

Report on rare birds in Great Britain and Ireland in 1958

*Compiled by G. A. Pyman
on behalf of the Rarity Records Committee*

THE FORMATION of a Rarity Records Committee, with expanded numbers, knowledge and functions to take the place of the vetting process formerly operated by this journal, was announced in August 1959 (*Brit. Birds*, 52: 241-244). With the co-operation of regional organisations, it aims to cope with the enormously increased number of observations of rare birds at a national level, so that these are assessed uniformly and not by the inevitably varying standards of the different county reports alone, and more particularly to bring together all the well-authenticated records in one place so that the general picture emerges. Each individual record of a rare bird has comparatively little value on its own, but when all are taken together they may act as pointers to the origins of drift and other migratory movements, while at the same time illustrating trends in range-expansion and such aspects of behaviour as the differences between the wanderings of adult and first-year birds. Twenty or even ten years ago such a general picture would have meant little because it could only have been of the sketchiest nature. These days, however, the much larger band of competent bird-watchers skilled in the considerable advances that have taken place in the art of field-identification, and not least the huge increase in observatory and trapping techniques, are now producing an annual flow of information on a scale which makes for a new and clearer appreciation of many problems.

Several birds which were formerly regarded as very rare vagrants are now found to be annual visitors in small numbers. One of these is the Melodious Warbler (*Hippolais polyglotta*) of which nearly five times as many as the pre-war grand total were recorded in 1958 alone (see page 169). This species, together with the closely related Icterine Warbler (*H. icterina*) which so nearly replaces it geographically, does in fact provide an interesting example of the pattern which begins to emerge when all the records are brought together (see page 170); and it is to further this aim of presenting the complete general picture that we have included a number of observations which clearly refer to one of these two warblers although specific identification was not possible. To exclude such observations because these two species happen to be very similar and comparatively difficult to separate in the field would be to distort their picture in relation to that of the other

warblers. A similar case is provided by the two dowitchers (*Limnodromus griseus* and *scolopaceus*), but otherwise we are of course only publishing records which we consider to be certain. There is no value in the inclusion of "probables" in square brackets (as is still so often done in some reports).

These, then, were the main aims behind the formation of this Committee, but another benefit has quickly become apparent. The bringing together and comparison of various detailed descriptions, followed by examination of museum skins and consultation with people who have special experience of the species concerned, is leading to a thorough reappraisal of the identification criteria of some groups. Such results will be published from time to time in this journal: the first, a paper on the field-identification of the marsh terns (*Chlidonias* spp.) in autumn and winter plumages, will be appearing shortly. The members of the Committee find themselves learning all the time and feel that the passing on of such information will not be the least of the values of their work.

The editors felt that there was a need for such a body as this, consisting of people who between them have first-hand field experience of the vast majority of the species likely to occur here; and that this feeling was general is apparent from the almost complete co-operation that the Committee now enjoys from editors of regional reports and from observatory wardens. At its annual conference in Oxford in January the Bird Observatories Committee agreed unanimously to give us its fullest support over the great volume of records from the ever-increasing network of regularly manned observation points.

As originally constituted (in June 1959) the Committee consisted of P. A. D. Hollom (Chairman), G. A. Pyman (Hon. Secretary), H. G. Alexander, I. J. Ferguson-Lees, D. D. Harber, A. Hazelwood, H. P. Medhurst, Prof. M. F. M. Meiklejohn, Major R. F. Ruttledge (Irish records only) and Kenneth Williamson. In November 1959, however, H. P. Medhurst had to resign upon taking up a post in Aden and Dr. I. C. T. Nisbet, recently returned from America, took his place (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 3). Then in early January 1960 H. G. Alexander also went abroad, probably for about a year, and the loss of his vast knowledge gained in many parts of the world was deeply felt, even though it is probably only temporary. In his place, however, we were very glad to welcome K. D. Smith, who has had many years' experience of Palearctic migrants in Africa.

While dealing with observations for 1959 as they came in, the Committee's first task was to consider the 1958 records of the species listed in the original announcement and of certain well-defined races of equal rarity. Details have so far been obtained of all but 16 of the 360 or so records for that year known to the editors of *British Birds*, *Scottish Birds*, *Nature in Wales*, *The Irish Bird Report* and the various

English county reports or to the wardens of the bird observatories. About 27 of these records are still under consideration, but it may be some weeks before the last of them is cleared and it is felt that publication of this report should not be further delayed on their account. Such of these remaining 1958 records as are accepted will instead be published later this year in the next report which will otherwise deal with 1959 records.

In this, our first report, it may be helpful if we mention some of the principles by which we have been guided. First and foremost, we have made every effort to obtain full details of each occurrence including, where possible, not only a description of the bird but also an account of the conditions in which it was seen. In this connection we should like to draw attention to the editorial on this subject published in 1952 (*Brit. Birds*, 45: 1-2). There it was emphasised that notes taken on the spot and before a book has been consulted are the only ones of real value, and that these should also include details of distance, light, the nature of the ground and whether other species were actually present for comparison. Experience in checking these records is of considerable assistance in recognising a genuine field-description as against one that has been touched up after reference to books. We hope that this will be borne in mind because it is the aim of this Committee to raise the already high standard of sight records still higher. At the same time we consider the possession of some knowledge of an observer's reliability to be almost as important as the account of the observation itself. Consequently, unless people are known to at least one member of the Committee, we have taken steps to find out what experience of identification they have had. In addition, we have taken into account any factors which indirectly support a record, including in some cases the weather conditions and in others the simultaneous appearance of the same species (or ones of similar range) elsewhere in Great Britain and Ireland or adjacent parts of the Continent. Finally, each observation is considered on its merits and, although no record is accepted unless the regional organisation is in agreement or has at least been consulted, we have not been influenced by considerations that are purely local: in some areas, for example, it is the practice of the regional editors automatically to reject a first county record which does not have the support of a second observer.

The procedure we adopt has developed as we have gained experience. Records are sent round by post and only those which on first circulation are rejected by a majority of the Committee are immediately "out". If more than half the members are in favour of acceptance the relevant documents are sent back to the minority for further consideration. Depending on these further comments, the record may then be circulated once again round the whole Committee for a final decision,

often after additional information has been obtained from the observer. If at the end only one member of the Committee does not accept the record, then he is overruled, but if the observation is rejected by two or more it is discarded. We hope that by these systems very few bad records are accepted and a minimum of good ones turned down. No records committee is infallible and undoubtedly some correct identifications are rejected, not because we necessarily think them wrong, but because we consider the evidence insufficient and because it is better that some good records should go than that a number of dubious ones should be admitted.

Close liaison is maintained with the Records Committee of the British Ornithologists' Union whose function it is to adjudicate upon first records for Great Britain and Ireland. No record rejected by that B.O.U. Committee will be published by us, even if we consider it acceptable. So far as 1958 is concerned, the two records in this category to have been cleared by us—the American Purple Gallinule (*Porphyryula martinica*) and the Northern Waterthrush (*Seiurus noveboracensis*)—have been accepted by both bodies, while one other is still under consideration.

It has been somewhat disturbing to find what a large number of 1958 records had been accepted by regional organisations on the flimsiest of evidence or, indeed, in the complete absence of supporting details in some cases. The need for a full account of each observation cannot be stressed too much. In 1958 there were several records which were accepted locally without the descriptions being checked and which proved to have serious flaws when considered by this Committee—flaws which, had they been known, would undoubtedly have resulted in the rejection of these records by the county referees concerned.

We do not propose to mention here the records in 1958 county reports which we consider to be unacceptable. However, for the sake of the completeness of this journal, we are listing below a number of claimed occurrences for that year which appeared in the "Recent reports and news" feature and which we are now unable to accept after full consideration of the available details:

Little Bittern	Yare valley, Norfolk, 7th May (<i>Brit. Birds</i> , 51: 250) Cley, Norfolk, 26th August (51: 362)
Kite	North Walsham, Norfolk, 3rd March (51: 207) Kelling, Norfolk, 22nd March (51: 164) Woodbastwick, Norfolk, 26th May (51: 280)
White-tailed Eagle	Unst, Shetland, 8th July (51: 317)
Crane	Staines Common, Middlesex, 15th-16th March (51: 164) Saltwood, Kent, 5th April (51: 207) Midrips/Rye, Sussex, 7th April (51: 320) Dunwich/Walberswick, Suffolk, 21st and 25th May (51: 278)

RARE BIRDS IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND 1958

Killdeer	Cley, Norfolk, 1st December (51: 528)
Great Snipe	Cley, Norfolk, 9th April (51: 207)
Hudsonian Whimbrel	Dublin Bay, Co. Dublin, 8th December (52: 32)
Black-winged Stilt	Thornham, Norfolk, 31st August (51: 363)
Cream-coloured Courser	Par Beach, Cornwall, 16th May (51: 278)
Mediterranean Black-headed Gull	Salthouse, Norfolk, 30th November (51: 530)
White-winged Black Tern	Blythburgh, Suffolk, 30th August (51: 363)
Roller	Mid Yell, Shetland, 5th September (51: 439)
	St. Mary's, Isles of Scilly, 22nd September (51: 439)
	Bamburgh, Northumberland, 24th September (51: 439)
Crested Lark	Dungeness, Kent, 24th November (two) (51: 530)
Black-eared Wheatear	Portland Bill, Dorset, 18th August (51: 362)
Marsh Warbler	Great Saltee, Co. Wexford, 1st September (51: 437)
Aquatic Warbler	Yalding, Kent, 31st August (two) (51: 362)
Arctic Warbler	Sands of Forvie, Aberdeenshire, 2nd September (51: 437)
Yellow-browed Warbler	Burn Halt, near Tiverton, Devon, 7th-8th April (51: 319)
Lesser Grey Shrike	Dartford, Kent, 7th May (51: 250)
Rustic Bunting	Cannock Reservoir, Staffordshire, 17th August (51: 362)
Little Bunting	Shellness, Sheppey, Kent, 13th September (51: 434)
	Shellness, Sheppey, Kent, 12th October (three) (51: 429)

It is likely that there will be several additions to this list after the outstanding 1958 records that were mentioned earlier have been finally considered.

As was announced in the original editorial in August 1959, species and some well-defined races which have been recorded not more than ten times in Great Britain and Ireland, as well as ones which have not been recorded at all during the previous 25 years, are still being published with full descriptions in this journal. Such birds are mentioned only briefly in the systematic list which follows, but have a cross-reference to the fuller publication. In a very few of these cases the record was accepted by the editors of *British Birds* before the formation of this Committee: such records have not been reconsidered by the Committee. The basic details given for each record in the list are (1) county; (2) locality; (3) number of birds *if more than one*, together with age and/or sex where established; (4) whether trapped or if dead; (5) date or extreme dates; and (6) observer or observers. With regard to the last, some birds were seen by many people and in such cases we have put the names of not more than three, with an indication that others were involved. Other relevant information and comments—for example, on the question of escapes from captivity—are included where necessary in a separate paragraph under the species concerned. In distant parts of the world there are certain species which would be very difficult to separate in the field from ones on the British list: in these cases we accept the record, but state below that the details do not rule out the other (usually extremely remote) possibility.

BRITISH BIRDS

In accordance with the policy of the editors of *British Birds*, the nomenclature and classification throughout the systematic list is that given in the B.O.U. *Check-list of the Birds of Great Britain and Ireland* (1952), with the amendments proposed by the B.O.U. Taxonomic Committee in 1955 (see *Ibis*, 98: 157-168). In the case of sight-records of subspecies, however—in which category we also include birds trapped and released—we normally give these only as “showing the characters” of the race concerned, since determinations of this kind are primarily a matter for the museum worker able to compare his birds with a range of skins.

In conclusion, we should like to express our sincere appreciation of the co-operation shown by the great majority of local organisations and individual observers alike in producing original documents, dealing with innumerable queries and assisting in divers other directions. It is hoped to produce the 1959 report before the end of the year and thereafter one annually in the middle of the year. These aims will only be possible, however, if we receive any outstanding 1959 records now and if, in future, full details of each observation are sent to the editorial address in Bedford (or to K. Williamson in the case of the observatories) as soon as possible after the event.

In the early, exploratory stages our progress has sometimes been held up by delays in receiving information and also by the sheer mass of papers involved in considering two years' records in our first six months of existence. We hope that the publication of this first report will justify, and indeed strengthen, the confidence already shown in this Committee, and that a smoother and speedier flow and exchange of records will enable us to be of increasing help to both observers and regional editors. Their support is vital to the success of our efforts.

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF 1958 RECORDS ACCEPTED

Little Shearwater (*Procellaria baroli*)

Cheshire: near Stockport, moribund ♀ of Madeiran race *P. b. baroli*, 10th May; now preserved in the Bolton Museum, Lancashire (*Brit. Birds*, 51: 354-355).

Cory's Shearwater (*Procellaria diomedea*)

Co. Wexford: Great Saltee, single birds, 2nd and 4th September (J. J. M. Flegg, D. F. Musson)

Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*)

Essex: Walthamstow Reservoirs, adult, 25th May (J. Fitzpatrick).

Hertfordshire: Wilstone Reservoir, Tring, immature, 30th July-15th August (H. Cole, Mrs. S. Cowdy, R. S. R. Fitter *et al.*).

Kent: Stoke, immature, 2nd and 10th August (E. H. Gillham, G. Lambourn, C. A. Walker *et al.*).

Sussex: Chichester gravel-pits, 18th May (L. P. Alder); Rye Harbour gravel-pits, 18th June (D. D. Harber).

Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*)

Cornwall: Hayle Estuary, 8th-18th May (Rev. J. E. Beckerlegge, A. G. Parsons *et al.*); Trewornan Bridge, R. Camel, 7th June (F. R. Smith).

Devon: Kingsbridge Estuary and Bowcombe Creek, 14th-21st May (D. R. Edgcombe, R. H. Stephens).

Sussex: near Rye, 16th-17th May (D. Cooke, J. R. Thompson); Pett Level, 19th May (R. Cooke, E. Giles *et al.*); almost certainly one individual.

Co. Cork: near Clonakilty, first few days May (B. O'Regan); Aghadown, near Skibbereen, 8th-23rd May (B. O'Regan); near Courtmacsherry, end May (B. O'Regan); probably all one individual.

It is of interest to bear in mind that before 1952 the Little Egret had been recorded in Great Britain and Ireland on only some twelve occasions. Since then, however, there have been something like three to six records nearly every year. There is no longer any suggestion (*cf. The Handbook*) that they are likely to have escaped from captivity. Such observations are always listed as *E. garzetta*, but it is conceivable that the Snowy Egret (*E. thula*) of North America might cross the Atlantic occasionally, particularly as the Little Egret is known to have done so the other way at least twice. The two birds, regarded by some authorities as conspecific, are indistinguishable in the field.

Squacco Heron (*Ardeola ralloides*)

Devon: Slapton Ley, 1st-9th June (M. R. Edmonds); Bampton, 17th July (Dr. Ingram, J. L. Maunder, R. H. Webster); may refer to one individual.

These are the first records since the two in 1954 (*Brit. Birds*, 48: 129).

Night Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)

Kent: Mersham, near Ashford, immature dead, 10th February (*per* H. E. Axell, Dr. J. M. Harrison, W. S. Nevin); now in Dr. J. M. Harrison's collection.

As previously pointed out (*Brit. Birds*, 47: 353-354), Night Herons are to some extent open to the suspicion of being escapes from Edinburgh Zoo. The history of the colony there has been described in detail by D. F. Dorward (1957, *Scot. Nat.*, 69: 32-36). In brief, it is that in 1936 six birds, presumably of the North American race *N. n. boactli*, were obtained from Canada and kept unpinioned in a roofed aviary. Breeding took place in 1938 and has done so every year since. Another pair was imported from Canada in 1946 and by that time some 27 birds were present. In December 1950 the aviary fell into disrepair and a few escaped. In May 1951 the roof was removed and the colony was free. The number of birds at that time was 18, ten having been exchanged. In January 1955 there were 20

BRITISH BIRDS

adults and four juveniles. It is not known how many have gone away over the years, but a number remain unaccounted for when compared with the average annual increment. There have been several records within a few miles of Edinburgh which presumably refer to birds from the Zoo and a question mark is thus inevitably cast against the increased number of records of Night Herons in other parts of the country in recent years. There were no records between 1930 and 1947, then one in the latter year and one in 1949, followed by six in 1953-54 in various parts of England and several since. On the other hand, a colony of Night Herons established itself in Holland in 1946 (T. Lebrecht, *Ardea*, 35: 149-156) and this may be the source of the post-war records, particularly as the majority of these have been from the east and south coasts.

Little Bittern (*Ixobrychus minutus*)

Cornwall: near Jacobstowe, Bude, first-summer ♀, 11th May, died subsequently (Mrs. F. E. Carter).

Essex: Tillingham, moribund adult ♀, late May (L. H. Symes).

Kent: Yalding gravel-pit, adult ♀, 10th August (W. G. Jarvis).

Somerset: in one locality a ♂ was seen on a number of occasions between 21st June and 1st August, and a ♀ on 18th and 27th July and 12th August (Mrs. M. L. Colthurst, B. Little, D. E. Slocombe *et al.*); near Keynsham, 28th September (A. T. Coote, B. Coote, A. M. Lane).

Angus: near Forfar, ♀, 12th July (R. Middleton).

In the cases of the sight records, the descriptions do not exclude the possibility of the Least Bittern (*I. exilis*) of North America.

Black Stork (*Ciconia nigra*)

Kent/Sussex: one, considered moulting from first-winter to adult plumage, frequented the coastal area between Stone Cliff (Kent) and Iden (Sussex), 7th August-14th September (C. W. G. Paulson-Ellis, G. des Forges, D. D. Harber *et al.*).

Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)

Argyll: Tiree, early October to 26th (Miss M. McKinnon).

Teal (*Anas crecca*)

Co. Down: Downpatrick Marshes, single ♂♂ showing the characters of the Green-winged Teal (*A. c. carolinensis*), 16th February (J. V. Bateman, Miss M. P. McMillan *et al.*), 26th October (Miss M. Bruce) and 2nd November (R. W. Culbert, W. Finlay *et al.*).

Co. Kerry: Akeagh Lough, as above, 23rd November (F. King).

American Wigeon (*Anas americana*)

Inverness-shire: Beauly Firth, immature ♂, 9th October (Miss K. Bryde-Williams, D. I. M. Wallace).

Red-crested Pochard (*Netta rufina*)

Devon: R. Plym Estuary, ♀, 8th November 1958-3rd April 1959 (P. F. Goodfellow, L. I. Hamilton, D. J. Mitchell *et al.*).

Essex: Abberton Reservoir, single individuals on 19th January (Maj.-Gen. C. B. Wainwright), 1st-2nd June, trapped (R. V. A. Marshall, Maj.-Gen. C. B. Wainwright), and 7th October (R. V. A. Marshall).

Leicestershire/Northamptonshire/Warwickshire: Stanford Reservoir, Leicestershire/Northamptonshire border, 2♂♂, 15th March (F. E. R. Peach, W. S. Peach); Napton Reservoir, Warwickshire, 2♂♂, 16th March (J. H. Lowe); almost certainly the same individuals.

Sussex: Chichester gravel-pits, ♀, intermittently up to 27th February (Miss W. P. White *et al.*) and again on 20th March (A. B. Sheldon); Pagham lagoon, ♀, 23rd January and 16th February (Major W. W. A. Phillips), thought to have been the Chichester individual; Chichester gravel-pits, ♀, 6th December to end of year (D. Langford *et al.*).

Peebles/Midlothian: Portmore and Gladhouse Reservoirs, 19th October (R. W. J. Smith).

Co. Meath: R. Blackwater between Navan and Kells, adult ♀ shot, 26th January (*per* Rev. P. G. Kennedy).

With the exception of the Devon record, the above occurrences first came to light during the course of the recent enquiry into the status of this species in Great Britain and Ireland, and the Committee have been content to accept them on the strength of their inclusion in G. A. Pyman's paper (*Brit. Birds*, 52: 42-56), in which an attempt was made to assess the extent to which genuinely wild birds may be expected to occur in various parts of Great Britain and Ireland at different seasons. In connection with the Devon record, F. R. Smith has informed us that a female is now known to have escaped from captivity three or four years ago at Ivybridge, only six miles from the River Plym.

Ferruginous Duck (*Aythya nyroca*)

Devon: Fremington, immature, 28th September (M. Huxtable).

Essex: Abberton Reservoir, adult ♂, 29th October (R. Harkness).

Norfolk: near Norwich, adult ♂, 16th-30th March (M. J. Seago).

Surf Scoter (*Melanitta perspicillata*)

Co. Dublin: North Bull, immature, 3rd November-20th December (C. S. Holahan, J. O'Mahony, C. F. Scroope *et al.*).

Lesser White-fronted Goose (*Anser erythropus*)

Gloucestershire: Slimbridge, adult, 11th February (M. Davy).

Norfolk: Yare valley near Norwich, 19th January (P. D. Kirby, M. J. Seago) and 2nd March (R. E. Hitchcock, R. C. Plowright); possibly one individual.

Kirkcudbrightshire: adult, 17th January-25th February (D. G. Andrew, A. Baldridge, A. D. Watson *et al.*).

These three localities have produced Lesser White-fronted Geese with some regularity in recent years. The Gloucestershire birds are

found with White-fronted Geese (*A. albifrons*) and those in Norfolk and Kirkcudbrightshire with Bean Geese (*A. fabalis*).

Snow Goose (*Anser caerulescens*)

Lancashire: near Southport, adult blue phase Lesser Snow, *A. c. caerulescens* ("Blue Goose"), 19th October-first week December (R. Harrison, F. Moscrop, N. Rowbotham *et al.*).

Aberdeenshire: Loch of Strathbeg, three, 22nd October-late November (Miss E. A. Garden).

Argyll: Appin, 6th November (Miss M. Chisholm).

Perthshire: Kingoodie/Invergowrie Bay, 16th and 18th November (H. Boase).

West Lothian: near South Queensferry, four, 30th November (A. M. B. Maclean).

Co. Wexford: North Slob, adult blue phase, *ca.* 1st November 1957-*ca.* 1st February 1958 when inadvertently shot (Major R. F. Rutledge *et al.*); South Slob, white phase, first seen 8th December, later moved to the North Slob where it spent the winter (T. J. Underwood *et al.*).

We are indebted to A. Baldrige for informing us that three Snow Geese, two of them of the blue phase, wandered from a collection near Dumfries early in 1958. These are the only escapes reported which could conceivably have any connection with any of the above occurrences.

Red-breasted Goose (*Branta ruficollis*)

Sussex: near Amberley, 8th-15th February (*Brit. Birds*, 51: 192-193).

Brent Goose (*Branta bernicla*)

Essex: Foulness, an adult showing the characters of *B. b. orientalis*, the eastern Siberian/western Arctic American race which winters in the Pacific and is known as the Pacific Black Brant, 8th February, in a flock of Dark-bellied Brent Geese (*B. b. bernicla*) (P. J. K. Burton, M. R. Chettleburgh, R. M. Latner).

P. J. K. Burton had located this bird in the same area in February 1957 (*Essex Bird Report* for 1957: 12). Enquiries have shown that there is little likelihood that it was an escape.

Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*)

Argyll: Islay, a small, dark, short-necked Canada Goose, distinctly smaller than the Barnacle Geese (*B. leucopsis*) it accompanied and clearly an example of one of the small races of *B. canadensis* breeding in the North American Arctic, 5th April (J. Shepperd).

Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)

In view of continued breeding in Co. Antrim and regular observations in N.W. England, we are only considering records south of 54°N. (and not "outside Scotland"). In Co. Antrim a pair has nested since 1953 (*Brit. Birds*, 47: 272), rearing one eaglet in 1958 (J. A. Benington).

Kite (*Milvus milvus*)
(elsewhere than in Wales)

Cornwall: Launcells, 10th March (E. H. Ware).

Devon: Challacombe Common, 3rd May (R. M. Curber, P. J. Dare).

Kent: Dungeness, 5th April (H. E. Axell *et al.*).

Middlesex: Staines (King George VI) Reservoir, 1st April (R. Adams); Shepherd's Bush, 20th May (E. Simms).

Wiltshire: Chippenham, 13th April (C. Rice).

Yorkshire: Barnsley, 4th March (G. Aynsley); near Arthington, 6th March (D. Ward).

Aberdeenshire: Old Aberdeen, 13th February (Prof. V. C. Wynne-Edwards).

Several other Kites were claimed during the period covered by the above records, but the Committee have been unable to assess the authenticity of these reports owing to lack of supporting details. The impression gained, however, is of a quite exceptional influx during the spring of 1958.

White-tailed Eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*)

Norfolk: immature, first seen at Cley late in 1957, reappeared there on 9th, 12th, 15th and 19th January and 4th March; also seen in the Snettisham/Heacham area on 26th January and on several subsequent dates up to 14th February (H. P. Medhurst, R. A. Richardson, J. S. Clark *et al.*).

Suffolk: Havergate Island/Butley, immature, 28th February-2nd March (F. K. Cobb, G. J. Jobson *et al.*); may well have been the bird reported from north Norfolk (see above).

Red-footed Falcon (*Falco vespertinus*)

Dorset: near Wareham, ♀, 21st-24th May (Dr. J. S. Ash, C. T. Bispham, Dr. K. B. Rooke *et al.*).

Norfolk: Whiteslea, 12th and 22nd June (G. E. Bishop, E. Piggin, I. A. Williams *et al.*); Holme-next-the-Sea, immature, 13th-16th September (H. G. Alexander, W. B. Alexander, Miss P. B. Lind *et al.*).

Suffolk: Southwold, ♀, 9th-14th May (G. B. G. Benson, Dr. P. R. Westall *et al.*).

Sussex: near Seaford, adult ♂, 4th May (G. Campbell).

Crane (*Megalornis grus*)

Essex: Earls Colne, adult, found slightly injured 20th February, cared for by the R.S.P.C.A., released 28th February (Inspector Cooper, R.S.P.C.A., *per* G. A. Pyman).

Northumberland: Hadston, near Amble, 29th April-5th May (M. Flanighan).

Suffolk: Waldringfield, a party of five, 9th January; one bird soon disappeared but the remainder (two adults and two immatures) remained until 2nd March (F. K. Cobb, I. J. Ferguson-Lces, A. E. Vine *et al.*).

Caithness: near Westerdale, adult, 12th and 14th June (J. Gunn, L. Salmon).

Sutherland: Lothbeg Point, Helmsdale, adult, 6th August (D. J. Mitchell).

Co. Derry: Lough Beg, adult, shot *ca.* 24th July (*per* H. Dick, A. J. Tree).

The number of Cranes recorded in 1958 was much higher than usual and this very fact supports the impression that at least the majority were wild birds. The picture would not be complete, either, without some reference to the party of 6 which stayed at North Deighton, near Wetherby, Yorkshire, from 17th November to 7th December 1957 (*Y.N.U. Ornithological Report*, 1957: 50). It seems possible that those which appeared in Suffolk a month later were the remnants of this group and, separately or together, the two records provide the first evidence for many years of a party of Cranes wintering in this country.

American Purple Gallinule (*Porphyryla martinica*)

Isles of Scilly: Hugh Town, St. Mary's, immature picked up exhausted, 7th November, died on 9th; now in British Museum (Natural History) (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 145-146).

Little Bustard (*Otis tetrax*)

Berkshire: Compton Down, adult ♂ of Western form *O. t. tetrax* found injured, 28th July, died on 30th (Dr. A. McDiarmid); now in Dr. A. McDiarmid's possession.

Kent: near Tonbridge, 17th October (Dr. J. G. Harrison).

Kentish Plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*)

(elsewhere than on the coast from the Wash to Hampshire and the Isle of Wight)

Glamorgan: Aberthaw, ♂, 7th April (D. Griffin).

Middlesex: Staines (King George VI) Reservoir, ♀, 1st April (J. Cook, Mrs. V. A. Gillham, H. P. Medhurst).

Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*)

Co. Kerry: Akeagh Lough, 26th February and 2nd March (F. King); near Blennerville, 20th November-2nd December (F. King).

Dowitcher (*Limnodromus* sp.)

Berwickshire: Hule Moss, 20th and 30th September (S. J. Clarke, Col. W. M. Logan Home, W. Murray).

Co. Dublin: Kilbarrack, Dublin, 19th October-1st November (P. D. Nolan, J. O'Mahony, G. B. Ryan).

Co. Kerry: Blennerville, 3rd December (F. King).

Two species of dowitcher are now recognised—the Short-billed (*L. griseus*) and the Long-billed (*L. scolopaceus*)—but insufficient details were noted in these cases to enable the birds to be specifically named in retrospect. It is expected that a statement on the subject of the two dowitchers will be published before long in this journal. Meanwhile, however, it is perhaps worth adding now that the points to note

particularly are the type of markings on the flanks and under tail-coverts, the call and the relative length of the bill in relation to the head.

Great Snipe (*Capella media*)

Gloucestershire: Slimbridge, 28th January (B. King).

Lesser Yellowlegs (*Tringa flavipes*)

Devon: Kingsbridge Estuary, 2nd September (M. J. McVail).

Suffolk: Havergate Island, 25th September (R. J. Partridge).

Co. Derry: Lough Beg, 24th May (A. J. Tree).

White-rumped Sandpiper (*Calidris fuscicollis*)

Devon: Wembury Point, 12th-22nd October (R. M. Curber, P. F. Goodfellow, G. G. Trencry *et al.*).

East Lothian: Tynninghame Estuary, 12th October (T. Boyd, R. W. J. Smith).

Co. Antrim: Belfast Lough, 9th October (H. Dick).

Co. Kerry: Inch, Castlemaine Harbour, 22nd October (F. King, J. R. Smythies).

Note the closeness of the dates of these four occurrences.

Pectoral Sandpiper (*Calidris melanotos*)

Cornwall: Ponsadene, Penzance, 22nd September and following days (Rev. J. E. Beckerlegge); Marazion Marsh, 27th-30th September (G. Allsop, A. G. Parsons); considered to have been the same individual.

Middlesex: Perry Oaks sewage-farm, 20th-28th September (E. E. Green, C. M. Veysey, I. M. Walker *et al.*).

Pembrokeshire: Skokholm, immature, trapped, 26th September (Mrs. K. E. I. Barham, E. Brun).

Co. Kerry: Akeagh Lough, 21st September (F. King).

Co. Wexford: North Slob, 27th September (P. J. Roche, Major R. F. Rutledge, K. Williamson *et al.*).

Note that all these birds were seen within a period of seven days.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper (*Tryngites subruficollis*)

Fair Isle: 18th September (P. Davis, P. Hope Jones, W. M. Peet *et al.*).

Black-winged Stilt (*Himantopus himantopus*)

Cornwall: Hayle Estuary, two, 19th April (K. O. Nash).

Suffolk: Minsmere, 7th-29th June (H. P. Medhurst *et al.*).

Sussex: near Norman's Bay, 15th September (J. H. R. Boswall); Camber/Rye/East Guldeford, two, 20th-27th September, and at least one until 5th October (M. Edelston, G. des Forges, D. D. Harber *et al.*).

Renfrewshire: near Erskine Ferry, 5th October (P. R. Campbell).

Wilson's Phalarope (*Phalaropus tricolor*)

Anglesey: Malltracth, ♀, 15th-16th June (*Brit. Birds*, 52: 386-387).

Bedfordshire: near Shefford, ♀, 10th-13th May (*Brit. Birds*, 52: 385-386).

BRITISH BIRDS

Pratincole (*Glareola pratincola*)

Essex: Hanningfield Reservoir, with chestnut axillaries and under-wing coverts, 31st May (M. R. Chettleburgh, S. Hudgell, R. M. Lerner).

Only one European species of pratincole is now recognised, the Black-winged Pratincole (*G. nordmanni*) being regarded as a colour phase of *G. pratincola* that is more or less dominant in south-east Europe and south-west Asia (*Ibis*, 98: 161).

Mediterranean Black-headed Gull (*Larus melanocephalus*)

Dorset: Puddletown Down, adult, 1st April (H. J. C. Bridle); Portland Bill, adult, 19th October (R. Chainey, J. A. Wigzell *et al.*).

Co. Durham: Hartlepool, adult, 1st August 1957-9th April 1958 and again 17th August 1958-8th March 1959 (P. J. Stead *et al.*).

Essex: The Naze, adult, 17th August-27th September (J. A. Fowler, B. S. Meadows *et al.*) and 24th October (R. G. H. Cant); almost certainly the same individual.

Hampshire: Southsea, adult, 13th January and 14th, 17th and 21st February (T. E. Brice, R. Brown).

Sussex: Brighton/Southwick, adult, 5th February-26th March (B. A. E. Marr, C. M. James); Rottingdean, adult, 12th October (C. M. James).

Co. Down: Copeland Island, 27th August (M. C. Gray, J. Lyons, A. Rogers).

What are presumably the same birds have appeared annually at the Co. Durham and Essex localities since 1956. The species is now of regular occurrence on the Sussex coast.

White-winged Black Tern (*Chlidonias leucopterus*)

Carmarthenshire: near Llandefilog, 8th March (G. R. Tucker); a notably early date.

Lincolnshire: Killingholme, immature, 24th-26th August (R. May).

Lincolnshire/Norfolk: Wisbech sewage-farm, immature, 21st September-7th October (A. Baldrige, J. A. W. Moyes, P. J. Stead *et al.*).

Whiskered Tern (*Chlidonias hybrida*)

Cornwall: R. Amble, 28th-29th May (A. Jeffreys, Miss E. M. Whelan, Miss K. Orr Wilson).

Gull-billed Tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*)

Kent: Dungeness, 2nd May (J. A. Bailey).

Hampshire: Chichester Harbour, 18th May (K. Brown).

Sussex: Langney Point, 20th July (D. D. Harber).

Caspian Tern (*Hydroprogne caspia*)

Hampshire: Mudeford, 7th September (M. C. Adams).

Bridled Tern (*Sterna anaethetus*)

Somerset: near Weston-super-Mare, freshly dead, 17th October (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 32).

Great Spotted Cuckoo (*Clamator glandarius*)

Norfolk: Winterton, first-summer, picked up freshly dead, 6th August (J. Bane per G. T. Wilkins); now preserved in the Castle Museum, Norwich.

Alpine Swift (*Apus melba*)

Norfolk: Trimingham, 18th August (R. P. Bagnall-Oakeley).

Suffolk: Minsmere, 21st June (G. J. Jobson, H. P. Medhurst *et al.*).

East Lothian: Dunbar, 11th October (A. Macdonald).

Co. Wexford: Great Saltee, 14th-15th September (T. Ennis, Major R. F. Rutledge, K. Williamson *et al.*).

Bee-eater (*Merops apiaster*)

Kent: Betteshanger, 11th July (J. R. Rose).

Leicestershire: Loughborough sewage-farm, 13th September (R. A. O. Hickling).

Lincolnshire: Gibraltar Point, three, 2nd September (F. Norris, D. Parr, A. D. Townsend *et al.*).

Pembrokeshire: Dale Fort, Haverfordwest, two, 31st May (P. A. Alderson, J. Cooper *et al.*).

Surrey: Beddington, adult, 5th August (B. S. Milne).

Sussex: North Lancing, 19th September (R. J. Wilmshurst).

Roller (*Coracias garrulus*)

Isles of Scilly: Porthellick, St. Mary's, 6th May (Miss M. C. Grundy, Miss M. E. Price); what was assumed to have been the same bird found dead on 11th (R. Symons).

Orkney: Randall/Deerness/Wideford Brae, in various localities between 27th May and 21st July (E. Balfour, Miss M. Traill Clouston, R. Watson *et al.*); probably the same individual.

Co. Kerry: Castlegregory, freshly dead, 23rd May (*per* Rev. P. G. Kennedy).

Short-toed Lark (*Calandrella brachydactyla*)

Yorkshire: Spurn Head, 30th November (J. Cudworth, J. K. Fenton, P. Hope Jones *et al.*).

Co. Antrim: Duncrue Street Marsh, Belfast, 22nd-23rd August (H. Dick, A. J. Tree).

Lesser Short-toed Lark (*Calandrella rufescens*)

Co. Wexford: Great Saltee, five 22nd March, one 23rd, two 24th and four 25th (R. G. Pettitt, Major R. F. Rutledge).

A statement on the occurrences of the Lesser Short-toed Lark will be published shortly in this journal.

Crested Lark (*Galerida cristata*)

Devon: Exmouth, 29th December 1958-3rd January 1959 (R. G. Adams, F. R. Smith, W. H. Tucker).

As with other sight records of Crested Larks in these islands, it is

almost impossible to exclude the admittedly remote chance that the bird was a Thekla Lark (*G. theklae*), the very similar species found in the Iberian Peninsula and North Africa.

Nutcracker (*Nucifraga caryocatactes*)

Kent: Ashley, 25th December (J. R. Rose).

White's Thrush (*Turdus dauma*)

Fair Isle: 18th September (J. A. Stout).

Black-throated Thrush (*Turdus ruficollis atrogularis*)

Fair Isle: adult male, trapped, 8th December 1957-*ca.* 22nd January 1958 (*Brit. Birds*, 51: 195-197, plate 33).

Gray-cheeked Thrush (*Hylocichla minima*)

Fair Isle: first-winter, trapped, 29th October (*Brit. Birds*, 52: 316).

Desert Wheatear (*Oenanthe deserti*)

Essex: East Mersea, immature ♂, 12th-13th January and 3rd February (*Brit. Birds*, 51: 275-276).

Thrush Nightingale (*Luscinia luscinia*)

Fair Isle: trapped, 15th-17th May (*Brit. Birds*, 51: 356-357).

Great Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*)

Suffolk: Minsmere, 28th June (F. D. Hamilton, C. K. Mylne, Mrs. N. Mylne).

Shetland: Duingarth, 4th-5th June (L. A. Brown, Dr. W. J. Eggeling, L. S. V. Venables *et al.*).

In neither of these cases does the description rule out the Clamorous Great Reed Warbler (*A. stentoreus*) of southern Asia and Egypt, notably the less rufous race *brunnescens*. The observer faced with the identification of a Great Reed Warbler should also bear in mind that there are other large brown and buff warblers of comparable size to be considered—notably the Thick-billed Warbler (*Phragmaticola aëdon*), which has occurred on Fair Isle (*Brit. Birds*, 49: 89-93), and Gray's Grasshopper Warbler (*Locustella fasciolata*), which has been recorded on Ushant, France.

Aquatic Warbler (*Acrocephalus paludicola*)

Berkshire: Windsor Great Park, 14th September (E. E. Green, P. N. J. Lette, T. Walker).

Hampshire: Farlington Marshes, 6th August (J. Simons); Ashlett, 6th September (J. K. Bowers, J. H. Taverner).

Norfolk: Holme-next-the-Sea, 20th August (A. Dobbs, Mrs. H. Dobbs).

Northumberland: Holywell Ponds, 20th-21st August (M. Bell, D. Howey, Dr. J. D. Parrack).

Sussex: Sidlesham Ferry, 21st September (M. Shrubbs).

Isle of Wight: St. Catherine's Lighthouse, 17th August (J. K. Bowers).

Wiltshire: Coate Water, Swindon, trapped, 2nd September (D. Felstead, G. L. Webber).

Fair Isle: trapped 6th September, seen to 10th and on 15th; thought to be only one individual (P. Davis, P. Hope Jones).

Co. Wexford: Great Saltee, 3rd September (J. J. M. Flegg, D. C. Lang *et al.*); 1st/2nd October (P. P. Creed, P. D. Nolan *et al.*).

Melodious Warbler (*Hippolais polyglotta*)

Caernarvonshire: Bardsey Island, three trapped, 5th, 6th and 7th September (R. W. Arthur *et al.*).

Dorset: Portland Bill, two trapped, 17th August (J. S. Ash *et al.*) and 28th August (A. J. Hold, J. H. Morgan *et al.*), and one other seen, 3rd September (R. J. Jackson).

Pembrokeshire: Skokholm, three trapped, 15th August and 9th and 21st September (Mrs. K. E. I. Barham, E. Brun).

Sussex: Holywell, Eastbourne, trapped, 17th August (D. D. Harber).

Co. Wexford: Great Saltee, three trapped, 5th, 9th and 11th September, and one present until at least 16th (J. F. Card, R. A. Card, T. Ennis *et al.*).

August/September 1958 was a remarkable period for this species (*Brit. Birds*, 52: 363-365). In addition to these 13 records of birds examined in the hand, there was one other trapped of which we have not yet been sent details and some at least of the unidentified *Hippolais* mentioned on the next page were almost certainly Melodious Warblers. Before 1954 there were only 7 records for Great Britain and Ireland, but since then systematic trapping at observatories and elsewhere has shown this species to be an annual drift-vagrant in the Irish Sea area and on the south coast of England.

Icterine Warbler (*Hippolais icterina*)

Dorset: Portland Bill, trapped, 1st September (K. V. Edwards, P. Partington *et al.*).

Lincolnshire: Gibraltar Point, two trapped and three others seen, 19th August (C. T. Beverley, H. Hems).

Norfolk: Holme-next-the-Sea, one trapped, probably a second seen, 3rd September (J. S. Clark, P. R. Grant, C. D. T. Minton); Blakeney Point, three (two trapped), 3rd September (R. A. Richardson), and one trapped, 11th September (R. J. Johns, R. A. Richardson); Cley, 4th September (R. A. Richardson); Titchwell, 6th September (D. Holmes, R. J. Johns).

Northumberland: Monks' House, Seahouses, trapped, 3rd September (Dr. E. A. R. Ennion).

Yorkshire: Spurn Head, four trapped, 1st, 5th, 6th and 14th September (G. R. Edwards *et al.*).

Fair Isle: 23rd-25th August; trapped, 4th September (P. Davis, P. Hope Jones).

Isle of May: trapped, 19th August (J. M. S. Arnott, H. K. Larsen); two trapped, 28th August (Miss E. Green, A. Smith).

BRITISH BIRDS

Shetland: Loch Spiggie, 3rd June (L. A. Brown, Miss I. M. N. Ryan, L. S. V. Venables).

Co. Down: Copeland Island, trapped, 14th-28th September (J. G. Gray).

Melodious or Icterine Warbler (*Hippolais polyglotta* or *icterina*)

Although it is not the Committee's policy to publish records of "probables", it is felt that there is a case for listing observations of birds which were either Melodious or Icterine Warblers, since it is not easy for any but the most experienced observers to separate these two species in the field and since they do form part of the general picture which is one of the aims of these reports. In addition, owing to the way these two very similar species replace each other geographically on the Continent, there is a remarkable "drift-shadow" effect to be seen in the autumn records (recently discussed by K. Williamson, *Brit. Birds*, 52: 364). As a result of this, a yellow *Hippolais* on the east coast in autumn is almost certain to be an Icterine, while one in the Irish Sea is only a little less likely to be a Melodious.

Birds which were of one or other of these two species were reported from Portland Bill (Dorset) on 3rd August (Miss M. D. Crosby, B. King), from Beacon Lane, Kilnsea (Yorkshire) on 25th August (Miss D. Darlow, G. R. Edwards) and from Bardsey (Caernarvonshire) on 18th and 29th August and 8th September (two) (R. W. Arthur *et al.*).

Subalpine Warbler (*Sylvia cantillans*)

Fair Isle: first-summer ♂, trapped, 12th June (P. Davis, P. Hope Jones); ♀ trapped, 13th-14th June (P. Adams, P. Davis, P. Hope Jones).

Isle of May: ♀, 16th and 22nd July, found dead on 23rd (Dr. W. J. Eggeling, A. D. Watson).

Greenish Warbler (*Phylloscopus trochiloides*)

Lincolnshire: Gibraltar Point, trapped, 3rd September (Mrs. L. Cave, F. Norris, A. D. Townsend).

Lincolnshire/Norfolk: Wisbech sewage-farm, 23rd November (J. A. W. Moyes).

Bonelli's Warbler (*Phylloscopus bonelli*)

Cornwall: Marazion Marsh, 14th September (*Brit. Birds*, 52: 317).

Yellow-browed Warbler (*Phylloscopus inornatus*)

Yorkshire: Spurn Head, trapped, 29th October (R. Chislett, R. M. Garnett *et al.*); 25th and 27th November (P. Hope Jones).

Fair Isle: trapped, 10th-12th October (P. Davis, P. Hope Jones).

Pallas's Warbler (*Phylloscopus proregulus*)

Kent: Sandwich Bay, 23rd November (*Brit. Birds*, 52: 317-318).

Richard's Pipit (*Anthus novaeseelandiae*)

- Caernarvonshire:** Bardsey Island, 14th September (Dr. R. J. H. Raines).
Middlesex: Staines (King George VI) Reservoir, 30th April (Mrs. V. A. Gillham).
Somerset: near West Huntspill, 21st December 1958-mid-February 1959 (R. Angles, E. G. Holt, G. Sweet *et al.*).
Surrey: Beddington sewage-farm, 17th-18th April (J. Cook, H. P. Medhurst, B. S. Milne).
Yorkshire: Spurn Head, trapped, 27th-30th November (J. Cudworth, R. C. Parkinson, E. S. Skinner *et al.*).
Fair Isle: 30th September-4th October, and 14th October (P. Davis, P. Hope Jones *et al.*); two separate individuals.

Tawny Pipit (*Anthus campestris*)

- Cheshire/Flintshire:** Dee Marshes, 4th May (Miss M. Henderson).
Dorset: Portland Bill, 30th August (R. Chainey, D. Rear *et al.*); 11th September (J. V. Boys, N. H. Pratt *et al.*); 28th September (Dr. J. S. Ash, Dr. K. B. Rooke *et al.*); three, 30th September and 2nd October (H. Aitken, C. R. Macdonald *et al.*); 3rd-5th October (Dr. K. B. Rooke, K. D. Smith *et al.*); 9th October (A. B. Sheldon, J. A. Wigzell *et al.*).
Kent: Dungeness, 2nd May (H. E. Axell).
Co. Wexford: Great Saltee, 18th September (T. Ennis, A. J. Tree).

Pechora Pipit (*Anthus gustavi*)

- Fair Isle:** trapped, 30th September (P. Davis, J. Wilson *et al.*); 5th October (J. A. Stout).

Red-throated Pipit (*Anthus cervinus*)

- Fair Isle:** 18th and 20th May (G. Stout, Mrs. G. Watts *et al.*).

Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*)

- Dorset:** Portland Bill, adult ♂ showing the characters of the Black-headed Balkan race *M. f. feldegg*, 9th October (full details to be published shortly).

Lesser Grey Shrike (*Lanius minor*)

- Fair Isle:** ♀, trapped, 30th May-1st June (P. Adams, P. Davis, P. Hope Jones).
Fife: Wormistone Mains, Crail, ♂, 8th June (J. O. Andrew, B. M. Kelley *et al.*).

Woodchat Shrike (*Lanius senator*)

- Berkshire:** Blewbury Down, adult ♀, 14th August-6th September (L. R. Lewis).
Cheshire: Middle Hilbre, ♀, 10th May (W. B. Clarke, G. A. Johnson, J. Noonan).
Devon: Seaton Landslip, ♂, 1st June (D. E. Paull).
Dorset: Portland Bill, immature, 14th September (Dr. J. S. Ash, D. K. S. Blanchard *et al.*); immature, trapped, 7th-23rd October (Miss M. D. Crosby, D. J. Godfrey *et al.*).
Gloucestershire: near Dursley, 27th May (M. H. Port).
Norfolk: Salthouse Heath, first-summer ♂, trapped, 4th-9th May (R. P. Bagnall-Oakeley, R. A. Richardson *et al.*).

BRITISH BIRDS

Pembrokeshire: Skokholm, first summer ♀, trapped, 4th June (Mrs. K. E. I. Barham, E. Brun); juvenile, trapped, 3rd August (Mrs. K. E. I. Barham, E. Brun); juvenile, trapped, 29th August (Mrs. K. E. I. Barham, K. Williamson).

Sussex: Portslade, immature, 7th-9th October (B. A. E. Marr, M. H. Port, G. A. Sutton).

Co. Wexford: Great Saltee, ♂, trapped, 3rd-9th May (P. J. Roche, R. G. Wheeler *et al.*); ♀, trapped, 6th-14th May (J. T. Lang, W. E. Waters *et al.*); immature, trapped, 3rd-4th September (J. J. M. Flegg, D. F. Musson *et al.*); adult ♂, trapped, and two immatures, 6th September (J. J. M. Flegg, D. F. Musson *et al.*).

Northern Waterthrush (*Seiurus noveboracensis*)

Isles of Scilly: St. Agnes, trapped, 30th September-12th October (full details to be published shortly).

Rose-coloured Starling (*Sturnus roseus*)

Nottinghamshire: Watnall, adult, 1st September (C. W. Ross, P. I. Vickers).

Isle of Wight: Sandown, adult, 18th October (J. K. Bowers).

Fair Isle: adult, 29th July-10th August; two immatures, 12th September (P. Davis, P. Hope Jones *et al.*).

Shetland: Fetlar, adult, 7th-8th September (R. N. Winnall).

Wigtownshire: Wigtown, adult, 14th-18th August (Miss M. McKinna).

Scarlet Grosbeak (*Carpodacus erythrinus*)

Fair Isle: immature, trapped, 15th September (P. Davis *et al.*).

Co. Wexford: Great Saltee, first-winter or ♀, trapped, 31st August-4th September (J. F. Card, R. A. Card, D. C. Lang *et al.*).

Black-headed Bunting (*Emberiza melanocephala*)

Isles of Scilly: St. Agnes, ♂, 31st August-5th September (C. M. Perrins, Miss H. M. Quick, Miss J. M. Vaughan *et al.*).

Red-headed Bunting (*Emberiza bruniceps*)

Essex: The Naze: adult ♂, 14th September (H. Lilley, C. F. Mann, J. K. Weston *et al.*).

Fair Isle: adult ♂, 29th August (P. Davis, P. Hope Jones).

Inner Hebrides: North Rona, ♂, 25th and 28th June (T. B. Bagenal, D. E. Baird *et al.*).

Red-headed Buntings are now imported as cage-birds into Britain and other western European countries in enormous numbers each year, males outnumbering females by ten or twelve to one. Single birds can be purchased for as little as 7s. 6d. each and a comparison between this figure and the prices of other cage-birds gives some indication of the relative abundance of the Red-headed Bunting in captivity. It is more than likely therefore that the majority of records of this species at large refer to birds that have escaped from aviaries and cages.

RARE BIRDS IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND 1958

Yellow-breasted Bunting (*Emberiza aureola*)

Fair Isle: immature, trapped, 9th September (P. Davis, B. S. Nau *et al.*).

Rock Bunting (*Emberiza cia*)

Pembrokeshire: Dale Fort, Haverfordwest, 15th August (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 35-36).

Rustic Bunting (*Emberiza rustica*)

Co. Durham: Teesmouth, 7th September (K. Smith, A. Vittery *et al.*).

Norfolk: Blakeney Point, ♀ trapped, 10th-13th September (R. A. Richardson, M. J. Seago, P. H. G. Wolstenholme *et al.*).

Yorkshire: Blaxton gravel-pits, near Doncaster, 14th September (J. Burley, A. E. Platt).

Little Bunting (*Emberiza pusilla*)

Fair Isle: 4th April (P. Hope Jones); two, 15th May (P. Davis, P. Hope Jones); trapped, 23rd September (P. Davis, P. Hope Jones); 3rd-5th October (P. Davis, P. Hope Jones).