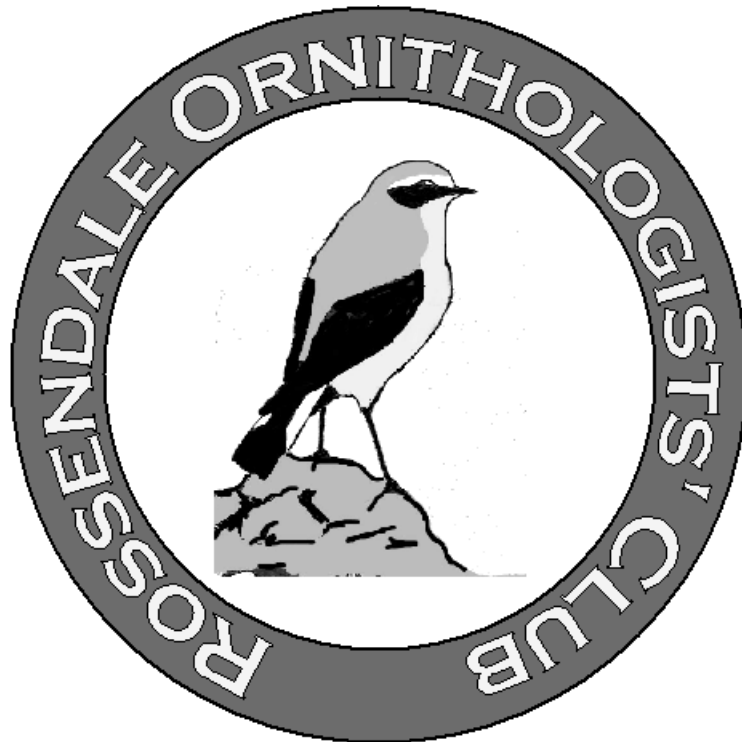

Rossendale Ornithologists' Club

Bird Report



1995

LITTLE GREBE - *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

One was present at Shortclough from 25th February and a pair from 1st April with 3 on 8th April. A pair was nest-building on 21st April and one other bird was also present. On 1st May 2 pairs were present. On 27th May there were 2 apparently unattached grebes in separate areas of the reservoir. 2 adults were present from 17th to 29th June and one on 17th July. There was no indication of successful breeding. At least one pair was at Syke reservoir from 26th March through to late August. 2 juveniles were seen there on 16th July. A nest with 5 eggs was found on 11th June at Holden Vale Flash. Later, 2 were at Holden vale Flash on 25th July and one at A.M.R. on 21st August. Singles were seen at Wallbank Lodge on several dates in November.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE - *Podiceps cristatus*

A single grebe was seen at Holden Wood from 22nd January to 2nd March and a pair from 13th March. There were records of this pair at Holden Wood until 16th July but no indication of nesting. A separate individual was also recorded at various times during this period on the nearby Ogden Reservoir and at Calf Hey. Elsewhere a pair was seen at Shortclough on 25th April and 2 young birds were seen there on 29th June. At Spring Mill 2 adults were present from 23rd June to 21st July then a single bird on several occasions to 1st October. At Clowbridge singles were seen on 8th January and 18th April with a pair on 23rd April. A pair and a single were recorded at Wayoh on 2nd April; 5 birds were there on 19th June and 3 on 3rd December.. A single was at A.M.R. on 18th June and an adult and 2 immatures were there on 16th July.. 2 immatures were at Clowbridge on 18th September then 1 until 23rd December. There were no records of young birds anywhere - probably a result of the drought lowering water-levels.

BLACK-NECKED GREBE - *Podiceps nigricollis*

One was present at Calf Hey on 19th and 20th August, probably the first local record since the one at A.M.R. on 28th August 1983.

CORMORANT - *Phalacrocorax carbo*

A single bird was present at Ogden reservoir on 22nd January and throughout February and at Holden Wood on 1st March.

LITTLE EGRET - *Egretta garzetta*

A bird, probably of this species was seen flying over Haslingden Golf Course on 20th May. It was described as an all-white heron with trailing legs. There have been several records of Little Egrets in Lancashire this year.

GREY HERON - *Ardea cinerea*

Records were numerous this year, occurring in every month. On 31st March one was seen carrying a stick at Reedsholme. On 12th March there were 7 nests, some containing young birds, at Norden, just outside our boundary. This heronry has developed from birds breeding at the Three Owls Bird Sanctuary. On 10th June 2 immatures and an adult were seen at Shortclough. On 25th July there were 10 at Shortclough reservoir including a large proportion of immatures. Immature birds were also seen at Jack Lodge and in the Cowpe valley in September and October. Up to 7 birds were seen at Spring Mill in August.

MUTE SWAN - *Cygnus olor*

An adult was present at New Line from 5th January. In April it suffered an attack by a dog and was moved to safer waters at Cowm reservoir by RSPCA officers. It was seen there for the remainder of the year. On 16th February an immature was present at Clowes Lodge where a captive pair was once kept. On 5th November an adult and an immature flew over Waterfoot to the southeast and they were seen at New Line on 12th November. The immature disappeared towards the end of November and only an adult was present at New Line to the end of the year.

WHOOPER SWAN - *Cygnus cygnus*

There were no records for the early part of the year but 2 adults were at A.M.R. from 12th November to the end of the year. There were 2 at Clowbridge on 16th November.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE - *Anser brachyrhynchus*

In late winter the usual flocks were recorded flying over Rossendale. On 8th January 15 flew to the southwest over Crawshawbooth, on 14th January 90 flew west over Reedsholme and on 24th February 300 flew west over Stacksteads and Waterfoot at 11.30hrs. The only record for the second half of the year was a flock of about 150 flying west over Calf Hey on 19th November.

GREYLAG GOOSE - *Anser anser*

70 - 80 flew to the northwest over Spring Mill on 15th January. The small number of feral birds continue to be seen. On 3rd April 3 flew up the Irwell valley over Stacksteads and on 18th June 3 were with the Canada Geese at Ogden. Two were present at Ogden with the Canadas on 20th March and then throughout the rest of the year.

CANADA GOOSE - *Branta canadensis*

Now regular on most waters in Rossendale with maximum numbers of 42 at Holden Wood in late July and August. At Clough Bottom a pair was present on 12th April and a nest with 5 eggs found on 23rd April. The nest had 3 eggs on 14th May and the pair was present with 2 young on 7th and 24th June. At Ogden reservoir there were 3 pairs on 14th May. Nests were built and eggs laid but all were taken. On 18th June 11 were present at Holden Wood with 2 half-grown goslings. On Isle of Man lodge a Pair was present on 9th April and on 15th June the pair had 5 half-grown young. Up to 11 were regular in the Clowbridge - Shortclough area and on 7th May 2 at Clowbridge were thought to be nesting. On 18th June there were 14 at A.M.R. with 2 half-grown young. Nests were also found at Orrell Moss and Green Howarth. At Spring Mill Canada Geese were present throughout the year with a maximum count of 29 on 20th August. Presence was also recorded at Cowm, New Line and Lee Quarry.

BRENT GOOSE - *Branta bernicla*

One of the dark-bellied race was present with 27 Canada Geese and 2 Greylags at Holden Wood on 10th and 17th December. Its origin is unknown and, like the Greylags, it may have been an escaped or feral bird.

MANDARIN - *Aix galericulata*

A male was present at Ewood Bridge in April. WIGEON *Anas penelope* A pair was at Calf Hey on 5th October. 2 males and a female were at Spring Mill on 30th November and a female at Cowm on 16th December.

GADWALL - *Anas strepera*

A pair was present at New Line from 2nd to 10th December.

TEAL - *Anas crecca*

Numbers were again low with no mid-winter records. At A.M.R. 2 or 3 birds were present from 2nd to 16th April and a single male on 14th May and 16th July. Post-breeding arrivals began on 17th July when 3 flew in to Clowbridge reservoir at dusk. At A.M.R. there were 2 on 13th August and 5 from 21st August to 8th October. During the same period there were 4 on Holden Wood, 3 on Calf Hey, 6 at Syke reservoir and 3 at Spring Mill. There was an influx at A.M.R. towards the end of the year with 30 on 14th November and 43 on 10th December.

CINNAMON TEAL - *Anas cyanoptera*

A male was present for the third year on the Irwell near Newhallhey. On 27th April it was seen in the company of a female Mallard. It was noted again on 20th May. a male seen on 30th and 31st March at Clowbridge with a female Mallard was probably the same bird.

MALLARD - *Anas platyrhynchos*

Mid-winter numbers at A.M.R. were rather low - 15 on 22nd January and 30 on 19th February compared with a count of 85 last year. During this period there were counts of 30 at New Line, 18 at Lench lodges and 13 at Ogden; also, Mallard were numerous along the rivers. Nesting was again widespread. Females with groups of ducklings were recorded at E.B.S.W., Ogden, Shortclough, Loveclough, Reedsholme, A.M.R., New Line, Wayoh and on the River Whitewell at Waterfoot. Numbers in autumn and winter flocks were higher - 84 at A.M.R. on 10th December, 40 at Calf Hey on 18th November, 75 at Spring Mill on 29th October, 34 at New Line on 26th November, 20 at Greens lodges on 22nd October and 68 at Spring Mill on 27th December. The drought produced low water levels and more exposed shallows, attracting an unusual flock of 12 Mallard to Cowpe reservoir.

PINTAIL - *Anas acuta*

A female was at Spring Mill from 10th to 27th September.

POCHARD - *Aythya ferina*

Continuing the trend from last year, numbers were low during the mid-winter period - 4 at Shortclough in January and February, 2 at Holden Wood on 15th January and a single on 19th February, 2 at Clowbridge in March. Number were higher in autumn and winter - 20 at A.M.R. on 14th November, 5 at Cowm on 26th November, 7 at Wayoh on 3rd December and 6 at Spring Mill on 10th December. At Shortclough the first 3 were seen on 27th October with a maximum of 5 on 16th December. There were 4 at Clowbridge on 10th December.

RING-NECKED DUCK - *Aythya collaris*

The male bird was again present throughout the year. It was recorded at Holden Wood on 15th January, at Shortclough on 3rd April, at Calf Hey on 1st and 14th May, at Shortclough on 10th June, at Calf Hey on 11th and 18th June, at Holden Wood on 18th June and at Calf Hey on 13th October and at Shortclough on 27th October.

TUFTED DUCK - *Aythya fuligula*

Recorded in every month of the year. A flock of 12 was at Holden Wood on 15th and 30th January and on 15th there were also 8 birds on nearby Ogden reservoir. 3 pairs were at Holden

Wood on 2nd March, 2 males and 4 females at Ogden on 24th March and at Holden Wood on 3rd May. On 11th June there were 3 males at Holden Wood and on 17th June a single male on Ogden. On 18th June there were 3 males and a female at Holden Wood. The preponderance of males suggests the possibility of incubating females nearby but there were no signs of successful breeding. By 16th July a flock of 11 birds had re-formed then 12 on Holden Wood on 12th August and 11 at Calf Hey on 10th September and at Holden Wood on 8th October. Up to 3 birds were at Spring Mill until June and then returned again from 14th October. During November numbers fell to 4 or 5 and to 1 or 2 by the end of the year. There was a similar presence of numbers from 2 to 6 at Shortclough with 2 pairs recorded on 6th May, 2 males and a female on 10th June and 1 male on 11th June. Tufted Duck were present at Shortclough in every month but no breeding occurred. Highest counts were in October with 25 on 8th. At Clowbridge there were 3 birds during April and a pair in May. A flock of 14 was seen there on 20th October. Elsewhere there were 3 pairs at the R.C.C. lodge at Townsendfold on 5th April, 8 at Wayoh on 2nd April, 8 at A.M.R. on 10th September and 31 there on 8th October and a single on 10th December.

GOLDENEYE - *Bucephala clangula*

Numbers were noticeably lower than in most recent years. As usual the most favoured area was at the Clowbridge - Shortclough reservoirs with 3 to 6 birds from January to 30th April. On 26th February there were 2 males and 2 females at Clowbridge and on 19th March 3 males and 3 females. On both occasions courtship activity was noted. Clough Bottom reservoir was also favoured during this period with records from 20th February to 23rd April. Maxima of 7 on 24th February, 5 on 26th February and 4 on 13th March were similar to those at Clowbridge. At Spring Mill up to 7 were present (18th February) with one present until 19th May. A female had returned by 29th October and up to 6 were present in December. There were no records from the Grane reservoirs during this period. Numbers in autumn and early winter were even lower. A single female was at A.M.R. on 13th August and possibly the same bird there on 21st August, 3rd and 10th September. A single female was at Cowm reservoir on 26th November and a male at A.M. R. on 14th November. This was a very poor autumn passage salvaged to some extent by the arrival of 6 males at Cowm reservoir on 10th December and 3 females on 17th December.

SMEW - *Mergus albellus*

An immature male was at Cowm reservoir on 9th and 10th December and probably the same bird at Clowbridge on 17th and 24th December. This is the second winter in which Smews have been recorded in Rossendale. In last year's report it was suggested that the "redhead" seen in autumn and winter of 1994 was a first for Rossendale. Since then Ken Spencer has informed us that there was in fact a previous record of a female or immature at Clough Bottom reservoir on 28th December 1951 and (probably the same bird) at Clowbridge on 2nd January 1952.

GOOSANDER - *Mergus merganser*

In late winter and spring numbers increased at A.M.R. from 12 on 22nd January to 48 on 15th March with the latest being a female on 16th April. At Clough Bottom numbers were between 5 and 12 during the same period. The maximum of 12 on 12th March was similar in time to that of 48 at A.M.R. Spring Mill had 35 on 25th February and 25 (all "redheads") on 18th March. 2 to 6 were recorded at Ogden reservoir with late dates of 2 males on 3rd May and 2 females on 11th May. Goosanders were also recorded at Shortclough - 3 on 4th February and Jack Lodge - a pair on 1st April. In the autumn there were 5 at A.M.R. by 3rd September,

26 on 8th October and 36 on 29th November (GM recorder in BirdWatching). Numbers fell to 5 or less in December. There were good numbers at Spring Mill in December with 32 on 10th and 58 on 16th. Also in December there were 3 on Jack Lodge on 14th, a pair on the Irwell on 17th and a maximum of 25 at Clowbridge in December. Two males were at Cowm on 26th November. 15 flew north over Crawshawbooth on 24th November. 5 birds were on the Irwell at Irwell Vale on 20th December.

HEN HARRIER - *Circus cyaneus*

A ring-tail was over Edgerton Moss on 22nd May. A male was reported over Rooley Moor on 13th November in the Greater Manchester report in December's BirdWatching.

SPARROWHAWK - *Accipiter nisus*

During late winter and early spring one was regular over the Waterfoot area (11 sightings between 6th January and 13th March). Regular presence during the nesting season was noted at Helmsore, H.M.T.C., Reedsholme (nest 30th April), Crawshawbooth, Waterfoot, Stacksteads, Staghills, Plunge, Marl Pits, Grane. Post-breeding Sparrowhawks were seen in many parts of Rossendale. On 10th September one made an unsuccessful attack on a Blackbird in the tennis courts in front of B.R.G.S. Possibly the same bird hunted through

suburban gardens nearby. At Spring Mill Sparrowhawks were seen all year and a nest in Whitworth had 2 chicks remaining from an original 6 on 3rd June.

COMMON BUZZARD - *Buteo buteo*

There were 2 records of birds on passage, both for the Grane area - one on 9th May over Holden Wood and one over Deep Clough on 27th August.

KESTREL - *Falco tinnunculus*

In January and February singles were seen at Stacksteads, The Hile, Bacup, Shawforth, and Grane. On 12th March pairs were present at Lee Quarry and on The Brex and 2 birds were hunting over H.M.T.C.. At Higher Hollinbank a male was present from 24th March and a pair had formed by 6th April when mating occurred. They nested in an old barn from which it is thought they drove out the resident pair of Little Owls. There were young present by 26th June and 2, possibly juveniles, were seen in the air at Musbury Tor on 6th August. At the site on the mill near Crawshawbooth one was in the nest-hole on 4th March and again on 1st, 3rd and 27th April and on 9th June. Two young were on the parapet on 17th June and 3 on 2nd July. In the Stubbins Nature Area one flew from the viaduct on 14th April. One pair was seen occasionally between the C.B.C. plot and Bacup Recreation Ground but apart from this the C.B.C. plot, which usually registers one or two pairs, was deserted. Two of the sites from which Kestrels hunted over The Hile were unoccupied - that on B.R.G.S. and the one at Shawclough. Eric Ward saw no Kestrels in this area between 21st May and 27th August. BTO News for January - February 1996 said "We have evidence that shows a general decline in Kestrel numbers". Elsewhere, there was breeding-season presence at Clowbridge, Lee Quarry, H.M.T.C., Grane, Crawshawbooth, Sherfin, Irwell Vale, Mitchell House and Spring Mill. Post-breeding records included one at Clough Bottom on 31st August, a female near The Brex on 22nd and 24th September, a female over H.M.T.C. on 23rd September and 26th October, one over The Hile / Brex area on 12th and 26th October and 9th November, one at lower Plunge on 5th October, a male at Calf Hey on 13th October and one at Broadclough on 24th December.

MERLIN - *Falco columbarius*

3 pairs were present in Rossendale and breeding took place at 2 sites producing a total of 5 young. Post-breeding singles were seen over Brandwood Moor on 10th October and an immature female at Spring Mill on 7th and 8th October. On 9th November one provided a spectacular view flying above a towering column of 1,000 Starlings which had formed a defensive pack over The Hile. The Merlin flew off to the southeast without making an attack. Outside our boundary but nevertheless of interest was a record of an urban Merlin on St. Matthew's Church, Burnley on 25th November (KGS). On 18th December one was seen over Shawforth and on 20th December one flew from Cowpe Moss to the Cowpe valley.

PEREGRINE - *Falco peregrinus*

During February there were several sightings at Grane and on 25th February one flew down the Irwell valley over Waterfoot. 3 (or possibly 4) pairs attempted breeding in Rossendale. All 3 failed due to desertion caused by disturbance or nest-robbing. At one site one of the adults was shot. Just outside our area a pair bred and 4 pulli were ringed in June. On 19th and 29th April one was seen in north Rossendale and on 8th October one over Clough Bottom. Singles were seen over Knowl Moor on 5th November and Clowbridge on 10th December.

RED GROUSE - *Lagopus lagopus scoticus*

On 22nd January a pair was seen on Cowpe Moss and 3 on Knowl Moor. The pair on Cowpe Moss was also seen on 26th February. Later in this general area, one was calling on Scout Moor on 24th April and a pair was seen at Ding Quarry on 5th May. Elsewhere there was a pair on Haslingden Moor on 12th February and on 12th April. A female and 8 newly-hatched young were seen at Knowl Moor on 18th June and there was a covey of 15 to 20 on Musbury Heights on 28th August. These birds could have flown in from elsewhere as a result of disturbance in the grouse shooting season beginning 12th August.

GREY PARTRIDGE - *Perdix perdix*

On 18th February a pair was seen at Nutshaw Hill. On 11th April several birds were calling in the Clowbridge / Crown Point area. There were records of at least one pair in the Clowbridge area from 25th April to 26th June. Elsewhere, the usual pair was present in the area south of Stacksteads, a pair was seen at the head of Lench Clough on 12th April, one was on Haslingden Moor on 4th July and a single was seen at Musbury on 13th June and several days afterwards. Reports of coveys later in the season were 3 on The Hile on 5th and 17th September, 6 above Rooley Moor Road towards Lee Quarry on 21st September, 10 on The Brex on 21st October, 17 on Rooley Moor on 22nd October, 7 at Spring Mill on 19th November, and 5 at Hades Hall, Shawforth on 26th December. There were 10 on Nutshaw Hill during December.

PHEASANT - *Phasianus colchicus*

There were a surprising number of records this year. There were regular sightings at Higher Hollinbank, Musbury from 15th February to April and May (JR). One was heard at Grane on 4th May. Pheasants were also seen regularly at H.M.T.C. during March and April. At least two farmers in the area are known to rear them for shooting. A male was at Irwell Vale on 14th April and at Clough Head during May and June. About 6 were seen at New Laithe, Musbury on 29th April and a male on 2nd May. On 25th May one was calling at Clowbridge, on 18th June one calling at Clough Bottom and in July a calling bird was heard at Loveclough. Several were heard on 27th October at Higher Ridge near H.M.T.C. This is the most regular presence

of Pheasants that we have recorded in Rossendale. Apart from at H.M.T.C. it may be that Pheasants are being reared and released in other parts of the area. Several of the males at Higher Hollinbank lacked the white neck ring which may support this idea.

MOORHEN - *Gallinula chloropus*

Records of presence, often with mention of successful breeding, at New Line, Lench Lodges, along the River Whitewell, Holden Vale Flash, Holden Wood reservoir, Calf Hey reservoir, Clowbridge, Shortclough, Loveclough, H.M.T.C., Higher Mill (Museum) Lodge, Spring Mill, Cowm, Healey Lodge, Wallbank Lodge.

COOT - *Fulica atra*

One had returned to Shortclough by 17th February. There were 3 on 21st April and an established pair from 1st May. One was sitting on 27th May and on 10th June the pair was seen with 5 young. On 17th July one adult and 2 large young were seen. At Holden Wood 2 were present on 2nd March and 4 on 16th April then 2 on 14th May and 1 on 24th July and 13th August. There were no signs of successful nesting, possibly as a result of the great fall in water-level during the drought. 2 pairs were present on Healey Lodge from February to late June with no firm evidence of breeding. On 11th June a pair was seen with 5 young along the River Limy at Crawshawbooth. Was this also the result of the drought causing Coots to seek other habitats away from reservoirs? The latest sighting at Shortclough was on 3rd September.

OYSTERCATCHER - *Haematopus ostralegus*

3 were present at A.M.R. on 19th March and Oystercatchers were heard calling there and at Clowbridge on 2nd April. Call were also heard at Cowpe reservoir on 30th April and 6th May. 2 were at Spring Mill on 15th June. These were presumably birds on spring passage, one at Spring Mill on 15th August was the only post-breeding record.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER - *Charadrius dubius*

A pair bred in the Grane area. They had 4 eggs on 3rd June and one large young bird was seen on 6th July. During autumn passage 2 were at A.M.R. on 5th August.

RINGED PLOVER - *Charadrius hiaticula*

During autumn passage one was with Dunlins at A.M.R. on 16th July and 4 on 13th August.

DOTTEREL - *Charadrius morinellus*

The spring passage brought one to Great Hameldon on 2nd May, one to Haslingden Moor on 4th May, 8 to Knowl Moor on 8th May, one to Nutshaw Hill, Clowbridge on 11th May and 6 on Oswaldtwistle Moor on 18th May.

GOLDEN PLOVER - *Pluvialis apricaria*

The early movement noted during recent years was repeated. There were 7 on Haslingden Moor on 8th January, about 40 on Cowpe Moss on 14th and 15th January. On 12th February there were 36 on Haslingden Moor. On 18th and 19th February flocks of 18 and 8 were seen on Cowpe Moss. A pair had taken up territory here on 26th February. On 19th March 4 groups of 4 were seen scattered over Knowl Moor and Cowpe Moss - all in winter plumage. They were possibly birds of the northern race as 8 northern were seen on 2nd April and there were also 10 of unspecified race on Knowl Moor. A male, apparently of the northern race, was seen at Haslingden Moor on 3rd May. Two pairs had settled on Cowpe Moss by 9th April and a

nest with 4 eggs was found on 30th April (R. Ives). On 21st May there were thought to be 3 or 4 pairs on Cowpe Moss and on 23rd May an anxious male was located. On 7th July none were seen or heard during a walk over Cowpe Moss which was very dry by this time. 2 pairs bred at Knowl Moor and one pair on Wet Mo ss. The male of a pair which nested unsuccessfully at Haslingden Moor had the characters of the northern race. The autumn passage brought 1 to A.M.R. on 18th August, 9 to Cowpe Moss on 28th October and 26 on 26th November.

LAPWING - *Vanellus vanellus*

A small flock was regular at Holden Wood through January and February with 70 on 30th January. Another observer reported a flock present all winter to the west of the Haslingden bypass at Rising Bridge. On 11th January 5 males had made an early return to The Hile. On 19th February there were 90 at A.M.R., 30 at Holden Wood with a few displaying males, 10 at Cowpe reservoir and 7 at Clough Bottom. On 24th February a flock of 50 circled over and alighted on the fields between The Brex and Bacup Recreation Ground and on 25th February there were 30 on Seat Naze. On 26th February there were 30 at Clowbridge. On 21st March 3 males were seen in flight display on the C.B.C. plot which was eventually to register 10 pairs. This figure is slightly down after the last 2 years (11 and 12 pairs). Nesting appeared to be later than usual. The earliest, which had 4 eggs on 13th April, was crushed by a tractor on 19th April. Repeat clutches in May were more successful. A group of 4 pairs in the northwest corner of the plot were all showing anxiety on 7th June and at least one immature was seen on 28th June. It was still present on 30th June but all the adults had made an early departure. Elsewhere, 4 males were displaying on Brex Heights on 12th March, 5 birds were present near the Farmers' Glory on 16th March, a pair was seen at Peersclough and the female was sitting on 8th April, a pair was present on Whinberry Naze on 9th April, pairs at Alden on 11th April and at Goodshaw Hill on 23rd April, 3 pairs at Clowbridge / Waggoners on 25th April, 4 pairs at Holden Wood on 14th May, 6 pairs at Haslingden Moor, 4 pairs at Sand Beds and one pair at Cribden, a pair on H.M.T.C. on 20th May, 2 pairs on the B.B.S. plot at Stonefold on 10th June. One report said that it had been a poor year for Lapwings at the northern end of the Whitworth valley with none on Moss Moor. A first flock of 7 was seen on The Hile on 13th June and 11 at Clough Bottom on 18th June. Flocks built up quickly - 80 at Clough Bottom on 30th June, 20 at Holden Wood and 200 at A.M.R. on 16th July. By 13th August there were 80 at Holden Wood, 100 at Ogden and 200 at A.M.R. Cowpe reservoir had 36 on 21st September and 45 on 15th October. Nesting activity finished earlier than usual, possibly because of the summer drought, but good use was made of the muddy margins of the dwindling reservoirs. Numbers declined towards the end of the year - 16 at Cowpe reservoir on 1st November and 50 at A.M.R. on 10th December.

DUNLIN - *Calidris alpina*

Two birds at Clowbridge on 5th January appear to fit the pattern of what K.G. Spencer (The Status and Distribution of Birds in Lancashire) calls "a curious tendency to appear in ones and twos on the coldest days of mid-winter". Other examples are quoted in Rossendale Birds (E. Ward 1988). No Dunlins were seen at Haslingden - Oswaldtwistle Moor but 1 was at Wet Moss on 19th May. During the nesting season a pair was recorded on Cowpe Moss on 30th April and on 21st May. 1 flew over Syke reservoir on 7th May. A single was also seen on Knowl Moor on 21st May. Two on passage were at A.M.R. on 16th July with 1 on 6th August. 3 were at Spring Mill on 23rd August with 2 there on 24th - 27th August. Another mid-winter visit brought 3 to Clowbridge in December..

JACK SNIPE - *Lymnocryptes minimus*

One at Syke reservoir on 3rd December had left by 15th December.

COMMON SNIPE - *Gallinago gallinago*

On 12th February 2 or 3 birds on Haslingden Moor were probably on passage. 13 were at Syke reservoir on 18th February and 11 on 25th February. The C.B.C. plot had one on 29th March and one on 2nd May but no drumming or other indications of nesting. One was put up from a pond at H.M.T.C. on 12th March and 2nd April. One drumming on 10th June on the B.B.S. plot at Stonefold was the only record received of a drumming male, a sad commentary on the present status. One was heard calling on 30th April on the Rooley Moor Road above Cowpe and 2 were present on Chapel Hill on 18th April. A displaying bird was seen at Syke reservoir on 7th and 27th May. The autumn passage brought 10 to A.M.R. on 13th August and 13 on 21st August, favourable conditions being provided by the large expanse of mud exposed by the summer drought. 17 were seen at Syke reservoir on 19th August, 25 on 12th November and 43 on 3rd December. In October and November singles, 2s and 3s were recorded on Brandwood Moor, The Hile, Wheathead, Musbury, A.M.R., Knowl Moor, Clowbridge, Sand Beds and a larger group of 28 on Knowl Moor on 28th October. As last year Syke reservoir attracted a large number - 41 on 5th December.

WOODCOCK - *Scolopax rusticola*

Few records this year. In February singles were present on Knowl Moor and at Clowbridge and one also on Knowl Moor on 19th March. One was flushed from Clowbridge plantation on 10th April. In mid-November one was seen at Grane and 2 were flushed at Spring Mill on 19th. There were 3 at E.B.S.W. on 27th December.

CURLEW - *Numenius arquata*

2 were calling in flight over Spring Mill on 25th February but the main return movement took place during the second week in March. One flew over Musbury on 8th March then there was a big influx on 13th March when there were 14 at Clough Bottom and 9 on The Hile. On 21st March there were 30 at Clough Bottom and 3 over The Brex. From April to June pairs and birds in display flights were seen at Clough Bottom (2 or 3 pairs), Jack Lodge, Clowbridge, Stonefold B.B.S. plot (2 pairs), Spring Mill, Cowpe Moss, Hoddlesden Moor (3 pairs), Grane, Haslingden Moor (1 pair), Holcombe Moor, Musbury (1 pair), Sand Beds (2 pairs), Cowpe Moss and Buckden. A westward movement was noted over Loveclough in July with a maximum group of 5. Movement towards the coast was noted on 21st August when there were 3 at A.M.R. , on 31st August when 2 flew to the west over The Hile and on 2nd September when there were 4 at A.M.R.

REDSHANK - *Tringa totanus*

One had returned to the Clough Bottom area by 10th March. A pair was present in the Clowbridge area from 19th March and there were records for this area during April and May (a pair at Clowbridge reservoir on 7th and 8th May) and 2 adults on 12th June. One was at Cheesden on 9th April and a pair with young at Knowl Moor on 18th June. One was heard calling at Loveclough on 16th July. At Spring Mill singles were seen on 3 dates in April. 2 were at Syke reservoir on 27th April and 8th May. Elsewhere, one was present at Hameldon on 7th May, one at A.M.R. on 14th May and 18th June, and one at Calf Hey on 18th June.

Later in the year one was at Calf Hey on 9th November and one was present at Cowm reservoir in late November and December. One also at Clowbridge on 5th to 12th November.

GREENSHANK - *Tringa nebularia*

One calling over Crawshawbooth flying north on 6th April, 2 calling at Clowbridge on 10th April. 2 were at Spring Mill on 15th July and 1 was calling and flying south over Crawshawbooth on 11th August. One was seen at Ogden reservoir on 30th and 31st August and again on 8th September.

WOOD SANDPIPER - *Tringa glareola*

Singles were recorded at A.M.R. on 21st August and at Holden Wood on 28th and 29th October. One was on the River Ogden at Irwell Vale on 27th December.

COMMON SANDPIPER - *Actitis hypoleucos*

One at Spring Mill on 22nd April was the first record this year. On 23rd April 2 had returned to Clowbridge and one to Clough Bottom. A pair had returned to Cowpe reservoir on 30th April. By 1st May there were 3 pairs at Clowbridge. Three territories were defined and 2 nests found. Nest A had 4 eggs on 25th May. On 8th June there were 3 eggs - one chipping. On 11th June the nest contained one dead chick. Nest B had 4 eggs on 12th June, 2 eggs on 26th June and had been destroyed by 11th July (R. Ives). At Clough Bottom there were 3 birds on 5th May, a pair on 18th June and 3 on 30th June. At Grane reservoirs there were 2 at Holden Wood and a pair on Ogden on 3rd May and 9th May, 2 at Holden Wood and one at Calf Hey on 14th May, one at Ogden on 9th June, a pair and a newly-fledged chick on 12th June, 2 at Holden Wood and 2 at Calf Hey on 18th June and 2 at Holden Wood on 16th July. A pair was present throughout the season at Spring Mill. On 4th July one was with fledged young at Cowm reservoir. The latest date was one at Holden Wood on 8th October.

TURNSTONE - *Arenaria interpres*

There were records of singles at A.M.R. on 13th August and at Spring Mill on 16th August to 2nd September (an immature female).

BLACK-HEADED GULL - *Larus ridibundus*

In late winter counts between 600 and 800 were usual at Stacksteads Tip. About 500 were also present on Fearn Moss playing fields on 22nd January, 100 at New Line on 29th January and 200 at Holden Wood on 19th February. By 23rd February most had departed from Stacksteads Tip with only 10 to 15 counted on the morning flight to the Tip. There were 30 on Cowpe reservoir on 26th February. Numbers dwindled in early March and there were none at Stacksteads on 9th March. On 10th and 11th March 5 flew east up the Irwell valley towards the Tip on the morning flight. On 10th March, however, there were 400 at dusk on Clowbridge reservoir and on 19th March 17 at Holden Wood. The latest were 2 at A.M.R. on 16th April, one at Ewood Bridge lodge on 28th April and one at Wallbank on 29th April. The usual wanderers during the nesting season included one at E.B.S.W. on 20th May and several at Holden Wood on 14th May. Returning Black-headed Gulls began to trickle in from early June - the first 3 on Fearn Moss on 11th June, 2 at Spring Mill on 11th June, 2 at Clowbridge on 12th June and 3 at Holden Wood on 18th June. The first large flocks began to arrive in early July - 42 on Spring Mill on 4th, 88 adults and 2 immatures there on 12th, 131 on 18th and 152 on 30th, 50 at A.M.R. on 16th, 50 at Holden Wood on 29th. Numbers remained at about this level through August and September but 400 moved south over Loveclough in August. The

main influx began on 11th October with good numbers flying up the Irwell valley for the first time. There were 150 at Stacksteads Tip on 12th October. On 20th October about 400 flew up the valley between 08.00 and 08.30 hrs. On 27th November there were 500 at Stacksteads and on 14th November A.M.R. held about 1,000 at dusk.

COMMON GULL - *Larus canus*

Present with the wintering flocks of Black-headed Gulls in the usual proportion of about one to 50 Black-heads and departing with them in early March for the nesting grounds. Return after the nesting season was recorded from late July. There has been an increasing tendency for larger numbers in single-species flocks to visit Rossendale. These visits have occurred in mid-winter and this year more especially during times of passage movements. There were 10 at Holden Wood on 19th February, 25 at E.B.S.W. on 23rd April and 20 at Hameldon on 29th April. Movement continued during May and June when 30 - 40 flew over Crawshawbooth from the northwest on 10th June- unprecedented numbers for this time of the year. In November 24 were at Spring Mill on 11th. In December a flock of 10 was at Cowm on 10th and 17th and at New Line on 26th December. There were 8 at A.M.R. on 10th December and 20 at Clowbridge.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL - *Larus fuscus*

Apart from an exceptional 35 on Cowpe reservoir on 15th January all other counts in January and February were less than 15. The spring influx began on 1st March and on 4th March at least 250 were present at Stacksteads. From 13th March about 450 large gulls were present but probably 200 of these were Herring Gulls. Numbers remained at 500 - 600 in April and May but again with a proportion of Herring Gulls. Numbers fell to about 200 - 300 in July and August most of these being Lesser Black-backs. From September numbers were more in the region of 100 - 150 and in October about 50. On 8th October there were 80 at A.M.R. In late October counts were about 50 decreasing to the end of the year - 1st November 26 at Cowpe reservoir, 19th November 15 on Cowpe reservoir, 10th December 20 at A.M.R.

HERRING GULL - *Larus argentatus*

The exceptional numbers recorded in December 1994 remained during January and February 1995 and into March when they became mixed with the incoming Lesser Black-backs with high numbers in April, May and June - mixed flocks of 500 - 600, 300 in July and August with only a few Herring Gulls. Numbers were low in September and October but rose to 40 or 50 in November and December. On 12th November there were 60 at A.M.R. GREAT

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL - *Larus marinus*

During the mid-winter period of January and February numbers at Stacksteads Tip reached a peak of about 20 continuing the trend of recent years. An unusual record was of an adult and a juvenile at Spring Mill on 22nd August. The winter influx began in mid-November when there were about 10 at Cowpe reservoir. Small numbers 3 to 5 were counted on several occasions in December flying east to the Tip with the morning flight. 2 were at Cowm on 17th December.

FERAL PIGEON - *Columba livia*

The town-centre colonies in Bacup, Waterfoot, Rawtenstall and Ramsbottom remain much the same. The only count made was of 70 in Bacup Centre.

STOCK DOVE - *Columba oenas*

Small numbers and few records this year, mainly singles and pairs - 2 at Whitworth on 29th January, 2 at Spring Mill on 25th February, 4 to 5 in Conference House Woods, Crawshawbooth on 12th March, 2 flying over Clough Bottom on 23rd March, one at Sundial Cottage at H.M.T.C. on 7th June. A few came to feed on pasture land on The Hile in August - 3 on 5th and 2 on 7th and 27th August. 2 were at Cowm on 8th October and one there on 14th.

WOODPIGEON - *Columba palumbus*

Relatively small numbers (3 - 6) in mid-winter records but with a noticeable increase from early February - 18 at Scout Bottom on 5th February and 18 at Healey on the same date, 45 on Cowpe Moss on 18th February, 45 at Reedsholme on 17th February, 20 at Haslingden Old Road on 24th February. By March and early April 60 to 100 were roosting in Brooks' Wood, Crawshawbooth. Pairs had returned to nesting areas in mid-March and males in display flights were noted at Wayoh on 2nd April, Helmshore and Waterfoot on 16th April and Fearn Moss on 29th April. One was recorded sitting on a nest in a hole in the viaduct at Healey Dell on 15th May - an unusual site for a Woodpigeon. Small flocks built up from early August - 6 at Higher Hollinbank, 8 to 15 on The Hile. Larger numbers were noted feeding on whinberry at H.M.T.C. Later in the year there were 22 at Ogden reservoir on 9th November, 30 at Wayoh on 3rd December, 50 at Calf Hey on 10th December, 27 at Cowm on 16th December and 15 at Broadclough on 24th December. About 200 were regular in the Reedsholme area from October to December.

COLLARED DOVE - *Streptopelia decaocto*

Numbers continue to increase and Collared Doves appear to have colonised the whole length of the valleys. One report said that they have now spread to the very top of the Whitworth valley. One of the earliest sites to be colonised - along Booth Road, Waterfoot - had 9 birds on one occasion. Song and aggressive behaviour continued throughout the year. One pair was carrying twigs on 28th April and chasing off Magpies on 1st May. The nest had 2 full-grown young on 13th June and on 15th June the 2 adults and 2 immatures were feeding on the lawn. At another nest in the next garden there were 2 well-grown young in the branches above the nest on 16th August. At Healey there were 10 on 11th November, 13 on 19th November and 29 on 2nd December. In an interesting occurrence a Collared Dove was rescued from a cat in the dark at 20.00 hrs on 28th October on the lower windowsill of a house, the family having been alerted by the vigorous banging on the window during the course of the struggle.

TURTLE DOVE - *Streptopelia turtur*

One was heard at Fairy Glen, Grane on 22nd May (B. Bell).

CUCKOO - *Cuculus canorus*

Still scarce. Heard at Musbury from 4th May and 21st May and displaying there on 24th. There were singles in early May at Reedsholme and at Pinner. One heard at Clowbridge 21st to 25th May, one at Calf Hey on 5th and 15th June, and at Wayoh and A.M.R. on 19th June.

LITTLE OWL - *Athene noctua*

A pair present at the Musbury site was seen almost daily from January to May and they were seen mating on 24th February. They were thought to have been driven from the regular nest-site in an old barn by Kestrels but were seen in the area to at least the end of November (J & B Rostron). In July one was seen with 3 fledged young at Loveclough. At Cowm a Little

Owl was feeding 2 young on 4th and 12th July. Little Owls were recorded as being present throughout the year at Moss Quarry, Facit Quarry, Syke reservoir and Spring Mill, all in the Whitworth area. One was seen at the old site on the C.B.C. plot on The Hile on 15th and 28th May, 2nd July when it made an unsuccessful attack on a Skylark and on 30th July. There were also breeding season records from Foxhill (2nd June), Ogden reservoir (18th and 21st June), H.M.T.C. (above rifle range 25th February) Cowpe reservoir (6th August).

TAWNY OWL - *Strix aluco*

In January one roosted in garden trees in Booth Road, Waterfoot where it was mobbed by garden birds and was also heard calling at dusk. It was also seen regularly in April and May at nearby Wolfenden Green. There were regular records for the Piercy / Scout Bottom / Seat Naze area from 21st March to 20th July. A nest at Ravenshore failed and the pair at Musbury did not breed this year. A pair heard and seen regularly in the Crawshawbooth area from February had at least one youngster in a nest box on 19th and 27th May. There were also breeding-season records for Shawforth (a pair in April), Fern Isle Wood, Healey Dell, Rawtenstall (one calling St. Mary's Church on 2nd June). Tawny Owls were described as very vocal at Reedsholme at the end of September. At the end of the year 2 were roosting in Broadclough on 24th December.

LONG-EARED OWL - *Asio otus*

Present at 2 sites in Rossendale. At one site 3 young were reared. At the other site calls were heard and birds seen during April, pellets were found on 25th May and one was seen on 26th June but there was no firm evidence of successful breeding .

SHORT-EARED OWL - *Asio flammeus*

One was seen in north Rossendale on 23rd April. 2 pairs were present at another site during April but the outcome was not known.

SWIFT - *Apus apus*

Apart from unusually early records of one over Holcombe on 13th April and 1 at Crawshawbooth on 21st April, all first records were between 2nd and 6th May. These were all of small numbers in single figures. Then from 7th to 20th May there were records of 15s and 20s back at nesting colonies. Recorded nesting sites were at Park Mill, Helmshore; Gaghills, Waterfoot; Atherton Holme Mill, Stacksteads; Tong Lane, Whitworth and Holme Shed, Townsendfold. Flocks included 100 - 130 at Clowbridge reservoir on 8th June (a cool, cloudy spell with northwesterly winds), 15 over the Gaghills colony, 30 - 40 over the Stacksteads colony. 25 were over Spring Mill on 27th June. Departure began at the end of July and movement was noted during the first week in August - 6th August, 25 over Stacksteads; 5th August, 40 over Seat Naze. Smaller numbers later in the month were one over H.M.T.C. on 12th August, 2 over Grane on 13th, one over Waterfoot flying west with Swallows on 14th, one over Musbury Tor on 22nd and 7 over Reedsholme on 30th August.

KINGFISHER - *Alcedo atthis*

No nesting records received but one was present at Wallbank lodge throughout the early part of the year. After the breeding-season there were records from along the River Irwell between Ewood Bridge and Townsendfold during August; from Strongstry in September and November. One was seen in the Waterfoot / Stacksteads area from September to November and was seen along the Irwell and at Lench ponds on several dates. Along the River Ogden at

Helmshore 2 Kingfishers were seen on two occasions on 7th November. One was at Wallbank again on 3rd December and one at Irwell Vale on 28th December.

HOOPOE - *Upupa epops*

One was seen on 5th May at Shadlock Cote, Whitewell Bottom (M Sutcliffe) and on 14th May at Clough Bottom (P Fyldes).

GREEN WOODPECKER - *Picus viridis*

A pair was present in the Musbury area throughout the year and recorded as nesting in Hare Clough on 9th April. There was also a continuous presence in the Crawshawbooth area from Conference House Wood to Shortclough. Elsewhere there were records from Dodbottom Wood, Thievely; Marl Pits; Grane and Healey Dell.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER - *Dendrocopos major*

During the late winter period there were records of visits to garden nut feeders from Ramsbottom, Townsendfold and Waterfoot. One was seen in the Reedsholme area regularly from January to March. During the breeding-season pairs were present in all suitable woodland areas, some quite small, along wooded stream valleys. Reports included Redisher, Alden, H.M.T.C. (adults with juveniles on 18th and 26th June), Rushbed (May to July), Folly Clough, Healey Dell (female at nest 6th May). Later in the year singles were seen at Lench on 7th July, Musbury on 14th September, Bacup Park on 12th November, Helmshore Textile Museum on 27th November, Gaghills on 4th December and Wallbank (several dates from October to December). One visited a garden feeder in Waterfoot several times in December and one was at a garden feeder in Haslingden on 7th December. One report mentioned a first known visit by a Great Spotted Woodpecker to Shawforth in October.

SKYLARK - *Alauda arvensis*

Two had returned to Cowpe Moss by 15th January but most first records were from 5th to 25th February. Song was heard on The Hile on 12th February, Shortclough on 18th February. Snow on 2nd March was a setback and 14 Skylarks flew south over Waterfoot on this date. By 9th March a flock of 8 was back on The Hile and on 19th March song was reported from Lee Quarry. Two were recorded back at Musbury Tor on 23rd March and by April much activity was seen on Cowpe Moss, Jack Lodge, Musbury Tor (about 12 in song and on ground on 10th April), H.M.T.C. On The Hile adults were carrying food on 28th June and on 13th July there were 2 family parties. Last year the number of pairs on the C.B.C. plot had reached an all-time low of 20. This year the number was a disastrous 14 pairs. No wonder the R.S.P.B. and B.T.O. have started a "Save our Skylarks" appeal. During July and August 1s to 3s were present on The Hile, then possibly with passage movement, 6 on 8th and 17th September and 20 on 22nd September. On the latter date passage was noted through Crawshawbooth. Late birds included one on Brandwood Moor on 10th October, 2 at Spring Mill on 29th October, one there on 12th November and 1 on Brown Wardle on 16th December.

SHORE LARK - *Eremophila alpestris*

An unusual visitor to Rossendale, more usually seen on the Lancashire coast in winter. Two birds seen at Moss Quarry, Whitworth by Clive Morton on 26th January following a severe blizzard were not definitely identified at that time. They were located again on 27th January and observed for one-and-a-half hours when they were identified with certainty. One was a typical winter bird and one was a very bright individual. They had gone by 28th January. The

nearest record that I can find is of one quoted by K.G. Spencer in *The Status and Distribution of Birds in the Burnley Area* (1977). "A solitary bird made a most unexpected visit to Lower Gorple 12th - 27th December 1971 (J. Nuttall, *The Naturalist*, 1972 p134)".

SAND MARTIN - *Riparia riparia*

One on spring passage was seen over Holden Wood on 16th April. At the Stubbins colony there were 7 on 19th May and about 10 on 11th June. One was with 45 House Martins at Spring Mill on 2nd September and two on autumn passage flew east over Grane on 8th October.

SWALLOW - *Hirundo rustica*

Nearly all first records were on the 12th and 13th April. Most parties were below 5 until early May when there were 20 at Clowbridge on 8th May, 10 at Helmsore on 12th May. Several had returned to the C.B.C. plot by 10th May and the plot registered 3 pairs. One nest there at Farm Hill had 3 eggs on 11th June and 5 on 13th June but it failed due to predation by Magpies. The adults had started building a new nest on 2nd July and it held 5 eggs on 12th July. Young were visible on 30th July. On 5th August 3 young were found dead on the floor beneath the nest and 2 dead in the nest. This nest was situated about 10 cms beneath a corrugated iron roof and it is possible that they were killed by the intense heat radiation during the extremely hot summer. On 10th August a pair was feeding 2 fledged young at West Hile Farm. On 30th July about 40 were feeding over a pond at H.M.T.C. A nest with young ready to fledge was found at Chapel Hill on 10th July. The old buildings below Jack Lodge were again used and on 19th August 14 immatures were counted on the wires there. A pair was still entering the buildings on 27th August. Swallows were present at Musbury all summer and a flock of 60 was counted on 5th August after which numbers decreased rapidly. On 5th September passage to the west and southwest was noted over Waterfoot all morning and a flock of 60 was on the wires at Shawclough. Passage continued on 8th September - 60 over Edgeside on 13th, 17th and 18th September when a steady movement was noted. A flock of 50 - 60 was over Wallbank Lodge on 12th September and similar numbers seen over Folly on 8th and 11th September. On 22nd September there were 20 at Shawclough, 10 on 23rd September with 2 young still being fed, then none on 24th September. Later records included 2 at Ogden on 29th September, 1 and 4 southwest over Waterfoot on 1st October, 20 at Alderbottom on 5th October, 3 south over Fearn Moss on 7th October, 8 over Lee Quarry on 8th October, 3 south over Brandwood Moor on 10th October.

HOUSE MARTIN - *Delichon urbica*

One flew over the Booth Road site on 10th April and a pair on 12th April. On 20th April one flew over Townsendfold and on 24th April 3 were back at Piercy. On 1st May there were singles at Cawl Terrace and Stacksteads and 2 at Irwell Vale. On 7th May there were 10 at Stacksteads Recreation Ground. A rather irregular spring arrival with low numbers. There was some improvement in late May when there were 8 over Piercy on 23rd May and 16 on 30th May, at least 6 pairs nested. Reports of nesting colonies included 2 pairs on B.R.G.S. with a new nest built 6th June which had young visible on 1st August; at least 4 nests in the usual place at Park Road, Helmsore; 11 nests on semi-detached houses at Cowpe on 7th July; 2 or 3 nests at Cawl Terrace. Numbers improved with a successful nesting season. There were 20 over Stacksteads on 2nd August, 30 over Edgeside on 19th August, 170 on wires at Shawclough on 20th August, 150 over Oakenhead on 2nd September, 30 over Crawshawbooth and 45 over Spring Mill on the same date, 60 over Waterfoot on 11th September, 20 over Booth Road on 18th September. On 23rd September at least 6 were still present at Piercy and young were

being fed. Later records were 4 to the south over Edgeside on 1st October, 4 over Lench on 2nd October, 6 over Rising Bridge and 2 at Ogden on 3rd October and 10 at Musbury. The latest was one over Hall Carr on 16th October.

TREE PIPIT - *Anthus trivialis*

Passage birds were heard over Crawshawbooth on 10th and 13th August and between 14th and 19th August ones and twos passed over Folly Clough heading south.

MEADOW PIPIT - *Anthus pratensis*

A flock of 20 had returned to The Hile on 11th January and was still present on 18th February. Most spring movement, however, took place from mid-March - flocks of 3 or 4 were flying north over The Hile / Brex on 12th March; on 17th March there were 6 at Musbury; on 19th March 25 at Lee Quarry; on 20th March 25 at Musbury and several passing over Crawshawbooth; on 21st March 30 on The Hile and on 30th March 20 flew northeast at Clowbridge. Song-flights were noted at H.M.T.C. on 12th March and on The Hile on 23rd March. A flock of 36 was at Spring Mill on 20th April. On 2nd May 2 pairs were carrying nest material on The Hile. 17 pairs nested on the C.B.C. plot - down on last year's 21 pairs. A nest with 5 eggs was found at Clowbridge on 21st May.. Meadow Pipits were described as being numerous at Holden Wood on 17th June and at Alden and Musbury on 29th July. Family groups were seen at H.M.T.C. on 26th June, Musbury on 7th July and on The Hile on 13th July including 2 newly fledged young. On 20th August a flock of 20 had built up on The Hile. Flock records included 15 at Cowpe reservoir and 10 on the Rooley Moor Road on 21st September, up to 75 at Clowbridge between 17th and 23rd September, 40 on The Hile on 26th September, 15 at Jack Lodge on 26th October, 30 near Ski Rossendale on 18th November. There were 3 at Spring Mill on 26th September and 3 at Hameldon on 28th December.

YELLOW WAGTAIL - *Motacilla flava*

Remains scarce. One male was seen over H.M.T.C. on 23rd April on spring passage and a single female was at Spring Mill on 5th October on autumn passage.

GREY WAGTAIL - *Motacilla cinerea*

An early return was noted on the Whitewell at Gaghills with singles on 17th and 23rd January. Most, however, returned as usual in March when there were records from Ogden, the Irwell at Cowpe Road, Clough Bottom, Piercy, Townsendfold, H.M.T.C., Lea Brook (2 pairs), Folly Clough and the River Limy near Do-It-All. Breeding season records included pairs at Ewood Bridge lodge on 9th April, Musbury on 11th April, Irwell Vale on 28th April and Folly Clough on 8th April. Later evidence noted - an adult with 2 fledged young on the Whitewell in Waterfoot on 15th May, 2 adults and 2 young at Lea Brook on 10th June, a male carrying food in Waterfoot on 11th June, adults with young at Loveclough in July, an immature on the Irwell at Cowpe Road on 6th August, 3 at Higher Hollinbank on 21st July and 3 juvenile birds at Spring Mill on 7th and 20th August. Post-breeding-season one was at Jack Lodge on 8th August and 12th September, a pair feeding on a Tarmac path in Edgeside Park. On 4th October, one on the Whitewell and a pair on the Irwell in Waterfoot on 9th and 19th October, one at Longholme, Rawtenstall on 3rd October, one at Shawclough on 8th November, 2 in Edgeside Park on 18th and 20th November, 1 at Gaghills on 25th November, 2 at Calf Hey on 10th December and 1 at Helmsore on 17th December. One report mentioned 2 feeding in back streets at Reedsholme during hard weather on 24th December. This follows the recent trend of Grey Wagtails to join Pied Wagtails in exploiting unusual feeding habitats which

have included school playgrounds, parks and streets outside school gates where the ice-cream vans have parked.

PIED WAGTAIL - *Motacilla alba yarrellii*

Present and widespread in good numbers throughout the year. The spring movement saw 16 at Clowbridge on 29th March and 4 at A.M.R. on 19th March. Also in March during frost and snow 7 fed near Fearn's School dividing their attention between playground, the playing-fields and the grass slopes above Piper Bank where hay was put out for sheep and horses. 2 males had returned to the C.B.C. plot on 23rd March. A pair had settled in at Higher Hollinbank on 19th February, nesting in a dry- stone wall, a pair also at Ogden on 29th March, and singles at Clough Bottom on 21st March, Lee Quarry on 5th April, New Line on 18th April, E.B.S.W. on 29th April. The C.B.C. plot only registered one pair - down on the 2 or 3 pairs of recent years. Nesting success was indicated by adults carrying food at Lea Brook in May, a fully-fledged juvenile at Top o' th' Height Farm, Cowpe on 8th June, a male with several juveniles at Foxhill on 22nd June, 2 or 3 family groups at Clowbridge on 11th and 17th July, 2 adults with 5 juveniles at Spring Mill on 29th July and 5th August and a family group at Calf Hey on 26th July. A good autumn passage was noted - earlier than usual at Fearn's Moss where there were an unprecedented 62 on 19th August, 28 on 28th August, 32 on 31st August, 25 on 7th September, 10 on 9th September. There were 8 all August at Musbury - gone by September. Good numbers were also seen at Spring Mill in August with 52 on 22nd tailing down to 2 on 4th November. A flock of 25 fed along Coal Pits Lane on 13th September. On 5th November 64 from E.B.S.W. flew to roost in the bushes along the river.

DIPPER - *Cinclus cinclus*

Records for every month of the year. Dippers were present along the Irwell and its tributaries with the exception of the upper reaches of the Irwell which are affected by "carr water" from old mine-workings. However, 2 were seen as far up as Lee Mill this year. Along the Irwell there were regular sightings from Stacksteads including Green's Lodges to The Glen, Waterfoot and Rawtenstall (Longholme), especially at its confluence with the Limy. Along the Whitewell sites included Piercy, Bridge Street, Gaghills and Waterfoot centre, where the Whitewell meets the Irwell and Cowpe Brook. Along the Limy there were records from Folly Clough, Rushbed, Stoneholme, Reedsholme, Tup Bridge and Rawtenstall centre. Along the Ogden valley sites included Calf Hey, Bowl Alley, Musbury Brook. In the Whitworth area Dippers were recorded from Healey Dell and Spring Mill. There were some notes of interest - a pair in song at Rushbed on 14th April, one carrying nest material along Musbury Brook on 10th May, one in display flight along the Whitewell on 11th May, a pair with 2 fledged young at Reedsholme on 10th June, a family party of 5 on the Limy at Crawshawbooth on 11th June, an adult feeding a fledged juvenile at Waterfoot on 11th June (a close correlation of fledging dates), 3 chasing along the Whitewell at Piercy on 14th October, one singing at Longholme on 30th October and one singing at Piercy on 28th October. On the Ogden 2 were seen at Helmshore on 19th December and one at Ravenshore on 20th December.

WREN - *Troglodytes troglodytes*

One was in song at Reedsholme in February. There were many records of birds singing in March and there was much song at Wayoh on 2nd April. On 27th May one was at a nest in the roots of a tree at Folly Clough and on 12th June an adult and 6 young were seen. 3 sites were noted at Musbury and one in the fishing cabin at Ogden reservoir. On 30th July there were at least 5 fledged young at Farm Hill and on 1st August there were noisy young in a nest

in a garden in Waterfoot. Song was noted in July and August with one singing at 1,000 feet (300 m) altitude on Cowpe Moss on 7th July. On 19th November one fed along a dry-stone wall at 1,100 feet (350 m) along Rooley Moor Road.

DUNNOCK - *Prunella modularis*

Song was heard in Crawshawbooth on 31st January. At Waterfoot on 2nd February 3 were engaged in chasing activity and on 8th February one was in song. On 11th February 2 were singing at Wallbank and on 19th February 2 were singing at Peersclough. 2 or 3 fledged juveniles were seen on 24th July. A resumption of song was noted in August (Healey Dell on 19th) and September. One report suggested a decrease in one area of Haslingden.

ROBIN - *Erithacus rubecula*

On 3rd January 3 were seen in an aggressive confrontation in a garden in Waterfoot, possibly a pair and an intruder. The pair visited the bird table on 2nd February. On 21st February they were engaged in courtship activity, the female approaching the male with the submissive head-down posture. On 8th June a fledged youngster was feeding on the lawn. On 6th August 2 adults with 3 juveniles were on the lawn - presumably a second brood. On 23rd and 4th August an immature was present on the lawn and by 31st August it was "ticking" regularly. On 4th September 2 immatures were in conflict. On 1st June a nest at Farm Hill contained full-grown young with 2 standing at the nest entrance. The nest was in a hole in a farm building about 2 m above the ground. The young had all fledged on 2nd June. A juvenile was seen at Lea Brook in May. Winter song was heard from 17th September.

REDSTART - *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

On 20th May one was heard calling at Dodbottom Wood, Thievely during a B.B.S. visit. At Musbury 2 males were singing on 4th May and one on 24th May. A male was in song at Oakenhead Wood, Rawtenstall on 24th May and one was seen in the Bacup area in July. A male and 3 females were seen at Syke reservoir on 28th August.

WHINCHAT - *Saxicola rubetra*

A male was in song at Clowbridge from 7th to 25th May and 2 were in song on 8th and 11th June. This was the area where successful nesting took place last year. There was also breeding season presence at H.M.T.C. where a male was in song on 18th and 26th June, a female was present on 23rd July and a pair on 30th July. 6 pulli were ringed at a nest at Clowbridge on 12th June. Elsewhere one was at Cowm on 4th July and 3 were seen at Spring Mill on 28th August. Immatures were seen on The Hile on 13th July and 5th September and a single bird at Clowbridge on 16th September.

STONECHAT - *Saxicola torquata*

The winter visits to Clowbridge noted for about 5 years continued with one present in January and one on 10th March. There was also one at Spring Mill in January. The following winter there were records from Cowm - a pair from 26th November to 10th December and a male on 17th December.

WHEATEAR - *Oenanthe oenanthe*

First arrivals were 2 males on The Hile on 23rd March, 1 at Spring Mill on 26th March and males at 4 sites on 29th March. Most first dates were in April - one at Hoddlesden Moss on 2nd April and males at Holcombe Head and Haslingden Moor on the same date. There were 5

or 6 at Lee Quarry on 2nd April, 2 on 5th April and 4 or 5 pairs there by 9th April. By the end of the month there were records also for Alden Head, Musbury, Clowbridge, Whittle Pike, Hailstorm Hill and Plunge. Pairs were seen at Clough Head, Scout Moor, Spring Mill and Musbury during May and June. A group of 9 on Hameldon on 7th May could have been of the Greenland race and similarly 10 on Reaps Moss on 8th May and 12 at Lee Quarry on 3rd May. On 25th June a pair with one juvenile were seen at Lee Quarry, on 26th June a family party of 3 or 4 on H.M.T.C. On 28th June a pair had at least 3 newly-fledged juveniles on East Hile, on 2nd July there were 2 immatures on The Brex, on 21st July 2 adults and a juvenile were seen at Higher Hollinbank. Autumn passage records were - an immature on Rooley Moor Road on 6th August, 10 birds including juveniles at Spring Mill on 9th August, an immature at West Hile on 8th September, 3 at Clowbridge on 10th September and a very late single at Lench on 29th October.

RING OUZEL - *Turdus torquatus*

The only record was of one at the quarry at the east end of Musbury Tor on 6th April, presumably a bird on passage.

BLACKBIRD - *Turdus merula*

Small winter flocks, possibly continental birds, were 5 feeding on Hawthorns at Piper Bank on 2nd January (one bird ate 3 berries in 5 seconds!), 12 in Edgeside Park on 7th January, 6 at Marl Pits on 25th February. A male was heard giving a quiet sub-song on 20th February. First full songs were 9th and 11th March in Waterfoot, 12th March at H.M.T.C., 21st March at Crawshawbooth, 1st April at Piercy and Jack Lodge. A female was carrying food on 21st April in Waterfoot centre. One was seen carrying straw in a garden in Waterfoot on 28th April and taking mud from the garden pond on 29th April. No juveniles were seen from this attempts but a second nest was built by 16th May and the first egg laid on 17th May, 4 eggs on 20th May and 4 young fledged 14th - 15th June. On 6th July a male was feeding 2 newly-fledged young in this garden. On 20th May a female was sitting on a nest in a barn at H.M.T.C. In Brook's Wood, Crawshawbooth a female was sitting on a nest on 27th May and a female was seen carrying nest mate rial on 9th June. On 7th August a female was feeding 2 newly-fledged young in the Waterfoot garden. One of the young had a badly twisted left leg which hampered its movements quite seriously. It was seen again on 12th August but not afterwards. Small winter flocks with Redwings and Fieldfares were seen as usual - 6 in the Newchurch area on 5th and 27th October, 10 in Bacup Park with Redwings on 12th November, 15 at Clough Bottom on 17th November, 10 at Healey Dell on 19th November, many with Redwings and Fieldfares at Lench on 22nd November and 8 at Irwell Vale on 26th December. An unusual record was one in song on 4th November.

FIELDFARE - *Turdus pilaris*

Relatively small flocks, generally under 30, were widespread from January to March although one flock of 90 was at Cragg Quarry on 15th January, 50 flew over Waterfoot to the south in snow on 28th March and there were 70 at Clowbridge on 19th March. In April there were 10 at H.M.T.C. on 2nd, 30 at Folly Clough on 16th April and 100 at Chapel Hill on 18th April. An unusual record was of 2 at Musbury on 26th June. There had been previous records of Fieldfares in this area during the nesting season. Return movement began with 100 - 200 at Musbury on 15th October and 12 at Alden on the same date. From 5th to 13th November Fieldfares were numerous in the Cowpe valley feeding partly on a large Rowan and 300 flew down the valley on 6th November. There were 70 at Whinberry Naze on 1st November and

80 at Clowbridge on 18th November. Numbers were lower into December though 100 were regular in the Musbury area. There was an increase towards the end of the year with 100 at Crawshawbooth on 7th December, 200 at Holden Wood on 23rd December, 130 at Whinberry Naze on 24th December, 200 at Musbury on 25th December, 200 were over Wallbank on 27th December and 70 at Cribden Clough on 30th December.

SONG THRUSH - *Turdus philomelos*

Song was heard early - 24th January at Cloughfold, 25th January at Hall Carr, 30th January at Crawshawbooth and 2nd February at Gagghills. Later, singing males were recorded at Townsendfold, Stubbins Nature Area, Booth Road, Waterfoot, Reedsholme, Tip Lodge, Crawshawbooth, Rushbed, Higher Cloughfold, Musbury, Healey Dell and Wayoh. Records of successful breeding were few. One was seen carrying food in the Stubbins area on 14th April, a newly-fledged juvenile was seen at Healey Dell on 15th May, one was carrying food on the banks of Cowpe Brook on 8th August and 2 young were seen at Shawforth. Some late autumn song by 4 birds was noted in Scott Park, Burnley on 29th November (K.G. Spencer). One was seen daily at Musbury during the first two weeks of December and 2 were present on the banks of the Whitewell at Mill End on 7th December. One was at Rushbed on 24th December and singles at Broadclough and Stacksteads on 28th December.

REDWING - *Turdus iliacus*

Relatively low numbers in late winter - 30 at Stacksteads on 1st January, 20 with 90 Fieldfares at Cragg Quarry on 15th January, 10 at Reedsholme on 28th January, 10 at Shortclough on 17th February, 2 at Shortclough on 18th March and 4 at Helmsore on 20th March. 7 were passing over Folly to the northwest on 24th April. Return birds were seen from 22nd October when 9 were at Spring Mill and 17 at Folly. On 29th October there were 20 at Wallbank, 60 at Spring Mill and 20 at Marl Pits. On 30th October 30 birds flew west down the Irwell valley at 08.00 hrs and 100 at 10.00 hrs. Passage was also noted on 4th November. On 10th November 35 were feeding on Rowans at Lench with the Fieldfare flock. Thereafter, relatively small numbers (5 to 20) were seen to the end of the year - 5 at Wallbank on 26th November, 5 at Cliffe lodge on 29th December and 20 at Wallbank on 30th December.

MISTLE THRUSH - *Turdus viscivorus*

The usual tendency to early song was not noted so much this year. Apart from one singing on 7th January in Waterfoot and one at Folly on 26th January, more typical records were 6th March at Piercy, 11th March at Asda and Crawshawbooth and 6th April at Stubbins. However, pair-formation did take place and was noted at Fearn Hall on 17th January, Musbury on 26th January, Lench and Shawforth on 29th January and at Reedsholme in early February. Presence of pairs and nesting activity was also noted at Clough Bottom (carrying food 5th May), Clowbridge, Shortclough (one with food 19th April), Stacksteads, H.M.T.C. Higher Hollinbank (one collecting food 9th to 14th May) and Folly Clough (pair at nest 16th April). Family parties formed and joined up to make larger flocks e.g. 5 at H.M.T.C. on 26th June, 8 at Musbury on 16th July, 4 at Shortclough on 17th July, 8 at Booth Road, Waterfoot on 5th September, 24 at Musbury on 10th September and 10 at Lench on 10th November. By 16th November some pairs were re-forming - noted at Shawclough, Edgeside and Waterfoot with some song on 28th November and 3rd December and 8th December at Crawshawbooth.

SEDGE WARBLER - *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

One was singing at Syke reservoir on 10th to 13th June. One on passage was seen at Loveclough in September.

WHITETHROAT - *Sylvia communis*

One was in song at Buckhurst in May. One on autumn passage at Spring Mill on 10th September. A single was in a garden at Crawshawbooth on 6th August and a juvenile was seen on 2nd October.

GARDEN WARBLER - *Sylvia borin*

A pair was feeding young at Cheesden on 2nd July. A male was in song at Folly on 10th July.

BLACKCAP - *Sylvia atricapilla*

First arrivals were at Healey Dell on 8th April and at least one pair stayed to nest. Indeed, up to 5 males were in song on 10th June. One of the male birds had a white brow bar. They were seen carrying nest material on 11th June. Elsewhere, at least 5 males were in song at Rossendale General Hospital on 18th May, one was at the fishponds at the lower end of Dodbottom Wood on 20th May, a male was in song at Brook's Wood on 21st May and one at Townsendfold on 24th May. In June there were records for singing males at Rushbed, Lea Brook and Marl Pits on 10th, Holden Vale on 15th, Wayoh on 19th, 3 males at Strongstry on 25th, Townsendfold on 30th. A pair with juveniles were seen at Folly on 22nd July and birds were seen at Folly until 8th September.

WOOD WARBLER - *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

The only records were from Healey Dell where they were present on 3rd May, singing on 17th May, and carrying food on 11th June. 5 young were in the nest on 15th June but the nest was thought to have failed at this stage, possibly as a result of predation by a Jay, as no fledged young were seen.

CHIFFCHAFF - *Phylloscopus collybita*

A male was in song at Rushbed on 8th, 22nd and 23rd April and on 13th June. Two or three different males were heard at Healey Dell on 3rd and 7th May and in early June and one was singing at Saplin Wood at H.M.T.C. on 26th June. Song was heard at Folly on 11th July and then again on 11th and 16th September. A male bird was in a Crawshawbooth garden on 27th December.

WILLOW WARBLER - *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Arrival dates for singing males were 8th April at H.M.T.C., 9th April at Townsendfold and Crawshawbooth, 12th April at Lench, 13th April at Piper Bank, Fearn Moss, 14th April at Lea Brook, at Stubbins and at Ewood Bridge Lodge. Thereafter, records were numerous and widespread - up to 10 in song between Ewood Bridge and Irwell Vale on 23rd April, 3 along Piper Bank on 19th May, 1st and 3rd July. Other records were from Clowbridge, Shortclough, Rushbed, Cribden Clough, Reedsholme, Stacksteads. On 27th July fledged young were being fed at Piper Bank and on 23rd July 2 juveniles were seen at H.M.T.C. Some return movement was noted from mid-August when passage birds appeared briefly in gardens. A marked passage was noted at Whitworth from 10th to 14th August. Latest were 2 at Lench on 6th September, 2 at Cowpe Lodge on 13th September, one at Piper Bank with a flock of Blue Tits on 16th September. 3 were seen at Healey Dell on 23rd September.

GOLDCREST - *Regulus regulus*

During spring calling Goldcrests were noted at Clowbridge on 19th February, H.M.T.C., Lee Clough and Clough Bottom on 12th March, Crawshawbooth on 17th March, Lee Quarry on 5th April, 2 or 3 at Plunge on 24th April. An increase in numbers was noted at the northern end of the Whitworth valley with presence in the breeding season at Britannia Brew Plantation, Bakerleigh and Shawforth. Calling birds were heard at Folly Clough from 9th September to the end of the year and there was a similar pattern at Healey Dell. There was an increased number of sightings from mid-November in small numbers and often with flocks of tits. Goldcrests were present at Reedsholme from 12th November and also seen on 24th and 29th December, a maximum of 2. One was in a garden in Waterfoot on 16th November and on 19th November several were in a mixed flock of tits and Treecreepers in Staghills Wood. On 27th November at least 6 were in trees near Higher Mill Museum, Helmshore. In December there were records for Wayoh on 3rd December, Lench Lodges and 6 at Calf Hey on 17th December and one at Stacksteads on 28th December.

FIRECREST - *Regulus ignicapillus*

2 singing males were at Folly Clough on 16th April (B. Bell).

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER - *Muscicapa striata*

The earliest date was one at Crawshawbooth on 28th April and a pair was seen in the area on 31st May. Much scarcer than formerly in Rossendale. 2 were calling at Healey Dell on 20th May and one or two birds were seen on several dates to mid-July. On 10th June a male was in song at Stonefold and one was calling at Rushbed. At least one or two pairs were at Folly through to 13th August. On 2nd July young were being fed by pair at Cheesden. A family party was at Calf Hey in August and September. During autumn passage one was in a garden at Waterfoot on 15th September.

PIED FLYCATCHER - *Ficedula hypoleuca*

A female was at Healey Dell on 26th April. A juvenile bird was at Folly Tip on 25th July.

LONG-TAILED TIT - *Aegithalos caudatus*

Records for every month from many parts of Rossendale. Two were at a garden feeder on 26th January at Crawshawbooth. There were winter flocks of 7 with Blue Tits at Whitewell Bottom on 22nd January, 2 flocks in Trickett's Memorial Gardens on 2nd January. At Rushbed there were 2 on 2nd January and 6 on 4th February, a pair on 22nd and 23rd April, one on 6th May and adults with young on 10th June. A male was in song in H.M.T.C. on 22nd March, 2 or 3 on 2nd April, several on 23rd April and a family party on 18th June. On 14th April birds were heard calling at two different sites at Rawtenstall cemetery. Pairs were noted at Irwell Vale, Alden, Wayoh and Reedsholme. After the breeding season there were 5 at Piercy on 4th August, 16 at Healey Dell on 1st October, a small flock at Alderbottom on 22nd November with 10 there on 24th December, at least 20 near Helmshore Textile Museum on 27th November, 5 at Buckden on 29th December and 10 in alders near Globe Mill, Piercy on 31st December. Long-tailed Tits were seen in a Crawshawbooth garden from August to the end of the year.

WILLOW TIT - *Parus montanus*

One was seen at Calf Hey in January.

COAL TIT - *Parus ater*

A regular visitor to garden food tables. A pair was still visiting a garden in Waterfoot on 24th April. Singing males were heard at Waterfoot on 29th January, Shortclough in January, Edgeside on 12th February, Clough Bottom on 19th February, H.M.T.C. and Tip Lodge on 12th March. Pairs were seen at Reedsholme on 10th April, Piper Bank showing anxiety on 10th May, with young at Rushbed on 10th June and in a family party at H.M.T.C. on 18th June, at Buckden on 25th June and at Healey Dell throughout the year. Coal Tits returned to the garden feeder in Waterfoot from 28th October and were then regular visitors. They were noted as being very active in conifers at Calf Hey on 13th October.

BLUE TIT - *Parus caeruleus*

Records were mainly of nesting. On 27th May a nest was found in a 3-foot tree stump at Folly Clough. On 15th June a Blue Tit was seen entering a nest hole in a garden wall in Waterfoot, directly onto the footpath on Booth Road about 3 feet above ground level. Young were visited in the nest. The adults ignored pedestrians walking close by and continued feeding. The young had fledged on 17th June. At another site 2 newly-fledged young, barely able to fly were found on the ground beneath a nest on 16th June. On 18th June a family party of 7 was seen nearby. Other family groups recorded were one of 10 at Farm Hill on 30th June and one of 8 at Higher Hollinbank. On 17th September a flock of 16 was present at Piper Bank. On 23rd November a large mixed flock of Blue Tits, Great Tits and Chaffinches numbered more than 100.

GREAT TIT - *Parus major*

Song was heard from late January. A pair visited a nest box on 2nd February, pecking at the entrance hole but it was not until 26th May that they were seen carrying in nest material. There were 4 eggs on 2nd June. On 7th June the nest had been stirred up, presumably by a cat putting its paw down the nest hole. There were 7 eggs, 3 of them broken. Adults with young were seen at Marl Pits in July. One record of interest was of a vicious fight between a Great Tit and a Blue Tit over food on a lawn on 14th May. The birds rolled round on the grass, locked together and pecking furiously. Was food scarce at this time? Nest records for both species were all late in the season.

NUTHATCH - *Sitta europaea*

Only one record of one at Sunnybank - Alden, the area where they have nested in previous years with no information about nesting. One was at Healey Dell on 30th December.

TREECREEPER - *Certhia familiaris*

During winter 3 were seen in the Alden area on 12th January and one was at Rushbed on 4th February. A pair was nesting in an artificial site at Crawshawbooth on 25th April. At Ogden reservoir a pair was seen entering a nest under the roof of the fishermen's cabin on 1st and 4th May and on 14th June. At Rushbed a pair was present on 10th June and had 3 juveniles with them on 17th June. There were records for Calf Hey on 12th March and 11th June. Elsewhere, 2 were seen at Reedsholme in riverside trees on 14th April, 2 at Buckden on 25th June and one on 25th July and one at Ravenshore on 30th April and 4th September. Post-breeding-season one was at Healey Dell on several dates between September and December, 1 or 2 were with tits and Goldcrests in Stag Hills Wood on 19th November, one with Long-tailed Tits at Helmsshore on 27th November, one at Calf Hey on 17th December, a pair at Green's Lodges on 27th December and 2 in Brooks' Wood on 29th December.

JAY - *Garrulus glandarius*

Now appears to be widespread wherever suitable woodland habitats occur and with a tendency to explore new areas in autumn and winter. Maximum numbers quoted are usually about 3. On 29th June 2 or 3 were in Redisher Wood. There are regular records for H.M.T.C. - 25th February 1 or 2 near the rifle range, 12th March one in Saplin Wood, 11th June 3 in the woods along Red Brook, 12th August one near Paddy's Pond and 14th October 1 or 2 along Red Brook. Another regular site was along the Irwell valley from Stubbins to Ewood Bridge - 9th February 2 at Ravenshore, 11th June 1 at Stubbins, 9th June 2 at Horncliffe, 25th June 2 or 3 at Cliffe Lodge, 25th July 3 at Buckden. One at Musbury on 25th and 26th September links this area with the Ogden valley which has mainly out of season records - one at Holden Wood on 17th December but also one at Calf Hey on 22nd May. In the Limy valley singles were seen on several occasions at Reedsholme in June and July, often out of the woods. There was a comment that Jays are often seen out of the woods in autumn on farmland and in other unusual habitats in this area. Further up the Irwell valley singles were seen in Staghills Wood on 21st October and 7th December and on 24th December 3 Jays were as far up the valley as Broadclough in the Bacup area. At Whitworth up to 5 birds were present at Healey Dell in April with 3 more usual to the year end.

MAGPIE - *Pica pica*

Spring gatherings were noted as usual - 57 birds at Wallbank on 15th January, 8 at Brooks' Wood and 10 at Dunnockshaw on 18th February and 11 engaged in chasing flights through the tree tops at Piper Bank on 9th March. An established pair was already building on this date. Breeding was successful as usual and there were many records of autumn and winter flocks - 8 at Edgeside Park on 17th September, 30 at Peers Clough on 15th October, 11 at Piper Bank on 29th October, 8 in a garden at Waterfoot eating peanuts from the lawn on 23rd November, 13 at Musbury in November and December. The Wallbank roost numbered 69 on 29th November.

JACKDAW - *Corvus monedula*

On 27th January 2 came to a garden feeding station during frost and snow. On 25th January a flock of 10 was counted at Tunstead. On 30th January several were perched in tree tops at Todd Carr in close pairs, some engaged in mutual preening. 19 were at Healey Dell on 18th March, on 11th and 28th March more than 70 were seen over Woodcroft at dusk - presumably flying to roost nearby. On 7th March 13 were in chasing flights over Waterfoot - most in pairs. Also in March there were 15 at Crawshawbooth on 4th March, 30 over Ilex Mill on 14th March and 30 over the B.R.G.S. - Booth Road area on 31st March. One was seen carrying nest lining towards the latter area on 4th April. On 20th May one was seen entering a ventilator opening on the wall of St. Joseph's Church, Stacksteads. Successful breeding was indicated by a flock of 13 immatures on Fearn's Moss on 1st August. A flock of 30 was seen at Green's Lodges on 22nd October and 18 over Gaghills on 4th December. On 19th November 80 flew in to Brooks' Wood at dusk to roost.

ROOK - *Corvus frugilegus*

Nest counts at rookeries in April were Rook Hill - 69, Crawshawbooth - 62, Acre - 27, Water - 14, Peers Clough - 9. There were none at Heath Hill (9 last year) but the nearby Rook Hill had 7 more nests than last year. Nest visiting was noted as early as 2nd January and by 18th February

many were building, continuing well into March. On 2nd May many adults were carrying food from The Hile to Rook Hill. On 1st September a flock of about 250 was at Stacksteads Tip.

CARRION CROW - *Corvus corone corone*

Counts of roosts were 80 at Grane on 12th February, 300 at Crawshawbooth on 11th March and 200 at Woodcroft. One was sitting at Lee Clough on 9th April and one at Farm Hill on 28th April. The Farm Hill pair had fledged young on 13th June and another pair on The Hile above Stacksteads had 3 juveniles. The C.B.C. plot had a new maximum of 9 pairs. The large number of crows is also indicated by the numbers in flocks of non-breeding birds - 10 at Edgeside on 2nd May, 45 on the B.B.S. plot at Stonefold on 10th June, 40 at Clowbridge in June. At Higher Hollinbank a juvenile was seen to peck at a window and eat putty in June. A pair was seen on several occasions in October feeding in the school playground at B.R.G.S.

STARLING - *Sturnus vulgaris*

Records of numbers in late winter to early spring flocks - 200 at Farm Hill and 100 at Edgeside on 30th January, 400 at Peers Clough on 19th February, 100 - 150 from January to March at Musbury, 250 on The Hile on 9th March and 300 on 23rd April, 150 at Clowbridge on 19th March, 30 - 40 during May at Musbury - the later flocks presumably being continental migrants or non-breeders. On 11th April Starlings were building at several sites and a hatched eggshell was found on 25th April. The first fledged young were seen on 20th May at Stacksteads and H.M.T.C. On 25th May flocks of 150 - 200 at Clowbridge contained many juveniles and on 11th June a flock of about 400. On 13th June about 2,000 were roosting in conifers at Chapel Hill. In autumn flocks of 50 - 100 were generally recorded but on 1st October a huge flock of about 4,000 flew over Waterfoot. On 9th November a flock of about 1,000 closed into a defensive ball in the presence of an attacking Merlin over The Brex. A flock of 200 was seen at Tunstead on 2 8th December.

HOUSE SPARROW - *Passer domesticus*

The two gatherings in the Park Road - Edgeside Lane area of Waterfoot continued until the end of February or early March with maximum counts of 30 at Park Road on 1st February and 16 at Edgeside Lane on 3rd February. Latest was a count of 12 at Edgeside Lane on 3rd March after which there was a dispersal to nesting territories. Walking round the same area and counting obvious pairs and singing males, 22 territories were found (see map page 29) giving a total of about 44 individuals - comparable with the winter count numbers. R. Ives found 7 similar winter groups along the Limy valley between Rushbed and Waingate, none larger than 15 birds. At a Haslingden garden there was an apparent increase from 5 - 6 birds in 1994 to 16 - 18 in 1995. There were also records of up to 12 near Airtours, Helmshore and 6 at Higher Mill Textile Museum. One was seen carrying nest material on 11th April and a male was feeding 3 newly-fledged juveniles in Waterfoot on 19th May. On 5th May there were 10 birds at Chapel Hill. On 1 0th June there were at least 6 adults and 6 juveniles with others in bushes at Hollins Lane. Winter gatherings had re-commenced on 25th November when there were at least 15 at the Edgeside Lane site. This did not continue but appeared to move 150 m to the southwest into rhododendron bushes in Edgeside Park where there were at least 30 on 3rd December. The Park Road site continued with relatively small numbers - 8 on 6th December. Counts in a garden at Whitworth totalled 34 on 28th August, 35 on 12th November and 30 on 27th December.

CHAFFINCH - *Fringilla coelebs*

First song was heard in Waterfoot on 24th February, Tip Lodge on 12th March, Lea Brook on 25th March. Later, singing males were heard at Clowbridge, Reedsholme and Gaghills in April then from all suitable areas. Chaffinches were said to be in "good numbers" at Peers Clough in February but a flock of about 12 noted for some years at Musbury was not present this spring. By the end of August there were, however, 30 present there and up to 50 on 31st October.

BRAMBLING - *Fringilla montifringilla*

There were a few records for late winter - 5 in a garden in Ramsbottom in January and about 25 at Musbury on 17th January. There were more records but in small numbers for the end of the year - 3 over Folly Tip on 24th October, 2 at Edgeside on 2nd November, 30 in Fern Isle Wood on 10th December, 25 at Broadclough on 17th December, 20 in Waterfoot centre on 19th December, 11 at Cowm, 3 at Broadclough and 2 at Shortclough on 24th December, 10 at Shortclough on 26th December and 24 at Cowm on 27th December, 10 at Broadclough on 28th December and 12 on 30th December when there were also 3 at Whittaker Clough.

GREENFINCH - *Carduelis chloris*

Winter flock records were all between 6 and 9. Some early song was heard at Townsendfold on 16th and 20th February and then until at least the middle of July - one singing all day from 16th to 19th July in a garden in Waterfoot and also heard at Reedsholme and Loveclough on 17th July. On 13th September 10 were feeding on large cultivated rose-hips at Fearn Hall. Later records of flock numbers were all between 3 and 7 except for a group of 17 at Healey Dell on 31st December.

GOLDFINCH - *Carduelis carduelis*

Winter flock numbers were relatively low, mostly between 6 and 30 from January to March. At least 2 males were in song at Rawtenstall Cemetery on 13th April and one at Rushbed on 23rd April. Singing males were also noted at H.M.T.C. and Lench. Again there were no large winter flocks - 20 at Stacksteads on 2nd August, 20 at Musbury on 26th August, 25 in the car park at Clowbridge on 16th September, 30 to 40 at Musbury on 2nd October, 15 at The Brex on 21st October, 30 at Lea Brook on 12th November and several flocks of about 10 in December. Small groups were regular at Healey Dell and Spring Mill from October to the end of the year.

SISKIN - *Carduelis spinus*

A small group visited a peanut feeder in a garden in Waterfoot from 3rd January to 10th April. The combination varied from singles of both sexes to 4 females, 2 males and 2 females, a pair and a male. On 31st March 2 males spent the whole day in the garden and the latest records were of a pair on 2nd and 3rd April and single males on 5th and 10th April. On 16th April 2 were at Calf Hey. Siskins were calling in flight over Crawshawbooth on 13th October. During the following winter there were 3 at Healey Dell on 17th December and 30 in alders at Piercy on 31st December. A report from Whitworth commented on the small numbers - only odd birds in January and February, none for November and few in December (8, 4 and 3 at Healey on 17th, 29th and 31st December) whereas 2 years ago flocks of 20 - 30 were common.

LINNET - *Carduelis cannabina*

Singles were seen on 2nd April over Cowpe Moss and 23rd April over H.M.T.C. A pair had returned to the C.B.C. plot on 2nd May, virtually the same date as the previous year (1st May). On 3rd May a pair was present at Holden Wood and on 20th May a male was in song at

H.M.T.C. Some were still in flock at this time - 10 on Chapel Hill on 5th May and 10 at Cowm on 11th June. During the nesting season there were 2 pairs on the B.B.S. plot at Stonefold on 10th June, 2 pairs on The Hile on 13th June, 3 pairs at Oakenhead on 7th June, 3 pairs at Chapel Hill on 13th June, a pair at Cowpe reservoir on 6th August, a pair feeding 3 fledged young at A.M.R. on 13th August. Good numbers in autumn and winter flocks suggest a successful breeding season - 30 at Green Howarth on 14th July, 20 at Musbury on 26th August and 13th October, 62 at Syke reservoir on 28th August, 30 at Ogden on 22nd September, 20 at Coal Pits Lane on 17th September, 50 at Spring Mill from 14th October through November and December, 30 at Ogden on 9th November, 30 at Musbury on 15th November and 7th December, 17 at Spring Mill and 15 at Cowm on 10th December.

TWITE - *Carduelis flavirostris*

Improved numbers for the third successive year. 10 had returned to the Lee Quarry site by 5th April and there were 20 there by 3rd May. A flock of 7 was back on The Hile on 11th April and 23 on 19th April. At least 2 pairs were present at Cowm and a pair at Reaps Moss on 8th May. There were records of singles from Facit and Moss Quarry. 2 were seen at Cowm reservoir on 10th June. On 13th June a pair was present on the southern edge of the C.B.C. plot. On 2nd July a family group of 2 adults and 3 juveniles was seen on The Brex and on 20th July 3 immatures at Farm Hill. Post-breeding flocks indicated a good breeding season. A flock of about 35 was regular on The Brex feeding on thistle heads from 7th August to 5th September and 40 on The Hile later in September. On 21st September two flocks - one of 20 and one of 70 - were present on Brandwood Moor near to Lee Quarry. Elsewhere there were 18 at A.M.R. on 19th September, 30 at Farm Hill on 26th September, 25 at Ogden on 29th September and 15 there on 3rd October, 12 at Cowpe Lodge on 15th October and 8 on East Hile on 21st October.

REDPOLL - *Carduelis flammea*

On 1st January 2 were feeding on alders at Shawclough and on 8th February 2 males and 2 females were feeding on the ground beneath alders at Park Road plantation. On 2nd April several were heard at Wayoh and on 15th April 5 were at Healey Dell. On 20th May one flew over H.M.T.C. and on 11th June one flew to the south over Stoneholme. Nesting took place at Haslingden and Hoddlesden. In the winter there were several interesting records. On 12th November a very pale grey bird was seen at New Line. On 17th December a large flock at Holden Wood included 3 showing a great deal of white. On 23rd December 12 at Holden Vale included one identified as being of the Mealy race (*C. f. flammea*). There were 25 at Reedsholme on 28th December. There appears to have been an influx which included continental Mealy Redpolls. A flock of about 20 Mealties seen at Rowley, Burnley on 30th December included an Arctic Redpoll (*Carduelis hornemanni*) which was seen by several members.

COMMON CROSSBILL - *Loxia curvirostra*

Present in the Grane area in February and March. In February 5 Crossbills were seen and 2 were mating and on 20th February 2 females were carrying nest material. Building was still in progress on 12th March, the first nest having been blown down. Altogether at Grane, up to 7 pairs may have attempted breeding. 4 pairs are known to have bred and 2 nests were found. One was blown down and failed but the other fledged young. 2 other groups of fledged young were seen. Two were still present on 19th March. Elsewhere, a pair was seen at Heap Clough on 19th February and 2 over Bacup Golf Course on 12th March. One was seen at Grane on

16th May and a pair on 22nd May. A party of 3 juveniles was at Bonfire Hill, Crawshawbooth on 22nd May.

BULLFINCH - *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

The usual scattered appearances were noted. AS pair was present in the Ramsbottom area in January. On 12th March 2 pairs were at Tip Lodge and the males were engaged in aggressive chasing activity. One pair was still present on 14th April. A single was seen in Saplin Wood, Holcombe on 26th June. At least 4 juveniles were seen at Folly on 19th June. Post-breeding-season at least 7 were present at Folly on 15th September, one was heard at H.M.T.C. on 14th October, a flock of 9 was seen at Healey Dell on 17th December (there may have been 12 as 3 were seen separately nearby), one at Piercy on 31st December. Bullfinches were also present regularly at Tip Lodge and Reedsholme in the winter with a maximum of 3.

SNOW BUNTING - *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Some at Crown Point as late as early January. On 17th February 7 were at Cragg Quarry (R Ives) and 3 on the same date (P Kemp). There were about 8 at Crown Point on Christmas Eve (J Stanners).

REED BUNTING - *Emberiza schoeniclus*

A flock of 20 was present at a lodge at Whitworth on 29th January. 2 were seen at Woodcroft and Reedsholme on 4th February. Males had returned to nesting territories at Clowbridge on 19th March, The Hile on 21st March (pair on 23rd March), H.M.T.C. on 2nd April, Ewood Bridge Lodge on 9th April, Spring Mill (5 males) on 18th April and Isle of Man Lodge on 23rd April. Singing males were recorded at H.M.T.C., on 20th May then in June and July at Holden Vale Flash, A.M.R. , The Hile, Clowbridge, Marl Pits. Two pairs nested on the C.B.C. plot and both males were carrying food on 7th June. Two fledged young were seen there on 13th June. 4 males held territories at Clowbridge reservoir. On 8th June there were singing males at 4 sites at H.M.T.C. Two pairs were present at Taddy Lodge and one pair east of Shawforth in the Whitworth area. Two were present at Loveclough in hard weather on 24th December.