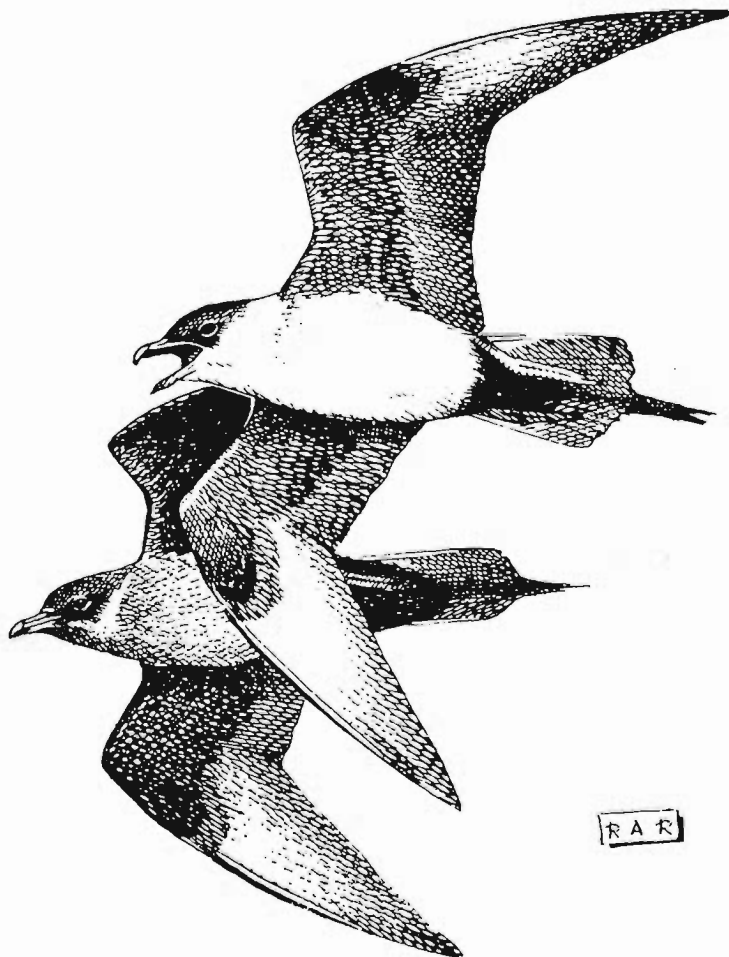
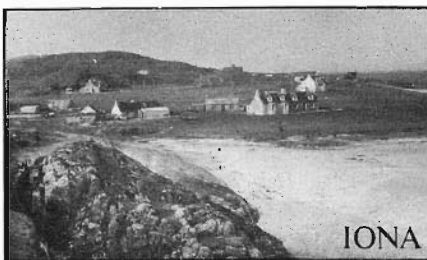


FAIR ISLE BIRD OBSERVATORY

Report for 1981



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



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Fair Isle Bird Observatory

REPORT No. 34
1981

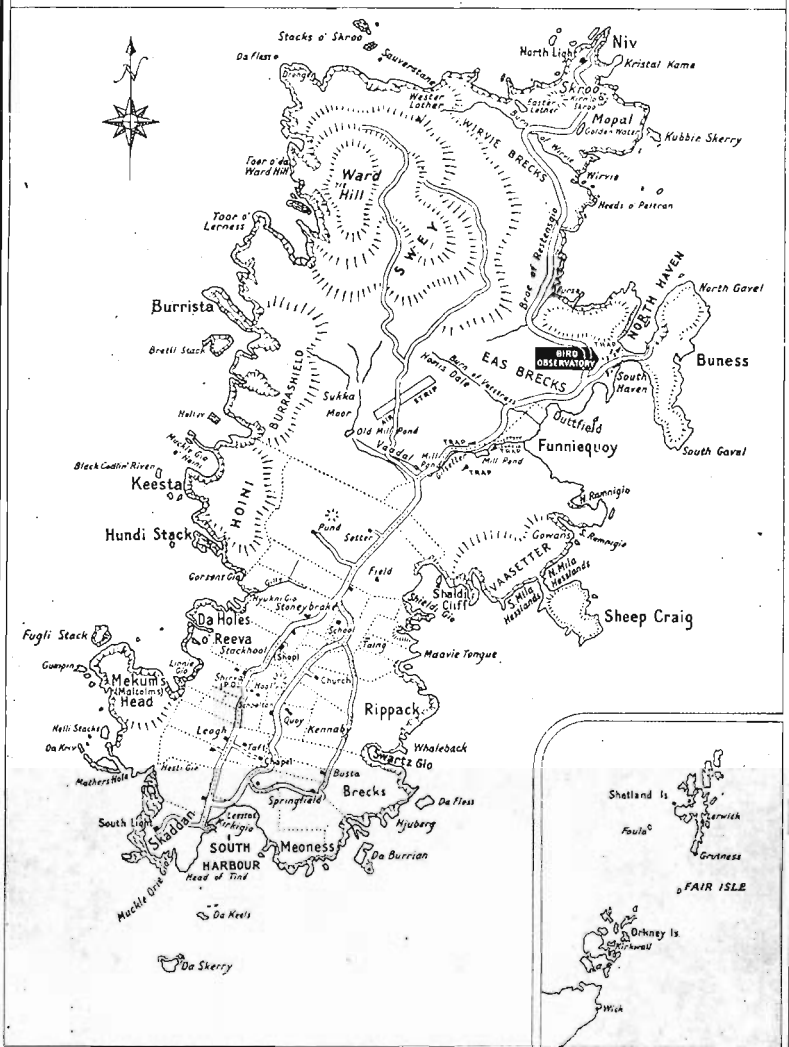
Edited by JOHN ARNOTT

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FAIR ISLE BIRD OBSERVATORY

0 100yds 440yds 880yds 1 mile
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Fair Isle Bird Observatory

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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 subscription 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.

IRENE WATERSTON,
21 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh EH7 5BT. Hon. Secretary.

FOREWORD

This year marks the first season that Nick and Elizabeth Riddiford have been in charge of the Observatory and hostel on Fair Isle and it has proved to have been a very happy and satisfactory one. The most important event, the birth of their daughter, Naomi Grace, happened after the end of the calendar year on 5th February 1982 and I know that all the Friends of Fair Isle will wish the parents and baby a long and happy sojourn on the island.

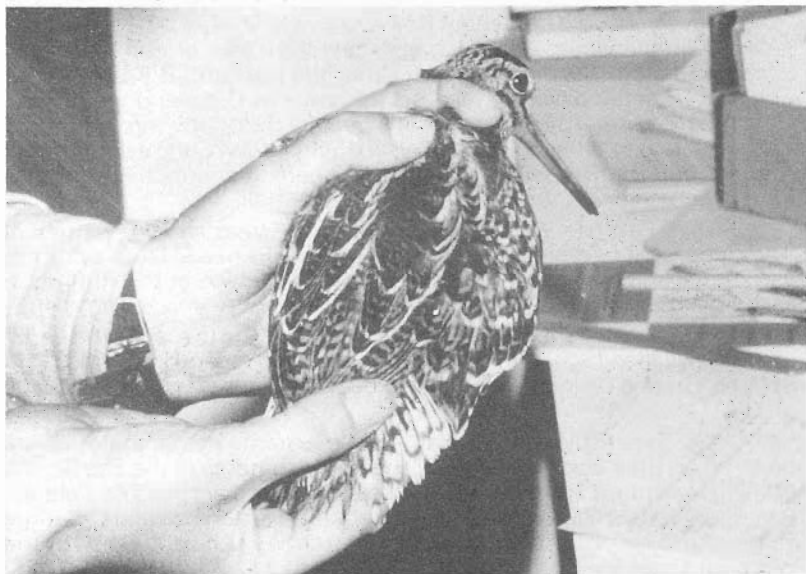
The body of the Report gives a very full account of events on the island, both ornithological and other, and among other notable happenings it is interesting to note that this year the number of birds ringed at well over ten thousand is easily the highest ever achieved. The question is often asked why we continue ringing large numbers of birds and in rather the same context why our annual Reports give so full an account of the bird happenings on the island. The answer, in my view, to both these queries is the same one that the usefulness of the data increases each year as it is accumulated in more or less the same form. The most convincing argument in this regard is to read the past Reports at one sitting! But there is particular urgency at the present time to pay particular attention to the seabirds, which are potentially under two threats, the possibility of massive oil spillage on their feeding grounds and the possibility of the coming of a sand eel fishery. Of recent times the sand eel population has probably materially increased round the British coasts as a result of overfishing of their predators, and it is very important that we should have reliable knowledge of the population trends and changes that may result. For seabirds generally and auks in particular this recent increase in food supply has been very helpful and Fair Isle with its constantly manned Observatory is admirably suited to this important work of monitoring changes.

I hope to visit the island in the spring of 1982 for a short time and next year to be able to write a foreword from more recent knowledge: meantime may I take this chance of thanking all the Friends of Fair Isle and supporters of F.I.B.O.T. for their continued support and especially the members of the executive committee in whose capable hands rests the day to day running of the Trust.

Arthur B. Duncan
Chairman



Pallas's Reed Bunting, 17th September 1981. Dark spot at lower rear of ear-coverts is thought to be diagnostic.



Great Snipe, 22nd September to 5th October 1981. Note extent of white on outer tail feathers with dark line in centre of outer two feathers denoting juvenile.

FAIR ISLE in 1981

as seen by a regular visitor

It is fortunate that Fair Isle falls under the wing of the Shetland Islands Council whose careful stewardship has ensured that part of the financial gains from North Sea oil are used to improve the essential facilities in Shetland. Fair Isle has enjoyed considerable benefits from the Shetland Islands Council Charitable trust and other Council funds. With such invaluable support a new slipway was constructed on the seaward side of the pier in North Haven in 1981. The contract was completed on time and with minimum disturbance to the island. The new refuge for the 'Good Shepherd' is proving a boon to the crew.

The Shetland Islands Council (together with the HIDB and, we hope, the EEC) are funding the installation of Britain's first commercial aerogenerator. The 15 metre high three-bladed windmill will be erected in 1982 on Houll Hill, and may provide up to 70% of the crofters' electricity requirements.

The North Light is in the last throes of conversion to automatic operation. Soon the station will be tended as required by the keepers from the South Light. With the less frequent vehicular traffic to the North Light it is hoped that the northern third of the island will be allowed to become a natural habitat for increasing varieties of wildlife compatible with its agricultural status as a Scattald.

After five years at the School Rod and Sylvia Thorne left for their native Kent, leaving behind happy children and grateful parents. Elfreda Buchan, the new teacher, and her husband Bill who is the Church of Scotland Missionary, set up home in October on the island with their one year old twins. Twins born to Jerry and Ingrid Eunson (Leogh), a son to Jim and Helen Wilson (Schooltown) and a daughter to Andrew and Kathleen Stout (Vaasetter) seem to ensure a busy future for the school and the extra facilities in the hall.

A visit to Fair Isle was the highlight of the year for four parties of Aberdeen school children organised by The Prince's Trust with the assistance of BP staff and Grampian police. Staying at the Puffin the parties joined in volunteer work projects during their week long stay.

Many past visitors to the island will be saddened to read of the death of Jackie Wilson (Schooltown) last summer and recently Sandy of Taft. Both renowned characters, they will be remembered with affection by many.

In 1982 Bill and Margo Murray will move to the house that they are building on their Springfield croft; the improvements to the Eas Brecks grazing, postponed from 1981, will be started and perhaps completed. Fair Isle Crafts will continue to market knitwear and tweeds. George Waterston's record of old Fair Isle photographs will be published by the National Trust for Scotland in the summer.

Fair Isle offers a welcome to all who travel to her shores for a short break. Outside of the peak migration periods the island provides a

rewarding experience that cannot be easily matched; an active and forward-looking crofting community, a habitat rich in variety and quality, and transport in the summer months connecting to the mainland by both sea and air. I hope that those of us who have enjoyed a visit to Fair Isle will encourage others to spend a few days on the island this year. They will not be disappointed.

WARDEN'S REPORT FOR 1981

Elizabeth and I arrived at Fair Isle on 7th February. It was a baptism of fire, for calm weather on our arrival was the prelude to hurricane force winds by late evening. The weather for the rest of the season was generally kinder.

David Borton and Chester Rowley were Assistants for the year and Adrian del Nevo the Seabird Assistant. The Cooks were Liz High and Mary Stewart. The Assistants worked hard and with great enthusiasm. Liz and Mary were irrepressibly cheerful and produced wonders in the kitchen. Culinary satisfaction vied with the birds in sending visitors home happy. Thus we express grateful thanks to all our staff.

Visitors from various parts of the world included a couple planning a Bird Observatory in Australia. FIBOT Trustees staying during the year were John Arnott and Irene Waterston. 8 young ornithologists took advantage of the John Harrison Memorial Fund and contributed a great deal to the work of the Observatory. There was, however, a slight decline in visitor weeks in relation to 1980. Our bookings for the first three months of the season suffered from Loganair declaring the schedule of their summer season only two weeks before its start, and stopping their Kirkwall-Fair Isle service just as it was attracting attention from would-be visitors. However, later in the season an Edinburgh-Tingwall service with connecting flights to and from Fair Isle provided by Loganair proved popular with our visitors.

The Observatory building will be a teenager next year but is withstanding the rigours of the weather well. However, the flat link block roof, having become as porous as a colander, was replaced during the summer by a new sloping roof along its entire length. Another fixture leaking water was the kitchen steriliser. Despite constant patching its condition deteriorated and at the end of the season it was despatched to Shetland for repair. The new garage complex is a real boon and became fully operational in March when a new 10½ kilowatt generator set was installed alongside the generator already in commission. It was our intention to run the generators on a two-week cycle but the new set let us down within ten days and was on its way back to Shetland with a faulty alternator, not to return until November. Fortunately the remaining set kept going throughout the visitor season, though in November it developed a diesel leak which necessitated a closedown while spare parts were sought. Other problems occurring during the year were minor and quickly rectified. None disrupted the smooth running of the Observatory or the comfort of the visitors.

Several ornithological studies were undertaken during the year. Seabird work was to the forefront again: we participated in the North Atlantic Bridled Guillemot survey during the summer and undertook a daily check on Guillemot attendance at breeding ledges in October and November for the I.T.E. During June the N.C.C.'s Seabirds at Sea team returned to study the offshore feeding patterns of our auks. Throughout the autumn Chester Rowley and Adrian del Nevo investigated patterns of seabird movement past the island. A non-seabird study, undertaken by Dr Peter Evans, researched aspects of Starling genetics. The

Observatory staff maintained the usual level of census work but particular stress was laid on involving visitors in our work where practicable. We were able to incorporate visiting ringers and trainees in the migration and seabird work while non-ringers also made a lively contribution to much of our census and monitoring studies. Prospective visitors may note that there is scope for participation in our work, irrespective of experience or ornithological knowledge.

ORNITHOLOGY

1981 was a year of quality and quantity. 203 species were seen during the year. Four species were recorded for the first time, swelling the island list to 331. They were Roller, Red-flanked Bluetail, Firecrest and Sandhill Crane. The crane was a first record for Britain.

The monthly totals of species recorded were:

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
24	36	72	98	145	110	75	98	145	142	76	57

The year started as it meant to carry on with good Blackbird and finch passage in late March followed by a whole series of 'earliest ever' summer migrants in the first half of April. We had to wait until mid May for main summer arrivals but a lack of commoner migrants was recompensed by a series of rarities in April and early May including the Sandhill Crane. The regular migrant famine ended when on 7th May the first of a series of falls led to a period of migrant abundance and variety lasting to the first week of June. Later in June there was a series of out-of-season records which continued into July and August.

The seabirds enjoyed another successful breeding season. The Gannet colony expansion continued apace, and a pair of Arctic Terns raised one young on Buness. Among the crops a pair of British Yellow Wagtails made a surprise first Fair Isle breeding attempt alongside a pair of Quail.

The covey of newly fledged Quail resident at Kennaby was the highlight of an August bereft of any worthwhile passerine movements, though waders were numerous. In contrast September was notable for a series of immense passerine falls. These were dominated initially by Garden Warblers then Blackcaps, accompanied by many other species including a series of vagrants from the east. Large scale arrivals petered out in October but the rarities continued to appear with satisfying regularity. This pattern continued into November when, for instance, Golden Oriole, Firecrest and Waxwing were trapped on the same day.

The impressive list of vagrants to the isle in 1981 includes Red-necked Grebe, King Eider, Honey Buzzard (3), White-tailed Eagle, Osprey (5), Hobby, Sandhill Crane, Temminck's Stint, Great Snipe, Long-tailed Skua, Alpine Swift (2), Roller, Hoopoe (3-5), Short-toed Lark (4-5), Richard's Pipit (6), Olive-backed Pipit (2), Red-flanked Bluetail, Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler, River Warbler, Savi's Warbler, Melodious Warbler, Greenish Warbler, Arctic Warbler, Firecrest, Golden Oriole, Isabelline Shrike, Arctic Redpoll, Rustic Bunting (2), Little Bunting (6), Yellow-breasted Bunting (3) and Pallas's Reed Bunting.

Monthly Highlights

January—February

The winter was generally mild and uneventful. Glaucous Gulls were in evidence on several dates with a maximum of 20 on 8th February. A second-winter Iceland Gull on 16th January was the first of the year. Other waterbirds included a Whooper Swan on 8th January, one to two Water Rails recorded occasionally throughout January, a Tufted Duck on 28th January and a few waders, most notably 20 Purple Sandpipers and 80 Turnstones on 2nd February. A fine drake Long-tailed Duck was in North Haven on 12th February while St. Valentine's Day thoughtfully provided a female, also in North Haven. Merlins were noted on three dates in January-February and a Peregrine on 25th January.

March

The weather was variable, though mainly mild and dry. From 24th to the end of the month the wind remained predominantly between E and S. This unleashed a series of arrivals, particularly of Lapwings, thrushes and finches. An Iceland Gull was seen frequently during the month.

The first major sign of spring movement was the appearance of 50 Skylarks on 5th. The first mixed arrival was on 8th, comprising 50 Blackbirds, 40 Song Thrushes, 30 Redwings, 20 Fieldfares, a Peregrine and a Golden Plover. There was another influx of thrushes on 13th with, in addition, a Long-eared Owl and 2 Woodpigeons. Good numbers of Guillemots, Razorbills and Kittiwakes were ashore. Further evidence of local breeding birds returning was obtained the next day when 32 Oystercatchers and 4 Ringed Plovers were counted and Rock Pipit numbers had increased. Migrants were represented by 17 Jackdaws, 6 Snow Buntings and a Shelduck. A Black Redstart on 16th was the second earliest ever for the isle. An arrival of 150 Oystercatchers, 25 Lapwings, 75 Turnstones, 13 Black-headed and 11 Common Gulls, and 30 Meadow Pipits occurred on 18th. New birds for the year were recorded almost daily for the rest of the month including Jack Snipe and Reed Bunting on 19th, Kestrel and Goldcrest on 21st, Yellowhammer, Sparrowhawk and 2 Bonxies on 26th, Cliffchaff and 2 Wheatears on 29th and 5 Puffins on 30th. There was steady passage during the last ten days of March. The largest and most varied arrival was on 26th when 300 Blackbirds and good numbers of Woodcock, Lapwing, Jackdaws, Redwings, Chaffinches, *alba* Wagtails and Dunnocks were recorded. On 29th the Plantation roost held a male Greenfinch, 12 Bramblings and 90 Chaffinches. There were 5 Greenfinches the following day and 6 Yellowhammers on 31st, both highest ever counts in the Observatory period.

April

The first twenty days of the month were noteworthy for a prolonged spell of warm, settled weather appreciated by humans and birds alike. During this period a whole series of summer migrants took advantage of winds predominantly in the southern quarter and there were earliest ever Fair Isle records for Willow Warbler, Swallow, Grasshopper

Warbler, Hoopoe, Whinchat, Wood Warbler, Alpine Swift and Wryneck. Cold weather returned with a vengeance in the last ten days of April when northerly winds and snow showers prevailed. This did not prevent the first Sandhill Crane for Britain turning up on 26th.

Short-eared Owl and ♂ Goosander on 1st were new for the year. A first-winter Iceland Gull, different from the February-March bird, was also seen. There was an influx of wildfowl between 1st and 4th, including ♂ Shelduck and ♀ Gadwall. A surprise group arrival of 5 Willow Warblers occurred on 3rd, the earliest spring record by five days. A Swallow the next day was the earliest by one day. An eagle reported by two workmen on Ward Hill on 6th was identified as an immature White-tailed Eagle on 7th. Unfortunately it was quick to leave the island, heading eastwards over Sheep Rock. The bird was not seen again although a Grey Heron gave observers several near heart attacks! During the day the year's first Ring Ouzels (2) were noted and visible migrants included 27 Common Gulls and 4 Snow Buntings flying north. The next spate of arrivals on 12th produced yet more early records — a Grasshopper Warbler in Gilsetter (earliest by four days) and a Hoopoe (earliest by five). Other newcomer summer migrants included Blackcap, Redstart and the first Greenland Wheatears. The Hoopoe was joined on 13th by 35 Twite and 6 Greylag Geese. The mildness of the weather maintained the run of 'earliest evers' on 14th when a Whinchat, earliest by five days, and more astonishingly a Wood Warbler, earliest by twelve, were recorded. At midday a Rough-legged Buzzard was seen over the Houll. The 15th was another fine sunny day which brought the first Arctic Skua, chasing a Lapwing over the Observatory, and an influx of Wheatears. One of the highlights of the month was an Alpine Swift on 18th, seen at Homisdale in the morning and Pund in the afternoon. A surprise flock of 50 Dunlin in the south was new for the year and the only record of the month. A Wryneck in the traps was the earliest ever by four days. To complete an interesting day ♂ Sparrowhawk and ♀ Merlin were seen.

A deterioration in weather on 21st produced snow and a Glaucous Gull as reminder of the conditions. Breeding birds continued to arrive, however, and there were 45 Bonxies on the hill on 23rd. On the morning of 26th a 'crane' gave frustratingly poor views before improving weather in the afternoon allowed lucky observers (including most of the islanders) excellent views of a Sandhill Crane which obliged by circling over the island for much of the day. After tea the bird was located on the ground at Homisdale, allowing splendid views at about 150 metres before going to roost at Easter Lothar. The Sandhill Crane, which departed in a NE direction the following morning, proved to be the highlight of an interesting month and was the last bird of note in April.

May

With the wind blowing from the eastern sector virtually throughout the month the island received wave after wave of medium to large-scale arrivals. The wind also brought fog, particularly between 7th and 25th.

The month started quietly but a touch of easterly wind on 3rd produced a singing ♂ Little Bunting, the first Green Sandpiper, *flava* Wagtail and Collared Doves (2) of the year, plus a few thrushes, finches, a Short-eared Owl and Tree Pipit. There were 79 Bramblings on 4th when Common Sandpiper, ♂ Lapland Bunting, 2 Siskins and Linnet were new. Bramblings increased to 128 on 5th and there was evidence of corvid movements with 17 Hooded Crows and a Jackdaw. SE winds and drizzle on 6th produced a variety of birds including 100 Purple Sandpipers, 52 Common Gulls, 10 Ring Ouzels and 6 Reed Buntings. Even more arrived on 7th, most notable counts being 30 Carrion Crows, 6 Rooks, 225 Twite, 150 Bramblings, 37 Linnets, 30 Chaffinches, 20 Lesser Redpolls, 13 Siskins and 13 Reed Buntings. Meadow Pipits (400) and Fieldfares (260) were in evidence everywhere. A Hoopoe was found and, more significantly, a Curlew Sandpiper, only the second spring record. There were rather fewer arrivals in the next few days but new birds for the year were recorded daily, comprising House Martin, Lesser Whitethroat, Manx Shearwater, Cuckoo, Swift, Red-backed Shrike and Sedge Warbler.

The next major influx was on 10th, the inaugural day of a period of exceptionally heavy passage. The most obvious components of the fall were 500 Fieldfares and 200 Wheatears, but there were also 20 Woodpigeons, 10 Whimbrel, 2 Shorelarks and 5 Cuckoos including an hepatic ♀. Fog made assessment of arrivals on 11th difficult but as the fog lifted at midday the size of the fall became apparent. The highlight was 12 Red-spotted Bluethroats, all males, but other numbers included 60 Bramblings, 60 Swallows, 20 House Martins, 30 Reed Buntings, 35 Redstarts, 15 Tree Pipits, 15 Lesser Whitethroats, 6 Cuckoos, 6 Common Sandpipers, 3 Wrynecks, Wood Warbler and ♂ Ortolan Bunting. ♂ and ♀ Bluethroats were present on 12th when at least 30 were seen. Further influxes produced counts of 90 Willow Warblers, 60 Redstarts, 50 Whinchats, 50 Tree Pipits, 20 Whitethroats, 34 Pied and 12 Spotted Flycatchers, 7 Wrynecks, a Hoopoe, Stonechat and Wood Sandpiper. There were marked increases too of 450 Wheatears and 700 Fieldfares. A pattern of parallel departures and arrivals over the next week led to daily fluctuating but generally elevated numbers for most migrant species and only the highlights need mention: these included 80 Swallows on 13th, Bar-tailed and Black-tailed Godwit on 15th, 8 Tufted Ducks on 16th, 52 Reed Buntings and a Quail on 18th. A Hoopoe was seen on occasional days throughout the second half of the month. On 18th there were still 15 Bluethroats on the island but departures of this and other species accelerated thereafter.

On 20th, however, a further wave of migrants arrived including 75 House Martins, 16 Spotted Flycatchers, 12 Chiffchaffs, 4 Lapland Buntings and a Scarlet Rosefinch. ♂ Scaup, Reed Warbler and ♀ Rustic Bunting were found on 21st. Newcomers on 22nd were Temminck's Stint, ♂ Red-breasted Merganser, ♂ Stonechat and Ruff. A Pomarine Skua was seen on the crossing. The 23rd was a quality day with the first Pintail of the year, a Scarlet Rosefinch and, to round off the day, a River Warbler in the Plantation in the evening. 100 Swallows and 100 House Martins were counted on 24th and an Icterine Warbler was

seen, followed on 25th by 12 Sand Martins. There was a good variety on 26th including 6 Golden Plovers, 5 *flava* Wagtails, 3 Bluethroats, 3 Black Redstarts, 25 Spotted Flycatchers, 2 Icterine Warblers and 2 Lapland Buntings. 6 Cuckoos arriving from the SE demonstrated yet more arrivals on 27th when 90 Swallows, 70 House Martins, 15 Sand Martins, 10 Garden Warblers, 3 Red-backed Shrikes, Sparrowhawk and Scarlet Rosefinch were noted. Similar numbers were present the next day, but a Short-eared Owl was new. On 29th 14 Tree Sparrows, 6 Dunlin and 12 Whimbrel appeared and a Grasshopper Warbler sang from the Plantation. The first Sandwich Tern and Corncrake of the year were recorded on 30th. There were also 3 Sparrowhawks, 17 Tree Sparrows and a ♀ Bluethroat. The Tree Sparrows were still present on 31st.

June

The month was generally dry and settled with some cold spells. Though not matching May in quantity of birds some interesting arrivals occurred, particularly in the first half of the month. During the month there were a few records of birds normally associated with early spring at Fair Isle.

There was a splendid start to the month. 70 House Martins and 60 Swallows owed their presence to arrival in May, but newcomers on 1st were Osprey, ♂ Lapland Bunting, Corncrake, Sandwich Tern and Marsh Warbler. A second Marsh Warbler appeared on 2nd. Quail, Red-spotted Bluethroat and Glaucous Gull were other birds of note. On 4th there was an arrival of 12 Garden Warblers, 7 Chiffchaffs, 7 Collared Doves, 2 Lapland Buntings, Iceland Gull and Common Scoter. Bird of the day, however, was the second Alpine Swift of the spring which spent the next week patrolling the island cliffs. No falls were recorded in the next few days but individuals reaching the isle included Wood Warbler on 5th, Hobby and Mistle Thrush on 6th, Icterine Warbler on 7th and Scarlet Rosefinch on 8th when 9 Collared Doves were present. A Ring Ouzel and 2 Fieldfares on 10th were the first of a series of late occurrences. Throughout the month 2 Yellow Wagtails had been seen at Kennaby and on 11th the ♀ gave a distraction display when flushed from a newly started nest. A Corncrake called persistently from Stoneybrake but was almost certainly unmated.

Migrant raptors were Peregrine on 11th and Osprey on 12th. Scarlet Rosefinch on 14th, Chiffchaff and Melodious Warbler on 15th, and ♂ Tufted Duck on 16th were new arrivals. There was a very late Song Thrush at Setter on 16th. From 18th there was a gradual increase in non-breeding waders, quite probably the earliest sign of 'autumn' wader passage. At times during the month a Quail had been calling in the south, but the killing of a female Quail by a cat on 20th dashed our hopes of their breeding.

From 20th our attention turned increasingly to seabird work and migrant records decreased correspondingly. Nevertheless there were 11 Turnstones and 2 Cormorants on 23rd and better still a Savi's Warbler trapped in the gully on 24th. Another surprise capture was a Woodcock on 25th, and the out-of-season pattern was reinforced by

Jack Snipe on 27th. On 30th the ♂ Yellow Wagtail was still at Kennaby.

July

July was mainly cold with winds predominantly from the west. There was frequent rain but it was rarely persistent or heavy. Despite these conditions most of the seabirds had excellent breeding success and the weather seldom hampered our seabird work. The main migrants in July were waders, particularly Turnstones, Purple Sandpipers, Redshanks, Dunlins and Curlews. There were further records of birds normally absent during the summer months.

A small influx of 8 Swifts, 2 House Martins and a Garden Warbler occurred on 4th. A Song Thrush was a surprise find on 5th. A Bar-tailed Godwit and 4 Whimbrels were present on 6th. Astonishingly, on the evening of 7th a ♀ Brambling was trapped in the Plantation. Post-breeders on 8th included 20 Black-headed and 28 Common Gulls, and on 9th an Arctic Tern chick was found. There was an unprecedented influx of 160 Swifts on 9th and a large unidentified raptor was reported. This was tracked down at Shirva the next day. It was a ♂ Honey Buzzard which spent the next ten days striding the fields in its search for invertebrates. There were still 60 Swifts on 10th. 70 Curlews included several groups flying south. An *alba* Wagtail and a Song Thrush were seen.

A touch of SE wind on 11th was sufficient to produce a Marsh Warbler. On 12th there was a ♂ Blackbird and a moulting ♀ was trapped on 14th, when a Sanderling and Grey Heron were seen. The first Knot of the autumn was noted on 15th, Sandwich Tern and Woodpigeon on 16th and Glaucous Gull on 17th. Find of the day on 17th was the Yellow Wagtail's nest with four eggs at Kennaby. On 20th a Leach's Petrel was trapped in the early hours; 2 Crossbills, the first Ruff of the autumn and an out-of-season Woodcock were seen. There was a Red-throated Diver on 22nd and the build-up of post-breeding Arctic Terns had started. Whimbrel, Greenshank and Blackbird appeared on 23rd. One Sooty and 12 Manx Shearwaters were seen on the crossing on 25th. A visit to Wester Lothar on 27th produced a count of at least 3 Leach's Petrels. Further autumn firsts were Golden Plover on 28th and Common Sandpiper. On 31st the Yellow Wagtail nest was found knocked over by an unknown predator. This find, however, was tempered by the discovery of six recently hatched Quail chicks, also at Kennaby.

August

The pattern of cold weather and winds set in the western quarter continued during August. The lack of easterlies undoubtedly contributed to the absence of many passerine species in any numbers. Exceptions were Wheatears and White Wagtails which were often numerous.

The first White Wagtail was seen on 1st but most attention was drawn by a completely albino Shag on the Holms. There were 32 Redshanks on 3rd, and on 4th a small influx occurred of 47 Arctic Terns, 46 Turnstones, 3 Knot, and single Kestrel, Swallow and House Martin.

More arrivals on 5th included 55 Turnstones, 2 Green Sandpipers and 3 Swifts. Sooty Shearwater was seen off Bunness. A Sand Martin was new on 6th and 250 Wheatears were counted. In the early hours of 7th a Leach's Petrel was flying round Gunnawark. One of the few days of SE wind on 8th produced an early Fieldfare, a Mistle Thrush and 12 Grey Herons. There was an influx of 300 Common Gulls. The first Barred Warbler of the year, trapped on 9th, spent nearly three weeks in the Observatory garden. Less expected was a Jack Snipe in the Vaadal. Several new arrivals on 11th included 2 Black-tailed Godwits, Blackbird and Dunnock. On 12th 7 Willow Warblers, 15 Dunlin and 2 Teal were counted.

The first marked influx of *alba* Wagtails (20) occurred on 13th, most or all were White. There were 8 Green Sandpipers on 14th. An influx of 170 Wheatears on 15th included one Greenland bird. 2 Merlins seen on 16th were the autumn's first. 10 Grey Herons, 65 Redshanks, 60 Turnstones and 40 Golden Plovers were found in unpleasant drizzle on 17th. 3 Sooty Shearwaters were seen off North Light, with one the next day when a Manxie flew north off Bunness. A Spotted Redshank there was new for the year. White Wagtails reached their August peak of 67 on 19th. There was a second Barred Warbler on 21st, the forerunner of a small arrival on 22nd which included Arctic Warbler, Spotted Flycatcher, Lesser Whitethroat, Garden Warbler, Tree Pipit and 30 Willow-warblers. An adult Pomarine Skua flew north. There were 3 Barred Warblers on 23rd and a Pied Flycatcher. Peregrine and Merlin were seen on 24th and Song Thrush, Scaup and Knot on 25th. Single Jack Snipe, Blackbird and Fieldfare appeared on 26th — birds more typically considered late autumn migrants. 7 flying Quail flushed at Kennaby confirmed breeding success there. A Velvet Scoter was off Sheep Rock on 27th.

At long last the wind swung SE on 28th. It was enough to bring 100 Wheatears, 50 Willow Warblers, 2 Pied Flycatchers, Whinchat, Swallow, Dunnock and Little Stint. There was a good range of species on 29th including Sedge Warbler, Grasshopper Warbler, 4 Chiffchaffs, 7 Wigeon, 15 Teal, 40 Curlew, 60 Redshank, 4 Merlins, Peregrine and Woodcock. A Wryneck and 2 Barred Warblers were new arrivals on 30th. Presaging the numbers to follow in September 140 Meadow Pipits arrived on 31st along with 16 Willow Warblers and 2 Turtle Doves.

September

In a month when winds rarely strayed from easterly for more than a day the island played host to wave after wave of migrants. Arrivals were notable for both quantity and variety and there was a fine crop of exceptional rarities, particularly in the second half of the month.

Quantity on 1st was represented by 160 Meadow Pipits and 60 *alba* Wagtails. There were 80 Wheatears and 60 Willow Warblers on 2nd when quality was supplied by 2 Scarlet Rosefinches, 4 Barred Warblers, 3 Wood Warblers and a Yellow-breasted Bunting. 35 Golden Plovers and 16 Teal appeared on 4th. On 5th 120 *alba* Wagtails, 600 Meadow Pipits and 850 Starlings included small parties of each flying

south. There were arrivals of 35 Fieldfares, 55 Redshanks and 50 Turnstones. A juvenile Red-necked Grebe and an adult Long-tailed Skua were found on 6th. Otherwise the area of origin for migrants was Iceland/Greenland with 1000 Meadow Pipits, 250 Wheatears, 60 White Wagtails and 25 Ringed Plovers present. The first Lapland Bunting of the autumn, a Wood Warbler and a Yellow-breasted Bunting appeared on 7th, while 3 Quail, still at Kennaby, were seen almost daily for the next three weeks. There were a few new arrivals on 8th, notably Sedge Warbler, Jack Snipe, Song Thrush and the first Water Rail, Pintail and Reed Buntings of the autumn. Meadow Pipits were everywhere — 1500 counted. 2 Goldcrests and a Linnet were new on 9th. A Red-throated Diver, a Manx and 2 Sooty Shearwaters were seen offshore. The first Bluethroat of the autumn, a Redstart and a Lapland Bunting were highlights of 10th.

The first major fall of continental birds occurred on 11th when arrivals included 200 Garden Warblers, 80 Fieldfares, 63 Teal, 50 Whinchats, 40 Redstarts, 20 Blackcaps, 16 Tree Pipits, 10 Pied and 8 Spotted Flycatchers and 6 Wrynecks. Firsts for the autumn were 3 Robins, 2 Chaffinches, 2 Bramblings, 3 Reed Warblers, 6 Red-backed Shrikes, Siskin, Snow Bunting and Redwing. Other notables were Grasshopper Warbler, Ortolan, Bar-tailed Godwit, 9 Ruff, 2 Scarlet Rosefinches, Osprey and Honey Buzzard. More followed on 12th when 70 Tree Pipits, 700 Meadow Pipits, 75 Whinchats, 50 Redstarts, 45 Pied and 15 Spotted Flycatchers, 7 Wrynecks, 50 Golden Plovers, 20 Wigeon, 30 Blackcaps, 9 Reed and 5 Sedge Warblers, 4 Kestrels and 3 Bluethroats were counted. 3 Sand and 5 House Martins, Peregrine, 2 Turtle Doves and Little Stint were new.

A pattern of fluctuating but generally high numbers of a wide range of species was established over the next two weeks. High points were 40 Snipe and 35 Siskin on 13th; 140 Golden Plovers, 30 Grey Plovers, 25 Ruff and 60 Blackcaps on 14th; 140 Tree Pipits, 100 Whinchats, 90 Garden Warblers, 2 Red-breasted Flycatchers and a Yellow-browed Warbler on 15th; and 2 Yellow-browed Warblers, Greenish Warbler and Richard's Pipit on 16th. On 17th an Ortolan and the first Corncrake, Long-tailed Duck and 2 Tufted Ducks of the autumn were recorded. A small bunting at Upper Stoneybrake proved to be the second Pallas's Reed Bunting for Fair Isle and Britain. Daily arrivals were now the norm. On 18th 500 Meadow Pipits, 130 Skylarks, 80 Whinchats and 45 Lapwings were main components while on 19th there were 230 Twite, 85 Turnstone, 80 Golden Plovers, and single Short-toed Lark, Richard's Pipit and Common Scoter. On a good day for raptors 4 Kestrels, 2 Peregrines, Honey Buzzard and Osprey were seen.

There was an enormous fall on 21st. Final estimates included 1000 Blackcaps, 400 Garden Warblers, 40 Siskins, 35 Swallows, 10 Little Stints and 8 Swifts. 5 Mealy Redpolls were new as were Ortolan, 15 Snow Bunting, 2 Wood Warblers and Buzzard. A second Richard's Pipit was found. A mystery *Locustella* glimpsed in the morning was 'run to ground' in the afternoon, and proved to be a Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler. The 22nd was much the same in terms of quantity and quality. Totals included 120 Pinkfeet, 59 Greylags, 250 Golden Plovers, 95

Snow Buntings, 400 Skylarks, 12 Grasshopper Warblers and 6 Lapland Buntings. Quality was provided by 7 Grey Plovers, Spotted Redshank and Yellow-breasted Bunting while a Great Snipe found in the morning and a Roller in the afternoon represented the cream. 120 Cormorants flew south on 23rd, when a Pomarine Skua and 8 Whooper Swans were seen. There were 400 Skylarks and 6 Kestrels on 24th and a Red-breasted Flycatcher was new. Skylark numbers reached 700 and Twite 300 on 25th. There were 2 Short-toed Larks, one of them new, and a Dotterel was with the Golden Plovers, Seawatching was profitable on 26th when a mainly southerly movement included 80 Cormorants, 7 Sooty Shearwaters and 5 Red-throated Divers. There was a late autumn component to the arrival on 27th: 1500 Redwings, 100 Fieldfares and 100 Song Thrushes. Waders included 30 Dunlin, 7 Little Stints and 70 Lapwings. On 28th the Redwing total reached 2000. There were also 250 Snow Buntings, 215 Common Gulls and 10 Jack Snipe. Waterbirds included 12 Tufted Ducks, 2 Velvet Scoter, 2 Pintail, Barnacle Goose and 6 Red-throated Divers. A late Puffin, 2 Richard's Pipits, Barred Warbler and Hen Harrier were seen. Yet more arrivals on 29th gave totals of 16 Whooper Swans, 28 Pinkfeet, 15 Greylags, 11 Barnacle Geese, 10 Grey Plovers and 3 Short-eared Owls. At sea 19 Sooty Shearwaters, 9 Red-throated and 6 unidentified Divers were seen. Bird of the day, however, was the isle's first Red-flanked Bluetail which provided excellent views as it hopped from ground to post in the Busta/Springfield area. It moved to North Haven on 30th. The first 2 Stonechats of the autumn were seen that day as were 230 Snow Buntings, 56 Pinkfeet and a Mistle Thrush. 2 Peregrines gave a fine display of talon grappling over Sukka Mire in the afternoon.

October

October could not quite match the immense excitements of September. Nevertheless, it was a month of great variety and interest. The run of rarities continued and there were some large falls early in the month. It was cold and wet on many days with winds mainly from the west. At times, however, the wind strayed into the northern sector and this provided a string of northern visitors and some heavy goose movements.

Hoopoe, Short-toed Lark and Ortolan on 1st ensured a good start to the month. There were 150 Greylags on 2nd. On 3rd 2500 Redwings arrived along with 10 Goldcrests and the first Woodcock since August. This was eclipsed on 4th when 10,000 Redwings, 500 Fieldfares, 300 Song Thrushes and 350 Snow Buntings descended on the island. There were also 55 Barnacle Geese, 50 Snipe, 12 Jack Snipe and 20 Bramblings. The star find was an Olive-backed Pipit, and other unusuals were Little Bunting, Red-breasted Flycatcher and Barred Warbler as well as the ever-present Great Snipe. A number of these were still present on 5th. There were increases of Snow Buntings (400), Dunnocks (25), Reed Buntings (15) and Blackbirds (10). New finds were Richard's Pipit, Wryneck, 4 Red-breasted Mergansers and Glaucous Gull. There was also a pale sandy Wheatear whose identity was not resolved until it was trapped and found to be a leucistic common

Wheatear. On 6th a new Glaucous Gull, a Short-toed Lark, a Bluethroat and 2 Richard's Pipits were found. Guillemots were ashore for the first time since the breeding season. Sooty Shearwater, Yellow-browed Warbler, Sparrowhawk and Red-backed Shrike were highlights on 7th, a day of torrential rain. 11 Sooty Shearwaters were seen on 8th. A variety of birds that day included Little Bunting, 4 Bean Geese, 2 Shorelarks, 8 Ring Ouzels, 4 Short-eared Owls, Grey Plover, Red-breasted Flycatcher, Bluethroat, Linnet, Buzzard and Great Grey Shrike. There was an influx the next day of 1500 Fieldfares, 1400 Redwings, 275 Song Thrushes, 25 Ring Ouzels, 25 Goldcrests, 55 Snipe, 15 Jack Snipe, 50 Bramblings, 3 Yellow-browed Warblers, 3 Glaucous Gulls and a Reed Warbler. One Rustic and 3 Little Buntings were found but of greater rarity status was an adult ♂ Isabelline Shrike at Shirva. 2 Great Grey Shrikes were also present. On 10th Pintail, 6 Goldeneye, 4 Yellow-browed Warblers and a Siberian Stonechat were recorded. The 11th was a day of bitter cold and violent winds. Nevertheless the second Olive-backed Pipit of the month was found, and Rustic Bunting, 3 Little Buntings, Barred Warbler, Shorelark, 3 Glaucous Gulls and 12 Lapland Buntings were seen. There were 150 Greylags on 13th and 15,000 Fulmars flying north in 2½ hours included one all-white bird.

There was a strong northerly element to the occurrences of the next few days. On 14th Greenland Whitefront, Little Auk, Great Northern Diver and 5 Merlins were recorded. A ♂ King Eider was found in the Eider flock on 15th. 4 Storm Petrels were seen off South Light. The King Eider was joined by a Little Auk and an Iceland Gull on 16th and an Arctic Redpoll was at Busta. On 17th it became clear that the Arctic Redpoll was of north-west origin for it matched in size a Greenland Redpoll which had joined it. Great Northern Diver, Little Auk, several Icelandic Redwings, 4 Goosander and a Goldeneye added to the northern flavour. There was an influx on 18th of 3,500 Fieldfares, 100 Blackbirds, 35 Blackcaps, 8 Woodcock, Yellow-browed Warbler, Great Grey Shrike and Stock Dove. Newcomers on 19th were 6 Jackdaws, Iceland Gull, Grey Plover, Whitefront, 7 Pintail and another Great Grey Shrike. It was back to northern birds on 20th with King Eider still present, and 2 Little Auks, Great Northern Diver, Glaucous Gull and Long-tailed Duck seen. An apparent influx of Tysties included 119 off Meoness. Slavonian Grebe and Shoveler on 21st were both first for the year. There were 2 Slavonian Grebes on 22nd when 100 Greylags and more Icelandic Redwings were noted. A weak warm front on 23rd brought 20 Bramblings, 15 Blackcaps, 2 Garden Warblers and a Waxwing. All highlights were offshore on 24th. 28 blue Fulmars were seen and 2 Great Northern Divers flew south. A rare calm day on 25th produced a Richard's Pipit, 10 Blackcaps and at least one Greenland Redpoll. A Scaup in the Haa ditch was the highlight on 26th.

From this date steady passage died away but assorted counts of note continued. These included 111 Turnstones on 27th, 11,000 Fulmars north in 100 minutes with a further 30,000+ ashore on 28th, 370 Snow Buntings on 29th and a Yellowhammer on 30th. There was a small arrival on the last day of the month, notably 3 Waxwings, 250

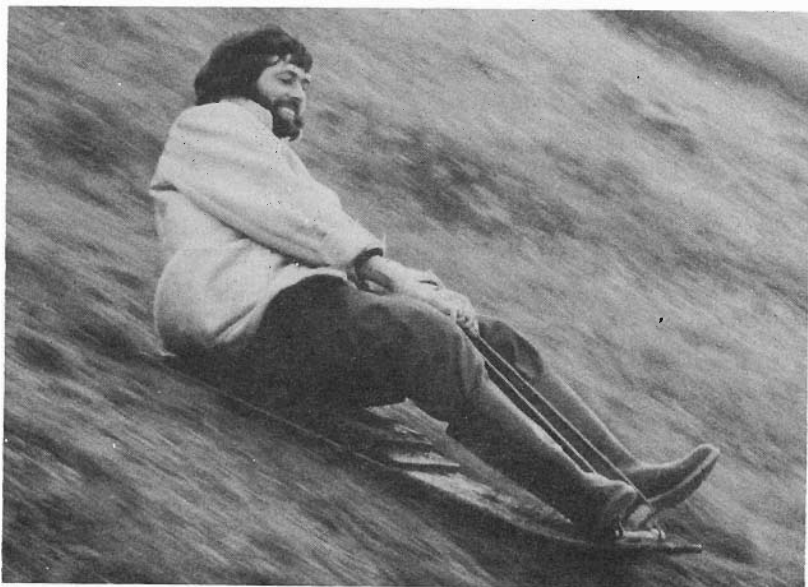
Fieldfares, 120 Redwings, 600 Snow Buntings, 15 Blackcaps and 120 Greylags.

November-December

Though November was a month of frequent gales, migrants continued to arrive during the first half. Later in the month and during December coverage was much reduced but occasional interesting records were obtained, particularly in the second half of December when the weather turned cold and above average snowfall occurred.

The first Black Redstart of the autumn appeared on 1st November as did 5 Shorelarks and 12 Blackcaps. There were 160 Turnstones, a Knot and a Waxwing on 2nd. A fall on 3rd comprised 500 Fieldfares, 500 Redwings, 200 Blackbirds and 10 Woodcocks. Woodcocks increased to 30 and Blackbirds to 250 the next day. 37 Greylags were seen on 5th. There was a strange mixture on 7th; a first-year Golden Oriole, the latest Fair Isle record by over a month, was trapped in the morning; a Firecrest trapped in the Gully at midday was the first recorded on Fair Isle; and a Waxwing was in the Axell trap in the afternoon. The following day there were 4 Water Rails, 2 Short-eared Owls, Long-eared Owl, Black Redstart and a Red-breasted Flycatcher — the last a latest ever by one day. Another late bird was a ♂ Redstart on 11th. A Goldfinch appeared on 13th, only the fifth in autumn.

Records were thin in the second half of November. In December there were a few small arrivals, some at least being associated with the cold weather. This gave records of 3 Glaucous Gulls, Ringed Plover and a very late Chiffchaff on 8th, 2 Whooper Swans, 2 Long-tailed Ducks, 2 Water Rails and 2 Robins on 9th, and 40 Snow Buntings on 15th. There were generally more birds in the second half of December, including up to 40 Curlews. An oiled Little Auk was picked up on 20th but died later, while on 22nd there were 6 Little Auks off South Light. On that day a good variety of birds included Grey Heron, Shelduck, 10 Mallard, Moorhen, Woodcock, 30 Common Gulls, Glaucous Gull, adult ♂ Hen Harrier and the first Coot of the year. 4 Lapwings and 2 Golden Plovers were noted on 27th and 2 Short-eared Owls on 29th. An Iceland Gull on 30th made a fitting end to the year.



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Systematic List

The list follows the sequence and nomenclature of *The 'British Birds' List of Birds of the Western Palearctic (1978)*.

RED-THROATED DIVER *Gavia stellata* None before June when singles seen over the island on 12th, 15th & 23rd and at sea on 8th (crossing), 15th & 17th (Seabirds at Sea Team); one over isle on 22nd July. Autumn records from 21st August (2) till 22nd October. Almost daily passage, mainly south off Buness, detected 9th-30th September with maxima 6 on 28th and 9 on 29th; singles, and on two occasions 2, recorded on nine dates 5th-22nd October.

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER *Gavia immer* Singles on 14th, 17 & 20th, 2 on 24th October.

DIVER species *Gavia* Unidentified divers were seen on 2nd June (2), on 6 dates in September including 6 south on 29th, and on 4 dates in October. Singles on 15th & 19th October were either Great Northern or White-billed.

RED-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps grisegena* One record: a juvenile in South Haven on 6th September.

SLAVONIAN GREBE *Podiceps auritus* One, South Harbour, 21st October. 2 in South Haven on 22nd, one remaining until 24th and the other to 29th October. One in Mavers Geo on 6th November.

FULMAR *Fulmarus glacialis* Present all year. A very successful breeding season. A Blue phase bird raised a chick at Furse. Blue phase birds were noted occasionally throughout the year but most frequently in October when counts included 28 on 24th, probably associated with northerly winds. These wind conditions also contributed to northerly movements of 15,000 in 150 minutes on 13th — including an all-white presumed albino — and 11,000 in 100 minutes on 28th October.

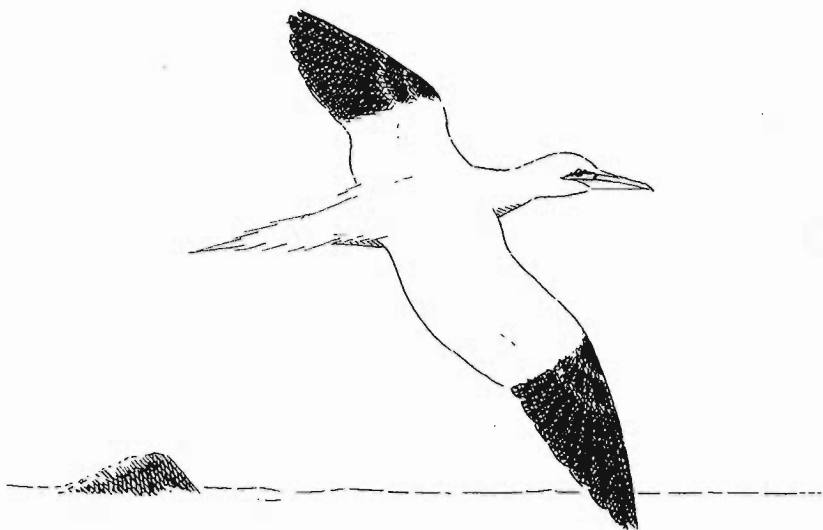
SOOTY SHEARWATER *Puffinus griseus* The first was seen on the crossing on 25th July and from the island on 5th August after which seen regularly to 23rd October. Most frequent in September with bird-day totals of 29 in August, 63 in September and 40 in October. Peak counts were 9 on 14th August, 19 on 29th September and 11 on 8th October.

MANX SHEARWATER *Puffinus puffinus* Singles offshore on 15th, 17th & 24th June (Seabirds at Sea Team). A record 12 were seen on the crossing on 25th July (twice the previous highest count) and one on

29th August. From the isle 2 were seen on 14th August with singles on 18th August, 9th & 21st September.

STORM PETREL *Hydrobates pelagicus* Recorded on crossing from 26th May (6) and nocturnally at cliff sites from 15th June to 27th August. Breeding was proved at North Restensgeo (chick calling from crevice). The only autumn record comprised 4 off South Light on 15th October.

LEACH'S PETREL *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* One trapped at Wester Lothar on 20th July. One trapped there on 27th July when at least 3 calling birds present. One flying round Gunnawark on 7th August: all records were at night.



GANNET *Sula bassana* Birds ashore on 7th February and regularly from mid-March. Breeding pairs topped 100 for the first time. Three new sites were colonised: Outer Stack, Matchi Stack (3 nests) and Toor O Ward Hill (27 nests on a ledge). The last two sites are the first on Fair Isle's west coast. Outer Stack was colonised on its north-west side thus proving impossible to census from land or accurately from sea. Birds at all sites had a successful season, most pairs fledging young. Virtually all young had left the ledges by 25th September. Peak count (breeders and non-breeders) 310 on 13th August. Autumn numbers generally smaller — though 200 on 12th October — and the last one was seen on 1st November.

CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo* Singles on 16th January, 2nd February (oiled), 19th & 31st March. 4 bird-days in April (2 on 18th),

9 singles between 4th & 22nd May, 10 bird-days in June (5 on 16th). None in July. Singles on 7 dates 10th-26th August. Main autumn passage 28th August, when 19 south, to 4th November. Heaviest passage, mainly south, 23rd September-1st October with 294 bird-days, peak 120 on 23rd. Other peaks 24 on 16th October, 29 on 26th October. 2-3 birds 'resident' in South Harbour throughout November. One on 1st & 7th December.

SHAG *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* Present all year. Mild weather in early April stimulated much early breeding activity but a cold late April may have caused low hatching success as very few broods of more than three found. Chick survival was, however, high. An albino, found in the Inner Sound O Holms on 1st August was present until at least 8th. Many juveniles left the isle in the autumn, and marked southerly passage off Buness, presumably of Shetland birds, was noted in the second half of October.

GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea* Singles on 4th, 7th & 26th April, 25th May-1st June. Post-breeding arrivals from 14th July when recorded almost daily. Largest numbers in August, particularly second half (105 bird-days 17th-31st August) — peaks 15 on 18th & 30th. Other monthly maxima 3 on 26th July, 10 on 12th September, 4 on 3rd October & 3 on 1st November. Later birds were singles on 17th November & 22nd-23rd December and 2 on 30th December.

WHOOPEE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus* One on 8th January, 8 on 22nd September and 16 on 29th September. Almost daily 1st-25th October, peak counts 13 on 9th, 12 on 13th and 10 on 19th. All adults except one family with 4 juveniles. 1-2 on five dates 7th-23rd December.

BEAN GOOSE *Anser fabilis* 4 arrived on 8th October and 2-5 were seen most days to 31st. 5 were seen on 16th October, thus 5 was the minimum number of birds but increases from 2 (17th-21st) to 3 (23rd-25th) suggest that at least 6 were involved.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus* 120 on 22nd September, 28 on 29th & 56 on 30th September. 34 on 1st October, small variable numbers of 1-18 most days to 20th October. One on 24th-25th October. One on 6th November. 4 30th November-23rd December, one on 30th December.

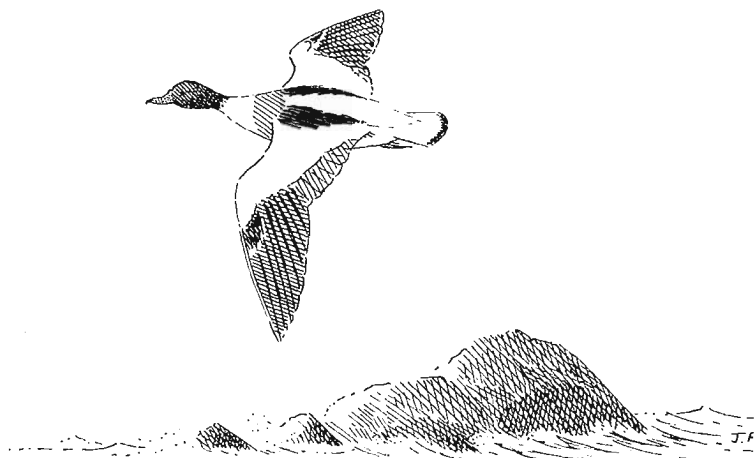
WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons* Singles on 14th and 19th October were both adults of the Greenland race.

GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser* Spring passage in two discrete periods: 8th-22nd April, 16 bird-days, maximum 6 on 13th; 5th-23rd May, 39 bird-days but probably only 5 individuals involved. In autumn 59 on 22nd and 9 on 23rd September; then heavy and prolonged passage daily from 29th September-end October with over 20 on

most days and peaks of 100 on 1st October, 200 on 2nd, 105 on 12th, 150 on 13th, 100 on 14th, 100 on 22nd and 120 on 31st October denoting a whole series of arrivals. Arrivals continued in early November, maximum 49 on 6th. Last 3 on 10th November until 2 on 6-23rd December.

GREY GOOSE species *Anser* One on 19th April; 128 on 29th September, 5 on 30th September and 11 on 1st October; 7 on 25th December.

BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis* Recorded in autumn only, 28th September-21st October. Recorded on 11 dates to 14th October, then none till one on 21st. Generally small numbers but 36 on 3rd & 55 on 4th October.



SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna* One on 14th March, a ♂ on 1st & 4th April & one on 21st-22nd December were the only records.

WIGEON *Anas penelope* ♀ on 3rd & 21st April, 2 on 12th; in May, 2 on 8th & 12th increasing to 6 on 14th-16th, then 4 to 18th, one on 22nd. 2 ♀♀ and a ♂ from 2nd-10th June. In autumn one on 13th August, then more regularly from 29th August. Main passage 8th September-15th October when seen daily, maxima 25 on 15th, 31 on 21st September & 20 on 3rd October. Sporadic records of 1-4 from 19th-28th October.

GADWALL *Anas strepera* A ♀ on 2nd April was the nineteenth island record.

TEAL *Anas crecca* 3 on 18th March, one on 21st, 1-4 most days 28th March-18 April, 1-3 on 10 dates 28th April-27 May, 1-3 most days 6th-13th June. 2 on 23rd July. 1-4 on occasional dates 12th-24th August, then regular passage 28th August-27th October. Heaviest passage in September, particularly 8th-15th with maxima of 63 on 11th, 35 on 12th & 32 on 13th September. One on 11th December was the only record late in the year.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos* A ♀ on 1st March. 1-3 on 10 dates 15th March-10th May. 1-4 almost daily 20th May-10th June. One ♂ on 4 dates 20th-28th July. Regular autumn appearances from 8th August then most days to 14th November with no concentration of records and a maximum of only 7, on 21st October. 5 arrived on 21st December and up to 10 were present to 28th.

PINTAIL *Anas acuta* One spring record, a ♂ on 23rd May. Autumn records comprised a ♂ on 8th September, 2 flying south on 28th September, one on 10th October, 4 on 11th-12th, 3 on 14th & 7 on 19th October.

SHOVELER *Anas clypeata* one on 21st October was the only record.

POCHARD *Aythya ferina* Only one record, a ♂ on 8th-9th May.

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula* One on 28th January. A ♀ on 5th May, then a small influx leading to a record peak of 8 on 16th-17th May. More than 8 individuals were involved. All fared badly and a gradual decrease to only 2 on 26th May was due to mortality as much as departure, with 5 emaciated corpses found during the month. Recorded daily 7th-26th May, then none until 14th-17th June when a ♂ present. In autumn 2 on 17th September, singles on 18th, 22nd, 26th, 29th September & 1st October, with a record flock of 12 flying west on 28th September.

SCAUP *Aythya marila* A ♂ on 21st May, an immature on 25th August and a female/immature 26th October-2nd November were the only records.

EIDER *Somateria mollissima* Present all year. Highest spring count was 1000 on 20th March. The first incubating female was noted on 15th May. The species had a moderately successful season though brood sizes on the sea were generally small. Highest post-breeding counts were 1,018 on 19th August and 1,050 on 12th October.

KING EIDER *Somateria spectabilis* A ♂ emerging from eclipse was with the Eider flock on 15th-20th October. 10th Fair Isle record and first since 1975.

LONG-TAILED DUCK *Clangula hyemalis* Very scarce in spring, and regular in only small numbers in autumn: A ♂ on 12th February, a

♀ on 14th February and one on 15th April were the only records in the first half of the year. In autumn, singles on 17th and 28th September, small numbers 3rd-28th October maximum 6 on 22nd. 2 on 9th December.

COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra* 4 on 16th January, 2 ♀♀ on 22nd February, a ♀ on 4th June and a ♂ on 19th-23rd September were the only records.

VELVET SCOTER *Melanitta fusca* The only records were a ♂ on 27th August, 2 ♂♂ flying south on 28th September and a ♀ on 14th October.

GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula* Recorded in October, with 6 on 10th, 2 on 11th, and singles on 17th, 21st and 24th; in November a ♂ on 6th. Immature ♂ present 7th-26th December.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator* There were spring records of a ♂ on 19th April, a pair on 8th May, a ♂ on 22nd and a ♀ on 29th May. Recorded on most days in autumn from 22nd September-21st October, maximum 8 on 12th October.

GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser* A ♂ was seen on 1st April. All other birds occurred between 17th & 22nd October, with 4 on 17th, 3 on 18th, 2 on 19th and one on the next three days.



HONEY BUZZARD *Pernis apivorus* No spring records but one in summer, a ♂ which spent 9th-19th July in the Shirva to Stoneybrake area. Surprisingly — for there are only three previous autumn records — two were recorded in September, one on 11th & one on 19th.

WHITE-TAILED EAGLE *Haliaeetus albicilla* A sub-adult on 7th April was the first since the 1968-69 introduction attempt and the first to arrive under its own power since 1949.

HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus* A poor year with a juvenile on 28th September and an adult ♂ on 22nd-29th December the only records.

SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus* 1-3 birds on 28 dates 26th March-3rd June with at least 15 individuals involved; most frequently during May and maximum 3 on 30th May. Scarce in autumn, with singles on 1st, 4th, 16th-19th & 30th September, 1st, 3rd, 7th & 19th October, and 19th, 20th & 26th November.

BUZZARD *Buteo buteo* One record, a single on 21st September.

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD *Buteo lagopus* One over the Houll on 14th April was the only record.

OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus* A good showing in spring and autumn. Singles were recorded on 1st and 12th June, and 11th, 19th and 23rd September. 3 in September is an unprecedented total. They comprise the 8th-10th autumn records.

KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus* Singles on 21st, 26th & 27th March, 25th & 27th April. Daily occurrence 7th-26th May, maximum 3 on 16th & 20th May with probably 5 individuals involved. A late bird on 5th June. In autumn occasional singles from 4th August, more regularly from 28th August and virtually daily from 9th September-24th October with maxima of 6 on 24th-25th September.

MERLIN *Falco columbarius* An adult ♂ was present throughout January and February. An immature ♂ appeared on 23rd February. The first ♀ arrived on 18th March and from that date recorded frequently to 23rd May, maximum 3 on 9th April. Autumn records daily 16th August-6th November, maximum 5 on 8th September and 14th-16 October but probably little changeover of individuals as denoted by the prolonged stay of a Shetland-bred bird trapped on 26th August and again on 14th October. Late singles were noted on 19th & 23rd November.

HOBBY *Falco subbuteo* A first-summer bird frequented the crofting area from 6th-8th June.

PEREGRINE *Falco peregrinus* One on 25th January. A ♀ on 8th March and a very vocal ♂ on several days 18th-28th March again raised hopes of breeding but the only other spring records were singles on 23rd and 28th April, 18th May, 5th and 11th June. In autumn early singles on 21st, 24th and 29th August followed by daily records 12th September-20th October of 1-2 birds; probably 2 to 4 long-stay individuals involved. After a ten-day gap a very pale adult ♂ appeared on 31st October and was joined by a first-year on 3rd November. There was one on 13th November and 3 on 14th.

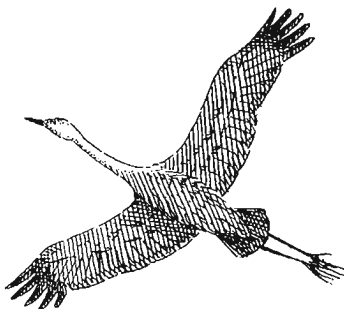
QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix* Singles on 18th-19th May, 2nd, 4th, 6th and 8th June probably involved at least 4 individuals. A dying ♀ was picked up at Quoy on 20th June. On 3rd July a ♂ was calling at Quoy but no other records were obtained until 31st when at least 6 newly-hatched chicks were uncovered by hay-making at Kennaby. 3 of these were seen on 11th August already flying, and on 26th a covey of 7 was flushed at the same site — proof that most or all of the chicks reached fledging. Further sightings of up to 3 were made regularly at Kennaby throughout September to 25th. This is the first confirmed breeding record since 1964.

WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus* There were January records of 2 on 15th and singles on 16th, 17th and 21st. The next records were in April; singles on 6th, 9th, 12th and 24th. An early autumn bird on 8th September preceded regular occurrences from 20th September. Recorded in October on 7 dates, maximum 2 on 1st, 6th & 16th, on 7 dates in November, including 4 on 8th, and on 4 dates in December, maximum 2 on 9th.

CORNCRAKE *Crex crex* Singles, perhaps involving no more than 2 individuals, were recorded on 30th May, 1st-5th, 12th, 15th-16th & 18th-19th June. One on 17th September was the only autumn record.

MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus* Spring records, all of singles, on 29th March, 7th-9th, 11th-12th April and 16th-17th May. First autumn bird, an adult, on 22nd September. One found dead on 28th September. In October, singles 2nd-5th, 12th, 15th-16th, 18th and 25th, 3 on 14th. One found dead on 1st November, singles seen on 3rd November and 22nd December.

COOT *Fulica atra* The only record was one on 22nd December.



SANDHILL CRANE *Grus canadensis* One, probably a first-summer bird, on 26th April, left in a north-easterly direction on 27th. This is the first British record of a species which breeds from Canada and the

USA westward to north-east Siberia, and winters in the southern United States.

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus* There was an isolated winter record of 1 on 27th January. First spring bird on 12th February was followed by almost daily arrivals reaching 30 on 28th February and 150 on 18th March. Highest spring count 160 on 28th March. About 80 pairs bred. A maximum summer count of 200 on 25th May included the first influx of non-breeders; largest summer flock 73 on 16th June. Maximum August count 270 on 13th but numbers dwindling from 23rd so that September maximum was 40 on 1st and decline continued to 5 on 30th. Small numbers daily in October, maximum 12 on 10th, but generally 1-6. Only later records 1 on 6th and 3 on 14th November, 1 on 19th and 22nd, 3 on 30th December.

RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula* 3 on 22nd January. Spring arrivals starting with 2 on 12th March increasing steadily till all breeding population installed in early May. 10 pairs attempted to breed, at least half successfully. Autumn passage in late August-September with peak 30 on 14th-15th September. Only 8 birds left on 1st October, rapidly declining to last 2 on 14th October. A winter single was noted on 8th, 23rd and 28th December.

DOTTEREL *Charadrius morinellus* An adult on 25th-27th September was the only record.

GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria* One on 8th March preceded the main spring passage by nearly a month. Main passage took the form of three waves: 7th-23rd April, maximum 6 on 20th; 30th April-11th May, maximum 6 on 9th; and 23rd May-5th June, maximum 6 on 26th. A displaying ♂ on several days in early May gave hopes of a breeding attempt, but to no avail. Singles in summer were recorded on 12th June and 9th July. Autumn passage from 28th July and daily 1st August-21st October, maxima 140 on 14th September, 100 on 21st and 250 on 22nd September. Still 60 present on 9th October but rapidly decreasing thereafter. A number of the autumn birds may have stayed off-passage for a considerable time judging from the presence of a 'white-winged' individual in the Swey flock for much of September and into October. A similarly marked individual was seen in the autumn of 1980, perhaps the same bird, indicating that Fair Isle is a regular stopover point for some individuals. The last bird was seen on 23rd October apart from 2 on 27th December.

GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola* None in spring but an unprecedented number in autumn, starting with 30 on 14th September (previous highest 4), 2 on 15th & 1 on 16th. Another arrived on 20th, then recorded almost daily to 1st October with maxima 7 on 22nd and 10 on 29th September. There were singles in October on 8th-9th and 19th-21st.

LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus* One on 21st, 6 on 25th January, one on 9th February. Strong passage 21st-23rd February with 25, 40 and 20 respectively. One on 27th February and 1st March. Almost daily passage 12th March-3rd April, maxima 50 on 21st, 94 on 26th, 76 on 28th and 30th March, and 7th-20th April, maximum 21 on 15th. One on 23rd April remained until joined by others from 3rd May reaching peak of 14 on 11th May. Much display from these but only two pairs settled to breed and only one successfully (raising 2 young). These joined occasionally by up to 10 non-breeders in late May-early July. Numbers in August and early September oscillating between 1 and 14. Main autumn passage started 12th September with arrival of 28. Strong passage rest of month and to about 12th October when tailing off; maxima 70 on 27th September and 1st October, and still 40 on 11th October. Period of main passage over by 24th October, but occasional later records including 16 on 8th November, 6 on 23rd November and 4 on 27th December.

KNOT *Calidris canutus* One on 20th May was the only spring record. A summer plumage adult was seen on 15th July. A rather sparse autumn passage started on 4th August with 1-3 recorded most days to 29th September and 10 on 20th September the only higher count. Later singles were recorded on 3rd, 5th and 8th October and 2nd November.

SANDERLING *Calidris alba* No spring records but one on 14th July. Autumn passage was poor with 2 on 1st and 8th August, 1 on 13th August, and 1-2 on 14 dates 9th September-2nd October.

LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta* One 28th August-3rd September, 1-3 12th-20th September increasing to 10 on 21st, down to 6 on 22nd; 7 on 27th, 6 on 28th, 2 on 29th and 4 on 30th September. 1-2 on 9 dates 1st-14th October.

TEMMINCK'S STINT *Calidris temminckii* One was seen on 22nd May. Only 9th Observatory record but seen for third successive year.

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea* One at the airstrip on 7th May was only the second spring record.

PURPLE SANDPIPER *Calidris maritima* Not noted in January but 20 on 2nd February. Generally smaller numbers most days late February-March but 40 on 1st April and up to 33 noted most days in April and beginning of May. Marked passage 4th-8th May with record 100 counted on 6th, 32 on 7th and 30 on 8th. 1-7 on several dates to 22nd May then absent until 1 on 23rd June. Thereafter seen with increasing regularity through July and August with maximum 35 on 22nd August. Individuals were seen on only eight dates in September, maximum 4, but almost daily 2nd October-5th November, peak 15 on 29th October. Colour-ringed individuals at South Light in August and Bunes in September had been ringed on

Fair Isle in 1972, and thus were at least nine years old. 2-4 noted irregularly later in November and up to 10 in December.

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina* An unprecedented flock of 50 on 18th April was the only record prior to small daily passage 7th May-10th June, maximum 7 on 13th May. Late spring or summer singles on 15th, 18th, 29th June and 6th July preceded the first post-breeding arrivals from 15th July. By 21st July 20 were present, but it was not until 1st August that it began to be seen almost every day. From then until 22nd October was the main autumn period, with peak numbers 21st September-9th October. Autumn maxima 28 on 14th September, 30 on 27th-28th September, 40 on 3rd October. Late singles were noted on 27th and 29th October, and 1st November.

RUFF *Philomachus pugnax* Spring records were ♂ on 17th and 1 on 22nd May. An early autumn single on 20th July was followed by more regular passage 2nd August-28th September. Main passage took the form of two waves: 2nd-28th August — recorded on 18 dates, maximum 4 on 14th; and 9th-28th September — recorded on 17 dates, maxima 25 on 14th and 16 on 19th. Singles on 2nd and 10th October, and 2 on 3rd were the only other records.

JACK SNIBE *Lymocryptes minimus* Singles on 19th, 20th & 24th March, 2 on 26th March and 1st April, singles on 10th April, 17th-18th May and, surprisingly, 27th June — the first June record. Continuing the series of unusual occurrences, one on 9th August was the earliest ever autumn record, and one on 26th August was also earlier than in previous years. Other early singles on 8th and 12th September presaged daily passage 15th September-19th October with maxima 10 on 28th September, 12 on 4th and 13th October, 15 on 9th October. Latest records were 3 on 23rd October, 1 on 24th, 26th-27th October and 10th November.

SNIBE *Gallinago gallinago* Very few wintered this year. Spring birds were noted from 13th March. Spring maxima were 14 on 7th April and 20 on 12th May. At least 10 pairs bred, with several apparently double-brooded, moving from wet areas to the bracken of Furse for their second attempt and hardly fledged juveniles seen there in September gave rise to several reports of possible 'Great Snipe'. Influxes of autumn migrants occurred from late August with peaks of 35 on 5th September, 48 on 18th September, 50 on 4th October, and 55 on 9th October. Many of the birds seen and trapped in September and early October were of the Faeroes race *G.g.faeroeensis*. Numbers declined from the middle of October but an influx of nominate race birds occurred in early November with a peak of 50 on 1st. Small numbers were present later in November and throughout December.

GREAT SNIPE *Gallinago media* One 22nd September-5th October (trapped on 23rd). One on 9th October was probably the same individual. First record since 1977.

WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola* One 17th January and 10th February. Spring passage 16th March-20th May, seen on most days second half of March to 7th April, maximum 15 on 26th March. Seen on only seven dates after 7th April, maximum 4 on 6th May. Out-of-season singles recorded on 25th June, 20th July and 28th August. Autumn birds on 12 dates 3rd-24th October, 1-3 but 8 on 18th and 20 on 19th. Daily records 31st October-11th November, maximum 30 on 4th November. 1-2 noted occasionally later in November and on five dates in December.

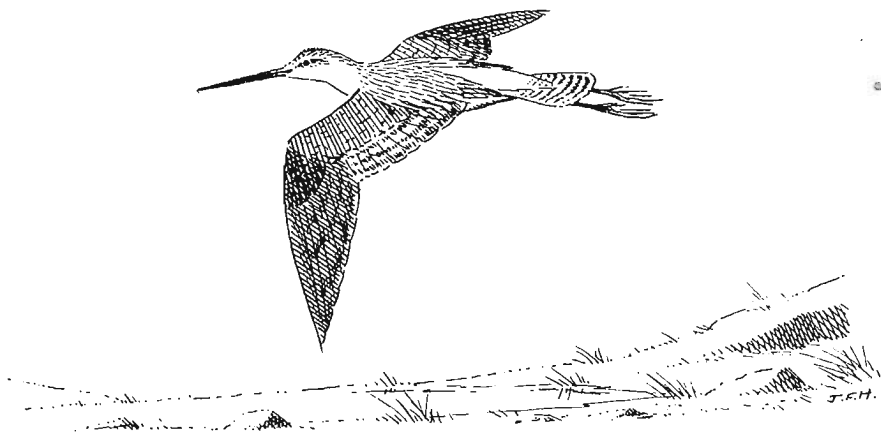
BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa* One in spring, 15th-23rd May. In autumn, 2 on 11th August, one remaining to 14th.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica* Spring singles seen between 15th and 22nd May with 2 on 16th May. Summer singles noted 6th, 10th and 14th July. Autumn singles on 11th September and most days 18th-28th September, 2 on 30th September, 1 on 1st October, 2 on 2nd-3rd October.

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus* One on 29th April and 1st May. Daily passage 7th May-4th June, maxima 15 on 11th May, 14 on 1st June. 1-4 on 9 dates June from 7th, 1-6 on 5 dates in July (6 on 19th). Autumn records on most days 3rd August-28th September, peak 6 on 28th August.

CURLEW *Numenius arquata* 12 on 16th and 4 on 17th January. Spring records daily from 12th March. Passage evident in early April with 31 on 9th April including 19 flying north. Another peak in mid-May with 20 on 15th. Up to 15 during late May and June, but only two pairs settled into territory and only one pair bred, raising 4 young. Post-breeding increases noted from 7th July and 70 present on 10th. Small parties were noted moving south on this date and subsequent days to 15th. Rather fewer noted in second half of July and early August though present all days. Daily records continued to 2nd November but most marked passage 5th August-26th September, peaks 30 on 22nd August, 40 on 29th August, 20 on 4th September. A late single was seen on 13th-14th November. In December there were 2 on 9th then an influx in the second half of the month with up to 40 present.

SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus* One on 17th August, and one on 22nd September-2nd October were the only records.



REDSHANK *Tringa totanus* About 8-12 noted regularly during January-February. Daily spring passage 17th March-23rd May with peaks 19 on 26th March, 16 on 29th April & 30 on 2nd May. 1-3 on 5 dates 29th May-23rd June. 3 on 3rd July, then daily 7th July-end of year; maxima 46 on 30th July, 65 on 17th August, 60 on 29th August, 55 on 5th September, 50 on 19th October, 37 on 1st November. Up to 8 in December.

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia* Spring singles were noted on 16th, 18th and 27th May, 2nd-3rd and 9th June. Earliest autumn bird was on 23rd July, daily passage 7th-16th August, maximum 5 on 14th. Recorded on 10 dates 20th August-21st September, all singles except 4 on 11th and 5 on 14th September.

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus* Only one in spring, on 3rd May. In autumn daily occurrence 5th-15th August, 2-4 birds except on 14th when 8 present.

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola* In spring, one 12th-14th May, 2 on 17th, one remaining to 22nd, one on 26th May. None in autumn.

COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleucos* Spring birds on most days 4th-28th May, maximum 6 on 11th. First autumn bird on 29th July. 1-2 on 8th-12th August, singles 16th August, 3rd-11th September, increasing to 2 on 12th-14th. 1-3 on 6 dates, 20th-27th September. One on 3rd-4th October.

TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres* Exceptional numbers overwintered with a maximum count of 80 on 2nd February. Numbers remained at a relatively high level to mid-May, maxima 78 on 30th March, 51 on 2nd April, 48 on 28th April and 30 on 2nd May. Up to 20 noted during June and early July. Post-breeding arrivals from 15th July building to 50 on 30th. Similar numbers during August and September (maximum 68 on 18th August), but further arrivals from 12th October when 92 counted, building to 125 on 19th, 100 on 21st, 111 on 27th October, 100 on 1st November and a highest ever count of 160 on 2nd November. Still 120 on 17th and 109 on 23rd November and present in good numbers to end of year with a December maximum of 60.

POMARINE SKUA *Stercorarius pomarinus* An adult seen on the crossing on 22nd May, an adult on 22nd August and one south on 23rd September; a better than average showing for this species.

ARCTIC SKUA *Stercorarius parasiticus* The first bird arrived on 15th April. Major arrivals were on 27th April and most in by 3rd May. About 120 pairs nested. Departures from mid-August and all gone by 15th September. Later individuals, all moving south offshore, were noted on 21st, 24th and 26th September (2).

LONG-TAILED SKUA *Stercorarius longicaudus* An adult was on the hill on 6th September.

GREAT SKUA *Stercorarius skua* 2 on 26th-27th March, then daily from 30th March. Gradually increasing numbers throughout April until most on territory from 3rd May. About 40 pairs bred. Non-breeders arriving from late May until 60 sitting in a 'bachelor club' at the Airstrip during June and July. Post-breeding departures started in August but still 100 present on 7th September, declining to 22 on 30th September, 20 on 8th October and 3 on 23rd October. Only one (ailing) individual remained thereafter, last seen on 6th November.

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Larus ridibundus* 2 on 4th and 1 on 8th January, 3 on 8th, 1 on 23rd February. Obvious passage 18th March-11th April with peaks of 13 on 18th, 42 on 25th March and 35 on 6th April. Smaller numbers, mainly immatures, later in April-May, June and July; highest count prior to July, 25 on 4th June. From 6th July evidence of first return movements with maximum 20 on 8th. Almost daily thereafter to end of September in small numbers with peak 23 on 4th August. 1-5 recorded on 20 dates in October. Singles recorded occasionally in November and on 1st December.

COMMON GULL *Larus canus* Singles on 9th and 15th, 3 on 18th February. Daily passage from 18th March, maxima 63 on 1st April, 81 on 8th May. 5 pairs bred, 4 successfully, but non-breeders were also present during the summer giving a maximum count of 51 on

14th June. Return movements started as early as 10th July (36), more regularly from 30th July when 50 present. Recorded on all days August to 26th October with occasional marked influxes, particularly 300 on 8th August, 250 on 11th August, 392 on 11th September, 140 on 15th and 215 on 28th September. Still 40 on 3rd October but then a decrease. Less regular 28th October until last on 1st November. Highest count in this period 25 on 31st October. Only later records were in December: 1 on 9th, up to 30 from 22nd-31st.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus* First arrivals on 18th March. No apparent through passage. About 40 pairs bred. Autumn peak counts were 210 on 2nd and 170 on 11th August. Most birds had departed by early September and all by 22nd September, though later counts were made of one on 25th, 20 on 28th September, and singles on 1st-2nd, 7th and 11th October.

HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus* Present all year. Peak counts were 1,600 on 17th February, 1,355 on 21st April, 1,000 on 8th June, 1,640 on 6th August, 650 on 10th October and 900 on 23rd-24th November. A yellow-legged bird, probably of a northern race, was seen on 5th August.

ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucoides* Second-winter individuals on 16th January and 8th February. One first-winter individual seen on 17 dates 9th February-7th May; another with it on 25th February. A second-summer bird present 19th-26th May, and 1st June. A first-summer on 4th June. In autumn, a second-year on 16th and an adult on 19th October. One December bird on 30th.

GLAUCOUS GULL *Larus hyperboreus* Seen on several dates in January and February with peak counts of 6 on 11th January, 20 on 8th February, 8 on 9th and 6 on 17th February. Only one in March, a first-winter on 13th. First-winter individuals seen on 4 dates in April. An adult was seen on 9th May, a second-summer on 19th and 29th May, and a first-summer on 2nd June. There was an adult on 17th July, then none until October. Small numbers were recorded most days 5th October-11th November, maxima 5 on 13th and 21st October. Recorded on five dates in December, maximum 3 on 8th.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus* Present all year. Peaks of 1,000 on 8th February, 1,300 on 21st April. Breeding season as normal. Autumn peak numbers 1,200 on 10th and 1,100 on 11th August, 1,000 on 10th October.

KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla* Recorded throughout the year. Excellent breeding season with above average post-fledging survival. Maximum autumn count 871 north on 8th October, very few present after October.

SANDWICH TERN *Sterna sandvicensis* Fewer noted compared with the previous two years' good numbers. Singles on 31st May, 1st June, 16th July and 8th August.

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo* First recorded on 9th May(3), increasing to 65 on 16th and 70 on 28th May. About 40 pairs raised about 60 young. Departures from beginning of August with very few birds left by the middle of the month, 3 from 23rd-29th August, then none till a final single on 21st September.

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea* The first of the year was on 5th May. Numbers peaked at 8 on 26th May with up to 4 birds recorded regularly throughout the breeding season. One pair was present for the second year in succession on the Stack O' North Haven; another pair successfully raised 1 chick at a new site on Bunes. Post-breeding influxes, probably of birds from Shetland, were noted from 29th July, peaking at 48 on 1st August. Numbers decreased and became less frequent from the middle of August, with the last 2 recorded on 10th September.

GUILLEMOT *Uria aalge* Ashore on ledges on fine days in January and February, regularly recorded from mid-March with 3,000+ on 21st March. An excellent breeding season. Numbers on ledges decreased from end of July to none by 9th August. From then only seen irregularly and in very small numbers until late August. Increasing numbers seen offshore from 7th September, reaching 150 by 30th September. First noted back on ledges on 6th October, then regularly on fine mornings thereafter, maximum count 556 at North Light census colonies on 8th November. 4 were found dead, oiled, on 8th December.

RAZORBILL *Alca torda* 60 ashore by 13th March. Breeding season as usual but perhaps slight decline in numbers. Dispersal from end of July to 9th August. A few seen offshore on several dates in August-September. Singles on 1st, 10th, 11th, 17th and 29th October, with a maximum of 6 on 12th.

BLACK GUILLEMOT *Cephus grylle* Recorded throughout the year as usual. Up to 20 birds heard singing in South Haven on 13th March. Rather poor breeding season with few young raised to fledging. Spectacular influx on 20th-21st October with 130, including a flock of 119, on 20th.



LITTLE AUK *Alle alle* Singles on 14th, 16th and 17th, 2 on 20th October. In December an oiled bird was taken into care on 20th but later died, and 6 were off South Light on 22nd.

PUFFIN *Fratercula arctica* 2 offshore and 3 ashore on Hoillie on 30th March were the first to be seen; 600 were ashore by 5th April, peaking at 1,000 on 3rd May. Main departures had taken place by mid-August. Very few noted offshore in September (last on 28th) and none in October.

ROCK DOVE *Columba livia* Recorded throughout the year. Only small numbers until increase in early May (maximum 32 on 2nd May). No large flocks until late August. Autumn peaks 35 on 29th August, 40 on 15th and 22nd October, 42 on 7th November.

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas* One from 18th October to 2nd November was the only record.

WOODPIGEON *Columba palumbus* 2 on 13th March were the first of the year. Recorded almost daily 17th March-18th April, maximum 12 on 8th April. Another wave of arrivals 3rd May-27th June, maximum 20 on 10th May. One on 16th July was the only summer record. Autumn birds were recorded on 15 dates, 1st October-3rd November, maxima 4 on 27th-28th October.

COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto* 2 on 3rd-4th May, 5 on 6th, then regularly recorded 15th May-15th June, peak numbers 6 on 20th May, 7 on 4th June and 9 on 8th June. 1-4 recorded occasionally in the second half of June, then singles on only three dates, 20th, 25th and 28th September.

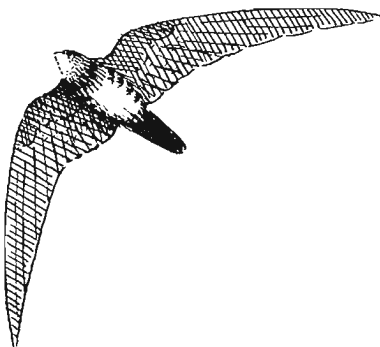
TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur* One on 17th May, increasing to 3 on 19th, then one to 29th. In June 1-3 on all days, with 4 on 15th. 2 on 1st July and one on 2nd and 4th July were the last until one on 7th August. 1-2 noted on 10 dates 29th August-27th September. Late singles occurred on 1st and 9th October.

CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus* An excellent spring passage started with 5, including an hepatic ♀, on 10th May. There were 4-6 present daily thereafter to 17th when 8 (equal highest ever count) were recorded, then a gradual decline to singles in early June and 2 on 7th June. Not a single bird was recorded in autumn.

LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus* Singles in spring on 13th-14th, 26th and 30th March, 9th-10th April, 1st and 21st May. Autumn records, one on 22nd September, 2 on 8th and 3 on 10th November and singles most days 14th-20th November.

SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus* Singles on 1st April, 3rd and 9th May. 2 on 11th May, singles 13th-19th, 28th May and 4th June. In autumn, recorded on most days 13th September-18th October, usually 1-3 but 4 on 8th and 10th October and 5 on 12th. Later records, one on 26th and 28th October, 2 on 8th November, one on 15th and 30th December with 2 on 29th.

SWIFT *Apus apus* Earliest birds, all singles, on 10th-11th, 18th and 20th May. Seen daily 24th May-15th June, 1-4 except 8 on 3rd June and 6 on 11th. 2 on 21st June, one on 22nd, 27th and 29th June preceded a remarkable influx from 4th-14th July. There were 8 on 4th, 2 the next day, 6 on 6th and 9 on 7th-8th. On 9th a flock of 160 — a record total for Fair Isle — were wheeling over the Houll and 60 remained the following morning. All had departed on 11th but there were 4 on 12th, 1 on 13th, 6 on 14th and one on 22nd July. 1-5 were noted regularly between 5th and 27th August. In September there were 4 on 13th, 2 on 16th, 8 on 21st, 2 on 23rd and last 4 of the year on 28th.



ALPINE SWIFT *Apus melba* One on 18th April and one on 4th-10th June, the 4th and 5th Fair Isle records. The two birds extended the earliest and latest dates respectively for the isle, and constituted the first record of two in a year.

ROLLER *Coracias garrulus* A first-autumn individual was found sitting on a wall near the shop on 22nd September — the first Fair Isle record.

HOOPOE *Upupa epops* One on 12th-14th April was the earliest ever.

There were records of singles on 15 dates from 7th-29th May with probably more than one individual involved. One autumn bird present 1st-4th October. At least 3 individuals (and perhaps 5) is a pleasant contrast to the recent occurrence of only one since 1977.

WRYNECK *Jynx torquilla* One on 18th April was the earliest ever. 3 arrived on 11th May. There were 7 the next day, decreasing to 3 on 13th and 1 on 22nd. Later spring records were 2 on 27th and 30th May. First autumn bird on 23rd August, one on 30th-31st, then almost daily occurrence 11th-27th September, starting with 6 on 11th and 7 on 12th, but otherwise 1-3. Only one later record, a single on 5th October.

SHORT-TOED LARK *Calandrella cinerea* One at Kennaby on 19th-26th September, another at Jimmy's Brae on 25th-26th September. One at Kennaby on 1st October, one at Taing on 6th October and the same or another there on 10th-11th October. All were of the grey eastern form.

SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis* 1-2 throughout January and irregularly in February. 4 arrived on 2nd March and 50 were present on 5th. Further influxes, including some passage birds, in the second half of March and early April, peak 200 on 21st March. Counts of singing males suggested a breeding population of at least 50 pairs. Autumn migrants arrived with 130 on 18th September building steadily to 700 on 25th. 200-600 most days 22nd September-13th October and 700 on 3rd and 5th October. Gradual decline from 14th October to 35 by end of month and 6 by 8th November. 1-5 remained during rest of the month. Recorded on four dates in December, maximum 8 on 7th.

SHORELARK *Eremophila alpestris* 2 at Jimmy's Brae on 10th May was the only spring record. Autumn records comprised 2 on 8th October, 1 remaining to 13th, and a flock of 5 on 1st November.

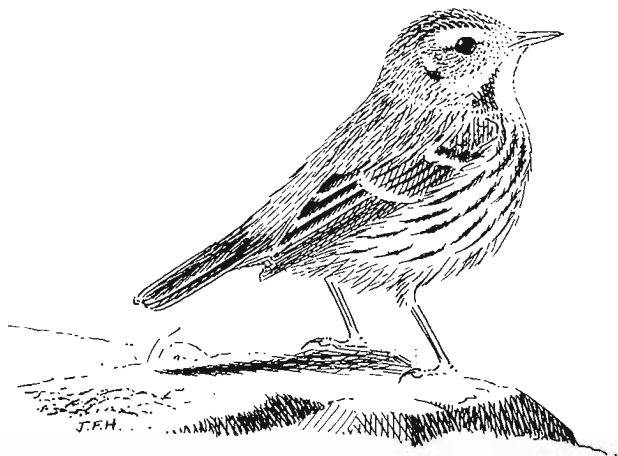
SANDMARTIN *Riparia riparia* Spring birds were seen almost daily 9th May-11th June in small numbers, commonest in the second half of May with highest count of 15 on 27th. One on 6th August, 3 on 12th-16th September, 3 on 24th and one on 25th September were the only autumn records.

SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica* One on 4th April was the earliest ever (by one day). 2 on 14th and 1 on 20th April were other early birds. Main passage occurred daily 5th May-17th June and almost daily to 1st July. Strongest passage spanned the dates 11th May-9th June; 60 arrived on 11th May, 140 the next day, over 50 on most other days with 100 on 24th and 28th May the peaks. There were 60 on 1st June but numbers gradually declined thereafter. After 1st July 1-5 were present on 6th-10th and 2 on 16th-17th July. An autumn bird was seen on 4th August, but no others until one on 28th-31st

August. There were 3 on 6th September, then daily passage 13th September-2nd October with largest numbers 20th-24th September, peak 35 on 21st. The only other autumn record was one on 5th October.

HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbica* Recorded daily 8th May-17th June. Strongest passage 11th May-5th June, peak 100 on 24th May. Spring stragglers recorded on 9 dates 20th June-10th July, never more than 3. In autumn, one on 4th August, then daily 12th September-3rd October. Less than 10 on all days except 12 on 16th, 28 on 21st, 30 on 22nd and 18 on 24th September.

RICHARD'S PIPIT *Anthus novaeseelandiae* One in Sukka Mire 16th-25th September; one near Quoy 21st-28th September with another on 28th; one at Kennaby on 5-6th October with a different bird at Lower Stoneybrake on 6th; one in the Quoy to School area 25th October-1st November.



OLIVE-BACKED PIPIT *Anthus hodgsoni* One at Quoy 4th-5th October, another in the Schoolton ditch on 11th-12th October. The seventh and eight Fair Isle records and the first occurrence of 2 in one year.

TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis* There was an early arrival of 2 on 17th April. One was seen on 3rd May, then daily passage 6th-29th May, strongest between 11th and 26th with peaks of 50 on 12th and 18th. First autumn single on 22nd August, then 1-2 on 6 dates to 8th September. Daily passage 11th September-6th October, with a later record of 3 on 9th October. A particularly heavy influx occurred from 12th September when 70 appeared, reaching 140 on 15th and

gradually decreasing to 60 on 18th and 35 on 19th. A further arrival of 50 occurred on 22nd September but numbers were below 25 from that date.

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis* First appearance on 15th March, numbers building to 220 on 30th March. Seen daily in some numbers throughout April, maximum 200 on 11th. There was more marked passage in early May with 400 on 7th and 285 on 8th. 25-30 pairs bred. Autumn increases occurred from 10th August when 130 present, but heaviest passage 5th September-12th October when many birds seen arriving from the north and east. Highest counts were 1,000 on 6th September and 1,500 on 8th. Gradually diminishing numbers recorded throughout October to single figures by 5th November and last one on 22nd.

ROCK PIPIT *Anthus spinoletta* Recorded all year. No apparent through movement in spring. No full census of breeding pairs was made, but all evidence pointed to an excellent breeding season with large numbers of fledged young throughout late summer. Departures of a portion of the population occurred in September. From 27th October-2nd November a marked increase took place, but this may have been due to heavy swell and spray forcing birds away from feeding stations at the base of the cliffs.

YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava* Birds of Blue-headed race *M.f.flava*: singles on 9 dates 13th-27th May, one on 23rd September. Grey-headed birds *M.f.thunbergi*: one on 15th-17th May, one on 25th September. British Yellow Wagtail *M.f.flavissima*: one from 13th May, joined by a second on 26th. These remained at Kennaby throughout June and were clearly a pair, raising hopes of breeding. Amazingly, this took place, the ♀ incubating 4 eggs at Kennaby on 17th July, but the attempt failed. 1-2 were present in August, perhaps the same pair, and 5 on 5th September at the Haa may denote that the pair managed a late replacement brood. Last recorded on 13th September apart from one on 27th September. Yellow Wagtails not assigned to race: first seen on 3rd May and regularly from 11th-31st May, maximum 5 on 24th and 26th. In autumn, passage 16th-30th September, maximum 12 on 23rd. Only one in October, on 2nd.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea* In spring 1-3 birds daily 25th-31st March, maximum 3 on 26th, and 1-2 birds on 5 dates 1st-8th April. 1-2 recorded most days 16th September-25th October with 3 on 5th October.

PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba* Both races Pied *M.a.yarrelli* and White *M.a.alba* recorded in spring but the passage of Pied was generally earlier with records from 7th March to 9th May, strongest and most regular passage 26th March-9th April, maxima 5 on 29th March and 9th April. White Wagtails from 6th March to 27th May with

strongest movement 5th-27th May, peak 10 on 11th May. One White Wagtail on 4th June and *alba* Wagtails not subspecifically identified on 9th and 23rd June and 10th July. In autumn the only Pied Wagtail noted were singles on 1st and 8th-11th October. White Wagtail passage started with singles on 1st and 7th August and daily 10th August-14th October with heavy movement 19th August to 12th September including peaks of 67 on 19th August and 120 on 5th September. Gradually declining numbers to 13th October and last on 20th.

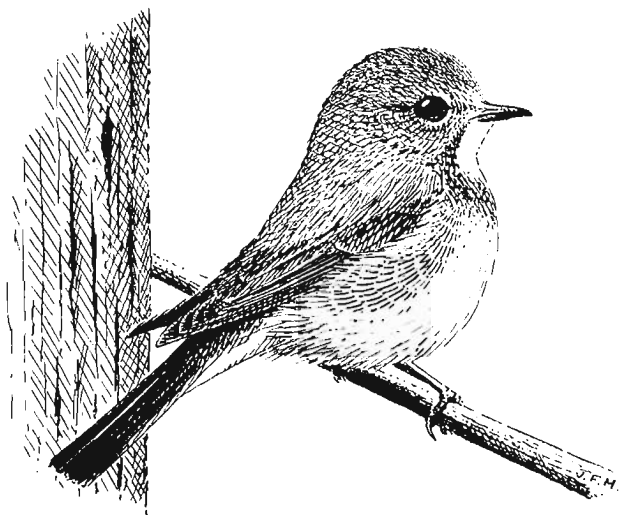
WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus* One on 23rd October, 3 on 31st October, 1 on 2nd November and an adult ♂ trapped on 7th November.

WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes* Probable passage migrants were noted on 3 dates in early April. The local population maintained its recent poor showing with only 10 singing ♂♂ located and no large numbers of fledged young seen. No clear evidence of autumn passage migrants.

DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis* One on 10th-15th March. Regular passage 26th March-25th April with a maximum of 16 on 9th April and a few stragglers in May. One was seen on 2nd June. Early autumn singles on 11th-13th August and 28th August-2nd September. Noted almost daily 6th September-19th October, including 25 on 5th October. Late singles on 23rd and 25th—26th October.

ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula* One on 11th February. From 13th March birds recorded almost daily until last spring bird on 7th June. No large numbers at any time but most marked arrivals 29th March-15th April with highest count of 25 on 3rd April. Daily autumn passage from 11th September-late October with 40 on the 30th September the biggest influx. By late October 1-2 settling into apparent territories though 4 on 8th and 5 on 9th November probably migrants. 1-2 recorded occasionally later in November and in December.

BLUETHROAT *Luscinia svecica* One of the heaviest spring arrivals in recent years started abruptly on 11th May when 12, all Red-spotted ♂♂ appeared. The following day more ♂♂ and the first ♀♀ arrived boosting the total to 30. In subsequent days there were rather fewer, but off-passage individuals plus a probable continued turnover ensured that until 18th May totals fluctuated daily between 14 and 20. Smaller numbers were noted almost daily to the last on 4th June. All ♂♂ were of the Red-spotted form. Autumn was quiet in comparison, with one on 9th-10th increasing to 3 on 11th September, one on 15th-16th and 22nd September and one from 6th-17th October.



RED-FLANKED BLUETAIL *Tarsiger cyanurus* One on 29th-30th September, trapped on 29th and thought to be a first-year ♂. First Fair Isle record.

BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros* One on 16th March. Rather scattered records of 1-3 on 27 dates, 29th March-27th May, with no obvious concentration of passage. The only autumn birds were singles on 1st and 8th November.

REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* Precursors of the main spring passage were a ♂ on 12th-15th April, joined by a second on 15th. The main passage spanned 10th-29th May, peak 60 on 12th. In autumn, there was a ♀ on 2nd-3rd September, then daily records 10th September-13th October. Largest arrivals were at the beginning of this period with 40 on 11th, 50 on 12th and 45 on 14th September. Late autumn singles were noted on 16th, 17th and 19th October, and a ♀ trapped on 11th November was the equal latest ever.

WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra* A ♂ on 14th April was the earliest ever by 5 days, and birds were noted daily from 7th to 30th May. Major arrivals occurred from 11th to 20th peaking at 50 on 12th. One late bird appeared on 4th June. First autumn bird was on 25th August, followed by daily passage 28th August-17th October. Sustained major movements started on 11th September with 50 and lasted until 1st October (also with 50). Highest count was 100 on 15th-16th. Numbers dropped rapidly after 1st October.

STONECHAT *Saxicola torquata* Sparse spring records comprised a ♀ on 28th and 30th March, 2 ♂♂ on 2nd April, a ♂ 12 May, a ♀ on 13th and a ♂ on 22nd May. In autumn there were 2 on 30th September, one on 3rd October, 2 on 4th — all of the western group of races — while a ♂ Siberian Stonechat, probably of the race *S.t.maura*, was seen on 10th October.

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe* First 2 on 29th March, thence daily. First major influx: 47 on 11th April increasing to 100 on 18th April. Largest numbers in the first half of May when breeding birds installed, but Greenland birds still on passage. Peak count of 450 on 12th May included at least 100 of the Greenland race. A census of breeding birds suggested a population of at least 50 pairs. They enjoyed a good season with fledged young numerous by late July. Some movement apparent from early August growing in size to most marked passage in the first half of September, peak 250 on 6th September. The first Greenland type bird was noted on 15th August, but main passage of this race 6th September to mid-October. Birds noted daily in October to 17th, declining from 35 on 1st to 1 on 17th, and last on 1st November.

RING OUZEL *Turdus torquatus* 2 on 7th April, 1 on four dates to 27th April, almost daily occurrence 2nd-27th May in small numbers, maximum 12 on 12th. One on 10th June. Autumn passage on most days 14th September-25th October with only 1-5 on all dates except 8th-12th October when up to 30.

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula* About 12 wintered. First marked spring arrival on 8th March with 50. Heavy passage was confined to 21st March-9th April, maximum 300 on 26th March. The maximum in May was 10 on 3rd, and in June 2 on several dates. After sporadic records across the summer daily arrivals started on 27th September but no total in excess of 20 occurred until 100 on 18th October. The first reasonable arrival was of 200 on 3rd November increasing to 250 on 4th. Another arrival of 200 took place on 8th-9th November. Small numbers present later in the month and into December when up to 10 present.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris* 11 in early January had dwindled to 6 by 17th February. First obvious signs of migration were 20 on 8th March. Passage continued and was most marked 30th March-8th April with maximum 300 on 30th March. Only small numbers recorded irregularly 9th-27th April. The second wave started with 3 on 3rd May rapidly rising to 260 on 7th, 700 on 12th, and declined again to 47 on 15th and 3 on 28th May. 3 records in June. Juvenile dispersal probably accounted for early singles on 8th & 26th August. Daily occurrences 2nd September-23rd November with first major influx 80 on 11th September. Largest numbers, however, in October with 100+ on most days to 26th, maxima 1,500 on 9th, 3,500 on 18th and 2,500 on 19th. November maximum 500 on 3rd. 1-2 recorded on 4 dates in December.

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos* Singles were noted on 4 dates in February. First notable arrival 40 on 8th March leading to daily passage till 20th April, maximum 22 on 1st April. A second wave of daily passage occurred 3rd-21st May with peak of 25 on 6th. Later singles on six dates to 11th July. One on 25th August preceded daily passage 8th September-9th November. Most concentrated movement 27th September-10th October with several days of 100+ and maximum of 300 on 4th October. Only small numbers of up to 9, from 21st October to last (2) on 14th November. One present on several days in December.

REDWING *Turdus iliacus* 1-2 on a number of dates in January-February. 30 on 8th March marked the start of the spring migration, thence almost daily to 1st June. No heavy movements but waves in late March-beginning of April and in the first half of May suggested by peaks of 25 on 31st March, 30 on 1st April and of 30 on 6th and 20 on 7th May. Latest spring bird on 7th June. Daily autumn passage 11th September-late November. Very few till 20 on 20th September then sudden arrival of 1,500 on 27th increasing 2,000 on 28th. Heaviest movements in October, all in the first fifteen days. Two major arrivals during this period, commencing with 2,500 on 3rd, a big fall of 10,000 on 4th with 3,000 on 5th, followed by an arrival of 1,400 on 9th and 1,500 on 10th. Up to 6 remained into December.

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus* Spring occurrences comprised 3 on 8th March, 2 on 11th and 14th, 1 on 26th and 2 on 30th March, 1 on 13-14th April, 1 on 5th-6th May and 1 on 6th June. Autumn appearances were few and well-spaced; singles on 8th August, 30th September and 9th October. The August bird was the earliest autumn record by 15 days.

PALLAS'S GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella certhiola* A first-year bird trapped in the North Grind trap on 21st September was the fourth Fair Isle record. A typical date.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia* One on 12th April was the earliest ever recorded by 4 days. Another early bird appeared on 16th April. 6 other spring birds were all in May; the last, on 29th May, was reeling its characteristic song in Gilsetter. The species is normally rare and encountered singly in autumn but not so this year. There was one on 28th August, then virtually daily records 11th-29th September. One on 11th increased to 4 on 13th & 16th, then decreased to 1 on 17th-18th. 3 on 20th-21st heralded an amazing influx of at least 12 on 22nd, and there were still 7-8 present the next three days before declining to 2 on 27th-29th. The only later bird was 1 on 4th October.

RIVER WARBLER *Locustella fluviatilis* One on 23rd-24th May was, sadly, found dead the next day. The 3rd Fair Isle and British record and first in spring. This record is not as surprising as it first seems as the

species is currently expanding its range northwards, particularly into Scandinavia.

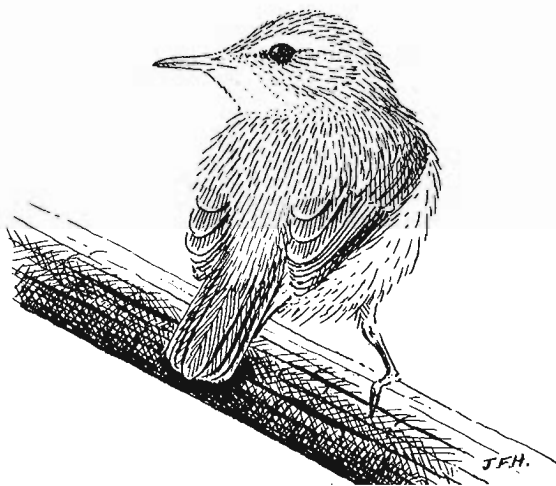
SAVI'S WARBLER *Locustella luscinioides* One trapped in the Gully on 24th June was the third to be recorded on Fair Isle. The other two occurred as long ago as May 1908.

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* Almost daily 10th May-11th June; highest numbers 17th-27th May, maximum 11 on 22nd. In autumn, singles on 29th August and 8th September. Small numbers daily 12th-18th September, peaks 5 on 12th and 14th. 3 on 21st and 1 on 23rd September were the latest records.

MARSH WARBLER *Acrocephalus palustris* One on 1st June, 2 on 2nd-4th June. One mid-summer bird was trapped on 11th July.

REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* Spring singles were seen on 21st-22nd May, 24th May, 3rd-5th June and 11th June. A far better than average autumn started with 3 on 11th September. 9 were present the next day and 15 on 13th-14th. 8-10 were counted on the next three days declining to 3 on 18th. 1-2 on all days to 27th except 23rd when 5 seen. Later records were 1 on 29th and 2 on 30th September, and singles on 1st, 4th and 9th October.

ICTERINE WARBLER *Hippolais icterina* One on 24th May, 2 from 26th-29th May and one on 7th June were the only records.



MELODIOUS WARBLER *Hippolais polyglotta* One trapped on 15th June, the ninth Fair Isle record and recorded for the second year in succession.

BARRED WARBLER *Sylvia nisoria* One set up residence in the hostel garden from 9th-26th August. There was another individual on 21st and 2 on 23rd August. 1-4 were recorded on most days 28th August-18th September. There were later singles on 28th and 30th September, 4th, 11th-12th October.

LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca* Spring passage daily 9th-30th May and 1 on 2nd-3rd June. Main arrival period 11th-20th May with maximum 16 on 12th. In autumn, early singles on 22nd August and 1st-3rd September, then daily 11th-26th September, maximum 11 on 16th. Singles later in the autumn on 6 dates to 16th October.

WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis* One on 6th-7th May. Two on 10th, 5 on 11th leading to peak 20 on 12th May then daily in decreasing numbers to 4th June and singles on 7th and 12th June. One on 11th August, then none until daily 6th September-5th October. No large numbers, maxima of 12 on 12th, 22nd and 25th September.

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin* In spring, 1 on 11th-12 May, daily passage 15th May-9th June and irregularly to 23rd June. Only recorded in small numbers, maximum 12 on 4th June. Singles on 6 dates in July, and on 6 dates in August from 14th. Daily 31st August-12th October, with 1-3 on 5 dates 15th-23rd October. A feature of the period 11th-22nd September was an unprecedented series of arrivals when the species was frequently the commonest migrant on the island. The first arrival, after 5 on 10th, was 200 on 11th, almost three times the previous highest autumn count. There were 120 on 12th decreasing to 40 on 13th. Another arrival of 90 on 15th declined to 8 on 17th. 30 were new on 20th but this paled to insignificance when 400 appeared on 21st. 40 were present the next day but only small numbers in subsequent days.

BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla* Single males were seen on 12th and 17th April. There were daily records 8th-16th May, maximum 12 on 12th; and 20th May-4th June, maximum 4 on 20th and 29th. 3 on 7th and 2 on 8th June declined to 1 on 10th-17th. The first autumn bird, a ♂, arrived on 6th September. No others were seen until 20 on 11th, then, in common with Garden Warbler, a heaviest ever passage lasting from 11th September to 10th October. 70 birds on 20th September were forerunners of an immense fall on 21st when Blackcaps seemed to occupy every niche on the isle and were estimated at a minimum 1000 (five times the previous highest total). There were 150 left the next day and 100 on 23rd, decreasing to 30 by 28th. Further influxes involved 70 on 29th September, 60 on 1st and 7th October. Generally fewer birds after 10th October and less regular in occurrence, but 35 arrived on 16th and 18th October, and 12 as late as 1st November. Late birds noted regularly to 22nd November, including 4 on 18th.

GREENISH WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochiloides* One (trapped) at Quoy and the Haa on 16th September. 14th Island record.

ARCTIC WARBLER *Phylloscopus borealis* One at Leogh on 22nd August was the only record.

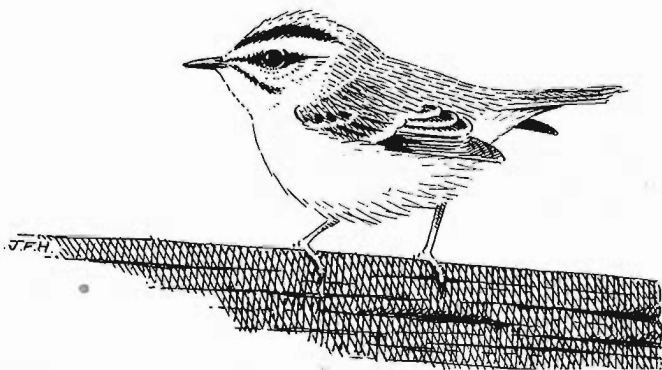
YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER *Phylloscopus inornatus* One or two recorded on most days 15th September-12th October; 3 on 24th-25th September and 9th October, and 4 on 10th October, last on 18th October.

WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* The earliest ever was seen on 14th April and other singles occurred on 6 dates in May and June. Only one August record on 23rd. In September, singles on 4 dates, 3 on 2nd and last 2 on 21st.

CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita* A single on 29th March, then 1-4 from 2nd-7th April. 10 on 11th and 12 on 12th then smaller numbers to 20th. A single on 21st was followed by 1-6 on most days 24th April-22nd May with a maximum of 12 on 20th May. Singles on 28th and 31st May with 3 on 29th. 7 recorded on 4th June with 1-2 noted on 5 dates to 24th June. There were no July records. Autumn passage from 29th August when recorded almost daily in very small numbers until 10th November, with a maximum of 7 on 2nd September. One late bird occurred on 8th December.

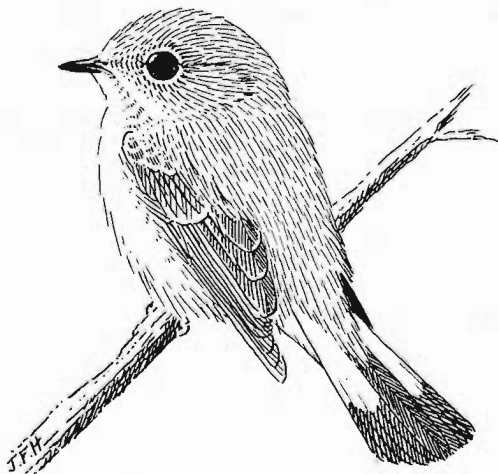
WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus* 5 on 3rd April then almost daily to 24th April with a maximum of 12 on 14th. None 25th-29th April, 1 on 2nd May and 2 on 3rd. Recorded daily 6th May-9th June with numbers increasing to 90 on 15th May and decreasing to 1 on 9th June. 1-7 recorded 7th-15th August, then none till 21st August when recorded daily until 5th October. Autumn peak 60 on 2nd September.

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus* 1-4 noted 21st-27th March, 10 on 29th and 17 on 30th. Recorded daily 1st-19th April with maximum of 17 on 6th. 1-2 on several dates from beginning to middle of May, last on 15th. Autumn passage heralded by 2 on 9th September with daily records 11th September-3rd October, then almost daily until 28th October. Maximum 25 on 9th October.



FIRECREST *Regulus ignicapillus* A first-year ♂ trapped in the Gully on 7th November was in the Plantation on 8th. This is a long overdue first record for Fair Isle.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata* In spring, daily 11th May-7th June and one on 11th June; peaks 12 on 12th, 16 on 20th, 25 on 26th and 12 on 29th May. One mid-summer bird on 8th July. Singles in August on 22nd and 24th. 1-2 on 5 dates 2nd-9th September, followed by daily passage 11th September-2nd October. 10 or more birds on 10 dates in September is far higher than the average and 25 on 14th and 16th September were highest ever autumn counts.



RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula parva* 2 on 15th September were the first of the year. Further records were one on 24th September, one from 4th-6th October, and one on 8th November. The last individual was the latest ever by one day.

PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hypoleuca* A short but strong spring passage spanned the dates 11th-27th May, 1-3 on most days but 34 on 12th, 5-7 on all days to 18th except 15th when 20, and 17th when 10 recorded. In autumn from 23rd August, August maximum 4 on 29th. Almost daily September with a marked concentration 10th-19th, peak 45 on 12th. In October 1 on 1st, 2 on 2nd, 1 on 3rd and 1 on 10th.

GOLDEN ORIOLE *Oriolus oriolus* A first-year bird trapped on 7th November was only the fifth in autumn, the previous four all being in September.

ISABELLINE SHRIKE *Lanius isabellinus* An adult σ hunted voraciously between Shirva and Quoy from 9th-12th October, the third island record. The bird showed characteristics of the Daurian race *L.i.speculigerus* and if accepted as such will be the first of this race for Britain.

RED-BACKED SHRIKE *Lanius collurio* Spring passage 10th May-9th June with up to 3 birds present. Autumn passage daily 11th September-1st October with a late bird on 7th October. 6 arrived on 11th September and 4-6 present daily till 18th, 3-5 from 19th to 26th and 1-2 thereafter. This is the heaviest autumn passage on record (previous highest count 4).

GREAT GREY SHRIKE *Lanius excubitor* Extremely scarce for the second year running. There was none in spring. In autumn there were four individuals, all in October: 6th-14th, one from 9th-14th, one from 18th-21st, one on 19th.

JACKDAW *Corvus monedula* 2 on 7th-11th March, 6 on 12th-13th, 17 on 14th, 4 on 18th and 17 on 26th March marked the intermittent period of strongest movement. Other spring records comprised 5 on 9th April, 1 on 5th and 7th May and 2 on 20th May. 3 on 1st June were the last until 19th October when 6 appeared, staying to 22nd. In November singles were seen on 8th and 10th.

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus* The first 2 spring birds were noted on 16th March. There was one on 26th March, 1-2 on 6 well scattered dates in April, 6 on 7th May and 1 on 8th. The last spring 2 birds were present from 3rd-8th June. The only autumn records involved 4 on 11th November, one on 13th and 22nd November and 2-3 throughout December.

CARRION CROW *Corvus corone* There were two pairs present throughout the summer, one of these a pure Hooded Crow *C.c.cornix* pair and one a Hoodie paired with a Carrion. Neither raised young to fledging. There were often extra birds in spring with peak counts of 17 Hoodies on 5th May and 30 Carrions on 7th May when 9 Hoodies and 2 intergrades were also present. 1-2

Hoodie/Carrion intergrades were noted frequently in April, May and to 12th June. In autumn no more than 2 Carrions noted and no great numbers of Hoodies either with a peak of 9 on 1st October.

RAVEN *Corvus corax* Present all year. There was some passage from late March to early May with a few visible movements towards Shetland noted. A maximum count of 15 was made on 11th April. 4 pairs were present during the breeding season but none bred successfully. Little evidence of movement in autumn though 12 on 15th October included immigrants.

STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris* Present all year. Spring passage from 14th March peaking at 580 on 30th March. At least 200 pairs bred and good first brood success led to a successful second attempt by a large proportion of pairs. A peak count of 950 on 6th August reflected the large numbers of fledged young but also probably included immigrants from other islands on juvenile dispersal, judging by the small proportion of ringed birds in some flocks. Numbers remained high into early September, e.g. 840 on 9th but rather fewer birds present from the middle of month and for rest of autumn. However, 550 on 19th-20th and 585 on 21st October marked an influx of migrants.

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus* Resident. Present all year with no evidence of immigration or emigration. Probably about 50 pairs bred and first fledged young were seen on 13th June. In autumn, peak counts of 210 are a good reflection of the size of the post-breeding population. At least 2 hybrid House X Tree Sparrows were present throughout the year.

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus* A better than average spring showing with daily passage 14th May-10th June and later singles on 13th-14th, 24th and 27th June. 1-2 were recorded except 5-9 on 20th-25th May, 14-17 from 29th May-3rd June, and 5-9 from 4th-7th June. A mid-summer single was seen on 15th July, and further singles on 4th, 12th and 15th August. The only other records comprised 4 on 27th September and 1 on 1st October.

CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs* Early singles on 12th-15th and 21st-23rd March preceded a strong movement 25th March-20th April. At least 20 were recorded on all dates 26th March-8th April, maxima 90 on 29th and 30th March, 85 on 1st April. Small numbers later in the spring on most days 24th April-31st May, never more than 8 except on 7th May when 30 present. 2 on 11th September were the first of daily occurrences to 17th October. Only small numbers throughout the autumn but 12+ on all days 21st September-6th October, maxima 40 on 22nd and 29th September. 1-4 were recorded on several dates from 19th October-8th November. Later singles noted on 1st, 5th and 17th December.

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla* Almost daily passage 29th March-28th May. 12 arrived on 29th March and there were 20 the following day. No more than 8 were recorded in a day until 15 on 26th and 10 on 27th April. Main spring movements were from 4th-15th May with 40 on 3rd, 79 the next day, 128 on 5th, 150 on 7th, 83 on 9th and 60 on 11th. A female trapped on 7th July was a surprise, being the first July record for the species. 2 on 11th and 3 on 12th September were forerunners to daily occurrences 20th September-8th November. The September peak was 12 on 27th. Most birds were noted in the first half of October with maxima 50 on 9th-10th and 40 on 18th. Peak November count was 6 on 2nd.

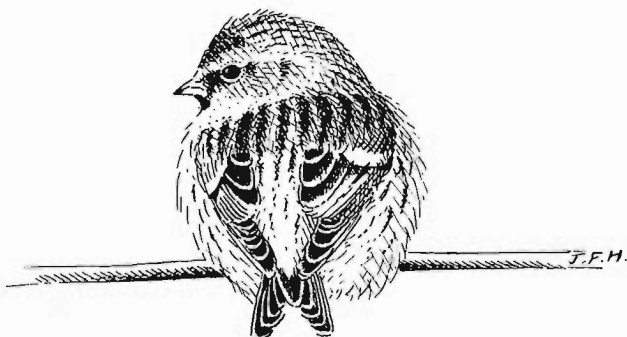
GREENFINCH *Carduelis chloris* Recorded on many dates 29th March-20th May. On most days 1-4, but 5 on 30th March, 7 on 9th April and 5 on 17th May exceeded any previous spring count in the Observatory's history. In contrast there was only one autumn record, 3 on 16th October.

GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis* One at the Haa on 13th November was only the eighth Fair Isle record, fifth in autumn and first since 1977.

SISKIN *Carduelis spinus* Recorded almost daily 4th May-4th June. On most days 1-6 were counted but 13 on 7th May was a record spring total for the island. Daily autumn passage spanned the period 11th September-14th October. Moderate numbers at this time peaked at 52 on 13th September, 40 on 21st and 23rd, 45 on 28th September and 40 on 6th October. After the main passage 3 were seen on 17th October, 2 on 25th October, a ♂ from 10th-22nd November, with a second ♂ on 15th.

LINNET *Carduelis cannabina* In spring, one on 3rd-4th May, 2 on 5th and 1 on 6th. A flock of 37 on 7th was a record count. There were still 8 the next day. 2 on 10th increased to 11 on 11th, then down to one on 12th. 17 appeared on 13th. There were 4 on 15th, then 1 or 2 most days to 3rd June. In autumn, there were 2 on 6th September, and singles on 9th and 11th and 6 dates in October to 16th.

TWITE *Carduelis flavirostris* 1-3 present in January. Next noted in March, from 15th with peak of 11 on 17th. Daily arrivals from 3rd April reaching 86 on 18th. The spring peak, probably including a good number of migrants, was 225 on 7th May. Breeding population had a good breeding season with large numbers of juveniles in late summer. First fledged young seen on 6th July. Peak autumn flocks were 300 at the end of September and there were still 120 on 2nd November but departures accelerated from that date. 20 on 1st December but just a few for rest of month.



REDPOLL *Carduelis flammea* Another finch present in record numbers in spring, and seen on most days 7th May to 15th June. An unprecedented 20 arrived on 7th May, all those identified to race being Lesser. There were 2-4 during the next few days but a further arrival of 9 (including 4 Lesser and 3 Mealies) took place on 11th May. There were 1-2 on other days but 5 on 30th May. Both Lesser and Mealy Redpolls were noted throughout the spring, but Lessers made up the bulk of the migrants. A Lesser Redpoll on 11th-17th September was the first of the autumn. There was 1-6 daily 20th-24th September, including 5 Mealies on 21st. 1-2 were recorded regularly in October until 6 Mealies appeared on 19th. There were 8 Mealies on 21st and 10 on 23rd. 1-2 were noted on later dates to 10th November. No Lessers were seen in October but Greenland Redpolls were recorded on 17th, 25th-27th and 29th October.

ARCTIC REDPOLL *Carduelis hornemanni* A ♂, probably of the Greenland race *C.h.hornemanni*, spent 15th-17th October at Busta.

CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra* 2, an adult ♂ and a juvenile, on 20th July was the sole record.

SCARLET ROSEFINCH *Carpodacus erythrinus* In spring, there were singles on 20th-21st May, 23rd May-2nd June, 27th May-1st June, and 8th-9th June. In autumn there were 6 individuals, all in September. Their dates were 2nd, 2nd-3rd, 6th-9th, 11th-19th & 22nd.

LAPLAND BUNTING *Calcarius lapponicus* A ♂ on 4th May, 4 on 20th, 1 on 21st-22nd and 24th-25th, 2 on 26th May, a ♂, on 1st June and 2 on 4th June comprise the spring records. There were early singles in autumn on 7th, 10th and 17th September. Small numbers were noted regularly 22nd September-22nd October, maxima 6 on 22nd September, 15 on 9th October, 12 on 11th, and 13 on 13th October. 1-2 were seen on 4 dates 1st-6th November.

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis* 1-9 seen on 5 dates in January.

There were spring records from 14th March to 15th June. The species was recorded on 9 dates in March, maxima 22 on 20th, 16 on 21st and 12 on 27th; on 8 dates in April, maxima 8 on 29th-30th; on 11 dates in May, maximum 9 on 2nd; and, in June, 3 on 14th and 2 on 15th. Early singles on 11th-15th September were followed by larger numbers from 21st September when 15 arrived. There were 95 the next day and 250 by 28th. Numbers were maintained at a generally high level of 100+ throughout October with peaks of 400 on 5th and 600 on 31st. There were 500 on 1st November and still 110 on 7th. Numbers fell thereafter, though still 48 on 23rd November, 40 on 15th December and 28 on 23rd.

YELLOWHAMMER *Emberiza citrinella* A better than average spring passage started with one on 26th-28th March. There were 4 on 30th and 6 on 31st March. 1-3 were seen on 7 dates 1st-11th April. The next record was a single on 5th May, then 2 ♂♂ appeared on 20th May, one staying to 22nd and the other to 25th May. There was only one in autumn, present from 30th October-8th November.

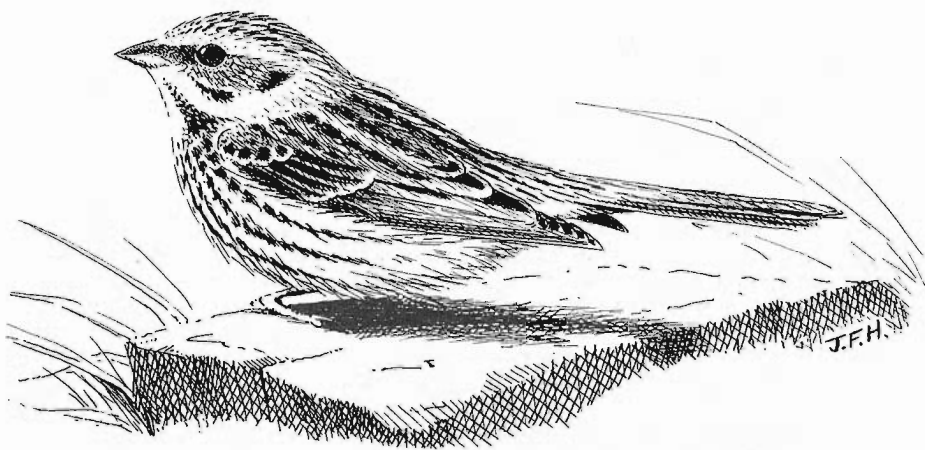
ORTOLAN BUNTING *Emberiza hortulana* There was just one spring record, a ♂ trapped on 11th May. In autumn there was one on 11th-14th September and perhaps the same bird on 17th, a new bird on 21st-24th September, and a further individual 30th September-4th October.

RUSTIC BUNTING *Emberiza rustica* A ♀ on 21st May and one on 10th—11th October were the only records.

LITTLE BUNTING *Emberiza pusilla* A ♂ was found singing quietly at Pund on 3rd May. All other birds were in October, with one on 4th-5th, 2 on 8th, 3 on 9th, 2 on 10th, 3 on 11th, and 1 from 12th to 16th — at least 5 individuals involved.

YELLOW-BREASTED BUNTING *Emberiza aureola* Three records: one on 2nd-3rd September, one on 7th-8th September, and one on 22nd-25th September.

REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus* The first spring bird was a ♂ on 19th March. There were almost daily records 27th March-13th April, 1-2 except 4 on 3rd April. The next wave of movement was 4th-27th May when noted daily. Passage was particularly heavy at this time with 20+ on all days 11th-18th and maxima of 38 on 13th, 40 on 15th and 17th, and 52 on 18th. One on 1st June. Autumn records 8th September-18th October, then more irregularly to last on 25th October. Autumn passage was poor with no day of more than 9 apart from 15 on 5th October.



PALLAS'S REED BUNTING *Emberiza pallasi* A first-year female, probably of the northern race *E.p. polaris*, trapped at Stoneybrake on 17th September was still there on 18th. The second British and Fair Isle record: the first was in 1976.

Ringling Details 1981

10,409 birds of 123 species were ringed during the year, exceeding the previous highest total for the isle by over two thousand, and partly as a result of an excellent seabird breeding season and a heavy September passage of passerines.

The montly ringling totals were:

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
—	6	385	320	367	1853	4419	1117	1161	567	213	—

A generally mild winter ensured that no major reconstruction work was required on the traps. However, almost all the traps received patching or replacement of wire-netting sections during the early part of the year and the forward part of the Vaadal trap roof was completely rewired. Damage during the season to a cross-spar of the Gully trap necessitated the insertion of a new beam as support to the roof. The traps proved their worth during the year, including the capture of 4 species of *Locustella* warbler, but a variety of other trapping methods was used successfully including single-shelf mist-nets, dazzling with torch, tape lure, rail traps and a walk-over technique using horizontal full-size net, the last procuring Great Snipe.

There was hardly a day during the summer when weather or other circumstances prevented us visiting the seabird colonies and this is reflected in the high seabird totals. Certain species were given priority and consequently rather small samples of gulls, particularly Kittiwakes, were ringed as their peak season for ringling coincided with that of Guillemots. On the credit side 20 *pulli* Gannets were ringed, the first time the colony had been visited.

The top ten species ringed were Guillemot 1,429, Fulmar 1,332, Starling 1,105, Shag 915, Storm Petrel 691, Blackbird 483, Puffin 480, Wheatear 401, Blackcap 382 and Rock Pipit 364. Guillemot is again in top position emphasising the importance placed on monitoring this species, an emphasis justified by the alarming increase in recoveries notified during the year.

The Guillemot total was a record, and there were record totals, too, for Fulmar, Gannet, Shag, Kestrel, Rock Pipit, Whinchat, Garden Warbler, Starling and Greenfinch. Common Tern and Bluethroat totals equalled the previous highest. On the debit side Wrens again fared poorly and the ringling total of 5 reflects their scarcity. A number of rarely trapped species were ringed including Slavonian Grebe, Pink-footed Goose 2, Greylag Goose 4, Wigeon 2, Tufted Duck, Arctic Tern, Short-eared Owl, Hoopoe, Sand Martin, Grey Wagtail 2, Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler, River Warbler, Melodious Warbler, Greenish Warbler, Golden Oriole, Rustic Bunting and Pallas's Reed Bunting. Great Snipe, Red-flanked Bluetail, Savi's Warbler and Firecrest were added to the ringling list. A full table of ringling totals and recoveries follows.

TABLE OF RINGING TOTALS AND RECOVERIES

	Ringed		1981		1948-81		Recovered	
	Juv/ Adult	Pull.	Total	Total	1981	1948-81	1981	1948-81
Little Grebe	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	—
Great Crested Grebe	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Red-necked Grebe	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Slavonian Grebe	1	—	1	3	—	—	—	—
Fulmar	102	1230	1332	9153	3	62	—	—
Storm Petrel	691	—	691	8232	27	200	—	—
Leach's Petrel	2	—	2	17	—	—	—	—
Gannet	3	20	23	53	—	1	—	—
Cormorant	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	—
Shag	54	861	915	12222	22	277	—	—
Grey Heron	1	—	1	13	1	2	—	—
Whooper Swan	1	—	1	28	—	4	—	—
Bean Goose	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Pink-footed Goose	2	—	2	6	—	1	—	—
White-fronted Goose	—	—	—	2	—	1	—	—
Greylag Goose	4	—	4	15	—	4	—	—
Barnacle Goose	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Shelduck	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Wigeon	2	—	2	12	—	—	—	—
Teal	3	—	3	36	—	2	—	—
Mallard	—	—	—	7	—	1	—	—
Pintail	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—
Pochard	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—
Ring-necked Duck	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Tufted Duck	1	—	1	9	—	—	—	—
Scaup	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—
Eider	2	—	2	83	—	2	—	—
Long-tailed Duck	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	—
Velvet Scoter	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—
Goldeneye	—	—	—	11	—	1	—	—
Red-breasted Merganser	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Goosander	—	—	—	3	—	1	—	—
Goshawk	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Sparrowhawk	7	—	7	135	—	14	—	—
Kestrel	3	—	3	33	—	5	—	—
Red-footed Falcon	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Merlin	4	—	4	161	—	12	—	—
Peregrine	—	—	—	6	—	1	—	—
Quail	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—
Water Rail	7	—	7	211	—	3	—	—
Spotted Crane	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	—
Little Crane	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—
Corncrake	—	—	—	34	—	2	—	—
Moorhen	3	—	3	69	—	3	—	—
Coot	—	—	—	12	—	1	—	—

	Juv/ Adult	Ringed		Recovered		
		Pull.	1981 Total	1948-81 Total	1981	1948-81
Great Bustard	—	—	—	1	—	—
Oystercatcher	20	31	51	972	2	50
Little Ringed Plover	—	—	—	1	—	—
Ringed Plover	5	4	9	349	—	3
Golden Plover	—	—	—	17	—	—
Dotterel	—	—	—	3	—	—
Lapwing	—	2	2	220	—	3
Knot	1	—	1	68	—	1
Sanderling	—	—	—	78	—	—
Western Sandpiper	—	—	—	1	—	—
Little Stint	1	—	1	64	—	—
Temminck's Stint	—	—	—	2	—	—
White-rumped Sandpiper	—	—	—	1	—	—
Pectoral Sandpiper	—	—	—	5	—	—
Curlew Sandpiper	—	—	—	4	—	—
Purple Sandpiper	—	—	—	138	—	1
Dunlin	20	—	20	416	—	6
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	—	—	—	1	—	—
Ruff	—	—	—	31	—	1
Jack Snipe	1	—	1	111	—	3
Snipe	13	—	13	270	—	4
Great Snipe	1	—	1	1	—	—
Woodcock	14	—	14	228	1	12
Black-tailed Godwit	—	—	—	1	—	—
Bar-tailed Godwit	—	—	—	8	—	2
Whimbrel	—	—	—	13	—	—
Curlew	—	4	4	46	—	2
Spotted Redshank	—	—	—	3	—	—
Redshank	5	—	5	209	—	2
Greenshank	—	—	—	7	—	—
Green Sandpiper	—	—	—	27	—	1
Wood Sandpiper	—	—	—	15	—	—
Common Sandpiper	1	—	1	39	—	—
Turnstone	—	—	—	63	—	—
Red-necked Phalarope	—	—	—	4	—	—
Grey Phalarope	—	—	—	3	—	—
Pomarine Skua	—	—	—	1	—	—
Arctic Skua	—	60	60	2607	—	56
Great Skua	—	39	39	528	—	11
Black-headed Gull	—	—	—	20	—	3
Common Gull	—	7	7	74	1	6
Lesser Black-backed Gull	8	59	67	1004	1	23
Herring Gull	7	163	170	2731	1	63
Iceland Gull	—	—	—	1	—	—
Glaucous Gull	—	—	—	27	—	1
Great Black-backed Gull	4	24	28	1523	4	70

	Juv/ Adult	Ringed		Recovered	
		Pull.	1981 Total	1948-81 Total	1981 1948-81
Kittiwake	4	216	220	2830	— 16
Common Tern	—	47	47	235	— 2
Arctic Tern	—	1	1	7	— 1
Guillemot	446	984	1429	8166	52 169
Razorbill	92	134	226	3003	9 68
Black Guillemot	2	6	8	1107	— 15
Little Auk	—	—	—	5	— —
Puffin	413	67	480	7924	— 21
Rock Dove	—	—	—	11	— 1
Woodpigeon	3	—	3	32	— 2
Collared Dove	4	—	4	120	— —
Turtle Dove	2	—	2	52	— 1
Cuckoo	5	—	5	75	— 1
Snowy Owl	—	—	—	1	— 1
Long-eared Owl	4	—	4	125	— 6
Short-eared Owl	1	—	1	10	— —
Nightjar	—	—	—	3	— —
Swift	—	—	—	15	— 1
Hoopoe	1	—	1	2	— —
Wryneck	7	—	7	150	— —
Great Spotted Woodpecker	—	—	—	18	— —
Short-toed Lark	—	—	—	5	— —
Woodlark	—	—	—	2	— —
Skylark	5	5	10	694	— 3
Shore Lark	—	—	—	3	— —
Sand Martin	1	—	1	8	— —
Swallow	8	—	8	217	— 8
House Martin	2	—	2	137	— 1
Richard's Pipit	—	—	—	9	— —
Tawny Pipit	—	—	—	2	— —
Olive-backed Pipit	—	—	—	4	— —
Tree Pipit	27	—	27	475	— —
Pechora Pipit	—	—	—	5	— —
Meadow Pipit	213	—	213	6977	1 42
Red-throated Pipit	—	—	—	5	— —
Rock Pipit	359	5	364	6786	— 21
Yellow Wagtail	—	—	—	10	— —
Citrine Wagtail	—	—	—	5	— 1
Grey Wagtail	2	—	2	15	— —
Pied Wagtail	11	—	11	429	— 4
Waxwing	1	—	1	34	— —
Dipper	—	—	—	8	— —
Wren	5	—	5	565	— —
Dunnock	47	—	47	1484	— 5
Robin	124	—	124	5027	1 29

	Juv/ Adult	Ringed		Recovered	
		Pull.	1981 Total	1948-81 Total	1981 1948-81
Thrush Nightingale	—	—	—	14	— —
Nightingale	—	—	—	17	— —
Siberian Rubythroat	—	—	—	1	— —
Bluethroat	12	—	12	167	— 2
Red-flanked Bluetail	1	—	1	1	— —
Black Redstart	2	—	2	87	— —
Redstart	56	—	56	1377	— 1
Whinchat	32	—	32	456	— 2
Stonechat	2	—	2	42	— —
Wheatear	401	—	401	12736	2 59
Black-eared Wheatear	—	—	—	3	— —
Rock Thrush	—	—	—	1	— —
Grey-cheeked Thrush	—	—	—	2	— —
White's Thrush	—	—	—	1	— —
Ring Ousel	13	—	13	336	— 6
Blackbird	483	—	483	155	8 272
Dusky Thrush	—	—	—	—	— —
Black-throated Thrush	—	—	—	—	— —
Fieldfare	13	—	13	554	— —
Song Thrush	64	—	64	1830	1 24
Redwing	145	—	145	5856	3 64
Mistle Thrush	—	—	—	18	— 1
Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler	1	—	1	3	— —
Lanceolated Warbler	—	—	—	12	— —
Grasshopper Warbler	4	—	4	73	— —
River Warbler	1	—	1	3	— —
Savi's Warbler	1	—	1	1	— —
Aquatic Warbler	—	—	—	20	— —
Sedge Warbler	12	—	12	280	— 2
Paddyfield Warbler	—	—	—	1	— —
Marsh Warbler	2	—	2	48	— —
Reed Warbler	10	—	10	125	— 1
Great Reed Warbler	—	—	—	4	— —
Thick-billed Warbler	—	—	—	1	— —
Booted Warbler	—	—	—	5	— —
Icterine Warbler	1	—	1	60	— —
Melodious Warbler	1	—	1	9	— —
Subalpine Warbler	—	—	—	17	— —
Sardinian Warbler	—	—	—	1	— —
Barred Warbler	6	—	6	294	— 1
Lesser Whitethroat	17	—	17	422	— —
Whitethroat	26	—	26	699	— —
Garden Warbler	247	—	247	2169	— 1
Blackcap	382	—	382	2845	2 9
Greenish Warbler	1	—	1	12	— —

	Juv/ Adult	Ringed		Recovered	
		Pull.	1981 Total	1948-81 Total	1981 1948-81
Arctic Warbler	—	—	—	24	— —
Yellow-browed Warbler	2	—	2	69	— —
Dusky Warbler	—	—	—	1	— —
Bonelli's Warbler	—	—	—	1	— —
Wood Warbler	3	—	3	68	— —
Chiffchaff	31	—	31	520	— —
Willow Warbler	111	—	111	2450	— 3
Goldcrest	25	—	25	1015	— 2
Firecrest	1	—	1	1	— —
Spotted Flycatcher	18	—	18	426	1 2
Red-breasted Flycatcher	2	—	2	39	— —
Pied Flycatcher	25	—	25	682	— 3
Blue Tit	—	—	—	2	— —
Great Tit	—	—	—	5	— —
Treecreeper	—	—	—	1	— —
Golden Oriole	1	—	1	4	— 1
Isabelline Shrike	—	—	—	1	— —
Red-backed Shrike	7	—	7	93	— —
Lesser Grey Shrike	—	—	—	6	— —
Great Grey Shrike	1	—	1	96	— 1
Woodchat Shrike	—	—	—	10	— —
Jackdaw	—	—	—	3	— —
Rook	—	—	—	4	— —
Hooded Crow	—	—	—	40	— —
Raven	—	—	—	17	— —
Starling	817	288	1105	14755	5 119
Rose-coloured Starling	—	—	—	2	— —
House Sparrow	53	—	53	1140	— 1
Tree Sparrow	4	—	4	92	— 1
Chaffinch	111	—	111	1641	2 8
Brambling	87	—	87	2018	1 9
Greenfinch	11	—	11	84	— —
Goldfinch	—	—	—	4	— —
Siskin	9	—	9	243	— 1
Linnet	1	—	1	102	— 1
Twite	90	—	90	3700	— 3
Redpoll	3	—	3	482	— 1
Arctic Redpoll	—	—	—	6	— —
Crossbill	—	—	—	290	— 2
Parrot Crossbill	—	—	—	35	— —
Scarlet Rosefinch	3	—	3	64	— —
Bullfinch	—	—	—	27	— —
Hawfinch	—	—	—	3	— —
Tennessee Warbler	—	—	—	2	— —
White-crowned Sparrow	—	—	—	1	— —
White-throated Sparrow	—	—	—	2	— —
Song Sparrow	—	—	—	2	— —

	Juv/ Adult	Ringed		Recovered	
		Pull.	1981 Total	1948-81 Total	1981 1948-81
Lapland Bunting	—	—	—	37	— —
Snow Bunting	2	—	2	499	— 3
Pine Bunting	—	—	—	1	— —
Yellowhammer	2	—	2	41	— —
Ortolan Bunting	1	—	1	18	— —
Cretzschmar's Bunting	—	—	—	1	— —
Yellow-browed Bunting	—	—	—	1	— —
Rustic Bunting	1	—	1	10	— 1
Little Bunting	1	—	1	18	— —
Yellow-breasted Bunting	—	—	—	6	— —
Reed Bunting	9	—	9	282	— 2
Pallas's Reed Bunting	1	—	1	2	— —
Black-headed Bunting	—	—	—	2	— —
Corn Bunting	—	—	—	3	— —
Red-headed Bunting	—	—	—	5	— —
TOTALS	6152	4257	10409	166794	151 1921

Recoveries

A total of 151 recoveries were reported during the year, the more interesting ones are given in full below. Storm Petrel and Shag reports are given in tabular form, Guillemot and Razorbill recoveries are summarised elsewhere. The international code of symbols for method of recovery and age of ringing are used:

- v —caught or trapped by man and released with ring
- +
- shot or killed by man
- x —found dead or dying

Age codes:

- 1 pullus or nestling
- 2 fully grown exact age unknown
- 3 hatched in current calendar year
- 4 hatched before current calendar year exact year unknown
- 5 hatched in previous calendar year
- 6 hatched before previous calendar year exact year unknown
- 7 hatched 2 years before ringing
- 8 hatched 3 or more years before ringing

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

FULMAR

- FS14751 1 16.08.71 *Heads o' Dutfield, Fair Isle*
- x 16.07.80 Off Utsira, Rogaland, NORWAY
- 59°25'N 4°20'E 36 km E. caught
- in fishing net
- FS46521 1 29.07.72 *Finniequoy, Fair Isle*
- x 09.06.81 Strathleven Bay, Stonehaven,
- Grampian Region, SCOTLAND
- 56°57'N 2°11'W 289 km S. found
- dead on beach

FS70349 1 31.07.74 *Furse, Fair Isle*
 x 08.07.81 Schleswig-Holstein, F.R. GERMANY
 54°18'N 8°36'E 849 km SE

Many Fulmars do not start breeding before 8 to 10 years of age and these three summer recoveries demonstrate the North Sea wanderings of non-breeders.

STORM PETREL

Recoveries and controls of this species were as follows:

			Ringed on Fair Isle	Controlled on Fair Isle
Fetlar (Shetland)			3	
Foula (Shetland)			2	2
Lerwick (Shetland)			7	3
Whalsay (Shetland)			1	2
Yell (Shetland)			9	10
Auskery (Orkney)				1
North Ronaldsay (Orkney)			1	2
Papa Westray (Orkney)			1	
Sule Skerry (Orkney)				1
Summer Isles (Highland)				1
Shiant (Western Isles)			1	
St Kilda (Western Isles)			2	2
Sanda Island (Strathclyde)				5

SHAG

There were 22 recoveries away from Fair Isle, all of first-year birds. 14 were reported from Orkney, 6 from Shetland and one each from Caithness and Sutherland.

OYSTERCATCHER

FS46644 7 29.03.73 *Dazzled on Buness, Fair Isle*
 v 07.12.80 Bangor, Gwynedd, WALES
 53°14'N 4°03'W 716 km SSW
 FS70927 1 20.06.76 *South Park, Fair Isle*
 v 25.09.80 Thornham, Norfolk, ENGLAND
 52°58'N 0°35'E 742 km S

WOODCOCK

EH40815 2 31.10.77 *Fair Isle*
 + 03.01.81 Dromore, Down, N. IRELAND
 54°25'N 6°09'W 631 km SSW

COMMON GULL

EH67970 1 13.07.81 *Fair Isle*
 x 07.11.81 Roe Estuary, Londonderry,
 N. IRELAND 55°06'N 7°00'W
 589 km SSW

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL

GK47191	1	15.07.77	<i>Goorn, Fair Isle</i>
x		28.08.81	Chalford, Gloucestershire, ENGLAND 51°45'N 2°09'W 865 km S found in poor condition on canal bank

HERRING GULL

GK93877	1	11.07.79	<i>Sheep Rock, Fair Isle</i>
x		12.07.80	Dunnet Bay, Thurso, Highland, SCOTLAND 58°36'N 3°23'W 145 km SW

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL

HW08209	8	15.11.69	<i>Dazzled on South Gavel, Fair Isle,</i>
v		25.07.79	Kharlov Island, Murmansk, USSR 68°49'N 37°20'E 2131 km ENE (re-ringed Moscow D779668)
HW08182	8	15.11.69	<i>Dazzled on South Gavel, Fair Isle,</i>
x		07.07.80	Gamvik, Finnmark, NORWAY 71°05'N 28°10'E 1868 km NE
HW26070	1	15.07.74	<i>Sheep Rock, Fair Isle</i>
x		16.07.81	Dunnet, Thurso, Highland, SCOTLAND 58°36'N 3°21'W 143 km SW
HW68768	1	12.07.80	<i>Sheep Rock, Fair Isle</i>
x		29.05.81	Coquet Island, Amble, Northumberland, ENGLAND 55°20'N 1°32'W 467 km S

HW08209 and HW08182 were ringed on the same night and both were recovered in July north of the Arctic Circle, demonstrating the northern origins of at least a proportion of the Fair Isle winter population.

MEADOW PIPIT

A188434	4	23.04.79	<i>Fair Isle</i>
x		15.11.80	Campo Lameiro, Ponteveda, SPAIN 42°33'N 8°32'W 1946 km SSW

ROBIN

B189594	3	09.10.81	<i>Fair Isle</i>
x		01.12.81	Evie, Mainland Orkney, SCOTLAND 59°04'N 3°03'W 96 km WSW

WHEATEAR

NH17726	4 ♂	31.08.81	<i>Fair Isle</i>
x		(28.09.81)	Oved Zem, MOROCCO 32°53'N 6°33'W 2984 km S
NA75392	3	06.08.78	<i>Fair Isle</i>
x		08.03.81	Near Safi, MOROCCO 32°20'N 9°17'W 3076 km S

Two recoveries from Morocco indicating passage through that country at both seasons. No precise finding date was given for NH17726 so the date of the letter is given and placed in parentheses. Nevertheless it is still clear that movement south by this adult ♂ was rapid.

BLACKBIRD

XB01334	4 ♂	24.10.75	<i>Fair Isle</i>
x		20.03.81	Drybridge, Buckie, Grampian, SCOTLAND 57°39'N 2°57'W 223 km SSW
XE08536	3 ♂	10.11.78	<i>Fair Isle</i>
v		15.01.81	Aberdeen, Grampian, SCOTLAND 57°10'N 2°04'W 264 km S
XH31115	6 ♂	16.04.79	<i>Fair Isle</i>
v		18.04.81	Meisingset, More og Romsdal, NORWAY 62°51'N 8°18'E 646 km NE
XH31482	5 ♂	27.03.80	<i>Fair Isle</i>
x		15.04.81	Kolvra Karup, Jylland, DENMARK 56°18'N 9°08'E 729 km SE
XH32378	5 ♂	29.03.81	<i>Fair Isle</i>
x		27.10.81	Oksbol, Jylland, DENMARK 55°02'N 9°46'E 846 km SE hit window
XH32439	5 ♀	21.06.81	<i>Fair Isle</i>
v		22.09.81	Strand, Mainland Shetland, SCOTLAND 60°11'N 1°13'W 76 km NNE
XJ61429	5 ♂	26.03.81	<i>Fair Isle</i>
v		06.04.81	Strand, Mainland Shetland, SCOTLAND

SONG THRUSH

NX55651	2	07.10.81	<i>Fair Isle</i>
+		15.11.81	Escalonilla, Toledo, SPAIN 39°55'N 4°21'W 2188 km S

A rapid, distant recovery

REDWING

NX37587	4	10.04.78	<i>Fair Isle</i>
x		11.05.79	Laugar, Reykdaelahreppur, ICELAND 65°43'N 17°21'W 1055 km NW

NX37952	4	15.10.79	<i>Fair Isle</i>
+		29.01.81	Cayeux, Somme, FRANCE
			50°11'N 1°29'E
			1057 km S

NX55350	2	04.10.80	<i>Fair Isle</i>
		12.12.80	Panjas Gers, FRANCE
			43°49'N 0°05'W
			1749 km S

NX37587 was recognised at the time of ringing as a member of the Icelandic race *T.i.coburni*.

BLACKCAP

A753054	3 ♂	25.09.80	<i>Fair Isle</i>
v		27.09.80	North Ronaldsay, Orkney,
			SCOTLAND 59°22'N 2°26'W
			50 km WSW

B189525	3 ♂	07.10.81	<i>Fair Isle</i>
v		05.12.81	Furness Abbey, Barrow-in-Furness,
			Cumbria, ENGLAND 54°08'N
			3°12'W 608 km S

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER

B056932	3	13.09.81	<i>Fair Isle</i>
v		19.09.81	North Ronaldsay, Orkney

STARLING

XC90109	4 ♀	07.04.78	<i>Fair Isle</i>
x		03.04.81	Saebovik Hordaland, NORWAY.
			59°48'N 5°43'E 413 km E
			electrocuted hitting power lines

XC90111	4 ♀	12.04.78	<i>Fair Isle</i>
v		03.02.81	South Whiteness, Shetland,
			SCOTLAND 60°11'N 1°17'W
			75 km NNE

XE08388	3 ♂	27.09.78	<i>Fair Isle</i>
x		06.06.81	Sanday, Orkney, SCOTLAND
			59°15'N 2°30'W 59 km WSW

XE08452	2 ♂	30.09.78	<i>Fair Isle</i>
v		16.01.81	Aberdeen, Grampian, SCOTLAND
			57°10'N 2°04'W 264 km S

XJ61171	6 ♂	21.03.81	<i>Fair Isle</i>
x		14.05.81	Horneland, Stord, NORWAY
			59°45'N 5°28'E 398 km E
			killed by cat

CHAFFINCH

A753246	3 ♂	30.09.80	<i>Fair Isle</i>
v		13.12.81	Chillington, Staffordshire,
			ENGLAND 52°39'N 2°13'W
			766 km S

B003562	4 ♀	15.04.81	<i>Fair Isle</i>
x		22.04.81	Heligoland, F.R.GERMANY
			54°11'N 7°55'E 829 km SE

BRAMBLING			
B189541	3 ♂	10.10.81	<i>Fair Isle</i>
x		21.10.81	Schalkhaar, Overijssel,
			NETHERLANDS 52°16'N 6°12'E
			942 km SSE road casualty

CONTROLS

FULMAR			
SS74125	1	16.07.69	<i>Foula, Shetland 60°08'N 2°05'W</i>
v	♀	23.05.81	Fair Isle. 72 km SSE
			(re-ringed FV73613)
FV68918	1	25.07.78	<i>Uynarey, Yell Sound, Shetland</i>
v		16.07.81	<i>60°31'N 1°12'W Fair Isle.</i>
			112 km SSW (re-ringed FV73638)

Two very interesting controls. SS74125 was holding a breeding site at Gilsetter; FV68918 was a non-breeder visiting the island.

CORMORANT			
5099203	1	28.06.80	<i>Clett Stack, West Mainland,</i>
			<i>Shetland 60°09'N 1°28'W</i>
x		15.01.81	Fair Isle. 69 km S

SHAG			
1133704	1	07.07.80	<i>Foula, Shetland</i>
x		03.07.81	Fair Isle. 72 km SSE
1136124	1	28.06.81	<i>Sumburgh, Shetland</i>
			<i>59°51'N 1°16'W</i>
x		21.09.81	Fair Isle. 40 km SSW

GREY HERON			
Stavanger			
236729	1	01.06.80	<i>Selvag Ulstein, More og</i>
	♀	30.09.80	<i>Romsdal, NORWAY 62°15'N 5°52'E</i>
x	3		Fair Isle, 504 km SW

MERLIN

Single Merlins ringed as *pulli* on Central Mainland and Fetlar (both Shetland) were controlled on Fair Isle in the autumn, the Mainland bird staying from at least 26th August to 14th October, and the Fetlar bird being trapped on the very late date of 19th November.

ARCTIC SKUA			
ED59235	1	13.07.74	<i>Hermaness, Unst, Shetland</i>
			<i>60°51'N 0°53'W</i>
x		18.05.81	Fair Isle, 152 km SSW

GREAT SKUA

A bird ringed as a *pullus* on Foula, Shetland, on 14.07.65 and controlled on Fair Isle in 1974 and 1975 was found dead on 20.06.81 at Homisdale, Fair Isle. Another ringed as a *pullus* on Foula in 1966 and controlled twice at the nest on Fair Isle in 1974 and 1976 was found long dead (probably about a year) on Fair Isle in 1981.

HERRING GULL

Two colour-ringed birds seen on the airstrip on 05.08.81 were ringed at Coxhoe, Durham, on 30.01.79 as adult ♀♀.

SWALLOW

Stavanger				
9550997	3 ♂	14.08.80	<i>Ratvikvatnet, More og</i>	
			<i>Romsdal, NORWAY</i>	62°28'N
x		20.05.81	6°17'E	Fair Isle. 536 km SW

DUNNOCK

Stavanger				
9458895	4	31.08.80	<i>Vranes Rondesund,</i>	
			<i>Kristiansund Rogaland, NORWAY</i>	58°07'N 6°17'E
v		05.05.81	Fair Isle.	50 km ENE

ROBIN

A810978	3	09.10.81	<i>North Ronaldsay, Orkney</i>	
v		16.10.81	Fair Isle.	49 km ENE

BLACKBIRD

Stavanger				
7132799	3 ♂	05.11.77	<i>Grinstadvatn, More og</i>	
			<i>Romsdal, NORWAY</i>	62°22'N
			6°00'E	
v		22.03.81	Fair Isle	517 km SW
CS16724	3 ♂	26.10.78	<i>Gibraltar Point, Lincolnshire,</i>	
			<i>ENGLAND</i>	53°06'N 0°20'E
v		30.03.81	Fair Isle.	725 km N
XH09974	3 ♂	24.11.79	<i>Gibraltar Point, Lincolnshire</i>	
v		04.04.81	Fair Isle	

BLACKCAP

A810788	2 ♀	21.09.81	<i>North Ronaldsay, Orkney</i>	
v	3	24.09.81	Fair Isle	

CHAFFINCH

Heligoland				
9G72159	5 ♂	28.01.81	<i>Heligoland, F.R. GERMANY</i>	
		29.03.81	54°11'N 7°55'E	
v		29.03.81	Fair Isle	829 km NW
A313431	3 ♂	23.12.78	<i>Dronfield S.F., Derbyshire,</i>	
			<i>ENGLAND</i>	53°18'N 7°55'E
v		07.04.81	Fair Isle,	693 km N

BRAMBLING

8032003	5♂	26.01.81	Queenamidda, Rendal, Orkney
v		30.03.81	59°04'N 3°06'W
v		30.03.81	Fair Isle 99km ENE

RETRAPS

The following is a selection of more interesting retraps and local recoveries obtained in 1981:

SHAG

Two Shags ringed as *pulli* at Lericum in 1963 and 1964 respectively were retrapped there as breeding ♂♂ in June.

OYSTERCATCHER

One found dead on 18th May had been ringed as a *pullus* in 1968 and had thus lived 13 years.

ARCTIC SKUA

A bird ringed as a juvenile in 1964 was found injured and had to be destroyed in July, aged 17 years.

AUKS

The oldest retraps were single Guillemot and Razorbill ringed as adults in 1966 and at least 17 years old, while a series of Puffin captures included 3 ringed as *pulli* in 1961, thus 20 years old, and an adult ringed that year which was at least 22 years of age. In all cases the auks were retrapped in their colony of ringing.

STARLING

The oldest report in 1981 was of a 1970 juvenile killed by a cat just short of 11 years old. The most interesting retrap involved a female ringed as a juvenile in 1978 and retrapped on its nest at North Light in May for it had previously been controlled in North Ronaldsay, Orkney, on 31st March 1979.

TWITE

The oldest Twite was a juvenile ringed on 14.08.76 and retrapped as an adult female on 24th August 1981—5 years old.

Red-flanked Bluetail— A new bird for Fair Isle

It fell to the lot of Pete Milburn on 29th September to find this real charmer. A breathless phone call brought me first news of it. My first task was to round up the visitors, a task simplified by the fact that most were trudging northwards towards an imminent lunch. Many of them

had long faces because having set out hopefully in the face of a promising SE wind they had failed to find a rarity. How quickly three words can change the mood of a person, especially when these words are Red-flanked Bluetail!

The mood of the gathering turned again to despondency when we found Pete Milburn leaning on a post near the Haa. "It was here a minute ago" he said. Twenty birdwatchers fanned out from the spot where the bird had last been seen. I struck out towards Busta and had been walking for little more than a minute when, with a flash of blue then bright orange, a small robin-like bird shot up from the grass and perched on a fence not 20 metres from me. My first problem was how to attract people's attentions without scaring the bird away. Luckily most observers had been birdwatcher-watching and my frozen pose and gentle gesticulations were enough to summon the others.

My caution seemed misplaced for, as everyone settled down to watch the bird, it proceeded to hop about like a wrongly coloured backyard Robin, bold as can be, frequently leaving short grass areas to perch on fencewire or posts. At times it hopped to within feet of the observers displaying its best features to watchers and photographers alike.

Immediately obvious as it flew was the cobalt blue flash of the tail. The blue was still evident but more subdued when it perched. Other obvious features were the large ovoid area of orange on the flanks—similar in colour to the underparts of a very colourful ♂ Redstart—the white eyering, and the buff of the chin, triangular in shape and clearly demarcated by the grey-brown sides to the chin. The upperparts were grey-brown, a shade greyer than in Robin, the coverts were blue and the flight feathers smartly edged chestnut. The underparts were smudgy buff-white the breast washed greyish, quite strongly and darkly on its sides.

For those who did not photograph it in the field the opportunity came during the ringing process, as the bird was trapped. The Red-flanked Bluetail breeds from Eastern Fennoscandia eastwards across Russia. This was the first record of the species for Fair Isle.

Daurian Red-tailed Shrike— A distinctive race of the Isabelline Shrike

An Isabelline Shrike, gorily dismantling a Blackcap at Shirva on 9th October, gave us an unequalled opportunity to investigate its race for, though the majority of records in Britain refer to juveniles, this was an adult ♂

This bird was structurally quite distinct. Its tail was thinner than that of Red-backed Shrike, making the tail look proportionately longer. There was probably little difference in size compared with Red-backed Shrike but this individual had an extremely chunky head and deep bill. This, coupled with its narrow long tail, seemed to shift the emphasis to one end making it less evenly proportioned than Red-backed Shrike.

The mantle and back were a uniform palish grey-brown with little

hint of sandy tones. The tail was redstart-red with no white outers. The central pair were darker and all the tail feathers darkened towards the tip to give a dark subterminal area, too diffuse to call a bar, which was wider in the centre. The crown and nape were uniform in colour with the mantle and back. The uniformity was interrupted only by the forehead which at close quarters appeared rusty brown. A thick black (adult ♂ Wheatear-type) mask ran from the base of the bill through the eye to the ear coverts. Above this was a whitish supercilium, pencil-thin before the eye but broadening behind it as an acute triangle of white. The underparts were salmon-buff washed richer on the lower flanks. The wing-coverts were concolorous with the back, the flight feathers being dark brown with buff-white edgings to the tertials. Broad buff-white visible bases to the primaries created a wide band of whitish across the closed wing beyond the primary coverts. In flight this band was even broader and more evident and was very reminiscent in flight of the wing-band shown by Great Grey Shrike. It was certainly as broad but somewhat shorter.

With such diagnostic features there was little problem in identifying the bird as an Isabelline Shrike and equally the facial pattern demonstrated that it was an adult ♂. But of which race?

The Red-tailed/Red-backed Shrike complex of races and species still awaits total clarification and indeed Dementiev and Gladkov's *Birds of the Soviet Union* still considered all forms as races of the Red-backed Shrike. However, it did provide a synopsis of each race including three races which together now comprise the Isabelline or Red-tailed species of Shrike, *Lanius isabellinus*. The nominate race is the palest and sandiest. In our individual the general tone of the upperparts, the dark towards the tip of the tail and the marked extent of the whitish primary bar would all appear to rule out *L.i.isabellinus*. The other commonly recognised race *L.i.phoenicuroides* was a far better candidate for our bird but one of the features of this race is the marked contrast between the grey-brown back and the rusty tinge to the crown. There was no contrast in our bird other than on the forehead. One other race was mentioned by Dementiev and Gladkov: the Daurian Red-tailed Shrike *L.i.speculigerus*. The features mentioned for this race matched closely those of our bird and in its favour too were the "wing with conspicuous speculum", "lores fused with subocular stripe and auriculars into black belt" (Dementiev & Gladkov) and "less white more creamy below" (from Vaurie's *Birds of the Palearctic Fauna*).

The most likely candidature for the Fair Isle bird seemed, thus, to be Daurian Red-tailed Shrike. The only way to confirm this was to look at skins. This I did in December at the British Museum. Here was clear evidence of the confused racial and specific status of this group for not only were they all labelled Red-backed Shrike but the Daurian Red-tailed Shrikes had been lumped with *L.i.phoenicuroides* and their skins scattered in drawers of the latter. However, it quickly became clear that amongst the adult males two distinct groups emerged: individuals with paler underparts and rusty head contrasting with grey-brown mantle/back formed one group and birds with richer creamy salmon

underparts and non-contrasting head the other. Skins of this second group, which could easily be picked out of the cabinet on underpart features, showed characters consistent with the Fair Isle bird. Other features they shared were a rusty forehead and a massive white speculum. The black mask was no different in extent, shape or colour from birds of the other group, but the heavier deeper bill may be a feature.

Only one of this second group was labelled *L.i.speculigerus*, others being called *L.cristatus isabellinus*. There was, however, enough evidence in the British Museum skin collection to support the identity of the race *L.i.speculigerus* as described in the *Birds of the Soviet Union*. The Fair Isle individual showed all the characters of this race and appears to be the first Daurian Red-tailed Shrike recorded in Britain. It is distributed to the north of the other Isabelline Shrike races, breeding in Mongolia.

A bad year for Guillemots and Razorbills

52 Guillemots were recovered away from Fair Isle in 1981. The bald fact taken in isolation means very little. However, the grand total in over 30 years up to 1980 at Fair Isle, including nearly 20 years of systematic Guillemot ringing, was a mere 119 recoveries. Thus in one year the grand total was increased by 50%. Fair Isle Razorbills fared rather better. 9 recoveries compares with 59 up to 1980.

The commonest form of Fair Isle Guillemot mortality as reported on recovery slips is not normally 'oiling'. Shooting, particularly off Norway, drowning in fishing nets and 'found dead' with no further details given, all figure largely in Guillemot recoveries. Not so in 1981, however. 46% fell to oil during the year, the next highest category being 'found dead'—which does not necessarily rule out oiling—at 20%. The main oiling black spot was the Skaggerak where nearly half our oiled birds were found. 7 came to grief on the Netherlands coast and wherever Fair Isle Guillemots were it seemed that they ran the risk of oil. Oiled birds were reported from Orkney, the east coast of Britain and the Channel coasts of England and France. No Fair Isle Razorbills were reported from the Skaggerak but individuals were oil victims on the coasts of Northumberland and northern France (2).

The Skaggerak disaster mainly encompassed the months December 1980 and January 1981 and most other recoveries came in then and in the next two months. Our usual breeding season census work took on a new importance during the summer. However, we found that there was no decrease in numbers present at the colonies. This came as no surprise for all but two of the 51 recoveries of birds of known age involved pre-breeders. Guillemots do not enter the breeding population before 4 to 6 years of age. 36 of the recoveries (72%) were in their first year and a further 10 (20%) in their second.

The Skaggerak oil incident accounted for Guillemots from a wide area of northern Britain. The general pattern was the same throughout; mortality largely confined to birds in the first two years of life. A computer prediction based on these recoveries suggests a 5% decrease in the Guillemot population (CJ Mead in litt.). However, this decrease will not be realised until the age groups concerned are ready to join the breeding population, and this will not be until about 1985. Thus we must wait at least four years to see what effect the series of oilings reported in 1981 will have. Whatever the outcome, the wide spread of oiling incidents cannot be viewed with anything but disquiet. Guillemot and Razorbill populations can survive isolated incidents but if birds are continuously at risk wherever they are in the North Sea and English Channel the long-term effect on Fair Isle's populations could be severe.

Fair Isle Seawatch Project 1981

by Chester Rowley

During the autumn of 1981 a regular morning seawatch was undertaken from NE Bunness. Seabird species were counted, recorded as moving north or south and where possible aged as adult or immature. Other details such as weather and sea conditions were taken for each watch. In an attempt to standardise collection of the above data, watches began one hour after sunrise and continued for 100 minutes. In addition observers were limited to three, all scanning with 10 x 40 binoculars. What follows is a brief account of some of the findings.

Over the whole watching period (14th August to 28th October) 148,398 seabirds were recorded. Of this total 118,753 (80%) were Fulmars, and because of their abundance their numbers were estimated by a variety of methods, so the accuracy of Fulmar data is poorer than for other species. Of the remaining 29,645 seabirds observed, 17,074 (58%) were moving North, and 12,571 (42%) South. By dividing the watch period into five the following table results:

Dates	14th—28th August	29th August— 12 September	13th—27th September
Period	1	2	3
N	5548(69%)	1836(58%)	1656(47%)
S	2449(31%)	1326(42%)	1877(53%)
Total	7997	3162	3533

Dates	28th September 12th October	13th—28th October
Period	4	5
N	3908(63%)	4126(47%)
S	2286(37%)	4633(53%)
Total	6194	8759

Total number of seabirds (excluding Fulmar) recorded moving North or South during 5 periods.

The table demonstrates changes in dominance of Northerly or Southerly movement over the 5 periods. The relative scarcity of seabirds off Fair Isle during periods 2 and 3 can also be seen—probably relating to dispersal of birds away from breeding colonies.

25 seabird species were recorded including Pomarine Skua, Glaucous Gull and Little Auk. Excluding Fulmar, Shag was the most recorded species followed by Kittiwake, Razorbill/Guillemot, and Gannet—see following table:

Period	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Shag	2175	1106	1033	1363	2329	8006
Kittiwake	1502	316	952	2306	2549	7625
Razorbill/Guillemot	23	136	274	1598	3064	5095
Gannet	1761	956	855	497	170	4239
Great Skua	480	206	106	55	11	858
Red-throated Diver	2	1	14	5	5	27

Table showing total number for selected species moving both N and S in each of the 5 periods.

Changes in abundance of the selected species over the 5 periods can clearly be seen. In addition, as might be expected, all species did not show the same patterns of North and South movement:

Period		1	2	3	4	5
Kittiwake	N	1126	204	433	1615	1201
	S	376	112	519	691	1348
Razorbill/ Guillemot	N	16	42	55	1281	1722
	S	7	94	219	317	1342
Gannet	N	1311	592	530	291	130
	S	450	364	325	206	40
Great Skua	N	308	90	50	25	3
	S	172	116	56	30	8

The above represents only a sample of the findings. It is clear, however, that various patterns have emerged, for example Gannets moving mainly North throughout the autumn (see table). Other factors revealed include the timing of departures for species such as Puffin where over 99% (1172) were recorded in the first period, and a suggestion of movement by Black Guillemots in period 5, the only period in which birds were seen flying far out at sea. No attempt will be made here to attribute reasons to patterns of movement, but it is worth noting the complications which remain. These include the difficulty of making standardised counts, distinguishing local from long distance movements and the unknown movements at other times of day. Much is therefore still to be clarified and amplified and it is hoped that further watching will be undertaken from Fair Isle.

TREASURER'S REPORT

This year Nick Riddiford took over as Warden from Iain Robertson, and I should like to thank both Nick and his wife Elizabeth, for making such a good start in a difficult economic climate. Although the Accounts show a small loss for the year, we are in process of recovering a sum in excess of that loss from a firm of Contractors with whom we have been in dispute. The final amount recovered will appear in next year's Account.

I have the following comments to make on this year's results.

I. *Revenue Account*

i *Income* The figure for *Board* includes over £1,400 paid by Contractors working on the Island, and no less than £350 in forfeited deposits, which is a direct reflection of the difficulties facing us. *Subscriptions* were up slightly but *Donations* down by a similar amount. *Income from the Endowment Fund* was down as a result of expenses incurred in transferring management of the fund from the Bank to Messrs. J. & F. Anderson. The Bank Charges were regarded as too high for the work involved. The income for next year should be around £500. *Interest received* has dropped slightly, mainly due to capital expenditure on new Garage, etc.

ii *Expenditure* As was only to be expected, every single item of expenditure has increased, the sum total being nearly £3,000, in spite of our not providing for further extraordinary expenditure. I would mention that *provisions*, although up by £700, represented 26% of Board as against 27% last year. *Repairs and Renewals*. These included roof repairs costing £750, and expenditure on a mains water connection and fire extinguishers. Otherwise I have no comment except to deplore inflation.

II. *Capital Account*

A further sum was received from Richard Richardson's Executry, along with Grants from the Highland and Islands Development Board and Shetland Islands Council, representing 50% of the cost of our new Garage and Tank House.

III. *Balance Sheet*

This remains satisfactory. We have not written down the Hostel Buildings or the new Garage and Tank House under *Fixed Assets*. The important figure is shown under *Net Current Assets* at £14,510, an increase on last year of some £1,500.

IV. *Endowment Fund*

No further comment. I have already referred to the change in management which accounts for the increase in *Management fees and Outlays*.

V. *John Harrison Memorial Fund*

The Fund provided Grants ranging from £50 to £75 in 1981 to enable ten young people to visit Fair Isle. We would strongly encourage you to support this Fund, and so assist us to be able to award more Grants in the future.

In general, I feel that we have come through a difficult year with success, and I can only hope that the financial climate improves, and wish Nick and Elizabeth all the best for the future.

FAIR ISLE BIRD OBSERVATORY TRUST

ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 31st OCTOBER, 1981

REVENUE ACCOUNT

INCOME		
<u>1980</u>		<u>1981</u>
£16,945	Board.....	£20,130
500	Grant N.T.S.	550
456	Fair Isle Endowment Trust	397
1,582	Subscriptions and Donations	1,594
267	Tax Recovered from Deeds of Covenant	266
434	Sale of Publications.....	375
2,136	Interest Received.....	1,834
127	Bird Rings Recovered.....	230
<u>£22,447</u>		<u>£25,376</u>

EXPENDITURE		
£4,519	Provisions.....	£5,203
4,768	Wages and National Insurance	5,379
1,209	Insurance and Water Rates	1,542
2,593	Heat and Light.....	3,221
1,398	Repairs and Renewals	2,357
1,643	Telephone, Postages and Stationery	2,088
725	Printing Annual Report	871
1,354	Travelling Expenses.....	1,486
504	Motor Boat Expenses	896
159	Freight Inward.....	186
298	Bird Rings and Nets	468
701	Administration Expenses.....	736
154	Audit and Legal Charges.....	112
1,500	Provision for Extraordinary Expenditure.....	—
859	Depreciation on Machinery and Equipment.....	1,108
63	Suplus/(Deficit) for year.....	(277)
<u>£22,447</u>		<u>£25,376</u>

CAPITAL ACCOUNT

£67,411	Balance at 31st October, 1980.....	£77,650
496	Richard Richardson Executry	414
2,188	Other Receipts	—
3,079	Donations	173
4,269	Transfer from Extraordinary Expenditure	
	Provision to meet expenditure on	
	New Garage	1,500
144	Grants Received re New Garage	6,325
63	Surplus/(Deficit) for year	(277)
<u>£77,650</u>		<u>£85,785</u>

FAIR ISLE BIRD OBSERVATORY TRUST

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st OCTOBER, 1981

FIXED ASSETS

<u>1980</u>		<i>Cost or Val.</i>	<i>Deprec. to date</i>	<i>Net book Value</i>
<u>£51,548</u>	Hostel Buildings	<u>£51,548</u>	<u>£ —</u>	<u>£51,548</u>
6,203	Garage and Tank House	10,948	—	10,948
1,898	Machinery and Equipment	6,618	2,422	4,196
1,500	Land Rover	2,430	1,430	1,000
<u>£61,149</u>		<u>£71,544</u>	<u>£3,852</u>	<u>67,692</u>

INVESTMENTS

£2,582	£2,642 8½% Treasury Stock 1980/82 (Market Value £2,596)	£2,582	
1,000	£1,000 14½% Falkirk D.C. Mortgage 1983	1,000	
<u>3,582</u>			<u>3,582</u>

CURRENT ASSETS

£1,564	Stocks	£2,409
140	Sundry Debtors	548
14,200	Temporary Deposits	14,480
1,258	Bank and Cash	1,848
<u>£17,162</u>		<u>£19,285</u>

CURRENT LIABILITIES

£2,100	Sundry Creditors	£3,843
1,500	Provision for Extraordinary Expenditure	—
643	Special Funds	931
<u>£4,243</u>		<u>4,774</u>

<u>£12,919</u>	NET CURRENT ASSETS	<u>14,511</u>
<u>£77,650</u>		<u>£85,785</u>

represented by

<u>£77,650</u>	CAPITAL ACCOUNT	<u>£85,785</u>
----------------	------------------------	----------------

- Notes:**
1. No depreciation has been provided on the Hostel.
 2. Included in creditors is an amount of £239.20 which relates to a non returnable deposit of a contract for accommodation which was cancelled during the year. The Trustees are suing for a further £750 plus expenses. The outcome of the case is as yet uncertain but all costs relating to it have been fully written off in the year in question. No credit has been taken for the non returnable deposit which is being carried forward.

In our opinion the above accounts are correctly stated in accordance with the books and records submitted to us.

COOPERS & LYBRAND
Chartered Accountants

Edinburgh, 5th February 1982.

FAIR ISLE ENDOWMENT TRUST

Summary of Account for the year ended 31st October, 1981

	<i>Capital</i>	<i>Revenue</i>
Fund at 31st October, 1980.....	<u>£8,309</u>	
Donations Received	25	
Income for year per Schedule		£376
Income Tax Refund 1980/81.....		<u>160</u>
	<u>£8,334</u>	<u>£536</u>
Management Fees and Outlays	31	£139
Remittance F.I.B.O.T.		<u>397</u>
		<u>536</u>
Fund at 31st October, 1981	£8,303	
SCHEDULE	<i>Capital</i>	<i>Revenue</i>
	<i>Market Value</i>	<i>Cost</i>
8¼% Treasury Loan 1987/90		
£2,400 Loan	£1,752	£2,114
10% Treasury Stock 1992		
£2,750 Stock	1,980	2,500
Henderson Administration		
960 High Income Units.....	564	638
	<u>£4,296</u>	<u>£5,252</u>
Heritable Property		
21 Regent Terrace		3,050
Cash Balance		<u>1</u>
		<u>£8,303</u>
		<u>£376</u>

THE JOHN HARRISON MEMORIAL FUND

Year ended 31st October, 1981

Balance of Funds at 31st October, 1980	£5,419
Richard Richardson's Executry	
Further estate	93
Royalties	321
Interest Received	624
Donations	<u>38</u>
	<u>£6,495</u>
Deduct	
Management Charges	£42
Grants paid	<u>685</u>
	<u>727</u>
Balance of Funds at 31st October, 1981	£5,768
Held as follows	
£6,000, 9% Treasury Loan 1994	£4,987
£600, 13¼% Treasury Stock 1997	587
On Temporary Deposit	180
Cash	<u>14</u>
	<u>£5,768</u>

THE JOHN HARRISON MEMORIAL FUND

Administering Committee:

Mr J. M. S. Arnott; Mr B. Grewcock (Organiser); Mr A. T. Macmillan; Mr J. H. Mellalieu; Major A. D. Peirse-Duncombe.

This special fund was set up to help young people to visit Fair Isle. It was instituted in 1968 by the late Richard Richardson in memory of John Harrison of Hunstanton in Norfolk. John, a very keen birdwatcher had visited Fair Isle three times before he died at the early age of nineteen.

The Fund gives financial assistance to young birdwatchers aged between fifteen and twentyone. Grants are awarded to successful applicants to help defray the cost of accommodation and travel. PLEASE ENCOURAGE YOUNG PEOPLE to use the Fund to visit Fair Isle — all applications should be sent to the Hon. Assistant Secretary, F.I.B.O.T., 21 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh EH7 5BT.

It is essential that the Fund be continually increased so that more people can be offered financial help to visit Fair Isle. Please send your contribution to:

**The Hon. Treasurer
Fair Isle Bird Observatory Trust
48 Castle Street
Edinburgh EH2 3LX**

Application for assistance from the John Harrison Memorial Fund, to visit Fair Isle must be received by 31st October.

To: The Hon. Assistant Secretary, F.I.B.O.T., 21 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh EH7 5BT.

Name..... Age.....

Address

Interests.....

Why do you want to visit Fair Isle?

Estimate of travel costs

Please enclose letters supporting your application from two referees, such as a school teacher and a senior naturalist, with whom you are well acquainted.

Acknowledgements

Lack of space prevents us from mentioning the names of all our many helpers during the year on the island and on the mainland. However, we relay our special thanks to John Holloway who provided bird records for the winter months and to Stewart Thomson Snr., Stewart Thomson Jnr., Barry Sinclair, John Best and Brian Wilson for help with maintenance and other problems. David and Gillian Okill gave frequent invaluable assistance from Shetland Mainland. S.O.T.E.A.G. again supported our seabird work with a generous grant. To those and all our helpful visitors and friends we convey our grateful thanks.

The vignettes were kindly supplied by John Holloway who runs the Fair Isle shop and from whom drawings and watercolour sketches are available direct.

Notices

Deeds of Covenant: We are dependent on donations and continued support from Friends of Fair Isle to enable us to purchase equipment for the Observatory and undertake projects. While some Friends covenant their annual subscription, there are many who do not and we would urge them to sign a Deed of Covenant in our favour. For each subscription of £2.50 the Trust can claim £1.05 at current income tax rates. Deeds of Covenant in favour of Charities are now allowable deductions from income for the higher tax rate.

Please write to the Hon. Assistant Secretary, FIBOT, 21 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh EH7 5BT for a Covenant form. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

Back numbers of the annual report: Some of the earlier annual Reports are out of print and we regularly receive requests for them. If anyone has a copy of any of the following numbers which is no longer wanted we would be very pleased to have it back:

1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1962, and in particular 1975 and 1976

Please send the copies to the Hon. Assistant Secretary, FIBOT, 21 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh EH7 5BT.

Memorial Appeal

While George's accomplishments, the S.O.C., F.I.B.O.T., the Scottish Centre, the greatly enlarged R.S.P.B. in Scotland, stand as memorials to him it is surely important that there should be a special memorial to him on Fair Isle.

Over recent years he often spoke to me and others of the plans to make a museum showing the way of life on Fair Isle as it was and while it is still remembered and articles from the past are available. The islanders plan such a museum in the now replaced hall and they propose to call it after George — The George Waterston Museum. The F.I.B.O.T. trustees wish to co-operate with the National Trust for Scotland in a joint appeal to raise funds for this purpose and for other schemes on the island and at the Observatory that we know were in George's mind. I know that many of you will wish to help in this project. Please send your subscription to:

**Major A. D. Pierse-Duncombe,
21 Regent Terrace,
Edinburgh.**

A.B.D.

Spend a Holiday on Fair Isle

Reasonably priced accommodation on the fascinating island of Fair Isle is available in the Fair Isle Bird Observatory to Ornithologists and general visitors alike, from March to October.

During the peak bird migration periods the island is of course an irresistible destination for keen ornithologists, but at other times — June, July and August — Fair Isle has much to offer those who enjoy quiet, away-from-it-all holidays in an incomparable island setting. Towering cliffs, gently-rounded hills and the friendliness of the islanders combine to provide an unforgettable holiday for the artist, walker, naturalist or out-of-season bird watcher — or for those with a less energetic holiday in mind.

Accommodation rates in the Hostel

(including board and lodgings): plus V.A.T.:

Single Room	£75 per person per week, £15 per day
Double Room	£62 per person per week, £12 per day
Dormitory	£48 per person per week, £9 per day

Further details from, and bookings to, Nick Riddiford, F.I.B.O.T. Warden, Fair Isle, Shetland. Telephone Fair Isle (035-12) 258.

Transport to Fair Isle

Monday	Loganair scheduled flights on eight-seater Islander plane from Tingwall Airport, Shetland.
Tuesday	Fair Isle Mail Boat, "Good Shepherd", leaves from Grutness Pier, Shetland, at noon. (Return: leaves 0700, arrives Grutness 10.00).
Wednesday	No transport
Thursday	No transport
Friday	"Good Shepherd" from Grutness at noon. (Return: leaves 07.00, arrives Grutness 10.00), May and September. Loganair flight from and to Shetland.
Saturday	Loganair flight from and to Shetland. "Good Shepherd" as above, June to August.
Sunday	No transport.

Transport details from:

Loganair Scheduled Service Bookings, Loganair, Tingwall. Tel. Gott (059 584) 246.

J. W. Stout: Tel. Fair Isle (035-12) 222 (for "Good Shepherd" bookings).



No identification problems with this Hoopoe, one of the 203 species seen on the island in 1981.



Red-flanked Bluetail.

Scottish Ornithologists' Club

The Scottish Ornithologists' Club was formed in 1936 and membership is open to all interested in Scottish Ornithology. Meetings are held during the winter months in Aberdeen, Ayr, the Borders, Dumfries, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverness, New Galloway, St Andrews, Stirling, Thurso and the Wigtown District at which lectures by prominent ornithologists are given and films exhibited. Expeditions are organised in the summer to places of ornithological interest.

The aims of the Club are to (a) encourage the study of Scottish ornithology and to promote an interest in wild birds; (b) co-ordinate the activities of Scottish ornithologists; (c) encourage ornithological work in Scotland; (d) encourage conservation of Scottish birds and protection of threatened and rare species; (e) hold meetings for discussion and to arrange ornithological field meetings, and (f) appoint local recorders and publish material relating to Scottish ornithology, including *Scottish Birds*, the club journal.

There are no entry fees for Membership. The Annual subscription is £7.50, or £3 in the case of Members under twenty-one years of age or Students under 25, who satisfy the Council of their status as such at the times at which their subscriptions fall due. The life subscription is £150. Family Membership is available to married couples and their nominated children under 18 at an Annual Subscription of £11, or Life Subscription of £225. *Scottish Birds* is issued free to Members but Family Members will receive only one copy between them. Subscriptions are payable on 1st October annually.

Scottish Birds, which is published quarterly, includes papers, articles and short notes on all aspects of ornithology in Scotland. A Scottish Bird Report is published annually.

Application for Membership form, copy of the Club constitution, and other literature are obtainable from the Club Secretary, Major A. D. Peirse-Duncombe, Scottish Centre for Ornithology and Bird Protection, 21 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh EH7 5BT (Telephone: 031-556 6042).

The Bird Bookshop

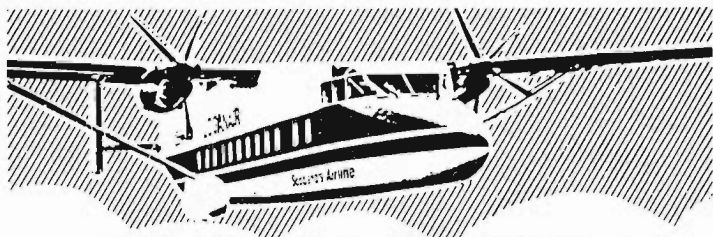
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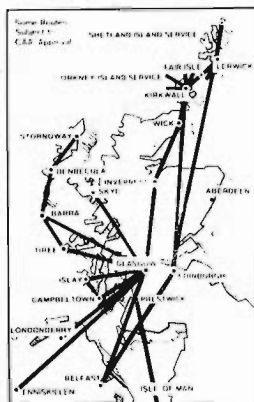
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