bushes near Lilling Green Farm, West Lilling and three at Lilling Green Farm on the 29th.

About 40 were at Wilberfoss on 16th April when six were singing at East Moor near Sutton-on-the-Forest with ten there on 22nd July. Twelve were at Thornton on 27th April while single singing males were noted at the regular breeding site just south of Bishopthorpe on 9th and 16th May with ten noted singing during a 13km bike ride around the area

north of Strensall on 6th June. Several were seen near Riccall in June and July and one was singing at East Cottingwith on 12th July.

There were few records received for the latter part of the year with 70 counted in a stubble field in Lilling Low Lane, West Lilling on 25th September and c.20 at Hagg Lane, Dunnington on 24th November.

INTRODUCTIONS/ESCAPES

Black Swan *Cygnus atratus*

Single adults were noted at Wheldrake Ings on 24th January and 27th February, at Bubwith Bridge on 1st February, North Duffield Carrs on 5th and 6th February, Castle Howard Lake on 8th February and at Aughton Ings on 22nd February.

Muscovy Duck *Cairina moschata*

A white bird frequented the Ouse Bridge area of York all year.

Wood Duck *Aix sponsa*

A female at Allerthorpe Gravel Pits on 19th February bore a pink ring on one leg while a pair (normal male, leucistic female) was on the River Ouse at Naburn Bridge on 6th March.

Blue-fronted Amazon *Amazona aestiva*

One was seen near Clifton Rugby Club on 12th February.

Parakeet sp. *Psittacula* sp.

One was at Heworth on 12th April.

Earliest and latest dates for summer visitors/passage migrants

Species	Arrival date/ first reported	Last Reported
Garganey	7th April	9th September
Black-necked Grebe	6th April	12th September
Marsh Harrier	19th April	12th September
Hobby	23rd May	7th September
Quail	16th May	19th August
Oystercatcher	4th January	20th July
Little Ringed Plover	28th March	4th September
Whimbrel	18th April	21st August
Common Sandpiper	18th May	18th October
Common Tern	28th April	16th July
Turtle Dove	9th May	4th September
Cuckoo	17th April	15th July
Nightjar	14th June	16th June
Swift	22nd April	16th September
Wood Lark	2nd February	23rd July
Sand Martin	20th March	24th August
Swallow	28th March	21st October
House Martin	16th April	6th October
Tree Pipit	20th April	16th June
Yellow Wagtail	15th April	21st September
Redstart	7th July	11th August
Whinchat	15th August	9th September
Wheatear	19th April	16th July
Sedge Warbler	18th April	15th August
Reed Warbler	26th April	22nd August
Lesser Whitethroat	25th April	15th August
Whitethroat	22nd April	24th August
Garden Warbler	28th April	15th August
Blackcap *	4th April	5th September
Chiffchaff **	17th March	11th October
Willow Warbler	4th April	15th September
Spotted Flycatcher	12th May	6th October

* Overwintering birds seen on 19th February, 2nd November and 27th December.

** Overwintering birds seen on 24th, 25th January, 19th February and 5th March.

Earliest and latest dates for winter visitors/passage migrants

Species	Last reported in Spring	First reported in Autumn
Bewick's Swan	7th March	18th November
Whooper Swan	1st May	18th October
Bean Goose	7th March	
Pink-footed Goose	6th April	29th September
White-fronted Goose	12th February	
Pintail	19th April	4th September
Goldeneye	15th February	20th November
Goosander	7th April	12th September
Merlin	29th April	22nd November
Golden Plover	19th April	14th August
Jack Snipe	2nd March	4th December
Green Sandpiper	end February	2nd August
Fieldfare	10th April	21st October
Redwing	10th April	29th September
Brambling	22nd April	25th October

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WITH APOLOGIES FOR ANY ACCIDENTAL OMISSIONS

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Chris & Derek Jakeman	Birdline Northeast (BLNE)
Lawrie King	English Nature
John Lawton	New Earswick & West Huntington
Anne & Chris Lloyd	Bird Report (NEBR)
David Lumsdaine	Sand Hutton CSL Bird Report (SHBR)
John & Terry Millett	YOC website reports
Brian Pepper	

Species in York recording area since 1966

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

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

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

Pochard (**B**)
 Ring-necked Duck *
 Ferruginous Duck R
 Tufted Duck **B**
 Scaup
 Eider
 Long-tailed Duck *
 Common Scoter
 Velvet Scoter *
 (Barrow's Goldeneye) R
 Goldeneye **W**
 Smew
 Red-breasted Merganser
 Goosander (**B**)?
 Ruddy Duck **B**
 Red-legged Partridge **B**
 Grey Partridge **B**
 Quail (**B**)
 Pheasant **B**
 (Golden Pheasant) *
 Red-throated Diver *
 Black-throated Diver *
 Great Northern Diver *
 Little Grebe **B**
 Great Crested Grebe **B**
 Red-necked Grebe *
 Slavonian Grebe *
 Black-necked Grebe (**B**)

Fulmar
 Manx Shearwater
 European Storm-petrel *
 Leach's Storm-petrel *
 Gannet
 Cormorant B
 Shag
 Bittern (B)? *
 Night Heron R
 Cattle Egret R
 Little Egret *
 Great White Egret R
 Grey Heron B
 Purple Heron *
 White Stork *
 Spoonbill *
 Honey Buzzard *
 Black Kite R
 Red Kite
 Marsh Harrier
 Hen Harrier
 Montagu's Harrier *
 Goshawk B
 Sparrowhawk B
 Common Buzzard B
 Rough-legged Buzzard *
 Osprey *
 Kestrel B
 Red-footed Falcon R
 Merlin
 Hobby (B)?
 Peregrine
 Water Rail B
 Spotted Crake (B) *
 Corncrake (B) *
 Moorhen B
 Coot B
 Common Crane *
 Oystercatcher B
 Black-winged Stilt R
 Avocet

Stone Curlew *
 Little Ringed Plover B
 Ringed Plover
 Kentish Plover *
 Dotterel *
 American Golden Plover R
 Golden Plover W
 Grey Plover
 Lapwing B
 Knot
 Sanderling
 Little Stint P
 Temminck's Stint *
 White-rumped Sandpiper R
 Baird's Sandpiper? R
 Pectoral Sandpiper *
 Curlew Sandpiper
 Dunlin W & P
 Buff-breasted Sandpiper *
 Ruff (B)
 Jack Snipe W
 Snipe B
 Woodcock B
 Black-tailed Godwit (B)
 Bar-tailed Godwit
 Whimbrel P
 Curlew B
 Spotted Redshank P
 Redshank B
 Greenshank P
 Green Sandpiper P & W
 Wood Sandpiper P
 Common Sandpiper B?
 Turnstone
 Red-necked Phalarope *
 Grey Phalarope *
 Pomarine Skua *
 Arctic Skua
 Great Skua
 Mediterranean Gull
 Little Gull

Sabine's Gull _
 Black-headed Gull B
 Ring-billed Gull? _
 Common Gull W & P
 Lesser Black-backed Gull S & P
 Herring Gull W & P
 Yellow-legged Gull *
 Iceland Gull *
 (Kumlien's Gull)? R
 Glaucous Gull *
 Great Black-backed Gull W
 Kittiwake
 Caspian Tern R
 Sandwich Tern
 Roseate Tern _
 Common Tern (B)?
 Arctic Tern
 Little Tern
 Whiskered Tern R
 Black Tern
 Guillemot
 Little Auk *
 Puffin
 'Feral Pigeon' B
 Stock Dove B
 Wood Pigeon B
 Collared Dove B
 Turtle Dove B
 (Ring-necked Parakeet) *
 Cuckoo B
 Barn Owl B
 Little Owl B
 Tawny Owl B
 Long-eared Owl B
 Short-eared Owl
 Nightjar B
 Swift B
 Alpine Swift R
 Kingfisher B
 Bee-eater _
 Hoopoe *

Wryneck *
 Green Woodpecker B
 Great Spotted Woodpecker B
 Lesser Spotted Woodpecker B
 Wood Lark B?
 Sky Lark B
 Sand Martin B
 Swallow B
 Red-rumped Swallow R
 House Martin B
 Richard's Pipit _
 Tree Pipit B
 Meadow Pipit B
 Rock Pipit
 Water Pipit
 Yellow Wagtail B
 (Blue-headed Wagtail)
 Grey Wagtail B
 Pied Wagtail B
 (White Wagtail)
 Waxwing
 Dipper B?
 Wren B
 Dunnock B
 Robin B
 Nightingale *
 Black Redstart (B)?
 Redstart (B)?
 Whinchat (B)?
 Stonechat
 Wheatear
 Ring Ouzel
 Blackbird B
 Fieldfare W
 Song Thrush B
 Redwing W
 Mistle Thrush B
 Cetti's Warbler _
 Grasshopper Warbler B?
 Sedge Warbler B
 Marsh Warbler _

Reed Warbler B
Barred Warbler _
 Lesser Whitethroat B
 Whitethroat B
 Garden Warbler B
 Blackcap B
Wood Warbler (B)?
 Chiffchaff B
 (Siberian Chiffchaff)
 Willow Warbler B
 Goldcrest B
 Firecrest *
 Spotted Flycatcher B
Red-breasted Flycatcher _
 Pied Flycatcher (B)?
Bearded Tit
 Long-tailed Tit B
 Marsh Tit B
 Willow Tit B
 Coal Tit B
 Blue Tit B
 Great Tit B
Nuthatch B
 Treecreeper B
Golden Oriole _
Red-backed Shrike *
Great Grey Shrike *
 Jay B

Magpie B
 Jackdaw B
 Rook B
 Carrion Crow B
Hooded Crow *?
Raven
 Starling B
Rose-coloured Starling _
 House Sparrow B
 Tree Sparrow B
 Chaffinch B
 Brambling W
 Greenfinch B
 Goldfinch B
 Siskin B?
 Linnet B
Twite
 Lesser Redpoll B
 Mealy Redpoll
 Crossbill B?
 Bullfinch B
Hawfinch (B)?
Lapland Bunting
Snow Bunting
 Yellowhammer B
Girl Bunting _
 Reed Bunting B
 Corn Bunting B

Guidelines for the submission of records

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

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

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

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

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

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

BIRD RECORDS FOR 2004 – Andy Booth

Greylag Goose

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

Canada Goose

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

Barnacle Goose

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

Cormorant

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

The need for field descriptions

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

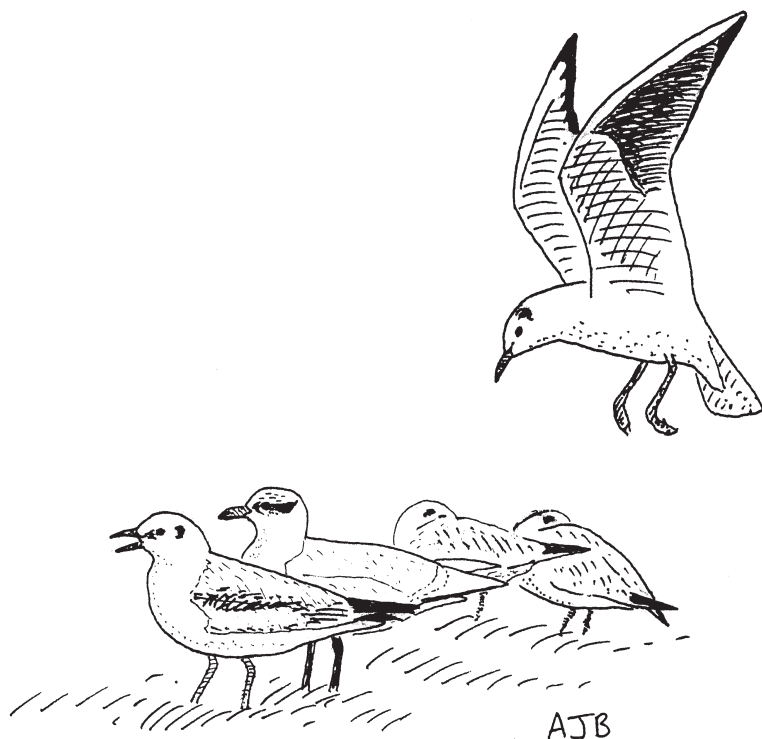
Accordingly, contributors **MAY** be asked to provide details for the following species/subspecies (but observers should be expected to be asked to submit notes for the species given in **bold**):

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

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

Hobby
Stone Curlew
 Little Ringed Plover
 Dotterel
 Knot
 Sanderling
 Little Stint
Pectoral Sandpiper
Purple Sandpiper
 Curlew Sandpiper
 Jack Snipe
Buff-breasted Sandpiper
 Black-tailed Godwit
 Bar-tailed Godwit
 Whimbrel
 Spotted Redshank

Great Skua
Pomarine Skua
Arctic Skua
Long-tailed Skua
 Mediterranean Gull
 Little Gull
 Lesser Black-backed Gull
 (^ of Baltic race *fuscus*)
Yellow-legged Gull
 Iceland Gull
 (^ including Kumlien's Gull)
 Glaucous Gull
Sabine's Gull
 Kittiwake
 Sandwich Tern
 Arctic Tern



Little Tern
Black Tern
Guillemot
Razorbill
Puffin
Little Auk
Ring-necked Parakeet
Long-eared Owl
Hoopoe
Wryneck
Horned Lark (=Shore Lark)
Wood Lark
Rock Pipit
Water Pipit
Yellow Wagtail (scarce races)
Bluethroat
Nightingale
Black Redstart

Ring Ouzel
Yellow-browed Warbler
Firecrest
Bearded Tit
Crested Tit
Golden Oriole
Red-backed Shrike
Great Grey Shrike
Chough
Raven
Twite
Common Redpoll
(^ including Mealy Redpoll)
(Common) Crossbill
Scottish Crossbill
Hawfinch
Snow Bunting
Lapland Bunting

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

