

*Sup*

Vol. 2  
No. 4

# FAIR ISLE BIRD OBSERVATORY BULLETIN



Edited by  
**KENNETH WILLIAMSON**  
Director

---

**Issued to the Friends of Fair Isle**

**Subscription, £1, 1s. per year**

# FAIR ISLE BIRD OBSERVATORY TRUST

## *Trustees :*

Dr. JAMES W. CAMPBELL	Sir NORMAN B. KINNEAR
*Dr. JOHN BERRY	Sir JOHN STIRLING MAXWELL
*Mr A. G. S. BRYSON	*Professor M. F. M. MEIKLEJOHN
The MARQUESS OF BUTE	Col. R. MEINERTZHAGEN
Dr. F. FRASER DARLING	Mr E. M. NICHOLSON
Mr JAMES FISHER	Professor JAMES RITCHIE
*Col. W. M. LOGAN HOME	Mr PETER SCOTT
Cmdr. G. HUGHES-ONSLOW, R.N.	Dr. A. C. STEPHEN
(Retd.)	Sir LANDSBOROUGH THOMSON
Mr G. THEO KAY	Professor V. C. WYNNE-EDWARDS
	*Cmdr. T. YEOMAN, R.N. (Retd.)

---

*Chairman:*—ARTHUR B. DUNCAN.

*Hon. Secretary:*—GEORGE WATERSTON, 35 George Street, Edinburgh, 2.

*Hon. Treasurer:*—IAN PITMAN, 48 Castle Street, Edinburgh, 2.

*Director:*—KENNETH WILLIAMSON.

*April to October*—Fair Isle Bird Observatory, by Lerwick, Shetland.

*November to March*—17 India Street, Edinburgh, 3.

• Member of Executive Committee.

---

*Solicitors:*—J. & F. ANDERSON, W.S., 48 Castle Street, Edinburgh, 2.

*Auditors:*—LINDSAY, JAMIESON & HALDANE, C.A., St. Andrew Square, Edinburgh, 2.

*Bankers:*—UNION BANK OF SCOTLAND LTD., 64 George Street, Edinburgh, 2.

---

**Annual Subscription ("Friend of Fair Isle") ... One Guinea.**

Please support by Donation or Legacy

### **The Fair Isle Bird Observatory Endowment Fund**

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

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

Write to the Hon. Secretary for particulars.

August, 1954.

## EDITORIAL

ONCE again the events of early and mid-May showed that our most interesting migratory movements in the spring come to us either from, or through, south-east Europe, and are associated with strong anticyclonic developments in that region resulting in a westwards drift of birds in the easterly airflow on the southern side of the high pressure centre.

AT the end of the first week of May a high developed in western Russia, and this was followed on May 8th by the growth of an anticyclone over southern Scandinavia. This intensified and during the next few days moved gradually north, and then east, into Barents Sea. The wind had been easterly in the Caspian and Black Sea regions since early in the month, and from 6th to 12th there was an easterly airflow across the whole of middle Europe, between about 45 and 55 degrees north, south of these anticyclones. The weather in our own sector was conducive to drift into South-west Britain and the Irish Sea from France from 7th to 9th, and also 11th, and to the North Sea coast of Britain from Denmark and the Low Countries up to May 14th.

It is not therefore surprising that we should find a crop of "rarities", mainly of south-east European origin, at widely-scattered places in the British Isles. Some will be found mentioned in the following articles, and others will no doubt be recorded later in the pages of British Birds. There was the Red-throated Pipit at Fair Isle on May 8th; an invasion of Black Terns in the south following 8th-9th (with one at the Isle of May on 12th, and a White-winged Black Tern in Devon); the daily passage of Turtle Doves through Saltee and the occurrence there on 12th of a probable Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler; Little Egrets at Comrie, Perthshire, on 11th and Spiggie, Shetland, on 15th; and Squacco Herons, Spoonbills and Little Gulls elsewhere.

IN mid-July it was our pleasure to play the part of hosts to a B.B.C. team which visited the island in order to build up feature programmes about the work of the Bird Observatory and the island life and folk-lore. The opportunity was also taken of pre-recording an "In the Country" programme for transmission on August 11th, and this time the programme really was "in the country", the speakers clustering around a microphone on the cliff-top of the South Haven. This programme was produced by Miss Elizabeth Adair with Gavin Catto as Chairman, and Tom Henderson, James A. Stout, George Waterston and Kenneth Williamson answering the questions, which had a local Shetland and Fair Isle flavour. Miss Adair's programme concerning the work of the Bird Observatory is for transmission some time in mid-September, and a later programme devoted to the islanders' way of life, - scripted by a Fair Isle man, Jerry Eunson, and produced by Archie P. Lee, - is due to go on the air in November.

Printed and Published by GEORGE WATERSTON and SONS Ltd.  
Edinburgh 2, for the FAIR ISLE BIRD OBSERVATORY TRUST.

53. "Nearly 8,000 Racing Pigeons Missing -  
Worth over £25,000."

With these words "The Scotsman" of Wednesday, June 9th 1954, announced the loss of the great majority of the homing pigeons which were released in the Whit Sunday race from Milford Haven, Pembrokeshire, to lofts in Northern Ireland. Of the 8,000 birds released only 15 completed the distance of 200 miles to their home, and these arrived on the same day.

A spokesman of the Ulster Federation of Homing Pigeon Societies, Belfast, told a reporter (says "The Scotsman"): "Another 30 pigeons may reach us during the week. We expect no more. Some of the birds were worth £25 each. During the race the birds flew into a heavy mist. This would cause them to fly low and the wash of the sea would dampen their wings and carry them down into the sea. With water-laden wings the birds would be unable to gain height."

The student of bird-migration will find the greatest difficulty in accepting this explanation of the disaster. He will very likely reason somewhat as follows. The homing pigeon is derived from Rock Dove Columba livia stock, and the Rock Dove is one of the most sedentary of birds. However, centuries of human skill and patience have given the domestic strain an ability to navigate over long distances, but this ability is not inherited and young birds have to be trained. Navigation to a fixed goal is an inherited faculty in many millions of wild birds of a variety of migratory species. Yet modern investigation has shown that orientation and navigation in long-distance migrants are not infallible. Under certain conditions even these practised travellers become helpless, lose their "standard direction", and drift aimlessly before the wind.

The experimental work of Dr. G.V.T. Matthews, of the Biology Department at Cambridge University, and the analysis of migration data undertaken at Fair Isle, have shown beyond doubt that cloud-cover sufficient to shut out the light of the sun, and such weather phenomena as mist

and drizzle, seriously impair the directional sense of homing pigeons and wild migratory birds. One theory postulates that under these conditions, - and especially when traversing an inhospitable environment such as the sea, - migratory birds drift down-wind; and G.V.T. Matthews has shown that this happens to Manx Shearwaters Puffinus puffinus taken from their burrows on Skokholm and released under cloudy conditions over land.

If we look at Whit-Sunday's weather-map, we find a trough of low pressure over the Midlands and a stationary front stretching across the Irish Sea from the Lley Peninsula to Northern Ireland. The 6 a.m. chart shows little activity at this front beyond a heavy cloud-cover in the Irish Sea area, and rain at Holyhead; but as the day progressed conditions worsened, and by 6 p.m. rain or drizzle was falling in a wide belt from Northern Ireland south to Wales. The rain had ceased by 6 a.m. on 7th but there was still complete cloud-cover over the whole area.

Such conditions would have depressed any migrant bird, let alone a homing pigeon with its more limited direction-finding ability. Two years ago similar conditions attended the start of a pigeon race at Randers in Jutland, and birds which should have homed less than a hundred miles across the Skagerrak were found a few days later in Fair Isle and Shetland, - after a down-wind drift which, one suspects, must have carried a number to a watery grave in the ocean beyond. This striking example of what can happen to racing pigeons was described in Bull. no. 7, para. 83.

Fortunately for the pigeons in the present case there is little danger of their having been carried out to sea, and only the remotest possibility that any were drowned in the manner described by the Ulster societies' spokesman. The wind at Milford Haven and along the Welsh coast was moderate westerly throughout the period, and the lost birds would drift inland over Wales and England. Indeed, a small paragraph in "The Scotsman" of June 10th announces that a number of the missing birds had been found in South Wales, six of them at Swansea, 50 miles due east of the release point.

It is tragic that so much of human care and skill and patience should be sacrificed in this way. Is the time-table set for a big race so inflexible that a postponement, even a cancellation, cannot be made if adverse weather conditions are forecast along the route? With a highly-skilled and efficient Meteorological Office (a public service for which the pigeon-fanciers help to pay) covering the country with a network of stations, there can be no excuse for the promoters of a race being ignorant of the weather conditions under which their birds must fly. A last-minute alteration in schedule, after all the plans for shipment of birds etc. have been carried through, would doubtless incur expense; but would it, in a big race such as this, cost more than £25,000.

K.W.

#### References

G.V.T. MATTHEWS, 1951. The experimental investigation of navigation in homing pigeons. Jour. Exper. Biol. 28: 508-536.

1953. Navigation in the Manx Shearwater. Jour. Exper. Biol. 30: 370-396.

K. WILLIAMSON, 1952. Migrational drift in Britain in Autumn 1951. Scot. Nat. 64: 1-18.

1953. The nature of spring and autumn passage migration through Britain. Bull. Fair Isle Bird Obs. No. 10, 3-10.

#### 54. Hawk Moths in the Faeroe Islands.

During my visit to the Faeroe Islands in the spring of 1953 my friend Niels a Botni showed me two specimens of hawk-moths which had been given to him in 1950. One was the Death's Head Acherontia atropus, taken at Torshavn (Streymoy) on August 5th in that year, and the other was a Convolvulus Hawk-moth Herse convolvuli caught on August 29th 1950.

It is interesting to look at the meteorological situations at the times of these occurrences, since it seems likely that the moths must have reached these remote islands by a down-wind drift from the Continent.

Practically the whole of the North Sea lay in a col on August 4th 1950 between highs developing over Scandinavia and western France: winds in the Skagerrak were moderate to fresh easterly early in the day, later backing somewhat to the north, and falling to light variable early on 5th. During the night of 4th/5th the weather was calm and clear in the col and the little wind south-easterly in the Fair Isle sea-area, and more southerly in Faeroes.

The Convolvulus Hawk-moth may have come to the Faeroes from the northern section of the Norwegian coast in the easterly air-flow ahead of a "bent-back occlusion" of a low centred north-west of the islands. The Faeroes, occupying a position midway between this centre and one lying to the south-west, had calm airs on 27th and 28th.

These moths are new to the Faeroese fauna. A few hawk-moths were seen by the crew of a fishing-boat some distance to the east of Fugloy on October 20th 1933, and one which flew aboard was recognised as a Death's Head moth.

K.W.



55. March and April birds at Fair Isle. JAMES A. STOUT.

The first PIED WAGTAILS, 3 in number, were seen on March 10th, and there were 30 SNOW BUNTINGS that day. Some BLACKBIRD movement was proceeding on 11th and next day, from "The Good Shepherd", we observed 3 LAPWINGS flying E.S.E. approximately 9 miles north-east of the isle, in fog. The wind was southerly, and fresh. There were some 200 Lapwings on the isle on 13th and these had increased to about 500 on 14th, and among other birds observed were 7 MALLARD, 9 DUNLIN and 2 WOODCOCK.

On 18th the wind became fresh SE. after a very fine week and migrants, including the first WHEATEAR and 34 FIELDFARE, appeared next day. Only 54 Lapwing remained on 20th, when a WOODLARK and REED BUNTING were seen. There were 2 Wheatears on 22nd, and the first 2 REDSTARTS and 3 WILLOW WARBLERS came on 23rd. A LITTLE GREBE also appeared.

The first WHITE WAGTAIL followed on 24th and on 25th 3 were seen. On this and the following day there was a Yellow Wagtail on the isle: it was seen again at close quarters on April 1st and identified as British Motacilla lutea flavissima, an unusually early bird. There was a light southerly breeze at the time of its arrival. James Anderson found a BLACK-BELLIED DIPPER haunting the Gully Burn on March 28th.

The wind changed to strong S.S.E. on 29th and a big rush of thrushes, hundreds of Blackbirds, and at least 50 each of Fieldfare, REDWING and SONG THRUSH - took place. There was a big fall of Woodcock, some 40 CHAFFINCHES and 7 BRAMBLINGS, and many ROBINS. A big increase in STARLINGS was noted, there were a few GOLDCRESTS, and several small lots of MALLARD. Three SWANS and a SLAVONIAN GREBE were seen. The only summer visitors were 4 Willow and an early WOOD WARBLER.

There was little change during the next two days, except that Robins and Blackbirds increased, but by April 1st, with the weather fine and the wind S.W., the Blackbirds were mostly away. There were over a

hundred BRAMBLINGS present on this day, and on 2nd 2 Chaffinches and the first SPOTTED FLYCATCHER were recorded.

The wind on April 3rd was fresh to strong from the south: it backed to west and increased to a severe gale which did considerable damage to the Observatory and Double Dyke Traps. There were at least 20 GOLDCRESTS inland, and 4 each of CHIFFCHAFF, YELLOW BUNTING and COOT were seen. The gale continued from W.NW. on 4th and 60 Blackbirds, 12 SONG THRUSHES and 14 Fieldfares were recorded. PUFFINS appeared for the first time on 5th and 7 WOOD PIGEONS were reported.

On 6th 12 CURLEW were observed by James Wilson and me at what we finally agreed upon to be at least 1,000 ft., flying E.SE. across a clear blue sky in V formation. One bird was leading, several hundred feet ahead, and the remaining 11 formed a perfect broad V behind.

BONXIES arrived on 7th and by 10th, when another Wheatear was seen, most of the birds had gone, except for 4 Lapwings and a few Blackbirds. A SNOW BUNTING was seen on 19th and a LAPLAND BUNTING on the next 2 days. MEADOW PIPITS came in on 19th and 3 Wheatears and 23 GOLDEN PLOVERS followed on 20th.

Very fine days followed from 21st to 29th, with a number of Wheatears coming in at the middle of the period. On 30th 2 Snow Buntings and a PINTAIL drake were seen.

56. Spring Migration at Great Saltee, 1954. R.F. RUTTLEDGE.

The Observatory was manned from April 10th to May 15th.

Weather

April. Winds were light or moderate and between south and N.NW. from 11th to 14th. They then became light and variable until 20th when a period of easterly weather, often with an element of south or north wind, set in and held until 28th. The month ended with haze and wind in the SW. In April skies were clear or had little cloud, there was no rain or fog and visibility was moderate or good.

May. Light variable wind on 1st gave way to 5 days of strong NW. wind which reached gale force on 2nd, 3rd, 5th and 6th. On 7th the wind backed to SW. and was light; it backed farther on 8th and SE. or S.SE. winds prevailed until the evening of the 11th. During this period wind-strength was on the average moderate, there was much fog and some showers. After W.SW. wind light, with rain and fog, on 12th the days to 15th saw winds between NW. and NE., light or moderate, blue sky with some cloud, very good visibility and bright moonlit nights.

Migration

One of the outstanding features was the late appearance and small numbers of WHITETHROATS that passed through during the period of manning. Previous years have led us to expect this species in large numbers, with up to 500 birds on rush days and heavy trapping results. This spring only 59 were ringed as opposed to 141 last spring. On the other hand, the volume of WILLOW WARBLER passage was very heavy and prolonged, though arrival in numbers was later than in other years.

A noteworthy observation concerning weather and movement was recorded on May 5th-6th. During the evening and night of May 4th there was a temporary lull in the wind and on 5th the island was alive with small passerine migrants. During 5th, with a cold wind from NW. averaging

force 6, migrants were clearly on the move through the island all day, and there were no re-traps of the large number ringed. In the evening the wind increased to force 7 and continued all night and remained at that strength until mid-day of 6th. Yet the host of migrants on the island at dusk on 5th had moved out during these conditions, and on 6th Saltee was virtually devoid of birds.

From the point of view of investigations at this observatory the occurrence of PIED FLYCATCHERS, TREE PIPITS, a LESSER REDPOLL and acredula WILLOW WARBLERS were the most important events. Notable occurrences were HOOPOES, a MONTAGU'S HARRIER and a TAWNY PIPIT. It is probable that a bird observed on May 13th was a PALLAS'S GRASSHOPPER WARBLER.

### Selected Species

The following notes are selected from those made on the migrants seen.

MONTAGU'S HARRIER. Circus pygargus. A ♂ between May 8th-13th was fully identified, both on the wing and at rest, by the dark bar on the secondaries and lack of a white rump, by 7 observers. A ♀ harrier, probably C. cyaneus, April 15th-16th, and another ♀ of one of the above species, May 9th-12th.

KESTREL. Falco tinnunculus. Singly, April 12th, 15th, 19th and 21st. A 1st-year ♂, May 9th-13th.

CORNCRAKE. Crex crex. One or 2 on most days from April 23rd to 29th; 2 on May 7th, 8th, 11th and one on 10th.

GOLDEN PLOVER. Charadrius apricaria. One, the race undetermined, on May 11th.

TURNSTONE. Arenaria interpres. Passage throughout the period, with peaks on April 11th (47), 20th (52), 26th (47) and May 4th-5th (30 each day).

WHIMBREL. Numenius phaeopus. April 21st (5). Three to 6 daily during the last week of April. Ten or more on May 1st, after which there were 5 or 6 on most days. Maxima May 2nd (35), 5th (24) and 13th (16).

COMMON COMMON SANDPIPER. Tringa hypoleucos. First on April 16th; one to 4 daily, 19th-24th; 7 on 25th; 27th and 28th; 9 on 26th. One or 2 on four days between May 2nd-11th and 3 on 10th.

PURPLE SANDPIPER. Calidris maritima. April 20th (2), 24th (1) and 2 to 4 daily from May 5th-12th.

DUNLIN. Calidris aplina. Singly, April 26th, 27th, 29th and May 9th; 2 on May 13th.

TURTLE DOVE. Streptopelia turtur. Daily from May 8th to 14th, in numbers up to 6.

CUCKOO. Cuculus canorus. One, April 22nd; 2 on May 1st, 5th, 9th and 11th; 3 on 10th and singly, 12th and 13th.

NIGHTJAR. Caprimulgus europaeus. A ♂ on May 11th-12th.

SWIFT. Apus apus. Four, April 21st and 3 on 25th and 5 on 26th. Singly, May 7th, 10th and 11th. There were 15 on 8th and 9th and 10 on 13th.

HOOPOE. Upupa epops. Singly, April 21st; 22nd and 24th; 2 on 23rd and at least 2 on 26th-27th.

HIRUNDINES. Swallow Hirundo rustica. Main peaks were on April 21st (200 plus), 23rd (500 plus) and May 1st (200 plus). Numbers reached 100 on May 8th, 10th and 11th. House Martins Delichon urbica peaked on May 8th (15) and 10th (15), and Sand Martins Riparia riparia on April 21st (50), 23rd (50) and May 8th (20). Thus all three species occurred in considerably smaller numbers than in 1953. Direction taken when leaving the islands was mainly NE. or north, sometimes NW.

MISTLE THRUSH. Turdus viscivorus. One on May 4th is the only spring record: the bird is very rarely seen on Saltee.

FIELDFARE. Turdus pilaris. Singly, April 22nd and 28th; 2 on 23rd-24th.

SONG THRUSH. Turdus ericetorum. Singly, April 22nd and 28th; 2 on 23rd, 3 on 24th.

REDWING. Turdus musicus. One on April 19th.

RING OUSEL. Turdus torquatus. One to 3 on eight days from April 17th to 28th. Singly from May 1st-5th.

WHEATEAR. Oenanthe oenanthe. Recorded in all but five days throughout the period. Peaks occurred on April 22nd (60), 26th and 27th (over 70 each day)

WHINCHAT. Saxicola rubetra. One on April 27th, 2 on 28th. Very thin passage from May 7th-14th.

REDSTART. Phoenicurus phoenicurus. From one to 4 on five days between April 23rd and 30th. Singly, May 5th, 8th and 10th; 2 on 7th and 9th.

BLACK REDSTART. Phoenicurus ochrurus. ♀ on April 18th and one to 3 daily from April 21st to 26th.

ROBIN. Erithacus rubecula. Singly, April 22nd, May 9th and 12th. The bird of 9th was trapped and was the British race melophilus.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER. Locustella naevia. Single birds on several days from April 20th, with 2 on 24th. Daily, May 1st-7th, with most on 4th (7) and 5th (8). Singly, May 10th and 12th.

SEDGE WARBLER. Acrocephalus schoenobaenus. The first appeared on April 21st. Daily, April 27th to May 15th, with the main arrival May 10th-14th, peaking on 13th (20). In far less numbers than usual.

BLACKCAP. Sylvia atricapilla. ♂ on April 22nd and ♀ on 30th.

GARDEN WARBLER. Sylvia borin. One in song on May 13th

WHITETHROAT. Sylvia communis. Two on April 22nd, thereafter in very small numbers by comparison with other years. Maximum numbers reached only 125 on May 13th and there were 50 on 10th and 30 on 15th.

WILLOW WARBLER. Phylloscopus trochilus. Heavy movement was in progress when the observatory opened on April 10th; April 11th (100), next day 200 and on 16th, 300. Numbers then varied from 20-30 per day, reaching 100 and 150 on April 27th and 28th respectively. There was a peak on May 1st (175) and another on 5th (200). After May 7th (100) numbers declined to 15th (10)

Birds referable to Ph. t. acredula were either trapped or clearly recognised in the field as follows: singly, April 29th-30th; May 1st (2), 2nd (at least 2), 5th (4), 7th and 13th (one each day). Wing-length of those trapped averaged rather low at 62 mm.

CHIFFCHAFF. Phylloscopus collybita. Passage on all except 6 days from April 10th to May 7th. Numbers were very small, only once exceeding 10, except on the peak days, April 11th (50) and 19th (50).

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER. Muscicapa striata. One on May 5th. Daily from May 7th (1) to 15th (6), with most on 13th (10).

PIED FLYCATCHER. Muscicapa hypoleuca. A ♀ caught on May 9th was present on 10th and another was seen on 11th.

TAWNY PIPIT. Anthus campestris. One was seen on April 21st and probably the same bird from 23rd to 26th. It was first identified by P.W.P. Browne, whose attention was arrested by the unusual flight-call, a loud "tcheup" or "tsweep", of this large wagtail-like pipit. It was later seen on numerous occasions by R.G. Wheeler and R.F.R. As was the case with last year's bird, no wagtail-like movement of the tail was noticed.

MEADOW PIPIT. Anthus pratensis. Evidence of migration of numbers up to 40 was noted between April 11th and 17th. There were 50 on April 24th, diminishing daily until 28th (7). On May 1st 22 arrived from the east, - evidence of rather late movement (cf. "The Handbook of Brit. Birds," 1: 198).

TREE PIPIT. Anthus trivialis. Singly, April 20th, 21st, 24th, 27th and May 9th; 2 on April 22nd and 23rd. Two of the birds were trapped, and in every other case the record was supported by the hearing of the flight-call. Single birds almost certainly of this species were seen under excellent conditions on April 28th by R.F.R. and May 13th by P.J. Roche. No call was heard but at less than 5 yards range the size, strong yellowish-buff underparts and strikingly pink legs all contrasted with nearby Meadow Pipits.

WAGTAILS. Alba wagtails not subspecifically identified were recorded on April 19th, 26th (3), 28th, 29th (2) and May 1st. PIED WAGTAILS Motacilla alba yarrellii were seen singly from April 17th-21st; and WHITE WAGTAILS M. a. alba singly on April 21st, 22nd, and 25th, one or more on 23rd, 5 on 27th, 2 on 29th and 3 on May 8th. YELLOW WAGTAILS Motacilla lutea flavissima were recognised singly on April 29th, May 8th and 10th, there were 2 or more ♂♂ on May 11th and a pair on 12th. Other "yellow" wagtails were noted singly on April 21st and 22nd.

STARLING. Sturnus vulgaris. Singly on 7 days between April 17th and 28th. From 19th to 23rd there were two daily except on 21st (3).

GOLDFINCH. Carduelis carduelis. Two on April 23rd and 24th, 5 on 25th and 27th, 4 on 26th, singly on April 29th, 30th and May 15th.

LINNET. Carduelis cannabina. From one to 3 on nine days between April 18th and 29th.

LESSER REDPOLL. Carduelis flammea cabaret. One was seen at very close quarters on May 10th.

CHAFFINCH. Fringilla coelebs. One, April 22nd. Single ♀♀ were seen from April 30th to May 2nd, on May 4th and 6th and May 15th.

### Trapping and Ringing

559 birds of 30 species and one subspecies were trapped and ringed. Willow Warblers were again in the majority with a total of 332, then came Chiffchaffs with 64 and Whitethroats with 59. Unusual birds in the traps were a Kestrel, Turtle Doves and Cuckoos.

The Hedge Sparrow J 9018 ringed on October 3rd 1950, re-trapped on September 23rd 1953 (see Bulletin, 2: 91), was again caught on April 10th 1954.



Note on a probable Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler.

On May 12th one of the observers, Peter Roche, flushed a bird which was entirely strange to him, and which he recorded in the following note:

"Bird appeared to be a SEDGE WARBLER with white tips to its tail-feathers, but to have the tail rounded and more fanned in flight. This was not so evident the second time the bird rose. No eye-stripe visible. Short flight low over vegetation first time; flight longer and into thicker vegetation second time. No view of underparts or side view, - seen from behind each time. Sun bright and at right-angles to observer. Range first time about 4 yds., second time 6 or 7 yds."

Peter Roche informed R.F.R. but the bird could not be located again in the dense undergrowth into which it had dived.

Mr. Roche later examined skins of PALLAS'S GRASSHOPPER WARBLER Locustella certhiola at the National Museum, Dublin, and he believes that the bird he saw was very possibly of this species. One had a tail-pattern exactly as he remembered the tail of his bird, though in others the white spots at the tips showed abrasion. All had the Sedge Warbler's rufous rump which had impelled him to compare the bird he saw with that species.

The previous Irish specimen (Rockabill Lt., Co. Dublin, September 28th 1908), which he examined both indoors and outdoors, as he did with all the specimens, he considered a darker bird, - as it is in fact from my memory of the Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler I saw at Fair Isle on October 8th-9th 1949 (see British Birds, 43: 49-51), and as it appeared to the authors of "The Handbook," 2: 34, footnote.

57. Spring Migration at Fair Isle and Isle of May  
in 1954.

KENNETH WILLIAMSON with notes from GERALD L. SANDEMAN.

We landed from "The Good Shepherd" in mid-afternoon of May 5th, and in the few hours left to us of that day trapped 30 birds, a better total than on any previous full day at this season. Of these, 18 were Robins. This was the dominant species in the big movement which was obviously taking place, and its numbers must have been greater than during the famous "Robin rush" of early October 1951, when we recorded 75-plus on the isle (see Bull. no. 5). No skins were available, but the greyness of the upper-parts and the pale orange breasts left no doubt that they were "Continental".

This early May movement, which appears to have reached its peak on May 4th-5th at Fair Isle, was due to a depression in the southern half of the North Sea providing the necessary easterly wind, and a warm-front rain-belt developing along a line from southern Norway through Denmark into Germany on 4th.

Our information on the build-up of this movement at Fair Isle is from James A. Stout. He records that the wind was fresh E.NE. on May 1st, but few birds were noted other than an increased number of Meadow Pipits, some 40 Bramblings and 7 Chaffinches, two Corn Buntings and a Yellow-hammer, - all, it will be noted, species which are usually diurnal migrants. The wind strengthened on 2nd and 3rd, holding the same quarter, and on the latter day he recorded more Meadow Pipits, many Wheatears, 6 Robins, 8 House Martins, 3 Pied Flycatchers, 2 Wrynecks, 2 Lesser Whitethroats and 2 Ring Ousels. It was a day of heavy rain and poor for observation. Robins were "many more" on 4th and a dozen Fieldfares were seen, and Whitethroats and Willow Warblers arrived.

It is clear from the observations of Gerard Sandeman on the Isle of May that the 2nd was a day of considerable movement there, - especially among

Whitethroats, Willow Warblers, Wheatears and Redstarts (see TABLE). Two Grasshopper Warblers were noted and a Nightingale, a redpoll and a flava wagtail were present. This influx was clearly associated with a cold front which moved north from the Channel during the night, affecting migrants in the Low Countries: it was too distant to divert more northern travellers to Fair Isle.

Another wave of migration entered the Forth on 5th, this being particularly a Robin - Redstart day, with a Willow Warbler peak, a good influx of Fieldfares, and a trapping total of 74 for the day. Most of the species present, however, had already begun to arrive on 4th, and clearly this "rush" coincided in its timing and general make-up of species at both observatories.

During the 5th another depression moved across Scotland from the west, and the next day it passed to northwards of us so that the wind backed to the west, freshening. The 7th was cold and blustery and like a November day, and birds to match in the Water Rail and 10 Snow Buntings which appeared. White Wagtails doubled their number (see centre-page TABLE) and like the Snow Buntings they may have been moving to the north-west from the Hebrides, and sustained a drift to Fair Isle on the westerly wind. Increases in Wheatear, Linnet and Willow Warbler at the Isle of May (where the day was a good deal milder than here) suggest "coasting" due to a concentration on the east-coast "guiding-line" before a westerly wind. As at Fair Isle, most of the Fieldfares disappeared, in all probability making a cyclonic migration to Norway. We have seen this species come into Fair Isle - and leave it - in autumn under similar conditions, flying round the rim of a depression, so to speak, and caring little for the strength of the wind.

The whole of the North Sea region and British Isles enjoyed anticyclonic weather on the 8th, and re-determined passage of the earlier drift-migrants was evident. Tree Pipits (there had been some, we were told, on 4th) re-appeared, as also did Willow Warbler, Swallow, and several other species. Curlew and Whimbrel

passage began anew, and a flock of 40 Purple Sandpipers was here for a day. The most exciting bird was a Red-throated Pipit, and the most important new arrivals were Blue-headed Wagtails, Sedge-Warblers and Sand Martins.

It was a day on which practically all the Willow Warblers seen were grey-brown looking birds with very little yellow beneath, and clearly of the acredula or Northern race; and it is interesting to note that Willow Warblers of this type had passed through Great Saltee only a few days before (see page 157)

This anticyclone retreated into Scandinavia, leaving a SE. wind in the southern part of the North Sea and a southerly air at Fair Isle. With conditions still excellent for re-determined passage the decreases which had begun on 8th continued. Blue-headed Wagtails were reduced to a pair, but Whites went up slightly due to passage. Northern Golden Plovers came in, the Lapland Buntings went out, and day-migration of hirundines continued.

There were noticeable influxes of Whitethroats, Whinchats and Redstarts in the Forth and other minor increases, suggesting renewed drift into that area in the SE. airflow below the Scandinavian high. This appears to have been arrested on 10th, but reflected 240 miles further north in the events at Fair Isle. The 10th-12th is a difficult phase to interpret, for the Norwegian anticyclone intensified, spreading to the whole of western Europe and eastern half of Britain; so that conditions in this country were excellent for the onward flow of our own incoming migrants, and also suitable for down-wind drift across the North Sea from the Low Countries northwards to the Skagerrak. Good visibility on the Continental coasts - the weather map shows absence of cloud over a very wide area - must have kept such drift at a minimum; yet at Fair Isle the Whitethroat and Sedge Warbler passage really got under way on 10th, and the volume during the three days is strongly indicative of trans North Sea movement.

Whinchats and Redstarts struck a minor peak on 10th, as on the previous day at the May, and a major Whitethroat and Willow Warbler peak occurred at the May on the 12th. Linnets arrived with us on 12th, two days after a flock had visited the May, and both observatories had a Goldfinch, a very rare bird at either place. We had British Yellow, Blue-headed and Grey-headed Wagtails at Fair Isle, and a Pied Woodpecker appeared; Gerard Sandeman saw a Black Tern flying south, and he re-trapped a Whitethroat which had been ringed as a nestling at Kilrenny in Fife in June 1952.

On 13th we were in the happy position (in retrospect, it seems to have been the only time this year!) of being sandwiched between two anticyclones, the Norwegian one and an Azorean high to the south-west. A low developed over Scandinavia on 14th-15th, but the Azorean high put forth a ridge to the north-east and until 19th we had light to moderate northerly winds, which checked migration, except for travellers to the northern isles and the north-west. Greenland and intermediate "schjæleri" - type Wheatears passed through fairly steadily during these days (see p. 173), and the island's Arctic Skua population really broke its link with the sea and settled down to a full occupation of territory. Highlights were two drake Shovelers and an obligingly tame Greenland Redpoll. A Whimbrel peak on 15th was succeeded by a Turnstone passage two days later, and a few Dunlin and Redshank were seen. Sedge Warblers had finished (for the time being, at any rate) by 15th, but a trickle of Whitethroats continued and a few lazy Fieldfares remained.

Meanwhile, conditions were rather different at the Isle of May: with a weak low developing over France there was once more an easterly airflow in the southern North Sea, sufficient to bring a light drift into the Forth on 14th. Whitethroats and Willow Warblers were the species mainly affected, but it was a good day too for the unusual birds, and 2 Cuckoos, a ♀ Black Redstart and the third Nightingale of the month appeared.

The wind-system was complicated from 20th to 22nd, with the Azorean high still strong to the west, an anticyclone over Norway, and a depression in the Skagerrak. We had a westerly airstream at Fair Isle and again there was a predominantly north-western element among the birds, - 20 Snow Buntings, 14 Dunlin and 4 Purple Sandpipers, - with only a few scattered British or Continental species.

The Azorean high retreated before an extensive depression which moved into the Iceland area on 23rd and expanded to the west of Ireland on 24th and 25th. Southerly winds, becoming SE. ahead of a warm front on 25th, returned to the North Sea, and once again a light drift was evident. Sedge Warbler passage began again on 24th and Whitethroat passage next day; and Garden Warbler, Blackcap and Red-backed Shrike, with a single Swift, put in a first appearance. There was marked passage of Common Gulls, new Whimbrel and Turnstone movements, and one or two Bluethroats and Spotted Flycatchers arrived.

#### Selected Species - Fair Isle

Below are given extended notes concerning the more interesting or important migrants observed in May and June, except for some which have already been included in the centre-page TABLE, or have been mentioned above.

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER. Gavia immer. One flew over the island on May 12th and others or the same on June 2nd, 7th, and 22nd. In mid-June the low-pitched and rapidly repeated "kwak-kwak-kwak" flight-call was heard on a number of occasions, particularly on 15th, when two birds were flying high up in the afternoon and early evening, and returned with a third bird at 2000 hrs. All appeared to be in adult plumage.

DUCKS. The most interesting visitors were 2 ♂♂ SHOVELER Spatula clypeata seen in a small cove at Buness on May 17th and the big rock-pool at Skadan next day. There was also a single drake on June 4th. The only previous note we have of Shoveler at Fair Isle

refers to a bird seen on August 18th 1923.

There was a single SHELDUCK. Tadorna tadorna on May 12th, another infrequent species in spring.

Drake MALLARD. Anas platyrhynchos occurred singly May 8th-10th and on several occasions in early June. There were 2 ♂♂ in partial eclipse on the Golden Water on June 25th.

TUFTED DUCK. Aythya fuligula. A pair haunted the Golden Water from May 27th to 29th.

GREY LAG GOOSE Anser anser. There were 2 on May 10th and a single unusually late bird on Bunes on the evening of June 13th.

SPARROW HAWK. Accipiter nisus. Single ♂♂ only were seen on May 5th and 6th (when birds were trapped) 9th-10th and 16th.

MERLIN. Falco columbarius. Single birds on May 18th and June 3rd.

KESTREL. Falco tinnunculus. Present from May 10th-18th, with one of each sex on 12th.

BUZZARD. Buteo buteo. One on May 20th, and another in a geo at the south end on June 3rd.

CORNCRAKE. Crex crex. First seen on May 7th.

GREY PLOVER. Charadrius squatarola. A bird in breeding-plumage was at Skadan on June 3rd, the first spring record for the island.

GOLDEN PLOVER. Charadrius apricaria. Singly, May 6th-8th, 3 next day and 6 on 10th, all of the Northern form. Also singly on May 28th, June 22nd and 28th.

WOODCOCK. Scolopax rusticola. Singly on May 10th, 15th, 20th, 21st and 26th.

WHIMBREL. Numenius phaeopus. In mid-June 7 haunted Burrashield for several days and breeding-song was heard. Occasional at the end of the month.

GREENSHANK. Tringa nebularia. One on May 5th.

TABLE. - Commoner

	May	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
LAPWING		3	4	1	8	5	9	8	10	10	13	2
<i>V. vanellus</i>												
TURNSTONE			4		1							2
<i>A. interpres</i>												
CURLEW			1	1	4	1		1	1	10	1	4
<i>N. arquata</i>												
WHIMBREL			8	1	3	1	1	2	3	2		13
<i>N. phaeopus</i>												
DUNLIN				1	1	2	3	1				
<i>C. alpina</i>												
WRYNECK		1	1		2	1		1			1	
<i>J. torquilla</i>												
SWALLOW			12		8	6	8	3	12	15	6	3
<i>H. rustica</i>												
HOUSE MARTIN			5			2		2	5	1	5	2
<i>D. urbica</i>												
WHINCHAT			1	2	1	1	7	2	4	5	3	1
<i>S. rubetra</i>												
REDSTART		18	10	5	5	3	8	5	6	3	2	
<i>Ph. phoenicurus</i>												
SEDGE WARBLER					3	1	13	10	13	15	6	2
<i>A. schoenobaenus</i>												
WHITETHROAT		3	3	1	3	6	15	10	10	12	8	3
<i>S. communis</i>												
WILLOW WARBLER		3	3	1	8	2	4		3	5	2	1
<i>Ph. trochilus</i>												
SPOTTED FLYCATCHER								1	1	1	1	1
<i>M. striata</i>												
TREE PIPIT		2			2	1	5	4	2	4		
<i>A. trivialis</i>												
WHITE WAGTAIL		5	5	10	2	4	3	2	1	1	1	1
<i>M. a. alba</i>												
SNOW BUNTING				10	2		20		7	4	2	6
<i>P. nivalis</i>												



# ring Migrants

16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----

7	2	12	3	7	3	4	Breeding pair only								
---	---	----	---	---	---	---	--------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

	14	3		1	1	10		9	12	4			1		1
--	----	---	--	---	---	----	--	---	----	---	--	--	---	--	---

1	2	5	22	1	1	3	2				1	1	1		
---	---	---	----	---	---	---	---	--	--	--	---	---	---	--	--

1	2	25	7	5	3	5	1	10	4	1			1		1
---	---	----	---	---	---	---	---	----	---	---	--	--	---	--	---

	3	5		14	8			2	1	1	1				
--	---	---	--	----	---	--	--	---	---	---	---	--	--	--	--

2	3	6	6	7	1		2	4	2	20	6	25	25		
---	---	---	---	---	---	--	---	---	---	----	---	----	----	--	--

4	2	4	4	2		1	1	1		3	11	1	12		2
---	---	---	---	---	--	---	---	---	--	---	----	---	----	--	---

										1	1				
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	---	---	--	--	--	--

			1				2	1	3		1	1			
--	--	--	---	--	--	--	---	---	---	--	---	---	--	--	--

2			1					6	2	1	3	2			2
---	--	--	---	--	--	--	--	---	---	---	---	---	--	--	---

										2					
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	--	--

				2						2	1				3
--	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	--	--	---	---	--	--	--	---

1															
---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

1	1	1	1			1									
---	---	---	---	--	--	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

2	5	12		20	13										
---	---	----	--	----	----	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

COMMON SANDPIPER. Tringa hypoleucos. Singly on May 9th-10th and 20th.

SANDERLING. Crocethia alba. One with the Grey Plover at Skadan on June 3rd, and 5 on North Haven beach on June 10th. One or two at the end of June.

WOOD PIGEON. Columba palumbus. Singly from May 7th-9th and 23rd-25th, and 12th, 20th and June 13th.

TURTLE DOVE. Streptopelia turtur. One stayed May 10th-21st and another from 25th-28th.

CUCKOO. Cuculus canorus. Twice seen and trapped - a ♂ in Vaadal on May 6th, and a 1st-summer ♀ in the Gully on June 12th.

OWLS. A Short-eared Asio flammeus on May 5th and 8th-9th; and 2 Long-eared Asio otus, one of which was trapped, on 21st-22nd.

NIGHTJAR. Caprimulgus europaeus. There was a bird in the Gully area on the evening of June 13th, only the fifth or sixth record for the island.

SWIFT. Apus apus. Singly on May 25th and on June 18th-19th.

PIED WOODRECKER. Dendrocopos major. A ♀ came on May 12th and remained till 20th, our second spring record.

SAND MARTIN. Riparia riparia. Two or 3 from May 8th-12th, singly 14th-15th, and 4 late birds on June 4th.

ROOK. Corvus frugilegus. On May 9th 16 birds (including young ones) came in, and parties of 12 and 8 were seen next day: they had decreased to 5 on 13th and one only on 15th.

JACKDAW. Corvus monedula. One with the Rooks, May 10th-12th, and 2 on 26th, none of them particularly light-collared.

FIELDFARE. Turdus pilaris. There were over 300 here on May 6th, our first full day on the island, and they were down to 100 or even fewer from 7th-10th, 30 on 11th, 10 next day and subsequently a few only to 17th. Single birds were seen on 24th and June 1st, and 2 on June 7th.

SONG THRUSH. Turdus ericetorum. We saw 4 on the afternoon of May 5th, trapping the Continental race, and recorded from 1 to 3 thence until 11th.

REDWING. Turdus musicus. One was trapped on May 5th and another next day, when 3 were seen: they were the Scandinavian race. Last seen on May 18th.

RING OUSEL. Turdus torquatus. Singly on most days between May 5th and 18th, but 2 on 3rd and 15th. There was a late bird from June 3rd-6th.

GREENLAND WHEATEAR. Oenanthe oe. leucorrhoa. There was steady movement of the bigger Wheatears between May 16th and 23rd. Their weights and measurements are given in the table on page 173 for comparison with those of our breeding birds.

RED-SPOTTED BLUETHROAT. Luscinia s. svecica. James A. Stout saw one in his garden on May 4th, and the next seen was a ♀ (? race) on 23rd. A 1st-summer ♂ was trapped on 26th.

ROBIN. Erithacus rubecula. The large number which must have been present on 4th-5th had dwindled to 20 or so on 6th and to 1 or 2 only from 9th-12th.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER. Locustella naevia. Three were trapped, on May 7th, 11th and 14th, the first 2 being caught in the Yeoman net in ditches in the cultivated area.

ICTERINE WARBLER. Hippolais icterina. A bird trapped in Vaadal on the morning of May 30th had a wing of 77 mm., tail 53 mm., bill 15 mm. from skull, and tarsus 22 mm. In the wing-formula the 3rd and 4th primaries were longest, the 2nd 1.5 mm. shorter and 5th 3.5 mm. shorter. The upper mandible was brown and the lower one pink, but orange at the cutting-edges; the gape was bright orange and the iris olive-brown. In the field the bird was a bright canary-yellow below and bright greenish-brown above, with the edges of the secondary wing-feathers presenting the appearance of a diffuse golden bar in the closed wing.

BLACKCAP. Sylvia atricapilla. The first was a ♂ on May 23rd-24th, followed by a ♂ on 27th and a ♀ on

TABLE

## Migrant Wheatears, May 1954.

Age/Sex.	Date.	Time.	Wing.	Tail.	Weight.
1st. s. ♀	16. v.	1200	100mm	59mm	21.21 gm.
" ♂	"	"	104	58	28.49
♀	17. v.	1900	98	56	27.92
♀	18. v.	1300	101	55	32.04
1st. s. ♀	19. v.	0700	95	54	32.80
" ♂	20. v.	1545	100	58	26.04
" ♂	21. v.	0715	99	55	28.91
" ♀	"	1700	101	55	27.21
" ♂	22. v.	1700	103	57	38.81
♀	23. v.	0930	100	55	26.70
♀	"	1130	101	58	32.78
♀	25. v.	0500	102	58	32.77

-----

## Breeding Wheatears, 1954.

1st. s. ♂	18. v.	1530	93	47	21.51
" ♂	1. vi.	2030	99	55	24.78
" ♂	2. vi.	1000	93	53	23.67
" ♂	12. vi.	1920	90	52	26.32
Ad. ♂	14. vi.	1015	97	57	24.42

The first 3 breeding Wheatears above are re-captures of birds ringed on the isle in previous seasons.

-----

31st. Birds were also trapped on June 2nd and 10th.

GARDEN WARBLER. Sylvia borin. Two arrived on May 24th and there was one on 26th-27th, then 2 on 28th-29th, a single bird on 30th, and again 2 on June 1st. There were 3 on 4th and an occasional bird to 19th, and one was trapped on 26th.

LESSER WHITETHROAT. Sylvia curruca. Scarce this year: singly, May 6th-8th, 14th-19th and 30th. There were 2 on May 3rd and also on 10th-11th.

PIED FLYCATCHER. Muscicapa hypoleuca. There were 3 on May 3rd, one or 2 from May 5th-8th, and a ♀ on May 23rd.

RED-THROATED PIPIT. Anthus cervinus. A handsome specimen frequented the short-cropped turf at Gaila between May 8th and 11th: on the last day, a fine and sunny one, it was heard to give snatches of a low, warbling song. There was less chestnut on the head than in the example recorded on May 31st 1952 (see Bull. no.7, pp. 39-41) and a noticeable feature of the heavily streaked mantle plumage was the pair of buffish-white streaks running down the inner edges of the scapulars. The call-note, Tree Pipit like but stronger, was often heard.

PIED WAGTAIL. Motacilla alba yarrellii. There were single ♂ birds on May 5th, 8th and 12th.

GREY WAGTAIL. Motacilla cinerea. A ♂ visited the Gully burn on May 26th and was back again several times during the first week of June

BRITISH YELLOW WAGTAIL. Motacilla lutea flavissima. Single ♂♂ (2 different birds) were seen from May 10th-12th.

BLUE-HEADED WAGTAIL. Motacilla flava flava. Three ♂♂ and 2 ♀♀ arrived on May 8th and there was one of each sex next day, followed by a ♂ on 10th, 2 birds on 11th and a ♂ on 12th.

GREY-HEADED WAGTAIL. Motacilla flava thunbergi. A single ♂ with very dark ear-coverts and no vestige of an eye-stripe was seen on May 12th and 15th.

RED-BACKED SHRIKE. Lanius collurio. The first seen was a ♀ on May 25th. A ♂ and another bird were in Vaadal on June 4th and there was one at North Haven on June 22nd.

SISKIN. Carduelis spinus. A ♀ was feeding in Vaadal, apparently on heather seeds, on May 6th.

GOLDFINCH. Carduelis carduelis. The best rarity of the spring: it was first seen at the Haa on May 11th and was trapped at the North Haven two days later. No skins were available for comparison, but the white patches on the sides of the head were immaculate except on the ear-coverts, which were tinged with brown, and the bird may well have been of Continental origin. There is only one previous record of this species at Fair Isle, for September 9th 1929.

LINNET. Carduelis cannabina. Between May 12th and 15th there were several Linnets on the isle, some feeding with the Twites in the Quoy cabbage-garden. This is always a scarce species here, and the 3♂♂ and 4♀♀ which roosted in Vaadal on 14th-15th, and included one strikingly handsome ♂, are more than we have seen at one time before.

GREENLAND REDPOLL. Carduelis flammea rostrata. A ♀ with the characteristic dark brown mantle, more greyish on the rump, and heavily streaked flanks was in the village area from May 19th to 23rd. On the last day it was feeding among seeding Dandelions.

CHAFFINCH. Fringilla coelebs. After the 7 of May 3rd one or two remained till 9th and one from 12th-14th. All we saw were ♀♀

BRAMBLING. Fringilla montifringilla. The 30-40 which arrived on 3rd must have passed quickly, as we saw 2 ♂♂ only on May 6th.

YELLOW-HAMMER. Emberiza citrinella. Singly on May 1st and 8th, the latter with a ♂ ORTOLAN E. hortulana.

LAPLAND BUNTING. Calcarius lapponicus. There were 4 together on plough, first seen by James Anderson on May 4th and last seen on 9th.

TABLE

## Commoner Spring Migrants - Isle of May

May	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
MAILLARD				2				3		4	2	2	1		
COMMON															
SANDPIPER			1	1	1	1		1					4	2	1
PURPLE															
SANDPIPER					33	2		3		40		12	30	5	
BLACK-HEADED															
GULL				30		1	6	3		6	12	2			
SWALLOW				4			2	6	4	4	4	20	7	6	12
BLACKBIRD	6	6	4	4	4	4	2	4	3	1	1	1	1	1	1
SONG-THRUSH	2	5	8	4	10	10	6	4	2	2	1				
RING OUSEL ♂	3	6	4	4	8	3	♀	♀	♀	♀	♀	♀	♀	♀	♀
WHEATEAR	25	60	15	12	12	8	12	20	16	16	10	10	15	20	11
WHINCHAT		5			5	2	3	4	10	10	4	5	3		
REDSTART		15	♂	6	30	10	10	12	20	8	6	4	3	3	1
BLACK															
REDSTART ♀			♀	3	2	2	♀	♀	♀	♀				♀	
ROBIN	1	1	4	7	30	10	10	10		8	4	2	2	2	
SEDGE															
WARBLER				1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	12	6	6	2
COMMON WHITE-															
THROAT	1	15	8	6	6	6	6	8	30	10	12	50	30	35	2
LESSER WHITE-															
THROAT									1	1	1	1	1	3	1
WILLOW															
WARBLER	8	20	8	15	50	10	20	30	20	10	6	50	15	25	2
CHIFFCHAFF		1		3	3	3			2						
PIED															
FLYCATCHER				3	8	5	5	4	♂						
TREE PIPIT					2	2	4	4	6	2	10	10	2	2	2
LINNET	2	2	5	4	6	3	6	6	6	16	4	6	6	8	8
TREE															
SPARROW										4	5	7	7	7	

Selected Species - Isle of May

CORMORANT. Phalacrocorax carbo. Up to 10 daily, roosting on rocks or cliffs; mostly immature birds.

SHELDUCK. Tadorna tadorna. Three flew over on 5th and a pair was investigating a burrow on 10th.

SPARROW HAWK. Accipiter nisus. One on 2nd, a ♂ on 3rd and ♀ on 10th-11th. There was a single KESTREL Falco tinnunculus on 7th.

CORNCRAKE. Crex crex. Singly on 6th and 14th.

LAPWING. Vanellus vanellus. Two on 9th, singly on 10th-11th. There were about 20 TURNSTONES Arenaria interpres on the island daily, and single SNIPES Capella gallinago on 1st and 6th.

CURLEW. Numenius arquata. Three on 5th-6th and 10th, otherwise occasional birds. Single WHIMBREL N. phaeopus passed on 5th and 12th.

GREEN SANDPIPER. Tringa ochrophus. One from May 11th-13th.

BLACK TERN Chlidonias niger. One was observed flying south on May 12th.

COMMON TERN. Sterna hirundo. One on 7th and one or 2 on 8th, increasing to well over 100 (probably including ARCTIC TERN S. macrura) from 10th onwards.

SANDWICH TERN. Sterna sandvicensis. About 6 on 4th and 5th, 3 or 4 on 8th and 2 on 9th. A dozen on 10th and noted each day subsequently.

BLACK GUILLEMOT. Cepphus grylle. Four on 12th and 2 on 14th.

WOOD PIGEON. Columba palumbus. Singly on 8th and 12th-13th.

CUCKOO. Cuculus canorus. One on 8th, 2 on 14th.

SWIFT. Apus apus. Two on 9th and 12th, one 13th.

WRYNECK. Jynx torquilla. Singly on 5th and 9th and 2 birds on 7th-8th.



HOUSE MARTIN. Delichon urbica. Two on 12th and 15th and singly 13th-14th.

FIELDFARE. Turdus pilaris. A hundred or so on 1st-2nd declining to 50 on 4th; 100 on 5th, 60 next day, then 6 or 8 on most days except 11th and 13th, when 2 only were seen.

REDWING. Turdus musicus. One or 2 on 1st and singly from 2nd-4th and on 6th and 8th.

GREENLAND WHEATEAR. Oenanthe oe. leucorrhoa. There was one on 7th-8th.

NIGHTINGALE. Luscinia megarhyncha. Singly on 1st-2nd, 4th and 14th. Two birds were trapped.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER. Locustella naevia. Two were trapped on 2nd and one was seen on 3rd-4th.

BLACKCAP. Sylvia atricapilla. ♂ on 2nd-3rd, ♀ on 14th and ♂ on 15th.

GARDEN WARBLER. Sylvia borin. Singly on 11th, 13th and 14th.

GOLDCREST. Regulus regulus. One from 2nd-4th. A single HEDGE SPARROW Prunella modularis on 8th.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER. Muscicapa striata. Two on 14th and one next day.

MEADOW PIPIT. Anthus pratensis. A party of 10, apparently migrants, on 4th.

WAGTAILS. A WHITE Motacilla a. alba was seen on 15th. A ♀ "flava" wagtail on 1st was followed by two on 2nd, one on 4th and two next day.

GOLDFINCH. Carduelis carduelis. There was one on 12th. A single GREENFINCH Chloris chloris was present on 5th.

REDPOLLS. Birds were seen on 1st and 2nd and a MEALY Carduelis f. flammea was trapped on 1st.

CHAFFINCH. Fringilla coelebs. A ♀ from 5th-7th. There was a ♂ BRAMBLING F. montifringilla on 6th.

## Bird Ringing

Isle of May. Between May 1st and 15th 387 birds were ringed, the main totals being 102 Willow Warblers, 100 Whitethroats, 42 Redstarts, 34 Robins, 20 Sedge Warblers, 14 Song Thrushes, 10 Whinchats, 9 Chiffchaffs, 7 each of Fieldfare and Ring Ousel and 6 Tree Sparrows. Two Nightingales and 2 Grasshopper Warblers were taken.

Fair Isle. The May total of 186 birds was much better than in former seasons. The chief totals were Robin 33, Whitethroat 28, Wheatear 18, Sedge Warbler 15, Redstart 10 and Garden Warbler (including some June trappings) 8. Among the more unusual species were 3 each of Sparrow Hawk, Wryneck and Grasshopper Warbler, and single Red-spotted Bluethroat, Icterine Warbler, Grey Wagtail, Siskin and Goldfinch.

### 58. Bird-Ringing Recoveries - Isle of May and Fair Isle.

#### Isle of May

STARLING. Ringed on March 22nd 1954, recovered at Nieblun auf Föhr, Schlesvig-Holstein, GERMANY, on May 12th. (Lat. 54.42' N., Long. 8 30' E.)

WILLOW WARBLER. Ringed on May 4th 1954 and found dead in a wood at Staveley, near Chesterfield, DERBYSHIRE, on May 18th.

SEDGE WARBLER. A bird ringed on May 29th 1954 was found dead at Hawkshead, near Ambleside, WESTMORLAND, on June 1st. There can be little doubt that the bird was a drift-migrant from the Continent ahead of the cold front of a low centred over the East Midlands on May 28th-29th. This small low persisted for the next 24 hrs., and if the bird travelled down-wind after leaving the Isle of May one might expect it to reach the English Lake District.

#### Fair Isle.

STARLING. A ♂ with wing 131 mm. and weighing

90 gm., caught by James A. Stout in a Potter Trap on November 24th 1951, was killed in a fight for a nest-box on May 10th 1952 at Bolshaja Berestovitzza in the Grodno region of the U.S.S.R. (Lat. 53 15' N., Long. 24 E., about 1,100 miles E.S.E. of Fair Isle).

REDWING. A 1st-winter bird of the typical race caught in the Single Dyke Trap on October 8th 1953 was killed at the lantern of the lightship "Texel" in the North Sea on the night of March 29th/30th 1954. (Lat. 53 4' N., Long. 4 40' E., about 500 miles SE. of Fair Isle). It is likely that this bird was migrating northwards from winter quarters along the Dutch coast, where there was fog and a moderate southerly wind late on 29th.

OYSTER CATCHER A bird ringed as a nestling on June 24th 1952 was released from a salmon-net at Mornington, Drogheda, Co. Meath, EIRE, on May 10th 1954.

59. Rare Spring Visitors to Shetland. TOM HENDERSON.

LITTLE EGRET. Egretta garzetta. A Little Egret was seen at the west side of Spiggie Loch, near the outlet burn to the voe, by Sinclair Moncrieff on May 15th. My attention was drawn to it by Mr. Moncrieff and Hugh Crawford, who had correctly identified the bird, on the following day. It was an adult in full plumage with breast plumes and crest very long and noticeable. On this and many subsequent occasions I had it under view at close range, once from a boat at a distance of 20 ft. Generally, it was feeding busily and paying little attention to passers-by, and none whatever to cars or boats. In the early days the bird was pure white, strikingly so, but as the weeks went by it became dingier, almost dirty, and gave the impression of being wet. Sinclair Moncrieff was the last to see the bird on June 21st.

SHOVELER. Spatula clypeata. A pair nested again on the Loch of Hillwell. A pair was present on this

loch in 1952 but we failed to get any evidence of their nesting. In 1953 they brought off a late brood, and we had reason to think they lost an earlier one. This year a brood of 5 well-grown ducklings were seen with the parents during the second week of June.

MONTAGU'S HARRIER. Circus pygargus. A fine ♂ of this species was seen over Spiggie Loch on the morning of May 5th by W. Crawford, Mary E. Pugh and K. Williamson; it was hustled by Hooded Crows, and passed out of sight over Loch Brown marsh, where Black-headed Gulls took up the hue and cry. Excellent views were had in a good light and the diagnostic characters were seen, - pale greyish upper-parts, absence of white on the rump, rust-coloured flank-streaks, and black bar in mid-wing visible on both upper and under sides. What was in all probability the same bird had been reported to me prior to this date by three different people residing at the south end of the loch, and it seems likely to have been present for about two weeks.

KESTREL. Falco tinnunculus. Dr. J.N. Hamilton saw one almost daily at Channerwick during the first fortnight of May.

AVOCET. Recurvirostra avosetta. An Avocet, first seen on April 26th, remained at the Pool of Virkie until May 4th. On that day it was watched at close quarters by William Crawford, R.K. Martin, Charles Rawcliffe and K. Williamson.

BLACK TERN. Chlidonias niger. Capt. D. Stewart reported to me that on two occasions between June 18th and 21st, when fishing the Bay of Scousburgh, he saw a tern which was entirely black save that it looked grey on the wings. He identified the bird without hesitation as a Black Tern when shown the plate of this species in "The Popular Handbook".

SANDWICH TERN. Sterna sandvicensis. Two were seen on July 9th at the south end of Loch Spiggie by G.T. Kay, C.K. Mylne and myself. The birds got up off the marsh along with Black-headed Gulls and we had very good views at close range.

SWALLOW. Hirundo rustica. A pair nested at Culster,

Dunrossness, under the inside eaves of a croft building. The eggs hatched on June 15th.

**GOLDEN ORIOLE.** Oriolus oriolus. A bird first seen by a Scousburgh boy on the evening of May 26th was described to me as being slightly larger than a Starling, greenish-grey but lighter below, and showing yellow when it flew. It was found near the Mill Burn on the evening of 27th, and again on the following morning, by W.I. and J.M. Watson, who had just returned from Fair Isle. They identified it as a ♀ Golden Oriole. I had a good view of it at close quarters on 28th and have no hesitation in supporting this identification.

**GREAT GREY SHRIKE.** Lanius excubitor. Dr. J.N. Hamilton watched one in his garden at Gord, Levenwick, on May 18th: it had been present in the township on the previous day. Dr. Hamilton visited Fair Isle on 19th and told Mr. Williamson of this occurrence: he unhesitatingly selected a specimen of the typical race Lanius e. excubitor from several skins, including L. minor and L. e. meridionalis, shown to him in the lab.

60. An Osprey in west Shetland.

DONALD CROSS.

I had an Osprey Pandion haliaetus under close observation for about two hours on the afternoon of May 15th 1954: the light conditions were perfect, and the bird was often within a hundred yards of where I was sitting on the hillside. The head and eye-stripe markings were clearly visible with the naked eye, and from reference to "The Handbook" I believe the bird was a mature specimen.

It spent the time soaring, and often hovering, at the landward end of North Clausta Voe, its lateral range being about a quarter of a mile. It was constantly molested by a pair of Hooded Crows, by the local Herring and Lesser Black-backed Gulls, and occasionally by Oyster-catchers, from all of which it took leisurely evasive action. It seemed to have no fear of human beings: a man and boy, with two collies, were working sheep in the area, and the bird must often have been within a few yards of them.

There is a small brackish lochan between the head of North Clausta Voe and the fresh-water loch of Clausta, and this appeared to be the bird's main interest. He spent a good deal of time hovering over this lochan rather like a Kestrel, but with much slower wing-beats. The lochan at this season is full of sea-trout smolts on their way out of the fresh water. Once the Osprey soared to about 300 ft., did a breath-taking turn, and with wings half-closed and feet extended made a wonderful dive into the lochan, making a splash which I heard distinctly at my vantage-point 120 yds. away. He rose up with a fish which I judged to weigh about a quarter of a pound, shook the water from his plumage, and flew out of sight behind a headland. He re-appeared a few moments later and through glasses I saw him transfer his catch from one set of talons to the other. Soon he rested on a grassy bank about 150 yds. away and began to eat, but was so pestered by the stooping of Hooded Crows that he rose up after a few minutes and carried his catch over my head and out of sight behind the hill.

The bird had apparently been in the area for a week or so prior to the date on which the above events took place, and was once disturbed whilst sitting on a roadside gatepost.

61. Migration Notes from Haroldswick,  
Unst, Spring, 1954.

MAGNUS SINCLAIR.

A small movement of birds occurred at Unst between May 3rd-6th, the first warblers of the season appearing on 3rd with light winds between SE. and NE. Next day a Robin, three warblers and a wagtail arrived and there was an increase in Wheatears. More Wheatears appeared on May 6th, and a flock of Fieldfares passed through.

A bigger migration took place from May 12th to 14th. This began with a light to moderate SE. wind, which brought the first Whinchats I have seen in Unst,

and coincided with the arrival of the first terns at Haroldswick and Mid-Yell. A ♂ Redstart and 3 probable Willow Warblers also appeared, and the first Swallow. A Whitethroat was seen on 13th and a Pied Flycatcher reached Mid-Yell, and next day, with the wind now NW. and light, more Swallows and the first House Martin arrived.

Selected notes follow. I am grateful to Mr. C Inkster for information about birds at Mid-Yell.

DIVERS. Great Northern Divers were seen all winter offshore, the last being 2 on May 14th. The first Red-throated was seen on March 22nd and there were 3 pairs on May 11th.

FULMAR. A dark phase Fulmar was seen at Brei Wick, the cliffs north-east of Saxa Vord hill, on May 2nd. The head, neck, breast and belly were a shade lighter than the wings, and the rump, tail and underwing quite grey. It was flying about the colony and frequently alighting on different ledges close to other birds.

On May 25th I found a Fulmar incubating an egg in the middle of a ploughed field! This rigg had been harrowed level, but had not yet been drilled, for turnips, and is half-a-mile from the shore and surrounded by rye-grass fields. On 26th, 27th and 29th I re-visited the place, but the bird had left the egg and was not seen in the vicinity.

BUZZARD. Either a Common, or possibly a Rough-legged, was seen on May 26th; it had a fair amount of white about the head and light grey underparts, and glided with the wings held straight out.

CORNCRAKE. First heard on May 8th.

OYSTER CATCHER. First arrivals, February 24th; 4 on 27th, and a gradual increase throughout March.

WHIMBREL. A party of 4 flew north on May 16th.

GREAT SKUA. The first arrivals were seen on April 5th, and two were seen off Fetlar on 13th. Fully half of the breeding-stock had arrived at Saxa Vord by May 2nd.

GLAUCOUS GULL. An adult on January 5th; an immature bird arrived on February 9th and stayed until the end of March, and another immature (an almost white bird) was seen on March 28th.

ARCTIC TERN. The first arrived at Haroldswick and also at Mid-Yell on May 12th.

SKYLARK. Flock of 20-30 on February 22nd; song first heard on 24th, as also in Mid-Yell. A flock of about 50 came in with light easterly wind on February 27th.

SWALLOW. First seen on May 12th, more on 14th, 2 on 19th and 26th and 3 on 27th. A HOUSE MARTIN was seen on May 14th.

JACKDAW. Very scarce this year: 4 "probable" on February 28th, and 2 on arable, and occasionally following plough, on April 19th. Two on May 27th.

FIELDFARE. A flock of 25 arrived with east wind on February 13th, and there was an increase in BLACKBIRDS on the same day. A party of a dozen was observed on May 6th.

REDWING. Numbers fluctuated throughout the winter months, dates for increases being January 11th (20-30) and 24th (20). In February over 20 were seen in flocks on 3rd, 6th and 13th. A flock of over a dozen arrived on April 1st and disappeared with a severe westerly gale on 4th. The last was seen on May 7th.

Quite a lot of song was heard this year: one sang for a minute or so from the top of a stone-wall at 0800 hrs. on February 24th, and again was heard on 27th. Song was also heard on March 17th, April 25th and 30th, and May 1st.



BLACKBIRD. An influx in population occurred on February 13th, mainly of adult birds. Before that date most of those present had been 1st-winter birds.

WHEATEAR. First seen on April 19th with moderate southerly wind, and a pair next day. Mr. Inkster's first was seen at Mid-Yell on April 6th. There were no more at Haroldswick until another pair came in with fresh NE. wind on April 30th. There were increases on May 4th and 6th.

WHINCHAT. Two arrived on May 12th.

REDSTART. A ♂ on May 12th, with other migrants.

ROBIN. Singly on January 16th and April 2nd-4th, with a depression north of Scotland which also brought a HEDGE-SPARROW and CHAFFINCH. One, May 4th-10th.

BLACKCAP. A ♂ on May 24th. Single WHITETHROAT seen on May 13th and 27th.

WILLOW WARBLER. First seen on May 3rd, 2 with tail, wings and head brown, mantle grey-brown contrasting with the head, breast and belly greyish-white with no trace of yellow, but a yellowish tinge on the rump. Legs, brownish-black. Although I hesitate to mention it, owing to inexperience of this species, the lack of green above and yellow beneath perhaps indicates the Northern race, Phylloscopus t. acredula. Three were seen on May 12th, one very greenish on upper-parts and yellowish beneath, the others intermediate between this and the birds seen on May 3rd.

HEDGE SPARROW. One from April 3rd-7th, and one was at Mid-Yell at the same period. I caught the Haroldswick bird at its roost in a cabbage-plant at dusk on 5th.

WHITE WAGTAIL. One on May 8th, and a probable one on May 4th.

CHAFFINCH. Singly on April 1st and 3rd, and at Mid-Yell at the same time. Two BRAMBLINGS arrived on May 18th with the wind light northerly.

CORN BUNTING. The first singing bird was seen on March 23rd as against March 4th last year.

SNOW BUNTING. One only, on May 11th. There was one at Mid-Yell on April 6th.

62. Spring Migration, 1954,  
at Tory Island, N.W. Ireland.

PHILIP S. REDMAN.

This interesting island was visited between May 13th and June 13th to observe the spring migration and assess the breeding population.

Tory Island lies about 10 miles to N.NE. of the Bloody Foreland, which is the most north-westerly point of the Irish mainland. The island is 3 miles long and, at its widest point, a mile wide. The north-east side has cliffs almost 300 ft. in height, while at the west side there are two lagoons. There is a powerful lighthouse which is said to attract large numbers of birds in the "right" weather. The island is populated by some 300 Irish-speaking people.

Altogether 63 species were recorded, at least 25 of which are known to breed on the island. A limited amount of bird-ringing was carried out and a total of 105 birds, including 46 Puffins, were marked. The best capture was a Yellow Wagtail caught in a clap-net on May 18th.

Unfortunately the bulk of the passerine migration

was missed, but during the days following my arrival the many migrant Wheatears, some of which were of the Greenland race, gradually moved on. Several White Wagtails were also present daily until May 29th, the maximum seen being 8 on the 18th, on which date the Yellow Wagtail also arrived. A Whitethroat arrived on the 17th and was eventually found trapped inside my tent. A further Whitethroat arrived on the 27th.

An interesting movement of Meadow Pipits occurred on May 21st-22nd when several parties of 4 or 5 birds were found scattered along the south side of the island. These birds stayed for two or three days before passing on. It is doubtful whether they were birds of British breeding stock and it seems more likely that they were on passage to Iceland.

A ♂ Reed Bunting was watched singing on June 1st but although search was made for a ♀ and nest neither was found. The ♂ was not seen subsequently.

Two unusual birds were recorded and full confirmatory descriptions were taken in both instances, at close range. They were a ♀ Mealy Redpoll on May 16th and a ♂ Blue-headed Wagtail on the 22nd. The latter is the first record of this race for Ireland (Major R.F. Ruttledge, in litt.)

An interesting wader passage developed during the last few days in May and continued until June 13th. Birds involved were Northern Golden Plovers, Ringed Plovers, Whimbrels, Dunlins, Purple Sandpipers, Knots, Sanderlings and Turnstones. The peak of this passage occurred between May 27th and June 1st.

The following other migrants of interest were observed. A Merlin on May 14th; an Arctic Skua in Tory Sound on 13th, and two seen on June 10th; a drake Tufted Duck on a lagoon between May 27th-29th.

The breeding species call for no particular mention except to comment on the status of the petrels. No evidence was found of either the Storm or Leach's Petrels breeding up to the time I left the island. The islanders have, however, certainly found eggs of one or the other of these species within the last few years, and also speak of hearing birds calling at night. Petrels strike the lighthouse annually during July, according to the lightkeepers. The only birds seen during my period on the island were one Leach's Petrel in the Sound during the early hours of June 3rd, and several Storm Petrels on June 7th and 9th. Several night visits were paid to the cliffs where the birds are alleged to breed, but neither then nor during the daytime when I searched for burrows could any trace be found. The Manx Shearwater occurred daily in the Sound, but no evidence could be found of breeding, though here again the species is said to nest.

The island is being visited again during the autumn, when it is hoped to establish a temporary Bird Observatory for the period mid-August to mid-November.

63. Notes from the Norduroyar,  
Faeroe Islands.

SAMUEL PETERSEN.

WHOOPEE SWAN. Cygnus cygnus. On November 1st two were present near Klakksvik.

COOT. Fulica atra. A specimen with an injured head was brought to me from Eidinum, Klakksvik, on December 19th: it is a rare winter visitor to Faeroe.

LAPWING. Vanellus vanellus. Single birds at Vidareidi, Vidoy, on March 18th (following the big invasion at Fair Isle, see p. 151) and at Klakksvik on April 4th.

GOLDEN PLOVER. Charadrius apricaria. A flock of 15-20 arrived on April 12th.

TURNSTONE. Arenaria interpres. There was a flock of between 200-300 at Klakksvik on April 12th. Flocks of 10-15, sometimes 20-30, have been along the shore all winter, occasionally frequenting the tilled fields.

SHORT EARED OWL. Asio flammeus. I have mounted for the school a specimen sent to me by S. Justesen of Havannasund, Vidoy, on October 5th 1953.

ROOK. Corvus frugilegus. One was shot at Klakksvik on February 25th and another seen next day.

REDWING. Turdus musicus. There were many of this species following strong SE. wind at the end of March, and there was a flock above my house on April 13th (see James Stout's notes from Fair Isle, p. 151).

BLACKBIRD. Turdus merula. Two ♂♂, December 24th and 28th; ♂♀ April 5th; ♂♂ April 13th; ♂♀ April 16th, all at Klakksvik.

ROBIN. Erithacus rubecula. One in my garden at Klakksvik on March 31st (see page 152)

GOLDCREST. Regulus regulus. A schoolboy brought one to me on March 31st (see page 151)

WAXWING. Bombycilla garrulus. One found in Klakksvik on October 21st 1953 was brought to me by D. Niclasen, and another was sent to me by Sophia Lind of Vidareidi on October 27th. For Shetland records, see page 92.

CROSSBILL. Loxia curvirostra. In all 6♂♂ and a ♀ were brought to me last year. Additional to those already recorded in Bull. no. 12, p.p. 29-33 are a ♂ at Klakksvik on August 20th and a ♂ at Nordoyri, Bordoy, on September 27th. Several people with whom I have spoken among the North Islands - particularly Svinoy - saw birds during the summer, and occasionally found dead ones. The last seen by me was a ♂ at Klakksvik on October 20th.

CHAFFINCH. Fringilla coelebs. A ♂ at Vagsheyg, Bordoy, after strong SE. wind for several days, March 30th (see page 151).

SNOW BUNTING. Plectrophenax nivalis. I saw a large flock on December 28th.

-----

## FAIR ISLE BIRD OBSERVATORY

**The Work of the Observatory.**—The purpose of the Bird Observatory is to provide facilities for visitors to carry out scientific research on the island, not only in the sphere of ornithology, but in every aspect of Natural History. Work will be mainly concentrated however on ornithology under the supervision of the Director.

**The Hostel.**—The Hostel has accommodation for ten observers. It is sited at the North Haven, the main landing-place, and consists of a group of well-constructed timber buildings formerly occupied by the Royal Navy.

**Terms.**—Full board, including service, is SEVEN GUINEAS PER HEAD PER WEEK. Reduced terms are available for parties of students from schools and universities. These terms include use of bicycles, bird-rings, and other Bird Observatory equipment, but do not include hire of motor transport or small boats whilst staying on the island.

**Catering.**—Breakfast is served at 9 a.m., lunch at 1 p.m., and supper at 6.30 p.m. Facilities for early morning and late evening refreshments are provided in the hostel sitting-room.

**Applications.**—Priority in bookings will be given to "Friends of Fair Isle," and to *bona fide* naturalists prepared to take part in the scientific investigations of the station under the leadership of the Director, and to help with such other duties as may be necessary from time to time in connection with the station or hostel. Anyone else wishing to visit the island will be made welcome, provided room is available. Those who are not keen ornithologists are asked to book for the summer months—June, July, and August—so that more accommodation will be available in the Spring and Autumn for students of bird migration. Application should be made as follows :—

**(1) If made between 1st April and 31st October.**

To the Director, Fair Isle Bird Observatory, by Lerwick, Shetland. Telegraphic address: "Migrant, Fairisle."  
Telephone: Fair Isle 8.

**(2) If made between 1st November and 31st March.**


To the Director, Fair Isle Bird Observatory Trust, 17 India Street, Edinburgh. Telephone: Edinburgh CENTral 4532.

**Prospectus.**—Giving details of transport to and from Fair Isle, and other information, will be sent on application.

**Publications.**—The Trust publishes an *Annual Report* which is sent to all subscribers. *Bulletins* are also published at regular intervals and are obtainable free by subscribers who indicate their wish to have them.

# FAIR ISLE BIRD OBSERVATORY

0 100yds. 440yds. 880yds. 1 mile

Roads == Bird Trap  Boundaries .....

