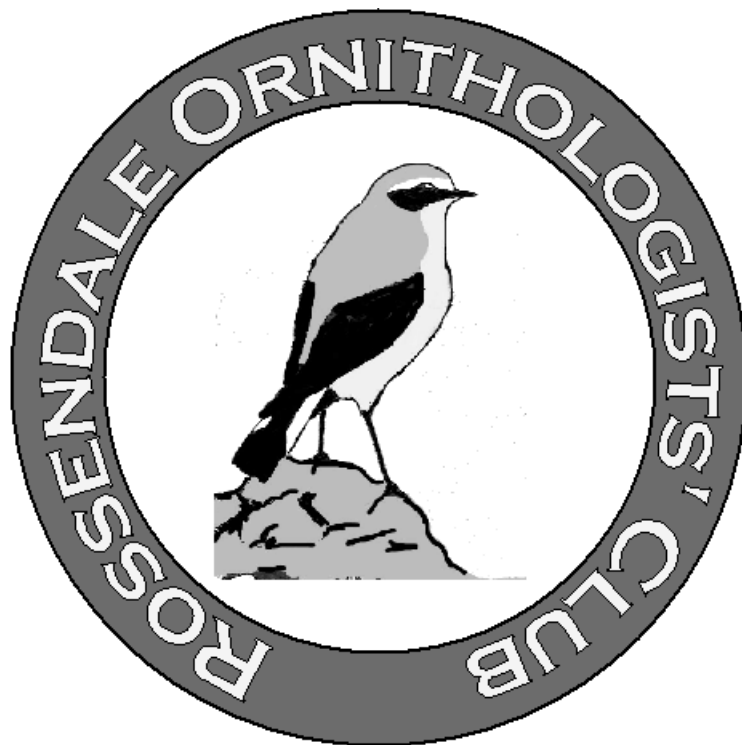

Rossendale Ornithologists' Club

Bird Report



2001

LITTLE GREBE - *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Little Grebes were present at All Saints' pond from May and made a nesting attempt.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE - *Podiceps cristatus*

A pair was present at Clough Bottom on 23rd April and a single at Shortclough on 25th April. There were 2 at Holden Wood on 12th July. At Spring Mill a single adult was present from 15th April to 17th June, 2 on 19th October and a single on 5th and 9th December. There were 4 adults at A.M.R. on 25th July. An immature was present at Clowbridge on 10th September.

BLACK-NECKED GREBE - *Podiceps nigricollis*

An immature was seen at Clowbridge at the end of July. There was a similar autumn record last year when an immature was present at A.M.R. from 28th August to 4th September.

CORMORANT - *Phalacrocorax carbo*

In the Whitworth area one flew over Wallbank on 31st March and one was at Spring Mill on 7th April. At Clowbridge one was present on dates from 4th to 23rd September, one flew over to the south on 27th October and one was present on 23rd December. One was at Clough Bottom on 16th October.

GREY HERON - *Ardea cinerea*

Present throughout the year along the rivers and at lodges and reservoirs. An adult was again seen fishing along the Irwell near the busy road and walkway near Asda in Rawtenstall. There were the usual records of visits to garden ponds, as often as 3 times a day at one location in Waterfoot which has a large uncovered pond stocked with Perch and Roach. There were second-hand reports of young Herons feeding on the Irwell in the Waterfoot area, as many as 3 seen together during July, so local nesting probably occurred again. In the Whitworth area a nest with one young was seen on 6th May, 2nd June, a pair with a fledged youngster on 17th June and a pair with a juvenile at Spring Mill on 24th June (J. Webb).

MUTE SWAN - *Cygnus olor*

No records this year.

WHOOPER SWAN - *Cygnus cygnus*

No records this year.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE - *Anser brachyrhynchus*

On 14th February about 500 flew over Reedsholme to the west during the morning and 34 flew west over Spring Mill on 10th February. A single was with the Canada Geese at Ogden from 10th to 20th July. On 11th October 110 geese in 3 skeins flew over Clowbridge to the east at 18.30hrs. On 2nd December 100 flew to the east over Reedsholme and 88 to the west over Chapel Hill.

LESSER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE - *Anser erythropus*

One with the Canada Geese at Ogden on 28th August was presumably the one seen in their company during the last 5 or 6 years.

GREYLAG GOOSE - *Anser anser*

Two with the Canada Geese at Ogden on 28th August.

CANADA GOOSE - *Branta canadensis*

Numbers again fell during winter - 19 at New Line on 7th January and 15 recorded over Grane at dusk on 10th April being the largest counts. Breeding was recorded at a lodge near All Saints - a pair and 4 juveniles on 10th June; A.M.R. - a pair plus 3 half-grown goslings, a pair with 2 small young and 19 other birds on 24th June. Autumn flocks were a little larger with 20 to 40 recorded at Clowbridge in September and October. There were 48 at Ogden in July and 20 there on 17th November and 16 at New Line on 3rd and 4th October. There were 96 at Deeply Vale on 9th December and 60 at A.M.R. on 16th December but there was no winter flock at Grane. There were 19 at Spring Mill on 7th February and 3 pairs on 6th May. In the autumn there were 12 in late July and 2 counts of 25 and 45 in September. A pair was seen with 4 goslings at Healey Dell lodge on 12th June.

BARNACLE GOOSE - *Branta leucopsis*

No records this year.

EGYPTIAN GOOSE - *Alopochen aegyptiacus*

No records this year.

MANDARIN - *Aix galericulata*

No records this year.

SHELDUCK - *Tadorna tadorna*

On 20th May a pair flew up the Irwell valley near Townsendfold. A male was at Clowbridge on 15th December.

WIGEON - *Anas penelope*

A male was at New Line from 27th to 30th September. On 26th September 8 were at Clowbridge in a mixed flock which included Teal, Pintail, Shoveler and Pochard. There were 2 males here also on 5th October.

GADWALL - *Anas strepera*

No records this year.

TEAL - *Anas crecca*

Numbers are still low. There were no records for the late winter - January / February - period and only one for March - a single at Shortclough on 14th. In autumn there were small numbers - from 1 to 5 - on dates from late July to December at Clough Bottom, Spring Mill, New Line, Clowbridge, Holden Wood and Deeply Vale with 2 larger flocks of 14 at Clough Bottom on 8th December and 8 at Spring Mill on 7th December.

MALLARD - *Anas platyrhynchos*

Between 60 and 100 were regular on the Irwell in the centre of Rawtenstall in winter and also 46 on the Limy at Lea Brook in January but only small numbers in the WeBS counts at Grane and A.M.R. Breeding success appears to have been poor this year. One report from the Limy valley said "very few broods this season". On 12th May a female and 12 small young were seen on the Whitewell at Scoutbottom and on 16th July a female with young was seen at A.M.R. Post-breeding there were 30 at New Line on 17th August and 50 at Cowm on 27th August. On 9th September there were 7 at Clough Bottom and on 28th September 20 at Jack Lodge.

Numbers were in single figures for the WeBS counts at Grane and A.M.R. from October to December. Autumn numbers at Clowbridge reached a peak in early October with 30 on 8th, 51 on 9th, 54 on 11th and 31 on 17th. At Lea Brook on the Limy there were 20 to 30 at this time increasing to over 40 during December. So once again there were more Mallards in river habitats than on the reservoirs. At Spring Mill there were from 7 to 17 during the winter period but 28 at Meadow Lodge on 30th January.

PINTAIL - *Anas acuta*

A female was in the mixed flock with Pochards on 26th September.

SHOVELER - *Anas clypeata*

Two females were with the mixed flock at Clowbridge on 26th September and one at New Line on 6th December.

POCHARD - *Aythya ferina*

On 26th September there were 3 males and 4 females at Clowbridge and a single male there on 30th September. Also a single at Spring Mill on 11th November.

TUFTED DUCK - *Aythya fuligula*

Another species which is decreasing. Numbers from 2 to 9 were present from January to May at Holden Wood and Clowbridge. In autumn there were again small numbers from August to October at A.M.R. (9 on 7th September) and Clowbridge (6 on 30th September). There was a continuous presence at Spring Mill from 28th March to 26th December but again in small numbers - 1 to 2 pairs in the breeding season and 5 to 8 during September. Spring Mill is now the reservoir most used by this species.

SCAUP - *Aythya marila*

An immature was present at Clowbridge from 5th to 11th October.

LONG-TAILED DUCK - *Clangula hyemalis*

One was at Clowbridge on 16th December (P. Grice via R Ives).

COMMON SCOTER - *Melanitta nigra*

On 14th March a female possibly of this species was seen at A.M.R. In late summer there was an unusual number of records - 1 at A.M.R. on 24th June, 7 males at Calf Hey on 15th July and a male at Clough Bottom on 25th August.

GOLDENEYE - *Bucephala clangula*

Numbers between 5 and 7 were recorded at Clowbridge from 10th January to 20th February. Two females were at Calf Hey on 23rd January, 30th January and 11th February. Pairs at A.M.R. on 5th May and Spring Mill on 7th May were the latest. In autumn and winter single females were recorded at A.M.R. on 14th and 25th July and 19th August, Calf Hey on 4th November and at both sites on 16th December. Also at A.M.R. there were 3 on 4th November and 6 on 26th December. First return to Clowbridge was a female on 1st November then 2 males and a female on 4th November. Then regular to the end of the year with a maximum of 5 females on 19th December. At Spring Mill there were records of from 1 to 5 from 1st January to 7th May then again from 11th November to 24th December and 3 also at the nearby Cowm reservoir on 26th December.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER - *Mergus serrator*

The single female was again at Spring Mill with Goosanders on 20th January.

GOOSANDER - *Mergus merganser*

Recorded during the winter period mainly in January and February in small numbers at Clough Bottom (8 on 7th January), Ogden (5 on 11th February) Spring Mill (3 on 14th January), Calf Hey (6 on 21st February), Clowbridge which had records from 12th January to 12th February, the largest number being 12 on 26th January. An interesting spring record was of a pair at Irwell Vale on 8th April and 15th April and a female on 9th June. In autumn there were 7 at Clowbridge on 19th August, 22 at A.M.R. on 9th September and 7 at Clough Bottom on 30th September. One flew round above Lench lodges on 10th December and there were 4 at A.M.R. on 16th December. Again, numbers were lower than in recent years. At Spring Mill there were from 3 to 22 from 1st January to 26th April and again from 8th July to 24th December (the highest number for the year was 24 on the latter date).

MARSH HARRIER - *Circus aeruginosus*

One thought to be a female or immature bird flew northwest over Holden Wood on 31st July (D. Nuttall).

HEN HARRIER - *Circus cyaneus*

A female flew over Musbury Tor on 1st November and was seen again on 13th, 15th and 18th December - on one occasion eating a pigeon (J. Rostron).

SPARROWHAWK - *Accipiter nisus*

Present in woodland and garden areas throughout the valleys. Sparrowhawks visited garden bird feeding stations in Waterfoot and Whitworth attracted by the numbers of small birds. During the breeding season there were records from Bacup, Stacksteads, Waterfoot / Newchurch, Clough Bottom (female with food 23rd July), Clowbridge, Rawtenstall (one carrying prey 21st May), Irwell Vale (nest with 5 eggs on 9th June, 3 young plus 2 eggs on 24th June), Rossendale General Hospital grounds, Crawshawbooth (5 large young in nest on 17th July), Whitworth. A female was hunting Fieldfares at Dunnockshaw on 19th October.

HONEY BUZZARD - *Pernis apivorus*

No records.

COMMON BUZZARD - *Buteo buteo*

There were records of singles in the Musbury area on 24th January, 28th July and 6th October and one over Duckworth Clough on 10th March.

OSPREY - *Pandion haliaetus*

No records.

KESTREL - *Falco tinnunculus*

Present in all usual areas. The pair was present at the Higher Hollinbank site throughout January and February and the male was in conflict with a second male which arrived on 23rd January and caused further conflict until 25th March. There were 5 at Musbury on 29th July. Elsewhere pairs nested at Mitchell House reservoir, St James' Haslingden and Rossendale General Hospital. Breeding season presence was also recorded at Bacup (entering a hole on

Forest Mill on 5th April), New Line, Crown Point / Deerplay, Clough Bottom, Lee Quarry (3 on 15th July), Clowbridge (an adult and an immature on 20th August), A.M.R. (2 immatures on 16th September), Cowpe valley, Spring Mill (carrying prey on 20th July). On 13th August one was seen to rob a Short-eared Owl of its prey at Clowbridge (R. Ives).

MERLIN - *Falco columbarius*

Two pairs bred successfully. One fledged 5 young on 4th July (N. Burke). Singles were recorded on various dates and a female was seen hunting Starling flocks at Clowbridge on 11th and 17th November (R. Ives).

HOBBY - *Falco subbuteo*

An immature was taking dragonflies over Clowbridge reservoir on 23rd August (D. Nuttall).

PEREGRINE - *Falco peregrinus*

Recorded on dates from 10th January to 16th December. One was harassed by Crows over Helmsshore on 10th January and one was seen over Haslingden centre on 27th April. One was seen carrying a corvid at Mitchell House reservoir on 26th July (D. Nuttall). Two flying from over The Hile down to Waterfoot on 11th October were possibly youngsters of the year still in company. One pair successfully reared one young one. An adult female with 2 first-winter birds were at Spring Mill on 19th October (J. Webb).

RED GROUSE - *Lagopus lagopus scoticus*

On 28th January 1 was at Scholes Heights on Holcombe Moor. A single on Cowpe Moss on 7th May was the only record for that area. A pair was present at Holcombe Hill in May. A covey of 15 was on Musbury Heights on 18th November.

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE - *Alectoris rufa*

No records.

GREY PARTRIDGE - *Perdix perdix*

A covey of 8 was present at Musbury on 8th February. A pair was seen at Clowbridge on 10th May and 12th June. One was seen at Musbury on 7th July.

PHEASANT - *Phasianus colchicus*

Seen regularly in the Musbury area, Clowbridge, Spring Mill and Lumb Vale but notably absent outside the breeding season at Clowbridge (R. Ives), also absent at Spring Mill in winter.

MOORHEN - *Gallinula chloropus*

Present on all suitable waters and along the rivers. Nesting was recorded at Holden Vale, Lumb Vale, Cowpe lodge, Clowbridge.

COOT - *Fulica atra*

One was at Shortclough reservoir on 25th April and a pair at the lodge at All Saints, Haslingden Road on 10th June. A pair had 3 young at Holden Wood on 12th July. There were 2 pairs at Spring Mill in June.

OYSTERCATCHER - *Haematopus ostralegus*

Two pairs were present in the Naden valley, one with young. A pair was present at Spring Mill from 7th March and were with 2 juveniles from 18th July. There were 4 adults and 2 juveniles here on 23rd July - the latest date. On 19th September a passage bird was seen at Clowbridge.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER - *Charadrius dubius*

Nested in the Holden Vale / Holden Wood area. A nest scrape was found on 16th April. It contained one egg on 21st April but was later deserted. A second attempt nearby had 4 eggs but these were broken by dog walkers. The female re-laid by 19th May and hatched by 8th June when she was seen brooding small young. An adult and one juvenile were also seen on 10th June (N. Burke). Later, 2 were present at Holden Vale on 21st June, one at Holden Wood on 12th July and one at Ogden on 25th July.

RINGED PLOVER - *Charadrius hiaticula*

An immature was seen at Clowbridge on 16th September.

DOTTEREL - *Charadrius morinellus*

No records this year, probably because of the lack of access due to Foot and Mouth Disease.

GOLDEN PLOVER - *Pluvialis apricaria*

No records this year owing to lack of access but almost certainly nested as usual on Cowpe Moss. Two were seen on Hailstorm Hill on 19th July. On 25th December there were about 40 on Cowpe Moss.

LAPWING - *Vanellus vanellus*

During the winter there were at least 300 in the fields near the Rising Bridge bypass on 25th January and on 12th February 200 were flying over Haslingden. On 11th January 6 were feeding on a manured field at Clowbridge. 30 had returned to A.M.R. by 14th March. There were few breeding season records owing to the lack of access during the Foot and Mouth Disease epidemic. 3 or 4 were present at Cheesden and similar numbers at Musbury and Broadley. Two pairs in the fields upstream of E.B.S.W. were the only ones breeding in the lower part of the Irwell valley (R. Ives). Two pairs nested at Holden Vale. One with 4 eggs hatched. At the other a female Sparrowhawk was seen taking the sitting bird. When the hawk flew away the other bird incubated the eggs (N. Burke). Post-breeding there were 180 at A.M.R. on 14th July, 80 on 7th October and 300 on 16th December. There were 12 to 23 at Spring Mill in July and August, 30 at Clough Bottom on 25th August and 21 on 20th October. An unusual occurrence was a flock of 35 on The Hile on 9th December. About the same time 60 were at Clowbridge on 14th December and 15 on 26th December.

DUNLIN - *Calidris alpina*

No records this year due to lack of access.

LITTLE STINT - *Calidris minuta*

An immature bird was at Clowbridge reservoir on 18th September (D. Nuttall).

RUFF - *Philomachus pugnax*

2 females were present at Deeply Vale on 16th September (D. Nuttall).

JACK SNIPE - *Lymnocryptes minimus*

One was present on Nutshaw Hill on 20th February - now a regular site (R. Ives) and one on Cowpe Moss on 7th May. Two were present with 2 Common Snipe on Whitworth Lower End Moor on 9th December.

COMMON SNIPE - *Gallinago gallinago*

During the spring movement 5 were seen on Great Hameldon and 2 on The Hile on 20th February. There were few breeding records due to lack of access. One was drumming at Belthorn on 22nd June and one was on Musbury Heights on 8th July. Later in the year one was at Clowbridge on 25th September, 2 on Great Hameldon on 11th October, 24 on Nutshaw Hill on 18th October (a local record) and 9 on 4th November (R. Ives). There were 3 on The Hile on 9th December and 5 on Reaps Moss on 28th December. One successfully evaded a Peregrine at Clowbridge on 25th November (R. Ives).

WOODCOCK - *Scolopax rusticola*

There were singles at Clowbridge on 18th January, the old sewage works at Whitworth on 24th March and Spring Mill on 3rd April. 6 were present in plantations at Clowbridge on 20th November and 2 on 25th November. One was at Heap Clough on 15th December, 6 were present in plantations at Clowbridge on 20th November and 2 on 25th November. Two were flushed from the plantation at Dunnockshaw on 23rd December and 2 were at Clowbridge on 31st December.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT - *Limosa lapponica*

No records.

WHIMBREL - *Numenius phaeopus*

No records

CURLEW - *Numenius arquata*

Arrival dates were 13th March at Musbury, 17th March at Deerplay, 22nd March on The Hile, 23rd March at Spring Mill. Breeding season records were limited by lack of access. Curlews were heard calling daily in the Musbury area and were present on the Clowbridge moors, at Cheesden, Clough Bottom and Rooley Moor. On 11th June 2 were feeding in a new-mown field at Lumb Vale, 4 were present on Holcombe Moor on 15th August. 3 flew south over Clowbridge on 9th September.

REDSHANK - *Tringa totanus*

One in a field at Belthorn on 22nd June was possibly in nesting territory. There were singles at A.M.R. on 14th July, Holden Wood on 29th July, Clowbridge on 23rd August and 18th September and Clough Bottom on 23rd August.

GREENSHANK - *Tringa nebularia*

During autumn passage there were 3 at Clowbridge on 16th August.

COMMON SANDPIPER - *Actitis hypoleucos*

There were singles at Ogden on dates from 9th to 20th July and 6 there on 25th July. Sandpipers were also present at Clowbridge but no counts were possible owing to restricted access. One

was seen at Clough Bottom on 1st May. There were records for Spring Mill of singles and pairs on 21st April. Two were on passage at Clowbridge on 24th August.

BLACK-HEADED GULL - *Larus ridibundus*

The winter gull roost at Clowbridge peaked at 3,000 on 27th January, the majority being Black-headed Gulls (R. Ives). A large proportion of these came in from the north - from the Burnley area - and it is likely that numbers from Rossendale are about the usual 1,000. Numbers would seem to be up on last year when there were 600 at Stacksteads Tip and 1,000 to 1,500 at Clowbridge. Departure to the nesting grounds had taken place by about 7th March. Return began in July - 3 over Dunnockshaw on 4th, 10 at Holden Wood on 12th and an adult with one immature at A.M.R. on 16th then 20 on 8th August over Waterfoot. On 22nd August several were soaring and swooping as though hawking for insects - the emergence of Crane Flies was taking place at this time and the winged sexual forms of ants often emerge from the nests en masse about this time. On 27th August there were 50 at Cown reservoir. On many mornings from September to November there were 50 to 100 on fields on either side of The Glen at Waterfoot and also on Fearn Moss playing fields. This was the normal behaviour when Stacksteads Tip was open and it appears to have been resumed even though the gulls are now probably using Horncliffe Tip for feeding. 700 roosted at Clowbridge on 2nd December (R. Ives).

COMMON GULL - *Larus canus*

There were about 200 at the winter gull -roost at Clowbridge (R. Ives). 2 were present at Cown reservoir on 14th January and with the return movement there were 2 here on 27th August and 3 on 10th September. On 18th December an adult was with 10 Black-headed Gulls on Fearn Moss. 40 to 50 roosted at Clowbridge on 2nd December. Common Gulls were regular at Spring Mill with records dated January to April and July to December. Largest flocks were 16 on 20th January and 7 on 14th March and 5th August. There were from 1 to 3 at New Line in November and December.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL - *Larus fuscus*

Movement was noted from mid-April with reports of 100s to the northwest over Rawtenstall and the Limy valley in the evenings and the reverse in the mornings. There were 500 at Horncliffe Tip daily from 16th April (R. Ives). The movement was presumably between the tip and a roost. These dates for the return of the Lesser Black-backs heading for the North Lancashire breeding grounds are similar to the ones recorded in the past (more often in late March). Post-breeding season there were 400 at Dearden Clough on 19th July, 250 (20% immatures) at A.M.R. on 9th September. 200 to 300 were seen flying to the west over Clowbridge in the evening from 14th to 30th August. Thereafter there were the usual small numbers of wintering gulls.

HERRING GULL - *Larus argentatus*

The usual wintering numbers were recorded - 400 to 500 flying down the Limy valley on 1st January. A northward passage was noted on 24th March when flocks of 36 to 47 were counted flying up the Limy valley (R. Ives). During the nesting season there were records of small numbers - 7 at Clough Bottom on 15th April and 1 in Irwell Vale on 10th June. A return movement of wintering gulls was noted from 18th November when 18 circled over Rawtenstall and on 3rd December 50 - 100 circled over Waterfoot. On 19th December 100

flew from the northwest over The Hile probably en route to Horncliffe Tip. There were 40 at A.M.R. on 16th December.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL - *Larus marinus*

On 1st January one flew up the Irwell valley towards Stacksteads on the old flight line. There were 20 at Horncliffe Tip on 3rd January and at the Clowbridge roost there were 7 on 10th January, 8 on 12th January, 6 on 17th January and 1 on 12th February continuing the usual mid-winter presence. Numbers were lower than usual in the second winter period with singles at Clowbridge on 4th and 26th December and 2 on 31st December and 1 at Clough Bottom on 28th December.

COMMON TERN - *Sterna hirundo*

An adult moulting into winter plumage was seen at Spring Mill on 22nd December (J. Webb).

FERAL PIGEON - *Columba livia*

The usual town-centre colonies were noted in Bacup, Rawtenstall, Waterfoot and Ramsbottom. The use of Fearn's School and playing fields noted last year continued with about 40 feeding there almost every day from 31st May. On 13th July 70 were feeding on a re-seeded area on the playing fields.

STOCK DOVE - *Columba oenas*

Small numbers were present and probably breeding in the Cowpe valley, Spring Mill, Lee Quarry, Ewood Bridge, Irwell Vale. Largest numbers were recorded in fields adjacent to Clowbridge reservoir - 4 on 18th January and 8 on 26th January. On 9th December 3 were present on The Hile.

WOODPIGEON - *Columba palumbus*

The usual large food-seeking flocks in winter were recorded - 120 to the south over Waterfoot on 1st January and 200 at Reedsholme on the same date. 1,000 moved south over Crawshawbooth on 9th January and 500 on 20th January. In the Whitworth area 180 flew west over Wallbank on 27th January and 250 to 350 roosted in Healey Dell in January and February. On the other hand, Woodpigeons in suburban garden situations where seed was put out were singing and making display flights throughout January and February and one was carrying a twig on 31st January. There were said to be good numbers at Kilfield, Musbury, Heightside plantation at Newchurch, Brooks' Wood at Crawshawbooth and there were 10 to 20 at other, smaller woodland sites.

COLLARED DOVE - *Streptopelia decaocto*

Very evident in most areas of suburban gardens. In song and mating from December and January. A pair with 2 newly-fledged juveniles was seen in Waterfoot on 19th May and 2 other young ones were present nearby. On 23rd November 9 came to nut and seed feeders in a garden in Waterfoot.

CUCKOO - *Cuculus canorus*

Few records again. One called all day at Musbury on 5th May but must have moved on as it was not heard again. On 10th June one was heard and seen at Grane but there were no further records. On 12th June one was calling at Hoddlesden Moss.

BARN OWL - *Tyto alba*

No records this year.

LITTLE OWL - *Athene noctua*

The usual pair was present at Higher Hollinbank from 16th January to 9th April. They then moved away possibly as a result of harassment by nesting Magpies, re-appearing later in the season. Another pair was present in a ruined barn at Alden where there is usually only one. There were records of Little Owls present in usual sites on The Hile, at Lee Quarry, Hutch Bank Quarry, Troy Quarry and at Holcombe and in the Naden valley and also in Bridge Clough near Jack Lodge, Spring Mill and Chapel Hill.

TAWNY OWL - *Strix aluco*

The roost hole near Warth Bridge was used until a date between 29th March and 2nd April. Calling birds were heard at Musbury, Booth Road area of Waterfoot, Whitworth, the grounds of Rossendale General Hospital (young seen in August), Healey Dell and Goodshawfold (adult with 2 young on 28th June). A nest with 3 young was found in the Waterfoot area (B. Oldfield). One was present at Clowbridge throughout September.

LONG-EARED OWL - *Asio otus*

One was seen hunting an hour before dusk at Clowbridge on 25th September.

SHORT-EARED OWL - *Asio flammeus*

Present in north Rossendale and seen with some regularity from January to early June in the moorlands surrounding Clowbridge. Later in the year there were many sightings by D. Nuttall and R. Ives at Crown Point, Clowbridge, Clough Bottom and Great Hameldon including 3 or 4 at Clowbridge on 10th September, 3 at Clough Bottom on 18th September (D. Nuttall) and "at least 3 birds and quite probably more" (R. Ives).

SWIFT - *Apus apus*

First arrivals were from 30th April to 4th May - earlier than last year (5th to 8th May). Numbers counted in the vicinity of nesting colonies included 20 at Lea Mill, 10 at Edgeside, 20 at Stacksteads, 8 at Gagghills. Large flocks over the Clowbridge area were - 100 on 12th June, 500 on 22nd July and 1,000 on 23rd July and there were 100+ over A.M.R. on 14th July. In August there were 20 over Waterfoot on 7th, 20 over Rawtenstall and 12 over Edgeside on 12th, 12 over Stacksteads on 14th and 12 over Clowbridge on 20th. Latest were 2 over Bacup on 26th August, 1 over Whitworth on 28th August and 2 over Spring Mill on 2nd September.

KINGFISHER - *Alcedo atthis*

During the winter there were records of 2 on the Swinnel Brook on 1st January, one at Healey Dell on 3rd January and 1 at Spring Mill on 14th January. One was present on the Limy at Reedsholme on 29th / 30th July and again in October.

GREEN WOODPECKER - *Picus viridis*

Present and seen regularly in the Helmsshore area from Ravenshore to Musbury and Hare Clough from January to June and "heard daily" at higher Hollinbank in February and March (J. & B. Rostron). Also one was heard regularly at Reedsholme from 7th April to early June. A pair nested in Lumb Vale and 2 pairs in different parts of Grane. 2 were seen in Naden

valley on 14th July. Regular also in the Healey Dell / Spring Mill area - 2 juveniles seen at Broadley on 23rd July.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER - *Dendrocopos major*

Present throughout the year in woodland and gardens. Nesting occurred at Grane, Holden Vale (feeding young on 10th May), Staghills Wood (3 pairs), Spring Hill Lodges (feeding young on 27th May and 3rd June). Pairs were also present in the breeding season at Broadclough, Rawtenstall Cemetery and Reedsholme. There were the usual reports of woodpeckers visiting garden nut feeders - at Higher Hollinbank in October and at Waterfoot on 12th June. One flying over Clowbridge reservoir harassed by a Pied Wagtail was a first here for R. Ives.

SKYLARK - *Alauda arvensis*

There were few records this year owing to lack of access during the nesting season. Two had returned to Great Hameldon on 20th February and one to Musbury on 30th March. 3 were in song at Spring Mill on 18th February. Present also at Lee Quarry in July. Passage was noted at Clowbridge on 25th September and 11th October and 1 was on Nutshaw Hill on 18th October and at Spring Mill on 22nd September. One was present at Whitworth Moor on 9th December.

SAND MARTIN - *Riparia riparia*

Return was later than usual - 4 at Stubbins on 2nd April, 6 at E.B.S.W. on 15th April and 6 flying north over Clowbridge on 10th May. At the Stubbins colony there were 25 on 16th April and about 20 on 22nd July. At Goodshawfold birds were seen flying to nest sites on 19th June and 12th and 30th July and were thought to have bred here. On the autumn passage 10 were over A.M.R. on 14th July with 1 over Spring Mill on the same date. One flew over Spring Mill on 8th August.

SWALLOW - *Hirundo rustica*

Earliest records were one at Clowbridge on 1st April and 3 at E.B.S.W. on 2nd April but it was mid-April before larger numbers appeared - 15 at E.B.S.W. on 10th and 35 there on 15th. There were 50 over Clowbridge on 5th May. The build up of flocks and autumn passage movement was recorded by J. Rostron at Musbury - over 100 Swallows 20 to 26th August, over 200 3rd to 11th September, 100s flying southeast on 13th September and the last ones on 14th September. Over Waterfoot movement was noted from 9th September with all-day passage on 11th September. A few were seen on 24th and 25th September then none until 1st October when 2 flew to the south. At Clowbridge over 50 were seen on passage on 16th September, 6 on 28th September and 3 on 3rd October. There were 25 over Spring Mill on 15th September and 5 over Wallbank on 29th September.

HOUSE MARTIN - *Delichon urbica*

Main arrival was in late April - 2 at Constablelee and 1 at Crawshawbooth on 25th April and 50 at E.B.S.W. on 26th April. On 26th April 3 were back at the Park Road colony at Musbury and on 1st May one was flying up to old nests on B.R.G.S. Counts of nests at colonies were 15 on The Arcade, Waterfoot and 6 on the nearby Regency Club; 14 nests along Park Road, Helmshore; 12 nests on semis in the Cowpe valley; 6 nests on Park Road, Waterfoot with 2 on the nearby Jolly Sailor Inn and 4 on B.R.G.S.; 15 nests at Crawshawbooth; 10 nests at Hoyle Street, Whitworth. In August there were 30 House Martins flying above the Ambulance Station at Stacksteads. There were 30 to 50 at Higher Hollinbank to 14th September, 2 over the Jolly Sailor / B.R.G.S. colony on 22nd September, 20 over Rawtenstall on 19th September

and one over Waterfoot on 3rd October. 40 were over Reedsholme on 3rd September and 50 on 10th and 11th falling to 20 on 18th. There were 20 at Clowbridge on 23rd September. At Spring Mill there were 45 on 13th September and 60 on 15th September. House Martins seem to be leaving earlier. There were often records to the 3rd week in October in past years.

TREE PIPIT - *Anthus trivialis*

No records this year.

MEADOW PIPIT - *Anthus pratensis*

Flocks were returning early - 18 at Dunnockshaw on 18th January and 15 on The Hile on 28th January. There were few records for the nesting season owing to the lack of access - a pair at Cheesden on 15th April, present at Clowbridge on 7th May and at Lee Quarry on 3rd and 15th July. Flocks recorded in the autumn included 12 on Holcombe Moor on 15th August, 60 at Clough Bottom on 25th August, 12 at Cowm on 10th September, 30 at Farm Hill on 5th October. At Clowbridge there were 200 on 16th September, 100 on 25th September, 100 on 2nd and 7th October, 6 on 18th October and 50 on 1st November.

YELLOW WAGTAIL - *Motacilla flava*

On spring passage one flew north over The Hile on 12th May.

GREY WAGTAIL - *Motacilla cinerea*

Present in good numbers in all the usual nesting areas. 5 pairs on the W.B.S. carried out by R. Ives on the Limy for the B.T.O. was the highest number to date. Breeding pairs were also recorded along Musbury Brook, the Ogden, the Irwell / Limy confluence in Rawtenstall (one with a fledged juvenile seen on 19th June), the Whitewell in Waterfoot, the Irwell at Stacksteads (one feeding young on 27th May), the lower end of Cowpe Brook. Grey Wagtails were also present at Clowbridge and Clough Bottom reservoirs and E.B.S.W. There were again several records of Grey Wagtails feeding at sites away from water - in Thornfield Avenue, Waterfoot on 26th August and on Farm Hill Lane, Edgeside on 5th October. One wintered at Clowbridge and one was also at Reedsholme during December.

PIED WAGTAIL - *Motacilla alba yarrellii*

Movement was noted in early spring when there were 12 at Musbury on 8th February, 50 at E.B.S.W. on 30th March, 38 there on 16th April and still 20 to 30 on 30th April. Nesting pairs were recorded at Musbury (with 2 juveniles on 12th June) Fearn's / Hile, Longholme, Gaghills (male and 2 juveniles on 7th August), 3 pairs on the W.B.S. stretch of the Limy, Lee Quarry (adults and 1 juvenile on 15th July). During the autumn passage there were 8 at Ogden on 28th August, 25 at New Line on 10th September, 20 at Clowbridge on 19th September, 30 at New Line on 30th December. These numbers were lower than in recent years. Pied Wagtails were again seen feeding in the playground and on nearby pavements at Fearn's School. A female seen at 1,000 feet on The Hile on 9th December was unusual at this time.

DIPPER - *Cinclus cinclus*

Again present on most stretches of the Irwell and its tributaries and on the River Spodden in the Whitworth area. Singing Dippers were noted at Loveclough on 18th January and Calf Hey on 14th February. One was seen carrying nest material on the Whitewell at Waterfoot on 20th June. There were the usual 2 pairs on the W.B.S. stretch of the Limy (R. Ives) and the young had fledged by 20th May.

WREN - *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Song was heard from 10th March. On 4th April one was carrying dead fern fronds into a nest box in Waterfoot and on 16th April a lining of moss. On 5th May the nest was shaped with an entrance hole near the top. Unfortunately, this nest was never used. On 10th June a pair had fledged young at Holden Vale and on 12th June a pair was carrying food at Healey Dell. On 15th July a pair was feeding young in the nest at Lee Quarry. On 2nd August a pair was feeding young in a nest perched precariously on an old window in the wall above the Limy at Longholme. On dates from 19th October to 21st November a number of Wrens - up to 6 - were present in rushes at Clowbridge and on 18th November one was seen in a similar habitat on Chapel Hill.

DUNNOCK - *Prunella modularis*

Song was heard and territorial behaviour noted with 3 birds involved in chases from 2nd February. 2 or 3 fledged juveniles were seen in Waterfoot on 3rd July. Further song and courtship was noted on 4th and 5th July.

ROBIN - *Erithacus rubecula*

A record number of 5 Robins seen at the same time around the feeders in a garden in New Line on 2nd March suggests the presence of migrants (Rev S. E. Brook). A nest with 5 eggs on the ground beneath a discarded shovel was found in mid-March and there were 3 young on 3rd April. On 7th May a cat was seen carrying a well-grown juvenile in Waterfoot. Winter behaviour - "ticking" and aggression - was noted from 22nd August but a late nest produced a family group of about 5 at Clough Bottom on 26th August.

BLACK REDSTART - *Phoenicurus ochruros*

No records this year.

REDSTART - *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

A male was in song at Clough Bottom from 7th May to mid-June.

WHINCHAT - *Saxicola rubetra*

On 20th May a male and 2 females were present in Limy Lane, Clowbridge. 3 or 4 immatures were seen at Clowbridge in August. On autumn passage there were 6 at Clowbridge on 26th August, one at Cowm on 7th and 10th September and 2 at Holden Wood on 29th September.

STONECHAT - *Saxicola torquata*

The increase noted last year has continued. There was a winter presence in January and February at Clowbridge and Loveclough. 4 pairs nested in the Naden valley continuing the re-colonisation from last year. Post-breeding there were records of from 4 to 8 birds at Clowbridge on dates from 9th September to 9th October, one to 4 during November and up to 3 in December to 19th. At Spring Mill there were from one to 4 on dates from 29th September to 16th December and one at nearby Cowm reservoir on 26th December. At Clough Bottom there were one or two from 20th September to 8th December. At Grane there were 4 on 29th September then 1 or 2 in November and December. One or two were also seen at A.M.R.

WHEATEAR - *Oenanthe oenanthe*

First records were of 2 at Clowbridge on 1st April and one at Sharneyford on 5th April. During May there were 6 at Clowbridge on 7th, one on 10th and 2 on 20th. There were few records

for the breeding season owing to lack of access - 6 juveniles on 3rd July at Lee Quarry and a pair also on 15th July. Present also on Rooley Moor and at Ding Quarry during May. During the autumn passage at Clowbridge there was one on 30th August then 3 records for September and 3 for October with a maximum of 2, the last being one on 11th October. At Spring Mill there were ones and twos from 21st July to 20th September. There were also records of ones and twos in August and September for Mitchell House reservoir, Holden Wood and Newgate Clough.

RING OUZEL - *Turdus torquatus*

No records this year.

BLACKBIRD - *Turdus merula*

Winter flocks included 10 at Tip Lodge and 12 at Lea Brook on 26th January, 8 along Musbury Road in January, 6 at New Line and Waterfoot. Territorial and courtship behaviour was seen from 25th January and first song was heard on 11th February at Tip Lodge. In Waterfoot several males were sitting on song perches from 25th January and the first subsong was heard on 16th, 19th and 31st March but no full song until 1st April. There were singing males in Staghills Wood on 25th March and by 7th May 6 males were in song at Stacksteads. In a garden in Waterfoot a female began building on 9th May and on 26th May and 28th May was carrying nest lining. There were 3 eggs on 2nd June and 4 on 13th June then 3 well-grown young and 1 egg on 25th June. The young fledged on 1st July. Post-breeding an increase in numbers at Clowbridge coincided with the arrival of Fieldfares. The usual winter flocks of 6 to 10 were noted.

FIELDFARE - *Turdus pilaris*

There was a regular presence through January and February to 14th March. Most flocks were 20 to 50 but occasionally larger - 200 on 22nd January at Folly Clough and 150 at Musbury on 22nd January. A report of 5 flocks of "large thrushes" flying south over Whitworth on 21st September probably referred to Fieldfares. The first definite record was of 20 to the south over Waterfoot on 12th October then several flocks of 70 to 100 on 19th October. At Clowbridge 60 flew to the east on 17th October and 310 on 18th October then 250 on 26th October, 290 on 1st November, 400 on 17th November then less than 50s to the year end. At Musbury 16 flew south on 19th October, 300 on 22nd October and "thousands" on 23rd October under low cloud for 10 minutes (J. Rostron). Thus there was a continuous passage from 12th October to 17th November. Flocks of 20 to 60 were widespread to the year end.

SONG THRUSH - *Turdus philomelos*

Song was heard from 7th February to the end of May. Several reports suggested an improvement in numbers that have fallen in recent years. 10 males were in song along the Irwell valley from Holme to Strongstry and 7 from Constablelee to Goodshawfold in the Limy valley. Records were numerous from January to August and scarce from September to December.

REDWING - *Turdus iliacus*

There were records of flocks mostly less than 20 from January to 1st April. Larger flocks were 50 at Broadley on 1st January, 40 at Musbury on 24th February, 200 in Staghills Wood on 5th March and 60 at Whitworth old sewage works on 31st March. Return began on 30th September with a single at Broadley then again flocks of 20 or less to the end of the year.

MISTLE THRUSH - *Turdus viscivorus*

First song was heard on 9th January in Crawshawbooth, 6th February in Waterfoot and 11th February at Ogden and latest was on 7th May in Stacksteads. Breeding season distribution was much as usual. A pair nested in a sycamore at Higher Hollinbank on 4th June and 4 were seen on 16th June. This area appears to be an attractive habitat for Mistle Thrushes. Numbers increased from 9 on 27th June to 50 on 8th July. On 25th July there were over 40 on Musbury Tor (J. Rostron). There were still 12 on 28th October and 4 on 22nd November. 2 on Musbury Road at the end of November suggested first pair-formation. Elsewhere there were 6 at Reedsholme on 10th October, 6 at Clowbridge on 11th October and 5 at Broadley on 19th October.

SEDGE WARBLER - *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Two pairs were present at last year's nesting area at Holden Wood. An adult with a juvenile at Calf Hey in July suggested a successful outcome here. A pair also nested at a new site at Jack Lodge (B. Oldfield).

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER - *Locustella naevia*

No records,

WHITETHROAT - *Sylvia communis*

A male was in song near Ewood Bridge on 12th and 20th May but not heard subsequently. A pair was present at Broadley from 24th June to 9th September and the male was in song on 13th and 23rd July. An adult and a juvenile were seen on 5th August.

GARDEN WARBLER - *Sylvia borin*

A male was in song at Healey Dell from 27th May to 24th June.

BLACKCAP - *Sylvia atricapilla*

A wintering bird was present for 4 days around 12th February in a garden in Haslingden Road - feeding vigorously. A male was in song at Lea Bank on 29th April. At Healey Dell a male was first heard in song on 29th April and again on 1st May. A pair and 3 singing males were present on 6th May. 2 singing males were heard regularly from 2nd to 24th June and one was heard on 23rd July. A male was still present on 18th August. One was heard at E.B.S.W. on 30th April. On 11th May 2 were in song at E.B.S.W. and one at Reedsholme. Blackcaps were thought to be later and less numerous - only heard at 3 sites in the Limy valley. On spring passage one was in song in a garden in Waterfoot on 4th May - a first for this garden. Another sang in gardens about 300m away on 17th July. One was heard in Staghills Wood on 21st May. A late or wintering Blackcap was seen in a garden in Waterfoot in October.

WOOD WARBLER - *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

No records.

CHIFFCHAFF - *Phylloscopus collybita*

First arrival was one at Helmsore on 30th March then one at Healey Dell on 1st April. On 2nd April singing males were heard at E.B.S.W., Lumb Vale and Strongstry. During the nesting season 5 males were in song at Healey on 6th May and song continued until 24th June. 3 males were in song in Lumb Vale and a nest with 5 eggs was found on 22nd April. On 19th May it was found to have been crushed by a cyclist (the nest was at the side of a path) and contained

3 dead young and 2 eggs. A pair nested at Holden Vale and singing males were present at Lea Brook and in Crawshawbooth. These records suggested a good increase in numbers which has continued from last year. On autumn passage Chiffchaffs were heard at Calf Hey on 24th July, Crawshawbooth from 1st to 11th August, Clowbridge on 28th and 29th September. A late one was at Newchurch on 6th October.

WILLOW WARBLER - *Phylloscopus trochilus*

First arrivals were at Townsendfold on 2nd April, Spring Mill on 8th April, Greens Lane on 10th April. By 30th April there were many in song at E.B.S.W., Helmshore, Reedsholme, Waterfoot. By 6th May one was carrying nest material at Fearn Moss and males were in song at each end of the plantation. A pair showing anxiety was present on 12th June. During the autumn passage there were 12 in the car park at Broadley Fold on 16th September.

GOLDCREST - *Regulus regulus*

Present in small numbers. Winter flock numbers never exceeded 5 (Fern Isle Wood in September). A male was in song at Stoneholme for a month from 23rd April and another in Irwell Vale in May. Recorded at Clough Bottom, Staghills, Rawtenstall Cemetery (March and April), Broadley and Cowm (February to April and September to October).

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER - *Muscicapa striata*

One was back at Goodshaw Chapel on 20th May and one at Reedsholme on 25th May. Present at Spring Hill Lodges, Stacksteads from 3rd June and 2 pairs bred in this area. A pair was present as usual at the lower end of Cowpe valley (N. Lees). On autumn passage one was present in a garden in Haslingden Road on 1st and 14th July and one in Stubbylee Park on 31st August. Becoming scarce and restricted to just a few areas.

PIED FLYCATCHER - *Ficedula hypoleuca*

There were records of a male in the Crawshawbooth - Goodshaw Chapel area on 1st, 11th, 13th and 20th May. No indication of eventual nesting.

LONG-TAILED TIT - *Aegithalos caudatus*

From January to March there were records of flocks - 10 to 12 regular at Rawtenstall Cemetery, 8 to 10 at Helmshore, 7 in Waterfoot, 6 at Healey, 10 at Reedsholme. During the nesting season pairs were seen at Healey through April and on 1st May, Stubbins on 2nd April, Haslingden Road in February and March. By early March 2 separate pairs were seen at Reedsholme and a pair probably bred young at Stoneholme on 9th May. A pair showed anxiety at the presence of a cat at Irwell Vale on 25th May. A pair nested again in the Edgeside area of Waterfoot (B. Oldfield). There was attempted nesting also in a garden in New Line where the pair continually flew into the window in an apparent attempt to drive off rivals on 20th March. The nest was found abandoned in May (Rev S. E. Brook). A family party of 6 was seen at Crawshawbooth on 19th June, 7 at Broadley on 18th August, 5 at Whitworth on 15th December, 12 at Buckden on 26th December, 6 at Helmshore on 31st December.

MARSH TIT - *Parus palustris*

Singles at Meadow Lodge, Whitworth on 1st, 3rd, 7th and 30th January.

COAL TIT - *Parus ater*

Now regular in gardens and coming to nut and seed feeders throughout the year. On 2nd September 3 (a pair and an intruder) engaged in a vigorous fight at a seed feeder in a garden in Waterfoot. Both continued to come and removed sunflower seeds for a private hoard. On 30th April one carried nest material to a mossy hollow at the foot of a tree in Fearn Moss and on 23rd May one flew to a nest hole in the wall above the river in Waterfoot centre. On 22nd March Coal Tits were calling from 2 sites at Brooks' Wood, Crawshawbooth and were heard all season. Also heard at Stoneholme and Irwell Vale. An adult was feeding fledged young at Broadley on 3rd June. A flock of about 12 was seen at Clough Bottom on 26th August. Coal Tits seem to be going through a period of expansion.

BLUE TIT - *Parus caeruleus*

In contrast to the Coal Tit there were fewer records and smaller numbers reported for this species, this in spite of the fact that last year's Report mentioned large numbers of juveniles at nut feeders. No large flocks were regular at the nut feeders in Waterfoot instead of the usual 6 or 7. Numbers also seemed low at other feeding stations.

GREAT TIT - *Parus major*

In vigorous song during January and February. A pair nested in a nest box usually occupied by Blue Tits in a garden in Waterfoot. They were feeding sunflower seed kernels to the young on 1st June. The young fledged on 12th June. On 20th June a pair and at least 4 young were seen in woods at Fearn Moss. The following winter pairs visited the feeders. A group of 5 was seen at Cowm reservoir on 26th December.

NUTHATCH - *Sitta europaea*

One was seen in the woods at Crawshawbooth on 2nd February (a first in this area for R. Ives but there is a previous record for 21st October 1985). Later, a pair was present on 3rd, 11th and 19th February but they were not seen thereafter. Present as usual at Healey Dell and seen on dates from 7th February to 6th May. Not seen this year in the garden at New Line where present in 1999 and 2000 (Rev S.E. Brook).

TREECREEPER - *Certhia familiaris*

There are records for Grane, Rawtenstall Cemetery, Reedsholme, Crawshawbooth. On 5th February one was with a flock of tits at Lea Brook. On 26th March one visited a garden in New Line.

GREAT GREY SHRIKE - *Lanius excubitor*

No records this year

JAY - *Garrulus glandarius*

Now distributed along the Irwell valley from Stubbins to Stacksteads and with one at Broadclough above Bacup on 14th January. Jays are also found along the Limy valley to Crawshawbooth and were present at Clowbridge in September and October, and also along the valleys from Ewood Bridge to Helmshore and Grane. Twos and threes were seen regularly at Healey Dell on dates from 7th January to 16th September.

MAGPIE - *Pica pica*

Common and widespread. Winter flocks of 6 to 10 are usual with gatherings of larger numbers from time to time - 15 at Spring Mill on 15th April and 34 in fields at Broadley on 20th December. The former was probably a social / sexual gathering, the latter a food attraction. Nest building was in progress from 12th February. On 8th March 2 were engaged in a vicious fight on the ground in Waterfoot car park. A pair had fledged 5 young from a nest at Higher Hollinbank on 11th June.

JACKDAW - *Corvus monedula*

At least 50 were in wheeling flights over Waterfoot on 12th January. Pairing had taken place by 27th January - many sitting in pairs engaged in mutual preening. On 21st February there were over 40 at Ilex Mill and on 28th March 20 at Bacup. On 25th October over 100 circled over Helmshore and 80 over Grane. Jackdaws began to be seen regularly in this area only in 1999 and use of this area for feeding has increased. On 19th August there were 25 at Stacksteads.

ROOK - *Corvus frugilegus*

Few counts this year. On 1st April there were 46 nests at Crawshawbooth. On 24th June there were 105 adults and young in Cheesden fields. On 7th August about 35 flew from over Cowpe Lowe towards the rookery at Rook Hill in the late afternoon. Birds from this rookery used to feed at Stacksteads Tip which is now closed, so it is likely that these birds were flying from Horncliffe Tip back to the rookery. On 9th September 50 were feeding in fields at Lench.

CARRION CROW - *Corvus corone corone*

Common and widespread. There were 20 to 24 daily on Musbury Tor during February. There were about 20 at E.B.S.W. on 30th March. Two pairs held territory in Bacup Cemetery. Nest building was noted from 23rd March. A pair had 2 newly-fledged young in fields and gardens at Booth Road, Waterfoot on 9th July. In the autumn the usual 8 to 12 were present on Musbury Tor. The Calf Hey roost still appears to be in use and 2-300 were seen in the area.

RAVEN - *Corvus corax*

There was a regular presence in the Musbury area from January to March and September (3 birds) to December. One flew over Cowpe Moss on 7th May and one was present in Lee Quarry on 15th July. A pair flew over Naden valley on 14th July. 2 were seen at Clowbridge on 17th October and one on 19th October. Two moving northwest called in flight over Spring Mill on 2nd September.

STARLING - *Sturnus vulgaris*

Flocks in the late winter period numbered from 30 to 50 generally. There were 300 at Folly Clough on 9th January with Fieldfares, 200 at Clowbridge on 10th January, 300 on 27th January, possibly an example of wandering migration at a temporary roost. Pairs formed from the end of March and one pair was seen mating on 15th April. On 20th May Starlings were carrying food from Fearn Moss to a nearby housing estate. At Helmshore flocks of adults and juveniles were seen - 200 on 25th May, 250 on 26th May then 100 - 300 daily. On 17th September over 500 were in a flocks at Broadway and over 800 on 15th October. During this period and up to 17th November there were records of 300 on The Hile, 250 at Clowbridge, 200 at Reedsholme then the usual smaller flocks to the end of the year.

HOUSE SPARROW - *Passer domesticus*

The usual colonies of 10 to 20 were recorded. One colony at Station Brow, Helmshore had disappeared where new houses had been built. On 30th May a juvenile albino and one other sibling partial albino were reported from Weir (Mrs Dance). In May and June larger numbers of 30 and 40 were seen at Edgeside. During the winter periods numbers of 10 to 20 were noted visiting bird tables and seed and nut feeders. Numbers appear to be higher than those from last year.

CHAFFINCH - *Fringilla coelebs*

Well-distributed in woods, parks and gardens but only in small numbers. Most flocks reported and numbers visiting feeding stations in gardens were from 3 to 6. the exception as usual was Musbury where the presence of Beech trees attracts larger flocks of 20 to 30. First song was heard on 8th March. On 29th June one was singing from an unusual perch on the television aerial of a house in Waterfoot.

BRAMBLING - *Fringilla montifringilla*

On 8th January 10 were seen at Higher Hollinbank and on 20th and 27th January 25 were with Chaffinches at Fern Isle Wood. On 9th February at least 3 were in a flock with Chaffinches flying over Grane Road. The only record for the following winter period was of one at Whitworth on 25th November.

GREENFINCH - *Carduelis chloris*

Improvement in numbers after a slight downturn last year continued. 8 to 10 were regular at nut feeders in winter, a flock of 30 was at Townsendfold on 3rd January and Greenfinches were described as numerous in groups of 6 to 8 along the old railway line at Helmshore. A male was in song on 7th and 8th February in Waterfoot and song was general in the Limy valley from the first week in March. A successful breeding season again brought good numbers - 18 at Broadley Fold on 17th August, 13 in a garden in Whitworth in September and 8 to 10 visiting several garden feeders.

GOLDFINCH - *Carduelis carduelis*

Flocks mostly in single figures were recorded January to March but 10s at Helmshore on 1st January and 26th February. A male was in song at Constablelee on 24th March and Goldfinches were said to be widespread in the Limy valley by early April. This was true also of the other valley areas. The usual pair appeared at the Booth Road, Waterfoot site on 10th June and the male was in song from the telephone wires, roofs and aerials on 29th and 30th June. A successful breeding season produced some good-sized flocks - 150 on 25th September and 7th October at Clowbridge, 30 to 40 at Ogden on 11th September, 23 at Spring Mill on 30th September, 14 at Cowm on 16th September.

SISKIN - *Carduelis spinus*

There were records for the old sewage works at Whitworth from 7th January to 29th April, mostly from 1 to 5 but with 18 on 10th February. There were 5 at Calf Hey on 14th February and 8 at Broadley on 22nd February. A single male visited a nut feeder in Waterfoot on 15th April and one at New Line on 9th March. During autumn and winter there were 7 on 23rd September, 7 on 1st December and 2 on 15th December at Whitworth old sewage works.

LINNET - *Carduelis cannabina*

Few records of winter flocks so most Linnets probably leave Rossendale at this season. There were 12 at Cowm on 14th January. 23 birds at Goodshaw on 10th May was probably a returning flock. Breeding season presence was noted at Spring Mill (from 11th April to 2nd June), Broadley (male in song 30th June), Rossendale General Hospital quarry area (one in Gorse). There was lack of access to some of the usual nesting areas. There were good numbers in autumn flocks - 118 in fields near A.M.R. on 14th July, 20 at Goodshawfold on 16th September, 20 at Holden Wood on 18th August, 46 on 17th August and in the Jenny Rough area of Whitworth - 45 on 16th September. Numbers then fell to 1s and 2s by October.

TWITE - *Carduelis flavirostris*

Returning flocks of 12 on 20th March and 55 on 21st March were seen at Musbury and were the best numbers for some time. 6 were at the regular nesting colony at Lee Quarry on 15th July and on 19th July there were 14 on Cowpe Lowe. On 28th August over 30 were in a flock in the quarry road at Stacksteads, suggesting some success in this area. A nest was found in the Naden valley with 5 eggs on 14th July and small young on 23rd July. Post-breeding flocks included 10 on Holcombe Moor on 15th August and 120 at Farm Hill on The Hile on 5th October. This latter was the largest for some years and reminiscent of past times when flocks of this size and larger were regarded as normal. The Lancashire Bird Report for 2000 suggests that the larger autumn flock may be moving from the Yorkshire breeding areas towards the Lancashire coast though most have been found to move to The Wash in winter.

REDPOLL - *Carduelis flammea*

Still scarce. A winter flock of 12 was seen at Chapel Hill on 21st January and one was in Balladen Clough on 18th March. Present in the Haslingden High School nature area on 10th June and 2 pairs were reported as nesting on Haslingden Golf Course not far from here. On 24th June 2 were calling over the old sewage works at Whitworth. A flock of 8 was seen in Deeply Vale on 9th December.

COMMON CROSSBILL - *Loxia curvirostra*

The only record is of 3 at Calf Hey in late October.

BULLFINCH - *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

As usual, a few small groups in favoured areas. Regular in the garden on Haslingden Road where young were seen in August. Pairs were also present in the Whitworth area, at Healey (pair on 7th January and 31st March), Spring Mill (a pair on 7th May, 12th June, 15th September and 20th November), the old sewage works on 20th February and 16th September. In Rawtenstall there were records for the area including the Cemetery, Waingate and Greenbank from 11th January to 6th May. A pair was also seen at Constablelee on 31st March and a female at Calf Hey on 16th September. A pair paid unusual visits to a bird table in Waterfoot on 3rd January, 14th February, 19th, 20th and 21st February, 30th March and on dates to 13th April. Other records were of 3 at Townsendfold on 3rd January and 3 males and 2 females at Rawtenstall on 21st December.

SNOW BUNTING - *Plectrophenax nivalis*

No records this year.

REED BUNTING - *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Few records owing to restricted access this year. One was at Hawks Clough, Balladen on 3rd January, 2 at Cowm on 14th January, a male at New Line on 16th April and a pair at Haslingden High School nature area on 10th June. One or two were at Clowbridge on 28th September and 24th November and 2 at Deeply Vale on 9th December and 2 at Holden Wood on 7th December. Breeding pairs were present at Naden and 2 pairs at Plunge.