



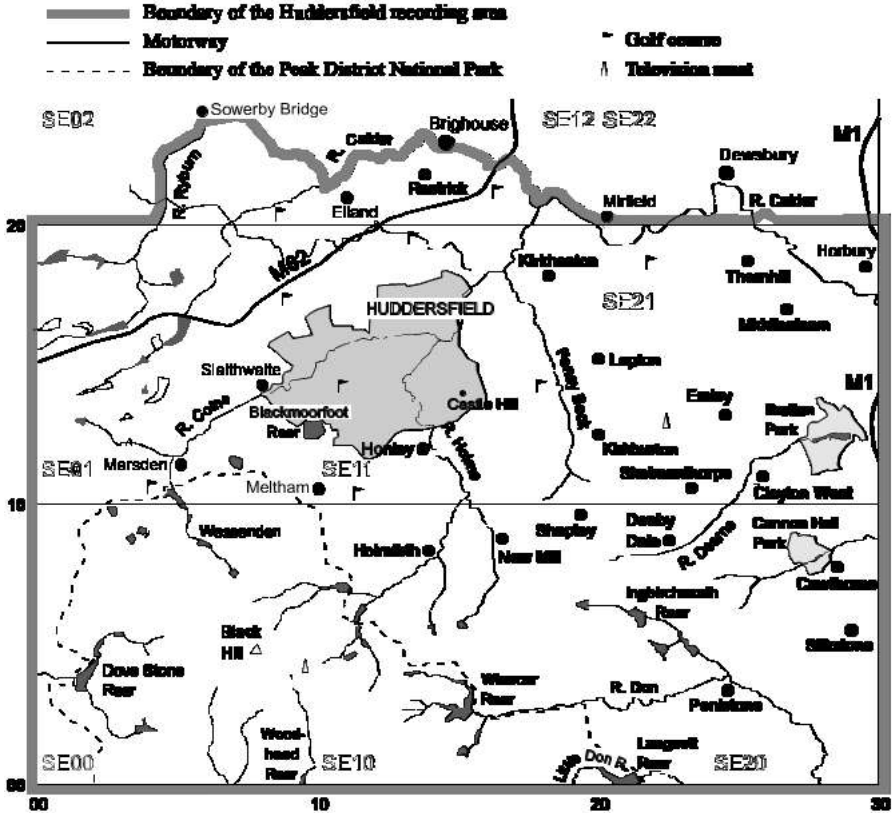
Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club

Birds in Huddersfield 2019



HUDDERSFIELD RECORDING AREA

The bird recording area covered by the Club comprises Ordnance Survey ten-kilometre squares SE 00, 01, 10, 11, 20 and 21, together with those parts of SE 02 and SE12 south of the Rivers Ryburn and Calder, plus Elland Gravel Pits and Dewsbury Sewage Works.



Birds in Huddersfield

2019

Written by

Mike Denton & David Sill

Recorder

Nick Mallinson

Editor

Mike Denton

Cover artwork

Stuart Brocklehurst

Photographers

Stephen Chippendale	Trevor Doherty
John Hamilton	Nick Mallinson
Tim Melling	David Pennington
Reg Senior	David Sill
David Tattersley	Geoff Taylor

Production

Mike Wainman

Published by

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Birds in Huddersfield 2019 is a publication of Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club and the latest in an unbroken series of annual reports produced by the Club since our formation in 1966. It is based upon records of bird sightings submitted and surveys undertaken over the year by Club members and other volunteer birdwatchers.

Cover artwork: **Woodcock (Stuart Brocklehurst)**.

Stuart Brocklehurst is a wildlife artist and printmaker and been providing the artwork for our covers for over 30 years. You can see more of his work on his social media sites:

www.stuartbrocklehurstprints.blogspot.com

www.facebook.com/stuartbrocklehurstprints

Rear cover photograph: **Great Reed Warbler (John Hamilton)**

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Club, thanks to its dedicated officials and members, continued to prosper. One of the main aims of the Club has always been to promote the education of the public in wild birds and their habitats. The lecture programme is one of the best ways to achieve this and, thanks to Alf King's dedication to finding interesting and entertaining speakers, we got off to a flying start. The Annual Report had been printed ahead of schedule and was well received.

In 2018 we published, as an e-book, Seth Lister Mosley's *An Account of the Birds of the Huddersfield District*. At the time we were unaware that some of the original printed volumes contained an illustration of Red-necked Grebe in place of that of Eared (Black-necked) Grebe. Thanks to the efforts of Steve Cook, however, we managed to obtain a copy of the picture, and this is now included in the e-book on the Club's website.

The recent technique of recording the flight calls of birds as they pass over at night is revolutionising our understanding of nocturnal migration. We have all listened to the 'seep' calls of Redwings as they pass over during the night, but one of our more enthusiastic members, Dave Pennington, has grasped this new technology and some fascinating results have been accomplished. During the months of April/May of this year, for example, he sound recorded Common Scoter on two occasions, along with Teal, Wigeon, Water Rail, Whimbrel, Common Sandpiper on three occasions, and Moorhen and Coot were regularly recorded. In addition, an Olive-backed Pipit sound recorded as it flew over Harden Quarries in 2017 was a new species for the Club area (see Dave Pennington's account on page 133).

Within this report there is an article on the Club's founder, T.D. Bisiker, attached to which is a newly acquired photograph. The photograph, taken outside Lake House at Blackmoorfoot in about 1964, was originally in a poor state, with what appeared to be burnt areas and a multitude of foreign bodies adhering to it. Through the wizardry of modern technology, and many hours work by my friend Colin Rew, the picture looks a lot healthier.

With the exception for the AGM, this is the only time that I get to sing the praises of Club officials. The behind-the-scenes running of the Club tends to go unnoticed by members, simply because it is undertaken by a dedicated team who carry out their duties with little fuss. The team has not changed since last year and consists of Chris Abell (Secretary), Alf King (Indoor Meetings Organiser & Web Site Manager), Nick Mallinson (Recorder), Trevor Doherty (Treasurer), Hazel Sill (Membership Secretary & Newsletter Editor), Roger Mitchell (Publicity Officer), and committee members David Sill, David Butterfield, Stephen Cook, and John Walker.

Mike Denton

ABOUT HUDDERSFIELD BIRDWATCHERS' CLUB

Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club was formed in 1966 and registered as a charity in July of 2003, with the aims of:

1. Studying and recording the wild birds of the area and publishing an annual report:

Members and other bird watching supporters are out and about throughout the year observing birds across the area and submitting records for analysis by our Recorder. We now have a wealth of data covering some 54 years, an invaluable source for studying the trends in local bird populations. The Club is the only organization in the area undertaking and publishing this kind of ornithological recording and *Birds in Huddersfield 2019* is the latest in an unbroken series of annual reports since the Club was formed.

From time to time we also publish more specific, one-off works, including in 2001 an *Atlas of the Breeding Birds of the Huddersfield Area*, in 2004 *Birds of Blackmoorfoot Reservoir 1985-2003* and in 2008 a major work *The Birds of the Huddersfield Area*, which reviewed the complete history of every species recorded in the area since records began, right up to modern times. In January 2017 we published another major work *A Natural History of Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, Huddersfield* by Mike Denton to commemorate our half-centenary in 2016/17. In 2018 we republished as an on-line digital 'e-book' *An Account of the Birds of the Huddersfield District*, first issued by S. L. Mosley in 1915 – this was a landmark book in both local and national ornithology and that we were able to bring it to a wider audience to appreciate its importance.

We also publish on-line and in our annual report the *Huddersfield List*, a checklist of all the species of wild birds and additional races that have officially been accepted as having been recorded in the area. This is now updated annually as a 'tick list' to enable birders to record their own yearly and lifetime sightings around Huddersfield.

Our publications are to be found in the Huddersfield Library and go to many regional and national ornithological and wildlife conservation bodies.

The whole of the Club archive, including all of our reports since 1966, is available in digital format on our web site for viewing by the public. This is an invaluable source for everyone interested in the history of the birds of the area.

2. Promoting education of the public about wild birds and their habitats:

Our lecture and meeting programme runs between September and May each year, at which visiting experts present on a wide range of birding topics, from local to overseas, with some stunning still and video photography. We also have a wealth of birding and photographic expertise within the Club and enjoy presentations from members equally as knowledgeable and fascinating as our visitors.

Each year, we hold a number of local 'patch outings' or bird watching walks on which members pass on their knowledge of local sites of particular birding interest.

Our web site www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk contains information about birding in the area, as well as about the Club and our activities. The forum is open to public view and shows the latest local bird sightings posted by members, often with photos, and is a great way of finding

out what is around. There is also a Twitter feed **@Hudds_BWC** through which members and supporters share their birding sightings and experiences.

3. Supporting research into conservation of wild birds and their habitats:

Readers will be only too well aware of the threat to many of our wild birds, but if conservation is to be effective, it needs to be based upon hard evidence and research. This is where the Club comes in. We have members with substantial experience in bird observation and surveying and there is also a role for less experienced volunteers.

The Club has played a major role in many bird life surveys of local, regional and national importance, including over 50 for the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), RSPB, National Trust, Natural England, Peak District National Park, Kirklees Metropolitan Council and The Friends of Beaumont Park. We also advise Kirklees Council on bird life issues and provide data in connection with planning applications.

We aim to undertake a survey programme of some type every year of a part of the Club area or of a particular species.

In 2014/15 we launched a nest box scheme, working with another local charity the Bridgewood Trust that provides support for adults with learning difficulties and which built the boxes at their centre in Edgerton, providing occupational work for people in their care. Boxes were provided free of charge to several local woodlands, targeting threatened species such as Pied and Spotted Flycatchers, as well as more common species.

Our work is undertaken entirely by un-paid volunteers and we rely entirely upon the generosity of members and upon voluntary donations to continue our work.

Members of the public are welcome to all of our meetings and patch outings, free of charge (voluntary donation), and we try to provide something for birdwatchers of all tastes and experience. It is a great way to learn about birds and to meet fellow birders.

So, whether old hand or beginner, why not come along and join us? Members receive a free copy of our Birds in Huddersfield annual report. Simply contact any member of the Committee - see page 157 or visit our website for more information.

www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk



@Hudds_BWC

2019: THE BIRDING YEAR

Another good year was had with a total of 176 species recorded. Amongst these was another 'first' for our area and there were plenty of scarce ones too. All this is due to who knows how many hours spent in the field in all weathers by our members over the course of the year. The weather conditions this year overall were not too bad, the winter months were quite mild without anything even approaching some of those of last year and as seems to be more the norm now lots of low fronts from the SW bringing strong winds and storms with very heavy rain and flooding in places during the summer months. Despite all this however, at our reservoirs water levels were still low enough to enable us to gather a good number of visiting wader records.

January

The New Year opened with a mild, sunny day and 1st January saw plenty of activity with the **Great White Egret** still at Bretton along with no less than seven **Little Egret** and 100 **Golden Plover** over. Another carry over from the previous year was the adult **Caspian Gull** at Blackmoorfoot and as with the above Great White it was to be seen on a number of occasions throughout the month. It was a good month for **Pink-footed Geese** with a total of 5,156 flying mainly NW which was heralded in by 200 W over Langsett on 1st. The following day, what has become almost an annual event was a **Green Sandpiper** at Dewsbury SW where the month's maximum of 140 **Teal** was also on view. On 3rd at Blackmoorfoot, as well as the only three figure count of **Lapwing** (156), a single **Shelduck** started a good run there with up to 18 later in the month. Other wildfowl counts were also notable and on 4th Horbury hosted 16 **Goldeneye** and a fine redhead **Smew** whilst other numbers during this period were 20 **Tufted Duck** at Bretton, two **Pintail** at Ingbirchworth and a sprinkling of **Shoveler**, **Gadwall** and **Wigeon** at various sites. Gale force SW winds brought a temporary change on 8th, but **Chiffchaff** were recorded wintering at four different locations and welcome flocks of **Waxwing** were found at Birkby (25) and Fartown (30). The following day brought the first of three sightings of a **Mediterranean Gull** at Blackmoorfoot and 15 **Bullfinch** were at Broadstone Res.

Then a calmer few days ended with a force 5 NW on 13th, 30 **Lesser Redpoll** visited Dunford Bridge the following day as did 200 **Fieldfare** in a month of good numbers for the species, but quite the opposite for **Redwing** which were down this time around. Then 25 **Long-tailed Tit** and a roost of 40 **Magpies** were counted at Thurstonland Bank on 16th. After a little light snow on the highest ground on 18th and 19th it was nice to see more **Waxwing**, this time at Langsett which held 21 on 19th and 22 on the following day. The 20th was also busy on the water with 18 **Whooper Swans** and two **Pintail** at Blackmoorfoot, eight **Shelduck** left SE from Boshaw Whams and the first **Red Kite** of the year flew SW over Oxspring. The following day, again at Blackmoorfoot, the presence of the now scarce **Pochard**, eight males no less, was much appreciated, whilst a **Water Rail** was seen at Bretton. The first good covering of snow came on a force 4 SW wind on 22nd and, with the temperature well below freezing the following day, an adult **Yellow-legged Gull** left Ingbirchworth flying W and an impressive count of 145 **Pied Wagtail** was taken at Dewsbury SW. This was quickly followed by a thaw on 24th when as well as a **Kittiwake** at Blackmoorfoot at least two **Water Rail** were heard calling at Healey Mills/Kerry's NR. The thaw continued and saw heavy rain on a force 6 SW wind on 25th but there was little of note until 10 **Snipe** appeared at Ringstone Edge on 28th, then came heavy snowfalls on 29th and 30th with the temperature down to -5° C on the last day and a **Jack Snipe** was found at Broadstone Res. and 18 **Reed Bunting** visited Wards End, Marsden.

February

Meteorologically February was certainly a month of two halves. The first day of the month saw the only snow, which didn't amount to much and Horbury held both 22 **Goldeneye**, a good count nowadays, and again a **Chiffchaff**. The next few days were dominated by wet SW winds and it all went a little quiet though 3rd brought another nice **Smew**, this time to Blackmoorfoot, three **Stonechat** to nearby Brow Grains and the first **Oystercatcher** of the year visited Ingbirchworth. Whilst plenty of **Fieldfare** were in evidence regrettably **Redwing** were not, the occasional **Peregrine** and **Raven** were now being seen on higher ground and a **Merlin** flew W over Marsden Moor on 5th. The same day saw the first **Skylark** of the year at Broadstone Res., 65 **Wigeon** at Meal Hill Lake, and an area total of just 410 returning **Pink-footed Geese** which flew mainly NW. As the rain and wind increased 200 **Lapwing** were at Ingbirchworth on 6th the day that five **Willow Tit** were at Carlecotes Pond. The next three days saw a storm approaching from the SW until it reached its climax in 'Storm Erik' on 9th with a lot of rain. By the following day it had all passed and 200 **Golden Plover** were at Maythorn Slack and on 11th the three **Whooper Swans** which flew W over Cowcliffe started a good run. Much calmer conditions then settled in and a flock of 30 **Linnet** visited Broadstone Res. on 12th with the first **Curlew** of the year at Ingbirchworth the day after.

Dewsbury SW still held 88 **Teal** and with spring-like conditions setting in with a balmy 15° C at Emely Moor a **Red Kite** went over Langsett on 15th and a well watched New Mill garden produced sparrow counts of 20 **House Sparrows** and no less than 30 **Tree Sparrows** a day later. Nothing in particular was noted over the next day or two and with light winds bringing warm air from Iberia temperatures reached the 20s even bringing some welcome butterflies and unfortunately a series of unwelcome fires to Marsden Moor. An unexpected count of 150 **Teal** were on Ingbirchworth Res., with 10 **Gadwall** at Bretton on 22nd and a grand flock of 30 **Crossbill** at Yateholme the following day and the same number of **Waxwing** at Langsett the day after that. An amazing 145 **Whooper Swans** went over Silkstone on 25th when the first **Redshank** of the year appeared at Ringstone Edge. Another one or two wildfowl counts worthy of note were the 14 **Shoveler** at Dewsbury SW and four **Pochard** at Bretton on 27th. The following day another **Chiffchaff** appeared, this time at Brockholes and 88 **Pied Wagtails** were still frequenting Dewsbury SW with the main thing of note on 28th being a fine flock of 30 **Lesser Redpoll** at Elland GP. The last day of the month, rather fittingly, brought the last **Pink-footed Geese** of the winter, a skein of 22 which flew E over Blackmoorfoot. The unseasonal mild weather over this period had resulted in a good number of migrants arriving on our southern shores.

March

The first week of March saw quite low temperatures, fairly constant heavy rain on gale force SW winds with flooding in places, with no sign of the above mentioned migrants yet. The first day saw 10 **Goosander** on the River Calder at Earlsheaton and 40 **Curlew** at Ingbirchworth. Conditions were not for the fainthearted but thanks to one or two intrepid observers 10 **Pochard**, a **Little Egret** and no less than 16 **Nuthatch** were found at Bretton on 3rd, with the following day producing the first **Dunlin** of the year at Blackmoorfoot and some good counts from Whitley Common included 450 **Lapwing**, 38 **Stock Dove** and 800 **Starling**. We then had to wait until the 9th to see another **Kittiwake** at Blackmoorfoot, a **Merlin** at Tunnel End, Marsden and 14 **Yellowhammer** at Skelmanthorpe. Heavy snow then arrived over the next two days and may have played a part in the arrival of a good count of 73 **Curlew** on Thick Hollins Moor and with continuing wintery showers a nice adult **Yellow-legged Gull** visited Whitley Common. The same conditions continued even bringing 'Storm Hannah' until the 18th brought calmness and arrivals starting to be noticed. A flock of 18 **Skylark** were at Wards End, the first **Wheatears** arrived on 20th at

Broadstone Res. and Whitley Common whilst on the same day the first **Sand Martin** was at Blackmoorfoot and six **Buzzard** went over Rastrick. Some 70 **Redwings** were still at Wards End on 21st as the first **Ring Ouzel** appeared and there were still 12 **Shoveler** and eight **Gadwall** at Dewsbury SW with 16 **Wigeon** at Meal Hill Lake and continuing the theme a grand male **Red-breasted Merganser** was on March Haigh the following day. A herd of 22 **Whooper Swans** were at Blackmoorfoot on 24th and **Blackcaps** were recorded at two different locations, suggesting probable migrants, whilst a **Hen Harrier** was observed briefly at the Isle of Skye Quarries.

Things remained calm through to the month end and the year's first **Twite** were seen at Wards End on 25th when a **Red Kite** was over Pule Hill, two adult **Mediterranean Gulls** departed W at Blackmoorfoot and three days later up to eight **Waxwings** were around Winscar Res. with 300 **Golden Plover** present at Whitley Common. The first **Willow Warbler** arrived at Tunnel End on 29th and **Chiffchaff** were pretty widespread by now. The 30th brought an early **Osprey** N over Winscar Res. and the same one? N over Ringstone edge an hour later, a **Red Kite** N over Blackmoorfoot, 24 **Snipe** at Dewsbury SW and 25 **Linnet** at Deer Hill with the last day bringing the first **Swallow** to Elland GP and probably the highlight of the month in the form of a very welcome **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** at Greetland.

April

The same high pressure persisted into April resulting in calm, though cold, dry weather for the first three weeks. The first **House Martin** arrived at Elland GP on 2nd, the following day a **Merlin** chased **Black-headed Gulls** at Dewsbury SW and at Wards End Farm two **Ospreys** flew NE and a **Shag** W. An **Arctic Tern** flew S at Blackmoorfoot on 5th when a grand total of 680 **Golden Plover** were feeding at Whitley Common, the first **Little Ringed Plover** was at Langsett and the last **Whooper Swans** (5), were at Blackmoorfoot. A **Black Redstart** was found at Thurgoland and 40 **Brambling** were still at Ingbirchworth on 6th and with the favourable conditions continuing things were becoming quite busy, a **Common Scoter** visited Blackmoorfoot on 7th when a **Red Kite** passed W over Deer Hill and on 8th Dewsbury SW held both a **Little Egret** and **Green Sandpiper** which both surprisingly stayed until the year end. The first **Common Sandpiper** of the year visited Blackmoorfoot on 10th, whilst on 11th another **Green Sandpiper** was found, this time at Deanhead and four **Little Egret** were at Bretton. This time a 'last' rather than 'first', as a **Redwing** was seen at Blackmoorfoot with another **Red Kite** over Wilshaw on 12th. Then much activity and back to new arrivals with **Pied Flycatcher** in Cliff Wood on 14th, **Redstart** at Blackmoorfoot on 16th, 13 **Ring Ouzel** in the Wards End area the same day and then a **Reed Warbler** at Dewsbury SW on 17th and 18th when two **Yellow Wagtail** were found at Tinker Hill, as well as **Grasshopper Warbler** at Scout Dyke Res., **Cuckoo** at Bird's Edge and **Garden Warbler** at Stirley Community Farm. The 17th had also seen single **Whimbrel** at Winscar Res. and Whitley Common. Temperatures then rose sharply to the low 20s and on 19th there was a good spring count of 16 **Great Crested Grebe** on Ingbirchworth Res., a **Hen Harrier** passed NW over a Golcar garden and the first **Whitethroat** was at Broadstone Res.

The high pace continued with the first **Lesser Whitethroat** at Sparth Res., Marsden on 20th with the day after bringing the first **Whinchat** to Broadstone Res., a **Marsh Harrier** flew NE over the Flouch and a **Tree Pipit** to Wards End. The warm dry weather had resulted in another fire on Marsden Moor which was then extinguished by the first rain for some time on 24th. On this date another **Common Scoter** appeared, this time at Broadstone Res., when the last **Goldeneye** was also seen. Even heavier rain on 26th didn't deter the first **Sedge Warbler** from appearing at Dewsbury SW, we saw the last **Brambling** at Ingbirchworth on 28th, and on the 29th we both welcomed the first **Swift** at Blackmoorfoot and bade farewell to the last departing **Fieldfare** at Holme Moss as an eventful month came to a close.

May

May opened with a week of low temperatures for the time of year and changing winds. The birds throughout the month didn't disappoint though and we started with a **Bar-tailed Godwit** at Winscar Res. on 1st. The day after wasn't too bad either with a **Honey-buzzard** low NW over Buckstones, four **Whimbrel** at Blackmoorfoot, a **Black Redstart** at Wards End and to round off, a very much appreciated **Wood Warbler** in Marsden. Then on 4th an even better one, a male **Ferruginous Duck** at Bretton, followed on 5th by a **Marsh Harrier** on Langsett Moors, a **Whimbrel** at Broadstone Res. and an **Arctic Tern** which left to the S at Blackmoorfoot. A very late **Jack Snipe** was feeding at Ringstone Edge on 6th and on 7th another 'first' in the form of two **Hobby** which drifted high to the E at Wards End Farm, before heavy showers on an Easterly then arrived on 8th bringing a **Common Tern** to Elland GP and no less than eight which left N at Ingbirchworth with two nice **Black Tern** visiting Ladywood Lakes the same day. By 13th temperatures had reached the low 20s and the first 'churring' **Nightjar** was heard, a **Marsh Harrier** flew W at Wards End Farm and seven **Common Sandpiper** were present at Langsett with two more warm days seeing the arrival of the first **Spotted Flycatcher** at Hartcliff Hill on 14th. Very variable cool winds then took over, plenty of **Cuckoos** were being seen or heard, a nice **Sanderling** was at Blackmoorfoot on 16th and eight **Common Tern** flew E at Ringstone Edge Res. The first of six **Red Kite** records came on 18th when at least two **Little Egret** were at Horbury Strands/Wyke and a **Whimbrel** visited Ringstone Edge the following day, with another flying N at Wards End the day after that, the same day that an **Osprey** flew N over Crosland Moor. Two **Ringed Plover** were present at both Deanhead and Ringstone Edge Reservoirs on 21st and were joined at the latter location by another nice wader, a **Purple Sandpiper**, with the day after another good tern record, this time in the form of two **Sandwich Tern** which flew NE from the same location whilst another **Hen Harrier** was hawking over Buckstones. Then the bird of the month and beyond was found at Dewsbury SW, a **Great Reed Warbler**. It first appeared on 23rd and remained well into the following month. Then back to normality with just a **Common Scoter** and a **Yellow-legged Gull** at Blackmoorfoot on 24th and a **Honey-buzzard** and an **Arctic Tern** W the following day and to round off a great month a female **Marsh Harrier** N over Holme Moss.

June

The first day of June brought us the first of just two **Quail** records this year, from Deer Hill, and a **Red Kite** at Blackmoorfoot which was the first of four records for the area. Showers had set in on mainly south-westerlies on 2nd and the only thing of note was a **Hobby** carrying prey at Wards End Farm with another one seen at Thurstonland Bank on 5th. The **Great Reed Warbler** at Dewsbury SW was last seen on 10th as heavier rain persisted and 70 **Swift** and a **Hen Harrier** were noted moving W over Marsden Moor. On 15th a **Green Sandpiper** was found at Gunthwaite Dam. The heavy rain continued and led to some flooding again on 17th and yet another **Green Sandpiper** was observed as it flew up the Colne Valley to March Haigh Res. the following day. Another **Hobby** was seen mobbing a **Buzzard** at Marsden on 22nd and for a change 13 **Great Crested Grebe** were counted on Ingbirchworth Res. on the same day. The following day, when temperatures had reached the 20s again, a **Common Tern** departed NE from Blackmoorfoot. Finally back to **Hobbies** and yet another was observed, this time at Oldfield on 27th. Whilst of course not much was passing through it gives us the chance to cast an eye once again on some of our more tenuous breeders to try and get an idea on how they may be faring compared to last year. On the plus side, though breeding wasn't recorded, at least this year we had two records of individual **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** compared to a complete blank the last two years, dare we hope? **Pied Flycatcher** records were up a little, aided by some well-placed nest-boxes, so too were **Spotted Flycatcher** and **Willow Tit** with **Yellowhammer** found holding 10 territories. **Ring Ouzel** bred once again and thanks to remedial work carried out at moorland sites the number of

breeding **Dunlin** continues to rise dramatically. **Reed Warbler** held plenty of territories but no breeding was confirmed and juvenile **Sedge Warblers** at one site pointed towards probable breeding. Definite breeding took place with **Nightjar** with numbers about the same but there was not much change with **Garden Warbler** or **Whitethroat**. **Little Ringed Plover** were seen at more localities, but breeding was only confirmed at one of these. It is always a bit 'hit and miss' with them as they are so dependent on water levels being low which in turn attracts more 'beach' walkers with their dogs, you can't win. Both **Redstart** and **Whinchat** were only recorded as breeding at two places and to end on a big minus there was no repetition of last year's breeding by **Wood Warbler** and all records of **Tree Pipit** were of birds just moving through again.

July

July kicked off with a period of average temperatures and the occasional shower on light south-westerlies and was quiet until the 4th when the first returning **Wheatears** (4), visited Blackmoorfoot, a **Little Egret** showed up at Boshaw Whams and the first of the five **Red Kite** records for the month was over Dove Stone. The following day came the first of three **Hobby** sightings at Blackmoorfoot. The 6th saw an exceptional post breeding flock of 110 **Curlew** at Broadstone Res., where two **Common Scoter** were on the water and 'reeling' **Grasshopper Warblers** were beginning to be heard. Boshaw Whams hosted a **Yellow Wagtail** on 7th and two days later four **Little Ringed Plover**, where they remained until the month end. Juveniles of both **Stonechat** and **Whinchat** were in evidence now and yet another **Little Egret** appeared as it went W up the Colne Valley on 12th whilst yet another **Green Sandpiper** spent two days at Boshaw Whams. A photographed **Great White Egret** was a very welcome visitor to Elland GP and another **Hobby** was over Wards End on 13th. Growing flocks of **Goldfinch** were starting to be noted at this time and Ringstone Edge hosted another **Green Sandpiper** on 15th with another now more frequently recorded **Yellow-legged Gull** at Boshaw Whams on 17th.

The 19th then brought big changes with a spell of heavy rain, deluges at times in fact. Some 120 **Swift** were seen flying ahead of a front over Thongsbridge during a lull on 21st and very welcome, the second **Quail** of the year was at Ingbirchworth. Lightening and a horrendous downpour during the night of 23rd/24th were brought from Africa with hot air on the Jet Stream and could well have accounted for some of the ensuing sightings. Both **Yellow Wagtail** and **Pied Flycatcher** were at Wards End Farm on 23rd the same day that a **Hen Harrier** visited Cook's Study Hill. One of the highlights of a good wader year was the amazing count of 26 **Bar-tailed Godwit** which flew SW over Boshaw Whams on 24th. It was turning out to be a good tern year too, and on 24th three **Arctic Tern** left Winscar Res. going E and two **Common Tern** left Boshaw Whams heading SW. With temperatures well into the 30s on a light easterly on 25th a count of 100 **Swallows** at Deanhead Res. stood out in an overall poor year. Then with continuing stormy conditions and heavy rain the month ended in a flurry with a **Hobby**, 40 **Linnet** and 30 **Siskin** in the Wards End area plus two **Common Scoter** at Blackmoorfoot on 27th. Eight more **Common Scoter** visited Baitings Res. the following day and another eight were at Winscar Res. on 29th where a **Whimbrel** flew SE and a **Green Sandpiper** was feeding at Ringstone Edge Res. The 30th brought almost 'monsoon like' conditions and another **Green Sandpiper** to Boshaw Whams and not surprisingly with the same conditions prevailing, the last day produced nothing of note.

August

Back to some calm over the first four days of August and we saw another **Common Tern** at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 1st with a **Hobby** over Wards End the following day and again on 4th when 44 **Swift** went over too with the same day also bringing the last **Pied Flycatcher** of the year to Holme Styes. Three **Sedge Warbler** were present at Boshaw Whams on 5th. A few post breeding

records of **Redstart** were noted as were returning **Wheatears** and **Hobby** sightings included juveniles. Starling flock numbers were on the increase and up to 180 **Lapwing** were by now at Blackmoorfoot and Scout Dyke though not one **Red Kite** was seen this month. Another **Yellow-legged Gull** visited Winscar on the 8th when another **Hobby** was in the Marsden area. A flock of 41 **Mistle Thrush** were counted at Broadstone Res. on the 10th and a **Mediterranean Gull** flew low W over Marsden Moor on 11th and with the rainfall increasing there was an early autumn feel to proceedings as we started to bid farewell to some summer visitors. Boshaw Whams continued to turn up some good waders and on 12th, apart from the last **Little Ringed Plover**, provided both a **Knot** and three **Black-tailed Godwit** which flew E. Blackmoorfoot attracted 40 **House Martin**, a good count this year, on 13th, when another good wader record was added to the year's list, this time two **Avocet** which departed high W. The same location also hosted a single, now rare, **Yellowhammer** on the 14th and a **Whimbrel** was also present as was a single **Common Scoter** with five there the following day. Still at Blackmoorfoot on 19th there was another **Whimbrel** and a **Common Tern** went SW. A few **Yellow Wagtail** were now being found at a handful of locations and again to Boshaw Whams where no less than nine **Ringed Plover** were present on 21st and on 23rd a **Merlin** put in an appearance at Blackmoorfoot with the 24th bringing a **Little Egret** to Boshaw Whams. Temperatures were rising by now and by 25th were up to 30° C.

The 25th was a busy day (a Sunday, coincidence?) and other than the last **Lesser Whitethroat** at both Broadstone Res. and Wards End Farm the latter sight held 150 **Swallows**, a fair count in another poor year. Windleden saw two nice raptors in the shape of **Merlin** and **Marsh Harrier** then Blackmoorfoot had a **Greenshank** fly high W. Activity continued to the 26th as another **Marsh Harrier**, this time a female, went NE over Deer Hill, another **Greenshank** left Boshaw Whams and probably visited Scout Dyke too where over 40 **Tree Sparrow** were also noted. Then another 'last' as a **Garden Warbler** visited Blackmoorfoot, also on 26th. An **Osprey** flew S low over Wards End Farm on 27th and again to waders on 28th with two **Greenshank** at Boshaw Whams and 29th, another **Whimbrel** at Blackmoorfoot, the same day that six **Whinchat** and a **Tree Pipit** were at Wards End. We had returned to showery weather again by now and apart from the aforementioned location hosting 30 **Siskin** on 30th and six **Whinchat** on the final day the month petered out somewhat.

September

The first day of September got us off to a good start when a juvenile **Cuckoo** flew SW over Harden Quarries and an early returning **Ring Ouzel** was in the Wessenden Valley. Things continued apace and on 2nd an **Osprey** went SE at Harden Quarries whilst five **Tree Pipit** flew S there and at Blackmoorfoot two Westerly bound visitors in the form of a **Marsh Harrier** and **Ruff** went over, whilst eight **Stonechat** were in the Wards End area. On the 3rd we started to feel the backlash of a Hurricane in the Bahamas but despite the strong south-westerlies and driving heavy rain on 4th three **Ringed Plover** went W over Blackmoorfoot and three **Pochard** and a **Yellow-legged Gull** were found at Bretton and Emley respectively. The first **Pink-footed Geese** arrived on 5th when five flew SW at Harden Quarries and these proved to be the forerunners of what was to become a bumper autumn. A few **Yellow Wagtails** were now in evidence, particularly at Blackmoorfoot, returning **Wheatear** numbers were rising and **Merlin** were regularly seen, mainly around Marsden. Conditions became calmer and on the 7th at Wards End Farm a flock of 22 **Twite** visited and 25 **Greylag Geese** flew E with the following day the last **Whinchats** noted at Blackmoorfoot and Deanhead Res. and the final **Sedge Warbler** at Boshaw Whams. A **Hen Harrier** went WNW at Harden Quarries and four **House Martin** at Blackmoorfoot on 10th were the last. On the 11th constant rain on gale force SW winds arrived and we had to wait until 14th for the last **Tree Pipit** over Isle of Skye Quarry and the final **Swift** E over Ingbirchworth with the following day another two 'lasts', a juvenile **Hobby** at Lower Maythorn and a juvenile **Yellow Wagtail** at Wards End

Farm, where up to 400 feeding **Goldfinch** were an impressive sight. The last **Whitethroat** was seen at Digley on 16th and the last **Swallow** visited Blackmoorfoot the day after where a **Mediterranean Gull** left SE. A skein of 280 **Greylag Geese** flew W at Hartcliff Hill on 18th and as well as a **Marsh Harrier** at Broadstone Res. on the 19th when we also said farewell to **Redstart** at Winscar and **Spotted Flycatcher** at Bare Bones Road. A period of high pressure moving in from Spain then led to some variable weather over the next few days and the first **Whooper Swans** arrived at Blackmoorfoot, Ingbirchworth and Boshaw Whams on 20th and an **Osprey** flew W over Bentley Springs. More **Sandwich Terns** left SE at Ingbirchworth and two **Black Redstart** were found at Holme Moss on 22nd. Yellow-legged gulls were once more present, this time at both Ingbirchworth and Ringstone Edge on 23rd and six **Yellowhammer** were noted at Lower Cumberworth on 25th. Then towards the month end as rain, sometimes torrential, set in, little was noted with the exception of the last **Common Sandpiper** at Blackmoorfoot on 26th, **Willow Warbler** in the Little Don Valley on 27th and on the last day a juvenile **Osprey** which U-turned from the E at Pule Hill, Marsden.

October

October opened to cool and calm conditions, the first **Redwing** arrived on 2nd as the last **Sand Martin** were seen, two **Wheatear** were still at Penistone and a **Marsh Harrier** flew W over Wards End Farm. The following day saw the first **Fieldfare** at Blackmoorfoot Res. and a nice **Rock Pipit** passed over Pule Hill on a vis-mig watch as did a flock of 24 **Snipe** over Wards End whilst two **Common Scoter** departed W at Blackmoorfoot on 4th and on the water there the day after were no less than three, very welcome **Red-breasted Merganser**. The 6th brought the first of five **Hen Harrier** sightings for the month from the Marsden area. A period of heavy rain then set in and brought a lot of **Pink-footed Geese** over between the 8th and 29th and as the first **Brambling** arrived on 10th so the last **House Martins** were seen at Blackmoorfoot. Pule Hill had another good 'un over on 12th as a **Knot** went E and at nearby Deer Hill eight **Stonechat** were present and 30 **Skylark** flew NW on 14th. A few more quality days followed as vis-mig watches produced more, as on 15th when a **Hawfinch** flew SE at Harden Quarries and 10 **Ring Ouzel** flew S over Wards End Farm whilst the last **Wheatear** was also at Blackmoorfoot. Then on 17th at the same location, apart from the last two **Swallows** departing, a **Red Kite** was also circling over. The day after saw a **Red-throated Diver** heading W up the Colne Valley and on 19th the two **Black Redstart** were still at Holme Moss, with a good count of 49 **House Sparrow** at Lockwood. With the wet conditions and some foggy starts continuing, 30 **Brambling** were counted at Hartcliff Hill and 16 **Coal Tit** went over Harden Quarries on 23rd then on 25th a total of 355 **Golden Plover** flew W over Wards End Farm as did 1,000+ **Starling** and two days later 36 **Whooper Swans** went over E and a male **Red-breasted Merganser** passed in the opposite direction. **Lapwing** numbers had risen to 600 at Whitley common by 28th and over 97 **Reed Bunting** were counted at Pule Hill the following day as a **Red Kite** was in the nearby Wessenden Valley and the final **Ring Ouzel** was seen at the Isle of Skye Quarry. Things went a little quiet then with two days of cold, still, weather, but with a good count of the decreasing **Collared Dove** (35) at Gunthwaite Dam on 30th and again to Pule Hill to end an eventful month on a high as a **Snow Bunting** flew high overhead.

November

November opened with a few days of moderate temperatures with some rain and varying between frost and strong wet north-easterlies. Wildfowl counts were variable and only five skeins of **Pink-footed Geese** amounting to just over 1,000 individuals were seen during the month. Six male **Pochard** were on Blackmoorfoot Res. on 1st however, and the following day still a good number of **Goldeneye** (11), were on the River Calder at Thornhill, where they remained through to the year end. At Bretton Park on 3rd, apart from 22 **Great Crested Grebe**, some 36 **Gadwall**, five

Shoveler, 10 **Wigeon** and two **Pochard** were also counted. In a similar vein on 6th a flock of 150 **Greylags** were at Whitley Common and two **Red-breasted Merganser** at Ringstone Edge Res. ended a good year for the species. The same day saw a **Marsh Harrier** fly high E over the Colne Valley and the second of only two **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** sightings, this time from Thongsbridge. A good number of **Golden Plover**, up to 700, were still feeding in the Cawthorne area over this period and on 8th a **Grey Plover** flew E over Wards End Farm and at Bretton once more, no less than 13 **Goosander** were present. Flocks of wintering **Fieldfare** and **Redwing** were hard to come by compared to recent years but one or two **Woodcock** were now around and a wintering **Chiffchaff** was a nice find at Marsden on 12th, as was a **Black Redstart** at Holme Moss the day after. On this same date both a **Marsh Harrier** passed NW over Wessenden Head and a **Hen Harrier** was quartering over nearby March Flatts. Two **Blackcap** found at Thongsbridge on 14th were presumably wintering.

Winds had moved around to NW by mid-month and on 15th another scarcity to us, a juvenile **Gannet**, flew NW over Silkstone Common, three **Pintail** were on Blackmoorfoot Res. and a sizeable flock of 120 **Brambling** were around the Wards End area. We then move on to the 18th when a **Water Rail** was found at Bretton Park and at the newly discovered **Reed Bunting** roost at Pule Hill no less than 114 individuals were counted, an impressive number indeed. An adult **Caspian Gull** was discovered feeding in the Honley area again on 19th and a **Mediterranean Gull** was found in the roost at Blackmoorfoot Res. Some more good counts were had on 20th, firstly 20 **Teal** were on Broadstone Res., 700 **Lapwing** were still frequenting the Whitley Common area and no less than 50 **Lesser Redpoll** were feeding in the Town Centre. Then with temperatures just above freezing and Easterlies prevailing it is not usually the time of year to be mentioning waders but the 22nd saw a **Bar-tailed Godwit** at Boshaw Whams, then as well as 50 **Pied Wagtail**, Clayton West SW also hosted two **Green Sandpiper** and the final day brought a late **Curlew** to Broadstone Res.

December

The cold weather lasted for the first four days of December, but the month started well as 1st brought up to five **White-fronted Geese** to the Ingbirchworth/Horn Lane area, where they stayed until 4th. A **Water Pipit** was discovered close to Wards End Farm on 2nd where it remained to the year end. On the same day a **Little Egret** was seen at two Meltham locations and, although present in the area the following day, it soon departed to the W and was later observed flying over Marsden Moor. A **Hawfinch** was at Cannon Hall on 3rd/4th when a juvenile **Rough-legged Buzzard** flew low SW along Buckstones Edge. Low pressure fronts from the SW then dominated, bringing gale force winds and some heavy rain. A flock of 50 **Brambling** still frequented the Head Clough area of Marsden where the occasional **Merlin** and **Peregrine** were seen and a small number of **Stonechat** were still widespread on some higher ground. Ladywood Lakes hosted nine **Goosander** on 6th and as the same weather conditions persisted 1,000 **Black-headed Gull** were feeding at Whitley Common on 8th. Gull roost numbers were high with 5,000 and 3,500 **Black-headed Gull** at Blackmoorfoot and Langsett respectively, with the former also holding up to 1,000 **Common Gull** and a year maximum of 50 **Lesser Black-backed Gull** with 60 at Langsett a few days later. A flock of 350 **Lapwing** were still at Broadstone Lodge on 9th, 40 **Siskin** visited Silkstone SW the day after and a **Hen Harrier** was at Meltham Grange the following day. Unsurprisingly perhaps, things were a little quiet, though a flock of 300 **Golden Plover** still frequented Cawthorne and 25 **Long-tailed Tit** were at Silkstone with 30 **Wigeon** at Meal Hill Lake and up to four **Goldeneye**, always nice to see nowadays, at Blackmoorfoot. Wintery showers on 15th and heavy snow on 16th hampered proceedings somewhat until the 17th saw two **Willow Tit** at Carlecotes Ponds and six **Crossbill** at Holme Styes. By this year's standards the 220 **Fieldfare** on Ingbirchworth Moor and 50 **Redwing** at Silkstone SW were good counts and the 20th saw the first **Jack Snipe** of the winter

at Boshaw Whams with the now rare winter sight of 12 **Twite** feeding in the garden at Wards End Farm on the same date, with up to 50 **Reed Bunting** doing likewise throughout the month. Milder wet weather then took us to the year end and at least one keen member was out on Boxing Day morning to find the **Chiffchaff** at Silkstone SW. This bird was present still on 28th when a **Willow Tit** was at Meal Hill and a slow end to an otherwise fruitful year was brought to a close by a **Hen Harrier** flying W over Marsden Moor.

Dave Sill

NOTES ON THE CLASSIFIED LIST

The area covered by the Club comprises Ordnance Survey ten-kilometre squares SE 00, 01, 10, 11, 20 and 21, together with those parts of SE 02 and SE 12 south of the Rivers Ryburn and Calder, plus Elland Gravel Pits and Dewsbury Sewage Farm. See also the map inside the front cover.

All reports of rare and unusual species and races that require a description have been assessed by the Club Records Committee, Yorkshire Naturalists' Union (YNU) Adjudication Panel or the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC), as appropriate.

The list includes two new species for the area:

Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus* - one at Dewsbury SW from 23rd May to 10th June 2019.

Olve-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni* – following acceptance by the BBRC of a sound recording from Harden on 9th October 2017.

The status of each species is indicated by the following classifications:

Resident breeder	Migrant breeder	Partial migrant
Winter visitor	Passage visitor	Rare visitor
Vagrant		

For breeding species, the number appearing in brackets following the statement of breeding status is an estimated level of breeding abundance, based upon the table below:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. 1-20 pairs per year | 4. 510-2500 pairs per year |
| 2. 21-100 pairs per year | 5. 2501 or more pairs per year |
| 3. 101-500 pairs per year | |

These figures were derived from data gathered during the Club's breeding atlas undertaken in the years 1987-92. Since this time a number of species have decreased alarmingly e.g. Whinchat but, due to a lack of detailed information, it would be an impossible task to judge the numbers now involved. In an effort to overcome this problem, although retaining the original estimate, any species which has shown a noticeable decline has now been indicated.

Species that are 'red listed' in the British Trust for Ornithology's (BTO) 2015 list of Birds of Conservation Concern, i.e. those of high concern, are indicated accordingly.

Precise locations for records of Schedule 1 species (Protection of Birds Act 1981) and for some other sensitive species have been kept confidential where it is felt that publication might lead to harmful disturbance.

On page 138 is a complete list, 'The Huddersfield List', of the 277 species and 14 additional distinct races of wild birds that have been recorded in the Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club area since records began, up to the end of 2019. The List incorporates guidance on when a description is required to support sightings.

Abbreviations: the following have been used in order to keep the text concise:

c.	-approximately	GP	-Gravel Pit
N	-North	NR	-Nature Reserve
S	-South	SW	-Sewage Works
E	-East	SP	-Sludge Plant
W	-West	Res.	-Reservoir
CP	-Country Park	nc	no count
Viz	-Visible		
mig	migration		

A comprehensive list of co-ordinates of sites within the Club area can be found on our web site:

www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk

CLASSIFIED LIST 2019

CANADA GOOSE *Branta canadensis*

Resident breeder, increased to (2-3), 50-150 pairs.

There were more records than usual, but once again this species was under-recorded, as the lack of records from some of the major locations testifies. On the other hand, the increase in records from Scout Dike Res. has enabled them to be tabulated.

Monthly maxima at regularly occupied sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Blackmoorfoot Res	7	4	24	16	9	31	52	59	14	5	0	6
Bretton Park	40	70	59	nc	18	nc	10	nc	8	nc	157	nc
Ingbirchworth Res	1034	238	208	13	24	76	174	70	28	414	340	783
Scout Dike Res	nc	500	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	145	250	16	nc	300

At **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, although occurrences between mid-March and early September were almost daily, they were very sporadic at other times. For the second consecutive year birds (8) remained at the reservoir to moult.

Birds were reported from 42 sites (34 in 2018) but only the following (as well as those in the table above) had counts in excess of 25+ on at least one occasion (maxima shown).

Scammonden Water – 160 on 3rd January.

Horbury Strands/Wyke – 80 on 4th January and 50 on 1st February.

March Haigh Res – birds move at first light from Cupwith Res. to March Haigh Res. on a daily basis. Although numbers vary, 82 did so on 30th September and 100 on 11th October.

RSPB Dove Stone – c.80 on 6th February.

Upper Windleden Res – 33 on 21st March.

Winscar Res – c.70 on 21st March and at least 70 on 29th July.

Deanhead Res – 140 on 13th August, 200 on 27th August, and 130 on 31st October.

Ringstone Edge Res – 200 on 10th September and 150 on 31st October.

Langsett Res – 61 on 23rd September.

Broadstone Res – c.400 on 3rd October and c.190 on 31st December.

Upper Cumberworth – c.200 in a field below The Star public house on 11th November.

Dewsbury – 41 on the River Calder on 21st November.

Cannon Hall – c.120 feeding in a nearby field on 17th December.

Breeding was only reported from seven sites (12 in 2018):

Bretton Park – five pairs bred.

Wessenden Head Res – four goslings in late May.

Deanhead Res – 19 goslings in late May.

Meal Hill Lake – at least 12 goslings in late June.

Greenhead Park – a pair with two goslings in late June.

Winscar Res – at least six pairs bred and fledged 32 young.

Snaildsen Res – four goslings in early July.

GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser*

Uncommon, decreased to rare/scarse passage visitor, increasing feral visitor.

Most records, as usual, stemmed from the Ingbirchworth area. Despite large numbers being present throughout the year, there were no breeding records.

Monthly maxima at regularly occupied sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Ingbirchworth Res	278	168	26	2	17	18	221	9	nc	250	276	300
Broadstone Res	nc	120	84	1	23	nc	nc	104	nc	303	116	160

Records were received from a further 16 locations, the same number as last year. Although there were few records from **Bretton Park**, they were evenly distributed throughout the year, suggesting that they may have been a permanent feature. Numbers were always low, and never exceeded the 17 on 11th March.

Numbers at other localities, as is the norm, rarely exceeded four, the following being the exceptions: 17 at **Horbury Strands/Wyke** on 1st February; seven flew NNW over **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 3rd April, 25 flew E there on 7th September and 15 did likewise on 22nd October, 35 flew W on 20th November and 48 flew N the following day; 105 at **Royd Moor Res.** on 18th July; 29 at **Scout Dike Res.** on 9th/10th September with c.50 on 23rd October; 260 at **Langsett Res.** on 17th September; 280+ flew W over **Hartcliff Hill** on 18th September; and c.150 were on **Whitley Common** on 6th November.

There were only 11 records from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (17 in 2018) but, unlike that year, there was no pattern to the occurrences. Of these 11 records, six involved overflying birds: two E on 14th January, two S on 16th June and 2nd July, singles S on 3rd October and 6th November, and two W on 8th November. The other five records involved up to four (usually only 1 or 2) for no more than a day's duration during the months of February (2 records), April (2), and October (1).

A Greylag x Canada Goose hybrid was present at **Ingbirchworth Res.** between 30th November and 3rd December.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Common to numerous passage and winter visitor.

With almost 10,000 birds, in 47 skeins, overflying the Club area during the first winter period, this was a very welcome increase on the meagre showing of 5,000 last year. There were impressive movements on 18th and 21st January and 12th October, although there was presumably much duplication.

With the figures presented above there were obviously several records of three-figure skeins, the following being the maxima:

1st January – 200 W at **Langsett Res.**

5th January – 100 SW at 11.30hrs. over **Honley.**

18th January – 1,200 NW in eight skeins between 10.30hrs. and 11.20hrs. at **Blackmoorfoot Res.,**
1,300 W/NW in five skeins over **Hazelhead,** 200 NW at **Langsett.**

20th January – 340 W in two skeins at **Broadstone Res.**

- 21st January** – 633 NW in five skeins between 12.00hrs. and 1255hrs. at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, 150 NW at 12.15hrs. over **Oldfield**, 120 W over **Penistone**, 333 W (skeins of 148 + 114 + 71) at **Ingbirchworth Res.**
- 24th January** – 110 W at 11.25hrs. over **Rastrick**.
- 29th January** – 270 W (180 at 10.46hrs. + 90 at 10.59hrs.) over **Wards End Farm, Marsden**, 200 NW at 10.45hrs. over **Bradley Park GC**.
- 5th February** – 180 W at 10.05hrs. over the **Isle of Skye Quarry**, 230 NW (100 at 10.15hrs. + 130 at 10.30hrs.) at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**

As in 2018, these movements over the area ended rather abruptly, and the last record involved a skein of 22 which flew E at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** at 10.45hrs. on 29th February.

The number of birds overflying the area during the second winter period continues to grow year by year. A remarkable total of 13,800 birds, in 112 skeins, were reported, and, even allowing for some duplication, the numbers involved were very impressive. The first birds were reported on 5th September when 20 flew SW over **Harden Quarries**. There were then no records until 16th September when 55 flew E at 08.35hrs. over **Bradshaw Moor** and 58 did likewise over **Harden Quarries**. Other September records involved a small number, less than six, heard but not seen as they moved E over **Blackmoorfoot Res.** at 10.05hrs. on 17th, with 113 E (53 at 09.45hrs. + 60 at 11.25hrs.) there on 19th; c.50 SSE over **Skelmanthorpe** on 18th; 40 E at **Harden Quarries** on 19th; 75 SW over **Wards End Farm** on 26th, with 35 flying E there at 17.45hrs. on 28th; and 31 SE over **Fixby** at 09.16hrs. on 30th. The following months produced several treble-figure counts, and the list below contains all movements in excess of 150.

- 8th October** – at least 660 E in six skeins between 08.41hrs. and 09.58hrs. over **Marsden**, 220 E at 09.57hrs. over **Fixby**.
- 9th October** – 390 E/SE between 09.05hrs. and 09.30hrs. over **Hartcliff Hill**.
- 12th October** – 913 E in five skeins between 09.09hrs and 09.55hrs. over the **Isle of Skye Quarry**, 796 (500 E at 09.24hrs. + 279 E at 09.37hrs. + 17 W at 11.01hrs.) over **Pule Hill, Marsden**, 606 E in three skeins between 09.30hrs. and 09.45hrs. at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**
- 14th October** – 240 NW (80 at 09.15hrs. + 160 at 13.00hrs.) at **Wards End Farm**, 305 SW in three skeins over **Harden Quarries**.
- 17 October** – 220 WNW (100 at 11.05hrs + 120 at 11.25hrs.) over **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, 331 E in four skeins at **Harden Quarries**.
- 22nd October** – 240 E in three skeins over **Harden Quarries**.
- 27th October** – 220 E in four skeins at **Harden Quarries**.
- 29th October** – 150 W at 07.25hrs. over **Whitley Edge**, 220 NW at **Almondbury**, 260 W in two skeins over **Harden Quarries**.
- 3rd November** – 150 E in two skeins at 09.40hrs. over **Fixby**.
- 16th November** – 300 W (250 at 10.35hrs. + 50 at 11.00hrs.) over **Blackmoorfoot Res.** + 200 NW at **Wards End Farm** at 10.59hrs.
- 26th November** – 200 W at 10.45hrs. at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**
- 2nd December** – 270 SE (210 at 08.40hrs. + 60 at 08.53hrs.) over **Wards End Farm**.
- 17th December** – 230 W (120 at 10.05hrs. + 110 at 10.35hrs.) over **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, 300 WNW over **Meltham**.
- 25th December** – 370 NW in three skeins between 09.50hrs. and 10.13hrs. over **Wards End Farm**, 210 W at 10.15hrs. over **Blackmoorfoot Res.**
- 27th December** – 270 NW at 13.30hrs. over **Wards End Farm**.
- 28th December** – 180 WSW at 12.45hrs. over **Fixby**.

Grounded birds were reported as follows: 17 were with the Greylag Goose flock on **Ingbirchworth**

Moor on 1st January, and then up to nine roamed the area for the following three weeks. Singles were at **Blackmoorfoot Res** on 18th January and on the River Calder at **Ravensthorpe** on 3rd February. Later in the year, four were with the Canada Goose flock at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 17th September; eight were with the Greylag Goose flock on **Ingbirchworth Moor** on 28th October; singles were present at **Broadstone Res.** on 22nd October and **Whitley Common** on 14th and 26th November; seven were **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 30th November and up to three then frequented the area until the year end. A single was on **Langsett Res.** on 1st December.

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons*

Rare visitor. Red listed.

Up to five birds of the European race *A. a. albifrons* were present with the Canada and Greylag Goose flock in the **Ingbirchworth** area between 1st and 4th December. Three were present in a field off **Horn Lane** on 1st and five were there on 2nd/3rd (KH, AAH, HB *et al.*). The same five were seen on the reservoir on 2nd but only two could be located on 4th (NWM, DHP *et al.*).

Initially there was some confusion over the age of the birds in this group, but photographic evidence showed them all to be adults. One is left wondering, however, if more than five birds may have been involved.

MUTE SWAN *Cygnus olor*

Resident, occasional breeder (1), 0-3 pairs.

Although this species remains scarce in the Club area, the large assemblage noted at Ladywood Lakes late in December 2018 persisted. There was no evidence of breeding at Horbury Strands/Wyke (a pair had bred for the 3 previous years), but a pair bred at Bretton Park.

The adult and three immatures from 2018 remained on **Windy Bank Res.** until 3rd January, but one of the immatures died from an unknown cause on the latter date (per Meltham Wildlife Rescue). The remaining three were then present until 18th January, but only the two immatures were present thereafter and remained until the year end.

In January, what was presumably the same adult (carrying a ring on its left leg) was present on **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 18th (all day), 19th (early morning only) and 20th (late afternoon only). The adult which flew SE over **Crosland Moor** at 09.00hrs. on 19th was presumably the bird seen earlier that morning at Blackmoorfoot Res.

Other birds were recorded as follows:

Bretton Park – up to four were present throughout the year, but eight were seen on 11th March. A pair bred, raising six cygnets.

Ladywood Lakes – all records related to birds either at the Lakes or nearby on the River Calder. Records were mainly restricted to the winter periods, but it is possible that birds were present throughout the year. Up to 24 were noted in January/February and the same number (birds?) were on the river on 9th May. The only records later in the year involved 35 on 18th November and 15th December.

Horbury SW – two on the River Calder on 4th January.

Greenhead Park – two on the park pond on 20th January.

Horbury Strands/Wyke – the only record from this former breeding site involved a single on the River Calder on 24th January.

Boshaw Whams – an adult was present from 3rd March to at least 18th March.
Scout Dike Res – a juvenile on 21st October.
Ingbirchworth Res – a juvenile on 5th December.
Langsett Res – a juvenile flew W on 1st December. This is a rare bird at this site.

WHOOPEE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus*

Scarce passage and winter visitor.

There was a far better showing, especially during the second winter period, than had been witnessed during the two previous years. Note that birds were recorded at three locations on the rather early date of 20th September, although at two of these the timing and direction of flight suggests they were the same birds.

Birds were seen during the first winter period as follows:

Blackmoorfoot Res – 18 (17 adults + 1 juvenile) arrived from the S at 12.15hrs. on 20th January, 22 adults were present on 24th March, and five adults on 25th April.

Cowcliffe – three unaged birds flew W at 08.10hrs. on 11th February.

Scout Dike Res – 13 unaged birds departed NW at 08.15hrs. on 13th February and nine adults were present on 25th February. These last mentioned birds were seen on Ingbirchworth Res. later in the day.

Winscar Res – ten (6 adults + 4 juveniles) on 16th February.

Boshaw Whams – an adult + juvenile on 21st February.

Silkstone – c.145 flew NW (25 at 09.30hrs. + 60 at 10.00hrs. + 60 at 10.15hrs.) on 25th February.

Broadstone Res – nine adults on 26th February. These birds were presumably those seen the previous day at Scout Dike and Ingbirchworth Reservoirs.

March Haigh – three unaged birds on 22nd March.

A most unusual occurrence involved an adult which appeared in a factory yard at **Lee Mills, Scholes** on 17th February. The bird had set the alarm system off at midnight as it crashed into the yard and, apart from blood around the carpal joints caused by it thrashing on the ground, it appeared healthy although the movement in its legs appeared restricted. The bird, thanks to Meltham Wildlife Rescue, was taken to the Yorkshire Swan Rescue Hospital, York.

Birds were seen during the second winter period as follows:

Boshaw Whams – six flew NW at 10.25hrs. on 20th September.

Blackmoorfoot Res – six adults which flew NW at 10.35hrs. on 20th September was the earliest record ever by two days. In October, three adults departed N at 12.40hrs. on 14th, 21 flew E down the Colne Valley at 11.00hrs. on 20th, and five adults flew E at 09.35hrs. the following day. Ten flew SE at 10.00hrs. on 6th November, three adults were present during the late afternoon on 12th November, two adults + two juveniles were present during the late afternoon on 1st December, and two adults departed S at 09.55hrs. on 5th December.

Ingbirchworth Res – four unaged birds on 20th September were seen on Scout Dike Res. later in the day.

Langsett Res – six flew E at 09.26hrs. on 29th October and two adults + four juveniles were present on 17th November.

Digley Res – two adults on 30th September.

Harden Quarries – three flew E at 08.22hrs. on 15th October.

Greenfield Res – eight unaged birds on 21st October.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – 36 flew over (29 E at 07.35hrs. + 7 E at 07.45hrs.) on 27th October.

Pule Hill, Marsden – five adults + four juveniles flew E at 08.21hrs. on 31st October.

Ringstone Edge Res – a single unaged bird on 11th November.

Windy Bank Res – three unaged birds on 12th November.

Baitings Res – four unaged birds flew over on 20th November.

Booth Wood Res – three unaged birds on 28th November.

In addition, although recorded as swan sp., the following records are most likely to relate to this species: ten flew S over **Marsden** on 6th November and four flew N over **Rastrick** on 19th November.

SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna*

Uncommon passage visitor.

There were records from five locations, a drop of two on last year. Most records, even from Blackmoorfoot Res., were confined to the first half of the year.

Blackmoorfoot Res – there was a good run of early winter records which involved, in January, a single on 3rd, three on 12th, nine on 15th, 18 on 20th, and two on 29th, and a single on 13th February. There were then no occurrences until five (2 adults + 3 juveniles) were present on 21st August, but the only record thereafter concerned two on 9th December.

Ringstone Edge Res – two were present on 3rd January and 7th May.

Boshaw Whams – eight departed SE at 09.50hrs. on 20th January and singles were present on 16th February and 4th September.

Upper Windleden Res – a single on 21st March.

Dewsbury SW – two which arrived on 30th March remained to breed, there being eight newly hatched ducklings on 24th May.

MANDARIN DUCK *Aix galericulata*

Rare to scarce visitor. Has bred.

There were five records (1 more than last year), and for the fourth consecutive year there were no long-stay individuals.

Ladywood Lakes – a male on 10th January (DT) and a male on the River Calder on 30th December (DHP).

Linthwaite – a male and female on the River Colne on 31st May (AP).

Ryburn Res – five unsexed birds on 18th November (AC).

Ingbirchworth Res – two males and a female on 4th/5th December (MCW).

SHOVELER *Spatula clypeata*

Scarce to uncommon passage and winter visitor.

The increase in records noted last year was short-lived.

Bretton Park – there was a good run of records during the first winter period with up to 12 being present on several dates between 1st January and 11th March. The only records later in the year involved six on 9th October, five on 3rd November and two on 28th November.

Blackmoorfoot Res – the only records involved single males on 2nd January and 23rd February.

Horbury Strands/Wyke – four on 4th January and a single on 18th May.

Ossett Spa SW – five on 4th January and four on 11th January.
Ringstone Edge Res – singles on 25th February and 20th September.
Dewsbury SW – 14 on 27th February and 12 on 21st March.
Elland GP – a male and female on 6th April.
Boshaw Whams – singles on 30th/31st July and 3rd September and a male + female on 22nd November.

GADWALL *Mareca strepera*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor. Has bred.

There were records from seven locations (8 in 2018 and 9 in 2017) but, unlike last year, no breeding was reported.

Birds were recorded as follows:

Bretton Park – two on 1st January and ten on 22nd February. Later in the year six were present on 26th July and 4th September, four on 9th October, an impressive 36 on 3rd November, and at least ten, all males, on 29th November.

Ossett – two on 24th January.

Horbury Strands/Wyke – six on 1st February and nine on 11th April.

Blackmoorfoot Res – two males were present on 19th March; a male + female on 11th and 24th April and 16th May; two female-types on 19th August; a female-type on 19th/20th September; and a male on 8th November.

Dewsbury SW – up to eight were present between 21st March and 26th April, but the only other record involved two on 24th May.

Ingbirchworth Res – a male + female on 29th April and a single on 3rd November.

Boshaw Whams – two on 28th July.

WIGEON *Mareca penelope*

Common passage and winter visitor.

Records were only received from 11 waters (14 in both 2018 and 2017) with most records being confined to the second winter period.

As in 2017, January/February records were very sparse, and only stemmed from eight localities: **Meal Hill Lake** held birds throughout but, although limited access makes accurate counts difficult, a maximum of 65 were present on 5th February; up to five were present on five January dates at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**; two were on **Digley Res.** on 1st January; 21 were at **Ossett Spa SW** on 4th January; 25 were on the River Calder at **Savile Town** on 23rd January; 83 were at **Broadstone Res.** on 31st January, with 58 there on 23rd February; and singles were at **Winscar Res.** on 15th February and **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 18th February. The only March records, with the exception of up to 16 on a daily basis at **Meal Hill Lake**, involved two males at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 19th and eight at **Dewsbury SW** on 30th. Occurrences during April were restricted to two at **Meal Hill Lake** on the first three days of the month, a female at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 6th and a female at **Ringstone Edge Res.** which remained from 22nd to at least 12th May.

There were then no records until two appeared at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 15th September. The only other September records involved a single at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 19th, with four there on 20th and 16 on 23rd; nine at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 20th, with two there on 22nd; three at **Boshaw Whams** on 23rd, with a single the following day; and nine at **Meal Hill Lake** on 25th.

Records during the following three months were limited to only five locations. The flock at **Meal Hill Lake**, which began to form from 25th September, reached a peak of c.30 by mid-December; **Blackmoorfoot Res.** attracted birds on 26 days, with most records being of five or less, but 15 were present on 5th October, 22 the following day, 23 on 30th October, 18 on 15th November, and 12 on 30th November; 13 were on **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 6th October, with three there on 30th/31st October, and six on 29th December; ten were at **Bretton Lakes** on 3rd and 6th November, with nine there on 28th November and three the following day; and the only other record during this period involved a flock of 36 on **Broadstone Res.** on 22nd November.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*

Resident breeder (3), 100-250 pairs. Common, but decreasing, winter visitor.

Although records were received from 32 locations (12 more than last year) this species is still under-recorded. Indeed, there were only single records from Holmfirth, Langsett Res. and Royd Moor Res. (the latter two are normally tabulated below), and a number of records from other sites simply stated 'ubiquitous, so not counted'.

Maximum numbers at regularly counted sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Blackmoorfoot Res	48	53	32	18	18	22	32	52	41	32	27	19
Ingbirchworth Res	36	41	36	35	29	61	54	54	43	35	38	38
Gunthwaite Dam	nc	35	6	nc	5	nc	27	30	nc	17	20	nc

The numbers at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** during the second winter period, especially in November/December, were greatly reduced on previous years' totals.

Elsewhere notable counts (30+) were received from the following locations:

Holmfirth – 76 on the River Holme on 2nd January.

Winscar Res – at least 70 on 2nd January and 21st March.

Bretton Park – at least 70 on 3rd February and 86 on 3rd November.

RSPB Dove Stone – 33 on 6th February and 38 on 4th July.

Boshaw Whams – 41 on 17th July.

Scout Dike Res – 38 on 14th August.

Windy Bank Res – 96 on 29th November.

Breeding (ducklings present) was recorded from several locations: **Blackmoorfoot Res** – 69 (a low figure for this location) with none reaching the flying stage; **Bretton Park** – two broods; **Ingbirchworth Res** – eight broods; **Boshaw Whams** – four broods; **Scout Dike Res** – three broods; **Silkstone Beck** – one brood; **Gunthwaite Dam** – one brood; **Langsett** – one brood; **Deanhead Res** – one brood; **Broadstone Res** – one brood; **Digley Res** – one brood; and **Isle of Skye Quarry** – one brood.

PINTAIL *Anas acuta*

Scarce to uncommon passage and winter visitor.

The good fortunes of this species in 2018, with records from eight localities, were not repeated.

Ingbirchworth Res – a male and female on 8th January, a female-type on 22nd September departed SE, and an eclipse male 3rd November.

Blackmoorfoot Res – the only record in the first winter period involved two males on 20th January. Thereafter, there were only two further occurrences: a female-type on 23rd September and three (1 male) on 15th November.

Ringstone Edge Res – three female-types on 20th September.

Boshaw Whams – a female-type on 23rd September.

TEAL *Anas crecca*

Resident breeder (1), 1-20 pairs. Common passage and winter visitor.

There were records from 22 sites (2 more than last year), with proof of breeding stemming from one of these.

Dewsbury SW maintained its stronghold, with good numbers being present throughout the first winter period: from a maximum of 140 in January numbers fell to 88 by mid-February and 52 by late March, but 48 then remained until late April. Records from **Bretton Park**, although sporadic, suggest that birds were present throughout this period: 23 on 3rd March being the maximum. Birds were seen at **Gunthwaite Dam** on a number of days, holding a maximum of 20 on 9th January and 54 on 18th January, and up to 15 were regularly present on the River Calder in the **Horbury/Ossett** area.

Records from other localities during the first winter period were sparse and rarely exceeded more than a handful: **Blackmoorfoot Res.** could only muster up to seven on six dates between 2nd January and 30th March; five were on **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 3rd and 21st January; six were on **Langsett Res.** on 5th February; six were on **Royd Moor Res.** on 17th February; but, in sharp contrast, a flock of c.150 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 22nd February was unexpected. There were very few occurrences between March and May, most of which only involved presumed pairs, but four were on **Scout Dike Res.** on 7th April; ten were at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 17th April, and ten were in the **Wessenden Valley** on 21st April.

Although a number of March/April/May records referred to birds at potential breeding sites, the only confirmation of breeding came from the **Isle of Skye Quarry**, where a single duckling was seen on 16th June.

As is usual, there were far more records in the second half of the year, with birds occurring at 14 localities (18 in 2018). At **Blackmoorfoot Res.** birds were recorded on 24 dates between 19th August and 28th December (56 dates last year) but numbers generally remained low, and the only double figure counts involved ten on 30th October and 22 on 30th November.

At the other locations, visitations tended to be short-lived, but **Boshaw Whams** had up to two regularly between 29th July and 24th September (with 4 on 11th September) and, following the 17 at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 30th October up to 23 then remained throughout most of November. The only other double figure counts involved 11 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 14th September, with 12 departing SE there on 22nd September; 20 at **Langsett Res.** on 28th/29th October; c.20 at **Broadstone Res.** on 20th November; and ten at **Cannon Hall** on 17th December. There were no records from **Dewsbury SW** due to a lack of coverage.

POCHARD *Aythya ferina*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor. Has bred. Red listed.

This nationally declining species was only recorded from three locations (7 in 2018).

Bretton Park – two on 1st January, a male on 29th January, two on 22nd February, four on 27th February, ten on 3rd March and six the following day. There were then no records until three were present on 4th September and, in November, two males on 3rd, four on 7th, two males on 11th, and a single male on 29th.

Blackmoorfoot Res – the increase in records noted last year continued, but this only amounted to eight records, with no birds staying for more than the day. There were only two records in the first half of the year: ten (8 males) on 21st January and a female on 25th February. Thereafter, a male was present on 23rd July with a female-type the following day; a female-type on 22nd August was followed by two males on 6th October, three males on 15th October, and six males on 1st November.

Ingbirchworth Res – the only records involved three males on 25th February and a single male on 21st October.

FERRUGINOUS DUCK *Aythya nyroca*

Rare visitor.

A male at **Bretton Park** on 4th May (PDi *et al.*) was the sixth record for the Club area, the first being as long ago as 1858. Interestingly, Bretton Park also played host to this species in December 1964 and November 1971.

This same bird was reported from four other Yorkshire localities, mainly in the Barnsley area, between late April and late June.

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula*

Resident breeder (1), 5-20 pairs. Common passage and winter visitor.

There were records from 24 localities, a slight increase on last year, but the species continues to be under-recorded at some of the core sites, as the table below indicates.

Maximum numbers at regularly counted sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Blackmoorfoot Res	2	8	6	7	2	2	12	8	12	4	5	3
Ingbirchworth Res	18	16	8	5	10	1	3	2	3	7	5	5
Bretton Park	20	6	11	10	1	nc	4	nc	nc	nc	41	nc
Windy Bank Res	8	8	6	8	2	nc	4	nc	3	8	8	6
Ringstone Edge Res	2	nc	2	2	2	3	4	1	nc	1	nc	nc

Once again, the numbers in the table above give a false impression of occupancy at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. During the first half of the year birds were only recorded on 46 days (35 in 2018 and 32 in 2017) and no birds remained for more than ten consecutive days (usually far less). The second half of the year produced larger assemblages, and fluctuating numbers were present on a near daily basis between 4th July and 30th November, but the only December record involved three (2 males) on 28th.

All other records, with the exceptions of the following, involved less than a handful of birds for short periods only:

Meal Hill Lake – eight on 27th January and 5th April.

Dewsbury SW – six on 24th May.

Ladywood Lakes – 12 on 1st February.

Deanhead Res – one or two, occasionally up to six, were present between 12th April and 10th September. This is in sharp contrast to last year when there was a single record.

Isle of Skye Quarry – a male + female on 18th June was only the third record for the site.

There were two breeding records: a female with a single duckling at **Scout Dike Res.** in late June and a female escorting eight newly hatched ducklings down the side of the road at **Bedding Edge Road, Hepworth** on 20th July.

COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra*

Scarce passage and winter visitor. Red listed.

There were records from five waters (7 in 2018 and 8 in 2017) with Blackmoorfoot Res., as is usual, having the lion's share, although the largest flock (40) was noted at Ringstone Edge Res. Note that birds occurred at three locations over a three day period in late July.

Broadstone Res – a female on 24th April (AK, NWM *et al.*) and two males on 6th July (II, TM, DMW).

Blackmoorfoot Res – there were six records (5 in 2018). There were two spring records: a male on 7th April (GK *et al.*) and a female on 24th May (MLD, GBS). Later in the year, two males were present on 27th July (MLD, GBS), a male on 14th August (SP), five males on 15th August (MLD, GBS *et al.*), and a male and immature departed W at 10.35hrs. on 4th October (MLD, GBS).

Baitings Res – eight (6 males) on 28th July (DF).

Winscar Res – eight males on 29th July (NWM, MW, MCW).

Ringstone Edge Res – 40 (37 males) departed W at 19.45hrs. on 5th August (AC, JM, AT) and an unsexed bird on 14th August (PDy).

GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula*

Uncommon winter visitor.

The fluctuating fortunes in the number of wintering birds continues. There were records from nine locations, a decrease of seven on last year, but 50% more than 2017. As in 2018, visitations were usually short-lived, although a single remained on Ringstone Edge Res. for three months from 20th January, two were present on Ingbirchworth Res. between 30th March and 19th April, and 11 remained on the River Calder at Millbank Thornhill from early November to the year end.

The only records during the first winter period at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** involved a female on 6th January, one or two birds on six February dates (all for 1 day only), two females on 7th April, and a single female on 11th April. There were far more records during the second winter period, with some birds remaining for up to six consecutive dates, but this only amounted to up to four birds (usually 1 or 2) on 34 dates between 15th October and 28th December.

The Ingbirchworth group of reservoirs, unlike last year, were once again favoured, especially during the first winter period. Two were on **Scout Dike Res.** on 24th March, with a female-type there on 28th October; a male + female-type remained at **Ingbirchworth Res.** between 30th March

and 19th April and, later in the year, four (2 males) were present on 30th/31st October; and a male + female-type were present at **Broadstone Res.** from 22nd – 24th April.

Elsewhere, a female-type was on **Harden Res.** on 1st January; singles were present on **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 3rd, 9th and 14th January, and then daily from 21st January to at least 20th April; the River Calder at **Horbury SW** had, in January, 16 on 4th, five on 8th, six on 18th, and 14 on 24th, with 22 there on 1st February; a female-type was at **Langsett Res.** on 20th October; and 11 remained on the River Calder **Millbank Thornhill** between 2nd November and the year end.

SMEW *Mergellus albellus*
Rare winter visitor.

A redhead was on the River Calder at **Horbury SW** on 4th January (DT) and a first-year male (identified from photographs of the open wing) was present on **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 3rd February (MLD, GBS *et al.*).

GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser*

Common passage and winter visitor. Has bred in small numbers since 2007.

There were records from 21 localities (25 in 2018 and 29 in 2017) and Blackmoorfoot Res. now appears to have become the stronghold for the species. Although there were few records from **Bretton Park**, they were evenly distributed throughout the winter periods, suggesting that they may have been a permanent feature at this time. There were no records during the summer months, other than a female with six ducklings at **Elland GP** in mid-May.

The table below includes the monthly maxima from Blackmoorfoot Res.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Blackmoorfoot Res	7	8	5	2	0	0	3	3	3	6	11	9

At **Blackmoorfoot Res.** up to eight (but usually less than 5) were present on a near daily basis between 1st January and 9th April, although occupancy became rather sporadic after mid-March (246 bird/days). There were then no records until three juveniles were present on 25th July and three redheads on 24th August. Thereafter, up to 11, but usually less than six, were present on a further 52 dates between 12th September and the year end (211 bird/days). The annual number of bird/days totalled 463 (395 in 2018).

Records stemmed from 19 locations during the first half of the year, but most of these were short-lived and, other than the Blackmoorfoot Res. occurrences mentioned above, most assemblages were of less than four birds, the following being the exceptions: five at **Bretton Park** on 1st January, with six there the following week and seven on 27th February; ten on the River Calder near **Earlsheaton** on 1st March; nine females on **March Haigh Res.** on 2nd April; and five on the River Calder at **Ladywood Lakes** on 9th May.

In the second half of the year records only stemmed from 12 localities, most of which had held birds earlier in the year, but the number of birds present only reached double figures at two locations (Blackmoorfoot Res. (see above) and Bretton Park). Most records were of a short-lived duration, but a redhead was seen on a near daily basis at **Boshaw Whams** between late August and late September. The only assemblages in excess of three were as follows: nine (7 flew S and

2 N) at **Harden Quarries** on 17th October; eight at **Bretton Park** on 7th November, with 13 there on 8th December; nine on the River Calder at **Ladywood Lakes** on 6th December; and six at **Elland GP** on 22nd December.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator*

Rare to scarce passage and winter visitor.

There were four records:

A male was present on **March Haigh Res.** on 22nd March (DT); three redheads arrived at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** at 12.00hrs. on 5th October (MLD, GK, GBS *et al.*); a male flew high to the W over **Wards End Farm, Marsden** at 08.15hrs. on 27th October (DWS); and two redheads were present at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 6th November (PDy).

These are the first records in the Club area since a long-staying individual in the Ingbirchworth area in October 2016. The Blackmoorfoot record is the first for the reservoir since a redhead was present on 12th November 2014.

RED GROUSE *Lagopus lagopus*

Resident breeder (3), 100-300 pairs.

There were records from all open moorland locations within the recording area. Although birds were reported from 12 sites, the same as in 2018, there was no evidence of breeding (5 sites in 2018). Despite the species being highly sedentary no records were received during the months of May, August or November and the only double figure counts were of 11 at **Snailsden Res.** on 22nd June and 24 on **Langsett Moor** on 15th April with 15 there on 26th October.

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE *Alectoris rufa*

Resident breeder (1), 5-20 pairs.

As stated in the 2018 report “It is obviously unknown how many shooting syndicates are releasing this species in the Club recording area, but... it appears that it may be widespread.” Considering the number of records from Meltham and adjacent areas, this must surely be a major release point. Birds were recorded from 21 localities (23 in 2018, 17 in 2017 and 7 in 2016), though six of these were additional to last year.

Rastrick – the single present since 17th December 2018 remained until 19th February.

Meltham – 14 were feeding in a garden on 14th January with two doing likewise on 14th March and eight were feeding close to The Travellers Rest public house on 18th January.

Cawthorne – three at Barnby Hall on 10th February.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – it is thought that many of the birds seen in the area, as mentioned above, are released for the Cupwith Moor shoot. Birds were seen in all months except January and November. Following a single on 25th February, one or two were seen on nine dates in March and then daily throughout April. In May up to four were seen on a near daily basis but there was a decrease in June and July with no more than two being seen on nine dates, although this did include some ‘singing’ males. It was a similar picture in August/September, with no more than four being seen on nine dates. October saw a slight increase, perhaps indicating a recent release, with six on 2nd, seven on 3rd, 12th and 18th, four on 27th and five on 31st. The only December records involved five on 12th and six on 19th.

Brow Grains, Meltham – two on 26th February.

Dove Stone Res – a single on 27th February.

Whitley Common – two on 18th March and 6th and 23rd April.

Ingbirchworth Res – two on 18th March and 1st May. A dead individual was found in the reservoir on 1st June.

Blackmoorfoot – two in the SW corner overflow field on 22nd March were the start of several months of residency. The SW corner overflow field or fields to the west then played host to this species until 14th October. Initially two were present, only occasionally three or four, but from mid-September up to eight were seen. There was no direct evidence of breeding, although the increase in numbers following the breeding season may indicate otherwise. The only record thereafter involved four in a field to the west on 2nd December. There had only been four previous records from this well-watched locality.

March Haigh Res – two on 27th March.

Butterley Res – up to 10 were present throughout April.

Ringstone Edge Res – a single on 12th April.

Moselden – one on 21st April.

Ingbirchworth Res – two on 1st May.

Oldfield – two on 7th May.

Cartworth Moor – two on 7th May.

Thurstonland – two on 26th May.

Kirkheaton – one on 9th June.

Crow Edge – a single along Bedding Edge Road on 18th June.

Gunthwaite Dam – a single on 17th July.

Broadstone Res – one on 16th August.

GREY PARTRIDGE *Perdix perdix*

Resident breeder (2), 50-100 pairs. Red listed.

Records were received from just 13 locations (16 in 2018 and 19 in 2017). Apart from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (see below) there were only three records involving more than two individuals: four at **Whitley Common** on 18th November, four at **New Mill** on 29th December and three at **Brow Grains, Meltham** on the same date. There was no proof of breeding despite some birds being present during the season.

With nine records from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** it was a similar picture to last year. Most records involved two birds in the SW corner overflow field, but these were only seen on single dates in February, March and April, three in May, and one in October, but nine were present on 15th October and 10th November. The true status of this secretive species can be difficult to access, and distraction display witnessed in late May strongly suggests that they had bred undetected.

QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix*

Scarce to rare summer visitor and occasional breeder.

Two records were received, both of singing males: singles at **Deer Hill** on 1st June (TD) and **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 21st July (HQ).

PHEASANT *Phasianus colchicus*

Resident breeder (3), 200-500 pairs.

Records were received from 34 localities (28 in 2018 and 41 in 2017). Once again the species was grossly under-recorded and at only four sites were birds noted as being present throughout the year. These were **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, **Ingbirchworth Res.**, **Cooper-Binns Lane**, **Holmfirth** and **Wards End Farm, Marsden**.

The only double figure counts involved low double figures throughout the year at **Wards End Farm**, 17 at **Cawthorne** on 26th October, and 30 at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 30th October. Although there was no direct proof of breeding, territory holding males were reported as follows: **Broadstone Res.** (2), **Ingbirchworth Res.** (3), **Royd Moor Res.** (7), **Scout Dike Res.** (2), and **Cliff Wood** (1).

RED-THROATED DIVER *Gavia stellata*

Rare visitor.

This species was recorded in the area for the third consecutive year.

A single flew low to the W over **Wards End Farm, Marsden** at 10.55hrs. on 18th October (DWS).

LITTLE GREBE *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Partial migrant breeder (1), 5-15 pairs. Red listed.

Records were only received from 21 localities (25 in 2018 and 22 in 2017) with breeding occurring at four of these and birds holding a territory at another.

Ingbirchworth Res – present throughout the year, with two pairs holding breeding territories, but only one produced young (2 newly hatched young on 21st August). Number usually remained below four, but at least ten were present on 23rd September and 11 on 30th/31st October.

Meal Hill Lake – a single was present throughout the year with three on 18th September and two on 25th October.

Horbury SW – five on the River Calder on 4th and 18th January.

Ladywood Lakes – a single on 17th January.

Broadstone Res – a pair bred and fledged two young, the pair being present from at least 26th February to 5th September.

Elland GP – a single on 28th February.

Blackmoorfoot Res – with only three records the abysmal showing, apparent since 2012, continued: singles were present on 19th March, 24th July and 2nd September.

March Haigh Res – a single on 27th March.

Deanhead Res – singles on 11th/12th April and 8th September.

Langsett Res – a pair bred and fledged two young.

Scout Dike Res – a pair held a breeding territory.

Gunthwaite Dam – there were only five records: two on 17th April, 22nd May and 17th July, one on 14th August, and two on 11th September.

Royd Moor Res – two on 17th April and a single on 23rd April.

Bretton Park – there were only five records: four were seen on 6th May and 26th July, seven on 4th September, and two on 9th October and 29th November.

Horbury Strands/Wyke – a single on the River Calder on 18th May.

Redbrook Res – a single on 17th June.

Boshaw Whams – a juvenile was present from 8th – 13th July, and an adult on 14th July and 20th and 23rd August. Thereafter, one or two were present on a near daily basis between 10th and 24th September.

Harden Res – a pair with an unrecorded number of chicks in late July.

Windy Bank Res – singles on 1st and 14th September.

Dewsbury SW – three on the River Calder between mid-October and the year end.

Digley Res – a single on 30th October.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus*

Partial migrant breeder (1), 5-20 pairs.

There were records from 13 waters, a slight increase on last year, but at some of these occurrences were very short-lived. Breeding occurred at three locations and involved a total of six pairs.

There were more occurrences during the first winter period at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** than normal, with one or two birds being present on 20 January dates. There were then no records until two appeared on 13th February, after which birds were seen daily until 19th October. Although numbers fluctuated, the highest assemblages were all in spring/summer, but this never exceeded the eight on 29th June (see table below). A pair attempted to breed on two occasions, but both failed at the egg stage. The only records following the ‘residents’ departure involved a single from 23rd – 27th and 29th October, and two on 3rd November. A single which departed high to the N at 10.10hrs. on 19th February was unusual.

The monthly maxima are shown below:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	3	6	7	5	8	7	5	4	5	2	0

Bretton Park – apparently present throughout the year, but no breeding attempt occurred. Indeed, an observer on 6th May could only find a single bird, prompting him to comment ‘an individual in breeding plumage on the Lower Lake was, surprisingly, the only bird seen’. Numbers were generally small, with no more than four until nine were present on 9th October, 22 on 7th November and six on 29th November.

Ingbirchworth Res – present throughout the year with three pairs raising a total of five young. Numbers generally remained low, but at least 11 were present on 6th April, 16 on 19th April, 13 on 22nd June, and 11 on 19th September.

Scout Dike Res – present in small numbers throughout most of the year, with two pairs each raising two young.

Boshaw Whams – a single on 3rd March, two on 8th March and one on 7th May. Later in the year an adult was seen on several dates between 10th August and 7th September, and a juvenile was present on 13th/14th September.

Ringstone Edge – up to three were present between 8th March and 25th August, with five on 14th May. Unlike last year, there was no breeding attempt.

Elland GP – singles on 2nd and 10th/11th April.

Broadstone Res – two on 19th and 22nd April, three on 24th April, two on 22nd June and 21st August, and a single on 5th and 11th September.

Royd Moor Res – two on 23rd April and 7th July.

Black Moss Res – a single on 25th May.

Langsett Res – two on 9th June.

Baitings Res – four on 28th July.

Winscar Res – a single on 19th September.

GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea*

Resident breeder, increased to (2), 20-70 pairs.

Records were received from 43 locations, a similar number to the previous three years. Once again birds were recorded from all corners of the Club area, with records spanning every month and most involving overflying singles, the only exceptions being three which flew W at **Harden Quarries** on 19th September, with three flying N there on 21st October, and four which flew W at **Scout Dike Res.** on 23rd October.

Away from **Blackmoorfoot** (see below) and the breeding areas, the only gatherings in excess of two involved six at **Horbury Strands/Wyke** on 11th January and four at **Elland GP** on 26th February. There were a number of garden records including one feeding from the pond at **New Mill** in June and birds were regularly seen in built up areas and close to the town centre.

Although records spanned the whole year at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, birds were in short supply during both winter periods, especially the second. Birds were seen on a total of 182 days (207 in 2018 and 221 in 2017) but numbers rarely exceeded five (usually less than 3), the following being the exceptions: nine on 6th June and seven on both 9th June and 19th July (3 present + 4 arrived from the SE at 09.40hrs.).

Breeding was confirmed from the same four localities as last year: three pairs bred at **Scamonden Water** (2 less than the previous 4 years), eight pairs bred at **Cromwell Bottom** (1 less than last year), ten pairs bred at **Healey House** (3 less than last year), and 63 pairs bred at **Bretton Park** (4 less than last year but nevertheless still 12 more than 2017).

GREAT WHITE EGRET *Ardea alba*

Rare visitor.

Once again the species was recorded from two locations, continuing the increasing frequency of records, making these the ninth, tenth and eleventh for the Club area.

Bretton Park – the single present from 28th October 2018 remained to 21st January (DBu, RM, MCW *et al.*). A single on 28th January could well have been the same bird (DH).

Elland GP – a single was photographed on the River Calder on 13th July (JM).

LITTLE EGRET *Egretta garzetta*

Rare visitor.

Sightings this year were received from eight locations, a similar number to the previous two years. The long-staying bird at Dewsbury SW was interesting as this is the first time that one has taken up 'residency' for such an extended period.

Bretton Park – there was an impressive assemblage of seven on 1st January (DBu, RM) but only three remained on 5th January (DD). A single was then seen on 3rd March (BBSG).

Dewsbury SW – a single on 8th April remained until the year end (JH).

Ingbirchworth Res – a loose party of four flew E on 11th April (DBu).

Horbury Strands/Wyke – at least two were present on 18th May (DHP).

Boshaw Whams – singles were present on 4th July (II), 14th July (DHP, NWM) and 24th August (DHP).

Wards End Farm, Marsden – singles flew W on 12th July, 12th November and 3rd December.

Meltham Grange – a single along the catchment on 2nd December (TD). This was presumably the same bird noted later in the day at Panna Mill Dam.

Panna Mill Dam – a single during the late afternoon on 2nd December. The bird was seen again the following day when it was present in a field off Slaithwaite Road before it departed W at 11.00hrs. (DMP). This was probably the same bird seen over Wards End Farm a few minutes later.

GANNET *Morus bassanus*

Rare visitor.

A juvenile which flew NW over **Silkstone Common** at 11.30hrs. on 15th November (RH) was presumably the same as that seen flying W over Midhope Res., Sheffield at 14.00hrs.

This is the first record in the Club area since an immature was found entangled in a fence at Crimble Clogh on 25th October 2008 and the ninth since 1914.

SHAG *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Rare visitor. Red listed.

An adult flew W over **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 3rd April (DWS).

CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Common passage and winter visitor, increasing.

There were records from 31 sites, six more than last year but seven down on the 2017 figure. The number of dated records was up to 132 as opposed to the 117 of last year but still well down on the 187 of the year before. Although the population of this species is increasing nationally we do still get yearly fluctuations in our area and this must be at least partially due to the many records which are simply sent in as birds being ‘present’. Records in this format make it impossible to carry out a more accurate evaluation. Although records indicate that the species is still doing well in our area, maximum counts were down on last year, probably due in no small part to the difficulty of carrying out regular counts at **Bretton Park**. Flyover singles were seen over all parts of our area: **Huddersfield, Fixby, Crosland Moor, Armitage Bridge, Honley, Slaithwaite, New Mill, and Digley**. During the first winter period one or two were regularly seen atop the **Huddersfield University** building on Manchester Road and three were present there on 3rd March.

Bretton Park – for the reason described above, records were limited and, although they spanned all months, suggesting that they may have been present throughout the year, numbers rarely exceeded two; the five on 5th January, seven on 11th March, and five on 3rd November being the only exceptions.

Ingbirchworth Res – one or two were present throughout most of the year with three on a few dates during the second half of the year and four on 21st September.

Blackmoorfoot Res – birds were seen on a total of 143 days (130 in 2018 and 197 in 2017) with records spanning all months. The months with the highest number of records were January (18

days), March (19), October (21), and November (20), with all other months holding birds on 15 or fewer days. Numbers involved rarely exceeded five, but eight (an adult + six immatures flew SW at 10.45hrs. and an adult W at 11.15hrs.) on 17th August, seven flew W at 10.45hrs. On 14th September, and six (three adults flew S at 09.45hrs. plus an adult W at 09.55hrs. + an adult and immature arrived at 10.10hrs.) on 14th October. Of the 20 flyover records, 11 involved birds flying W (the usual direction), five S, two N, and singles SW and NW. The total number of bird days reached 266 (245 in 2018 and 396 in 2017).

Scout Dike Res – one or two were present throughout most of the year with seven being present on 22nd October, ten on 27th December and at least 17 on 30th December.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a single flew NE on 2nd January. A total of 39 then flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 18 dates between 4th March and 24th October, with a maximum of eight W on 2nd October.

Langsett Res – singles were present on 2nd January, 11th April, 26th May, 9th June, and 3rd October.

Elland GP – eight were sitting on a pylon on 3rd January, three were present on 26th February, 16 were on a pylon on 28th November and six were seen on 22nd December.

Horbury Strands/Wyke – three on 4th January.

Ladywood Lakes – there were only three records, all in January: two on 10th, a single on 17th and nine on 29th.

Horbury – three on 11th January and six on both 24th January and 1st February.

Dewsbury SW – 18 on 17th March, eight on 7th May, two on 24th May, and 15 on 21st November.

Broadstone Res – a single on 20th March and four on 21st August.

March Haigh Res – four on 24th March and a single on 7th July.

Brownhill Res – a single on 13th April.

Scammonden Water – singles were present on 16th April and 10th May.

Royd Moor Res – six on 17th April, singles on 23rd April and 7th July, ten on 12th September and 11 on 15th September.

Ringstone Edge Res – singles were seen on eight dates in May and June, with three there on 25th July and two on 28th August.

Longroyd Bridge – four landed on the canal on 6th May.

Harden Quarries – a total of 24 flew over in various directions between 13th August and 29th October, with a maximum of six on 16th September.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 14 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on eight dates between 21st August and 27th October, with a maximum of four (3 W + 1 S) on 21st August.

Windy Bank Res – four on 30th September, then singles on 31st October and four dates in November.

Deer Hill Res – a single on 30th December.

OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus*

Rare passage visitor, increasing.

There were nine records, four more than the previous two years. The timing of the two on 30th March suggests that only a single bird was involved.

Winscar Res – one flew N at 15.40hrs. on 30th March (NWM).

Ringstone Edge – a single flew N at 16.40hrs. on 30th March (JB).

Wards End Farm, Marsden – two flew NE on 3rd April, one at 9.45hrs. and the other at 10.15hrs. Later in the year one flew low to the S at 15.55hrs. on 27th August (DWS).

Crosland Moor – one flew N at 12.55hrs. on 20th May (GK).

Harden Quarries – one flew SE at 08.10hrs. on 2nd September (DHP, NWM).

Bentley Springs – a single was mobbed by Carrion Crows as it flew W at 09.30hrs. on 20th September (DBu).

Pule Hill, Marsden – a juvenile U-turned from the E at 11.25hrs. on 30th September (JMP, EDS).

Number of Osprey records in the Huddersfield area in the last ten years:

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
1	2	5	5	8	2	10	5	5	9

HONEY-BUZZARD *Pernis apivorus*

Rare passage visitor.

There were two records, the first since 2015.

Wards End Farm – a single flew low NW whilst being mobbed by Carrion Crows on 2nd May (DWS).

Blackmoorfoot Res – a single from the E turned SW over Orange Wood at 11.05hrs. on 25th May (MLD, DMP, SP, GBS *et al.*). This is the third record for the reservoir, the others involved singles on 2nd August 2005 and 20th September 2008.

SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus*

Resident breeder (2), 50-100 pairs.

Birds were reported from 45 locations, eight down from the 53 of last year. Despite this the total number of dated records was up on last year from 211 to 250 this year. Once again many records were simply sent in as birds being ‘present’ or ‘regular’, thereby making it impossible to reach a very accurate comparison. As is to be expected, the majority of sightings were of singles, occasionally two, with three at **Harden Quarries** on 12th September being the only exception. Birds were seen displaying at just two localities and no actual proof of breeding was provided though there were many records of juvenile birds following the breeding season.

There were a good number of records of birds hunting prey in gardens with **Hepworth, Holmfirth, Fixby, Lockwood, Meltham, Skelmanthorpe, Oldfield, Marsden** and **New Mill** being just some of the favoured locations. This year, although a number of birds were seen with prey the only confirmed species being taken were Blackbird and Woodpigeon.

Birds were seen during all months at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, but occurrences in the first half of the year were sporadic and never exceeded six records per month. With two birds present on a number of occasions, the total number of bird/days amounted to 87 (64 in 2018 and 86 in 2017).

Dated records were distributed throughout the year as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
20	19	15	18	14	8	17	35	43	27	21	13

GOSHAWK *Accipiter gentilis*

Sporadic breeder (1), 0-1 pairs. Scarce visitor.

There were two records from different locations, both in the east of the area: an adult male in April and a first-winter female in March.

MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus*

Rare passage visitor.

A good year after the decrease of the previous two, with the number of records more than doubling the seven of last year.

Flouch – a ‘cream-crown’ flew NE on 21st April (RJB).

Wards End Farm, Marsden – there were four records: a female flew W at 10.45hrs. on 3rd May, a ‘cream-crown’ flew low to the E at 09.17hrs. on 25th September, a ‘cream-crown’ flew low to the W at 11.40hrs. on 2nd October, and a ‘cream-crown’ flew E at first light on 6th November (DWS).

Langsett Moors – a ‘cream-crown’ on 5th May (SG).

Holme Moss – an adult female was photographed as it flew N on 28th May (GMBRG).

Windleden – a ‘cream-crown’ on 25th August (BBSG).

Deer Hill Res – a juvenile flew NE on 26th August (DMP).

Harden Quarries – a group of three ‘cream-crowns’ flew S at 07.20hrs. on 29th August (NWM, DHP).

Blackmoorfoot Res – a juvenile flew W over the reservoir at 10.40hrs. on 2nd September (MLD, DMP, GBS, TW).

Broadstone Res – a ‘cream-crown’ on 19th September (CB).

Wessenden Head – a ‘cream-crown’ flew NW on 13th November (DMP).

Number of Marsh Harrier records in the Huddersfield area in the last ten years:

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
4	4	10	10	7	2	16	9	7	15

HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus*

Rare to scarce passage and winter visitor. Red listed.

It was an exceptional year for the species, though it is always difficult to assess the number of individuals involved especially as all but one record were of ‘ringtails’.

Isle of Skye Quarry – one was seen briefly on 24th March (DHP).

Golcar – an unusual garden record of one flying towards Scapegoat Hill at 12.00hrs. on 19th April (JP).

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a single was hawking between Buckstones and Close Moss on 22nd May and one flew W at 10.20hrs. on 14th June. Later in the year one flew low to the S on 6th October and during the same month singles were hunting over the moor on 20th - 22nd, and 27th/28th. A single was hunting over March Flatts on 13th November and finally one flew W at 10.25hrs. on 30th December (DWS). How many individuals were involved in these sightings is obviously open to conjecture.

Cook’s Study Hill – a single on 23rd July (DJ).

Harden Quarries – one departed WNW on 10th September (NWM, DMP).

Wessenden Valley – an adult male flew S on 15th October (EDS) and a ‘ringtail’ hunting over Wessenden Lodge on 22nd October (DMP).

Meltham Grange – a single on 11th December (TD).

Number of Hen Harrier records in the Huddersfield area in the last ten years.

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
5	5	3	8	7	9	8	9	8	17

RED KITE *Milvus milvus*

Rare to scarce visitor. Increasing.

There were only 27 records, an alarming drop from the 54 of last year. The majority of records, as is usual, involved fly-over singles.

Silkstone Common – the single present from 27th October 2018 was seen on most dates until 2nd February (BBSG).

Oxspring – a single flew SW on 20th January (DH) and one was present on 24th August (CB).

Langsett – a single on 15th February (SS).

Blackmoorfoot Res – there were seven records, a drop of three on last years’ largest ever annual total: one flew W over Orange Wood at 11.00hrs. on 30th March (MLD, GK, GBS *et al.*); a single flew N along the E bank at 11.05hrs. on 25th May (MLD, SP *et al.*); in June, one flew SW over Orange Wood at 11.00hrs. on 1st (TD), one did likewise at 11.05hrs. on 3rd (MLD); two were circling over the fields to the west at 10.05hrs. on 10th (MLD, GG, GBS), and a single circling over Meltham Cop departed S at 13.05hrs. on 22nd (TD). The only other record involved a single circling over the NE corner at 15.00hrs. on 17th October (JL).

Huddersfield – a single near Kirklees College drifted towards the town centre on 3rd March (S & HC).

Pule Hill, Marsden – one circling with Buzzards on 25th March (DWS).

Deer Hill – a single flew N on 7th April (DMP, SP).

Wilshaw – a single on 12th April (SS).

Yateholme – one circling over the area for much of the morning of 18th May (II).

Broadstone Res – two flew SE on 20th May (DMW).

Ingbirchworth Res – a single flew E on 20th May (JMcL).

Holme – one circling over the village on 24th May (CB, MG).

Netherton – a single flew S at 18.00hrs. on 24th May (SK).

Shepley – one flew N at 19.30hrs. on 24th May (DB).

RSPB Dove Stone – singles on 4th July (S & HC) and 30th July (GMBRG).

Scout Dike Res – one flew W on 5th July (DMW).

Hassocks Lane, Meltham – a single drifted N on 10th July (DMP).

Hepworth – one flew SW on 15th July (HQ).

Bradshaw Moor – a single on 14th September (DHP).

Wessenden Valley – one moved slowly up the valley on 29th October (DMP, SP).

Number of Red Kite reported in the Huddersfield area during the last five years:

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
11	23	31	54	27

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD *Buteo lagopus*

Rare winter visitor.

A juvenile was watched from **Wards End Farm, Marsden** as it flew low SW from Buckstones at 10.55hrs. on 4th December (DWS).

BUZZARD *Buteo buteo*

The most widely distributed raptor of the area, resident breeder since 2004 (1 pair), now increasing.

Records were received from 60 locations compared to the 41 of last year and dated records were correspondingly up from the 503 of the previous year to 616. However, as has been previously pointed out a large proportion of records were still undated and marked as ‘present’ or ‘seen regularly’ or ‘throughout the year’ thereby making an accurate figure impossible to achieve. Four pairs bred, an increase of one on last year, and probable breeding was reported from a further five sites. These figures are probably an underestimate, however, as even such a highly visible species as this can be very ‘secretive’ around nesting sites.

As is usual now, due to the number of records received it is impractical to list them all and the following locations are where four or more were reported.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – up to three were seen throughout the year on an almost daily basis, with four being present on 25th March.

Brockholes – birds were seen regularly with a maximum of four on 10th February

Blackmoorfoot – birds were recorded on 73 occasions (71 in 2018 and 57 in 2017) with records spanning every month of the year. The majority of records involved up to three individuals (usually 1 or 2) but four were circling over Edge Moor on 11th February and 19th and 25th May, and four were present on 24th August.

Yateholme – up to four were seen regularly, particularly in the early part of the year.

Broadstone Res – four on 23rd February.

Holme Moss – five on 27th February.

Rastrick – six on 20th March was the highest of the many counts coming from this location.

Ossett – four on 30th March.

Little Don Valley – regular counts from here provided maxima of six on 21st/22nd April and at least five on 5th May,

Ingbirchworth Res – four on 20th March and six on 1st May.

Digley Res – four on 4th May.

Bretton Park – four on 6th May.

Harden Quarries – in September, four were present on 5th, six on 10th and four on 13th.

Windy Bank Wood – a maximum of four on 13th September.

Thick Hollins – four on 17th October.

Scout Dike Res – six on 28th October.

Dated records were distributed throughout the year as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
33	59	99	62	50	34	30	41	77	63	24	46

WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus*

Resident/migrant breeder (1). Mainly a scarce winter visitor.

Unlike last year there was no evidence of breeding and records were only received from two localities (4 in 2018):

Bretton Park – singles on 21st January (MCW), 4th September (DJ) and 18th November (DHP).

Healey Mills/Kerry's NR – at least two calling birds on 24th January (DHP).

MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus*

Resident breeder (3), 200-400 pairs.

There were records from 22 locations, the same as last year, but a sharp decrease on the 34 of 2017. Birds, as is usual, were present throughout the year at several sites, but evidence of breeding was only forthcoming from ten of these (1 more than 2018). On a negative note, no breeding was reported from Bretton Park, a favoured locality in the past. As in the previous two years, numbers rarely reached more than half a dozen, the only exceptions being c.20 at **Bretton Park** on 5th January and 3rd February.

The observer at Lark's House, **Hepworth** reported two birds in his garden on 2nd February, commenting that 'this is the only time I've seen them here even though they are present nearby at Meal Hill Lake'.

Breeding records were as follows:

Gunthwaite Dam – present throughout the year with a pair fledging three young.

Blackmoorfoot Res – up to four were present until late September, but records thereafter only consisted of singles on 17th October and 1st – 3rd December. Even though three newly hatched chicks were seen along the W bank in mid-July, the high-water level made it impossible to determine the eventual outcome.

Ringstone Edge Res – one or two were present throughout the year with a pair fledging one young.

Armitage Bridge – a pair bred.

Ingbirchworth Res – up to four were present throughout the year with two pairs holding breeding territories, one of which fledged two young.

Broadstone Res – a pair held a breeding territory.

Royd Moor Res – at least three pairs bred.

Scout Dike Res – at least three pairs held breeding territories.

Huddersfield Narrow Canal – a pair with two young on the canal near the University in late May.

Turnbridge – a pair with two young on the Narrow Canal in mid-July.

COOT *Fulica atra*

Resident breeder (2), 30-50 pairs. Uncommon to common winter visitor.

This grossly under-recorded species was only reported from 12 locations, the same as last year. It is always difficult to interpret records if there are none – in the table below it is unknown whether the 'no counts' indicated for July, August, November and December from Ingbirchworth Res. are real, or were birds genuinely absent?

The only double figure counts involved up to 20 at **Bretton Park** during the first winter period, with 31 there on 3rd November and 91 on 7th November; 12 at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 9th January; and 12 at **Meal Hill Lake** on 27th September.

Monthly maxima from the only site with regular, although somewhat sporadic, counts:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Ingbirchworth	2	7	8	8	6	6	nc	nc	3	1	nc	nc

Although two pairs bred at **Gunthwaite Dam** (see below) birds were totally absent from late October to the year end. A single on **Brun Clough Res.** on 14th November was unusual as this is a rare bird in the Marsden area.

Breeding was reported from the following locations:

Windy Bank Res – up to four were present throughout the year and two pairs bred.

Ingbirchworth Res – three pairs held breeding territories, but no young were seen.

Broadstone Res – a pair held a breeding territory.

Scout Dike Res – a pair fledged three young.

Greenhead Park – a pair fledged two young on the pond.

Gunthwaite Dam – two pairs bred.

Bretton Park – a pair bred.

Ossett Spa SW – a pair with four young in mid-May.

At **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, where the species has been in decline for over a decade, there were only three records: singles on 20th June and 2nd and 14th October.

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus*

Migrant breeder since 1999 (2 pairs) with a recent marked increase in breeding numbers. Uncommon passage visitor, increasing.

There were records from 25 locations, one more than last year, with breeding taking place at five of these (same as last year).

The first returning birds, as is usual, were recorded in February, and involved singles (unless otherwise stated) at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 3rd, 16th – 21st, with two on 25th; **Scout Dike Res.** on 5th; **Langsett Res.** on 5th, with five there on 21st and seven on 24th; **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 14th, 22nd and 28th; two at **Broadstone Res.** on 15th, with five on 23rd, eight on 26th and 19 on 28th; six at **Winscar Res.** on 17th, with eight there on 18th, 17 on 21st and 14 on 28th; **Broadstone Heath** on 18th, with two there on 20th, five on 23rd and nine on 25th; six at **Digley Res.** on 18th; **Boshaw Whams** on 22nd; and six at **Dewsbury SW** on 27th.

During the following four months, March to June, birds continued to be recorded from most of the above locations but also appeared at a further seven sites. Most records involved no more than two individuals, only occasionally up to six, but March produced some larger assemblages: eight were present at **Broadstone Res.** on 8th/9th; 21 were foraging in a field adjacent to **Digley Res.** on 11th but only eight remained the following week, and a flock of 18 were on the dam wall on 23rd; 16 were in fields off **Bird's Edge Lane**, **Maythorn** on 15th; and seven were on **Broadstone Heath** on 20th with eight there on 22nd.

A number of sites, including the reservoirs at **Ringstone Edge** and **Blackmoorfoot**, held birds throughout the summer months, but confirmation of breeding was only obtained from the following locations:

Winscar Res – two pairs bred, each hatching three chicks, but only two remained in each brood by late May.

Digley Res – a pair hatched two chicks.

Langsett – a pair hatched four chicks.

Isle of Skye Quarry – a pair present from 20th March subsequently bred at the usual site on the cliff face and showed much agitation during June, indicating that young were present.

Blakeley Res – a pair reared two young.

July and August records were received from 11 sites, most of which had held birds earlier in the year. Numbers rarely exceeded four, but eight were present at **Boshaw Whams** on 8th, 12th and 31st July, with ten there on 1st August; ten were at **Broadstone Res.** on 9th July, with eight there on 19th July, 29 on 22nd July, and eight on 10th August; 26 were in a field near **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 21st July; and six were at **Digley Res.** on 1st August.

With the exceptions of the few August records mentioned above, the only other records during this month involved three at **Boshaw Whams** on 5th, and up to four on a daily basis at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** until the last (3) on 15th.

AVOCET *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Rare visitor.

Two on the N bank of **Blackmoorfoot Res.** departed high to the W at 10.40hrs. on 13th August (MLD, SP *et al.*).

This is the sixth confirmed record for the Club area and the 221st bird species to be recorded from the reservoir. The previous records were in March 2005, September 2010, March 2014, August 2015 and March 2017.

LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus*

Partial migrant breeder, decreased to (3), 100-500 pairs. Numerous passage/winter visitor. Red listed.

January, as last year, produced very few treble figure assemblages. Birds were only reported from eight locations, with the only groups in excess of 50 being as follows: 156 at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 3rd, then 120-160 daily to the month end; 90 at **Ringstone Edge Res.** and 62 at **Broadstone Heath** on 6th; at least 50 flew N over **Rastrick** on 9th, with 100 N there on 14th, and c.70 doing likewise on 19th. February produced some larger assemblages, but birds were still restricted to nine sites: numbers at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** fluctuated daily, reaching a maximum of 90 on 4th; c.200 were present at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 6th; c.150 at **Maythorn Slack** on 10th; 182 at **Harden Moss** on 13th; and c.170 at **Broadstone Res.** and c.50 at **Whitley Common** on 23rd. Numbers in March began to fall as migrants departed the area, but at least 450 were present at **Whitley Common** on 4th, with 30 there on 20th; 40 were seen at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 8th; at least 50 were at **Whitley Edge** on 18th; and c.30 were on **Whitley Airfield** on 20th.

Breeding was widely reported, with records from more locations than last year: **Whitley Common** (c.15 pairs bred), **Harden Moss** ('several' pairs bred successfully), **Langsett** (five pairs bred), **Barmings**, **Langsett Moor** (2 pairs bred), **Isle of Skye Quarry** (at least 2 pairs bred), **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (1 pair bred), **Moselden** (1 pair bred), **Winscar Res.** (8 pairs in the general area), **Deer Hill End Road** (1 pair bred), **Garside Hey**, **Marsden** (1 pair bred), **Hade Edge** (1 pair bred), **Digley** (at least 1 pair bred), **Law Bottom**, **Carlecotes** (3 pairs bred), **Snape Res.** ('several' well-grown young), **Winscar** (1 pair bred), **Broadstone Res.** (2 pairs held territories),

Whitley Edge (3 pairs held territories), **Ingbirchworth Res.** (2 pairs held territories), and **Mossley/Doubting, Penistone** (5 pairs held territories).

The post-breeding assemblage at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, which tends to develop earlier than at most other sites, began in mid-June and had reached 70 by the month end. Although numbers then fluctuated daily, 300 were present by mid-July. Other post-breeding flocks started to develop from early July and, unlike last year, involved some impressive numbers by recent standards: *c.*490 were at **Broadstone Res.** on 6th, then up to 300 remained for the rest of the month; 320 at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 25th, and at least 100 at **Boshaw Whams** on 31st.

In August the **Boshaw Whams** flock of 100+ remained until mid-month; up to 180 remained until mid-month at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**; 120 were in the **Royd Moor** area on 3rd, with *c.*180 there on 26th; *c.*110 were at **Broadstone Res.** on 19th; and at least 180 were at **Scout Dike Res.** on 26th.

Flocks became more widely distributed in September/October, with good numbers being witnessed at some sites: 388 were counted at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 8th September; *c.*300 at **Scout Dike Res.** on 15th September; at least 120 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 23rd September; and at least 600 at **Whitley Common** and *c.*200 at **Maythorn Slack** on 28th October. At **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, although birds were present daily throughout this period, flock size rarely attained 50 strong, and the only treble figure count involved 120 on 1st/2nd October.

Although some of these flocks persisted until the year end, it was only favoured sites that attracted good numbers: *c.*350 were with Golden Plovers at **Barnby Hall, Cawthorne** on 3rd November, and *c.*300 were there on 14th December; *c.*400 remained at **Whitley Common** on 6th November and had increased to 700+ by 20th November but by mid-December only *c.*30 remained; *c.*300 at **Broadstone Res.** on 18th November; and *c.*100 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** and *c.*350 at **Broadstone Lodge** on 9th December. On the other hand, birds at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** were only present on six dates in November (maximum of 71 on 18th) and three in December (maximum of 33 on 1st).

Overflying birds, presumably on passage, were recorded as follows:

Wards End Farm, Marsden – the only records involved six which flew NE on 3rd July and 28 (26 W + 2 E) on 30th October.

Harden Quarries – in August, 45 flew SW on 12th, 90 SW on 23rd, and 50 SW on 28th. Flocks of 40 flew S on both 13th and 16th September.

Hartcliff Hill – 22 flew W on 18th September.

GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria*

Migrant breeder (2-3), 50-200 pairs. Common passage and winter visitor, decreasing.

Several localities held good numbers of birds during both winter periods, but birds were absent from some expected locations.

In January, *c.*100 flew NE over **Bretton Park** on 1st; five were present at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 9th, with 40 there on 28th; 64 were at **Broadstone Lodge** on 18th and, although numbers fluctuated daily, up to 64 were present on seven dates at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** More locations attracted birds in February and larger numbers were generally present: **Blackmoorfoot Res.** only had four on 4th and three on 8th; 14 were on **Broadstone Heath** on 4th, with *c.*35 the following day and eight on 18th; *c.*20 flew NE over **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 6th; at least 40 were on **Whitley Common** and 124 were at **Harden Moss** on 7th; *c.*200 at **Maythorn Slack** on 10th; seven flew E at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 17th, and *c.*100 flew W there on 25th; and four were at **Holme Moss** on 24th.

As in 2018, March saw a tremendous increase in numbers, presumably of passage birds on their way to northern breeding grounds. A flock of 260 was present at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 6th; 62 were at **Snape Res.** on 12th; 44 flew NE over **Dewsbury SW** on 17th; and 146 were at **Broadstone Res.** and c.300 at **Whitley Common** on 28th. Despite these large assemblages the only March record from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** involved 27 on 31st.

Numbers continued to increase throughout the first half of April, with large assemblages being recorded from the following locations: c.680 at **Whitley Common** on 5th, with c.160 there on 12th; at least 100 at **Hartcliff Hill** on 6th, with c.130 there on 13th; 69 at **Snape Res.** on 7th; 150 at **Harden Moss** on 13th; c.200 at **Cartworth Moor** on 14th; and at least 80 at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 17th.

These flocks had all moved on by late April, leaving only a small number of birds in potential breeding areas, but the only direct evidence of breeding came from **RSPB Dove Stone** where 60 pairs held territories, ten territories on **Black Hill**, and three territories at **Holme Moss**. On a negative note, however, no birds were located on the moors at **Winscar Res.** or **Digley Res.**, both of which have held breeding birds in the past.

Birds became more widespread following the breeding season, with records from 15 locations. Unlike last year, when treble figure counts were few and far between, this year was quite the opposite. The peak counts involved the following: 126 circling over **Pule Hill, Marsden** on 22nd October; 355 flew W at **Wards End Farm** on 25th October; at least 700 at **Barnby Hall, Cawthorne** on 3rd November, with c.300 there on 14th December; up to 500 on **Whitley Common** throughout November, but this had reduced to c.60 by late December; and c.400 at **Broadstone Res** on 18th November.

On a more negative note, at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, although small numbers (never more than 10) were present on a near daily basis between early April and late July, there were then no records until seven appeared on 13th November. The only records thereafter involved two on 15th November and, in December, 19 on 1st, 75 on 2nd, and 50 the following day.

Birds were recorded moving over at two locations, with movements over Wards End Farm being particularly impressive:

Wards End Farm – between 25th February, when c.100 flew W, and 3rd April a further 703 flew over, mainly in a W or NW direction, on a further 12 dates. Numbers involved were usually less than 50, but 320 flew NW on 24th March. Later in the year five flocks totalling 355 birds flew W on 25th October and 365 did likewise on four dates between 2nd and 12th November, with a maximum of 300 on 6th.

Pule Hill – 51 flew W on 10th October and 81 (50 N, 30 S and 1 W) on 27th October.

GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola*

Rare visitor.

A single flew E over **Wards End Farm, Marsden** at 08.45hrs. on 8th November (DWS).

RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula*

Uncommon passage visitor. Has bred. Red listed.

There were records from four localities, one less than last year.

Deanhead Res – two on 21st May and from 28th – 31st (DT).

Ringstone Edge Res – two on 21st May (DHP, DT).

Boshaw Whams – nine (4 on the shoreline around midday + 5 flew S at 16.10hrs.) on 21st August (DHP). In September, two juveniles were present on 6th and a single juvenile remained from 21st – 25th (DHP).

Blackmoorfoot Res – three flew W at 11.10hrs. on 4th September (MLD).

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius dubius*

Migrant breeder (1), 0-8 pairs. Scarce passage visitor.

There were reports from 14 sites, a welcome increase from the six of last year. Breeding, however, was only confirmed at a single location (3 in 2018), with three young fledging in late July. The first records involved a single at **Ingbirchworth Res.** and two at **Langsett Banks** on 5th April and the last, a single, at **Boshaw Whams** on 12th August.

Other records were received from:

Ingbirchworth Res – one or two were regularly seen between 5th April and 6th June.

Langsett Res – a single on 11th April, two on 19th April then one or two daily to 5th June.

Horbury Wyke/Strands – a single on 11th April.

Langsett – two in a field near Langsett Barn car park on 5th and 14th April with three there on 16th April.

Ringstone Edge Res – one or two were regularly seen between 17th April and 29th May, with four on 12th May and three on 28th May.

Tinker Hill – one on 18th April.

Scout Dike Res – a single on 18th April.

Dewsbury SW – a single on 1st May.

Whitley Common – two in a bare field on 4th May.

Isle of Skye Quarry – one on 10th May.

Cupwith Res – a single on 15th May.

Wessenden Head Res – a single on 15th May, three on 19th May then one or two daily until 24th May.

Winscar Res – singles on 27th May, 26th July and 6th August.

Boshaw Whams – up to four, but usually one or two, were present on most dates between 9th and 27th July. The only other record involved a single adult on 12th August.

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus*

Scarce passage visitor. Red listed.

There was a good showing of this scarce passage migrant during both passage periods, with 12 records in spring and nine in autumn.

Winscar Res – a single flew E on 17th April (JCW) and one flew SE at 19.25hrs. on 29th July (DHP).

Whitley Common – singles on 17th April (MCW) and 23rd April (NWM), two on 26th April

(NWM, DHP) and singles on 28th April (DHP), 5th May (DHP) and 18th July (JMCL).

Ringstone Edge Res – two on 28th April (AC, DF *et al.*) and a single on 19th May (DF).

Blackmoorfoot Res – there were two spring records and six in autumn: the fields to the west hosted four on 2nd May (MLD, GBS) and two the following day (MLD, GK, GBS); in July, a single flew W at 08.55hrs. on 22nd (MLD, GBS), one flew W at 09.05hrs. and a single present in a field to the W departed W at 09.15hrs. on 24th (MLD, GBS), and one flew S at 10.45hrs. on 31st (MLD, GK, GBS); in August, a single flew W at 11.00hrs. on 14th (SP), two were in the fields to the west on 19th (TD) and a single flew W at 13.00hrs. on 29th (TD).

Broadstone Res – a single on 5th May (II).

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a single flew N at 17.45hrs. on 20th May (DWS).

Boshaw Whams – a single flew SE at 07.50hrs. on 4th August (DHP).

CURLEW *Numenius arquata*

Migrant breeder (3), 100-250 pairs. Common passage visitor. Red listed.

The first returning birds involved a single at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 13th February, then a single flew W at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** and a single was present at **Broadstone Res.** on 18th February. There were further February records from seven locations, mainly involving no more than three birds, but 17 were at **Snake Res.** on 22nd, a flock of 58 were present at **Broadstone Res.** on 26th but only 17 remained the following day, 11 were at **Red Lane, Meltham** on 26th with 14 there on 28th. Birds became far more widely distributed during the following four months, March-June, with records from 39 locations. Although numbers mainly consisted of no more than a handful of birds, there were some impressive assemblages, especially in March: at least 40 were at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 1st March; at least 45 were at **Nont Sarah's** on 2nd March; a flock of 42 flew W at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 5th March and 18 were in the fields to the west on 8th March with 21 there on 14th April; 27 were at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 6th March; 40 were at **Broadstone Res.** on 9th March and 22 on 15th March; at least 50 were at **Maythorn Slack** on 11th March; 73 were on **Thick Hollins Moor** on 11th March but this had reduced to 42 by 13th March and 26 the following day but increased again with 35 on 15th March; 12 were at **Wilshaw** on 16th April; 20 were in the **Winscar** area on 21st April; and at least 14 were at **Digley** on 4th May.

Evidence of breeding was obtained at 14 localities (18 in 2018): **RSPB Dove Stone** (23 pairs bred), **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (a pair raised at least 1 young in the fields to the E), **Hade Edge** (2 chicks in late May), **Deanhead Res.** (3 chicks in late May), **Wards End Farm, Marsden** (chicks seen in early June), **Whitley Common** (7+ chicks in mid-June), **Broadstone Res.** (4 pairs held territories), **Ingbirchworth Res.** (3 pairs held territories), **Royd Moor Res.** (2 pairs held territories), **Scout Dike Res.** (3 pairs held breeding territories), and displaying birds were seen at **Whitley Airfield**, **Whitley Edge**, and the **Isle of Skye Quarry**.

Records following the breeding season were restricted to 11 locations, but only **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, **Boshaw Whams** and **Wards End Farm** held birds on a regular basis. Numbers at these sites rarely reached more than a handful, but seven flew W at **Wards End Farm** on 24th July and up the nine were present at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** in late July and 12 flew W there on 26th August. Despite the limited number of sites holding the species at this time, there were some impressive assemblages at **Broadstone Res.**: 32 present in nearby fields in early July had increased to at least 110 by 6th July, but the highest count thereafter only amounted to 28 on 19th July.

The only records after late August involved a single which flew E at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 20th September and a single at **Broadstone Res.** on 30th November.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica*

Rare to scarce passage visitor.

There were three records from two locations:

Winscar Res – a single photographed on 1st May proved to be a female on bill length (NWM, DHP).

Boshaw Whams – 26 (a record high count for the Club area) were photographed as they passed over very high to the SW at 09.20hrs. on 24th July (DHP) and a single was present on 22nd November (DHP).

These are the first records in the Club area since five flew W at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 6th June 2015.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa*

Rare to scarce passage visitor, increasing. Red listed.

Three at **Boshaw Whams** departed high to the E at 11.20hrs. on 12th August (NWM, DHP).

Numbers of Black-tailed Godwits in the Huddersfield area in the last ten years:

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
0	2	11	0	0	4	25	3	9	3

KNOT *Calidris canutus*

Rare passage visitor.

There were two records: a single was present at **Boshaw Whams** on 12th/13th August (NWM, DHP) and one was photographed as it flew E at **Pule Hill, Marsden** on 12th October (JMP, EDS).

RUFF *Calidris pugnax*

Rare to scarce visitor. Red listed.

A single flew W at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** at 11.20hrs. on 2nd September (MLD, GK, GBS) and two were present at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on most dates between 23rd and 28th September (JB, PDy, DF).

Numbers of Ruff in the Huddersfield area in the last ten years:

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
2	2	0	2	0	3	2	9	1	3

SANDERLING *Calidris alba*

Rare to scarce passage visitor.

Two summer-plumaged adults were present on the N bank of **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 16th May (MLD, GK, BW).

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-40 pairs. Uncommon passage visitor. Red listed.

There were records from ten locations (1 more than last year) with breeding taking place at one of these and birds were present in other potential breeding areas during May.

Blackmoorfoot Res – in the first half of the year singles flew W on 4th and 19th March and 10th April, and a single on the S bank on 12th May had been joined by another the following day. Later in the year a single flew W on 6th July, three flew W on 2nd September and two did likewise on 4th September.

Winscar Res – a single on 20th March.

Deanhead Res – up to five, but usually only two, were present throughout May with two birds occasionally displaying.

Cupwith Res – two on 7th May and a single (a different bird) on 9th May.

Ingbirchworth Res – a single in the company of two Little Ringed Plovers on 9th May.

Chew Res – singles on 18th May and 26th June.

Ringstone Edge Res – present daily between 10th and 25th May. One or two was the norm, occasionally four or five, but there were peaks of nine on 13th and eight the following day.

Wessenden Head Res – up to three between 19th and 25th May.

Deer Hill Res – a single on 20th May.

RSPB Dove Stone – 40 pairs held breeding territories.

PURPLE SANDPIPER *Calidris maritima*

Vagrant.

A single which remained all day at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 21st May (AC *et al.*) was the seventh record for the Club area and the first since a single at Ingbirchworth Res. on 14th October 1991.

WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola*

Resident breeder (2), 25-75 pairs. Uncommon winter visitor. Red listed.

This very secretive species was only recorded on seven occasions during the first winter period: three in **Windy Bank Wood** on 3rd January; and singles in **Ramsden Woods** on 4th January and 14th April, **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 9th January, **Thurstonland Bank** on 16th January, **Carlecotes Ponds** on 14th February, and **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 6th April.

Breeding evidence which, other than roding birds, is not always easy to obtain was recorded as follows: one bird observed roding at **Storthes Hall** on 26th May, three birds were roding at **Holme Styes** in early June, two were roding at **Langsett** in mid-June, a nest with four eggs was found at **Swinden Walls, Langsett**, four recently fledged young were flushed at **Carlecotes Ponds**, and a pair bred at Ashway Gap, **Dove Stone Res.**

Records after the breeding season were confined to November and December, and only amounted to singles in the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 8th November, **Carlecotes Ponds** on 17th and 29th November, **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 24th November and 2nd December, and **Deer Hill** on 9th December.

JACK SNIPE *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Scarce passage and winter visitor.

There were five records, including the latest ever recorded in the Club area:

Broadstone Res – a single on 31st January (NWM).

Wards End Farm, Marsden – one on 2nd March (DWS).

Deanhead Res – a single on 20th March (DJ).

Ringstone Edge Res – one was watched for a good 10 minutes as it fed with the species' distinct bobbing action on 6th May (DT). This bird was ten days later than the previous latest record.

Boshaw Whams – a single on 20th December (DHP).

SNIPE *Gallinago gallinago*

Resident breeder, decreased to (2), 50-100 pairs. Common passage and winter visitor.

If the number of records submitted for this species are a true reflection of the species' current status, then the alarming decrease continues.

The first three months of the year only produced records from nine widely scattered localities. With the exceptions of ten at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 28th January, nine at **Wholestone Moor** on 20th March and 24 at **Dewsbury SW** on 30th March, all other records related to no more than two individuals for one day's duration.

There were breeding records for 15 localities in 2018, but this year drumming and chipping birds were only reported from eight, all involving no more than two birds (which may have simply been the territorial pair): **Barmings, Langsett Moors; Crossley's Plantation; Isle of Skye Quarry; Ringstone Edge Res.; Wards End Farm, Marsden; Digley Res.; Hade Edge;** and **Snittlegate**. At the last mentioned locality two chicks were seen in late June.

Records following the breeding season were restricted to ten locations, most of which only held one or two birds for very short durations. The only localities with lingering birds were **Boshaw Whams** and **Harden Quarries**. At **Boshaw Whams** up to five were regularly seen between 8th July and 24th September, and seven were present on 17th July, eight on 2nd September and nine on 4th and 24th September. At **Harden Quarries** one or two were present on a handful of autumn dates.

Visible migration, which seems to be becoming more frequent in the area, was recorded from the following locations:

Pule Hill, Marsden – seven flew W on 28th August and a single did likewise on 23rd September.

Blackmoorfoot Res – birds flew W as follows: three on 10th September, a single on 4th October, and two on 6th October.

Wards End Farm – an impressive flock of 24 flew W at 10.20hrs. on 4th October, a single did likewise on 6th October, and a flock of nine flew W on 16th November.

Harden Quarries – in October birds flew over as follows: two SE on 18th, one SW on 23rd, three SW on 25th, and a single SW on 27th.

Whitley Common – two flew high to the SE on 28th October.

COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleucos*

Migrant breeder (2), around 50 pairs.

Records were received from 25 locations (23 in 2018 and 25 in 2017) but breeding was only proven at two of these.

The first returning birds were all singles: **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 10th April, **Langsett Res.** on 11th April, **Deanhead Res.** on 12th April and **Ringstone Edge Res.** the following day. Although these four sites continued to hold up to three birds for the rest of the month, the only other April records involved a single at **Winscar Res.** on 18th with four there the following day, singles at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 21st, 24th and 26th, two at **Chew Res.** on 26th, and singles at **RSPB Dove Stone** on 26th and **Scout Dike Res.** on 30th.

Birds became more widely distributed during the following two months, but most sites never held more than three individuals, the following being the exceptions: six at **Winscar Res.** on 1st May, six at **Langsett Res.** on 7th May with seven there on 13th May, four at **Deanhead Res.** and eight at **Yateholme** on 12th May, and eight at **Winscar Res.** on 13th May.

The only evidence of breeding came from **Cliff Wood** (a pair hatched at least 3 chicks) and **Langsett Res.** (2 pairs fledged at least 3 chicks). In addition, displaying birds were noted at **Wessenden Head Res.**, **Ringstone Edge Res.** and **Deanhead Res.** but no further proof of breeding was forthcoming.

Although one or two, occasionally three, were present at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on a near daily basis throughout July and August, other records were limited to no more than two birds at a further eight sites, the only exceptions being **Boshaw Whams** which had up to three almost daily between 7th July and 12th August (with 4 on 11th July and 5 on 24th July) and **Digley Res.** which held four on 1st August. The only sites which yielded September records were **Boshaw Whams** which held a single until 14th, and **Blackmoorfoot Res.** which had one or two on 14 dates until the last, a single, on 26th.

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus*

Scarce to uncommon passage and winter visitor.

Birds were reported from eight locations (9 in 2018 and 5 in 2017), but numbers at Dewsbury SW, which normally has the lion's share, were very subdued.

Dewsbury SW – a single on 2nd January and one nearby on the River Calder from 8th April until the year end (JH).

Deanhead – a single was photographed 'along the A640' above the reservoir on 19th April (PDy).

Gunthwaite Dam – one on 15th June (DMP).

March Haigh Res – a single flying W up the valley landed at the reservoir at 09.50hrs. on 18th June but it was disturbed shortly afterwards and departed (DWS).

Boshaw Whams – one remained from 12th – 14th July and singles were present on 30th July and 3rd September (NWM, DHP).

Ringstone Edge Res – one on 15th July (AC) and two on 29th July (AC, JM).

Bretton Park – a single on 13th November (TM).

Clayton West SW – two were seen in flight over waterlogged fields between the main road and the sewage works on 25th November (DHP).

REDSHANK *Tringa totanus*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1), 0-5 pairs. Uncommon passage visitor.

Last years' slight increase in records was not maintained, but records were received from a similar number of locations. For the fourth consecutive year, however, there were no records from the River Calder catchment.

Ringstone Edge Res – a single on 25th February and three on 28th September.

Blackmoorfoot Res – there were only two records, a dramatic drop on the nine of last year: singles were present on 1st March and 18th April.

Wholestone Moor – a single on 20th March.

Langsett Res – one departed W after a brief stay on 16th April.

Deanhead Res – a single on 23rd April.

Winscar Res – one departed S at 08.25hrs. on 13th May.

Boshaw Whams – a single which had been present for most of the day departed SW at 19.50hrs. on 29th July.

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*

Scarce to uncommon passage visitor.

Although an increase to four records is welcomed, this species still remains rare in the Club area.

Blackmoorfoot Res – a single, heard but not seen, flew W at 10.25hrs. on 25th August (MLD, GBS).

Boshaw Whams – one departed at 09.10hrs. on 26th August (NWM) and two were present in the early morning on 28th August (NWM, DHP).

Scout Dike Res – a single, heard but not seen, on 26th August (RJB). There is every possibility that this and the Boshaw Whams bird on the same date were the same individual.

KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla*

Rare to scarce passage visitor. Red listed.

There were only two records, both from **Blackmoorfoot Res**: an adult was seen briefly at 10.55hrs. on 24th January (MLD) and an adult arrived from the E at 11.05hrs. on 9th March (MLD, GBS, TW *et al.*).

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Resident breeder, decreased to (1), 0-5 pairs. Numerous passage and winter visitor.

Blackmoorfoot roost counts produced the following monthly maxima:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
5400	5400	nc	nc	nc	nc	72	nc	262	nc	3800	5000

Counts from the **Ingbirchworth/Scout Dike/Royd Moor/Broadstone** area produced the following monthly maxima:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
200	330	400	300	40	8	11	150	150	700	400	400

As is usual, small parties were seen at a number of widely scattered localities throughout the year, but the only treble figure counts involved the following:

Digley Res – 100+ on 1st January.

Langsett Res – birds were present in the roost as follows: c.4,100 on 6th January, 4,500+ on 10th February, c.700 on 11th August, c.1,100 on 26th September, 850+ on 20th October, 2,000+ on 17th November, 4,300 on 1st December, and c.3,500 on 24th December.

Dewsbury SW – at least 650 on 23rd January, 700 on 23rd February, 800 on 30th March, and 450 on 7th May.

Bretton Park – c.100 on ice on the Lower Lake on 3rd February, c.150 on 17th February and 204 on 3rd November.

Whitley Common – 500+ on 14th March, 300+ on 9th October, 250+ on 20th October, c.200 on 6th November, c.300 on 14th November, and c.1,000 on 8th December.

Fixby – c.300 flew NW between 16.30hrs. and 17.00hrs. on 23rd July.

Winscar Res – the 500+ present on 29th July included many juveniles, presumably from the nearby Woodhead Res. in Derbyshire.

Clayton West – c.250 feeding over water-logged fields on 19th October.

Gunthwaite Dam – c.100 feeding in fields on 30th October.

Broad Canal – c.100 were present between Aspley and Colne Bridge on 27th December.

No birds bred at the recently established colony at **Winscar Res.** (BBSG).

Visible migration was noted at four localities:

Wards End Farm, Marsden – in the first half of the year a total of 131 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 28 dates. Number rarely reached double figures, the maximum only amounting to 20 W on 22nd January. The second half of the year, as is usual, was far more productive. A total of 1,432 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 52 dates, but the heaviest passage was during the months of July (945 W with a maximum of 217 on 18th) and October (415 mainly flew W, with a maximum of 86 W on 9th).

Blackmoorfoot Res – 72 flew W on 30th July.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 367 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 17 dates between 13th August and 6th November, with a maximum of 160 (152 W + 8 N) on 17th October.

Harden Quarries – singles flew S on 14th August and two S on 25th September. All other passage was concentrated into October, when a total of 202 flew over, mainly in a S or SW direction, on ten dates, with a maximum of 41 N on 10th and 54 (17 W + 37 N) on 23rd.

MEDITERRANEAN GULL *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*

Rare to scarce visitor.

Although there were more records than last year, only two localities were involved (3 in 2018), with all but one record stemming from Blackmoorfoot Res.

Blackmoorfoot Res – in the first half of the year what was presumed to be the same adult was seen on three January dates: 10th (GK), 20th (GK, DM) and 24th (MLD, GK) and two breeding-plumaged adults departed W at 11.50hrs. on 25th March (MLD, GK *et al.*). Later in the year an

adult departed SE at 11.05hrs. on 17th September (MLD, GBS) and an adult roosted on 19th November (DHP, DMP, NWM).

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a first-summer flew low W at 18.05hrs. on 11th August (DWS).

COMMON GULL *Larus canus*

Common passage and winter visitor.

As in 2018, numbers at most localities were abysmally low. The number of passage birds at the two main sites in Marsden were also extremely low.

Blackmoorfoot roost counts produced the following monthly maxima:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
1350	1500	nc	nc	1	1	3	5	8	14	750	1000

With the exception of the Blackmoorfoot counts noted above, records during the first winter period were from a number of widely scattered localities, especially in the east of the area, but counts rarely exceeded 20, the following being the exceptions:

Bretton Park – 40+ on 1st January.

Broadstone Res – c.100 on 1st January, 63 on 6th February, c.170 on 10th February, 245 on 17th March, and c.30 on 20th March.

Ingbirchworth Res – 23 on 2nd January, 50 on 6th February and 51 on 13th February.

Langsett Res – c.100 roosted on 6th January and c.125 on 10th February.

Ringstone Edge Res – 26 on 8th March and 85 on 20th March.

Numbers began to build from mid-October (2 weeks later than last year) and, although widely distributed, numbers were uninspiring (but see Blackmoorfoot above), rarely exceeding single figures, the only exceptions being as follows:

Broadstone Res – 38 on 19th October, 20 on 6th November, 145 on 30th November, and 17 on 9th December.

Whitley Common – 22 on 14th November and 41 on 13th December.

Ingbirchworth Res – 47 on 30th November, 41 on 2nd December and c.20 on 18th December.

Langsett Res – 35 roosted on 17th October and c.70 on 1st December.

Elland GP – 12 on 22nd December.

Apart from **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, which had up to eight (but usually 1 or 2) on 35 dates between early May and late September, the only other records during these months were as follows:

Harden Quarries – a single flew S on 1st September.

Langsett Res – five roosted on 17th September and two on 26th.

Ingbirchworth Moor – a single on 19th September.

Visible migration was noted at two localities:

Wards End Farm – passage during the first half of the year only involved 11 birds which flew W on seven dates between 28th February and 17th March. Although more birds were on the move during the second half of the year this only amounted to 83 birds which flew W on 30 dates between mid-July and late December, with a maximum of 15 on 27th July.

Pule Hill, Marsden – passage was restricted to the period 17th – 27th October: eight flew W on 17th, one NE on 22nd, and singles W on 23rd and 27th.

A bird in full juvenile plumage, which should have completed its moult at least two months previously, was present in the roost at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 8th and 16th January.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus*

Uncommon winter visitor.

At **Blackmoorfoot Res.** this species is becoming so irregular as a roosting species that a table of occurrences is no longer justifiable. Despite numerous visits to record gulls throughout the year, the only roosting birds were in January: three on 1st, seven on 6th, and two on 8th. The only other records concerned birds loafing on the reservoir during the day or overflying groups: two were present on 2nd January and singles on 15th and 25th January, 14 flew W on 23rd January, and a single was on the reservoir on 5th February. With the exception of two which flew W on 14th March, the only other record involved an adult on the reservoir on 29th November.

The only other records were as follows:

Wards End Farm, Marsden – during the first winter period birds were in very short supply and only amounted to a maximum of three (usually only 1) flying W on 26 dates. Later in the year, a total of 58 flew W on 26 dates between 27th May and the year end, with a maximum of 11 on 25th December.

Mirfield – a single on the River Calder on 4th January with two there on 17th January, 11th February and 30th December.

Langsett Res – 12 roosted on 6th January.

Mirfield (Biffa waste disposal centre) – in January, two were present on 10th, three on 17th, seven on 28th, and five the following day. The only other record involved at least two adults on 6th February.

Dewsbury SW – four on 6th May.

Ingbirchworth Res – a juvenile on 20th August.

Carlecotes Ponds – an adult on 19th September.

Pule Hill, Marsden – three adults flew W on 30th September.

HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus*

Common passage and winter visitor. Red listed.

The roost at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** held more birds during both winter periods than have recently been recorded. In January, 64 roosted on 6th, 78 on 8th, 67 on 17th, and in February there were 21 on 1st and 37 on 13th. Later in the year, 21 roosted on 29th November and, in December, 26 on 1st, 50 on 5th and 53 on 29th. Overflying birds were recorded on numerous occasions: between 23rd January and 19th March a total of 368 flew W on nine dates, with a maximum of 107 on 21st February. Thereafter movements were restricted to the 31 which flew W on 19th May, seven W on 26th August, 11 W on 15th October, 18 W on 10th November, and 16 NW on 22nd December.

There were records from a further 17 localities (same as 2018). As has now become the norm, Wards End Farm at Marsden produced some good passage figures. Unusually, Dewsbury SW attracted some large gatherings between late March and late May.

Bretton Park – a single on 1st January.

Wards End Farm – a total of 509 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 37 dates up to the end of March, with a maximum of 51 W on 18th February and 31 W the following day. The following six months only produced a further 51 birds, most of which flew in a westerly direction,

on 18 dates, with a maximum of 13 on 20th April. The final three months of the year saw 301 fly over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 30 dates, with a maximum of 54 W on 2nd December and 42 W on 25th December.

Oldfield/Honley area – 14 in nearby fields on 1st January with ten there on 22nd January. There were then no records until three were present on 9th November, numbers slowly increased thereafter, with 16 on 6th December and 22 the following day.

Carlecotes Ponds – six flew N on 6th January.

Langsett Res – birds roosted as follows: five on 6th January, singles on 11th February and 20th August, two on 17th September, and singles on 20th October and 1st December.

Mirfield (Biffa waste disposal centre) – c.50 on 6th February.

Ingbirchworth Res – one on 13th February and 30th November, eight on 2nd December, and singles on 14th and 18th December.

Dewsbury SW – 20 were present on 23rd February and 140 on 30th March. During April and May some large assemblages were encountered: in April, the 120 present on 3rd had increased to 280 by 8th but the rest of the month only produced a maximum of 58 on 18th; in May, 44 on 1st had increased to 180 on 6th/7th and 250 on 24th.

Whitley Common – an adult on 25th February.

Isle of Skye Quarry – four flew N on 2nd March and 21 flew E on 6th April.

Winscar Res – a single on 21st March.

March Haigh Res – two flew SW on 1st April.

Elland GP – two on 11th April and 22nd December.

Pule Hill, Marsden – 23 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on eight dates between 26th August and 6th November, with a maximum of six (1 S + 5 E) on the latter mentioned date.

Mirfield – up to 20 regularly frequented the River Calder between 10th November and the year end, when c.50 were present.

Harden Quarries – singles flew SW on 16th and 18th September.

Silkstone – three flew W on 23rd December.

CASPIAN GULL *Larus cachinnans*

Rare visitor.

This species was recorded in the Club area for the eighth year in succession. Despite the numerous records below, it is highly probable that only one bird was involved.

The adult which roosted at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 31st December 2018 also roosted on 1st, 3rd, 5th and 9th January (NWM *et al.*). Although there were no further roosting records, the same adult was present during the day on 12th and 21st January: on 12th it arrived from the E at 10.35hrs. and departed S at 10.45hrs. (MLD, GBS *et al.*) and on 21st it arrived at 14.10hrs. and departed S at 14.30hrs. (DMP). The same adult also put in an appearance during the afternoon on 9th February (NWM), on two occasions during the morning of the following day (MLD, BW) and it was last seen when it departed S at 10.40hrs. on 14th February (MLD, GK *et al.*). This same adult (easily identifiable by its wingtip patterning) was feeding in a field at **Wilshaw** on 3rd and 4th January (DHP, DMP, SP) and in a field to the west of **Honley** on 22nd January (DHP).

What may have been the same returning adult was present in a field near **Honley** on 19th November (DHP) and that evening it frequented the roost at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (NWM, DHP, DMP). An adult feeding in a field at **Oldfield** remained between 1st and 3rd December (DHP) and roosted at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on the latter date (NWM, DMP). An adult present during the morning at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 17th December (MLD, GG, GBS) and feeding in a field at **Oldfield** on 22nd December (DHP) was presumably the same individual.

A juvenile/first-winter which roosted at **Langsett Res.** on 17th September was either this species or Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis* (MCW).

YELLOW-LEGGED GULL *Larus michahellis*

Scarce passage visitor.

As is now the norm, most records were during the second half of the year. The Ingbirchworth area, which normally holds long-staying birds during the autumn period, only mustered single birds on three dates.

Ingbirchworth Res – an adult departed W on 23rd January (DBu, RM) and an adult was present on 8th August (NWM, MCW) and 23rd September (MCW).

Whitley Common – an adult on 14th March (MCW).

Blackmoorfoot Res – the only record involved a third-summer on 24th May (MLD, GBS).

Boshaw Whams – a second-summer was photographed on 17th July (DHP).

Winscar – a third-summer on 8th August (MCW).

Langsett Res – adults roosted on 20th August and 17th and 26th September (RJB).

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus*

Common passage visitor, uncommon winter visitor.

The only site with regular counts was **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, where the following monthly maxima occurred:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
19	23	3	3	16	16	8	17	17	4	18	50

With the exception of the Blackmoorfoot Res. records noted above, the only other records during the first winter period were as follows:

Bretton Park – singles on 1st January and 3rd February.

Mirfield (Biffa waste disposal centre) – one on 10th January.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a total of 87 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 36 dates between mid-January and 25th April, but numbers never exceeding six on any one day. This is in sharp contrast to last year when 286 flew over during the same period.

Ringstone Edge Res – two on 21st January and a single on 21st April.

Ingbirchworth Res – three flew W on 23rd January, two on 28th February, five on 20th March, ten on 20th March and, in April, two on 1st and 11th, four on 15th, and a single on 18th.

Langsett Res – a single roosted on 10th February.

Dewsbury SW – 20 on 23rd February, 35 on 30th March, and 100 on 8th April

Whitley Common – six on 14th March.

Winscar Res – two on 30th March.

Broadstone Res – four on 9th April.

Fixby – a single flew E on 15th April.

Moselden – one flew NW on 22nd April.

From early May until late October birds were reported from a number of widely scattered localities but numbers at most locations rarely reached double figures, the only exceptions being as follows:

Dewsbury SW – 20 on 6th/7th May.

Ringstone Edge Res – 35 on 21st May.

Ingbirchworth Res – c.100 on 8th August and c.30 on 21st August.

Langsett Res – roosting birds were counted as follows: 251 on 11th August, at least 360 on 20th August and c.380 on 17th September, but this had reduced to c.50 by 20th October.

Whitley Common – c.50 on 21st August.

Boshaw Whams – present in small numbers in autumn with high counts of 28 on 5th September and 30 the following day.

Broadstone Res – 11 on 23rd September.

Movements over the area, other than the few mentioned above, were noted from four localities between early May and late December.

Wards End Farm – a total of 226 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 81 dates between early May and late December, with a maximum of 20 W on 25th May and 24 W on 21st June. Once again this is in sharp contrast to last year when 439 flew over during the same period.

Blackmoorfoot Res – 16 flew S on 18th May, 11 W the following day, 16 SW on 5th June, and eight W on 26th August.

Harden Quarries – a total of 179 flew over, mainly in a S or SW direction on 18 dates between 12th August and 29th October, with a maximum of 53 SW on 12th August and 29 S or SW on 17th October.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 18 flew over (all bar 1 in a westerly direction) on eight dates between 21st August and 24th October, with a maximum of seven (6 W + 1 E) on 23rd August.

With the exceptions of birds at Blackmoorfoot Res. and Wards End Farm in November/December (see above) the only other records at this time were from **Ingbirchworth Res.** and involved c.20 on 22nd November and c.60 on 18th December.

SANDWICH TERN *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

Rare passage visitor.

This rare passage visitor was recorded on two occasions, single records in spring and autumn.

Ringstone Edge Res – two present at 08.14hrs. departed NE at 08.18hrs. and then the same or another two arrived at 08.35hrs. and departed E at 08.42hrs. on 22nd May (NWM, DT).

Ingbirchworth Res – two, an adult and a first-winter, departed SE at 08.19hrs. on 22nd September (KH, JMCL). Interestingly, these same birds arrived at RSPB Old Moor, Barnsley at 09.30hrs.

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo*

Scarce to uncommon passage visitor. Potential future colonist.

With records from five localities, this is a marked increase on the two or three of the last three years. Birds occurred between 8th May and 19th August.

Ingbirchworth Res – a group of eight departed NE at 15.04hrs. on 8th May and an adult was present on 9th August.

Elland GP – a single remained from 8th to 10th May.

Ringstone Edge Res – a party of eight flew E on 17th May.

Blackmoorfoot Res – there were four records, all involving adults (5 in 2018). A single departed NE at 09.55hrs. on 23rd June; two departed SW at 09.30hrs. on 6th July; and in August, a single was present on 1st and one departed SW at 10.40hrs. on 19th.

Boshaw Whams – two adults departed SW at 09.20hrs. on 24th July.

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea*

Rare to scarce passage visitor.

There were three records (same as last year), two in spring and one in autumn.

There were two records from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** both in spring: one departed S at 10.05hrs. on 5th April and a single departed W at 08.55hrs. on 25th May (both MLD, GBS). Three at **Winscar Res.** departed E at 16.48hrs. on 24th July (NWM, JIM).

BLACK TERN *Chlidonias niger*

Rare to scarce passage visitor.

Two were present at **Ladywood Lakes** during the afternoon on 8th May (DT).

FERAL PIGEON *Columba livia*

Resident breeder (3), 300-500 pairs.

The number of records of this under-recorded species dropped alarmingly, with the majority referring to no more than eight birds feeding in gardens. Indeed, the main population in the town centre was only counted on a single occasion.

The only large assemblages were as follows:

Elland – c.50 were present throughout the year.

Rastrick – 20+ all year round under the M62 road bridge, with at least one pair nesting.

Lindley – c.50 were present throughout the year.

Turnbridge – Red Doles – c.70 along the Broad Canal on 3rd January.

Lockwood – c.30 on 20th January.

Thornton Lodge – c.100 on 25th January and c.180 on 1st November.

Huddersfield – 120 in the town centre on 19th March.

Berry Brow – c.60 on 22nd September.

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas*

Resident breeder (3), 200-300 pairs.

This under-recorded species was only reported from 21 locations, a drop of eight on the two previous years, and at only four of these were birds recorded throughout the year: **Blackmoorfoot Res.**; **Whitley Common**; **Wards End Farm, Marsden**; and a garden in **New Mill**. Although garden records were widely distributed, never more than four birds were involved, but a pair fledged one young from an owl nest-box in a garden at **Thongsbridge**. The only other breeding record involved two pairs which fledged young (2 + 1) at **Whitley Common**.

The majority of records only involved a handful of birds and, unlike last year, there were no impressive assemblages. The only double figure counts are listed below:

Ossett Spa SW – 13 on 4th January.

Whitley Common – 16 on 25th January, 38 on 4th March, 11 on 2nd April, and 12 on 8th December.

Wards End Farm – 12 on 5th February, 11 on 7th April, and 12 on 18th August.

Broadstone Res – 19 on 12th April.

Birds considered to have been on migration were recorded as follows:

Wards End Farm – 12 (2 W + 10 E) on 6th February, four SW on 10th October, five S on 20th October, and eight W on 11th December.

Harden Quarries – a total of 31 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on 14 dates between 12th August and 28th October, with a maximum of five on 29th August.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 29 flew over (25 W + 4 N) on eight dates between 17th September and 23rd October, with a maximum of six W on 17th October.

WOODPIGEON *Columba palumbus*

Resident breeder (4), 2,000-2,500 pairs. Numerous but irregular winter visitor.

Although this species remains widely distributed and common, for the fourth consecutive year there were no large gatherings reported. Indeed, the only treble-figure assemblage involved up to 600 which were present in **Head Clough, Marsden** throughout October and November. The only other flocks in excess of 30 involved c.40 at **Stirley Community Farm** on 18th April; 80 at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 11th May; 40 at **Almondbury** on 14th August; and c.50 at **Digley Res.** on 30th October. On the other hand, good numbers were counted overflying the usual migration watch points.

Small numbers of birds were present in several widely scattered gardens and breeding was reported from numerous locations.

Visible migration was only witnessed at three sites, but similarly impressive numbers to last year were reported from both Harden Quarries and Pule Hill, Marsden. Note that impressive numbers were encountered at all three sites on 28th October.

Wards End Farm – a total of 31,729 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 33 dates between 2nd September and 29th November, with peaks of 11,200 W on 28th October and 3,300 SW on 6th November.

Pule Hill – a total of 18,091 flew between S and W, but mainly SW, on 28 dates between 17th August and 18th November, with peaks of 4,442 on 28th October and 4,478 on 6th November.

Harden Quarries – a total of 21,838 flew S or W on 12 dates between 14th October and 6th November, with a maximum of 6,386 on 28th October.

COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto*

Resident breeder (3), 300-400 pairs.

There were numerous garden records of this species which is mainly confined to the urban environment. As is usual, although present throughout the year at a number of garden feeding stations, assemblages only exceeded four on a single occasion: 22 were in a garden near **Broadstone Res.** on 5th February. The infrequent visits to a **Lockwood** garden mentioned last year became even less frequent this year, and it was postulated that the drastic decrease in numbers could be due to competition from the feral pigeons which feed in the garden. With the exception of the flock of 22 noted above, the only other double figure assemblage involved c.35 in the vicinity of **Gunthwaite Farm** on 30th October.

Evidence of breeding only came from **Ingbirchworth** (2 pairs), **Brockholes** (1 pair), **New Mill** (1 pair), and **Crosland Moor** (2 pairs).

Passage birds were noted as follows:

Harden Quarries – a single flew S on 12th September and six E on 25th October.
Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 24 (21 flew W + 3 E) on seven dates between 3rd and 27th October, with a maximum of five W on the latter mentioned date.
Wards End Farm, Marsden – singles flew S on 8th October and E on 22nd October and two flew W on 9th November.

CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1), 5-20 pairs. Red listed.

Last years' tremendous upsurge in localities from which this declining species was recorded (47) was very short-lived, as this year only 23 locations could muster records. There were more sightings than usual at both Wards End Farm, Marsden and Brow Grains, Meltham, however.

The earliest birds, all in April and all single singing males, were recorded from the following locations: **Bird's Edge** (18th), **Dunford Bridge, Brow Grains** and **Winscar Res.** (21st), **Yateholme** (24th), and **Windy Bank Wood** (25th). Rather unusually, there were only three records after late May. As has been the tradition in the past, all records are listed.

Other birds, all singles unless otherwise stated, were reported as follows:

Brow Grains – following the first on 21st April (see above) up to three were then present between Brow Grains and Deer Hill Res. up to the third week in May.

Winscar Res – following the first on 21st April (see above) a singing male was heard on several dates between 1st and 18th May.

Windy Bank Wood – following the first on 25th April (see above) a single male was heard on nine dates until late May, with two on 4th and 11th May.

Bretton Park – 28th April.

Thick Hollins – 29th April.

Isle of Skye Quarry – a singing male on 29th April and a female the following day. Up to two were then present on several dates until 9th June.

Deer Hill Res – two on 30th April.

Blackmoorfoot Res – the decline noted last year was also reflected in this years' meagre total of only two records: a male on 30th April and a single on 22nd May.

Harden Moss – a singing male on 1st May.

Digley Res – two on 4th May and a single the following day.

Holme Styes – a single along Bare Bones Road on 6th May.

Flight Hill, Winscar – 9th May.

Meal Hill – 11th May.

Honley – 11th May.

Wards End Farm – the observer at this well-watched site reported his best ever year. Single males were present on 11 dates between 12th May and 14th June, with two on 21st and 29th May.

Oldfield – 12th May.

Langsett Res – 15th May.

RSPB Dove Stone – 18th May.

Chew Brook – two on 18th May.

Harden Quarries – a juvenile flew SW on 1st September.

BARN OWL *Tyto alba*

Rare visitor. Occasional breeder.

The only record of breeding came from a site in the SE of the area, where a pair fledged young. In addition, a bird seen in a Kestrel box in May at a site where they have previously bred, may have gone on to do so, but observations thereafter were lacking.

Singles were noted at a further dozen locations, but these were presumably dispersing birds as they were never seen for more than a couple of days duration.

TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco*

Resident breeder (2), near 100 pairs.

There were records from 23 locations, a drop of three on last year, and a considerable decrease from the 33 of 2016. Birds were recorded throughout the year at **Brockholes**, **Hepworth** and **Fixby**. An observer in **Honley**, however, commented that despite having taken part in the BTO's Tawny Owl Survey and regularly recording birds previously, there hadn't been a single contact this year.

The only breeding records came from **Kings Mill Lane** (a pair may have fledged 4 young), **Windy Bank Wood** (a nearly fledged owlet in late May), **Broadstone Res.** (1 pair bred), **Ingbirchworth Res.** (1 pair bred), and **Cliff Wood** (a pair held a breeding territory).

The majority of the other records, most of which only involved a single, were confined to January and February. The only record from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** involved a single calling from the S bank wood during the late morning of 2nd November.

LITTLE OWL *Athene noctua*

Resident breeder (2), 50-80 pairs.

Although there were records from 24 locations (18 in 2018 and 21 in 2017) most of these were generally very short-lived. The only sites to harbour birds throughout the year were in the Meltham area – **Red Lane/New Bridge Road** and **Brow Grains**.

There was a welcome increase in records from **Blackmoorfoot**. The number of records from the fields to the west of the reservoir suggests that two birds were resident between late February and early December, but there was no evidence of breeding. On a negative note, however, it was noted that at least two sites in the **Broadstone** area were lost when buildings were demolished/damaged.

Birds were present at a number of locations during the breeding season, but the only proof of breeding came **Red Lane/New Bridge Road** (2 young fledged), the western end of **Meltham Cop** (at least 1 young fledged) and near **Helme** (at least 1 young fledged). In addition, the resident 'pair' at **Brow Grains** probably bred.

LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus*

Resident breeder (1), 5-10 pairs.

There were two records of singles prior to the breeding season, both on 11th March: **Ingbirchworth Res.** and near **Wards End Farm, Marsden.**

Evidence of breeding was obtained from three locations: a pair raised two young at a site in the SW of the area, the third successive year that breeding has been successful at this location; at least two pairs were present during the breeding season at a new site in the SW of the area; and at the site in the NW of the area a pair raised two young.

The only evidence of occupancy at one of the new sites in the SW of the area where young fledged in 2017 (but not in 2018) was the finding of a moulted primary in late August.

SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus*

Partial migrant breeder (1), 0-13 pairs. Scarce passage and winter visitor.

There were very occasional records of up to three birds at six locations during the first winter period.

Birds were present at six potential breeding sites during the summer months (3 in 2018), with breeding being proven at three of these. At one large site at least seven pairs (some of which may not have been in the Club area) fledged a total of 24 young, large young were being fed at a site in late May, and three owlets were fledged at the other. At the three other sites, although birds were seen in wing-clapping display at two of these, there was no proof of breeding.

The only records following the breeding season involved singles at **Broadstone Res.** on 5th September and **Ingbirchworth** on 28th October.

NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Rare visitor. Former migrant breeder, which may occasionally do so. Red listed.

A single male was 'churring' from a potential breeding area on 13th May.

At the location which has attracted birds for the previous five years as many as four 'churring' males may have been present and a nest with two eggs was located in early June.

At the traditional site in the south of the area, six males held breeding territories, but some of these may have been outside the Club area.

SWIFT *Apus apus*

Migrant breeder (3), 100-300 pairs.

Birds were present between 29th April and 14th September, but numbers continued to drop, there being only two treble-figure counts. There were a number of comments from observers who regularly watch specific areas, all negative: a **New Mill** resident commented that 'alarmingly, there were no sightings from the house of birds flying over', at **Rastrick** the single observed on 1st May

was ‘the only one seen throughout the summer from home’, and at **Dewsbury SW** ‘numbers were very much down on previous years’.

The first records involved two at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 29th April, two at **Dewsbury SW** and singles at **Rastrick** and **Armitage Bridge** on 2nd May, and two at **Cupwith Res.** on 4th May.

Following the two at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 29th April birds continued to be seen on a near daily basis until the last, a single, on 10th September. As in the previous four years, however, numbers remained very low, with assemblages rarely reaching 30, the only figures in excess involved 40+ on 27th and 30th May and, in June, 40 + on 5th, 100+ on 8th, 60+ on 11th, 80+ on 12th/13th, and 50+ on 15th/16th.

Although birds became more widely distributed by mid-May, the abysmal figures noted above for Blackmoorfoot Res. continued, and the only assemblages in excess of 15 involved c.50 over the River Calder at **Brighouse** on 5th May; 30 at **Dewsbury SW** on 7th May; 42 at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 9th June, with 70 there on 14th June and 35 on 17th June; 18 over **Marsh** on 13th July; c.20 at **Lowerhouses** on 18th July; c.120 circling at a great height on the edge of a weather front over **Thongsbridge** on 21st July; and 22 over **Netherton** on 24th July. At the two locations which attracted birds on a regular basis, **Crosland Moor** and **Lockwood**, flock size never reached double-figures.

There was more breeding evidence than usual: ten of the 14 nest-boxes on **Slaithwaite** viaduct were occupied (a belated record for last year indicated no change); a pair nested under the eaves of a house in **Helme**; in **Netherton** two pairs nested on Moor Lane and single pairs on Delph Lane and Netherton Moor Road; single pairs nested in **Lowerhouses** and **Armitage Bridge**, and the birds around the Clock Tower in **Lindley** may have been breeding.

By late August, although still fairly widely distributed, assemblages never reached more than a handful. Birds lingered into September, being recorded from five localities: **Blackmoorfoot Res.** had four on 1st/2nd, 18 flew W on 4th, 3 were present on 8th and a single on 10th; eight were over **Armitage Bridge** on 2nd, with four there the following day; four (3 flew S + 1 W) at **Harden Quarries** on 2nd; two were over **Wards End Farm** on 3rd, with a single there on 6th; a single flew NW over **Fixby** on 5th; and a single flew E at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 14th.

Visible migration was reported as follows:

Wards End Farm, Marsden – movements over the area fell into two distinct periods. A total of 43 flew over (36 NW + 7 E) on seven dates between 16th and 31st May, with a maximum of 18 NW on the last mentioned date. The other movements were confined to July/August when a total of 381 birds flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 30 dates, with peaks of 76 on 20th July, 60 on 24th July, and 44 on 4th August.

Isle of Skye Quarry – 15 flew S on 14th June.

Oldfield – a flock 36 flew SW on 14th August.

Harden Quarries – three flew S and a single W on 2nd September.

Blackmoorfoot Res – a flock of 18 flew W up the Colne Valley on 4th September.

KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis*

Resident breeder (2), near 30 pairs.

There were records from 16 locations, a slight increase on last year, but still way below the 27 of 2017. Breeding was confirmed at five sites, a welcome increase on the single of 2018.

With the exceptions of the breeding locations, most other records were confined to the two winter periods, and birds were only present for short periods.

The total number of bird/days at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** was again disappointing: the first half of the year only produced a single from 1st – 3rd January and, although there were more records in the second half, this only amounted to singles on 22 dates between 13th July and 20th December.

LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos minor*

Former resident breeder. Now very rare. Red listed.

There were two records of this nationally declining species: a single along Scar Bottom Lane, **Greetland** on 31st March (AT) and one in a solitary oak tree along with a Great Spotted Woodpecker at **Thongsbridge** on 6th November (AP).

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos major*

Resident breeder (2), 70-100 pairs.

Records were received from 39 localities, a marked drop from the 52 of last year. Once again a number of gardens attracted birds throughout the year, and there was the usual sharp increase in visits between June and August as adults brought their recently fledged young to feeding stations. At gardens in **Thongsbridge** and **New Mill**, however, visits were said to be 'less frequent than previous years'.

Although drumming was widely recorded, the only proof of breeding came from **Armitage Bridge Wood** (2 pairs fledged young), **Windy Bank Wood** (2 pairs), and single pairs in **Helme Wood**, **Cliff Wood**, and **Beaumont Park**.

At only one 'wild' locality, **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, were birds present throughout the year, but there was no evidence of breeding, although a pair did breed in nearby Helme Wood.

Movements over the area were reported as follows: at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** two flew W on 5th October, a single S on 12th October, and one SW the following day; and two flew SW over **Pule Hill, Marsden** on 12th October. Note the interesting correlation between these sites on 12th October.

GREEN WOODPECKER *Picus viridis*

Resident breeder (2), 20-40 pairs.

There were records from 24 widely scattered localities, a similar figure to last year. No locality held birds throughout the year and, despite being present in suitable nesting habitat during the summer months, the only evidence of breeding involved a pair which bred in **Cliff Wood**. There were a few records from gardens, but most of these related to birds heard 'yaffling' nearby, although a single frequented a **Holmfirth** garden between 5th and 11th May.

Following last years' increase in records at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (18 dates), this years' showing was abysmal, and only amounted to five records, all possibly relating to the same individual: in March, singles were in the S bank wood on 19th, Orange Wood on 26th, and near the inflow the following day and, in April, singles were in Orange Wood on 8th and along the E bank on 11th.

KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus*

Resident breeder (2), 70-100 pairs.

There were records from 47 localities, a fall of five on last year. Dated records totalled only 320, a marked decrease from the 373 of last year, though again some 'block' records came from a number of locations, making an exact count difficult. Evidence of breeding came from only three sites though it is fairly certain that some were overlooked and some of the groups seen later in the year may have contained locally bred juvenile birds.

Most records involved single birds, occasionally two and rarely three, with the only exceptions being five in the **Ingbirchworth** area on 15th February, four at **Stirley Hill Farm** on 23rd July, and four at **Pule Hill, Marsden** on 17th August.

At **Wards End Farm, Marsden**, which is watched daily, birds were recorded in every month of the year but only on 153 dates. This is a marked drop compared to the 189 last year, and the number of birds was also drastically down with a maximum of only three on two occasions.

One or two were present throughout the year at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. For the seventh consecutive year, however, no interest was shown in the nest-box secured to the tower by YW in 2012. (The occupancy of this box by Jackdaws has now made it totally unsuitable for the species for which it was originally intended).

MERLIN *Falco columbarius*

Partial migrant breeder (1), 0-4 pairs. Scarce visitor. Red listed.

The now familiar downward trend in records continued and, although there were a similar number as last year, it was below half of the 78 in 2017. Birds were reported in every month apart from January and November, with a third of the records occurring in September and October which, as mentioned last year, may suggest some movement through the area coinciding with passerine migration. There were very few records during the breeding season and despite a juvenile being noted at one location there were no signs of breeding taking place.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – this daily watched moorland site not surprisingly accounted for the majority of the records. Singles were seen on 24 dates, one down on last year, with half occurring between late August and late October. The first involved a single which flew W on 5th February. Thereafter, although singles were seen on a further four February dates, they became very sporadic until September, and only amounted to singles on one date in March and April, three in May, and singles in June, July and August. Single birds were then seen on six September dates, two in October and three in December. In September birds were seen mobbing both Buzzards and Kestrels, and also chasing Meadow Pipits.

Tunnel End – two sightings on 9th March probably involved the same individual.

Dewsbury SW – one was chasing Black-headed Gulls for about 30 minutes before departing to the NW on 3rd April.

Ingbirchworth Res – a female on 13th May and a juvenile which flew in the direction of Royd Moor on 13th July.

Blackmoorfoot Res – there was a single record (4 in 2018): an adult male was hunting over the fields to the west on 23rd August.

Windleden – a male on 25th August.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a male on 18th September.

Scout Dike Res – one flew N on 21st September.

Ringstone Edge – one photographed on 23rd September.

Harden Quarries – one flew SW on 23rd October.

Hartcliff Hill – a female on 23rd October.

HOBBY *Falco subbuteo*

Rare to scarce visitor, increasing. Has bred.

As can be seen from the table below records were a little down on last year and were received from three fewer locations. Breeding was confirmed at one site in the S of the area where two juveniles were successfully reared and there were enough summer records and later ones of juveniles to suggest that breeding could have taken place elsewhere.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – it was a good year with ten records (8 in 2018). The first record of the year involved two which drifted slowly to the E on 7th May; one flew low W and returned shortly afterwards carrying prey on 2nd June; a single was mobbing a Buzzard on 22nd June, after which it sat on a fence post for 20 minutes; singles were seen flying W up the valley on 30th June and 13th and 26th July; a single circling over Garside Hey on 2nd August was followed in the same month by one flying high to the S on 4th and one chasing Swallows through the yard on 8th; and the final bird of the year was seen doing likewise on 5th September (DWS).

Thurstonland Bank – one on 5th June (DHP).

Oldfield – a single on 27th June (II).

Blackmoorfoot Res – there were four records (three in each of the previous two years): a single flew W over Orange Wood at 11.35hrs. on 5th July (MLD); a first-summer was chasing hirundines over the reservoir at 10.20hrs. on 20th July (MLD, DMP *et al.*) and what was presumably the same bird was again chasing hirundines over the reservoir at 10.10hrs. on 29th July (MLD, GBS); and a single flew E over Orange Wood at 11.10hrs. on 20th September (MLD, GK).

Scammonden Water – a single on 27th July (GBS).

Gunthwaite Dam – one was seen to chase off another before departing W on 14th August (AK).

Boshaw Whams – a juvenile on 24th August (DHP).

Harden Quarries – single juveniles on 29th August and 1st September (NWM, DHP).

Lower Maythorn – a very approachable juvenile was sitting on a fence post on 15th September (II).

Records of Hobby in the Huddersfield area during the last 10 years:

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
12	16	28	18	34	29	25	21	29	25

PEREGRINE *Falco peregrinus*

Resident breeder, increased to (1), 1-6 pairs.

Records of this very mobile species came from 29 locations, six more than last year. There was evidence of successful breeding from four locations, two of which, following recent national trends, occurred in urban areas, well away from the high moorland. These urban pairs fledged five young (3 + 2). Records of birds in past/potential breeding areas have been omitted.

Huddersfield town centre – one or two were present throughout the year, but speculation of breeding on the incinerator tower was unfounded.

Clayton West – a single on 4th January.

Whitley Edge – an adult male on 4th January and a large female consuming a Woodpigeon on 28th January.

Rastrick – a single on 9th January.

Langsett Res – a single on 20th January and one over Langsett Banks on 30th August.

Blackmoorfoot Res – there were 13 records, a marked increase on the six during each of the two previous years. The only records during the first half of the year involved a single which flew N on 1st February, a female over Meltham Cop on 6th February, and one circling over the NE corner on 20th March. The other ten records fell between 2nd July and 26th December and involved singles with the exception of a male and female circling together on the latter mentioned date. On a number of occasions birds were seen pursuing potential prey items, which included Lapwing, Oystercatcher, and a Herring Gull.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – birds were seen on 32 dates, seven up on last year, with records spanning all months with the exception of January. All were flyover singles apart from two circling high over the valley on 19th December and two mobbing a Buzzard over Garside Hey on 23rd of the same month.

Wood Nook – a single flew S on 9th February.

Silkstone SW – one flew E on 25th February.

Holme Moss – a single on 27th February.

Isle of Skye Quarry – a single on 24th March and a juvenile on 3rd July.

Scout Dike Res – one flew S on 1st April.

Ringstone Edge Res – one landed on the shore on 17th April.

Harden Moss – two on 17th April.

Little Don Valley – singles on 21st/22nd April and 7th May.

Cowcliffe – one flew W on 26th April.

Boshaw Whams – on 22nd July a juvenile attempted to take an Oystercatcher which then ‘ditched’ into the water.

Golcar – two on 24th July and a single on 31st October.

Windleden – one on 25th August.

Harden Quarries – a juvenile flew SE on 2nd September, an adult flew W on 10th September, two were interacting on 23rd October, and a single flew W on 27th October.

Meltham – one over Brow Grains on 1st October and a single over a Millmoor Road garden on 24th October.

Hartcliff Hill – a single on 9th October.

Winscar Res – one on 7th November.

Ingbirchworth Res – a juvenile on 18th December.

New Mill – a single on 29th December.

RING-NECKED PARAKEET *Psittacula krameri*

Introduced.

At **Rectory Park, Thornhill**, where the species has gained a strong foothold, up to six were present for most of the year and there were occasional sightings of seven or eight (Tim Dukes, Friends of Rectory Park). Perhaps a breeding record of this alien species is on the cards.

The other records involved a single in **Helme** on 23rd April (TD), one in **Lockwood** on 24th August (S & HC), a single over **Brockholes** on 7th September (DD), one at **Armitage Bridge** on 16th September (DJ), a single in **Greenhead Park** on 20th October (DD), and one U-turned from the E over **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 22nd October (DWS).

JAY *Garrulus glandarius*

Resident breeder (3), 200-350 pairs.

Remains widely distributed and common but, unlike most previous years, other than at the migration watch points in **Marsden** (see below), there was no appreciable increase in numbers during the autumn months. Birds were present throughout the year at numerous localities, including gardens, but numbers remained low and never exceeded four. Indeed, in sharp contrast to last year, the only records in excess of four involved eight at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 5th October and 11 there on 20th October.

At **Wards End Farm, Marsden** the observer commented that birds were seen regularly in the garden, far more than in previous years. Although present throughout the year at several localities, breeding evidence of this very secretive species was only forthcoming from **Head Clough, Marsden**, where three young fledged.

Visible migration was noted as follows:

Harden Quarries – two flew SW on 18th August and 2nd October, and five flew SW on 3rd October.

Wards End Farm – a total of 70 flew over (42 S + 16 SW + 12 W) on ten dates between 2nd and 19th October, with peaks of 13 SW on 3rd and 11 S on 12th.

Pule Hill, Marsden – five flew W on 3rd October and ten S on 12th October.

MAGPIE *Pica pica*

Resident breeder (4), 1,500-2,000 pairs.

The national breeding population increased steadily until the late 1980s, after which abundance stabilized, but a minor decrease has occurred during the last decade (BTO BirdTrends). As a consequence, large roosting assemblages in the Club area have not occurred for over a decade. Breeding was widely reported including several in, or nearby, gardens.

The only double figure counts were as follows:

Thurstonland Bank – c.40 roosted on 16th January.

Crosland Moor – 11 on 1st February and ten on 13th September.

Blackmoorfoot Res – in February there were flocks of 23 on 5th and 18 on 18th and 21st.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – 11 on 17th September.

Marsden GC – 19 on 28th October.

Oldfield – up to 13 on various December dates.

Aspley-Colne Bridge – 12 on 27th December.

Seven, in small groups, flew SE over **Harden Quarries** on 20th September, and 13 did likewise on 17th October.

JACKDAW *Coloeus monedula*

Resident breeder (4), 500-1,000 pairs.

There were numerous records of this common and widely distributed species but, rather surprisingly, the only evidence of breeding came from birds carrying nesting material in **New Mill** in April and juveniles being fed by adults at **Lockwood** in July. As is now usual, several gardens were visited throughout the year and the **Holmfirth** garden mentioned in the previous two reports continued to monopolise. As in these two years, the detailed data supplied showed that, although

present throughout the year, numbers peaked in February/March, reaching a maximum of 80 on 9th February. During the rest of the year assemblages only occasionally reached double figures, but in November 80 were present on 9th and 90 the following week.

Flocks of anything up to 30 were widely distributed, and those in excess are outlined below:

Deanhouse – up to 80 were present throughout the year.

Marsden – c.100 were present throughout the year.

Cowcliffe – up to 140 flew west from a roost during the early mornings of both winter periods.

Spicer Hill – 100+ with Rooks on 4th January.

Honley – c.50 on 13th February.

Scholes – c.90 on 17th February.

Bretton Park – 41 on 11th March.

Oldfield – c.200 on 28th August.

Blackmoorfoot – 30+ on 3rd October.

Thurstonland Bank – c.50 on 6th October.

Whitley Edge – 200+ on 28th October.

Low Common – c.250 on 18th December.

Deer Hill – c.100 on 30th December.

Birds were recorded moving over the area at three localities. Note the high numbers at both Marsden watchpoints on 17th October – the direction of flight appears to eliminate any possibility of duplication.

Harden Quarries – as is usual at this site, small flocks were noted flying in various directions, suggesting that these may simply be feeding flights or birds dispersing from roosts. A total of 602 flew over on 21 dates between 5th September and 6th November, with a maximum of 114 on 23rd October.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 2,341 flew W on 14 dates between 18th September and 6th November, with a maximum of 1,097 on 17th October. This is a very large number for the site, the previous best season total being 762 in 2017.

Wards End Farm – a total of 2,716 flew W on 16 dates between 2nd and 30th October. Treble figure counts were reached on a number of days, with peaks of 400 on 17th, 300 on 25th, and 425 on 28th. As with Pule Hill, this is a very large number of birds for the site.

A single in **Shepley** on 12th March had a very distinct pale silvery half-collar, reminiscent of the Nordic/Eastern race (NWM).

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus*

Resident breeder (5), 3,000-4,500 pairs (2,450 during the Club survey in 2005).

Although the number of Rooks nesting in the Club area has decreased (see Birds in Huddersfield 2018 pages 122-125) this under recorded species remains widely distributed, with some large assemblages at favoured locations.

Flocks in excess of 40 were reported as follows: 200+ with Jackdaws at **Spicer Hill** on 4th January; c.80 at **Scout Dike Res.** on 13th January; 110 + at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 8th February; 100+ at **Fullshaw** on 13th February; 104 on **Whitley Common** on 25th February, with 40+ there on 29th April; 43 at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 20th May, with 52 there on 24th May; of the c.150 in fields at **Annat Royd Lane** on 1st June most departed to the NE; c.80 at **Broadstone Res.** on 17th July, with 60+ there on 9th October; and c.100 at **Thurstonland Bank** on 6th October.

The only rookeries reported were as follows: two nests at **Meal Hill** (8 in 2018), 11 nests at **Scholes**

(13 last year), five at **Black Rock, Linthwaite** (same as last year), and two new rookeries in the **Jackson Bridge** area: seven nests on the north side of the A616 and nine, possible 13 nests, spread out along a line of trees above the village. On a negative note, for the second consecutive year the former rookery at **Crosland Moor**, which had been in decline for several years, was again devoid of nesting birds.

CARRION CROW *Corvus corone*
Resident breeder (4), 800-1,600 pairs.

Although the number of records of this under recorded species remained low, flock sizes, especially at **Whitley Common** (see below), greatly outnumbered those of the previous two years. Once again, breeding was widely reported, and several gardens attracted small numbers throughout the year.

The majority of records were of fewer than 12, the following being the exceptions:

Broadstone Res – 16 on 27th February and 24 on 8th April.

Whitley Common – 22 on 4th March, 20+ with Rooks on 29th April, 200+ on 19th September, 150+ on 2nd October, 70+ on 9th and 28th October, c.25 on 14th November, and 30+ on 2nd December.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – 12 on 6th February and 20+ on 22nd February.

Broad Canal – 19 were present between Turnbridge and Cooper Bridge on 17th October and 19 were counted between Aspley and Colne Bridge on 27th December.

Birds moving over the area were recorded as follows:

Wards End Farm – in March, 31 (including a flock of 16) flew W on 18th, eight flew W on 23rd, and 12 did likewise on 24th. Later in the year 20 flew W on 3rd June and a total of 128 flew W on nine dates between 23rd September and 29th October, with peaks of 22 on 23rd September and 23 on 17th October. The observer has commented that there is sometimes some obvious movement of this species along with Jackdaws, but the local population of half a dozen doesn't fluctuate.

RAVEN *Corvus corax*
Former rare visitor, now resident breeder (1), 1-2 pairs.

Birds were reported from 37 localities, a marked increase on the 24 of last year, but at only two of these were birds present throughout the year. A pair bred at one site, fledging three young in mid-May.

There were 14 records from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (10 in 2018 and 19 in 2017), which fell into two distinct periods: three records between 13th February and 25th March, and 11 records between 4th August and 22nd October. All sightings involved no more than two birds, with the exceptions of three circling over Meltham Cop on 8th March and three over the fields to the west on 4th August.

Other records away from the potential breeding areas in the west and south involved singles at **Scout Dike Res.** on 13th January and 16th February; singles at **Broadstone Res.** on 26th February and 8th September; singles over **Brockholes** on 2nd March and 15th December; singles at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 21st March, 9th May, 22nd October, 24th November, with two there on 3rd December; a single at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 6th May; two flew W over **Thongsbridge** on 4th September; two at **Royd Moor Hill** on 19th September; a single at **Royd Moor Res.** on 24th October; and a single flew W at **Bretton Park** on 29th November.

Although most records were of no more than four individuals, a gathering of 14 at a location in the SE of the area in early May was unusual as double figure assemblages have rarely been recorded in the Club area.

With birds present throughout most of the year at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** it is difficult to be certain whether overflying birds were actually on migration. As most birds tended to fly in a W or NW direction, however, it is possible that at least some of these birds may have been migrating. A total of 19 flew W or NW on nine dates between 6th February and 26th May. Later in the year a total of 62 flew over, again mainly in the directions noted above, on 28 dates between 8th July and the year end, with a maximum of five NW on both 2nd and 23rd September.

It is similarly difficult to assign birds to any category at **Harden Quarries** as they flew in opposing directions on adjacent days. Up to three birds were seen overflying the area on nine dates between 13th August and 28th October, but all compass directions were involved.

WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus*

Rare to uncommon irruptive winter visitor.

There were records from four locations, all during the first winter period.

Birkby – a flock of c.25 were photographed on Blacker Hall Road on 9th January (AS) and 14, probably part of this flock, were present along Grimescar Avenue on 12th January (GBS).

Fartown – a flock of c.30 were in trees near Fartown Village Hall on 9th January (BirdGuides).

Langsett – 21 on 19th January (NS), 22 the following day (PG) and 30+ on 24th February (SS).

Winscar Res – five were near the car park on 27th March (PMcG) and eight roosted in a conifer near the car park the following day (NWM, DHP).

COAL TIT *Periparus ater*

Resident breeder (3), 400-500 pairs.

Remains as widely distributed as usual, but records were only received from 27 locations, a drop of six on last year. Several gardens held birds throughout the year, but these never amounted to more than four in a **Holmfirth** garden on 6th and 27th January and four in a **Cowcliffe** garden on 11th February. Although birds were present throughout the year at a number of locations, the only proof of breeding came from **Higher Green Owlers** and **Netherton**. The highest gatherings away from the garden environment only amounted to a minimum of six at **Bretton Park** on 1st January and five at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 18th December.

Visible migration was recorded as follows:

Harden Quarries – a total of 49 flew S or SE on six dates between 23rd September and 29th October, with peaks of 19 on 17th October and 16 on 23rd October.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – five flew W on 14th October and six did likewise on 25th October.

WILLOW TIT *Poecile montana*

Resident breeder (1), about 20 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Red listed.

Records were only received from six localities (11 in 2018 and 10 in 2017) but at least two pairs bred.

Carlecotes Ponds – following last years' records, which were thought to be the first for the site, up to three were present throughout the first half of the year with five being seen on 6th February. A pair attempted to breed in a nest-box, but in early June four close to fledging young were found dead, and no birds were seen after mid-month. The only record later in the year involved two on 17th December.

Ingbirchworth Res – up to four were present throughout the year and two pairs bred, one of which fledged five young.

Broadstone Res – two were present throughout the year but were thought not to have bred.

Scout Dike Res – two pairs held breeding territories.

Royd Moor Res – there were sporadic records of up to three throughout most the year and a pair held a breeding territory.

Meal Hill – a single on 28th December.

BLUE TIT *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Resident breeder (5), 3,000-6,000 pairs. One of the commonest species.

Records were received from the usual broad suite of habitats. There were numerous breeding records, especially from garden nest-boxes. Interestingly, BTO research shows that 2019 was an early breeding season, with many species laying eggs significantly earlier than average, possibly thanks to record-breaking February temperatures; research has shown that many birds produce eggs earlier during warmer springs to ensure that their young hatch when the insects on which they are fed are most abundant. The biggest winners were the tits. Numbers of Blue, Great and Long-tailed Tits at the start of the breeding season were higher than average.

Despite the above statement, most records, even from gardens, rarely reached double figures, the following being the exceptions:

Blackmoorfoot Res – 13 on 2nd January with 14 on 6th and 20th January. Later in the year at least ten were present on 9th/10th November.

Hepworth – 12 on 6th January.

Armitage Bridge – c.20 on 7th January.

Ingbirchworth Res – at least 30 on 8th January and 3rd February, c.25 on 4th March, at least 15 on 22nd July, c.20 on 31st October, c.30 on 14th November, and c.20 on 8th December.

Cliff Wood – at least 11 pairs bred (10 in nest-boxes) and fledged at least 65 young.

Almondbury – ten on 1st and 8th September.

Pule Hill, Marsden – 13 flew W with two Great Tits on 14th September.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – at least 20 on 5th October, 12+ on 23rd/24th November, and 14 on 11th December.

Aspley-Colne Bridge – 22 on 27th December.

A Great Spotted Woodpecker was caught on camera attempting (unsuccessfully) to take the last chick from a nest-box in a **Fixby** garden on 26th May.

GREAT TIT *Parus major*

Resident breeder (4-5), 1,500-3,000 pairs.

This species was recorded from the same broad suite of habitats as Blue Tit but, as is usual, numbers were appreciably lower. Birds were present throughout the year at most locations, but numbers rarely exceeded six, the following being the exceptions: eight were present throughout

the year at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** and 12 were seen there on 2nd September, with ten on 22nd September, 13 on 25th November, and ten on 24th December; at least 12 were at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 21st February and 4th March, with ten there on 1st April and 4th November and c.15 on 8th December; c.20 were in **Bretton Park** on 29th November.

Breeding was widely recorded, especially from gardens, and at least five pairs (4 in nest-boxes) fledged at least 35 young at **Cliff Wood**.

At **Pule Hill, Marsden** two flew W with Blue Tits on 14th September and a single flew W at **Wards End Farm** on 3rd October.

SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis*

Partial migrant breeder, decreased to (4), 500-2,500 pairs. Red listed.

Although not unusual, there were no January records, and February occurrences only amounted to singles at **Broadstone Res.** on 5th and 23rd; two at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 9th, with singles there on five other dates and four which flew W on 23rd; a single NW at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 11th, then a build-up with a maximum of ten on 23rd; singles at **Royd Moor Hill** on 12th and **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 18th, 24th and 25th; and two at **Gilbert Hill, Langsett** on 24th.

Birds became more widely distributed between mid-March and mid-September, but numbers remained low, rarely exceeding a handful, the only exceptions being 19 at **Wards End Farm** on 18th March; 14 at **South Crosland** on 19th March; eight at **Deanhead Res.** and seven at **Broadstone Res.** on 20th March; eight at **Wards End Farm** on 28th June, with up to 15 there throughout July; and seven at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 21st September.

Singing males were recorded from 29 widely distributed localities, some of which held up to six individuals, but the only direct evidence of breeding came from **Wards End Farm** where adults were seen carrying food in mid-May.

There were contrasting comments from observers in different areas: at **Wards End Farm** the species was said to be 'getting more common' but in the **Cheesegate Nab** area it was stated to have been 'once regular in fields up the hill alongside Dick Edge Lane, and although there were four singing in the area in early June I saw no further signs of any presence. The fields have all been 'improved' and now have little more interest than a billiard table'.

Visible migration was recorded as follows:

Blackmoorfoot Res – in February, singles flew W on 12th, 14th and 21st and four flew W on 23rd. Later in the year a total of 39 flew over (38 W + 1 S) on five dates between 14th September and 31st October, with a maximum of 14 W on 17th October.

Wards End Farm – a total of 32 flew over (29 W + 3 SW) on five dates between 14th September and 8th October, with a maximum of 11 W on 17th September.

Pule Hill, Marsden – three flew W on 14th September and a single flew S on 23rd October.

Isle of Skye Quarry – up to three were seen flying SW on several dates between 14th September and 14th October, with 13 flying SW on 12th October.

Harden Quarries – a total of 82 flew S or SW on 11 dates between 16th September and 28th October, with a maximum of 45 on 14th October.

Digley Res – a flock of 11 flew N on 16th September.

Deer Hill – 30 flew NW during one hour in the morning of 14th October.

Boshaw Whams – two flew SW on 17th October.

Note that birds were reported at four watchpoints on 14th September.

By October birds had started to vacate the area and, apart from the passage birds noted above, the only records involved six in the car park at **Holme Moss** on 12th (said by the observer to be an unusual location) and four at **Scout Dike Res.** on 23rd.

SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia*

Migrant breeder, increased to (2), 20-100 pairs. Uncommon passage visitor.

A single at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 20th March and two at **Scout Dike Res.** on 24th March were the earliest. There were then no records until April, when nine flew E at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 1st, with seven there on 3rd, five on 4th, four on 10th, seven on 11th, four on 12th, and a single on 15th; three flew N at **Scout Dike Res.** on 1st; a single was at **Elland GP** on 2nd, with two there on 10th; nine were digging tunnels in the river bank near **Dewsbury SW** on 9th and had increased to c.130 by 18th; three at **Lockwood** on 23rd, with nine there on 29th; and a single was at **Silkstone SW** on 26th.

The following months only resulted in records from 13 locations (10 in 2018 but an alarming drop from the 24 in 2017). As last year, double figure counts were at a premium, and at most locations birds were only present for short periods. Apart from the double figure counts from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (see below) and the two breeding colonies (see below) the largest assemblage involved 11 over the River Calder at **Cooper Bridge** on 11th June.

The number of birds at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, as in 2018, was abysmal. A single on 20th March and three on 10th April were the first records. Thereafter birds were only seen on a further 53 days (56 in 2018 and 125 in 2017) until the last, a single, on 2nd October. The number of birds present rarely exceeded six, the only exceptions, all in September, being as follows: 14+ on 12th and 13th, 20+ on 14th–16th, 10+ on 17th and 18th, and 20+ on 20th.

Breeding was confirmed at **Dewsbury SW** where 40 pairs nested along the River Calder and **Horbury Strands/Wyke** where c.35 nest holes (which were not necessarily all occupied) were counted at a colony on the River Calder.

Most birds had departed by late July and, with the exception of **Blackmoorfoot Res.** which held birds until 2nd October (see above), the only other records involved nine which flew SSE at **Boshaw Whams** on 9th August, a total of ten which flew S on five dates between 13th August and 16th September at **Harden Quarries**, five at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 17th August, and singles at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 26th August and 8th September.

SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*

Migrant breeder (4), 500-600 pairs. Numerous passage visitor.

The first records of the year involved a single at **Elland GP** on 31st March, two at both **Ingbirchworth** and **Scout Dike Reservoirs** on 1st April, singles at **Elland GP** and **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 2nd April, and singles at **Ossett** and **Blackmoorfoot Res.** the following day. Shortly afterwards, birds arrived at numerous widely scattered localities, but assemblages, for the fourth consecutive year, remained very low, the few double figure counts being as follows: **Ingbirchworth Res** – in April, c.12 on 4th, 14 on 7th, c.15 on 10th/11th, c.20 on 18th, and c.30 on 30th and 50+ on 9th May.

Elland GP – c.60 on 10th April.

Dewsbury SW – c.45 on 18th April.

Blackmoorfoot Res – in May, 20+ on 3rd/4th, 15+ on 8th/9th, and 30+ on 10th and 20+ on 11th June.

An observer at **New Mill** commented that ‘the decline of this species continues with the first sighting of a singleton on 24th April, then three flying around on 7th May. There were no further sightings until one on 29th June, a few a week from 20th July, with one on 9th September being the final sighting of the year’.

Confirmation of breeding was only obtained at **Whitley Common** (a pair fledged 5 young), **Broadstone Res.** (1 pair), **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (2 pairs), and **Wards End Farm, Marsden** (5 pairs – down from the 10 last year).

The usual autumn build-up, for the third consecutive year, was abysmal, and the decline in large assemblages continued. Indeed, there were only two localities where flock size achieved treble figures (see below), neither of which involved a well-watched reservoir. The following documents all the counts in excess of single figures:

Wards End Farm – the exceptional numbers (by today’s standards) witnessed last year were not repeated. Indeed, although up to 40 were present on a daily basis throughout the autumn period, assemblages in excess of this only amounted to 70 on 15th July, 100 on 23rd August, 150 on 25th August, and 50 on 26th-30th August.

Deanhead Res – c.100 on 25th July.

Blackmoorfoot Res – 25+ on 4th August and 35+ on 24th August and, in September, 20+ were present on four dates with 30+ on 30th.

Almondbury – 14 on 5th August, 24 on 14th August and 12 on 15th September.

Broadstone Res – 22 on 21st August.

Whitley Common – c.25 on 21st August.

Oldfield – c.40 on 27th August.

Ingbirchworth Res – c.25 on 29th August and c.15 on 8th September.

Upper Denby – c.50 on 1st September.

Visible migration was recorded as follows:

Harden Quarries – a total of 1,664 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on 30 dates between 12th August and 17th October, with a maximum of 378 on 8th September.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 1,234 flew W on eight dates between 17th August and 14th September, with peaks of 261 on 17th August and 275 on 23rd August.

Wards End Farm – a total of 258 flew over, mainly in a W or SW direction on eight days between 28th August and 30th September, with a maximum of 90+ W on 28th August.

Broadstone Res – 20+ flew W on 5th September.

Royd Moor Res – 30+ flew S on 12th September.

Blackmoorfoot Res – at least 169 flew S on six dates between 3rd and 12th October, with peaks of 50+ on 3rd and 70+ the following day.

By late September birds had started to vacate the area, and the only October records (other than the migrating birds mentioned above) involved two which flew NE at **Wards End Farm** on 1st, with three W there the following day; a single at **Winscar Res.** on 3rd; and up to nine at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on six dates, until the last (2) on 17th.



Wigeon, New Mill, 31st January 2019, Reg Senior



Ferruginous Duck, Bretton Park, 4th May 2019, David Pennington



Common Scoters, Broadstones Res., 6th June 2019, Tim Melling



Smew, Blackmoorfoot Res., 3rd February 2019, David Pennington



Sparrowhawk, Fixby, 14th July 2019, Geoff Taylor



Curlew, Dunford Bridge, 11th June 2019, Reg Senior



Bar-tailed Godwit, Winscar, 1st May 2019, David Pennington



Dunlin, Cupwith Res., 20th May 2019, David Pennington



Woodcock, Storthes Hall, 26th May 2019, Reg Senior



Caspian Gull, Wilshaw, 3rd January 2019, David Pennington



Yellow-legged Gull, Boshaw Whams, 17th July 2019, David Pennington



Sandwich Tern, Ringstone Edge, 22nd May 2019, Nick Mallinson



Black Tern, Ladywood Lakes, 8th May 2019, David Tattersley



Short-eared Owl, site withheld, 3rd January 2019, David Tattersley



Kestrel, Cartworth Moor, 19th January, Reg Senior



Hobby, Holme Valley, 5th June 2019, David Pennington



Sand Martin, Marsden, 27th August 2019, David Sill



Nuthatch, Holmfirth, 8th January 2019, Trevor Doherty



Black Redstart, Holme Moss, 6th October 2019, David Pennington



Redstart, Barebones Rd, 17th September 2019, David Pennington



Dipper, Cromwell Bottom, 26th February 2019, Stephen Chippendale



Yellow Wagtail, Boshaw Whams, 7th July 2019, David Pennington



Brambling, Holmfirth, 8th February 2019, Trevor Doherty



Siskin, Magdale, 14th January 2019, Reg Senior

HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbicum*

Migrant breeder (3), 400-500 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Common passage visitor.

The dire situation regarding this decreasing species continues unabated. There were records from 31 locations, a slight increase on the 29 of last year but, as last year, breeding was only reported from eight of these. There were only two treble figure counts, indeed, the majority of assemblages rarely exceeded 50, even at the well-watched reservoirs.

An observer at **New Mill** commented that ‘the serious decline of this species is illustrated by the fact that only sighting from the house involved a minimum of eight on 29th July’.

The first records of the year involved singles at **Elland GP** and **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 2nd April. The only other April records, with the exceptions of up to eight on nine dates at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** and up to c.30 (but generally less than 6) on six dates at **Ingbirchworth Res.**, involved a single at **Marsden** on 5th; two at **Dewsbury SW** on 9th, with 18 there on 18th; two at **Elland GP** on 10th; a single at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 12th, with two there on 21st; and c.40 at **Silkstone SW** on 26th.

Although the species became more widely distributed in May, numbers remained abysmally low, and remained so for the rest of the summer. Despite numerous records, the only counts which attained double figures referred to 30 over the River Calder at **Ladywood Lakes** on 9th May; 100+ at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 9th May, with 50+ there on 18th June; 30+ at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 30th May, with 20+ on five June dates, 25+ on 20th June, and 17 on 23rd June; 12 at **Meltham Mills** on 29th May; ten at **Marsden** on 1st June; 11 at **Golcar** on 7th June; 22 at **Armitage Bridge** on 10th June, with 12 there on 17th/18th June.

Breeding was confirmed at nine location, one more than as last year, but well below the 12 of 2017. **In order to understand the fluctuating fortunes of this species it is essential that members continue to submit all records of breeding locations including negative records from past breeding locations.**

The following were the only breeding sites with data:

Helme – two pairs nested along Helme Lane (a new breeding site).

Crosland Moor (Blackmoorfoot Road) – one nest (same as 2018).

Thongsbridge (Stoney Bank Road) – one nest (2 in 2018).

Oldfield – two pairs (3 in 2018).

Rastrick (Slade Lane) – four nests (5 in 2018).

Netherton (Infant School) – one nest (3 in 2018).

Netherton (Moor Lane) – no data available (2 in 2018).

Netherton (Delph Lane) – one nest (a new breeding site).

Lowerhouses – one nest (no data available for last year).

Although the autumn build-up was more impressive, with far more double figure counts, numbers rarely exceeded 30, the following being the only exceptions: c.70 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 22nd July and 30+ on 8th August; 30+ at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 7th and 11th August, with 40+ there on 12th/13th, 30+ on 20th/22nd, and 35+ on st September; 30 at **Armitage Bridge** on 14th August and c.60 on 2nd/3rd September; and 120 at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 10th September.

By mid-September most birds had vacated the area, and the only records later in the month involved two at **Ingbirchworth Res.** and ten at **Scout Dike Res.** on 23rd; two at **Blackmoorfoot**

Res. on 26th, with 15+ there on 30th; six at **Lockwood** on 27th; a single at **Skelmanthorpe** on 28th; and *c.*60 which flew slowly SW over **Annat Royd Lane** on 30th. The only October occurrences were all at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** and involved up to eight on the first five days of the month and 20 which flew W on 8th and four which did likewise on 10th.

Visible migration was recorded as follows:

Fixby – 20 flew SW on 18th August.

Harden Quarries – a total of 696 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on 18 dates between 23rd August and 26th September, with a maximum of 93 on 13th September.

Wards End Farm – considering that last year produced a total of 132 overflying birds, this years' showing of 35 (25 SE + 5 W + 4 SW + 1 S) on four dates between 2nd and 28th September was disheartening.

Royd Moor Hill – 30+ S on 23rd September.

Annat Royd Lane – a flock of *c.*60 flew slowly SW on 30th September.

Blackmoorfoot – 20 flew W on 8th October and four W on 10th October.

LONG-TAILED TIT *Aegithalos caudatus*

Resident breeder (3), 100-250 pairs.

This species remains as widely distributed as usual, but breeding was only confirmed at four locations. A number of garden feeding stations attracted small numbers (never more than 8) during both winter periods but, unlike last year, no garden held birds during the summer months.

As usual most groups were in single figures, the exceptions being outlined below:

Dean Brook Road, Netherthong – ten on 7th January.

Thurstonland Bank – a flock of *c.*25 on 16th January.

Healey Mills/Kerry's NR – 12 on 23rd January.

Langsett Res – at least ten on 17th February.

Blackmoorfoot Res – present throughout the year with a pair fledging young. Numbers rarely reached double figures, the following being the exceptions: 14 on 7th January, 12 on 26th January, 19 on 5th October, and 11 on a number of November dates.

Ingbirchworth Res – present throughout the year with two pairs breeding, but the only double figure counts involved 12 on 29th May, *c.*16 on 7th August, ten on 7th September, 12 on 11th September, 11+ on 17th October, and ten on 10th December.

Scout Dike Res – 19 on 10th September.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – ten on 12th October and 15 on 14th October and 1st November.

Lockwood – 14 on 26th October.

Hepworth – 15 on 8th November.

Skelmanthorpe – *c.*12 on 12th December.

Silkstone – *c.*25 on 14th December.

Breeding was reported from the following locations: **Ingbirchworth Res.** (two pairs bred), **Cliff Wood** (a pair fledged young), **Armitage Bridge** (2 pairs bred, but only 1 fledged young), and **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (a pair fledged young).

WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Migrant breeder (4), 1,000-2,500 pairs. The commonest warbler. Common passage visitor.

Records were received from 42 locations, a similar number to last year, but still a marked decrease on the 53 of 2016. The earliest arrival was on 29th March and the last on 27th September.

A singing male at **Tunnel End** on 29th March was the first returning bird. There were then no records until 6th April when three singing males were located at **Ingbirchworth Res.** and a single was singing at **Dewsbury SW**. Birds became more widely distributed during the following three weeks, with records from a further 27 locations (a good week earlier than last year). An unusual record involved ‘several’ presumed migrants, singing in Bilberry from treeless ground on the moorland between **Winscar Res.** and **Ramsden Clough** on 21st April.

As is usual, most records referred to fewer than half a dozen birds but there were several double figure counts of territorial birds at the well-known breeding locations. At **Dunford Bridge** 13 singing males were counted on a 4km stretch of the Trans-Pennine Trail on 21st April; 31 singing males were located at **Royd Moor Res.** on 23rd April, the same day that 33 were singing at **Scout Dike Res.** (34 males eventually held breeding territories); 13 singing males at **Digley** on 4th May; 14 in the **Little Don Valley** on 9th June; ten males held breeding territories at **Ingbirchworth Res.**; and in the **Marsden** area 23 territorial males were present between Hey Green and Netherwood in May, but the observer commented that this is way below the 17 year average of 35. On the other hand, the observer at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** recorded his best ever year with, for the first time, a pair breeding in the garden – although breeding was successful, that didn’t account for the large number of sightings which followed.

The first to arrive at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** were two singing males from 11th– 14th April. Numbers increased sharply thereafter, and eight singing males took up territories (only six in 2018) and remained throughout the summer months. These males, along with their respective families, were then present until early August, after which up to four were seen on a daily basis until late August. The only September occurrences involved a single on the first three days of September.

Birds were still widely distributed in late August, and the first half of September produced one or two birds at five localities. The only later records involved singles at **Golcar** on 20th and 22nd September and in the **Little Don Valley** on 27th September.

CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita*

Migrant breeder, increased to (3), 100-200 pairs. Passage visitor and scarce winter visitor.

There were records from 57 widely scattered localities, an increase of six on last year, but still a marked decrease from the 79 in 2015. Birds were present at seven localities during the first winter period, but the second winter period only produced three records from two sites.

Records between January and early March involved the following:

Silkstone SW – up to three were present on a daily basis until 23rd January, with five being seen on 21st. A single was present on 25th February, two on 1st March and three on 3rd March (RJB *et al.*).

Horbury SW – records suggest that two were present throughout January, with a single on 1st February (DT *et al.*).

Ingbirchworth – a single in the Green Lane area on 16th January (DJ).

Healey Mills/Kerry’s NR – at least one, possible two, on 24th January (DHP).

Brockholes – a single on 28th February (DD).

Lockwood – a single in a garden on 5th March (S & HC).

Elland GP – a singing male on 8th March (DHP).

It is always difficult to decide which birds are the first true migrants – was it the singing male at **Elland GP** on 8th March or was it the singing male at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 19th March? The second half of March produced records from a further nine localities, all of one or two birds with the exceptions of nine singing males at **Royd Moor Res.** on 24th, four singing males at **Marsden** on 29th, and three singing males at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** for the last three days of the month.

By mid-April birds, mainly fewer than four, had been recorded from a further 24 sites and by late April birds had become far more widely distributed (a similar picture to last year). Most records related to less than four individuals, the only exceptions being as follows:

Elland GP – seven, of which five were singing males, on 2nd April.

Thurstonland Bank – eight singing males on 8th April.

Ramsden Res – 11 singing males (but see below) on 14th April.

Royd Moor/Scout Dike area – c.20 males were singing on 28th April and c.20 birds were present on 15th September.

Wessenden Valley – 15 singing males on 28th April. The observer commented that this is well below the 15 year average of 20 males.

Healey Mills/Kerry's NR – five singing males on 1st May.

Marsden – 11 males held breeding territories. The observer commented that this is an increase of two on the previous 17 years average.

Dunford Bridge – six males were singing along the Trans-Pennine Trail on 3rd June.

Thongsbridge – c.15 in a garden on 12th August consisted of two family parties. Only five remained the following day, but these birds then took up residence until 13th September.

Scammonden Water – at least 15 on 10th September.

Of the 11 singing males at **Ramsden Res.** on 14th April, one had a mixed Willow Warbler/Chiffchaff song (II). This mixed song raises the possibility of this being an Iberian Chiffchaff *P. ibericus*, but without a tape recording this would be difficult/impossible to prove.

The first record at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** involved a singing male on 21st/22nd March; two males were then present from 26th – 28th and three from 29th – 31st. Although five males were singing between 1st and 3rd April, this soon reduced to three, and these males were then recorded daily until late July. Between early August and 19th September up to four were seen on a daily basis with, in September, six on 13th, five the following day, and eight on 15th. Thereafter, one or two were seen on a further nine days until the last, a single, on 19th October.

Although birds remained at several of these sites until mid-September, they made a very quick exit, and the only later occurrences, all in October, relate to singles at the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 2nd/3rd, **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 4th/5th, **Thongsbridge** on 8th, **Crosland Hill** on 15th, **Ingbirchworth Res.** and **Cooper Bridge** on 17th, and **Scammonden Water** and **Fixby** on 31st.

The only records of presumed wintering birds involved singles at **Marsden** on 12th November (JMP) and **Silkstone SW** on 26th and 28th December (RJB, BBSG).

WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Rare to scarce passage visitor and irregular migrant breeder (1), 0-5 pairs. Red listed.

There were two records, with no birds being recorded from last years' breeding location.

One was calling persistently in **Marsden** on 2nd May (JMP) and a singing male was present at **Yateholme** on 12th May (TM). The Marsden record was the first since a single on 15th May 2010.

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Migrant breeder (1), 5-20 pairs.

The decline in this species continues. Records were only received from two locations, a marked decrease from the ten in 2016. At **Colne Bridge SP**, a former stronghold, there have been no birds, despite regular visits, since 2013. In addition, for the first time in several years, there were no breeding records.

Dewsbury SW – a single on 26th April was the only record from this former breeding site.

Boshaw Whams – single juveniles were present on 27th/28th and 31st July and 1st August. Two juveniles were seen on 2nd August, with possibly three juveniles on 5th August, and a single juvenile was present on 8th September.

GREAT REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*

Rare migrant.

A singing male present at **Dewsbury SW** between 23rd May and 10th June (JH *et al.*) was the first record for the Club area.

There was a major influx of the species at this time with at least 12 others being recorded in the country. Three of these were in Yorkshire, with a singing male at Wintersett remaining for five weeks from 8th May. The Dewsbury SW bird, last heard in the early morning of 10th June but not at lunch time, was presumably the same bird which appeared at Pugneys CP later in the day.

REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Rare to scarce passage visitor and rare migrant breeder (1), 0-2 pairs.

Records were only received from three locations, a marked drop from the six of last year. The first birds were seen on 17th April, but there were no autumn sightings.

Dewsbury SW – a singing male on 17th/18th April had increased to five singing males by early May and a total of 15 singing males were proclaiming territories by mid-May.

Elland GP – a single on 7th May.

Colne Bridge SP – the only record from this former stronghold involved a single male which sang for four consecutive days in mid-May.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia*

Passage visitor and occasional migrant breeder (1), 0-3 pairs. Red listed.

There were records from 11 locations, one more than last year. Unlike last year, however, breeding was confirmed at one site. Birds were recorded between 18th April and 25th August.

Scout Dike Res – a reeling male on 18th April.

Deanhead Res – up to two reeling males were present between 19th April and 25th July.

Broadstone Res/Heath – up to three reeling males were present between 21st April and 19th July.
Red Lane, Meltham – a reeling male on 30th April and 1st May.
Brow Grains, Meltham – a reeling male on 1st May.
Deer Hill Res – two birds, one a reeling male the other silent, in the same willow bush on 22nd April.
Scammonden Water – a reeling male on 10th May attracted a mate, as a juvenile was being fed by an adult on 25th August.
Meltham – a reeling male near Muddy Brook on 16th May.
Marsden – a reeling male near Intake Head Farm on 4th July.
West Slaithwaite – a reeling male to the east of Wool Clough on 22nd July.
Pule Hill, Marsden – a reeling male on 23rd July.

BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla*

Migrant breeder (3-4), 400-600 pairs, increasing. Scarce winter visitor.

As last year, there were no records during the first winter period.

A female was in an **Almondbury** garden on 24th March, the same day that two were at **Royd Moor Res**. The fact that birds appeared at two locations on the same date strongly suggests that they were true migrants. There were then no records until April, when a male was at **Elland GP** on 6th, with five there on 8th; three were at **Almondbury** (not the garden mentioned above) on 6th and two at **Bretton Park** on 9th. A further five sites held one or two singing males on 11th April and thereafter birds became far more widely distributed with records from a further 43 locations (slightly more than last year). Numbers remained low, however, rarely exceeding three, the following being the only exceptions:

Royd Moor/Scout Dike area – c.10 singing males on 28th April and eight males eventually held breeding territories.

Dewsbury SW/ Healey Mills/Kerry's NR – 12 singing males on 1st May.

Bretton Park – six on 6th May.

Elland GP – ten singing males on 7th May.

Marsden – 17 singing males were present between Hey Green and Netherwood in May. The observer commented that this is just above the 16 years average of 16 males.

Ingbirchworth Res – four males held breeding territories.

Cliff Wood – four males held breeding territories.

Little Don Valley – six on 9th June.

The first for the year at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** involved a singing male on 11th April. The number of singing males quickly rose, and four took up territories, each of which is thought to have attracted a female. As is usual at this site, birds had all but departed by early August, and the only records thereafter involved up to three (usually only 1) on a further 11 days until the last, a single, on 18th September.

Birds remained widely distributed until late August but, with the exception of those mentioned above at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, the only other records involved two at **Broadstone Res.** on 8th September, a single at **Scammonden Water** on 10th September, a male at **Golcar** on 16th September, singles at **Holm Styes, Harden Quarries** and **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 19th September, a male in a **Cowlcliffe** garden on 1st November, and a male and female in a **Thongsbridge** garden on 14th November, These last two mentioned sightings presumably referred to wintering birds.

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin*

Migrant breeder (2), near 100 pairs.

The downward spiral of this nationally decreasing species continues. There were records from 16 localities (17 in 2018 and 20 in 2017). Birds were recorded between 18th April and 23rd August.

The continued low number of localities from which the species was recorded warrants the inclusion of all records:

Stirley Community Farm – a single on 18th April.

Royd Moor/Scout Dike area – six males on 28th April, of which five remained and held breeding territories.

Elland GP – three males on 29th April and 7th May.

Ingbirchworth Res – a singing male on 29th April maintained a territory throughout the breeding season.

Broadstone Res – a male, present from 29th April, held a breeding territory and four were present on 22nd June.

Carlecotes Ponds – a singing male on 30th April and 6th and 12th May.

Digley Res – a single on 4th May.

Bretton Park – two on 6th May.

Dewsbury SW – a singing male on 7th May.

Blackmoorfoot – two singing males took up territories from 10th May and both attracted females and bred. The breeding birds had departed by mid-July and the only other record involved two on 26th August.

Scammonden Water – a singing male on 12th and 20th May.

Tunnel End – a singing male on 15th May.

Horbury Strands/Wyke – a singing male on 18th May.

Dunford Bridge – two along the Trans-Pennine Trail on 3rd June.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a single flying WSW with a juvenile Bullfinch and a Reed Bunting on 23rd August was very unusual.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a singing male on 15th May was followed by singles on 13th, 26th and 27th July and 8th/9th August.

LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca*

Migrant breeder (1), 5-20 pairs.

There were records from only five locations (13 in 2018). With the exception of a male which held a territory at **Broadstone Res.**, all the others were for one day only. Birds were recorded between 20th April and 25th August.

Sparth Res – a singing male on 20th April.

Broadstone Res – a singing male on 22nd April maintained a territory throughout the breeding season and an additional male was singing on 22nd May.

Scout Dike Res – a singing male on 23rd April.

Horbury Wyke/Strands – a singing male on 18th May.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – singles on 3rd June, 25th July and 25th August.

WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis*

Migrant breeder (2-3), 75-150 pairs.

There were records from 20 locations, a drop of seven on last year and a massive reduction on the 42 of 2015. Is this reduction real, or is the species being under-recorded? With so few records it is becoming increasingly difficult to ascertain the true status of the species. Birds were present between 19th April and 16th September.

The first returning birds, all in April, involved single singing males at **Broadstone Res.** on 19th; **West Slaithwaite, Langsett** and **Deanhead Res.** on 20th; two singing males at both **Healey Mills/Kerry's NR** and **Scout Dike Res.** on 23rd, and a singing male at **Flockton Moor** on 24th. By early May birds were more widely distributed (a similar situation to last year), but numbers remained low, those exceeding three only amounting to ten singing males at **Dewsbury SW** from 1st – 7th May and four singing males at **Stirley Community Farm** on 22nd May.

Breeding was recorded at eight locations (10 last year) and involved four territory holding males at **Broadstone Res.**, four pairs in the **Ingbirchworth** area (3 of which fledged a total of 11 young), six males held territories at both **Royd Moor Res.** and **Scout Dike Res.**, six pairs bred at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (see below), a pair fledged three young at **Scammonden Water**, and three males held territories at **Stirley Community Farm** and in the Fullshaw Lane/Gilbert Hill area at **Langsett**. Although the **Deanhead Res.** male first recorded on 20th April remained until 10th May, there was no evidence of breeding.

A single singing male at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 1st May was the first. This very quickly rose to six and these territory-holding birds attracted females and bred. Family parties were in evidence until early August, but the only other records involved singles on 17th and 26th August and 5th September.

By late July very few birds remained and the only August records, other than those mentioned from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** above, involved up to four (but usually 1 or 2) on ten dates at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** and singles at **Scout Dike Res.** on 14th, **Broadstone Res.** on 21st, and **Crosland Hill** on 25th.

Unlike last year, which produced several September records, this year there were only three, all involving singles: **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 5th, **Broadstone Res.** on 8th, and **Digley Res.** on 16th.

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus*

Resident breeder (3), 100-200 pairs. Common passage and winter visitor.

There were records from 23 locations (27 in 2018 and 41 in 2017) but, unlike the previous two years, no locality held birds throughout the year. Indeed, at several sites there were less than a handful of sightings. All records were of less than three birds (usually only 1 or 2) with the exception of four at **Harden Quarries** on 17th October.

Although most records were concentrated into the winter periods, birds were present at half a dozen locations during the breeding season, but at none of these was evidence of breeding forthcoming.

The number of records from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** remained low. The first half of the year only produced singles on 15th January and 15th February, two on 18th – 20th February, and a single on

1st March. Later in the year one or two were seen on seven dates between 15th August and 21st December with three on 23rd September.

WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Resident breeder (5), 6,000-12,000 pairs. One of the commonest species.

With records from every habitat type, including high moorland cloughs, this species remains as widely distributed as usual. A number of observers, however, were of the opinion that fewer birds were in evidence. At **Wards End Farm, Marsden** birds were not present in January or February and the observer commented that the species was less numerous since ‘The Beast from the East’ in 2018. A garden observer at **Oldfield** commented that the species ‘seems to have vanished from the garden’. The majority of gardens, however, held one or two birds throughout the year.

Counts in excess of two or three were limited, again suggesting that the ‘Beast from the East’ may have played a part, but six were in **Head Clough, Marsden** on 31st March, 13 were counted in the **Langsett** area on 15th April, eight (including 3 singing males) were at **Bretton Park** on 6th May, 14 were in the **Little Don Valley** area on 9th June, and six were present along the **Broad Canal** between Aspley and Colne Bridge on 27th December.

Single pairs were reported breeding at numerous locations, with the following sites holding more than one territory: three at both **Broadstone Res.** and **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, five at **Ingbirchworth Res.**, six at **Royd Moor Res.**, and four at both **Scout Dike Res.** and **Cliff Wood**.

NUTHATCH *Sitta europaea*

Resident breeder, increased to (2-3), 50-150 pairs.

Records were received from 41 localities, an increase of eight on last year. A number of gardens attracted birds throughout the year and, as last year, pairs bred in nest-boxes in two of these. Other breeding records were limited to only a handful of sites, but there were four territory holding pairs, one of which fledged six young from a nest-box, at **Cliff Wood** and the behaviour of birds in the **New Mill Dike** area suggested that there were seven territories.

The majority of records involved no more than two birds, but at **Bretton Park**, the only locality for the species in the Club area at one time, up to seven were seen on a number of occasions and an incredible 16 were present on 3rd March.

Although some garden held birds throughout the year, there were mixed fortunes from others. At a garden at **Cowcliffe** this once regular visitor has now not been recorded for three years; the absence noted last year in a **New Mill** garden continued until mid-June, after which up to two were regular visitors until early December; although birds were heard almost daily at **Deanhouse** birds are now ‘rarely recorded from the garden’; and in a garden at **Thongsbridge**, although birds were present throughout the year, they were ‘less numerous than previous years’. On the credit side, at a garden in **Lockwood** the species was a ‘welcome new visitor’, with up to two being seen regularly between late August and the year end.

As is now the norm at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, one or two were present throughout the year and a pair fledged young from a new nest hole in Orange Wood. A pair also fledged young from a nest in nearby **Helme Wood**.

Singles at **Harden Quarries** on 4th August and 23rd September were unusual, the latter more so as it departed fairly high to the SE over the open moor.

TREECREEPER *Certhia familiaris*

Resident breeder (3), 100-200 pairs.

Records were only received from 19 locations, one less than last year, but breeding was forthcoming from four of these. Although there were several garden records, these were generally for short periods and only occurred during the winter months. Even though records suggest that no site held birds throughout the year, this is obviously unlikely for this highly sedentary species. As is usual for this non-gregarious species, with the exception of at least four in **Bretton Park** on 3rd March, all other records were of no more than two birds.

At **Blackmoorfoot Res.** birds were seen fairly frequently during the first winter period and a pair eventually took up residence in Orange Wood and nested, but the nest was predated at the egg stage. The only records later in the year involved a single in the S bank wood on five dates in November/December. The other breeding records involved at least two pairs which held territories in **Cliff Wood**, a pair which fledged young in **Helme**, and a pair that nested in an old Great Spotted Woodpecker nest hole in **Windy Bank Wood**.

STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris*

Resident breeder (4-5), 2,000-6,000 pairs. Winter visitor. Red listed.

As is now usual, large assemblages were at a premium, and there was only a single four-figure count reported. Indeed, even the number of treble-figure assemblages was much reduced from last year.

Several gardens held small numbers of birds throughout the year, with up to 30 being a regular feature in a garden at **Lockwood**. On the debit side, however, birds were completely absent from a **Hepworth** garden.

Breeding records were few, but the numbers of juveniles within the late summer/autumn flocks suggests a relatively good breeding season.

The largest flocks were reported as follows:

Ingbirchworth Res – c.100 on 18th January and 22nd October.

Brow Grains, Meltham – c.600 on 5th February.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – c.100 on 11th February, up to 200 throughout June with 500 on 9th, and 100 on 7th July.

Bella Vista Farm, Penistone – c.500 on 25th February.

Whitley Common – 800+ on 4th March, 3,000+ on 14th March, 300+ on 9th October, c.600 on 6th November, and 800+ on 14th November.

Scammonden Water – c.100 on 1st April.

Broadstone Res – c.100 on 17th July and c.200 on 21st August.

Blackmoorfoot – 150+ on 19th July, c.220 on 31st July, and 300+ on 28th August.

Scout Dike Res – c.150 on 15th September.

Lepton – c.150 on 14th October.

Digley Res – 100+ on 30th October.

Visible migration was reported as follows:

Wards End Farm – a total of 151 flew over, mainly in a northerly direction, on six dates between 6th and 24th March, with a maximum of 60 NE on 23rd. Later in the year, a total of 4,951 flew W or NW on 39 dates between 5th October and 4th December, with a maximum of 1,013 W on 25th October.

Pule Hill – a total of 1,151 flew W on 17 dates between 14th September and 18th November, with a maximum of 317 on 24th October.

Harden Quarries – a total of 4,708 flew over, mainly in a W and NW direction, on 15 dates between 7th October and 13th November, with a maximum of 1,917 on 6th November.

Blackmoorfoot – in October, 350 flew W on 23rd and 300 did likewise on 25th.

RING OUZEL *Turdus torquatus*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1), 5-20 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Scarce passage visitor. Red listed.

There were records from 21 locations, an increase of five on last year, but numbers were greatly reduced at the now major stop-over site at **Wards End Farm, Marsden**. The first records, all in March, involved a male at **Wards End Farm** on 21st, a single in the **Little Don Valley** on 22nd and 27th, a single at **Head Clough, Marsden** on 24th, and a female in the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 28th.

Wards End Farm continued to attract birds on a near daily basis between 7th and 30th April. Unlike 2018, however, double figure counts were at a premium and were only achieved on three dates: 12 on 14th, 13 on 16th, and 11 on 20th. The total number of bird/days only amounted to 100, a tremendous reduction on the 243 bird/days experienced last year. This reduction in numbers was also witnessed at **RSPB Dove Stone** where the RSPB commented that numbers were down on last year, probably due to the long dry summer in 2018 and the associated lack of insect prey.

Other April records involved a male at **Cheesegate Nab** on 3rd, 5th, and 12th, with five there on 19th; a single in the **Little Don Valley** on 4th, with nine there the following day, ten on 11th, 19 on 21st and 14 on 22nd; four pairs then held breeding territories; a male at **Whitley Common** on 5th; a male at **Whitley Edge** on 6th; one flew W over **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 11th; a female at **Bradshaw Moor** and 12 at **Pots and Pans** on 13th; a male at **Hartcliff Hill** on 13th/14th, with two there on 19th; a female at **Scammonden Water** on 16th; a single at **Hade Edge** on 22nd; three at **Chew Res.** on 26th; a pair then bred but only fledging one young; and a male in the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 28th/29th.

With the exceptions of the breeding pairs (see above), there were no other records until early September. A male and female along with two juveniles were present in the **Wessenden Valley** between 1st and 14th September (as there were no records during the breeding season these birds were presumably not locally bred); two in the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 16th September, with a single there on 12th October; a single in the **Little Don Valley** on 17th September; one flew W over **Pule Hill, Marsden** on 10th October and three did likewise on 17th October; a single at **Holme Moss** on 12th October, and two flew SW there on 19th October; and a single flew SW at **Harden Quarries** on 15th October. At **Wards End Farm**, although it is not unusual to get grounded birds in autumn, following a single on 29th September up to four were present on seven dates between 11th and 21st October. In addition, birds overflying the area, mainly in a SW or S direction, were recorded on eight dates between 6th and 22nd October, with peaks of ten S on 15th and six (4 SW + 2 W) on 22nd. This resulted in a total of 47 bird/days.

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula*

Resident breeder (5), 3,000-6,000 pairs. One of the commonest species.

As widely distributed as usual, with records from all habitat types with the exception of open moorland. Breeding was widely reported with up to six pairs holding territories at several sites and, as is usual, numerous gardens held breeding pairs. Interestingly, BTO research shows that 2019 was an early breeding season, with many species laying eggs significantly earlier than average, possibly thanks to record-breaking February temperatures. The biggest winners were the tits. Conversely, 2019 was a poor year for several of our other common garden visitors. Numbers of Blackbirds and Dunnocks encountered by ringers were the lowest since the use of ringing to monitor abundance began nearly 40 years ago, and Robins were also less numerous than in recent years.

Several gardens held birds throughout the year, but these never exceeded the nine present in an **Almondbury** garden during the first winter period and up to eight in a **Lockwood** garden during January/February with the same number in a **Meltham** garden during February.

In the wider countryside, the only double figure counts during the first winter period involved 16 at **Horbury Strands/Wyke** on 4th January; up to 20 regularly at **Ingbirchworth Res.**; and up to c.15 at **Bretton Park** in February/March. Although there was no real indication of an increase in birds during October/November, when Scandinavian migrants arrive for the winter, 15 were along the **Broad Canal** between Turnbridge and Cooper Bridge on 17th October, there was a maximum of 12 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 8th November, and 16 were present along the **Broad Canal** between Aspley and Colne Bridge on 27th December.

With British birds being predominantly sedentary, the birds overflying the migration watch points are highly likely to be of Scandinavian origin. A total of 19 flew over **Harden Quarries**, mainly in a southerly direction, on 12 dates between 1st September and 13th November, with four on both 6th and 13th November; at **Wards End Farm, Marsden**, in October, one flew SW on 18th, 11 W on 22nd, five NW on 29th, and ten NW on 30th; a single flew W at **Pule Hill, Marsden** on 23rd October, a flock of 16 flew W on 27th October, and two flew E and a single W on 31st October.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris*

Numerous passage and winter visitor. Has bred. Red listed.

As in 2018, birds were widely distributed during the first winter period, but there were far more large assemblages reported with birds lingering to mid-April. Only in the **Ingbirchworth** area, however, were birds present on a near daily basis. In sharp contrast to last year, there were far fewer large assemblages during the second winter period and only at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** were birds present on a near daily basis. In addition, the autumn movements over the area, by comparison to last year, were abysmal.

There were numerous widely distributed flocks of up to 50 strong during the first winter period but, with the exception of the **Ingbirchworth** area, these were generally short-lived. Even at the two usually favoured localities, **Wards End Farm** and **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, birds were in short supply: up to 60, but usually far less, were present at **Wards End Farm** on 24 dates (mainly in March), and **Blackmoorfoot Res.** only held birds on 11 dates, with never more than 35 being present.

Larger assemblages were scattered around the area and amounted to *c.*200 on the Trans-Pennine Trail at **Dunford Bridge** on 14th January; *c.*200 roosted at **Winscar Res.** on 28th March; *c.*70 at **Hartcliff Hill** on 31st March with, in April, *c.*150 there on 4th, 200+ on 6th, *c.*100 on 13th and *c.*70 the following day; 400+ at **Whitley Common** on 12th April with *c.*150 the following day; *c.*120 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 12th April; 80 at **Deanhead Res.** on 16th April; and *c.*60 at **Skelmanthorpe** on 17th April. The only later occurrences involved singles at **Wards End Farm** on 18th and 20th April and 10th May; five at **Wolfstones** on 22nd April; and a single at **Holme Moss** on 29th April.

The first returning birds (8) were seen at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 3rd October. Other arrivals quickly followed, with seven flying W at **Wards End Farm** on 7th October, three flew W at **Pule Hill**, **Marsden** and a single flew over **Fixby** on 10th October, nine flew S at **Harden Quarries** on 14th, and six flew W at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 21st. There was an influx of birds on 22nd/23rd October when 32 flew W at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 22nd and *c.*30 were present at **Scout Dike Res.** and 40 at **Deanhead Res.** on 23rd. By the month end there had only been records from one other locality, but this amounted to a flock of *c.*290 at **Langsett Res.** on 29th. Other October records involved ten at **Wards End Farm** on 24th, with up to 17 there on a further four dates and *c.*40 on 30th; *c.*40 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 30th and 102 there on 31st; and 30 which flew E at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 31st.

November/December was equally uninspiring, there only being records from 11 locations, mainly of fewer than 25 birds for short periods only. At **Wards End Farm**, where birds were present on a near daily basis, the peak only amounted to 120 on 8th and 17th November; the maximum at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, where birds were only present on 17 dates, involved a flock of 100+ on 5th November. In November, *c.*50 were on **Whitley Common** on 6th; at least 220 were at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 8th; and *c.*70 were at **Hartcliff Hill** on 9th; and in December, at least 220 were on **Ingbirchworth Moor** on 18th; *c.*50 were at **Silkstone SW** on 23rd; and *c.*30 were at **Broadstone Res.** and 30+ were at **Scout Dike Res.** on 30th.

Visible migration was noted at four localities:

Blackmoorfoot – 99 flew W and 50 S on five dates between 15th November and 7th December, with peaks of 54 W on 16th November and 50 S on 20th November.

Pule Hill – a total of 375 flew in a W or SW direction on nine dates between 10th and 31st October, with a maximum of 153 W on 27th.

Harden Quarries – a total of 1,017 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on 14 dates between 14th October and 13th November, with a maximum of 423 on 6th November.

Wards End Farm – a total of 5,271 flew W or NW on 39 dates between 7th October and 8th December, with peaks of 723 NW on 21st October and 1,000 W on 29th October.

REDWING *Turdus iliacus*

Numerous passage and winter visitor. Red listed.

The records of this species were a complete reversal of those for Fieldfare. Birds were very scarce during the first winter period and records were limited to 21 localities, all of which only held small numbers of birds for very short periods. Birds were reported from slightly more localities during the second winter period, with good numbers being present at some of these, and observers at two of the main migration watch points enjoyed a far heavier than usual passage.

The only counts in excess of 15 during the first winter period involved *c.*60 at **Crosland Hill** on 1st January, 16 at **Scout Dike Res.** on 13th January, 15 at **Hepworth** on 27th January, 40 at **Brow Grains**, **Meltham** on 5th February, 18 at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 20th February, *c.*30 at **Silkstone SW** on 10th March, and 70 at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 21st March. Most birds had vacated

the area by late March, and the only April records involved two at **Hartcliff Hill** on 4th and two at **Whitley Common** and a single at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 12th.

The first returning birds (6) flew W at **Wards End Farm** on 2nd October and the following day 155 flew W there, four flew over (2 S + 2 SE) **Harden Quarries** and 29 were present at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** The 4th October saw a large arrival, with 1,622 flying SW at **Harden Quarries**, 630 W at **Wards End Farm**, 170 W at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, and 13 NW over **Fixby**. Birds became more widely distributed during the remainder of the month, but the only localities to hold birds on a near daily basis was **Blackmoorfoot Res.** Numbers rarely exceeded 60, but 73 flew W on 5th, 78 flew S on 15th, a flock of 80+ was present on 20th, and 330 flew W the following day. Although flocks were very short-lived at other locations c.250 were present at **Hartcliff Hill** on 9th and flyover birds included c.200 SW over **Fixby** on 7th.

There was a mass exodus at the end of October and, with birds only being reported from 12 localities in November/December. With the exception of **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, which continued to hold birds on a near daily basis, all other records were for no more than a couple of days' duration. Even at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, flock size only occasionally reached as high as 40, but 120 flew S on 20th November, 120+ were present on 4th December, and 200 flew W on 7th December. At other locations assemblages rarely attained double figures but 38 were present at **Bretton Park** on 3rd November; 24 were seen at **Wards End Farm** on 11th December, with 20 there on 14th and 22nd December; and c.50 were at **Silkstone SW** on 23rd December.

Visible migration was recorded from the following sites:

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a total of 6,796 flew over, mainly in a W or NW direction, on 34 dates between 2nd October and 18th December, with a maximum of 2,435 (800 W + 1,635 NW) on 21st October.

Harden Quarries – a total of 7,680 flew S on 17 dates between 3rd October and 6th November, with a maximum of 2,007 on 8th October,

Blackmoorfoot Res – a total of 611 flew W and 78 S on five dates between 4th and 22nd October, with a maximum of 330 W on 21st. Later in the year 120 flew S on 20th November and 200 W on 7th December.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 1,739 flew in a S or W direction, but mainly W, on nine dates between 8th and 21st October, with a maximum of 1,080 on 8th.

Hartcliff Hill – c.250 flew S or SW on 9th October.

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos*

Partial migrant breeder (4), 800-1,600 pairs, but decreasing. Red listed.

There were records from 42 localities, a marked drop on the 48 of last year. Birds, never more than two, were present in a number of gardens, especially during the winter periods, but an observer at **Hepworth** commented that a single in his garden on 2nd January was 'a rare garden visitor' and two in an **Oldfield** garden on 13th April were said to be 'very unusual visitors to the garden'. On the other hand, a garden observer at **Thongsbridge** described the species as being 'more numerous than in previous years'.

Away from the garden environment, with the exception of four at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 15th October, all other records never involved more than three individuals.

Breeding evidence, mainly in the form of territory holding males, was widely recorded and pairs fledged young at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** and **Wards End Farm** and a pair raised two broods at **Thongsbridge**.

A single in the compound at **Holme Moss** on 6th, 13th and 15th October, and two there on 19th October were presumably grounded migrants which had been present for the duration, and were said to 'look very much out of place'.

Visible migration was recorded from the following sites:

Harden Quarries – a total of 37 flew over in various southerly directions on nine dates between 7th October and 6th November, with a maximum of 11 on 8th October.

Pule Hill, Marsden – in October, four flew W on 10th, eight SW on 12th, and a single SW on 17th.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – 31 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on nine dates between 9th and 30th October, with a maximum of 13 (1 flock) W on 29th. A single which flew W on 2nd December was the only other record.

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus*

Resident breeder (3), 300-400 pairs. Red listed.

Records were only received from 41 locations, a marked decrease on the 51 of last year. Although there were a number of garden records, these were mainly confined to the first winter period and never involved more than two individuals.

The only gatherings of more than two prior to the autumn build-up involved three at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 23rd January; three in the **Little Don Valley** on 22nd February; three at **Marsh** on 27th February; three at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 12th March, with five there on 5th April, four on 7th April, and five on 31st May; four at **New Mill** on 20th March; three at **Langsett** on 15th April; and four at **Digley** on 4th May.

Breeding was only reported from a handful of localities but, considering the appreciable autumn build-up in some areas, this presumably went undetected at others.

The autumn build-up began rather earlier than usual and commenced with flocks of up to 19 at **Wards End Farm** throughout June and, although numbers were more subdued between July and mid-September (never exceeding 10), a flock of 40 was present on 14th September and 18 on 22nd September. At **Blackmoorfoot Res.** a flock of 14 on 10th June had increased to 22 by mid-August and 23 were present on 16th September, but by early October only eight remained. Away from these locations, a flock of 31 was present **Brow Grains, Meltham** on 30th July, ten at **Netherton** on 7th August, 41 at **Broadstone Res.** on 10th August, and 22 at **Wolfstones** on 28th August.

Visible migration was noted at three localities:

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 39 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on nine dates between 14th September and 27th October, with a maximum of ten W on 12th October.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a total of 36 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 13 dates between 23rd September and 30th October, with a maximum of seven W on 7th October.

Harden Quarries – a total of 97 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on 16 dates between 4th October and 6th November, with a maximum of 25 on 20th September.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-30 pairs. Scarce passage visitor. Red listed.

There were records from 21 localities, a welcome increase from the 16 last year, with breeding occurring at five of these (3 in 2018 and 4 in 2017). Birds were present between 14th May and 19th September.

The first returning birds were all singles: **Hartcliff Hill** on 14th May, **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 15th May, and **RSPB Dove Stone** on 18th May. The only other May records involved a single at **Wards End Farm** on 19th and 24th and two at **Langsett Banks** on 28th. The species became more widely distributed in June and pairs went on to breed at **Hartcliff Hill** (a pair hatched young), **Langsett Banks** (2 pairs held breeding territories and at least 1 pair fledged young), **Cliff Wood** (a pair held a breeding territory), **Little Don Valley** (a single fledged young being fed by adults in late June), and **Broadstone Res.** (adult carrying food in early July).

With the exceptions of the breeding birds, there were no records until early August. The observer at **Wards End Farm** recorded his best year ever, with birds being seen on 17 dates between 4th August and 8th September. Most records were of one or two individuals but three were present on 25th August and at least six on 27th August. On the other hand, occurrences at **Blackmoorfoot** were well below average, and only amounted to up to three birds on seven dates between 19th August and 15th September, with four being seen on 23rd August.

Other August records involved a single at **Marsden** on 21st; one at **Hald Head, Denby Dale** on 22nd; two at **Scammonden Water** on 23rd with three there from 25th – 27th; singles at **Thongsbridge** and **Helme** on 24th; a single at **Bare Bones Road, Holme Styes** on 25th, with three there on 26th/27th; and four in a garden at **Hepworth** on 28th.

With the exceptions of the September records mentioned above from **Wards End Farm** and **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, the only other September records involved a single at **Mill Moor Road, Meltham** on 7th; two at **Scammonden Water** on 8th; and singles at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 14th, **Hassocks Lane, Meltham** on 16th, and **Bare Bones Road** on 19th.

ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula*

Resident breeder (5), 5,000-6,000 pairs.

Remains common and widely distributed with numerous records from most habitat types. Breeding, although reported from several locations, obviously went undetected at most, but see the comment under Blackbird regarding breeding nationally.

As is usual for this very territorial species, the majority of records involved no more than four individuals, but at least five were coming to feeder in a **Hepworth** garden during hard weather on 22nd January and 14 were attracted to feeder at **Healey Mills/Kerry's NR** on 23rd January.

At most sites during the breeding season only one or two pairs were usually in evidence, but there were at least 12 territory holding males at **Royd Moor Res.**, seven at **Ingbirchworth Res.**, at least eight at **Scout Dike Res.**, at least six at **Cliff Wood**; and six at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**

The past few years have seen a number of records referring to territorial birds along lengths of canal/rivers. This year, although birds were counted, numbers remained very low, with the only

double figure count referring to 11 along the **Broad Canal** between Turnbridge and Cooper Bridge on 17th October.

PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1), 1-5 pairs. Scarce passage visitor. Red listed.

There were records from four locations: the species' two strongholds and two autumn migrants.

Cliff Wood – a male on 14th April was the first, after which four 'pairs' bred in nest-boxes, three of which fledged young (6 + 5 + 3). One of the males was polygamous, but the four small young died during heavy rainfall during the night of 12th/13th June.

RSPB Dove Stone – three pairs nested but no further details were forthcoming.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a female-type on 23rd July.

Holme Styes – a female-type along Bare Bones Road on 4th August.

BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Rare visitor. Red listed.

There were records from three localities (4 in 2018) but the autumn flurry of birds noted last year at Wards End Farm, Marsden was not repeated.

Thurgoland – a female-type on 6th April (DBu).

Wards End Farm – female-types on 2nd May, 26th July and 5th November (DWS).

Holme Moss – a male was in the compound on 22nd September (AL, NM). Two, a male and a female-type, were then present on most days between 30th September and 19th October (II, NWM, DHP *et al.*). There were then no records until a female-type was seen on 13th November (DHP).

REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-40 pairs.

There were records from 19 locations, a marked increase on the seven of last year, but most of these related to autumn migrants and breeding evidence was only forthcoming from two of these.

The first returning birds were a female at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 16th April and males at **Windleden** on 18th April and near the **Huntsman Inn, Holmfirth** on 20th April. The only breeding evidence involved a juvenile at **RSPB Dove Stone** in late June and a juvenile being fed by an adult below **Digley Res.** on 1st August (both these instances are presumed to have involved birds of a local provenance). There was no evidence of breeding in the **Langsett** area, despite the usual intensity of field-work, but two males were singing in the **Little Don Valley** on 7th May.

All other sightings related to the autumn period. At **Blackmoorfoot Res.** there were far more records than had recently been experienced, but this only amounted to one or two birds on 24 dates between 9th July and 17th September. Singles were seen at **Boshaw Whams** on 9th/10th July and **Cliff Wood** on 19th July. The Hassocks Lane area at **Meltham**, as last year, attracted birds on a near daily basis between mid-July and mid-August, but numbers were reduced and never more than three were present. At **Wards End Farm, Marsden** up to two, but usually a single, were seen on 11 equally spread dates between 23rd July and 6th September.

August produced a flush of widely distributed migrants with two at **Scout Dike Res.** on 3rd; singles at **Netherthong** on 7th, **Winscar Res.** on 8th and **Broadstone Res.** on 10th; two at **Scamonden Water** on 12th, with singles there on 25th and 27th; singles at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 19th and **Marsden** on 21st; and at least two at **Holme Styas** on 26th. September records, other than those mentioned above, involved singles at **Digley Res.** on 16th, **Holme Styas** on 17th, and **Winscar Res.** on 19th.

WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra*

Migrant breeder (2), about 50 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas).

There were records from nine localities (8 in 2018), but the autumn flurry and large numbers noted at Wards End Farm, Marsden last year was, by comparison, rather mediocre. Evidence of breeding came from two locations.

The first records of the year involved a single at **Broadstone Res.** on 21st April and males at **Brow Grains, Meltham** on 24th and near **Deer Hill** on 29th. Other spring records, all in May, involved a male at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 2nd; a female at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 2nd and 6th with a male there on 3rd and 7th; a female at **Cupwith Res.** on 7th; a male at **Wessenden Lodge** on 15th; a female at **Deanhead Clough** on 19th, with a male and female there the following day; and a male at **Muddy Brook, Meltham** on 31st.

A pair fledged young near **Brow Grains** and three pairs bred at **RSPB Dove Stone**, but no further details were forthcoming. Although birds remained in the **Muddy Brook** area until mid-August there was no sign of breeding.

At **Wards End Farm** a single was present on 9th/10th and 30th July then, between 6th August and 13th September, birds were present on 30 dates with an amassed total of 80 bird/days. The majority of these records involved less than four individuals, but six were present on 29th and 31st August and five on 1st September.

Away from this area, singles were present at **Broadstone Res.** on 22nd June and 7th September, **Whitley Common** on 1st July, **Deanhead Res.** on 25th, 27th and 29th August and 8th September, and **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 8th September.

STONECHAT *Saxicola rubicola*

Resident breeder, increased to (1), 5-20 pairs. Scarce/uncommon passage and winter visitor.

Birds were reported from 28 widely scattered locations, a slight increase on the 24 of the previous two years, with birds being in residence for extended periods at some of these and breeding being reported from four.

Records were received from the following localities:

Wards End Farm, Marsden – present throughout most of the year, but records during the winter periods were very sporadic and only involved one or two individuals. Birds were seen on 90 dates between 1st April and 29th December but, although juveniles were regularly seen, there was no proof of breeding. Number usually remained below five, but in September, when birds were present on a near daily basis, eight were seen on 2nd and 8th.

Broadstone Heath/Res – a pair present from early January to late October fledged at least two young.

Brow Grains, Meltham – three on 3rd February.
Hepworth – a single on 3rd February, at least four on 9th October, and two on 3rd December.
Ringstone Edge Res – a male on 17th February.
Isle of Skye Quarry – singles on 22nd February and 7th May.
Blackmoorfoot Res – there were more records than last year, but this only amounted to a female on Meltham Cop on 23rd February; a juvenile, of unknown provenance, in the fields to the west of the reservoir on 24th August; a female on the S bank on 22nd October, a male and female in the SW corner overflow field on 29th October, a male near the inflow on 1st November, and a female in the SW corner overflow field on 3rd, 10th and 21st December.
Marsden – a female along Mount Road on 26th February.
Dove Stone Rocks – two males and two females on 27th February.
Deanhead Res – a pair present from late March to late October fledged four young.
Redbrook Res – a male and female on 23rd March and 23rd April.
Buckstones – a single on 25th March.
Greenfield Res – a single on 14th April.
Wessenden Res – a male on 21st and 28th April.
Little Don Valley – a male and female on 21st April and singles on 12th May and 26th June.
Meltham – two pairs present in the Muddy Brook from early May fledged young.
Chew Brook – two ‘pairs’ in May, with one feeding fledged young.
RSPB Dove Stone – three on 4th July.
Winscar Res – four juveniles of unknown provenance on 7th July and a male on 22nd September.
Boshaw Whams – a juvenile of unknown provenance on 29th July and a single on 17th October.
Deer Hill – a family party of six (2 adults + 4 juveniles) seen on several dates from mid-August may have originated from Muddy Brook (see above). At least eight were present in the Deer Hill/Meltham area on 14th October.
Holme Moss – a single on 3rd October and two on 15th October.
Harden Quarries – at least one on 15th October and three on 19th October.
Pule Hill, Marsden – a male on 15th October.
Royd Moor Res – a male on 24th October.
Bradshaw Moor – a single on 4th December.
Law Bottom, Hade Edge – a male and female on 25th December.
Ingbirchworth Res – a male and female on 30th December.

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-50 pairs. Uncommon to common passage visitor.

The first returning birds were seen on 20th March and the last on 15th October. Although juveniles appeared at Deanhead Res. in late June, the lack of any adults prior to this strongly suggests that they were not bred on site.

Single males at **Broadstone Res.** and **Whitley Common** on 20th March were the first to return. The following day saw three at **Whitley Edge** and a single at **Horbury Junction** and by the month end a further eight sites had attracted birds, albeit in low single figures, with the exceptions of seven on **Bradshaw Moor** on 25th/26th.

A number of these locations continued to hold birds during the following two months and by late May birds had been recorded from a total of 32 localities. Only at two of these, **Blackmoorfoot Res.** and **Wards End Farm, Marsden**, were birds seen with any regularity, however. At **Wards End Farm** birds were recorded on 43 dates between 22nd March and 14th May with a total bird/day count of 224. Low single figures were the norm, occasionally up to ten, but 16 were present on 21st

April and 13 the following day. It was a very similar picture at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** with birds being present on 41 dates between 25th March and 20th May, with a total of 191 bird/days being amassed. As at Wards End Farm, low single figures were the norm, occasionally up to nine, but 13 were present on 20th April and 11 on 22nd April and 4th May. Note the similarity in peak count dates between these two sites.

At all the other sites birds were only present for short periods and numbers always remained very low, the only exceptions being six at **Whitley Edge** on 2nd April, 15+ on **Whitley Common** on 5th April, six at **Whitley Airfield** on 7th April, and seven at **Broadstone** on 4th May.

June records were restricted to a female at **Wards End Farm** on 16th and four juveniles at **Deanhead Res.** on 27th.

The first returning birds involved a juvenile at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** from 4th – 6th July, two adults and two juveniles at **Deanhead Res.** on 30th July and five at **Digley Res.** on 1st August. Birds were then reported from a further 11 locations, but occurrences were very short-lived with the exceptions of the two favoured sites of **Blackmoorfoot Res.** and **Wards End Farm.** At **Blackmoorfoot Res.** up to eight (but usually less than four) were recorded on 21 dates between 2nd August and 26th September. Sightings from **Wards End Farm** paralleled those from Blackmoorfoot, with up to 12 (but usually less than four) being present on 28 dates between 2nd August and 21st September.

The other nine widely distributed sites could muster no more than five birds (usually only 1 or 2), with none staying for more than the day. By the second week in September, with the exception of those mentioned above, the only other records involved four at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 11th, a single at **Digley Res.** on 14th, two at **Hepworth** and one in the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 16th, and a single at **Holme Moss** on 30th. The only October records involved two at **Penistone** on 2nd and a single at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 15th.

Greenland Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe leucorhoa*

Birds showing characters of this race were reported as follows:

Wards End Farm – a male on 1st May, a male and female on 5th May, and two males on 10th May (DWS).

DIPPER *Cinclus cinclus*

Resident breeder (2), 40-60 pairs.

There were records from 23 localities, a drop of three on last year, and breeding was only forthcoming from three of these (5 in 2018 and 7 in 2017). Two pairs nested along the River Holme between **Sands** and **Holmfirth** centre, a pair were feeding young at **Chew Brook** in mid-May, and a pair fledged a single juvenile at **Silkstone SW.** A juvenile on the River Holme at **Armitage Bridge** in mid-July may well have originated from there as birds were present throughout the year. Last year's report made reference to an unusual record of a single on the beck at **Silkstone SW** between 26th November and the year end. This bird obviously attracted a mate and went on to breed in what is a rather low lying area for the species.

As is usual, this very sedentary species was present at most sites throughout the year, but the following were more unusual: singles at **Harden Res.** on 1st January, **Yeoman Hey Res.** on 27th January, **Greenfield Res.** on 10th February, **Elland GP** on 26th and 28th February, and **Wessenden**

Head on 1st September. In addition, a single was present at **Windy Bank Res.** during both winter periods.

As in the last few years, **Blackmoorfoot Res.** only mustered a small number of records: singles were along the inflow on 17th January, 5th and 14th February, 10th April, 17th September, and 7th October.

A bird photographed at **Elland GP** on 26th February appeared to have no chestnut on the belly when the photographs were examined (S. & HC). As a consequence, it was submitted to the British Birds Rarities Committee as a Black-bellied Dipper *C. c. cinclus*. BBRC chose not to accept the record and the following explanation is taken from their website. “For the moment, BBRC will take the pragmatic view that birds with little or no chestnut on the belly in eastern Britain (particularly in the Northern Isles and lowland south-east England away from the range of *gularis*) are likely to be nominate *cinclus* but other claims may have to await further investigations on the variation of plumage shown by all the races likely to occur in Britain”.

Although the possibility of this bird being a Black-bellied Dipper cannot be ruled out, given the above facts about the variation in *gularis*, these comments are perfectly understandable.

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus*

Resident breeder (5), 3,000-6,000 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Red listed.

There were numerous garden records, some very detailed, with assemblages remaining similar to last year. Breeding, although widely distributed, was confined to most of the known centres of population: **Crosland Moor; Blackmoorfoot; Holmfirth; New Mill; Almondbury; Golcar; Fixby; Lockwood; Oldfield; Skelmanthorpe; Wards End Farm, Marsden; and Meltham**, where at least 20 pairs bred in houses along Slaithwaite Road.

Even though this species suffered a catastrophic decline in the 1970/80s and has never recovered, a number of observers were of the opinion that there had been local increases: in **Brockholes** ‘the species seems to be getting more common again, with more singing and nest sites noted’ and in a garden in **Holmfirth** ‘this species returned as a breeder after a “sparrow terrace” nest-box was erected’.

The small colony in the village at **Blackmoorfoot** persisted until late September. Numbers fluctuated daily, there usually being less than nine, but 14 were present on 3rd January, 20 on 21st January, and 11 on several dates in March. These birds generally fed in the garden of 41 Blackmoorfoot Road and, as in 2019, two pairs bred in the adjacent property. The only other records from the village involved three on 4th December and four the following day. In addition, a male was near the Will’s O’ Nat’s on 19th/20th May and 3rd, 7th and 9th June, and up to four (usually 1 or 2) were present along Potato Lane on 12 between 18th June and 11th August.

Birds were regularly seen in the following gardens:

Skelmanthorpe – up to ten were present on a daily basis.

New Mill – present throughout the year with a maximum of 20 on 16th February.

Golcar – two gardens held up to 18 birds on a daily basis and in one of these there was a flock 30 on 23rd August.

Lockwood – present throughout the year with 30+ post-breeding.

Almondbury – up to 20 were seen on a daily basis.

Marsh – up to 21 were present throughout the year with a flock of 37 on 18th January.

Cowcliffe – up to 20 were present on a daily basis.

Linthwaite – present throughout the year with up to 30 being a regular feature.

Holmfirth – birds were present between early March and early August but never more than three were seen. Interestingly, in this same garden, up to 12 Tree Sparrows were present throughout the year.

Away from feeding stations numbers generally remained low, but an observer in **Meltham** commented that ‘despite all the new houses being built at the top of Mill Moor Road birds are for ever present, and at least 50 roosted in a Hawthorn hedge near the riding stables in November. In addition, 15 were at **Wooldale** on 14th August, 15 were present at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 21st August, 14 were along the Broad Canal between **Turnbridge** and **Cooper Bridge** on 17th October, and 40 were along Back Lane, **Lockwood** on 20th October.

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus*

Resident breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-50 pairs. Red listed.

There were records from 14 locations (16 in 2018 and 18 in 2017) and breeding was forthcoming from four of these (5 in the previous 2 years). This downturn in the species’ fortunes is a rather worrying state of affairs or, as stated last year “Is this a true reflection of the species’ fortunes, or is it going under-recorded?”.

At the breeding site at **Wilshaw**, first discovered in 2014, birds were present throughout the year and four pairs bred. A pair which bred in a hole in a telegraph pole at **Broadstone Res.** fledged at least one young and a maximum of 12 were present on 10th August. Birds were present throughout the year in a garden at **New Mill**, with up to 30, especially post-breeding, and at least two pairs fledged young. A pair bred in a nest-box on a barn in Harrison Lane at **Crosland Edge**.

Elsewhere birds were reported from the following locations:

Holmfirth (Cooper-Binns Lane) – present throughout the year with up to 12 in August, October and November.

Helme – two on 5th April and a single on 22nd October.

Grange Moor – four in the Bristfield area on 24th April.

Meal Hill – a single on 7th May.

Kirkheaton – a single at the former brickworks on 9th June.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a single on 13th July and a juvenile of unknown provenance on 6th August.

Beck Lane, Penistone – seven on 1st August.

Scout Dike Res – 40+ were along Folly Lane on 26th August.

Netherthong – a single on feeders on 20th November.

Hepworth – ‘some’ were present in a mixed flock with House Sparrows on 28th December.

DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis*

Resident breeder (5), about 4,000 pairs. One of the commonest species.

Remains common and widely distributed with numerous records from most habitat types. Breeding records were negligible and obviously went undetected at most locations, but see the comment under Blackbird regarding breeding nationally. As usual, birds were reported throughout the year from several gardens, even some at high elevations. Numbers were always low, however, rarely

exceeding four with the exception of **Wards End Farm, Marsden** which regularly held up to six, and eight were present on 29th/30th March and 16th October.

Away from the garden environment, numbers were always low, but at least seven were present at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 4th March, at least 12 singing males were in evidence at **Broadstone Res.** on 20th March, and six were at **Elland GP** on 22nd December.

A single which flew S over **Harden Quarries** on 14th October was unusual.

YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1), 0-1 pairs. Scarce to uncommon passage visitor. Red listed.

There were records from 13 locations (8 in 2018) with most birds being recorded during late summer/autumn. Birds were present at three localities for extended periods in autumn, this being especially impressive at Blackmoorfoot Res.

Tinker Hill – two on 18th April.

Hartcliff Hill – a male on 19th April and five on 21st April.

Cartworth Moor – a single on 21st April.

Blackmoorfoot Res – a male of the British race, *flavissima*, was present in the fields to the west of the reservoir on 22nd April. There was an unprecedented gathering of birds in these fields between 2nd August and 14th September, when up to three (usually 1 or 2) were present on 20 days. Although most of these birds were juveniles, their birthplace remains a mystery. As the above suggests, there were long periods of absence, especially between late August and mid-September, and it is impossible to speculate on how many individuals were involved.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a female was present on 15th May. Later in the year, singles were seen on seven dates between 23rd July and 15th September. Although never more than a single was seen, at least three birds, based on age and sex, were involved.

Langsett – two along Fullshaw Lane on 19th May.

Wessenden Head Res – a single on 25th May.

Boshaw Whams – one or two birds were seen on ten dates between 7th July and 2nd September. Based on age and sex, at least three birds were involved in these sightings.

Meltham SW – a juvenile on 17th August.

Scout Dike Res – a single along Folly Lane on 26th August.

Marsden – a single was on the cricket pitch on 28th August with two there the following day.

Harden Quarries – one flew SW on 29th August.

Isle of Skye Quarry – a single flew SW on 14th September.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*

Resident breeder (2-3), about 100 pairs. Red listed.

With records from only 34 locations (43 in 2018), this species would appear to have joined the list of those being under-recorded. Although present at several sites throughout the year, numbers were generally low and confirmation of breeding was only reported from three. On the other hand, there was a good autumn passage of birds over Harden Quarries.

The number of birds, even at the breeding sites, never exceeded the four at **Sands Recreation Ground** and six along the River Holme at **Holmfirth** on 6th March and five at **Brownhill Res.** on 14th September.

Birds were present throughout most of the year at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, although records were very sporadic in January/February and there were no appearances in December. Never more than two were present, but a pair were carrying nesting material in mid-April.

Visible migration was noted as follows:

Wards End Farm, Marsden – singles flew N on four dates in the second half of March. Later in the year singles flew W on 13th September and 15th October.

Harden Quarries – a total of 48 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on 18 dates between 29th August and 15th October, with a maximum of eight on 1st September.

Pule Hill, Marsden – singles flew W on 14th and 18th September, two flew SW on 12th October, and one flew W on 18th October.

Although the number at **Harden Quarries** was unprecedented, the observer at **Wards End Farm** commented that 'less this year than the previous two years' and the observer at **Pule Hill** stated that 'it was a very poor showing this year, well below the average of 11 over the last eight years'.

PIED WAGTAIL, *Motacilla alba*

Partial migrant breeder (3), 300-500 pairs. Common passage and winter visitor.

Like last year, this species was grossly under-recorded, thereby making it difficult to give a true evaluation of status.

Birds were present throughout the year at several localities, but only two gardens attracted birds. Numbers were generally in low single figures, the only higher counts involved 12 at **Horbury SW** on 4th January with 30 there on 24th January and 1st February; 145 at **Dewsbury SW** on 23rd January with 88 there on 27th February; 14 at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 10th August with 20+ there two days later; up to 20 were on **Marsden** cricket pitch between 23rd August and 28th October (these birds were believed to be migrants and amassed a total of 103 bird/days), at least 50 in a waterlogged stubble field near **Clayton West SW** on 25th November; and at least ten at **Silkstone SW** on 23rd December.

The only evidence of breeding was received from **Ingbirchworth Res.** (a pair fledged 3 young), **Scout Dike Res.** (a pair held a breeding territory), **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (2 pairs fledged young), and **Wards End Farm, Marsden** (3 pairs bred with plenty of juveniles being seen).

Visible migration was noted as follows:

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 46 flew W on 16 dates between 21st August and 28th October, with a maximum of ten on 23rd August.

Harden Quarries – a total of 349 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on 24 dates between 23rd August and 13th November, with a maximum of 92 on 14th October.

Wards End Farm – a total of 21 flew over, mainly in a SW direction, on five dates between 27th September and 20th October, with a maximum of eight SW on 10th October.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*

Rare to scarce passage visitor.

There were six records: a single at **Deanhead Res.** on 11th and 14th April (DT); one with several Pied Wagtails at **Broadstone Res.** on 18th April (II); single males at **Bretton Park** on 6th May

(DBu) and **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 3rd June (DWS); and at least one with Pied Wagtails at **Boshaw Whams** on 6th and 12th September (DHP).

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*

Partial migrant breeder (5), 2,500-4,000 pairs. The commonest bird of open country.

Birds, as is now usual, were present throughout the year, but winter records were very restricted, especially during the second winter period. There were some large assemblages in both spring and autumn, and the three main migration watch points experienced a good season.

During the first winter period singles were seen at **Broadstone Res.** on 1st January and 20th February; up to 11 were present at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on five January dates and up to 20 were then seen on nine dates in February, giving a total of 113 bird/days; four were at **Horbury SW** on 18th January and 1st February; c.30 were counted coming into roost in a field near Meltham Cop at **Meltham** on 22nd January; and a single was along Windmill Lane at **Broadstone** on 6th February.

By early March birds were becoming far more widespread, and there were far more double figure assemblages than last year: ten were at **South Crosland** on 19th March; 12 were at **Broadstone Res.** and 16 on **Wholestone Moor** on 20th March; at least 40 were at **Whitley Edge** on 27th March; 21 were in the **Little Don Valley** on 4th April, with 35 there on 23rd April and 44 on 5th May; at least 30 were on **Whitley Common** on 5th April, with c.20 there on 15th April; 22 were on **Marsden** cricket pitch on 21st April; and up to 30 were regularly seen at **Wards End Farm** in March/April. Breeding was widely reported, mainly taking the form of displaying males.

Although there were fewer large autumn assemblages than last year, **Wards End Farm** held up to 60 throughout August and by September higher numbers were involved: the 80+ on 1st and 7th had increased to 250 a couple of days later, but this had reduced to 150 + by 15th and 80 the following day, and only 40 remained by 25th. The only other double figure assemblages involved 160 at **Deanhead Res.** on 8th September and at least 60 in the fields to the west of **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 3rd October.

By late October most birds had vacated the area and the only later records were in December: there was a maximum of six at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** throughout the month and up to five at **Wards End Farm** on five dates during the first two weeks.

Visible migration was noted at six localities:

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a total of 386 flew NW on 17 days between 14th March and 2nd April, with peaks of 77 on 18th March and 53 on 27th March. Later in the year, a total of 2,201 flew over (1,850 SW + 230 W + 121 NW) on 21 dates between 10th September and 29th October, with a peaks 260 SW on 27th September and 510 SW on 30th September.

Blackmoorfoot – in March, 50+ flew N on 18th, 40+ flew N on both 19th and 20th, and 35+ flew N on 21st. Later in the year 250+ flew S on 30th September.

Harden Quarries – a total of 7,103 flew S on 41 dates between 12th August and 13th November, with a maximum of 942 on 14th October.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 2,847 flew SW or W on 20 dates between 17th August and 27th October, with a maximum of 1,093 on 14th September.

Isle of Skye Quarry – 450 flew SW on 14th September and 401 did likewise on 12th October.

Whitley Common – at least 30 flew W on 2nd October.

TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-30 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Scarce passage visitor. Red listed.

There were no records from Carlecotes Ponds, the former stronghold of the species. There were records from ten locations in 2018, albeit generally only for very short periods, but this year only three sites delivered.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a single was feeding with Meadow Pipits on 20th April and a single flew E on 6th May. Later in the year, singles were present on 3rd August (in nearby Head Clough), 26th and 29th August and one flew W on 2nd September.

Harden Quarries – a total of 18 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on six dates between 12th August and 10th September, with a maximum of five on 2nd September.

Isle of Skye Quarry – a single flew SW on 14th September.

WATER PIPIT *Anthus spinoletta*

Rare passage and winter visitor.

A single present at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 2nd December was seen intermittently until the year end (HM, DWS).

ROCK PIPIT *Anthus petrosus*

Rare passage visitor.

A single which flew W calling at **Pule Hill, Marsden** on 3rd October (JMP, EDS) was only the second record for the site. The other was as long ago as 29th October 1988.

CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs*

Resident breeder (5), 5,000-10,000 pairs. One of the commonest species.

As in 2018, although still widely distributed, assemblages remained abysmally low, with no flocks in excess of 40 being reported. This decrease is not restricted to the Club area, however, as the BTO's Breeding Bird Survey shows an 18% decrease in population between 1995 and 2018.

There were numerous garden records, some of which held birds throughout the year, but numbers never exceeded more than a handful with the exception of **Wards End Farm, Marsden** which held up to 12 on several dates from 24th September, with highs of 18 on 22nd September and 20 on 22nd October. On a more negative note, the observer in a garden in **Lockwood** commented that 'a male on 8th January was the only recorded instance'.

Away from the garden environment, the only double figure counts involved at least 20 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 2nd January, with at least 15 there on 28th February and 4th March, c.40 on 26th November, and c.30 on 8th December; ten in the **Little Don Valley** on 9th June; and c.40 at **Whitley Common** on 8th November.

Breeding was only reported from a limited number of sites, but at the **Ingbirchworth** group of reservoirs at least 16 males held territories.

Visible migration was reported from four sites:

Harden Quarries – a total of 1,551 flew over, mainly in a SE direction, on 32 dates between 8th September and 13th November, with a maximum of 256 on 3rd October.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 2,991 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 19 dates between 18th September and 6th November, with a maximum of 1,149 W on 12th October.

Wards End Farm – a total of 961 flew over (731 W + 223 NW + 7 S) on 29 dates between 10th September and 29th October, with peaks of 225 W on 12th October and 118 NW on 21st October.

Blackmoorfoot – 39 flew W on 24th October.

A first-year male ringed at **Bradfield, Sheffield** on 11th May 2019 was killed by a cat at **Wards End Farm** on 4th June 2019, having travelled 30 km in a NW direction.

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla*

Uncommon to common passage and winter visitor.

Following last year's disappointing showing, it was pleasing that this year birds were reported from 23 widely scattered localities during the first winter period. There were records from 11 gardens, some of which held good numbers of birds for extended periods. In sharp contrast, the second winter period was abysmal, with records from only seven localities and, even at the migration watch points, numbers were greatly reduced on previous years.

Although a number of gardens only held small numbers of birds for short periods, the following were the exceptions: up to seven were present on a daily basis in a **Holmfirth** garden, with the last, a single, being seen on 20th April; two gardens in **Thongsbridge** attracted birds: in one, between 20 and 30 were seen on a daily basis until the last, a singing male, on 21st April, and there was a peak of c.40 on 1st February, in the other smaller numbers were involved, with up to ten being present on a daily basis between 19th January and 17th March; two gardens in **Meltham** held birds: in one, birds were present between early January and mid-April with a peak of 50+ on 7th February, in the other one or two were present on several dates between 6th January and 26th March, with an outlying single on 27th/28th April; a garden in **Almondbury** attracted up to three between 10th February and 30th March; and 13 were on feeders in a **Helme** garden on 5th April.

Assemblages away from the garden environment rarely exceeded double figures and were generally short lived, but at **Carlecotes Ponds** up to 25 were present between 5th January and 14th April, but numbers gradually decreased from mid-February; **Blackmoorfoot Res.** had up to four (usually only 1 or 2) on 15 dates between 9th January and 17th April, with 11 on 7th April and six the following day; and c.20 on feeders at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 20th January remained in the area until late April but, although there were c.40 on 6th April, numbers at this time were much reduced, with the last, a single, on 28th.

April records, other than those mentioned above, involved singles at **Whitley Common** on 5th and **Broadstone Res.** on 16th, three in the **Little Don Valley** on 21st, and one which was found dead in **Swinden Plantation** the following day.

The good numbers of the birds in the first winter period were not repeated later in the year. The first birds to return were a flock of eight in **Head Clough, Marsden** and a single at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 10th October. Birds remained in the **Head Clough/Wards End Farm** area, being seen on 21 dates between 26th October and the year end. Although numbers rarely exceeded a handful, in November 60 were present on 6th, 70 on 11th, and 120 on 15th, Numbers in December were much reduced but 50 were present on 5th, 37 on 17th, and 30 on 25th.

The only other records involved 11 which flew W at **Broadstone Res.** on 20th October; at least 30 at **Hartcliff Hill** and a single at **Scammonden Water** on 23rd October; a single at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 24th October, with two there on 19th December; and two at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 30th October and 4th and 8th November, with a single there on 9th December.

Visible migration was reported from three sites:

Wards End Farm – a total of 747 flew over, usually in a W or SW direction, on 19 dates between 7th October and 20th December, with peaks of 102 W on 24th October, 210 W on 9th November, and 80 W on 20th December.

Harden Quarries – a total of 105 flew over, mainly in a SE direction, on 13 dates between 9th October and 13th November, with a maximum of 29 on 17th October.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 106 flew W on seven dates between 10th and 29th October, with peaks of 44 on 23rd and 45 the following day.

HAWFINCH *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Rare to scarce visitor. Former breeder. Red listed.

By sharp contrast to the previous two years, birds were in very short supply, and records only amounted to singles at two localities.

A single flew SE at 09.52hrs. over **Harden Quarries** on 15th October and one was at **Cannon Hall** on 3rd/4th December (both NWM, DHP).

BULLFINCH *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Resident breeder (2-3), about 100 pairs.

Records were only received from 38 localities which, although a slight increase on last year, is well below the 55 of 2017. Unlike last year, when only five gardens attracted birds, this year things were back to normal, with birds being reported from 12.

The only counts of more than three were as follows:

Almondbury – a garden in Fenay Crescent held up to five throughout the year and a pair fledged three young.

Blackmoorfoot Res – up to four were present throughout the year and recently fledged young were seen in late June and on 26th September, indicating that a pair were double-brooded or two pairs bred.

Upper Park Wood – six on 9th January.

Broadstone Res – 15 on 10th January and eight on 6th and 20th February.

Thurstonland Bank – present throughout the year with a maximum of 15 on 16th January.

Healey Mills/Kerry's NR – four on 23rd January.

Oldfield – four on 27th January.

Flockton Moor – 12 on 30th January.

Skelmanthorpe – four on 9th March.

Ingbirchworth Res – up to five throughout August and September and five on 11th November.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – four on 8th November.

Hartcliff Hill – five on 9th November.

Silkstone SW – six on 10th December and four on 13th December.

Elland GP – six on 22nd December.

Proof of breeding was limited, perhaps not unexpectedly for this unobtrusive species, with the following sites yielding records: **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (2 broods fledged), **Almondbury** (a pair fledged three young), **Armitage Bridge** (a pair fledged young), **Golcar** (a pair fledged 2 young), **Crosland Hill** (a pair fledged young), **Ingbirchworth Res.** (2 pairs held breeding territories), and **Broadstone Res.** (a pair held a breeding territory).

An interesting record concerned a male briefly feeding a recently fledged Chaffinch in **Armitage Bridge** on 18th July (DJ).

Visible migration was reported as follows:

Harden Quarries – a total of 55 flew between S and SE on ten dates between 9th October and 13th November, with a maximum of 19 on 17th October.

Pule Hill, Marsden – seven flew W in October: two on 12th, a single on 17th, and two on 23rd and 27th. A single U-turned from the W on 6th November.

Wards End Farm – two flew W on 6th November.

GREENFINCH *Chloris chloris*

Resident breeder (4), 1,000-1,600 pairs.

Although there were records from 31 localities, an increase on the 26 of last year, only three counts exceeded double figure. There were records from a number of garden feeding stations, but only three held birds throughout the year, and these rarely exceeded more than a handful, even when locally bred juveniles were included. The national status, indicated by the BTO's Breeding Birds Survey, shows an alarming decrease of 64% since 1995, which is mainly attributed to the disease trichomonosis.

Other than those recorded at the migration watchpoints (see below), the only double figure counts involved at least 20 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 26th April, ten at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 18th September, and a flock of 23 there on 30th September.

As last year, the comments of observers are worthy of documentation: **Thongsbridge** – 'more numerous than in previous years, particularly in the second half of the year' and **Skelmanthorpe** – 'this species is unusual here these days'.

There was more evidence of breeding than last year: **Almondbury** (a pair fledged young), **Fixby** (a pair fledged at least 3 young in a garden), **Wards End Farm** (a pair fledged young), **New Mill** (a pair fledged 2 young), **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (a pair fledged young), and **Ingbirchworth Res.** (2 males held breeding territories).

Visible migration was only reported from three locations:

Harden Quarries – a total of 94 flew over, mainly in a SE direction, on 12 dates between 13th September and 25th October, with a maximum of 37 on 8th October.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 318 flew SW or W on ten dates between 3rd October and 6th November, with a maximum of 77 SW on 17th October.

Wards End Farm – a flock of 22 flew W on 12th October.

The observers at **Pule Hill** commented that the figure of 318 is more than double the eight year average of 156.

TWITE *Linaria flavirostris*

Partial migrant breeder, decreased to (2), 20-100 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Red listed.

The alarming decrease of this species in the area continues. Even at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** the observer commented that ‘numbers were well down this year’. At **Deer Hill**, a former stronghold of the species, the situation was dire, and the observer commented that ‘for the first time since I started putting seed down in 2003 not a single bird was seen at the feeding site’ and ‘the only record concerned two birds near the rifle range on 16th May’.

The first returning birds at **Wards End Farm** were in March: with two on 25th, a single on 30th, and four on 31st. Thereafter, birds were seen feeding in the garden on a further 22 dates between early April and late June but never more than ten were present, and usually far less. In addition, three flew N on 7th and 10th May, two SW on 15th May, and a single NW on 25th May. Birds were then absent until a single appeared on 1st July and five on 3rd July. Small numbers, usually less than ten, were then seen on a further 13 dates until late September, but 22 were present on 7th September, 40 flew W on 14th September, and 20 flew S on 30th September. The only other records involved five which flew W on 12th October and 12 feeding in the garden on 20th December.

The only other records involved nine in **Derby Delph Quarry** on 6th March; three at **March Haigh Res.** on 5th April; a single in the **Wessenden Valley** on 2nd May; three at **Wessenden Head Res.** on 15th May, with one there on 10th June; and a single at **Harden** on 24th July.

LINNET *Linaria cannabina*

Partial migrant breeder (3-4), 400-600 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Red listed.

From the records received, this species would appear to be decreasing alarmingly in the Club area. This decrease is not restricted to the Club area, however, as the BTO’s Breeding Bird Survey shows a 21% decrease in population between 1995 and 2018.

Birds were reported from only four localities during the first three months of the year: a flock of 12 were at **South Crosland** on 5th February, c.30 were along **Potter’s Gate, Broadstone** on 12th February, six were at **Broadstone Res.** on 20th March, and 25 were at the Twite feeding area at **Deer Hill** on 30th March.

Birds became more widely distributed in April/May, but this only amounted to records from 14 localities, most of which held low single figures, the only exception being up to 14 at **Broadstone Res.** which were present throughout this period. Even at the few localities which held birds throughout the summer months, numbers never exceeded nine.

Proof of breeding was only forthcoming from the following locations: **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (2 pairs fledged young), **Broadstone Res.** (9 males held breeding territories), and **Whitley Common** (at least 3 males held breeding territories).

With the exception of **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, post breeding flocks were in short supply, and only amounted to a flock of c.50 feeding on Common Sorrel at **Panna Mill Dam** on 19th June and 12 at **Broadstone Heath** on 17th July. The first indication of an increase in numbers at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** came in July when 35+ were seen on 6th, 50+ on 19th, and 70+ by the month end. Numbers remained below nine throughout August and into early September, but 40+ were present on

13th/14th September with 30+ on 18th September, 40+ on 1st/2nd October and 50+ the following day but only eight remained by 8th.

There were no records during the months of November or December.

Visible migration was witnessed as follows:

Harden Quarries – a total of 234 flew S on 23 dates between 23rd August and 6th November, with a maximum of 46 on 14th October.

Wards End Farm – 40 flew N on 27th July and two W on 27th October.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 33 flew W on five dates between 14th September and 23rd October, with a maximum of 20 (a single flock) on 10th October.

Blackmoorfoot Res – six flew W on 6th October.

The observers at **Pule Hill** commented that the species is gradually getting scarcer at this site. The 33 which flew over being a great reduction on the eight years average of 57.

LESSER REDPOLL *Acanthis cabaret*

Partial migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-50 pairs. Red listed.

There were records from 21 locations (19 in 2018 and 22 in 2017). As in the previous two years, there were records from a handful of gardens, but these were all confined to the first winter period. Breeding was reported from **Langsett Barn** (a pair fledged at least 2 young) and **Winscar Res.** (2 males held breeding territories).

A garden in **Meltham** attracted up to five (usually 1 or 2) on several dates between early January and late April, the species being particularly prolific in February/March when birds were seen on most dates. A garden in **Thongsbridge** held a maximum of five between early March and early April. The other garden records involved no more than four birds which were present for short periods only between early January and late April.

The majority of records related to small groups of no more than six birds, the following being the only exceptions:

Bretton Park – c.15 on 14th January.

Dunford Bridge – c.30 along the Trans-Pennine Trail on 14th January.

Carlecotes Ponds – a flock of c.25 feeding in birches on 21st January gradually decreased during the rest of the winter.

Elland GP – c.30 on 28th February.

Huddersfield – a flock of c.50 were feeding in birches near the Civic Centre on 20th November.

Visible migration was reported from two locations:

Harden Quarries – a total of 141 flew SE on 17 dates between 18th September and 13th November, with a maximum of 46 on 3rd October.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 13 flew W on five dates between 12th and 27th October, with a maximum of four on 17th.

CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra*

Irregular breeder (1), 0-5 pairs. Scarce to uncommon irruptive passage and winter visitor.

There were records from a similar number of locations as last year. Although there were numerous records from the species' stronghold in the Yateholme area, by comparison to last year, passage was uneventful.

Crossley's Plantation – six on 1st January.

Winscar Res – singles on 1st January and 22nd February.

Langsett Res – a single on 2nd January, seven on 20th January, six on 1st February, c.14 on 16th April, at least eight on 23rd April, and a single on 7th May.

Carlecotes Ponds – four on 3rd January, five on 27th March, two on 10th April, and a single on 14th April.

Yateholme Res area – one or two were seen on most visits during the first half of the year with a substantial increase occurring in February, with a maximum of c.30 on 23rd. There were no records after mid-May despite several visits.

Holme Styes – up to seven were present throughout February, but the only other records involved singles on three August dates and, in December, six on 17th, five on 25th, and two on 28th.

Swinden Plantation – two on 21st April.

Harden Quarries – 14 (but see below) flew between S or SE on six dates between 18th September and 6th November, with a maximum of five SE on the last mentioned date.

Pule Hill, Marsden – two flew SW on 18th September.

Digley Res – a single on 5th October.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – in October, 18 flew W on 12th, four were present on 14th, four flew W on 15th, and five were present on 22nd.

Scout Dike Res – at least three on 23rd October.

Two crossbills which flew SSE together at **Harden Quarries** on 17th October attracted particular attention due to their flight calls and, from the photographs obtained, at least one of them possessing an unusually large bill. The specific identification of these two birds is still under consideration (see DHP's interesting article on page 127 for further discussion).

GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis*

Partial migrant breeder (3), 300-500 pairs.

Remains as common and widely distributed as usual, but large assemblages in the first half of the year were very limited, there being more in gardens than the wider environment. Breeding was widely reported, with at least eight pairs holding territories at Ingbirchworth Res. and four at Scout Dike Res. With the exceptions of Deer Hill and Wards End Farm, Marsden, large post-breeding flocks were limited to a few localities. The largest assemblages ever recorded in the Club area, however, were present at Wards End farm in September.

In the majority of gardens which attracted birds they were present throughout the year, but generally no more than a handful were involved, the following being the exceptions: a maximum of 35 in a garden at **Thongsbridge**, 20 in a **Rastrick** garden and 31 in a **Marsh** garden on 1st January, c.60 were seen in a garden at **Hill Top, Cheesegate Nab** on 27th September, up to 16 were present in an **Almondbury** garden in September/October, and there were occasional visits of up to ten birds in a **Holmfirth** garden. At a garden in **Oldfield**, however, although up to six were present on a daily basis, this was restricted to the first half of the year.

Away from the garden environment a flock of 30 was present at **Fixby** and at least 25 were at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 6th January, 18 were near the **Huddersfield Stadium** on 5th February, 12 were at **South Crosland** on 19th March, c.19 were at **Broadstone Res.** on 8th April, and at least 15 were at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 3rd February and 8th March, with 17 there on 10th April.

At **Wards End Farm**, where the species is becoming increasingly common, birds were present throughout the year on a near daily basis. Although up to 30 were present throughout January, double figure counts during the following five months were limited and never exceeded the 13 on 12th February. From late July to early September double figure counts (up to 60) became the norm, but numbers increased throughout September and an amazing flock of 400 were present on 15th and 25th. Assemblages from early October were much lower and fluctuated widely, but 100 were present on 12th and 14th October, and during the remaining months up to 20 became a regular feature.

The largest assemblages post-breeding season, other than those mentioned above at Wards End Farm, were as follows:

Ingbirchworth Res – a flock of at least 25 on 18th June remained throughout the following months, reaching a peak of c.40 in late October and November, and at least 30 were still present on 8th December.

Blackmoorfoot – 50+ on 16th July and 10th August, 80+ on 27th August, and c.30 on 7th October.

Stirley Community Farm – 30 on 30th July.

Scout Dike Res – c.40 on 14th August.

Deer Hill – there was a build-up of birds feeding on thistles which peaked at c.150 on 26th August.

Crosland Moor – 35 on 30th August.

Whitley Common – 40+ on 12th September and c.20 on 6th November.

Holme Moss – c.40 were in the car park on 13th September.

Isle of Skye Quarry – a flock of 20 on 14th September had increased to 40+ two days later, the flock then remained at this level into early October.

Royd Moor Res – c.60 on 16th September.

Marsden – a flock of c.30 on 28th October had increased to c.60 the following day.

Upper Maythorn – at least 20 on 9th December.

Visible migration was recorded as follows:

Harden Quarries – a total of 1,171 flew S on 32 dates between 12th August and 13th November, with a maximum of 170 on 17th October.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 585 flew SW/W on 18 dates between 14th September and 6th November, with a maximum of 85 W on 12th October. A flock of 60 which flew S on 3rd October was exceptional.

Wards End Farm – a total of 198 flew W on 11 dates between 5th and 29th October, with peaks of 35 on both 6th and 9th and 40 on 10th.

The observers at **Pule Hill** commented that numbers were far in excess of the eight year average of 323.

A single amongst the flock at **Deer Hill** on 26th August was leucistic. At a distance it looked strikingly white all over, but closer observations revealed that it had yellow wing coverts and the body looked very pale cream coloured with a faint red wash on the 'face'. The bird remained for about a week, but as two Sparrowhawks were seen regularly hunting this flock, it was thought likely that such a striking looking bird would no doubt be selected out (DMP *et al.*). A similar, but differently marked leucistic bird was present with the flock of normal birds in the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 14th September (DHP).

SISKIN *Spinus spinus*

Resident breeder (1), 5-20 pairs. Uncommon to common passage and winter visitor.

The number of localities from which this species was recorded continues to fall, with records only being received from 21 (24 in 2018 and 28 in 2017). Is this reduction real, or is the species being under-recorded? There were records from seven gardens (1 less than last year), but the vast majority of birds were only present during the first half of the year. There were very few records during the breeding season, and the only breeding evidence involved three territory holding males in the Little Don Valley.

There were only two gardens which attracted birds with any regularity: in **Holmfirth**, with the exception of ten in early March, up to four were seen on a daily basis between 1st January and early June and in **Meltham**, with the exception of 13 on 4th March, up to eight were present on a near daily basis between 1st January and 4th April. The other gardens which attracted birds during the first half of the year never held more than five individuals, all of which were only present for very short periods. The only garden which held birds during the second half of the year was in **Almondbury**, where singles were noted on 21st October and 9th, 16th and 30th December.

With the exception of **Wards End Farm, Marsden** (see below), double figure assemblages were at a premium, and only amounted to 20 at **Bretton Park** on 8th January, with *c.*25 there on 7th November; *c.*50 at **Langsett Res.** on 17th February; at least ten at **Swinden Plantation** on 4th April and **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 30th/31st October; *c.*20 at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 4th December; and *c.*40 at **Silkstone SW** on 10th December.

Numbers at **Wards End Farm** were described as ‘exceptional’. Birds were present on a near daily basis between 1st July and 24th September. Although most of the birds in July were juveniles, their provenance remains a mystery. Numbers gradually built from early July to reach a maximum of 30 on 27th and a similar number then remained throughout August and into early September. Numbers then began to fall, and all the other September records involved single figures with the exception of ten on 15th. The only records thereafter involved five on 11th October, 11 on 13th October, and six on 26th December.

Visible migration was witnessed at the following sites:

Harden Quarries – a total of 379 flew SE on 31 dates between 5th September and 13th November, with a maximum of 114 on 3rd October.

Blackmoorfoot Res – a single flew W on 2nd October, a flock of 16 flew W on 15th October, and a single flew W on 8th November.

Wards End Farm – a total of 131 flew over (110 W + 21 E) on eight dates between 9th and 28th October, with a maximum of 28 W on 24th.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 102 flew W or SW on seven dates between 10th and 28th October, with a maximum of 40 W (1 flock) on 15th.

YELLOWHAMMER *Emberiza citrinella*

Resident breeder (3), 300-450 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas. Red listed.

There were records from 21 locations, the same as 2018, but birds were only present throughout the year at the **Ingbirchworth** group of reservoirs. All records involved fewer than four birds with the exceptions of six at **Broadstone Res.** on 10th January, 14 along Pilling Lane at **Skelmanthorpe** on 9th March, six at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 14th March, seven at **Emley** on 4th September, six at **Lower Cumberworth** on 25th September, and six at **Hartcliff Hill** on 9th November.

Records of birds in the west of the area, where they have always been rare, involved a single at **Lower Green Owlers** on 20th January and males were in the fields to the west of **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 14th August and 4th September. These latter mentioned birds were the first to be recorded there since a single on 5th July 2016, which in itself was the first since 3rd May 2007.

Breeding season records were limited to four territory holding males at **Broadstone Res.**, three territory holding males at **Ingbirchworth Res.**, and two territory holding males at the reservoirs at **Scout Dike** and **Royd Moor**. In addition, a singing male was at **Cheesegate Nab** during May/June and two singing males were at **Stirley Community Farm** on 22nd May.

A single flew SW at **Harden Quarries** on 14th October and two did likewise the following day, whilst a single which flew S on 17th October returned to the NE.

REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Resident or partial migrant breeder (2-3), 60-120 pairs.

The stronghold for this species continued to be **Wards End Farm, Marsden** where birds were present throughout the year, although there were only single records in both April and May. During the first three months of the year birds were present on a near daily basis and, although single figures were the norm, there were 18 on 31st January, 15 on 1st February, and 14 on both 13th February and 12th March. Between early June and mid-September never more than four, which were considered to be nesting nearby, were present. Numbers began to increase from late September and, especially after mid-October, counts of up to 30 became commonplace, with up to 60 by late November and 50 on three late December dates.

With all the birds at **Wards End Farm** during the second winter period, the observer commented that 'there must be a roost somewhere nearby'. Indeed, at **Gilberts** (near Pule Hill) birds were found roosting in a small plantation from 2nd October until at least 19th November. Birds were present in widely varying numbers and were seen commuting to and from a small area out on the moor. Number peaked at c.50 on 28th October, 97+ but probably many more the following day, 75+ on 6th November, and 114 on 18th November.

Away from the Marsden area, the only locality to hold birds throughout the year was **Ingbirchworth Res.**, where up to five were seen fairly regularly, especially on the feeders, and at least three males held breeding territories. The only other evidence of breeding concerned territory holding males at **Broadstone Res.** (2), **Royd Moor Res.** (3), and **Scout Dike Res.** (5).

All other records, from 11 localities, never involved more than four individuals, with the exceptions of c.30 in the **Brow Grains, Meltham** area on 16th September and 30th November and seven along **Old Mount Road, Marsden** on 15th October and 6th November.

There were more records from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** than has been the recent norm, but this never amounted to more than a couple of birds on 13 dates between 25th March and 15th October, but there were no records during the months of May, July or September.

Visible migration was witnessed at four sites:

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 114 flew SW or W on 16 dates between 23rd August and 6th November, with peaks of 14 SW on 17th October and 17 W the following day.

Harden Quarries – a total of 81 flew S on 20 dates between 10th September and 6th November, with a maximum of 12 on both 14th and 17th October.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a total of 198 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 14 dates between 10th October and 15th November, with peaks of 42 W on 21st October and 35 W on 15th November.

The observers at **Pule Hill** commented that the figure of 114 is exceptional, as the previous eight year average had only been 41.

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Rare passage and winter visitor.

A single was calling high overhead at **Pule Hill, Marsden** on 31st October (JMP).

ESCAPED/INTRODUCED SPECIES

EGYPTIAN GOOSE *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

Introduced.

A single at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** departed S at 11.05hrs. on 18th April (MLD, GBS *et al.*). What was almost certainly the same bird was present at **Meal Hill Lake** during the evening of the same date (GG).

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*

Winscar Res. appears to be the stronghold for ‘plastic’ varieties, as the following records confirm: a Cayuga Duck, present from 2014, remained throughout 2019; an East Indian Duck and two Khaki Campbell Runners, along with 2 or 3 unrecognisable crosses, were present throughout the year; and a Saxony Duck was present between early August and the year end (MCW).

In addition, three male Call Ducks (a bantam breed of domesticated duck raised primarily for decoration or as pets) were consorting with the regular Mallard at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 30th October (DBu, AK, RM).

GOLDEN PHEASANT *Chrysolophus pictus*

Introduced.

The only records involved single males at the species’ stronghold at **Upper Hagg** on 26th March (SC) and in a **Fixby** garden on 27th March (DWB).

HARRIS’S HAWK *Parabuteo unicinctus*

Escape.

A single was photographed in **Cliff Wood** on 30th April (RS, identified by MLD).

ADDITION TO THE 2017 REPORT

OLIVE-BACKED PIPIT *Anthus hodgsoni*

Rare vagrant.

One sound-recorded as it passed over **Harden Quarries** at 08.05hrs. on 9th October became the first record for the Club area and only the second for inland Yorkshire (DHP).

A full account can be found on page 133.

ADDITION & CORRECTION TO THE 2018 REPORT

MEDITERRANEAN GULL *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus*

The belated record below brings the total of sightings for the year up to five.

Two adults were photographed at **Digley Res.** on 8th April (A. Lees and N. Moura).

PEREGRINE *Falco peregrinus*

The statement ‘there was no evidence of breeding’ was given in error as a pair fledged three young at a traditional site.


EARLIEST AND LATEST DATES OF SUMMER MIGRANTS

	EARLIEST				LATEST			
	EVER		2019		EVER		2019	
	DATE	YEAR	DATE	LOCALITY	DATE	YEAR	DATE	LOCALITY
Little Ringed Plover	15/3	2000	5/4	Ingbirchworth & Langsett Banks	29/9	1969	12/8	Boshaw Whams
Common Sandpiper	7/3	1964	10/4	Blackmoorfoot	21/11	1959	26/9	Blackmoorfoot
Common Tern	31/3	2010	8/5	Ingbirchworth & Elland GP	16/10	2001	19/8	Blackmoorfoot
Cuckoo	8/4	1976	18/4	Bird's Edge	27/10	1977	1/9	Harden Quarries
Swift	13/4	2013	29/4	Blackmoorfoot	8/11	2001	14/9	Ingbirchworth
Sand Martin	7/3	2005	20/3	Blackmoorfoot	23/10	1971	2/10	Blackmoorfoot
Swallow	10/3	1959	31/3	Elland GP	5/12	1995	17/10	Blackmoorfoot & Harden Quarries
House Martin	20/3	2005	2/4	Ingbirchworth & Elland GP	27/11	1959	10/10	Blackmoorfoot
Willow Warbler	24/3	2003	29/3	Tunnel End	27/10	1987	27/9	Little Don Valley
Wood Warbler	21/4	1981	2/5	Marsden	4/9	1956		no records
Sedge Warbler	1/4	1999	26/4	Dewsbury SW	26/9	1999	8/9	Boshaw Whams
Reed Warbler	11/4	2011	17/4	Dewsbury SW	29/9	2001	13/9	Dewsbury SW
Grasshopper Warbler	10/4	2005	18/4	Scout Dike Res	29/8	2000	25/8	Scamonden Water
Garden Warbler	5/4	1958	18/4	Stirley Community Farm	24/11	1984	23/8	Pule Hill, Marsden
Lesser Whitethroat	8/4	2000	20/4	Sparth Res	27/9	1973	25/8	Marsden
Whitethroat	1/4	2011	19/4	Broadstone Res	12/10	1999	16/9	Digley Res
Ring Ouzel	7/3	1956	21/3	Marsden	25/12	1855	22/10	Marsden
Spotted Flycatcher	8/4	1967	14/5	Hartcliff Hill	16/10	1985	19/9	Holme Styes
Pied Flycatcher	10/4	2007	14/4	Cliff Wood	19/9	1969	4/8	Holme Styes
Redstart	21/3	1942	16/4	Blackmoorfoot	24/10	1976	19/9	Winscar Res
Whinchat	11/4	1949	21/4	Broadstone Res	9/11	1999	8/9	Blackmoorfoot & Deanhead Res
Wheatear	1/3	1997	20/3	Broadstone Res & Whitley Common	4/12	1997	15/10	Blackmoorfoot
Yellow Wagtail	7/4	1980	18/4	Tinker Hill	24/10	1952	15/9	Marsden
Tree Pipit	3/4	1988	20/4	Marsden	16/10	2016	14/9	Isle of Skye Quarry

Denotes a new earliest/latest ever record.

LATEST AND EARLIEST DATES OF WINTER MIGRANTS

	LATEST				EARLIEST			
	EVER		2019		EVER		2019	
	DATE	YEAR	DATE	LOCALITY	DATE	YEAR	DATE	LOCALITY
Pink-footed Goose	12/4	2009	29/2	Blackmoorfoot	11/9	2007	8/10	Marsden & Fixby
Whooper Swan	3/5	2006	25/4	Blackmoorfoot	12/9	2015	20/10	Blackmoorfoot, Ingbirchworth & Boshaw Whams
Redwing	7/5	1975	29/3	Blackmoorfoot	27/8	1941	2/10	Marsden, Newsome & Brockholes
Brambling	13/5	1976	12/4	Blackmoorfoot & Whitley Common	13/9	1983	2/10	Marsden

 Denotes a new latest/earliest ever record.

Notes:

Blackcap and Chiffchaff dates have been discontinued because of the difficulty in distinguishing between summer migrants and over-wintering birds.

In view of the fact that Fieldfare previously bred in the area and the possibility that they did so again in 2008, Fieldfare has also been removed from the table.

CONTRIBUTORS (with apologies for any omissions)

Abell. C. D.	Harrison. P.	Potter. A.
Barrans. D. & B.	Holloway. D.	Quarterman. H.
Bailey. D.	Horne. K.	Saxelby. M.
Bath. C.	Hunt. D.	Saxelby. S. A.
Beaumont. J.	Hutt. A. A.	Sedgwick. S.
Bennett. H.	Ibbotson. I.	Senior. R.
Boland. R. J.	Jaggard. D.	Shields. E. D.
Boyd. C.	Jenkins. C.	Sill. D. W.
Brierley. D. W.	Kaye. G.	Silver. G. B.
Bullough. C.	King. A.	Smith. P. J. W.
Butterfield. D.	Knell. S.	Speight. G. J.
Carr. G.M.	Lees. A.	Squires. C.
Chippendale. S. & H.	Lucas. M. J.	Stables. N.
Charnock. M.	Laycock. J.	Storey. P.
Cockroft. A.	Linnington. M.	Stopher. A.
Cooke. S.	Lunn. J.	Streets. C.
Croston. K.	McGenity. P.	Sutcliffe. D. J.
Cunningham. M. G.	McLoughlin. J.	Sykes. D.
Dawtre. N. C.	McMillan. I.	Tattersley. D.
Dean. A.	Maguire. H.	Taylor. A.
Denton. M. L.	Mallinson. N. W.	Waddington. D. M.
Diskin. P.	Marchant. D.	Wainman. M. J.
Dixon. C.	Marsh. J.	Walker. B.
Doherty. T. A.	Martin. J. I.	Walker. M.
Dryden. D.	Mitchell. R.	Wasse. J. C.
Duckworth. T.	Melling. T.	Wells. M.
Dyson. P.	Moura. N.	Wells. M. C.
Franz. D.	Oliver. G.	Whitwam. M.
Garside. G.	Palliser. J. K.	Wimpenny. T.
Garrity. P.	Palmer. R.	
Gibson. M.	Parkinson. J.	
Grba. P.	Pearce. D.	
Green. S.	Pennington. D. H.	
Hamilton. J.	Pinder. J. M.	
Hargreaves. R.	Pogson. D. M.	
Harris. C.	Pogson. S.	

Barnsley Bird Sightings
Barnsley Bird Study Group
Greater Manchester Bird Recording Group
Halifax Birdwatchers' Club (HBC)
RSPB Denby Dale Office

CROSSBILLS OR CROSSBILL SPECIES: THE FLIGHT CALLS OF BIRDS MIGRATING OVER HARDEN IN THE AUTUMN OF 2019

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, my birding interest has increasingly been focussed on the observation of visible migration in autumn. This has mostly taken place at Harden Quarries on the southern edge of the Holme Valley, in the company of Nick Mallinson and, until 2016, Mick Cunningham. In 2014 I began experimenting with sound recording at this site, and this, among several other benefits, soon had the effect of drawing attention to the variations in the flight calls of migrating Common Crossbills *Loxia curvirostra*. At first, virtually all of these variations were shown by sonograms to belong to one or the other of just two ‘types’. However, this all changed in 2019, when despite it being a very poor year in terms of the number of birds, at least five different crossbill flight calls were detected. The aims of this article are to document these latest occurrences and, drawing on recently published research, put them in some sort of context.

CROSSBILL ‘TYPES’?

Variability in the vocalisations of Common Crossbills has long been acknowledged, with their flight calls and excitement calls showing the most obvious diversification. However, several studies over the past three decades have shown that individuals are in fact very limited in their call repertoire, and that birds using any particular flight call will invariably use the same associated excitement call. Hence, each individual can be assigned to a vocal ‘type’ (see e.g. Groth, 1993 and Robb, 2000).

As well as vocally, these types are known to differ in at least some cases in their morphology (e.g. mean bill depth) and in their food preferences. Perhaps more significantly, they have also been shown to breed assortatively, with females choosing to mate only with males of their own call type, even when other types are present and breeding sympatrically (i.e. side-by-side in the same forest). For these reasons, vocal types are not the same as the local dialects known in many other songbirds. Nor are they the same as subspecies, whose breeding distributions are, by common definition, geographically discrete. A review of contemporary research in this area is included in Edelaar (2008).

In contrast, any genetic distinction has so far proved more difficult to detect, with DNA sequences being unable even to separate three of the four currently recognised European crossbill species.¹² However, a study published in 2006¹⁰ described small but significant genetic differences between vocal types in North America, and similar techniques were recently used to show that divergence also exists in three sedentary subspecies of Common Crossbill in the Western Palearctic.¹¹

ATTEMPTS TO CLASSIFY THESE TYPES

The earliest major efforts to systematically classify and name these types took place in North America in the early 1990s (e.g. Groth, 1993). In a European context, these were followed by the work of Magnus Robb, whose findings were published in *Dutch Birding* in 2000.⁹ In this paper, Robb analysed an extensive collection of crossbill vocalisations, mostly from the Netherlands and other parts of north-western Europe, and identified nine distinct types, examples of which were

included on an accompanying CD. Six of the nine were ascribed to Common Crossbill, and each of these was designated with a letter from A to F, along with a name describing the perceived sound of their flight calls (e.g. ‘weet’, or ‘glip’). Subsequent wider-scale investigations led Robb to make some amendments and additions to this set, which was published in a revised version in Constantine & The Sound Approach (2006). Here, several of Robb’s types were given a new name (e.g. ‘phantom’, or ‘Bohemian’), and it was noted that some had become much scarcer since first being described.

In the meantime, a different classification had been proposed by Summers *et al.* (2002). This study was primarily based on recordings from northern Scotland, and described four flight calls (named 1-4) and five excitement calls (named A-E). Combining these, Common Crossbills were separated into three groups (1A, 2B, and 4E), with other combinations referring to Parrot *L. pytyopsittacus* and Scottish *L. scotica* Crossbills. More recently, Summers utilised a larger sample size and new biometric data to refine this classification in a paper published in the March 2020 issue of *British Birds*.¹⁶

In January 2019, an entirely new system of nomenclature was published in the journal *Ecoscience* (Martin *et al.*, 2019). This paper presented findings from analysis of 8216 recordings made between 2010 and 2016 in 33 countries across the Western Palearctic. Call types were separated into two groups, northern and southern, and each given a number preceded by N or S. In the northern group, at least 16 types of Common Crossbill were described, with several having ranges spanning thousands of kilometres. Four further northern types related to other crossbill species, which were generally more localised. With regard to flight calls in particular, the authors found surprisingly little accordance with previously published types, and this was one of the reasons why a new classification was deemed necessary. A summary of this paper (including detailed descriptions of the named types) has since been published online.⁷

IDENTIFYING THE HARDEN MIGRANTS

Between 18th September and 6th November, 2019, a total of 14 crossbills were counted as they passed south or south-east over the Harden watch point. The flight calls of 11 of the 14 were sound-recorded, and the resulting sonograms were found to correspond most closely with the type classification of Martin *et al.* (2019). As expected, most were recognisable as belonging to Common Crossbill, but one of the recordings has yet to be conclusively identified to species. Mp3 versions of each of the recordings are accessible online at <https://www.xeno-canto.org>.

On 18th September, a single Crossbill flew SE at 07.40hrs., giving flight calls of type N11 (Fig. 1). In continental Europe, type N11 is common in central latitudes, but unknown in the far north.⁷ In Britain, no prior recordings of this type have so far come to light, but another single was recorded on visible migration in the West Midlands shortly afterwards (see www.xeno-canto.org/505603). Martin *et al.* (2019) made no connection between N11 and any of the types described in earlier classifications, although they did acknowledge some similarity with a particular flight call recorded in Greece in 1999, which Robb (2000) used as an example of his type B (‘weet’) call.

Fig. 1. Call-type N11, Harden,
18th September 2019
<https://www.xeno-canto.org/511902>

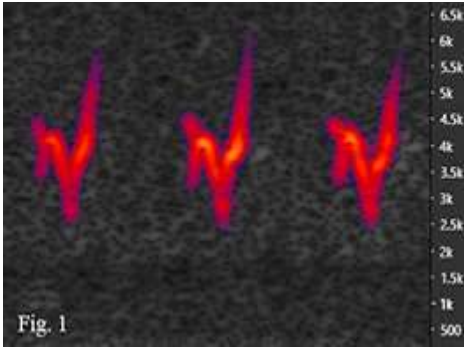
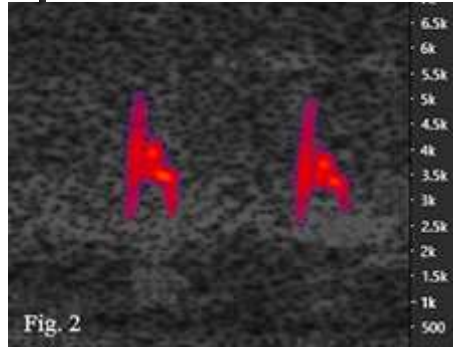


Fig. 2. Call-type undetermined, Harden,
17th October 2019
<https://www.xeno-canto.org/504233>



On 17th October, two birds flew SSE at 08.50hrs. Their calls were noted at the time as sounding somewhat unusual, and this was later confirmed by sonograms which were of a shape difficult to assign to any recognised type (Fig. 2).

Adding to the puzzle of these calls, a series of three photographs taken at the time showed the bill of at least one of the two birds to be relatively large, with a structure appearing more typical of Parrot Crossbill than of Common (see below). It is known that a partially open bill, for instance when a bird is calling, can give a false impression of its depth, but the size and shape were consistent across all three images, making it very unlikely that this was the case here.



So, the sound file and a photograph were sent to Magnus Robb, who kindly responded as follows. 'I have to be honest with you and say I've never heard crossbill calls exactly like that. I made sonograms... and the shape really doesn't look familiar. However, the energy is very concentrated

in a narrow band between 3 and 4.3 kHz, and that does suggest Parrot.... The photo (also) looks very suggestive of a Parrot to me.’ He added that Parrot Crossbills do seem to show some regional variations and that, since influxes originate from different areas, the birds reaching furthest west in any given year may sound different to those involved in previous influxes (Robb, pers. comm.). With this in mind, attempts have been made to locate recordings of similar sounding calls from around the same time, but the search has so far been fruitless. Hence, the specific identity of these birds remains, for now at least, unproven.

On 25th October, two distant birds flew SE at 08.40hrs. Sonograms (Fig. 3) showed them to be of type N8, which Martin & Rochefort (2019) classed as ‘probably identical’ with the Sound Approach’s type X (‘parakeet’) call. This call type was first recorded by Robb in the Netherlands in 2002, and named ‘parakeet’ because of confusion that year with the flight calls of Parrot Crossbill.¹ Since then, it has become ‘one of the most common call types of the northern half of Europe’⁷, albeit one previously unrecorded at Harden.

Fig. 3. Call-type N8, Harden,
25th October 2019

<https://www.xeno-canto.org/521696>

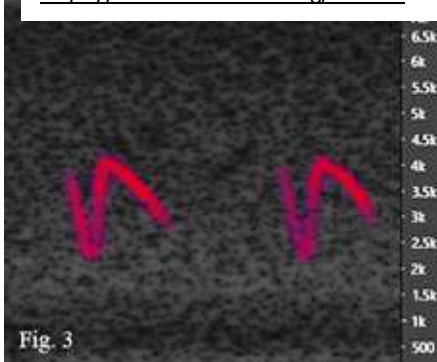
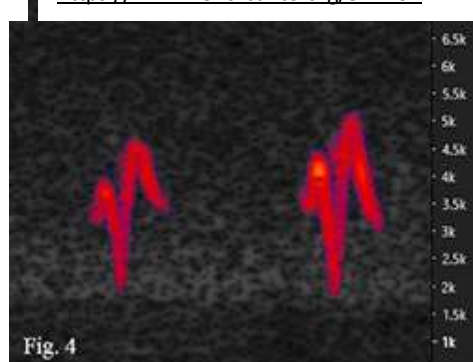


Fig. 4. Call-type N4, Harden,
6th November 2019

<https://www.xeno-canto.org/521701>



In terms of Crossbill numbers, the morning of 6th November was our most productive of the autumn, with four flying SE at 09.15hrs. and two doing likewise at 09.28hrs. Sonograms revealed that the first four included both N4 and N6 birds, probably in a ratio of three to one. Of the two later birds, one also gave N6 calls, with the other being of an undetermined type.

The N4 flight call (Fig. 4) has been recorded at Harden on a near-annual basis, and according to Martin & Rochefort (2019) is probably the most common call type in the northern half of the Western Palearctic and ‘probably identical’ with type C (‘glip’) in Robb (2000) and type 4 in Summers *et al.* (2002). However, the call does seem to have undergone a slight change in the past two decades, with most of the more recently recorded examples having a prominent final descending component which was not shown on sonograms published in the earlier papers (pers. obs).

Type N6 (Fig. 5) is mainly found in north-western Europe⁷, and over the past six years has been the most commonly recorded flight call at Harden. The fact that there are no similar calls in either Robb (2000) or Constantine and The Sound Approach (2006) suggests that it might have developed very recently, although Martin *et al.* (2019) did draw a comparison with type 1 in Summers *et al.*

(2002). The final sonogram (Fig. 6) depicts the calls of the aforementioned undetermined type, and is included here for completeness. These calls can be heard on the same recording as the N6 type.

Fig. 5. Call-type N6, Harden,
6th November 2019
<https://www.xeno-canto.org/521706>

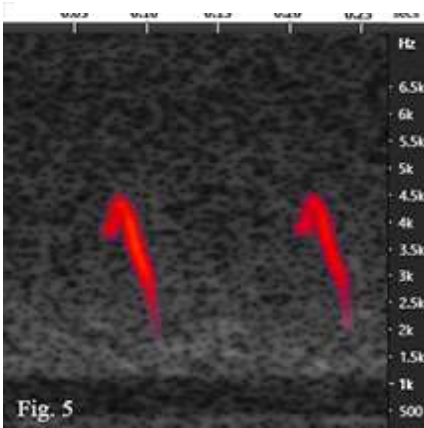
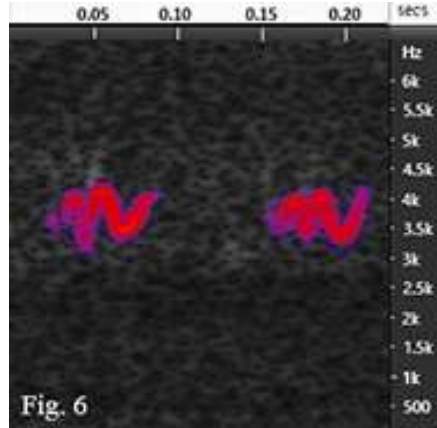


Fig. 6. Call-type undetermined,
Harden, 6th November 2019



MORE QUESTIONS

The extent to which Martin *et al.* failed to match their crossbill vocal database with previously published classifications (which were based on recordings mostly made less than two decades beforehand) has posed questions regarding the stability of crossbill calls over time. In their paper, they acknowledged this, and promised further research in this particular area.

Considering that DNA sequencing has so far been unsuccessful in separating the three European plain-winged crossbill species, the concept of discrete types within Common Crossbills has inevitably led to suggestions that Parrot and Scottish Crossbills might best be seen as one end of a spectrum of these types, and perhaps no more deserving of species status than some of the others. Ultimately though, this is a matter for evolutionary biologists and taxonomists to sort out amongst themselves, and one which hinges to some degree on the definition of the word 'species'.

D.H. Pennington, March 2020

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A NOTE ON THE SONOGRAMS

The sonograms shown above were produced from each recording using Adobe Audition. To illustrate the typical variation within a series, at least two individual calls per recording were included. In some cases, the distribution of energy within a call is shown by differences in colour (with yellow the 'loudest'), but others were recorded at too great a distance for this detail to be captured. Printed reproductions of sonograms often seem to lack clarity (this being evident even in such a lavish publication as *The Sound Approach to Birding*¹), so in an effort to make them more easily decipherable, the background of each one has been rendered in black and white. Unfortunately, there are some slight disparities in scale from one to another, but for the purposes of this article these are too small to be of any significance.

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IDENTIFICATION OF AN UNSEEN OLIVE-BACKED PIPIT AT HARDEN QUARRIES ON 9th OCTOBER 2017

INTRODUCTION

At 07.45hrs. on 9th October 2017, Nick Mallinson and I arrived at Harden Quarries for what was to be our first visible migration watch from there since 22nd September. A light westerly breeze seemed promising, and indeed there were finches passing over right from the start, although mist was hampering our counts and, in some cases, identifications.

Amid this early morning confusion, I heard a single distant call which sounded to me like that of a Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*. Unfortunately, neither of us managed to see the bird, and so cannot state the direction of flight. The date didn't strike me as especially late, because we'd had one fly south on 16th October in the previous year, but an October Tree Pipit is still a good local record. So, in the hope that at least one of my two sound recorders had managed to capture the call, I stopped them both and saved the files.

On listening to the sound files a couple of days later, it was found that one of the recorders had picked up three calls, and not just the single one noted at the time. The first of the three was very faint, but the second two were clear enough. The downside was that they didn't sound quite right for Tree Pipit. I even wondered if they might be an odd, truncated version of a Redwing call. So, I saved the cropped file as a 'possible Tree Pipit', intending to investigate it further when I had more time. Later in the month though, we were lucky enough to experience that autumn's irruption of Hawfinches, which could well have contributed to me completely forgetting about the mystery call, and it wasn't until just over a year later that I finally got around to revisiting the recording.

IDENTIFICATION

I was already aware of the method devised by Ralph Martin for distinguishing the flight calls of Olive-backed *A. hodgsoni* and Tree Pipits by sonogram (Martin, 2013). In fact, I'd used it to confirm the identity of the October 2016 Tree Pipit, so it's rather annoying that I was so slow to carry out the same process with this latest bird.

In comparison with the latter species, the calls of its congener are said to be on average thinner, higher pitched, and less 'buzzing', although variability between individuals has led some authorities (e.g. Alstrom *et al.*, 2003) to doubt whether they are safely separable by flight call alone. Challenging this notion, Martin compiled a dataset of 207 calls from 60 recordings of Tree Pipit (these including 17 calls from four recordings from the eastern part of the species' range) and 190 calls from 48 recordings of Olive-backed. Measurements obtained from sonograms of these calls revealed that, for Olive-backed, the gradient of the modulated descending part of the call was usually steeper (i.e. with a faster decrease in pitch) and that the mean starting frequency (MSF) of this modulated section was typically higher. Combining these values produced what Martin defined as Parameter 1. However, it was clear that there was a significant overlap between the species when considering this parameter alone. So, a third variable was introduced; this being the duration of one modulation, with the faster modulations of Tree Pipit no doubt contributing to differences perceived when comparing the calls by ear. This produced Parameter 2, by which it was found that although there was still some overlap between single calls of the two species, no such overlap existed when applying mean values obtained from more than one call per individual

bird. Hence it was concluded that, given an adequate quality of recording, identification of typical flight calls should now always be possible.

In order to obtain the data required by Martin’s formulae, the faint and distant first call was disregarded, and sonograms of the two clearer calls (here named Call 1 and Call 2) were produced with the aid of Adobe Audition (Fig. 1). Measurements (Table 1) were then taken directly from the computer monitor, where expansion of the axes can achieve a much more accurate result than is possible from a printed screen grab.

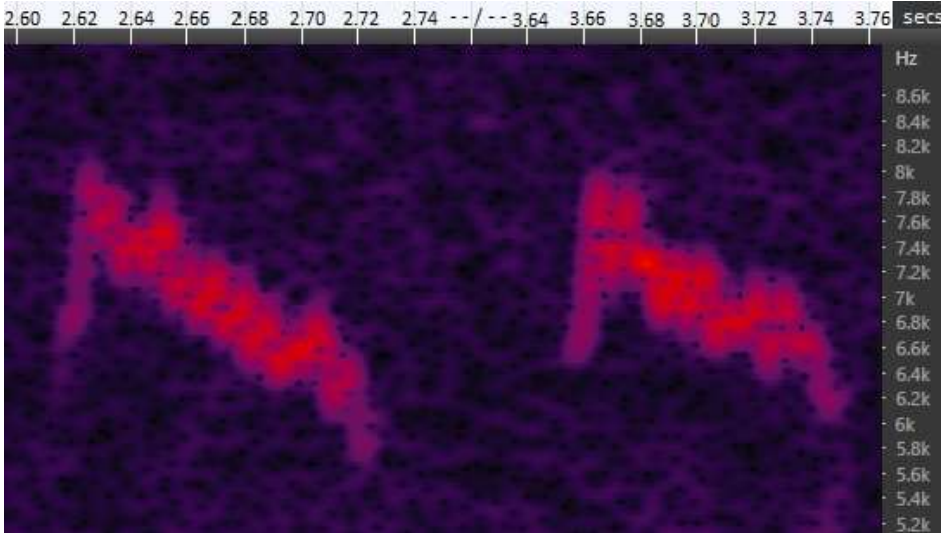


Fig. 1. Example sonograms of ‘Call 1’ and ‘Call 2’. Note: for clarity and ease of print reproduction, the time gap between the calls has been reduced here. An Mp3 version of the recording is available at <https://www.xeno-canto.org/461704>

	Call 1	Call 2
Highest frequency (kHz)	8.20	8.05
Mean Starting Frequency (MSF) (kHz)	7.70	7.50
Point in time of MSF (s)	2.62	3.66
Mean Ending Frequency (MEF) (kHz)	6.63	6.75
Point in time of MEF (s)	2.689	3.724
Number of modulations	11	11
Point in time of the start of modulations (s)	2.613	3.650
Point in time of the end of modulations (s)	2.730	3.755

Table 1. Measurements obtained from sonograms of Calls 1 and 2

Entering the data from Table 1 into the worksheet provided in Martin (2013) gave the results shown in Table 2. Focussing on the average values of Parameters 1 and 2, and comparing them with the equivalent results from Martin’s dataset (summarised in Table 3) it can be seen that both lie well outside the range of Tree Pipit and comfortably within that of Olive-backed.

	Call 1	Call 2	Av. of Calls 1 and 2
Highest Frequency (kHz)	8.20	8.05	8.125
Gradient	15.5	11.7	13.6
Parameter 1	119	88	104
Duration of one modulation (ms)	10.636	9.545	10.091
Parameter 2	1270	839	1054

Table 2. Results from the application of data in Table 1

	Tree Pipit	Olive-backed Pipit
Highest Frequency (kHz)	6.5 – 8.4	7.7 – 9.3
Gradient	1.8 – 10.6	8.4 – 22.0
Parameter 1	12 – 72	62 – 187
Duration of one modulation (ms)	4.6 – 7.7	7.3 – 11.6
Parameter 2	82 – 440	565 – 2100

Table 3. Ranges of averages of each call per recorded series in Ralph Martin’s dataset, adapted from Table 2 in Martin (2013)

CONFIRMATION

Although by now increasingly confident of the bird’s identity, I was concerned that I might have measured or entered the data incorrectly. Also, it was still at the back of my mind that the bird might not have even been a pipit at all. So, I decided to send the sound file and measurements directly to Ralph Martin, asking if he’d listen to the calls and check my workings, to which he kindly responded as follows. ‘This is surely an OBP. Sounds perfect and measurements are fine!’ In the meantime, one highly experienced and evidently very perceptive observer had managed to correctly identify the species within seconds of hearing the recording played back on a mobile phone!

After a second lengthy delay, the record was finally accepted by the YNU Rarities Committee in June 2020 as an Olive-backed Pipit.

D.H. Pennington, July 2020

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & REFERENCES

To varying degrees, all of those thanked at the end of the crossbill article on page 131 deserve acknowledgement here as well. However, special thanks are due once again to Ralph Martin.

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T.D. BSIKER

Although T.D. Bisiker was the co-founder of Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club (along with Clifford Disbrey), little has ever been written about him, and he never received the acclamation he deserved. The finding of a c.1964 photograph by Ken Jollans, who used to reside at Lake House, makes the time right to correct this injustice. The following paragraphs will hopefully rectify this omission and will allow members to appreciate his dedication and capabilities.

Mr Bisiker (he was always known as that, even to older members) only resided in Huddersfield until his retirement in 1968, which is probably why he features so little in the annual reports. His professional life with the Huddersfield Building Society, of which he eventually became manager, allowed him to appreciate that the Club could only thrive with a cast iron constitution. At the inaugural meeting of the Club on 22nd June 1966, he said that the purpose of the Club would be "to promote the study and protection of wild birds by bringing together the interests of local birdwatchers". Later, in the first constitution, it was stated that the Club will disseminate knowledge of the birds of Huddersfield by producing an annual report and by presenting lectures on differing aspects of bird life.

Upon TDB's retirement, the then President, Andrew Riley, wrote the following in the 1968 annual report: "Before making a resume of the club's activities during 1968, I must pay tribute to our first President, Mr. D. Bisiker [*sic*] who was largely responsible for its formation. It was as a result of his untiring efforts that the club got off to such a good start, and I am sure that all members join me in wishing him and his wife a long and healthy retirement in Broadstone, Dorset."

TDB's retirement was short lived, for he died in 1969. It was not until the 1973 annual report, however, that this was conveyed to members by the then President Brian Cocking who wrote "The sad news of Douglas Bisiker's death came to us in 1973. Douglas was our Founder President, indeed it is doubtful that the Club would exist without his drive and inspiration. We owe him a great deal, and many of us remember him as a dear friend".

It was not until 1998 when the Club published 'Results from bird-ringing in the Huddersfield area' that TDB's name appeared again. The dedication reads "This report is dedicated to the founder of the Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club, the late T.D. Bisiker. His ability as a teacher, along with his perseverance and encouragement, enabled me and others to make the grade necessary to become bird-ringers. This report could not have been attempted without the extensive knowledge of birds which he unselfishly passed on to others. Undeniably, the birdwatchers of Huddersfield, and the ornithological world, owe Douglas a tremendous debt of gratitude".

On a personal note, I first met TDB at a meeting of the Huddersfield Naturalists, Photographic and Antiquarian Society in 1963 (three years prior to the Club's formation) and, having a mutual interest in birds, he took me under his wing. In the 1960s TDB was a member of the Spurn Bird Observatory Committee, which meant attending four meetings per year. In an effort to make the most of his visits, he would stay at the Observatory for the weekend. On several of these visits he invited me along, thereby starting my long association with Spurn. TDB also taught me to ring birds, and the first I ringed was a Dunnock at Kirkburton Sewage Works (now Dogley Nature Reserve) in 1965. That TDB was ahead of his time can be gauged from the fact that during my training he had the foresight to send me to Knaresborough Ringing Station (owned by John Mather, but no longer extant) as a 'finishing school'. His idea was that any bad habits that he had instilled into me would be remedied by a second party. This was long before the BTO thought of the idea and introduced Trainee Permits. TDB was also instrumental in training a number of other

Huddersfield birdwatchers who became fully qualified bird ringers. One of these, present in the accompanying photograph, is John Ireland, who went on to become the warden at Long Point Bird Observatory, Ontario, Canada.

Although TDB's involvement with the Club only lasted for two years after its inception, he had been the major driving force and without his efforts it is probably unlikely that Huddersfield would have ever had the benefits of a bird club. Over the last 50+ years the Club has gone from strength to strength, fulfilling all the obligations set out in the original constitution and more: something that TDB would have been immensely proud of.



The above photograph, taken in c.1964, shows Mr Bisiker (on right), John Ireland (on left), Ken Jollans (young lad at front), Tony Jollans (young lad behind Ken), and two unknown lads. Ken and Tony Jollans were occupants of Lake House during their youth.

Mike Denton

THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2019

The following is a list of the 277 species of wild birds that have been officially accepted as recorded in the Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club area since records began, up to the end of 2019. Fourteen additional distinct races or 'sub-species' have also been recorded. In such cases, the generic species name is shown, followed by unnumbered entries for, firstly, the race more commonly encountered in the area, followed by the less common 'additional' race(s).

The list includes two new species for the area:

Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus* - one at Dewsbury SW from 23rd May to 10th June 2019.

Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni* – following acceptance by the BBRC of a sound recording from Harden on 9th October 2017.

The 'Description required' column indicates those species and races for which records of sightings must be accompanied by a description and, if possible, photographs, as required by the Club (HBC), the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union Records Committee (YNU) or British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC). Consult the YNU and BBRC websites for lists of other species and races for which these organisations require descriptions. Descriptions for the YNU and BBRC should also be copied to the Club. Descriptions must also be submitted to the Club for all species and races not on the list. All such descriptions should be submitted as soon as possible after the observation.

Please send records of all your sightings, including both common and scarce species, to the Recorder (see page 157).

Note that for some species distinguishing between races can be problematic at certain times of year and allocation to species only is advised – refer to a quality field guide.

THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2019

No	Common English name	Scientific name	Description
			species
1	Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla</i>	HBC
	Dark-bellied Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla bernicula</i>	HBC
	Pale-bellied Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>	HBC
2	Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	
3	Barnacle Goose	<i>Branta leucopsis</i>	
4	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	
5	Taiga Bean Goose	<i>Anser fabalis</i>	YNU
6	Pink-footed Goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>	
7	Tundra Bean Goose	<i>Anser serrirostris</i>	HBC
8	White-fronted Goose	<i>Anser albifrons</i>	HBC
	European White-fronted Goose	<i>Anser albifrons albifrons</i>	HBC
	Greenland White-fronted Goose	<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>	HBC
9	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	
10	Bewick's Swan	<i>Cygnus columbianus</i>	
11	Whooper Swan	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	
12	Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	
13	Mandarin Duck	<i>Aix galericulata</i>	
14	Garganey	<i>Spatula querquedula</i>	HBC
15	Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>	
16	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>	
17	Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>	
18	American Wigeon	<i>Mareca americana</i>	YNU
19	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	
20	Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	
21	Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	
22	Green-winged Teal	<i>Anas carolinensis</i>	HBC
23	Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>	
24	Ferruginous Duck	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>	BBRC
25	Ring-necked Duck	<i>Aythya collaris</i>	YNU
26	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	
27	Greater Scaup	<i>Aythya marila</i>	
28	Lesser Scaup	<i>Aythya affinis</i>	YNU
29	Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>	

THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2019

No	Common English name	Scientific name	Description
			species
30	Velvet Scoter	<i>Melanitta fusca</i>	HBC
31	Common Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>	
32	Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>	HBC
33	Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	
34	Smew	<i>Mergellus albellus</i>	
35	Goosander	<i>Mergus merganser</i>	
36	Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>	
37	Ruddy Duck	<i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i>	
38	Black Grouse	<i>Lyrurus tetrix</i>	
39	Red Grouse	<i>Lagopus lagopus</i>	
40	Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	
41	Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>	
42	Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>	
43	Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	
44	Red-throated Diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>	HBC
45	Black-throated Diver	<i>Gavia arctica</i>	HBC
46	Great Northern Diver	<i>Gavia immer</i>	HBC
47	Storm Petrel	<i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i>	HBC
48	Leach's Petrel	<i>Oceanodroma leucorhoa</i>	HBC
49	Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	HBC
50	Manx Shearwater	<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>	HBC
51	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	
52	Red-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>	HBC
53	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	
54	Slavonian Grebe	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>	HBC
55	Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	HBC
56	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>	HBC
57	White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	HBC
58	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	YNU
59	Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	HBC
60	Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>	HBC
61	Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	YNU
62	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	

THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2019

No	Common English name	Scientific name	Description
			species
63	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	YNU
64	Great White Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	HBC
65	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	
66	Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>	HBC
67	Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>	HBC
68	Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	
69	Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	HBC
70	Honey-buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>	YNU
71	Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	YNU
72	Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	
73	Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	HBC
74	Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	HBC
75	Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	HBC
76	Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>	YNU
77	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	YNU
78	Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	
79	White-tailed Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>	YNU
80	Rough-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo lagopus</i>	YNU
81	Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	
82	Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>	
83	Corncrake	<i>Crex crex</i>	HBC
84	Baillon's Crake	<i>Porzana pusilla</i>	BBRC
85	Spotted Crake	<i>Porzana porzana</i>	HBC
86	Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	
87	Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	
88	Crane	<i>Grus grus</i>	HBC
89	Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus oediconemus</i>	HBC
90	Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	
91	Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	HBC
92	Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	
93	Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	
94	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	
95	Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	

THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2019

No	Common English name	Scientific name	Description
			species
96	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	
97	Dotterel	<i>Charadrius morinellus</i>	HBC
98	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	
99	Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	
100	Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	
101	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	
	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa limosa</i>	HBC
	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa islandica</i>	HBC
102	Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	
103	Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>	
104	Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>	
105	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	HBC
106	Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>	HBC
107	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>	
108	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	
109	Purple Sandpiper	<i>Calidris maritima</i>	HBC
110	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	HBC
111	White-rumped Sandpiper	<i>Calidris fuscicollis</i>	YNU
112	Buff-breasted Sandpiper	<i>Calidris subruficollis</i>	YNU
113	Pectoral Sandpiper	<i>Calidris melanotos</i>	YNU
114	Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	
115	Jack Snipe	<i>Lymnocyrtus minimus</i>	
116	Great Snipe	<i>Gallinago media</i>	BBRC
117	Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	
118	Terek Sandpiper	<i>Xenus cinereus</i>	YNU
119	Wilson's Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus tricolor</i>	BBRC
120	Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>	HBC
121	Grey Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i>	HBC
122	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	
123	Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularius</i>	BBRC
124	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	
125	Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	
126	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	HBC

THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2019

No	Common English name	Scientific name	Description
			species
127	Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>	
128	Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	
129	Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	
130	Sabine's Gull	<i>Xema sabini</i>	HBC
131	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	
132	Little Gull	<i>Hydrocoeleus minutus</i>	
133	Mediterranean Gull	<i>Ichthyaetus melanocephalus</i>	HBC
134	Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	
135	Ring-billed Gull	<i>Larus delawarensis</i>	YNU
136	Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	
137	Glaucous Gull	<i>Larus hyperboreus</i>	HBC
138	Iceland Gull	<i>Larus glaucoides</i>	HBC
	Iceland Gull	<i>Larus glaucoides glaucoides</i>	HBC
	Kumlien's Gull	<i>Larus glaucoides kumlieni</i>	YNU
	Thayer's Gull	<i>Larus glaucoides thayeri</i>	BBRC
139	Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	
	Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus argenteus</i>	
	Scandinavian Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus argentatus</i>	HBC
140	Caspian Gull	<i>Larus cachinnans</i>	YNU
141	Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>	HBC
142	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	
	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus graellsii</i>	
	Scandinavian L. B-b. Gull	<i>Larus fuscus intermedius</i>	HBC
143	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>	HBC
144	Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>	HBC
145	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	
146	Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	HBC
147	White-winged Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>	YNU
148	Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>	HBC
149	Great Skua	<i>Stercorarius skua</i>	HBC
150	Pomarine Skua	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>	HBC
151	Arctic Skua	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	HBC
152	Long-tailed Skua	<i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i>	HBC

THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2019

No	Common English name	Scientific name	Description
			species
153	Little Auk	<i>Alle alle</i>	HBC
154	Guillemot	<i>Uria aalge</i>	HBC
155	Razorbill	<i>Alca torda</i>	HBC
156	Puffin	<i>Fratercula arctica</i>	HBC
157	Pallas's Sandgrouse	<i>Syrrhaptes paradoxus</i>	BBRC
158	Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i> (feral)	
159	Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	
160	Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	
161	Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	
162	Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	
163	Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	
164	Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	HBC
165	Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>	
166	Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>	
167	Long-eared Owl	<i>Asio otus</i>	
168	Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>	
169	Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>	
170	Alpine Swift	<i>Tachymartus melba</i>	YNU
171	Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	
172	Roller	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>	BBRC
173	Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	
174	Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	HBC
175	Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>	HBC
176	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dryobates minor</i>	
177	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	
178	Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>	
179	Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	
180	Red-footed Falcon	<i>Falco vespertinus</i>	YNU
181	Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>	
182	Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	
183	Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	
184	Ring-necked Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	
185	Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	HBC

THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2019

No	Common English name	Scientific name	Description
			species
186	Great Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius excubitor</i>	HBC
187	Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>	HBC
188	Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	
189	Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	
190	Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	
191	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	
192	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	
193	Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	
194	Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	
195	Waxwing	<i>Bombycilla garrulus</i>	
196	Coal Tit	<i>Pariparus ater</i>	
197	Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>	HBC
198	Willow Tit	<i>Poecile montana</i>	
199	Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	
200	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	
201	Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>	HBC
202	Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	
203	Shore Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>	HBC
204	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	
205	Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	
206	House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	
207	Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>	YNU
208	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	
209	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	
210	Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	
	Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita collybita</i>	
	Siberian Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita tristis</i>	YNU
211	Wood Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>	HBC
212	Pallas's Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus proregulus</i>	HBC
213	Yellow-browed Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>	HBC
214	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	
215	Great Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>	BBRC
216	Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	

THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2019

No	Common English name	Scientific name	Description
			species
217	Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>	
218	Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	
219	Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>	
220	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>	
221	Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	
222	Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>	HBC
223	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	
224	Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	
225	Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	
226	Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>	
227	Rose-coloured Starling	<i>Pastor roseus</i>	YNU
228	Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	
229	Ring Ouzel	<i>Turdus torquatus</i>	
230	Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	
231	Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	
232	Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	
233	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	
234	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	
235	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	
236	Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	
237	Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	HBC
238	Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>	
239	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	HBC
240	Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	
241	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	
242	Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	
243	Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	
	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe oenanthe</i>	
	Greenland Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe leucorhoa</i>	HBC
244	Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>	
245	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	
246	Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	
247	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	

THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2019

No	Common English name	Scientific name	Description
			species
248	Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	
	Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava flavissima</i>	
	Blue-headed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava flava</i>	HBC
	Grey-headed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava thunbergi</i>	HBC
249	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	
250	Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	
	Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba yarellii</i>	
	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba alba</i>	HBC
251	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	
252	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	
253	Olive-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus hodgsoni</i>	YNU
254	Water Pipit	<i>Anthus spinoletta</i>	HBC
255	Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus</i>	HBC
	Eurasian Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus petrosus</i>	HBC
	Scandinavian Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus littoralis</i>	HBC
256	Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	
257	Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>	
258	Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>	
259	Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	
260	Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	
261	Twite	<i>Linaria flavirostris</i>	
262	Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	
263	Mealy Redpoll	<i>Acanthis flammea</i>	HBC
264	Lesser Redpoll	<i>Acanthis cabaret</i>	
265	Parrot Crossbill	<i>Loxia pytyopsittacus</i>	BBRC
266	Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>	
267	Two-barred Crossbill	<i>Loxia leucoptera</i>	BBRC
268	Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	
269	Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>	
270	Corn Bunting	<i>Miliaria calandra</i>	
271	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	
272	Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>	YNU
273	Little Bunting	<i>Emberiza pusilla</i>	YNU

THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2019

No	Common English name	Scientific name	Description
			species
274	Black-headed Bunting	<i>Emberiza melanocephala</i>	BBRC
275	Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	
276	Lapland Bunting	<i>Calcarius lapponicus</i>	HBC
277	Snow Bunting	<i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i>	HBC

REPORTING AND RECORDING SENSITIVE BIRD SPECIES

It is imperative for all Club members and other birdwatchers to be fully committed to the understanding that the welfare of all birds is of paramount importance and must not be threatened or compromised by any of our activities. In particular this applies to all birds in the breeding season and especially to those birds whose populations are particularly vulnerable in Europe, the UK or just in the Club area. Schedule 1 of the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act itemises a number of rare breeding birds (see abbreviated list below) which require a special licence for any individual who may approach them whilst nesting. These licences, which are issued in order to keep disturbance to a minimum, are only issued to bona fide researchers, i.e. ringers, official nest recorders, photographers (occasionally) etc. Anyone disturbing any Schedule 1 species who is not in possession of a licence is breaking the law and liable to prosecution, as well as putting the breeding attempt at risk. If you accidentally find a nest, however, you are not breaking the law, as this was done without any foreknowledge. If however you return to that nest and this results in any form of disturbance, then that would be breaking the law.

It should be obvious that the purpose of the law is to protect these individual species from disturbance, thereby allowing them to breed without molestation and providing the greatest chance of success. It is important, therefore, to avoid circulating any information relating to the whereabouts of such breeding birds. The HBC committee therefore asks that no such information should be posted by anyone using the Club forum; to do so may encourage unlicensed individuals to visit these nest sites, for whatever reason, and could seriously compromise the well-being of the birds and their eggs or offspring. The information could also be used by those intent on persecuting species, stealing eggs or young.

Should you suspect that a Schedule 1 species is breeding within the Club area then do contact Mike Denton (01484 646990) who holds the necessary licence to monitor and document proceedings.

Where you see any Schedule 1 birds, and even though there may be no evidence of breeding at that time, it is advisable not to advertise the locality of such sightings on the forum, or even verbally to others. It is possible that the bird(s) may be prospecting in the area for potential breeding sites and such reports may compromise their opportunity for success. By not advertising the whereabouts of these species or their nests you can be content in the knowledge that you are positively contributing to their protection by not inviting disturbance by others.

Please do remember, however, to submit all of your detailed records to the Club Recorder for inclusion in the annual report, although the detail included in the report will be appropriately circumspect. Such information is vital for use by relevant bodies (e.g. the rare birds breeding panel, conservation bodies etc) your records are a key component of maintaining an accurate picture of population dynamics which aids plans to conserve and protect them.

In addition to the above, if you are aware of the presence of any Schedule 1 birds in an area and you suspect that illegal interference may have taken place, or be about to take place, then contact Mike Denton or the Recorder urgently. We have the contact details of the appropriate authorities that would allow us to alert them to these threats.

These comments, whilst directed primarily at Schedule 1 species, are pertinent for any nesting species and if you are uncertain about their status it is advisable to seek clarification from Mike Denton. There are also a number of species (see additional list) that may not be threatened within UK but that are scarce breeding, or potential breeding birds within the Club area. It is by leaving

these birds undisturbed during a critical time in their life cycle that you can feel gratified that you have had no detrimental effect upon the outcome.

Abbreviated list of Schedule 1 Species

Black-necked Grebe
Bittern
Pintail
Garganey
Honey-buzzard
Red Kite
All harriers
Goshawk
Osprey
Merlin
Peregrine Falcon
Avocet
Stone-curlew
Little Ringed Plover
Dotterel
Red-necked Phalarope
Little Tern
Barn Owl
Kingfisher
Firecrest

Additional List of Sensitive Birds in the Huddersfield Area

Nightjar
Buzzard
Raven
Short-eared Owl
Long-eared Owl

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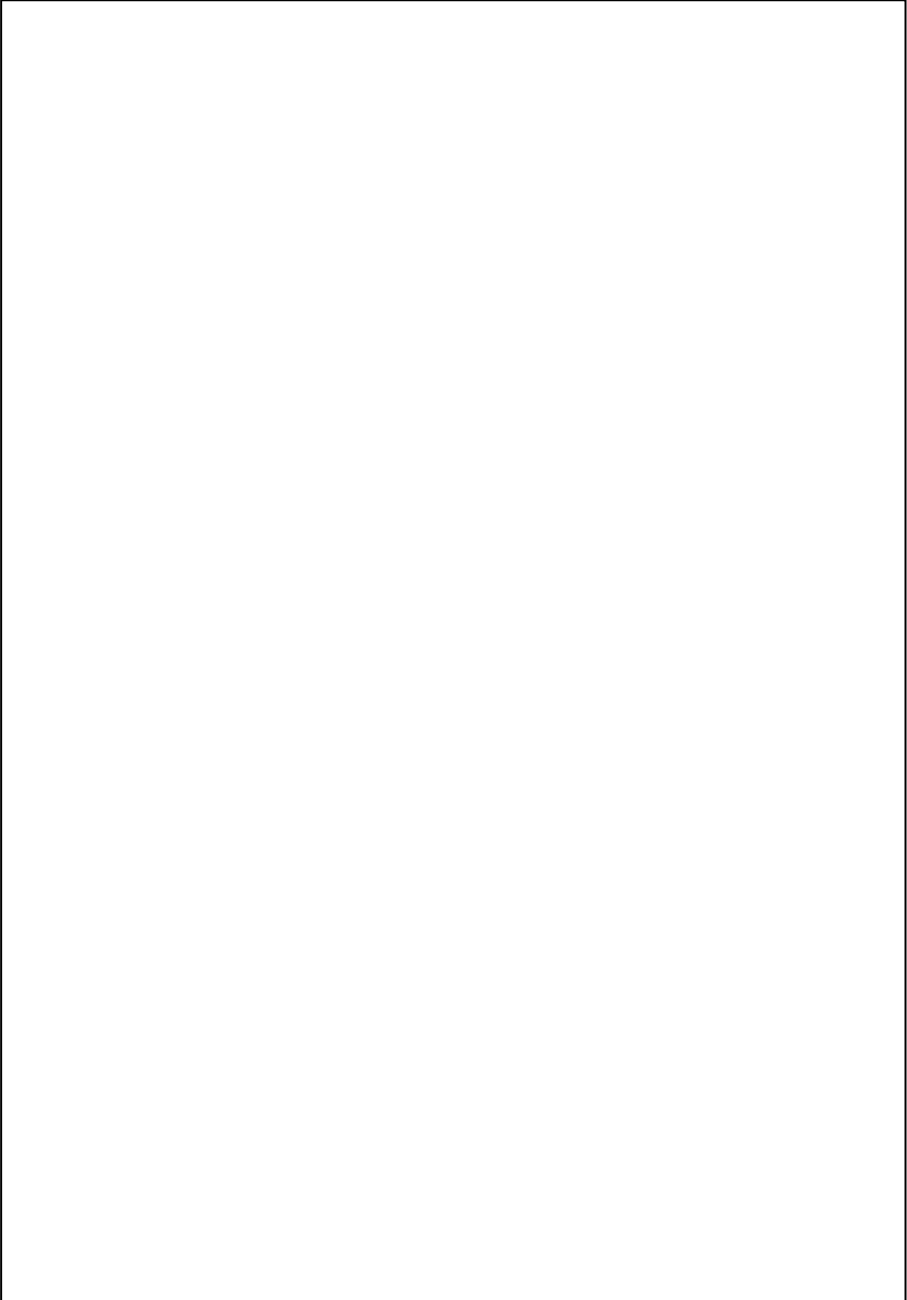
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NOTES

NOTES

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying most of the page. It is intended for the user to write their notes.

NOTES

CLUB COMMITTEE 2019/20

President & Conservation Officer: Mike Denton
77 Hawthorne Terrace, Crosland Moor, Huddersfield, HD4 5RP
Tel. 01484 646990 michael@atheta.plus.com

Recorder: Nick Mallinson
100 Marsh Lane, Shepley, Huddersfield, HD8 8AS
Tel. 01484 609027 hbwrecorder@gmail.com

Treasurer: Trevor Doherty
trevor.doherty@gmail.com

Membership Secretary: Hazel Sill
Wards End Farm, Marsden, Huddersfield, HD7 6NJ
Tel. 07854739646 hazel.sill@btinternet.com

Secretary: Chris Abell
57 Butterley Lane, New Mill, Holmfirth, HD9 7EZ
Tel. 01484 681499 cdabell@gmail.com

Indoor Meetings Organiser & Web Site Manager: Alf King
13 Fenay Crescent, Almondbury, Huddersfield, HD5 8XY
Tel. 01484 304479 alf.king@ntlworld.com

Publicity Officer: Roger Mitchell
rogerwmitchell346@gmail.com

Members: David Butterfield Stephen Cook
David Sill John Walker



in focus

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All the latest information at

www.infocustics.co.uk



Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club

Registered charity no 1098296

**The annual record of all the species of birds seen
and breeding in the Huddersfield area.**



This Great Reed Warbler was at Dewsbury Sewage Works from 23rd May to 10th June. A summer breeding migrant in much of southern and central Europe that winters in tropical Africa, it is rare in the UK and this was the first recorded in the Huddersfield area. Photo: John Hamilton.



www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk

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