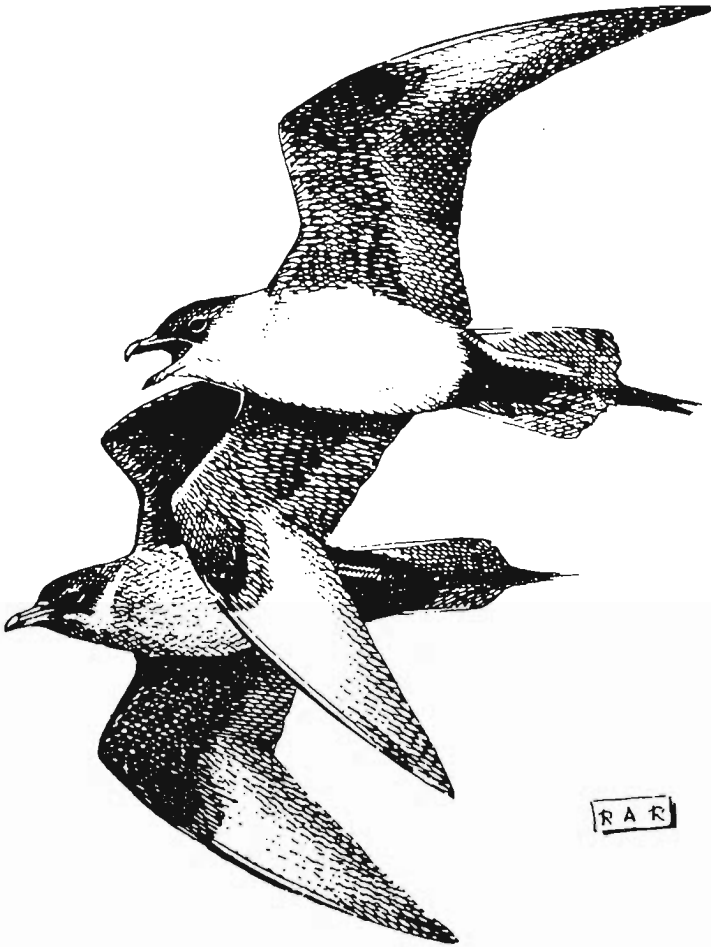


FAIR ISLE BIRD OBSERVATORY

Report for 1988



If you think we're all about countryside and buildings, that's only half the story.

THE National Trust for Scotland is about people – people like you – people who by joining the Trust help us to help care for over 100 properties throughout Scotland.

From the soaring majesty of Ben Lomond to the hauntingly beautiful Pass of Killiecrankie. From the Adam grandeur of Culzean Castle to the emotive Moor of Culloden. From the thatched cottage of Souter Johnnie to over 16,000 acres of Torridon. We couldn't care without your support and your membership.



Culloden



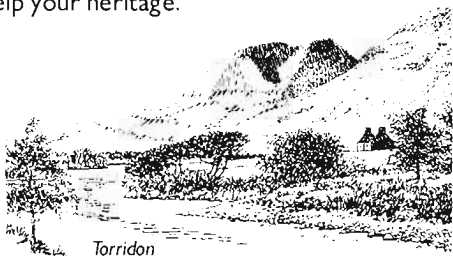
Killiecrankie

We don't ask for much – we give so much in return. It's your country we're here to help preserve and protect. When you join the Trust you save so much more than entrance charges. All members are admitted free to over 100 Trust Properties in Scotland and to all properties of the National Trust in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

As a member of the National Trust for Scotland you will also receive free a quarterly magazine, our properties guide and the annual report. There are so many ways in which you can help us to help your heritage.

Why not join today?

Send now for full details and membership application form to: Membership Department, National Trust for Scotland, 5 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh EH2 4DU or telephone 031-226 5922.



Torridon



National Trust for Scotland

Fair Isle Bird Observatory

Report No. 41

1988

Edited by Nick Riddiford, assisted by Valerie Thom

CONTENTS

		Page
Chairman's Report	<i>David MacLehose</i>	1
Warden's Report	<i>Nick Riddiford</i>	3
New Warden Appointed		5
An NTS View of 1988	<i>Alexander Bennett</i>	6
A Look Back Over the Years	<i>F. Hewitt, E. Skinner, V. Thom, R. Dennis, R. Broad, N. Riddiford</i>	8
And a Thought for the Future	<i>James W. Stout</i>	14
Ornithology	<i>Nick Riddiford</i>	15
Monthly Highlights	<i>Peter Howlett & Peter Potts</i>	16
Systematic List	<i>Nick Riddiford</i>	27
Up-date on BBRC Decisions	<i>Nick Riddiford</i>	45
Ringing Details 1988	<i>Nick Riddiford</i>	45
Recoveries & Controls	<i>Nick Riddiford</i>	50
Moths on Fair Isle, 1988	<i>Nick Riddiford</i>	59
Cetacean Records in 1988	<i>Nick Riddiford</i>	63
The Weather on Fair Isle in 1988	<i>Dave Wheeler</i>	64
Miscellany	<i>Nick & Elizabeth Riddiford</i>	66
Publications		66
Coming Shortly!		67
The John Harrison Memorial Fund	<i>Alastair Peirse-Duncombe</i>	68
Treasurer's Report & Accounts	<i>Andrew Hamilton</i>	70

Published by the Fair Isle Bird Observatory Trust
21 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh EH7 5BT
for 'Friends of Fair Isle'

Printed by Alexander Ritchie & Son Ltd., Edinburgh

Fair Isle Bird Observatory Trust

A company limited by guarantee

21 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh EH7 5BT
Telephone: 031-556 6042

Board of Directors (1988)	David MacLehose <i>Chairman</i> Roy Dennis <i>Vice-chairman</i> Valerie Thom <i>Hon. Secretary</i> Andrew Hamilton <i>Treasurer</i> Dougal Andrew Roger Broad Donald Erskine Dave Okill Pat Sellar Peter Slater Magnus Flaws
Warden:	Nick Riddiford, Bird Observatory, Fair Isle, Shetland Tel: 035 12 258
Membership Sec:	Miss Pat Webster, FIBOT, 21 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh EH7 5BT
Solicitors:	J & F Anderson, W.S., 48 Castle Street, Edinburgh EH2 3LX
Auditors:	Coopers & Lybrand, C.A. George House, 126 George Street Edinburgh EH2 4JZ
Bankers:	Bank of Scotland 64 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 2YS
Research & Education Committee:	Peter Slater <i>Chairman</i> Roger Broad Jeremy Greenwood Dave Okill Roy Dennis Mike Harris Mike Richardson
John Harrison Memorial Fund Secretary:	Alastair Peirse-Duncombe

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION – 'FRIENDS OF FAIR ISLE' £5

Chairman's Report

Looking back over the last 12 months it is all too easy to become engrossed in the physical re-development of the building on Fair Isle to the exclusion of the many equally significant achievements. Undoubtedly 1988 will be heralded as a watershed in the 'life and times of FIBOT'.

A chronological review of events starts with the public launch of the Appeal in February 1988, leading to the tremendous response from individuals, trusts and government agencies. With sufficient cash secured, the Directors authorised the start of building works in September. Blessed with a relatively wind-free autumn and mild winter, and a committed design team and workforce, building works have kept to a very tight schedule, allowing the Lodge and Observatory to re-open in April 1989. This is no mean achievement for a £200,000 building contract on an isolated island in winter.

For me the highlight of the year has been the reaffirmation of the original ideals for FIBOT as dreamt by George Waterston and Ian Pitman in that prisoner of war camp in the 1940s. Those ideals married to the expectations of today's visitors are all encompassed in the new Lodge building on Fair Isle. With the priority provision of improved research and group accommodation, and the ability to computerise research data, the Observatory now has the wherewithal to remain at the forefront of leading observatories in the world. It is up to us all to ensure that these facilities are effectively used.

Despite the anxiety expressed by some visitors, through the many marketing report questionnaires which were returned and in letters to me during the year, there is no intention of changing the informal atmosphere of the Lodge. Furniture will be replaced and, yes, a dish-washing machine is being installed, but these additions need not destroy the family atmosphere appreciated by so many visitors. It is people, not machines, that create a convivial atmosphere – through an open approach between the visitors and a welcoming service from FIBOT staff. As with the research facilities, it is up to visitors and staff to maximise the potential of all the Lodge and FIBOT have to offer, and in so doing to enjoy their stay there to the full.

Aside from the building works, 1988 has seen a huge increase in the number of 'Friends', to more than 700. I know that many joined to support the Appeal but I would encourage these new 'Friends' to continue supporting FIBOT and to make use of the Lodge. The open meetings held in Edinburgh and London in February were voted a great success by all who attended and I hope they will remain in the annual calendar. Certainly it was a great thrill to see so many friends of Fair Isle at both occasions, including many of the Trustees of the original FIBOT. Few will forget the cake in the shape of Sheep Rock cut at the Edinburgh meeting by Esther Williamson, widow of Ken Williamson, the Observatory's first warden.

On the island we welcomed even more visitors who saw a broad selection of interesting birds throughout the season, as Nick records in his report. Several of these visitors were representatives of the media, whose favourable reactions were reflected in much useful publicity. The final year of the NCC's first seabird monitoring contract on Fair Isle was concluded very satisfactorily; funds permitting the NCC hope to renew the contract. FIBOT is particularly well placed to contribute to the debate on the decline of seabird colonies in Shetland, with the Observatory's accumulated data proving invaluable.

Eight seasons is 'a good stint' as Warden of FIBOT, and when Nick and Liz Riddiford leave in February 1989 they will have been 'in post' longer than anyone since the Williamsons. Both have given generously, often in difficult

conditions, to the wellbeing of FIBOT, and of many grateful visitors, during their period in office. In particular they have brought visitor numbers back up to the levels of the early 1970s and contributed significantly to the plans for re-development of the Lodge, while Nick has played a key role in the successful seabird monitoring contract mentioned earlier. We wish Nick, Liz and Naomi well in their new life – still on Fair Isle – and say ‘thank you’ to them for all they have done for FIBOT. The new warden will take up post in time for the opening of the Lodge in April.

It is encouraging to note that the revenue account for the year records a small surplus. This is confirmation that we will be able to maintain our tariff levels in line with those of recent years.

Visitors to FIBOT in the 1960s will remember Alex Warwick, the National Trust for Scotland’s buildings officer. Committed to the Trust, and especially to Fair Isle and her people, Alex with his great character and beaming smile was instrumental in rebuilding many Fair Isle houses. Sadly, he died in the autumn; we remember him with affection and respect.

Pat Webster resigned as membership secretary in July, to take up a full-time post with the SOC. Pat kept our membership records and reclaimed covenant tax for our benefit very efficiently, and persuasively kept membership rolling in. We are grateful to her.

1988 has been an eventful year, an exciting one, in which the foundations for the future of FIBOT have been securely re-established. A full review of the Appeal and all it has achieved will be included in the 1989 report but meantime, on behalf of the Directors of FIBOT, I want to record thanks to everyone who has supported the Appeal so generously. From the Directors of the European Regional Development Fund in Brussels to the individual who sent a donation of postage stamps, each and every contribution is equally and greatly appreciated.



Roofing the new link building.

I would like to add a personal 'thank you' to my fellow Directors, who have attended more meetings than usual and guided FIBOT on the successful and adventurous course we have established. In February 1989 we say 'au revoir', with gratitude, to Dougal Andrew and Donald Erskine as Directors. Each has served FIBOT generously – Dougal by keeping us on the legal straight and narrow and Donald by fostering our close links with the National Trust for Scotland.

Looking back on 1988, despite the concentration of attention on building works, I will remember the people that make up FIBOT, the Friends of FIBOT, the staff and visitors, and especially the Fair Isle residents; without them all, despite the birds, FIBOT would not be.

David MacLehose

Warden's Report

The total of 436 visitor/weeks constituted an increase for the fourth consecutive year. As usual September was the most popular month, but an encouraging trend was the number of visitors staying in October. October visitors were rewarded by a month of exceptional interest, and it is little surprise that the trend is set to continue in 1989 and 1990.

Our staff for the year comprised Louise Binks (Cook), Joy Stephens (Assistant Cook), Chris Donald (in the new position of Domestic Assistant), Peter Howlett and Peter Potts (Assistants) and Andy Silcocks (Seabird Monitoring Officer). Mairi Thomson again helped out in the summer during staff holidays. Their efforts, without exception, were second to none and this was reflected in their quality of work and popularity among guests and islanders alike. We are indebted to them. Elizabeth and I would also like to give a special thank you to Clare Ditchburn for helping out so ably and cheerfully while Elizabeth was recuperating from an operation early in the season, and to Cathy Stout for deputising on the administration side during the spring. Florrie, Jimmy, Brian and Ian Stout were also of considerable service, ferrying people and goods during Elizabeth's recuperation and a prolonged minibus absence. We are indebted, too, to Sarah Watts whose voluntary assistance with the seabird monitoring (when she wasn't assisting Fulmar researcher, Fiona Hunter) was much appreciated.

Fair Isle's far-reaching reputation was amply demonstrated by the range of visitors, 81 foreign nationals from 14 countries including travellers from as far away as Israel, Japan and New Zealand. Another long distance migrant was the eminent Vietnamese conservationist, Professor Vo Quy. His visit created several 'firsts': he is probably the first Vietnamese ornithologist to visit Fair Isle, and certainly the first to savour the delights of a Shag colony. Fair Isle has entertained many a 'first for Britain' but cannot have played host to many ornithologists who have discovered a new species of bird to science. Unfortunately his discovery, a Vietnam endemic found in 1976 and recently appropriately named Vo Quy's Pheasant, is unlikely to stray to Fair Isle. We were delighted to hear that Professor Vo Quy has been awarded the WWF's Gold Medal in recognition of his services to conservation.

Fair Isle was yet again the focal point for TV Crews and film-makers. Channel TV came in May with Leslie Thomas, author of *Some Lovely Islands*, to make a film version of the book. In August a Japanese TV crew filmed aspects of family life on the isle. May was a busy time. Jimmy MacGregor recorded a special Fair Isle edition of his Radio Scotland programme, *MacGregor's Gathering*, while I took Michael Scott on a Fair Isle nature trail for the Radio 4 programme, *Living World* (tripping over Subalpine

Warbler and Wryneck on the way). Some of this attention was generated by the FIBOT 40th anniversary appeal, and one offshoot of the appeal was to entice a number of journalists specialising in environmental matters to visit. This resulted in good publicity in the form of a series of articles about the isle, including in *The Scotsman Magazine*, *Birdwatching* and *Natural World*. In late April we played hosts to a party of army bird enthusiasts including United Kingdom Land Forces Commander-in-Chief, General Sir John Chapple. Other party visits during the year comprised a McHugh Ornithological Tours group from America (led by *Birds of Trinidad* author Richard ffrench), a Malmo (Sweden) Bird Club group and the now annual YOC courses in July and August. We were also delighted to welcome a party from the National Trust for Scotland, including NTS Vice President Joyce Mackie, in July and Council of Europe members from Strasbourg and Majorca in August. The major event of the year, however, was a very enjoyable *Friends Week* in June, held in celebration of 40 years of Fair Isle Bird Observatory. The week lived up to its name, attracting friends and supporters from the earliest days of the observatory. For one participant, Ken Martin, the return had a special purpose for he was able to inspect the progress of the Vaadal Plantation which he had pioneered way back in 1954.

FIBOT Directors visiting during the year were David MacLehose, Valerie Thom, Peter Slater, Dave Okill and Pat Sellar. It was a great pleasure to welcome Max Nicholson to the isle, in June. Though no longer involved in the administrative structure of FIBOT, Max was a Trustee from the early days and remains an influential and supportive friend of the observatory. His visit was the fulfilment of a long nurtured desire to set foot on the isle he had previously seen only in passing. We hope his first visit will be quickly followed by a second.

Functional problems during the year were minor, although the hot water boiler was unreliable and frequently required attention. From mid September, however, we had major building works to contend with, though the extensive improvements embarked on were initially restricted to exterior work, lessening the impact on our guests - most of whom considered that the good autumn migration, and a series of special rarities, more than compensated any inconvenience. As I write (December) the workmen are making enormous progress and all is set fair for splendid 'new' premises and a number of improved facilities in 1989. Both generators were reliable during the season, but No. 2 generator broke down with electrical control system problems in late autumn. A gearbox failure left us without the minibus for nearly three months from August while a replacement part was sought from abroad. The opportunity was taken to correct other problems, including the shock absorbers and back door, during its enforced absence from the isle.

As usual, a number of ornithological and other scientific projects were carried out during the year. The main thrust of the summer work was again the Seabird Monitoring Scheme. Almost complete breeding failure by some species, apparently related to food shortages, demonstrated the value of the scheme and the need for the high level of Nature Conservancy Council support (which has enabled us to carry out the work) to continue. The observatory also participated in the North-East Atlantic Storm Petrel Study instigated by Tony Martin of the Sea Mammals Research Unit, while Fiona Hunter of the University of Sheffield started her doctoral study of Fulmar breeding relationships based mainly on a study plot at Furse. Professor Colin Pennycuik, whose work on wing-loading in birds has achieved international recognition, was another research visitor during the summer, pursuing his interest by filming and measuring seabirds. Another summer activity for the observatory was collecting data for the *British Breeding Bird Atlas* up-date organised by the Scottish Ornithologists Club and British Trust for Ornithology. Non ornithological work was mainly at my instigation. A complete season of trapping and the valued help of Mike Terry in the identification of 'micros' were major factors in considerable progress in the Fair Isle moth study, while the spider monitoring programme started by Edward

Milner and myself in 1987 also had the benefit of a full year. I also collected records for the Botanical Society of the British Isles' *Atlas of Flowering Plants*. The major flower find of the year, however, fell to Annie Thomson of Shirva who added Hairy Bittercress *Cardamine hirsuta* to the island list. The more I delve into aspects of Fair Isle's natural history the more I realise how much there is still to learn. The observatory has assisted and played host to a steady stream of researchers throughout its history, but cost and lack of custom-made facilities may have discouraged others. All this will change in 1989. Improvements currently in progress include provision of specialist research facilities which we hope will encourage greater scientific input. The scope for research on Fair Isle is endless.

This is my last *Warden's Report*, the moment having come for us to move on to pastures new. Thus it seems the appropriate time and place to say a big 'thank you' on behalf of Elizabeth and myself to all our many friends, on and off the isle, for support, help and encouragement throughout our residence at the observatory. It has been very much appreciated.

Nick Riddiford

New warden appointed

The Directors are pleased to announce the appointment of Paul Harvey to succeed Nick as Warden of FIBO. Paul is no stranger to Fair Isle, as he was Assistant Warden at the Observatory in 1984 and 1985. Since then he has worked for the Nature Conservancy Council in Shetland, as Seasonal Warden on Noss NNR and latterly as Assistant Regional Officer. Between graduating BSc (Hons) Ecology in 1981 and coming to Fair Isle he was employed on a variety of wildlife survey and monitoring projects. His wide experience with seabirds will stand him in good stead in his new role, as will his knowledge of 'foreign' birds, gained on travels to many different countries. His wife Elizabeth, a trained nurse, will take up the supporting post of Secretary/Hostess at the Observatory.

Both Paul and Elizabeth are enthusiastic 'naturalised Shetlanders', actively involved in various community activities. Paul is currently a compiler of the Shetland Bird Report and serves on the committees of Shetland Bird Club and the local Conservation Volunteers Group, and both have helped with crofting tasks. The Harveys and their one-year old daughter, Holly, will move into the newly refurbished Observatory Lodge during March. We bid them a very warm welcome and wish them every success during their time with FIBOT.

An NTS view of 1988

It is sad to have to record that John Henderson, of Stackhoull Stores, passed away in April last year. He was succeeded in the shop tenancy by his widow, Ella, and it has been good to see the support given to Ella during her time of need.

The National Trust for Scotland have been working closely with FIBOT over their plans for the development of the Lodge, so it is heartening to see good progress being made on the work at such a difficult time of the year. Obviously the very mild winter has helped a great deal but credit must also go to the willing and enthusiastic workforce. The Trust look forward to a long association with FIBOT and wish them well in the years ahead.

Although Nick and Liz Riddiford are leaving the Observatory they have decided, fortunately for the Trust and Fair Isle, to settle at Schoolton croft, where they will be able to contribute to island life to a greater degree than has been possible before. The Trust wish them every success in their future on Fair Isle.

One of the most notable events of the year was the arrival of the new fire tender for the airfield. This was necessitated by the ever tightening regulations imposed by the Civil Aviation Authority which, in effect, made the old fire engine redundant. The new vehicle, delivered in May, is a basic production Toyota 4-wheel drive 2.4 diesel pickup, with a number of modifications to meet our needs. Its high performance satisfies the requirements of the CAA. Fortunately it has not so far been used in anger but it has been put through its paces and it certainly lives up to its reputation. At present we are looking for a use for the old fire engine and hope that it may go into service down the isle sometime in the not too distant future.

I am pleased to say that a start has been made to the restoration of the Auld Haa, which has lain derelict for a number of years. The work will take about 9 months to complete, and it is hoped that the basic character of the building will be restored to its eighteenth century form. However, in order to provide adequate accommodation for a family, certain internal alterations will be needed as well as a very small extension at the rear. This will be handled as sympathetically as possible, and it is gratifying that we have received favourable comments on our plans from Shetland Islands Council Conservation Planning Department. It is hoped that Nigel and Cathy Hallett will in due course take up residence in the Haa, from where they will carry on a business of full-time knitting and guest accommodation. This will make a welcome addition to the isle's accommodation list, as there is an increasing demand for such facilities.

During the summer months much activity took place around the community hall, where Northmen were working away furiously, constructing new storage rooms to accommodate the ever-expanding needs of an active community. The completed extension blends well with the existing building, and it was a fine achievement that the finance was raised without the need to call on the Trust's hard pressed resources.

As I am sure every visitor to Fair Isle will know, the isle was awarded a Council of Europe Diploma in 1986, for an initial period of 5 years. In 1988 two representatives from the Council, Marie-Aude L'Hyver of Strasbourg and Joan Mayol of Majorca, visited the island to see if the conditions of the award were being adhered to. Their short but enthusiastic trip gave them a good insight into island life, and they went away very impressed with what they saw. The Trust, therefore, fully expect the Diploma to be awarded again in 1991, for a further period of 5 years.

Last year's visitors to the island were, as always, welcomed with open arms. The work camps, whether NTS or IVS, carried out a variety of tasks with the usual enthusiasm. Various cruise ships, from the *Polaris* to the *Plantius*, called on a number of occasions, with American visitors whose main aim appeared to be to buy up the complete stock of Fair Isle jumpers available at the time, as well as swelling the order books. It is also good to see a number of visitors returning to the isle again

and again, having first stayed at the hostel and now coming back and staying down the isle.

One of the major current concerns, not only on Fair Isle but in Shetland as a whole, is the apparent erosion of the hill land. This obviously has long term implications for the grazing and the quality of the stock dependent on the hill. At present it is not fully understood why this erosion should be taking place, and a research programme will hopefully be undertaken shortly to try and determine the cause. In the short term, an experiment in bracken control will commence in 1989, to see if any impact can be made on this ever encroaching problem.

The future of Fair Isle will depend largely upon the younger generation and on their enthusiasm to return to their native land, so it is extremely encouraging to see a young Fair Islander starting up a traditional Fair Isle business. Ian Best has brought back one of the oldest island crafts, boat building, and has already successfully completed a number of yachts. The obvious enthusiasm with which he goes about his task augurs well for the future of this venture.

Finally, 1988 was the first year since I became Factor for Fair Isle that I have been able to welcome a new arrival on the isle. Jennifer Stout was born to Michael and Cathy at Setter in September. Cathy and Jennifer are both doing fine – let's hope that the strain on Michael will not dampen his enthusiasm for helping to increase the population!

Alexander M. Bennett



The new Toyota fire tender at the airstrip.

Photo: Dave Wheeler

A look back over the years

Eichstatt Prisoner of war Camp, Bavaria

The sight of a solitary figure standing near the barbed wire and looking out of the camp and across the valley to the wooded hills beyond usually suggested that he was planning an escape route. But that was not always the case. One member of the camp in particular was studying the bird-life with professional expertise, and for him the barbed wire fulfilled a secondary role as a larder for the Butcher Bird. Nor was George Waterston always solitary; he would often gather a small band of enthusiasts to whom he would point out and identify the different species.

It was in this camp that George and Ian Pitman laid plans for the establishment of the Fair Isle Bird Observatory, plans which he started to implement soon after he was repatriated and which eventually came to fruition in 1948.

Fred Hewitt

From plans to practicalities

George's original ideas for the Observatory, which he drew up in great detail, are recorded in a series of notebooks marked with the Oflag stamp. One of these contains scale drawings of the alterations he thought necessary to adapt the croft house at the Pund to accommodate a warden and wife plus 12 visitors. During a visit to the isle in 1944, however, he began to consider the Haa as an alternative location, and started to investigate the possibility of using the war-time camp huts to form accommodation 'wings' there. Some work was done on the Haa but post-war shortages and restrictions made progress frustratingly slow and it was still not ready for occupation when, in 1947, George acquired the Naval huts at the North Haven – and most of their contents. Ken and Esther Williamson arrived in June 1948 to get the Observatory going and soon realised that the camp buildings offered the best solution to providing adequate accommodation at minimal cost.

Valerie Thom



The Pund as it was in 1935.

Photo: G. Waterston

FIBO's first visitors arrive

August 25th 1948 – a day I shall long remember. After a hectic couple of months trying to make some of the ex-Naval huts at the North Haven habitable, Ken and I were greatly looking forward to receiving our first very important guests, George Waterston and Ian Pitman, who were accompanied by Richard Fitter. Many of the islanders were on the quayside to welcome the party and Ken even managed to finish his weekly shave in time for “the boat”.

After a cup of tea we took George and Ian round the domain with bated breath, hoping they would approve both of our idea of siting the Observatory at the North Haven and of the work which had been accomplished in such a short time with the tremendous help and support of Rock Jimmy and his gang. We need not have feared. George's exclamation of “It is just grand”, followed by his infectious laugh, was just what we had been hoping for. George and Ian were most enthusiastic and more plans and ideas were formulated during the evening.

So, after a great deal of hard work and anxiety as we struggled to have the Observatory in reasonable order by the time George and Ian arrived, Ken and I felt very elated. We could now look forward to continuing our work in the knowledge that we had the full support of the FIBO Trust.

Esther Williamson

Reminiscences of the Fifties

Most of my visits to Fair Isle took place in the early 1950s, in the days before ‘twit-ching’ was ever heard of and travel to the isle was much more difficult than it is today. Getting there presented special problems in May 1951, when a strike caused cancellation of flights to Sumburgh from Renfrew. I and two other visitors decided to take the alternative route – by train to Aberdeen where we embarked on the *St Magnus*. We knew that our arrival in Lerwick would be too late to connect with the *Good Shepherd*, so when the *Magnus* called at Kirkwall we went ashore, hoping to get a plane from there. But that flight was cancelled too. As we sat in the square, debating what to do, the Captain of the *St Magnus* (William Stout by name!) happened to pass by. Overhearing our discussion, he offered to stop the ship at Fair Isle if we could arrange for a boat to collect us. A quick phone call to Ken Williamson and that was soon arranged – but we had to sign a document absolving the shipping company of all responsibility if any of us fell into the sea! Fortunately the weather was fine and the sea calm. When we reached Fair Isle there was a yoal waiting and we all managed to scramble safely down the ladder into it with our bags. We were possibly the last visitors to arrive by this route.

A visit in October 1952 was memorable for the incident of the Pechora Pipit. As Ken described in his book ‘Fair Isle and its Birds’, we spent hours trying unsuccessfully to get a good look at the bird and eventually called on Jimmy Wilson's expertise. For him the pipit's distinctive note was sufficient to confirm its identity – but for us the fact that it killed itself by flying into the only telephone wires in the vicinity was definitely helpful! In July 1953 it was Crossbills that provided the highlight. There were about 50 on the island and we were continually trapping them in ones and twos. Incidentally there were then only four pairs of Bonxies and 20 pairs of Arctic Skuas nesting – a very different state of affairs from that today.

Edward Skinner

For much of the fifties there was no electricity ‘down the isle’ and the Observatory regularly played host to social functions. These were often arranged at short notice when a visitor happened to arrive with slides – films were rarely available in those days and of course there was no TV – and they took place in the ‘Coronation Hut’,



Celebrations in the Coronation Hut, 1953.

Photo: G. Waterston Collection

originally the camp's mess hut. Leogh Jerry's lorry, the largest of the few island vehicles, provided transport, and Jerry's decision that it was time to head for home was usually the factor which brought the dancing to an end. Then as now, the dances were enthusiastically supported, and the efforts of visitors to cope with the Lancers, or even some of the more sedate old-time dances, often added to the general hilarity. As Dodie commented of one couple attempting a Hesitation Waltz: "When one goes ahead the other goes astern!"

July 1955 saw the Coronation Hut fulfilling a very different role when it provided emergency accommodation for shipwrecked mariners. The herring boat "Planet", which had struck a rock off Buness in fog holing her bows badly, lay decks awash on the North Haven beach, awaiting the arrival of a salvage boat. Three days later she and her crew had gone but a lingering reminder of their visit remained; the 120 crans of herring thrown overboard carpeted the floor of the Haven for several smelly weeks!

Valerie Thom

The Sixties

Marina and I vividly remember the Fair Isle of the 1960s. It was still the old Fair Isle, with the *Good Shepherd* our only link with the outside world, and we knew of everyone who came and went! Many of our memories are not of birds but of people: the many friends in the island community and our shared enjoyment of island events, and the visitors to the observatory, often returning year after year like the migrants. Ornithologically it was an exciting period, with our ringing totals increasing annually in both quantity and quality, many interesting studies being completed by staff and visitors, and some spectacular migrations in spring and autumn. I remember a May afternoon when every croft sported beautiful bluethroats and ortolan buntings in full summer plumage. Every year brought its rarities, such as Cretzschmar's bunting and olive-backed pipit. It was a boom time for seabirds, too, with all species on the increase. And at sea every nation was involved in the herring boom and, looking out at night from Buness, there was a city of lights to the east of the island.

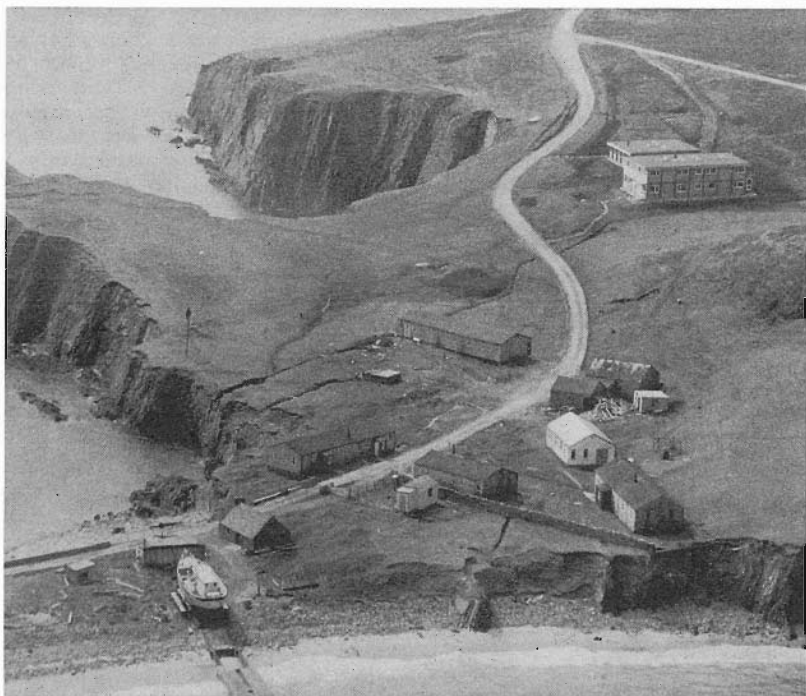
In the late 1960s change came in the form of an air service by Islander aircraft, initially from Orkney and later from Sumburgh. Underwater archaeologists arrived to study the *El Gran Grifon*, and for a whole summer we enjoyed their triumph as they made historic discoveries. In 1968 George Waterston arranged for four young sea eagles from Norway to be reared and released on Fair Isle. This was a fascinating project and it was a great thrill to release all four birds on the isle — alas, they did not stay to breed. Finally, the last years of the decade saw the construction and opening of a new purpose-built observatory building in Maver's Cup, and the long-awaited move from the old huts at North Haven. With better travel options and much more comfortable accommodation, FIBO was ready to cope with growing numbers of visitors.

Roy Dennis



Roy Dennis, Dr Johan Wilgohs and George Waterston admire one of the young White-tailed Eagles.

Photo: Dennis Coutts



The move from the old building to the new marked the start of a new era in the life of FIBOT.

Photo: Dennis Coutts

The Seventies

Fair Isle lost something of its remoteness in the 70s, although the travelling itself retained an element of adventure even after the *Good Shepherd II* was replaced by *Good Shepherd III* and the old wartime airstrip was improved and extended. In summer 1972, weather permitting, there were two sailings per week and a regular Loganair flight, chartered by the Observatory, each Saturday. The demand for air travel grew and by 1977 this connection had increased with the addition of twice daily scheduled services on two days a week. As a result more short-stay visitors were welcomed to the new hostel, and even the occasional unknown face wandered in unannounced as day trippers became a reality.

A few regular visitors did wryly comment, with a tinge of nostalgia, on the passing of the old Obs., but the new building was really welcomed by all. As it settled into use further improvements were made, including the carpeting of all bedrooms. A 7 ½ kw generator was installed to replace the hopelessly inadequate 1 ½ kw standby generator, which even in an emergency could only cope with either the heating or the electricity! With modernisation of the island phone system out went the old crank-handled phone, the distinctive Fair Isle 8 number, and the anticipation of listening for the number of rings to see if a call was for you or for someone else on the isle. Major alterations were carried out to satisfy the requirements of the Fire Precautions Act – and the background emergency lighting provided was much appreciated

by visitors caught out by the blackout when the generator was turned off at 2300 hours. To form a windbreak for the Hostel garden a *Rosa rugosa* hedge, transplanted from Aggie's garden at Leogh, was established. This acted as a magnet to all sorts of migrants, which often provided a welcome diversion for those on the washing up rota. It naturally became one of the first ports of call for newly arrived birdwatchers anxious to see sheltering rarities recently released from the birdroom. In the 70s these included Subalpine Warbler, Booted Warbler, Arctic Redpoll and Britain's first Siberian Rubythroat.

Sadly, one of the Observatory's greatest supporters, Richard Richardson, died in 1977. His vignettes enlivened many annual reports and he left FIBO a lasting legacy, in the books he donated to the Observatory's library and in the John Harrison Memorial Fund (described elsewhere in this report).

Roger Broad

And the Eighties

Darwin travelled to the Galapagos to formulate his theory of evolution but in the 1980s visitors to Fair Isle were able to observe evolution of another kind, that of the island's infrastructure. The moment Elizabeth and I arrived in 1981 we witnessed the first of a series of major improvements to the quality of service to the isle, in the form of a new slipway. It is still a marvel of a kind to watch the *Good Shepherd* sail onto its cradle then creep from the water like some great sea monster. Memories still linger of days gone by, all hands on deck, hauling on ropes, shouted instructions, organised chaos, Barry Sinclair risking life and limb to secure a rope on the North Haven skerry – all banished in favour of a winch and drive-on cradle.

The improved slip was followed in 1986 by a new boat. *Good Shepherd IV*, with its sophisticated equipment and increased cargo capacity, was another reminder of the modern technological age. It is faster, too, more comfortable and more suited to passengers than its immediate predecessor. Even I, one of the world's archetypal land-lubbers, can now enjoy the crossing. The *Good Shepherd's* passenger popularity can be judged from the numbers using it; often in summer it arrives full to capacity. Air links have improved too; from the one charter a week of 15-20 years ago the Loganair service has expanded to four flights a week from Shetland and one from Orkney on scheduled services, with frequent charters as well. A trip to Fair Isle has long ceased to be a voyage into uncharted territory, and travel for both islanders and visitors is more comfortable and convenient than ever before.

Unlike these changes at the Haven, the arrival of the first commercial aerogenerator did not directly benefit the Observatory. But what a difference it made down the isle, lights at night, warm and snug houses – some of the comforts that most British folk take for granted. There are disadvantages, of course – that 20% of the year when the wind does not blow is one of them – but nevertheless I doubt if a return to the old system would get many votes.

I have dwelt on changes and the modern life but Fair Isle's social evolution is not taking place at the expense of its roots and traditions. A walk round the beautifully set up George Waterston Memorial Centre at the Auld Schule amply demonstrates that. Fair Isle has a proud history and we are constantly reminded of it. Tragedy is part of that history and poignant recent reminders of the past included the group of latter day Spanish *conquistadores* who came to commemorate the sinking of the *El Gran Grifon* some 400 years ago, and the return of World War II pilot, Karl-Heinz Thurz, to the remains of his Heinkel shot down 46 years earlier. The 1980s saw history in the making, too – a celebration in 1987 of 25 uninterrupted years of workcamps, now very much a part of Fair Isle tradition and enjoyed as keenly by

the inhabitants as the participants. After 40 years the Bird Observatory is also an integral part of Fair Isle's community life, and like the isle itself FIBOT has evolved over the years.

Some may have expected me to write of changes in the birdlife. Of course there have been many. A glance at annual reports shows, however, a remarkable degree of continuity. The populations of some seabird species were higher in the 1980s and there have been some excellent falls of migrants and a seemingly endless series of rarities. But flick back through the reports and you will find that the birdlife, common and rare, was just as thrilling, just as varied, in the 1970s in the 1960s and as far back as ornithological records allow. It is a satisfying thought that, under the stewardship of a caring community and with the sympathetic support of the NTS, the isle's ornithological interest – upon which the fortunes of FIBOT largely depend – is as strong today as ever.

Nick Riddiford

And a thought for the future

My little niece in Norway has a favourite joke when she asks – “What have the Swedes got which Norwegians haven't?”. The answer ‘Good neighbours’ is always the same, no matter the country being promoted.

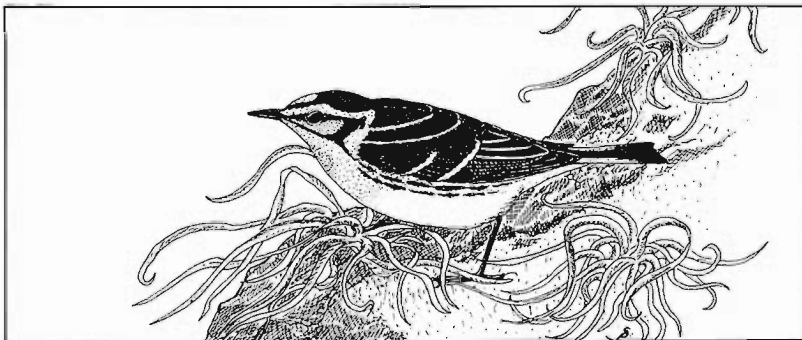
Much has been written, and rightly so, of George Waterston's vision of the future, and how he realised his ambition in such a romantic manner. Perhaps not enough credit has been given to those who, in the early years, did the initial ground-work and formed a bond with the Island by introducing visitors who returned year after year; for the original “Friends of Fair Isle” surely helped to put the place so handsomely on the map. It was a very different way of life in 1948 – the War was not long over, people were not well off, foreign holidays were unknown, and air travel was in its infancy. It was the age of the intrepid traveller to Fair Isle, enduring up to four hours on the deck of *Good Shepherd II*.

Another milestone was reached in 1969, when the present wooden building was erected. It has since been gradually upgraded to meet requirements until now, with major expenditure, FIBOT is moving to meet the needs of the present day traveller, who may holiday in opposite ends of the earth in the same year. While still requiring to be intrepid to come here in the first place, the visitor to Fair Isle is now much more a person whose standards are set by other places and who will return only if a place has something special to offer.

Progressing along this line of thought – if we are all going to succeed, this Island must still have that extra friendliness, that concern, and that willingness to stop and speak to people, and to make them feel part of what is really a most acceptable, but also a unique, way of life. So much is now at stake in this small community – and I include the Observatory Lodge very much in that statement. On one hand, a vast amount of money has been spent and success is of the essence; the very credibility of those far off dreams and visions is once again standing at the crossroads. On the other hand, there is the community enjoying the frequency of transport services – services which the Island by itself could not support – and enjoying also the extra revenue which more people bring into a small place, especially to the shop and to the knitwear industry. There is also the prospect of catering for tourism in the croft area, a prospect which I consider essential if our community is to maintain its present numbers, or possibly be increased, even as our crofting incomes are being eroded year by year. Add to these points the very important one of extra people on the Isle for a fairly large percentage of the year, swelling the numbers in our churches and at our social functions.

Our future as neighbours, depending on the observer, can generate excitement or apathy. To generate apathy in today's world, especially in such a small community as ours, is a recipe for sure disaster. The opposite of apathy is effort, and effort is essential if the excitement is to be fulfilled. So let us strive together for that standard, and that quality of life, which will still attract "Friends of Fair Isle" and, having attracted, will bring them back again and again.

James W. Stout



Ornithology

It was another outstanding year for migrants, common and rare. Seabirds fared less well, with several species experiencing their worst breeding season for years. New species for the isle, Roseate Tern, Blackburnian Warbler and Blyth's Pipit, were 3 of 204 species recorded. The Blackburnian Warbler was also an addition to the West Palearctic list, while the Blyth's Pipit was the first British record this century - and posed an interesting identification challenge.

The tone for the year was set in late March, with some strong thrush and Skylark movements and Fair Isle's third record of Red Kite. April was another interesting month for common migrants and there was a number of early records. A Great Crested Grebe was the first for 6 years and an unprecedented Grasshopper Warbler influx occurred late in the month. A splendid fall of Bluethroats, Red-backed Shrikes, Pied Flycatchers and other showy species was a feature of May. May-June was also notable for rarities, including multiple arrivals of Subalpine Warbler (4), Great Reed Warbler (3), Woodchat Shrike (3), Golden Oriole (3) and Thrush Nightingale (2). Other rarities included Red-throated Pipit, Black-headed and Little Bunting, Hoopoe, Short-toed Lark and the Roseate Tern.

The seabird season started well with a remarkable influx of Arctic Terns and above average Common Tern numbers. By early July, however, it was apparent that terns, Kittiwakes and Fulmars especially were in trouble, with food shortages (particularly of sand-eels) at cause. In contrast to almost complete tern failures, Gannets bred successfully from 60% more nests than in 1987.

An autumn migration varying from steady to strong began with above average wader passage in July-early September, resulting in record counts for Common Sandpiper, Little Stint and Curlew Sandpiper. A very large fall on 2nd September included record autumn numbers of Red-backed Shrike (12). Unforeseen sea passage

in late September more than doubled the number of Fair Isle Long-tailed Skua records. August-September rarities were 'regulars', with the best yet to come. 'The best' was an October array of species including the Blackburnian Warbler and Blyth's Pipit, an unprecedented 3 Pallas's Grasshopper Warblers, 2 Lanceolated Warblers, Pechora Pipit, 3 Olive-backed Pipits, 4 Little Buntings and a host of other rarities and semi-rarities. There was a strong Scandinavian flavour to late autumn movements, including the first ever autumn Hawfinches (6), Great Spotted Woodpeckers, 2 Rough-legged Buzzards, 20+ northern Bullfinches, good Long-eared Owl passage and the best Waxwing invasion for nearly two decades.

Other unusual species during the year included several Quails and Corncrakes, King Eider, 2 Spotted Crakes, 3 Honey Buzzards, 2 Marsh Harriers, 2 American Golden Plovers, 2 Pectoral Sandpipers, Citrine Wagtail, 2 Greenish Warblers, Rustic Bunting, 2 Yellow-breasted Buntings, Great Tit and the first Blue Tit since 1982.

Monthly Highlights

January-February

It was a quiet winter but Water Rail was seen on three dates in January, a Little Auk on 17th January and a Sparrowhawk on 26th January. A Teal was seen on 20th February. The first 3 Ringed Plovers returned the same day, and the first Oystercatcher on 27th February when hundreds of Guillemots were ashore on the west side.

March

The first half of the month was dominated by cold weather and little migration. This situation ended from 24th, when a spell of SE winds resulted in excellent numbers and variety of passage migrants.

At least 26 Oystercatchers were present on 1st. A Peregrine was seen on 6th and a very early Puffin on the crossing of 8th. Skylark movements began on 9th and the first Song Thrush was on 12th. Early March, however, was cold with regular snow, slowing migration. 20 Fieldfares appeared on 14th and the first Brambling was on 15th. A Ring Ouzel on 16th was the earliest ever by 2 days. There was a Dunlin on 17th, a Whooper Swan on 18th and 20 Snow Buntings on 19th. Main passage did not start until 24th when SE winds brought 100 Blackbirds, 20 Chaffinches, 10 Robins, and the first 8 Greenfinches, 2 Goldcrests, 2 Grey Herons and Siskin of the year. Even larger numbers the next day included 500 Blackbirds, 250 Skylarks, 160 Lapwings, 70 Chaffinches, 35 Woodpigeons, 44 Snow Buntings, 18 Black-headed Gulls, 10 Woodcock and a Water Rail. The 26th was another excellent day. Totals of 1300 Blackbirds, 1000 Starlings, 670 Skylarks, 200 Lapwings, 350 Fieldfares, 150 Redwings, 100 Meadow Pipits, 42 Black-headed Gulls and 22 Puffins were impressive enough. These, however, were only the supporting cast to a magnificent Red Kite over the hill. The impressive movement continued on 27th. Chiffchaff and Wheatear were new and there were 100 Blackbirds, 120 Redwings, 80 Chaffinches, 60 Snow Buntings, while 67 Snipe and 45 Woodpigeons were record spring counts. The Red Kite was giving excellent close views to islanders out for their Sunday afternoon stroll. The first Stock Dove and Black Redstart were seen on 28th and there were 3 Stock Doves and 4 Rooks on 29th. Highlights of 30th were Lapland Bunting, Sparrowhawk and 7 Hoodies. There was a quiet end to the month, but the Red Kite looked at its very best in bright sunny weather.

April

After the fine warm weather and large number of migrants in the last week of March, the first three weeks of April were something of a contrast with largely SW-NW winds, frequent rain and low cloud, snow for 2-3 days and fewer migrants.

The Red Kite stayed to 10th. New migrants included the year's first Red-throated Diver and second Black Redstart and Chiffchaff on 2nd and the first Moorhen below Quoy on 4th when a light morph Arctic Skua was the equal earliest ever arrival. Fog and low cloud on 5th produced 40 Chaffinches, 3 Bramblings and a Mealy Redpoll but little else, though 2 White-beaked Dolphins were seen on the *Good Shepherd* crossing. A small passage of Curlew was marked by at least 42 flying north on 6th. An influx of 90 Icelandic Redwings and 8 Wheatears occurred on 7th. With a bitterly cold day and frequent snow showers on 8th, 15 Wheatears may have regretted their arrival. A complete snow cover on 9th did not deter the first Cormorant, Stonechat and Dunlin of the year or an influx of 24 Ravens. There was an influx of 230 Oystercatchers and 7 Greenfinches on 10th, and male Linnet, 23 Wheatears and the second earliest ever Greenshank on 12th when 3 White-beaked Dolphins were seen on the crossing. A major Fair Isle rarity, a Great Crested Grebe, occurred on 14th. Pausing briefly in Furse Bay it was the first since 1982. Other migrants were the first Great Grey Shrike of the year, 60 Wheatears and a Long-eared Owl. 100 Wheatears occurred on 15th and the year's first Black-tailed Godwit and Glaucous Gull on 16th. Yellowhammer and 3 female Common Scoter were new for the year on 18th.

Strong NE-E winds with rain on 19th produced the month's only large arrival, comprising 280 Fieldfares, 200 Redwings, 30 Blackbirds and 30 Song Thrushes. Tufted Duck and Green Sandpiper were new for the year. Birds continued to arrive on 20th - 320 Bramblings, 1500 Fieldfares, 120 Redwings, 100 Song Thrushes, 31 Ring Ouzels, 135 Wheatears, 105 Chaffinches, 19 Chiffchaffs and the first 4 Tree Pipits and 2 Cuckoos of the year. Included in the arrival were 10 Green Sandpipers, the highest ever spring count. There were fewer birds on 21st but 1000 Fieldfares and over 200 Bramblings remained, Ring Ouzels increased to 50, Tree Pipits to 16 and Whinchat was new. Numbers of Ring Ouzel, Fieldfare and Brambling stayed high almost to the end of the month.

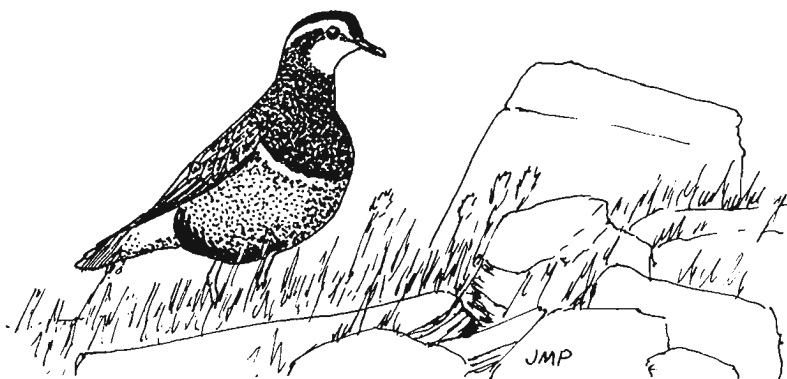
A series of firsts for the year followed - Willow Warbler on 22nd, Redstart, Blackcap and Grasshopper Warbler on 23rd, Swallows on 24th, 3 Collared Doves and Bar-tailed Godwit on 25th, Common Tern and Goldfinch on 26th. Other migrants included 6 Lapland Buntings on 23rd and Mistle Thrush on 24th. Ducks on 26th included a male Scaup, 6 Tufted Ducks and 4 Shoveler. E-SE winds lived up to their reputation on 27th, bringing Wryneck and a smart male eastern race Subalpine Warbler, the latter destined to stay to 14th May. Other migrants included 6 Carrion Crows and the first 2 of a remarkable Grasshopper Warbler influx. There were at least 5 Grasshopper Warblers, another Wryneck and the first *flava* Wagtail on 28th, and 7 Grasshopper Warblers on 29th when 27 Chiffchaffs, 2 Goldfinches and the first Wood Sandpiper were seen. The month ended with a record spring count of 10 Grasshopper Warblers, Sedge Warbler, Moorhen and 2 Common Terns. Steady Chiffchaff passage during the month was highlighted by an April ringing total of 32, exceeding most annual totals!

May

E-SE winds predominated throughout the month, inevitably producing excellent and varied migration. The timing of arrivals closely mirrored those of the equally excellent May 1985.

The first Sand Martin and only Ortolan of the spring occurred on 1st and 6 Grasshopper Warblers were present. Another wave of Ring Ouzels on 2nd brought the total back to 20. Other migrants included Common Sandpipers and 11 Reed

Buntings. The year's first Arctic Tern arrived on 3rd along with 2 Wrynecks and 14 Reed Buntings. 20 Ring Ouzels were still present, increasing to 26 on 4th. 235 Fieldfare were also present. 30 Ring Ouzels were located on 5th and more Grasshopper Warbler arrivals were indicated by a count of 7. The first Whitethroat was also seen but birds of the day were 2 Marsh Harriers over Gilsetter. The Ring Ouzels and one of the Marsh Harriers departed overnight but a Turtle Dove was new. New for the year on 7th were Shelduck, Bluethroat and 2 Lesser Whitethroats. 3 Wrynecks were also seen. On 8th the long-stay Subalpine Warbler was joined by a male of the southern variety. Vying for attention were 3 Dotterel, including a fine female, on Ward Hill. There was no doubting the bird of 9th, a Thrush Nightingale caught on the early trap round. The supporting cast was the first Swift, 62 Purple Sandpipers and 27 Tree Pipits. The year's first Knot and an influx of 23 Carrion Crows occurred on 10th and the first Red-backed Shrike and second Bluethroat on 11th. New for the year on 12th were Pied and 2 Spotted Flycatchers, while a Roseate Tern over Hesti Geo and Shalstane was the first 1988 addition to the island list.



An arrival beginning on 13th continued on 14th to provide the best day of the spring. Arrivals on 13th included a Nightingale, a Hoopoe, 2 Wood Warblers (all new for the year), 30 Tree Pipits, 20 Whinchats, 20 Chiffchaffs, 16 Spotted Flycatchers and 11 Lesser Whitethroats. Warm and sunny weather on 14th enhanced the colours of 55 Bluethroats, 30 Red-backed Shrikes, 35 Pied Flycatchers and 45 Redstarts. Other species present in strength were 500 Wheatears, 180 Tree Pipits, 140 Swallows, 60 Willow Warblers, 50 Spotted Flycatchers, 35 Whinchats and 7 Wood Warblers. Rarities were represented by Short-toed Lark, female Subalpine Warbler and a new Thrush Nightingale. Migrants were still present in strength the following day and Quail, Corncrake, male Golden Oriole and Little Bunting were new. Numbers decreased slowly, but with few new arrivals, to 21st when a Thrush Nightingale was found among the huts at North Haven and 5 Tree Sparrows, 3 Wrynecks, 40 Tree Pipits, 6 Red-backed Shrikes and Glaucous Gull arrived. The spring's fourth Subalpine Warbler was at North Light on 22nd, Grey Wagtail was new and a Woodchat Shrike was seen briefly, flying over Taft. New for the year on 23rd were Scarlet Rosefinch and 3 Pink-footed Geese. On 24th there was relief for observers who missed it previously when the Woodchat Shrike was relocated, back at Taft. Marsh Warbler, 6 Collared Doves, 4 Turtle Doves and a Quail were also present. A sunny, calm day on 25th produced the year's first Honey Buzzard, 7 Scarlet Rosefinches, 3 Marsh Warblers and 200 Swallows. It was calm but foggy on 27th,

when the star bird of the early morning trap round was a Great Reed Warbler, the sixth Fair Isle record. The year's first Icterine Warbler was also seen. The Great Reed Warbler was still present on 28th. Other highlights were a Mistle Thrush, the year's first Sanderling and a record gathering of 90 Rock Doves. There was a renewed arrival of Red-backed Shrikes on 30th with 7 present, the elusive Woodchat was seen again and 2 Marsh Warblers. The Woodchat, 8 Red-backed Shrikes and 3 Marsh Warblers were recorded on 31st when the saddest find of the month was the heavily Fulmar-oiled corpse of the Honey Buzzard.

June

Winds between SW and N for long periods did not prevent a good variety of late migrants from making landfall, though inevitably migrants were few from mid month. Mid month also saw a deterioration in the weather to frequent days of fog and low cloud, hampering our usual seabird monitoring activities.

There was an excellent start to the month on 1st in the form of a first-summer male Golden Oriole at Quoy, a Quail at Springfield, the year's first Reed Warbler outnumbered by 5 Marsh Warblers, 15 Garden Warblers and a Scarlet Rosefinch. On a sadder note there was another Fulmar-oiled Honey Buzzard. Not to be outdone the 2nd brought a Red-throated Pipit, the second Great Reed Warbler of the spring, 5 Marsh Warblers, 2 Reed Warblers and 2 Icterine Warblers; and after some initial doubts we confirmed that there were 2 Woodchat Shrikes and 2 Scarlet Rosefinches. It was a spring of multiple rarity arrivals, no better demonstrated than on 3rd when a new Great Reed Warbler trapped, and the May-ringed and an unringed bird seen, brought the spring and day total to 3. One of the two Woodchat Shrikes, a male, was also trapped. An unseasonal Brambling on 4th and a singing Lesser Whitethroat on 5th were the highlights of a quiet spell, though a male Woodchat thought to be new on 7th did not stay long enough for all doubt to be dispelled. One lucky observer was treated to fine views of a male Black-headed Bunting on 9th and a Marsh Warbler in full song in the observatory garden on 11th was later joined by another. We fared better with Woodchat Shrike on 12th, confirming the third (or fourth?) record of the spring. A Sandwich Tern was new for the year on 14th and the first 6 Storm Petrels were seen on the crossing on 16th. Two adult Long-tailed Skuas flew north over South Harbour on 19th. A breath of SE wind on 20th was sufficient to produce a new Marsh Warbler. A flock of 9 Curlews on 25th may have been early returning migrants but the migratory status of a male Tufted Duck and Whitethroat on 30th was less clear.

The seabird highlight was undoubtedly the continued growth of the Arctic Tern colony. A minimum count of at least 345 nests and scrapes was easily a record for the isle and included a large new colony at Shalstane in the south.

July

July was memorable for its weather, but not in a way we would want to remember. Eighteen days of rain and fog strove to ensure maximum disruption to our seabird work. Nevertheless, it did not prevent us from witnessing the poorest seabird breeding season on Fair Isle for many years with terns, Kittiwakes and Fulmars the most severely affected. On the migrant front, however, there were some notable influxes of gulls and waders, particularly after the 10th.

Even in early July there were signs of autumn, including a Green Sandpiper on 2nd and a juvenile Grey Heron on 3rd. Other sightings on 2nd included male Wigeon and male Tufted Duck on the isle and the year's first Manx Shearwater on the crossing. Butterfly migration was demonstrated by 3 Painted Ladies on 3rd. A Honey Buzzard on a cloudy, foggy day on 4th had not yet encountered Fulmars. The autumn's first Ruff occurred on 6th and a Grey Heron was trapped in the Plantation. A Quail calling on 8th may have been the long staying bird heard intermittently in the Taing/Da Water

area. Two Tufted Ducks were in residence on 9th. The Honey Buzzard was seen again on 10th. Inevitably, it now showed signs of Fulmar-oiling. An influx on 11th comprised 41 Black-headed Gulls, the first 2 Knot of the autumn and a Wood Pigeon. Wet, foggy weather on 13th may have forced 210 Black-headed Gulls, the highest ever July count, to land. Less seasonal were 2 Song Thrushes and a Fieldfare. We embarked on our part of the north east Atlantic Storm Petrel study on the night of 13th/14th with a successful catch of 36 on North Haven beach.

A female Pintail, the first of the year, on 15th preceded a small arrival of 15 Ringed Plovers, 12 Curlews, Ruff and the autumn's first Sanderling and Bar-tailed Godwit the next day. Another gull influx on 19th produced counts of 160 Common Gulls and 110 Black-headed Gulls. There were 200 Common Gulls early on 20th, but the arrival of fine weather prompted most of them to move on. More waders on 21st included 45 Redshank and 40 Turnstone. A Kestrel was new on 25th but Redwing and Quail were probably both oversummering birds. A good arrival on 26th included 27 Knot, 30 Turnstone, 23 Redshanks, 13 Sanderling, 9 Dunlin, 90 Common and 20 Black-headed Gulls. Thrushes were represented by single Mistle Thrush, Redwing and Fieldfare. Knot numbers increased to 35 on 27th and there were 16 Swifts, rising to 100 on 28th. The autumn's first Wood Sandpiper, 75 Turnstone, 16 Purple Sandpipers and 24 Dunlin were also seen on 28th, while continued gull movements resulted in counts of 100 Common, 90 Black-headed and 80 Lesser Black-backs. The autumn's first Greenshank on 29th was joined by 5 Green Sandpipers on 30th when there was the surprising sight on the crossing of 4 very early grey geese.

August

Periods of SE winds in August produced some interesting migrants and a good wader passage. There was a number of early records, including the earliest ever Goldcrest on 17th. There were not as many national rarities as in recent Augusts, but 2 Greenish Warblers made a good start to the autumn. A major night-time activity was Storm Petrel trapping at North Haven. Over 700 were caught in August, including the second Norwegian bird of the summer. An estimated 400 birds were flying round the nets on 1st. Storm Petrels and Sooty Shearwaters were also seen regularly on *Good Shepherd* crossings.

Migrants were scarce in the first week. Highlights were 5 Green Sandpipers and a Kestrel on 2nd, the first Peregrine of the autumn on 3rd, an influx of waders on 4th including 95 Turnstone, 40 Redshank and 3 Purple Sandpipers, and a big influx of 320 Common Gulls on 5th. South-east winds set in on 7th but little arrived until 9th when rain in the morning brought the first warblers of the autumn. As befits the isle 2 were Fair Isle specialities, a Barred and a Greenish. A marked influx with easterly winds on 11th included 12 Greenshanks, 7 Common Sandpipers, 500 Common Gulls, another Barred Warbler and single Wood Sandpiper and Wryneck. Spotted Flycatcher on 12th and Song Thrush and Fieldfare on 13th were early records. Six Shelducks spent four days on Easter Lother from 13th. Easterly winds brought a number of new migrants on 14th, including Short-eared Owl, Cuckoo, Tufted Duck, 7 Swallows and another Barred Warbler.

Two newly fledged Puffins were rather atypical finds on first trap round after a SW gale on 15th. Another fledged inland on 18th. A Wood Warbler was in the north on 16th. The wind returned to the east on 17th, bringing 20 Sanderling and the first of an excellent Little Stint influx. The season's seabird work was rounded off with a boat trip to the Gannet colonies in the north-west.

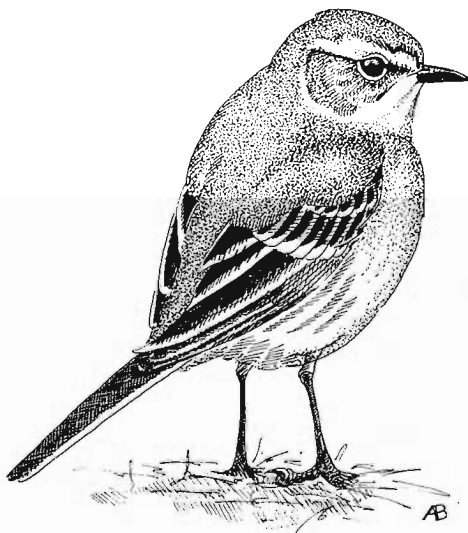
New migrants on 21st included 26 Golden Plovers, 8 Green Sandpipers, 7 Knot, 3 Pied Flycatchers, 300 Meadow Pipits and single Fieldfare and Barred Warbler. It was the last day for the Greenish Warbler of 9th, which had resided mainly in the observatory garden. The second Scarlet Rosefinch of the month was seen on 22nd

and a flock of 11 Grey Herons was an impressive sight on 23rd. Other new arrivals were 8 Ruff, 48 White Wagtails and a Short-eared Owl. A Merlin, 2 Wood Warblers and 2 Barred Warblers were new on 24th. A minor influx occurred the next day, highlights being a Wryneck, Redstart, Redwing, 15 Garden Warblers and 12 Green Sandpipers. Another Wryneck was found on 26th and Willow Warblers increased to 25. Strong SE winds on 27th brought the second Greenish Warbler of the autumn and influxes of 480 Wheatears and 385 Meadow Pipits. The supporting cast included Grasshopper Warbler, Barred Warbler and Scarlet Rosefinch. Water Rail and Turtle Dove were new for the autumn on 28th. Corncrake, Spotted Redshank and the first Curlew Sandpipers on 30th and a Dotterel on Ward Hill on 31st made a fitting climax to the month.

September

The month began well with an excellent fall on 2nd after an overnight easterly blow. The winds for the rest of the month were predominantly westerly, often reaching gale force, although there were some days of southerly. The month was, at least, fairly dry.

The month began as August ended, with the Dotterel still present (and remaining to 4th). Three Barred Warblers, and the first Red-backed Shrike and Mistle Thrush of the autumn were new. The wind was E and remained so, reaching gale force with rain during the night of 1st/2nd. We woke to a classic Fair Isle fall. There was impressive quantity and variety, highlights being 500 Meadow Pipits, 120 Tree Pipits, 70 White Wagtails, 400 Twite, 170 Garden, 130 Willow, 4 Reed and 3 Barred Warblers, 20 Lesser Whitethroats, 100 Whinchats, 35 Redstarts, 65 Pied Flycatchers, 40 Common Sandpipers, 32 Little Stints, 12 Goldcrests and 12 Wrynecks. Twelve Red-backed Shrikes was a record autumn count. Single Corncrake, Bluethroat and Icterine Warbler were also seen. Birds were not quite as numerous on 3rd, but there were still very creditable counts of 60 Tree Pipits, 15 Pied Flycatchers, 7 Red-backed Shrikes and 3 Wrynecks as well as 30 Ruff, 9 Curlew Sandpipers and 7 Kestrels. A *Convolvulus* Hawk Moth found dying at Quoy was a first for Fair Isle.



Over the next few days there were departures and further arrivals. Observations on 4th included 8 Red-backed Shrikes, 7 Wrynecks, 2 Bluethroats and a Grasshopper Warbler, while a Whitethroat was one of only 5 records during the autumn. On 5th there were record counts for Little Stint (33) and Curlew Sandpiper (36) and Whinchats peaked at 140. A third Bluethroat was found and 2 Sand Martins were new. All but one of the Curlew Sandpipers had gone by 6th, the only fresh migrants being 2 Scarlet Rosefinches and a Spotted Redshank. A Citrine Wagtail was found outside the observatory on 8th, remaining to 10th. The first 2 Siskins of the autumn were also seen, and a Leach's and many Storm Petrels on the crossing. A Yellow-breasted Bunting proved elusive at Springfield on 9th but was found later that day at Quoy where it remained to 18th. Sixteen migrant Cormorants flew over and the Eider flock reached 1050.

With the wind in the SW, going N on 12th, there was little migratory activity during the next few days. Highlights of this quiet period were 4 Red-backed Shrikes, including an adult male, on 10th and 20 Sanderling, 12 Goldcrests, a Corncrake and Slavonian Grebe on 12th. Cold northerlies on 13th produced the first 2 Snow Buntings and first 2 Jack Snipe of the autumn. Another Leach's Petrel was seen on the crossing. Even on NW winds it is impossible to relax on Fair Isle. This was ably demonstrated by a *Locustella* at Springfield on 15th. At first it was very difficult to see but was eventually identified as Lanceolated Warbler. Fortunately it remained to 21st, an atypically long stay for that species. The first 8 Pink-footed Geese were seen on 15th, and 30 next day. A Grey Plover on 16th was new for the year. The first 3 Lapland Buntings of the autumn occurred on 18th, but the highlight was an adult Long-tailed Skua flying past South Light. News of more Long-tailed Skuas off North Ronaldsay prompted further seawatching on 19th and skua rewards of 3 Long-tailed, 4 Arctic and 35 Great. Gale force westerly winds rendered other birdwatching activity unproductive, though a new Yellow-breasted Bunting was found sheltering in North Haven.

On 20th continued strong westerlies ensured that seawatching was again popular, producing observations of 100 Gannets per hour, another Long-tailed Skua and 2 Manx Shearwaters. Over the isle there were sightings of 150 Pinkfeet passing through and the autumn's first Sparrowhawk. A change in wind strength and direction to light S on 21st was accompanied by arrivals of American Golden Plover and King Eider. Both were at North Light but that was where the similarity ended, for the plover was away within minutes while the duck began a two-month residence in the Eider flock. Elsewhere on the isle there were 2 Barred Warblers, 2 Scarlet Rosefinches and a Yellow-browed Warbler. Strong Skylark and Meadow Pipit through-passage over the next few days peaked at 700 Skylarks and 800 Meadow Pipits on 22nd. A Pomarine Skua was seen from the crossing on 21st and 3 Long-tailed Skuas the next day, with a juvenile seen from the isle. American waders continued to make landfall in the guise of the first Pectoral Sandpiper for 8 years at Setter and, amazingly, a different American Golden Plover at Brecks o Busta - both on 22nd.

There were light variable winds on 23rd but just a breath of SE was sufficient to bring a Short-toed Lark to Quoy. Other new arrivals included 30 Wigeon, 15 each of Garden Warbler and Goldcrest and 4 Scarlet Rosefinches. More seawatching on 24th produced 7 Long-tailed and 3 Pomarine Skuas and 3 Sooty Shearwaters. 25 Cormorants and the first Great Northern Diver of the autumn were also seen. 2 Pintail and a very late Common Tern occurred on 26th. On 27th there was a Bluethroat and first autumn records for Whooper Swan (5), Greylag Goose (23) and Red-throated Diver (3). Yet another Long-tailed Skua was seen on 28th along with the first Blackbird of the autumn and late Puffin and Tree Pipit. The month ended with a Pectoral Sandpiper on Malcolm's Head (possibly different from the Setter bird), a Glaucous Gull at Dutfield, 4 Mealy Redpolls, 45 Snow Buntings and 20 Lapland Buntings, all on 30th. The Short-toed Lark and King Eider were still present.

It was not the most remarkable September on record for rarities, but more than compensated by large early September arrivals and record numbers of Little Stints, Curlew Sandpipers and Red-backed Shrikes; and the late September Long-tailed Skua passage more than doubled the isle's records of that species.

October

With depressions moving to the south of us the wind was rarely far from the easterly quarter. The result was migrants in force and a most exciting and excellent month for the relatively few birdwatchers shrewd enough to visit then.

An arrival of 100 Fieldfares, 80 Redwings and 52 Barnacle Geese on 1st was a promising start to the month. The King Eider, Short-toed Lark, 2 Bluethroats and 2 Scarlet Rosefinches remained from September. On 2nd Barnacle Geese numbers increased to 102 and Snow Buntings to 65. The Short-toed Lark at Quoy was joined by another. With the wind switching to NE-E on 4th birds started to arrive in force. Leading the way was an extraordinary 16 Yellow-browed Warblers, accompanied by 50 Goldcrests, 20 Blackcaps and 23 Bramblings. A Lanceolated Warbler was discovered at Barkland at lunchtime and gave excellent afternoon views. Even those on the crossing were not left out, 2 Yellow-browed Warblers and 3 Goldcrests landing on the boat and a late Puffin flying by. The following day was just as eventful. The pace of breakfast quickened perceptibly as news broke of a possible Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler at Utra, possibility turning to reality as it flashed its whitish tail tips at observers during a foraging spell in a sheltered wood pile. In the afternoon attention turned to a Pechora Pipit at Taing. Observers still had time to log 5 Yellow-browed Warblers, a third Short-toed Lark, the Barkland Lanceolated Warbler and the first Moorhen and Ring Ouzel of the autumn. The wind backed southerly on 6th but birds continued to arrive, most notably 2000 Redwings, 800 Fieldfares, 60 Song Thrushes, 20 Dunlin, 10 Jack Snipe and 2 Spotted Crakes. A Rough-legged Buzzard was watched arriving from the north and a Red-breasted Flycatcher was ringed. With the Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler now at the School, a Grasshopper Warbler brought the day count of *Locustella* species to 3. A first-winter Glaucous Gull easily trapped on South Haven beach in the evening rounded off an enjoyable day. The Glaucous Gull had arrived a few days earlier and was set to stay until at least late November.

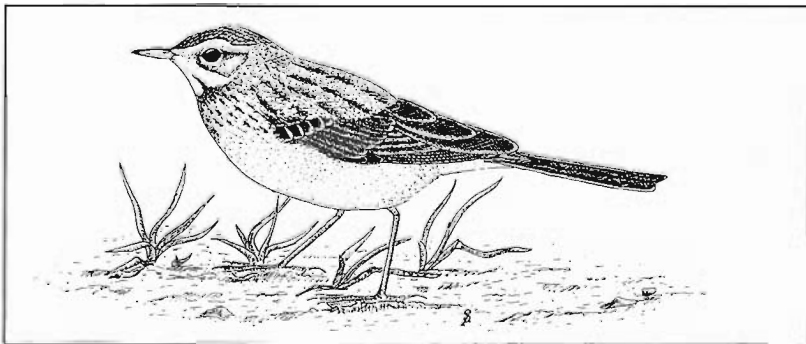
Those who thought that north-west winds and a wet, blustery start to 7th was a recipe for a quiet day were quickly proved wrong. Soon after breakfast news spread of an American warbler at Furse. It was soon re-located and identified as a first-winter male Blackburnian Warbler, a stunning addition to the Fair Isle, British and West Palearctic list. Modern technology in the form of CB radios ensured that almost everyone saw it before it flew off high on an easterly heading, never to be seen again. Other highlights were 5 Red-breasted Flycatchers, an Olive-backed Pipit at Shirva, the Pechora Pipit, 2 Richard's Pipits, 4 Bluethroats and 5 Yellow-browed Warblers (including a leucistic one). The bird of 8th was an Otolan Bunting but the finder of the Blackburnian Warbler again struck lucky, observing 3 Killer Whales off North Light. A wet and windy night, with the wind shifting from SE to NE, produced a large lighthouse attraction in the early hours of 9th, about 30 casualties mainly comprising thrushes. Counts of 1750 Redwings and 800 Fieldfares demonstrated a corresponding influx on the isle. Other arrivals included 250 northern Herring Gulls and 1200 Great Black-backs. A Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler at Quoy appeared different in plumage to the one of a few days earlier and this was confirmed when it was seen to be unringed.

The *Locustella* theme continued with a new Lanceolated Warbler, the third of the autumn, at the School on 10th. By 1988 standards the 11th was a quiet day, with departures including Skylarks and Meadow Pipits. Nevertheless, another Olive-backed Pipit was found at Meadow Burn and the first Little Auk of the winter was seen

on the crossing. Impressions gained from first trap round of another quiet day on 12th were soon to be proved wrong. Force 7-8 easterly winds rarely fail Fair Isle in autumn and it soon became obvious that there had been a big influx, including 200 Blackbirds, 320 Goldcrests, 1800 Redwings and 280 Song Thrushes and an excellent variety of other migrants. A darker, duller unringed Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler (sharing Meadow Burn with the Olive-backed Pipit) brought the autumn's total to an unprecedented three. A Little Bunting was found at Quoy and another at Gilsetter. Reports of a Hawfinch escalated as 4 were found. Pursuit of 3 as they went to ground at South Harbour led as if by magic to a Hoopoe on the same cliff! Scarcely had that incident finished before a Rustic Bunting was found at Leogh. Other notable newcomers included 2 Hen Harriers, 2, possibly 3, Great Spotted Woodpeckers, a Grey Wagtail, 2 Mistle Thrushes and 7 Yellowhammers, all contributing to a memorable day.

A Radde's Warbler on 13th, only the second Fair Isle record, was seen at Easter Lothar by one observer spirited enough to go north. It was clear that another major arrival had occurred: 2000 Fieldfares, 2000 Redwings, 1500 Song Thrushes, 400 Blackbirds, 50 Robins, 40 Blackcaps, 16 Reed Buntings, 10 Jack Snipe and 10 Ring Ouzels. Other birds included 4 Black Redstarts, 2 Stonechats, 2 Glaucous Gulls, a late Turtle Dove and the first Goldeneye of the autumn. A large pipit, seen by a few observers, generated considerable debate but resolution of identity was not achieved until the following day. It was seen briefly in the morning south of Shirva and was finally tracked down to Quoy in the afternoon where it settled for a six day stay during which detailed study permitted us to identify it as Blyth's Pipit, a first for Fair Isle and the first in Britain this century. Other birds present included 3 Little Buntings (including a new one), a new Olive-backed Pipit at North Light, a Red-breasted Flycatcher and a Blyth's Lesser Whitethroat. Arrivals on 15th included a late Whitethroat, a Richard's Pipit at Barkland and, at midday, the first light plane load of Blyth's Pipit 'twitchers'. The airstrip-Quoy return route was employed by two more plane loads next day, but only residents were treated to the extraordinary sight of a Pectoral Sandpiper on an occasional pool at Mavers Cup, oblivious of birdwatchers just 3 metres away in the observatory lounge and dumper trucks and building contractors outside.

A relatively small influx on 17th brought counts of 1200 Blackbirds, 480 Skylarks, 110 Bramblings and the first Long-eared Owl of the autumn. Larger numbers the next day included 6000 Redwings, 2500 Blackbirds, 100 Woodcocks, 4 Sparrowhawks, 2 Grey Wagtails and 43 Long-tailed Ducks. 1800 Herring Gulls and 800 Great Black-backs were ashore with continued gale force south-easterlies on 19th. Fair Isle 'rarities' comprised a dark-bellied Brent Goose and Pochard. The wind moderated a



little on 20th, though remaining relentlessly SE. Birds present in numbers were 1050 Starlings, 90 Snipe, 15 Jack Snipe and 12 Woodpigeons. Other new migrants were 2 Great Spotted Woodpeckers and 2 eastern type *flava* Wagtails. It was all change on 21st. Many migrants had departed, but 12 northern Bullfinches and 2 Hawfinches were new and there was a late Little Stint and Red-breasted Flycatcher. Migrant Wrens were noted. There was a new Little Bunting at Midway on 22nd while rather rarer in Fair Isle terms was a Great Tit at Shirva. Yet more arrivals resulted in counts of 150 Goldcrests, 2200 Fieldfares, 100 Snipe, 50 Reed Buntings, 15 Ring Ouzels, 9 Short-eared Owls, 5 Long-eared Owls and 2 Ortolan Buntings. The Blyth's Pipit put in a brief appearance at Lower Stoneybrake. Totals of 127 Long-tailed Ducks and 16 northern Bullfinches on 24th were both exceptionally high counts for the isle. A Waxwing flew over Malcolm's Head. The Fenno-Scandian trend continued next day with 3 Waxwings, a Rough-legged Buzzard, 2 Long-eared Owls and an estimated 200 Woodcock on the hill. The crossing produced a Pomarine Skua, 2 Little Auks and a late Sooty Shearwater. An interesting selection of migrants on 26th included 13 Greenfinches and 11 Yellowhammers. A Norwegian-ringed Greenfinch was trapped the following day.

As the month closed the wind swung into the west and the hectic pace of migration slowed at last, 2 Black Redstarts on 28th and 2 Long-eared Owls on 31st being the highlights. Apart from the last few days there had hardly been a slack moment and, for all those lucky enough to partake, October 1988 will long remain in the memory.

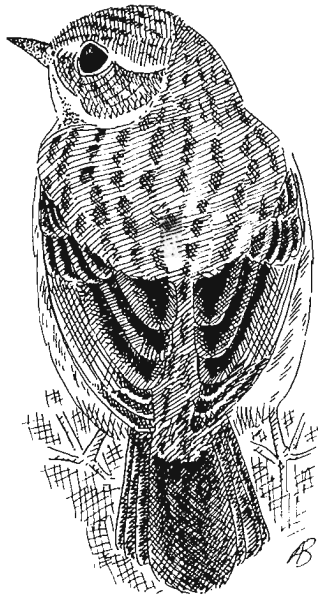
November-December

November was inevitably a quieter month, but Waxwing passage continued and there was a series of Long-eared Owls. Offshore there were plenty of Long-tailed Ducks and Little Auks and some exciting cetacean sightings. Mild and dry weather encouraged good numbers of thrushes and Skylarks to remain for most of the month.

Two Porpoises on 1st were a promise of better to come. On 2nd the bird highlight was 20 Waxwings scattered in small flocks round the isle. Snow Bunting passage peaked at 310 and there were also at least 4 Merlins, 5 Ring Ouzels, 250 Skylarks and 40 Robins. A flock of 100 Long-tailed Ducks was off the south and King Eider and Great Tit were still present. The mammal highlight was a school of about 18 Risso's Dolphins off South Light. A Waxwing was at the observatory on 4th-5th and 2 Glaucous Gulls at the Havens on 6th. A Goldfinch and 2 Greenland White-fronted Geese arrived on 7th and 5 Waxwings and 2 Whooper Swans were seen. Birds present in numbers comprised 150 Turnstones, 200 Redwings, 300 Fieldfares and 150 Snow Buntings. Turnstone numbers increased to 230 on 9th when 46 Purple Sandpipers were present. A Great Northern Diver flew E, 2 Water Rails were seen and gulls ashore totalled 5000 Herring and 1500 Great Black-backs. Other increases were Snow Bunting to 300, Fieldfare to 800, Redwing to 600 and Song Thrush to 60. 12 Little Auks flew S off Bunness on 11th and 2 Long-eared Owls were new on 12th. Two more Long-eared Owls and a Mistle Thrush arrived on 13th. Activity on 15th included 100 Blackbirds, 30 Song Thrushes, 200 Redwings and 260 Turnstones. Rock Dove movement was suggested by a count of 60, involving a series of small flocks all flying determinedly S. Geese were represented by 26 Greylags, a Pink-foot and the 2 Whitefronts. Two northern Bullfinches included a new male. The Eiders were censused at 1100, plus the ever present King Eider. New migrants on 16th were Black Redstart, Ring Ouzel, Redpoll, Jack Snipe, Kestrel, 2 Waxwings and 2 Siskins. A Water Rail and a Great Northern Diver were seen on 17th, and a long stay male Ring Ouzel was still outside the observatory. Counts of 170 Snow Buntings, 220 Fieldfares, 130 Redwings, 100 Blackbirds, 45 Snipe, 30 Long-tailed Ducks and a Common

Scoter were made on 18th, but the undoubted highlight was a pod of 6 Sperm Whales (probably bachelor males) moving slowly SW off the south. Waxwing, Great Northern Diver and 5 Little Auks were seen on 19th. There was another Waxwing on 21st, 7 Little Auks off Bunes and a further 7 off South Light where Red-throated Diver and Goldeneye were also seen. A late Ringed Plover was at Midway. A new Long-eared Owl was trapped on 23rd, Little Auk and Great Northern Diver seen on 24th and 11 Little Auks on 25th. Numbers of commoner migrants were at last declining by 28th, but the habitual 6 Little Auks were off South Light and a new bird for the year, first-winter Iceland Gull, was in South Harbour.

With mild weather allowing migrants to remain well into November, December numbers of thrushes, Robins, Skylarks, Snow Buntings and Twite were all above average.



Late addition

Two Blue Tits were in the Gully on 30th December.

Systematic List

**Details of all birds preceded by an asterisk are still being considered by the British Birds Rarities Committee*

RED-THROATED DIVER *Gavia stellata*. Records comprised 1 on 2nd April, 1 on the Good Shepherd crossing of 14th May, 1 regularly over the isle 24th May-16th July and in autumn 1-3 on 13 scattered dates, 2nd August-23rd October and 1 on 21st November.

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER *Gavia immer*. Records comprised singles on 24th & 30th September, 3 on 4th, 1 on 7th, 2 on 17th & 1 on 26th October and 1 on five dates 9th-25th November, while on the crossing there were 2 on 24th September and 1 on 31st October.

DIVER species *Gavia*. Unidentified divers were seen on 4th April, 16th May (3), 2nd June, 4th & 24th August, 1st & 28th September and 8th October (2).

GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus*. One in full summer plumage sitting on the sea at Furze on 14th April was the first record since 1982.

SLAVONIAN GREBE *Podiceps auritus*. One on 12th September was the only record.

FULMAR *Fulmarus glacialis*. Present all year. 'Blue' Fulmars were seen occasionally most months. Breeding productivity at monitored sites was 0·38 chicks per nest.

SOOTY SHEARWATER *Puffinus griseus*. The first one was seen on crossing of 27th July and 1-6 from the isle or on the crossing on 9 dates 11th-31st August, 1-3 on 19th-25th September and singles on 6th, 9th & 25th October.

MANX SHEARWATER *Puffinus puffinus*. Singles were seen on crossings of 2nd & 27th July and 11th August and 2 from the isle on 20th & 26th September.

STORM PETREL *Hydrobates pelagicus*. Recorded from 16th June on crossing and 17th June ashore. Common ashore at night mid July to late August and commonest on crossings of 10th-11th September. Late records were 1 on crossing of 4th October and juveniles ashore on 8th & 18th October.

LEACH'S PETREL *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*. The only records were singles on crossings of 8th & 13th September.

GANNET *Sula bassana*. Present from at least February. There was a 60% increase in number of nests to a new high of 488. Breeding productivity at monitored sites was 0·78 chicks per nest. Breeding departures were complete by mid October and birds offshore few and infrequent after late October.

CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*. Very few in spring, comprising one on four dates, 9th-24th April, 1-2 on five dates in May and 1-2 on three June dates to 17th. Autumn passage 21st August-22nd November when recorded most days, maximum 25 on 24th September.

SHAG *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*. Present all year. Breeding productivity at monitored sites was 1·3 chicks per nest.

GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea*. In spring there were 1-4 on 24th-26th March and 2 on 24th April. Post-breeding birds were present most days 3rd July-4th November, maximum 7 on 15th September and 22nd October.

WHOOPEE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus*. A second-winter on 18th March was the only record until 5 on 26th September, decreasing to 2 on 30th September. There was further passage of 1-5 on 15 dates, 10th October-7th November.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus*. Three on 23rd May-1st June was the only spring record. Autumn passage was 15th September-4th October, with strongest passage on 20th-23rd when 150, 190, 75 & 100 respectively. One late bird was present from 16th October-23rd November and 5 on 5th December.

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons*. Two Greenland Whitefronts were present from 7th-18th November.

GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser*. One overwintered, remaining to May. It was joined by others from 18th April-24th May, maximum 5 on most days 25th April-9th May. Almost daily 27th September-December, peaking at 100 on 4th, 6th & 8th October.

GREY GOOSE species *Anser*. Four unidentified grey geese were seen flying S on the crossing of 30th July and 4-23 on 4 dates, 16th-30th September.

BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis*. Autumn passage was concentrated in 1st-8th October when 47-67 daily and 102 on 2nd. 1-5 were seen most days 9th-27th October.



Barnacles

Photo: Alan Roberts

BRENT GOOSE *Branta bernicla*. The only records were a dark-bellied on 19th-20th and a pale-bellied bird on 20th October.

SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna*. There was 1 on 8th & 20th May. Six occurred on 12th-16th August and 2 on 2nd-13th December.

WIGEON *Anas penelope*. Up to 8 were seen on ten widely scattered dates, 26th March-23rd May. 1-3 were seen regularly 30th June-25th July. 1-5 on 6 dates, 3rd-21st August, preceded steady daily passage, 27th August-26th November, maxima 30 on 23rd September, 25 on 20th-21st October.

GADWALL *Anas strepera*. 3 on 29th August and 1 on 5th September were the only records.

TEAL *Anas crecca*. There was 1 on 20th February, 2 on 25th March and 1-4 most days, 7th April-18th June, with 6 on 21st April. Autumn records were 26th July-28th November, maximum 16 on 19th October.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*. 1-4 were seen on 28 dates, 25th March-20th June. In July there were 2 on 2nd & 1 on 19th. Nine August singles and 1-3 most days in

September preceded stronger daily passage 2nd October-12th November, maxima 22 on 22nd, 40 on 25th October.

PINTAIL *Anas acuta*. Records comprised a female on 15th-16th & 22nd September, 2 on 25th & 1 on 29th September-2nd October and a female on 21st October.

SHOVELER *Anas clypeata*. There were two pairs on 26th April-5th May, one pair remaining to 7th. A male was present 30th May-2nd June. In autumn there was 1 on 4th October and 1 on 20th November.

POCHARD *Aythya ferina*. A male on 19th-24th October was the only record.

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula*. In spring there was 1 on 19th April, 3 on 24th-25th increasing to 6 on 26th April and 1-3 most days to 16th May. Summer records comprised a male on 30th June-11th July, a female on 2nd-11th July and 1 on 25th July. Autumn singles were seen on 15 widely scattered dates, 10th August-18th October.

EIDER *Somateria mollissima*. Present all year. The spring maximum was 450 on 21st April and the autumn maximum 1100 on 15th November.

***KING EIDER** *Somateria spectabilis*. A male emerging from eclipse, found off North Light on 21st September was last seen on 15th November.

LONG-TAILED DUCK *Clangula hyemalis*. Spring records comprised 2 on 21st March, 1-3 most days 2nd-25th April and 2 on 8th-14th May. Post-breeding arrivals began with 1-2 on 4 dates, 23rd September-2nd October. Daily records from 6th October built to 43 on 18th October and exceptional numbers on 23rd October-7th November when 60+ most days and 127 on 24th October. 40-50 remained into December.

COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra*. 3 females flew N on 18th April and 23rd May, a male was present 10th-25th May, a male and 2 females on 11th-13th June, a male on 13th July and a female on 26th July. Autumn records comprised 2 on 25th September, 1 on 30th September & 4th-6th October, 2 on 11th & 2 on 20th October, and 1-2 on 1st-18th November.

GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula*. Spring records were a female on 27th March and 18th April, 2 on 2nd May, 1 on 17th May and 1-2 daily 23rd May-1st June. Autumn records comprised 1-3 on 7 dates, 13th-26th October, 5 on 21st October and 2 on 20th-22nd November.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator*. 1-3 were present most days, 23rd March-24th April and 17th May-16th June. A female was seen on 8th and 14th-15th July. 1-3 were present on 14th-20th September and 1-4 on 16 dates in October, with 7 on 9th October. 1-2 were seen regularly on 1st-25th November.

HONEY BUZZARD *Pernis apivorus*. One on 25th-31st May was found dead on the last date and the same applied to another from 1st-9th June. Both had been heavily Fulmar-oiled. One on 4th-10th July fared better.

RED KITE *Milvus milvus*. A magnificent adult, gracing the isle from 26th March-10th April, was the third Fair Isle record.

MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus*. Two immatures appeared on 5th May, one remaining to 7th.

HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus*. The only records were 2 on 12th-18th October, one staying to 23rd, and 1 on 18th November (all 'ring-tails').

SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus*. There were singles on 26th January and on 16 dates, 30th March-23rd May. In autumn there was 1 on 20th September, daily passage 12th-22nd October including 4 on 18th and 1 on 29th-30th October.

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD *Buteo lagopus*. Single birds were seen on 6th & 25th October.

KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus*. In spring there was 1 on 31st March, 20th & 30th April, 2 on 6th May, and 1 on 7th, 16th & 17th-19th May and 1st June. Autumn birds were seen regularly 26th July-29th November, maxima 5 on 2nd & 7 on 3rd September.

MERLIN *Falco columbarius*. There was a female on 12th February, 1 on 14th & 27th-28th March with 2 on 30th, and singles on 10 dates 2nd April-4th May. Late singles occurred on 24th & 31st May and 3rd June. A relatively poor autumn passage comprised singles on 24th & 27th-28th August, 1-3 on 9 September dates from 9th and 1-2 most days October-20th November, with 4 on 2nd November.

PEREGRINE *Falco peregrinus*. Singles on 1st January and 5th-6th March preceded regular singles on 27th March-23rd April. Late birds were seen on 14th-15th & 24th May and 8th June. There were autumn singles on 3rd-4th August, most days 27th August-10th September, 26th September and most days 6th October-21st November. 2 occurred on 12th October.

QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix*. Singles were seen and/or heard on 15th & 24th May, 1st-2nd & 23rd June, 8th & 25th July; and 2 sang simultaneously on 16th July.

WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus*. Singles were seen on 7th, 10th & 24th January. A very poor spring passage comprised 1 on 25th & 29th-30th March. In autumn there was 1 on 12th & 21st-23rd September and 1-2 on 18 dates, 4th October-18th November.

SPOTTED CRAKE *Porzana porzana*. 2 on 6th October was the only record.

CORNCRAKE *Crex crex*. There was one in spring, on 15th May, and autumn singles on 30th August, 2nd, 6th & 12th September.

MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus*. Spring singles occurred on 4th & 30th April. Autumn records comprised 1 on 4th-6th October and singles found dead on 16th & 26th October.

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus*. First arrivals were in late February. 170 were present by 30th March and 230 on 10th April. Non-breeders arrived from mid May, maximum flock 150 on 4th June. The breeding population was censused at 51 pairs. Post-breeding numbers were high in early August, including 300 on 9th, declining to 40 on 31st August, 18 on 10th September and 3 on 24th September. 1-3 late birds were present in October to 22nd and 1 to 24th November.

RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula*. The first 3 arrived on 20th February. 11 were present by 27th March. The spring peak was 18 on 17th April. The breeding population was censused at 18 pairs. Autumn passage was indicated in late August-early September by counts including 90 on 31st August, 60 on 1st September. Only 3 remained by 30th September, but a late influx of 21 occurred on 2nd October, declining to 5 on 12th October and the last 2 on 25th October. One was seen on 21st November.

DOTTEREL *Charadrius morinellus*. In spring there was 1 on 7th May, 3 next day and 4 on 9th. Another 2 occurred on 15th-16th May. An autumn adult female was present 29th August-4th September.

***AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER** *Pluvialis dominica*. The recent run of autumn records continued with a first-year at North Light on 21st September and a different first-year at Brecks o Busta the next day.

GOLDEN PLOVER *Charadrius apricaria*. 2 on 26th March and 7 next day preceded almost daily records, 7th April-30th May. Passage was strongest in late April-early May, peaking at 26 on 3rd May. Singles occurred on 5 dates, 5th-26th June. In July there were 5 on 19th, 4 on 21st and 3 on 22nd. Almost daily autumn records occurred from 5th August. The August maximum was 26 on 21st and the September maximum 55 on

22nd. Strongest passage was in October, peaking at 85 on 17th. The only November birds were singles on 9th, 16th & 20th.

GREY PLOVER *Charadrius squatarola*. The few records comprised 1 on 16th-23rd September, with 2 on 21st, and singles on 12th, 16th-17th, 21st & 24th-25th October.

LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus*. The first occurred on 10th March. Passage was strong in late March, peaking at 200 on 26th. The breeding population was censused at 6, possibly 7, pairs. Very few young fledged, and only 1-4 were seen occasionally in July to 16th. Post-breeding arrivals occurred from 21st July, including 17 on 25th & 27th July. The only August records were 1-6 on 5 scattered dates. 1-15 were seen most days in September. Strongest passage was in the second half of October when frequently 40+, and 100 on 19th. 1-8 remained in November to 23rd.

KNOT *Calidris canutus*. Spring records comprised 4 on 10th-14th and 1 on 27th May. 2 adults on 11th and 1 on 21st July preceded autumn records most days 25th July-2nd October. There was an early peak of 35 on 27th but no other count exceeding 7 apart from 17 on 20th September.

SANDERLING *Calidris alba*. Singles on 20th & 28th May were the only spring records. An early autumn wave on 16th-31st July peaked at 13 on 26th. A second wave of almost daily records, 9th August-25th September, peaked at 20 on 17th August and 12th September. 6 late birds occurred on 1st October.

LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta*. Singles on 17th & 20th-21st August preceded record arrivals of 32 on 2nd September and peaking at 33 on 5th before decreasing to 13 on 10th and 2 on 13th September. A late bird was present on 20th-21st October.

PECTORAL SANDPIPER *Calidris melanotos*. After an eight year absence two turned up: at Setter on 22nd-30th September and on a rain pool just outside the observatory on 16th-19th October.

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea*. One of the best autumn passages for years comprised 1-9 daily on 30th August-12th September and 12 on 4th & a record 36 on 5th September. 1-2 were seen regularly on 18th September-4th October



Curlew Sandpiper

Photo: Alan Roberts

PURPLE SANDPIPER *Calidris maritima*. Seen most days, 27th March-25th May, with highest counts of 55 on 2nd April, 62 on 9th May and 60 on 11th May. 4 were seen on 7th July. Seen regularly 21st July-December, with highest counts 25 on 7th August, 46 on 9th, 30 on 10th & 60 on 28th November.

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*. 1-3 on 8 dates, 17th March-25th April preceded almost daily records from 3rd May, maximum 9 on 29th May. One, probably 2, pairs bred in the Airstrip-Mire o Vatnagaard area. Post-breeding arrivals began with 11 on 14th July. Seen almost daily, late July-1st November, maxima 35 on 21st August, 2nd & 27th September and 7th October.

RUFF *Philomachus pugnax*. A male on 6th July was the first of the year. 1-2 occurred on 4 dates, 16th-26th July. Main autumn passage was 9th August-26th September, particularly early September including 30 on 3rd.

JACK SNIFE *Lymnocyptes minimus*. 2 on 26th-27th March and 1 on 17th April were the only spring records. The best autumn passage in recent years spanned 13th September-26th October. Passage was strongest in October, Peaking at 10 on 6th & 12th-13th and 15 on 20th. Singles were seen on 3rd, 12th & 16th November.

SNIFE *Gallinago gallinago*. Present all year. 67 on 27th March was a highest ever spring count, and there was an influx of 53 on 20th April. A breeding census located at least 18 drumming birds. Strong autumn passage was heaviest on 2nd September (120) and 22nd October (100).

WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola*. Main spring passage was late March, including 40 on 25th, 100 on 26th and 15 on 27th. 1-2 were seen on 9 dates in April and singles on 15th, 21st & 23rd May. Autumn records were almost daily from 2 on 8th October. Heaviest arrivals on 12th-26th October included 100 on 17th, 200 on 25th & 100 on 26th.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa*. The only records were a summer plumage adult on 16th-23rd April and 1 on 8th June.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica*. One on 24th-25th April was the only spring record. In autumn, there were 1-3 on 5 dates, 16th-29th July and on 3 dates, 16th-25th August and daily records on 30th August-29th September peaking at 10 on 7th & 12th September.

CURLEW *Numenius arquata*. Seen daily 22nd March-December. The only marked spring passage was 42 N on 6th and 35 on 21st April. Four, possibly 5, pairs bred. Post-breeding movements began in July, maximum 18 on 17th July. Other autumn maxima were 50 on 23rd and 35 on 25th August.

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus*. 1-3 most days, 20th-27th April, preceded daily passage 3rd May-9th June, maximum 12 on 13th, 14 on 14th May. 1-2 were present occasionally, 15th-29th June. Post-breeding birds were seen most days, 5th July-10th September, maximum 11 on 15th July.

SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus*. One on 6th-7th September was the only record.

REDSHANK *Tringa totanus*. Seen daily to 3rd June, almost daily from 11th June-9th July and daily from 12th July. Highest spring count was 40 on 25th March. First major post-breeding arrival 45 on 21st July. Other major arrivals were 70 on 7th & 15th August, 115 on 2nd October and 85 on 9th November.

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*. Spring singles were seen on 12th & 16th April, 1st, 9th, 12th, 14th-15th & 19th May, with 2 on 13th May. Autumn passage was on 20 days, 29th July-6th September, maxima 12 on 11th & 6 on 19th. A late bird occurred on 22nd September.

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus*. 1-3 occurred almost daily, 19th April-15th May, and 10 on 20th April. A late migrant appeared on 26th-27th May. One on 2nd July preceded almost daily records, 14th July-15th September, maximum 12 on 25th August.

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola*. In spring there was 1 on 29th April and 24th-26th May. One on 6th July preceded autumn singles on 26th, 28th & 31st July, 11th, 13th, 16th & 18th-19th August.

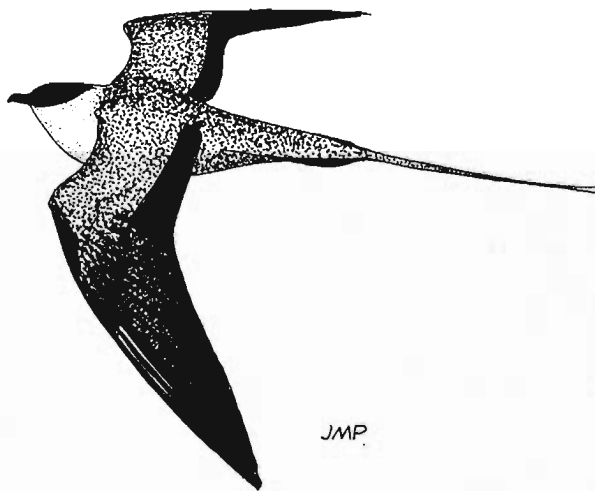
COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleuca*. Seen almost daily 2nd-31st May, maximum 7 on 13th. In July there were 2 on 24th and 1 on 26th-27th. 1-7 were seen on 14 dates, 6th-25th August but strongest passage was 2nd-13th September, beginning with an unprecedented arrival of 40 on 2nd. A very late bird was present 8th-20th October.

TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres*. Present daily to 3rd June, most days from 13th June-13th July and daily from 18th July. Highest spring counts were 220 on 25th March and 200 on 2nd April. The first major post-breeding arrival was 75 on 28th July. Other high counts comprised 160 on 15th and 125 on 30th August, 175 on 26th September, 180 on 2nd, 9th & 17th October and 240 on 9th and 260 on 15th November.

POMARINE SKUA *Stercorarius pomarinus*. 2 on 22nd September were the only ones from the isle but on the *Good Shepherd* crossing there were 2 adults on 6th May, 4 on 21st & 1 on 24th September, and 1 on 25th & 31st October.

ARCTIC SKUA *Stercorarius parasiticus*. A very early light phase on 4th-7th April was followed by further arrivals from 14th April, reaching 50 on 29th April. A census of occupied territories put the breeding population at 78 pairs. Breeding success was estimated at 1-4 chicks fledged per nest. Departures were rapid in late July-August and only 4 were left by 1st September. Daily records ended on 5th September but 1-5 were seen occasionally to 4th October.

LONG-TAILED SKUA *Stercorarius longicaudus*. 2 adults flew N over the isle on 19th June. An unprecedented autumn passage, involving adults and first-years, was part of a larger Northern Isles movement. Records on 8 dates, 18th September-1st October, amounted to 18 bird/days with a maximum of 7 on 24th September. 3 were also seen on the crossing of 22nd September.



JMP

GREAT SKUA *Stercorarius skua*. The first on 21st March was followed by others from 26th, reaching 20 on 9th April and 70 on 20th April. A census of occupied territories put the breeding population at 78 pairs. Departures were slow until September (47 still present on 7th September but only 10 remained on 1st October, decreasing to 1-5 occasionally from 11th October to the last on 3rd November).

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Larus ridibundus*. Seen most days, 16th March-27th October. Spring maxima were 42 on 26th March and 40 on 5th May. Some major July influxes included 210 on 13th and 110 on 19th. The only other sizable movement was 50 on 11th August. 1-3 were seen regularly throughout November.

COMMON GULL *Larus canus*. 1-2 seen occasionally from 4th March, preceded daily records, 25th March-December. Main spring passage in the second half of April included 110 on 20th & 300 on 21st. A breeding census located 9 nests. This included two females laying in one nest, 3 chicks hatching from 6 eggs laid. Moderate July post-breeding influxes peaked at 160 on 19th and 200 on 20th. Passage was strongest in the first half of August, including 320 on 5th, 400 on 9th & 500 on 11th. Further influxes included 140 on 2nd & 110 on 7th September, but numbers were lower from mid September apart from 70 on 2nd & 21st October.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus*. An adult on 26th March and 2 on 2nd April were followed by daily records, 9th April-22nd August. The peak spring count was 70 on 20th April. Peak post-breeding counts were 80 on 28th July and 15th August. 1-4 late migrants were seen on 6 dates, 9th-27th September, and 1 on 4th October.

HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus*. Present all year. Largest numbers ashore were 2500 on 4th-5th and 5000 on 9th November.

ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucoides*. A first-winter on 28th November was the only record.

GLAUCOUS GULL *Larus hyperboreus*. There were 4 on 31st January, a second-winter on 16th April, a first-winter on 19th & 26th April, a first-summer on 21st-25th May and a second-summer on 24th May. A first-winter took up long-term residence from 30th September. Extra birds were seen on 7th, 9th, 13th, 20th & 28th October and 6th November.

GLAUCOUS X HERRING GULL *Larus hyperboreus x argentatus*. A first-summer showing hybrid characters between the two species was seen on 26th May.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus*. Present all year. The maximum spring count was 600 on 10th April and in autumn 1500 on 9th November.

KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla*. Present on the cliffs from February. A complete island census in June revealed 19,340 occupied nests. Fledging success was very low, breeding productivity at monitored sites being only 0dp09 chicks per nest. Post-breeding birds were seen most days, maximum 160 on 26th September.

SANDWICH TERN *Sterna sandvicensis*. One on 14th June and 1 on 22nd July were the only records.

ROSEATE TERN *Sterna dougallii*. One attracted briefly to the new Shalstane Arctic Tern colony on 12th May, before being chased away by one of the colony birds and a Kittiwake, was a new species for Fair Isle.

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo*. One on 26th and 2 on 30th April preceded daily records, 3rd May-15th August. Main arrivals were from 6th May, reaching 70 on 11th. About 59 pairs attempted to breed, but only 2 young fledged. Post-breeding departures were complete by 15th August but 1-3 late birds were seen on 4 widely scattered dates, 29th August-26th September.

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea*. One on 3rd May was quickly followed by further arrivals reaching 80 by 15th May. More arrivals led to a count of 320 on 30th May. The breeding population increased 63·5% to a new high of 345 pairs, including a large new colony at Shalstone. Unfortunately, most abandoned at egg or young chick stage, apparently due to food shortages, and only 1 young fledged. Departures were complete by 30th July. Autumn migrants were few, comprising 2 on 4th August, 1 on 2nd and 3 on 8th September.

GUILLEMOT *Uria aalge*. Present on fine days from January. Breeding productivity at monitored sites was 0·79 chicks per nest. There were a few irregular August records and more regular records from mid September, maximum 25 on 19th September.

RAZORBILL *Alca torda*. Present from February. Two full censuses produced counts of 5,114 individuals in late April and 3,053 plus 383 loafers in June. Few were seen after 22nd July, maximum 3 on 27th September & 9th October.

BLACK GUILLEMOT *Cephus grylle*. Present all year. Breeding productivity at monitored sites was 0·57 chicks per nest.

LITTLE AUK *Alle alle*. Records from the isle were 1 on 18th January and 1-14 regularly from 11th November (maximum 14 on 21st November). On the crossing small numbers were seen regularly from 11th October.

PUFFIN *Fratercula arctica*. There was an early bird on the crossing of 8th March. Birds were ashore regularly from 22 on 26th March. Breeding productivity at monitored sites was 0·75 chicks per nest. Late departures were demonstrated by counts of over 350 on 3rd August and still 20 on 22nd. Late singles were seen on 1st, 6th-7th & 28th-29th September and 6th-7th & 9th October.

ROCK DOVE *Columba livia*. Present all year. 90 on 28th May was a largest ever count for the isle. The autumn peak was 60 on 15th November.

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas*. 1-3 were present most days, 27th March-13th April. 1 on 3rd-7th October was the only autumn record.

WOODPIGEON *Columba palumbus*. 35 arrived on 26th March, reaching 43 on 1st April with up to 23 remaining to 26th April. 1-13 were present to 8th June, 1 on six dates, 18th June-11th July, and 1 on 3 dates in September. 1-9 were present daily on 12th October-15th November and 12 on 20th October.

COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto*. 1-6 were seen almost daily, 25th April-16th June and 1-2 on four dates, 22nd June-5th July. The only later records were singles on 10th-12th August, 6th-9th & 23rd September and 10th October.

TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur*. In spring there was 1 on 5th-6th & 12th May and 1-5 daily, 22nd May-4th June. A poor autumn passage comprised 1-2 on 10 dates, 28th August-13th October.

CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus*. There were 2 early birds on 20th April, 1 staying to 21st. 1-2 were seen regularly 15th May-9th June. A juvenile was present on 14th-20th August and 2 on 2nd September.

LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus*. A poor spring passage comprised singles on 25th March, 13th-14th & 17th April. In contrast a good autumn passage beginning with 1 on 17th October and peaking at 5 on 22nd October produced a series of individuals to 23rd November.

SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammea*. There was 1 on 26th March and 2 next day, 1 on 20th April, 1-3 on 4th-6th May and singles on nine dates, 16th May-3rd June. In autumn there were 9 singles between 14th August and 30th September, 1-5 most days in October and 9 on 22nd, and 1 on 9th & 18th November.

SWIFT *Apus apus*. Records comprised 1-2 on seven dates, 9th-27th May, 5 on 30th May, 1-4 on seven dates in June and 1-2 on three dates, 9th-20th July. Seen almost daily, 24th July-15th September, particularly late July when 16 on 27th and 100 on 28th. A late bird occurred on 6th October.

HOOPOE *Upupa epops*. One was at Setter on 13th May and 1 at South Harbour on 12th October.

WRYNECK *Jynx torquilla*. Seen almost daily, 27th April-30th May, maximum 6 on 15th May. In autumn there was 1 on 11th & 25th August and 2 on 26th, a small 2nd-5th September influx peaking at 12 on 2nd, and 1 on 12th September.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopus major*. A small irruption brought 2 on 12th October, increasing to 3 next day and 2 on 20th October, one remaining to 24th and one to 26th.

***SHORT-TOED LARK** *Calandrella brachydactyla*. A southern race bird was at Taing on 14th May. Three in autumn, all eastern race birds, comprised 1 at Quoy on 23rd September-18th October, another there on 2nd-21st October and 1 mainly at Upper Stoneybrake on 5th-12th October.

SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis*. Present from 27th February. Main passage was late March, peaking at 670 on 26th March. The breeding population was censused at 92 pairs. Main autumn passage began in mid September and was strongest on 21st September-early October, peaking at 700 on 21st September, 475 on 5th and 480 on 17th October.

SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia*. A little commoner than in some recent years. There were 1-8 on most days 1st-18th May, 1-8 daily on 25th May-1st June and 1-3 on three dates, 6th-16th June. Singles occurred on 17th & 28th July, 1-2 were seen on 6 dates, 8th-19th August and on 8 dates, 27th August-10th September.

SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*. In spring, 2 on 24th-25th April preceded daily passage, 29th April-24th June. Strongest arrivals were 13th-15th May, when 100-140 daily, and 200 on 25th May. 1-2 were seen on 12 dates, 3rd July-2nd August, there were 7 on 14th August, 1 on 27th August, 8th & 10th September and 6 on 23rd September. In October 1-3 were seen daily on 3rd-10th and 1 on 20th & 22nd.

HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbica*. There were 1-2 on 20th-24th April, then almost daily records, 3rd May-24th June. 45 occurred on 14th May but main arrivals were late May-early June, peaking at 80 on 25th May. The very few autumn records comprised 1-2 on 7 scattered dates, 14th August-10th September.

RICHARD'S PIPIT *Anthus novaeseelandiae*. At least 3 individuals contributed records of 1 on 2nd-3rd, 8th, 15th & 17th and 2 on 7th October.

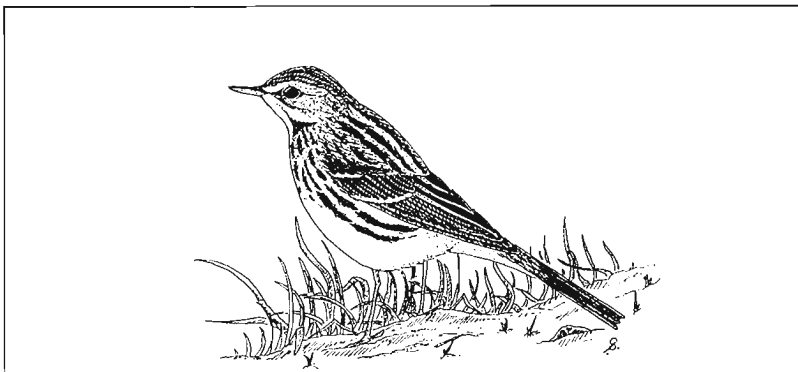
***BLYTH'S PIPIT** *Anthus godlewskii*. One on 13th-22nd October was new to Fair Isle and the first British record this century.

***OLIVE-BACKED PIPIT** *Anthus hodgsoni*. There were 3 birds, all in October: on 7th, 11th-22nd & 14th.

TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis*. There was a strong spring passage, 20th April-4th June. The early peak was 20 on 29th April but main arrivals were mid May, including 180 on 14th, 135 on 15th. In autumn 1-2 on 6 dates, 18th-31st August preceded an arrival of 120 on 2nd September, declining to 25 on 5th. After another arrival of 40 occurred on 7th September and small numbers remained to 14th. Late singles were seen on 28th September, 4th-5th, 10th-11th & 14th October.

***PECHORA PIPIT** *Anthus gustavi*. One at Taing on 5th October remained to 7th.

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*. Recorded daily from the first 10 on 21st March. There was an early peak of 100 on 26th March, and further arrivals included 120 on 3rd



and 260 on 20th April. The breeding population was censused at 45 pairs. Main autumn passage spanned 23rd August-mid October, peaking with 800 on 22nd September. Steadily decreasing numbers from early October led to 10 by 13th November and 2 on 28th November.

***RED-THROATED PIPIT** *Anthus cervinus*. One on 2nd June was the only record.

ROCK PIPIT *Anthus (spinoletta) petrosus*. Present all year. The breeding population was not censused.

YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava*. Almost daily spring passage spanned 28th April-6th June. Single Yellow Wagtails *M.f.flavissima* were seen on 6 dates, 1st-26th May and a Blue-headed *M.f.flava* on 23rd May. All others subspecifically identified were Grey-headed *M.f.thunbergi*, including the peak count of 7 on 14th May. In autumn there were 1-4 of indeterminate race on 29th August-11th September, 2 of a grey 'eastern type' morph on 20th and 1 on 23rd October.

***CITRINE WAGTAIL** *Motacilla citreola*. One outside the observatory on 8th September remained to 10th.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*. Records comprised 1 on 22nd May and 1-2 on 12th October-1st November.

PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba*. White Wagtails *M.a.alba* were recorded in spring from 26th March with main passage in late April, maximum 27 on 21st. Autumn passage spanned 14th August-17th October, peaking at 65 on 7th September. Pied *M.a.yarrelli* were noted regularly 21st March-July, maximum 8 on 20th April, and regularly on 17th August-17th October, maximum 4 on 7th October. Two pairs, each a Pied x White combination, bred with at least 6 young fledging.

WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus*. The best movement of the decade began with 1 on 24th October and 3 next day. 1-5 were seen almost daily on 29th October-7th November and flocks flying south included 28 on 2nd and 16 on 9th November. 1-2 were seen on three dates, 17th-21st November.

WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes*. Present all year. Census work revealed 39 singing birds.

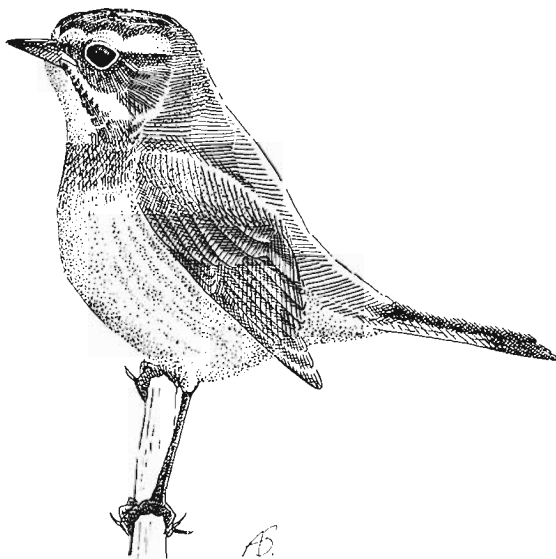
DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis*. In spring there were daily records, 25th March-28th May. Main passage was 20th-30th April, with 20+ daily and 40 on 29th. A very poor autumn passage comprised 1-2 on 10 dates, 12th October-13th November and 5 on 23rd October.

ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula*. One wintered. There were two spring waves: 1-8 on 23rd March-8th April, and daily records on 16th April-3rd June when passage was strongest in late April, maximum 70 on 22nd. In autumn there were 1-3 on 9 dates, 2nd-23rd September and strongest daily passage from 4th October, peaking at 80 on 26th October. Up to 15 remained to late November and small numbers into December.

***THRUSH NIGHTINGALE** *Luscinia luscinia*. Two records comprised 1 on 9th-13th May (trapped) and 1 on 14th-21st May.

NIGHTINGALE *Luscinia megarhynchos*. One was in South Reeva on 13th-14th May.

BLUETHROAT *Luscinia svecica*. There was a female on 7th May, a male next day, 3 on 11th, increasing to 10 on 13th, 55 on 14th and 30 on 15th-16th May. Smaller numbers were seen to 2nd June. All spring males were of the Red-spotted form *L.s.svecica*. A good autumn passage comprised 1 on 2nd, 2 on 4th & 3 on 5th September, 1-3 daily on 23rd September-22nd October with 4 on 7th October, and a male on 26th October.



BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros*. In spring there were singles on 28th March & 2nd April, 1-4 daily on 13th-28th April, 1-4 on 9th-14th May and 1 on 30th May-3rd June. Virtually daily autumn records, 12th October-2nd November, peaked at 6 on 14th October. Late singles were seen on 16th & 20th November.

REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*. Early singles on 21st, 23rd & 28th April preceded daily records 2nd May-2nd June. Main arrivals were in mid May, maximum 50 on 15th. There were two main periods of autumn passage: 25th August-7th September, peak 35 on 2nd September; and 2nd-26th October, peak 8 on 13th.

WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra*. Spring passage spanned 21st April-6th June. Main passage was 13th-19th May, peaking at 40 on 15th. In autumn seen daily from 11th August-23rd October. Only small numbers except 2nd-10th September when 50+ daily and arrivals of 100 on 2nd, 140 on 5th.

STONECHAT *Saxicola torquata*. Two spring records comprised 1 found dead on 19th March and 1 on 9th April. A male on 2nd-19th October and a female on 13th October were both British or west European.

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*. A male occurred on 27th and 4 on 31st March, but daily records were not until 6th April, reaching 100 on 15th and 300 on 22nd April. The spring peak was 350 on 15th May. The island population was censused at 135 pairs. Autumn passage was strongest in late August-early October, maximum 500 on 31st August. Larger northern birds were observed from 2nd, peaking at 80 on 21st September and 50 on 4th October. The last record was on 1st November.

RING OUZEL *Turdus torquatus*. The earliest ever bird, a male on 16th March, presaged an excellent spring. Daily records on 19th April-27th May included counts of 50 on 21st & 45 on 23rd April and 30 on 5th May. A late male was seen on 6th & 8th June. Birds were seen daily in autumn from 5th October, maximum 12 on 22nd October. All had departed by early November except a male which remained around the observatory till 18th.

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula*. About 12 wintered. Spring birds were seen daily to 7th June. Passage was small except 23rd-31st March when 60+ daily and 1300 on 26th. Autumn birds occurred from 28th September. Main passage began on 12th October and was particularly strong on 16th-23rd October, peaking at 2500 on 18th-19th. Mild November weather encouraged up to 100 to remain to 19th and 40 into December.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris*. Up to 30 were present in winter. Spring migration spanned mid March-1st June. An early wave in late March, peaking at 350 on 26th, was followed by a much larger 19th-27th April wave when 200+ daily and 1500 on 20th. A smaller early May arrival peaked at 250 on 5th. One summered and was present until at least late August. At least 7 arrived in early September and 1-6 from 22nd September. Main passage from 1st October was heaviest on 13th-26th October, maximum 3000 on 23rd. 400 were still present on 13th November and 15 into December.

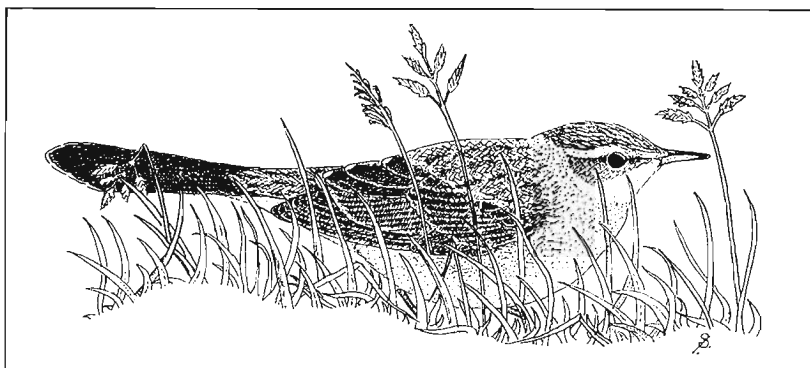
SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos*. 1-14 were seen regularly on 10th March-10th April. There were daily records on 14th April-9th May, peaking at 100 on 20th April. 1-8 were seen on 6 dates, 12th-27th May. Summer records were 1 on 19th June, 2 on 13th & 1 on 14th July and 1 on 13th August. 1-6 were seen regularly from 2nd September but main passage was not until October. Strongest passage was 12th-19th October, peaking at 1500 on 13th. Small numbers were present in November-early December.

REDWING *Turdus iliacus*. Up to 15 wintered. Late March-1st June spring passage was in two main waves, the first peaking at 150 on 26th March and a stronger second on 7th-23rd April peaking at 200 on 19th. One summered. 1-6 were seen most days in September but main autumn passage began on 1st October and was strongest on 6th-26th October, maximum 6000 on 18th. Up to 200 were still present to mid November and 10-20 into December.

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus*. There were singles on 26th March, 24th April, 22nd & 28th May and the surprise dates of 26th July and 1st September. In October 1-3 were seen regularly on 12th-26th and in November there was 1 on 1st-2nd & 13th.

***PALLAS'S GRASSHOPPER WARBLER** *Locustella certhiola*. In an unprecedented October spell three turned up. One trapped at Utra on 5th October was still present next day, an unringed bird was at Quoy on 9th and a different bird was trapped at Leogh on 12th.

***LANCEOLATED WARBLER** *Locustella lanceolata*. Three records comprised a long-stay bird at Springfield from 15th-21st September, 1 at Barkland on 4th-5th October and 1 at the School on 10th October.



GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia*. A record spring passage started with 1 on 23rd April. 2 were present on 27th, increasing to 5 next day, 7 on 29th and 10 on 30th. 6 on 1st May decreased to 1 on 4th before another arrival brought 7 on 5th. 2 remained on 7th and later singles occurred on 14th & 16th May and 2nd June. The only autumn birds were singles on 27th August, 4th & 10th September and 6th October.

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*. Early singles on 27th & 30th April and 3rd May preceded daily records 6th May-3rd June, maximum 15 on 14th. Autumn records comprised 1 on 11th, 2 on 12th and 1 on 27th-28th August, and in September 9 on 2nd and 1-5 on 3rd-10th.

MARSH WARBLER *Acrocephalus palustris*. A good spring passage comprised 1-3 daily on 24th May-5th June with 5 on 1st-2nd June, 2 on 10th-11th June and singles on 12th & 20th-24th June. One was trapped on 16th July.

REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*. The only spring records were 1-2 on 1st-4th June. In autumn there was 1 on 11th & 14th August, 1-4 on 2nd-19th September, 2 on 12th, 1 on 13th-14th & 26th October.

***GREAT REED WARBLER** *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*. Despite only 5 previous records, the last in 1978, 3 occurred in late spring 1988. One trapped in the Gully on 27th May remained to 10th June, an unringed bird was present in the south on 2nd-3rd June and 1 was trapped on 3rd-4th June in the Gully.

ICTERINE WARBLER *Hippolais icterina*. In spring there were singles on 27th & 29th May and 1st June & 2 on 2nd-3rd June. One on 2nd September was the only autumn record.

***SUBALPINE WARBLER** *Sylvia cantillans*. Four spring records comprised a male of the eastern race *albigistriata* on 27th April-14th May, a male of the southern race *cantillans* on 8th-10th May, a female on 14th May and a male *albigistriata* on 22nd May.

BARRED WARBLER *Sylvia nisoria*. A steady series of arrivals produced records of 1-3 on most days, 9th August-29th September.

LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca*. Daily spring records, 7th May-6th June, peaked at a very creditable 30 on 15th May. 1-2 were seen on 12th-13th June. Autumn passage began with 20 on 2nd and 10 on 3rd September, with 1-6 seen daily to 17th October.

WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis*. Spring passage spanned 5th May-9th June, peaking at 30 on 15th May. A late bird occurred on 30th June. A dismal autumn showing

comprised 1 on 4th, 2 on 8th&9th & 1 on 11th-12th September and 1 on 15th October.

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin*. Spring birds were seen almost daily on 9th May-21st June. Numbers were low apart from 15 on 1st, 20 on 2nd June. There was 1 summer record on 2nd-3rd July. Autumn passage spanned 9th August-27th October. Strongest arrivals were in late August-early September, most notably 170 on 2nd September.

BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla*. 1-10 were seen most days, 23rd April-17th June, and 12 on 15th May. An early wave of 1-8 on 2nd-12th September preceded almost daily records on 22nd September-28th October. Strongest passage was in October, maximum 55 on 12th. In November there were 1-3 on four dates to 16th.

***GREENISH WARBLER** *Phylloscopus trochiloides*. There were two records: 1 trapped on 9th remained to 21st August and 1 was at Midway on 27th August.

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER *Phylloscopus inornatus*. The only September record was 1 on 21st. One on 3rd October preceded an amazing arrival of 16 on 4th, when 2 also landed on the *Good Shepherd* at sea. 1-5 were present on 5th-15th October.

***RADDE'S WARBLER** *Phylloscopus schwarzi*. One on 13th October at Easter Lothar was the 2nd Fair Isle record, just one year after the first.

WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*. The few spring records comprised 2 on 13th May, an astonishing 8 next day and 1 on 22nd-23rd May. Autumn records were all in August: 1 on 16th, 19th & 22nd-23rd and 2 on 24th.

CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita*. 1-3 were seen most days, 27th March-15th April. Main passage was 19th April-31st May, particularly late April including 27 on 29th, 25 on 30th. 1-2 were present throughout June and to 24th July. 1-3 were seen occasionally in September from 9th, but main autumn passage was 3rd October-18th November, peaking at 15 on 14th & 22nd October.

WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus*. Birds were seen almost daily, 22nd April-15th June. Strongest arrivals were 13th-19th May, maximum 60 on 14th. 3 out-of-season birds occurred on 6th July. Autumn passage spanned 9th August-12th October and was strongest in late August-early September. The largest arrival was 130 on 2nd September.

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus*. In spring 1-8 were seen almost daily 24th March-1st May and a late single on 28th May. A very early arrival of 1 on 17th increasing to 2 on 20th August preceded daily records 28th August-3rd November. Passage was strongest in October and included major arrivals of 320 on 12th (with 130 remaining next day) and 150 on 22nd.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata*. Daily spring passage spanned 12th May-8th June, maximum 50 on 14th May. One late migrant occurred on 17th June. One on 12th August, 1-9 daily on 2nd-9th September and 1 on 24th September were the only autumn records.

RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula parva*. An excellent series of records comprised 1 on 5th October, the same or another on 6th, 5 on 7th, 1 on 14th-15th and 1 on 21st October.

PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hypoleuca*. An above average spring passage comprised 1-11 daily on 12th-27th May, with 35 on 14th & 23 on 15th, and 1-2 on five dates, 29th May-3rd June. Autumn records comprised 3 on 21st & 1 on 27th August, 1 on 1st September preceding a large fall of 65 on 2nd, smaller numbers daily to 14th, 1 on 21st-26th September and 1-4 on 5 dates, 7th-17th October.

BLUE TIT *Parus caeruleus*. One on 28th October was the first since 1982.

GREAT TIT *Parus major*. A male on 22nd October remained to 9th November.

GOLDEN ORIOLE *Oriolus oriolus*. Three spring records comprised a male on 15th May, a female type on 22nd May and an immature male on 1st June.

RED-BACKED SHRIKE *Lanius collurio*. One on 11th May and 2 on 12th-13th were followed by an excellent influx of 30 on 14th. Numbers decreased to 5 on 27th May, but another influx followed comprising 7 on 30th and 8 on 31st May, decreasing to 2 on 7th June. A female occurred on 12th June. An excellent autumn passage was concentrated into daily records on 1st-11th September, mainly stemming from an arrival of 12 on 2nd.

GREAT GREY SHRIKE *Lanius excubitor*. One on 14th-16th April was the only record.

***WOODCHAT SHRIKE** *Lanius senator*. In an exceptional spring for southern rarities there were three records, a female on 21st May-4th June, a male on 1st-4th June and a first-summer male or female on 7th-27th June.

JACKDAW *Corvus monedula*. 1-3 were seen regularly, 26th March-11th May, and 8 on 1st April. In autumn there was 1 from 18th October increasing to 7 on 23rd-28th October, 6 remaining to 31st.

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus*. 1-4 were seen regularly, 26th March-11th May and 1 on 5th-19th June. 3-4 were present on 18th-29th October.

CARRION CROW *Corvus corone*. Hooded Crows *C.c.cornix* were noted regularly from March-early July, maximum 8 on 21st May. Carrion Crows *C.c.corone* were seen occasionally from 26th March and daily 22nd April-10th June, maximum 23 on 10th May. One pair of Hoodies held territory but did not breed successfully. Autumn Hoodies were seen from 25th July and Carrion from 17th August, the only marked influx being 6 Hoodies on 24th October.

RAVEN *Corvus corax*. Present all year. There were spring influxes of 24 on 9th April and 19 on 14th April. Only 3 pairs bred. The only autumn influx involved 15 on 6th October.

STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris*. Present all year. Strong spring passage was recorded in late March, maximum 1000 on 26th, 900 on 27th. Autumn passage peaked at 1100 on 23rd October.

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus*. A good population was present all year and a count of 290 on 26th August was the highest ever.

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus*. Spring records comprised 5 on 21st May, 2 on 23rd & 31st May and 3 on 7th-11th June. In autumn there was 1 on 12th September and 2 from 19th September to 26th October.

HOUSE X TREE SPARROW *Passer domesticus x montanus*. A bird showing characteristics of both species was seen on 1st June.

CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs*. Main spring passage, 22nd March-9th May was strongest in late March, maximum 80 on 27th-28th, and 20th-26th April when 38+ daily and 105 on 26th. 1-10 were seen daily 14th May-13th June. Early autumn singles were seen on 7th & 29th August and 5th September and 2 on 18th September. Main passage was extremely thin, daily records on 5th October-19th November peaking at 10 on 12th & 22nd October.

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla*. There was 1 on 31st January, 1-3 regularly on 14 dates, 15th March-9th April and daily records, 18th April-23rd May. The biggest arrival was 320 on 20th April, slowly decreasing to 120 on 26th and 18 on 30th April. Another influx of 70 occurred on 3rd May. Late birds were seen on 27th May and 4th-5th June. In

autumn there was 1 on 22nd-23rd September and moderate daily records, 1st October-3rd November, maximum 120 on 19th October.

GREENFINCH *Carduelis chloris*. Small numbers were seen almost daily, 24th March-3rd May, with the maximum of 8 on the first date. A late bird occurred on 14th May. 5 from 4th October increased to 7 on 24th and 15 on 28th October, 2 remaining to 9th November. 1 occurred on 18th November.

GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis*. This species, once a rarity, has now become regular. In a good spring there was 1 on 14th-18th April with 3 on 17th, 1-2 daily on 26th April-2nd May and 1 on 5th May. One on 7th-14th November was the only autumn record.

SISKIN *Carduelis spinus*. A poor spring passage comprised 1-2 on 11 widely scattered dates, 24th March-31st May, 3-5 on 1st-4th June and 1 on 19th-21st June. Autumn birds were almost as scarce. 1-7 were seen on 8th-12th September and 13 on 10th, 1 on 21st September and 1-9 on most days, 4th-21st October.

LINNET *Carduelis cannabina*. In spring there were 1-2 on 25th-30th March, 1 on 12th April, 1-2 on 23rd April-1st May, 1 on 6th May and 2 on 16th-21st May. One on 2th October was the only autumn record.

TWITE *Carduelis flavirostris*. The first 5 occurred on 18th March, reaching 38 on 27th March. Largest spring numbers were in the first half of May, maximum 125 on 4th. The breeding population was not censused. Post-breeding arrivals, beginning in late August, peaked at 480 on 9th September. 100 were still present on 13th October and 25 on 22nd November.

REDPOLL *Carduelis flammea*. There was 1 on 4th & 4 on 11th February. Spring records were 1 on 5th April, 4 on 7th May, 2 on 16th and singles on 23rd-27th May, and 1-2 on five dates, 1st-12th June. Summer singles were seen on 5th & 16th July. All sub-specifically identified birds were Mealy except for 1 Lesser *C.f. cabaret* on 25th May. 1-3 Lesser Redpolls were seen on 30th September-4th October, but other occasional 13th September-21st November records mainly involved Mealies, including 7 on 2nd November.

SCARLET ROSEFINCH *Carpodacus erythrinus*. In May there was 1 on 23rd, 4 on 24th, 7 on 25th, 2 on 26th, 4 on 27th, 1 on 28th and 1 on 30th. June records were 1 on 1st and 2 on 2nd. Early autumn singles on 12th, 22nd & 27th August preceded more regular records on 6th September-10th October, maxima 4 on 23rd September & 3rd-4th October.

BULLFINCH *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*. A superb influx beginning with 2 on 20th October, increased to 13 on 21st and 16 on 24th. 5 remained to 2nd November and 1 to 5th December. All were big northern race birds.

HAWFINCH *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*. The first ever autumn records started with 4 on 12th-13th October, 2 surviving to 14th and 1 to 19th (2 were cat victims). Two new birds occurred on 21st October.

***BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER** *Dendroica fusca*. A first-year male was at Furze on 7th October - another Fair Isle candidate for the British list and the first for the West Palearctic.

LAPLAND BUNTING *Calcarius lapponicus*. In spring 1 on 30th March, 2 on 1st & 1 on 12th April preceded small numbers daily, 22nd April-6th May, maximum 6 on 23rd & 26th April. A male on 16th, 2 on 23rd & 1 on 27th May were later records. Autumn passage spanned 18th September-9th November, maximum 20 on 30th September.

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis*. Spring passage spanned 14th March-23rd May. Main passage comprised 20 on 19th March and 15+ daily on 25th-29th March,

maximum 65 on 28th. A small mid April influx peaked at 12 on 11th. Autumn birds occurred from 13th September. The first major arrival was 50 on 30th September. The October maximum was 107 on 8th. November numbers were consistently higher and peaked at 310 on 2nd. Up to 40 remained into December.

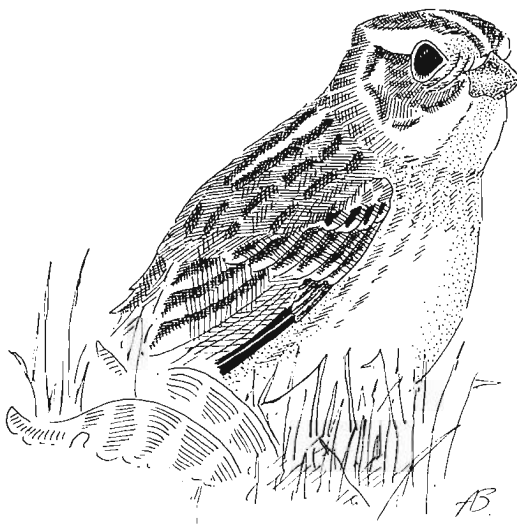
YELLOWHAMMER *Emberiza citrinella*. A small spring passage comprised 1 on 18th April, 4 on 21st and singles on 22nd, 24th-25th & 29th April and 9th May. A good autumn passage comprised daily records, 12th October-2nd November, maximum 11 on 26th October. 1 was seen on 15th November.

ORTOLAN BUNTING *Emberiza hortulana*. This species has become much scarcer in recent years and none more so than 1988: a male on 1st May was the only spring record and singles on 8th-9th, 17th-18th and 2 on 22nd October the only ones in autumn.

***RUSTIC BUNTING** *Emberiza rustica*. One on 12th-16th October was the only record.

***LITTLE BUNTING** *Emberiza pusilla*. One on 15th-18th May was the only spring record. There were four in autumn, all in October: 12th-14th, 12th-17th, 14th & 22nd-24th.

***YELLOW-BREASTED BUNTING** *Emberiza aureola*. One spent 9th-18th September at Quoy. Another was at North Haven on 19th September.



REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus*. 1-2 on 25th-27th March & 1 on 5th April preceded almost daily records, 13th April-11th June. The largest numbers were in early-mid May, including 14 on 3rd, 17 on 14th, 18 on 16th & 20 on 18th. Autumn passage, 2nd October-7th November, generally involved small numbers but 50 arrived on 22nd and 20 on 26th October.

***BLACK-HEADED BUNTING** *Emberiza melanocephala*. A male near Taing on 9th June was the only record.

Amendment to 1987 Systematic List

SIBERIAN STONECHAT *Saxicola torquata maura/stejnegeri*. There were 5 (not 4) on 29th September. All 5 were accepted by the *British Birds Records Committee*.

Up-Date on British Birds Rarities Committee Decisions, 1987

All 1987 records submitted to BBRC were accepted except the following:

ARCTIC WARBLER *Phylloscopus borealis*. 26th-27th August, decision awaited.

TWO-BARRED CROSSBILL *Carduelis hornemanni*. 3 juveniles on 15th August with 2 remaining to 16th August, decision awaited. Female on 28th August, decision awaited.

LITTLE BUNTING *Emberiza pusilla*. 20th-21st October, no decision - not yet submitted by observer.

British Ornithologists Union Records Committee Decision, 1985

DAURIAN STARLING *Sturnus sturninus*. 7th-28th May 1985, trapped on 21st. Accepted by the BOURC as the first British and Irish record. It was also an addition to the West Palearctic list.

Ringling Details 1988

5383 birds of 104 species were ringed in 1988. The monthly ringling totals were

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
1	—	47	396	370	540	1481	1225	443	753	118	11

Parts of all traps were patched during the year, the double dyke catching box was reinforced and work done on the observatory and plantation trap enclosures. Rose bush cuttings were planted in the observatory trap enclosure to compensate for the loss of the garden during winter building work. Once again a number of ringers helped us with our seabird work and received training and experience. Relatively low June-July totals were due to the demands of the Seabird Monitoring Scheme and poor seabird breeding success. The high August total was a product of greater Storm Petrel trapping effort as part of the North East Atlantic Storm Petrel Study. Not surprisingly, Storm Petrel headed the list of birds ringed with 974. Others in the top ten were Starling 572, Blackbird 437, Shag 394, Wheatear 204, Puffin 197, Guillemot 188, Robin 179, Meadow Pipit 169 and Fulmar 161. The quality of the spring and autumn migration was demonstrated by record ringling totals for Bluethroat, Marsh Warbler, Great Reed Warbler, Chiffchaff, Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler, Bullfinch and Hawfinch. Seabird monitoring effort contributed to a record Bonxie total and strong colonisation to the record Arctic Tern total. Rarely ringed species included Grey Heron (2), Shelduck, Long-tailed Duck, Short-toed Lark, Waxwing (2), Thrush Nightingale, Lanceolated Warbler (2), Subalpine Warbler, Greenish Warbler and Woodchat Shrike.

We gratefully acknowledge the BTO, NCC and SOTEAG for financial assistance with aspects of our seabird work.

Table of Ringing Totals & Recoveries

	Ringed as		Totals		Recovered	
	Juv/Adult	Pullus	1988	1948-88	1988	1948-88
Little Grebe	-	-	-	9	-	-
Great Crested Grebe	-	-	-	1	-	-
Red-necked Grebe	-	-	-	1	-	-
Slavonian Grebe	-	-	-	3	-	-
Fulmar	49	112	161	13846	12	113
Storm Petrel	974-	-	974	10810	37	295
Leach's Petrel	-	-	-	20	-	-
Gannet	-	5	5	127	-	2
Cormorant	-	-	-	7	-	-
Shag	18	376	394	16816	14	419
Grey Heron	2	-	2	17	-	2
Whooper Swan	-	-	-	30	-	4
Bean Goose	-	-	-	1	-	-
Pink-footed Goose	-	-	-	9	1	2
White-fronted Goose	-	-	-	3	-	1
Greylag Goose	-	-	-	19	-	6
Barnacle Goose	-	-	-	3	-	-
Shelduck	1	-	1	4	-	-
Wigeon	-	-	-	14	-	-
Teal	-	-	-	38	-	2
Mallard	-	-	-	9	-	1
Pintail	-	-	-	1	-	1
Pochard	-	-	-	2	-	1
Ring-necked Duck	-	-	-	1	-	-
Tufted Duck	-	-	-	10	-	-
Scaup	-	-	-	4	-	-
Eider	4	-	4	124	3	5
Long-tailed Duck	1	-	1	14	1	1
Velvet Scoter	-	-	-	2	-	-
Goldeneye	-	-	-	14	-	1
Red-breasted Merganser	-	-	-	3	-	-
Goosander	-	-	-	3	-	1
Hen Harrier	-	-	-	2	-	-
Goshawk	-	-	-1	-	-	-
Sparrowhawk	11	-	11	204	-	18
Kestrel	1	-	1	41	-	8
Red-footed Falcon	-	-	-	1	-	-
Merlin	1	-	1	169	-	13
Peregrine	-	-	-	6	-	1
Quail	-	-	-	5	-	-
Water Rail	3	-	3	245	-	3
Spotted Crake	-	-	-	-	15	-
Little Crake	-	-	-	1	-	1
Corncrake	-	-	-	35	-	2
Moorhen	-	-	-	84	-	3
Coot	-	-	-	13	-	1
Great Bustard	-	-	-	1	-	-
Oystercatcher	3	29	32	1186	2	66
Little Ringed Plover	-	-	-	1	-	-
Ringed Plover	2	-	2	480	-	6
Golden Plover	-	-	-	17	-	-
Dotterel	-	-	-	3	-	-
Lapwing	-	-	-	259	-	4

	Ringed as		Totals		Recovered	
	Juv/Adult	Pullus	1988	1948-88	1988	1948-88
Knot	-	-	-	78	-	2
Sanderling	-	2	-	2	88	-
Western Sandpiper	-	-	-	1	-	-
Little Stint	-	-	-	69	-	-
Temminck's Stint	-	-	-	2	-	-
White-r. Sandpiper	-	-	-	1	-	-
Pectoral Sandpiper	-	-	-	5	-	-
Curlew Sandpiper	-	-	-	5	-	-
Purple Sandpiper	-	-	-	147	-	1
Dunlin	-	-	-	438	-	7
Buff-b. Sandpiper	-	-	-	1	-	-
Ruff	-	-	-	32	-	1
Jack Snipe	-	-	-	113	-	3
Snipe	6	2	8	327	-	4
Great Snipe	-	-	-	1	-	-
Woodcock	5	-	5	300	1	17
Black-tailed Godwit	-	-	-	1	-	-
Bar-tailed Godwit	-	-	-	9	-	2
Whimbrel	-	-	-	14	-	-
Curlew	-	2	2	93	-	3
Spotted Redshank	-	-	-	3	-	-
Redshank	1	-	1	225	-	2
Greenshank	-	-	-	8	-	-
Green Sandpiper	1	-	1	37	-	1
Wood Sandpiper	-	-	-	16	-	-
Common Sandpiper	3	-	3	55	-	-
Turnstone	-	-	-	65	-	-
Red-necked Phalarope	-	-	-	4	-	-
Grey Phalarope	-	-	-	3	-	-
Pomarine Skua	-	-	-	1	-	-
Arctic Skua	-	74	74	2940	-	58
Great Skua	1	68	69	898	3	15
Black-headed Gull	4	-	4	33	-	3
Common Gull	1	8	9	117	-	6
Lesser Black-b. Gull	-	23	23	1244	-	32
Herring Gull	15	40	55	3765	2	88
Iceland Gull	-	-	-	1	-	-
Glaucous Gull	1	-	1	35	-	1
Great Black-b. Gull	36	8	44	1907	3	82
Kittiwake	28	32	60	4838	-	22
Common Tern	-	8	8	438	-	3
Arctic Tern	-	37	37	87	-	-
Guillemot	47	141	188	18125	37	622
Razorbill	32	58	90	4524	15	157
Black Guillemot	3	12	15	1292	-	18
Little Auk	-	-	-	6	-	-
Puffin	107	90	197	9909	-	24
Rock Dove	-	-	-	19	-	2
Woodpigeon	2	-	2	41	-	2
Collared Dove	4	-	4	179	1	1
Turtle Dove	1	-	1	64	-	2
Cuckoo	1	-	1	85	-	1
Snowy Owl	-	-	-	1	-	-
Long-eared Owl	8	-	8	162	-	9
Short-eared Owl	-	-	-	16	-	-
Nightjar	-	-	-	3	-	-
Swift	-	-	-	16	-	1
Hoopoe	-	-	-	3	-	-

	Ringed as		Totals		Recovered	
	Juv/Adult	Pullus	1988	1948-88	1988	1948-88
Wryneck	8	-	8	185	-	-
Gt. Spotted Woodpecker	-	-	-	20	-	-
Short-toed Lark	1	-	1	7	-	-
Woodlark	-	-	-	2	-	-
Skylark	3	-	3	751	-	3
Shorelark	-	-	-	3	-	-
Sand Martin	-	-	-	8	-	-
Swallow	-	-	-	228	-	8
House Martin	-	-	-	144	-	1
Richard's Pipit	-	-	-	9	-	-
Tawny Pipit	-	-	-	3	-	-
Olive-backed Pipit	-	-	-	6	-	-
Tree Pipit	14	-	14	563	-	-
Pechora Pipit	-	-	-	6	-	-
Meadow Pipit	166	3	169	8115	1	45
Red-throated Pipit	-	-	-	6	-	-
Rock Pipit	142	11	153	7935	1	25
Yellow Wagtail	-	-	-	10	-	-
Citrine Wagtail	-	-	-	5	-	-
Grey Wagtail	-	-	-	18	-	-
Pied Wagtail	7	3	10	514	-	4
Waxwing	2	-	2	36	-	-
Dipper	-	-	-	12	-	-
Wren	9	-	9	628	-	-
Dunnock	84	-	84	1927	-	6
Robin	179	-	179	6551	2	33
Thrush Nightingale	1	-	1	18	-	-
Nightingale	-	-	-	21	-	-
Siberian Rubythroat	-	-	-	1	-	-
Bluethroat	15	-	15	214	-	2
Red-flanked Bluetail	-	-	-	1	-	-
Black Redstart	3	-	3	114	-	-
Redstart	25	-	25	1490	-	1
Whinchat	18	-	18	542	-	2
Stonechat	-	-	-	48	-	-
Wheatear	192	12	204	14362	-	67
Black-eared Wheatear	-	-	-	3	-	-
Rock Thrush	-	-	-	1	-	-
Grey-cheeked Thrush	-	-	-	2	-	-
White's Thrush	-	-	-	1	-	-
Ring Ouzel	14	-	14	432	2	8
Blackbird	437	-	437	18548	5	300
Eye-browed Thrush	-	-	-	1	-	-
Dusky Thrush	-	-	-	1	-	-
Black-throated Thrush	-	-	-	1	-	-
Fieldfare	9	-	9	593	-	-
Song Thrush	43	-	43	2187	2	29
Redwing	80	-	80	6814	-	69
Mistle Thrush	-	-	-	21	-	1
Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler	2	-	2	6	-	-
Lanceolated Warbler	2	-	2	22	-	-
Grasshopper Warbler	8	-	8	88	-	-
River Warbler	-	-	-	5	-	-
Savi's Warbler	-	-	-	2	-	-
Aquatic Warbler	-	-	-	21	-	-
Sedge Warbler	13	-	13	363	-	2
Paddyfield Warbler	-	-	-	4	-	-
Blyth's Reed Warbler	-	-	-	1	-	-

	Ringed as		Totals		Recovered	
	Juv/Adult	Pullus	1988	1948-88	1988	1948-88
Marsh Warbler	7	-	7	73	-	-
Reed Warbler	4	-	4	150	-	1
Great Reed Warbler	2	-	2	6	-	-
Thick-billed Warbler	-	-	-	1	-	-
Booted Warbler	-	-	-	5	-	-
Icterine Warbler	1	-	1	70	-	-
Melodious Warbler	-	-	-	9	-	-
Subalpine Warbler	1	-	1	20	-	-
Sardinian Warbler	-	-	-	1	-	-
Barred Warbler	5	-	5	323	-	1
Lesser Whitethroat	22	-	22	501	-	-
Whitethroat	13	-	13	754	-	-
Garden Warbler	149	-	149	2700	2	3
Blackcap	115	-	115	3764	1	13
Greenish Warbler	1	-	1	14	-	-
Arctic Warbler	-	-	-	26	-	-
Pallas's Warbler	-	-	-	2	-	-
Yellow-browed Warbler	3	-	3	85	-	-
Radde's Warbler	-	-	-	1	-	-
Dusky Warbler	-	-	-	3	-	-
Bonelli's Warbler	-	-	-	1	-	-
Wood Warbler	1	-	1	83	-	-
Chiffchaff	57	-	57	733	-	-
Willow Warbler	59	-	59	2846	-	3
Goldcrest	35	-	35	1159	-	2
Firecrest	-	-	-	1	-	-
Spotted Flycatcher	13	-	13	521	-	3
Red-breasted Flycatcher	1	-	1	46	-	-
Collared Flycatcher	-	-	-	1	-	-
Pied Flycatcher	17	-	17	776	-	4
Blue Tit	-	-	-	2	-	-
Great Tit	-	-	-	7	-	-
Treecreeper	-	-	-	1	-	-
Golden Oriole	-	-	-	6	-	1
Isabelline Shrike	-	-	-	1	-	-
Red-backed Shrike	10	-	10	152	-	-
Lesser Grey Shrike	-	-	-	6	-	-
Great Grey Shrike	1	-	1	104	-	1
Woodchat Shrike	1	-	1	11	-	-
Jackdaw	-	-	-	3	-	-
Rook	-	-	-	5	-	-
Hooded Crow	-	-	-	43	-	-
Raven	-	-	-	26	-	-
Daurian Starling	-	-	-	1	-	-
Starling	372	200	572	20161	7	168
Rose-coloured Starling	-	-	-	2	-	-
House Sparrow	7	-	7	1263	2	3
Tree Sparrow	2	-	2	97	-	1
Chaffinch	54	-	54	2211	-	11
Brambling	82	-	82	2559	-	12
Greenfinch	8	-	8	145	-	-
Goldfinch	-	-	-	5	-	-
Siskin	5	-	5	274	-	1
Linnet	-	-	-	130	-	1
Twite	97	-	97	4362	-	3
Redpoll	2	-	2	548	-	1
Arctic Redpoll	-	-	-	16	-	-
Two-barred Crossbill	-	-	-	1	-	-

	Ringed as		Totals		Recovered	
	Juv/Adult	Pullus	1988	1948-88	1988	1948-88
Crossbill	-	-	-	298	-	2
Parrot Crossbill	-	-	-	36	-	-
Scarlet Rosefinch	5	-	5	102	-	-
Bullfinch	5	-	5	36	-	-
Hawfinch	4	-	4	10	-	-
Tennessee Warbler	-	-	-	2	-	-
White-crowned Sparrow	-	-	-	1	-	-
White-throated Sparrow	-	-	-	2	-	-
Song Sparrow	-	-	-	2	-	-
Savannah Sparrow	-	-	-	1	-	-
Lapland Bunting	-	-	-	40	-	-
Snow Bunting	2	-	2	510	-	3
Pine Bunting	-	-	-	2	-	-
Yellowhammer	1	-	1	52	-	-
Ortolan Bunting	-	-	-	18	-	-
Cretzschmar's Bunting	-	-	-	1	-	-
Yellow-browed Bunting	-	-	-	1	-	-
Rustic Bunting	-	-	-	12	-	1
Little Bunting	-	-	-	24	-	-
Chestnut Bunting	-	-	-	1	-	-
Yellow-breasted Bunting	-	-	-	6	-	-
Reed Bunting	9	-	9	341	-	2
Pallas's Reed Bunting	-	-	-	2	-	-
Black-headed Bunting	-	-	-	3	-	-
Corn Bunting	-	-	-	3	-	-
Red-headed Bunting	-	-	-	5	-	-
TOTALS	4029	1354	5383	219572	157	3022

Recoveries in 1988

157 Recoveries were reported during the year. The more interesting ones are given in full below. The others are presented in tabular or summary form. The international code of symbols denoting method of recovery and age is used:

Manner of recovery:

- v - caught or trapped by man and released with ring
- vv - ring number read in the field, or sight record of identifiable colour rings
- vB - breeding where recaptured
- +
- x - shot or killed by man
- x - found dead or dying
- xF - found freshly dead or dying
- xL - found dead (not recent)
- () - caught or trapped alive and not released, or released without ring
- /?/ - manner of recovery unknown

Date of recovery: where this is unknown, the date of the reporting letter is given in parentheses.

Age when ringed: this is given in the EURING code, based mainly on calendar years. Interpretation as follows:

- 1 *pullus* (= nestling or chick)
- 2 fully grown, year of hatching unknown
- 3 hatched during calendar year of ringing
- 4 hatched before calendar year, but exact year unknown
- 5 hatched during previous calendar year
- 6 hatched before previous calendar year, but exact year unknown
- 7 definitely hatched two years before year of ringing
- 8 hatched three or more calendar years before year of ringing
- J the suffix 'J' denotes bird still in juvenile plumage

Sex: m = male; f = female

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

Fulmar

Twelve recoveries comprised 6 in the Netherlands, 3 in West Germany, 1 in Norway, 1 in Cumbria, 1 in Shetland.

Storm Petrel

	Ringed on Fair Isle	Controlled on Fair Isle
FAROES	3	
Yell (Shetland)	4	9
Whalsay (Shetland)	9	
Lerwick (Shetland)	9	4
Foula (Shetland)		1
North Ronaldsay (Orkney)	1	2
Auskerry (Orkney)	3	1
John o Groats (Highland)		1
Holborn Head (Highland)		1
Noss Head (Highland)	5	5
Collieston (Grampian)		
Girdleness (Grampian)		1
Isle of May (Fife)	1	
North Rona (Western Isles)	1	

Three of the most interesting recoveries are given in full.

2221470	4	30.07.79	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	v	10.08.88	Nolsoy, FAROES 62°1'N 6°41'W 389 km NW
2230403	4	30.07.81	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	v	05.08.83	Noss Head, Wick, Highland
	v	04.08.88	Noss Head 58 28'N 3 3'W 144 km SW
2315278	4	09.08.87	<i>Lerwick, Shetland</i> 60°09'N 1°08'N
	v	15.08.87	Fair Isle 74 km SSW
	v	30.08.88	Nolso, FAROES 389 km NW of Fair Isle

Shag

Typical short distance dispersal was demonstrated by 8 recoveries in Orkney and 5 in Shetland. A more adventurous individual was recovered at Craighleith, Lothian 389 km S in its first summer.

Pink-footed Goose

1170358	4f	02.10.83	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	+	16.10.87	Montrose Basin, Tayside
			56°43'N 2°30'W 317 km S

Eider

A first-year ringed in September 1966 was nearly 22 years old when found freshly dead as an adult male, tangled in fishing net at Funniequoy in May 1988.

Long-tailed Duck

SS68635	4m	21.10.67	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	+	25.10.87	Jamalinlahti, Lieksa, Kuopio, FINLAND
			63°20'N 29°54'E 1724 km ENE

Another old one! Ringed as an adult, this bird was at least 21 years old when shot (and must have made tough eating!).

Oystercatcher

Two recoveries away from the isle comprised a 1983 chick controlled in Anglesey, Wales, in October 1987 and a 1969 adult found dead in Lancashire, England in November 1987.

Woodcock

EK66963	6	30.04.86	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	+	12.12.87	Luffness Estate, Lothian
			56°1'N 2°50'W 397 km SSW

Bonxie

HW68862	1	01.07.81	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	v	29.03.86	Cagliari, Sardinia, ITALY
			39°15'N 9°32'W 2388 km SSE

HW91069	1	16.07.83	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	+	(30.03.88)	near Gambian waters, off Southern SENEGAL
			13°41'N 16°32'W 5452 km SSW

Two excellent early spring reports. There was also a first October recovery in West Germany of a bird ringed as a chick.

Herring Gull

Recoveries away from the isle comprised a fifth-autumn bird in Norfolk and a seventh-autumn bird in Shetland.

Great Black-backed Gull

A second-winter bird was recovered in Norfolk and a fourth-summer at North Mainland, Shetland. A 1971 adult was at least 19 years old when recovered in August 1987 at Noss, Shetland.

Guillemot

Recoveries were from the following areas:

RINGED AS NESTLINGS

	Age in years at recovery									
	less than	1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Within Britain:										
Shetland		1								
Highland							1			
Suffolk							1			
Abroad:										
Iceland									1	
Faroes		1		2						
Norway		7				4				
Sweden		3	2							
Denmark		3	1							
North Sea					3					
Netherlands			1							1

RINGED AS ADULTS

	No. of years after ringing									
	less than	1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Within Britain:										
Fife							1			
Lothian										1
Abroad:										
Norway		1					1			
West Germany						1				

Razorbill

Recoveries were from the following areas:

RINGED AS NESTLINGS

	Age in years at recovery									
	1	2	3	4	5	8	10			
Within Britain:										
Tyne & Wear										1
Devon		1								
Abroad:										
Denmark				3			1			
West Germany							1			
Netherlands					1					
Portugal			1							

RINGED AS ADULTS

	No. of years after ringing									
	1	2	3	4	7	9	12	21		
Within Britain:										
Grampian							1			
Suffolk						1				
Sussex							1			
Wales				1						

Abroad:		
Denmark		1
Spain	1	1

The most unexpected recovery was a 1984 adult trapped in 1987 in a breeding colony at Bardsey Island, North Wales.

Collared Dove

EB47993	4	23.06.77	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	x	(01.07.82)	Scarborough, North Yorks, ENGLAND 54°21'N 0°30'W 580 km S

The first recovery of a Fair Isle ringed Collared Dove.

Meadow Pipit

C858938	3J	25.07.87	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	x	12.10.87	Thurles, Tipperary, EIRE 52°35'N 7°58'W 866 km SSW

C858938 was probably a Fair Isle bred bird.

Rock Pipit

2323072	3J	15.08.87	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	x	12.03.88	Finstown, Orkney 59°0'N 3°6'W 103 km SW

Robin

E109397	3	16.10.87	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	v	29.10.87	Wideford Burn, Kirkwall, Orkney 58°58'N 2°55'W 97 km SW
C858603	5m	08.04.87	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	x	22.04.87	Nidingen, Halland, SWEDEN 57°18'N 11°54'E 824 km ESE

Two relatively quick recoveries.

Ring Ouzel

XJ61975	3f	22.10.87	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	x	25.05.87	5 km SE of Lannion, FRANCE 48°44'N 3°28'W 1206 km S
XJ61982	4m	30.04.88	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	xF	17.10.88	Soria, SPAIN 41 46'N 2 28'W 1975 km S

XJ61975 was ringed at 1740 hrs and covered the 1206 km at a minimum ground speed of over 16 kph.

Blackbird

XK68973	5m	08.04.84	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	x	26.10.88	Alfoten, Sogn og Fjordane, NORWAY 61°50'N 5°40'E 471 km ENE

XH32780	4m	20.11.81	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	x	13.04.87	Goteborg, SWEDEN 57°45'N 12°0'E 812 km ESE
XP08747	5f	17.03.86	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	v	14.11.87	Moseby, Jylland, DENMARK 57°14'N 9°41'E 706 km ESE
XP28118	5f	30.04.86	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	v	26.03.88	Blavand, Jylland, DENMARK 55°33'N 8°5'E 728 km SE
XP28187	5f	28.04.88	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	v	07.05.88	North Ronaldsay, Orkney 59°22'N 2°26'W 50 km WSW

Note the similar area of recovery for XH32780, XP08747 and XP28118.

Song Thrush

NX95761	4	03.04.87	<i>Fair Isle</i>
		07.02.88	Hervas, Caceres, SPAIN 40°16'N 5°51'W 2161 km S
NX95930	3	19.10.87	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	v	23.10.87	Spum Point, Humberside, ENGLAND 53°35'N 0°6'W 669 km S

NX95930 was another quick recovery.

Garden Warbler

E109896	4	22.05.88	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	v	24.05.88	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	v	03.06.88	North Ronaldsay, Orkney 59°22'N 2°26'W 50 km WSW
E109964	4	26.05.88	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	x	28.05.88	Burravoe, Yell, Shetland 60°35'N 1°20'W 118 km N

Two classic cases of late spring wanderings within the Northern Isles.

Blackcap

A first-year female ringed on 23rd October was killed by a cat the following day on North Ronaldsay, Orkney.

Starling

Four juveniles recovered two months to five years later in Orkney and two in Shetland were typical examples of short distance dispersal. Another ringed as a juvenile male in October 1976 was over 12 years old when controlled in January 1988 at Sandwick, Shetland.

House Sparrow

NK13821	3J	08.07.87	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	vf	05.05.88	North Ronaldsay, Orkney

NK13821	3J	08.07.87	<i>Fair Isle</i>
	vf	14.08.88	North Ronaldsay, Orkney

The only previous recovery away from the isle was on Foula. Departures may have been prompted by population pressure, the island population reaching its highest level for many years by 1987-88 (demonstrated by high counts and adoption of cliff and North Haven breeding sites).

Controls

Details were received for 34 birds in 1988 which had been ringed elsewhere and found on Fair Isle:

Shag

1238031	1	15.06.86	<i>Sule Skerry, Orkney 59°4'N 4°24'W</i>
	xL	(19.01.88)	Fair Isle 166 km ENE

Barnacle Goose

Close scrutiny by staff and visitors of flocks of Barnacle Geese on 2nd-4th October 1988 produced 10 very interesting colour-ring sightings of birds ringed on Spitsbergen breeding grounds and Caerlaverock, Scotland, winter grounds, including 3 pairs. The results are tabulated below.

BIRD	MATE	DATE RINGED	PLACE
HVU	HPN	both 1977	both Spitsbergen
AXY	CGA	1978, 1977	Caerlaverock, Spitsbergen
KIP	KFA	both 1977	Caerlaverock
NP		1986	Spitsbergen
blue CV		1973	Spitsbergen
orange AC		1979	Caerlaverock
NZJ		1977	Spitsbergen

Merlin

EP15486	1	29.06.87	near Lerwick, Shetland 60 9'N 1 8'W
	vm	25.09.87	Fair Isle 74 km SSW

One of a brood of 5, this was a typical control, though most recent captures have been females.

Oystercatcher

FA19385	5	03.12.87	<i>Craigbury, Beaully Firth, Highland</i>
			57°30'N 4°18'W
	xL	21.08.88	Fair Isle 274 km NE
FV41055	1	24.07.77	<i>Sumburgh, Shetland 59°51'N 1°16'W</i>
	x	30.05.88	Fair Isle 40 km SSW

Bonxie

HT18581	1	24.07.77	Hoy, Orkney 58°51'N 3°17'W
	xF	30.05.88	Fair Isle 121 km NE
HW65097	1	03.08.85	<i>Hirta, St Kilda, Western Isles</i> 57°49'N 8°34'W
	+	27.06.88	Fair Isle 444 km NE

A number of Foula hatched birds regularly breed in the Fair Isle colony, but the above records suggest additional recruitment from farther afield.

Black-headed Gull

Copenhagen

630448	1	24.06.87	<i>Fruensholm, Jylland, DENMARK</i> 57°4'N 9°48'E
	x	30.07.87	Fair Isle 720 km WNW

A quick post-fledging movement to Fair Isle.

Great Black-backed Gull

A first-year trapped on 21st September had been ringed as a chick on St Ninian Isle, Shetland in June.

Kittiwake

Reikjavik

523818	1	19.07.80	<i>Flatey, Breidafjörður, ICELAND</i> 65°22'N 22°55'W
	xL	08.06.87	Fair Isle 1269 km ESE

Arctic Tern

XS67181	1	05.07.83	<i>Foula, Shetland</i> 60°8'N 2°5'W
	xF	21.05.88	Fair Isle 72 km SSE

First evidence of the source of Fair Isle colonists.

Guillemot

T05513	1	02.07.84	Sumburgh, Shetland 59°51'N 1°16'W
	xF	09.07.87	Fair Isle 40 km SSW

A non-breeder prospecting a non natal colony? The corpse was sexed as female on dissection.

Duncock

Bruxelles

2530864	3	18.10.86	<i>Herent, Brabant, BELGIUM</i> 50°54'N 4°40'E
	v	06.04.87	Fair Isle 1038 km NNW
C699607	4	07.04.87	<i>Out Skerries, Shetland</i> 60°5'N 0°46'W
	v	14.04.87	Fair Isle 109 km SSW

Blackbird

There were 2 controls, both from Orkney. A North Ronaldsay 26th March adult male was on Fair Isle 3 days later and a Kirkwall 21st April first-winter male 7 days later.

Redwing

An Icelandic race bird ringed on North Ronaldsay on 28th May 1987 was caught on Fair Isle 25 days later.

Sedge Warbler

E562667	3J	02.08.87	Drum, Montrose Basin, Tayside 56°43'N 2°32'W
	v	08.05.88	Fair Isle 318 km N

A spring overshoot.

Marsh Warbler

A bird ringed in Fetlar, Shetland, on 28th April and caught nearly 2 months later on 26th June was a fascinating example of spring-early summer wandering within the Northern Isles.

Garden Warbler

A first-year trapped on 6th November had been ringed in North Ronaldsay 2 days earlier.

Red-backed Shrike

Stockholm			
3290362	3m	11.08.86	<i>Ottenby, Oland, SWEDEN</i> 56°13'N 16°25'E
	v	16.06.87	Fair Isle 1126 km WNW

Details of one of the most exciting captures in 1987.

Starling

RE05716	3J	05.06.88	<i>North Ronaldsay, Orkney</i>
	v	06.07.88	Fair Isle 50 km ENE

Despite intensive Starling *pulli* ringing, summer flocks on Fair Isle predominantly comprise unringed juveniles. RE05716 was the first indication of the source of this summer influx.

Brambling

Two controls were both from North Ronaldsay. A first-summer male was at Fair Isle on 27th April two days after ringing. Wintering in the Northern Isles or very similar autumn and spring migration routes was indicated by a first-winter female ringed at North Ronaldsay on 20th October and returning via Fair Isle the following 20th April.

Snow Bunting

For the second spring running a colour-ringed bird was seen on spring migration. Observed on 30th March 1988, it was from the same source, being an adult female ringed at Keiss Links, Wick, Highland in March 1987.

Retraps

The following is a selection of more interesting retraps in 1988:

Oldest Birds	Ringed	1988 Details	Age
Fulmar	adult, 1962	breeding	at least 27 yrs
Storm Petrel	adult, 1977	retrap	at least 12
Shag	chick, 1968	breeding	20
Oystercatcher	chick, 1963	found dead	25
Great Black-back	chick, 1970	retrap	18
Kittiwake	chick, 1974	breeding	14
Razorbill	adult, 1968	breeding	at least 22
Tystie	chick, 1976	breeding	12
Puffin	adult, 1969	breeding	at least 21
House Sparrow	juvenile, 1981	found dead	7

Selected Weight Gains	Ringed	Retrap	Gain	Gain per day
Long-eared Owl	12.11	21.11	41 g	4 · 5 g
Bluethroat	16.05	18.05	2 · 8	1 · 4
Thrush Nightingale	09.05	12.05	2 · 4	0 · 8
Redwing	10.04	21.04	18 · 0	1 · 63
Blackbird	29.10	30.10	11 · 7	11 · 7
Great Reed Warbler	27.05	09.06	4 · 0	0 · 3
Great Reed Warbler	03.06	04.06	3 · 2	3 · 2
Bullfinch	28.10	10.11	3 · 3	0 · 25

A Bullfinch weighing 34 · 2 g on first capture on 10th November and retrapped at 34 · 3 g on 18th November was the heaviest Fair Isle Bullfinch on record.

Moths on Fair Isle, 1988

Following introductory trapping in the second half of 1987 (Riddiford 1987) a fuller season of trapping was undertaken in 1988, the mercury vapour trap being set on all suitable nights from 29th March to 23rd August. Poor weather and building works prevented further trapping. Trapping results are presented in Tables 1 & 2.

Eight macro moth species were trapped for the first time in 1988. They were Map-winged Swift, Yellow Shell, Nettle Pug, Narrow-winged Pug, Juniper Pug, The Shears, Marbled Coronet and Silver Y. All but the Juniper Pugs were trapped earlier than the 1987 starting date of 22nd July and thus had probably not been available for sampling previously. The Shears and Marbled Coronet were the only species trapped before June and were among the commonest in June. Map-winged Swift was second commonest to True Lover's Knot in the second half of June. True Lover's Knot was the commonest moth from mid June to the end of July. In August Autumnal Rustic was by far the commonest, comprising 43% of 1st-15th August and 73% of 16th-31st August macro moth captures. The micro moth *Acleris aspersana* was also common in second half of August captures. The night of highest numbers was 17th August when 110 macros (100 of which were Autumnal Rustics) and 22 micros were trapped. In contrast, trapping was carried out on 10 nights of light wind between 29th March and 22nd May but no moth was trapped before 27th May.

Full details of captures by half-month are given in Tables 1 & 2 and first and late dates of macro moth captures in Table 3. Species variations are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Macro Moth captures in Fair Isle MV Light Trap, 1988

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
No of Nights	3	8	10	8	8	7	4
Map-winged Swift¹		3	21	3			
<i>Hepialus fusconebulosa</i>							
Silver-ground Carpet²			2				1
<i>Xanthorhoe montanata</i>							
Garden Carpet³		1	2			1	2
<i>Xanthorhoe fluctuata</i>							
Yellow Shell⁴				2			
<i>Camptogramma bilineata</i>							
Netted Pug⁵			3				
<i>Eupithecia venosata</i>							
Narrow-winged Pug		2	1				
<i>Eupithecia nanata angusta</i>							
Juniper Pug							2
<i>Eupithecia pusillata</i>							
Northern Rustic				5	6	7	21
<i>Standfussiana lucerneae</i>							
Large Yellow Underwing						3	1
<i>Noctua pronuba</i>							
Autumnal Rustic⁶						42	153
<i>Paradiarsia glareosa</i>							
True Lover's Knot			23	26	19	5	1
<i>Lycophotia porphyrea</i>							
Ingrailed Clay				9	12	16	3
<i>Diarsia mendica</i>							
Square-spot Rustic						2	3
<i>Xestia xanthographa</i>							
The Shears	4	24	10				
<i>Hada nana</i>							
Marbled Coronet	10	8	6				
<i>Hadena confusa</i>							
Antler				5	2	14	23
<i>Cerapteryx graminis</i>							
Dark Arches				1			
<i>Apamea monoglypha</i>							
The Confused				3			
<i>Apamea furva britannica</i>							
Silver Y				6			
<i>Autographa gamma</i>							

KEY

A: 27th-31st May

B: 1st-15th June

C: 16th-30th June

D: 1st-15th July

E: 16th-31st July

F: 1st-15th August

G: 16th-23rd August

Notes

1. All Map-winged Swifts were of the Shetland form *H. f. ssp. shetlandicus*.
2. All Silver-ground Carpets were of the Shetland form *X. m. ssp. shetlandica*.
3. All Garden Carpets were of the northern form *X. f. ssp. thules*.
4. Both Yellow Shells were the nominate form *C. b. ssp. bilineata*.
5. Netted Pugs were all apparently of the Orkney form *E. v. ssp. ochracea*.
6. The capture ratio of Autumnal Rustics was 75% nominate *glareosa* and 25% Shetland form *edda* (*edda* was commoner after mid August, comprising 33% of 16th-31st August captures compared with only 17% in 1st-15th August).

Table 2: Micro Moth captures in Fair Isle MV Light Trap, 1988

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Diamond-backed Moth							
<i>Plutella xylostella</i>			2				
Brown House Moth							
<i>Hofmannophila pseudospretella</i>			1				
<i>Eana osseana</i>				7	25	17	
<i>Eana penziana colquhounana</i>				3	2	1	3
<i>Acleris aspersana</i>						10	79
<i>Lobesia littoralis</i>			2				
<i>Eucosma cana</i>			7		1	9	6
<i>Crambus lathoniellus</i>			2	10	1		
<i>Agriphila straminella</i>				2			

KEY

As for Table 1

Table 3. First and Last dates of macro moths captured in 1988

	FIRST	LAST
Map-winged Swift	9.6	8.7
<i>Hepialus fusconebulosa</i>		
Silver-ground Carpet	29.6	18.8
<i>Xanthorhoe montanata shetlandica</i>		
Garden Carpet	8.6	23.8
<i>Xanthorhoe fluctuata f. thulei</i>		
Yellow Shell	13.7	14.7
<i>Campogramma bilineata</i>		

	FIRST	LAST
Netted Pug	27.6	29.6
<i>Eupithecia venosata</i>		
Narrow-winged Pug	12.6	16.6
<i>Eupithecia nanata angusta</i>		
Juniper Pug	23.8	23.8
<i>Eupithecia pusillata</i>		
Northern Rustic	8.7	23.8
<i>Standfussiana lucemea</i>		
Large Yellow Underwing	11.8	23.8
<i>Noctua pronuba</i>		
Autumnal Rustic	10.8	23.8
<i>Paradiarsia glareosa</i>		
True Lover's Knot	27.6	18.8
<i>Lycophotia porphyrea</i>		
Ingrailed Clay	8.7	20.8
<i>Diarsia mendica</i>		
Square-spot Rustic	11.8	23.8
<i>Xestia xanthographa</i>		
The Shears	27.5	29.6
<i>Hada nana</i>		
Marbled Coronet	27.5	30.6
<i>Hadena confusa</i>		
Antler	4.7	23.8
<i>Cerapteryx graminis</i>		
Dark Arches	15.7	15.7
<i>Apamea monoglypha</i>		
The Confused	14.7	15.7
<i>Apamea furva britannica</i>		
Silver Y	3.7	14.7
<i>Autographa gamma</i>		

The other Lepidopteran highlights of 1988 were a Convolvulus Hawk-moth *Agrius convolvuli* picked up moribund at Quoy on 3rd September and single Rush Veneers *Nomophila noctuella* (a micro moth well-known as a migrant) caught by hand on 21st and 22nd September. As far as I can establish, both are first records for Fair Isle.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due once more to Pat Sellar and Brendan O'Brien for continued loan of the MV trap and for their encouragement. The Thomsons of Quoy drew my attention to the Convolvulus Hawk-moth. Table 2 would not have been possible without the identification skills of Mike Terry.

Reference

Riddiford, N. 1987. Moths on Fair Isle, 1987. *Fair Isle Bird Observatory Report* for 1987: 50-52.

Nick Riddiford

Cetacean records in 1988

SPERM WHALE *Physeter macrocephalus*. Peter Howlett saw 6 moving slowly SW off the south end of the isle on 18th November. The observation probably comprised a pod of 6 bachelor males. This appears to be the first sighting of this species from the isle, and thus PH's description is given as verification: Probably all in the region of 40-50', gave repeated views of their huge squared-off foreheads and also the back with only a triangular lump rather than a distinct fin about $\frac{2}{3}$ along the body. On 2 occasions I saw a spout strong enough to retain its shape, showing the distinctive forward angle of projection.

PORPOISE *Phocoena phocoena*. A good series of observations comprised 1 in Furse Bay on 23rd March, 2 on crossing of 21st May, 2 off Dronger on 17th June, 1 off the west on 15th September, 7 on 23rd and at least 8 S on 30th September, 2 off the Gunnawarks on 13th October, 1 W off North Light on 16th October, 10 in Funniequoy Bay on 22nd October, 2 off Buness on 1st November, 12-15 off South Light on 2nd November, a school of c15 south off Buness on 11th November and c20 heading SE off Meoness on 13th November.

PILOT WHALE *Globicephala melaena*. Records, both on the *Good Shepherd* crossing, were 1 (half-way) on 28th May and 6 on 21st September.

KILLER WHALE *Orcinus orca*. Three off North Light on 8th October included 1 bull.

WHITE-BEAKED DOLPHIN *Lagenorhynchus albirostris*. Records were 2 on crossing of 5th April, 3 on 12th April accompanying the *Good Shepherd*, 1 off Dronger on 4th May, 3 (adult + 2 calves) swimming E off North Coast on 9th May, 2 heading NE on crossing of 21st May, 6 on crossing of 19th July, 10 on crossing of 30th August, at least 2 on crossing of 17th September and about 12 off South Light on 20th September.

RISSE'S DOLPHIN *Grampus griseus*. A school of c18 was off South Light at 1400-1500 hrs on 2nd November.

UNIDENTIFIED DOLPHINS: 3 were off Buness on 18th July and 1 on the crossing of 30th July.

MEDIUM SIZED WHALE: unidentified whales comprised 1 on the crossing of 21st May (halfway) and 1, probably Minke Whale *Balaenoptera acutorostrata*, on crossing of 2nd June.

Nick Riddiford



The Weather on Fair Isle in 1988

January	Mild, sunny and drier than usual; temperatures 1°C above av.; max. of 10.2°C was the highest January temperature since records began in 1974. Gales on 10 days with frequent southerly winds. Mean sea level pressure of 995.1 mbs equalled the lowest January record.
February	A very wet month with rainfall 270% of average – our wettest February on record. The mean sea level pressure of 1001.6 mbs equalled the lowest on record for February.
March	Temperature and rainfall near – and sunshine above – average; Fair Isle was the sunniest of some 76 stations in Britain and northern Europe! Cool, with frequent northerly winds; on 12th & 13th mean daily temperatures just below freezing. The lowest temperature of the year (-3.1°C) was recorded on 13th. The grass minimum temperature fell to -4.6°C on the nights of 13th & 18th – the lowest value for the year.
April	Cool and sunny, but rather wet for first 20 days. During last 10 days over 100 hours of sunshine was recorded – well over half the month's total – with Fair Isle the sunniest place in Britain on two occasions. On 23rd humidity fell as low as 40% as easterly winds brought cool dry air across the Norwegian mountains. Fair Isle recorded the lowest daytime max. temp. in Britain on 13 days!
May	Dry, with av. temperatures. A sunny start, but dull with persistent fog and low stratus during last 10 days of the month. Almost half the sunshine total (87 hours) occurred between 12th & 19th. Fair Isle reported the lowest daytime max. temperatures on no fewer than 17 days! Persistent easterly winds.
June	Very dry, with rainfall only 26% of normal, half of it falling in one day – the 20th! Calmest June on record. On average a little warmer, but with lower maxima than usual. With 16.5 hours the 6th was almost the sunniest day of the year anywhere in Britain – Tiree beating Fair Isle to this title by just 0.1! Fog on 13 days.
July	Unsettled and very wet; rainfall 308% of av. yet sunshine 20% above normal. Fog on 18 days. With 23.6mms 23rd was the year's wettest day. Gale force winds, gusting to 56 knots, on 25th. Mean sea level pressure of 1005.2 mbs lowest recorded for July. Again a little warmer than usual, but maxima still well below average.
August	Dull and wet with fog on 15 days. The second wettest August on record with almost twice the normal rainfall (196%). But for a splendid end to the month – almost half the month's sunshine falling within the last week – it would also have been the dulllest August on record. Maxima again below average.
September	Mild, dry and a little sunnier than usual. The warmest day of the year was 7th when the temperature rose to 15.7°C.
October	Near average rainfall and temperature, but rather dull. A cold end to the month with snow showers on 28th.
November	Drier and sunnier than usual. The mean sea level pressure of 1016.4 mbs was the highest for any November. Temperatures generally above average, but with a brief cold spell with snow on 20th & 21st.
December	Dull, with rainfall about av. but very mild – warmest December on record. The max. of 11.5°C during the night of 28th/29th is the highest temperature recorded in December. Gales on 8 days; highest gust of the year (71 knots) on 21st and windiest day of the year (mean speed of 37.6 knots over the 24 hours) on 22nd.

Meteorological data for Fair Isle 1988

Temperature (° Celsius)	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	YEAR
Mean	4.9	4.5	3.8	4.9	7.7	10.1	11.9	11.7	11.3	9.0	6.9	6.8	7.8
Maximum	10.2	8.2	8.7	8.8	12.0	13.7	14.9	15.1	15.7	13.4	11.2	11.5	(7.4)
Minimum	-0.6	-2.0	-3.1	-2.4	3.2	4.3	9.3	7.4	5.2	0.4	-0.3	0.0	
Rainfall (millimetres)													
Monthly	81.9	117.2	73.7	56.6	32.3	10.2	144.6	115.3	61.8	106.9	93.2	108.5	1002.2
Maximum Daily fall	12.4	17.5	8.8	10.5	8.8	5.5	24.6	20.4	10.2	20.3	10.3	12.2	(895.2)
Sunshine (hours)													
Total	34.0	62.7	124.5	168.8	183.9	153.6	155.0	116.0	120.7	57.7	37.8	13.3	1228.0
Maximum Daily	4.6	7.6	10.7	13.8	15.1	16.5	12.8	12.7	11.0	8.1	4.7	2.2	(1178.0)
Wind speed (knots)													
Mean	18.6	18.7	15.2	12.5	12.6	7.0	11.4	9.7	15.8	15.1	17.4	19.1	16.1
Maximum Gust	68	68	67	51	47	31	56	46	62	58	62	71	(16.5)
Number of days													
Hail	15	19	11	4	2	0	0	0	2	5	10	11	79
Snow/sleet	8	15	14	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	54
Rain, > .1mm	23	29	26	18	13	7	25	21	25	23	22	28	260
Wet, > .9mm	19	23	20	13	9	3	22	18	18	17	18	21	201
Ground frost	11	10	12	9	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	4	51
Wind (direction at 09hr)													
North	3	3	9	2	3	7	2	1	2	4	6	1	43
North East	2	2	2	7	5	1	4	1	0	2	0	0	26
East	7	2	1	7	9	0	6	6	2	4	2	0	46
South East	2	2	6	2	5	4	5	5	2	7	0	4	44
South	9	1	4	0	3	4	7	4	7	6	5	2	52
South West	4	5	3	5	3	2	3	4	6	3	6	5	49
West	2	7	3	4	1	5	2	6	11	3	9	13	66
North West	2	6	3	3	2	7	2	4	0	1	2	6	38

(Figures in brackets are the average for the period 1974-1987)

Miscellany

Congratulations

Congratulations to Michael & Cathy Stout on the birth of daughter Jennifer on 7th September. Cathy was Assistant Cook (as Cathy Falkner) in 1985. And congratulations to Dave Suddaby, 1983 Assistant and now a Shetland resident, on his marriage to Kim in January.

Vignettes

The bird vignettes for this report were drawn by Andy Birch, Mike Pinder and Paul Salaman. Stewart Thomson of Quoy drew the pod of Sperm Whales. We are grateful to them all.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the islanders, visitors, friends and Observatory benefactors for their considerable help, advice and support in so many facets of the Observatory's work.

Publications

The following were published in 1988 by or with the assistance of FIBO staff and facilities.

Migration and Faunistics

Arnfield, R. J. *A geographical analysis of bird migration in autumn 1987 with particular reference to Fair Isle*. Degree Dissertation, University of Oxford.

Camphuysen, C. J. & van IJzendoorn, E. J. Influx of Pomarine Skua in northwestern Europe in autumn 1985. *Dutch Birding* 10: 66-70.

Ellis, P. Recent Reports. *Scottish Bird News* No 9 (March 1988): 3.

Ellis, P. Recent Reports. *Scottish Bird News* No 11 (September 1988): 3.

Evans, L. G. R. Red Kites during Spring 1988. *Birding World* 1: 136-138.

Evans, L. G. R. Subalpine Warblers during Spring 1988. *Birding World* 1: 213-215.

Harvey, P. & Riddiford, N. J. (1987). Bobolink on Fair Isle. *Scott. Birds* 14: 256.

Nicoll, M., Summers, R. W., Underhill, L. G., Brockie, K. & Rae, R. Regional, seasonal and annual variations in the structure of Purple Sandpiper *Calidris maritima* populations in Britain. *Ibis* 130: 221-233.

Willmott, M. J. Blackburnian Warbler on Fair Isle - A New Western Palearctic Bird. *Birding World* 1: 355-356.

Identification

Heard, C. D. R. & Walbridge, G. Field Identification of Pechora Pipit. *Brit. Birds* 81: 452-463.

Riddiford, N. & Ellis, P. Calls of Pechora Pipit. *Brit. Birds* 81: 469-470.

Riddiford, N. & Harvey, P. Dark neck spot of Pechora Pipit. *Brit. Birds* 81: 469.

Seabirds

Anker-Nilssen, T., Hope Jones, P. & Rostad, O. W. Age, sex and origins of auks (Alcidae) killed in the Skagerrak oiling incident of January 1981. *Seabird* 11: 28-46.

Da Prato, S. The 1988 Round Up. *Scottish Bird News* No 11 (September 1988): 4-5.

Ewins, P. J. The timing of moult in Black Guillemots *Cephus grylle* in Shetland. *Ringin & Migration* 9: 5-10.

Ewins, P. J. An analysis of ringing recoveries of Black Guillemots *Cephus grylle* in Britain and Ireland. *Ringin & Migration* 9: 95-102.

Ewins, P. J., Ellis, P. M., Bird, D. R. & Prior, A. The distribution and status of Arctic and Great Skuas in Shetland, 1985-86. *Scott. Birds* 15: 9-20.

Ewins, P. J. & Kirk, D. A. The distribution of Shetland Black Guillemots *Cephus grylle* outside the breeding season. *Seabird* 11: 50-61.

Furness, R. W. (1987). *The Skuas*. Poyzers, Calton.

Harris, M. Kittiwake Breeding Success 1987. *BTO News* No 156 (May-June 1988): 11.

Heubeck, M. Shetland's Seabirds in Dire Straits. *BTO News* No 158 (September-October 1988): 1-2.

Hope Jones, P. The European cline in wing-length of Guillemots *Uria aalge*. *Seabird* 11: 19-21.

Lloyd, C. (1987). Scotland's seabirds come out of top. *Scottish Bird News* No 8 (December 1987): 6.

Rothery, P., Wanless, S. & Harris, M. P. Analysis of counts from monitoring Guillemots in Britain and Ireland. *Journal of Animal Ecology* 57: 1-19.

Longevity

Mead, C. Long Tail of an Old Duck. *BTO News* No 156 (May-June 1988): 2.

Marine Ecology

Howson, C. *Marine Nature Conservation Review Survey of Shetland, Foula and Fair Isle 1987*. Volume 1 Report. Oil Pollution Research Unit/Field Studies Council, Pembroke.

Information and Publicity Articles

Edwards, M. Fairest Isle of All. *Bird Watching* October 1988: 8-11.

Coming shortly!

FAIR ISLE – an island saga, by Valerie M. Thom

The background to this book, which tells the story of island life, past and present, was described in last year's Report. John Donald Publishers, Edinburgh, now hope to produce it in July. The price has not yet been finalised but is likely to be in the region of £12.50.

The John Harrison Memorial Fund, 1967-1988

In 1967 artist Richard Richardson of Norfolk set up a fund in memory of his friend John William Harrison, who had recently died aged only 19. John had accompanied Richard on his annual visits to Fair Isle for three years before he died, and during that relatively short time had come to love the island and all it had to offer. Richard felt that a fitting memorial would be to establish a fund from which annual awards could be made to help young people pay the costs of a visit to Fair Isle. Sadly, Richard Richardson died in 1977, but he had made generous bequests in his Will; he left to the fund not only a large sum of money but also a proportion of the royalties on his books. These have enabled the fund to be built up to its current total of some £7,000, only the interest of which can be used for grants.

Initially the Bird Observatory Warden was authorised to make awards annually, of at least £5 each, to two or three youngsters between the ages of 15 and 21. In 1969 three applicants were awarded a total of £20, while in the fund's first ten years the 43 grants made totalled £376. During the period 1979-1988 72 awards, totalling £5,575, were made. As a result of Richard Richardson's foresight and generosity, 115 young people have been helped to visit Fair Isle in the past 20 years.

The fund is at present administered by a small committee which, in consultation with the Warden, considers all applications in mid-December and makes awards for the following year. Applications must be submitted by 31st October; those eligible should write to the JHM Fund Honorary Secretary, at 21 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh EH7 5BT.

Free full colour Golden Eagle poster (24" x 16") if you join the Scottish Ornithologists' Club now

Join now and celebrate 50 years of Scottish Ornithology.

You will receive our quarterly newsletter *Scottish Bird News*, the twice yearly journal *Scottish Birds* and the annual *Scottish Bird Report*.

As a Club member you also qualify for privilege terms and special offers from **The Bird Bookshop**.

All this for only £12 a year and a free poster (usually £1.95).

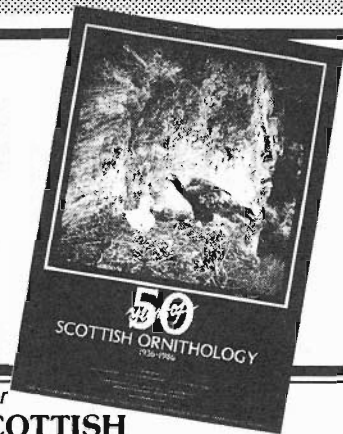


Join now or ask for further information

THE SCOTTISH

ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

FREEPOST (no stamp required) Edinburgh EH7 0LQ
Telephone: 031-556 6042 (24 hours)
Scottish Charity No. CR 38075



Contributions to the fund are always welcome – and what better way could there be of paying tribute to Richard Richardson's vision and helping young people to visit the isle than by making a donation to the John Harrison Memorial Fund. Perhaps those who received a grant and are now better placed financially might consider contributing as an appropriate way of acknowledging the help they received.

Alastair Peirse-Duncombe

The John Harrison Memorial Fund

Accounts for the year ended 31st October 1988

	1987	1988
	£	£
Revenue account		
Opening balance	89	26
Interest received	672	774
Tax refund (1987)	—	106
	<u>761</u>	<u>906</u>
Grants paid	700	490
Management expenses	35	48
Closing balance	<u>26</u>	<u>368</u>
	<u>761</u>	<u>906</u>
Balance sheet at 31st October		
Investments @ cost		
£6400 9% Treasury Loan 1994	5362	5362
£ 900 13¾% Treasury Stock 1997	870	870
£ 550 9½% Treasury Stock 1999	<u>340</u>	<u>559</u>
	6572	6791
Cash	<u>217</u>	<u>458</u>
	<u>6789</u>	<u>7249</u>
represented by:		
Capital Account		
Balance per last account	6572	6763
Received from R. Richardson's Exy.	186	113
Donations	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>
	6763	6881
Revenue Account balance	<u>26</u>	<u>368</u>
	<u>6789</u>	<u>7249</u>

Fair Isle Bird Observatory Trust

(A company limited by guarantee)

Treasurer's Report & Accounts

Treasurer's Report

The Trust's accounts for the year to 31st October 1988, set out below, are based on the full statutory accounts, which have been examined and reported on by our auditors, Coopers & Lybrand. Copies of the full statutory accounts may be obtained from the Trust's headquarters.

The Trust made an operating surplus of £1,305 in 1987/88, compared with a deficit in the previous year of £1,994. This surplus is due partly to an increase in the number of visitor weeks and partly to the fact that overheads have been contained.

The Directors have approved a budget for 1988/89 which seeks to ensure that the Trust balances income and expenditure for the year ending 31st October 1989.

During the year under review, substantial monies have been spent on improving the Fair Isle Bird Observatory Lodge. The budgeted cost of these improvements amounts to £250,000. This programme of improvements could not have been contemplated without the very generous support of the various bodies and individuals who have contributed to the Appeal. An abbreviated list of donors is set out on page 73. The programme of improvements is scheduled to be completed in Spring 1989. A full analysis of expenditure on the development and monies raised from the Appeal will be published in next year's Report.

Fair Isle Bird Observatory Trust Ltd

Income & Expenditure Account for the year to 31st October 1988

	1988 £	1987 £
Contributed Income		
Subscriptions from Friends of Fair Isle (incl. tax recovered)	3,302	1,013
Donations	171	812
Investment income (from Endowment Trust)	2,128	2,220
National Trust for Scotland – Grant	1,058	750
Bank and other interest	132	33
Royalties	74	186
40th Anniversary Meeting – net profit on ticket sales	188	0
	<u>7,053</u>	<u>5,014</u>

Hostel Account

Accommodation charges received		39,976	<u>38,068</u>
Supplies and stocks purchased	11,848		11,545
Salaries	13,261		
Less: NCC Seabird monitoring grant	<u>1,500</u>	11,761	12,237
Lighting and heating	3,655		2,973
Property outgoings: –			
Rates	97		66
Insurance	(3)		206
Repairs and renewals	2,898		2,474
Depreciation of hostel building and other fixed assets	5,991		
Less: credit in respect of grants received	<u>4,111</u>	<u>1,880</u>	<u>3,056</u>
		<u>32,136</u>	<u>32,557</u>
Net surplus on hostel account		7,840	5,511
Add: Contributed income as above		<u>7,053</u>	<u>5,014</u>
Surplus before ornithological, promotion and admin. expenses		14,893	10,525
Ornithological and promotion expenses: –			
Annual report and other publications	1,324		1,436
Motor and boat expenses	1,286		1,263
Travel and subsistence	1,716		2,075
Bird ring costs	478		283
Advertising and subscriptions	<u>839</u>		<u>1,275</u>
		(5,643)	(6,332)
Administration expenses			
Edinburgh secretarial services	1,586		1,000
Printing and stationery	1,201		403
Telephone and posts	1,614		1,236
Directors' travelling expenses	0		259
Sundries	56		129
Audit fee	350		300
Accountancy and book-keeping	2,275		2,500
Legal	743		360
Bank Charges	<u>120</u>		<u>0</u>
		<u>(7,945)</u>	<u>(6,187)</u>
Operating surplus/(deficit)		<u>1,305</u>	<u>(1,994)</u>

Balance Sheet as at 31st October 1988

	1988	1987
	£	£
Fixed assets at written down value		
Appeal assets	74,226	0
Hostel building	84,745	88,242
Plant and equipment	0	870
Garage and tank house	9,634	10,072
Motor vehicle	911	1,797
	<u>169,516</u>	<u>100,981</u>
Investments at cost	10,548	10,548
Total fixed assets	<u>180,064</u>	<u>111,529</u>
Current assets: –		
Stocks	3,228	4,483
Debtors	12,495	7,157
Cash at bank and in hand	9,812	5,727
	<u>25,535</u>	<u>17,367</u>
Current liabilities (under one year): –		
Creditors	(1,719)	(4,777)
Deposits in advance and other accruals	(8,856)	(6,672)
Grants received but not released to income and expenditure account	<u>(4,111)</u>	<u>(4,111)</u>
Net current assets	<u>10,849</u>	<u>1,807</u>
Total assets less current liabilities, as above	190,913	113,336
Non-current liabilities (due after one year): –		
Grants received but not yet released to income and expenditure account	<u>(19,028)</u>	<u>(23,139)</u>
Total net assets	<u>171,885</u>	<u>90,197</u>
Representing: –		
Accumulated surplus	90,103	88,798
Library Fund	509	571
Appeal Fund	81,273	828
	<u>171,885</u>	<u>90,197</u>

Grants and Donations – Abbreviated Schedule

The Directors are enormously grateful to the individuals and Grant bodies who have so generously contributed towards the Appeal. An abbreviated list of Grants and Donations received is set out below: –

Grants & Donations of £1000 or more:

	£
Anonymous	1,000
Mr & Mrs D Royle	1,000
National Trust for Scotland	11,723
P I Addison	1,000
ICL Discretionary Trust	1,100
Lady Mary Carter Charitable Trust	2,000
Pilgrim Trust	10,000
Dulverton Trust	5,000
Chapman Charitable Trust	2,000
Shetland Islands Charitable Trust	35,000
MacRoberts Trust	2,000
	<hr/> 71,823
Donations of less than £1000	<hr/> 17,900
	<hr/> <u><u>£89,723</u></u>



[illegible]

Although we flew over 400,000 passengers last year, we still fly the small local routes which we started with 27 years ago.

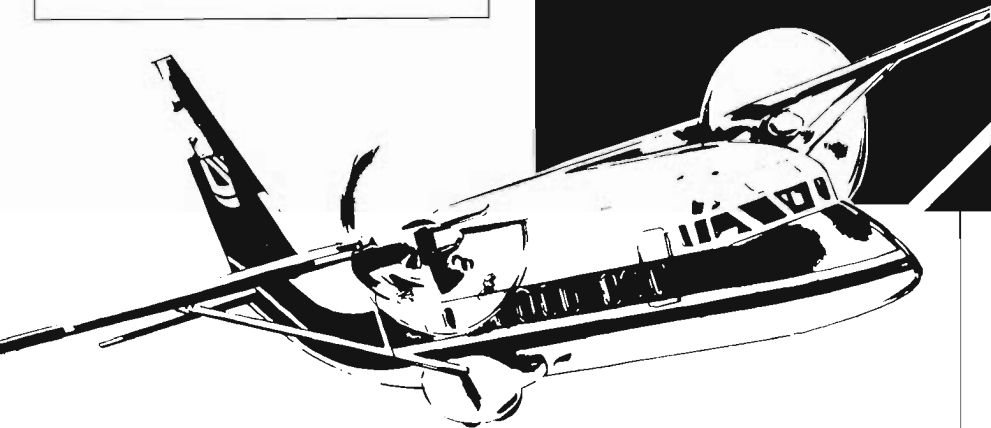
Now we're big enough to offer services associated with bigger international airlines on all our flights because we really do care.

Ask your travel agent or phone
Gott 246, Kirkwall 3457 or
Glasgow 041-889 3181.

**Flights to Fair Isle from Edinburgh
via Kirkwall and Lerwick.**

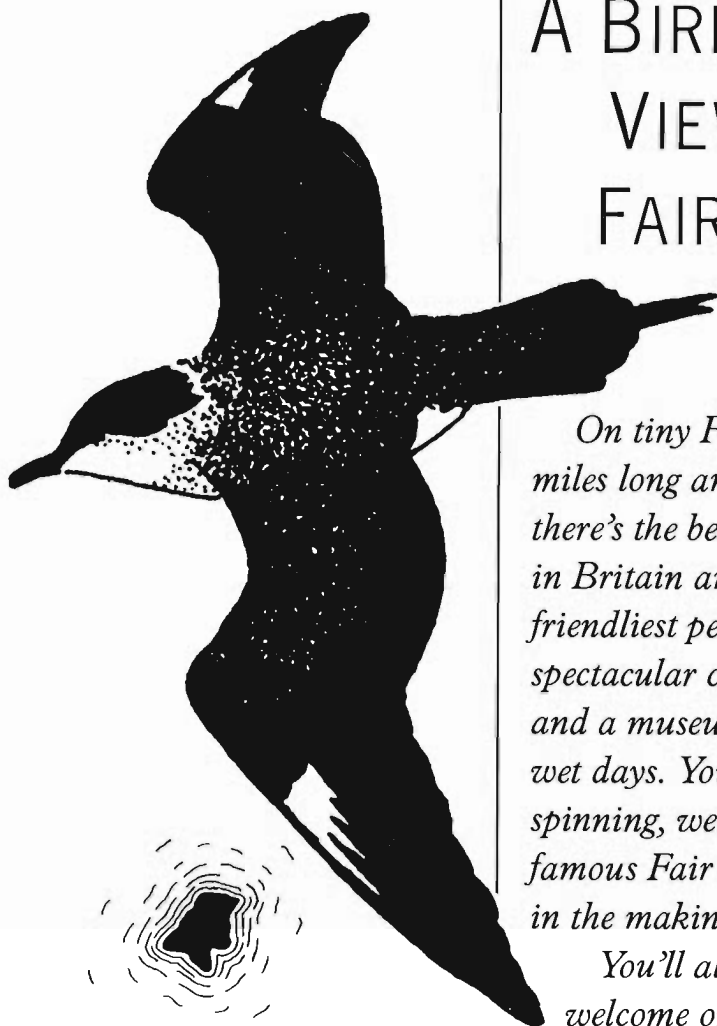
Connecting flights from
Edinburgh to London Heathrow
via British Midland.

SMALL
ENOUGH
TO BE
LOCAL...
... BIG
ENOUGH
FOR
400,000
PEOPLE.



LOGANAIR
Scotland's Airline

A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF FAIR ISLE



On tiny Fair Isle, three miles long and a mile wide there's the best birdwatching in Britain and some of the friendliest people. Miles of spectacular cliff walking, and a museum to visit on wet days. You can watch spinning, weaving and the famous Fair Isle knitwear in the making.

You'll always find a welcome on Fair Isle.

Fair Isle

THE ISLAND THAT LOVES VISITORS

For full information pack, including travel and accommodation on Shetland and Fair Isle, contact:

Shetland Tourist Organisation, Information Centre, Market Cross, Lerwick, Shetland ZE1 0LU

Tel: (0595) 3434 (24-hour service) Telex: 75119 Fax: (0595) 5807