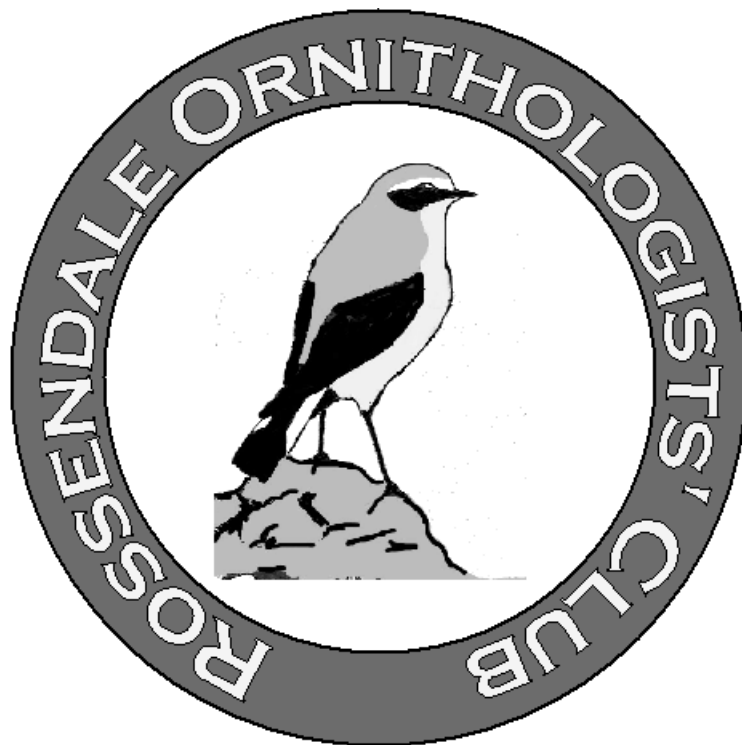

Rossendale Ornithologists' Club

Bird Report



1998

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER - *Gavia immer*

A juvenile bird was at Clowbridge reservoir on 21st January. One, presumably the Clowbridge bird, was on Ogden reservoir on 25th January. It flew off down the Grane valley towards the Limy valley.

BLACK-THROATED DIVER - *Gavia arctica*

A splendid summer-plumaged bird was on Clowbridge reservoir between 1630 and 1830 hrs on 2nd July. The species is the rarest diver to occur inland even in winter, making this a truly remarkable record. It was seen to dive and preen but not to feed. It was seen by R and A Ives, D Nuttall, B Lee and others.

LITTLE GREBE - *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

One was present at Clough Bottom on 7th and 8th April. One was at Shortclough reservoir on 28th March but probably did not breed as there were no subsequent sightings. A pair and another adult were seen at Syke reservoir from 29th March but there was no evidence of breeding there. At Spring Mill reservoir a juvenile bird was seen on 19th and 24th August. 2 adults were at Syke reservoir on 7th September. In the autumn a single was seen at Holden Wood on 11th October and at Calf Hey on 22nd October and 3rd November.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE - *Podiceps cristatus*

A single bird was at Shortclough on 11th February but no breeding took place due to the disturbance caused by "bank side improvements". Later in the year one was at Clowbridge on 3rd September with a juvenile there from 10th to 24th September. One had returned to Holden Wood by 13th February and a pair was present on 15th March. Nesting was successful here. The nest held 3 eggs on 4th May from which 2 eggs hatched. An adult and one young bird were seen on 14th June and again on 15th July. Ones and twos were seen here until 1st December. In the Whitworth area breeding appears to have taken place at Spring Mill reservoir (adult and juvenile seen on 25th July). There were also regular sightings at Watergrove reservoir and occasionally at Cowm. The latest Spring Mill sighting was one on 3rd October.

CORMORANT - *Phalacrocorax carbo*

There were singles at Ogden on 9th August and 11th October and at Holden Wood on 6th December. The latter flew up to Ogden while under observation. One flew over Cowm reservoir towards the west on 5th April. One was on Watergrove reservoir on 12th April.

GREY HERON - *Ardea cinerea*

There are records for most of the year with fewer records for the period 25th February to 7th April when most would be at the heronries. An immature was seen in the Cowpe valley on 19th July. Records are mostly of singles but there were 3 at Musbury on 29th June and 4 to 6 regularly roosting in Brooks' Wood, Crawshawbooth from late May. Herons were seen at Spring Mill reservoir throughout the year, mainly ones and twos but with 6 adults on 3rd May and 4 or 5 being regular during July and August.

MUTE SWAN - *Cygnus olor*

A single male was at Cowm from January to April. A pair was seen there from 31st August to the end of the year.

WHOOOPER SWAN - *Cygnus cygnus*

Two adults were seen at A.M.R. on 4th January. 5 flew southeast over Clowbridge reservoir on 26th October. A pair spent some time at A.M.R. during December and were seen on 6th and 13th. It is several years since we had a regular winter appearance at A.M.R., the last being a pair in the winter of 1995 - 96.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE - *Anser brachyrhynchus*

The only record was of 200 flying north over Bacup on 19th February.

LESSER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE - *Anser erythropus*

The single bird presumed to be an escape was again seen in company with the Canada Geese at Grane from January to 13th February. It was absent until 10th July and then remained to the end of the year.

GREYLAG GOOSE - *Anser anser*

A single bird was present at Grane with the Canada Geese on dates from January to April and again on 15th June.

CANADA GOOSE - *Branta canadensis*

Apart from an exceptional 125 at Wallbank, Whitworth on 11th February, flock numbers appeared to be lower on average this year with more records in the 40s rather than the 60s and 70s of last year. The Limy valley flock peaked at 80 in mid-winter, reducing to 24 by 11th March. There were over 70 at Ogden on 1st September and at Holden Wood on 22nd September. Thereafter numbers fell to 63 in October and November and 47 in December. 36 flew from Wallbank on 20th September and 62 were seen on 6th October. There were 40 at Clowbridge in August, 21 on Cowpe reservoir (a new site) in June and July and smaller numbers at New Line and Lench. Successful breeding occurred at Ogden where a pair had 5 goslings during May and 4 were surviving in July. At Clowbridge 2 pairs with 4 young and a pair with 2 young were present on 2nd June. A pair showed anxiety at Cowpe on 19th May but there was no evidence of success.

SHELDUCK - *Tadorna tadorna*

A single bird was seen at Clowbridge reservoir on 27th April. A single bird feeding with the Mallards on the Irwell in Rawtenstall centre on 7th June and subsequent dates was presumably an escape.

WIGEON - *Anas penelope*

At Spring Mill pairs were seen on 17th January and 5th September. A single female was there on 27th September with 2 females and a male on 15th November. 1 was seen at Clowbridge on 10th September. At A.M.R. 9 were seen on 4th September with 4 on 19th September and 2 on 20th September.

TEAL - *Anas crecca*

Virtually absent during winter and early spring, the only records were a pair at Holden Wood reservoir on 1st March, 10 at A.M.R. on 15th March and a pair at Watergrove on 12th April. In autumn there were small numbers at Clowbridge - 5 on 21st September, A.M.R. - 10 on 11th October, 5 on 18th October and 25 on 7th November and Whitworth - 5 on 1st and 2nd

September, 1 on 29th September and 2 on 6th October. A single male was seen on Cowpe Moss on 9th November and a female was seen at Cowm on 24th December.

MALLARD - *Anas platyrhynchos*

A numerous and successful species, taking full advantage of the cleaning-up of the rivers, where the largest flocks are now often found. There are usually about 50 on the Irwell in Rawtenstall town centre near the Asda store. They are regularly fed by the public. On 17th January there were 40 on the River Limy near Crawshawbooth which are also given extra food. Other records of flocks were - 18 at Spring Mill on 31st January and 17th March, 30 at Cowm on 19th April, 20 at A.M.R. on 18th October, 16 at Calf Hey on 6th December and 12 at Jack Lodge on 11th December. Successful breeding was widespread - a female with 9 young was seen at Clough Bottom on 30th May, a female with 6 small ducklings on the Whitewell in Waterfoot on 9th June, one with 5 ducklings at Calf Hey on 9th August, one with 5 large ducklings at Clowbridge on 17th August.

PINTAIL - *Anas acuta*

A single female was at Clowbridge on 21st September. (B Lee per Bob Ives)

POCHARD - *Aythya ferina*

As last year numbers were low. 3 males were at Cowm on 4th January. At Holden Wood there were 3 females on 12th January, 4 females on 15th January, 3 females and 2 males on 19th January, a female on 5th February and 2 on 1st March. A female was at Shortclough on 11th February. Numbers were even lower in autumn and early winter. A single male was at Spring Mill on 9th August and another was present at Holden Wood on 18th October, 22nd October, 8th November and 6th December and 2 were seen on 13th November.

TUFTED DUCK - *Aythya fuligula*

From one to 3 pairs were present at Holden Wood from January to April, 2 pairs at A.M.R. on 8th February and a pair at Clough Bottom on 7th April, 3 pairs at Shortclough on 11th February and 2 pairs at Clowbridge on 22nd and 23rd March and 4 at A.M.R. on 6th April but there was no evidence of successful breeding. A pair was again present at Holden Wood on 10th July. At Spring Mill a pair was present from March through to August and September but there was no evidence of breeding. 7 males were seen there on 16th July. Flocks of 8, 13 and 14 were regularly at Holden Wood from September to December with smaller numbers at Clough Bottom and A.M.R. There were 11 at Spring Mill on 9th September with 13 there on 12th September. At Clowbridge autumn passage started with 1 on 25th July, peaked at 18 on 11th and 28th September and continued to 4th November when 1 was present.

GOLDENEYE - *Bucephala clangula*

With the exception of Spring Mill reservoir, numbers were again low during winter and the spring passage - present from January to 7th April at Clowbridge with maxima of 7 on 23rd January and 3 on 22nd and 23rd March, 4 at A.M.R., 4 at Clough Bottom and 2 at Calf Hey in February and March. At Spring Mill, however, 6 or 7 were regularly seen between January and late April. Maxima here were 10 on 19th and 22nd March of which 3 were males. There was an early return but again in small numbers - 2 at A.M.R. on 8th, 9th, 18th and 22nd August, a female at A.M.R. on 6th September. At Clowbridge the autumn return began with 3 on 26th October. 5 or 6 were regularly present from late November to mid-December. Numbers then built up reaching an unusual 10 on 31st December. Only 2 males were seen at any time. There

were few winter records - 3 at Calf Hey on 6th December, up to 4 were present at Spring Mill in November and December, 2 at Cowm on 7th November and 2 at Wallbank on 24th December.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER - *Mergus serrator*

A single female was again with the Goosanders at Spring Mill reservoir from January to early March and again in early November.

GOOSANDER - *Mergus merganser*

Numbers during winter and the spring passage were generally considerably lower than last year - single figures at Holden Wood, Calf Hey, Ogden and A.M.R. on 8th March. However, there were 75 on 1st February, 30 on 13th March and 50 there on 15th March. A single male was at Clowbridge on 26th April. At Spring Mill there were 9 on 1st January rising to 27 on 25th January, 33 on 7th February and 37 on 8th February. Numbers then tailed off with 2 females on 5th April being the latest. There was evidence of local breeding this year with a female and a duckling seen on the River Irwell at Ewood Bridge in late May. At Spring Mill, the first return was of 5 females or immatures on 27th June, but the main return began in July. Numbers remained in single figures until 13th September when there were 13. Smaller numbers were recorded there from October to December with 13 on 31st December. Elsewhere, return movement was from 21st September, again in single figures at Clowbridge, A.M.R. and Holden Wood. There were 17 at A.M.R. on 7th November. There was an interesting record of Goosanders on the canal in urban Burnley in December (K.G. Spencer).

COMMON SCOTER - *Melanitta nigra*

A single bird was at A.M.R. on 8th August.

OSPREY - *Pandion haliaetus*

One flew north over Clowbridge reservoir on the evening of 5th April, being chased by 2 Curlews.

RED KITE - *Milvus milvus*

One was seen over Whinberry Naze on 27th August. (A Ives)

HEN HARRIER - *Circus cyaneus*

A male was hunting the moors to the north of Clowbridge on 20th March being mobbed by Carrion Crows. A 'ringtail' was seen near Pickup Bank on 21st March. A 'ringtail' was seen at Spring Mill on 5th September, flying west. A 'ringtail' was also seen at Spring Mill on 7th September. The bird seen on 7th had tags on both wings.

GOSHAWK - *Accipiter gentilis*

A pair was seen at high level over Hameldon moving north by Craig Bell on 12th May.

SPARROWHAWK - *Accipiter nisus*

Present throughout the year. There was evidence of occupation of breeding territories in the following locations - Waterfoot / Newchurch with regular records January to July and a male in a display flight on 14th March; Holden Wood / Helmshore where there was regular presence from January to July; Whitworth, probably 4 pairs present. There were autumn and winter sightings in Waterfoot, Newchurch, Stacksteads, Bacup, Musbury and Holden Wood. 4 were

seen on one day in the Whitworth area on 31st August. On 16th October one was seen carrying a Magpie at Higher Hollinbank - unusual prey.

COMMON BUZZARD - *Buteo buteo*

Records during the spring and autumn movements were - one soaring over E.B.S.W. on 27th April, one soaring over the Rooley Moor Road on 31st July alighting in a field among sheep, 1 flew from Fern Isle Wood towards Cowm on 19th August and one over Helmsore on 4th September.

KESTREL - *Falco tinnunculus*

There are records for every month of the year. Present in the Musbury area from 12th January, a pair nested successfully at Higher Hollinbank. They were carrying food from 12th June and either 2 or 3 young were seen by the nest site from 21st June. Pairs were also present in the Hile / Brex area and Stacksteads / Lee Quarry. Pairs were also reported from Whitworth (up to 3 pairs), Rossendale General Hospital, Grane, Hutch Bank Quarry, Broadley's at Reedsholme, Loveclough and Greenbridge Mill, Rawtenstall. A nest on a pylon at Clowbridge was unsuccessful. Two immatures were hunting together over The Brex on 18th September where fields were being mowed, and one caught a small rodent. On 30th July an immature male was hunting from Stacksteads along The Glen. Later in the year Kestrels were seen at Whitworth, Musbury, Holden Wood, A.M.R. and The Brex in November and December.

MERLIN - *Falco columbarius*

Singles were seen at Sheephouses on 11th February, Spring Mill on 20th April, Walstead Clough on 9th May, over The Glen on 18th May, over Ogden on 15th July, flying over A.M.R. towards Knowl Moor on 11th October, Spring Mill on 31st August, Withens Hay on 6th and 7th September. 2 pairs bred in Rossendale with one rearing 4 young but a nest in south Rossendale was robbed of its eggs.

HOBBY - *Falco subbuteo*

One flew over Holcombe Brook on 9th August.

PEREGRINE - *Falco peregrinus*

Singles were recorded over southwest Rossendale in January and February and 2 were soaring over Stacksteads on 21st February. There were sightings in several parts of Rossendale on 22nd March, 29th March, 30th March, 28th April, 19th June. Two flew over Ogden on 4th and 30th August and 2 flew over Cowm on 3rd October. Two pairs bred in Rossendale, one rearing 4 young, the other was robbed of its eggs. A single was seen over Musbury on 8th and 11th December.

RED GROUSE - *Lagopus lagopus scoticus*

On 18th January 4 were seen at Alden and one at Bull Hill in the Holcombe Moor area, and on 19th January 3 at Musbury Heights. 5 were on Knowl Moor on 1st February. On 21st February one was seen at Cragg Quarry in the Cowpe Moss area and a pair and a female were seen in the same area on 15th March. 1998 appears to have been a good breeding season with pairs present at Cowpe Moss, Knowl Moor, Haslingden / Oswaldtwistle Moor, Hoddlesden Moss, Musbury Heights. On 28th October 2 and a covey of 8 was present on Haslingden / Oswaldtwistle Moor, 10 on Musbury Heights on the same date and 15 on Bentley Moss on 31st October. 4 were seen on Cowpe Moss on 14th November.

GREY PARTRIDGE - *Perdix perdix*

In the spring pairs were seen on The Brex, Musbury Tor, Alden, Clowbridge, Loveclough, Deeply Vale, Spring Mill, Cowm, Plunge (2 pairs), Grane. Records of coveys in the autumn and winter were 9 at The Waggoners on 4th September, 4 at Spring Mill on 6th September, 6 at Dunnockshaw on 8th October, 4 on Hameldon on 1st November, 3 at the head of Lench valley on 1st November, 3 in Cragg Quarry on 30th November.

PHEASANT - *Phasianus colchicus*

Recorded in ones and twos in the Musbury area from 5th February to 31st October and a cock seen daily at Higher Hollinbank in July.

MOORHEN - *Gallinula chloropus*

Present on most of the smaller lodges, along the rivers and on reservoirs having suitable shallow edges with aquatic vegetation such as Holden Wood and Clough Bottom. On 26th May there were at least 3 immatures on Cowpe Lodge and on 19th July 3 full-grown. On 10th July 4 were seen at Holden Wood including one sitting on a nest. At Whitworth, Moorhens were seen at Wallbank, Spring Mill reservoir, Meadow Lodge.

COOT - *Fulica atra*

Three had returned to Holden Wood by 15th March and there were 9 there on 19th March. Up to 6 were recorded on various dates from April to July at Holden Wood but no young were seen. Two or three remained into the autumn and there was a slight increase at the end of the year to 8 on 13th November and 7 on 1st December. At Spring Mill a single adult was seen on several dates during April but there appeared to be no attempt at breeding.

OYSTERCATCHER - *Haematopus ostralegus*

2 were seen at Cowm on 14th March and a pair had returned to A.M.R. by 15th March. They nested lower down the Cheesden valley but the nest was destroyed by ploughing together with about 12 Lapwing nests. 1 was seen briefly at Clowbridge on 15th May. A pair was seen at Spring Mill from 20th March through to 15th April and again on 20th June. One was calling there on 25th July. However, there was no evidence of breeding there. Of interest was a pair seen at Clegg Hall, Rochdale during an R.O.C. ramble on 3rd May.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER - *Charadrius dubius*

One was at Watergrove reservoir on 12th April. A pair was present at Holden Wood from 17th May to 14th June and a pair was seen with young at a nearby site on 20th June.

RINGED PLOVER - *Charadrius hiaticula*

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

DOTTEREL - *Charadrius morinellus*

4 flew on to Great Hameldon from the south on 12th May. 5 were seen later on the same day and, presumably the same party, on 13th.

GOLDEN PLOVER - *Pluvialis apricaria*

In the Cowpe Moss / Hailstorm Hill area there were 6 on 25th January building to 35 on 1st February, 80 on 19th February and 57 on 7th March. 46 were present on 6th April (probably the Northern form) and 25 on 12th April. 1 was on Knowl Moor on 8th March, two were there

or 15th March and 6 on 25th April. Calls were heard over Rawtenstall on the evenings of 17th and 18th March. A pair nested on Haslingden Moor and there were 4 pairs in the Cowpe Moss area on 20th May. A Golden Plover was calling over Whitworth Golf Course on 30th August. On Cowpe Moss there was a flock of 18 on 7th November, 27 on 9th, 18 on 30th November and 16 on 31st December. A flock of 20+ was on Haslingden Moor on 13th December.

LAPWING - *Vanellus vanellus*

The latest record for A.M.R. in 1997 was of 200 on 16th November. There were then no records until 8th February when a flock of 60 was present. 16 were at Spring Mill on 21st February. Two pairs were back on territory at Holden Wood on 13th February, a pair at Bacup Golf Club on 9th March and a male on territory at Deerplay on 18th March. Reports of numbers of pairs in nesting colonies were 3 at Holden Wood, 4 at Water, 4 at Reap's Moss, 12 on Seat Naze, 4 on Musbury Tor, 3 on Haslingden Moor, 7 on Whitworth Lower End Moor, 2 at Syke reservoir, 30 (approx.) in the Limy valley from Reedsholme to Loveclough, 5 near A.M.R. and 12 in Cheesden valley. None nested on The Hile, probably for the first time in living memory as records for this site go back to C.K. Parker in the early 1900s. The first record of post-breeding flocks was of 25 on Seat Naze on 15th June. Later flock numbers were 120 at A.M.R. on 8th August, 160 there on 9th August, 6th September and 28th September reducing to 50 on 18th October and none in November. On 7th September there were 190 feeding near Whitworth Golf Course and during November there were 100 to 150 in fields at Rising Bridge. Lapwing flocks used roofs of industrial buildings in Rossendale Road, Burnley for daytime roosting. They were seen there on 18th February and resumed after the breeding season about 24th July. 210 Lapwings were in the flock on 10th November. They range widely when feeding, visiting the Crown Point and Waggoners areas. (K G Spencer)

DUNLIN - *Calidris alpina*

Present on Cowpe Moss where a nest with 4 eggs was found on 13th May, 3 other pairs were present. At Clowbridge autumn passage involved 2 or 3 birds on 13th September and 3 on 17th September.

JACK SNIPE - *Lymnocyptes minimus*

In spring singles were at Spring Mill on 28th February, Cowpe Moss on 8th March, Cowpe Moss on 12th April and Nutshaw Hill on 29th April. In autumn 1 was on Cowpe Moss on 14th November and 1 was on Goodshaw Hill on 29th November. 1 at Whinberry Naze was flushed and killed by a Sparrowhawk. It was identified from the remains.

COMMON SNIPE - *Gallinago gallinago*

Ones and twos were seen from January to March at Musbury, Brex Heights, Reaps Moss, Burnt Hill, Hameldon, Clowbridge, and Holden Wood and there were 6 at Syke reservoir on 26th January. A male was drumming over The Brex on 23rd April (the first here for several years) but there were no further developments. One seen in damp fields at Holden Wood on 17th May suggested the possibility of nesting here. One was calling near Great Hameldon on 9th May and one was drumming at Cheesden Bar on 7th June. At Whitworth calling birds or drumming suggested possible breeding at 3 sites. 2 pairs were present on Haslingden Moor on 10th May. During the autumn passage in September and October singles were seen at the head of Musbury on 6th September and A.M.R. on 28th September. There were 2 at Clough Bottom and one on The Hile on 18th October, one at Holden Wood on 18th October, 2 at Clough Bottom on 22nd October, 3 on Haslingden Moor and 10 on Musbury Heights on 28th October.

Up to 4 were at Spring Mill during September and singles at Cowpe Moss in November and December. On 1st November 18 were seen on Great Hameldon and 13th December there were 20+ on Haslingden Moor.

WOODCOCK - *Scolopax rusticola*

Singles were seen in the Healey Dell area on 31st January, 8th February and 14th March, 1 was on Cowpe Moss on 1st February and 2 were on Great Hameldon on 11th March. A predated egg was found at a site in western Rossendale. One was seen above Calf Hey in the Fairy Glen area on 28th October, 2 flew over Reedsholme on 31st October, 1 at Plunge on 9th November and singles at Great Hameldon on 11th, 17th and 20th November. Single birds were seen in the Whitworth area on 31st October and 7th November with 2 there on 8th November. One was in the Whitewell Bottom area in November.

CURLEW - *Numenius arquata*

The main return was in mid-March - 5 at Spring Mill on 8th March, 19 at Clough Bottom on 11th March, a pair at Crown Point and one at A.M.R. on 15th March. During the nesting season Curlews were present on Haslingden Moor (3 pairs), Musbury Height, Cowpe Moss, Musbury / Hare Clough, Ogden, Hile / Shawclough, Hailstorm Hill (4 eggs on 3rd May), Whitworth area (up to 7 pairs). During the autumn movement there were 4 at Clough Bottom on 14th June, one calling above Ravenshore on 16th July, ones and twos over Loveclough several evenings during July and August, 5 at A.M.R. on 19th September.

WHIMBREL - *Numenius phaeopus*

2 flew over Clowbridge on 5th April. 1 was at Spring Mill on 3rd May.

REDSHANK - *Tringa totanus*

2 were at Knowl Moor and 2 at A.M.R. on 25th April and 2 at Knowl Moor on 9th May. An adult Redshank was at Spring Mill reservoir on 6th July.

GREEN SANDPIPER - *Tringa ochropus*

There was a secondhand report of one at A.M.R. on 8th August. 2 were at Clowbridge on 3rd September with 1 still there on 4th September (B Lee)

COMMON SANDPIPER - *Actitis hypoleucos*

First arrivals were one at Clowbridge on 18th April, Clough Bottom on 21st April and 26th April, 1 at A.M.R. on 25th April, one at Ogden on 27th April and 3 at A.M.R. on 19th May. At Ogden reservoir a pair was seen regularly from 27th April to 11th June with one probable immature on 11th June. At Clowbridge 3 sites were occupied in late April. There was no firm evidence of breeding success here, and birds had left the site by 25th July. At Spring Mill, up to 4 birds were present during May and July, but there was no proof of breeding. A pair had returned to Cowpe reservoir by 19th May and were showing anxiety on 28th June. In autumn one was at Clowbridge on 17th and 20th August, 3 on 3rd September and 2 on 6th and 10th September and a last single on 11th September. 2 were at A.M.R. on 2nd August with singles later in the month. 2 were at Spring Mill on 7th September and a single on 19th September.

BLACK-HEADED GULL - *Larus ridibundus*

The Clowbridge roost numbered 1100 on 16th January but was down to 100 by 5th March. Estimates at Stacksteads Tip in January and early February suggested numbers between 650

and 700. Numbers began to decrease in February but there were still about 300 on 11th and 12th February. On 23rd February there were only large gulls at the Tip. On 28th February about 12 flew east on the morning flight. 20 or 30 lingered in the area until early March. There were 50 at Holden Wood on 1st March, 7 at Clowbridge on 8th March and 21 at Spring Mill on 14th March. There was a similar early departure last year (20th February). First return was 1 at Cowm on 6th June and 2 at Loveclough on 7th June but the main return was on 10th July when there were 13 at Calf Hey, 7 at Ogden and 2 at Holden Wood. There were 100 at Stacksteads Tip by early October and 200 by mid-October. In mid-November numbers rose to 4-500 and in December to 7-800. At Spring Mill up to 84 were seen in early August rising to 150 at the end of the month and 200 on 7th November. At the Clowbridge roost numbers grew from c 40 in September and October, rising to 400 in late November and about 1200 on 15th December to the year end.

COMMON GULL - *Larus canus*

Present in the usual proportions of about 1 Common to 50 Black-headed at Stacksteads. 10 flew south over Whitworth on 10th January and 11 were at Cowm on 28th February. There were 6 at Clowbridge on 8th March, and a single at Spring Mill on 11th March, the latest. Return was rather late - single adults at A.M.R. and Spring Mill on 9th August then as usual with the Black-headed. There were single-species flocks at A.M.R. - 7 on 6th September and 20 on 8th November. On 30th September there were 11 at Spring Mill. On 24th November there were 10 with 360 Black-headed on the all-weather pitch at Fearn School. At the Clowbridge roost numbers ranged from 40 to 100 birds.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL - *Larus fuscus*

During January and February no more than 4 were seen with the Herring Gulls at Stacksteads Tip or on morning and dusk flights to and from the Tip. The spring influx began on 11th March when there were 150. On 19th March there were 250 large gulls, mostly Lesser Black-backs at the Tip. On 12th April c 40 flew over Musbury Tor towards the northwest in the late afternoon. On 24th April up to 500 flew into Rossendale from the northwest over Great Hameldon. Numbers at Stacksteads increased to 300 in April then to 650 later in the month. There were at least 300 during May and 300 also at Horncliffe Tip - whether the same birds or not is uncertain. Numbers at Stacksteads rose to 400 in June and then to 1000 by 27th July. On 31st July there were well over 1000, possibly even 1500. Numbers fell to 500 in August, 300 at the end of August, 100 - 150 in September and 10 in October and to the end of the year. 300 flying southeast over Musbury at 0850 hrs on 21st August were probably moving from the roost to Stacksteads. 285 were at A.M.R. on 4th September. During autumn passage was noted over Clowbridge with 400 moving west on 30th August and 350 on 6th September

HERRING GULL - *Larus argentatus*

There were about 300 regularly at Stacksteads Tip during January and February, 200 in early March, then a departure to the nesting areas. Small numbers were present with the Lesser Black-backs from June to August increasing to 100 in early October and 200 in November. At the Clowbridge roost approximately 60 adults were present in December with about twice that number of immatures. Up to 200 moved west in the evenings toward Blackburn.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL - *Larus marinus*

Unusually large numbers were present at Stacksteads in mid-winter up to at least 25 in January and probably 40 flying up the valley on 10th January. Smaller numbers were seen

through February to early March. Elsewhere, one was over Cowpe on 17th January and 2 over Whitworth on 1st March. One or two were visiting the Tip in November and December. Up to 8 were present at the Clowbridge roost from 15th December.

BLACK TERN - *Chlidonias niger*

A single bird was at Clowbridge reservoir on 11th May (A Ives).

FERAL PIGEON - *Columba livia*

Town centre colonies much as usual.

STOCK DOVE - *Columba oenas*

A flock of 20 on East Hile was reminiscent of the larger flocks regularly seen in this area in January and February. There were 8 here on 11th February. There is a connection between this feeding area and the opposite side of the valley at Lee Quarry and the Cowpe valley where there are nesting sites. On 21st February 12 were feeding in a field at Whitworth. On 30th March a pair was seen in Lee Quarry. A pair was seen at Troy Quarry, Grane on 11th April. Another pair was seen around old farm buildings below Cowpe reservoir on 19th May and 28th June, and a pair along the Rooley Moor Road on 5th July. Elsewhere, one was at Clough Bottom on 14th June. At least 2 pairs in the Limy valley between Crawshawbooth and Loveclough. One was at Deeply Vale on 7th June. At least 3 pairs were seen in the Whitworth area.

WOODPIGEON - *Columba palumbus*

In the late winter period a flock of 20 was present at Calf Hey, 30 at Lench, 70 at Holden Wood and 40 at Musbury. In Whitworth a flock of 220 was seen on 2nd January. One or two fed on peanuts put out on a lawn in Waterfoot. A male was singing and engaged in display flights along The Glen by 19th March. A pair in gardens in Booth Road, Waterfoot were seen to feed regularly on Ash buds in April. Nesting was widespread in gardens, parks and woodland. Family parties and flocks gradually built up. At Musbury there were 10 on 12th August, 25 on 16th and 31st October and over 60 in December. A flock of 200 was in Brooks' Wood during November. At Whitworth flocks of up to 50 were seen from August to November.

COLLARED DOVE - *Streptopelia decaocto*

Common and widespread in gardens and parks. Males may be heard in song in every month of the year.

CUCKOO - *Cuculus canorus*

Males were heard calling in the Ogden and Musbury areas from 7th May. A calling male was seen at Fern Isle Wood on 15th and 18th May and a calling male was also present at the head of Cowpe valley on 19th May. A farmer lower down the valley had also heard regular calling.

LITTLE OWL - *Athene noctua*

The Higher Hollinbank / Musbury pair again nested successfully and a single young one was seen fledged from 23rd June. Another pair was also present further up the Musbury valley. The pair which formed on The Hile in November last year remained and a full-grown immature was seen on 2nd September. The pair remained in the area throughout the winter. Elsewhere, Little Owls were seen regularly in the Lench valley, Whitworth (at least 3 pairs), The Waggoners, Clowbridge, Loveclough and 2 other sites in the Limy valley.

TAWNY OWL - *Strix aluco*

There were records from Waterfoot (heard regularly in January near B.R.G.S.), Calf Hey (calling 8th May), Musbury (2 calling to each other for over a week from 28th September and one there in December), Brooks' Wood, Healey Dell, Fern Isle Wood. 2 recently-fledged young were seen at Clowbridge on 16th August, quite a late date.

LONG-EARED OWL - *Asio otus*

Pairs nested in 3 known sites. 3 juveniles were seen at one site on 25th June. At another site 2 or 3 young were calling on 21st June. One young bird was ringed at one of the sites.

SHORT-EARED OWL - *Asio flammeus*

There were several records from the Crown Point area between 20th March and 13th September, including one of one carrying prey near Crown Point on 25th July. However, there was no evidence of breeding. A single was seen at Knowl Moor on 6th April, and probably the same bird was seen at A.M.R. in mid-April.

SWIFT - *Apus apus*

All first records were from 8th to 10th May - a late date. There were 12 over Edgeside on 10th May and 10 over Gaghills on 12th May with 20 over Crawshawbooth on the same date. Numbers still appeared to be down at Gaghills with counts mostly in single figures. There were up to 20 over Edgeside where Swifts now nest in one of the older council estates. On 28th July there were about 40 over this area but only 5 over Gaghills. 45+ were seen over Spring Mill on 25th June. 100+ were feeding over Clowbridge on 1st July. Return movement began in late July. On 23rd, 24th and 25th Swifts were moving west down the Irwell valley and there were 20 over Gaghills - a much larger number than had been present in the nesting season. On 7th August there were 50 over Waterfoot. Singles were seen on 25th, 27th and 28th August with the latest being 1 over Spring Mill on 12th September.

KINGFISHER - *Alcedo atthis*

One was seen along the Irwell in The Glen on 29th January. Two were seen on the River Ogden near Ravenshore on 16th July. A pair bred at Rising Bridge. There were records for the Grane reservoirs on 3rd and 9th August and during October and November. One was at Cowpe Lodge on 14th October. Kingfishers were seen at Wallbank Lodge on several occasions in January and on two dates in September. Single birds were seen at Loveclough in July and early August. An unusual incident was a sighting of a Kingfisher flying along a busy road at Rising Bridge on 24th September. It suddenly flew straight up for about 100 feet and hovered as if to orientate itself before flying off.

GREEN WOODPECKER - *Picus viridis*

One was present at Higher Hollinbank, Musbury on 18th September and 6th December. At Whitworth calls were heard between 8th February and 15th November in the Spring Mill / Healey area. The species bred and 2 adults and 2 juveniles were seen on 5th August.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER - *Dendrocopos major*

There were records from Irwell Vale, Ravenshore, Alden, Musbury, Haslingden, Calf Hey, Ogden, Holden Wood, Clough Bottom, Cowpe valley, Brooks' Wood, Whitworth (at least 3 pairs) and Edgeside. A large, ancient tree at Edgeside which blew down in the autumn gales had a woodpecker nesting hole in one of the higher branches. In winter there were the usual

visits to garden feeders in Waterfoot, Cowpe valley and Haslingden. In Whitworth, there were even visits to a bird table in June and July.

SKYLARK - *Alauda arvensis*

A single Skylark was seen on Higher Hill on 4th January. First song was heard from 1 of a dozen birds at Goodshaw on 8th February. A small flock of about 6 had returned to The Hile by 15th February and there were 2 males in song in the Brex area. 5 or 6 pairs were located on The Hile on 22nd March. The final estimate for the old C.B.C. plot was 12 pairs after an average of 14 or 15 pairs for the last 3 years. There were about 6 on Musbury Tor on 19th February and 8 on 30th March. There were about 6 pairs on Brandwood Moor on 29th May and 5 pairs at the head of Alden on 4th May. On 31st May 27 were counted on a two hour walk at the head of Alden. Another count was of 10 at Clowbridge on 18th February. On 14th June young were being fed by a pair at Clough Bottom and on 1st July 2 immatures were seen on The Hile. There were 2 on The Hile on 26th July. One calling in flight over Spring Mill on 7th November was the latest record.

SAND MARTIN - *Riparia riparia*

During spring passage singles were seen at Clowbridge on 29th and 30th April and 2nd May. As in recent years, Stubbins was home to our only local breeding Sand Martins, but the size of the colony was not known. On return passage 3 were at Clowbridge on 2nd July, 1 on 5th July and 1 on 16th August. One was at Spring Mill on 1st September, with 2 over Wallbank with Swallows on 5th September.

SWALLOW - *Hirundo rustica*

All first records were between 18th (Clowbridge) and 24th April - a late arrival (10th to 12th April last year). There were records of nesting from Helmshore, Musbury (8 nests in Carr Lane Farm), Whitewell Bottom (2 pairs reared 2 broods each), Shawclough (4 juveniles on wires at Coal Pits Lane on 7th July). In a flock of 8 over Waterfoot on 28th September young were being fed on the wing. Passage was noted from 17th August when many were moving over Clowbridge at dusk. There was a peak about 12th to 20th September with small groups moving westwards over Knowl Moor on 13th September, 35+ over Spring Mill on 12th and hundreds seen over Musbury during this period. Late records were 2 or 3 over Waterfoot and 2 over Chapel Hill on 2nd October, 4 over Fearn's on 6th October and 2 over Waterfoot the same day 1 over Rawtenstall on 10th October, 4 over Irwell Vale and 2 probables flying south high over Holden Wood on 11th October.

HOUSE MARTIN - *Delichon urbica*

First returns were between 23rd (Crawshawbooth) and 28th April, as with Swallows, later than last year (15th - 19th April). 30 - 40 were feeding over Reedsholme on 23rd May. The Waterfoot centre colony had about 10 nests, there were 14 nests on semis in the Cowpe valley, both these are up on last year. Young were noisy in 2 nests on B.R.G.S. on 6th July and in a nest in Park Road, Waterfoot on 16th July. Post-breeding flocks were 40 over Stacksteads on 26th August, 10 over Park Road on 5th September, 30 over Waterfoot on 18th September and many with the large flocks of Swallows seen over Musbury on the same date. Up to 250 moved south over Whinberry Naze on 21st September and there were 10 at Stacksteads on 25th September. The latest were 2 over Constablelee on 5th and 6th October and 1 at Crawshawbooth on 8th October which flew up to a nest under the eaves, as if feeding young.

TREE PIPIT - *Anthus trivialis*

There were two possible breeding pairs this year - one was seen at Calf Hey on 18th May with another single bird nearby. Another pair was seen at Middle Bank, Musbury on 18th May and 1st June.

MEADOW PIPIT - *Anthus pratensis*

Apart from occasional mid-winter flocks (e.g. 5 at Spring Mill on 10th January, 4 at Healey and 17 near Syke reservoir on 25th January) movement of flocks back into breeding areas began in late February when there were 15 in Cragg Quarry on 21st February and 15 at Cowm on 28th February. There were 13 on Musbury Tor on 18th March and 20 there on 30th March. Early males were in song flights on The Hile on 19th and 22nd March. Meadow Pipits were described as numerous and widespread on Haslingden Moor on 12th April. On 4th May 31 were counted in a 1 km square at the head of Alden and 37 on 31st May. On 24th May a pair was carrying food on The Hile. An estimated 14 pairs nested on the old C.B.C. plot, an increase from the 10 or 11 pairs of the last 3 years. On 16th July Meadow Pipits were described as numerous on Musbury Heights. Post-breeding and passage flocks included 35 on Musbury Heights on 2nd September, 50 on Fearn Moss on 1st October, 20 at Clough Bottom on 25th September, 8 at Musbury on 22nd October and 10 at Shawclough on 25th November. 3 at Spring Mill reservoir on 6th December was quite a late record.

YELLOW WAGTAIL - *Motacilla flava*

A juvenile or first-winter bird was with 11 Pied Wagtails at Spring Mill reservoir on 25th August.

GREY WAGTAIL - *Motacilla cinerea*

Present at all the usual sites. On 17th March a pair was inspecting nest sites in a wall by the Limy at Longholme. Pairs were recorded at Gaghills (newly-fledged young on 22nd June); Cowpe Lodge (2 immatures on 18th July); Musbury Brook (family party of 3 on 14th June); Ogden reservoir; the River Ogden, Helmshore; Spring Mill reservoir; the River Spodden at Healey Dell and Loveclough. On the W.B.S. site on the Limy 2 pairs bred with young seen at both sites on 11th June. Later in the year Grey Wagtails were recorded frequently along the rivers and at reservoirs. Passage was noted over Crawshawbooth during the last two weeks of September. There were also records of Grey Wagtails feeding in unusual places as mentioned in previous Reports and following Pied Wagtails in this change of behaviour. On 15th October 2 were feeding on a main path in Edgeside Park. On 30th October one was feeding in a car park in Waterfoot. On 11th December one was feeding on B.R.G.S. playground more especially where the ice-cream van parks at lunch time. A single bird remained at Clowbridge until the year end.

PIED / WHITE WAGTAIL - *Motacilla alba*

Movement was noted from late January when a flock of 7 was feeding among horses above Fearn Moss. The arrival of pairs at nesting sites was recorded at Calf Hey on 15th March, at Clough Bottom on 11th March, at Fearn Moss on 2nd April, at Lee Quarry on 19th March. On 3rd April there were about 30 at E.B.S.W. Nesting was widespread and successful, there were many reports of fledged young. In September a communal roost again formed in Rawtenstall centre. There were at least 100 feeding on the cricket field on 14th September just before going to roost. On Fearn Moss there were 35 on 23rd September and 40 on 28th September, 30 on

6th October then 11 to 21st October and 13 on 17th and 20th November. During the winter Pied Wagtails were again seen feeding on pavements, car parks and playgrounds. A roost in Rawtenstall centre held 3 - 400 birds on 27th September. They roosted in small trees near to Rawtenstall station. At the same time, numbers at Clowbridge were 40 - 50 and were seen to move south at dusk. An adult male White Wagtail was seen at Spring Mill on 28th April with another there on 7th September.

DIPPER - *Cinclus cinclus*

Recorded along the Irwell at Longholme, Waterfoot and Stacksteads, along the Limy at 2 sites on the W.B.S. stretch, along the Whitewell at Piercy, Woodlea, along Cowpe Brook and Lench, along the River Spodden and Fern Isle Brook at Whitworth, along the River Ogden and Musbury Brook at Helmshore and Ravenshore and at Holden Wood and Ogden reservoirs. At Crawshawbooth young were being fed at the nest on 30th April. Fledged young were seen feeding on the Whitewell at Bridge Street on 8th July and 5 young were reared from a nest in an artificial site at Holden Wood. One was feeding along the 'tideline' at Clowbridge reservoir on 30th October.

WREN - *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Common and widespread in all suitable habitats and following streams up into the hills to at least 1000 feet. Song was heard from 25th February and was very vigorous from 11th April and still heard on 14th August. 5 were in song at Cowm reservoir 30th May. Wrens appeared in gardens in winter where they had not been seen earlier in the year.

DUNNOCK - *Prunella modularis*

Common in gardens, parks and woodland. Song and chasing behaviour was noted from 8th February. Young were being fed on 21st May in Waterfoot. Song was heard in woodland on 25th June.

ROBIN - *Erithacus rubecula*

Spring song was heard from 9th February. On 16th July 3, all immatures, were seen between Helmshore and Irwell Vale and on the same date an immature was seen in a garden in Waterfoot.

REDSTART - *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

A male at Calf Hey on 13th May a male singing at Cowm on 30th May and one at Musbury on 17th July were the only records.

WHINCHAT - *Saxicola rubetra*

One was at Clowbridge on 24th and 25th April, then there were 2 on 30th April. Whinchats were present there during summer but with no evidence of breeding. One seen on 10th May at Shawclough was probably on passage as was a male at Watergrove on 3rd May. A pair on gorse bushes at Great House, Alden could have been a breeding pair. During autumn one was seen on 11th August at Cowpe reservoir in company with 5 Wheatears, 1 was with 11 Wheatears at Spring Mill on 26th and 29th August and 3rd September, 2 at Cowm on 31st August and there were 2 at Clough Bottom from 22nd to 27th September. At Clowbridge autumn passage was lighter than last year with 3 on 30th August, 1 on 6th September and 3 on 11th September.

STONECHAT - *Saxicola torquata*

Apart from a male at Cowm on 3rd January, the rest of the records were for autumn and winter. There were two records for Clowbridge - 2 on 30th August with Whinchats and 1 on 6th September with Wheatears. A female was seen at Spring Mill on 3rd October and a male was at Cowm on 31st October with a pair there on 7th November. One was at Holden Wood on 8th November.

WHEATEAR - *Oenanthe oenanthe*

First arrivals were males at Musbury Tor on 20th March, Cowm reservoir on 22nd March, Clowbridge on 29th March and Lee Quarry on 30th March. There were 2 females at Hare Clough on 31st March, 17 at Spring Mill on 5th April and 3 males and a female at Lee Quarry on 12th April. Maximum at Clowbridge on spring passage was 13 on 30th April. 5 males and a female at Musbury on 1st June may have been Greenland Wheatears. Nesting pairs were seen at Musbury, Alden, Higher Hollinbank (pair with fledged young on 13th June), Grane (pair reared 5 young from an artificial site), Rooley Moor Road (anxious male on 28th June and an immature on 24th July), Heap Clough (pair and 3 juveniles on 7th June), Brow Edge Quarry, Hall Carr, Cowm (6 pairs all with juveniles on 8th August). On autumn passage there were 5 immatures at Cowpe reservoir on 11th August, 2 on Rooley Moor Road on 29th August, an immature on The Hile on 2nd September. 6 at Clowbridge on 11th September was the maximum of an unremarkable passage. The last test were 2 at Spring Mill on 3rd October and 1 at Clowbridge on 4th October.

RING OUZEL - *Turdus torquatus*

2 in Bagden Quarry, Spring Mill on 24th April was the only record this year.

BLACKBIRD - *Turdus merula*

First song was heard at Crawshawbooth on 5th February. A male was carrying nest material at Musbury on 12th February and a female in Waterfoot on 20th March. At Whitworth young were being fed at the nest on 9th April, quite an early date. Fledged young were seen on 19th June in Waterfoot and 14th July in Edgeside. A male was in song at Fearn Moss on 25th June. Loose flocks formed in the autumn - 5 on Rowans in Waterfoot on 1st September and 8 in October. 8 to 10 were regular at Todd Carr and 5 in Hawthorns at Musbury. From November 6 were regular in pre-roost gatherings in a Hawthorn in a garden in Waterfoot.

FIELDFARE - *Turdus pilaris*

Mainly small flocks between 10 and 30 were present in January and February although there were flocks of 62 on 10th January, 45 on 31st January and 50 on 28th February all at Whitworth and then a flock of 120 at Stacksteads on 9th March and 100 at Clowbridge on 10th March. These numbers were smaller and the departure earlier than for the same period last year. The latest spring record was 1 at Whitworth on 12th April. Return movement began early with 50 at Musbury on 20th September. During October there were flocks of 40 at Holden Wood, 200 at Musbury. Passage was noted in early November (59 + 40 at Whitworth on 7th) and there were 40 then 100 in the fields on each side of The Glen, Waterfoot. 50 flew over to the southwest on 12th November. This continued into December with flocks of 100 over A.M.R., Cowpe valley and Shawclough.

SONG THRUSH - *Turdus philomelos*

Early song was heard at Whitworth from 12th January, Ravenshore on 3rd February and Lench on 25th February then in every month until 16th July. Successful nesting was indicated at Helmshore on 29th April when a pair was seen with a fledged chick. During October, small numbers, presumably continentals, were with Redwings at Folly.

REDWING - *Turdus iliacus*

There were few records and small numbers during late winter - one with Mistle Thrushes at Musbury on 3rd February, 30 at Holden Wood on 1st March and 2 at Clowbridge on 8th March. 4 at Healey Dell on 5th April were the latest in spring. Return movement was also small - 10 at Folly on 4th October, 80 there on 6th October, one in garden trees in Waterfoot on 6th October, 40 at Musbury on 31st October, 10 at Holden Wood on 8th November.

MISTLE-#E THRUSH - *Turdus viscivorus*

Song was heard on 12th January in a Waterfoot garden, on 11th February at Tunstead and 15th March at Calf Hey. Pairs were seen at Musbury Lench, Edgeside, Water, Crawshawbooth. One was sitting on a nest in a Rhododendron in the Greens Lane area of Stacksteads on 7th May. A flock of 6 at Hare Clough on 25th May was probably a family group. An immature was seen at Cowpe on 28th June. Post-breeding flocks were 20 over The Glen, Waterfoot on 25th August; 10 flying into Rowans in Waterfoot on 27th August; 24 over Reedsholme on 10th September; 6 at Musbury on 20th September; 4 at Fearn Moss on 27th December. There were records of singles and pairs in November and December. A Mistle Thrush was singing at Crawshawbooth on 6th October.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER - *Locustella naevia*

3 males were heard singing near Haslingden and 2 pairs were thought to have bred. Song was first heard there on 1st July.

SEDGE WARBLER - *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

1 was at Clowbridge on 9th May. A male was in song at Holden Wood on 14th June and one, possibly two, birds present there on 10th July. One was at Clowbridge in August.

WHITETHROAT - *Sylvia communis*

1 was at Clowbridge on 2nd September and 1 was seen at Watergrove on 7th September.

LESSER WHITETHROAT - *Sylvia curruca*

A male was singing at Folly Tip on 21st April.

GARDEN WARBLER - *Sylvia borin*

On 14th May a male was in song in gardens along Booth Road in Stacksteads and again on 4th June at Atherton Holme. On 21st May a male was in song in Trickett Memorial Ground and again on 7th June.

BLACKCAP - *Sylvia atricapilla*

At Whitworth song was first heard on 15th April and 7 males were in song at Healey on 3rd May. Song was first heard at Rushbed on 24th April then 2 males were heard singing at Reedsholme for the rest of the summer. A male was in song near the old railway tunnel entrance in Stacksteads on 14th and 29th May and on several other dates about this time. A

male was also in song in the grounds of Rossendale General Hospital on 29th May. A male was in song at Calf Hey on 17th and 18th May. Latest record was a female at Healey on 12th September.

CHIFFCHAFF - *Phylloscopus collybita*

First song at Reedsholme was on 6th April then one or two

males were singing there through the summer. At Whitworth 2 were singing on 5th April and up to 4 were singing at Healey on 6th May. At least 1 was present there throughout the summer. Singing males were also present at Horncliffe and at Waingate on 6th July. A male was singing at Helmshore during August. Singles were singing on passage at Clowbridge on 19th and 28th September. The latest was 1 at Spring Mill on 4th October.

WILLOW WARBLER - *Phylloscopus trochilus*

First record was of one in song at Whitworth on 8th April. Thereafter song was heard at Crawshawbooth on 9th April, Scout Bottom on 15th April. From this date they were numerous and widespread. On 7th May one was carrying nest material at Atherton Holme, Stacksteads. On 29th June one was with a tit flock in Waterfoot and on 6th July 2 immatures were with a mixed flock of tits. On 9th July a pair showed anxiety on Piper Bank, Fearn's. Passage birds were 10 at Folly on 11th August and one at Lench on 18th August. There were 2 at Healey Dell on 16th September. One was calling at Folly on 5th October, quite a late date.

GOLDCREST - *Regulus regulus*

Larger numbers recorded than last year. Flocks of 25 on 28th February and 6 on 1st March at Calf Hey. A single with a flock of tits in a garden in Waterfoot on 27th March. There were no definite breeding records, probably due to lack of observations rather than absence. In autumn there was a flock of 20 in the Larches in Piper Bank above Fearn's Moss on 27th September, several at Folly during September and October, several at Calf Hey on 6th September and singles in a garden in Waterfoot in September and November. Goldcrests were present at Whitworth throughout the year, particularly at Fern Isle Wood.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER - *Muscicapa striata*

A pair nested at the usual site in the Cowpe Valley at Greenbridge and males were at Baxenden and Crawshawbooth in June. Apart from this the only other record was of passage birds at Spring Mill on 29th and 30th August and 13th September.

PIED FLYCATCHER - *Ficedula hypoleuca*

A male was present at Calf Hey on 17th May.

LONG-TAILED TIT - *Aegithalos caudatus*

Long-tailed Tits are the latest to join birds at peanut feeders. 2 to 5 came to a feeder in Waterfoot from 26th January to 21st March. 5 also regularly visited a feeder in Whitworth for the first time. Flocks were seen in Buckden Wood on 18th January and Alden on 10th March. An almost finished nest was found at Folly on 17th March. A pair nested in The Glen, Waterfoot and were seen carrying faecal sacs on 15th April. Nesting pairs were also seen at Whitworth (2 pairs), Lumb Vale and Alden. In autumn there were flocks of 20 at Healey Dell on 5th September, 15 on Piper Bank on 6th August and 8 there on 23rd September. 10 were on a feeder at Helmshore on 30th December and 9 at Healey on 25th December..

MARSH TIT - *Parus palustris*

One was seen at Helmshore on 13th April.

COAL TIT - *Parus ater*

A pair was present intermittently in a garden in Waterfoot from 28th February to 16th May and the male was in song on several occasions. There was evidence of nesting at Grane, Whitworth and Rossendale General Hospital. Coal Tits fed regularly at garden feeders during the winter.

BLUE TIT - *Parus caeruleus*

Good numbers were present along the old railway line at Helmshore in January and February. A pair was seen entering a nest box in Waterfoot on 6th April. On 16th April one came out of the nest hole in the low garden wall adjoining the footpath along Booth Road, Waterfoot which has been used successfully for the last 2 years. A pair reared young at Higher Hollinbank. On 16th June a pair was feeding young at Ogden reservoir.

GREAT TIT - *Parus major*

A pair examined a nest box in Waterfoot on 12th February and carried nest material into the box on 6th April. There were 3 eggs on 1st May and a complete clutch of 7 on 8th May. The nest was found to be deserted on 22nd May. When examined there were 3 small eggs and 4 larger ones with the spots banded at the large end. It seems likely that the Great Tits took over the nestbox from a pair of Blue Tits, which had already laid 3 eggs. 6 young were successfully fledged from a nest at Higher Hollinbank.

NUTHATCH - *Sitta europaea*

Nuthatches were reported to be present at Sunnybank Wood, Helmshore, a site frequented by them in the past. At Whitworth calls were heard on 28th March and 5th and 13th April.

TREECREEPER - *Certhia familiaris*

One was present at Alderbottom on 18th January and 1 was with a tit flock at Healey on 31st January. Treecreepers were reported from Calf Hey in February and March. A pair nested again at the regular site in the anglers' hut at Ogden reservoir. They were feeding young in the nest on 11th and 14th June. An adult was feeding 3 juveniles at Healey on 27th June. One was reported from Moorlands Park, Bacup in December.

GREAT GREY SHRIKE - *Lanius excubitor*

Two were seen at Grane on 24th and 25th February by Dr. P Rishton. Interestingly, one was also present at Wood End, Burnley on and around 21st March.

JAY - *Garrulus glandarius*

Present in the wooded areas along the Irwell below Ewood Bridge and up the Ogden to Helmshore and Musbury, and seen regularly in these areas. Probably 2 pairs were also present at Whitworth. One was present in the old plantation at Clowbridge on 23rd April. There were the usual wanderers in autumn and winter - one at Broadclough on 29th November, one at Calf Hey on 6th December and one in a garden in Booth Road, Waterfoot on 18th December - a first for this garden. At least 6 were in a Hawthorn near The Waggoners on 19th September.

MAGPIE - *Pica pica*

Communal gatherings in January and February were 30 in Osborne Park, Stacksteads on 29th January, 20 at Holden Vale in January, 12 in a garden in Waterfoot on 29th January. A roost near Wallbank, Whitworth numbered about 100 birds during January and February with a maximum of 113 on 6th January. There was conflict with encroaching Carrion Crows in suburban areas. A pair resumed repairs on an old nest in Booth Road, Waterfoot but a pair of Crows nesting in a tree across the road harassed them so much that they gave up and built a new nest in the back garden. There were fledged juveniles around from 5th July. Immatures were also seen at Edgeside from 8th July.

JACKDAW - *Corvus monedula*

On 30th January there were about 35 flying round the chimney at Ilex Mill. On 5th March about 100 circled over Waterfoot and there were 40 on 18th March. On 27th March one was carrying a twig at Cloughfold. On 11th June a pair carried food to a nest hole on Rossendale General Hospital. On 7th July fledged juveniles were being fed on roof tops in Park Road, Waterfoot. On 19th August there were about 100 in a mixed flock with Rooks at Stacksteads Tip. At Whitworth 13 were seen on 8th November. On 31st October there were 20 on the roof of the Jolly Sailor Inn and on 7th December 25 were on nearby B.R.G.S. This colony, making use of chimneys and holes in the older buildings of the area, is thriving and pairs regularly visit winter feeding stations in nearby gardens.

ROOK - *Corvus frugilegus*

On 23rd January there were about 100 at the Rook Hill rookery beginning to fly off to the northwest at 14.50 hrs. Courtship feeding was seen on 30th January between a pair on Fearn Moss and mating was seen on 12th February. There were at least 52 nests at Rook Hill in March, 15 at Healey on 12th April and 35 nests at St. John's, Crawshawbooth.

CARRION CROW - *Corvus corone*

Reports of numbers in winter flocks were 20 in the Musbury valley on 7th February. There was still a large roost at Grane believed to contain up to 200 birds. A flock of 23 was seen at Cowm on 31st January and a flock of 34 on Whitworth Lower End Moor on 14th March. Two pairs were engaged in aggressive territorial behaviour in a garden and along the roofs of terraced houses in Waterfoot during February and March. The males "sang" regularly from song posts on chimneys. One of the pairs carried twigs to a conifer in a front garden on 28th March. They came to feed on cheese put out on a lawn in one of the gardens. Two fledged young were noisy with food calls in the garden from 10th June. They found a favourite perch in a Larch tree which they occupied through the following winter. So the once persecuted Crow has become a common garden bird. On 24th September a flock of 45 was present at Musbury.

RAVEN - *Corvus corax*

! flew from Bonfire Hill Quarry on 15th March and 1 flew over Clowbridge pursued by 2 Carrion Crows on 22nd March. 1 was seen over Brown Wardle, Whitworth on 13th April. A single bird was present with Crows on Musbury Tor on 3rd September and 12th October. 4 were seen near Whitworth flying towards Cowpe Moss on 5th September and 2 were in flight over Cowpe Moss on 6th December. Ravens nest just to the north of Rossendale and this is the third successive year that they have been seen in Rossendale.

STARLING - *Sturnus vulgaris*

A roost at Clowbridge numbered 3000 at dusk on 24th January. Winter flocks were mostly between 20 and 70. There was an increase with the passage of migrants in March - 300 at Clowbridge on 8th March, 550 at Burnt Hill on 9th March. Numbers of up to 250 including many immatures were seen at Musbury during May. There were about 300 at Stacksteads Tip on 24th July and 2000 there on 19th August. A flock of 250 adults and juveniles was at Spring Mill on 10th August. On 26th August 30 were feeding on garden Rowan trees. Numbers at the Tip rose to about 3000 in October but flocks mostly numbered 100 to 200 birds later in the winter. There were 300, presumably continentals, with 40 Fieldfares in fields at Fearn on 3rd November.

HOUSE SPARROW - *Passer domesticus*

The usual small groups were noted in Helmshore - usually 6 to 10 at Carr Farm, Park Road, Airtours and the Museum during January and February but numbers here in November and December appeared to be down, with none seen at some of the sites. However, there was a flock of over 30 at Higher Deardengate, Haslingden on 22nd December. Numbers were also down in the area of Waterfoot around Booth Road, Park Road and Fearn Moss. Counts in this area in 1994/1995 indicated a total of about 45-50. Counts this year never found more than about 20. During April a group of 8 fed regularly on peanut feeders in a garden in Booth Road and there were gatherings of about 10 at the Booth Road / Park Road junction - about the average for the 1994 counts. There were never more than 6 at the Edgeside Lane site which regularly held 12 to 25 in 1994. On 5th July a post-breeding flock of about 30 was seen at the junction of the West Hile Farm track with Booth Road, Stacksteads. 18 were seen in a Whitworth garden on 4th January, 22 on 20th June and 34 on 25th July.

CHAFFINCH - *Fringilla coelebs*

On 9th January a flock of 20 was present on Musbury Brook and in February / March Chaffinches were numerous in woodland near Helmshore Museum. 5 came regularly to food on the lawn of a garden in Waterfoot during winter. Song was heard from 12th March. Adults with fledged young were seen in the Cowpe valley on 28th June. During October and November a flock of about 15 was seen daily in Beeches and Hawthorns on Musbury Road. About 10 were regular in Park Road plantation, Waterfoot and 6 fed regularly on seed in a garden nearby. At least 20 were present in the Beeches on Musbury Road in December.

BRAMBLING - *Fringilla montifringilla*

Up to 100 were seen near a bird table at Folly Tip during January, February and March. A pair visited seed and nut feeders in a garden in Waterfoot in a mixed flock of Siskins, Goldfinches, Chaffinches and Greenfinches on 23rd January and a female alone with the flock on 24th January. 4 were at Bonfire Hill Quarry on 28th March. At Folly, singing males and courtship behaviour was seen until late April when they departed. However, calls were also heard on 26th May at Folly, a very late date. A pair was present at Cowm on 19th April. In the autumn and early winter there were 2 at Folly on 25th November, 6 in Musbury Road on 5th December, 5 at Broadclough on 27th December. At Whitworth, about 70 were seen at Dane Wood on 1st January, 35 at Fern Isle Wood on 7th February, 14 on 7th March and 7 on 28th March. 11 at Dane Wood was the final record for the spring. During winter there were 15 on 15th November, 50 on 6th December and 20 on 12th December, all at Fern Isle Wood.

GREENFINCH - *Carduelis chloris*

A flock of 8 to 10 fed regularly at nut and seed feeders in a garden in Waterfoot from January to March. Song and territorial chasing flights were noted from 13th March. Song and nesting activities were recorded in many areas. A flock of about 15 was seen at Musbury on 19th June. One fed on peanut feeders in Waterfoot from 25th July and numbers increased to 7 by September. A flock of about 10 fed in Hawthorns at Shawclough on 9th December and a flock of 12 also in Hawthorns in early December at Clowbridge (KGS). 18 were at Cowm on 7th November and 20 there on 24th December.

GOLDFINCH - *Carduelis carduelis*

Winter flocks numbering 10 to 12 were recorded - rather lower than last year's numbers. 6 to 10 came to a peanut feeder in Waterfoot. One was in song on 15th April. Song and nesting were noted in many areas. A pair was seen with 2 fledged chicks at Musbury on 31st May. Flocks built up in August and September - 19 at Cowm, 17 at Spring Mill, 30 at Musbury, 40 at Holden Wood, 40 at Fearn Moss. First return to peanut feeders in Waterfoot was of a pair on 25th September. Unfortunately, one was killed by a cat whilst retrieving a piece of nut which had fallen to the ground. The surviving bird visited the feeders until January 1999. Likewise, at Musbury there was only a single on 16th December.

SISKIN - *Carduelis spinus*

About 30 birds were seen in the Cowpe valley on 25th January and 40 were at Folly on 4th February. Flocks of 6 to 10 visited peanut feeders in Waterfoot in January and February. Numbers fell in March but often the birds would be in pairs. On 31st March there was a pair and 2 females and on 1st and 2nd April a single female. Elsewhere, there were 7 at Holden Wood on 1st March, a male at Helmshore on 12th April, 4 at Wallbank on 31st January, 6 at Healey on 12th March and 5 at Healey on 29th March. Nesting occurred at Grane, probably 2 or 3 pairs. One of the nests was found with 5 eggs on 5th May but by 17th it had been predated. In autumn and early winter, Siskins were virtually absent. None came to the feeders in Waterfoot. A flock of 5 was seen at Clough Bottom on 8th October and 1 was at Whitworth on 15th November.

LINNET - *Carduelis cannabina*

An early return was of 2 at Helmshore on 26th February but most were seen in April. A flock of 100 at Musbury Brook on 14th April was similar to the numbers seen there in September last year. There were 5 at Stacksteads on 26th April and a pair at Stubbins on 27th April. During the nesting season there were pairs at Clowbridge, Loveclough, by the West Hile track on 7th May, Alden on 31st May, Cowm reservoir on 11th May and along the Rooley Moor Road, Stacksteads on 5th July and 19th August. Autumn flocks were 34 at Hallfold, Whitworth on 8th August, 65 along the Rooley Moor Road above Alf Kyme's from 26th August to mid-September, 40 at Holden Wood on 6th September, 20 at Clowbridge on 10th September, 30 at Fearn Moss on 27th September, 10 to 15 at several sites in Whitworth during August and September.

TWITE - *Carduelis flavirostris*

First returns were 5 at West Hile on 5th April and 4 at Stacksteads on 22nd April. Nesting occurred along the Rooley Moor Road between Stacksteads and Cowpe. Two pairs were seen here on 19th May. A flock of 12 here on 24th July suggested 2 family groups. On 11th August

a flock of 20 was feeding here on the surface of the Rooley Moor Road. Elsewhere, pairs were present at Spring Mill, Cowm, Hoddlesden Moss (2 pr), A flock of 20 was present in the Musbury area from 4th to 16th December.

REDPOLL - *Carduelis flamma*

Small winter flocks were recorded - 7 at Stoneholme on 10th January, 3 at Helmsshore on 5th February, 20 at Stacksteads on 21st March, 4 at Healey on 29th March, 5 at Healey on 31st October, 17 there on 15th November and 15 in Park Road plantation on 1st December. A pair was present from April 7 at Clowbridge and singles were seen over Whitworth on 18th and 25th July, but with no proof of breeding.

COMMON CROSSBILL - *Loxia curvirostra*

A flock of over 40 was in Broadhead Plantation on 21st March. At least 3 pairs bred at Grane. One nest held 3 eggs on 11th April but it had been predated by 23rd. A second nest held 3 eggs on 26th April but had been predated by 5th May. A third nest, some distance away, was probably predated as no young were seen. A single was seen at Clough Bottom on 30th August.

BULLFINCH - *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

In early January a pair was in Moorlands Park, Bacup. 3 were at Lea Brook on 27th January, feeding on Guelder Rose. A group of 7 was seen at Tip Lodge on 12th February. A male was seen in a garden at Helmsshore on 18th February and a female along the old railway line at Helmsshore on 15th April. At east 3 pairs were present in the Whitworth area. 2 pairs were regularly present near Road End from February to June and there were also pairs at Whittaker Park, Gin Clough and Loveclough. 5 were seen in a Bacup garden in autumn. A fledgling was seen at Sykeside House near Road End on 1st September. A pair was present at Alden on 8th November. 8 visited a bird table at Constablelee during December.

SNOW BUNTING - *Plectrophenax nivalis*

1 was at Higher Hill on 4th January, 1 was seen at Top of Leach on 17th January. Later in the winter there were 15 at Cragg Quarry, Cowpe Moss on 15th February, about 30 there on 21st February, 8 at Chapel Hill on 28th February and 28 at Cragg Quarry on 7th March. Flocks were also recorded in late autumn and winter including 6 at Cragg Quarry on 9th November, 3 at Hameldon on 9th November, with 11 there on 9th December, 9 on Top of Leach on 30th November, 23 over Rooley Moor Road on 31st December and 8 at Hameldon on the same date.

REED BUNTING - *Emberiza schoeniclus*

During late winter, small numbers were seen at Cowm reservoir - 5 on 5th January and 21st February and 10 on 28th February. A male on the lower part of Knowl Moor on 1st February was unusual. A male had returned to a breeding area on The Brex by 15th February and a single male was back at Clowbridge on 20th February. 2 males were in song in Plunge on 6th April. 4 pairs were present at Cowm on 5th April with 2 pairs at Spring Mill on the same date. A male visited a bird table at Crawshawbooth on 15th April after an overnight snowfall. 3 males were in song at Cowpe reservoir from 19th May and at least one was still in song there on 19th July. At least 3 pairs were present at Clowbridge though breeding success seemed low with few family parties seen. Breeding season presence was also noted at Holden Wood. The latest seen at Clowbridge were 3 on 26th October. Small numbers were again present at Cowm in winter including 4 on 31st October, 3 on 24th December and 5 on 31st December

YELLOWHAMMER - *Emberiza citrinella*

There was a report of one in song between Crawshawbooth and Constablelee in late April. A female was seen at Clowbridge on 26th October (B Lee).