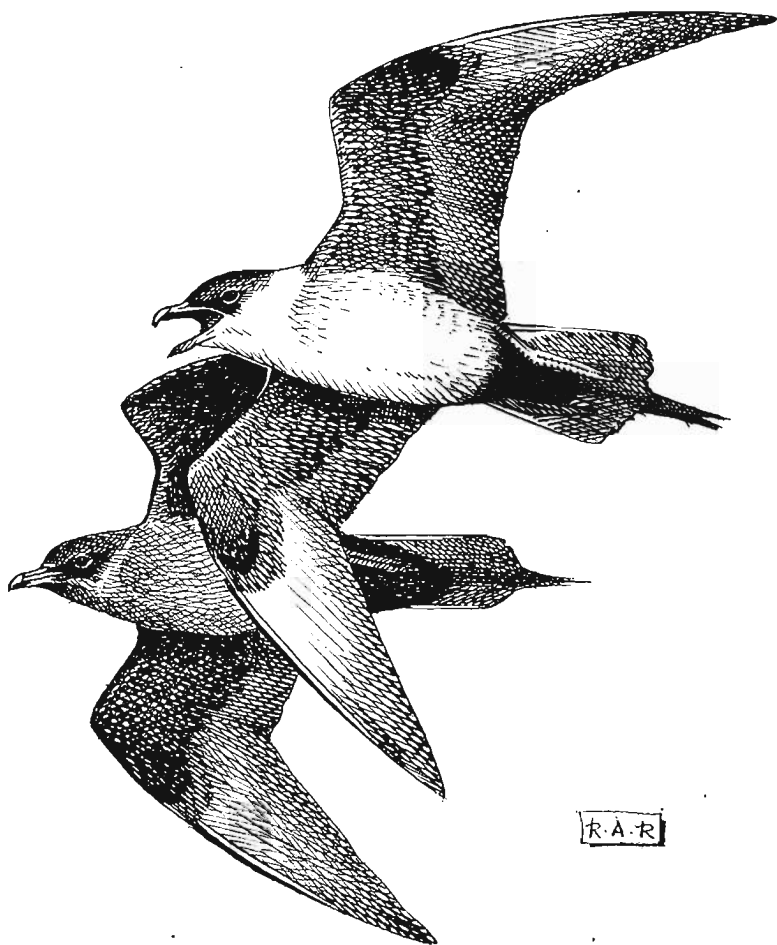


Fair Isle Bird Observatory

REPORT FOR 1973



PUBLISHED BY THE FAIR ISLE BIRD OBSERVATORY TRUST
21 REGENT TERRACE, EDINBURGH, EH7 5BT
for "Friends of Fair Isle"



(Above). House Martins and two Swallows huddled together in Observatory Garage.
6th May 1973 (see p. 71).

Photograph by Dr Peter Munro

(Below). Pectoral Sandpiper at Field, 22nd September 1975. (See p. 21).

Photograph by R. A. Broud



Fair Isle Bird Observatory

REPORT No. 26

1973

Edited by GEORGE WATERSTON

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Fair Isle Bird Observatory

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Tel. Fair Isle 258

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Auditors—Arthur Young McLelland Moores & Co. C.A., 16 Abercromby Place, Edinburgh 3.

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THE FAIR ISLE BIRD OBSERVATORY ENDOWMENT FUND

With the generous help of the Pilgrim Trust, the Observatory Trustees have established an Endowment Fund for Ornithology and Bird Preservation in Scotland. The objects are: To establish the Fair Isle Bird Observatory on a permanent financial basis; to extend Fair Isle research methods to other stations in Scotland; and finally to develop Bird Sanctuaries and Bird Protection in general.

Capital subscribed to the Fund will be held as a permanent Endowment by the Trustees and cannot be spent. Income from the Fund will be carefully used by the Bird Observatory Executive Committee in keeping with the above objects.

Please write to the Hon. Secretary for particulars.

GEORGE WATERSTON,
Hon. Secretary.

21 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh EH7 5BT.

FOREWORD

WHILE pondering over the contents of this Foreword I was saddened to read in his own favourite daily, the *Glasgow Herald*, of the death of Maury Meiklejohn. Elsewhere others more competent have paid their tribute to him but I cannot start this preface to another annual report without mentioning his long and interested connection with F.I.B.O.T. We all have different recollections of our late colleague; mine will ever be of a humorist who never hurt and a wit who never wounded.

Maury's death is also a reminder that the Trustees and Executive members are older than they once were: it is not only that fact that makes it particularly pleasant to welcome two younger members to our number. R. A. Richardson and Roy Dennis who have joined us during the year have in their different ways already contributed much to the Trust and I know that they will greatly strengthen our organisation.

The activities on the island are fully chronicled in the warden's report and I can only comment that the interest increases with every passing year. This year the work on sea birds was continued, the migration periods threw up a lot of what are called 'good' birds, which may be translated as rare or unusual birds. Parenthetically I have yet to hear of common or familiar birds being referred to as 'bad'. The third phase of the bird work has been the most welcome start of a study on the Arctic Skuas in detail and more particularly their colour phases. This is to me a particularly pleasing event reviving and enlarging as it does the studies done by Ken Williamson some years ago now in a field in which I have always had a strong personal interest. It is fascinating to read that there may be among Arctic Skuas sexual selection in the true Darwinian sense, a concept that had by many been relegated to the limbo of discarded beliefs.

During the year we received a very handsome donation from the MacRobert Trustees towards liquidating our capital indebtedness and for this we are most grateful: I hope that this gift will act as a spur to us all to increase our individual efforts to build up our financial position.

In conclusion may I again thank the Broads for another year of great achievement and success in charge of our affairs on the island.

ARTHUR B. DUNCAN,

Chairman.

FAIR ISLE BIRD OBSERVATORY TRUST

Treasurer's Report

Broadly speaking, if I may coin a phrase, Roger and Judy have done it again. They have managed to show a small surplus on Revenue account, despite having to find £500 toward the re-construction of the Airstrip. I am very grateful to them for their helpful and intelligent management.

I have the following comments on the individual accounts.

I. Revenue Account

Board and Booking fees were up £700 on last year but this was not in itself enough to meet the inevitable rise in Provisions, wages, and National Insurance, £857 more than 1972. Expenditure increased on all items other than Loan Interest, as a result of the annual repayment. Travelling Expenses, £207 down as a result of staff staying for longer periods, and Bird Rings and Nets, which is a variable either way.

On the credit side, we got more from the Endowment Trust, but this is not a representative figure since it includes £96 tax refund and revenue surplus which should have been received in 1972. There was also a small increase in tax recovery and in publications and stock interest. Overall, a satisfactory result for the year, but we have had to raise charges for board to combat rising inflation.

II. The Appeal Fund (carried to Balance Sheet)

No comment.

III. Capital Account (carried to Balance Sheet)

Increased by small surplus on Revenue.

IV. Balance Sheet

We have depreciated Furnishings and Equipment, the Generator, the Land Rover and the Boat in the normal way. No depreciation has been provided on the Hostel itself. Net Current Assets are unfortunately down, and as of the date of the Account we still owed the Highlands & Islands Development Board £7,600 to account of their original loan. **In this connection I am happy to report that we have recently received, from the MacRobert Trustees, a really wonderful donation of £2,000 to be used in reduction of the loan. I would welcome any further help towards achieving final repayment of this loan.**

V. Endowment Trust

I have little comment. The Investments remain the same, the income was remitted as is usual to Fair Isle revenue. The Regent Terrace property remains in at cost.

FAIR ISLE BIRD OBSERVATORY TRUST

Year ended 31st October 1973

REVENUE ACCOUNT

1972

£1654	Provisions	...	...	...	...	...	£2125
1859	Wages, National Insurance	...	...	...	...	...	2235
344	Insurances	...	...	...	...	...	402
433	Heat, Light	...	...	...	...	...	479
683	Repairs, Renewals	...	...	...	...	...	864
538	Telephone, Postages & Stationery	...	...	...	...	...	410
202	Printing Annual Report	...	...	...	...	...	218
447	Travelling Expenses	...	...	...	...	...	240
59	Motor Expenses	...	...	...	...	...	112
100	Freight Inward	...	...	...	...	...	134
102	Bird Rings & Nets	...	...	...	...	...	64
309	Administration Expenses	...	...	...	...	...	357
23	Audit & Legal Charges	...	...	...	...	...	31
463	Loan Interest	...	...	...	...	...	436
—	Contribution to reconstruction of Air Strip	...	...	...	...	...	500
	Depreciation						
180	Furnishings & Equipment	...	...	...	...	£180	
60	Generator	...	...	...	...	60	
96	Boat	...	...	...	...	21	
							261
280	Surplus for year	...	...	...	...	...	3
£7832							£8871

1972

£6250	Board & Booking Fees	...	...	...	...	...	£6948
250	Annual Grant—National Trust for Scotland—Wildlife Fund	...	...	...	...	...	250
164	Fair Isle Endowment Trust to Account of Income	...	...	...	...	...	375
893	Subscriptions & Donations	...	...	...	...	...	854
126	Tax recovered from Deeds of Covenant	...	...	...	...	...	147
95	Sale of Publication	...	...	...	...	...	157
54	Interest received on Government Stock	...	...	...	...	...	140
£7832							£8871

APPEAL FUND

1972

22497	Balance carried to Balance Sheet	...	...	...	...	...	£23241
22497							£23241
21647	Balance at 31st October 1972	...	...	...	.....	£22497	
445	Donations received during year	...	...	...	...	402	
209	Interest from Temporary Deposits—gross	...	...	...	...	178	
196	Tax recovered from Covenants	...	...	...	...	164	
22497							£23241

CAPITAL ACCOUNT

£4726	Balance carried to Balance Sheet	...	...	...	£4729
£4726					£4729
£4446	Balance at 31st October 1972	...	...	...	£4726
280	Surplus for year	...	...	...	3
£4726					£4729

BALANCE SHEET as at 31st October 1973

Fixed Assets	Cost or Val.	Deprec.	1972
Hostel	£51548	£—	£51548
Sheds and Traps	150	—	150
Furnishings & Equipment	1816	668	1148
Generator	592	232	360
Scientific & Photographic Equipment	160	—	160
Land Rover	223	223	—
Boat	107	86	21
	£54596	£1209	£53387
			£53648
Investment			
£2642 8½% Treasury Stock 1980/82 (M.V. £2325)		2582	619
Current Assets			
Stocks	£473		332
Sundry Debtors	435		752
Tax Recoverable	46		11
Deposit 8½% repayable 15/5/75	1000		—
Temporary Deposits	3200		5300
Bank & Cash	702		420
	£5856		£6815
Less Sundry Creditors	1255		784
Net Current Assets		4601	6031
		£60570	£60298
Capital Account		£4729	£4726
Appeal Fund		23241	22497
Grants Received from Highlands & Islands Development Board		25000	25000
		£52970	£52223
Secured Loan—Highlands & Islands Board		7600	8075
		£60570	£60298

Notes

1. No Depreciation has been provided on the Hostel.

2. **Highlands & Islands Development Board**

The loan secured over specified Trust Properties is repayable by 16 Annual instalments of £475.

The Grants are only repayable under special circumstances, such as Sale, Disposal or discontinuance of the Observatory within the next year.

EDINBURGH, 17th January 1974.—Examined and found correct.

ARTHUR YOUNG McCLELLAND MOORES & CO.,
Chartered Accountants.

FAIR ISLE ENDOWMENT TRUST

Summary of Account for the year ended 31st October 1973

	Capital	Revenue
Fund at 31st October 1972	£7987	£35
Income for year per Schedule		187
Income Tax refunds 1971/72		61
1972/73		110
		<hr/> £393
Trustees Fees, Outlays	£18	
Remittances to F.I.B.O.T.	375	
	<hr/>	<hr/> £393
	<hr/> <hr/> £7987	

Schedule

	Capital	Revenue
	Market Value	Cost
Lanarkshire County Council		
£1000 5½% Stock 1977/79	£750	£896
Treasury Loan £1000 8½% Stock 1987/90	810	996
British Investment Trust		
£1530 7½% Conv. Deb. Stock 1996	2658	2728
Whitbread Co. Ltd.		
840 "A" Ord. 25p Shares	693	314
	<hr/> £4911	<hr/> £4934
Heritable Property		
21 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh	3050	
Cash Balance	3	
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<hr/> £7987	<hr/> £187

THE JOHN HARRISON MEMORIAL FUND

A special fund in memory of John Harrison of Hunstanton, Norfolk, who died in September 1967 at the early age of 19, was instituted by R. A. Richardson to help adventurous teenagers of slender means with their Hostel expenses should they choose to visit Fair Isle where John spent happy holidays in three successive years.

The Trustees wish to warmly commend this scheme to all readers of the Annual Report, and ask that all donations for this most worthy object be sent to the Hon. Treasurer of FIBOT, 21 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh EH7. Please continue to support and publicise the Fund to your friends.

Eligible applicants for financial assistance must be between the ages of 15 and 21, and should write to the Warden, enclosing letters of recommendation from two references such as a school-teacher and a senior naturalist of their acquaintance.

The John Harrison Memorial Fund

Year ended 31st October 1973

Balance of Funds at 31st October 1972	...	...	...	£370.52
Donations received during year	...	...	...	67.35
Interest received on temporary loan	...	...	...	22.92
				<u>£460.79</u>
Deduct:				
Five Grants paid for Accommodation at Hostel	...	...	...	35.00
Balance of Funds held at 31st October 1973	...	...	...	<u>£425.79</u>

WARDEN'S REPORT FOR 1973

By ROGER A. BROAD

Judy, Adam and I returned to the Observatory on 1st March and were resident until the end of the year. During the season Nick Riddiford was assistant warden and John Davies helped with the seabird work during the summer months. In the kitchen, Fiona Shiels was our cook and was assisted by Deidre Yeoman who was also responsible for the housekeeping. These domestic duties were taken over by Jessamine Inkster and Marion Fullerton in the late autumn. Jane Wheeler (Field) continued to help out in many ways through the year and Stewart Thomson (Quoy) continued to be responsible for the caretaking until the spring. We are very grateful for the willing co-operation we received from all our staff: their dedication to their duties resulted in the Observatory running smoothly through the year.

The facilities provided by the Observatory were supported by a growing number of visitors and a total of 368 people stayed for 427 visitor-weeks. These record figures included a number of overseas visitors and 5 young ornithologists who benefited from the John Harrison Memorial Fund. Many of the visitors are long-established friends of the Observatory who return at regular intervals. In this category we were pleased to welcome George and Irene Waterston and Pat Sellar who are Observatory Trustees. Visitors who stayed at the Observatory in 1972 and returned again in 1973 will have noticed few changes in the Observatory itself. However, in the immediate vicinity the access road to the back of the Observatory has been levelled and surfaced and a great deal of clearance has been carried out around the old Observatory site. This has included the removal of another hut and the destruction of concrete foundations. The whole area south of the road has now been returned to grass.

Island Events

At the end of the year the Island community numbered 67 persons and in addition Michael Stout (Barkland) continues his education at school in Lerwick. The total, inclusive of lighthouse keepers, remains at about the same level as the last few years. The number of crofts occupied is also the same as last year but the number of children in receipt of full-time education on the Island has increased to seven. Beneath these apparently stable figures there have been several change-overs. Stewart and Sheila Wilson and their family who have run the shop for many years sadly left the Island for the Scottish main-

land during the summer; Stewart is now teaching art at Elgin. They will be missed for many reasons including their services in the choir, the chapel where Stewart regularly preached and also for Stewart's lively ability as master of ceremonies at many dances. The shop is now being run by Barry and Anne Sinclair with their children Lise and Steven. It is good to see yet another family with strong Island connections returning to Fair Isle. Anne (née Thomson) was formerly of Shirva. Sheena MacKinlay (nurse) and her husband Ian left the Island and returned to the Glasgow area. Their successors are Betty and John Best and their family—Fiona, Andrew and Ian. They are already well-settled and have introduced a new mammal species to the Isle—2 goats (both well-tethered)! At the South Light, the Principal Keeper, Bill Edwardson and Ruth have been posted to Orkney; so too were Alistair and Noreen Tait and their daughter Kelda. The new keepers are Mr and Mrs McWilliam and Ailsa and Ian and Norma Paisley and their young sons Darren and Colin.

It was a great shock to the Island when Jerry Stout of Busta died early in the year, and he will be missed by all who knew him. Within the same family, there was a happy event later in the year when Helen was born to Tommy and Sheila (Springfield). During the summer, for the second year in succession, there were wedding celebrations when Teddy Stout (Midway) married Lindsay.

International Voluntary Service camps were again held on the Island and their main task was the construction of a shelter beside the airstrip for the use of Loganair passengers. The new airstrip was finally completed—a very welcome and necessary innovation with the increased volume of Loganair charters. The Good Shepherd III was proved as a worthy sea-boat and the crew maintained an excellent service between Grutness and Fair Isle. Jerry Stout (Leogh) retired as skipper of the new boat and Jimmy Stout (Midway) has taken over the responsibility. Other boat traffic at the Island included the welcome visit of the *Regina Maris* on 1st June with 275 passengers on the National Trust for Scotland Cruise. The *Orcadia* with 200 visitors from Orkney was less fortunate on 7th July, when despite reaching the Island it failed to land any visitors. Another notable event during the summer was the presence of a BBC (Scotland) team who made a film of the Island.

Lobsters were fished from the Island when weather permitted. Despite early losses during a particularly cold spell in April the lambs that survived were in excellent condition by the time they were ready for the market. This may have been due in part to the lush growth of vegetation resulting from a very damp summer. However, the persistence of fog and

drizzle promoting food growth, resulted in extremely poor conditions for drying hay and ripening corn. By the law of averages 1974 should have a fine summer!

Acknowledgments

The success of the Observatory relies tremendously on the support of many people in many ways. It is impossible to mention them all individually but we much appreciate the help we have received during the year. We continue to be dependant on the crofters for access to their land in search of migrants. Additional observations complementary to our own are frequently forthcoming and here the support we receive from Gordon Barnes is greatly appreciated. Our growing library is the result of many kind donations and Richard Richardson's gifts are particularly generous, further his excellent vignettes again lighten the text of this report. We benefited by the continued loan of a collection of bird skins from the Royal Scottish Museum. For these and many other kindnesses we are very grateful.

Ornithology

The season was varied and interesting and a total of 202 species were recorded. Two of these, White-winged Black Tern and Dowitcher were additions to the Fair Isle list. Migration during the second half of September stole the limelight from the rest of the year with an exciting run of rarities which pushed the monthly species total to a very high level. The number of species recorded month by month were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
No. of species	65	92	142	104	71	99	150	117	82

The breeding birds had another reasonable season and Whimbrel bred for the first time.

The spring also saw the start of a three year research project from the Department of Genetics, Cambridge University on the Arctic Skua. John Davis who carried out the field work was assisted by Nick Wedd. Not only were we involved in this work during the summer but we continued to monitor the attendance of seabirds at selected colonies through the season in conjunction with the R.S.P.B. Also a large number of Puffins were colour ringed and details of these and information from the transect laid down in 1972 on Burrista were forwarded to Dr Mike Harris of the Nature Conservancy.

Spring migration

During March we were busy around the hostel for much of the time and consequently we carried out less ornithological

observations than we might have done. However, it was obvious that no large movements occurred and not until the end of the month did we begin to record any variety of species. The weather was amazingly settled, fine and calm (under the influence of a stationary high) for much of the first half of March, with unusually high temperatures and light winds for the time of year. The second half was less settled with strong winds prevailing from the SW-NW and a fair amount of rain during the last week.

Several species overwintered; a ♂ Kestrel was seen on many days, a Water Rail ringed in November '72 was retrapped at the end of January and, as last year, a Ringed Plover (bearing a ring) was seen when the hostel closed in December and was at the same place when we returned in March. Blackbirds were seen daily through the winter and some certainly wintered. Up to 3 Long-tailed Ducks were 'resident' through March. In the first few days of the month Oystercatchers increased markedly having been slower than in some years to return to the island. Skylarks, although widespread at the beginning of the month, were passing through on several days (especially 17th and 25th). 30 Lapwings arrived on 4th and for the rest of the month parties of up to 45 could be seen. A small passage of Stonechats occurred between 11th-23rd and Meadow Pipits, after their first appearance on 16th increased slowly to 30 by 28th.

On 9th, during the calm spell, 2 Mistle Thrushes arrived and on 11th a ♂ Garganey appeared. The next day a Chiffchaff was trapped at the Plantation. Both the Garganey and the Chiffchaff appeared on extremely early dates for so far north. The variety increased during the last ten days of the month; a Pied Wagtail on 21st, Whooper Swan from 22nd when Glaucous Gull and mealy Redpoll were also recorded. A Black Redstart was found on 23rd and a more noticeable arrival occurred the next day with southerly winds. A Sparrowhawk was seen, the first Goldcrests of the year appeared (9) and Meadow Pipits increased. On 25th the first 2 ♂♂ Wheatears were seen and Redwings increased. Jackdaw, 2 Rooks and a Chaffinch were also new. On 26th the first two Puffins were close inshore at Dutfeld, Fieldfares increased to 17, a roving band of 19 Ravens paused briefly over the Island, and a Snowy Owl was flushed on Ward Hill. The first Lesser Black-backed Gull was seen, much as usual, on 27th but a ♂ Yellow Wagtail on the same date was very early.

April proved to be an unfavourable month for migration with very unsettled weather, predominated by strong northerly winds and low temperatures. Snow flurries occurred on several days and an unusually late snowfall (2-3") on the night

of 28th was drifted by strong winds. A period of NE winds between 21st-24th did give us some respite from an otherwise lean month. Many species of spring migrants usually recorded in April failed to appear.

In the first two weeks a few of the returning breeding species were recorded for the first time; Bonxie on 3rd and the same day the first Puffins were gathering offshore, but it was not until 10th that they came ashore in numbers. 1-2 new species were recorded daily over this period: 5 Wood Pigeons and a Reed Bunting on 2nd, 2 Rooks on 3rd, Water Rail on 4th, Black Redstart on 5th, Jack Snipe on 6th, Chaffinch and Brambling on 8th, Pied Wagtail on 9th, Dunnock on 10th, Mistle Thrush on 11th and Woodlark on 13th. Small numbers of Black-headed Gulls and Common Gulls began to move north and the first Arctic Skua arrived on 16th when a Short-eared Owl was also found. A small influx of Starlings on 17th-19th included a control, a British ringed bird. On 20th, 4 Wigeon, Stock Dove and a small influx of Snow Buntings were logged.

Between 21st-24th things improved, with an interesting variety of birds passing through in fine weather. 2 Teal, 6 Long-tailed Ducks and 2 Shelducks were recorded on 21st when a fine Black-tailed Godwit and the first Whimbrel were also seen. A Slavonian Grebe in breeding plumage was recorded and 5 Dunnocks were the herald of 40 the next day, a very large number for Fair Isle. Wheatears appeared in strength (45), Robins and Bramblings increased, and a large movement of Common Gulls occurred. Other species included Glaucous Gull, Mistle Thrush (4), White Wagtail (2) and Great Grey Shrike but these were eclipsed by the raptors. Apart from the resident Peregrines which were much in evidence, a visiting Sparrowhawk, a dark Gyr Falcon and a Rough-legged Buzzard were seen within minutes over Ward Hill. On 23rd, Sparrowhawks increased to 3 and a Merlin was self-caught in the Vaadal. Many of the Dunnocks had moved on overnight but the first Ring Ouzel, 6 Song Thrushes and 4 White Wagtails were newly arrived. On 24th thrushes increased and 20 Ring Ouzels were well scattered. Bramblings also increased and a Black Redstart and an early Wryneck were recorded. Visible passage included small flocks of Curlew (70 in all) and Hooded Crows (37 in all) all heading north at high altitude.

The main changes on 25th were again in the thrushes, Blackbirds (25) and Redwing (120) both showed increases but Song Thrushes and Fieldfares had decreased. 25 Robins also indicated an influx and these contributed to the first good day's ringing of the year—43. A few Mallard and Teal were seen and a pair of Gadwall flushed from Muckle Uri Geo. Gordon reported a Dotterel; and Corncrake, Chiffchaff, Grey Wagtail,

Tree Pipit and mealy Redpoll all added variety. Apart from Woodcock (5), Linnet, Reed Bunting and Long-eared Owl (trapped) which were all newly arrived, most species decreased by the morning of 26th. Passerine numbers continued to decrease during the next few days and apart from Shorelark on 29th the larger species relieved the quiet ending to the month—3 Common Scoter and 6 Teal on 27th, Glaucous Gull on 28th, Barnacle Goose and 2 Shelduck on 29th.

The census of migrants during May was hampered on several days by fog, particularly during the second half of the month. The first week and the 16th-20th proved to be the best periods for migration and arrivals occurred on most of these days, under the influence of south easterly winds.

On 1st Bramblings and thrushes increased and some birds did not appear until the afternoon. The first Swallow was recorded. The next day in better visibility several new species were found including a pair of Tufted Ducks, Sparrowhawk, Common Sandpiper, Yellow Wagtail, House Martin and 6 Linnets. Some of these may have been overlooked on 1st but there was certainly an overall change in turdidae: Fieldfares had moved on and Song Thrushes and Robins both increased. Most species were less numerous on 3rd but there was a small arrival in the afternoon including the first Redstart and 2 Tree Pipits, Collared Dove, Mistle Thrush and Scaup were also seen. Between 4th-6th arrivals occurred each day and a wide variety of birds were recorded. The main arrival on 4th was during the morning when Tree Pipits (50) were the most numerous species. Robins (30) and Wheatears (including some large birds) were also prominent. However, Willow Warblers (25) were not recorded until the afternoon. Other warblers seen included Chiffchaff (8), Grasshopper (4) and Sedge. Another Black Redstart, 7 Redstarts, 5 Whinchats, 3 Pied Flycatchers, 12 *alba* Wagtails, 16 Reed Buntings and 28 Bramblings were recorded and Corncrake, Dotterel and a male Lazuli Bunting added interest. Small flocks of Tree Pipits were everywhere on 5th and a minimum estimate of their numbers suggested ca250 were present. Finches were also much in evidence, namely: Siskin 6, Brambling 50, Linnet 13, Chaffinch 8 and Redpoll. A good selection of buntings included 16 Reed Buntings, a Lapland Bunting and 3 Ortolans—the latter almost alongside 2 Shore Larks at Kennaby. Willow Warblers (50) doubled and the first arrival of Lesser Whitethroats (10), Spotted Flycatchers and Blackcap were noted later in the day. House Martins came in through the day and 27 were counted in the Observatory garage in the evening. A Green Sandpiper was recorded and Common Sandpipers increased to 8. On 6th thrushes were again in evidence with increases in Fieldfare

(300) and Ring Ouzel (30), and the first Whitethroat was seen. A remarkable figure of 20 Common Sandpipers and a good selection of other birds including in the Busta/Kennaby area 2 Shore Larks, Short-toed Lark and 3 Ortolans were logged. Elsewhere, Goldeneye, Merganser, Shelduck, Kestrel, Quail, Water Rail, Turtle Dove and Short-eared Owl were all seen. On 7th, although most of the oddities were still present, a general decrease was noted and this decline continued over the next few days. Contrary to the trend were Wood Pigeon (15), Linnet (17), Redpoll (12) and Reed Bunting (40). A Great Grey Shrike was present on 8th and a fine male Snowy Owl spent most of the 9th at Ferny Cup.

The second week remained quiet, punctuated only by Glaucous Gull and the first 'comic' tern on 12th, 12 Whimbrel and a Bluethroat on 13th and a Pomarine Skua on 14th. The small, common migrants reappeared in some numbers during the third week of May. The 15th-16th were generally quiet but more varied than the preceding week. Jackdaw, Wryneck and Grasshopper Warbler were seen on 15th while the next day Greenshank, Collared Dove (8), Turtle Dove and Sand Martin were seen. On 17th Swallows arrived during the day and small numbers of Whinchats, Spotted Flycatchers and some warblers were logged. Also seen were Wood Sandpiper, 5 Wrynecks, 3 Bluethroats and a male Black-headed Bunting. Hirundines were again moving through on 18th and the first Swift was seen. Most of the common migrants increased further, especially Redstart, Willow Warbler and Spotted Flycatcher. A Wood Warbler was recorded and the first Cuckoos (3), and Red-backed Shrikes (2) were seen. Less expected was a male Stonechat but the birds of the day were undoubtedly a Golden Oriole at Gunglesund and a Hoopoe at Hjukni Geo. There were marginal increases in some species on 19th and Spotted Flycatcher (50) and Bluethroats (8) were both good totals. Many of the Flycatchers departed overnight, but Redstart, Willow, Sedge and Garden Warblers, Whitethroat, Red-backed Shrike (5) and Cuckoo (6) all increased.

A trickle of good birds was seen to the end of the month but no further arrivals of the common, small migrants were recorded. On 21st, 3 Wood Sandpipers were at Setter and a pair of Tufted Ducks were seen. A Thrush Nightingale was discovered in a dry ditch at Easter Lothar. Yellow Wagtails peaked on 22nd and an immature/female Scarlet Rosefinch was seen at Skerryholm. Both Black and Bar-tailed Godwits were present on 23rd and a few new Bluethroats were also noted. The following day Red-backed Shrikes reached 8 and a Willow Warbler found by Alan Barnes was carrying a Heligoland ring (it had been dead several days). On the morning of

the 25th another Thrush Nightingale was found at the Havens and later the same day visitors arriving on the Good Shepherd had excellent views of 2 Grey Phalaropes. An Icterine Warbler was at Jivvi Geo on 27th and a Nightjar at Gunnawark the same evening. A fine Red-throated Pipit found first at Setter on 28th was later watched in Gilsetter, where an Osprey flew overhead. A pair of Shoveler were in the South Haven on 29th and a Reed Warbler was trapped. House Martins peaked at 40 on the same date and a Quail was the last good bird of the month on 30th.

Summer

June was changeable and dull with rain and/or fog recorded on about half the days of the month. No large arrivals occurred and the main spring passage petered out during the first ten days (last records of Whinchat, Redstart, Robin, Sedge Warbler, Garden Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat, Willow Warbler, Spotted Flycatcher and *flava* wagtail during this period). Of the remaining common, passerine migrants a few Blackcaps and Whitethroats lingered into the third week of the month. Turtle Dove and Collared Dove as well as Cuckoo were recorded almost daily and Collared Doves reached a maximum of 18 on 24th. Similarly, Swallows and House Martins, although more numerous during the first week, when maxima of 15 and 30 respectively were noted, continued to be seen regularly to the end of the month.

The month opened with a third Thrush Nightingale on the 1st, trapped at the Observatory, and a Golden Oriole was seen the following day. The week continued with Honey Buzzard on 3rd, Pintail on 4th and a Reed Warbler on 5th. The 10th was highlighted by the appearance of a summer-plumaged White-winged Black Tern which flew past the Observatory at lunch-time—the first Island record. Honey Buzzard and Marsh Harrier were seen on 15th when a Melodious Warbler was trapped in the Vaadal. On 18th a Black Redstart was trapped and a Bluethroat seen carrying a ring was later found to have been ringed in Sweden. On 20th a pair of Shoveler and a party of 8 Mallard were seen the latter a large number for the time of year. Also recorded were Song Thrush, Red-backed Shrike and a Swift—the first of up to 4 which were seen daily to the end of the month. A Hobby was at Setter on 21st and a Golden Oriole was trapped in the Gully the same day. A Redwing, first recorded on this date stayed until 25th. Another fine capture was a Scarlet Rosefinch taken in the Setter trap on 26th when a single Crossbill and a Yellow-hammer were recorded. A Marsh Warbler was trapped at Setter on 24th and simultaneously a Greenish Warbler was trapped at the Observatory. An Osprey on 28th and a Golden Oriole on 29th closed the month.

The miserable weather persisted into July with fog, drizzle or rain recorded on 20 days and only infrequent glimpses of the sun. Migrants, as to be expected, were few until the usual early return passage of waders got under way from the middle of the month. The breeding birds continued to have reasonable success despite the poor weather, and amongst the less usual species to successfully rear young were Whimbrel (first record), Common Gull, Common Tern and Blackbird. Unfortunately, a pair of Curlew which nested on Sukka Mire were predated and Peregrines, for the fourth successive year failed to produce any young.

A large number of Gannets, mainly sub-adults, were recorded fishing inshore, especially on the west side, and through the middle of the month up to 300 were resting ashore on Da Fless, with smaller numbers ashore on Sheep Rock. Family parties of terns began to build up from the 20th and they peaked at 75 on 26th. Many of the records of returning waders were from the rocky area around the South Light where small flocks of Redshank increased from 11th, Purple Sandpipers from 19th and Turnstones from 22nd. The last species reached 45 at the end of the month. A party of Black-tailed Godwits (5) were seen on 10th, Sanderling on 14th-15th, Knot on 26th, 4 Ruff from 27th and a Greenshank on 30th.

Few other migrants were recorded in July, but several species common as migrants during the migration months appeared unexpectedly: Song Thrush, Redwing, Ring Ouzel, Robin, Willow Warbler, Dunnock and Chaffinch were all reported. Less common species but in some cases more typical of the time of year were recorded as follows: Grey Wagtail on 1st, Glaucous Gull and Reed Warbler on 2nd, another Greenish Warbler trapped on 4th remained to 8th, and a Cuckoo was seen on 6th. A Black-headed Bunting trapped on 7th was considered to be an escaped cage bird. A Jackdaw first seen on 8th was present into November and a Marsh Warbler was trapped on 10th. A single Kestrel was recorded on the 30th.

Autumn migration

August continued as the previous summer months with fog and rain on an excessive number of days. Only two fine days were recorded during the first fortnight of the month! Visibility improved during the second half and some passage was noted. Sea watching proved to be worthwhile at the end of the month when good numbers of Sooty Shearwaters were passing mainly to the south. A few Mallard and Teal were noted from the middle of the month and small numbers of waders recorded daily. The build-up of terns, begun at the end

of July, continued into August with Arctics in the majority at the South end and Commons at the North Haven, presumably attracted by the breeding birds. Passerine migration started slowly and not until the middle of the month were any real influxes noticed—when Meadow Pipits and Wheatears started to move south.

Turnstones peaked at 35 on 2nd and a Ruff on 4th was the herald of 11 the next day when 19 Curlew were also seen. Common Gulls were much in evidence over this period. A Sparrowhawk was seen on 4th, 3 Shoveler and young Red-necked Phalarope were on Easter Lother Water on 5th and a young Cuckoo was seen in the crofting area. On 6th a Spotted Redshank was seen and 2 Willow Warblers recorded. 3 Green Sandpipers and 6 Knot were seen on 10th but the only new passerine was a Pied Flycatcher. On 12th Meadow Pipits and Wheatears increased markedly and numbers of the latter exceeded 150 in the Restengeo bracken alone. Ringed Plovers began to flock and about 34 were recorded from this date to the end of the month.

From the 16th, when the wind was south to south south east arrivals of a few passerines were recorded. Whinchat, Willow Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat and the first Barred Warbler were recorded on 16th and Purple Sandpipers peaked at 60 the same day. The wind was SSW on 17th but following overnight rain there were a few more passerines including 2 Barred Warblers trapped first thing. 7 Swallows were recorded and 18 *alba* Wagtails arrived in the afternoon. The wind remained SW on 18th and a few more Swallows and *alba* wagtails were recorded. Sanderling peaked at 5 on this date. The wind remained between N and W until 22nd and few new birds were logged. A flock of 25 Golden Plover on 19th was followed by Merlin and Fieldfare the next day when an odd bunting was seen fleetingly. When seen the next day it was identified as a female/immature Black-headed Bunting. Also seen on 21st were 30 Curlew and the first large flock of Cormorants was noted flying south. Renewed passage was noted from 23rd with light and variable winds. Barred Warblers increased to 4, 7 Phylloscops and a Reed Warbler were seen and the first autumn Scarlet Rosefinch was at the Haa. The trickle continued the next day and included Wood Warbler and Chiffchaff. The wind was temporarily in the SE on 25th but apart from Whitethroat, a fine Icterine Warbler at Jivvi Geo and 3 Green-shanks little passage was noted.

With no change in the small bird line on 26th and the wind established in the SSW (force 3-4) seawatching from the South Light became more popular. 10 Sooty Shearwaters were seen and a Great Shearwater. This incentive produced great

interest the next day and in moderate visibility a good Sooty Shearwater passage was noted with 48 logged. 2 Manx Shearwaters, another Great Shearwater and 7 Storm Petrels were also seen and 5 Tufted Ducks passed off Bunes. Visibility improved on 28th and although fewer Sooties were seen another Great Shearwater was recorded. The wind was light NW and interest in the land birds was renewed when 3 Wrynecks and 6 Barred Warblers were recorded early in the day. Another Rosefinch was located and Moorhen, Black-tailed Godwit (very exhausted) and Curlew Sandpiper were also newly arrived. Of the common migrants Whinchats (10) and Phylloscos (15) were the most obvious and a small movement of Hirundines was noticed through the day.

The wind again returned briefly to the SE on 29th and early in the morning a large number of Wheatears appeared; 14 new Wheatears were trapped on the first round and of these (and many others seen in the field) many were large, adult males, but most had flown only a short distance as they were still of very high weight. A Spotted Redshank was seen flying over Easter Lother where the bird of the day was found—a Pectoral Sandpiper. The disappearance of the Wheatears the next day was as marked as their arrival. New birds recorded on 30th included Turtle Dove and a few House Martins.

The miserable weather continued through much of September and for the first two weeks the wind, although light was west of south. Sooty Shearwater passage continued in the first few days. The second half of the month was very different with easterly winds between 15th-20th and 24th-25th. Waders and ducks were particularly numerous and small arrivals of continental migrants were frequent. The lack of numbers was more than compensated by the variety of species recorded!

The SW wind increased force 7 for much of 2nd and Sooty Shearwater passage peaked at 250. 2 'large' shearwaters were also seen on the sea. The autumn's first Lapland Bunting was seen in the afternoon. On 3rd, 3 Collared Doves arrived and Icterine and Wood Warblers were recorded. Light southerly winds prevailed on 4th-5th and a small selection of birds arrived including Spotted and Pied Flycatchers, Sedge and Willow Warblers. Barreds increased and an Arctic Warbler was trapped at the Observatory. The autumn's first Goldcrest was seen and other species recorded included Merlin, Water Rail, Common Sandpiper and Short-eared Owl. The wind strengthened again on 6th and shearwater passage continued: 50 Sooties and another 'large' shearwater. 500 Common Gulls came onto the Island during the day and Redshank increased to 35. There was another small arrival on 7th composed mainly of warblers, Goldcrests and Pied Flycatchers but an Ortolan

was found at Setter where it was joined by a second the next day. On 9th with NW winds, 4 Wigeon, Merlin, a small party of Golden Plover and the first Snow Buntings were recorded. Cormorants were again passing on 10th when there were 2 Merlins and 3 Lapland Buntings. The first autumn influx of Skylarks was noted and other arrivals included 4 Chiffchaffs, more Rosefinches and another Arctic Warbler was trapped. A total of 6 Rosefinches were seen on 11th and these were to stay for several days. On 12th a Shoveler and 4 Velvet Scoters preceded a larger duck passage the next day when small parties were flying south through the day, including 15 Teal, 40 Wigeon, and 3 Scoter. A Yellow-breasted Bunting was found at the Nurse's and Barred Warblers increased to 7. 2 Red-backed Shrikes were seen on 14th.

The wind had backed to SE by the morning of 15th and some increases were noted, notably Goldcrests and Blackcaps. Robin, Sedge Warbler and Swallow were new, Purple Sandpipers peaked at 60 and 2 Spotted Redshanks were seen. Wigeon continued to pass through but the discovery of a ♂ King Eider just off the South Light rocks was the climax to the day. Passage begun on 15th gathered momentum on 16th and resulted in a day to be remembered. Species which had increased yesterday were more in evidence today. Duck passage continued: 40 Teal, 5 Scoters, 3 Mergansers, and a drake Pochard (a rarity on Fair Isle). Raptors had a good showing with very good totals of 12 Kestrel, 3 Merlin and a Hobby. Waders were also on the move and we recorded 130 Lapwing, 100 Golden Plover, 40 Ringed Plover, 25 Dunlin, 2 Ruffs and 8 Jack Snipe. A small number of winter thrushes were mixed up with the outgoing summer migrants. Redstarts appeared in strength (25), and Whinchat, Robin, Blackcap, Barred Warbler, Pied Flycatcher and Tree Pipit all increased. Variety was given by Wryneck (2), Icterine Warbler, Yellow-browed Warbler (3), Red-breasted Flycatcher, Red-throated Pipit and singles of many commoner species. Lapland Buntings were everywhere; in small numbers on the crofts and in larger numbers on the hill. A total of 80 were logged in the evening. The day's tally was phenomenal, even by Fair Isle standards—93 species recorded for the day.

Passage continued on 17th; rain and fog hampered the small bird census, but notable were 5 Wrynecks, Stonechat and a new Yellow-breasted Bunting. Among the larger species, apart from 2 Sparrowhawks and a Cuckoo, it was a day for the waders, many of which assembled on Meoness—8 Bar-tailed Godwits, 75 Dunlin and 60 Ruff (an exceptional number for the Island). Elsewhere a Common Sandpiper and 4 Little Stints were seen. Waders remained to the fore the following day

when Little Stints increased to 10 and Snipe to 40. 200 Common Gulls appeared and there were 3 Sparrowhawks and 4 Merlins. Wigeon (30) were still passing through and small increases in Whinchat and Reed Buntings were noted. A Great Grey Shrike was also new. The easterly wind persisted on 19th and although numbers of the commoner migrants hardly changed, new species seen included Water Rail, Greenshank, Sedge Warbler, Brambling, Ortolan and Rustic Bunting (the latter was found at Busta). The picture was similar for the 20th with another good list of newly arrived birds including Honey Buzzard, a Pectoral Sandpiper at Field (see photograph on inside front cover), 4 Yellow-broweds and a species new for the Island—a Dowitcher seen flying over Field. Wigeon were still passing, there were increased numbers of Wrynecks (7) and single Stonechat, Reed Warbler and Grey Wagtails.

The wind backed to NW on 20th but remained light to moderate; arrivals were few. On the 21st there was a renewed movement of Cormorants, the first Long-tailed Duck of the autumn was seen and there were 3 Water Rails and a Long-eared Owl. On the crossing another Great Shearwater was recorded. Waders continued to be important, with another wave of Lapwings and Golden Plovers, 2 Spotted Redshanks and an increase in Dunlin took their total into three figures. It was amongst the Dunlin on Meoness that a Buff-breasted Sandpiper was located. Blackcaps were the only small bird to show any real gain but 2 Reed Warblers and a Richard's Pipit were notable. Light NW winds persisted on 22nd and small birds were not much in evidence. 2 Slavonian Grebes and 2 Scaup were seen on the sea, a Greenshank was in the south and Dunlin peaked at 115—a phenomenal figure for Fair Isle. People waiting for the plane to leave Fair Isle had luck on their side for they all just had time to see the Lanceolated Warbler which was found and trapped on Sukka Mire. Returning from this successful venture 3 Dotterel were flushed on Byerwall, and later in the evening there were 4 in the same place. The 23rd saw the arrival of 16 Long-tailed Ducks, 2 Turtle Doves, 4 House Martins, 3 Reed Warblers, an influx of Goldcrests and the first sizeable arrival of Snow Buntings (100).

A southerly airstream early on 24th veered to SE later in the day and persisted through the 25th. On the 24th there were fresh arrivals of Whinchats and the first good number of continental Redwings included a Swedish-ringed control. An influx of Yellow-broweds (7) occurred and further excitement was created by the discovery of a Little Bunting at Setter and a Red-breasted Flycatcher, but these were eclipsed by the discovery of a White's Thrush at Lower Station, Ward Hill where it was trapped in the evening.

The SE winds brought a wave of small migrants overnight and some of the highest totals of the autumn were recorded on 25th. The most important species were Redstart (30), Robin (30), Blackcap (45), Chiffchaff (7), Goldcrest (60) and Dunnock (8). Yellow-broweds increased to 15 (a record total for Fair Isle) and there were 2 Red-backed Shrikes, 2 Great Grey Shrikes, Crossbill, Oortolan and a second Little Bunting. The wind veered to the SW on 26th but many birds remained, some to boost our ringing total to the best for the month—63 birds of 19 species. However, the majority of this total were Song Thrushes which had appeared in strength overnight (500). A Buzzard and another Great Grey Shrike were also seen. The wind was back in the S on 27th and again 2 Great Grey Shrikes were reported, but one trapped was a new bird. 3 Water Rails were found and a Short-toed Lark was at Setter. The wind backed into the SE overnight and the following day another small influx of Redwings occurred and the first Whooper Swans of the autumn were seen. Another Great Shearwater, 2 Velvet Scoters and 18 Common Scoters were passing through. The last two days of the month closed with strong NW winds which brought few birds to the Island but 4 Pink-feet and 2 Whooper Swans are worthy of mention.

October continued unseasonably wet with precipitation in the form of hail and light snow from the middle of the month. Apart from a period of light easterly winds on 4th-5th which veered southerly on 6th-7th, the wind was mainly moderate and in the western quarter. Bird movements seemed particularly thin after the previous month and October passed without the usual autumn Blackbird arrivals. However, during the easterly spell, a spectacular influx of continental Redwings was recorded and the prevailing weather conditions resulted in a strong attraction at both lighthouses on consecutive nights.

The 1st-3rd, predominated by W winds were quiet although new arrivals included Merlins, Moorhen, Pink-feet, Whooper Swan and Dotterel. On 4th-5th the wind was light and easterly but became southerly on 6th-7th. On 4th Redwings were in reasonable numbers (600) and several other species were more in evidence, notably Blackcaps, Goldcrests and Bramblings. A much larger influx of Redwings occurred the next day when ca 3500 were scattered over the Island. Associated with this arrival were a few Fieldfares, Song Thrushes, Blackbirds and Robins and more noticeable numbers of Blackcap, Goldcrest and Brambling. Several northern Chiffchaffs, 3 Yellow-browed Warblers and a Stonechat showing the characters of the Siberian race were recorded. On the evening of 5th the Lighthouse Keepers reported a heavy attraction at the lanterns which

seemed to consist mainly of Redwings and Skylarks. The following day on 6th, Redwings had certainly arrived in force and we estimated 13,000—the majority of which were concentrated in one huge, impressive flock on Vaasetter. Other species on the Island included 2 Wrynecks, 2 Short-toed Larks, Bluethroat and an extremely late Wood Warbler. Ducks and geese were passing through and another large flock of Lapwings, 2 Long-eared Owls and 4 Kestrels completed the day's tally. On the evening of 6th, conditions appeared to be very similar to the previous night, so in anticipation of an attraction at the Lighthouses, I went to the North Light where Gordon Barnes joined me and Nick Riddiford and Andy Grieve went to the South Light. We were well rewarded, and although the keepers said that the attraction was not as strong as the previous night, we were able to catch well over 100 birds. The majority were Redwings, which had settled below the towers but other species included Skylark, Ring Ouzel, Song Thrush, Fieldfare, Blackbird, Wheatear, Redstart, Brambling and Starling. The morning trap round was also rewarding and both Long-eared Owl and Spotted Crake were caught. However by log call we had substantiated that at least half of the Redwings had left the Island. New arrivals included TurtleDove, 2 Short-eared Owls, 5 Ring Ouzels and another Short-toed Lark.

The wind returned to the west on 8th and small migrants became scarce during the rest of the month. On 8th Lapwings increased to 119 and there were 20 Dunlin. Wryneck and Stonechat were recorded but the general picture was one of exodus, particularly the Redwings. Winter ducks were more prominent on 9th and a Red-breasted Flycatcher was in Maver's Geo during the afternoon. Typical winter arrivals occurred during the rest of the month with occasional small numbers of Grey-lag, Whooper Swan, Goldeneye and Glaucous Gulls. A few northern Chiffchaffs were regular throughout the period. Less regular visitors included a Hoopoe on the Head o' Tind on 10th, Great Grey Shrike, Woodlark and Hen Harrier on 12th. A late Turtle Dove was seen on 14th and a Tree Pipit on 15th when a Little Bunting was found but the excitement was centred around the Great Tit caught in the gully in the evening (enjoyed more by the Observatory staff than by the visitors from the south!). A second Great Tit was trapped in the Vaadal the next morning. A small influx of Fieldfares, Bramblings and Goldcrests occurred on 18th and there was a late Pied Flycatcher on 21st followed by an exceptionally late Turtle Dove on 25th. An adult male Black Redstart was recorded on 30th and a Waxwing on 31st.

November saw the early start of the winter. After a relatively calm first week there followed two weeks of very strong

winds, and a cold spell in the last week brought frequent snow showers and the unusual sight of a snow covering which persisted for several consecutive days. During the first two days of the month there was a moderate arrival of birds including the only sizeable influx of Blackbirds of the autumn. Thereafter birds became scarce and the onset of the gales made conditions very inclement for birds and observers alike. Most reports were thus generally of odd birds except for the expected influxes of gulls. As a result of the cold weather there was an increase in several species at the end of the month.

On 1st-2nd the wind continued light to moderate, mainly southerly and Blackbirds could be counted in three figures for the first time this autumn. A good selection of migrants, typical of the late autumn were also recorded, including 2 Water Rails, 10 Woodcock, 2 Long-eared Owls, Black Redstarts, a few Robins and Blackcaps, 50 Bramblings and 3 Reed Buntings. Less expected was a Reeve on 1st. Woodcock arrived in larger numbers on 2nd when Fieldfares (850) outnumbered Blackbirds. Long-eared Owls increased to 4 and there were more Blackcaps, Chiffchaffs and Skylarks. 2 White Wagtails, Waxwing, Great Grey Shrike and Lapland Bunting were seen and a Knot was less typical of the time of year. This was the last small bird influx of the autumn and these quickly moved on during the next few days. After this, new arrivals were confined mainly to the larger species, although Snow Buntings on 5th-6th increased to 1000. On 5th geese and Whooper Swans were moving south and a Brent Goose was found the next day in the South Haven.

Little Auks were seen for the first time between Sumburgh and Fair Isle on 9th and the last Wheatear was seen on the Island on 10th-11th. On 14th there were 6 Curlew, Black Redstart and a Ring Ouzel. A Long-eared Owl was found on 15th. A small influx of gulls on 19th included several Glaucous and an Iceland Gull. During the last week's freezing conditions waders increased and Snipe could be flushed from almost any unfrozen patch of ground. A minimum of 35 Curlew were present for much of the week. 7 Glaucous Gulls were seen on 26th and Greenfinch and Redpoll on 27th. 2 Fieldfares were at the Observatory on 28th and the following day Gordon saw a Rough-legged Buzzard and I saw a Hen Harrier and 2 Water Rails. On the last day of the month there was a Jack Snipe in the Gilsetter marsh.

December was typically blustery and as in November gales were frequent. A second period of snow occurred during the middle of the month and field observations were incomplete. From the few notes recorded it was obvious that very little movement occurred and the year closed quietly.

Ringling Details 1973

1973 was again a very successful year for ringing with a new record total of 6708 birds ringed of 115 species. A further 8 birds of 5 species were ringed with FIBO rings away from the Island. These included two young Snowy Owls on Fetlar ringed by Rod and Chris Thorne. Special seabird projects were partly responsible for the high ringing total on the Island. John W. F. Davis marked a large percentage of the breeding Arctic Skuas (154) and their young (144) as a basis for the research project being carried out from the University of Cambridge, Department of Genetics. In conjunction with Dr Mike Harris (Nature Conservancy) a considerable effort was put into ringing Puffins and of a total of 632 the majority were also colour ringed. The increased effort put into the seabird ringing programme was to some extent complemented by the continued expansion of some of the seabird populations. The high figure for Guillemots (492) was due to both these factors.

Apart from the seabird work the Heligolands provided the majority of captures. All the traps were in good working order for most of the season, after the usual spate of post-winter repairs. Interesting captures in these traps included Golden Oriole, 2 continental Great Tits (which doubled the previous total ringed!), Melodious Warbler, Greenish Warbler and 5 Scarlet Rosefinches. Small wire traps (drop traps and wader traps) were in use at times and their contribution included a variety of waders including Wood, Purple and Pectoral Sandpipers. Dazzle netting accounted for several waders, including Dotterel, and roosting gulls, including 4 Glaucous Gulls. However, it was particularly effective in association with birds attracted to the lighthouses. One night in early October more than 100 birds were picked up beneath the towers. The majority of the birds were Redwings (99) and these boosted an otherwise average species total.

Mist nets accounted for a wide variety of species including the only addition to the ringing lists (both Fair Isle and British) —a White's Thrush. Other captures included Lanceolated Warbler, 2 Arctic Warblers, another Greenish Warbler, 2 out of 3 Thrush Nightingales (the third entered the Observatory garage and was caught by hand), Short-toed Lark, Red-necked Phalarope and a second Pectoral Sandpiper.

A comparison of the annual ringing totals reveals certain trends and changes in status, but there is only room here to mention two species whose overall change is emphasised by their '73 ringing totals. The Linnet has been steadily increasing as a migrant at Fair Isle but this year's capture of 19 is quite unprecedented. Twite are fortunately continuing to re-

cover their old status, and this is the third year in succession that their ringing total has exceeded 100. This is a welcome increase after the totals for the years 1963-70 which were between 36-63. These low figures were at a time when dressed seed was used on the Island.

The monthly ringing totals are given below.

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov-Dec
No. of birds	94	198	688	1085	2272	805	622	637	307
No. of species	16	24	59	45	34	30	55	43	25

The annual and accumulative ringing and recovery totals of birds ringed at Fair Isle are shown in the following table. Birds ringed away from the Island with FIBO rings and their recoveries are excluded from the table but their recovery details are included in the recovery section following the totals list.

	Numbers ringed			Numbers recovered		
	1948-72	1973	Total	1948-72	1973	Total
Great Crested Grebe	1		1			
Red-necked Grebe	1		1			
Slavonian Grebe	2		2			
Little Grebe	3		3			
Fulmar	5282	356	5638	28	3	31
Storm Petrel	2256	230	2486	18	2	20
Leach's Petrel	4		4			
Gannet	18	2	20	1		1
Cormorant	7		7			
Shag	8419	479	8898	177	7	184
Heron	9		9			
Mallard	6		6	1		1
Teal	24	1	25	2		2
Wigeon	8		8			
Scaup	2		2			
Tufted Duck	7		7			
Goldeneye	5	1	6			
Long-tailed Duck	5	1	6			
Velvet Scoter	2		2			
Eider	66	5	71			
Red-breasted Merganser	1		1			
Goosander	3		3	1		1
Greylag Goose	4		4	1		1
White-fronted Goose	1		1			
Pink-footed Goose	2		2			
Barnacle Goose	1		1			
Whooper Swan	12		12	1		1
Sparrowhawk	77	2	79	11		11
Goshawk	1		1			

	Numbers ringed			Numbers recovered		
	1948-72	1973	Total	1948-72	1973	Total
Peregrine	6		6			
Merlin	118	3	121	11		11
Red-footed Falcon	1		1			
Kestrel	24		24	4		4
Quail	4		4			
Water Rail	143	9	152	2		2
Spotted Crake	6	1	7			
Little Crake	1		1			
Corncrake	26		26	2		2
Moorhen	45	2	47	2		2
Coot	7		7			
Great Bustard	1		1			
Oystercatcher	606	45	651	33		33
Lapwing	209		209	2		2
Ringed Plover	238	8	246	3		3
Little Ringed Plover	1		1			
Golden Plover	12		12			
Dotterel	2	1	3			
Turnstone	50	3	53			
Snipe	129	14	143	6		6
Jack Snipe	35	1	36		1	1
Woodcock	139	3	142	6		6
Curlew	23		23	1		1
Whimbrel	8	3	11			
Black-tailed Godwit	1		1			
Bar-tailed Godwit	6		6	2		2
Green Sandpiper	19	1	20	1		1
Wood Sandpiper	9	1	10			
Common Sandpiper	29	4	33			
Redshank	119	3	122	2		2
Spotted Redshank	3		3			
Greenshank	5		5			
Knot	45	2	47			
Purple Sandpiper	96	7	103			
Little Stint	24	3	27			
White-rumped Sandpiper	1		1			
Pectoral Sandpiper	3	2	5			
Dunlin	278	20	298	4		4
Curlew Sandpiper	2		2			
Western Sandpiper	1		1			
Sanderling	66		66			
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	1		1			
Ruff	17	1	18	1		1
Grey Phalarope	1		1			
Red-necked Phalarope	2	1	3			
Great Skua	281	16	297	4		4

	Numbers ringed			Numbers recovered		
	1948-72	1973	Total	1948-72	1973	Total
Pomarine Skua	1		1			
Arctic Skua	1165	298	1463	30		30
Great Black-backed Gull	760	128	888	31	3	34
Lesser Black-backed Gull	541	41	582	10	1	11
Herring Gull	1174	228	1402	30	2	32
Common Gull	19	1	20	5		5
Glaucous Gull	22	4	26	1		1
Iceland Gull	1		1			
Black-headed Gull	14		14	2		2
Kittiwake	1304	196	1500	6	1	7
Common Tern	14	2	16		1	1
Arctic Tern	5		5	1		1
Razorbill	1055	161	1216	34	1	35
Little Auk	5		5			
Guillemot	1724	492	2216	36	6	42
Black Guillemot	666	45	711	8		8
Puffin	4454	632	5086	10		10
Rock Dove	4		4			
Wood Pigeon	26		26	2		2
Turtle Dove	22	2	24			
Collared Dove	24	6	30			
Cuckoo	56	5	61	1		1
Snowy Owl	1		1			
Long-eared Owl	64	2	66	2		2
Short-eared Owl	1		1			
Nightjar	3		3			
Swift	15		15	1		1
Great Spotted Woodpecker	15		15			
Wryneck	88	7	95			
Short-toed Lark	4	1	5			
Woodlark	2		2			
Skylark	455	18	473	2		2
Shorelark	2		2			
Swallow	155	16	171	2		2
House Martin	81	34	115			
Sand Martin	6		6			
Golden Oriole	2	1	3			
Raven	3	3	6			
Hooded Crow	29		29			
Rook	4		4			
Jackdaw	1		1			
Great Tit	2	2	4			
Blue Tit	2		2			

	Numbers ringed			Numbers recovered		
	1948-72	1973	Total	1948-72	1973	Total
Treecreeper	1		1			
Wren	443	11	454			
Dipper	8		8			
Mistle Thrush	12	2	14	1		1
Fieldfare	447	7	454			
Song Thrush	1078	59	1137	18	1	19
Redwing	3829	260	4089	48	1	49
Dusky Thrush	1		1			
Black-throated Thrush	1		1			
Ring Ouzel	201	15	216	4		4
Blackbird	11391	260	11651	218	5	223
White's Thrush		1	1			
Grey-cheeked Thrush	2		2			
Rock Thrush	1		1			
Wheatear	10271	251	10522	49	1	50
Black-eared Wheatear	2		2			
Stonechat	18	4	22			
Whinchat	328	14	342	2		2
Redstart	1016	82	1098			
Black Redstart	55	6	61			
Nightingale	11		11			
Thrush Nightingale	7	3	10			
Bluethroat	123	8	131	2		2
Robin	2960	119	3079	20	2	22
Grasshopper Warbler	50	1	51			
Lanceolated Warbler	4	1	5			
River Warbler	2		2			
Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler	1		1			
Thick-billed Warbler	1		1			
Great Reed Warbler	3		3			
Reed Warbler	69	5	74	1		1
Marsh Warbler	29	2	31			
Reed/Marsh Warbler	1		1			
Paddyfield Warbler	1		1			
Sedge Warbler	208	9	217	1		1
Aquatic Warbler	14		14			
Melodious Warbler	5	1	6			
Icterine Warbler	47	1	48			
Booted Warbler	3		3			
Blackcap	1038	160	1198	4	2	6
Barred Warbler	210	14	224			
Garden Warbler	1319	58	1377			
Whitethroat	577	15	592			
Lesser Whitethroat	273	25	298			
Sardinian Warbler	1		1			

	Numbers ringed			Numbers recovered		
	1948-72	1973	Total	1948-72	1973	Total
Subalpine Warbler	9		9			
Willow Warbler	1640	70	1710	1		1
Greenish Warbler	6	2	8			
Chiffchaff	283	22	305			
Wood Warbler	44	2	46			
Bonelli's Warbler	1		1			
Arctic Warbler	20	2	22			
Yellow-browed Warbler	52	8	60			
Dusky Warbler	1		1			
Goldcrest	612	89	701			
Spotted Flycatcher	283	23	306	1		1
Pied Flycatcher	493	35	528	3		3
Red-breasted Flycatcher	32		32			
Dunnock	718	67	785	4		4
Richard's Pipit	7		7			
Tawny Pipit	2		2			
Meadow Pipit	5288	255	5543	34		34
Tree Pipit	280	44	324			
Olive-backed Pipit	2		2			
Pechora Pipit	3		3			
Red-throated Pipit	3		3			
Rock Pipit	4766	214	4980	15		15
Pied/White Wagtail	347	15	362	4		4
Grey Wagtail	7	1	8			
Citrine Wagtail	4		4			
Yellow Wagtail spp.	9		9			
Waxwing	28		28			
Great Grey Shrike	54	4	58	1		1
Lesser Grey Shrike	6		6			
Woodchat Shrike	8		8			
Red-backed Shrike	95	8	103			
Starling	8253	613	8866	70	3	73
Rose-coloured Starling	2		2			
Hawfinch	1		1			
Greenfinch	41	2	43			
Goldfinch	3		3			
Siskin	145	6	151			
Linnet	47	19	66	1		1
Twite	2333	162	495	3		3
Redpoll	272	10	282			
Arctic Redpoll	5		5			
Bullfinch	19		19			
Scarlet Rosefinch	36	5	41			
Crossbill	287		287	2		2
Parrot Crossbill	35		35			
Chaffinch	643	14	657	1	1	2

	Numbers ringed			Numbers recovered		
	1948-72	1973	Total	1948-72	1973	Total
Brambling	685	48	733	1	1	2
Corn Bunting	2		2			
Yellowhammer	33		33			
Black-headed Bunting	2		2			
Red-headed Bunting	5		5			
Yellow-breasted Bunting	5		5			
Cretzschmar's Bunting	1		1			
Ortolan Bunting	16		16			
Rustic Bunting	6		6	1		1
Little Bunting	14		14			
Reed Bunting	186	9	195	1		1
Lapland Bunting	37		37			
Snow Bunting	361	7	368	2		2
Song Sparrow	1		1			
White-throated Sparrow	1		1			
House Sparrow	1000	1	1001	1		1
Tree Sparrow	64	1	65			
GRAND TOTAL	98694	6708	105402	1049	45	1094

Number of species ringed 1949-72 - 224

1973 - 115

TOTAL - 225

Recoveries 1973

44 recoveries of birds ringed on Fair Isle were reported in 1973 and a further 5 recoveries of birds bearing Fair Isle rings but which had been ringed elsewhere in Shetland were also received. The details of these are given in full below. The international code of symbols for the method of recovery is employed:

v—caught or trapped and released with ring.

+—shot or killed by man.

X—found dead or dying.

xA—found long dead.

()—caught alive and not released, or released without ring.

/?/—method of recovery unknown.

Where the exact date of recovery is unknown, the date of the finder's report is given in brackets. Ringing details of each bird are given on the first line and the recovery details on the second line. The distance in kilometres and the direction are approximate.

The international age classification has been adopted throughout this section. In this system, the age is the 'age'

when ringed. The age code will be found immediately following the ring number.

- 1—pullus or nestling.
- 2—age quite unknown (but fully grown).
- 3—hatched in the calendar year of ringing.
- 4—hatched before calendar year of ringing.
- 5—hatched in the last calendar year.
- 6—hatched before last calendar year.
- 7—hatched two years ago.
- 8—hatched three or more years ago but exact year unknown.

The co-ordinates of Fair Isle are 59°32'N 1°37'W.

Fulmar

SS84627 4 31.08.69 Fair Isle.
x (oiled) 03.05.73 Melissant, Overflakkee, Netherlands,
51°46'N 4°02'E.

SS84713 4 01.09.69 Fair Isle.
/?/ 19.04.73 Hanstholm, Thy, Denmark, 57°08'N 8°36'E.

SS84827 4 02.09.69 Fair Isle.
x 25.04.73 Mundesley, Cromer, Norfolk, 760 km SSE.

There have now been five recoveries of post-juvenile birds fleyged in the last week of August/first week of September 1969 and subsequently recovered around the North Sea coast. To date there have been no recaptures on Fair Isle of birds trapped at the same time.

Storm Petrel

699727 4 12.08.71 Fair Isle.
v 11.07.73 Fetlar, Shetland, 130 km NNE.

2104803 4 24.07.73 Fair Isle.
v 04.08.73 Foula, Shetland, 72 km NNW.

678230 4 07.07.68 Mousa, Shetland.
v 11.08.73 Foula, Shetland, 54 km WNW.

Gannet

1057689 Pull 30.06.66 Hermaness, Unst, Shetland.
+ —.08.71 Isla Canela, Ayamonte, Spain, 37°11'N 7°23'W.

Shag

1013254 Pull 08.07.60 Fair Isle.
xA 17.06.73 Brough, Nesting, Shetland, 80 km NNE. (Ring only found).

1026812 Pull 07.07.62 Fair Isle.
x 05.08.73 Whale Wick, West Burra, Shetland, 65 km NNE.
1064207 Pull 12.06.72 Fair Isle.

x (04.09.73) Cowie, Stonehaven, Kincardine 285 km S.

1087671 Pull 16.06.72 Fair Isle.

x 16.05.73 St Andrew's, Fife, 360 km SSW.

1087825 Pull 25.06.72 Fair Isle

xA 29.07.73 Dingyshowe Bay, Upper Sanday, Orkney, 95 km SW.

1087967 Pull 02.07.72 Fair Isle.

x (08.01.73) Loch Eynort, S. Uist, Outer Hebrides, 410 km SW.

1088418 Pull 09.07.73 Fair Isle.

v 04.10.73 ca. 30 miles west of Foula, Shetland. Landed on fishing boat. ca. 96 km NW.

Oystercatcher

FS14342 Pull 04.07.71 Skeld, Mainland, Shetland.

xA (12.03.73) Cramond, Edinburgh, Midlothian, 475 km S.

Jack Snipe

BV02033 2 06.10.71 Fair Isle.

+ 03.01.73 Loch of Isbister, Mainland, Orkney, 105 km WSW.

This bird, shot in Orkney two winters after ringing at Fair Isle, is our first recovery of this species.

Great Skua

HW07805 Pull 14.07.70 Fetlar, Shetland.

x 09.06.72 North Sea (between Shetland and Norway), ca. 61°30'N 1°30'E.

Great Black-backed Gull

HW07833 8 06.11.72 Fair Isle.

() (14.11.72) Midway between Lerwick and Scalloway, Shetland, ca. 75 km NNE.

HW08088 Pull 03.07.72 Fair Isle.

+ (08.05.73) Norham, Northumberland, 420 km S.

HW08215 7 15.11.69 Fair Isle.

/?/ 12.06.73 Jakelfjord, near Alteidet, Norway, 70°02'N 22°05'E.

Lesser Black-backed Gull

GP79576 Pull 07.07.73 Fair Isle.

+ 02.10.73 Safi, Morocco, 32°20'N 9°17'W.

Herring Gull

AJ45941 Pull 27.06.66 Fair Isle.

x (15.09.73) Near South Shields, Durham, 510 km S.

GP37736 8 24.07.71 1½ ml W off Fair Isle.

x 08.08.73 The Snub, R. Ythan, Ellon Aberdeenshire, 245 km S.

Black-headed Gull

EF14323 Pull 01.07.72 Whiteness, Lerwick, Shetland.

v 04.10.73 Nairn Harbour, 330 km SSW.

Kittiwake

ED28617 Pull 12.07.67 Fair Isle.
 + (21.10.72) Ulkebugten, Holsteinsborg, Greenland, 66°55'N
 53°40'W.

Common Tern

CK32994 Pull 14.08.70 Fair Isle.
 v 05.10.73 Cap Timiris, Mauritania, 19°22'N 16°30'W.
 (Paris GD 53385 added).

This bird was one of the brood of two raised in the first
 year of breeding at Fair Isle.

Razorbill

FS46009 Pull 24.06.72 Fair Isle.
 xA 04.07.73 Strathy Point, Sutherland, 170 km SW.

Guillemot

GM55907 Pull 24.06.72 Fair Isle.
 + —.08.73 Hasteinen, Askvoll, Norway, 61°21'N 4°40'E.
 GM55913 Pull 24.06.72 Fair Isle.
 + 01.10.72 Store Faerder, Tjome, Norway, 59°04'N 10°32'E.
 GP79136 Pull 16.07.72 Fair Isle.
 x (oiled) (28.01.73) Portknockie, Banff, 215 km SSW.
 GP79455 Pull 26.06.73 Fair Isle.
 + (?) (09.09.73) Oslofjord, Norway, 59°20'N 10°35'E.
 GP79494 6 27.06.73 Fair Isle.
 x (05.08.73) Bulandet, off Solund, Norway, 61°15'N 4°40'E.
 GP79621 Pull 08.07.73 Fair Isle.
 + 24.10.73 Hollenderbaen, Notteroy, Norway, 59°10'N
 10°38'E.

Song Thrush

CS43066 4 07.10.67 Fair Isle.
 + 17.03.73 St Emilion, France, 44°54'N 0°09'W.

Redwing

CP65769 4 23.09.70 Fair Isle.
 + —.01.73 Serpa, Portugal, 37°57'N 7°36'W.

Blackbird

CJ47306 4♂ 07.11.72 Fair Isle.
 x(?) (08.01.73) Boston, Lincs., 735 km S.
 CN47163 4♀ 19.10.71 Fair Isle.
 x 19.03.73 Dublin, 740 km SW.
 CN47438 4♀ 02.10.72 Fair Isle.
 x (18.02.73) Chilgrove, Chichester, Sussex, 960 km S.
 CP65961 3♂ 24.10.70 Fair Isle.
 x(?) 01.03.73 Auchinbo, Huntly, Aberdeen, 235 km S.

CV90561 4♂ 20.10.66 Fair Isle.
 x —.09.72 Mioy, Midsund, Norway, 62°40'N 6°37'E.

Wheatear

BE48433 3 26.08.68 Fair Isle.
 + 30.09.73 Dar Bel Amri, Morocco, 34°10'N 5°57'W.

Robin

JC38988 4 12.04.72 Fair Isle.
 v 08.10.72 Inseln Scharhorn, Elbe estuary, Germany, 53°57'N 8°26'E.

JR45137 3 27.09.73 Fair Isle.
 v 17.10.73 The Calf, Isle of Man, 630 km SSW.

Blackcap

HV67762 4♂ 27.09.70 Fair Isle.
 v 04.07.73 Near Waardenburg, Netherlands. 51°51'N 5°07'E (Arnhem S540089 added).

JN83045 2♀ 26.10.72 Fair Isle.
 x 05.03.73 Ballinasloe, Galway, 790 km SW.

This species regularly occurs into November (occasionally December) at Fair Isle but the recovery of JN83045 in Southern Ireland in early March is the first confirmation that some of these late migrants may overwinter in the British Isles.

Starling

XX46868 5♂ 21.04.71 Fair Isle.
 + 05.08.73 Haus, Osteroy, Norway, 60°27'N 5°30'E.

XX65328 3 18.06.72 Fair Isle.
 x 26.03.73 Aberdeen, 270 km S.

XX65571 3 17.07.72 Fair Isle.
 v 31.12.72 Finstown, Mainland, Orkney, 100 km SW (sexed as ♀).

Chaffinch

HV67091 5♀ 09.05.70 Fair Isle.
 v 24.09.72 Schiermonnikoog, Frisian Islands, Netherlands, 53°29'N 6°12'E. (Arnhem S669923 added).

Brambling

JJ38948 3♀ 14.10.72 Fair Isle.
 v 03.12.72 Castricum, Netherlands, 52°33'N 4°37'E (re-ringed Arnhem B245308).

Recaptures 1973

During the season a considerable number of birds were re-captured which had been ringed previously on Fair Isle. The majority had been ringed earlier this year and the details of

these have been entered in the Observatory retrap files. All recaptures of birds ringed in previous years are summarised in the following table. The figures include a few birds that were found dead on the Island during the year.

Birds ringed in previous years and retrapped in 1973

Species	1955	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72
Fulmar (Ad)											3	1				5	9	10
Fulmar (Pull)									1		2							
Storm Petrel														1			1	5
Shag (Ad)						1	1	1	1				1			1	1	1
Shag (Pull)						1	2	1			5	1	3	4	3	4	4	
Eider										1						1		3
Arctic Skua (Ad)		1	2	1		2												
Arctic Skua (Pull)	1		1		4	1	5	7			1			1	1			
Razorbill (Ad)								1	2			3	1		4	2	8	8
Razorbill (Pull)																3		
Guillemot (Ad)					1					3	6	4	4	21	9	18	3	33
Guillemot (Pull)										1			3	4				
Tystie (Ad)												1						2
Puffin (Ad)						1	1	1	3	1		1	1		1	1		4
Puffin (Pull)						3	3	1	4		1	1						
Skylark																	1	
Wheatear															1		1	8
Meadow Pipit																1		5
Rock Pipit															1		3	3
Starling											1			4	3	6	4	14
Twite																	3	7

In addition to those tabulated above a Water Rail trapped and ringed on 24th November 1972 was recaptured on 21st January 1973. A Blackbird was also proved to overwinter, ringed originally on 19th November 1972 it was still present on 1st April 1973.

Ringed Strangers in 1973

Storm Petrel

2100146 4 08.08.68 Inishvickillaun, The Blaskets, Kerry.
v 04.08.73 Fair Isle, 1000 km NE.

2117262 4 29.07.73 Lambhoga, Fetlar, Shetland.
v 07.08.73 Fair Isle, 130 km SSW.

2133312 4 05.08.73 Foula, Shetland.
v 16.08.73 Fair Isle, 72 km SSE.

2133346 4 05.08.73 Foula, Shetland.
v 06.08.73 Fair Isle, 72 km SSE.

The control of 2100146 from the Blaskets, Southern Ireland is the furthest movement of this species so far recorded to or from Fair Isle and the bird ringed 2133346 shows a rapid movement between Foula and Fair Isle.

Shag

1104332 Pull 04.07.72 Fetlar, Shetland.
 x 22.04.73 Fair Isle, 80 km SSW.

Merlin

EC97566 Pull 26.06.73 Fetlar, Shetland.
 v 3 23.10.73 Fair Isle, 130 km SSW.

This is the second year in succession that a Shetland-fledged Merlin has been controlled at Fair Isle. There is one other similar control—all have been young birds moving south in their first autumn.

Oystercatcher

FS44701 6 18.03.73 Southerness, Kirkcudbright.
 x 17.05.73 Fair Isle, 535 km NNE.

Arctic Skua

AT80125 Pull 09.07.61 Foula, Shetland.
 v 29.05.73 Fair Isle, 72 km SSE (reringed EF84523).
 AT80802 Pull 15.07.63 Foula, Shetland.
 v 24.06.73 Fair Isle, 72 km SSE (reringed EF84572).
 EC78442 Pull 30.06.70 Foula, Shetland.
 v 24.06.73 Fair Isle, 72 km SSE.

All three birds were trapped as breeding adults on Fair Isle as part of the Skua Study now in progress on the Island.

Swallow

JK55036 4 27.08.72 Guardbridge, St Andrews, Fife.
 x 13.05.73 Fair Isle, 360 km NNE (sexed as ♀).

Redwing

Stockholm 4094831 Pull 28.05.73 Bon, Artemark, Sweden, 59°02'N 12°09'E.
 v 3 24.09.73 Fair Isle (reringed BV18610).

The details of this bird, ringed as a nestling, give the exact origin of the movement. It was controlled on the Island on the day of the first real influx of continental Redwings in the autumn.

Bluethroat

Stockholm 2168216 3♂ 02.09.72 Angarnsjoangen, Taby, Stockholm, Sweden, 59°33'N 18°09'E.
 v 22.06.73 Fair Isle.

This bird was first seen on 18th June with a sprained wing and was caught on 22nd. It could well have been on the Island much earlier in the spring. This is only the second foreign-ringed Bluethroat to be recovered in the British Isles. The first controlled at Girdle Ness, Aberdeen, on 21st May this year was also ringed in the same area of Sweden.

Willow Warbler

Heligoland OL7282 3♀ 29.08.72 Heligoland, Germany,
54°11'N 7°55'E.
x 24.05.73 Fair Isle.

Starling

XV29447 5♂ 10.02.73 Buckie, Banff.
v 17.04.73 Fair Isle, 225 km NNE.

SYSTEMATIC LIST

The order followed is that given in 'A species list of British
and Irish birds', BTO Guide No. 13.

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER *Gavia immer*. The only records were during October: one on 17th, 2 on 19th and one on 25th. All were flying north up the west side of the Island from the South Light.

RED-THROATED DIVER *Gavia stellata*. 1-2 on 4 days between 18th-23rd May, singles on 3 days in June, 1-2 on 5 days in second half of July and singles on 1st and 14th September.

DIVER sp. *Gavia sp.* Unidentified divers were seen on 8 dates between 26th August and 26th September. The majority were thought to be Red-throated.

SLAVONIAN GREBE *Podiceps auritus*. One in full summer plumage between 21st-23rd April was first seen in the North Haven. 2 together off Hesti Geo on 22nd September possibly the same 2 that were seen at Dutfield on 24th. One off the Rippack on 30th September-1st October.

FULMAR *Fulmarus glacialis*. Some birds ashore throughout the year, except in severe weather outside the breeding season. Breeding season as usual; first egg seen on 19th May and first chick seen on 2nd July. 2 blue phase birds were seen ashore during the breeding season, one at North Mila Hesslands and one at Peitron. 1-2 blue phase birds were seen almost daily offshore between 30th September-12th October. 3 blue phase birds followed the Good Shepherd on the crossing on 22nd December.

MANX SHEARWATER *Puffinus puffinus*. On the crossing one seen on 10th April (early date), 2 on 2nd May and 2 on 4th September. The only sightings from the Island were one on 3rd May and 2 on 3 dates in the second half of August.

GREAT SHEARWATER *Puffinus gravis*. Single birds (flying south) were seen by several observers on 26th and 27th August. One individual could have been responsible for two sightings on 28th August, again witnessed by several observers. One seen on the crossing on 21st September (A. Heath) and one

from the South Light on 28th September (K. Edwards).

Unidentified large shearwaters were seen on 2nd (2), 6th, 13th and 28th September (2). This is only the fourth year that Great Shearwaters have been recorded in Fair Isle waters. Previous records were in 1946 (3 singles), 1965 (large movement, 98 recorded) and 1967 (one record).



SOOTY SHEARWATER *Puffinus griseus*. Much larger numbers than usual on crossing and from the Island. Records between 7th August-15th October with up to 10 on many days but heavier movement between 26th August-9th September with peaks of 48 on 27th August, 250 on 2nd and 50 on 6th September.

STORM PETREL *Hydrobates pelagicus*. First single seen on the crossing on 25th May. One found dead ashore on 6th June otherwise birds trapped ashore between 12th June-23rd September at Milens Houllan, Sheena Wheetha, Gunnawark and Buness. 7 were seen on 27th August from the Island. One bird heard calling on the Kame o' Furse on 22nd June was seen in a rock crevice but was absent at a later visit. There was no evidence that breeding had been attempted or of predation. The last record of the year was a recently fledged chick still carrying a little down picked up in a ditch near Hesti Geo on 4th October. It was released at the North Haven the same night. Very few young birds have been ringed on the Island.

GANNET *Sula bassana*. Recorded in all months of the year except January. Scarce and irregular in the winter months but almost daily in May-October in variable numbers. Monthly maxima: February 2, March 4, April 5, May 40, June 50, July 400, August 60, September 150, October 80, November 2 and December 15. Continuing the habit of last year birds were ashore in July. A few were occasionally ashore on the

lower slopes of Sheep Rock but up to 300 ashore on the Fless were part of a fishing group, composed mainly of second year birds that fished offshore on the West side for much of the month of July. However, a few birds in adult plumage were sitting on a wide ledge on the main Island in the north west corner.

CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*. Singles on 25th and 27th March. Frequent records, mainly of singles, between 19th April-31st May but up to 4 on some days. Singles in June on 10th and 12th and in July on 2nd-3rd. Records on return passage almost daily between 21st August-20th October, but flocks smaller than usual. Peaks of 17 on 21st August, 35 on 5th, 10th and 23rd September. Scattered singles from 31st October to 29th November but 5 on 22nd. One on 23rd-24th December.

SHAG *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*. Present in usual numbers all year. Breeding season as usual: first eggs on 4th April (c/2), first chicks seen on 10th May (one 4-5 days old) and the first young seen on the sea on 10th June. The same nest at South Mila Hesslands, that last year contained one normal and one albinistic chick, this year contained a single albinistic chick. This is known to have fledged. A ringed, white bird was seen around the South Light rocks until the 4th October. One was carrying nest material on 31st December.

HERON *Ardea cinerea*. Apart from 4 on 14th March the spring records are all of single birds—on 4 scattered dates in March and 3 days in the first week of May. Singles in autumn on 9 dates between 6th July-2nd August then records frequent from 13th August-8th October with numbers a little higher. Maximum of 3 in August (16th-17th), 1-4 birds almost daily in September but 6 on 13th and 1-3 daily at the beginning of October. Singles on 18th October, 12th and 20th November and 7th December.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*. 5 on 1st and 1 on 9th January. 3 on 11th March, 2 on 2nd-6th and 3 on 25th April. 1-2 on scattered dates in May and June but 8 on 20th June. 2 on 7th-8th and 26th July. 1-3 on most days from 4th August-6th September. Recorded daily from 10th September-30th October, numbers usually less than 10 but 13 on 6th October. A flock of 30 was recorded on 14th November then 1-4 on several days to 1st December. 2 on 18th, 2 on 30th and 3 on 31st December.

TEAL *Anas crecca*. One on 1st January. Frequent records on spring passage 21st April-31st May, usually 1-2 on any day but peak of 6 on 25th-27th April. Autumn passage: 2-5 daily from 18th August-6th September but 8 on 27th August and 7 on 6th September. Heavier passage between 10th

September-1st October with peaks of 15 on 13th, 40 on 16th, 30 on 20th and 23rd September. Records less frequent in October and apart from a peak of 25 on 5th numbers usually 1-4. Scattered singles on 5 days in November and one on 1st December.

GARGANEY *Anas querquedula*. A drake on a small pool at Setter between 11th-14th March. Only the fifth record for the Island, previously recorded in 1935 and 1964. An early date for this species to be so far north.

GADWALL *Anas strepera*. A pair were flushed from Muckle Uri Geo on 25th April.

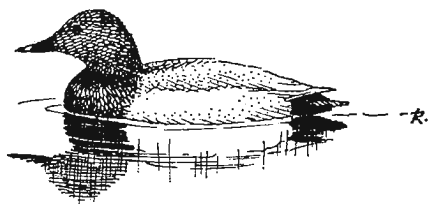
WIGEON *Anas penelope*. Singles on 3 days in January, 4 on 20th April, 2 on 20th-21st May. Strong autumn passage: one on 26th August, daily from 7th September-6th October with peaks of 40 on 13th, 35 on 18th and 40 on 20th September. Frequent records in the rest of October, mainly singles but up to 6 recorded. Singles on 1st and 17th November and 1st December.

PINTAIL *Anas acuta*. A duck from 4th-8th June.

SHOVELER *Anas clypeata*. A pair on 29th May and 20th June. 3 on 5th-7th August, 2 remained on 8th and one on 9th. One on 13th September.

SCAUP *Aythya marila*. A duck on 3rd-7th May. 2 on 22nd September and a duck on 11th October.

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula*. A pair on 2nd-6th, 21st-22nd and 28th-29th May. 5 flew south off Bunes on 27th August. A pair on 14th-16th September and a drake 18th-30th September. One on 6th October.



POCHARD *Aythya ferina*. Single drakes on 16th September and 6th-11th October.

GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula*. 2 drakes on 18th-21st January. A duck on 6th May. A drake on 24th September. 1-3 on 9th-18th October. Singles on 24th and 26th October, 5th November and 5th December.

LONG-TAILED DUCK *Clangula hyemalis*. 2 on 19th January, 3 on 2nd and 7th-9th February. 1-3 on many days in March. Recorded almost daily through April to 7th May with maxi-

mum of 6. 4 on 20th and one on 31st May. 2 on 2nd June. Autumn arrivals from 21st September. 1-3 in September except for 16 on 23rd. Daily from 4th October-17th November, generally less than 10 but 14 on 11th and 31 on 30th. Records less frequent and in smaller numbers to the end of the year but 15 on 23rd November and 12 on 1st and 17 on 31st December. The high totals were the result of sea duck censuses and the species is probably overlooked at other times.

VELVET SCOTER *Melanitta fusca*. A duck stayed around the Nizz between 19th January-14th March. In autumn 4 on 12th, 2 on 13th-14th and one on 28th September. One seen on the crossing on 9th October. A duck in the North Haven on 4th December moved to South Harbour where it stayed until the end of the year.

COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra*. A drake on 17th January, a duck on 7th April, 3 on 27th April and a drake on 4th May. A duck on 15th-16th August. 1-5 on several days between 13th-24th and 18 flew south on 28th September. 3 on 5th, 4 on 17th and 1 on 30th October and one on 9th December.

EIDER *Somateria mollissima*. Recorded in all months of the year with breeding as usual. First chicks seen on the sea on 19th June. Autumn flock build up a little later than last year but numbers continue to increase with maximum recorded around the coast of 872 on 30th October.

KING EIDER *Somateria spectabilis*. An adult male coming out of eclipse plumage was seen off the South Light rocks on 15th-16th September. Only the fourth Island record and the first since 1936.

RED-BREADED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator*. Single drakes 21st-22nd February, 30th March-1st April and 22nd April. A pair on 6th and 24th and one on 26th May. One on 11th June, 3 on 8th July. 1-4 on scattered dates from 9th September-24th October but 5 on 5th and 6 on 8th October. One on 11th and one from 1st-16th December.

GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser*. A drake on 15th January.

SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna*. One from 1st-7th January. One 21st-22nd and 2 on 29th April. 2 on 6th May.

GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser*. No spring records. Light autumn passage, 2 on 11th, 11 on 13th-15th, 16 on 16th-18th and 1 on 19th October. 1-6 on scattered dates from 22nd October-17th November except for 24 on 5th November.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus*. Very scarce. 4 on 29th and one on 30th September, 4 on 2nd October.

GREY GEESE sp. *Anser sp.* Unidentified grey geese were recorded as follows: 50 on 6th, 21 on 8th, 39 on the crossing on 9th and 4 on 11th October.

BRENT GOOSE *Branta bernicla*. An immature pale-breasted form was with a small party of Eiders in the South Haven on 6th November and in Furse the next day.

BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis*. 6 on 15th-16th January reduced to 3 on 17th-24th. One on 29th January. One on 29th April. In autumn 7 on 5th, 6 on 6th and 2 on 30th October and 33 on 5th November.

WHOOPEE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus*. 2 on 22nd January. Small northerly passage at the end of March: 1 on 22nd, 2 on 24th, 15 on 25th, 2 on 26th and 4 on 31st. Return movement from the end of September: 12 on 28th, 2 on 30th September, 9 on 2nd, 2 on 12th, 5 on 14th, 5 on the crossing on 16th and 7 on 18th October. Heard in the early morning on 5th and 3 on 10th November.

BUZZARD *Buteo buteo*. One on 26th-27th September over the Hill.

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD *Buteo lagopus*. One over Ward Hill on 22nd April flew off in the direction of Shetland (R. A. Broad). One over Tarryfield on 29th November (G. J. Barnes).

SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus*. A ♀ on 14th and a ♂ on 24th March. One on 22nd and 3 on 23rd (2 ♂♂) April. A ♀ on 2nd May. In autumn one on 4th August, 2 on 17th, 3 on 18th (2 ♂♂) and singles on 20th-21st, 24th and 26th-27th September.

HONEY BUZZARD *Pernis apivorus*. Singles on 3rd and 15th June (G. J. Barnes). One on 20th-21st September.

MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus*. An immature bird was seen on 15th June. The following day it flew across Sukka Mire where it was grounded by Arctic Skuas. It was picked up moments later with a broken wing and taken into captivity. The wing was successfully set (although a little twisted) and it thrived into the autumn when it wasted and died.

HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus*. A ♂ on 5th-6th January, a ring-tailed bird on 13th-25th October and another on 29th November.

OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus*. One over Gilsetter on 28th May and one over Eas Brecks on 28th June.

HOBBY *Falco subbuteo*. A ♀ on 21st-22nd June (probably present on the 20th). One first seen on 16th September was seen on several dates to 3rd October.

PEREGRINE *Falco peregrinus*. Another disappointing year for the resident birds. 4 individuals were seen in spring, one pair centred around the Sheep Rock and the other in the cliffs below Ward Hill. Apart from mild screaming on several oc-

casions at the Sheep Rock site there was no further evidence of breeding. During the summer sightings were less frequent and there were no records at all during July and the first two weeks of August. 3 different individuals were again seen on scattered dates in the autumn and winter.

GYRFALCON *Falco rusticolus*. A dark phase bird was at Wester Lothar on 22nd April (R. A. Broad).

MERLIN *Falco columbarius*. Scarce in spring with only 2 singles recorded on 23rd and 26th April. In autumn: one on 20th August, 1-3 almost daily from 4th September-7th October but 4 on 18th September. 1-2 most days from 12th October-2nd November and singles on several dates in November to 23rd.

KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus*. One bird overwintered, it was rescued from 2 Ravens on 21st December 1972 when it was found to have been ringed on Fair Isle on 19th August 1971. 1-2 birds recorded most days in May and the first week in June but 3 on 4th June. Singles on 24th-25th June and 30th July. In autumn singles almost daily from 10th August-5th September and 9th-15th September. Marked influx on 16th September (12) after which numbers remained high with up to 5 on many days to 8th October. Singles were then recorded regularly to 2nd November. One bird present to the end of the year.

QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix*. Singles seen on 6th and 30th May.

WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus*. One bird overwintered and singles were seen on several occasions in January-May. In autumn one on 5th September and regular sightings from 19th September-8th December. Up to 3 on best days and some birds were retrapped several weeks after first capture. One still present on 25th December.

SPOTTED CRAKE *Porzana porzana*. One trapped in the Vaadal on 7th October and seen again the next day.

CORNCRAKE *Crex crex*. One on 25th April and 4th-5th May.

MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus*. One on 3rd May. One on 28th August, 1-2 daily from 20th September-6th October. One on 17th October.

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus*. Two on 5th-9th January and one on 4th February. Slow build up of numbers from 13th February with at least 44 by 9th and 119 on 25th March. Breeding season as usual: first eggs on 10th May (c/1) and first chicks hatching on 6th June. A non-breeding flock in the summer contained up to 80 birds. Emigration noted from the end of August and only 4 remained by the end of September. 1-2 on most days in October but 6 on

17th. One on 5th November and 2 on 1st December were still present at the end of the year.

LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus*. 3 on 5th-9th and one on 26th January. One on 5th February and 1-5 daily between 19th-28th February. Higher numbers in March with 20-45 on several days as a series of flocks moved north. Up to 7 daily through April-6th June except for 10 on 14th and 23 on 22nd April. 2 birds were song-fighting over Vaasetter in April but breeding was not attempted. Small numbers between 17th June-8th July, generally less than 10, but 42 on the last date. 1-3 on many days from 21st July-13th September. Main southerly passage from 16th September-12th October with peaks of 130 on 16th and 125 on 21st September and 119 on 8th October. A few records between 23rd October-13th November (maximum of 12), one on 1st and 3 on 25th December.

RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula*. One bird overwintered. Small influx from 8th March with up to 6 on scattered dates. Numbers reached breeding strength in April. Territory was held at all the following sites and breeding confirmed at most: Bunness (2 pairs), Brae o' Restensgeo, North Light, Hesti Geo, Muckle Uri Geo, Mid Geo, Meoness and Rippack. This represents a further increase in the breeding population (6 pairs in 1972). First eggs were noted on 16th May (c/4). Family parties and flocks first noted in early August and main influx and passage from mid August-22nd September. Maxima of 35 recorded on several dates, 40 on 16th and 50 on 18th September. Decrease noted from 23rd September and only odd birds recorded from mid October. One bird present from 15th was joined by a second on 30th November-4th December and one remained to the end of the year.

GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria*. 1-4 on scattered dates in March-April. Regular in small numbers 4th-24th May with maximum of 8. Singles on several dates in June and July. Return passage from early August with 1-5 on many days except for 25 on 19th. Main passage between 7th September-22nd October with peaks of 100 on 16th and 80 on 21st September and 100 on 5th and 70 on 11th October. A few recorded to 6th November.

DOTTEREL *Eudromias morinellus*. One on 25th April (G. J. Barnes) between Setter and Hoini might have been the same bird seen on the Rippack on 4th May (J. Wilson). One on 21st September was followed by 4 on the 22nd at Byerwall. 2 of these remained to 24th. One on 2nd October was dazzled on Burrashield the same night and it stayed until 8th October.

TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres*. Passage difficult to detect in

spring with overwintering birds confusing the picture. Maxima of 9 in January-February, 20 in March and 15 in April and May. Singles in summer on 6th June and 15th July. Return passage from 22nd July (15) after which records daily to the end of October. Peaks of 45 on 31st July, 30 on 21st August, 35 on 2nd and 7th September, 50-60 on 24th-25th and 68 on 29th October. Up to 29 recorded regularly in November-December.

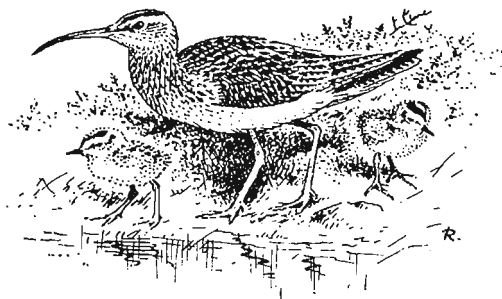
SNIPES *Gallinago gallinago*. Up to 5 recorded in January-March. Small increase in April and early May with up to 13 on best days. Breeding was proved at Gilsetter (c/4 on 28th May), Swey (chick found on 14th June) and near Setter where a young bird just on the wing was trapped on 8th September. Another very late chick was caught by hand on the Hill on 9th September. Autumn influxes noted from 17th August with heavier than usual passage, 20-30 recorded on many days in September-October and peaks of 40 on 18th and 25th September and 1st-8th October. Smaller numbers in mid-November but influx in hard weather between 26th November-1st December with 40 on the last date. A few remained to the end of the year.

JACK SNIPES *Limnospiza minima*. One spring record—7th April. Singles in autumn on 4th, 6th and 10th-12th September. Daily records from 15th September-20th October with peaks of 8 on 16th and 23rd and 10 on 29th September-1st October and 6th October. Singles on 26th, 30th-31st October, 4th and 30th November.

WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola*. Singles on 25th and 30th March and 17th April. Small passage, 1-5 birds daily from 25th April-2nd May. Singles on 8th-9th and 18th May and a straggler on 4th June. In autumn, scattered records (1-5) throughout October but larger passage 30th October-5th November with at least 60 on 2nd November. Small numbers, less than 10, on scattered dates to 1st December.

CURLEW *Numenius arquata*. One on 10th January. 1-4 on several days in March from 12th. Recorded daily in April-May with up to 15 on best days. A diurnal, northerly passage noted on 24th April when ca 70 passed over high. One pair again bred, for the second year in succession; the nest was found on Sukka Mire (c/4) on 22nd May but was predated in the first week of June when the eggs were almost ready to hatch. Autumn passage recorded from 20th June; except for 23 on 7th July, numbers generally less than 10 until 30th July (20). Numbers a little higher through August with peaks of 20 on 5th, 30 on 21st and 25 on 24th. Records continued through September-October with up to 10 daily at the beginning of the period and up to 5 daily at the end. 1-6

on several dates in mid-November and an influx of 30 in hard weather at the end of November remained into the first week of December. A few birds stayed on to the end of the year.



WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus*. Singles on 4 days in April from 21st. Small numbers daily from 1st May-6th June with peaks of 12 on 13th-14th and 21st and 15 on 23rd May. One pair successfully bred on Sukka Mire—the nest contained 4 eggs when it was found on 17th June and hatched on 27th. 3 chicks were seen with the parents on 13th July and all were ringed. At least two are thought to have fledged. This is the first breeding record for the Island. Southerly movement from the end of July-August with up to 6 recorded on many days but peak of 13 on 17th August. The last singles were seen on 4th and 8th-9th September.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa*. Singles on 21st-27th April and 23rd-24th May. 5 on 10th July. A very tired bird on 28th August stayed to 9th September.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica*. One on 23rd May. One on 29th and 2 on 30th August. One on 2nd and one on 16th September. At least 8 were present on 17th then singles were recorded on 18th, 20th and 22nd September.

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus*. Singles on 13 days between 5th-24th May and 2nd-3rd June. In autumn, singles on 1st and 5th-9th August, 3 on 10th and singles on 12th and 18th August and 5th October.

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola*. Spring birds from 17th May-3rd June with records on 13 dates, all singles except for 3 on 21st and 2 on 22nd May.

COMMON SANDPIPER *Tringa hypoleucos*. Spring passage from 2nd-31st May with up to 6 on several days in the third week of the month. Large movement from 5th-7th with peak of 20 on 6th May. Autumn passage: 1-2 birds on many days in August from 5th. One on 5th September. Another movement

recorded 17th-27th September when 1-2 recorded daily except for 7 on 20th.

REDSHANK *Tringa totanus*. Less than 10 during January-March. About the same numbers daily through April until the end of the month when a small passage was noted with peaks of 14 on 24th and 40 on 29th April and 17 on 1st May. Only 1-2 daily in May after 11th and singles on many days through June-10th July. Return passage from 11th July with 20-25 recorded on many days until early November but peaks in August on 2nd (30), 12th (30), 18th (30), 22nd (40), in September on 6th (35), in October on 24th-27th (40-45). Up to 12 recorded daily from mid-November to the end of the year.

SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus*. Singles in August on 6th and 29th, 2 on 15th September then 1-2 to 22nd September. One on 2nd October.

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*. First record in spring was a bird heard on 16th May. Sight records from 20th with singles on several days to the end of the month. In autumn, singles on most days 30th July-18th August. 3 on 25th August. One on 1st, 2 on 19th and 1 on 22nd September. One stayed from 2nd-15th October.

KNOT *Calidris canutus*. One on 26th July. 1-4 birds almost daily from 3rd August-11th September with 6 on 10th August and 6th September. 1-4 daily from 18th September-1st October and a late bird 2nd-5th November.

PURPLE SANDPIPER *Calidris maritima*. Highest counts between January-March of 8, but probably higher numbers present. Unquestionable influx on 27th March (48). Maximum of 16 in April and another influx in early May with 55 on 1st and 40 on 4th and 7th. Numbers decreased to the 26th May after which there were no records until return movement from 19th July (8). Peak counts in autumn as follows: July, 35 on 22nd and 41 on 29th; August, 60 on 16th; September, 60 on 15th and 40 on 18th and October, 21 on 29th. Up to 20 daily in November-December.

LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta*. 4-6 daily from 17th-21st September but 10 on 18th, then singles daily to 2nd October.

PECTORAL SANDPIPER *Calidris melanotos*. One on Easter Lothar 29th-30th August (trapped on 29th) and another on a temporary pool at Field on 20th-24th September (trapped on 21st). 6th and 7th records for the Island.

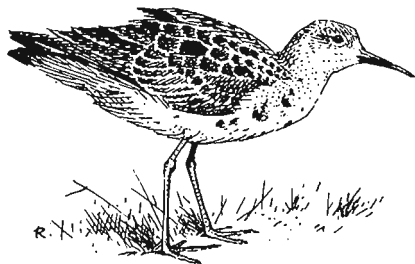
DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*. In spring, 1-5 most days from 2nd May-17th June. 1-2 many days in July. Numbers a little higher in August with 8 on 15th and 7 on 29th. Up to 10 in September to 15th then numbers higher than usual from 16th-26th

with 75 on 17th, 100 on 21st and 115 on 22nd. From 27th September to mid-October maximum of 22 after which 1-3 on scattered dates to 8th November.

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea*. One on a pool at Setter on 28th August (G. J. Barnes).

SANDERLING *Calidris alba*. One on 7th-8th May. One on 14th and 2 on 15th-16th July. 1-3 most days from 4th August-25th September, except for 5 on 18th August.

BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER *Tryngites subruficollis*. One feeding with Dunlin flock on Meoness on 21st September. The 3rd record for the Island.



RUFF *Philomachus pugnax*. Singles on 28th and 31st May. 4 (1 ♂, 3 ♀♀) on 27th and 3 on 28th-29th July. A ♂ on 4th and 11 (4 ♂♂, 7 ♀♀) on 5th-7th and one on 13th August. 1-4 daily from 23rd August-11th September. 2 on 16th September followed by an extremely large number 17th-18th when 60 present. 20-24 remained to 21st. 1-2 on scattered dates 25th September-8th October and a late reeve 1st-5th November.

GREY PHALAROPE *Phalaropus fulicarius*. Two birds in full summer plumage were seen alongside the Good Shepherd about mid-way between Shetland and Fair Isle on 25th May (D. Coutts).

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE *Phalaropus lobatus*. A first year bird on Easter Lother and Golden Water on 5th-6th August. It was trapped on 5th.

GREAT SKUA *Stercorarius skua*. First birds recorded on 3rd April (6), 2 on 5th, 1 on 8th and daily records from 10th April. Numbers slowly increased to 25 on 2nd May. 13 pairs nested; first eggs found on 14th May (c/2); eggs hatching on 10th June. A flock of 30 was seen on 26th July and up to 27 were seen together 9th-16th September. The breeding birds were already decreasing at this time and the flocks probably contained some passage birds. Only 4 remained ashore at the end of September and these decreased to the

last record on 22nd October although singles were seen over the Island on 29th, 30th October and 2nd November.

POMARINE SKUA *Stercorarius pomarinus*. One on 14th May (G. J. Barnes).

ARCTIC SKUA *Stercorarius parasiticus*. First birds were seen on 16th and 18th April. 4 arrived on 22nd after which numbers increased: 12 on 30th April, 24 on 2nd and at least 80 on 8th May. The first egg was noted on 18th May before all the breeding birds had returned. An accurate count of the population revealed 106 pairs. Decrease noted from the beginning of August and this continued to 22nd September—the last date of consecutive records. Singles were seen on 28th and 29th September.

GREATER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus*. Winter influxes of 1000 on 11th and 18th February. Smaller numbers ashore in rough weather in April (15th-26th). Breeding season as usual but at the largest breeding colony, on Sheep Rock, fledging success probably higher than in last few years. The removal of the sheep from the Rock in the summer of 1972 has resulted in an increase in the height of the vegetation. This extra cover concealing the chicks from the predations of neighbouring gulls and the absence of continual sheep disturbances are probably the factors responsible for the increased fledging success. Influxes in autumn noted between 6th-10th September (1100) and more frequently October-December particularly in October on 15th (1600), in November on 5th-7th (1000), 19th (1000) and in December on 27th (700).

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus*. One on 27th March and 2 the next day. Records continued to be scattered until 15 arrived on 15th April and by 29th April there were 45. Breeding season as usual but fewer chicks fledged than in the last two years. Numbers decreased through August and only 5 remained on 24th. The last singles were seen on 9th and 16th September.

HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus*. Increases recorded in severe weather in January on 16th-19th (2000-3000) and similar but larger influxes in the autumn and winter as follows: November, 5000 on 6th and 3000 on 19th and December, 1000 on 2nd and 2000 on 27th-30th. Breeding season as usual but probably increased fledging success at the Sheep Rock colony—the comments made under Greater Black-backed Gull are also applicable to this species.

COMMON GULL *Larus canus*. Recorded on most days between 13th-26th January, 27th-28th February, 25th March, 2nd and 4th April, but not more than 5 on any of these dates. Recor-

ded almost daily in very variable numbers from 11th April to the end of the year with larger influxes in the spring and autumn. Monthly peaks as follows: April, 60 on 16th, 65 on 20th, 400 on 22nd; May, 35 on 6th; June, 20 on 17th and 22 on 25th; July, 30 on 6th; August, 100 on 4th, 300 on 6th, 250 on 16th and 25th; September, 120 on 4th, 500 on 6th, 200 on 18th; October, 60 on 5th; November, 26 on 17th and December, 6 on 1st. Juvenile birds were first observed on 26th July. One pair bred on Johnny Arcus' Park and when found on 1st July the nest contained 2 chicks 1-2 days old. One chick survived and fledged. This is only the second breeding record for the Island (a pair laid 2 eggs but failed to hatch them in 1966 at Hjon).

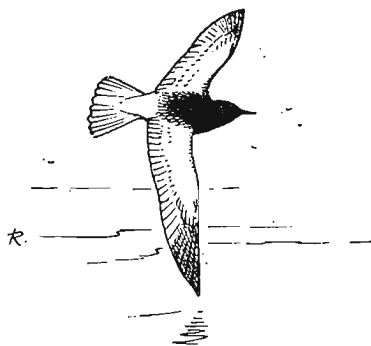
GLAUCOUS GULL *Larus hyperboreus*. One on 11th and 3 on 18th February. Single first year birds on 22nd-23rd March, 22nd and 28th April and 12th May. A second year bird on 2nd-4th July. One was seen on the crossing on 4th September. Singles on 28th September and 13th October. 3 on 15th, 2 on 18th and one on 30th October. 1-3 on several dates from 6th-19th November and 1-3 daily 23rd-29th November but 7 on 26th. 1-2 on several days in December.

ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucoides*. One on 18th February. A second year bird on 19th November and a first year bird on 27th-31st December.

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Larus ridibundus*. Singles on several days in January. 1-4 daily 21st-27th March. One on 4th April. Reports almost daily from 14th April-5th October with first juvenile recorded in autumn on 8th July. Monthly maxima as follows: April, 20 on 16th; May, 15 on 17th; June, 12 on 23rd; July, 9 on 8th; August, 20 on 5th and 23rd-24th; September, 16 on 13th. Scattered records from 6th October to the end of the year with not more than 2 on any day.

KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla*. Small numbers offshore in the winter months (January, November and December). Some birds ashore from mid-February. Breeding season as usual with continued expansion of the population. Birds decreased ashore at the breeding colonies from the end of July and the beginning of August. Large numbers could still be seen ashore at the South Harbour throughout August and early September where they collected after bathing close inshore.

WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERN *Chlidonias leucopterus*. An adult in full summer plumage flew past the Observatory on 10th June and after circling Landberg, the Havens and Bunes it was seen heading out to sea in the direction of Sheep Rock. B. Wilson saw the bird come in on the south side of the Rock, fly past the Shop and disappear in the direction of the Reeves. The first Island record.



COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo*. One on 17th May, 5 on 25th and 1-2 on 27th-31st May. Up to 6 daily in June, except for 8 on 3rd and up to 12 daily in July. Three pairs resident on the Stack o' North Haven during the summer although one pair arrived very late. 2 pairs bred, both had c/2 on 29th June. Only 2 chicks fledged on 1st August (both were ringed). Other birds, presumably from Shetland and including family parties were attracted to the area in August. Numbers peaked at 30 on 19th. All had departed by 27th although 1-3 passage birds were recorded on several days in September to the 19th.

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea*. First identified in spring on 23rd May (2). 1-2 on several dates in June. Main southerly passage including family parties was between 20th July-12th August. Maxima of 75 on 26th July and 45 on 6th August. The birds at this time congregated, as in previous years, around the South Harbour/Head o' Tind area. Small numbers, 1-5 on scattered dates to 2nd September and one on 11th.

COMMON/ARCTIC TERN. Comic terns not specifically identified were recorded from 11th May (1) with 1-8 on several days to 25th June, with the majority in May. 1-15 recorded in autumn almost daily from 18th August-2nd September and 1-4 daily from 19th September-1st October.

RAZORBILL *Alca torda*. Birds seen on the sea almost daily in March. First recorded on the cliffs on 11th March. Bred in usual numbers. Last recorded ashore on 5th August but small numbers seen offshore to 5th October. Last seen on the crossing on 13th October.

LITTLE AUK *Plautus alle*. Recorded on the crossing in January. An oiled bird was picked up alive at the North Light on 18th January. Seen on the crossing from 9th November to the

end of the year on several occasions. On 22nd December ca 20 were within $\frac{1}{2}$ mile of the North Light.

GUILLEMOT *Uria aalge*. Birds ashore in strength through February and early March although subject to fluctuation. Regularly ashore through the breeding season from mid-April to early July. Rapid decrease in mid-July. Last seen ashore in first week of August. Some birds could be seen offshore in all winter months with attendance at the larger colonies on suitable days from first week of October. Population continues to increase with some new areas being colonised.

BLACK GUILLEMOT *Cepphus grylle*. No change in status. Present all year with breeding season as usual. First chick seen on the sea on 3rd August. One pair with 2 well-grown chicks was able to catch an excess of fish—at least 20 Butterfish were found at the nest site.

PUFFIN *Fratercula arctica*. 2 offshore on 26th-27th March. 200 on 3rd April and a few ashore on 9th. Main arrival on 10th when many were ashore. Breeding season as usual with no large overall change in status. Last bird recorded ashore on 28th August with a few offshore until 11th September. Stragglers recorded until a few days later. 2 on the crossing on 30th October.

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas*. One on 20th April.

ROCK DOVE *Columba livia*. None were reported in Jan-February; otherwise recorded in all months of the year. No flocks were noted between 12th June-24th August but breeding birds seen regularly. Largest numbers were noted in autumn. Monthly maxima: March 30; April 14; May 18; June 25; August 11; September 40; October 50; November 60; and December 7.

WOODPIGEON *Columba palumbus*. One on 14th January. Singles on 7 days in March. 1-5 most days in April. Recorded daily 1st May-4th June with up to 10 on several dates and 15 on 7th May. 1-3 on scattered dates 7th June-22nd July. 1-2 from 22nd-28th August and singles on 5th and 9th October.

TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur*. One on 6th May. 1-2 daily from 16th-31st May. 4 daily from 2nd-7th June, 1-2 on 9th-10th, 4 on 16th, 3 on 17th-18th and 1-2 on 5 days to 27th June. In autumn, singles on 11 days from 30th August-21st September, and 2 on 23rd-27th September. Singles on 7th, 14th-15th and 25th-26th October.

COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto*. One on 3rd-4th May. 1-5 daily from 10th-31st May but 8 on 16th and 7 on 26th and 28th. Numbers a little higher in the first 10 days of June with maximum of 16 on 6th. One on 14th, 13 on 15th-16th and 7 on 17th June. Another influx 20th-24th with 12 on

- 21st and 18 on 24th. 1-2 on many days from 28th June-27th July but 4 on 15th July. 1-5 from 30 July-6th August. Singles on several days from 15th August-5th September and 3 on 3rd September.
- CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus*. 2-6 daily 18th-25th May then 1-2 daily until 24th June. One on 6th July. Singles in autumn on 14 dates between 5th August-1st September and on 17th and 25th September.
- SNOWY OWL *Nyctea scandiaca*. One flushed near the Lower Station on 26th March was thought to be an immature ♂ (possibly second year). An adult ♂ was at Ferny Cup on 9th May.
- OWL sp. It is worth recording a very large, dark-looking owl seen flying over the hill on 25th May (P. Agland, G. J. Barnes, D. Bell). Unfortunately, the range was too great for any details to be made out and it could not be assigned to a species.
- LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus*. One in winter from 1st-9th January. One on 26th April was the only spring record. In autumn: singles on 21st-26th September, 1-2 from 5th-10th October, 2 on 1st and 4 on 2nd November and one from 15th-30th November.
- SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus*. Singles in spring on many days between 16th April-1st June. In autumn: singles on 5th and 26th-27th September. 1-2 on several days in October and 3 on 18th. Unidentified eared owls, either this species or *A. otus* were recorded as follows: singles on 19th-20th and 30th September, 3rd October and 3rd November.
- NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus europaeus*. One was seen at close range but in poor visibility on 27th May at the head of the Hill Dyke (P. Agland).
- SWIFT *Apus apus*. 1-3 on most days from 18th-28th May. 5 on 4th and one on 5th-6th June. 1-4 daily from 20th-30th June. 4 on 8th and 1-2 from 10th-17th July. 1-2 on many days from 1st-18th August and singles on 7th, 9th, 16th and 20th-21st September.
- HOOPOE *Upupa epops*. One on 18th-22nd May mainly in the Reeva area. One 11th-27th October, first seen on the Head o' Tind and later in the Malcolm's Head area.
- WRYNECK *Jynx torquilla*. One on 24th April. 1-2 on several days 4th-15th May. 5 on 17th decreasing to one on 19th. In autumn: 3 on 28th decreasing to one on 30th August. 2 on 16th, 5 on 17th then 1-3 daily to 26th except for 6 on 20th September. 2 on 6th and one on 8th October.
- SHORT-TOED LARK *Calandrella cinerea*. One on 6th-8th May. One on 27th September-5th October, 2 on 6th, 3 on 7th after

which one remained to 13th October. Apart from one greyish individual 6th-7th October the others were thought to be of the reddish western type. One of these was trapped on 4th October.

WOODLARK *Lullula arborea*. One on 13th April (G. J. Barnes). One on 6th and 13th October.

SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis*. A few on many days in January-February with arrivals in spring from 26th February (50). Passage then difficult to detect but influxes noted on 17th and 25th March. Breeding season as usual. First autumn influxes recorded from 10th September with passage in September and October. The majority had left by the first week in November after which a few were noted until 8th December.

SHORELARK *Eremophila alpestris*. One on 29th April-2nd May. 2 on 5th-9th May and one on 14th May.

SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*. First one recorded on 1st May. Daily records from 3rd with 10-15 on many days until 12th June but 25-40 on 17th-20th May. 1-6 daily from 16th-29th June and 1-4 on scattered dates to 11th July. 3 on 24th and 2 on 25th July. Singles on 3 days in first half of August. Up to 10 on several dates from 17th-31st August. 1-6 daily from 15th September to 9th October.

HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbica*. One on 2nd May then daily records in spring from 4th May-30th June with 15-20 on many days and 30 on 6th and 40 on 29th and 31st May and 30 on 4th June. 1-2 on 3 days in July to 14th. Infrequent scattered records in autumn: 2 on 21st, 1 on 22nd and 4 on 30th August. 4 on 23rd and 9 on 29th September.

SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia*. 5 on 16th and one on 19th-20th, 3 on 26th May and singles on 6 days from 29th May-7th June. In autumn: 6 on 28th, 3 on 30th and one from 31st August-5th September.

GOLDEN ORIOLE *Oriolus oriolus*. One on 18th-20th May and sightings on 4 days in June involving a minimum of 2 birds: records on 2nd, 21st and 29th-30th. The bird on the 21st was trapped in the Gully and found to be a first year bird.

RAVEN *Corvus corax*. Resident birds recorded as usual. Breeding successful at Gunnawark and near Sheep Rock although young birds from both sites were contaminated with fulmar oil. The only sizeable migrant flock was of 19 on 26th March.

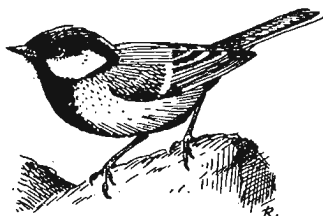
HOODED and CARRION CROW *Corvus corone*. Carrion Crow *C. c. corone*. One 23rd-25th March. Almost daily 20th April-4th June, rarely more than 2 on any day but 7 on 9th, 9 on 10th, 4 on 15th and 5 on 16th May. 1-2 on 4th-5th August. 5 on

25th and 2 on 27th September. 2 on 4th, 4 on 5th and singles on 14th-18th October and 15th November.

Hooded Crow *C. c. cornix*. Resident birds recorded throughout the year. A northerly movement was noted on 24th April when 37 flew over high.

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus*. 2 on 6th-12th January and from 3rd-28th February. 1-2 on many scattered dates 22nd March-17th May. One on 1st-3rd November.

JACKDAW *Corvus monedula*. Singles on 25th March and 15th May. One stayed and apparently moulted on the Island from 8th July-1st November. It was joined on the last date by a second bird and both left on the 4th November. One on 31st December.



GREAT TIT *Parus major*. A ♂ trapped in the Gully on 15th October and a ♀ caught in the Vaadal the following day. These captures double the previous ringing total for the Island and are the first records since 1966.

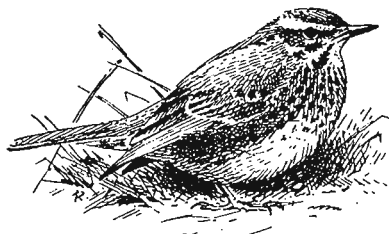
WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes*. Present throughout the year. No obvious change in status noticed.

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus*. One on 6th January. 2 on 9th-10th and one from 15th-17th March. Singles on 11th and 13th April. 4 on 22nd, 5 on 24th and 2 on 25th April. 1-2 on several days 30th April-17th May. One on 26th September, 6th and 11th October.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris*. Small numbers recorded on many days in winter from January-mid-April with up to 25 on some days. Main spring passage 21st April-26th May with up to 30 on several days and larger arrivals on 1st (200), 5th (100) and 6th (300), about 130 remaining on 7th. One on 1st June. In autumn: singles on 20th, 24th and 30th August and 7th September. Daily records 12th September-17th November with up to 50 on several days and larger arrivals as follows: 75 on 11th, 100 on 18th, 150 on 22nd, peak of 300 on 26th and 350 on 31st October increased to 800 on 2nd November. 1-2 from 25th November-1st December. One on 9th and up to 6 from 24th-31st December.

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos*. 1-4 on several days 5th

March-13th April. Spring passage mainly 22nd April-19th May with peaks of 13 on 24th April and 30 on 2nd May. Singles on many days in the rest of May, 20th, 24th-25th June, 5th-7th and 23rd July. In autumn singles from 21st-28th August, 5th September and main southerly passage from 15th September with daily records until 5th November. Up to 10 on many days but larger arrival on 26th September (500) and fresh smaller arrival the next day (30). Another period of activity 5th-8th October with 20-40 daily.



REDWING *Turdus iliacus*. Small numbers in winter (January-23rd March) with maximum of 11 on any day. All identified were of the Icelandic form. First continental birds were identified on 23rd March coinciding with the first influx of the spring. 60 on 25th increased to 90 the next day; thereafter, small numbers through April-26th May with peaks of 120 on 25th April and 100 on 1st May. Singles on 21st-25th June and 8th and 16th July. Autumn migrants recorded from 16th September and main arrivals in September as follows: 350 on 24th, 150 on 28th increasing to 300 on 29th. Heavy passage in the first fortnight of October—600 on 4th, 3500 on 5th and 13000 on 6th which decreased slowly over the next few days. New, smaller arrivals as follows: 250 on 22nd, 300 on 26th October and 350 on 2nd November. A few recorded to 26th November and singles on 5 dates in December. A Swedish-ringed bird was trapped on 24th September in association with the first autumn arrival of any size (see Ringed Strangers).

RING OUZEL *Turdus torquatus*. Spring passage from 22nd April-3rd June with peaks of 20 on 24th April, 14-17 from 1st-5th and 30 on 6th May. Otherwise 1-5 daily, but 8 on 23rd May. A ♂ on 23rd July stayed at Restensgeo until 10th September. 2-3 recorded on 1st-2nd September. Small passage with 1-5 on 12 days from 23rd September-14th October. One on 14th November.

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula*. Larger numbers than usual in winter. 15-25 recorded daily January-March and numbers boosted by influx on 3rd-5th January (100). Small spring

passage mainly 10th April-10th May with maximum of 25 on 25th April and 20 on 3rd May. Smaller numbers recorded from 11th-27th May. One pair bred at Utra and fledged 3 chicks (flying young first seen on 2nd June). Autumn passage: additional birds from 17th September, numbers a little higher in October with 20-45 on many days. Only arrival of any size in first week of November with 500 on 1st-2nd and 300 on 4th. Up to 35 in the rest of the month and up to 20 in December.

WHITE'S THRUSH *Zoothera dauma*. One found at Lower Station on Ward Hill late on 24th September was trapped in the evening. It was roosted overnight and released the next morning. The first to be ringed in Britain.

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*. 2 ♂♂ arrived on 25th March and were seen again on 26th. A ♂ on 28th March and 2 ♂♂ on 3rd April. The next record was 17th April after which records daily. The first ♀ was recorded on 19th and a good influx occurred on 22nd (45) followed by another on 2nd May (100). Breeding numbers were then quickly reached. Large, Greenland types recorded in spring on 26th-27th April and daily 4th-15th May and 1st-2nd June. Breeding numbers as usual: young ready to fledge on 28th June. In autumn influxes noted from 12th-20th August and on 29th when large ♂♂ were prominent. Decrease from 30th August and most noticeable from 10th September when only 25 recorded. Some small influxes in the rest of September with up to 60 on best days. Up to 40 in the first week of October then small numbers to 17th after which singles to 1st November and late bird on 10th-11th November. Greenland types prominent from 4th October to mid-month.

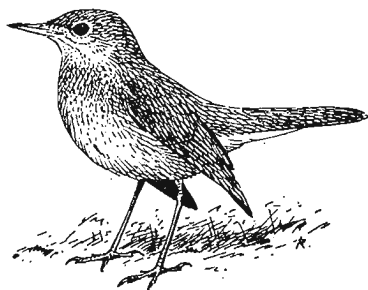
STONECHAT *Saxicola torquata*. 2-4 almost daily 11th-23rd and a ♂ on 30th-31st March. A ♂ on 18th May. In autumn singles on 17th and 20th September, 4th, 5th and 8th October. The bird seen on 5th October on the South Haven beach was thought to belong to one of the Eastern races, probably *S. t. maura*. Previously, Siberian Stonechats were recorded in October 1961 and 1965 and November 1964.

WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra*. Spring passage from 3rd May-4th June with peaks of 15 on 6th and 25 on 20th May. Autumn passage daily between 16th August-21st October and one on 25th October. Peaks of 10 in August on 28th-29th, in September 15-30 daily between 16th-25th but 40 on 24th and in October 10 on 4th.

REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*. Recorded in spring almost daily between 3rd May-8th June with peaks of 10 on 5th-6th, 25 on 20th and 20 on 23rd May. In autumn, 25-30 reg-

ularly from 16th-25th September and smaller numbers daily to 12th October.

BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros*. Singles on 23rd-24th March, 5th April, 24th April-4th May then up to 3 daily to 25th May. Singles on 3rd and 18th-19th June. An adult ♂ on 30th October and other singles on 1st-2nd and 14th November.



THRUSH NIGHTINGALE *Luscinia luscinia*. Three individuals, all trapped and ringed: 21st May in a ditch at Easter Lothar; 25th-27th May and 1st-3rd June both in the vicinity of the old Observatory.

BLUETHROAT *Luscinia svecica*. Singles on 13th-16th, 3-5 daily 17th-23rd but 8 on 19th then up to 3 to 27th May. One from 1st-7th June and a ringed bird with a sprained wing first seen on 18th June; when trapped on 22nd June proved to have been ringed in Sweden (see Ringed Strangers). It remained on the Island to 2nd October. In autumn singles on 17th and 24th September, 1-2 on 6th-12th, one daily to 21st, and one on 25th October.

ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula*. One bird probably overwintered. It was seen on several days in January-February. 1-3 most days through March-14th April. Main passage in spring from 21st April with peaks of 25 on 25th April and 30 on 4th-5th May. Recorded daily in small numbers to 5th June. At least 2 in the last week of June and one on 9th July. Autumn passage mainly between 15th September-9th October with less than 10 on most days except peak of 25-30 on 25th-26th September. 1-3 on most days to 5th November and one still remained at the end of the year.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia*. 4 on 4th May and 1-2 on 6 days between 6th-17th May.

LANCEOLATED WARBLER *lanceolata*. One at Sukka Mire on 22nd September (trapped and ringed). Recorded for the second year in succession.

- REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*. Singles in spring on 29th-31st May, 5th June and 2nd-4th July (all trapped). In autumn, 1-3 daily from 20th-26th September (2 trapped) also an unstreaked *Acrocephalus* almost certainly this species was seen on 23rd-27th August.
- MARSH WARBLER *Acrocephalus palustris*. One trapped on 24th June and another trapped 10th July was present the next day.
- SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*. 1-3 daily from 4th-10th and up to 6 daily 17th-27th May. 1-2 between 31st May-6th June. In autumn: singles on 29th-30th August, 5th and 15th September, 2 on 19th-21st and one on 22nd September.
- MELODIOUS WARBLER *Hippolais polyglotta*. One trapped in the Vaadal on 15th was seen again at Leogh on 17th June.
- ICTERINE WARBLER *Hippolais icterina*. One on 27th-28th May. Singles on 25th August, 3rd and 16th-18th September.
- BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla*. Small passage in May, almost daily from 5th with maximum of 8 on 22nd-23rd. 1-2 on several days in June to 26th. Autumn passage from 13th September with peaks of 25 on 16th and 21st and 45 on 25th September. 40-45 on 5th-6th, 35 on 14th October then less than 10 daily to the last single on 13th November.
- BARRED WARBLER *Sylvia nisoria*. 1-3 daily in August from 16th but 4 on 23rd and 6 on 28th-29th. Up to 5 daily in September to 25th but peaks of 7 on 13th, 6 on 15th and 7 on 16th-17th. All were young birds.
- GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin*. Small numbers 17th May-7th June with maximum of 7 on 20th May and 5 on 3rd-4th June. Singles on 11th and 23rd June. In autumn: 1-3 on several days in August from 17th but 6 on 29th. Almost daily in September, rarely up to 10 on any day but 15 on 7th and 12 on 20th-21st. 1-4 on most days in October to 13th and one on 26th.
- WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis*. 4 on 6th then 1-2 on most days to 15th May. Numbers a little higher from 17th May with up to 7 on many days and 12 on 19th, 25 on 20th and 12 on 23rd. 1-3 daily in first week of June after which singles recorded to 21st June. Recorded on many days between 23rd August-30th September but not more than 2 on any day.
- LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca*. 10 on 5th May decreasing to one on 11th. One on 15th, 5 on 17th-18th and 8 on 19th then 1-4 daily to 28th May. Singles on 7 days in June to 10th. In autumn: singles daily from 16th-28th August. 1-2 daily in September from 4th-26th but 5 on 14th and 3

on 15th-16th. Singles in October from 5th-17th but 3 on 12th.

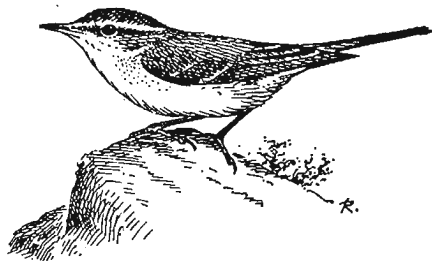
WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus*. 25 on 4th, 50 on 5th and 30-45 present on 6th-8th May. Numbers then much lower until the next influx—7 on 17th and 20-35 on 18th-20th after which numbers decreased to last spring record on 3rd June. One was trapped on 8th July. In autumn 2 on 6th and one on 13th August, up to 5 daily from 16th to the end of the month except for 15 on 24th-25th. Records in September from 4th-26th, numbers a little higher with peak of 15 on 7th and 15-20 daily from 10th-22nd.

GREENISH WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochiloides*. One behind the Observatory on 24th June (trapped) and another self-caught in the Double Dyke trap on 4th July remained to 8th. The 8th and 9th Observatory records.

CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita*. One on the very early date of 12th March remained to 16th. Singles on 25th and 30th April. 1-2 on scattered dates in May but 8 on 4th and 5 on 5th-6th. Autumn passage a little heavier than usual, one identified on 24th-25th August, 1-4 on several days between 10th-30th September but 7 on 25th. Records daily from 3rd October-6th November and one on 9th. Up to 5 on several days and 11 on 16th, 10 on 21st, 7 on 31st October and 15 on 2nd November. Majority of October-November birds were northern types.

Unidentified **WILLOW/CHIFFS**: small numbers were recorded in spring between 4th-31st May and in autumn from 15th August-30th September.

WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*. 1-2 daily from 18th-25th May. Singles from 24th-29th August and 3rd-5th September. A late record on 6th October.



ARCTIC WARBLER *Phylloscopus borealis*. One behind the Observatory on the 4th September (trapped) and another in the bracken at Restensgeo on 10th September (trapped).

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER *Phylloscopus inornatus*. 3 on 15th September and one 17th-19th. Another influx of 4 on 20th, 1-3 until next arrival of 7 on 24th which increased to largest

recorded figure of 15 on 25th. 4 remained on 26th-27th, 2 on 29th, 1 on 30th September-1st October. Last influx of 3 on 5th October, one remaining to 6th.

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus*. 9 arrived on 24th March and numbers continued at about this level to 4th April. Numbers then 1-6 daily from 8th April-14th May after which only scattered singles to 24th May. In autumn: 1-7 daily from 4th-15th September. 32 on 16th after which 15-35 recorded daily until further increase to 60 on 25th. Small numbers then recorded daily to next influx on 4th October (20) which peaked at 50 on 5th. Decrease noted to 16th but another influx on 20th-21st (15-20) then numbers fell to last record on 30th October.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata*. Singles on 5th and 8th May. Main spring passage daily from 17th May-4th June with one on 8th June. Up to 25 on several days in May but 50 on 19th. Smaller numbers in June. In autumn: singles on 17th August and 5th September. Main passage daily from 16th September-8th October with peaks of 15 on 19th and 10 on 22nd but only 1-2 daily in October.

PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hypoleuca*. First recorded on 4th May (3) after which up to 5 seen almost daily to 15th. Numbers a little higher 17th May-1st June with maximum of 12 on 22nd May. In autumn: one on 10th and 2 on 17th August. 1-4 daily from 24th-31st August. Numbers a little higher from 5th-27th September with peaks on 7th (15), 16th (20) and 12 on 19th-20th and 24th. Singles on 29th-30th September and 1-2 on several days to 10th October and one on 21st.

RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula parva*. Singles on 16th-17th, 24th-27th September and 9th-11th October.

DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis*. One on 10th-18th April. Main spring passage 21st April-15th May after which up to 3 daily to 4th June. Peaks in main period of 40 on 22nd, 20 on 25th April and 15 on 5th-6th May. Singles on 20th-21st June and 16th July. Autumn records between 16th September-21st October with maximum of 8 on 25th-27th September and 3rd October.

RICHARD'S PIPIT *Anthus novaeseelandiae*. Singles on many days from 21st September-5th November involving several birds but at least one individual known to have made an extended stay of more than 2 weeks.

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*. 1-2 on 3 days between 14th-20th February. Small numbers arrived from 16th March and built up to 30 by 28th then the full complement quickly arrived. Breeding season as usual: song flight from 13th April, many fledged young by 19th May. Flocking noted in mid-

August and decrease in numbers through September although obvious influxes noted on 10th and 23rd September. Very few remaining by the end of October (30) and stragglers to 23rd November.

TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis*. One on 25th April. 2 on 3rd May increasing to 50 on 4th and 250 on 5th. This peak decreased slowly and not until 26th did numbers fall to 10 (daily totals sometimes boosted by small arrivals during this period). Small numbers to the end of May and stragglers recorded until the last single on 10th-11th June. Autumn singles on 27th-28th and 31st August and 5th September. 2 on 7th September. Main passage from 13th with maximum of 10 on 20th-24th. Small numbers daily to 7th October and one 15th-17th October.

OLIVE-BACKED PIPIT *Anthus hodgsoni*. One seen at Leogh on 24th September (G. Jobson). The third Island record.

RED-THROATED PIPIT *Anthus cervinus*. One on 28th May. Another 30th May-2nd June. One in autumn 16th-18th September.

ROCK PIPIT *Anthus spinoletta*. Recorded all months of the year. Breeding season as usual: carrying nest material on early date of 4th April, first young on the wing on 18th June. Obvious influx noticed 26th-31st October.

WHITE/PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba*. White Wagtail *M. a. alba*: Spring records daily from 22nd April-31st May with maximum of 10 on 4th-6th May, otherwise regularly up to 5. A pair were seen frequently throughout June-July and one stayed into August. They were seen carrying nest material into the cliff at Landberg but were not thought to have succeeded at this site. They probably bred nearby—a young bird was seen on 14th July. Autumn passage from 17th August (18)-28th September with up to 20 on most days until mid-September then only a few to the end of the month. 2 on 8th October and 2 late birds on 2nd November; one remained to 5th November. Pied Wagtail *M. a. yarelli*: A ♂ on 21st and a ♀ on 24th-25th March. One on 9th-10th, 2 ♂♂ on 20th-21st and one 27th April-2nd May. 1-2 from 4th-14th and one 25th-28th May. A ♂ on 29th June. In autumn: 1-2 daily 26th September-8th October and singles on 12th and 30th October.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*. One on 25th April-1st May. One on 21st September and another on 16th October.

YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava*. Blue-headed Wagtail *M. f. flava*: singles in May on several dates from 4th-31st. Yellow Wagtail *M. f. flavissima*: a ♂ on 27th March. 1-4 on 2nd-6th May, then 1-2 on several days to 22nd May. Grey-headed

Wagtail *M. f. thunbergi*: 1-3 from 17th-24th May and 1-2 from 29th May-3rd June. Flava wagtails not sub-specifically identified were recorded in spring as follows: in spring, singles on 4th, 6th-7th and 22nd June; in autumn, singles on 8th, 16th-26th September and 2 on 21st.

WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus*. Singles on 31st October and 2nd and 16th November.

GREAT GREY SHRIKE *Lanius excubitor*. Singles on 22nd April and 8th May. In autumn: 1-2 daily from 18th September-8th October involving a minimum of 4 individuals. One from 12th-15th October and one on 2nd November.

RED-BACKED SHRIKE *Lanius collurio*. Daily in spring between 18th-30th May, 3-4 on most days but 5 on 20th, 6 on 23rd, 8 on 24th and 6 on 25th. 2 on 5th-7th and single ♀♀ on 11th and 18th-20th June. 1-2 daily in autumn from 14th-29th September.

STARLING *Sternus vulgaris*. Present all months of the year. Breeding season as usual: young ready to fledge on 10th June. Small influx noted 17th-22nd April and 1st May. In autumn throughout October a small passage noticed with birds departing south on several days, and influx on 1st (800) and 5th November (500).

GREENFINCH *Carduelis chloris*. Scarce: 2 on 25th May. 2 from 4th-10th November and a ♂ on 27th November.

SISKIN *Carduelis spinus*. 6 on 5th then 1-3 daily to 18th May. One from 17th-22nd June. In autumn: 4 on 5th then 3 daily to 11th and singles on 17th-18th October and 2nd November.

LINNET *Acanthis cannabina*. A ♂ on 18th January. Good numbers in spring: one on 26th April and daily in May from 2nd (6) with maxima of 13 on 5th-6th and 17 on 7th. Smaller numbers to the end of the month. 1-2 on several scattered dates in June. No autumn records. A record total of 19 trapped and ringed.

TWITE *Acanthis flavirostris*. Continuing the upward trend of the last two years with good numbers in autumn. Up to 30 on some days in January-February. Smaller numbers in early March but increase from mid-month. Up to 50 present in second half of April and 100 in early May. Breeding season as usual. Flocks first noted in August from 6th. Maximum individual flock sizes as follows: August 60; September 200; October 150—but the totals present were higher than these figures. Up to 130 present in early November but an exodus followed and only 20 on 8th. Small numbers rarely reaching 20 on any day to the end of the year.

REDPOLL *Acanthis flammea*. Redpolls not sub-specifically identified were recorded in January on 5th-9th and 15th-17th

(2), also 22nd-26th March and 27th November. Mealy Redpoll *A. f. flammea*: more numerous than usual in spring following last year's autumn irruption. One on 15th-16th February and singles on 22nd-26th March and 25th April-2nd May. Recorded daily from 4th May-3rd June with maxima of 12 on 7th and 8 on 11th May. 1-3 from 18th-21st June and one from 30th June-3rd July. Lesser Redpoll *A. f. cabaret/disruptus*: one from 5th-7th May.

SCARLET ROSEFINCH *Carpodacus erythrinus*. 2 in spring: 22nd May-1st June and 22nd-25th June (trapped on 22nd). Autumn records continue to increase: one 23rd-26th August, 2 on 27th, 3 on 28th of which 2 remained to 31st. 3 from 1st-5th September; one remained to 9th. 5 on 10th and 6 from 11th-15th (often all seen together feeding on sow thistle heads) 2 remained on 16th-17th. 3 from 18th-22nd and one on 23rd September. The autumn records involved a minimum of 4 individuals between 23rd August-9th September and a minimum of 7 between 10th-23rd September. Single birds were trapped in autumn on 28th August, 10th, 21st and 23rd September. All records involved females/immatures.

CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra*. One flying over Furse on 22nd June and a green bird on 25th September.

CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs*. Single ♂♂ on 5th February and 25th March. A ♀ on 8th-11th April. 1-3 daily from 20th April-2nd May. Numbers a little higher 4th-13th May with maximum of 9 on 6th. A ♂ seen on 12th July. Singles in autumn from 18th August-16th September then small passage to 12th October. Peaks of 10 on 27th and 15 on 29th September and 15 on 6th October. 1-2 recorded on several dates to 20th November.

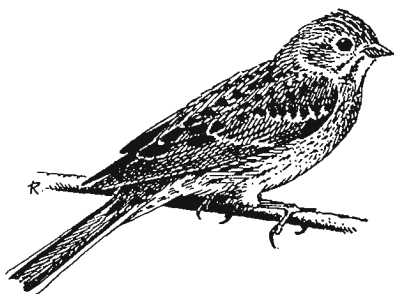
BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla*. One on 22nd-24th January. One on 8th-10th April. Main spring passage from 20th April-30th May, majority in first 10 days of May. Maxima of 11 on 24th-26th April, 20 on 1st, 50 on 5th May. From the 11th not more than 3 on any day to the end of the month. Autumn records: scattered singles in September from 19th, daily records from 25th September-5th November. Influxes of 15 on 4th increasing to 150 on 7th-8th October. Further influxes on 20th (57), 23rd-25th (40) October and 1st November (50). A ♀ on 18th-21st November and a ♂ on 11th December.

CORN BUNTING *Emberiza calandra*. One on 15th February (G. J. Barnes).

YELLOWHAMMER *Emberiza citrinella*. Singles on 16th-17th May and 22nd June. One 1st-8th November and one 23rd-25th December.

BLACK-HEADED BUNTING *Emberiza melanocephala*. A female/immature frequented the Quooy-Kennaby area from 21st-26th August. (2 ♂♂, 17th-23rd May and 7th July were judged to have been cage birds).

YELLOW-BREASTED BUNTING *Emberiza aureola*. One on 13th-14th September near the Nurse's cottage and another 17th-22nd September first seen at the Haa was later at Leogh. Both were females or immatures.



ORTOLAN BUNTING *Emberiza hortulana*. In spring, 3 on 5th increasing to 5 on 7th, 2 on 8th and one on 9th May. 1-2 at Setter on 7th-12th September and singles on 19th-21st and 25th September. These are the first autumn records since 1970.

RUSTIC BUNTING *Emberiza rustica*. One found at Busta on 19th September stayed until 29th.

LITTLE BUNTING *Emberiza pusilla*. One on 24th September, 2 on 25th-26th, one remained to 30th. One on 15th October.

REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus*. Singles on 14th and 26th March, 2nd and 26th April. Daily from 3rd-28th May with 30 on 5th-6th and 40 on 7th but lesser numbers in the rest of the month; peaks of 12 on 20th and 22nd. Main autumn passage 16th September-16th October with 1-4 daily but 7 on 7th-8th October. 1-3 on scattered dates 28th October-10th November and one on 8th December.

LAPLAND BUNTING *Calcarius lapponicus*. Singles in spring on 5th-6th, 12th and 17th May. Large autumn passage: one on 2nd September and then daily records from 10th September-18th October with singles on 2nd and 6th-7th November. In main period 3 arrived on 10th, 8 on 14th and 80 on 16th then numbers remained high to 21st. Up to 15 daily to the end of September and maximum of 10 daily to 11th October after which 1-2 to the end of the period.

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis*. More than 100 recorded on only 2 days during January-February on 2nd (124) and

16th February (110). 150-200 regularly in mid-March then numbers generally less than 50 daily to the end of April. Maximum of 20 in May with last consecutive spring record on 26th May. One on 1st June. Autumn records from 9th September (4) with influxes on 23rd (100) and 30th September (150), 2nd (250), 14th (150), 20th (200) increasing to 400 on 21st October. Largest influx 800-1000 on 5th-8th November then numbers generally less than 100 daily to the end of the year.

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus*. Resident in usual numbers, all months of the year.

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus*. 2 on 13th March. 1-4 on many days from 10th April-11th June but larger numbers on 5th (7) and 19th May (7). 3 on 22nd June and one on 18th and 4 on 27th July. 1-3 on 3 days in late August. 1-4 almost daily from 4th September-3rd November but 6 on 31st October.

Birds of doubtful origin and presumed cage birds

RED-HEADED BUNTING *Emberiza bruniceps*. A ♂ from 5th-15th May. A ♀ (almost certainly this species) 22nd-23rd May (trapped) and ♂♂ 17th-20th, 27th June-1st July and 20th August.

BLACK-HEADED BUNTING *Emberiza melanocephala*. ♂♂ thought to be escaped cage birds on 17th-23rd May and 7th July (trapped).

LAZULI BUNTING *Passerina amoena*. ♂♂ on 4th-8th May and 7th June.

MANDARIN MYNAH *Sturnus sinensis*. One on 24th-26th June.

Additional record accepted by the Rarities Committee for 1971

WHITE-BILLED DIVER *Gavia adamsii*. One in summer plumage at Furse on 29th May 1971 (J. H. Simpson).

The Arctic Skua Project on Fair Isle : An Introduction

BY JOHN DAVIS AND PETER O'DONALD

The Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus* is one of the relatively few species of bird that are polymorphic in their plumage. Three phases, similar in males and females, can easily be recognised. (There is also a fourth phase but its status is uncertain, and as it contributes little to an understanding of the problem it will not be considered further). Some birds are pale with a white or nearly white breast and belly. They may have a dark band across the breast. Others are dark with uniformly dark brown plumage. The rest are intermediate birds which are dark with a variable amount of lighter plumage around the cheeks, collar and breast. The darkest intermediate birds may sometimes be confused with dark birds. These major plumage differences are apparently controlled by a single gene, with dark showing incomplete dominance over pale; the intermediate birds are probably those with one dark and one pale gene; genetically they are the heterozygotes. On Fair Isle, about 20% of the population are pale. Pale birds increase in frequency to the north: in the far north nearly all birds are pale.

The population of Arctic Skuas on Fair Isle was studied from 1948 to 1963 by Kenneth Williamson, Peter Davis and Peter O'Donald. In this period, the population increased from 20 to 70 pairs; it is now about 100 pairs. The present work was started in 1973 with the financial support of a research grant from the Natural Environment Research Council to Peter O'Donald. It will run for at least three years. There are two main, interrelated, problems. The first is quite simple. The polymorphism is apparently stable. This poses the question: what selective forces are acting to maintain its stability? The second problem also affects the selective forces acting on the three phases. There is a steady seasonal decline in breeding success. Birds breeding early in the season tend to lay two eggs and often fledge both young; birds breeding late in the season often lay only one egg and fledge no young. Most of the pairs breeding late in the season are those in which the birds are breeding together for the first time. By an analysis of the data obtained in the earlier work, it was found, on average, in pairs breeding together for the first time, that dark males breed earlier than intermediates who breed earlier than pale males. Because the darker males breed earlier they will on average

raise more young than the pale males. Female phase is irrelevant to this effect. Fitness in Darwin's sense may be measured in terms of the number of offspring an individual produces. Since dark males will produce more young than pale males one would expect an increase in the frequency of dark birds in the population. The earlier breeding of dark males thus contributes to the selective forces acting on the population. Why the darker males breed earlier is in itself an interesting question. The condition of the female is probably more important in determining when a pair breeds than the condition of the male. Females who are ready to breed earlier in the season are more likely to choose a dark male than a pale one. Therefore on average dark males mate before pale ones. There is *sexual selection* in favour of the dark males. This mechanism for sexual selection in the Arctic Skuas is very similar to that suggested by Darwin.

The phenomenon of sexual selection is of great interest in population genetics. Part of the project is concerned with the development of computer models of the skua population in which different mating patterns can be simulated, so that models giving the closest fit to field observations can be found. Another part of the project is to investigate the cause of this sexual selection in the field. For example, there may be differences in the behaviour of dark and pale male which cause the sexual selection; or the females may respond differently to the pale and dark males. Once pairs have bred together for more than one year, however, the difference in the breeding times of pale and dark males disappears, showing that the difference depends only on the actual process of choosing a mate. All types of 'old' pairs raise on average more young than new pairs. Thus the total selective advantage to dark males resulting from this sexual selection will depend on the number of times they form new pairs in their lifetime. Analysis of the previous data suggests that about 15% of pairs divorce after one year. If they stay together after the first year, they usually remain together until one of the birds dies. The other bird then chooses a new mate.

Sexual selection for dark males is obviously an important factor in the maintenance of the polymorphism. In one computer model, some females are assumed to prefer the dark males and others to prefer the intermediates. By fitting the model to the data of breeding times, the proportions of females with these preferences can be estimated: about 17% prefer dark males and 29% prefer intermediates, while the remaining 54% mate at random with all males. This model shows that the polymorphism can be maintained solely by the selective forces of sexual selection. Other models, however, predict an in-

crease in the frequency of dark birds. Such an increase could be balanced by factors favouring pales. A possible factor is differential migration of birds between colonies, but as yet there is little evidence for this. Another possibility is that birds of different phases have different life expectancies. In most birds, mortality of breeding birds is independent of age so that the proportion of any group that dies each year indicates the annual mortality of that group. The expectation of life can then be calculated. Analysis of previous data suggests that 20% of breeding skuas die each year. Mortality of dark males is lower than that of pale males while in females the situation is reversed. Obviously, the longer a bird lives the more young it will produce. Thus it is important to obtain precise figures to establish the effect of differential mortality on the maintenance of the polymorphism. The apparent difference in mortality of the phases in the two sexes suggests that some other effect of the gene (a "pleiotropic effect"), rather than colour, determines the fitness. If the intermediates are then found to have the highest overall fitness, a stable polymorphism will be maintained.

We are collecting data on the population of Arctic Skuas to measure such effects as differential mortality, likelihood of changes of mate and so on. In 1972 most of the field work on Fair Isle was concerned with trapping as many breeding adults as possible and colour-ringing them. Funnel traps were normally used to catch the adults. They were generally more effective than the clap nets which had been used in the previous work on Fair Isle. Most of the adult breeding birds were thus caught and ringed. The chicks were also of course ringed. We recorded the phases, breeding time and breeding success of each pair and made a detailed survey of the nests. The distances between nests and bearings from one nest to another were carefully measured. From these data we have drawn a map of the colony. Polygons giving the area of each pair's territory have been fitted to the data of the map. The size of a pair's territory presumably depends on their aggressiveness in defending it and may therefore be correlated with the parameters of sexual selection. We are planning other observations on behaviour in 1974 and 1975 in the hope that we may be able to analyse the factors that cause the sexual selection.

*John Davis, Peter O'Donald, Department of Genetics,
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Cambridge, CB4 1XH.*

Some observations on House Martins and Swallows in adverse weather

By ROGER A. BROAD

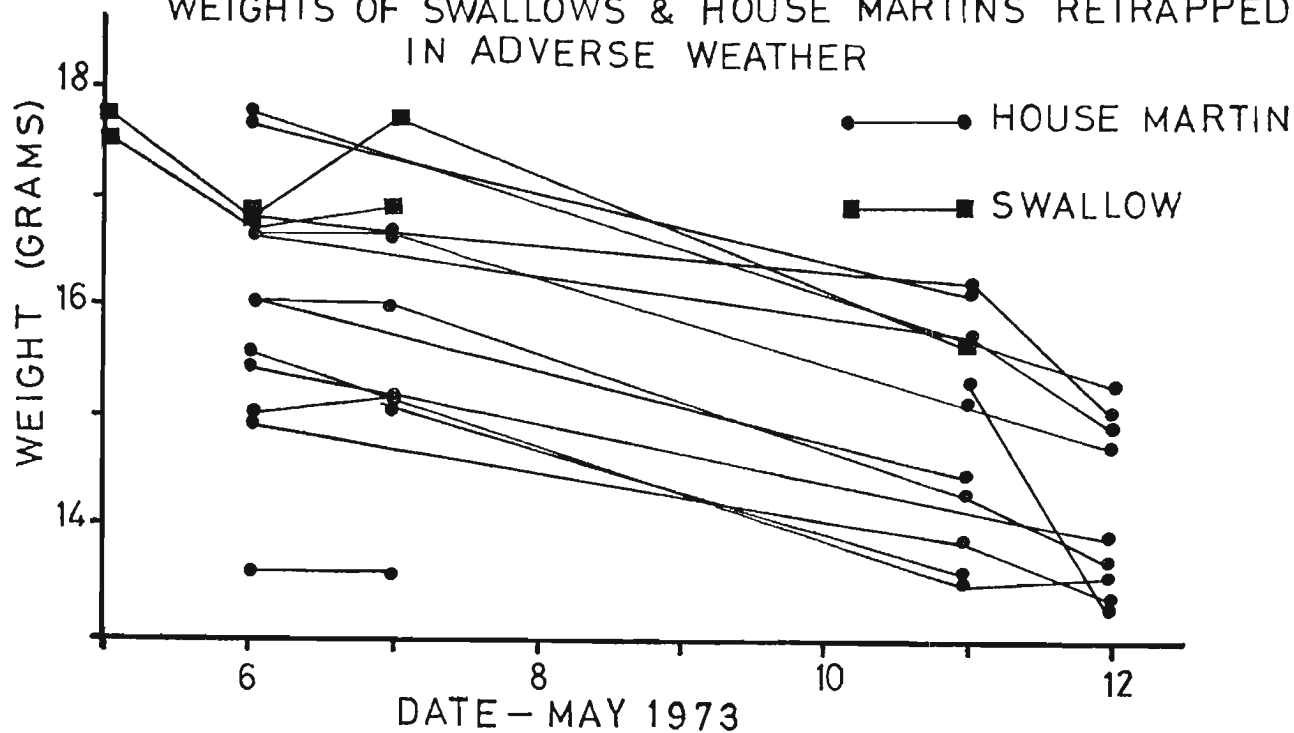
Twenty seven House Martins arrived on Fair Isle on 5th May (the only previous records this year had been singles on 2nd and 4th) and a few Swallows arrived from 1st May. On the night of 3rd/4th two Swallows entered the Observatory garage where they settled to roost on the beams and there were three more the next night (see photograph on inside front cover). On the night of 5th/6th 4 Swallows and 27 House Martins did likewise and after dark these birds were captured, taken into the Observatory, where they were roosted overnight and early the following morning were ringed, measured and weighed before release.

During this period the weather log records: moderate-poor visibility, drizzle and fog combined with low temperatures. These conditions continued over the next few days obviously to the detriment of the hirundines which, having arrived on the Island at relatively low weights, could find few aerial insects to satisfy their needs. Consequently, many took to feeding low over the tide line where some food was evidently still to be obtained. However, their activity was limited to periods of reasonable visibility and some of the birds were noticed huddled together in the Observatory garage during daylight hours. Despite some moderation in the weather on 8th and 9th conditions remained fairly poor over the next few days.

On the nights of 10th/11th and 11th/12th several hirundines again entered the garage to roost, both House Martins and Swallows clustered tightly together, some on top of others. These were caught in the evening and roosted in the Observatory bird room. On examination the following morning the majority were found to be recaptures of birds ringed 4-5 days previously. Almost without exception the weights of the birds showed a decrease (weight of 23 House Martins ringed on 6th May: 13.6-17.8g, mean 15.6g; weights of 12 House Martins retrapped on 11th and 12th May: 13.3-16.2g, mean 14.4g).

The majority of weight studies on migrant birds have been concerned with the deposition of fat and weight build-up prior to migration. The opportunity to investigate the depletion of these reserves rarely presents itself. In this case Swallows and House Martins freshly arrived at Fair Isle at low weights and with partially depleted reserves continued to lose weight dur-

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ing adverse weather when food was scarce. Conservation of energy was presumably achieved, to some extent, by prolonged periods of inactivity and through the reduction of heat loss by individuals huddled together.

None of the Fair Isle ringed hirundines were recaptured or found dead after 12th and it seems likely that they were able to put on enough weight to continue their journeys, when the weather improved. Between 5th-13th May, 3 House Martins and 3 Swallows were found dead, as a result of the critical conditions and a ringed Swallow was also found dead at this time; it had been ringed the previous autumn in Fife. Like others noted previously on Fair Isle this bird could well have died as a result of overshooting its destination.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

INDEX FOR BULLETINS AND ANNUAL REPORTS

A Grant has been kindly offered by the Scottish Ornithologists' Club to cover the cost of printing and publishing an Index for all *Bulletins* and *Annual Reports* published by the Trust.

We are indebted to Roy Dennis and Roger Broad for the preparation of the Index.

Copies will be made available free on request. But as the production will be costly, the number of copies printed will be limited according to demand.

It is therefore essential that anyone wishing to obtain a copy of the Index should apply to the Hon. Secretary, FIBOT, 21 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh EH7 5BT NOT LATER THAN 1st NOVEMBER 1974.

The Late Professor M. F. M. Meiklejohn

The death of Maury Meiklejohn on 14th May 1974 after a short illness has come as a sad blow.

He became a Trustee of Fair Isle Bird Observatory Trust in 1949 on coming to Scotland to take up the post of Professor of Italian at Glasgow University, and since then he took an active interest in migration studies at both Fair Isle and the Isle of May.

He paid many visits to Fair Isle—particularly in the early days when Ken and Esther Williamson were in charge, and we have many happy memories of him there. He will be greatly missed too by the islanders with whom, in typical fashion, he was soon on intimate terms. He was particularly fond of 'Fieldy' (the late George Stout of Field), and contributed a sensitive appreciation of him in our Annual Report for 1966. The two of them were often seen together wandering around the crofts on the lookout for rarities—both kenspeckle figures.

I well remember the excitement when Maury doggedly tracked down and identified a Lesser Golden Plover in September 1956. His knowledge of unusual vagrants was remarkable, and it was not surprising that he became a member of the 'Ten Rare Men' for a spell. He was punctilious and most careful in all his work.

To those of us who were privileged to know him, what endeared him to us all was his superlative sense of humour and his gentleness of character.

In the early days of the Bird Observatory, visitors used to take it in turns to write up the daily Log. Maury's contributions were always well worth reading for their humorous descriptions of the daily happenings—interspersed frequently with verse. Visitors are well advised to find out from the Visitors' Book the dates when he was on the island, and to look up the relevant Log entries!

The following is an example . . .

*While the birdswatchers school at Fair Isle
went to church in a spruce crocodile,
sad unbelievers
reeled off to the Reeves
with a Godless but satisfied smile.*

G.W.

Stop Press : 1974

Gannets attempting to breed :

For the past few years, Gannets have been coming ashore to sit around in July. In 1974, four birds were ashore at Glimster in the north-west corner of Fair Isle as early as 26th April. Then, on 21st May there was a maximum of seventy on the rocks at Dronga, and up to twenty-seven up to the end of June.

Three nests have been constructed, but as far as can be seen no eggs have been laid.

Whimbrel and Common Gulls breed :

A pair of each successfully hatched young again this year.

(From notes supplied by Roger A. Broad).

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Photograph by Dennis Coutts

If you would like to spend a birdwatching holiday on Fair Isle . . . write to the Warden, Bird Observatory, Fair Isle, Shetland, for a copy of our Prospectus.

Between May and September, the island mail-boat operates on Tuesdays and Fridays, leaving Fair Isle at 6 am, arriving at Grutness pier, Sumburgh, in the south of Shetland three hours later. It leaves Grutness on the return journey at midday. On Saturdays during the same period, the Bird Observatory operates a charter flight in and out of Fair Isle in a 7-seater 'Islander' aircraft operated by Loganair Ltd. All booking arrangements for these flights must be made through the F.I.B.O. Warden.

You can phone the Warden (Fair Isle 258) at the cheap rate after 6 pm or at weekends to discuss all booking arrangements.

MEMBERSHIP

We urgently require more 'Friends of Fair Isle'. Will you help please? Ask for Membership Form. Please persuade some of your friends to subscribe—preferably by Banker's Order and Deed of Covenant.

FAIR ISLE BIRD OBSERVATORY

