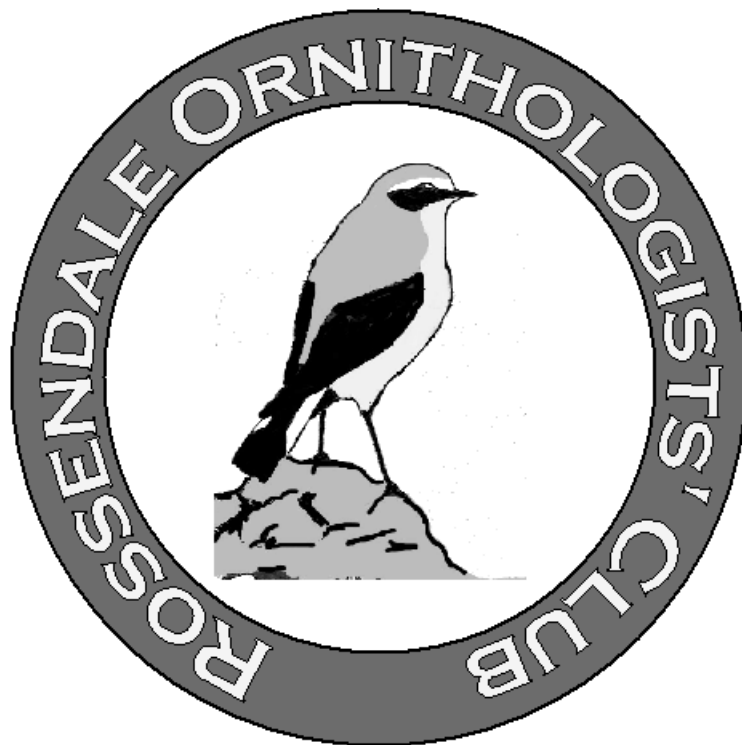


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Rossendale Ornithologists' Club

# Bird Report



1993

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## **GREAT NORTHERN DIVER - *Gavia immer***

One was present at Clowbridge reservoir from 6th February to 17th February.

## **LITTLE GREBE - *Tachybaptus ruficollis***

A single bird was present at Wayoh reservoir on 2nd January and 2 had returned to Shortclough reservoir by 7th February. By the end of April 3 pairs were regular at Shortclough and on 30th April one of the pairs had a nest. 6 birds were seen throughout the summer but the only sign of successful nesting was a single juvenile on 25th July. Numbers declined from late September and all had departed by 23rd October. Elsewhere, a male was heard trilling on a pond in the Quarry near the car-park at Grane and a pair hatched young at Holden Vale Flash. On 6th May 3 were present at Syke reservoir, Whitworth - a new site. During post-breeding dispersal 2 were seen at Healey Dell on 17th October, a single arrived at Lench Lodges on 14th October and remained until late November. One was also present at Spring Mill reservoir on 27th November. Numbers at Shortclough were much lower this year and breeding was less successful, probably due to disturbance.

## **GREAT CRESTED GREBE - *Podiceps cristatus***

Singles had returned to Wayoh reservoir by 2nd January and to Holden Wood by 17th January. A pair nested at Holden Wood and young were seen. Nesting was also attempted at Shortclough where a pair was seen mating and building on 24th May. They were thought to have been disturbed by boats and had left by 5th June. A single grebe was seen at Clough Bottom reservoir on 6th June. An adult was seen regularly at Spring Mill reservoir from 11th August to 17th September and then intermittently from October to the end of the year. One was present at Clowbridge in mid-December.

## **CORMORANT - *Phalacrocorax carbo***

On 9th October an adult and an immature flew over Clowbridge reservoir.

## **GREY HERON - *Ardea cinerea***

Recorded throughout the year but with fewer sightings from March to the end of May. On 17th May 4 were present at Wayoh and on 19th July there were at least 6 there, 3 being immatures. On 13th August a young bird which had difficulty flying was seen in the trees at St. Mary's Church, Rawtenstall. An immature was present for several days in mid-September on the Irwell below Rossendale Groundwork. A single bird was regular at Spring Mill and Whitworth from January to March and 1 to 4 birds from August to the end of the year.

## **MUTE SWAN - *Cygnus olor***

On 12th April 2 flew over Rawtenstall and on 24th October a female was present on the Irwell at Strongstry.

## **BEWICK'S SWAN - *Cygnus bewickii***

On the afternoon of 6th November, 2 birds flew over Swinshaw Moor, calling.

## **WHOOPER SWAN - *Cygnus cygnus***

On 3rd January, during a period of strong winds, a flock of more than 20 flew from Plunge Valley to the Irwell Valley and were blown northwards. On 20th February 20 were seen flying over Ramsbottom and on 15th March 20 were present at Wayoh reservoir, one of the birds

appearing to be ill. The first return was one bird at A.M.R. on 2nd November and 2 were regular there during December.

### **PINK-FOOTED GOOSE - *Anser brachyrhynchus***

Fewer records this year and all in mid-February. On 8th 200 flew to the west over The Hile at 14.30hrs and some were seen flying round over Clowbridge at 15.00hrs. On 10th February a small skein of calling birds flew over Folly Clough, Crawshawbooth at 03.00hrs.

### **CANADA GOOSE - *Branta canadensis***

At the Grane reservoirs 2 birds were at Holden Wood on 14th February and 12 at Ogden on 14th March. There were no reports of successful breeding. At Clowbridge there was a late arrival of a pair on 5th May but nesting did not occur. 4 birds were at Isle of Man Lodge on 21st March and a pair on 12th April but no breeding was noted and there was a similar report from Shortclough and New Line reservoirs. The only breeding report this year was at Clough Bottom reservoir. 4 birds were seen there on 24th April and there were 5 adults and 3 juveniles on 28th June and 25th July. Other reports were 3 at New Line on 14th March and 3 in the Musbury Valley on 13th April. On 19th July there were 7 adults at Wayoh reservoir. During autumn there were flocks of 17 at Holden Wood on 12th September and 16th October; 15 at A.M.R. on 4th September and 20 on 14th November; 15 at Clowbridge on 4th September; 16 at Whitworth on 16th October and 15 at Clough Bottom on 26th December. Nesting success was much lower than last year when 4 pairs reared 16 young. At Spring Mill 5 adults and 2 juveniles were regularly seen to the end of the year.

### **SHELDUCK - *Tadorna tadorna***

The only records were of a pair at Holden Wood on 24th January and 5 at Clowbridge on 14th April. A pair was seen at Holden Wood on 24th January.

### **WIGEON - *Anas penelope***

On the evening of 11th April 2 males and a female were present at Shortclough reservoir. A female was at Clough Bottom on 14th November.

### **TEAL - *Anas crecca***

Numbers were about normal in late winter when 11 were recorded for the January and February Wildfowl Counts but none were present in March. A male was seen at Cheesden Bar at the end of April and it is possible that there was a sitting female nearby. This fits the pattern of isolated breeding attempts in Rossendale. Numbers were slightly higher in the autumn when 20 Teal were recorded at A.M.R. on 12th September rising to 32 on 16th October and with 11 still present on 14th November but none on the December count. Smaller numbers elsewhere included 7 at Spring Mill on 6th September, 3 on Haslingden - Oswaldtwistle Moor on 30th August and 3 at Clowbridge on 1st September.

### **CINNAMON TEAL - *Anas cyanoptera***

A bird of this species, presumably an escape, was seen at Holden Wood on 19th May and 1st June.

### **MALLARD - *Anas platyrhynchos***

In late winter numbers reached a maximum of 50 at A.M.R. on 14th February falling to 40 by 14th March. There were also 50 at Spring Mill. During the same period there were about 20

at Grane, 13 on Lench Lodges, 8 at Shortclough, 7 on Greens Lodge and uncounted numbers along the rivers (at least 20 on the Irwell in Rawtenstall centre). On 2nd January there were about 20 at Wayoh. Pairs arriving back on nesting territories were recorded on 13th February on The Hile and on Isle of Man Lodge and on the Whitewell in Waterfoot; 17th March when a pair was mating on Lench Lodge; 19th March at Clough Bottom where there were 4 pairs by 26th March. 4 pairs were at Shortclough in late February. On 24th April there were 10 males at Clough Bottom suggesting the probability of sitting females. Successful breeding was recorded from many areas. On 24th April a female with 15 young was seen on the banks of the Irwell at Stacksteads Recreation Ground. On 24th May at Shortclough a female with 5 young and another with one were seen at Lench Lodges but most fell victim to predation. On 15th June a female with 12 young came down the waterfall in Folly Clough. During autumn there were 60 at A.M.R. on 12th September and 65 on 14th November falling to 20 on 12th December. At Lench Lodges there were 14 during October and November rising to 30 on 29th November feeding on the unfrozen part of the upper lodge kept open by the inflow from Lench Brook. There were still 22 birds here on 20th December. Other counts included 10 at Clough Bottom on 3rd October, 20 at Clowbridge on 1st September, 14 at New Line on 6th September. There were also many Mallard along the rivers. 10 birds frequented a wet patch around a spring on The Hile where they were seen feeding on several occasions.

### **PINTAIL - *Anas acuta***

A female was present at Holden Wood reservoir on 28th July.

### **POCHARD - *Aythya ferina***

In late winter smaller numbers than usual were present - 10 at Wayoh on 2nd January, 6 at Holden Wood on 17th January, 4 at Shortclough on 7th February, 5 there on 15th February and 2 at Holden Wood on 14th February. Numbers were also low in autumn with a single female at Holden Wood on 31st August and 12th September, 2 males there on 16th October and 14th November and 5 birds on 12th December. At A.M.R. there were 6 on 9th October, 8 on 14th November and 3 on 12th December and at Spring Mill, 3 during November and December.

### **RING-NECKED DUCK - *Aythya collaris***

The male of this species which has been present in East Lancashire for several years was at Shortclough reservoir on 11th April. It re-appeared at Holden Wood on 12th September and thereafter was seen on all the Wildfowl Counts to the end of the year (and into 1994), usually in company with Tufted Duck.

### **TUFTED DUCK - *Aythya fuligula***

On 14th February 2 males and a female were present at Holden Wood and on 14th March there were 2 pairs and a single male. A nest in the Holden Vale area contained 8 eggs which hatched successfully, this being the third successful year for nesting, though the fate of the ducklings was uncertain. Birds were also present at Shortclough reservoir from February to 6th May with a maximum of 10 during April. Smaller numbers were seen at Clowbridge. In the autumn Holden Wood had 22 on 29th August, 6 birds on 12th September (4 on Calf Hey on the same date). 2 on 14th November and 8 on 12th December. Shortclough had 12 on 5th September, 13 on 11th September. Clowbridge had 11 on 17th September, 17 on 18th September. A.M.R. had from 5 to 7 birds from October to December. Thus peak numbers were from the end of August to 18th September.

### **GOLDENEYE - *Bucephala clangula***

Numbers were again rather low this year - only single figures being recorded. 3 were seen at Clowbridge on 24th January and numbers rose to 6 on 7th February and 8 on 14th February, the maximum figure. This was also the latest date for Clowbridge apart from a single on 26th March- an earlier departure than usual. Elsewhere a single female was at Calf Hey on 14th February and 14th March, 2 at A.M.R. on 14th March and a female at Clough Bottom on 20th March. One was at Spring Hill on 28th March. In the autumn there were 4 at Spring Mill on 6th November and singles on other dates. Single birds were recorded elsewhere - a male at A.M.R. on 12th September, a female there on 17th September, one at Spring Mill on 23rd October, a female at Syke reservoir on 14th November and a female at A.M.R. on 14th November and 12th December.

### **GOOSANDER - *Mergus merganser***

Numbers continue to increase. More than 40 were present at Clowbridge in January and February and during the same period there were 15 at Clough Bottom, 20 at A.M.R. and 12 at Grane. Smaller numbers were also seen at other locations - 4 on the Irwell near Ewood Bridge and a pair on 23rd February. 5 or 6 birds were also seen on Shawclough Lodge on 28th March and 5th April. A few birds stayed later than usual - 2 in flight over Reedsholme on 23rd April and 2 at Clough Bottom on 24th April, possibly the same birds. Numbers at Spring Mill increased from single figures in January and February to 24 on 20th March and 44 on 30th March. There were fewer birds on the autumn passage until 6th December when there were more than 60 at A.M.R., probably as a result of the preceding cold weather when many waters were frozen. Previously there had been 4 at A.M.R. on 12th September, 1 on 17th September, 1 on 16th October and 2 on 14th November. On 20th November 5 flew up the Cowpe Valley and on 12th December there were 3 at Holden Wood. Numbers up to 9 were seen at Spring Hill from August to December.

### **HEN HARRIER - *Circus cyaneus***

One, thought to be an immature male, was seen near Sand Beds on 23rd October.

### **SPARROWHAWK - *Accipiter nisus***

There were numerous records throughout the Valley for all months of the year. A pair was seen regularly in the Waterfoot area and on 15th June one with heavy prey soared with difficulty over Edgeside towards Whitewell Bottom. Pairs were also reported from Todmorden Road, Bacup; Healey Dell; Crawshawbooth; Grane (2 nests found) and Fern Isle Wood, Whitworth. On 6th August one carrying prey flew over Waterfoot to the west being harassed by Carrion Crows. The use of suburban gardens as hunting areas was again noted: on 5th July a female took a House Sparrow from the top of a small tree in a garden on a housing estate in Waterfoot and on 20th August one took a Starling on the grass verge of Booth Road and carried it into a nearby garden.

### **COMMON BUZZARD - *Buteo buteo***

There was a second-hand report of one over Constablelee on 11th March. On 21st August a probable, seen from a distance of 2 or 3 miles, was soaring over Hameldon then flying south along the side of Cribden

### **OSPREY - *Pandion haliaetus***

One was seen at Spring Mill on 8th August. It perched in a tree for 20 minutes then flew off to the northwest.

### **KESTREL - *Falco tinnunculus***

Numbers appeared to be more like normal this year. A few singles were recorded during the late winter period from Folly Clough, Cribden Clough, Grane and along the bypass near Rawtenstall. There was an increase in March as pairs returned to breeding territories. A male hunting over The Hile on 16th March was the first seen there since November 1992. It was an unusually coloured bird with almost black wings and dark grey tail, presumably due to excess melanin pigment. On 13th March one had returned to Alderbottom viaduct, on 14th to the Shawclough site, to Blackwood on 19th March, to Water on 25th March and to Reedsholme and Clowbridge. On 25th April there were pairs at both viaducts in the S.N.A. and one pair was seen mating. On 10th April the pair at the Shawclough site had returned and nested successfully. Pairs also nested at Clough Bottom using an old crow's nest and at Grane, Hutch Bank Quarry, Mitchell House reservoir, Lee Quarry, Scout Moor Quarry, Naden and Musbury. A pair at Reedsholme had 3 fledged young on 26th June. On 14th August 2 immature males were hunting over Coal Pits Lane, probably from the Shawclough nest. On 16th August 2 immature females were hunting along Fo' Edge above Waugh's Well and on 17th August an immature female was hunting over The Hile - a good record of successful fledging. A nest at Shawforth was robbed in May. On 28th September a male with very dark wings was hunting over The Hile, possibly the same melanistic bird seen on 6th March. In contrast, an albinistic female with much white on the wings was seen on The Hile on 27th November and again at Lench on 28th November. There were few records after November.

### **MERLIN - *Falco columbarius***

One was seen over The Glen, Waterfoot on 9th February. 2 pairs bred successfully rearing 4 & 3 young. At a third site the female was found dead at the foot of a fence, possibly as a result of collision. On 2nd September one was present at Lee Quarry, on 30th October one was at Cheesden and on 6th December one flew over Stacksteads.

### **HOBBY - *Falco subbuteo***

On 12th September one was seen chasing Swallows near the boat-house at Clowbridge reservoir.

### **PEREGRINE - *Falco peregrinus***

One was seen over Clowbridge several times during January and again on 6th April. A Peregrine had returned to one of the breeding territories in 1st April and both birds were there on 6th April. Both were seen again on 17th April and one bird was sitting. In February a single was seen over Shawforth and on 5th March 2 females were fighting above Bacup. Peregrines were seen over Musbury at the end of May and often hunted over Haslingden / Oswaldtwistle Moors from May to October. Later in the year singles were seen at Stacksteads on 24th August and 23rd October, over Haslingden - Oswaldtwistle Moors on 30th August and 4th September, at Clowbridge on 4th September and at Rooley Moor on 7th September. At one site a freshly plucked Red Grouse was found with a male Peregrine nearby. One was seen to take a gull at Clowbridge on 9th July and a Peregrine was plucking a dead gull on the "island" at A.M.R..

### **RED GROUSE - *Lagopus lagopus scoticus***

Several pairs nested on Hoddlesden Moss with good breeding success. On 14th April a pair and a single male were present on Haslingden - Oswaldtwistle Moor. A male was seen on Wet Moss on 7th May and a pair at Low Head in late July. On 21st August a male and 3 other birds were present on Haslingden Moor.

### **GREY PARTRIDGE - *Perdix perdix***

During February fresh faeces indicated the continuing presence of a covey on The Hile and Smallshaw Heights (9 birds 22nd November 1992). The covey had split up by 6th March when a pair was seen on the Stacksteads side of the C.B.C. plot. On 21st April one was showing anxiety on the Shawclough side of the plot. On 3rd and 8th March a pair was seen on Brandwood Moor, on 6th May a pair in the Sykes reservoir area of Whitworth. Pairs were also seen in Plunge Valley and Heap Clough, Grane where 2 males were calling on 16th April. A pair was seen on the moors above Clowbridge on 14th February and birds were heard calling at the reservoir on 17th April. A pair was seen near Bull Hill, Holcombe Moor on 7th May and a pair near Clowbridge reservoir on 19th July. Records of coveys included a pair with 5 young on The Brex on 24th August and 6 at Law Head on 30th September.

### **QUAIL - *Coturnix coturnix***

One was calling at Naden at 09.30 hrs on 5th June.

### **PHEASANT - *Phasianus colchicus***

A male was seen in the Musbury Valley on 20th March and one or two in the Shawclough area in late August. Some hand-reared birds were released in the Stacksteads area in the autumn.

### **MOORHEN - *Gallinula chloropus***

Widespread as usual on all suitable ponds, lodges and reservoirs and increasingly seen along the rivers. Juveniles were recorded at Lea Bank, Isle of Man, New Line, Lench and Cowpe Lodges.

### **COOT - *Fulica atra***

There were 3 pairs at Holden Wood from 14th February and about 10 birds by August. 2 pairs were at Shortclough and were seen nest-building on 30th April. One pair had one small chick on 27th June but only 2 birds were seen subsequently. Some expansion took place this year. Coots nested at Isle of Man Lodge where at least one juvenile was seen with the adults on 30th August. Coots were also recorded at New Line in spring and on 24th August and at Clowbridge on 1st September. At Holden Wood there were 7 still present on 16th October, 2 on 14th November and one on 12th December.

### **OYSTERCATCHER - *Haematopus ostralegus***

One was present at Clowbridge at dusk on 22nd April and (possibly the same bird again) on 27th April. A pair was apparently holding territory in the A.M.R. area during April and May and on 30th April one of the pair was seen driving off a Carrion Crow. A second pair was also seen to fly to the reservoir from a different direction. A single bird was at Clowbridge on 26th July. This is the third year in which territorial and nesting activity have been recorded in the Cheesden Valley area. A small flock of 3 or 4 frequented Holden Wood during May and June.

### **LITTLE RINGED PLOVER - *Charadrius dubius***

At least one pair returned to the usual area and 3 birds were seen on at least one occasion. A nest with 4 eggs was found but proved unsuccessful.

### **RINGED PLOVER - *Charadrius hiaticula***

During autumn passage there was a cluster of records for mid-September. On 12th 4 at A.M.R. were put to flight by a Sparrowhawk. On the same date there were 2 at Clowbridge and subsequently 3 on 15th, 2 on 17th and 2 on 19th. There were also 2 birds at A.M.R. on 12th September.

### **DOTTEREL - *Charadrius morinellus***

On 23rd April 2 were seen on the western edge of Cowpe Moss at Thar Hill (Higher Hill) and on 3rd May a flock of 12 at Top o' Leach with 5 there on 8th May.

### **GOLDEN PLOVER - *Pluvialis apricaria***

An early return brought a flock of 40 on passage to Cowpe Moss on 31st January and a single was seen on Haslingden Moor on the same date. Later there were 6 on Haslingden Moor on 14th April and one on 1st May. Two pairs were present on Cowpe Moss on 4th June - an improvement on last year. One pair was showing anxiety just above the quarry edge and a second pair was calling on the southwestern edge. Elsewhere a single bird was seen on Haslingden Moor on 1st May. A flock of 14 on The Hile on 19th November was the first indication of an autumn passage through Rossendale for several years. A single bird was at A.M.R. on 25th September and 2 at Black Moss, Rising Bridge on 15th October.

### **LAPWING - *Vanellus vanellus***

A flock of 120 was at Holden Wood on 14th February, one of 40 at Clowbridge on the same date and 120 were above Clowbridge on 6th March. 2 males were making song and display flights at Townsendfold as early as 23rd February. On 24th February a flock of 47 had returned to The Hile reducing to 22 by 6th March, an interesting figure as the final C.B.C. analysis gave 11 pairs. Flocks were late breaking up and there were 24 at Holden Wood on 14th March and 25 at Clough Bottom on 26th March. The early nests on The Hile were crushed by sheep and repeat clutches on 8th and 11th May suffered the same fate after reaching only one or two eggs respectively. It was not until 5th June that a nest survived when the pair chose a field from which the sheep had been moved for the grass to grow for hay. The grass was about 8" (20cm) high before the eggs hatched on 29th June. There were indications this year of a change of location of nesting Lapwings, perhaps brought about by the difficult conditions on the heavily-stocked permanent grass land which comprises most of the C.B.C. plot. On 23rd May 7 males were holding territory in a new area on rough hill grass on the edge of Smallshaw Heights which is contiguous with the northern edge of the plot. 2 nests were found at Holden Vale Flash one of which was successful. About 12 pairs were present on Haslingden Moor; 4 or 5 pairs at Cowpe; 2 pairs on Tor Hill; 8 pairs on High End, Cribden; 6 pairs at Cheesden Bar and 6 pairs in the Ashworth Valley. 4 pairs were present in Hutch Bank Quarry and 3 nests were found, 2 of which were successful. Other evidence of nesting included a pair at Lumb on 3rd March, a pair at Dean Height, Bacup on 28th March, a pair at E.B.S.W. on 2nd April, 3 at Edenfield on 19th April, a pair at Syke reservoir on 6th May, 7 at The Holme on 21st March when 2 males were in song flight. First flocks included 21 at Clough Bottom on 28th June, 16 on The Hile on 30th June when 3 pairs were still showing anxiety, 18th July

35 flying from Smallshaw Height to the west. In autumn, a flock of 60 was at Haslingden Old Road on 29th August and a flock of 200 was at Holden Wood on 12th September, 13 at Clough Bottom on 3rd October and 50 at A.M.R. on 14th November. At Spring Mill reservoir a flock of about 200 was regular from 30th October to 27th November. On 24th November a flock of 50 flew south over Waterfoot during the cold spell of weather. Numbers were low compared with earlier years. A flock of 60 was present at Black Moss from mid-September to 25th October and left at the onset of the cold weather.

### **KNOT - *Calidris canutus***

One spent the whole of 30th August on an island in A.M.R.

### **LITTLE STINT - *Calidris minuta***

One was at A.M.R. on 3rd September with 2 on 5th September and a report dated 12th September said that there had been 6 or 7 during the previous week. An immature was also seen at Clowbridge on 15th September (M Naylor, E.L.O.C.) and probably the same bird seen there with Dunlins on 17th September - an unusual passage movement for Rossendale.

### **DUNLIN - *Calidris alpina***

Present during the nesting-season in small numbers on Cowpe Moss. 2 were seen in separate areas on 3rd May. Both dropped nearby when flushed. A single bird was seen flying round on 4th June. Passage birds seen during autumn included one at A.M.R. on 12th September, 2 at Clowbridge on 15th and 17th September and 5 at A.M.R. on the latter date. 4 were at A.M.R. and one at Clowbridge on 19th September. These were similar dates to those of the Little Stint passage.

### **RUFF - *Philomachus pugnax***

Singles were seen on Haslingden Moor - a male on 30th August and a female on 3rd September.

### **JACK SNIBE - *Lymnocyrtus minimus***

The only record was of one at Balladen on 15th October.

### **COMMON SNIPE - *Gallinago gallinago***

At least 12 were present on Haslingden Moor on 31st January. Singles were recorded on The Hile on 13th, 23rd and 27th February, 27th April and 9th June but no display drumming was heard this year - the first time for E. Ward in 44 years. Singles were also recorded at Sand Beds on 7th March (R. Ives' only sighting) and Syke reservoir on 6th May. A nest with 4 eggs was found at the top of the Ashworth Valley. 2 pairs were present on Harden Moor and a nest with 4 eggs hatched successfully. A pair was recorded on Hoddlesden Moss on 3rd May and a pair on Wet Moss on 7th May. A pair with young was seen on Cribden Moor on 17th June. The autumn passage brought a few more birds from the end of August into September. There were 5 on The Hile on 24th August, 2 on 26th August, 3 on 7th September; 4 on Haslingden Moor on 30th August, 4 on 12th September and 3 on 19th September. Later in the year another passage movement brought 7 to A.M.R. on 26th October, 1 to The Brex on 31st October, 6 to A.M.R. on 8th November and 1 to The Hile on 19th November. As last year these figures show a serious reduction in the numbers of what was once a common local bird.

### **WOODCOCK - *Scolopax rusticola***

Singles were recorded at Grane on 31st January and 13th February, on open moorland north of Clowbridge on 14th February, in Heap Clough on 13th April and in The Glen, Waterfoot on 4th May. Later in the year one was seen on the moors near Greenfold on 24th October and one at Shawforth on 4th November. During December one was seen locally on 19th, one in The Glen on 22nd and there was a report of up to 6 being flushed at various points on Cribden hillside during the month.

### **WHIMBREL - *Numenius phaeopus***

3 were at A.M.R. on 20th August.

### **CURLEW - *Numenius arquata***

Passage birds were heard calling overhead on 17th and 27th February. Local birds had returned to Lumb on 7th March, Clough Bottom on 20th March with 8 there on 26th March. Breeding-season presence was recorded from Lumb Vale on 10th April, from Smallshaw Height on 2nd and 23rd May (2 pairs) and from Musbury Valley, Clough Bottom, Greenfold - Clowbridge area (reduced numbers reported), Haslingden - Oswaldtwistle Moors (reduced numbers down to 2 pairs). Better numbers were recorded on Cribden where 3 pairs were found, one with young; Musbury where a nest with 3 young hatched successfully and 2 other pairs were present; Hoddlesden Moss which had 8 pairs, several with young. A pair was on territory at the head of Whitworth Valley but no young were seen. Movement away from the hills began on 28th June when 3 were at Clough Bottom and on 29th August Curlews were calling over Holden Wood. A late movement brought 3 birds to The Hile for about a week around 23rd October.

### **REDSHANK - *Tringa totanus***

On 30th January one was calling in flight over Waterfoot. Return to breeding areas began on 14th March with one at A.M.R. On 21st March a pair was at Holden Vale and still present in the area in late April at Holden Wood reservoir. A pair was recorded at Clowbridge reservoir on 21st March, 6th and 17th April and 18th May. Possibly the same pair was seen on Limy Lane pond, Crawshawbooth on 29th May and a bird was heard calling on Swinshaw Moor on 24th June. 2 birds were at Syke reservoir in May. During autumn passage a single bird was at Spring Mill on 26th August and one at Clowbridge reservoir on 10th November.

### **GREENSHANK - *Tringa nebularia***

During spring passage one was calling at Ogden reservoir on 25th May and one was calling in flight to the north over Clowbridge on 29th May. In autumn 1 was at A.M.R. on 20th and 21st August, 2 there on 31st August and one on 4th September. Greenshanks were heard calling over Clowbridge reservoir on 15th September with 2 on 21st September.

### **GREEN SANDPIPER - *Tringa ochropus***

The only record was of one calling in flight travelling south over Crawshawbooth on 18th August.

### **COMMON SANDPIPER - *Actitis hypoleucos***

2 birds had returned to Clowbridge reservoir by 12th April. 3 pairs were reported being there on 12th May. A nest with 4 eggs was found on 22nd May and another with 2 eggs on 29th May. One had returned to Clough Bottom reservoir by 24th April and 2 pairs nested there.

Pairs were recorded at Calf Hey and Holden Vale Flash. During late summer and autumn one was at Wayoh reservoir on 19th July, 2 at A.M.R. on 31st August, one at Clowbridge reservoir on 4th September and calls were also heard here on 12th September.

### **BLACK-HEADED GULL - *Larus ridibundus***

Late winter counts at Stacksteads Tip gave figures of about 800 and on 30th January an unusual gathering on the playing fields of Fearn Moss also numbered about 800. Numbers roosting at Clowbridge reservoir also gave a count of 800 on 9th January. However, there had been about 2,000 Black-headed Gulls there on 3rd January but numbers at the roost fell to 700 on 23rd January, 250 on 30th January and only small numbers after this date. Other winter counts were - 48 at New Line on 3rd January, 200 at Holden Wood reservoir on 14th February. During February numbers at Stacksteads decreased to 350 on 24th then 50 on 4th March. Only small numbers were seen after this date - 10 at A.M.R. on 14th March and 30 flying west over Edgeside on 23rd March. On 30th April a single bird in full summer plumage flew west over Cowpe Moss. Apart from a single at Folly Clough on 20th June return from the nesting areas began in early July with 14 on Fearn Moss on 2nd and 3 on The Hile on 5th. On 19th July 10 adults and 2 immatures were at Wayoh and on 1st August 2 adults and 3 immatures on Fearn Moss. Numbers began to increase from the end of August when there were about 100 at A.M.R. with 50 on 12th September. Numbers remained relatively low until early October when there were 70 at Stacksteads Tip on 4th and 150 on 5th rising to 300 at the end of the month, 500 in early November, 800 in late November and 1,000 by the end of the year.

### **COMMON GULL - *Larus canus***

As usual most records were of a small number among the flocks of Black-headed Gulls. During the late winter period the maximum count was 10. There were, however, 30 roosting with the 800 Black-headed at Clowbridge on 9th January. On 13th January 10 birds were counted in the morning flight of gulls to Stacksteads Tip. On 17th January one was with 100 Black-headed Gulls on Fearn Moss. On 26th January there were 10 with 650 Black-headed on Fearn Moss. On 30th January there were 10 with 800 Black-headed, 15 Lesser Black-backs and 10 Herring Gulls on Fearn Moss. On 4th February there were 6 with 200 Black-headed on Fearn Moss and on 6th March 4 with 70 Black-headed. The latest were 6 at A.M.R. on 14th March. First return was recorded on 31st July when there were 2 with 40 Black-headed near Clowbridge. On 4th August there were 2 adults on Fearn Moss. On 29th August one of the larger single-species flocks was seen at A.M.R. where 30 were counted. The influx of Black-headed Gulls at the end of October also brought in 15 Common Gulls. Thereafter, the usual small numbers were reported in mixed flocks. In late December numbers increased and 26 were seen with 100 Black-headed on Fearn Moss and 10 at New Line. More than 60 were at Clowbridge on 29th December.

### **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL - *Larus fuscus***

Numbers were in single figures in mid-winter but began to rise from late January when there were 15 in the large gathering of gulls on Fearn Moss (see under Common Gull) on 30th January. Numbers rose to 150 at Stacksteads Tip on 19th February, 500 on 18th March, 600 on 19th March and 21st April. Numbers fell to 100 at the Tip in May and early June but were back up to 500 again on 17th June and 6th July and rose to 800 on 21st July. On 6th August there were 30 adults and 6 juveniles at Cowpe reservoir and on 4th September 60 with 10 immatures on The Hile. On 10th August there were still 500 present and a report from Crawshawbooth gave a figure of at least 250 flying southeast each morning, presumably en

route from a roost towards the Tip. Numbers then fell to 200 at Stacksteads on 26th August, 150 on 23rd September, 40 on 4th October, 30 on 27th October. Thereafter, 15 were counted on several occasions to the end of the year. Only 2 to 6 roosted at Clowbridge during December.

### **HERRING GULL - *Larus argentatus***

Relatively small numbers were present at Stacksteads during the late winter period with a maximum of 17 on 21st February. During summer singles were seen in the Lesser Black-back flocks on 4th and 27th June. In autumn numbers built up a little and at least 30 were in the morning flight to Stacksteads Tip on 28th November. 20 roosted at Clowbridge in December.

### **GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL - *Larus marinus***

The usual mid-winter influx brought small numbers to Stacksteads Tip. 3 were seen flying west from Stacksteads in the evening flight on 12th January. On 13th January 8 flew east to the Tip at 08.00hrs and on 21st January 8 were counted among the gulls at the Tip. On 21st February 3 adults and 3 immatures were at the Cowpe reservoir. The following winter 11 flew west over Stacksteads on 19th December, one was seen with Lesser Black-backs on 20th December flying west from Stacksteads at dusk and on 26th December there were 6 at Clough Bottom reservoir.

### **COMMON TERN - *Sterna hirundo***

One was seen over Clowbridge reservoir on 26th April and two on the afternoon of 17th September. 4 terns flying southwest over A.M.R. on 17th August may have been of this species.

### **LITTLE TERN - *Sterna albifrons***

1 was seen at A.M.R. until about 09.30 hrs on 28th August, feeding and resting on the island.

### **BLACK TERN - *Chlidonias niger***

An immature was present at Holden Wood reservoir on 11th September.

### **FERAL PIGEON - *Columba livia***

The usual colonies were recorded in town centres. The Waterfoot colony now extends to Gaghills. A small group at Tup Bridge near Rawtenstall Market was also mentioned in one report.

### **STOCK DOVE - *Columba oenas***

Few records this year and numbers appear to be decreasing. There were none on the C.B.C. plot. Pairs were reported from Alderbottom Viaduct, Musbury, a quarry above Cloughfold and Water where there were 2 young in a nest on 16th June. Occasional birds were seen in the Crawshawbooth area during the summer. On 29th August a single was seen flying over The Hile.

### **WOODPIGEON - *Columba palumbus***

Present throughout the year in small flocks in most parts of the Valley. An increase with the approach of spring brought 24 to Water on 4th February and 150 to Whitewell Bottom on 12th March. A flock of 20 was present at E.B.S.W. on 2nd April. Nesting was attempted in all suitable areas of parks and woodland. 2 pairs were recorded in Bacup Park and one in Edgeside Park and 3 pairs at Lench. On 18th July a flock on The Hile included 7 adults and

2 immatures suggesting a low success rate. During August flocks of 20 to 30 were regular on The Hile, often feeding on chickweed in unmown meadows.

### **COLLARED DOVE - *Streptopelia decaocto***

Numbers increased in the Booth Road area of Waterfoot. A male was in song there on 6th January when the regular pair was visiting bird-tables. They were in conflict with a third bird on 31st January and on 1st February 2 pairs were present and there was territorial conflict. On 19th February one was seen carrying a twig and later in February and March birds fed singly in the garden, suggesting that others were sitting. There was no evidence of successful breeding but in autumn numbers in the garden rose to 4 on 25th October and 8 on 27th October - a fourfold increase over last year. There were also regular sightings from Newchurch to Heightside and Marl Pits where 4 pairs were thought to have been present. The usual numbers were seen at Irwell Vale, a pair was present near Lane Head, Bacup and 2 pairs nested at Shawforth. 2 were seen in Healey Dell on 14th August.

### **RING-NECKED PARAKEET - *Psittacula krameri***

On 20th September 2 were seen flying up the Irwell Valley at Stacksteads and a second-hand report suggested the possibility of 2 in Bacup Park at the same time last year.

### **CUCKOO - *Cuculus canorus***

Much reduced in numbers this year. None heard in Cowpe Valley for the first time since at least 1949. A single male was heard at Grane on 30th April, 6th June and 26th June - the only known site for one of the observers. The only other record was of a singing male in Musbury Valley on 23rd April. Passage birds (immatures) were seen at Lumb on 25th August and 5th September and there were two other sightings along The Glen about the same time.

### **EAGLE OWL - *Bubo bubo***

The escaped bird first seen in November and December 1992 was still present in January and February in Staghill Wood. It then moved to the Crawshawbooth area where it was seen in Brooks' Wood in March and near Goodshaw Avenue in April. Pellets were found measuring 90mm by 30mm and contained feather quills. The owl was recaptured later in the year.

### **LITTLE OWL - *Athene noctua***

Numbers appeared to be down again this year. A pair was recorded nesting in a barn below Musbury Tor and they were seen regularly in the Musbury Valley. 2 pairs were present in the Alden area, a pair at Plunge, a pair at Shortclough and a pair at Higher Whams above Whitewell Bottom. A pair was present near the Astronomy Centre on 24th June, there were two pairs at Back Cowm and one pair near Spring Mill. None were seen on the C.B.C. plot until a single appeared on 4th July and was seen later in the month. The pair had vanished from the old site, presumably because the collapsed wall forming the nest site had been repaired. The dry stone waller found a sucked egg of Little Owl at the base of the wall. On 14th August one was seen in a derelict farm at Foxhill and on 5th September one at Shortclough.

### **TAWNY OWL - *Strix aluco***

In the Piercy area one was calling from Seat Naze during February and a pair was active during March. One was reported at Shawforth in February and another at Stacksteads on 8th March. Pairs were also seen at Lumb church, Weir, Healey Dell and Grane where a nest with one dead owlet was found. Calls were also heard at Constablelee in spring but no owls were seen during

the summer. Much calling activity was reported from Whitewell Bottom in August. An adult which had been ringed when more than a year old at Haslingden on 15th May 1989 was found dead at Helmshore on 25th June 1993. On 27th December single birds were roosting at Bacup and Shawforth and one roosted regularly in Fern Isle Wood.

### **BARN OWL - *Tyto alba***

There was a record of a sighting of a possible Barn Owl in the Stacksteads area during May and June. On 28th June one was found very decomposed in a derelict factory at Shade End. It may have been an escaped bird which found it difficult to survive in the wild.

### **LONG-EARED OWL - *Asio otus***

A pair nested locally hatching 4 eggs and eventually rearing 2 young.

### **SHORT-EARED OWL - *Asio flammeus***

One was seen at Crown Point on 18th January. There was no evidence of nesting but a pair was present in the Clowbridge area on 22nd May. Later in the year one was flushed from rushes near A.M.R., one was seen over Swinshaw Moor on 5th November and 2 on 6th November, in both cases between 15.00 and 16.00hrs.

### **SWIFT - *Apus apus***

All first records received were for 9th - 10th May. By 11th May there were 15 at Stacksteads and on 14th May Swifts were numerous over Rawtenstall. Departure began early - the birds from the Gaghills colony had gone by 7th August. There was a marked passage on 9th August when 5, 6, 4 and 10 were seen flying west over Waterfoot and on the same day there were at least 15 over Crawshawbooth. This continued to about 15th August - 30 over Rawtenstall on 11th August, 12 over Crawshawbooth on 15th August. Earlier there had been at least 50 at E.B.S.W. on 7th August. 30 were regular over Constablelee during the summer but they had gone by mid-August. The latest were 6 over Crawshawbooth flying south on 4th September.

### **KINGFISHER - *Alcedo atthis***

In mid-winter one was seen regularly along the Irwell at Warth Bridge, Waterfoot and later one at Strongstry on 13th March. A pair was present along the Irwell between Ewood Bridge and Townsendfold during the breeding season, but there was no information about nesting success. Observations suggested that Kingfishers may have bred on the River Whitewell but, again, there were no details. From August to November singles were recorded along the Irwell from Waterfoot to Rawtenstall, along the Whitewell at Lumb and Piercy, at Helmshore on Higher Mill Lodge and at Holden Wood reservoir. On 11th October one was seen at Strongstry.

### **GREEN WOODPECKER - *Picus viridis***

On 14th March a pair was seen as far up the Whitewell Valley as Lumb. Last year's Report showed a spread up the Whitewell Valley as far as Piercy. The usual pairs were recorded in Staghills Wood, Stubbins and at Crawshawbooth, especially in the Folly Clough area. A pair was seen in Musbury Valley where birds were recorded throughout the year.

### **GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER - *Dendrocopos major***

Present in all the usual wooded areas and spreading into parks and gardens especially for winter feeding. Visits to nut-feeders were recorded at Lumb, Haslingden, Cowpe, Waterfoot and Townsendfold. On 11th July one brought 3 young birds to a bird-table in the Cowpe

Valley. On 15th June a pair was feeding large chicks in a nest in Folly Wood, Crawshawbooth. During the nesting season birds were also regular in Irwell Vale, the S.N.A., Staghills Wood and Helmshore.

### **SKYLARK - *Alauda arvensis***

3 early arrivals were on the moor above Cowpe reservoir on 31st January but the main movement began in mid-February. Several were calling and flying north over Crawshawbooth on 10th February and on 14th there were 2 birds on The Hile and 2 at Clowbridge. On 6th March 6 were back on The Hile and one was in song. Song was first noted at Moss Quarry, Whitworth on 11th March, at Holden Wood on 14th March and at Swinshaw Moor on 24th March. The number of pairs on the C.B.C. plot was 25 - the same as last year which was the lowest ever recorded. On 5th July a few were still singing and on 9th July one was still singing and a pair carrying food. By 24th July the C.B.C. plot was deserted. The autumn passage movement saw 2 on The Hile on 12th August then singles, twos and threes to 30th September.

### **SAND MARTIN - *Riparia riparia***

For the second year there were none at the Townsendfold colony but the Stubbins site was still active with 30 to 40 birds present. On 5th July one flew over Folly Tip.

### **SWALLOW - *Hirundo rustica***

First record was of one at Sand Beds on 12th April, then 3 at Shortclough and Stacksteads on 13th April. By 19th April there were 15 at Shortclough and on 23rd April 10 at E.B.S.W. A pair had returned to West Hile Farm by 22nd April. On 4th July a pair was present at Brex Farm and one was carrying a feather. On 4th July there were family parties at West Hile and 5 at Farm Hill. The C.B.C. plot registered 4 pairs. On 1st August 2 pairs were feeding young in old buildings at Shawclough. At least 5 pairs were present at Shawforth. From 24th August a gathering of Swallows occurred over lower Coal Pits Lane below Jack Lodge. Numbers rose to 50 by the end of the month and there were many House Martins there also. On 6th September they were feeding close to the tops of sycamore trees even brushing through the upper leaves and sometimes perching - possibly an abundance of aphids was providing a good food supply. On the same date a pair was still entering the old building as on 1st August and on 16th September 4 newly-fledged young were present. Young birds were still being fed on 18th September at Lane Head, Bacup. Movement was in progress from 17th September: 30 were flying south over Clowbridge reservoir on 17th, several to the south over Crawshawbooth on 20th, 30 over Edgeside on 21st, several over Folly Tip and Edgeside on 23rd. 4 were seen on 27th September then singles on 1st and 14th October; again an early departure.

### **HOUSE MARTIN - *Delichon urbica***

As last year there were some early sightings - 3 at Reedsholme on 16th April and 2 at Stacksteads on 27th April but these were presumably on passage. Local birds were much later - 3 over Waterfoot on 11th May - and then a rapid build-up of numbers. They were numerous over Rawtenstall on 14th May and on 17th - 18th May there were records of returning birds at Crawshawbooth, Waterfoot and at B.R.G.S. Records of nesting colonies included 8 nests on the Conservative Club, Waterfoot, 2 nests on B.R.G.S., 2 nests on the Ambulance Station at Stacksteads, 3 pairs at Piercy, 3 pairs at Cawl Terrace, 3 pairs at Edenfield, 4 pairs at Facit and 5 pairs at Whitworth. Nesting occurred at Constablelee for the first time in 3 years. Young fledged from the B.R.G.S. colony on 13th and 14th August. At Piercy a pair was still feeding young on 7th and 10th October and at Stacksteads on 2nd October. There were no later records.

### **TREE PIPIT - *Anthus trivialis***

At least one pair nested at Grane. Autumn passage was recorded over Crawshawbooth including singles on 3rd, 25th and 26th August, 2 or more flying south and another flock of 4 or 5 calling overhead on 29th August.

### **MEADOW PIPIT - *Anthus pratensis***

Singles, twos and threes were recorded in January. Some return was noted during February with 17 at Folly Clough on 8th February. The main return was in March and April - 25 at Folly Clough on 24th March, small numbers at Weir and on The Hile on 26th March, 150 at Greenfold on 28th March, 30 at Lee Quarry on 1st April and 40 on 6th April. A nest on the C.B.C. plot had 5 eggs on 5th May and two nests at Clowbridge on 12th May each had 5 eggs. The number of pairs on the C.B.C. plot was 19, the same as last year - a low total. Numbers nesting in the Whitworth area were also reported as being down. Flocks began to form in August - 20 on The Hile on 4th, 30 on The Brex on 15th. A few birds were heard calling on passage in late August but the main movements were later with good numbers flying south over Clowbridge and Crawshawbooth on 17th and 18th September, over Cowpe Moss on 23rd September and over Brown Wardle on 10th October. There were 60 birds at Syke reservoir on 11th September. In September 50 were resting in grass at Shortclough. Latest were 10 at Shawclough on 15th October and 5 on The Brex on 31st October. Up to 10 were at Clowbridge during hard weather in December.

### **WATER PIPIT - *Anthus spinoletta***

One was present at Clowbridge from 2nd December to the end of the year.

### **YELLOW WAGTAIL - *Motacilla flava***

A pair was seen outside our area on a Club ramble to Elton reservoir, near Bury, on 9th May. A female was seen on 31st May at Hall Carr. None were present during the nesting-season. During the autumn passage one was calling flying to the south over Crawshawbooth on 17th August and a male was at Spring Mill on 28th August. 2 were seen at A.M.R. on 3rd October.

### **GREY WAGTAIL - *Motacilla cinerea***

On 5th February feathers of a bird plucked by a Sparrowhawk on Fearn Moss proved to be of this species (by reference to "Tracks and Signs of the Birds of Britain and Europe" by R. Brown et al. Grey Wagtails were scarce or absent during the winter with a return beginning in mid-February. One seen at Crawshawbooth on 13th February was referred to as "the only winter sighting". A pair had returned to the Irwell at Cowpe Road by 21st February, a pair at Lane Head, Bacup on 23rd February, a pair at Blackwood from 11th March and one at Greens Lodge on 1st April. Breeding-season records included a pair on the Whitewell at Gaghills on 17th May, a male with 2 fledged young on the Whitewell at Bridge Street 200 metres upstream from Gaghills on 20th May, 3 pairs on the Limy from Rawtenstall to Reedsholme, a pair near Stacksteads Recreation Ground on 11th May (one carrying food), one at Globe Mill, Waterfoot and one on the Irwell at Kenroy Dispersions on 13th June, a pair at Tong Lane, Bacup, 3 immatures at Lench on 11th July, one on the Irwell at Lee Mill, one on the Irwell at Bacup Cemetery on 2nd May, a pair on the Irwell near Do-It-All on 15th July and a pair at Back Cowm. A regular site at Shawforth was not used. Post-breeding-season sightings included one at Shawclough on 4th August, 2 at Clough Bottom on 29th August, one on the Whitewell at Wood Lea on 6th September, one at Shortclough on 11th September, 2 at Springhill on

16th October, one on the Irwell at Blackwood on 29th October, one at Newhallhey on 2nd November and one on Cowpe Brook on 5th November. Thereafter the breeding-areas seem to have been deserted but 2 were with Pied Wagtails at E.B.S.W. on 19th December.

### **PIED WAGTAIL - *Motacilla alba yarrellii***

Fewer than last year at E.B.S.W. in late winter and early spring - 10 on 14th January, 20 on 26th March, 10 on 2nd April. 5 were on passage at Clowbridge on 20th March and 5 on passage at Shortclough on 10th April. A pair had arrived back on territory on the C.B.C. plot on 27th April and 2 were at Clough Bottom on 24th April. On 3rd July one was on the Limy near the Ashworth Arms and another was carrying food further upstream near the Craven Heifer. On 23rd July a female was carrying food to 2 fledged young in the grounds of Winfield's. On 6th August 2 immatures and an adult were seen at Lench. On 25th June juveniles were starting to flock on rooftops in Crawshawbooth. 2 pairs nested on the C.B.C. plot, one less than was usual in recent years. There was a marked autumn passage. At Spring Mill reservoir 10 to 20 birds were regular in late August, 15 to 30 during September and in October 16 on 1st, 8 on 2nd, 11 on 6th 6 on 8th then 2s and 3s to 27th October. On Fearn Moss there were 12 on 7th September, 21 on 16th October, 30 on 2nd October, 10 on 12th October. 40 to 50 birds were present at E.B.S.W. during December.

### **WAXWING - *Bombycilla garrulus***

None in our area but one was present in urban Burnley on 26th and 27th November (K.G. Spencer).

### **DIPPER - *Cinclus cinclus***

One was present at Cowpe reservoir on 24th January. Territories along the Whitewell from Piercy to Waterfoot centre were occupied from 6th February. There were at least 2 pairs - one at Piercy and one between Bridge Street and Gaghills. A pair was regular along the Irwell in The Glen, Waterfoot from January to March and one was seen on the Irwell at Townsendfold on 17th February and 29th June. On 4th March one flew over Rawtenstall centre and on 17th April a Dipper was carrying food on the Irwell near Do-It-All. Higher upstream on the Irwell a pair was present at Lee Mill on 17th July. The usual sites were occupied along the Limy. On 3rd July a pair was present above the Ashworth Arms and one juvenile was fledged from the Craven Heifer site. 3 pairs were found along the Limy from Crawshawbooth to Rawtenstall but breeding success was low, probably due to the presence of mink along the river. In the Whitworth area one was seen on the upper Spodden on 27th March but there was no evidence of nesting. Dippers were seen regularly on Spring Mill Brook. Post-breeding-season birds were recorded at Shawclough on 14th August, Warth Bridge on the Irwell on 15th September, 3 on the Limy at Crawshawbooth on 18th September, Waterfoot centre on 6th October and 4th November, on the Irwell at Stacksteads on 29th October, at Newhallhey and Townsendfold from 30th September to 26th November, Whitworth on 14th October. A male was singing in Crawshawbooth on 19th October.

### **WREN - *Troglodytes troglodytes***

Wrens appeared to have survived the winter in good numbers. In song and very vocal during February then continuously to late July. Post-breeding dispersal brought one to a garden in Waterfoot on 11th August and the species was then seen to the end of the year. On 23rd September one was feeding along a dry-stone wall on moorland at 1,400 ft just below Top

o' Leach, the highest point in Rossendale, and on 19th November one was feeding in rushes at 1,000 ft on The Hile.

### **DUNNOCK - *Prunella modularis***

Song was heard from mid-January. 3 were seen in territorial chasing activity on 28th January. There were records of singing birds from all parts of the Valley. In a Waterfoot garden, Dunnocks have joined Robins and Blackbirds in taking finely-chopped peanuts at a bird-table.

### **ROBIN - *Erithacus rubecula***

Spring song was heard from 7th January. 2 Robins were engaged in aggressive territorial activity in a garden on 12th January but pairs had formed by the end of the month. On 14th March at least 6 were in song in Bacup Park. The first immature was seen in a garden on 17th June. First winter song was heard on 17th August in a Waterfoot garden and on 19th August at Gaghills. From 29th September to 10th November 2 were in regular conflict in a Waterfoot garden until a territorial boundary was established more or less down the centre of the garden. Much of the fighting was round the bird-table which was eventually left on the boundary and was visited from each side, usually at different times, but with much aggressive display when both arrived together.

### **REDSTART - *Phoenicurus phoenicurus***

A pair nested in the Folly Clough area of Crawshawbooth. A female and a juvenile were seen on 28th June, a male on 13th July and 2nd August and 2 birds on 14th August. A male was singing near Cowm reservoir and a pair nested in the area. A male was in song at Calf Hey on 2nd, 3rd and 8th May.

### **WHINCHAT - *Saxicola rubetra***

A male had arrived at Clowbridge by 12th May and a female was nest-building on 22nd May. The pair was seen on 23rd June and 1st July. Three birds were present in the area on 19th September. A female was at Scout Moor on 30th April and a pair also nested in Plunge Valley. During the autumn passage one was seen in company with 12 Meadow Pipits at Clough Bottom and on 25th September there were 3 at Clowbridge and one at A.M.R.

### **STONECHAT - *Saxicola torquata***

One was present in the Clowbridge area during February and on 25th February a pair was seen on the slopes of Seat Naze above Bridleway. On 7th March a female was seen at Cheesden. A female was again at Clowbridge on 12th, 19th and 24th September. A pair at Spring Mill was seen on several dates from 6th November to 30th December and 2 were at Clowbridge from 26th November to the end of the year.

### **WHEATEAR - *Oenanthe oenanthe***

Some early arrivals - one above Clowbridge on 20th March, a male at Moss Quarry on 22nd March and 5 at Hameldon and 1 at Top o' Leach on 28th March. Many more birds arrived in April. There were 5 in Lee Quarry on 6th and about 10 on 17th. Arrival back on the C.B.C. plot was on 27th April with a group of 2 males and 3 females on East Hile and single males at 2 other sites. On 30th April there was a pair at Thar Hill (Higher Hill), a female at Waugh's Well and a male in song at the head of Lench Valley. A pair in Moss Quarry had eggs on 25th April but disturbance by bike trials on the May Bank Holiday probably caused desertion. a young bird was seen above the quarry on 21st July. On 4th July a pair was carrying food at East Hile

and on 18th July a male with at least 3 fledged young were seen. On 28th July 2 immatures were seen. 3 immatures and a male were in the vicinity until 26th August. 2 pairs nested on the C.B.C. plot - the same number as last year. On 4th June at least 5 pairs were present in Lee Quarry. There was no breeding season presence at Clowbridge. On 13th July a male and 2 immatures were present along the Rooley Moor Road above Cowpe reservoir. Pairs were also reported from Musbury, Grane, Alden and Hutch Bank Quarry. During autumn passage one was seen at A.M.R. on 29th August, one at Clowbridge on 12th September, 4 immatures on Haslingden Moor on 19th September and 2 at Spring Mill on 29th September.

### **RING OUZEL - *Turdus torquatus***

During spring passage singles were at Plunge on 13th April and 1st May, 3 at Turn on 14th April with one on 2nd May. On 17th April one was seen in Lee Quarry and on 6th May one near Chapel Hill. No breeding-season presence was noted. In the autumn passage a female was in company with Redwings in a tree at Folly Clough and one was at Plunge on 25th September. Outside our area but of some interest, a male was present in suburban gardens off St. Matthew Street, Burnley from 29th November to 7th December (K.G. Spencer).

### **BLACKBIRD - *Turdus merula***

In January a group of about 15 fed in Broadclough. Song was heard in Bacup Park on 14th March and at Piercy on 22nd March. A nest in a garden in Waterfoot had 4 eggs on 25th April, hatched on 2nd May, one fledged on 19th May and 3 full-grown immatures were seen on 4th June. On 19th June a pair was present with a later brood. From 5th to 15th August 5 to 7 immatures were regular in the garden. On 18th and 19th October a small flock of 5 birds, presumably continentals, was with Redwings in trees at Waterfoot and on 24th October a flock of 7 roosted with Redwings in garden trees in Waterfoot. A good autumn passage was noted at Crawshawbooth where at least 25 birds were counted on one occasion.

### **FIELDFARE - *Turdus pilaris***

Some were present in early January with a maximum of 48 at Clowbridge on 9th January. Numbers increased in February as migrant flocks, in company with Starlings, began to move back north and east. On 3rd February there were 100 at Water with 200 Starlings; on 14th March there were 30 at Lumb, on 20th March 50 at Clough Bottom. Also on 20th March about 500 flew in to Folly Clough with about 650 Starlings. Numbers declined after this date but there were 45 at Greens Lodge on 1st April. Return movement was noted from mid-October. On 14th October there were 100 at Lench and 40 over Rawtenstall; on 15th October there were 500 at Balladen, on 16th October 60 at Water, on 17th October 200 at Peersclough and on 18th October 40 at Shawclough. Numbers remained high for the rest of the month with maxima of 200 with 500 Starlings on The Hile on 23rd and 31st October and 60 at Cowpe on 30th October. Size of flocks declined during November with fewer sightings and numbers between 10 and 20. Few were present in December - 10 in a Waterfoot garden on 11th December and a few at Holden Vale on 12th December. An interesting observation was of a male singing in Folly Clough on 15th October.

### **SONG THRUSH - *Turdus philomelos***

First song was heard at Gaghills on 23rd January. Thereafter, males were in song on 4th February at Edgeside Park, on 6th February at Folly Clough and then more generally through March and April. On 16th February a pair was present at Townsendfold. On 21st May a hatched eggshell was found in a garden at Waterfoot. On 9th July one was feeding fledged

young in Whitaker Park. Ones and twos were recorded in August and September. Birds probably of continental origin were seen in October - a group of 4 in the Limy Valley on 15th October, then 3 dark birds with Redwings in Edgeside Park on 12th November and one with redwings on 13th and 14th November

### **REDWING - *Turdus iliacus***

Flocks numbering up to 50 were present during January, with 50 in the Irwell Valley below Rawtenstall on 23rd January and 50 at Staghills on 31st January. Fewer in February with a record of 10 at Holden Wood on 14th February and the latest 4 below Musbury Tor on 3rd March. Return movement began on 10th October with 50 birds over Chapel Hill, then 10 in Rawtenstall on 13th October. On 16th October there were 100 with Fieldfares at Shawclough. Movement was continuous for the rest of the month and especially heavy from 20th to 26th October. During this period 5 birds roosted regularly in a garden in Waterfoot. Passage slackened in November. Calls were heard over Townsendfold and Crawshawbooth on several evenings round 7th November when 2 or 3 birds were also present in gardens in Waterfoot. Only ones and twos were seen, then 20 on 25th November, 10 on 7th December and one on 13th December.

### **MISTLE THRUSH - *Turdus viscivorus***

Males were in song on 18th January in Waterfoot, 22nd January in Crawshawbooth and then from many areas during February and March. A nest with eggs was found at Stacksteads on 14th April and 4 fledged young were seen at Shawforth on 10th May. 2 nests only 20 yards apart were found in Rawtenstall Cemetery on 10th April. One had 2 eggs and a bird was sitting on the other nest. A nest found in Stacksteads in early April contained 8 eggs and 3 birds were giving alarm calls, presumably 2 females and a male. The nest held only one

chick and one egg on 20th April. There were still 3 adults present on 13th May and the nest contained 5 eggs. On the next visit the nest was empty and an adult was dead.

### **GRASSHOPPER WARBLER - *Locustella naevia***

On 11th June a male was reeling in a meadow above Gin Clough, Crawshawbooth.

### **SEDGE WARBLER - *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus***

Males were in song in Folly Clough on 27th April and at Cheesden on 13th June, presumably passage birds. On 15th August one was heard calling in a plantation at Stacksteads. A pair was present all summer above Ewood Bridge.

### **WHITETHROAT - *Sylvia communis***

A male was in song from 10th to 15th June in the Spring Lodge and Gin Clough area of Crawshawbooth. Similarly, one was heard on 13th and 14th May and 10th June in Bacup Cemetery. There were no further indications of nesting in either case. One was seen during autumn passage on 25th August at Folly Clough.

### **GARDEN WARBLER - *Sylvia borin***

Singing males were heard in Staghills Wood on 2nd May and in The Glen, Waterfoot on 14th June. In Folly Clough a male was heard singing from 11th May to 16th June.

### **BLACKCAP - *Sylvia atricapilla***

A male was in song at Folly Tip on 21st April and at least 2 males were in song in this area until 23rd June. Also in the Crawshawbooth area, singing males were heard at Rhodeson's and Bottoms plantation. Males were singing at Sandybank on 27th April; The Glen, Waterfoot on 29th May, 10th and 26th June and 7th July; Staghills Wood on 13th June and Townsendfold on 29th June. 3 males were in song at Ravenshore on 26th May and males were singing at 3 sites at Reedsholme, 2 at Haslingden High School Nature Area and at least one pair at Healey Dell. 4 pairs were thought to have been present in the Stubbins Nature Area. In Folly Clough, a female and an immature were seen on 2nd August and calls were heard on 17th and 26th August. There were several reports of Blackcaps in November, presumably on passage. One was a male at Edgeside Park on 20th and there was also a male at Ramsbottom on 30th. Tying in with this, though outside our area, Blackcaps were seen twice during November in the Manchester Road area of Burnley (K.G. Spencer).

### **WOOD WARBLER - *Phylloscopus sibilatrix***

Males were heard in song at Folly Clough on 29th May and at Stoneholme on 2nd June. On 3rd June a female was seen visiting a nest at Stoneholme and on 15th June a pair was feeding young near the Pets' Cemetery at Crawshawbooth. Elsewhere, one was in The Glen, Waterfoot on 13th April and a male was in song at Staghills Wood on 13th June.

### **CHIFFCHAFF - *Phylloscopus collybita***

An early bird probably of this species was calling at Piercy on 1st April. On 10th April a singing male, probably a passage bird, was heard at Folly Tip and likewise others were heard at Bacup Cemetery and at Rushbed on 24th April, Clowbridge Plantation on 26th April, Staghills Wood and Redisher on 2nd May. During autumn passage Chiffchaffs were heard at Folly Tip on 27th August and 15th September, Stacksteads on 22nd September and at Crawshawbooth on 2nd October.

### **WILLOW WARBLER - *Phylloscopus trochilus***

The first singing males were heard at Folly Clough on 9th April, Lumb Vale and Strongstry on 10th April and Lea Brook on 12th April. By 21st April there were 4 at Folly Clough, 3 at Piercy and 2 at Fearn Moss with widespread records subsequent to this. There were 6 singing birds in the Limy Valley as far up as Rushbed. On 15th June a pair was showing anxiety at the Fearn Moss site and on 21st, 22nd and 23rd July another pair was feeding fledged young. Passage birds were seen from 18th August in a Waterfoot garden, from 26th August to 30th September at Crawshawbooth, this being the latest sighting.

### **GOLDCREST - *Regulus regulus***

During January 2 fed regularly in a garden at Shawforth. On 31st January a flock of 6 was seen in Staghills Wood. During the nesting-season Goldcrests were present in the coniferous plantations at Grane, Clough Bottom and at Healey Dell. A flock of 6 birds was at Clough Bottom on 12th September. Goldcrests were present there on 17th October and about 10 were present on 26th December. Post-breeding dispersal brought wanderers to other areas. Ones and twos were recorded in a garden in Waterfoot from 7th October to 11th December usually in Cupressus and larches. At Folly Tip there were several on 29th August and 8th September with 15 on 12th October. One was seen at Helmshore on 21st November. At Spring Mill there

were 5 on 17th September, 5 on 17th October and 2 on 26th December. About 6 Goldcrests were present at Clowbridge Plantation from 11th December to the end of the year.

### **SPOTTED FLYCATCHER - *Muscicapa striata***

One had arrived back in Waterfoot on 28th April. In the Crawshawbooth area a male was singing in Fuller's Wood on 20th May; a pair was present at Rhodeson's Mill on 5th June - a site used for 6 years - and were feeding young there on 25th June; another pair was present in Folly Clough on 5th June. On 29th August at least 13 birds were seen in Folly Clough indicating a successful breeding-season. Elsewhere, there were 3 pairs at Calf Hey and two others in Stubbins Nature Area. On passage there were 6 at Blackwood on 28th August, 2 at Lench on 8th September and one at Crawshawbooth on 20th September.

### **PIED FLYCATCHER - *Ficedula hypoleuca***

A male on passage was seen in Bacup Cemetery on 22nd April. On 14th May a pair was nest-building at Rising Bridge. On 19th May a male was singing in Dodbottom Wood. On 2nd June a female was seen in the Crawshawbooth area.

### **LONG-TAILED TIT - *Aegithalos caudatus***

In late winter 2 to 6 birds were seen in Staghills Wood, 2 at Rushbed, 7 at Strongstry and 12 at Townsendfold on 23rd January. A pair was present in The Glen, Waterfoot on several dates from 5th February to 26th March and on 3rd May a nest with young was found, probably a first for this locality. A pair was seen at Townsendfold on 16th February and a pair in Bacup Cemetery on 24th April. On 17th May a pair was present at Wayoh reservoir and on 19th July a flock of at least 9 was recorded there. 2 were at Ravenshore on 21st March and a pair was nest-building at Tip Lodge on 10th April. On 21st August one or more family groups were present along the old railway at Holden Vale. During October small flocks of up to 6 birds, sometimes in mixed flocks with Blue, Great and Coal Tits, were seen along the Irwell Valley from Stacksteads to Waterfoot and in gardens along Booth Road and into the Cowpe Valley. A flock of 14 was seen in Healey Dell on 12th December.

### **COAL TIT - *Parus ater***

Present in all the usual habitats but possibly in smaller numbers than of late. Birds were regular at a peanut feeder in a Waterfoot garden throughout winter and spring up to 4th May. Males were in song on 7th February at Shortclough, 10th April at The Cliffe, Stubbins, 27th April in Waterfoot. Breeding-season presence was noted at Brooks' Woods, Rushbed, Grane, Clough Bottom, S.N.A. and Wayoh reservoir. A pair was back feeding on a larch tree in a garden in Waterfoot on 29th June and occasionally in July and August. Two were regular in the garden from 28th September to the end of the year. Small numbers were present at Whitewell Bottom plantation on 14th August, Townsendfold on 30th September, Clough Bottom on 17th October, Rockcliffe, Wayoh and Grane to December. Coal Tits appeared to be scarce in the Shawforth area where one report said that last year's pair did not show up in the garden and none was seen until 20th December when 2 were present.

### **BLUE TIT - *Parus caeruleus***

A male was in song as early as 1st January in Irwell Vale and several at Shortclough on 7th February. On 17th February a pair was inspecting a nest-box at Townsendfold. A nest-box in Waterfoot contained a nest with 2 eggs on 3rd May and 8 eggs on 11th May. The 8 young were full grown on 7th and 8th June and had fledged by 07.45hrs on 9th June. Post-breeding-season

numbers were said to be good, especially in the Shawforth area with flocks of 12 to 15 and a flock of 15 was seen at Rockcliffe on 28th December.

### **GREAT TIT - *Parus major***

Males were in vigorous song during January and February. Numbers and distribution were very much as usual. Great Tits had returned to a garden feeder by 28th September and then were regular to the end of the year.

### **NUTHATCH - *Sitta europaea***

One was caught and ringed on 24th October in Conference House Wood, Crawshawbooth. One was present at Healey Dell on 18th and 25th December. A nuthatch visited a bird-table at Helmshore, the same site as in 1989.

### **TREECREEPER - *Certhia familiaris***

One was seen in a garden in Haslingden on 30th January and 3 in Staghills Wood on 14th February. In Helmshore, birds were seen on 7th February, 17th March, 28th April (a pair) and 21st November. Treecreepers nested as usual in suitable woodland - 2 pairs were recorded at Healey Dell. On 5th June a pair was feeding young in an alder at Gin Clough, Crawshawbooth. Later in the year one was seen at Helmshore on 21st November and one at Broadclough on 21st November.

### **JAY - *Garrulus glandarius***

Present in the usual numbers along the Irwell Valley from Stubbins to Ewood Bridge and in the Crawshawbooth area, and at Wayoh. Occasional sightings also at Grane - one at Holden Wood on 16th October, and also in Staghills Wood - one at Lea Bank on 10th October. In the Whitworth area 3 at Shawforth on 16th September was a first record for the site. From 1 to 3 Jays were seen regularly at Spring Mill from 12th August to 15th October and 3 were seen at Healey Dell on 12th December.

### **MAGPIE - *Pica pica***

Continues in good numbers in garden and woodland areas - probably fewer on lower slopes of the hills where a shortage of tree nesting-sites brings it into conflict with Carrion Crows. 2 pairs registered on the C.B.C. plot, more usually 3 pairs in past years. On 18th January 6 were feeding on meat scraps in a garden in Waterfoot and were in conflict with 2 Carrion Crows. 11 birds were seen in the usual spring gatherings of a social / sexual nature on 25th February and 24th March in the Waterfoot / Edgeside park area of suburban gardens and parks. A pair was nest-building at Stacksteads on 1st April. On 21st June a family group with 4 or 5 young was present in gardens along Booth Road, Waterfoot. On 16th October 20 were seen at Water. At Spring Mill up to 11 Magpies were seen daily in autumn and winter and a roost at Wallbank had from 25 to 45 birds. On 28th December there were 8 at Osborne Plantation, Stacksteads and 6 were regular in Edgeside Park during this autumn period.

### **JACKDAW - *Corvus monedula***

Increasing steadily in numbers and ready to exploit any possible new nest-sites. Suitable holes for nest-sites would appear to be the main limiting factor. The colony in Ilex Mill chimney consists of 25 to 30 birds and a similar number is to be found in the Waterfoot / Newchurch area. Jackdaws were seen carrying nest-material to chimneys on the Duke of Buccleugh in the centre of Waterfoot and to buildings opposite Trickett's Memorial Gardens. About 14 birds

were present at the old railway goods-yard building at Warth and some nested in a scrap-yard at Lea Brook. On

8th July about 120 were flying round above Constablelee. On 23rd September at least 100 in company with 200 Rooks flew northwest from Stacksteads Tip from 19.00hrs to 19.15hrs. On 31st December 40 Jackdaws were harassing a Sparrowhawk over Waterfoot, some of them diving on to it very closely.

### **ROOK - *Corvus frugilegus***

Counts of the local flock in central Rossendale often approximate 250 - 300 birds whereas in the 1950s and 1960s such counts were more often between 400 and 500. On 5th February 250 with 20 Jackdaws were feeding on manured fields on The Hile. A full census was not carried out but counts of nests for some of the rookeries were: 64 at Rook Hill, 33 at Acre, 30 at Belmont, 18 at Water, 6 at Peersclough and 4 at Heath Hill - i.e. 155 pairs or 310 birds. On 29th June 280 were counted in a mown field on The Hile, this including many young birds of the year. Flocks of about 200 were counted feeding on The Hile on 24th July, 1st and 11th August and 250 on 21st August. Assuming the regular counts of 200 comprised birds mainly from the from the nearby rookeries at Rook Hill and Heath Hill with a combined total of 68 nests this would imply a proportion of 136 adults and 64 young i.e. approximately one surviving young for each pair.

### **CARRION CROW - *Corvus corone corone***

Continues to increase in numbers. The C.B.C. plot registered 8 pairs - the highest total ever and an increase of 2 pairs over last year. Fully adapted to life in parks and gardens and exploiting all available food resources. A pair now regularly visit a garden in Waterfoot to feed on peanuts, grain and sunflower seeds spread on the lawn to attract finches and Collared Doves. Early spring flocking was again noted - 32 on The Hile from 19th to 27th February. Perhaps this is comparable with the social / sexual gatherings of Magpies at a similar time of year and when the colonial corvids, Rooks and Jackdaws, also indulge in their familiar chasing flights. About 300 roost in Brooks' Wood, Crawshawbooth during the winter. Crows flying northwest from Stacksteads Tip at dusk in winter are probably heading for the roost.

### **STARLING - *Sturnus vulgaris***

The usual large flocks were recorded in early spring when presumably continental birds were returning in company with Fieldfares. On 3rd February there were over 200 at Water with about 100 Fieldfares and on 20th March 650 coming in to roost in Folly Clough with 500 Fieldfares. Nesting Starlings were numerous whenever suitable nest-holes occur in buildings. None nested on the C.B.C. plot on The Hile but, during May there was a constant stream of birds to and from the fields on The Hile to carry food to the young. First juveniles were seen fledged on 31st May and 1st June. On 24th July 400 were feeding on a mown meadow and on 1st August 600. These large flocks of adults and immatures seem to disperse or move away fairly soon and flocks of 30 to 70 were more usual later in the year. The tip at Stacksteads still draws feeding birds and 300 were counted there on 22nd September.

### **HOUSE SPARROW - *Passer domesticus***

Numbers and distribution much as usual in scattered colonies of up to 20 birds. On 11th July 20 were feeding on a manure heap at Lench. Also in July, one was taken by a Sparrowhawk from the top of a tree in the garden of a housing estate. On 2nd September a flock of 20 was feeding around poultry sheds at Todd Carr. Sparrows were not seen commonly in a garden in

Booth Road, Waterfoot but one had appeared by 22nd October and there were up to 7 by early November feeding on Pampas Grass seeds and then on bird-table peanuts. One report found House Sparrows to be in groups of up to 20, usually in Hawthorns, at Lomas Lane, Tip Lodge, Loveclough and Lea Bank. Up to 25 birds were counted at Spring Mill during December. A count made in the Constablelee area in winter by Bob Ives found House Sparrows in areas of hawthorns each of which held up to 25 birds.

### **TREE SPARROW - *Passer montanus***

Sadly, all the local colonies now seem to be unoccupied. The only record was of a vagrant bird at Edgeside on 15th December.

### **CHAFFINCH - *Fringilla coelebs***

The winter flock at E.B.S.W. numbered about 40 and on 3rd January there were 20 at a Bacup plantation. Males were in song from 16th February - at least 2 at Townsendfold - and one was still in song at Waterfoot on 28th June. On 11th July a flock of 10 females and immatures was seen at Lench. One report indicated that there were larger numbers than usual at Shawforth with 13 birds in the garden rather than the usual 2 or 3. Up to 8 birds were regularly seen at Spring Mill in autumn and winter. One bird at Tip Lodge had pale blue primaries.

### **BRAMBLING - *Fringilla montifringilla***

Large numbers and many reports in late winter and early spring indicated a big influx this year. In Folly Clough and nearby areas flocks of up to of up to 50 were seen regularly from 14th January to 21st April. A male was in song in Folly Clough on 28th March. There were 40 at Shortclough on 27th March. On 3rd April a flock of 20 was present at Calf Hey and some were in song. On 9th and 10th April 40 were seen in Rawtenstall cemetery and on 14th April 42 at Tip Lodge. Small numbers were seen in the Waterfoot area where there were several with Goldfinches on 28th February and 2 visiting a bird-table on 13th and 14th March. At the Bacup end of the Valley there were 50 at Broadclough on 17th January and, outside our area, a huge flock of about 450 in Todmorden Park (Peter Fyldes). A flock of about 15-20 fed from a bird-table in the Lane Head area of Bacup from 27th March to the end of April. Much smaller numbers were recorded during autumn: 2 females at Clough Bottom on 17th October, 2 in the Cowpe Valley on 23rd November, 2 at Healey on 18th December, 3 at Shawforth on 20th December and a male at Spring Mill on 31st December.

### **GREENFINCH - *Carduelis chloris***

As last year, numbers appeared to be on the low side. The winter flock at a garden bird-feeding centre numbered 6 to 8 instead of the 10 to 15 of 3 or 4 years ago, when larger flocks were also recorded elsewhere. First birds were in song on 1st February at Tong Lane, Bacup, 5th February at Folly Clough and 9th February at Townsendfold. Post-breeding-season flocks were again small, and often only singles or twos were recorded: 16th August 3 at Lench, 17th October 10 at Peersclough, 13th November 5 at Peersclough, up to 6 at Spring Mill from August to December. The winter flock at the garden feeding-centre rose from 3 on 15th November to 6 during December. 6 birds were regular at Tip Lodge rising to 20 in December.

### **GOLDFINCH - *Carduelis carduelis***

Continues to be our most numerous and most reported finch. During late winter and early spring flocks numbering 30 to 60 were recorded throughout the valleys. The flocks sometimes included a few Siskins and Redpolls. Nesting was widespread in gardens, parks and even in

roadside trees. On 6th May a pair was established in the trees along Booth Road, on 9th July a male was in song near Do-It-All in Rawtenstall and on 13th July juveniles were present at Folly Tip. There also appears to be an extension onto the lower hill slopes. A pair above Farm Hill at 900 feet on 20th June registered as an unusual presence on the C.B.C. plot. Pairs were also recorded on the Rooley Moor Road above Alf Kyme's yard and in the trees on the dam of Cowpe reservoir - both between 900 and 1000 feet. On 4th August a family party of 4 was feeding on thistles at 1100 feet on The Hile. Post-breeding-season flocks of 15 to 25 were more usual than the larger numbers the previous winter although a flock of 75+ was in the Plunge area during winter.

### **SISKIN - *Carduelis spinus***

Some large flocks were seen in mid-winter: 60 at Blackwood on 30th January and 17th February and 80 along The Glen, Waterfoot on 10th and 11th February. On 2nd February there were at least 60 at Bonfire Hill and on 8th February there were 20 with 20 Goldfinches at Park Road plantation. There were still 30 at Park Road on 18th March and 50 at Piercy on 1st November. On 14th March a male was in song at Calf Hey reservoir and 2 females were also seen. 9 birds were present on 18th March and some song was heard. A male was also heard singing at Clough Bottom. There was no further evidence of nesting. Flocks were seen from mid-October with 8 on 15th October at Folly Clough, 50 at Calf Hey on 16th October, 20 in a Waterfoot garden birch tree on 28th October, 35 with Goldfinches at Stacksteads on 29th October and 15 at Park Road on 31st October. Numbers declined in November though there were still 30 at Folly Tip on 7th November. Later in the month flocks of 10 to 20 were more usual at Calf Hey, Stacksteads, Park Road and Shawforth. In December only a few were seen - small numbers in a mixed flock with Goldfinches at Park Road on 16th December.

### **LINNET - *Carduelis cannabina***

A pair had returned to The Glen, Waterfoot by 30th March and was still present on 10th April. There was a spring return of 6 birds at Tip Lodge football field on 9th April and 16 at the same place on 24th April. A pair had returned to the C.B.C. plot on 22nd April and one was carrying nest-material on 5th May. 2 pairs were registered on the plot. A pair was present at Pinner Clough on 17th June and several pairs were seen during a Club ramble to Cheesden on 21st June. 3 pairs were found on Cribden Moor and on 1st July a pair was present in the Plantation at Clowbridge. 4 or 5 pairs nested at Cowm and young birds were seen in August. Pairs were also seen at Alden, Grane and in Cribden Clough. Some large flocks built up later in the year suggesting a successful nesting-season. On 16th August there was a flock of 15 at Lench, on 24th August 5 at Shawclough, on 28th and 29th August 30 at Spring Mill, on 12th and 17th September 40 at Clowbridge, on 11th September 26 at Syke reservoir and a flock of about 20 was present near Lane Head, Bacup from 18th September for about 3 weeks. These figures suggest a passage movement reaching a peak in mid-September. Regular counts at Clowbridge gave 4 on 2nd August, 40 on 19th September, 21 on 25th September and 1 on 3rd October.

### **TWITE - *Carduelis flavirostris***

On 6th March 23 flew north over The Hile. One was seen on Brandwood Moor on 10th April and 6 at Waugh's Well on 12th April and one at Grane on 14th April. In the Whitworth area 2 or 3 pairs nested on the hillside above Whitworth Square and 12 pairs in fenced tree-planting behind Facit. A colony such as this is reminiscent of the days when Twites were more numerous. A flock of at least 50 was present above Gander Brow, Shawforth on 20th July - a good breeding record. The nesting habitat above Lee Quarry was occupied and birds

were heard calling here on 4th June. Later in the year flocks of 14, 18 and 2 were counted between this area and the Rooley Moor Road on 13th July. There were also indications of good breeding success in the area north of The Hile. Flocks of 20 to 30 were regular along Coal Pits Lane from The Brex to Shawclough from 12th August to 11th September. On 12th September there were 11 at Clough Bottom, on 23rd September 20 at Stacksteads Tip and on 24th September 16 and 20 at Low Head. There was some indication of possible breeding at Hutch Bank Quarry where 2 females were present on 2nd May and at Cowm reservoir where at least one bird was present on 22nd May. These figures suggest an improvement after the decline during the last 10 years.

### **REDPOLL - *Carduelis flammea***

A flock of 40 at Blackwood on 4th January was one of the largest for some time and may have remained in the area for some time as 40 were also recorded in The Glen, Waterfoot on 5th March. During this period a few were also seen in mixed flocks with Goldfinches and Siskins in Park Road plantation on 8th and 21st February. 6 were seen in The Glen as late as 10th April and some remained through spring and summer so possibly nested. Few records later in the year. Some were heard calling in flight over Folly Tip on 19th November.

### **COMMON CROSSBILL - *Loxia curvirostra***

A pair had returned to last year's nest site at Calf Hey by 14th March and the female was seen carrying nest-material, but there were no further developments. One was heard calling in Plunge Valley on 2nd July.

### **BULLFINCH - *Pyrrhula pyrrhula***

More records than usual this year. A pair was seen at Holcombe on 1st January. In March 3 pairs were located along the Ogden Brook in Helmsore and a pair at Irwell Vale. On 21st March a male was present at Holden Vale. During April a pair was seen at The Cliffe, Stubbins, 3 males and a female at Tip Lodge and a pair built a nest in Waterfoot. The nest was, unfortunately, deserted due to disturbance. On 11th June pairs were seen at Folly Tip and Gin Clough, Crawshawbooth and on 20th August a family party was at Folly Tip. A male visited a garden in Waterfoot on 4th December.

### **REED BUNTING - *Emberiza schoeniclus***

A male was in song at Holden Wood on 14th March and a pair was present. At E.B.S.W. a male was singing on 10th April and on the C.B.C. plot one on 22nd April. 2 pairs were registered on the plot, one less than last year. A male was at Balladen on 3rd May and 2 at Syke reservoir, Whitworth on 6th May. 2 males at Clowbridge on 1st July were noted as the only sightings there. Singing males were present at Cheesden and near Clog Lane, Haslingden. At Spring Mill a single male was seen on 8th August and 20th November, 2 males and a female on 28th December. A male on 29th December then a pair on 31st December were feeding in a garden overlooking Spring Mill. A male was present at Folly Clough on 26th August. These records indicate a reduction in numbers of Reed Buntings recorded in Rossendale.