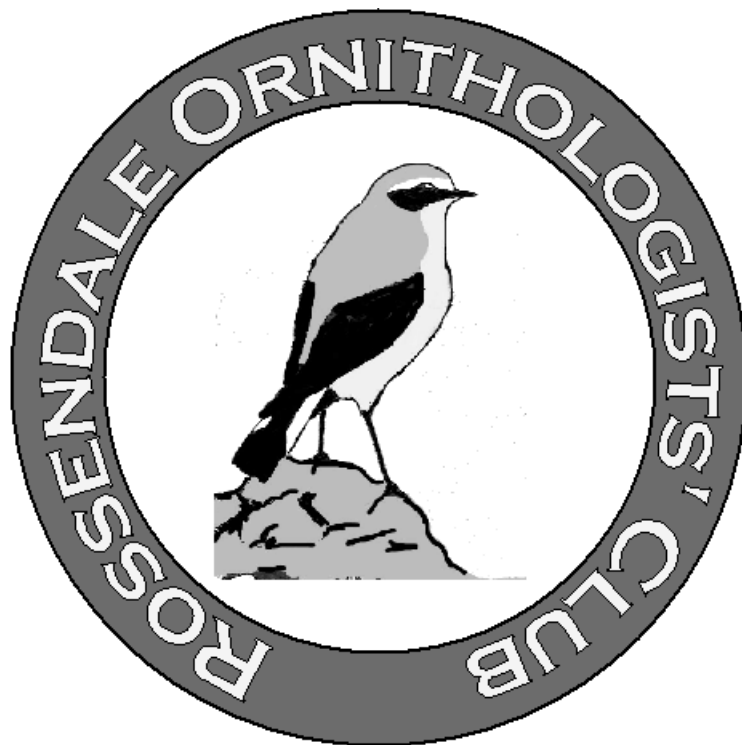

Rossendale Ornithologists' Club

Bird Report



1997

LITTLE GREBE - *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Singles were seen at Healey Dell on 25th January and at Spring Mill on 24th and 25th April. One had returned to Shortclough reservoir by 27th March. Nesting was successful here and a pair had 2 small young on 3rd June. An adult was feeding 3 large young there on 10th October. A pair bred at Syke reservoir, Whitworth and 4 juveniles were seen there on 2nd August. A single at A.M.R. was unusual.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE - *Podiceps cristatus*

At the Grane reservoirs one had arrived back at Ogden in late March and was seen on various dates to 25th April. Two birds were present on Ogden from May to 6th June, then one on 19th June. One was incubating eggs in a nest at Holden Wood on 11th May and 3 other adults were present. One adult was found dead, possibly killed by a mink, on 26th June and the nest had been disturbed. The other pair did not breed. At Shortclough a pair had returned by 14th March. Successful breeding was indicated by the presence of 2 small young on 12th and 30th May. An adult and a juvenile bird were present at Clowbridge on 23rd June and again later in the season from 25th September to 5th October. A single bird was seen at Clough Bottom on 30th June and 6th July. A pair was at Spring Mill on 11th August but there was no evidence of breeding. After the breeding season one was seen at Clough Bottom on 6th July, one adult at Holden Wood on 20th July, at A.M.R. on 18th August, two at Holden Wood on 19th October and 3 there on 22nd and 31st October.

CORMORANT - *Phalacrocorax carbo*

As last year there were brief appearances, usually of single birds in the autumn - 2 at Spring Mill on 13th August, 1 there on 15th August, one over Waterfoot on 7th October, 1 at Clowbridge on 19th, 22nd and 29th October, 2nd and 13th November and one flew on to Ogden reservoir from the south on 16th November.

GREY HERON - *Ardea cinerea*

Recorded in all the usual places throughout the year. On 7th January during a cold spell one was present for at least two hours at the confluence of the Limy and the Irwell, only a few yards from the busy footbridge carrying pedestrians to Asda and Do-It-All. Immature birds were seen on 28th May at Lench, on 20th July at Holden Wood and on 1st August at Jack Lodge. Our nearest heronry - at Entwistle - was reported in the 1996 Lancashire Bird Report as having 5 nests. One adult again paid regular visits to the garden pond in Waterfoot from 16th October to 18th December, probably the same bird reported last year. Highest numbers recorded were 4 at Clough Bottom on 30th June, 4 at Spring Mill on 17th and 18th July with 5 there on 20th and 22nd July, 5 at Shortclough on 8th June and 6 at Ogden on 22nd August.

MUTE SWAN - *Cygnus olor*

Remains scarce in Rossendale. A male was at Cowm reservoir throughout the year. One was regular at Holden Wood and Ogden reservoirs from 9th May to 23rd June.

WHOOPEE SWAN - *Cygnus cygnus*

The only record was of 4 and 2 immatures at Wayoh on 2nd February.

LESSER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE - *Anser erythropus*

A single bird - presumably an escape - was seen with the Canada Geese at Grane from 28th June to the end of the year.

GREYLAG GOOSE - *Anser anser*

The two birds seen with the Canada Geese at Grane last year were present until 7th March. Later in the year a single bird was present from 3rd June to the end of the year.

CANADA GOOSE - *Branta canadensis*

Present and breeding successfully on most reservoirs. Numbers were similar to those of last year. 40 roosted on the ice at Clowbridge on 3rd January. There were 62 at Holden Wood on 12th January and 76 on 12th February. On 6th April there were 17 at A.M.R. At Ogden 2 were at a nest on 15th April and one was sitting on 11th May. On 5th June there were 5 adults and 4 goslings (surviving from 6 hatched). On 19th June there were 33 including 4 well-grown young. At Clowbridge on 16th June there were 18 adults with 3 younger and 6 older goslings. On 22nd May a pair had 3 small goslings on Cowpe reservoir - believed to be a first nesting here. At Clough Bottom a pair with one gosling were present on 14th May. A pair nested at Spring Mill but they were unsuccessful. Flock numbers recorded later in the year were 80 at Clowbridge throughout October and November, 73 at Spring Mill on 23rd September, 70 at Holden Wood on 19th October, 13 at A.M.R. on 20th July.

BARNACLE GOOSE - *Branta leucopsis*

One was present at Wayoh on 1st September.

SHELDUCK - *Tadorna tadorna*

During April, presumably at a time of spring movement, one was at Clough Bottom on 14th and 3 at A.M.R. on 21st.

MANDARIN - *Aix galericulata*

A pair of free-flying birds was seen at Cowm reservoir on 15th November.

WIGEON - *Anas penelope*

Recorded in the usual small numbers - 2 at Holden Wood on 20th January, a single male at A.M.R. on 8th and 9th March and 3rd May, 2 at A.M.R. on 31st August, 1 at Clowbridge on 21st September with 2 there on 22nd October and 5 at Holden Wood on 19th October.

TEAL - *Anas crecca*

After the slight increase noted last year numbers were down to the usual low figures. There were single figures for A.M.R. during late winter and early spring - 2 on 9th February, 6 and 7 in early March, 2 on 6th April and 2 on 13th April. There were also 2 pairs at Clough Bottom on 14th April. These had moved on by the breeding season and there were no records until the return movement - 5 at Calf Hey on 18th August, 7 at Holden Wood on 18th and 27th August and 8 there on 19th October, 2 at Clowbridge on 11th September and 1st November, 30 at A.M.R. on 19th October. At Spring Mill there were 2 on 20th August and 1 on 21st December. At A.M.R. there were 5 on 14th October and 10 on 16th October.

MALLARD - *Anas platyrhynchos*

Flock numbers reported in January and February were 60 on the River Irwell in Rawtenstall on 7th January, 30 at A.M.R. on 12th January, 20 on New Line on 12th January, 20 at Holden Wood on 20th January and 65 there on 12th February. Pair-formation led to the dispersal of flocks in March and nesting was again widespread. On 1st May there were broods of 9 and 11 on the stream at Folly. On 2nd May a female was with 8 small ducklings on Jack Lodge,

on 23rd June there were 8 adults and 4 young on Holden Wood, on 20th July a flock of 30 on Holden Wood included 10 young. on 18th August a female was with 5 large young on A.M.R.. There were 2 large broods of 12 each on Clowbridge in early summer. Post-breeding flocks were 27 at Calf Hey and 33 at Holden Wood on 27th August, 30 on the River Limy below Crawshawbooth on 27th September, 37 at Spring Mill on 13th August, 49 at Calf Hey on 19th October, 70 at A.M.R. on 16th November.

GARGANEY - *Anas querquedula*

A female was on a pond near Clegg Hall, Rochdale, just outside Rossendale on 12th July. It was present until 16th July.

SHOVELER - *Anas clypeata*

3 flew high up to the south over Crawshawbooth on 7th November and 3 were seen on Clowbridge reservoir on 22nd November.

POCHARD - *Aythya ferina*

There were large numbers - 60 to 70 at Wayoh in February but much smaller numbers in Rossendale. In the late winter period there were 3 at Holden Wood on 9th February and 2 there on 12th February then 5 or 6 from 25th February to 7th March. A male was at Spring Mill on 1st and 2nd March. There were similar small numbers in autumn - 4 at A.M.R. on 18th August and one at Holden Wood on 22nd August. A single female was with Tufted Ducks at Clowbridge from 27th to 30th September and a male was at the same site on 21st December. A single male was at Shortclough on 7th October and a male was at Spring Mill on 14th December.

TUFTED DUCK - *Aythya fuligula*

Small numbers from 2 to 6 were recorded at Holden Wood, A.M.R. and Cowm from January to March and a slightly larger flock of 10 at Wayoh on 2nd February. Pair-formation was noted from April - 2 pairs at Clowbridge on 12th (the first of the year there), 2 pairs at Clough Bottom on 20th and a pair at Shortclough on the same date, a pair at A.M.R. on 13th and 25th. A pair remained for a while at Clowbridge to 29th May. 2 pairs were present on Holden Wood reservoir from May to July. One pair probably attempted breeding but failed. Some slightly larger flocks were seen in the autumn 12, 13 and 17 at Holden Wood from 18th August to 16th November, 14 at A.M.R. on 7th September, 18 at Clowbridge on 21st September, 16 at Holden Wood on 16th November. Small numbers remained at Clowbridge until 4th December.

SCAUP - *Aythya marila*

The first-winter male recorded in December 1996 at New Line reservoir remained until 21st January 1997.

COMMON SCOTER - *Melanitta nigra*

A female was at Spring Mill reservoir from 0930 to 1500 hrs on 1st November.

GOLDENEYE - *Bucephala clangula*

Numbers were again low with singles and twos from early January to 9th March at Calf Hey, A.M.R., Holden Wood, Cowm, Clough Bottom, Clowbridge and Spring Mill. 6 were at Spring Mill on 16th March and 9 there on 29th March. A female lingered at Clowbridge until 12th April and one remained on Spring Mill until 26th April. Autumn records involved Clowbridge,

Cowm and Spring Mill. 2 males and 3 females arrived at Clowbridge on 19th October. A female appeared at Cowm on 25th October and there were 2 at Spring Mill on 26th. Small numbers were seen at the three sites until the end of the year with higher numbers of 7 at Clowbridge on 21st November and 7 at Spring Mill on 29th December.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER - *Mergus serrator*

A female was seen at Spring Mill reservoir in company with the Goosanders on at least 10 dates between 15th November and 31st December.

GOOSANDER - *Mergus merganser*

During late winter and early spring small flocks of 2 to 10 birds were widespread on reservoirs and occasionally on the River Irwell. Rather larger flocks were frequently recorded at Spring Mill during this period. There was a peak passage in early February - 87 on A.M.R. on 2nd February, 62 on Spring Mill on 7th February, 3 on Holden Wood, 5 on Ogden and 38 on A.M.R. on 9th February. There were 31 at A.M.R. on 9th March. Latest were 3 on Clowbridge on 16th June - they alighted at 20.45 hrs for about 10 minutes. Post breeding season a female was at Holden Wood on 2nd July. 2 males had returned to Spring Mill on 30th August and there were variable numbers to the end of the year. Other flocks recorded in autumn were 8 at Holden Wood on 8th October, 22 at A.M.R. on 19th October, 16 there on 16th November and 30 on 30th November. At Clowbridge there were 3 on 28th and 29th October, 8 on 14th December and 4 on 31st December.

RED KITE - *Milvus milvus*

There were sightings of two individuals during 1998. On 20th July a wing-tagged bird was seen at Water by B Dempsey. On 2nd August another bird, not wing tagged and appearing to be an immature bird with a "tatty" tail was seen at Spring Mill by D Nuttall and J Stanners. What was probably the same individual was seen at Crawshawbooth on 3rd August by C Ellison.

HEN HARRIER - *Circus cyaneus*

There were several second-hand reports of one on the moors between Clowbridge and Clough Bottom during late April and a definite report of a "ringtail" near Compston's Cross from 27th to 29th April. On 29th October an immature male was harassed by Carrion Crows in the Cowpe Valley. A male was seen on Goodshaw Hill on 13th December.

MARSH HARRIER - *Circus aeruginosus*

One flew across the top end of Grane on 2nd May.

GOSHAWK - *Accipiter gentilis*

On 31st March and 18th April one was seen in the west of Rossendale. On 12th April one was seen flying over Knowl Moor and then on towards Holcombe.

SPARROWHAWK - *Accipiter nisus*

The female recorded hunting through gardens in the Waterfoot area at the end of last year was again seen regularly in spring and summer. On 21st March she chased a Dunnock by scrambling through a hawthorn hedge. Breeding was successful in this area and the female was seen carrying food from The Hile to Staghills Wood on 1st August. 2 pairs bred in the Grane area and a pair nested in a beech tree at Fern Isle Wood, Whitworth. Regular presence was also

recorded from Reedsholme, Clowbridge, Helmshore. During autumn at least 3 Sparrowhawks were present in the lower Whitewell valley area - 2 females seen together and a male.

COMMON BUZZARD - *Buteo buteo*

One was seen over Ogden and Holden Wood reservoirs on 3rd July and one over Bacup on 21st September.

OSPREY - *Pandion haliaetus*

Two separate sightings were reported by anglers at Grane in mid-August on different days. One over Ogden reservoir attempted to catch a fish then flew into Kings Hillock Wood. 1 flew over Haslingden Moor on 21st September.

KESTREL - *Falco tinnunculus*

Numbers and distribution were similar to last year. A pair was present in the Musbury area from 13th January and an immature was seen over Musbury Tor on 19th July. There was an immature male at Holden Wood on 18th August and 2 hunting together over Musbury Heights on 9th September were probably youngsters of the year. In the Clowbridge area there were regular sightings in spring and summer and breeding took place here and at the usual site at Reedsholme. A pair was present in the Stacksteads area and Kestrels were seen at Lee Quarry, hunting along the Cowpe Valley and along the fields by The Glen. Two probable immatures were hunting together over Piper Bank on 30th September. Kestrels were also present at the usual sites at Alderbottom, Spring Mill, Grane (at least 3 pairs) and there were sightings at New Line, A.M.R., Dearden Clough.

MERLIN - *Falco columbarius*

There were several spring records, the earliest being on 4th April in south Rossendale. 3 pairs bred one pair reared 4 young from 4 eggs, a second pair raised 2 young from 5 eggs and a third pair bred but details are unknown. There were several sightings during late summer and autumn - 3 singles at Clowbridge between 27th July and 17th August, one over Grane on 2nd August, one over Musbury on 25th August, one over The Brex on 3rd October, 2 over Cowpe reservoir on 7th October, one over Haslingden Moor on 8th October and one on 12th October which suddenly appeared from high up and dived on to a Peregrine flying south over the Irwell Valley. One flew low over Wallbank, Whitworth on 25th December.

PEREGRINE - *Falco peregrinus*

First arrivals were noted in March - one flying south over The Brex on 13th March, one in south Rossendale on 19th March and 2 on 22nd March. A pair had returned to one site by 8th May and one was incubating on 2nd June. There were 2 eggs and 2 young on 15th June and on 14th July both adults and 2 young ready to fledge were recorded. Two other pairs reared 2 young from 3 eggs and 3 young from 3 eggs respectively. Autumn records included 2 over Ogden reservoir on 8th October, one over Musbury on 11th October, one over Fearn Moss on 10th November and one over The Brex on 21st November. There were several sightings at Spring Mill between August and November.

RED GROUSE - *Lagopus lagopus scoticus*

There were good numbers on Holcombe Moor where one observer found 6 pairs on 20th April and there were reports of a pair on the nearby Musbury Heights on 30th March and 9th May. On Knowl Moor 2 were seen on 9th March then later during spring pairs were flushed

from 2 sites and display was observed on 15th April. A single bird was seen on the north side of Cowpe Moss on 11th May. A nest found with one egg on 28th May at Cowpe was later deserted. 3 were seen on Knowl Moor on 27th July and 30th November and droppings were found in 3 areas of Cowpe Moss on 10th October.

GREY PARTRIDGE - *Perdix perdix*

Last year's report suggested that 1997 had been a good year for Partridge and this was confirmed by some good numbers in winter coveys - 14 on Cowpe Lowe and 7 in Ding Quarry on 18th January, 9 on Whinberry Naze on 25th January and up to 17 at Crown Point in January and February. There were records of pairs on territory from 2 sites round Clowbridge, Nutshaw Hill, Swinshaw Moor, Chapel Hill, The Hile / Shawclough, Cowpe Lowe, Cowpe reservoir, Musbury, Balladen, Red Moss, Plunge, A.M.R., Thieveley Pike, Naden, Mitchell House, Alden, Spring Mill and Cheesden. A pair with 8 young was seen at Folly on 10th August and a covey of 6 was seen at Musbury on 31st October. A pair showed anxiety on the Hile site on 8th June but only a pair was present on 7th August. Partridges were noted at several sites during November and December - Hameldon, Goodshaw Hill, Cowpe Lowe, Nutshaw, Crown Point (6 birds on 7th December), Hades Hill, Shawforth (10 on 7th December).

PHEASANT - *Phasianus colchicus*

Observers reported a regular presence in the Higher Hollinbank area of Musbury and at Alden throughout the year. On 13th February 2 males were seen fighting at Musbury and calling males were heard daily from May to August. There was a report of a Goshawk being flown at Pheasants at Musbury on 8th February.

QUAIL - *Coturnix coturnix*

One was calling from a meadow near Hoddlesden Moss on 25th May.

MOORHEN - *Gallinula chloropus*

Recorded as being present on virtually all lodges, reservoirs and along the rivers. A pair at Clowbridge reared 3 broods. An adult and 2 immatures were seen on Jack Lodge on 17th August and there were 2 adults and 2 young on Holden Vale Flash on 27th August.

COOT - *Fulica atra*

A single bird was at Spring Mill during January and February and into early March. A pair was seen on Sykes reservoir, Whitworth on 17th May. At Holden Wood 4 to 9 were present in April and early May but these moved on, possibly due to predation by feral mink, and none was seen during the summer. 2 birds were present on 18th and 22nd August. None was seen at Shortclough and one at Clowbridge on 2nd May was unusual. Elsewhere, a pair was present at Wayoh on 11th May. This appears to be a reversal of the trend towards increased nesting in Rossendale which took place in the earlier years of the decade.

OYSTERCATCHER - *Haematopus ostralegus*

At A.M.R. one had returned on 2nd March, then a pair on 25th April and 4 on 3rd May. Also one was at nearby Cheesden Bar on 5th May. Nesting has taken place in this general area for the past few years. One bird on passage was at Clowbridge as early as February and there were singles there on 9th and 24th May. One was at Cowpe on 24th May. At Spring Mill 1 was seen on 21st and 22nd March, 2 on 29th March and one or two birds on several occasions during

May and June. 5 were calling in flight over Wallbank on 16th July. In the autumn 2 were at A.M.R. on 3rd August and one was at Holden Wood on 7th September.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER - *Charadrius dubius*

One had returned to Clowbridge on 26th April then 2 on 2nd May and a single on 4th and 6th May and on 17th June. There was no indication of breeding, unlike 1996, when drought conditions brought a drop in water level producing ideal nesting habitat. Two pairs were seen at Grane reservoirs, but the high water levels and probably the presence of mink prevented breeding. One pair did breed in Rossendale, however, rearing 3 young. There were 2 at A.M.R. on 2nd May and 2 at Watergrove reservoir, just outside Rossendale, on 4th May.

RINGED PLOVER - *Charadrius hiaticula*

Singles on passage were at Clowbridge on 13th May and Holden Wood on 20th July.

DOTTEREL - *Charadrius morinellus*

One on Knowl Moor on 6th April - probably our earliest record. There were 4 at the same place on 13th April.

GOLDEN PLOVER - *Pluvialis apricaria*

On Cowpe Moss 4 had returned by 2nd February and on 9th March there were three groups of 2 - 4 and 17 with some song display. On 3rd April there were groups of 2 - 11 and 3. By 6th April they had separated into pairs and singles in at least 5 territories. On 12th April Andy Ives found a nest with 4 eggs. The eggs were chipping on 2nd May and on 11th May the adults were calling anxiously indicating that young were present. On 18th April 4 birds feeding at Cheesden Bar flew on to Cowpe Moss at dusk. A pair nested on Haslingden Moor rearing 3 young. Golden Plovers were also present at Knowl Moor and Lee Moss. There was a good passage of birds of the Northern race at Cheesden Bar beginning on 7th April when 25 were present, then on a further 10 dates until 5th May when 7 were present. Peak counts were 26 on 11th and 15th April (R & A Ives). On 6th April 38 flew north over Whitworth. There was evidence that Golden Plovers had been taken by Peregrines on Knowl Moor and Cowpe Moss. During autumn and winter small flocks were seen on Cowpe Moss on several dates - 4 on 26th and 31st October, 15 on 9th November, 21 on 21st November, 22 on 12th December. 1 was on Knowl Moor on 30th November and 2 on Hameldon on 11th December.

LAPWING - *Vanellus vanellus*

First returns were 34 in the Bull and Butcher area on 14th February and 14 on Bacup Golf Course on 16th February. There were 10 at Cheesden on 24th March, 30 at A.M.R. on 7th March and 45 over Brex Heights on 8th March. A male was displaying over territory at Holden Wood on 7th March. Reported colonies were 3 pairs on Musbury Tor (nest c/4 on 2nd April and flock of 10 on 9th May), at least 10 pairs at Cheesden Bar (3 small young seen 28th May), 12 pairs Haslingden Moor, 3 pairs Hoddlesden Moss, 4 pairs at Chapel Hill, 3 pairs Swinshaw Moor, 4 pairs on Seat Naze, 3 pairs on The Brex (pair showing anxiety on 8th June and a flock of 12), 2 pairs east of A.M.R., 3 pairs Whitaker Pasture (north of Cowpe Moss), 3 pairs on Tooter Hill, 2 or 3 pairs Reaps Moss. In autumn large numbers built up in flocks at A.M.R. - 300 on 20th July and 650 on 22nd August decreasing to 300 on 19th October and 200 on 16th November. Elsewhere there were 30 at Holden Wood on 18th August. A small flock of 3 at Clowbridge on 21st November was unusual.

SANDERLING - *Calidris alba*

One was recorded at Clowbridge in late April or early May.

LITTLE STINT - *Calidris minuta*

One was calling whilst flying north over Crawshawbooth on 26th August.

DUNLIN - *Calidris alpina*

Present in small numbers but no definite evidence of breeding. One was seen with Golden Plovers on Cowpe Moss on 12th April and one also on 11th May. A single bird was present on Holcombe Moor near Bull Hill on 20th April. There were 3 Dunlins at A.M.R. on 24th April and 2 on Knowl Moor on 11th May. A nest was found predated on Cowpe Moss on 26th May. The female must have re-laid as they had young on 21st June. 4 pairs bred on Knowl Moor. Singles were seen at Clowbridge on 29th September, 22nd October and 13th November. One was seen at Spring Mill on 1st November.

KNOT - *Calidris canuta*

A single adult was at Clowbridge on 24th August a similar date to last year.

JACK SNIBE - *Lymnocyptes minimus*

There were records of singles at Naden on 16th January, on The Hile on 12th March, on Cowpe Moss on 6th April and Brandwood Moor on 15th April. One report said that single birds had been flushed on Cowpe Moss, Knowl Moor and Great Hameldon from mid-April to the first week in May. 2 were flushed from Knowl Moor on 30th November and one on Goodshaw Hill on December 14th.

COMMON SNIBE - *Gallinago gallinago*

Five were flushed from wet fields at Crown point on 9th February and there were 11 at Syke reservoir on 1st March. There were 3 on Knowl Moor on 9th March and 2 on 7th April. There were singles on The Hile on 12th March and on Reaps Moss on 31st March and one was drumming at A.M.R. on 6th April. 2 pairs were seen on Haslingden Moor on 7th April, drumming was heard from Syke reservoir on 13th April and near Hutch Bank Quarry on 30th April and a pair bred in a field near to Holden Wood reservoir. There were 24 at A.M.R. on 31st August. Elsewhere there were 2 at Nutshaw Hill on 29th October, 4 on 1st November and 5 on 1st December. There were 5 on Knowl Moor on 30th November. Singles were reported from Cowpe Moss, Whinberry Naze and Scout Moor on various dates from October to December.

WOODCOCK - *Scolopax rusticola*

4 were at Broadhead on 19th January. Single birds were seen at Healey on 1st February, Fern Isle Wood on 1st and 15th February. One was seen at Alden Ratchers on 22nd March. The first of the autumn was on Cowpe Moss on 11th November and 1 was at Hameldon on 17th December. On 23rd December one was near Clough Bottom reservoir.

WHIMBREL - *Numenius phaeopus*

On 4th May 13 flew over Clowbridge reservoir against a strong southwesterly wind and alighted on the moor to the south of the reservoir from 1445 hrs to dusk.

CURLEW - *Numenius arquata*

Apart from 1 at Spring Mill on 23rd February, first returns were in early March - one at Musbury on 5th March, one near Clowbridge on 9th, 12 at A.M. R. on 8th, 3 at Spring Mill on 10th and one flying north over Rawtenstall on 16th March. On 21st March there were 3 at Clough Bottom. Display flights were seen over Cowpe reservoir on 27th March and over Holden Wood on 6th April. During the nesting season there were records of pairs at Swinshaw Moor (3 pairs), Spring Mill (3 pairs), Hameldon, Nutshaw Hill, Clowbridge, Greenfold, Musbury, Smallshaw Height, Clough Bottom, The Hile / Brex, Lee Moss, Tooter Hill, Reaps Moss, Brandwood Moor, Cheesden, Deerplay, Crown Point, Scout Moor, Knowl Moor, Haslingden Moor (4 pairs), Hoddlesden Moss (2 pairs). Post-breeding flocks were noted at Hoddlesden Moss (13 on 23rd June), Harden Moor (7 on 24th June), Spring Mill (9 on 29th June). Return movement began in July with calls heard over Crawshawbooth early on 2nd, 2 at Cowm on 26th and continued during August with the latest being one over Spring Mill on 30th.

REDSHANK - *Tringa totanus*

Two had arrived back at A.M.R. on 4th April and there were 3 there on 3rd May. At Clowbridge there were records of 2 birds on 26th April and 18th May and one on 25th May and 8th June. Nesting has occurred in each of these areas in past years but there was no definite evidence for 1997. At Clowbridge 3 were seen on 22nd July, 2 on 23rd and 1 on 26th and 27th July. Singles were also recorded there on 30th September, 22nd October and 4th December.

GREEN SANDPIPER - *Tringa ochropus*

Single birds were seen at Clowbridge on 8th, 10th and 15th August and one was at Spring Mill reservoir from 1815 to 1910 on 30th August.

COMMON SANDPIPER - *Actitis hypoleucos*

The earliest arrival was one at Clowbridge on 12th April. There was then a gap in records until 25th and 27th April when 3 were present and 6 on 29th April. On 9th May pairs were seen in 3 or possibly 4 sites and there was noisy display activity until early June. Two pairs were seen to have small young in late June but overall breeding success seemed poor. A late nest had 6 eggs on 29th June, reduced to 2 by early July and then deserted (R & A Ives). At Clough Bottom 2 had arrived on 20th April and there were 5 on 27th April and 6 on 4th May. There were 3 pairs on 26th May and 29th June. This may be assumed to be the number of pairs holding territory but there were no further observations to indicate breeding success. Pairs were present at Cowpe, Mitchell House, Spring Mill, Cowm and Calf Hey reservoirs. One had returned to Ogden by 15th April and singles were seen there on 25th April, 14th May and 5th June. Breeding is thought to have failed at Holden Wood due to the presence of mink. Later in the year there were singles at Ogden and Calf Hey on 22nd August and 2 at Holden Wood on 27th August. At Clowbridge ones or twos were present until 5th September.

BLACK-HEADED GULL - *Larus ridibundus*

Numbers remained at about 5 - 600 at Stacksteads Tip in January and February. Numbers elsewhere included 80 at Cowm and 25 at New Line on 9th February, 100 at Holden Wood on 7th March. There were 50 leaving Stacksteads in the late afternoon of 20th February after which the Tip was virtually deserted - an early departure date. Small numbers were recorded in spring and summer - 4 at A.M.R. on 13th April, 2 on 19th April. One was at E.B.S.W. on

8th June and 2 at Grane on 22nd June. Returning gulls were seen in early July - an adult and a juvenile at Spring Mill on 6th, 2 at Clowbridge on 6th, 3 on playing fields at Crawshawbooth on 7th, 1 on Fearn Moss on 18th and then increasing to double figures later in the month - 10 at Holden Wood on 20th, 50 at A.M.R. on 23rd. There were 13 with 4 immatures on Fearn Moss on 24th July and 9 with 2 immatures on 7th August, 5 with 7 immatures on 9th August. On 18th August 50 flew in to roost at Grane and on 22nd there were 60 on Holden Wood. Numbers remained at about this level until early October when there was an influx of about 350 to Stacksteads on 9th. Numbers again increased with another influx in early November with estimates of about 650 at the Tip plus 350 - 400 large gulls, mostly Herring Gulls. At Spring Mill maximum numbers were 122 adults and 7 juveniles on 23rd July, 139 birds on 7th December.

COMMON GULL - *Larus canus*

On 3rd January there were 13 on the ice at Clowbridge reservoir - also 10 at Cowm on 3rd and 14th January. Present in the usual relatively small proportion among the Black-headed Gull flocks. Rough counts on the morning flights to Stacksteads never gave more than 20 or 30 though there were 33 at Cowm reservoir on 22nd February. February and March produced several of the single-species flocks which have been noted before in spring and autumn - 9 at Cowm on 9th February, 40 at A.M.R. on 7th March. Departure for the breeding-grounds occurred with the Black-headed Gulls but a late bird was seen at Musbury on 6th May. The earliest returning bird was 1 at Spring Mill on 22nd July and numbers rose here to 14 on 8th August. 2 birds were seen at A.M.R. on 18th August. Single-species flocks seen were 16 at A.M.R. on 16th November and 32 at Spring Mill on 24th November. About 20 were counted on morning flights to Stacksteads Tip.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL - *Larus fuscus*

Winter figures were less than 10 at Stacksteads Tip and at Cowm and Ogden reservoirs during January and February and a similar figure of 12 birds at Wallbank on 12th January. There was a slight increase to 15 - 20 in early March, then the usual influx with 150 near Stacksteads on 21st March, 250 on 3rd April and 500 on 22nd April. Numbers at Stacksteads were about 250 during May and June. The usual increase occurred with the southward movement from the breeding-grounds in north Lancashire - 500 on 25th July declining to 200 on 15th August, 150 on 27th August, 120 on 30th August and 50 on 4th September. During this period flocks seen on reservoirs included 120 at A.M.R. on 7th September, half of which were juveniles. Later figures showed the steady decrease to low winter numbers - 80 at Stacksteads on 22nd September, 50 at A.M.R. on 19th October, 50 at Stacksteads on 22nd October, 26 at A.M.R. on 16th November, 15 at Stacksteads on 19th November and a few singles on the morning flight in late November and December.

HERRING GULL - *Larus argentatus*

Large numbers continued to visit Stacksteads Tip during the mid-winter period and estimates suggested about 300 - 400 were regular. Numbers fell in February - 100 on 12th February and only the occasional single by March - one with a few Lesser Black-backs on 31st March and one at E.B.S.W. on 16th April. However, there was a flock of 90 over Cowm reservoir on 29th March. There were records of singles at Clough Bottom on 8th July and Stacksteads on 7th August then small numbers with the Lesser Black-backs in early November. On 10th November a flock of c 100 large gulls flying to the Tip were about half-and-half Herring and

Lesser Black-backs, with many immatures included. On 13th November there were about 350 at the Tip and similar numbers on the evening flight on 1st and 2nd December.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL - *Larus marinus*

Small numbers continued to visit Stacksteads Tip in mid-winter. On 9th January 3 were seen on the morning flight and on the same date there were at least 20 at the Tip. On 12th January there were 20 at A.M.R. and 7 at Holden Wood. Ones and twos were seen flying to and from the Tip up to 5th February. One flew over Healey Dell on 6th April.

COMMON TERN - *Sterna hirundo*

On 18th June one visited Clowbridge reservoir and one was seen at A.M.R. on 3rd August.

BLACK TERN - *Chlidonias niger*

2 were present at Clowbridge reservoir on 4th May.

FERAL PIGEON - *Columba livia*

Town-centre colonies were much as usual. On 14th October 56 were counted in Waterfoot centre and along the Whitewell valley to the north there were 10 at Gaghills and 16 near B.R.G.S. For about 3 weeks in September at least 30 fed every day on re-seeded playing-fields at Fearn's.

STOCK DOVE - *Columba oenas*

Before the breeding season a flock of up to 15 birds was seen feeding in a field near Jennie Rough, Whitworth during March. During the nesting season there were records of ones and twos from the head of the Cowpe valley, The Hile, Lee Quarry, Coal Pits Lane, Spring Mill and Clough Bottom (3 on 27th April). Two pairs were present at Hutch Bank Quarry, a pair at Heap Clough and a pair at Bonfire Hill Quarry.

WOODPIGEON - *Columba palumbus*

Good-sized winter flocks were recorded - 31 over Wallbank on 12th January, 40 flying from The Hile to Staghills on 13th January, 64 at Cribden Clough on 15th February, 100 over The Hile to Stacksteads on 28th February, 70 at Musbury on 3rd March and 30 at Clough Bottom on 24th March. Nesting was again widespread in woods, parks and gardens. Flocks built up in autumn - 40 at Farm Hill in beech trees on 23rd October, 250 in Fern Isle Wood on 8th November, 80 flying east over Waterfoot on 7th December and 150 at Ogden on 14th December, 170 at Healey Dell on 21st December.

COLLARED DOVE - *Streptopelia decaocto*

A flock of up to 10 was present near Healey during January and early February. The species is increasingly common and apparently nesting through most of the year. Males were in song from early January and pairs were seen mating on 14th January and 3rd February. Collared Doves were seen carrying twigs into a Cupressus on 2nd April in Waterfoot and one was sitting on 13th April in Bacup Park. A hatched eggshell was found in Waterfoot on 23rd May. Aggressive territorial behaviour was noted in June and July. The very tame pair mentioned in last year's Report brought a newly-fledged juvenile down for peanuts on the lawn on 22nd August. By 29th August the parents were acting aggressively and chasing it off. Bewildered by this change in behaviour it sought refuge between Eric Ward's feet and on one occasion

alighted on his head! It continued to visit the garden in spite of parental aggression. In the autumn a flock of 10 was seen at Waingate and 9 were at Healey on 21st December..

RING-NECKED PARAKEET - *Psittacula krameri*

One was seen over Waterfoot in mid-October.

CUCKOO - *Cuculus canorus*

One was calling at Calf Hey on 9th May, one at Musbury where a pair was later present. Males were also heard calling at Hoddlesden Moss and at Cowm.

BARN OWL - *Tyto alba*

On 11th July one was found dazed in Bacup Centre. It was taken to Three Owls Bird Sanctuary at Norden where it recovered and was later released.

LITTLE OWL - *Athene noctua*

Nesting was again successful at the site at Higher Hollinbank. Little Owls were seen there regularly from 14th January. From early June there was much noise by day and night with aggression against Magpies, Crows and cats. Late in June and in July one juvenile was seen in company with the adults and on 19th July it was mobbed by House Martins. It was seen until at least 26th August (J & B Rostron). A single bird was seen at the Hile site but there was no evidence of nesting although the presence of 2 birds instead of the usual one in November was interesting. Elsewhere, a pair bred at Swinshaw Moor and 3 young were ringed on 10th June, one was seen above Cowpe reservoir on 10th June and one flying across the nearby Rooley Moor Road on 7th October. One was present at Peers Clough on 17th July and a pair bred at Spring Mill (juveniles seen in August). One was seen at Clowbridge on 4th and 5th October. The Cowpe pair reared at least 2 young. There were also pairs at the top end of Musbury and at Alden and a single was seen at Cheesden Pasture on 17th April

TAWNY OWL - *Strix aluco*

Records received indicated occupation of the following territories Crawshawbooth (one roosting at Brooks' Wood on 1st January, 2 juveniles seen on 18th May); a second pair was seen in a nearby territory on 30th March and 19th April; Whitewell Bottom where regular calls were heard in January and February and similarly further south at Piercy; Waterfoot where calls were heard and owls seen hunting over Fearn Moss, Park Road plantation and between B.R.G.S. and Wolfenden Green; the lower Cowpe Valley where one called regularly from the trees near Lench Lodges - it was heard in broad daylight at 1000 hrs on 30th April, quite a common event according to local people; Clowbridge where 2 large young were seen on 24th May and 2 were found dead in separate areas in July; Higher Hollinbank, Helmshore where one was heard regularly; Healey Dell where a juvenile was found on the ground on 8th June; Shawclough where one was sitting near Jack Lodge on 17th March and seen on 17th April but later deserted. At Grane a pair nested in the same hollow tree as last year and reared one young from 3 eggs.

LONG-EARED OWL - *Asio otus*

An adult was seen at Weir on 23rd July. A pair was present in north Rossendale to the end of the year. A pair nested in the same site for the third year in succession rearing 2 young from 3 eggs.

SHORT-EARED OWL - *Asio flammeus*

Two pairs bred in the north of Rossendale. At one of the sites 6 out of the 7 young were ringed. The family group was present until early October. Singles were seen at Crown Point on 12th August and 28th August and a single was seen on Brandwood Moor on 26th August. The finding of numerous pellets on the north Rossendale moors suggests the presence of wintering birds.

SWIFT - *Apus apus*

First arrivals occurred during the first week of May - singles at E.B.S.W. on 2nd, Waterfoot on 3rd and Clowbridge and Crawshawbooth on 4th. On 9th May there were 10 at Clowbridge; on 15th May 2 had arrived back at the Gaghills colony; on 16th May there were 6 over Rawtenstall and on 18th May 10 over Stacksteads. At the Gaghills colony the number of Swifts flying round was generally 8, whereas in most years 10 or 11 have been counted. However, 20 were counted over the adjacent area including Townsend Street and Millar Barn Lane where Swifts have been seen flying to the eaves of older terraced houses in previous years. On 19th July there were 20 in a screaming party over both sites. Elsewhere, 4 were in chasing flights over Bank Street, Rawtenstall on 16th June; 15 were regular over Helmshore near the Park Mill colony. Departure began in late July and early August. Counts included 40 over Musbury in July, up to 60 over Wallbank - Spring Mill on 2nd August, 40 over Edgeside on 1st August and 100 there on 9th August. There were 12 in a screaming party over Gaghills on 8th and 9th August, 2 there on 12th August and none from 13th August. Late birds were seen over Rawtenstall on 7th September, Reedsholme on 8th September and Lench on 10th September.

KINGFISHER - *Alcedo atthis*

During the winter there were continued sightings round the confluence of the Irwell, Whitewell and Cowpe Brook, as noted in the 1996 Report. One flew down the Whitewell at on 16th March and there was some evidence of a nesting attempt at Piercy during April. One was seen on Folly Stream on 6th June. On 24th August one was seen catching a fish from the lodge at Lench and one flew along the Whitewell in Waterfoot in early November. On 27th August one was seen on the River Ogden at Bowl Alley. There were sightings of single Kingfishers at Wallbank Lodge during January and February and again from September to December, but with no sightings during the breeding season. Another report said that Kingfishers were seen along the River Limy with increasing frequency.

GREEN WOODPECKER - *Picus viridis*

Fewer records were received this year. One was present at Hall Carr for 2 or 3 days in January. One was seen at Musbury on 30th March, 10th April and 14th May and one at Water for a few days in April. A juvenile bird was seen at Folly on 6th July. An adult was feeding a juvenile at Spring Mill on 2nd August. In the autumn one flew across Edgeside Park on 3rd October. One was seen at Haslingden Golf Course in September and October. Birds were calling in 2 localities at Bonfire Hill on 22nd December.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER - *Dendrocopos major*

There were winter records from Calf Hey and Holden Vale. At least 2 birds (a male and a female) visited peanut feeders in a garden in Waterfoot in January and early February. At Greenbridge in the Cowpe Valley a male visited a peanut feeder from 24th May and a pair shortly after. The pair brought 2 fledged young in early June. There were also breeding-season

records from Alden where a male was drumming on 11th March and one was seen on 30th April; from Musbury - one on 3rd May and a pair on 8th May and one on 14th May and 20th June; from Crawshawbooth - drumming heard on 11th June; from Whitworth - juveniles seen at Healey on 12th June, juvenile at Fern Isle Wood on 18th August. One was seen at Cowm reservoir on 26th October. Visits to the peanut feeders in Waterfoot began again on 22nd September and continued throughout the winter. Two were seen at Alden on 21st November and one at Higher Hollinbank on 22nd December.

SKYLARK - *Alauda arvensis*

First arrival was 12th January when 6 were seen on Cowpe Lowe and 2 flew over A.M.R. towards Knowl Moor. A flock of 20 was present at Crown Point on 8th February and 6 flew west over Spring Mill on same date. 2 were in full song on 22nd February at 2 sites in Whitworth. Several were back on The Hile on 28th February, territorial activity was noted on 6th March and song was heard on 12th March. Small numbers were seen in January and February on Great Hameldon, Nutshaw Hill and Top of Leach. In the Musbury area 2 males were singing on the Tor on 23rd February and there were 4 pairs on the Tor on 25th March. There were 25 at Burnt Hill, Musbury on 21st March and 10 on Tooter Hill on 31st March. On the old C.B.C. plot on The Hile there were an estimated 15 pairs (14 for the last 2 years) and several juveniles were seen with adults on 2nd July. At Clowbridge there were 6 in song on 8th March and many in song with much territorial chasing activity on 9th March on Knowl Moor, Cowpe Moss, Cheesden Bar. A nest with 3 young was found on Haslingden Moor on 23rd May and a nest with 2 eggs on Knowl Moor on 8th July. Most Skylarks had left The Hile by 6th August but with the usual brief return of small flocks on 4th and 28th September and a slight resurgence of song and territorial activity. 4 flew over Spring Mill on 24th October.

SAND MARTIN - *Riparia riparia*

During the spring passage 2 flew over Clowbridge on 4th May and one was at Spring Mill on 10th May. On 11th May singles were seen over Holden Wood and Clowbridge and 3 over Wayoh. The Stubbins colony numbered about 6 pairs. In the autumn one was seen over Clough Bottom on 2nd August.

SWALLOW - *Hirundo rustica*

4 were seen at Whitworth on 10th April, there were singles at E.B.S.W. and Crawshawbooth on 11th April and Clowbridge on 12th April, 2 at Edenfield on 11th April, 2 at Musbury on 14th April, one at Haslingden on 16th April. There were 2 at Higher Hollinbank on 21st April then 20 to 30 locally during the summer. There were 3 pairs at a farm on the hillside above Whitewell Bottom. Nesting was also recorded at Lea Brook, Chapel Hill, Sowclough and Balladen. 5 juveniles were being fed on the wires at Shawclough on 15th August and there were 70 there on 17th August. 90 were seen on wires at Whitworth on 10th August. Movement was noted on 4th, 16th, 22nd and 24th September. On 26th September there were 20 over Edgeside then 2s and 3s in late September and 6 over The Glen on 30th September. On 1st October there were 2 over Waterfoot and on 3rd October 3 high over the Whitewell moving south.

HOUSE MARTIN - *Delichon urbica*

First returns were 2 at Musbury on 15th April, 2 over Spring Mill on 16th April, 3 flying north over Constablelee on 19th April and 2 at Goodshawfold on 20th April. There were 7 colonies in the Rawtenstall area with about 10 pairs at Constablelee the largest. 20 to 30 were

present in the Higher Hollinbank / Helmshore area during June and July, roosting and nesting in Park Road. In the Cowpe Valley there were 9 nests on semi-detached houses and at least 10 birds in the air on 10th June. On 7th July there were 8 nests on Stacksteads Ambulance Station. The usual colony of about 8 nests was present in Waterfoot centre. About 30 were seen at Hopwood Hall, Whitworth on 16th August. On 12th September there were 2 nests in Park Road, Waterfoot with large young visible in one of them. On 23rd August there were many feeding high over Waterfoot and on 10th September at least 50 over Lench. On 22nd September there were about 30 over Crawshawbooth and on 25th September there were about 40 over Waterfoot. Latest were 3 over Edgeside on 1st October, 40 at Shortclough on 5th October and 3 over Crawshawbooth on 9th October.

TREE PIPIT - *Anthus trivialis*

The only records this year were for autumn passage birds 1 calling over Folly early on 8th August and 2 over the same site on 18th August.

MEADOW PIPIT - *Anthus pratensis*

On 3rd January there were about 60 at E.B.S.W. during a cold spell and 30 on Whinberry Naze with Fieldfares on 25th January. An extended passage was noted from late February to the end of March. There was a flock of 10 on The Hile on 28th February and 14 on Musbury Tor on 21st March. The largest numbers were seen during the last few days of March - 20 at Lee Quarry on 28th, 50 at Pinner Quarry on the same date and 35 on Musbury Tor on 31st. Further passage was noted at Clowbridge on 26th April when the Wheatear passage was at its heaviest. Pairs had formed and males were in song on The Hile and at Cowm by 15th March. On 25th May pairs were carrying food at Cowpe and on The Hile. On 16th June 4 or 5 pairs were feeding young at Clowbridge reservoir. 11 pairs nested in the old C.B.C. plot, one up on last year. On 17th August flocks of 50, 30 and 15 were seen in the Hile / Brex area and there were at least 50 at Clowbridge on the same date. Flocks of 10 to 20 were seen during October and to mid-November at Musbury, The Hile, Grane. Single birds were seen as late as 31st December at Fern Isle Wood and Top of Leach.

YELLOW WAGTAIL - *Motacilla flava*

A female believed to be of the Blue-headed race was seen at Clowbridge on 26th April. It remained for a few hours before flying off to the north (R. Ives). 1 was calling over Folly on 9th August and one was at Spring Mill on 11th August.

GREY WAGTAIL - *Motacilla cinerea*

Singles recorded in most areas during January, February and March. 2 males were engaged in aggressive territorial behaviour on 3rd March on the River Whitewell in Waterfoot. On the W.B.S. stretch of the River Limy near Crawshawbooth 2 pairs produced 2 broods each. The pair at Reedsholme were feeding young at the nest on 17th May. They had fledged by 27th May and 4 young were seen on 7th June. Nesting activity was also recorded on the River Irwell near Cowpe Road where a pair was carrying food on 20th June; on the Whitewell between Waterfoot and Piercy; at Spring Mill where juveniles were seen on 12th July; on Musbury Brook and the River Ogden in the Helmshore area where a family party of 4 was seen on 13th August; on the Irwell in Rawtenstall centre and at Stubbins. Singles were seen in most of these areas to the end of the year. On 19th November one was feeding on a house drive and lawn at Woodlea near the Whitewell.

PIED / WHITE WAGTAIL - *Motacilla alba*

Ones and twos were seen in January and February, often feeding in unusual habitats. On 17th January 2 were on a car park off Bank Street, Rawtenstall. On 20th January one was feeding on the forecourt of a shop in Park Road, Waterfoot and on 28th January one near B.R.G.S. in Waterfoot. There were good numbers at E.B.S.W. - about 60 on 3rd January and 16th February. Movement and return to nesting sites was noted from late February - 5 at Fearn Moss on 28th, a pair back at Clowbridge on 15th March, 5 at Alden on 30th March, 2 at Gaghills on 23rd March. One was taken by a Peregrine at Helmshore on 21st March. Winter communal roosting on rooftops in Rawtenstall centre was noted by A. Ives. 2 pairs bred at Clowbridge reservoir and 2 pairs on the W.B.S. stretch of the Limy. Nesting pairs were also recorded at Edgeside where fledged young were being fed in late May; Jack Lodge; the upper Cowpe Valley; Clough Bottom; Musbury (5 young reared); Gaghills; Fearn (3 juveniles on 27th July); Clowbridge (3 juveniles 17th August). During autumn passage up to [#]18 birds were seen on playing fields at Crawshawbooth on 23rd September. Ones and twos were again recorded to the end of the year, often exploiting favoured feeding areas such as school playgrounds at Fearn and B.R.G.S., parks and streets near shops frequented by children at lunch-breaks.

Passage of White Wagtails was noted at Clowbridge reservoir by R. and A. Ives from 24th to 29th April with a maximum of 4 at any one time and always with a larger number of Pied Wagtails. One was also recorded at Spring Mill on 9th May.

WAXWING - *Bombycilla garrulus*

The nearest record to Rossendale was 17 in Blackburn centre on 2nd March.

DIPPER - *Cinclus cinclus*

Numerous and widespread records suggest that the species is doing well on our mostly cleaned-up rivers. 2 pairs bred on the W.B.S. stretch of the Limy. A pair at Reedsholme had a single fledged young by 7th May and by 15th June they were feeding at the nest again. There were also other pairs at Longholme, Loveclough and Crawshawbooth - 4 pairs for the River Limy (R. Ives). On 28th June newly-fledged young were being fed below the Craven Heifer. There were breeding records for Cowpe Brook where a dipper was seen to catch a small fish, probably a stickleback, at a nearby lodge and carry it to the nest site. Breeding was also recorded for the Whitewell between Waterfoot centre and Piercy (probably 2 pairs); Jack Lodge; the Irwell at Bacup Park (nest-building on 23rd March); the Spodden at Healey Dell. In the Helmshore area there were pairs at Musbury Brook, the River Ogden and Swinnel Brook and at Hare Clough. There were continuing records for these areas to the end of the year.

WREN - *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Seen regularly in all suitable habitats. Song was heard from 22nd February to 2nd August. Winter visits to gardens were again noted and in one instance presence continued into May

DUNNOCK - *Prunella modularis*

Remaining common and widespread in gardens and woodlands. Song was heard from 25th January accompanied by territorial chasing behaviour. On 26th October one was seen on top of the Hile at 1100 feet far from its usual bushy environment.

ROBIN - *Erithacus rubecula*

Song was heard from 12th January and a pair had formed in a garden in Waterfoot by 20th January. They were carrying leaves into a garden shed by 24th March and the nest was lined on 3rd April. There were 2 eggs on 6th April, 3 on 7th and 5 on 9th. On 23rd April there were 4 young and one infertile egg. 4 young fledged on 8th May. One immature was seen in the garden on 30th May. 2 fledged young were seen at Waingate on 19th April. An adult with one fledged juvenile were seen at Musbury on 13th May and an immature at Lench on 14th May. On 28th July an adult was feeding young at Higher Hollinbank. Winter territorial activity was noted as early as 24th October.

REDSTART - *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Males were seen at Chapel Hill on 29th April and at Clowbridge on 4th May. A male was in song in the Cowpe Valley on 18th May. A pair nested at Grane. Juvenile birds were seen at 2 sites in Whitworth; 2 on 12th and 13th July at Broadley Fold, 3 on 15th July at Syke reservoir. One on passage was seen at Clowbridge on 24th August and a male was at Folly on 22nd September.

WHINCHAT - *Saxicola rubetra*

First at Clowbridge were 2 males on 29th April, then 4 on 1st May. One male had settled in the plantation by 2nd May and a pair was present on 18th May. 2 males were in song on 24th May. By 2nd June R and A Ives were sure that young were being fed but none were seen all summer. There was a later record of 6 at Clowbridge on 24th August which may well have been a local family party. Autumn passage at Clowbridge was well above previous years. 2 birds were noted on 16th August with 8 on 21st and 22nd and a very high 16 on 24th. 6 or 7 birds were present at the end of August and beginning of September tailing off gradually to 2 on 29th September. 1 was seen with Wheatears at Bagden Quarry, Whitworth on 20th September.

STONECHAT - *Saxicola torquata*

Two of the usual midwinter appearances occurred at Cowm on 1st and 3rd January but there were none at Clowbridge this year. The first on spring passage was at Clowbridge on 9th March and there were singles on 20th March and on 3rd and 7th April. On 16th November a pair was present at Spring Mill. There were 2 at Clowbridge from 25th to 29th September and one from 19th to 21st October.

WHEATEAR - *Oenanthe oenanthe*

First arrivals were a male at Clowbridge on 20th March, 3 males at Cowm on 22nd March and a female at Musbury Tor on 25th March. There were 2 males there on 30th and one on Scout Moor on the same date. R Ives made a detailed check of numbers on passage at Clowbridge 4 on 4th April then remaining in single figures until 12 on 26th April then 30+ on 27th, 25 on 29th tailing down to 12 on 6th and 9th May with only a single remaining on 11th May. There were no sightings of Wheatears on passage after this date but a pair fledged 4 young on nearby Nutshaw Hill. During the peak passage period there were 10 near Compston's Cross on 27th April, 10 on Reaps Moss on 30th April and the species was numerous at Musbury on 9th May. A male was seen carrying food into a nest hole at Cowm on 2nd June and a juvenile was seen nearby on 7th June. A pair was seen with 2 young at higher Hollinbank on 15th June then the female with 2 young to 22nd June. In the autumn small groups of 3 to 4 immatures were seen along the Rooley Moor Road on 9th September.

RING OUZEL - *Turdus torquatus*

A male and a female were seen separately in the vicinity of Musbury Tor on 21st March, one then a pair on the east side of the Tor on 25th March and a female at Alden on 20th April. This continues a sequence of spring sightings for this area by J & B Rostron going back to about 1992. On 3rd April one was seen in Plunge Valley - another area with a long history of sightings. There was still no evidence of successful nesting attempts. One was found as prey in the nest of a pair of Peregrines. On return passage one was seen feeding in a rowan tree at Spring Mill reservoir on 27th September.

BLACKBIRD - *Turdus merula*

Dusk gatherings of Blackbirds prior to roosting were noted at several sites. 8 were at Wallbank Lodge on 1st January. 5 or 6 birds were noted in early January in a garden in Waterfoot. On 20th January 2 males were fighting here. Song was heard at Whitworth as early as 26th January. A female was carrying nest material to a nest in a Whitworth garden on 15th March and young were being fed there on 11th April. On 4th April a nest at Higher Hollinbank had 3 eggs but these were soon predated. On 29th May one was carrying food in Waterfoot and a fledged chick was being fed in the same area on 6th June. There were several immatures here on 22nd July. Song continued through July and one was in song at Edgeside on 1st August. During September about 10 were active in a garden in Waterfoot and during October groups of about this size were seen at Lench, Edgeside Musbury and Holden Vale. Up to 20 were seen at Hallfold, Whitworth on 4th October. On 2nd December one was seen eating Holly berries. A group of 7 was present in Edgeside Park on 18th December.

FIELDFARE - *Turdus pilaris*

Some large flocks were recorded during January and February - 500 in a mixed flock with Redwings on Smallshaw Height on 2nd January, 40 at Musbury on 3rd January, 100 at Holden Wood, 90 at Musbury and 70 at higher Hollinbank on 20th January, 110 over Cowm on 22nd February, 100 at Holden Wood on 25th February, 100 at Folly on 28th February. Good numbers continued in the spring movement - 100 at Clowbridge on 15th March and many coming in to Clowbridge plantation on 31st March. 70 flew northeast over Clowbridge on 2nd April and there were 350 in fields there on 3rd April. There were 30 at Clowbridge on 7th April and 8 on 20th April. First returns were 2 at Musbury and one at Alden on 6th October. A heavy movement was noted on 12th October with flocks - some very high - flying northwest over Waterfoot several flocks of 60 - 70 and one of 120. On 19th October there were 170 at Higher Hollinbank, on 21st October 70 at Edenfield and 150 flying west over Folly on 26th October. There were small numbers in November - 15 over Fearn on 13th, 12 over The Hile on 21st, 20 with 50 Starlings on The Brex on 30th. There were 8 at Higher Hollinbank on 25th December, 60 at Loveclough on 14th December, 30 at Clowbridge and 100 over Loveclough on 26th December.

SONG THRUSH - *Turdus philomelos*

Returns to gardens were noted in early January and song was heard from 5th February. At least 5 males were in song in the Reedsholme area and 4 were singing in the Broadley area of Healey on 22nd February. On 8th April several were singing at Stubbins. On 19th May one was in song at Gaghills then again on 6th, 9th and 10th June. In March, April and May there were at least 4 in the Musbury - Higher Hollinbank area. In spite of this presence during the nesting season there were no definite records of successful breeding. Late in the year numbers

decreased but one was at Higher Hollinbank on 13th November, one in Edgeside Park on 18th December. One was present in a garden in Bacup - the first sighting there for 12 months. There were 2 at Musbury on 25th December.

REDWING - *Turdus iliacus*

There were 14 flying south over Reedsholme on 1st January, 20 at Holden Wood on 12th January and 20 at Piper Bank on 6th February. Apart from these, other reports were in single figures. During hard frost in early January a group of about 6 settled in at a garden in Waterfoot, consorting with the regular group of Blackbirds, joining their dusk gathering and roosting. They depended for food mostly on a well-berried Holly bush which was gradually stripped by 17th January. After this date the weather improved and the Redwings moved on. Latest were 40 on 8th March at Water. First returns began on 12th October when heavy passage was noted over Crawshawbooth, 50 birds being seen in a local garden the next day, a few with Fieldfares at Holden Wood on 19th October, 8 calling over Wallbank on 20th October and 40 flying west over Folly on 26th October.

MISTLE THRUSH - *Turdus viscivorus*

First song was heard from early February. There was a flock of 8 at Musbury on 7th January but pairs had formed in many places - at Edgeside on 6th February, on Booth Road visiting last year's nest site on 28th February, at Gaghills on 3rd March, at Holden Vale on 7th March, at Shawclough on 16th April. One was sitting in Bacup Park on 6th April. An immature flew into a garden in Booth Road at dusk on 19th June and another was present in Edgeside Park on 27th June. A family group of 4 fed on rowan berries in Waterfoot on 1st August and a flock of 7 was seen on 3rd August. On 24th August a flock of 7 was seen at Clowbridge and on 27th August 9 were feeding among Starlings at Higher Hollinbank. Later in the year some pairs had re-formed. Pairs were seen in Edgeside Park on 21st November and in Booth Road on 1st December. A flock of 15 flew over the old sewage works at Healey on 15th September. Groups of from 3 to 6 were seen at Higher Hollinbank in late December.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER - *Locustella naevia*

One was "reeling" at dusk on 18th April near Folly Tip and another was heard near Syke reservoir on 4th May.

SEDGE WARBLER - *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

One was calling early in the morning at Folly on 8th April. One was present at Holden Vale on 3rd and 8th June. There were singles at Clowbridge on 3rd, 18th and 22nd August.

MARSH WARBLER - *Acrocephalus palustris*

On 13th June a male was heard singing in willowherb at Folly Tip. It was still present in the evening when it was caught and ringed and the event was recorded in photographs and on video. This may be the first record of this species for Rossendale.

ICTERINE WARBLER - *Hippolais icterina*

One on autumn passage was caught and ringed at Crawshawbooth on 1st October.

WHITETHROAT - *Sylvia communis*

One was at Holden Vale on 9th May and a pair later nested successfully. A male was singing at the old sewage works at Healey from 15th to 24th May but did not breed. A pair nested

unsuccessfully at Staghills Woods. 2 were at Spring Mill on 9th August and 1 with 4 Willow Warblers at Spring Mill on 16th August.

GARDEN WARBLER - *Sylvia borin*

A singing male was heard on 19th May at Folly and breeding took place there. At Whitworth a male was singing near the old sewage works on 25th May and on several occasions to 2nd July, but breeding was not proved.

BLACKCAP - *Sylvia atricapilla*

There were records of wintering birds. One was feeding on small berries in a garden on 1st January, a female was at Reedsholme on 15th February and one visited a bird table at Haslingden during January. Two males were in song at Stubbins on 8th April, singles were at Healey Dell and Broadclough on 9th April and in Bacup Park on 13th April. A pair was present at Helmsshore on 9th May. At least 3 were in song at Wayoh on 11th May. Males were singing at 4 or 5 sites between Reedsholme and Stoneholme during May. A pair bred at Folly with calls still being heard on 21st August. One was in Whitaker Park on 17th May and 3 at Healey Dell on 8th June. At Whitworth, 6 males were in song between Wallbank Lodge and Healey Hall on 17th May. Juvenile birds were seen near the old sewage works in early August.

WOOD WARBLER - *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

One was singing at Broadley Station, Healey on 7th and 8th May and on the latter date a second was singing near the old sewage works. At the Broadley site a pair bred, the first nest failed, but the second attempt succeeded with fledged young seen on 11th July.

CHIFFCHAFF - *Phylloscopus collybita*

The earliest spring record was one in song at the old sewage works, Healey on 31st March. A pair bred at Healey Hall. The nest contained 5 - 6 chicks on 17th May and fledged young on 21st May. A male was in song at Holcombe on 27th April. In Brooks' Wood, Crawshawbooth the first was heard on 7th May then intermittently until 13th July. Several males were heard at Crawshawbooth singing during return passage 1 on 6th August, 2 on 8th August and singles on 19th and 23rd September. One was at the old sewage works at Whitworth on 18th August and one at Healey Hall on 13th September. A late bird was heard on 19th October at Clough Head, Grane.

WILLOW WARBLER - *Phylloscopus trochilus*

At least 5 were in song at Stubbins on 8th April, one at Whitworth on the same date then 2 at Cloughfold on 10th April, 2 in Bacup on 11th April, one at Lench on 15th April, at Park Road and Shawclough on 16th April and at Piper Bank on 22nd April. Numerous and widespread in the nesting season. Breeding may have been early this year fledged young were heard at Folly on 6th June. Post-breeding movements brought small numbers to gardens on 22nd July and with mixed flocks of tits in August. Singles were seen in a garden in Waterfoot on 22nd August and 26th September. 2 were seen at Whitworth on 15th September and singles at Crawshawbooth on 20th and 23rd September.

GOLDCREST - *Regulus regulus*

For early 1997, the only records were of singles with mixed flocks of other species at Whitworth on 25th January and 8th February. There were no breeding-season records of Goldcrests in Rossendale this year although we cannot be sure whether this means a poor

breeding season or reduced reporting by observers. In the autumn and winter only small numbers were seen on the whole. These were often with the mixed gypsy flocks of tits and finches seen at this time. 2 were at Folly on 12th August, one on 18th August then at least 12 on 24th September. At Whitworth small numbers were seen between 30th August and 26th October, with 7 on 27th September, 12 on 27th September and 13 on 4th October. On 8th September one was with a tit flock at Entwistle, on 6th October one at Alden, on 19th and 20th November one was with Blue Tits in a garden in Waterfoot, on 17th December at least one with a flock of Siskins in Park Road, on 16th December one at Buckden and one at Ravenshore.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER - *Muscicapa striata*

Return dates at the Cowpe Valley site was about 23rd April. A male was in song here on 10th June and 14th July. Calls were heard at Folly on 28th April and pairs were later present at Folly and Bonfire Hill. One was in song at Lea Brook on 16th May and one in Whitaker Park on 17th May. On 9th June a pair was present at Shortclough. A family party was present at Calf Hey on 30th July. In the autumn one on passage was seen at Crawshawbooth on 20th September.

PIED FLYCATCHER - *Ficedula hypoleuca*

A female was seen at Clowbridge reservoir during the spring passage on 29th April. Another female was seen in The Glen on 4th August.

LONG-TAILED TIT - *Aegithalos caudatus*

The usual flocks were seen in the late winter period in several locations. Pairs formed early in the year - a pair at Tip Lodge on 15th March, 2 pairs at Bacup Park on 23rd March. At least one pair bred in the Meadow Lodge area of Whitworth (young being fed in the nest on 12th May). Pairs were also seen at Ewood Bridge on 2nd May and Musbury on 30th May. A successful breeding season was indicated by records of good-sized flocks. 17 birds were at Broadley, Whitworth on 19th June, and 19 there on 2nd August. On 6th August 17 flew across Booth Road, Waterfoot; on 26th September there were 7 in The Glen; on 6th October at Irwell Vale there was a mixed flock of about 40 Blue, Great and Long-tailed Tits ; on 6th October about 15 at Ravenshore; on 16th December there were 20 at Buckden and 12 at Ravenshore; on 31st December there were 25 at Alden. Several were seen at Folly on 24th September and 12 were there on 21st October. 11 - 13 were at Healey on 26th October and at the old sewage works on 1st November. Flocks of 15 to 20 were seen at Lea Brook in November and December.

MARSH TIT - *Parus palustris*

One was present at Calf Hey on 25th May.

WILLOW TIT - *Parus montanus*

One was with the tit flock at Clowbridge on 20th March. One was seen along The Glen, Waterfoot at the end of September.

COAL TIT - *Parus ater*

Increasingly present in gardens even during the nesting season. A male was in song in a larch tree in a garden in Waterfoot on 11th February then intermittently until the end of April. A pair present in this garden spent much time on 28th, 29th and 30th March carrying away sunflower seeds from a feeder to their own hoard. They fed from nut and seed feeders throughout the summer. At Higher Hollinbank a pair fledged 4 young about 7th June and brought them to a nut feeder in a garden. On 18th May a pair was present in a garden in Haslingden Old Road.

Coal Tits were described as common along the Limy Valley in March and April. At Whitworth up to 5 were seen at Healey from January to March, but there were no breeding records. Pairs were seen at Lee Mill on 27th April, Clough Bottom on 6th July. Coal Tits again fed regularly from garden feeders from late September throughout the winter.

BLUE TIT - *Parus caeruleus*

Winter flocks of up to 20 were seen at Wallbank Lodge, Whitworth in January and February. Nesting activity began in early March when a pair took possession of a nest box in a garden in Waterfoot and acted aggressively to other tits approaching. Another pair was busy seeking a suitable hole in the walls of old buildings at Shawclough and the hole in a garden wall on Booth Road, used last year, was re-occupied. Young were being fed in the garden nest box on 13th June and they fledged shortly afterwards. Young were also being fed at Higher Hollinbank in June.

GREAT TIT - *Parus major*

One spent some time examining a nest box as early as 13th January and was in song regularly nearby from 20th January. Another male was in song on 2nd February at Piercy. The nest box had a nest with 6 eggs on 2nd May and 6 young on 14th May fledging on 2nd June. Several were seen in the garden with the adults on 14th June. On 15th April 4, possibly 2 pairs, were seen in noisy aggressive behaviour at Lench. During the winter Great Tits were regular at nut feeders, usually in pairs. A male was in song as early as 21st - 22nd December in Waterfoot, continuing into January.

NUTHATCH - *Sitta europaea*

Nuthatches were present in the Healey Hall area of Whitworth from 31st March. A pair bred at this site with 3 juveniles being seen on 12th June. One came to a peanut feeder in the Cowpe Valley for 2 or 3 days in mid-April.

TREECREEPER - *Certhia familiaris*

Singles and pairs recorded at Edgworth, Ravenshore, Buckden, Calf Hey, Ogden reservoir (a pair at the nest in the anglers' hut 3rd July), Healey Dell. In the winter there were singles at Alden on 21st November and Buckden Wood on 16th December.

JAY - *Garrulus glandarius*

Seen in all the areas mentioned in last year's Report and expanding a little further north from Crawshawbooth into Clowbridge. Noted again at Clough Bottom on 6th July and 25th August. At Healey Dell 6 were seen in March and 7 were seen at Folly on 4th September. Pairs were present during the breeding season at Broadley Station, Healey and at the old sewage works.

MAGPIE - *Pica pica*

A group of 10 located in the Edgeside - Park Road area engaged in chasing flights and communal activity on 16th and 20th January. A similar group of 13 in the Cowpe Valley - Glen area indulged in similar behaviour on 27th February. A pair was building in a tree at 65 Booth Road (used for several years) on 17th April. Young birds from this nest were in nearby trees in late July and were beginning to fly around on 2nd August. Numbers were thought to be down in the Higher Hollinbank area with only 3 or 4 present. There were 8 in chasing flights in trees in Waterfoot as early as 20th December and also in December there were about

7 daily at Higher Hollinbank. A winter roost at Wallbank held up to 95 birds during February. The maximum number recorded during November and December was 78 on 6th December.

JACKDAW - *Corvus monedula*

Counts at main colonies suggest figures of about 40 in Rawtenstall centred on Ilex Mill chimney, 40 round the old railway goods station at Waterfoot and 35 round the B.R.G.S. - Booth Road area. On 9th April a pair was nest-building at a house in Piercy. During January and February, and again in November and December, a pair came regularly to feed on peanuts on the lawn of a house in Booth Road, Waterfoot. During the winter Jackdaws associate with the Rooks to feed on the Tip at Stacksteads. On 9th October 20 assembled in the trees at Fearn's and at least 50 were seen flying west at dusk from Stacksteads on several occasions. On 13th November a mixed flock of 200 Rooks and Jackdaws fed on pastures on The Hile.

ROOK - *Corvus frugilegus*

On 8th February about 250 flew west from Stacksteads Tip at dusk. Counts of nests at rookeries were Shuttleworth - 34, Crawshawbooth - 54, Peers Clough - 10, Water - 20, Holcombe - 34, Helmshore - 13, Acre - 48, Healey Dell - 34, Belmont - 31, Rook Hill - 59, Honey Hole, Stacksteads - 5, Broadclough - 40, Weir - 34 a total of 436 nests (450 last year). At the Healey rookery, young were in the nest by 6th March. On 13th July a flock of 170 fed in a mown field on The Hile.

CARRION CROW - *Corvus corone*

At least 200 were roosting at Calf Hey in January. 20 to 40 flew over Helmshore regularly at dusk. Presence and breeding were widespread in parks, gardens and open country. In a garden in Waterfoot one was breaking twigs from a birch tree as early as 21st January and nest lining was being carried on 20th March. 2 pairs were engaged in aggressive territorial behaviour here on 16th April and one male 'sang' vigorously from a larch. At Spring Mill adults were sitting eggs at 2 nests by 12th April.

RAVEN - *Corvus corax*

On 26th January 2 flew from Bull Hill on Holcombe Moor towards Knowl Moor. This is the second year that there have been sightings of Ravens in the Holcombe Moor area. On 2nd February 2 were seen at the head of the Cowpe Valley. On 14th March, 2 pairs were reported in the north of Rossendale. There were subsequent sightings of a pair at Cliviger in May and June. 2 flew over Haslingden on 7th May. 2 birds were seen over Prickshaw Slack, Whitworth on 9th August, later flying north. One was seen in aerial acrobatics over Cragg Quarry on 30th November and one flew over Nutshaw Hill towards Cliviger on 2nd December.

STARLING - *Sturnus vulgaris*

In late winter and early spring the usual flocks moved through in company with Fieldfares - 400 at Holden Wood and 400 at Clowbridge on 9th February, 60 at Bacup Golf Course on 16th February, 220 at Lench on 2nd March, 300 at Alden on 30th March. First juveniles were seen on 26th May - the same date as last year - and by 27th May there were flocks containing juveniles. Numbers at Higher Hollinbank increased to 25 on 30th and 31st May. On 15th June there were 400 or more at Bull Hill and in July flocks of 2 - 300 were regular on The Hile. Movement, probably of continental birds, was noted in October - 200 with 7 Fieldfares on The Brex on 17th, 2 flocks each of about 250 birds on wires and an aerial at Edgeside on 30th. The tall pylon-type aerial was used as a roost in the afternoons. By 11th November about 120 were

using it as a perch. From about the same time (7th November) a roost had become established in evergreen s adjacent to a tool and engineering works at Clowbridge. About 6000 Starling s were estimated to be using the roost, some from the Cliviger direction and many from the direction of the Whitewell Valley (K G Spencer). At Whitworth, flocks of up to 450 birds were seen at Spring Mill and Cowm reservoirs during November and December.

HOUSE SPARROW - *Passer domesticus*

The usual groups of 6 to 12 were seen in Helmsore at 4 sites. A group of about 8 came to peanut feeders in Waterfoot to March and April and a family group of 6 on 13th June. Juveniles were also being fed at the nut feeder on 21st July. 8 were regular in the garden in the winter. Groups of 6 to 8 were recorded at the Helmsore sites - fewer than the usual 6 to 12. At Wallbank, the typical House Sparrow Flock in January to March was 13 - 17 birds. A flock of adult and juvenile birds there on 27th June totalled 28 birds and in November and December the flock was 22 - 25 birds.

CHAFFINCH - *Fringilla coelebs*

The flock at Musbury Road was back to normal with about 25 in the beeches there in January. First song was heard at Cowm on 8th February and at Reedsholme and Lea Brook on 15th February. Eggs were being incubated in a nest in a holly bush in this area on 7th May but the nest was empty on 17th May. Two pairs were present in gardens in Waterfoot but no song was heard until 3rd April and another pair showed anxiety at Piper Bank on the same date. Song was still heard on 24th June and 3rd July a female was collecting moss from a tree trunk in Edgeside Park. An immature male had returned to the garden feeding station in Waterfoot on 24th September and 5 (2 males, 3 females) were regular during the winter. Flocks of 7 were at Cowm and Healey in October and a flock of 10 at Syke reservoir at the same time. On 30th October there were 12 at Higher Hollinbank and from 1st to 14th November a mixed flock of about 50 Chaffinches, Greenfinches and Goldfinches in the Musbury Road area. Small flocks of 8 to 12 were present here in November and December. Numbers - up to 50 in some years - would appear to be dependent on the quantity of beech mast.

BRAMBLING - *Fringilla montifringilla*

Small numbers visited a garden feeding station in Waterfoot from 1st January to 25th March. They were present virtually every day, the maximum being 7 on 5th February. Up to 10 were also regular visitors to a garden in Haslingden. Elsewhere, 25 were at Folly on 12th January, 4 were at Holden Wood on 9th February. Several males at Folly on 22nd March were in full breeding plumage., At Healey Dell a late male was seen on 29th April. Later in the year 40 were at Fern Isle Wood on 26th October and numbers rose here to 75 on 12th December with 90+ on 25th December. 2 were heard over Folly on 12th November and there were up to 30 there on 22nd December. There were 3 in the Waterfoot garden on 10th December and 8 on Musbury Road on 25th December.

GREENFINCH - *Carduelis chloris*

During the winter a flock of 8 to 12 was regular at a garden feeding station in Waterfoot and on one occasion (7th January) a flock of 17 flew in to the garden. Similar numbers (10 to 12) came to a nut feeder in a garden in Haslingden. Song was heard from mid-January. 2 juveniles were being fed in Waterfoot on 16th and 24th July. At Healey, a flock of 37 was seen on 15th August and at this site and at Syke reservoir flocks of up to 8 were seen during November and

December. A flock of 8 was present at Higher Hollinbank on 1st September. 6 were regular in the Waterfoot garden in November and December - fewer than in the previous winter.

GOLDFINCH - *Carduelis carduelis*

Flocks numbering from 10 to 40 were recorded in many areas from January to March. Up to 5 birds were regular in the Waterfoot garden feeding on peanuts and seeds both on the ground and in hanging feeders. By April only a pair remained. They were active in this area throughout the summer and were in conflict with another pair on 5th and 9th May. Pairs were also present at Gaghills, Shawclough, Cowpe Valley, Musbury Road, Musbury Brook and Helmshore Museum. At Crawshawbooth a male was in song on 27th March. A walk round Rawtenstall on 17th May produced sightings in many areas. Breeding pairs were numerous and widespread. Nesting continued late into the season. On 12th September a family party at Gaghills included 2 newly-fledged young begging food. Flocks formed from August and September - 20 at Folly on 9th August, 50 on thistles at Higher Hollinbank on 7th to 10th September and 80 on 14th September, 50 on thistles at Stacksteads on 24th September, 30 over The Brex on 28th September. One visited a peanut feeder in a garden in Waterfoot on 23rd November then a few (up to 4) came daily to the end of the year. There were 27 at Cowm on 6th December, 12 at Alderbottom on 16th December and 35 on Musbury Road on 25th December.

SISKIN - *Carduelis spinus*

Winter flocks numbering 5 to 20 were recorded in several areas in January and February. Up to 30 with Goldfinches were at Bonfire Hill on 4th February. 3 visited garden peanut feeders in Waterfoot on 14th March. 2 or 3 pairs nested at Grane. 2 called over Healey Dell, on 6th April. By June flocks were forming - 40 at Clough Bottom on 30th June, 30 there on 8th July. Up to 40 were seen in birches at Folly during August and there were 12 at Wallbank on 30th August. Up to 100 were at Folly in September and up to 60 there in October. From late November to the end of the year flocks numbering up to 20 were seen in alder plantations on Fearn Moss and Park Road, Irwell Vale, Reedsholme and Rawtenstall centre. 2 or 3 visited garden peanut feeders in late December.

LINNET - *Carduelis cannabina*

There was a flock of 5 on Bacup Golf Course on 16th March. A pair had returned to Musbury Tor on 31st March, 2 pairs to Piper Bank on 22nd April and 2 pairs to Clowbridge on 27th April. About 10 pairs were located in the Chapel Hill area, about 2 pairs were present at Oakenhead Wood, 2 pairs at Swinshaw Moor, 3 pairs at Syke reservoir, 2 pairs at Shawclough and a pair at Piers Clough. Large flocks later in the year suggested a good breeding season 31 at Spring Mill on 4th August, 30 on The Hile on 25th August, 12 at Ogden on 29th August increasing to 40 on 18th September, 70 at Higher Hollinbank on 7th September and 100+ on 9th and 10th September. Latest were 25 at Ogden on 8th October and 3 at Clowbridge on 19th October.

TWITE - *Carduelis flavirostris*

After three good years numbers were down again. The Lee Quarry colony had about the usual numbers. There were flocks of 11 and 8 there on 30th March and 25 on 10th April. Several males were in song on 27th April and presence was noted in June. At Whitworth 6 were calling in flight above Cowm on 22nd March. Elsewhere there were records of flocks passing through in March and April - 15 at Clowbridge reservoir on 8th March, 15 at Musbury Tor on 22nd

March, 4 on The Hile on 12th April and 7 flying east over Knowl Moor on 19th April. A pair flew over Stacksteads on 7th April and Twites were heard calling at Naden on 17th April. Autumn flocks were few - 8 in late October in the Bacup area.

REDPOLL - *Carduelis flammea*

Flocks of 10 and 20 were seen in Holden Vale during January and 2 at Tunstead on 2nd February. The first seen at Clowbridge was one flying into the plantation on 12th April. There were 4 by 19th April and 2 pairs were believed to be present during the summer. A pair probably bred at Bonfire Hill on 4th June. Up to 15 were in the birches at Folly on 8th August. Redpolls were seen at Whitworth in March, July, October and November, but there was no confirmation of breeding.

COMMON CROSSBILL - *Loxia curvirostra*

A flock of about 50 was present in the conifers at Clough Bottom from 29th June to at least 4th July. On 8th July there were about 6 seen there. A flock of 10 was seen at Haslingden on 25th May. A female was seen in Plunge Valley on 31st October.

BULLFINCH - *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Two were seen in the woods near Helmshore Museum on 8th January and a pair on 6th May. Up to 3 birds were seen at 3 sites in Whitworth from January to March. On 7th May a male visited a garden at nearby Gregory Fold. There were 2 at Irwell Vale and 3 at Chatterton on 5th January. In March 2 pairs were seen at Tip Lodge, a pair at Holden Vale and a male at Calf Hey. A female was building at Folly on 22nd April and juveniles were heard on 7th August. A pair nested above Sykeside, Haslingden and 2 pairs appear to have bred in the Whitworth area. At the end of November 5 in a Bacup garden were probably a family party. A male was seen at Holden Wood on 14th December. 2 or 3 were present at Reedsholme during November and December. Up to 4 were seen at Whitworth in October and November.

SNOW BUNTING - *Plectrophenax nivalis*

A flock of 30 was present at Top of Leach on 12th January. They probably remained in the area until early February. There were many droppings and seed cases on the snow here and on Cowpe Moss on 2nd February. 2 were seen on Cowpe Lowe and 8 at Top of Leach on 18th January. Elsewhere there were also droppings on Great Hameldon and Nutshaw Hill on 20th January suggesting probable presence. An early male was seen in Cragg Quarry on 26th October and was seen again on 31st October and 12th December. Three were present on Great Hameldon on 4th December, 13 on Goodshaw Hill on 11th December and up to 18 on Great Hameldon an hour later. There were 14 on Goodshaw Hill on 13th December, 4 on Great Hameldon on 14th December and one seen in strong winds on 17th December. The birds were seen to feed on Birds-foot Sedge, *Carex ornithopoda* (R and A Ives).

REED BUNTING - *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Return to nesting areas was noted in early January - 6 at Cowm on 1st and a male on The Hile on 9th. A male was in song at Holden Wood on 7th March and on 6th April and there were records for May and June. At Clowbridge reservoir there were 3 males on 8th March and by 31st March males were present in 5 territories which were occupied throughout the summer. At Clough Bottom a female was seen on 14th April and a male on 20th April. 3 were seen there on 4th May and a pair on 14th and 26th May. At least 2 pairs were at Swinshaw Moor on

29th May. Elsewhere 2 pairs were present at Cowm, a pair at Spring Mill, a pair was present in the usual territory on the old C.B.C. plot on The Hile.