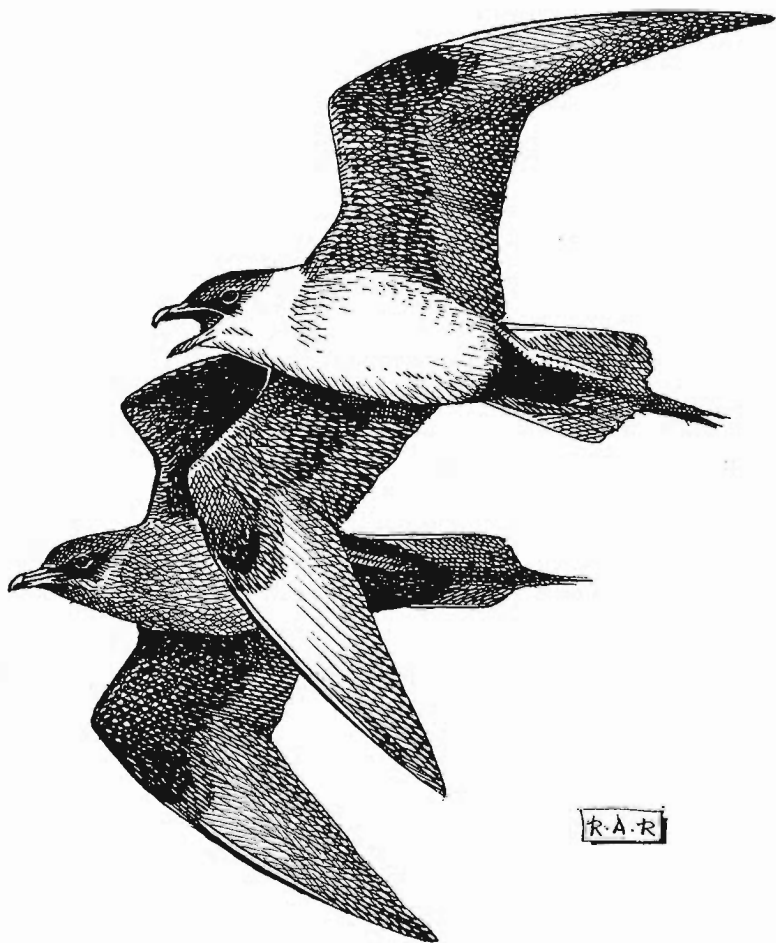


Fair Isle Bird Observatory

REPORT FOR 1976



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



Good Shepherd 2 approaching the Sheep Rock from south.

Photograph by National Trust for Scotland

CORRECTION. We regret that the titles for the photographs of the Siberian Rubythroat and Tennessee Warbler were unfortunately transposed in the middle pages of 1975 Report. Also, the photograph purporting to be of Barkland was in fact the Nurse's cottage at Shirva.

STOP PRESS

We have just had news of the death of Sir A Landsborough Thomson, one of our Trustees; and of Mr Kenneth Williamson, Warden of FIBOT from 1948-56.

Fair Isle Bird Observatory

REPORT No. 29

1976

Edited by GEORGE WATERSTON

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Foreword	3
Storm Petrel results in 1976	4
Lighthouse casualties, autumn 1976	6
Warden's Report for 1976	8
Systematic List	22
Obituary : G. Theo Kay	35
Ringling Details 1976	52
Recoveries in 1976	56
Recaptures in 1976	61
Ringed Strangers in 1976	62
Treasurer's Report	63
John Harrison Memorial Trust	68

Fair Isle Bird Observatory

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***Member of Executive Sub-Committee**

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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

NEXT year 1978 is the fiftieth year after the National Heron census. And what, you may well ask, has this anniversary to do with F.I.B.O.T.? I will tell you. The heron census was the first really successful attempt to achieve cooperation on a national scale of field naturalists interested in birds. It is not so much the census and its success as the fact that it marked the start of a new era in the ornithological history of the country that makes 1928 so memorable a date. From this cooperation flowed the whole range of institutions and activities that we now take largely for granted. At that time there was no possible career in this country as a professional ornithologist outside of a museum and a fairly sombre career within one. We are proud in F.I.B.O.T. that the man who above all has been responsible for starting this ornithological revolution and through the years in one way or another has supplied so much of the energy to keep the wheels revolving, Max Nicholson has from our inception been and still is one of our Trustees. Doubtless others will ensure that this remarkable jubilee will not pass unnoticed, but it is perhaps not unfitting that, as a participant in the Heron census and an associate in some other of Max's ploys, I should draw attention to its imminence.

In the ornithological world of the years before 1928 it is inconceivable that an organisation such as F.I.B.O.T. could have existed. I hope that the perusal of this year's report shows you that the work on the island is as interesting, useful and productive as ever both in the strictly ornithological sense and also in the way that the activity generated on the island has been helpful in maintaining the community on Fair Isle.

You will see from the Treasurer's report that we have been involved in considerable expenditure in complying with the fire regulations at the hostel. The H.I.D.B. have again been extremely helpful in this regard and we thank them for their continuing and generous support.

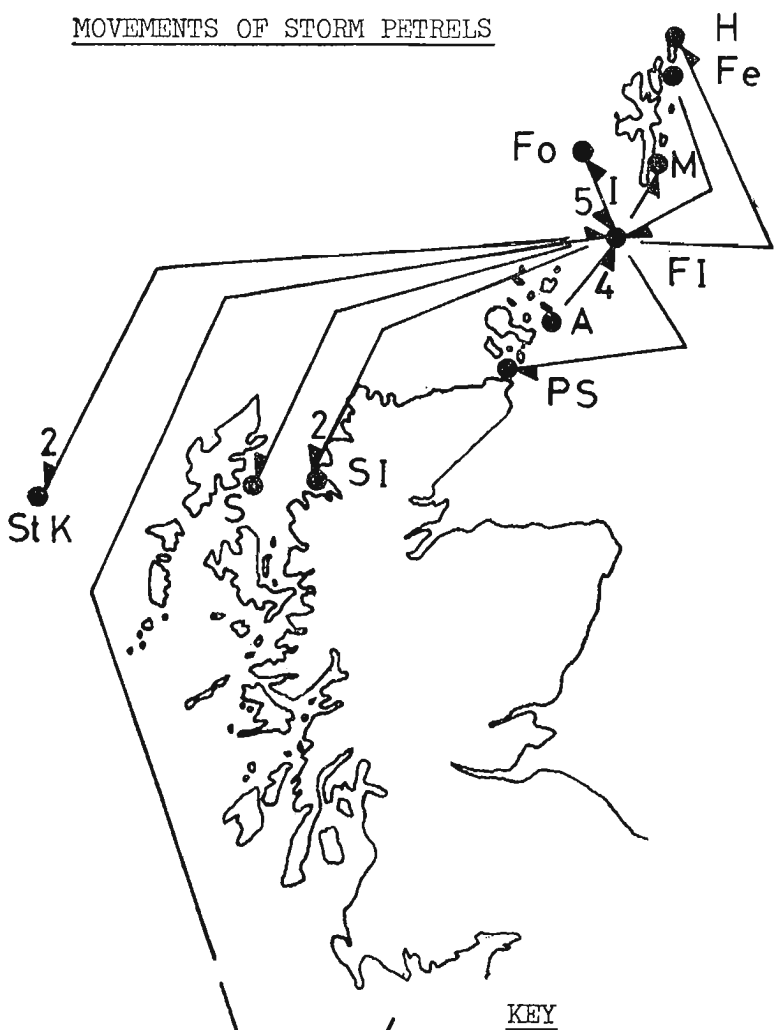
Our indomitable George Waterston hopes to visit the island later this year and we are busily engaged in discussions as to the future running and servicing of the Trust and hope to reach some suitable arrangements fairly soon.

In the meantime we have had another good year on the island and are particularly indebted to Judy and Roger Broad for their continuing successful work on Fair Isle.

May I thank you for your interest in our affairs and for your support without which we could not continue. We would greatly appreciate anything you may be able and willing to do in interesting others in F.I.B.O.T.

ARTHUR B. DUNCAN, *Chairman.*

MOVEMENTS OF STORM PETRELS



**Skomer
Pembs**

KEY

4 Movement, showing direction and number of birds when more than one.

A	Auskerry	M	Mousa
Fe	Fetlar	PS	Pentland Skerries
Fo	Foula	S	Shiant Islands
FI	Fair Isle	St K	St. Kilda
H	Hermaness	SI	Summer Isles

Some Storm Petrel results in 1976

All movements of Stormies to and from Fair Isle and reported in 1976 are shown on the accompanying map. They include one moving from Fair Isle to Foula in 1972 and only reported recently (this movement is excluded from the following tables). As usual all birds had been ringed in the last few years (see table 1) with the exception of one bird ringed on Foula in 1963.

TABLE 1 Year of ringing of Storm Petrels moving in 1975

Year ringed	1963	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976
Number of recoveries	—	—	—	1	2	5
Number of controls	1	1	—	2	2	5

The large number of recoveries and controls undoubtedly reflects the effort put into catching the species on Fair Isle and emphasises the success of using taped calls to lure the birds into mist nets. Table 2 shows the annual catches during the last five years and it can be seen that average catches/night in 1974 and 1975, when taped lures were extensively used, are considerably larger than for the preceding three years when tapes were not used. The figures for 1968 have been included for comparative purposes—this being the only year when the level of Stormie captures has approached the level achieved using tape-lures. It should also be added that when trapping was carried out at more than one site on the same night each site has been included as a separate trapping night. Also to achieve a realistic comparison between years, all nights on which trapping success was virtually minimal have been excluded.

TABLE 2 Number of Storm Petrels trapped annually to show effect of using tape-lures in 1974 and 1975

Year	1968	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976
Number of Stormies ringed	615	223	230	203	627	1019
Number of nights trapping	27	10	13	11	15	30
Average number of birds trapped/ night	23	22	18	18	42	34

The use of taped calls has also shown that at Fair Isle the distribution of Storm Petrels moving along the cliffs is far from uniform through the night. There is very often a marked 'wave effect' with periods of high activity following periods of absolute inactivity. These 'waves' of varying intensity may continue throughout the night.

The Shetland movements follow the typical pattern of interchange between colonies (see Ringed Strangers FIBO 1968 Report), and once again movements between Fair Isle and

Foula show a strong bias in favour of birds moving in the southerly direction. There are considerably more movements between Orkney and Fair Isle than in any previous year but it seems likely that this is the typical picture which has been revealed by the increased trapping of Stormies in Orkney by a few dedicated ringers. Our first movements between the Shiant Islands and the Summer Isles (2) and the 2nd and 3rd movements between St Kilda and Fair Isle may also, in part, reflect increased ringing activity in these areas. However, the rapid Skomer control (ringed 26.7.76 and controlled 15.8.76) cannot, even in part, be explained in this way. This bird comes from an area which despite intensive Storm Petrel ringing at neighbouring colonies has produced only one previous movement to Shetland (Skokholm 1969 to Fetlar 1972).

TABLE 3 Storm Petrel recaptures

	1968	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976
Number from previous years	4	6	7	4	10	21
Number from same year	35	1	6	1	14	72
Total all recaptures	29	7	13	5	24	93

Apart from increasing our knowledge of interchange between colonies, the use of tape-lures greatly increased our recapture rate on the Island (see table 3). We will have to wait until another season to determine whether this dramatic increase was typical or not and perhaps, through future recaptures, determine more about what these birds are doing at Fair Isle. What does seem certain is that the majority of birds trapped are not strongly connected to any particular site on Fair Isle and only 12 of the 72 birds retrapped in 1976 were recaptured at the same site where they were originally trapped.

Corrections to the 1975 Annual Report

The photograph showing reconstruction work in progress is of North Shirva (the Nurse's House) and not of Barkland. The captions to the photographs of the Tennessee Warbler and the Siberian Rubythroat have been transposed.

Brief summary of lighthouse casualties, autumn, 1976

Large attractions of night migrants to the Fair Isle lighthouse are generally infrequent and casualties few. Suitable weather conditions for attraction this autumn coincided with an exceptionally large volume of migrating birds and 'lighthouse nights' were more frequent than in most years. The casualties found around the Skadan (South) Lighthouse build-

ings and perimeter on the morning following the main attractions are shown in the following table. At the Skroo (North) Light the attractions seem to have been considerably smaller and fatalities confined to only a few birds.

Birds killed at Skadan Lighthouse, autumn 1976

	September				October			
	26/27	27/28	19/20	20/21	21/22	25/26	27/28	Total
Snipe	1							1
Woodcock							1	1
Skylark	13	4				1		18
Fieldfare						6	1	7
Song Thrush			1	2				3
Redwing			6	11	4	63	5	89
Blackbird						1	1	2
Blackcap	1							1
Starling			1	1		5		7
Totals	15	4	8	14	4	76	8	129

WARDEN'S REPORT FOR 1976

By ROGER A. BROAD

Tony Taylor was assistant warden until October when he left to take up a year's course at a Teacher's Training College. Jan Pettersson assisted during the summer months with the seabird work. In the hostel, Ann Richardson returned to cook for the spring and summer and Lizzie Camm took over for the autumn. Ann Welby was assistant cook for the whole season and additional help was given by Alison Shearer during the busy autumn period.

The number of visitor-weeks booked in 1976 showed a substantial drop over the previous year's bookings. The autumn, as usual, was booked almost to capacity in August and September and the combined bookings for the autumn were the best ever. Disappointingly small numbers of visitors in spring and summer and the lack of workmen staying during the off-peak periods were responsible for the drop in occupancy. Overall 358 visitors stayed for a total of 402 visitor-weeks and of these 34 travelled from abroad. Grants were given by the John Harrison Memorial Fund to help seven young ornithologists with their expenses. One new venture was the independent block-booking of the Observatory by a Workers Educational Association ornithological course. It was organised and led by Eric Meek (previously assistant warden in 1972) and Brian Little. A measure of the success of this venture was an immediate decision to repeat the course in 1977. The Observatory also benefited during the summer by the arrangements of

Dr Colin Pennycuik, University of Bristol who arranged for Juliet Brodie to carry out a vegetation survey of the Island as part of her undergraduate course. After an enforced absence from the Island since his last visit in October 1974, we were very pleased to be able to welcome George Waterston back to the Observatory for a couple of nights in the spring of this year (in between stints on the kidney machine). Joe Eggeling and Richard Richardson, also both officials of FIBOT stayed at the Observatory and Peter Slater made a brief day visit from Orkney on the *Orcadia*.

The electrical supply to the hostel has been backed up by the provision of a 7½ Kw Lister generator as a standby engine. It was acquired through the NTS in part exchange for our previous 1½ Kw engine. Originally the 7½ Kw engine was part of the Island supply and was housed at Taft. In the early spring we were visited by the Fire Prevention Officer and his report in relation to the Fire Precautions Act, 1971 was received later in the year. The costly recommendations arising from his long-awaited visit will undoubtedly cause some changes in the coming season but it is hoped that inconvenience to our visitors will be minimal.

Island Events

1976 saw the beginning of work on the long-overdue mains water scheme. By the end of the year much of the pipeline was completed and work had begun on providing a supply from the Vaadal Burn. A small dam is being constructed just upstream of the Vaadal trap, and this will, when completed, feed by gravity, via a pipeline buried in the stream bank, to a pump-house situated just upstream of the Plantation trap. The pump will then push water up to the top of Tarryfield where the reservoir and filter (joint capacity 12,000 gallons) are being constructed. When finished, one branch should carry water to all the crofts and the South Light, and a second branch will connect with the Bird Observatory. It is hoped that 1977 will be the start of a new era in which no house has the thankless task of carrying buckets and filling tanks to supplement dwindling wells and springs.

The new electricity scheme is now fully operational and is administered by an Island Committee who have assumed full financial responsibility for the scheme. A 52 Kw Lister generator, sited at the quarry on the north side of the Houll, provides a central supply, consumption being metered at each croft house and the supply being controlled by a time clock.

Work has continued with the installation of equipment at the Orkney-Shetland telecommunication relay station attached to the 150 feet mast on Ward Hill. With completion of the Ork-

ney end of the link many of the croft houses have taken rapid advantage of the 625-line and colour reception (as attested by the new generation of TV aerials).

The Shetland Islands Council agreed to provide a road to Busta and Springfield, and at the end of the year work began on constructing a road east from the Chapel to join the previously isolated houses.

A fire-fighting unit has been established on the island, manned by a volunteer brigade. The first two training sessions were held under the supervision of the Lerwick Fire Officer, and towards the end of the year the unit saw its first action. They were called on to pump out the hold of a Faroese fishing boat—the *Fleyr*—which had shipped a lot of water after losing a hatch cover in rough seas.

The fire-fighting equipment at the airstrip, generously loaned to the National Trust for Scotland by Loganair last year was eventually removed from Fair Isle and installed at the new airstrip at Tingwall in Shetland. The N.T.S. have replaced it with a second-hand equipment in order to satisfy the Civil Aviation Authority who have now licensed the airstrip for scheduled flights. Loganair began a trial scheduled flight during the summer. The service was weekly with two flights on the one day, and this was followed by a more modest winter service introduced from the New Year. Both summer and winter flights were successful, and Loganair propose to extend their scheduled services from April 1977 with two flights on Mondays and Fridays during the summer, leaving Sumburgh at 0855 hours and 1610 hours.

Both the *Regina Maris* and the *Orcadia* called at Fair Isle and managed to land their passengers. As usual the Observatory was open for the National Trust Cruise and the island ladies sold their goods and served tea. In reciprocation, the crew of the *Regina Maris* provided a beach barbecue in the evening (see photograph)—a novelty which was much appreciated by the Islanders.

Camps organised by Enterprise Youth stayed on the island during the summer and they were concerned mainly with the reroofing of the old store at the North Haven (see photograph). This interesting old building was formerly roofed with stone slates, but the roof was badly damaged in a gale a few years ago and many of the slates badly damaged. The original couples in the roof have been repositioned and strengthened to take the weight of the slates by the addition of new wooden horizontal spars. On this framework the old slates were rehung, but having discarded several severely damaged slates, the final row on the ridge was incomplete. It is hoped that

suitable matching replacements will be found for this final row in either Shetland or Orkney. Mr Tom Henderson of Lerwick Museum is of the opinion that this old building is at least 17th century and possibly contemporary with the old Fish Store at the South Harbour. There is mention in literature of a booth built by Sinclair of Quendale for the use of a Hamburg merchant at the South Harbour but no mention of one at the North Haven. In 1804 there is mention of 'two warehouses for storing fish, oil, etc—both roofed with turf.' It goes on to suggest reroofing with slate, and this may refer to the first slates put on the North Haven Store. This important conservation work initiated by the N.T.S. aims to restore the store to its former appearance, and it will be used as a store for equipment for the *Good Shepherd*.

Within the Island community there have also been changes. Helen Stout of Busta, one of the few remaining traditional hand knitters, died in April and her ever cheerful hospitality to visitors will be greatly missed. The N.T.S. hope to begin steps to modernise the house in due course.

Andrew Stout, a son of Jamie of Midway, and his wife Kathleen took over the croft at Setter in the spring and their first child, Christopher, was born later in the year. Neil Thomson, younger son of Stewart of the Post Office at Shirva and his wife Pat who moved into Lower Stoneybrake last year, now also have a son Innes. Dave and Jane Wheeler at Field have adopted a baby daughter, Mary. The increasing number of children on the island is reflected at the school where, with the three new admissions, the register now shows 12 pupils—the highest number since the N.T.S. took over the island. A further five will start school in 1977, with only two leaving in the summer. The average age of the Fair Island population must now be one of the lowest in the Shetland islands—a highly gratifying situation.

At the end of the academic year, Dennis and Stella Shepherd moved to Sandness in Shetland where Stella is now teaching. They had been resident on Fair Isle since 1970—Stella as teacher and Dennis as missionary to the Church of Scotland. They were replaced by Roderick Thorne, a keen ornithologist who formerly taught at schools on Fetlar and Cunnisburgh. At Christmas, Rod was married and returned in the New Year with his wife Sylvia. He later resigned the position of missionary—a post now vacant on the island.

At the South Lighthouse, Norma and Iain Paisley, Colin and Darren, were transferred to the Isle of Man. They were replaced by Elizabeth and Robert Hepburn, and George who moved from the North to the South Lighthouse. Ann and George McDermott moved in to complete the complement at the North.

Acknowledgments

At the Hostel, and in all our work, our staff has been particularly helpful and we are most grateful to them all. Our island friends have continued to support us in many ways, not least in allowing us continued access to their land in search of migrants. Jimmy and Liz Watt (South Light) have helped in many ways with our records, and this has been valued during the winter when there is little coverage. The Royal Scottish Museum continued to loan us a useful collection of bird skins. We have received many kindnesses from our visitors who have helped the Observatory in many ways, and we greatly appreciate Richard Richardson's unfailing support with gifts of Shetland books for the library and for again illustrating this report with his delightful vignettes.

Ornithology

January-February

The first two months of the year were dull with little sunshine. January was generally cold with more rain than usual but February was a little warmer and dryer. The usual small variety of species overwintered including a few Skylarks, thrushes, 1-2 Robins and small numbers of Snow Buntings, and at sea Goldeneye and Long-tailed Ducks were recorded regularly. Other species, less frequently present during the winter, were Merlin, Water Rail and Curlew and these were joined in February by a Rook and a Glaucous Gull. A number of Jack Snipe were trapped in February, and some may well have been present all winter. Northerly passage began in February with the first Oystercatchers, Lapwings, Ringed Plovers and Skylarks appearing at typical dates. Stonechats appeared in small numbers from 21st (within a day of the beginning of the '75 passage). Two unusual features were a small influx of Coots in early February and an influx of Dunlin from 30th January-11th February. Additional species were few and far between in January and early February, although a Bean Goose dazzled on 6th February and a Waxwing seen on 8th are worthy of mention. From mid-February the variety of species increased marginally giving a hint of expectancy.

March

The month continued on the cold side with frequent snow showers and below average hours of sunshine. The wind was recurrently south to south east, moderate to strong on many days. The general ornithological picture was one in which the early wader species, which had made their first appearance in February, generally became more noticeable as parties pushed north. Large numbers of Skylarks built up in the first week of the month before moving on in mid-month, and, as

in '74, Stonechats were present throughout. The first Meadow Pipit (22nd), Lesser Blackback (24th) and Puffins (31st) appeared on typical dates. Further evidence of migration was rather restricted and the only early March movement of note was on 8th when, with the wind backing into the west, a Kestrel, 3 Rooks, 2 Jackdaws and a very small, but noticeable influx of Blackbirds were seen. Not until 25th was there any comparable arrival when 70 Blackbirds, a Mistle Thrush and an early ♂ Wheatear arrived. Three Woodpigeons were seen the following day and an extremely early Red-throated Diver was seen on 28th.

April

The month opened cold and wintry and, although changeable it remained this way for the first ten days. Warmer weather mid-month was accompanied by periods of rain as a series of depressions and fronts moved east across Shetland. High pressure established on 18th gave some good sunny periods and light winds to the end of April. During the cold opening days few birds were moving and not until the calmer, high pressure system became established did the arrival of the spring passerine migrants begin to pick up momentum. Small numbers of White Wagtails, Bramblings, Chaffinches and a few Linnets were also recorded from mid-month but outgoing thrushes remained scarce and Robins, Goldcrests, often a feature of the early spring, were virtually absent. The return of Black-headed and Common Gulls to their breeding grounds resulted in visible northerly passage on many days.

A Bonxie was seen on 1st and a fine Gyr Falcon sighted originally over Gilsetter was relocated on Ward Hill from where it was watched until out of sight, flying towards Shetland. Wheatears appeared in style on 10th when at least 20 arrived. Meadow Pipits also became widespread and there was a Stock Dove. Parties of Whoopers were arriving in the morning and by afternoon an impressive herd of 54 were massed on the sea at Dutfield. Half the herd had departed by the following morning. A trickle of species appeared in the next few days including Sparrowhawk and Yellowhammer on 11th; Black Redstart, Grey Wagtail and Greenfinch on 12th; 2 Slavonian Grebes in full breeding plumage, White Wagtail and Siskin on 14th and Linnet on 15th. A sizeable flock of Curlew was recorded on 16th and on 17th 5 Greylags and the first Arctic Skua were recorded. The arrival of the first Chiffchaff is a landmark in every spring and this year 2 on 18th preceded a Black Redstart and a few more White Wagtails on 19th. On 20th a second and larger influx of Wheatears occurred and Whimbrel, Ring Ouzel (2) and Great Grey Shrike all appeared. The 21st revealed a larger arrival of

birds: Wheatears had increased further to 80, Ring Ouzel had doubled, Willow Warbler, Tree Pipit and 7 Mealy Redpolls were seen and there was a large northerly movement of Common Gulls. Also 2 Mergansers, 11 Whoopers, a Sparrowhawk and a Great Spotted Woodpecker were seen. The latter, an unusual species to be seen in spring, remained for several days. Redstart, Short-eared Owl and 2 Great Grey Shrikes were recorded on 22nd and in the evening a flock of 25 Whimbrel was seen over Vaassetter. A large flock of Curlew was seen on 25th when a roving band of 19 Ravens stopped briefly on the Isle. A Swallow was seen on 26th and a Lapland Bunting on 27th. On 29th raptors were to the fore—2 Sparrowhawks, 2 Merlins and ♀ Hen Harrier were seen and there was a handful more Bramblings and Ring Ouzels. 2 Sand Martins put in their first appearance on 30th.

May

Winds were generally south to south west in the first fortnight with rain and showers on several days. From the 19th the winds, which were rarely strong in the early month, fell even lighter, variable, but mainly south east giving several warm and sunny days. There were no spectacular arrivals of the common migrants, more a steady stream of some variety, numbers remaining generally low until late in the month when Red-backed Shrike, Spotted Flycatcher, Garden Warbler and Whitethroat appeared in numbers well above average, especially during the fine calm weather in the 2nd half of the month.

Small numbers of common migrants arrived daily in the first week of May and these included the first Greenshank, Common Sandpiper, Collared Dove, Whinchat, Whitethroat, Spotted Flycatcher and *flava* Wagtail. A Corncrake was seen on 2nd and on 3rd a Buzzard sp., thought to be a Honey Buzzard, was seen by several observers. An unlikely species to be recorded on the same date was the Island's latest record of Little Auk, seen flying north in company with other auks. A Tawny Pipit was near the North Light on 5th and a Goshawk was seen over Hoini on 6th. The 8th produced the first modest influx of hirundines which coincided with a marked increase of other common migrants, Whinchats (25) and Willow Warblers (25) were the most noticeable but Wryneck Corncrake and the first 'commic' tern, Grasshopper Warbler and Sedge Warbler were also seen. Although very few species arrived in any number over the next few days there was a steady trickle of unusual species. A Red-rumped Swallow found near Skerryholm on 9th gave excellent views and was later seen at Furse. Pied Flycatchers appeared for the first time on 10th and the first of the breeding Common Terns returned to the North Haven on 11th. Tree Pipits increased

to 20 on 12th and an Ortolan was seen. A Corn Bunting—a species which now only occurs infrequently—was seen on 13th and after last year's total absence, it was pleasant to record 3 Grasshopper Warblers. The 14th brought the first of the Turtle Doves, a Wood Warbler and there were 2 Ortolans. A Fair Isle rarity, a Canada Goose, was discovered on the beach at Linni Geo on 15th and both Quail and Bluethroat were seen. A different Tawny Pipit was discovered near Skerryholm on 17th. The following day saw the first sizeable arrival for several days. There were additional Woodpigeons, another wave of Collared Doves, a Cuckoo, more Sedge Warblers (7), Tree Pipits (40), 4 Bluethroats and a Red-backed Shrike. Unusual for Fair Isle were the large numbers of hirundines: 60 Swallows, 10 Sand Martins and 120 House Martins. These were to remain common for the rest of the month, with several further influxes. The arrival of 18th was short-lived and during the next few days migrants returned to a trickle of mainly unusual species. On 19th there were 2 Rosefinches and on 21st, as well as Ortolan and Wood Sandpiper an obliging Honey Buzzard was seen by everyone. A Wood Warbler was seen on 22nd and there was another influx of hirundines. 3 Red-backed Shrikes were seen on 23rd and a Tawny Pipit was seen briefly at Golden Water. A ♀ Rustic Bunting was seen early on 24th and later trapped in the Double Dyke trap. On 25th-26th, probably the largest and most varied arrival of the spring took place. On the first day numbers of Turtle Doves increased to 6, Bluethroats to 7, Spotted Flycatchers and Red-backed Shrikes were more in evidence and a Wry-neck (uncommon this spring) was recorded. A Short-toed Lark was at Setter and the Bull's Park and an elusive small falcon was finally tracked down in the evening at Beeva and later identified as a ♂ American Kestrel, the first record for Britain. It was seen again the following day when most other species had increased further. There were 5 Cuckoos, more Whinchats and Redstarts and 4 Black Redstarts. A good selection of warblers included a Marsh, 12 Sedge, 35 Garden and 20 Whitethroats. Both Pied and more particularly Spotted Flycatchers (50) were in good numbers. A Hoopoe was found and 12 different Red-backed Shrikes located. The last species was to remain numerous into June. An Icterine was found on 29th and there were 3 on 30th when a Golden Oriole was seen, and a more general arrival, similar in composition to that of 25th-26th but in lesser numbers, was recorded.

June

There were many fine and settled days early in June with winds generally light and variable. It became more changeable later with intermittent fine and foggy spells and on 27th almost gale force south west winds. Some of the migrants

present at the end of May remained into the first few days of June after which the usual season decrease occurred, but Turtle Doves and hirundines remained unusually common to the mid-month. Quail were a constant feature of June with several sightings and birds heard regularly. Collared Doves followed their recent pattern with further influxes throughout.

The last small influx of the spring occurred on 1st June when Garden Warblers were the most obvious species to increase. Three Icterines were present and a fine ♂ Subalpine Warbler was found and later trapped at the Observatory. On 3rd, the second Red-rumped Swallow of the spring was found and it too frequented the Skerryholm and Leogh area. On 4th a Black Redstart was seen and a frustrating observation involved a dark-looking Eagle seen over the sea, too far away for detail to be discerned. An Osprey was seen over Meoness on the following day, a very fine adult ♂ Scarlet Rosefinch was found at Midway on 7th and the same day a Red-throated Pipit trapped itself in the Gully. On 8th, an influx of Tree Sparrows, begun earlier in the month, peaked at 17 but the excitement of the month was the discovery at Field of a Bimaculated Lark. Another Red-throated Pipit appeared on 10th and a Marsh Warbler was trapped on 11th. 10 Greylags made an out of season visit on 15th and stayed on for several days. Even more unexpected in mid-June was a ♂ Lapland Bunting on 16th and the following day a Spotted Redshank was reported. A Scarlet Rosefinch was trapped on 18th and the only Iceland Gull of the year was recorded on 20th. A Goldfinch arrived at the Observatory on 22nd at dusk and obligingly flew into the trap. On 24th a Black Redstart was recorded and the following day 2 Sandwich Terns were seen. A ♂ Red-backed Shrike on 26th and a Lesser Whitethroat on 28th were the last of a longer than usual list of out of season migrants in late June.

July

Long spells of calm weather with temperatures above average in the first half of the month were marred only by the occurrence on a number of days of fog and low cloud. At the end of the month there was a return to more windy conditions with showers and drizzle more frequent. In the first half of the month there continued to be the occasional record of migrants, for example Song Thrush and Scarlet Rosefinch on 4th, ♂ Red-backed Shrike on 5th and Black Redstart and Marsh Warbler on 6th. A Long-tailed Skua on 9th was followed by another on 14th and a third on 15th stayed for 4 days on the airstrip with the Arctic Skuas. A Honey Buzzard was seen on 16th, 2 Sandwich Terns on 18th and several Song

Thrushes appeared in mid-month. Numbers of south-moving Common and Black-headed Gulls began to appear from the middle of the month, and the first waders beginning to move at the same time involved mainly adults. The 19th was the peak day for waders in July with good numbers for several species for so early in the autumn including 40 Redshank, 24 Knot, 16 Purple Sandpipers, 20 Dunlin and 20 Sanderling. Most of these early birds had moved on within days and the rest of July was quieter although Green Sandpiper on 21st and Ruff on 26th were recorded.

August

Rainfall was well below average and despite the first few days being generally unsettled the persistent feature of August was high pressure and settled conditions giving good hours of sunshine and generally light winds, but mist and fog occurred on a number of days. As the high pressure moved away in the last few days a temporary south easterly airstream was established. The calm conditions in August were excellent for the night mist netting of Storm Petrels and a good number of Leach's were again recorded.

Sandwich Terns (4) again visited the Isle on 4th but not until the 9-14th did the first trickle of passerines appear, including the first Barred Warbler. The southerly passage of Cormorants, typical of the season, began in earnest on 14th, when there was also another influx of waders and yet another Sandwich Tern. A good arrival occurred on 15-16th when 2 Barreds, 40 Willow Warblers and a Scarlet Rosefinch on the first day increased on the second when the following were recorded: 20 Whinchats, 10 Garden Warblers, Wood Warbler, 55 Pied Flycatchers, Red-backed Shrike and 2 Scarlet Rosefinches. In addition Sparrowhawk, Merlin and an influx of 80 Redshanks and 45 Purple Sandpipers were noted. Although no comparable movement was recorded in the next few days, there was a small but significant turnover. A Reed Warbler was trapped on 17th and another on 18th and on 19th there was a different Rosefinch, an increase to 4 Wood Warblers and an Aquatic Warbler was trapped at Skerryholm. Another was caught the next day at Kennaby and the first Sooty Shearwater was recorded from the Island on 21st. Throughout this time parties of waders continued to pause briefly on the Island. Between 22-25th there was another, lesser arrival of birds, again with several species making their first autumn appearances, including the first trickle of Fieldfares. Willow Warblers were the species most in evidence but there were also a few Wrynecks, an Oortolan on 22nd and Barred Warblers were probably, for 1976, at their most plentiful. A Booted Warbler was trapped at Quoy on 25th and remained, after

release, near the Observatory for several days. White Wag-tails, which had been widely distributed since mid-month, peaked in the closing days of the month when another small but varied arrival of Continental passerines occurred. On 29th Willow Warblers were once again the main species but there were also 4 Wrynecks, Black Redstart and Ortolan. On 30th a scattering of Whinchats, Spotted Flycatchers and Tree Pipits were seen and Garden Warblers were in moderate numbers. A Red-backed Shrike and 3 Ortolans were located, and a final August wave of waders included 65 Golden Plover, Black-tailed Godwit and Spotted Redshank.

September

A moderate to strong north to north west airstream persisted for much of the first week after which it became mainly strong north to north north east as a series of depressions tracked east. High pressure developed over Scandinavia in mid-month and produced more settled weather with continuing but lighter easterly winds to the end of the month. Rain-fall was considerably less than average. The north west airstream early in the month contributed to a marked influx of Greenland Redpoll, some of which remained for many days. The second half of the month with predominantly easterly winds produced a series of arrivals which brought good numbers of several species to the Island. The number of Jack Snipe were particularly noteworthy. Also there was much in the way of unusual species to interest all-comers.

In the first few days of the month Sooty Shearwaters could be seen offshore, and on the Isle the first Greenland Redpoll appeared on 3rd and Snow Bunting and Lapland Bunting were recorded on 5th and 6th respectively. On 9th a Grey Phalarope spent a few hours along the shore at South Harbour and a Little Stint was seen at Midway. Passerines remained scarce until the third week of September but there were signs of things to come a few days earlier. On 12th a Yellow-breasted Bunting was found, the first Jack Snipe was recorded on 13th and on 14th there was a scattering of Blackcaps and a Scarlet Rosefinch while a Laneolated Warbler originally found just south of Shirva, obligingly gave good views in the 'field'—as it tried to appear inconspicuous in the Midway cold frame! By the 15th Greenland Redpolls had built up to 50, Lapland Buntings to 10 and there were 50 Snow Buntings. A wider variety of species on 16th included a small selection of warblers and Pied Flycatchers as well as Goldcrest, Spotted Flycatcher and Bluethroat. Most of these birds were however seen incidentally as observers selected viewpoints, hoping for a glimpse of a large falcon which appeared briefly in severa

areas, including immediately behind the Observatory where it killed and began to pluck a Wigeon. On 17th any thoughts of systematically checking the crofting area for migrants were soon forgotten as rarity after eastern rarity were found. An elusive Little Bunting settled at the mouth of the Gilly Burn for all to see. Both Red-throated and Pechora Pipits were sighted and some observers saw a Yellow-breasted Bunting. A second Lanceolated Warbler was discovered in a grassy field north east of Taing and there were 2 Scarlet Rosefinches and a Red-breasted Flycatcher. Mention should also be made of Pintail, Grey Plover and Curlew Sandpiper, none of which can be called common at Fair Isle. 5 Little Stints and 4 Ruffs were also recorded. In conjunction with this impressive list a number of more common species had increased, but not to the degree that might have been expected from the number of rarities. Robin (12), Blackcap (30), Lesser White-throat (6) and Goldcrest (10) were the species most in evidence. Most of the rarities were recorded again on later dates and several which had been flighty when they first arrived on 17th later became almost predictable. Many of the common species increased between 18-20th. Wheatears increased most noticeably on 18th but Redstarts and Robins increased gradually to reach 20 and 30 respectively on 20th. There were also a few hirundines. Additionally a Long-eared Owl was trapped early on 18th when a Yellow-browed Warbler and another Little Bunting were found. This last species was to remain regular to the end of the month. 2 Black Redstarts and 3 Red-breasted Flycatchers were recorded on 19th and a Buzzard, first seen on this date remained until well into October. A large Locustella warbler, located at Kennaby on 20th proved, when trapped, to be the first British record in 20 years of Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler. A Red-backed Shrike and a Scarlet Rosefinch were also found on 20th. On the 21st a Short-toed Lark was seen briefly and it remained to be seen by most observers the following day when there was also a Corncrake and a Red-breasted Flycatcher. A further small increase in Redstarts occurred and in the evening a Citrine Wagtail was briefly seen and heard. Like the Short-toed Lark, it was relocated the following day when many observers had good views of it at Field Croft. Also on 23rd there was a more general arrival with increases in Whinchats (15), Black Redstarts (3), Blackcap (40), Willow Warbler (20), Goldcrest (25) and Lapland Bunting (17). A Richard's Pipit and an Ortolan were recorded. Several of these species remained in good numbers into October but Blackcaps were especially numerous. Bluethroat and Red-breasted Flycatcher were again recorded on 24th and Yellow-browed Warbler and Scarlet Rosefinch on 25th. On this last date 7 Pink-feet also appeared, and

visitors on 26th included a few winter thrushes, but pride of place went to 2 Hoopoes which spent some while together on the cliffs at the South Harbour. More thrushes arrived on 27th including 40 Fieldfares, 250 Redwings and 4 Ring Ouzels. A Great Northern Diver and a party of Barnacle Geese were seen and Jack Snipe increased to 11. *Phylloscs*, Blackcaps (50) and Goldcrests showed substantial gains and there were 3 Richard's Pipits, an Osprey was seen in several places during the day and in the evening, a Siberian Stonechat was found near the Shop. A further movement occurred on 29th with winter thrushes conspicuous among the new arrivals. Jack Snipe increased to 20, Redwing to 1000 and Song Thrush (50), Redstart (30) and Robins (25) all showed gains. A very skulking bunting found at Skerryholm in the late morning could not be traced in the afternoon but it was subsequently identified (having reappeared in October) as a Pallas's Reed Bunting—another first for Britain. On the 30th most species were as much in evidence as the previous day and an effort was made to trap some of the very numerous Jack Snipe. The majority were confined to the wet burns and ditches making this task all the easier and a total of 10 were trapped.

October

The weather was far from stable during the month but, except between 7-9th when the wind was south west, the wind was persistently in the south east, moderate to strong on many days and there was a considerable amount of rainfall. It was the most exciting month of the year for the sheer volume of migrants that passed through the Island. For some species the migration log figures give a very sensitive picture of increasing waves, culminating in a massive influx in the last week. This pattern is echoed for several other species, but generally on a smaller scale.

The first wave of Redwings in October was on 1st when 800 arrived. Blackcaps increased to 100, Bramblings to 35 and Reed Buntings to 18. All these species were to remain numerous throughout the month. There was also a small arrival of Tree Pipits and Yellow-browed Warbler, Richard's Pipit and Little Bunting were seen. On 2nd, 2 Richard's Pipits, 2 Great Grey Shrikes and 3 Bluethroats were found and a general increase in the common species was continued in the next few days. By 3rd Robins had increased to 40 and Reed Buntings to 30 and there were also a few Ring Ouzels and 2 Little Buntings. On 4th an Arnhem-ringed Blackcap was trapped and Bramblings increased to 150, and the local Wren population was swollen by the addition of immigrants. The latter were to be seen throughout October on many of the stone walls around the crofts. The general build up continued on

5th when Dunnocks reached 50 and there was an influx of Song Thrushes (250) and Goldcrests (35). 3 Merlins were recorded and a party of 7 Shorelarks was seen near the North Light. This species was to occur at intervals into the late autumn. The following day the talking point was the rediscovery in the rape at Taing of the nondescript small bunting which was later identified as a Pallas's Reed Bunting. The only other rape crop on the Island, at Field Croft sheltered the season's third Lanceolated Warbler. The majority of birds on 7-8th arrived from the north west including parties of Greylags on both days and on 8th a party of Whooper Swans and the only moderate arrival of Icelandic Redwings of the autumn. A Goosander drake was also recorded. The wind returned to the south east on 10th and there was another wave of Redwings (1500) and Blackcaps (40). Chaffinches increased to 70 on 12th and a further 2000 Redwings were recorded. The latter doubled overnight in association with 200 Song Thrushes and many other species including another influx of Jack Snipe (15) and Blackcaps (60). A very late Icterine was found at the Bull's Park, an Olive-backed Pipit was found and trapped in Gilsetter and 4 Waxwings were reported. Ducks were also more in evidence and 90 Greylags were seen flying straight through to the south. Mallard, Goldeneye and Barnacle Geese were moving on 14th when Merlins increased to 4, Jack Snipe to 20 and a number of Shorelarks reappeared. On 15th, a Richard's Pipit was seen and Dunnocks increased on both 16th and 17th. On the last date Robins and Blackcaps (including a second Arnhem-ringed bird) were present in increased numbers, there were a few more Goldcrests and 5 Willow Warblers arrived. 13,000 Redwings came in on 19th along with a Hen Harrier, a few Woodcock, 2 Great Grey Shrikes and 100 Chaffinches. There was an attraction at the South Light on the night of 19th but by morning many of the Redwings had left to be replaced on 21st by another influx of 7,000. This time they were accompanied by the first modest arrival of Fieldfares, more Song Thrushes, a few Blackbirds and Ring Ouzels. Bramblings built up to 170 on the same day and an influx of corvids included 54 Hooded Crows. Rooks were associated with the next large arrival on 24th which brought another 15,000 Redwings and no less than 7 Black Redstarts. Robins, Blackcaps and Wrens were all, in their own measure, significantly increased at this time. On 25th Robins reached 300 and there was a marked influx of Snipe and Turnstone, but totally unexpected was the appearance, for the first time in autumn, of a Marsh Harrier which spent most of its time quartering Pund and Setter. There was a large attraction, mainly of Redwings, at the South Light on the night of 25th and having been able to catch and ring a

good series through the night, we were caught off our guard by the number of birds on 26th—nothing we had seen so far this autumn approached the spectacle that greeted us on the 26th. With only 2 observers on the Island, it was almost impossible to get further south than the trapping area. Redwings were everywhere, 20,000+ was a conservative estimate. Other thrushes were in lesser numbers but 80+ Ring Ouzels were remarkable. Without having time to check the cliffs and geos, which must have held many birds, we counted 600+ Robins, 60+ Blackcaps, 70+ Dunnocks and 250+ Bramblings. Woodcock reached three figures and these included a Danish-ringed bird shot on the hill. An exceptional sight on Fair Isle was a single flock of 90 Woodpigeons. A Brent Goose, 6 Whoopers, 3 Dotterel, 3 Mistle Thrushes and a Great Grey Shrike were recorded and, by the end of the day we had also ringed 261 birds. On 27th, although the Redwings had decreased, estimates of Woodcock exceeded 1000, Woodpigeons reached 150 and there were good numbers of Rooks (68), Goldcrests (150) and Dunnocks (150). Ducks were again on the move and included 20 Mallard and 2 Pintail. The next day there were further increases in some species and particularly noticeable were Snipe, Dunlin, Song Thrush and Blackbird. Rooks also increased again, the 3 Dotterel were relocated on the Airstrip and an additional one was found on Meoness. The 29th brought a surprise at Kennaby—a Nightjar. Bramblings had built up to 400 and Goldeneye and Pinkfeet were moving during the day. By the last two days of the month the peak had passed but the Island was still alive with birds.

November

On the whole November was milder than many, with some good sunny spells especially in the first half. The second half was duller and considerably wetter with showers of sleet on some days. Large numbers of birds remained from the October arrivals and although numbers generally decreased through the month, a few were still present into December. Very few new arrivals occurred but there was a small turnover in winter thrushes, a few Chiffchaffs were recorded to mid-month and Blackcaps trickled on into December. More Skylarks than usual persisted and Shorelarks, probably the same few birds, appeared on several dates.

On 1st there was a small, new influx of Woodcock and the following day there were more Fieldfares, some migrating south by day. A Great Grey Shrike was seen and a Rough-legged Buzzard appeared. The latter was to remain for many days. Occasional Long-eared Owls had been seen through the autumn but 5 on 3rd were undoubtedly newly arrived. On 7th, 3 Glaucous Gulls were seen and there was a Bonxie on 8th.

The last Bonxies recorded were 3 together on 10th. On this date there was an unusually large, southerly passage of Rooks and Jackdaws; two flocks totalling 125 and 9 respectively flew south down the Island apparently without stopping. A late Wheatear was recorded on 13th and a Great Northern Diver was seen on 14th. Another moderate arrival of Woodcocks on 15-16th was accompanied by 2 more Long-eared Owls, and a Garden Warbler on 20th was the latest record for the Island.

December

The month was cold and frosty and snow lay for 2 days towards the end of the year. However, wind speeds were generally less than average and consequently the wintry conditions lacked penetration. There were some fine clear days at times. A small selection of species was recorded in the month. The few species regularly present in winter were joined by others from the large-scale October passage. Woodcock, Robin, Dunnock and more surprisingly Shorelark, could all be mentioned here. Likewise, there is undoubtedly a connection between the four December records of Blackcap and the previous heavy passage. 2 Herons were present in the month and several Rooks remained throughout. Parties of Whooper Swans were seen at intervals and following an influx in mid-month Glaucous Gulls were frequent to the end of the year. In response to a colder spell in the closing days of the year there was a small influx of waders including 10 Curlew, Jack Snipe and 3 Dunlin. Also a diurnal passage of Skylarks was most evident on 29th when 200+ were recorded leaving the Island to the South.

Systematic List

(The order followed is that given in 'A Species list of British and Irish Birds', BTO Guide No. 13).

Details of all birds preceded by * are still being considered by the British Rarities Committee.

Observers names are only included where uncommon species have been seen by few observers.

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER *Gavia immer*. Singles on 27th September, 15th October and 14th November.

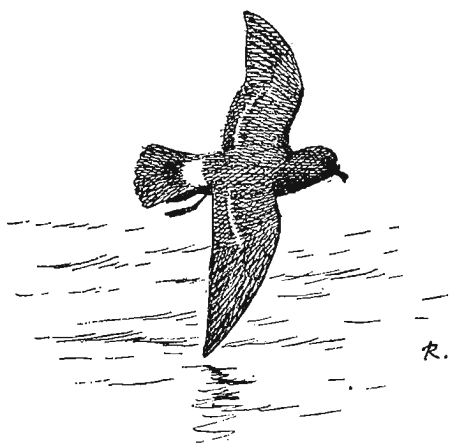
RED-THROATED DIVER *Gavia stellata*. Singles on 28th March and 12th and 14th April—all very early records. 1-2 on 16 days between 9th May and 16th July. Singles on 21st August, 2nd and 5th September and 1st October and 2 on 11th October. Unidentified divers, probably of this species, were seen on 23rd May, 1st June (2) and 16th September.

SLAVONIAN GREBE *Podiceps auritus*. 2 in summer plumage on 14th April at Furse, one remaining to 17th. 2 together on 21st April at Dutfield. 2 on 8th September in the South Haven.

FULMAR *Fulmarus glacialis*. Recorded as usual in all months. Breeding data: first eggs noted on 17th May and chicks 3-4 days old seen on 6th July. For the first time eggs were laid inland at two sites, one under a boulder at Ulieshield and another in a planticrub in Homisdale. The latter had a chick at least two thirds grown when last visited. Blue phase birds were recorded offshore on 7th May and 1-2 were seen on several days between 25th August and 9th September and occasionally to 21st October. One bred at the usual North Mila Hesslands site and two others were seen ashore in mid-summer at Guidicum.

MANX SHEARWATER *Puffinus puffinus*. Seen on the crossing on 3rd and 27th August, otherwise singles from the Island on 23rd August, 1st and 5th September.

SOOTY SHEARWATER *Puffinus griseus*. First seen from the *Orcadia* south of Fair Isle on 7th August (3) and from the *Good Shepherd* on 10th and 13th. Records from the Island mainly between 21st August and 24th September, numbers reaching double figures only on 31st August (14), 5th September (35) and 6th September (18). 11 on 6th October and singles on 7th, 10th and 21st October.



STORM PETREL *Hydrobates pelagicus*. Recorded ashore by night between 1st June and 24th September. More than 1,000 birds were mist-netted between these dates with the aid of tape recordings, which also stimulated churring from birds in crevices at Malcolm's Head, Gunnawark, Milens Houllan and Kirn o' Skroo.

LEACH'S PETREL *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*. All records are of birds at night attracted to tape recordings. One seen and heard at Wester Lothar on 17th July. In August singles on 1st, 7th and 8th, 3 on 11th and one on 12th—of these 5 were trapped and ringed. One was also seen on the crossing on 10th August.

GANNET *Sula bassana*. Recorded in all months, with largest numbers offshore as usual in autumn. Very few seen between January and mid-April and mid-October and the end of the year, 30 on 27th December was atypical. Breeding data: birds were first seen ashore at Dronger on 9th March, 18 nests were constructed and occupied all season and a further 9 small nests were built and occupied at some time. 17 or 18 eggs were laid from which 15 chicks are known to have hatched. Only one chick is known to have died. Two of the successful nests were on a lower ledge below the main area. Last recorded ashore on 5th October. This is only the second year that Gannets have bred on Fair Isle (cf. 1975 when 5 nests produced 3 flying chicks).

CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*. Recorded in February on 3rd, March on 8th (2), April on 12th and 1-2 were seen on several days between 2-15th May. One on 10th June. Recorded regularly in autumn between 7th August and 22nd November when southerly movements produced peaks in August of 21 on 14th and 26 on 31st and in September of 20 on 8th and 27th. Singles in December on 22nd and 31st.

SHAG *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*. Recorded in all months as usual. Breeding data: first eggs noted on 11th April (c/2) and fledged young on the water on 5th July.

HERON *Ardea cinerea*. Singles on 18th March, 3 days in April and 12-22nd May. 1-2 on several days between 28th May and 11th June. Small numbers on many days in autumn from 16th July to 30th October, not more than 5 on any day, except for 13 on 28th August. 1-2 in December from 10-29th.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*. Recorded in all months, up to 3 occasionally in January to March, and seen on many days in spring between 16th April-13th June with maximum of 6 on 8th June. Small parties recorded on 4 days in July with 8 on 25th. Regular in autumn between 22nd August and mid-November, numbers a little higher, especially in late October when up to 20 were recorded. Up to 4 at intervals in December.

TEAL *Anas crecca*. Occasional records in winter months, up to 3 on several days in spring between 20th April and 6th June. A ♂ on 2-3rd July. Regular in small numbers in autumn between 14th August and 28th October with maximum

- of 13 on 27th September. Up to 5 present in mid-November.
- PINTAIL *Anas acuta*. A ♀ on 17-30th September. 4 on 11th October and a pair on 27th October.
- TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula*. A ♂ on 12th May. A ♂ on 16th May joined by a pair on 20th which remained on 21st. A ♂ on 28th was joined by a ♀ on 6th June. A ♂ on 23rd June to 11th July. A ♀ on 29th September-2nd October and another on 15th October.
- WIGEON *Anas penelope*. A ♂ on 2nd January. 10 on 18th February dwindled to 2 on 26th. 1-3 on several days in spring between 9th April and 4th June. Regular in small numbers between 23rd August and 31st October with maximum of 13 on 27th September.
- GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula*. 1-3 on several scattered days between 6th February and 11th April. A ♂ on 19th May. Recorded on many days in October, usually only 1-2 but 7 on 14th and 10 on 29th. 1-3 on 13-21st November and 5-31st December.
- LONG-TAILED DUCK *Clangula hyemalis*. One on 30th January. Recorded on many days between 6th February-10th May, but no more than 5 on any day. A ♂ on 13-15th June. Recorded regularly from 4th October to 29th December, rarely up to 6 but 17 on 12th October.
- COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra*. 4 (2♂♂, 2♀♀) on 24th May, 2 remaining to 8th June and a ♂ to 3rd July. A ♂ 27th September-1st October. 6♀♀ on 10th November. 7♀♀ on 22nd December, 5 remained to 31st.
- EIDER *Somateria mollissima*. Recorded in all months with count in peak month of 840 on 10th November. Breeding data: first broods seen on the sea on 13th June.
- RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator*. In March a ♀ on 2nd and a ♂ on 18th. In April 2-3 on 21-23rd and a ♀ on 27th. Single ♂♂ in May on 4th and 29th. A ♀ on 2nd and ♂ on 16th June. In autumn 2 on 13th September and regular sighting between 23rd September and 1st November, numbers generally small but up to 6 between 25th September and 5th October. Up to 3 at intervals between 16th November and end of year.
- GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser*. A ♂ on 8th October.
- GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser*. One on 1st January joined by 7 others on 5th. Up to 9 on 19-21st February, 2 remained to 24th. 2-3 on most days in March but an additional party of 8 on 16th. 5 on 17th April, the last of which was present to 25th. One on 6-16th May and 2 on 19th. A party of 10 grey geese sp. from 15th June increased to 14 on 24th when they were positively identified, 9 remained to 29th. In aut-

umn 1 on 23rd September. Recorded most days 6th October to 14th November with main parties in October on 7th (15), 8th (46), 13th (90) and 30th (23).

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons*. An adult of the European race from 28th October to 10th November.

BEAN GOOSE *Anser fabalis*. One which had probably been on the Island for several days was dazzled at Setter and ringed on 6th February. It remained to 13th February. The 10th record for the Island.

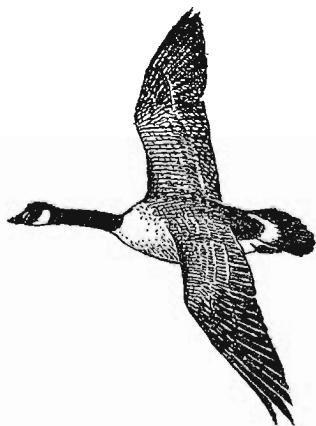
PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus*. In September, 7 on 25th and 29-30th, 4 remained to 3rd October. 2 on 13-14th October. Recorded almost daily 28th October to 16th November with main parties on 29th October (49), 2nd November (10) and 13th (5).

GREY GOOSE sp. *Anser* sp. In March 9 on 8th; September, 8 on 26th and 2 on 29th and November, 5 on 11th (probably Pink-feet).

Geese sp. A party of 9 on 27th September included a white bird. (This party was seen on a day when a number of Barnacle Geese were recorded. A small number of albino Barnacles are recorded annually in Scotland in winter).

BRENT GOOSE *Branta bernicla*. One of the dark-breasted form 26th October to 10th November. Last recorded in 1973.

BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis*. One present at the end of 1975 remained until 5th January. 32 on 27th September and 3 on 14-21st October.



CANADA GOOSE *Branta canadensis*. One at Linni Geo on 15-16th May. The third Island record, previously recorded in 1962 and 1964. All have been large, heavy-looking birds.

WHOOPEE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus*. 2 on 28th February. In April, a very large arrival of 54 on 10th, 26 remained on 11th. 11 on 21st, 3 on 22nd and 2 on 26th April. One on 4th May. Autumn records: 9 on 27th September. In October, 8 on 8th, 6 remaining to 10th, 2 on 13th and 3 on 14th, 6 on 26th of which 5 remained to 29th. In November, 1 on 3rd, 3 on 6th, heard at night on 11th and one 28-30th. In December, 4 on 3-5th, 5 on 12th, 11 on 18th and 5 on 29th.

EAGLE sp. A large dark-looking eagle, too far away for details to be seen, was observed on 4th June (R. Eagles and D. Woodward). It was watched flying north parallel to the coast, off the South Light and disappeared beyond Malcolm's Head.

BUZZARD *Buteo buteo*. One on 19th September to 23rd October was probably partly contaminated with fulmar oil during its stay.

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD *Buteo lagopus*. One on 2nd to 15th November. It was flushed from a mutilated Woodcock on the last date.

SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus*. In April, ♀♀ on 11th, 21-23rd and a ♂ and a ♀ on 28th, the ♂ remaining to 29th. Singles seen in May on 1st, 5-6th and 8th. One on 16th August and a ♀ recorded on 30th September. In October, one on 3rd, an adult ♀ trapped on 5th and an adult ♂ present 21-25th. 1-2 almost daily between 27th September and 10th November.

GOSHAWK *Accipiter gentilis*. One seen over Hoini on 6th May was seen by several observers. Last recorded in winter 1971/2.

HONEY BUZZARD *Pernis apivorus*. One on 21st May spent a long time sitting in a field south of Pund, for all to see. One flew north over the Havens on 16th July (A. M. Taylor). A Buzzard seen flying from Hoini to Hesswalls on 3rd May was also probably this species.

MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus*. An immature, mainly in the Setter and Pund area on 25-26th October. The 10th Island record and the first in autumn.

HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus*. A large ♀ on 28th April and a 'ring-tailed' bird on 19-20th October.

OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus*. One on 5th June over Meoness (R. Eagles). One on 27th September seen at many places.

PEREGRINE *Falco peregrinus*. Not more than one bird recorded on any day between 24th February and 8th June but both ♂ and ♀ recorded. 1-2 recorded on many days between 14th August and 30th November and almost certainly more than 2 individuals involved in September and October. One on 12th December.

GYRFALCON *Falco rusticolus*. One of the grey race on 1st April, first seen over Gilsetter and later relocated near the summit of Ward Hill from where it was seen to fly directly out towards Shetland (R. A. Broad and A. M. Taylor).

MERLIN *Falco columbarius*. At least two birds present in winter, one a weak individual released after recuperation on 26th September 1975 was found dead on 3rd February. A second bird was seen on several days in February and March. 1-2 on several days between 13th April and 28th May. Autumn records: one on 16th and 2 on 17th August. Recorded on most days between 29th August to 28th September and 5th October to 4th November, generally 1-2 but numbers a little higher in early October with 3-4 on several days. Recorded on 4 days late November-December.

KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus*. One on 1st and 3rd January (♀), 3 days in March and 17-20th April. 1-2 on many days between 3rd May and 6th June. A ♂ on 12-21st July and singles on 3 days in mid-August. In September one on 11th then records daily between 17th September and 28th October, 2-3 on many days but up to 6 in early October. One on 10-26th November, and 12-19th December.

AMERICAN KESTREL *Falco sparverius*. A ♂ on 25-27th May was observed at several places between Malcolm's Head and Setter by several observers. The record is still under consideration by the BOU Rarities Committee for admission to the British List. The species breeds widely in America from Central Alaska, North America, Central and Southern America and the West Indies.

QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix*. Singles on 15th, 18th and 19th May. Birds heard calling on most dates between 9-28th June, mainly in the Bull's Park/Field/Pund area but also occasionally at Taing and Boini Mire. 3 (2 ♂♂, 1 ♀) were seen together on 17th in Bull's Park, otherwise no more than 2 could be proved on any day. One was calling near Pund on 14th July and at Setter on 4-5th August. Despite all this activity there was no proof of breeding.

WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus*. At least 2 overwintered with records on several days in January-March. One on 29th April. Autumn records: 1-2 recorded on many days between 15th September and 15th November. 3 on 30th September, 28th and 31st October were the largest daily totals. Singles in December on 11-13th, 23rd and 25th.

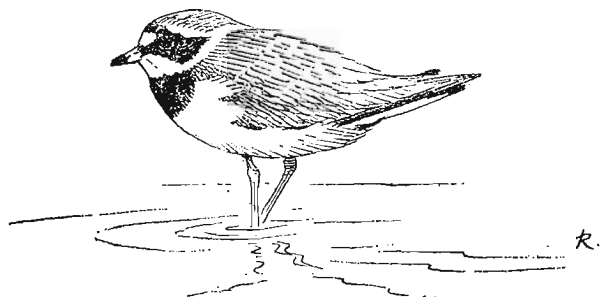
CORNCRAKE *Crex crex*. Spring records were all in May with singles on 2nd, 8-9th and 23rd. Only one autumn record on 22nd September.

MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus*. Only 4 records, all singles, on 20th March, 1st May, 6th September and 18th October.

COOT *Fulica atra*. 2 arrived on 2nd February and increased to 3 on 7th when an additional bird was found recently dead. The last one was seen alive on 9th February. All appeared to be in poor condition.

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus*. No birds overwintered. First arrival in spring on 7th February but no real influx until 21st February when 30 arrived. Build-up of breeding population and onward northerly passage recorded throughout March. Rather slow decline in numbers at the end of the breeding season with 5 still present at the end of October. 3 throughout December but 5 on 27th. An albino bird was present on 8-9th May. Breeding data: first eggs noted on 6th May (c/4) and flying chicks recorded on 30th June.

LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus*. Northerly moving parties recorded regularly from 11th February, some staying for several days. Main arrivals as follows: in February, 26 on 16th and 25 on 27th; in March, 100+ on 10-24th and in April, 24 on 9th, 41 on 14th, 30 on 21st and 45 on 28th. Smaller numbers, generally less than 10 recorded on many days between May and early July. Apart from 20 on 18th July returning birds not obvious until small passage daily from 15th August to 7th September. Main autumn movement between 16th September and 5th November when up to 50 recorded on several days and 150 on 26-27th October. Recorded at intervals in smaller numbers to the end of the year.



RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula*. The only winter records were 1 on 17th and 2 on 18th January. Spring build-up of breeding birds from 9th February and flocking first noticed in autumn on 12th August. At least 50 recorded on several days at the end of August after which numbers gradually decreased to the last single on 31st October. One appeared on 2nd December, increased to 5 on 8th, 1-2 remained to the end of the year. Breeding data: predated eggs found on the very early date of 14th April. 13 territories occupied, a marked increase on the 8 occupied in 1975.

GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola*. 1-2 on most days between 17th September and 1st October. One on 18th October.

GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria*. 2 on 19th February and up to 10 on several scattered days in March. Recorded on most days between 9th April and 14th June, numbers highest between 19th April and 13th May when 20-30 on several days and 39 on 6th May, otherwise generally less than 5 daily. Returning birds recorded on most days 14th July-31st October with 30-40 present on many days from mid-August and higher numbers as follows: in August, 55 on 25th and 65 on 30-31st and in October, 46 on 2nd and 45 on 21st. One on 10th November.

DOTTEREL *Eudromias morinellus*. 3 on the Airstrip on 26th October were still present on 28th when an additional bird was also seen on Meoness; these decreased to one on 31st. One, possibly one of the same birds, was on the Rippack on 6th November.

TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres*. 40 were present in January-February with numbers a little lower in March-April, except for influxes in April on 10th (40) and 18th (45). Noticeable decrease through May to last spring record on 30th. Recorded daily from 16th July to the end of the year, with 30-40 on some days in August-October and larger influxes on 1st September (45) and in October on 6-7th (60) and 25th (130).

SNIFE *Gallinago gallinago*. Small numbers recorded through the winter. Passage difficult to detect in spring but up to 15-20 recorded on several days in April-May. Numbers began to increase in autumn from late August after which 20-30 on many days in September-October and more noticeable influxes in October as follows: 17th (40), 21st (40) and 25-28th (60). Up to 15 regularly in December and 40+ on 19th. Breeding data: population a little higher than in the last few years, breeding proved at Boini Mire, School, Green Path, Brae O' Restensgeo and Watery Brae. A nest in Gilsetter still had eggs in mid-August.

JACK SNIFE *Lymnocryptes minimus*. Several overwintered, up to 3 recorded on several dates in February and in late March. Singles in April on 14th, 16th and 25th and 1-2nd May. The majority of these records were from night dazzling expeditions. Very strong autumn passage, recorded virtually daily from 13th September-2nd November with 5-10 on many days and larger numbers as follows: in September, 20 on 29th and 30 on 30th; in October, 20 on 1st and 12-20 on 13-21st. One on 10th November and one on 27th December.

WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola*. 4 on 9th January. Singles in

February on 7-8th and 23-24th and in March on 4 scattered dates. Singles in June on 5th and 12th. Very strong autumn passage, numbers highest in Observatory period (1948 onwards). Up to 3 on 29th September-5th October. Daily 14th October-10th November, numbers generally less than 10 until 25th October. Huge arrival 26-28th with 100+ on 26th. Increasing to 1000+ on 27-28th October after which at least 30 on most days until 10th November. New arrival from 15th November with 100+ on 16th. Small numbers seen at intervals in December. A Danish-ringed bird was shot on 26th October.

CURLEW *Numenius arquata*. 2-3 throughout January and February with an additional party of 5 on 16th February. Recorded regularly in spring from 8th March, usually less than 10 on any day but larger parties, generally moving north recorded in April on 16th (50), 21st (16) and 25th (36). Small numbers present all summer and first evidence of returning birds from 26th July (20). Passage hard to discern in autumn with no large influxes but 10-20 recorded on most days in August-September. Numbers a little lower in October and a few remaining into November and December. Small influx from mid-December increased to 10 on 29th. Breeding data: one pair bred, a nest containing c/3 was found on Sukka Mire on 28th May. All had hatched by 13th June. 2 chicks were ringed but one, and probably both, died before fledging.

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus*. One in April on 20-21st, large flock of 25 on 22nd and one on 23rd. Recorded daily 29th April-10th June, with 7-10 on several days and 17 on 13th May. One on 18th, 2 on 21st and one on 23rd June. Autumn passage from 6th July, with 1-4 on many days to 26th August and 6 on 17th July and 5 on 18th and 22nd August. In September 2 on 7th, 1 on 11th and 3 on 14th.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa*. One on 4th May and one 30th August.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica*. Singles on 16-18th and 28th May. One on 17th July. In September, one on 18-20th, 3 on 21st, 1 on 23-29th and 2 on 30th, one remaining to 5th October.

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochrupos*. One on 21st July. In August singles on 5th and 12th and 1-2 daily 15-27th August.

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola*. Singles on 21-31st May but 2 on 26-27th.

COMMON SANDPIPER *Tringa hypoleucos*. 1-4 in spring on most days between 3rd May and 5th June. Autumn records, singles on 23rd August, 1st September and 30th September-2nd October.

REDSHANK *Tringa totanus*. Up to 15 recorded regularly January-February. Numbers occasionally a little higher in March-April but generally less than 5 daily in May. Singles seen at intervals from 27th May until numbers began to increase in autumn from early July. 10-25 recorded on many days from mid-July to October with larger influxes as follows: in July, 40 on 19th; in August, 80 on 16th, 40 on 18th, 35 on 22nd and 25th, 45 on 26th and 30 on 30th. Up to 15 remained November-December.

SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus*. One on 17th June (A M Taylor) and one 30th August-1st September.

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*. In spring, 1-2 daily between 6-12th May and 26th May-1st June. Singles in autumn on 15th, 23rd and 26th August and 22nd September.

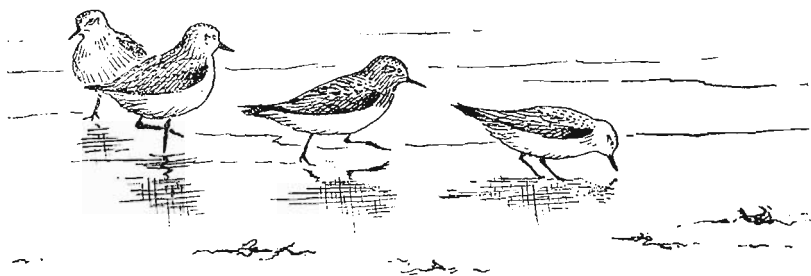
KNOT *Calidris canutus*. One spring record on 29th May. In autumn, small numbers daily between 14-26th July but 24 on 19th was unusually large for so early in the autumn. Recorded on many days 12th August-4th October, numbers generally less than 6 but 9 on 8th September and 12 on 12th September.

PURPLE SANDPIPER *Calidris maritima*. Up to 30-40 recorded at intervals in winter. Numbers generally a little lower in April-May but peaks on the following dates suggest passage: in April, 52 on 14th and 30 on 18th and 42 on 13-14th May. Last recorded in spring on 27th May. Autumn birds recorded from 15th July, after which seen virtually daily to the end of the year. 20-35 seen on several days and larger influxes in August as follows: 45 on 16th and 40 on 19th.

LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta*. All records confined to September; one on 9-12th, 5 on 17th, singles on 21-28th and 2 on 29-30th.

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*. Unusual small influx in winter—8 on 31st January increased to 18 on 4th February, 15 remained on 11th and singles on 20th and 26th February. One on 20-22nd March. In spring, 1-3 recorded on most days 21st April-10th June with 7 on 17th May. Up to 3 recorded on many days in summer from 16th June until first obvious autumn influx on 18th July. Between this last date and 27th July all birds recorded were adults: their numbers peaked at 20 on 19-20th. Thereafter, recorded on most days in autumn until 4th November, but numbers generally small, exceeding 20 only on 28th October (24). Singles on 10th and 16th November, and 19th December and 3 on 31st December.

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea*. Only one record, one in flight on 17th September (C D R Heard).



SANDERLING *Calidris alba*. One on 25th May. Unusually early and large passage in July between 18-23rd, with peak of 20 on 19th. In August, up to 3 between 12-16th June and numbers a little higher 21st August-3rd September with peak of 7 on 25th August. Singles in September on 9-11th and 17th and in October on 6th.

RUFF *Philomachus pugnax*. A ♀ on 26-31st July. Single ♂♂ on 28th August and 11th September. Recorded on most days in small numbers 17th September-11th October with maximum of 4 on 17-22nd September.

GREY PHALAROPE *Phalaropus fulicarius*. One in the South Harbour for several hours on 9th September.

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE *Phalaropus lobatus*. One 'almost run down' by the Good Shepherd on the crossing on 10th August.

GREAT SKUA *Stercorarius skua*. First recorded on 1st April and at least 20 present by mid-month. Gradual decrease from mid-August but 2-3 still recorded daily in October. In November, one on 8th and 3 on 10th. Breeding data: 25 pairs attempted to breed (cf 21 pairs in '75). The first egg was laid on 9th May. A non-breeding flock of ca 30 birds remained from mid-June through the summer.

ARCTIC SKUA *Stercorarius parasiticus*. First recorded on 17th April and at least 50 present at the end of the month. Noticeable decrease in August and last recorded over land on 10th September, except for one on 22nd. Last recorded offshore in September on 27th (5) and 28th (1). Breeding data: season as usual 136 pairs bred.

LONG-TAILED SKUA *Stercorarius longicaudus*. A subadult with the non-breeding Arctic Skuas on Byerwall on 9th July. A different subadult near the Bullock Holes on 14th July (A M Taylor) and a 2nd year bird on the airstrip on 15-18th July.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus*. Recorded in all months with typical influxes in rough weather in the late autumn and winter. In October, 1000+ recorded ashore on

several days. Breeding data: little information available but thought to be a typical season.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus*. First recorded on 24th March, and decrease noticed through August until last record on 22nd September. Breeding data: little information available but thought to be a typical season.

HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus*. Recorded in all months with influxes in rough weather in late autumn and winter. The largest influxes in October were 5000 on 19th and 2000 on 24th and in November 2000 on 16th. Breeding data: little information available but first eggs noted on 9th May (c/2).

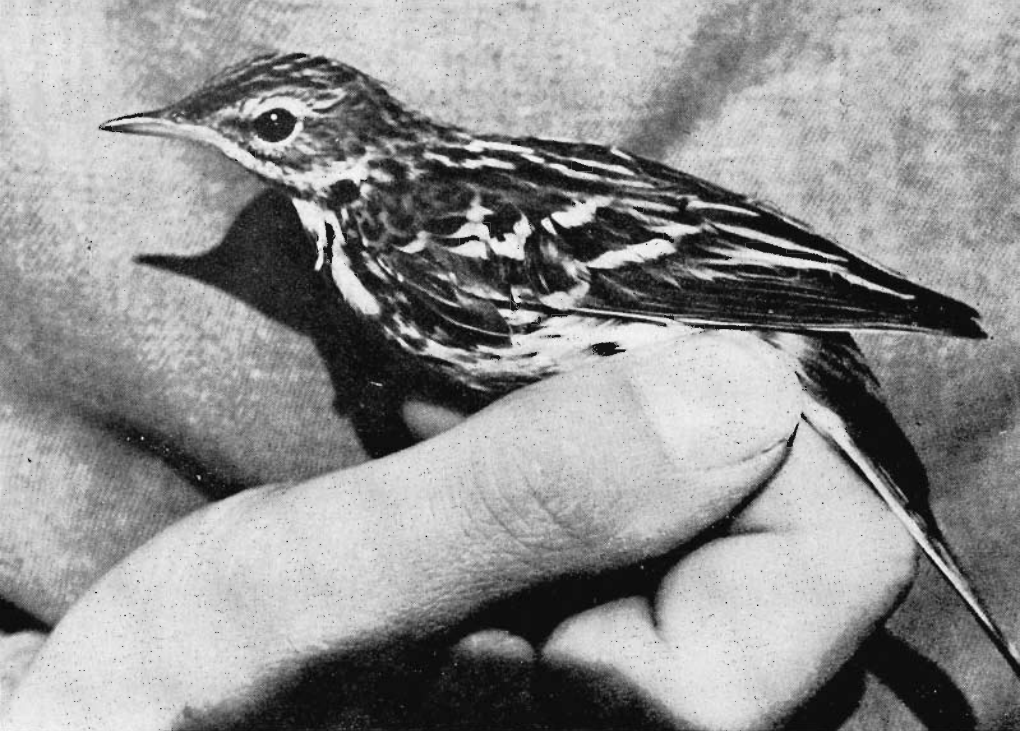
COMMON GULL *Larus canus*. Small numbers, generally less than 10, recorded on many days from 3rd February until larger movements in April when visible northerly passage recorded on several days. Largest numbers recorded in April on 21st (300), 22-23rd (100+) and 28th (60). Numbers a little lower in May and early June only occasionally reaching 20-30. A minimum of 10 present through the summer until first returning birds recorded in mid-July. Up to 50 recorded on many days in autumn and larger peaks as follows: in August, 150 on 11th, 250 on 15th, 100 on 21st, 250 on 23rd and in September, 100 on 22nd, 116 on 25th and 60 on 27th. Numbers regularly higher throughout October with up to 100 on several days and 150 on 13th, 130 on 24th and 200 on 14th. Only small numbers recorded occasionally from November. Breeding data: 3 pairs attempted to breed, one on Tarryfield fledged three chicks, one on South Park lost its first clutch but relaid, successfully raising 2 chicks. A third pair, one adult of which was hatched on Fair Isle in '73 laid 2 addled eggs on Vaasetter.

GLAUCOUS GULL *Larus hyperboreus*. Singles in January on 2-3rd and 18th and on 7 days in February. 1-2 on several days 21st March-11th April and one 9-11th May. In October, one on 14th and 2 on 15th. One on 5th, 3 on 7th and 1 on 8th and 22nd November. One in December on 4th and up to 10 in second half of month following influx on 17th. All were immatures except for adults on 14-15th October and 27th (2) and 29th December.

ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucoides*. A 2nd year bird on 20th June was the only record.

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Larus ridibundus*. 1-2 on 4-10th February. Small numbers, generally less than 20 recorded on most days in spring from 6th March to mid-June but 40 on 3rd May. Small numbers recorded at intervals through the summer until the first juvenile was seen on 2nd July. 30-40 on several days in July and 100 on 18th and 130 on 19th. From

continued on p. 35



(Above) PECHORA PIPIT *Anthus gustavi*. 17th-25th September 1976 (trapped 19th).
Photograph by Roger A. Broad

(Below) OLIVE-BACKED PIPIT *Anthus hodgsoni*. 18th-22nd October 1976.
Photograph by Roger A. Broad



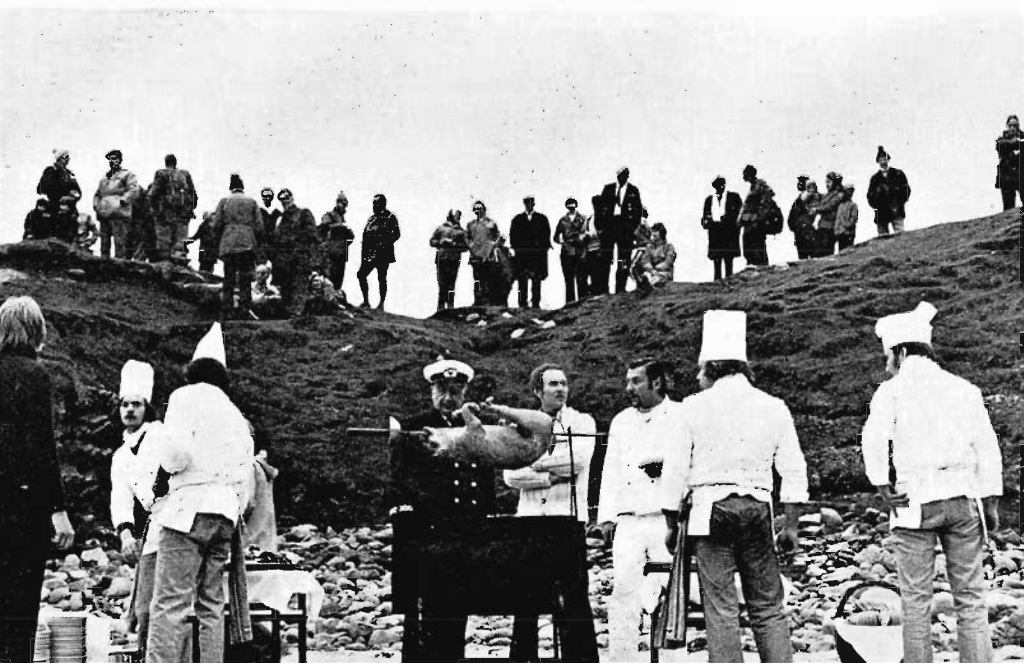


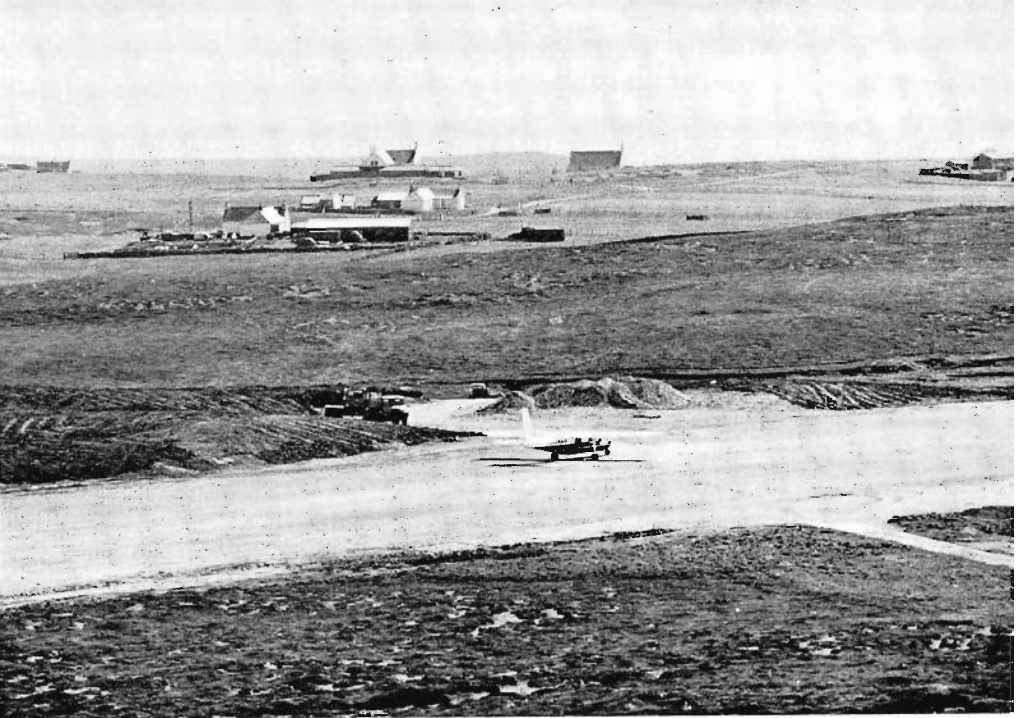
PALLAS'S GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella certhiola*. 20th-24th September 1976.

Photograph by Roger A. Broad

(Below) First-ever Barbecue on the beach at North Haven, organized by the crew of *M.S. Regina Maris*, National Trust for Scotland Islands Cruise, 1976.

Photograph by Bobby Tulloch

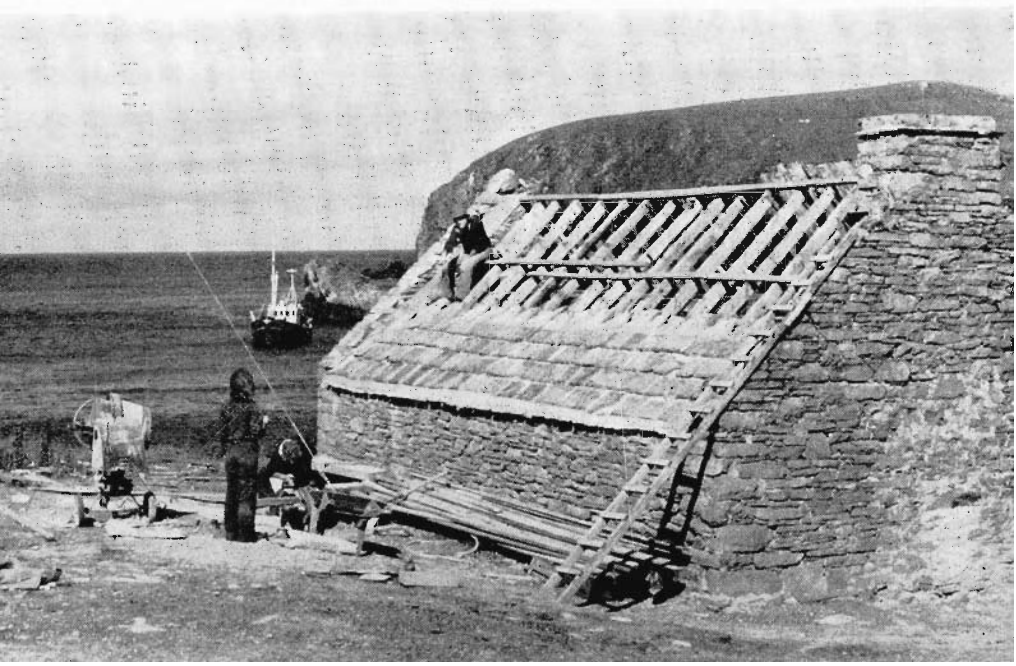




(Above) Loganair 'Islander' aircraft on Fair Isle Airstrip looking south, Setter croft in foreground, and the School and the Kirk in centre background.
Photograph by The National Trust for Scotland

(Below) Re-roofing of old Store at North Haven by Enterprise Youth. This is a 17th Century building and is being restored with the original slates. Summer 1976 (see p. 9).

Photograph by R. A. Broad





Three stalwart Shetland ornithologists of a past era. G. Theo Kay at the helm of his yacht *Soldian*, with George W. Russell and Jack S. Tulloch. (See Obituary).

Photograph probably by Jack Peterson in mid-thirties

G. THEO KAY

With the death of Theo Kay at the age of 88, the Trust has lost a staunch supporter and Trustee. Like nearly all Shetlanders, Theo was very well read, observant, and extremely knowledgeable on all aspects of natural history. He retired from business while still in his fifties and thereafter had plenty of time, and fortunately the means to do just what he wanted to do. His main interests were birds and sailing. In his yacht the *Soldian* he not only cruised around every island, voe and harbour in Shetland but crossed three times to Norway. He helped James Fisher with his early work on Gannets. James signed on as cook aboard the *Soldian*, and Theo had to waken him every morning to tell him that his breakfast was ready !

In the years just prior to the War, Theo evinced great interest in my scheme for a Bird Observatory on Fair Isle. With

characteristic generosity he paid for the erection of the first Heligoland Trap in the backgarden of the Haa—at that time derelict.

No visit to Lerwick was complete without a visit to Theo's home. I can recall many splendid evenings in his comfortable study with the keen local birdmen of the day—Sammy Bruce, George Russell, Jack Tulloch, Pat Venables and Jack Peterson (a fine photographer). There were some great characters around in these days! In the accompanying photograph can be seen George Russell on the left, a very able if somewhat dour Town Clerk of Lerwick. He had no compunction, in the interests of ornithology, to sitting fishing on Victoria pier with several ragged urchins paid a penny or so to help catch sillocks to entice the Gannets ever nearer to the cine camera held by Theo when he took the first unique film of Gannets diving and swimming under water in Lerwick Harbour. Jack Tulloch sitting next to Theo went to the Greenland whaling as a boy and also went sealing in Antarctica. If you consult the bibliography in the Venables' book 'Birds & Mammals of Shetland', you will see that they all made important contributions in their day.

One of Theo's achievements was to induce a pair of Snow Buntings to nest in his aviary in the garden.

As a boy, Theo remembered seeing a pair of Sea Eagles flying high over Lerwick. At that time, a pair nested on the coastal cliffs of Bressay, and on 18th June 1967 Theo piloted us—Stanley Cramp, Peter Conder and I—along the coast of Bressay and up to Noss. The owner of the yacht at that time was a Mr Jolly, and he became a bit anxious when Theo took his boat almost alongside the steep precipices of Noss—'Och, you can bring the *Queen Mary* alongside here!' Theo pointed out to us the site of the eyrie of the last pair of Sea Eagles to nest on Bressay. Another cherished memory was the occasion when I took Theo to Fetlar to see the nesting Snowy Owls and introduced him to Bobby Tulloch. Even in his eighties, Theo drove his car like a young man and took me on several jaunts around the Mainland to good birding spots.

What a privilege it was to know all three of the splendid men in the photograph.

GEORGE WATERSTON

Continued from p. 34

August-October recorded daily with 10-15 present on many days. One on 5th November, and 1 on 5 days in December.

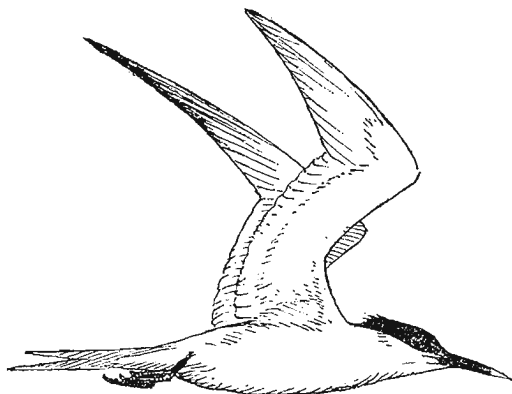
KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla*. An adult on 2nd January and 7th February. Recorded ashore from mid-February after which

was seen throughout the breeding season until last recorded ashore at the end of August. Seen in some numbers offshore on most days September-October but less frequently from November. Breeding data: first eggs noted on 16th May.

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo*. First positively identified on 11th May (2) after which recorded daily until 31st August. 9 on 9th September and an immature 1-3rd October. Breeding data: a very successful season, from 8 clutches (all c/3) present on 9th June, 18 chicks were fledged. An additional 5 chicks were fledged from 2 later (or repeat) clutches (also c/3).

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea*. First specifically identified on 19th May after which small numbers, rarely exceeding 5, seen at intervals until 13th September.

COMMON/ARCTIC TERN. "Commic" terns not specifically identified were recorded on several days between 8th May-14th September. The only days when their numbers exceeded 5 were 17th June (15) and 23rd July (20). An immature was also recorded on 13th October.



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SANDWICH TERN *Sterna sandvicensis*. An unusually large number of records: 2 on 25th June, 2 on 18th July, 4 on 4th August and one on 14th August.

RAZORBILL *Alca torda*. A few ashore from as early as 3rd February. Last recorded ashore in autumn on 7th August with very small numbers seen offshore occasionally in the rest of August and September to 25th. Breeding data: first eggs seen on 5th May.

LITTLE AUK. *Plautus alle*. One found freshly dead on 11th Feb-

ruary. One flying north with other auks on the extremely late date of 3rd May.

GUILLEMOT *Uria aalge*. Some recorded ashore from the beginning of the year on fine days. Last recorded ashore after the breeding season on 8th August. Seen offshore on many days until first birds noticed returning the cliffs on 13th October. A cream-coloured bird was seen on the sea and ashore near Kristal Kame in early June. Breeding data: first eggs on 29th April.

BLACK GUILLEMOT *Cephus grylle*. Recorded as usual in all months. Breeding data: population possibly slightly larger than in last few years and a good number of chicks raised.

PUFFIN *Fratercula arctica*. First recorded on 31st March (a few offshore and one ashore), and first large arrival on 2nd April. Last record ashore after the breeding season on 26th August. Rarely seen offshore, in very small numbers to 7th October. Breeding data: several birds incubating by 5th May. Fish being carried ashore to burrows on 5th June.

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas*. One on 10-11th April.

ROCK DOVE *Columba livia*. Recorded in all months, up to 10 in January-February with numbers a little higher in April and up to 26 in May and early June. Larger flocks appeared in autumn from early September and up to 50 were recorded in mid-September and early October. Numbers a little lower during rest of October and November with occasional sightings of up to 30. Breeding data: population much as usual, 2 nests located in caves at Pietron and Furse raised 2 chicks each and provided us with our first Rock Dove pulli ringed on the Island.

WOODPIGEON *Columba palumbus*. One on 26th February-13th March. 3 on 26th March decreased to 1 on 30th. Small numbers on many days in April with up to 8 in mid-month. Recorded virtually daily 2nd May-21st June, numbers a little higher in May with up to 14 in mid-month. In July, one on 7th, 4 on 8th and 2 on 16-18th. 1-4 recorded at intervals 23rd September-20th October and exceptionally large arrival from 24th October with 90 on 26th and peak of 150 on 27th after which numbers gradually diminished through November. Two remained to 11th December.

TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur*. In spring seen almost daily 14th May-25th June, 2-3 present on several days and 6 on 25-29th May, and peak of 7 on 12th June. In autumn one on 27th August, singles on 9th and 15th September and 3 on 19th September.

COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto*. Recorded almost daily 2nd May-16th June with main influxes in May on 6th (15),

between 18-27th (up to 12) and in June, on 1st (11), 10-13th (14 increasing to 22). 14 arrived on 22nd June, most stayed to 4th July after which up to 4 seen on many days to 9th August. One on 16-19th September.

CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus*. 1-3 almost daily 18th May-3rd June but 5, including one hepatic type on 26-28th May. Singles on 12th and 25th June.

LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus*. 2 on 21st and 1 on 25th February. One on 24-25th March. One on 12th April. In autumn, one on 18-20th September, 1-2 on most days 27th October-5th November but 5 on 3rd November. 2 on 16th November and one on 2nd December.

SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus*. Singles on many days 22nd April-2nd June but 2 on 1st May, 3 on 11th and 2 on 12th May. One on 29th June. One on 10th August and 1-2 on many days 19th September-15th November.

LONG/SHORT-EARED OWLS. Additional birds not assigned to either species were recorded as follows: singles on 3rd February, 11th and 23rd April, 1st, 2nd and 8th May. Singles on 18th September, 26th and 28th October, 2 on 29th October, one on 18th November and one on 24th December.

NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus europaeus*. One on the exceptionally late date of 29th October at Kennaby. Last recorded in 1973.

SWIFT *Apus apus*. Recorded on many days 23rd May-8th August with up to 7 on best days. Singles on 16-18th and 28-29th August and 21st September.

HOPOE *Upupa epops*. One on 26th May, west of Barkland. 2 together on the cliffs at South Harbour on 26th September, both were seen again on 27th and one remained mainly in the Quoy area until 30th September.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos major*. A ♂ on 21st April remained until 8th May.

WRYNECK *Jynx torquilla*. Very scarce in spring: singles on 8-9th and 25-26th May. One on 22nd August, 3 on 23rd of which one remained on 28th, 4 on 29-30th and 2 on 31st August. Singles on 10 days in September between 1-21st.

BIMACULATED LARK *Melanocorypha bimaculata*. One frequented a small cultivated area beside the road at Field Croft in the afternoon of 8th June. It was seen well by many observers. The first Island record.

SHORT-TOED LARK *Calandrella cinerea*. One in spring on 25-28th May and one in autumn on 21-23rd September.

SKYLARK *Alda arvensis*. At least 5 overwintered. Numbers increased from mid-February with northerly passage evident on several days. 100+ on the Island by 20th February had increased to 1000+ on 2nd March. Numbers remained

high throughout March and there were smaller movements in April. Autumn influxes evident in September, with attraction at the Lighthouses in late September and early October. At least 500 remained in early October and 200+ still present in mid-November. Numbers remained high in December with cold weather movement recorded on 29th when 200+ flew south. Breeding data: fledged young first noted on 2nd June.

SHORELARK *Eremophila alpestris*. In October, 7 on 5th and 10 on 6th, 6 on 14th, 5 on 15th and 4 on 16th. Probably the same birds remained and were responsible for records at intervals to 28th November (4). However, 7 seen on 13th involved some different birds. One remained to the end of the year.

SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*. One on 26th April. Recorded daily 3rd May-13th June in rather larger numbers than usual with 20-30 present on several days and larger peaks in May as follows: 60 on 18th, 40 on 23rd and 50 on 25-26th. Up to 4 at intervals between 21st June-16th July. In autumn one on 4th August and, apart from 8 on 18th, 1-3 occasionally 14th August-9th September. Recorded daily 18th September-15th October with 5-10 on many days and 15 on 19th September.

RED-RUMPED SWALLOW *Hirundo daurica*. One on 9th May was first found near Skerryholm but was seen at many places until 11th. It roosted in the Plantation on 10th and 11th. Another also mainly in the Skerryholm area was seen on 3rd June. These are the first records in the Observatory period; previously recorded in 1905 and 1931.

HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbica*. Recorded virtually daily in spring 8th May-21st June, in larger numbers than usual. Main arrivals as follows: in May, 10 on 8th, 20 on 9-10th, 120 on 18th, 40 on 22nd, 45 on 26th and 40 on 1st June. One on 4th July. Small numbers, not more than 4 on any day, in autumn on 18th August, 29th August-3rd September, 12th, 19-27th September, 5-6th and 13-15th October.

SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia*. 2 on 30th April. Recorded daily 7-11th May with peak of 12 on 8th, one on 16th and daily between 18-26th with peaks of 10 on 18th and 8 on 22nd May. Up to 3 on several days 29th May-14th June and 2 on 29th June. 4 on 4th 2 on 20th September and one 24-30th September.

GOLDEN ORIOLE *Oriolus oriolus*. One mainly in the Quoy and Meadow Burn area on 30th May.

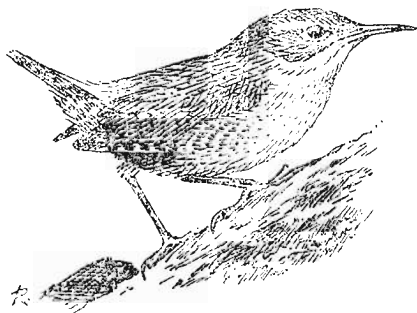
RAVEN *Corvus corax*. Recorded in all months as usual but flocks of 19 on 25th and 11 on 26th April indicate a small

passage. Breeding data: at least 4 pairs attempted to breed. Fledged young were recorded on 17th May.

HOODED and CARRION CROW *Corvus corone*. Hooded Crow c.c. *cornix*. Recorded in all months as usual but flock of 54 on 21st-22nd October were undoubtedly migrants. Breeding data: a nest in Jivvi Geo had hatching eggs on 23rd May. Carrion Crow c.c. *corone*. A hybrid was seen on 18th April. Small numbers most days 1-23rd May with maximum of 6 on 8th and 5 on 16th. One on 4th June.

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus*. One on 31st January-6th February and another 20-22nd February. Up to 4 on several days in March and April. 9 on 9th May, one remaining to 11th and 2 on 18th May. Unusually large movements in late autumn: 7 on 21st October increased to 36 on 24th and 80 on 28th October of which 20 remained on 8th November. Two flocks totalling 125 flew south down the Island on 10th November and thereafter about 10 remained until 31st December.

JACKDAW *Corvus monedula*. 2 on 8th increased to 3 on 17-18th March. Singles on many days 30th April-25th May but 4 on 16-17th May. One on 1-4th June. In autumn, one on 8-13th October and up to 7 between 24th October-3rd November. 9 flew south with a flock of Rooks on 10th November.



WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes*. Recorded in all months with large numbers inland throughout October and November. At least 35 birds seen inland on 4th October and 30+ on 23rd October. These certainly contained some immigrants but the size of the influx was obscured by the presence of local birds, presumably displaced from the east coast geos by the prevailing winds. Breeding data: census incomplete but numbers apparently little changed from last year. Fledged young first seen on 20th June.

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus*. Singles on 23-24th February, 11-15th and 25-26th March and 23-25th May. One

on 23rd August. Singles on 5th and 21st October and up to 3 between 25-29th October. 1-2 on several scattered dates in November and one on 31st December.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris*. Very low numbers recorded in spring and a similar situation in autumn coupled with a very slow start to the return passage. Recorded in all months January-3rd June but no more than 20 on any day and this figure only reached in mid-February. In autumn, up to 3 on 22-26th August, and singles on 1st and 6-7th September. Recorded daily from 19th September but numbers did not reach 50 until 19th October. Numbers more typical from 21st October-17th November with peaks of 250 on 21-24th, 500 on 26-28th October and 2nd November, 350 on 10th and 300 on 14-16th November. During this period some southerly visible passage was noted on several days. Less than 10 seen daily in December.

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos*. Recorded on many days 16th February-14th June with 6 on 22nd March the best total. One on 4th July and up to 3 on 15-22nd and one on 30th July. Strong and protracted autumn passage especially in October. Recorded almost daily in very small numbers 13th August-20th September. Daily from 22nd September to mid November in larger numbers with peaks as follows: 25 on 27th September, and in October, 250 on 5th, 200 on 13th and 21-24th. 50 still present on 10th November and up to 5 in December.

REDWING *Turdus iliacus*. Recorded January to 22nd May in very low numbers. 25 on 17th April was the best day in spring. Singles most days 2-10th June. Strong and protracted autumn passage, especially in October. Recorded daily from 15th September with main arrivals as follows: in September, 250 on 27th and 1000 on 29th; in October, 800 on 1-2nd, 150 on 8th (Icelandic), 1500 on 10th, 4000 on 13th, 13000 on 19th, 7000 on 21st, 15000 on 24th and 20000+ on 26th after which numbers decreased until early November, ca 150 remained in mid-November and up to 40 were recorded in December.

RING OUZEL *Turdus torquatus*. Small numbers recorded in spring at intervals between 20th April-17th May. No more than 5 on any day. A bird trapped on 6th May showed the characteristics of the central European race *T. t. alpestris*. In autumn a ♀ on 17th September. Recorded most days 26th September-1st November with up to 6 on several days and in October, 10 on 13th, 18 on 21st, 12 on 24th and 80+ on 26th which had decreased to 5 on 28th.

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula*. Recorded daily January-early June but in very low numbers. Numbers rose above 20 only on

8th (23) and 25th March (70) and 4th April (50). A ♀ remained into the summer and was last recorded on 21st July. Very slow start to the autumn passage and numbers generally not very high. Recorded daily from 20th September but did not reach double figures until 17th October (17), and no real arrival until 26th (500). 600 were recorded on 28th and thereafter figures rarely exceeded 100. Up to 20 remained from mid-November to the end of the year.

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*. A ♂ on 25th March, then no further records until 20 on 10th April. Numbers built up to 80 by 21st April and passage noticed throughout May (including Greenland birds). In autumn decrease noticed from the end of August and only ca 25 present in early September. Immigrants increased totals to 70-80 daily between 18-28th September after which numbers decreased to 31st October. A late ♂ on 13th November. Breeding data: young first seen on the wing on 20th June.

STONECHAT *Saxicola torquata*. In February a ♂ on 21st, ♀ on 23rd and a ♂ on 24-29th. Recorded virtually daily in March, 3-4 on several days and peak of 6 on 5-6th. Seen on 6 scattered dates in April and a ♀ on 14-22nd and 29th May. Recorded in autumn on many days between 6-31st October with 2-3 on several days and 4 on 25th.* Additionally, a bird referable to one of the eastern farms was seen on 27th September-7th October.

WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra*. Recorded in small numbers daily from 6th May-1st June with peaks of 25 on 8th and 15 on 26th May. Singles on 7th, 12th and 14th June. Recorded in autumn on most days 13th August-25th October but rarely reaching double figures, except for 20 on 16th August and 15 on 23rd September.

REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*. A ♂ on 22nd April. 1-3 daily 8-18th May. Numbers a little higher 25th May-5th June with 11 on best days. In autumn, 1-4 daily 22nd August-2nd September. Recorded daily 15th September-5th October with 10-25 on several days and 30 on 22nd and 29th September. Smaller numbers, not exceeding 5, recorded almost every day to 2nd November.

BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros*. A ♂ on 12th and a different bird on 19th April. 1-2 on 6-9th and 13-17th May. 4 on 26th and singles on 27th and 29th May and 4-6th June. Records on 24th June, 6th July and 14th August probably referred to the same bird and may also be the same bird recorded daily from 29th August to at least mid-September. Up to 3 recorded on many days from mid-September-30th October but 7 on 24th October. One on 10th November.

BLUETHROAT *Luscinia svecica*. Recorded daily 15-30th May

with up to 3 on several days and 4 on 18th and 21st and 7 on 25th. A ♀ on 2-3rd June. In autumn, singles on 16th and 24-25th and 2 on 30th September (including an adult ♂). One on 1st, 3 on 2nd and singles on 3-4th and 17th October.

ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula*. At least 2 overwintered. Very few recorded in spring with no more than 2 recorded on any day between April-6th June. In autumn, very strong passage with exceptional numbers in late October. Recorded daily from 17th September with main arrivals as follows: in September, 12 on 17th and 30 on 20th; in October, 40 on 3-4th, 60-70 on 17-21st, 300+ on 26th and 600+ on 27th. Numbers fell very slowly after this huge arrival and 50+ still present in mid-November. 5-10 still present at the end of the year.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia*. Up to 3 daily 8-17th May. One on 26th May. In autumn one on 20th September and a late bird on 13-14th October.

LANCEOLATED WARBLER *Locustella lanceolata*. One at Shirva and later trapped at Midway on 14th September. Another found in a grassy field north of Taing on 17th September was also trapped. *One in a crop of rape at Field Croft on 6th October (R. Johns and H. Gilston).

*PALLAS'S GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella certhiola*. One found and trapped at Kennaby on 20th September. After release it frequented the Meadow Burn until 24th September. Recorded twice before in 1949 and 1956.

REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*. A Reed/Marsh Warbler was seen on 29th May and a Reed Warbler identified on 7th June. In autumn, there were records of Reed/Marsh Warblers on many days—none were thought to be Marsh Warbler and all those trapped proved to be Reed Warblers. Autumn records were as follows: singles on many days 17-31st August (Reed Warblers trapped on 17th, 18th and 30th). In September, singles on 10th, 17-18th and 21st and 1-3 on most days between 22nd-30th September (one Reed Warbler was found dead on 23rd). In October, one on 1st, 2 on 2-4th and singles on several days to 23rd, 2 on 26th and a Reed Warbler was found freshly dead on 27th. (Reed Warblers were trapped in October on 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 14th and 17th).

MARSH WARBLER *Acrocephalus palustris*. Singles on 26th May, 11-12th June and 6th July (all trapped).

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*. Up to 3 daily between 8-17th May, 7 on 18th which gradually decreased to one on 24th. 12 on 26th then up to 3 until 1st June. One on 8th and 2 on 9th and 11th June. Autumn records: one

on 31st August. Singles on 10-11th, 2 on 20-22nd and singles on 24th and 28th September.

AQUATIC WARBLER *Acrocephalus paludicola*. One on 19th August at Skerryholm (trapped) and another caught at Kennaby on 20th August. Both were first year birds.

ICTERINE WARBLER *Hippolais icterina*. In May, singles on 29-30th, 3 on 31st May-1st June and one on 2nd June. One autumn record, a bird on the very late date of 13th October.

BOOTED WARBLER *Hippolais caligata*. One trapped at Quoy on 25th August was released at the Observatory where it remained until 2nd September. Four previous records, the last in 1968.

BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla*. Singles in May on 7th, 8th, 10th and 20th. Up to 7 daily between 25th May-13th June. Exceptionally heavy and protracted autumn passage. A ♀ on 27-30th August and a ♂ on 4th September. Recorded daily 12th September-13th November. In September, 30-40 on many days and 50 on 27th. Numbers even higher in October with peaks of 100+ on 1st and 3rd, 60 on 13th, 65 on 17th and 60 on 22nd and 26th. 25 present on 2nd November after which numbers generally decreased. 2 on 18th, 4 on 19th, and 2 on 29th November. 2 on 2nd, ♂ on 11th and ♀ on 20th December. Ringing totals underline the scale of the autumn passage: 87 ringed in September and 292 ringed in October. Two Dutch-ringed Blackcaps were controlled on 4th and 17th October.

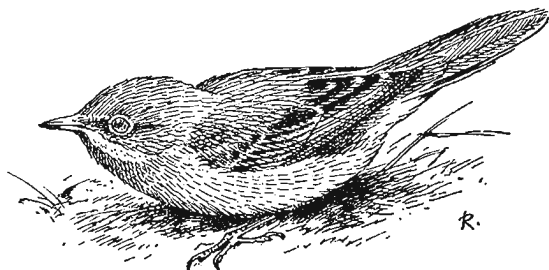
BARRED WARBLER *Sylvia nisoria*. All records of immature birds. One on 11th August. Recorded virtually daily 15th August-27th September but numbers rather low with daily totals reaching 3 only on 23-24th August and 16th and 19th September. Only 8 individuals ringed.

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin*. Recorded daily in spring 19th May-14th June with main peaks in May on 26th (35) and 30th (20) and in June on 1st (20). One on 20th June. Autumn records in two periods: daily between 13th August-7th September, numbers rarely reaching double figures except for 10 on 16th and 22 on 30th August. One on 9th and 2 on 12th September after which records again daily 14th September-11th October with peaks of 12 on 17-18th, 10 on 23rd and 27th September. Small numbers recorded at intervals to 26th October and one exceptionally late bird on 20th November.

WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis*. One on 5th May. Recorded daily 7th May-3rd June with 5-6 on several days and 8 on 17th and 25th, 20 on 26th and 12 on 30th May and 8 on 1st June. One on 8th June and one on 8-11th July. In autumn,

singles on 30-31st August and in September on 2nd and 14-18th. Up to 4 daily between 22nd September-6th October and one on 17th October (latest record).

LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca*. 1-2 on 15-17th May. Recorded daily 21st May-6th June with 5 on 26th May the largest number recorded. Singles on 9th, 11th and 28th-30th June. Autumn records: 1-3 daily 24th August-8th September. 1-2 on 11-13th and up to 6 on 16-18th September. Recorded daily 20th September-6th October with peak of 8 on 26th September.



SUBALPINE WARBLER *Sylvia cantillans*. A ♂ trapped at the Observatory on 1st June.

WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus*. One 21-22nd April. Recorded daily 6th May-8th June with peaks as follows: 25 on 8-9th, 26th and 30th May and 16 on 1st June. Singles on 12th and 28th June and 14th July. Autumn passage: recorded daily 11th August-7th October with peaks as follows: in August, 40 on 15th, 30 on 22-23rd and 50 on 29-30th; in September, 25 on 18th and 27th and 15 on 1st October. One on 12th, 5 on 17th and last one recorded on 20th October.

CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita*. 2 on 18-19th April. Up to 5 between 3-9th May. Up to 3 from 20th May-5th June, 2 of which summered, the last being recorded on 8th September. Recorded on most days in autumn between 15th September-19th November, rarely exceeding 10 on any day but peaks of 20 on 28th September and 4th October and 12 on 30th October.

WILLOW/CHIFFS. Additional unidentified birds belonging to one of these species were recorded as follows: one on 26th April and up to 5 on many days in May. 5 on 5th October.

WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*. In May singles on 14-16th, 22nd and 28th, 2 on 29th and one on 30th. In autumn 3 different birds on 16th, 17th and 18th, 4 on 19th and 2 on 20th August. Singles on 25th and 29th August and 16th and 18th September.

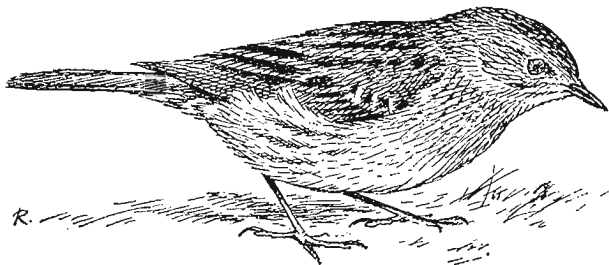
YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER *Phylloscopus inornatus*. Only 3 records; singles on 17th and 25th September and 1st October (A. R. Lowe).

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus*. Very scarce in spring, no more than 3 on any day. Records at intervals between 2nd April-5th June. Autumn records daily 16th September-11th October, with peaks of 25 on 23rd and 35 on 29th September and 5th October. Numbers similar 14-31st October except for peak of 150 on 27th October. Small numbers in November recorded to 10th.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata*. Small numbers recorded occasionally from 6th May until recorded daily between 16th May-11th June when numbers higher with peaks of 50 on 26th and 40 on 30th May. One on 24th June. 1-3 scattered records in August from 17th. Small numbers almost daily 16th September-6th October but no more than 5 on any day.

PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hypoleuca*. Recorded in small numbers in spring between 10-20th May with peak of 7 on 16th. Numbers a little higher 23rd May-2nd June with 20 on 26th and 11 on 30th May. One 6-7th June. Autumn passage also in two periods, 9th August-2nd September when numbers rarely exceeded 10 except for 55 on 16th and 20 on 18th. Also seen most days 12th September-5th October with peaks of 15 on 16th and 12 on 19th September. 2 on the late date of 26th October.

RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula parva*. One on 17th September, ca 3 on 19th and singles on 22nd and 24th September.



DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis*. Singles in April on 10-11th, 21-22nd and 28-30th. Up to 3 seen at intervals in May to 22nd. Autumn passage exceedingly strong and protracted with records daily 18th September-mid-November. Less than 10 seen daily in September but numbers very much higher in October with peaks of 50 on 5th, 40 on 13th, 60 on 17th, 50 on 24th increasing to 150+ on 27th. Numbers remained at 100-150 until 8th November and 10-20 remained until mid-month. At least 2 remained to the end of the year. The

strength of the passage is underlined by the ringing totals—146 ringed. A bird bearing a Belgian ring was controlled on 3rd November.

RICHARD'S PIPIT *Anthus novaeseelandiae*. Singles on 23rd, 25-26th, 3 on 27th, 2 on 28th, one remaining to 30th September. 1-2 daily in October between 1-11th, and one on 15th. The records involved a minimum of 5 individuals.

TAWNY PIPIT *Anthus campestris*. Sightings on 5-6th May near the North Light, another west of Skerryholm on 17th May and one at Golden Water on 23rd May (Mrs V. McFarland). The latter could not definitely be claimed as a different individual. Last recorded in 1970.

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*. One on 21st and 2 on 28th February. Small numbers appeared in spring from 22nd March and the species was widespread by 10th April. Passage in autumn noted from the end of August and considerable decrease noted through October, not more than 15 recorded in November and last seen on 2nd December. Breeding data: population thought to be about the same, or a little lower than in last few years.

TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis*. One on 21st April. Recorded almost daily 2nd May-10th June, up to 10 on several days and peaks of 20 on 12th and 40 on 18th May. In autumn, one on 25th August, 8 on 30th August decreased to one on 4th September, recorded daily 17th September-7th October, less than 10 in September but 15-20 on 1-4th October. One on 9th and one 13-14th October.

OLIVE-BACKED PIPIT *Anthus hodgsoni*. A very well-marked bird was trapped in Gilsetter on 13th October and relocated at the Gully trap on 18th. It remained in Gilsetter to 22nd October. The 5th Island record.

*PECHORA PIPIT *Anthus gustavi*. One seen briefly on 17th September near Stoneybrake was trapped in the Roadside trap on 19th. It was relocated at Shirva on 22nd and remained until 25th September. Recorded for the 2nd autumn in succession.

RED-THROATED PIPIT *Anthus cervinus*. One self-caught in the Gully trap on 7th June, another near the Graveyard on 10-14th June. *One first seen on 17th September at Setter was later seen in several places to 23rd September.

ROCK PIPIT *Anthus spinoletta*. Recorded in all months. Marked decrease noted in late October. Breeding data: season and numbers similar to last few years.

WHITE and PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba*. White Wagtail *M. a. alba*, recorded in small numbers in spring on many days 14th April-2nd June. 10 on 9th May was largest spring total. In

autumn, 10-20 recorded on many days between 2nd August-27th September and 50 on 27-28th August. Up to 5 daily 1-10th October and singles on 14th, 16th and 28th October and 10th November. Pied Wagtail *M. a. yarelli*, 1-2 recorded on several days 15-28th April. One on 16th May and one on 28th June. One on 18-19th September and 1-2 on several days 2-14th October. Additional *alba* Wagtails were recorded in small numbers on several days in spring and autumn all between the dates given for the two subspecies.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*. Singles on 12-13th April and 15-16th May. In autumn singles were recorded in October on 3-4th, 9th, 14-17th, 21st and 31st.

CITRINE WAGTAIL *Motacilla citreola*. An immature on 22-26th September, seen at several places on the Island including Field, Quoy and the Plantation.

YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava*. Blue-headed Wagtail *M. f. flava*, a ♂ on 8th, ♀ on 28th, 2 (♂, ♀) on 29th, 3 (♂, 2 ♀♀) on 30-31st May. A ♂ on 3rd and ♀ on 11th June. Yellow Wagtail *M. f. flavissima*, a ♂ on 6-8th, 2 ♂, ♀) on 16th, 3 on 17th (2 ♂, ♀) and a ♂ on 18th May. Grey-headed Wagtail *M. f. thunbergi*, a ♂ on 7-10th and ♂♂ on 26th and 28-29th May and 5th June. 4 (2 ♂, 2 ♀) on 6th and a ♀ on 7th June. Unidentified *flava* Wagtails were recorded in spring on 12th May, 20-21st and 26th May and 1st, 4th, 5th (2) and 12th June. In autumn, *flava* Wagtails were seen on 13th and 18th August and 2nd and 5-6th October.

WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus*. One on 8th February. 4 on 13th October, one of which was killed by a cat.

GREAT GREY SHRIKE *Lanius excubitor*. One on 20th April, 2 on 22-24th, one remaining to 30th April. In autumn, up to 3 daily between 2-10th October and 1-2 from 19-28th October. 2 on 31st October and one on 2nd November.

RED-BACKED SHRIKE *Lanius collurio*. A good series of records in spring. In May, a ♂ on 18th, ♀ on 19-21st. 3 on 23rd increased to 12 (7 ♂♂) on 26th, 8 on 27th (5 ♂♂), numbers remained at this level until further small increase to 11 (8 ♂♂) on 31st. In June, 6 on 1st (4 ♂♂) decreased to one on 7th. A ♀ on 11th, ♂ on 13th and ♀ on 14th. A ♂ on 26-30th June and a ♂ on 5-6th July. Autumn records: in August, singles on 16-17th and 30-31st and in September, 2 on 1-4th, one remaining to 7th and one on 20th.

STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris*. Recorded in all months with evidence of passage in autumn between 29th August-2nd September, and 26th to 30th September. Passage also noted on several days in October especially on 26th (2000+). Some numbers were also attracted at the Lighthouses on several

nights in October. Breeding data: fledged young first noted on 12th June.

GREENFINCH *Carduelis chloris*. A ♀ on 12-19th April. Singles on 2-13th May (3 different birds). One 13-14th October and daily from 21st October-3rd November with peak of 11 on 24th October.

GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis*. One arrived at the Observatory garden on 22nd June then obligingly flew to roost in the Observatory trap.

SISKIN *Carduelis spinus*. Very scarce in spring and autumn. Singles on 14th and 29th April, 1st and 16-24th May. 1-2 on several days 13-30th October but 6 on 21st and 4 on 30th.

LINNET *Acanthis cannabina*. 1-2 between 15-21st April. Recorded daily 27th April-27th May, up to 5 on several days and peak of 9 on 10-11th May. Singles on 31st May, 4-6th and 23rd June. Autumn records all in October, 2 on 2-4th, one on 12-13th and up to 3 daily 16-31st.

TWITE *Acanthis flavirostris*. Virtually absent in winter until 11th February (9) after which numbers built up slowly to 50-60 in early May. In autumn flocks of young birds totalled 700+, one flock alone exceeding 400 in mid-September. Numbers considerably decreased in October and less than 50 by mid-November, a few remaining to the end of the year. Breeding data: fledged young first noted on 4th July.

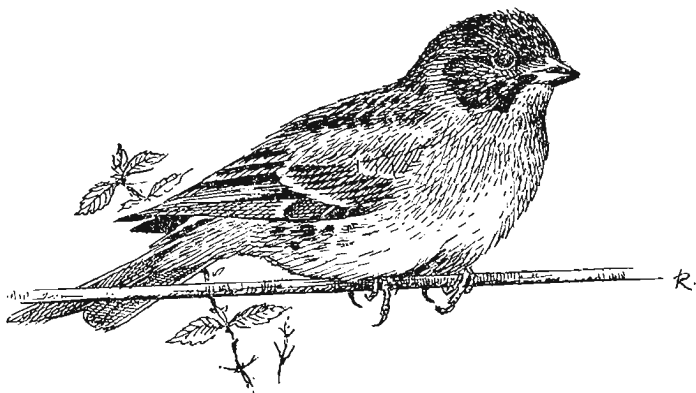
REDPOLL *Acanthis flammea*. Mealy Redpoll *A. f. flammea*, up to 7 seen on most days 21st April-22nd May. Birds considered to belong to this race seen in autumn on 26-27th September (2) and 30th October (2). Greenland Redpoll *A. f. rostrata*, very large autumn influx: recorded daily in September from 3rd with steady rise to 20 by 7th and build-up to 60 on 17th after which numbers decreased to 4 at the end of the month. Small numbers were recorded until 16th October. All those trapped were immatures. Lesser Redpoll *A. f. cabaret/disruptis*, 2 on 7-13th May. One on 11th September and ♂♂ on 17th and 20-21st October. Redpolls not subspecifically identified were recorded as follows: one on 27th May, 2 on 28th August, one on 2-3rd September and 2 on 30th September. In October, 8 on 2nd, 2 on 4th, 1 on 5th and 8 on 10th. Singles on 3rd, 10-11th and 13th November.

BULLFINCH *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*. A ♂ on 27th (trapped) and a different ♂ on 28th October.

SCARLET ROSEFINCH *Carpodacus erythrinus*. Rather more spring and rather fewer autumn records than usual. 2 on 19-21st and one 22nd May—both immature/♀♀. An adult ♂ on 7th, a brown bird on 18th June (trapped) and another on 4th July (trapped). In autumn: 1-2 daily from 15-21st

August (a minimum of 3 individuals). In September, one from 14-16th (trapped), 2 on 17th, one remaining to 19th. A different bird on 20th and one on 25-26th September. One on 8th October (R. Johns and H. Gilston).

CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs*. In April single ♂♂ on 4th and 15th and 1-2 between 20-24th. Recorded virtually daily in very small numbers 2nd May-3rd June, no more than 5 on any day. Strong and protracted autumn passage: recorded daily 18th September-21st November. Numbers up to 15 in September but consistently higher in October with arrivals as follows: 28 on 3rd, 70 on 12th, 60 on 16th, 100 on 19th and 27th and 140 on 31st. Numbers generally decreased in November. A large proportion of those trapped in the autumn were adults. Singles on 19th and 27th December.



BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla*. One on 10th April. Up to 14 between 14-24th April and up to 15 between 27th April-14th May. A ♂ on 20th May and up to 4 from 26th May-14th June. Strong and protracted passage in autumn: recorded daily from 20th September-17th November. Up to 10 in September but numbers consistently higher in October with main arrivals as follows: 35 on 1st, 150 on 4th, 60 on 13th, 50 on 17th, 170 on 21st, 250 on 26th and 400 on 29th. Although 200 still present on 2nd November, numbers generally lower in November to last record on 17th.

CORN BUNTING *Emberiza calandra*. The only record was one in 13th May (W. E. Fletcher).

YELLOWHAMMER *Emberiza citrinella*. Single ♂♂ on 11-12th and 27-29th April. Singles on 9-10th and 19-21st May. Up to 4 recorded in autumn between 20th October-5th November.

*YELLOW-BREASTED BUNTING *Emberiza aureola*. Two autumn records: one at Skerryholm on 12-13th and another at

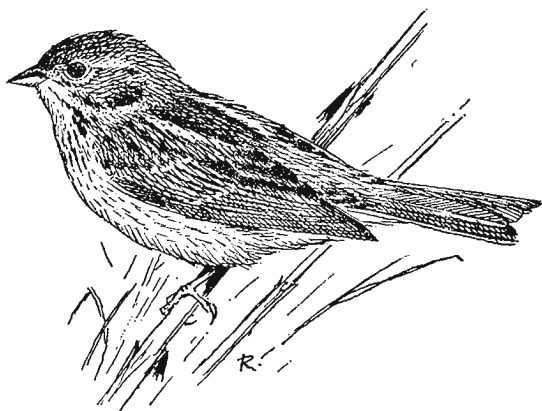
Shirva on 17-19th September. Both were immature or female.

ORTOLAN *Emberiza hortulana*. One 12-13th, 2 on 14-15th and one 16-17th May and a ♂ on 21st May. In autumn, a ♂ on 22nd August, one on 29th, 3 on 30th and one on 31st August-4th September. One 23-30th September.

RUSTIC BUNTING *Emberiza rustica*. A ♀ on 24-26th May trapped in the Double Dyke on 24th.

LITTLE BUNTING *Emberiza pusilla*. An unprecedented influx in autumn. Recorded from 17-27th September and although only 3 birds seen on best days (23rd and 26th) probably 5 different individuals during this period. In October, singles on 1-2nd, 2 on 3-8th and one remaining to 14th October; both birds were thought to be additional to the September individuals.

REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus*. A ♂ on 28th February, another 26-29th March. Singles in April on 15th, 20th and 27th. 1-5 recorded most days 1st May-6th June. Strong autumn passage, recorded most days 18th September-13th November, 10-20 on many days and peaks of 30 on 3-4th and 7th October.



*PALLAS'S REED BUNTING *Emberiza pallasii*. An adult ♀ was found at Skerryholm on 29th September. It then proved elusive until 6th October when it was refound at Taing. It was seen daily to 11th October and was mist netted on 10th. By reference to skins in the British Museum, Tring it was found to be referable to the Northern race, *E. p. polaris*. This is the first British and Irish record of this species which breeds in North Central and East Siberia and winters in Korea, Manchuria and China.

LAPLAND BUNTING *Calcarius lapponicus*. A ♂ on 27th April. In May a ♀ on 9th and ♂♂ on 13th and 29th. A ♂ on Svey on the very late date of 16th June. Recorded daily 6th September-16th October, most between 16-30th September when 10-15 on many days and 17 on 23rd. 3 on 24-25th and 31st October and one 2-3rd November.

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis*. Numbers recorded in winter rather lower than in most years and although recorded daily, 65 on 2nd March was largest number seen in winter and spring. Less regularly recorded after 11th April and only up to 5 seen to last spring record on 17th May. In autumn, recorded regularly from 5th September, numbers again lower than in many recent years, and with exception of 19th September (120) and 31st October (200), numbers rarely exceeded 50 until 10-19th November when 150-200 recorded. Not more than 20 seen in December.

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus*. Present in usual numbers throughout the year. Breeding data: season as usual.

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus*. 4 on 16th May increased to 7 on 22nd, one of this group was trapped on 17th May and it was later found in Shetland in September (see Recoveries 1976). Another influx 3-10th June, peaking at 17 on 7-8th. 1-2 seen at intervals 10-26th September and 5-24th October.

Presumed Cage Birds

RED-HEADED BUNTING *Emberiza bruniceps*. A ♂ on 18-21st May, ♀ on 29-30th June and a ♀ on 16-17th July.

Supplementary details to the 1975 Systematic List

The record of White Stork on 25th May and a Stonechat referable to one of the eastern forms on 10-17th October have been accepted by the British Birds Rarities Committee.

Ringling Details 1976

Progress was rather slow through the spring, and during the summer many of the seabird totals were barely average. The exceptions during the summer were Storm Petrel and Black Guillemot, both of which received a lot of attention and were trapped in record numbers. It will be seen from the monthly ringling totals that by the beginning of the autumn progress was still average. However, the autumn was quite exceptional and the number of common migrants trapped pushed our annual ringling figure to another record high of 8176.

	Jan-										
	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Monthly ringing totals	91	204	337	1130	1796	1656	632	2063	267		

In the second half of October we were in fact limited by the man-power available to work the traps and ring the birds and not, as is so often the case, by the number of birds. The October ringing totals for several species were sufficient to exceed the previous best annual totals. The most notable 1976 totals, all boosted by the October 'rush' were Blackcap 439 (160), Dun-nock 146 (96), Chaffinch 240 (84) and Brambling 289 (165). The previous best annual totals are shown in brackets.

The exceptional finch totals above resulted almost entirely from the use of the Sitka spruce at the Gully and particularly the Plantation for roosting. It is hoped that the present construction work for the new Island water scheme in close proximity to the Plantation trap (and the Vaadal trap) will not reduce the potential of these important traps. Another finch species that figures prominently in 1976 was the Twite 318 (194). The total here reflects not only the breeding success but the success of the Observatory trap. Fortunately, the Observatory trap has proved to be an asset and in part this has compensated for the removal, this year, of the Setter garden trap. It is hoped that, with the planting of cuttings in and near the Observatory trap, the area will become more attractive to a wider variety of species.

Through the year 112 species were ringed, of which three were new to the FIBO ringing list—Pintail and Bean Goose were dazzled and Pallas's Reed Bunting was mist netted. These additions take the number of species ringed on Fair Isle to 230. A scan of the following ringing lists reveals a fine selection of unusual species, but to mention a few on merit, based merely on the infrequency with which they are ringed on the Island puts a very unlikely combination of species in the same class. In this way the 2nd Jackdaw ringed on Fair Isle is in the same class as Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler and the 4th Goldfinch is in the same category as the Olive-backed Pipit, Pechora Pipit and Red-throated Pipit all ringed this year.

The following table of birds ringed and recovered has been simplified and only those species relevant to 1976 are included. Also by omitting the cumulative totals column it has been possible to include a breakdown of the current year's ringing figures into those ringed as pulli and those ringed as fully grown birds (FG). The cumulative totals are still easily obtained from the table by the addition of the current year's figure to those ringed previously.

	1948-75	1976	1948-75	1976
		Pull FG		
	1948-75	1976	1948-75	1976
		Pull FG		
Fulmar	6496	208 44	43	2
Storm Petrel	3316	1031	25	9
Leach's Petrel	9	5		
Shag	9722	119 11	212	11
Teal	30	2	2	
Pintail		1		
Goldeneye	7	2		
White-fronted Goose	2			1
Bean Goose		1		
Sparrowhawk	90	6	11	
Merlin	128	3	11	
Kestrel	26	1	4	
Water Rail	176	11	2	
Corncrake	27	1	2	
Coot	8	3		1
Oystercatcher	709	38 2	35	1
Lapwing	212	4	2	
Ringed Plover	272	5 14	3	
Snipe	187	23	4	
Jack Snipe	62	36	1	
Woodcock	157	30	1	
Curlew	30	2	1	
Wood Sandpiper	10	1		
Redshank	158	10	2	
Knot	54			1
Purple Sandpiper	115	9	1	
Little Stint	27			
Dunlin	332	28	5	
Ruff	29	1	1	
Great Skua	335	19 4	4	1
Arctic Skua	1891	102 28	33	
Great Black-back	1062	67 1	40	2
Lesser Black-back	666	50 5	15	
Herring Gull	1817	108 5	40	4
Common Gull	32	5 8	5	
Black-headed Gull	17	2	2	
Kittiwake	1657	82 1	8	4
Common Tern	37	22	1	
Razorbill	1540	166 47	42	2
Guillemot	2922	313 70	59	8
Black Guillemot	855	95 37	9	1
Puffin	5877	113 397	11	1
Rock Dove	5	4		

	1948-75	1976	1948-75	1976
		Pull	FG	
Turtle Dove	30		7	
Collared Dove	57		20	
Cuckoo	64		2	1
Long-eared Owl	92		12	2
Great Spotted Woodpecker	17		1	2
Wryneck	122		3	
Skylark	542	25	25	2
Swallow	176		3	2
House Martin	115		13	
Hooded Crow	38		1	
Jackdaw	1		1	
Wren	489		43	
Mistle Thrush	15		1	1
Fieldfare	479		13	
Song Thrush	1267		122	20
Redwing	4355		323	55
Ring Ouzel	248		21	5
Blackbird	13191		376	238
Wheatear	11012	16	296	52
Stonechat	31		1	
Whinchat	379		5	2
Redstart	1173		26	
Black Redstart	71		5	
Bluethroat	142		3	2
Robin	3494		373	22
Grasshopper Warbler	53		2	
Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler	1		1	
Reed Warbler	78		10	1
Marsh Warbler	35		3	
Sedge Warbler	229		9	1
Aquatic Warbler	16		2	
Booted Warbler	3		1	
Blackcap	1460		439	6
Barred Warbler	256		8	
Garden Warbler	1554		88	
Whitethroat	620		18	
Lesser Whitethroat	338		16	
Subalpine Warbler	13		1	
Willow Warbler	1868		105	1
Chiffchaff	379		23	
Goldcrest	826		49	1
Spotted Flycatcher	327		25	1
Pied Flycatcher	550		29	3
Dunnock	886		146	4
Meadow Pipit	5933	4	189	35

	1948-75		1976	1948-75	1976
		Pull	FG		
Tree Pipit	373		18		
Olive-backed Pipit	3		1		
Pechora Pipit	3		1		
Red-throated Pipit	3		1		
Rock Pipit	5467	16	271	16	2
Pied/White Wagtail	382		9	4	
Great Grey Shrike	72		7	1	
Red-backed Shrike	133		13		
Starling	10348	51	533	82	5
Greenfinch	53		7		
Goldfinch	3		1		
Linnet	78		7	1	
Twite	2863		318	3	
Redpoll	417		47		1
Bullfinch	23		1		
Scarlet Rosefinch	46		3		
Chaffinch	739		240	2	
Brambling	924		289	2	
Yellowhammer	33		1		
Rustic Bunting	7		1	1	
Reed Bunting	219		17	2	
Pallas's Reed Bunting			1		
Snow Bunting	481		3	2	1
House Sparrow	1003		1	1	
Tree Sparrow	72		7		1
Totals for 1976		1630	6546		72
Number of species ringed in 1976					112
Grand total of birds ringed 1948-1976				127672	
Grand total of species ringed 1948-1976				230	
Grand total of birds recovered 1948-1976				1305	

Recoveries in 1976

A total of 72 recoveries had been reported by the end of the year (plus an additional recovery of a bird ringed with FIBO rings away from the Island). The details of the most interesting are given in full, but in the case of repetitive sequences of similar recoveries, they have been summarised for convenience. 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.

/?/—method of recovery unknown.

Where the exact date of the 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 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 (pull) 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.

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

FULMAR

FS70794 pull 28.07.75 Fair Isle.

v 05.01.76 Blomendaal aan Zee, Netherlands.
52°24'N 4°33'E.

SS84388 4 30.08.69 Fair Isle.

x 01.03.76 Atlantic Ocean, NE of Shetland.
ca 62°N 0°54'W.

STORM PETREL

The nine recoveries reported during the year are dealt with in detail later in this report.

SHAG

Of the 11 recoveries of pulli reported, 8 were in their first year (2 in Shetland, 4 in Orkney, 1 in Banff and 1 in South Uist, Outer Hebrides). 2 which had been ringed in the same colony on the same day in '75 were found dead at Dunbar, East Lothian on consecutive days in April '76. The ring of a bird ringed on Fair Isle in 1962 was found on a beach in Unst, Shetland.

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE

1111369 8 03.05.75 Fair Isle.

+ 23.01.76 Law Hill, Trinity Gask, Crieff, Perthshire. 370km SSW.

This bird, assigned to the Greenland form, is our first recovery of this species of which only two have been ringed on the Island.

COOT

- GK06095 4 22.04.75 Fair Isle.
 x (02.02.76) Goeree, Overflakkee, Netherlands.
 ca 51°50'N 4°00'E.

This is our first recovery of this species which reaches Fair Isle in extremely small numbers. There is, however, a previous record of a young bird ringed in the Frisian Islands, Germany in 1963 which was found in an exhausted condition on Fair Isle in November '63.

OYSTERCATCHER

- FS70695 pull 23.07.75 Fair Isle.
 (17.01.76) Off Morecambe, Lancs. 610km S.
 FS14330 pull 20.06.71 Balta Sound, Unst.
 + 13.11.76 Bergen, Norway. 60°23'N 5°20'E.

This is the first Fair Isle ringed Woodcock to be recovered in Norway. The direction of the movement is difficult to explain being the reverse of what might be expected in autumn.

KNOT

- CK97553 4 08.09.70 Fair Isle.
 v 06.12.75 Holme-next-Sea, Hunstanton, Norfolk. 740km SSE.

This bird which had in '75 reached one of the main wintering areas in the British Isles for this species is our first recovery of this species.

GREAT SKUA

- HW26229 pull 23.07.75 Fair Isle.
 x 24.10.75 Brandso, Jylland, Denmark. 55°21'N
 9°43'E.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL

- HW26159 pull 07.07.75 Fair Isle.
 x? 10.06.76. Insel Borkum, East Frisian Islands,
 W. Germany. 53°35'N 6°44'E.
 HW26248 8 02.12.75 Fair Isle.
 x 03.01.76 Blavands Huk, Jutland, Denmark.
 55°33'N 8°08'E.

HERRING GULL

Three pulli were found, two from '75 in Aberdeenshire and Lincolnshire and one from '64 was found in Shetland in August '76. Details of an adult dazzled at a winter roost are given in full.

- GP97600 8 02.12.73 Fair Isle.
 x 20.07.76 Sandvag i Helgeland, Vik, Norway.
 65°17'N 12°08'E.

KITTIWAKE

- EF84345 pull 11.07.73 Fair Isle.
 + 29.09.76 Ekalugarssuit, Julianehab, Greenland.
 60°50'N 46°10'W.
- EB07643 pull 04.07.75 Fair Isle.
 /?/ 08.10.75 Godthab, Greenland. 64°50'N 46°10'
 W.
- EB47235 pull 28.06.76 Fair Isle.
 x ca 05.08.76 Dunnet Bay, Caithness. 145km SW.
- ED57726 6 26.06.70 Fair Isle.
 x 06.01.76 Den Helder, Netherlands. 52°57'N
 4°47'E.

RAZORBILL

- M19288 pull 16.06.75 Fair Isle.
 x 16.06.76 Mimizan, France. 44°12'N 1°14'W.
- FS70653 pull 12.07.75 Fair Isle.
 + 10.12.75 Off Guecho, Viscaya, Spain. 43°21'N
 3°01'W.

GUILLEMOT

7 recoveries of pulli were reported in '76, three from Northumberland had all been ringed as pulli, one in '72 and one '75. The third originally ringed in '68 had been retrapped in '75 on Fair Isle. 4 others were reported from Norway; one ringed in '73, one in '74 and two in '75. An adult ringed in '68 was shot in October '76 off Husoy, Norway.

BLACK GUILLEMOT

- EB47041 pull 03.08.75 Fair Isle.
 x ca 15.09.76 Burghead Bay, Moray. 230km SSW.
- Only one previous Black Guillemot ringed on Fair Isle has moved further south—one recovered in Essex in 1953.

PUFFIN

- EB07519 pull 18.06.75 Fair Isle.
 x 13.03.76 Pakefield, Lowestoft, Suffolk. 805km
 SSE.

LONG-EARED OWL

- GK06877 2 10.11.75 Fair Isle.
 x 07.03.76 Kimo, Blekinge, Sweden. 56°09'N
 15°26'E.
- GK06884 2 17.11.75 Fair Isle.
 x 05.03.76 Between Flo and Salstad, Grastorp,
 Skaraborg, Sweden. ca 58°20'N 12°35'E.

The autumn of '75 was exceptional for the influx of Long-eared Owls in Britain with large numbers recorded along the whole eastern coast. A record total of 21 were ringed on Fair Isle (cf. 71 between '48-74). These two birds, making

early returns to their breeding areas, are only our 3rd and 4th recoveries.

BLACKBIRD

6 recoveries were notified, one ringed in November '74 was controlled a year later in Norfolk. The other 5 were all reported from Norway in February, March, August, November and December. All had been ringed on passage, 2 in spring and 3 in autumn, between '72-75.

WHEATEAR

BR01971 4♂ 26.08.74 Fair Isle.
+ 29.03.76 Boujniba, Khouriga, Morocco.
32°54'N 6°47'W.

GOLDCREST

173635 2♀ 09.10.75 Fair Isle.
v 09.10.75 North Ronaldsay, Orkney. 48km SW.
This is only our second Goldcrest recovery, and it is particularly interesting for the speed of the movement. It was ringed at 0800 hours weighing 5.4g. It must have flown direct to Orkney to be trapped at 1000 hours when it weighed 0.3g lighter.

MEADOW PIPIT

JJ38587 3 05.09.72 Fair Isle.
+ 20.10-10.11.74 Los Palacios, Sevilla, Spain.
37°10'N 5°55'W.
KB18474 2 19.09.75 Fair Isle.
x ca 05.12.75 Monzalbarba, Utebo, Spain. 41°41'N
0°57'W.

ROCK PIPIT

BS23390 3 11.08.75 Fair Isle.
x (24.02.76) Portmahomack, Tarbet Ness, Ross-shire. 225km SW.
BS23876 3 10.07.76 Fair Isle.
x (27.10.76) Leckmeln, Ullapool, Ross-shire.
270km SW.

STARLING

5 Starlings, all ringed in autumn, were reported south of Fair Isle, in Orkney, Caithness, Sutherland, Banff and Aberdeen.

REDPOLL (*Acanthis flammea rostrata*)

KH42724 3 13.09.76 Fair Isle.
v 21.09.76 North Ronaldsay, Orkney. 48km WSW.

This bird, part of one of the largest influxes of Greenland Redpolls into Fair Isle, is only the second movement involving the Island. The first was ringed on North Ronaldsay

and controlled on Fair Isle in the same spring. It was referable to the Mealy race *A. f. flammea*.

SNOW BUNTING

BS23346 3♀ 07.11.75 Fair Isle.

v 31.01.76 Zeedijk, Oosterbierum, Friesland, Netherlands. 53°15'N 5°30'E. Reringed Arnhem B362394.

There have been 2 previous Snow Bunting recoveries, one, like this one, had gone further south to winter but on the British North Sea coast at Yorkshire. The other had returned to Newfoundland in May.

TREE SPARROW

KH42081 4 19.05.76 Fair Isle.

v 04.09.76 Kergord, Weisdale, Shetland. 85km N.

This bird, our first Tree Sparrow recovery, was controlled among a group, some of which were breeding at Kergord.

Recaptures in 1976

During the season a considerable number of birds were recaptured which had been ringed previously on Fair Isle. The majority had been ringed earlier this year and the details of these are stored in the Observatory retrap files. All recaptures of birds ringed in previous years and those found dead on the Island (excluding Arctic Skuas) are summarised in the following table.

Birds ringed in previous years and recaptured or found dead in 1976

Species	1960	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
Fulmar (Full grown)										1	1	2	6	2		1
Storm Petrel (Full grown)										2			1	1	3	14
Shag (Pull)								1	1				1	2	1	
(Full grown)													2	1		3
Eider (Adult ♀)													1	1		
Oystercatcher (Full grown)															1	
Snipe (Full grown)																1
Redshank (Full grown)															1	
Great Skua (Pull)			1	1		1	2			5	1		1			
(Adult)															6	6
Lesser Blackback (Pull)															1	
Common Gull (Pull)															1	
Razorbill (Pull)										1					1	
(Full grown)							1	1		1	2	2	8	2	5	7
Guillemot (Pull)								1	2		3	2	1			
(Full grown)		1			1	1	1	2	2	3	5	2	10	4	4	8
Tystie (Pull)				1	1			1	1		2					
(Adult)						1	1		2	1		1	2	1	4	6

Species	1960	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
Puffin (Pull)		2	1										3	2		
(Full grown)		1	1				1			1			2	6	7	24
Starling										1				3	9	14
Wheatear																4
Meadow Pipit													2	1	1	
Rock Pipit															3	2
Twite														3	3	15

Additionally, 34 birds ringed with FIBO rings in Shetland were found at or near the place of ringing in 1976. The majority were Storm Petrels at Mousa.

Ringed Strangers in 1976

STORM PETREL

The 10 controls are dealt with in detail later in this report.

OYSTERCATCHER

FS54230 9 22.07.74 Friskney, Boston, Lincs.
v 17.06.76 Fair Isle. 735km N.

DUNLIN

BX21496 6 23.02.74 Westhaven, Carnoustie, Angus.
x 29.10.76 Fair Isle. 340km N.

GREAT SKUA

Three birds trapped at their nests on Fair Isle had been ringed as pulli on Foula (one in '69, 2 in '70). Additional colour ringed birds sighted in '76 had been ringed as pulli on Foula in '71 and '68. A bird seen over the airstrip in early July with blue and white colour rings had been ringed as a pullus in the Faeroes in '68. This is the first Faroese Bonxie to be reported from Britain.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL

Moskwa D751993 3 28.06.72 Great Ainov Island, Murmansk, USSR. 69°50'N 31°35'E.
v 02.12.75 Fair Isle. Reringed HW26240.

This is the second Russian-ringed Great Blackback to reach Fair Isle. The first, also ringed at the same location was found dead on Fair Isle in February '61.

COMMON GULL

Three which had been ringed in Shetland were found on Fair Isle at the start of their movement south in the early autumn. 2 chicks ringed in '76 were found dead and a third bird ringed as a pullus in '63 on Mousa was controlled on 30.07.76.

BLACKCAP

Arnhem S895605 2♀ 24.09.76 Nieuw Formerum, Terschelling, Frisian Islands, Netherlands, 53°24'N 5°19'E.

v 04.10.76 Fair Isle. Reringed JB90095.

Arnhem S931519 3♂ 20.09.76 Sparregat, Wassenaar, Zuid Holland, Netherlands. 52°08'N 4°20'E.

v 17.10.76 Fair Isle. Reringed KP51556.

Note the similarity of the ringing and control details of these two birds. The ringing details give us some insight into the immediate 'take-off' area of the large scale, early October Blackcap arrivals on Fair Isle.

STARLING

Helsinki A367579 pull 06.06.73 Near Lammi, Hame, Finland. 61°03'N 25°03'E.

xA 03.12.75 Fair Isle.

This is one of the very passerines recovered where the age and origins are precisely known.

Fair Isle Bird Observatory Trust

Treasurer's Report

I would like to emphasise two things clearly, before I deal with the figures. First, that we have an unknown liability for installing such alterations as are necessary to comply with the new fire regulations. The fire inspector, at last, visited Fair Isle in March 1976. Our application for a fire certificate was made in 1972. If we were to carry out all his recommendations it might now cost around £4,000. We are hoping to arrive at a more sensible figure without endangering either the safety of the building or, more important, of our guests. Last year we set aside £800 towards this contingency. This year we show a loss.

My second point is that this loss reflects in no way on the efforts of Roger and Judy Broad, who have done a magnificent job in an exceptionally difficult year. A lot of our spring bookings were cancelled, and the number of visitors dropped con-

siderably from the previous year. In the circumstances Roger and Judy saved the ship by good organisation.

I. Revenue Account

Board takings dropped by over £1,500 as a result of the above drop in the number of visitors. The cost of provisions also dropped, but only by some £400. Food is becoming, as you well know, more expensive. For the rest, on the expenditure side, although we cut down on Repairs and Renewals and on Motor expenses, the inevitable increases on Heat—Light—Telephone—Freight had to be expected. We have continued to allow for depreciation on the three items mentioned, but not on the Hostel itself. On the income side there is really little change, except that we have made more from the sale of publications and that the Subscriptions and Donations figure is higher.

II. Appeal Fund

(Carried to Balance Sheet). Very little change.

III. Capital Account

(Carried to Balance Sheet). During the year we received a donation of £555 from the Colonial Research Institute to be used in the reduction of the H.I.D.B. Loan and a further £500 from the estate of the late Miss M. B. O. Baillie, for both of which we are extremely grateful.

IV. Balance Sheet

I have little to comment on. The important figure of Net Current Assets has risen by more than £1,000, and the loan from the H.I.D.B. has been reduced not only by the normal annual repayment, but the £555 donation which I mentioned above. It now stands at £3,620.

Any further help toward repaying this remaining balance would be of great help to the Trustees.

V. Endowment Fund

No change. Income paid to the Fair Isle Revenue account. Capital cannot be encroached upon.

'FRIENDS OF FAIR ISLE' - ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

At the A.G.M. of Trustees held in Edinburgh on 3rd February 1977, it was agreed that the annual subscription for 'Friends' should be raised from £1.05 (the old guinea—in force since 1948!) to £2.50 as from this year. Existing Covenanters could continue at their present subscription for the duration of their covenants. New Banker's Order & Covenant Forms are obtainable from 21 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh.

FAIR ISLE BIRD OBSERVATORY TRUST

Year ended 31st October, 1976

REVENUE ACCOUNT

1975									
£4084	Provisions	...	...	...	...	...	...	£3646	
2443	Wages & National Insurance	...	...	...	...	...	...	2704	
415	Insurances	...	...	...	...	...	...	591	
1000	Heat & Light	...	...	...	...	...	...	1173	
976	Repairs & Renewals	...	...	...	...	...	...	418	
602	Telephone, Postages & Stationery	...	...	...	...	...	...	804	
352	Printing Annual Report	...	...	...	...	...	...	433	
499	Travelling Expenses	...	...	...	...	...	...	542	
245	Motor Expenses	...	...	...	...	...	...	204	
120	Freight Inward	...	...	...	...	...	...	134	
95	Bird Rings & Nets	...	...	...	...	...	...	136	
368	Administration Expenses	...	...	...	...	...	...	366	
92	Audit & Legal Charges	...	...	...	...	...	...	90	
274	Loan Interest	...	...	...	...	...	...	248	
800	Provisions for alterations re fire regulations	...	...	...	...	...	...	—
	Depreciation :								
180	Furnishings & Equipment	...	...	...	...	...	£180		
60	Generators	...	...	...	...	...	90		
127	Land Rover	...	...	...	...	...	100		
								370	
46	Surplus for year	...	...	...	...	...	...	—
<u>£12778</u>								<u>£11859</u>	
£10898	Board	...	...	...	...	...	...	£9373	
250	Grant—National Trust for Scotland—Wildlife Fund	...	...	...	...	...	...	250	
230	Fair Isle Endowment Trust to account of Income	...	...	...	...	...	...	302	
857	Subscriptions & Donations	...	...	...	...	...	...	1043	
143	Tax recovered from Deeds of Covenant	...	...	...	...	...	...	125	
175	Sale of Publications	...	...	...	...	...	...	363	
225	Interest received on Government Stock	...	...	...	...	...	...	225	
	Loss for year	...	...	...	...	...	...	178	
<u>£12778</u>								<u>£11859</u>	

APPEAL FUND

£25420	Balance carried to Balance Sheet	...	...	...	...	£26325	
<u>£25420</u>						<u>£26325</u>	
£24361	Balance at 31st October, 1975	...	...	...	...	£25420	
437	Donations received during year	...	...	...	...	117	
408	Interest from Temporary Deposits—Gross	...	...	...	...	691	
214	Tax recovered from Covenants	...	...	...	...	97	
<u>£25420</u>						<u>£26325</u>	

CAPITAL ACCOUNT

£6781	Loss for year	...	...	...	...	£178
	Balance carried to Balance Sheet	...	...	...	...	7904
<u>£6781</u>						<u>£8082</u>
£6735	Balance at 31st October, 1975	...	...	...	...	£6781
—	Donations received	...	...	...	...	1301
46	Surplus for year	...	...	...	...	—
<u>£6781</u>						<u>£8082</u>

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st OCTOBER, 1976

Fixed Assets	Cost or Val.	Deprec.	1975
Hostel	£51548	£—	£51548
Sheds and Traps	150	—	150
Furnishings & Equipment	1816	1208	608
Generators	942	442	500
Scientific & Photographic Equipment	160	—	160
Land Rover	427	227	200
Boat	107	107	—
	<u>£55150</u>	<u>£1984</u>	<u>£53166</u>
Investment			
£2642 8½% Treasury Stock 1980/82 (M.V. £2127)			2582
			2582
Current Assets			
Stocks		£945	739
Sundry Debtors		816	664
Tax Recoverable		58	54
Deposit repayable 15.5.77		1000	1000
Temporary Deposits		6200	6500
Bank & Cash		296	202
		<u>£9315</u>	<u>£9159</u>
Less Sundry Creditors	£1414		2276
Provision for Alterations	800	2214	800
Net Current Assets			<u>7101</u>
			<u>£62849</u>
Capital Account			£7904
Appeal Fund			26325
Grants Received from Highlands & Islands			
Development Board			25000
Secured Loan—Highlands & Islands Board	£4175		4650
Less Special Donation to be applied in reduction	555	3620	
			<u>£62849</u>

Notes :

1. No Depreciation has been provided on the Hostel.
2. **Highlands & Islands Development Board** £9,500 Loan at 5½%. The balance of the loan (£3,620) secured over specified Trust Properties is repayable by 7 annual instalments of £475 and a final instalment of £295.

The above accounts are correctly stated in accordance with the books and receipts submitted to us.

ARTHUR YOUNG McCLELLAND MOORES & CO.,

Chartered Accountants.

Edinburgh 21st March 1977

FAIR ISLE ENDOWMENT TRUST

Summary of Account for the Year ended 31st October 1976

				Capital	Revenue
Fund at 31st October 1975	...	...	...	£7987	£40
Income for year per Schedule	...	...	...		191
Income Tax Refund 1975/76	...	...	...		102
					<hr/> £333
Trustees Fees & Outlays	...	...	...		£19
Remittances to F.I.B.O.T.	...	...	...		302
					<hr/> 321
Fund at 31st October, 1976	...	...	...	<hr/>£7987	<hr/> £12

Schedule

				Capital	Revenue
				Market Value	Cost
Lanarkshire Sub-Region					
£1,000 5½% Stock 1977/79	...	...	...	£780	£896
Treasury Loan £1,000 8¼% Loan 1987/90	...	...	...	645	996
British Investment Trust					
£1,530 7½% Conv. Deb. Stock 1996	...	...	...	1415	2728
Whitbread Co. Ltd. 840 "A" Ord. 25p Shares	...	...	...	399	314
				<hr/> £3239	<hr/> £4934
Heritable Property					
21 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh	...	...	...		3050
Cash Balance	...	...	...		3
					<hr/> £7987
					<hr/> £191

THE JOHN HARRISON MEMORIAL FUND

Year ended 31st October 1976

Balance of Funds at 31st October, 1975	...	...	...	£573.81
Donations received during year	...	...	...	80.10
Interest received on temporary loan	...	...	...	39.13
				<hr/>
				£693.04
Deduct :				
Seven grants paid for Accommodation at Hostel	...	...	...	70.00
				<hr/>
Balance of Funds held at 31st October, 1976	...	...	...	£623.04
				<hr/>

This special Fund was instituted some years ago by R. A. Richardson in memory of a keen young birdwatcher—John Harrison of Hunstanton, Norfolk who died at the early age of 19. John spent three happy visits to Fair Isle.

The Fund was set up to help adventurous teenagers of slender means with their Hostel expenses should they choose to visit Fair Isle; and as the Fund builds up, more and more youngsters are helped in this way.

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 referees such as a school-teacher and a senior naturalist of their acquaintance.

The Trustees 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 5BT.

With the ever rising costs of travel to Fair Isle, it is all the more important that this Fund should be increased.

If you cannot give us a donation now—why not bequeath something to us in your Will?

In conjunction with the Fund, the Kilwarlin Trust has kindly agreed to make available the sum of £150 per annum for the next few years to permit the winners of a Y.O.C. Competition for Scottish youngsters to visit Fair Isle for a week. Details of this Competition can be obtained from the R.S.P.B. Scottish Office, 17 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh. This means that two youngsters may benefit to the tune of £75 each to help cover travel and board at the Bird Observatory.



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.

In addition to the charter flight, Loganair are now operating scheduled flights in and out of Fair Isle on Mondays and Fridays. Particulars from Loganair Ltd, Sumburgh Airport, Shetland.

You can phone the Warden Fair Isle (STD) 258 at the cheap rate after 6 p.m. or at week-ends 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. A Subscription Form is enclosed.

FAIR ISLE BIRD OBSERVATORY

