

# British Birds

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## Report on rare birds in Great Britain and Ireland in 1959 (with 1958 additions)

*Compiled by G. A. Pyman*

*on behalf of the Rarity Records Committee*

SINCE THE PUBLICATION of our first report, dealing with 1958 occurrences (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 153-173), we have continued with the task of considering records for 1959. The complete list of species with which we are concerned was published at the time of the announcement of the formation of the Rarity Records Committee (*Brit. Birds*, 52: 241-244), except that the Sabine's Gull (*Xema sabini*) was afterwards added, as from the beginning of 1959 (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 95).\* In addition, we also aim to include certain well-defined races of equal rarity.

For 1959 we have reached a decision on all but 12 of the 400 or so such records which were known to the editors of the various national and county publications and have been reported to us (though we are also aware of some 18 records which we have not been able to include because we have not yet received any details). Those accepted form the bulk of the present report. However, it also contains a short section of additions and corrections to the 1958 report. When that went to press, 27 records remained undecided and all but five of them have now been cleared: those accepted are published here, together with four 1958 records of which we had not previously received details. In all, there remain about 13 records for 1958 and about 30 for 1959 still to be considered, mostly because we have not yet received sufficient evidence (or, in many cases, any at all).

As consideration of 1959 records has extended over the whole of the period since its formation, it is necessary to recite once more the

\* Although they have not been considered by this Committee and cannot therefore be regarded as accepted by it, it is worth drawing attention to the fact that the 1958 records of Sabine's Gull were recently listed in the paper on "Nearctic birds in Great Britain and Ireland in autumn 1958" (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 373).—EDS.

membership of the Committee as originally constituted (in June 1959) and the changes which have since been made in it. When first appointed, it 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 went abroad and was replaced by Dr. I. C. T. Nisbet and subsequently, in January 1960, H. G. Alexander left the country temporarily and his place was taken by K. D. Smith.

In our first report we went to some length to enumerate the principles by which we had been guided and to explain the procedure adopted in considering records. These still apply in all respects, though we do not propose to burden our readers by recapitulating them. We would, however, like to stress how important it is that we should be given an opportunity of considering the observer's *original notes*, as distinct from an edited or abridged version, particularly in the cases of records which come to us through county and other regional organisations. There is no satisfactory substitute for an original account. From it the adjudicator can often gain an insight into such things as the experience of the observer, the conditions in which the observation was made and the methods of identification—things which can make or break a record. We would, therefore, particularly ask regional recorders always to provide us with the original documents (or copies of them); these we undertake to return, if requested to do so, once the record has been considered.

The systematic list below is set out in the same way as the 1958 one. The following points, some of which were explained more fully in the introduction to the previous report, should be borne in mind since they show the scope of the information given:

(i) Basic details given for each record are (1) county; (2) locality; (3) number of birds *if more than one*, together with age/sex if known; (4) if trapped or found dead; (5) date or dates; and (6) observer or observers up to three in number, in alphabetical order. Any other relevant information and comments, e.g. on the subject of escapes from captivity, are included in a separate paragraph underneath. Where details of an accepted record do not rule out the (usually extremely remote) possibility of a different species of very similar appearance which is not on the British and Irish list but found in some distant part of the world, this is stated below it.

(ii) Occurrences of species and some well-defined races that have been recorded in Great Britain and Ireland (a) not more than ten times or (b) not at all during the previous 25 years are still published separately in this journal with full descriptions. Such records are, therefore, mentioned only briefly in the systematic list below and cross-referenced to the fuller publication.

(iii) The scientific nomenclature and classification follows that given in the B.O.U. *Check-list of the Birds of Great Britain and Ireland* (1952), with the amendments subsequently proposed in *The Ibis* (98: 157-168). Any sight records of subspecies

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(including those of birds trapped and released) are normally referred to only as "showing the characters" of the race concerned.

(iv) No record which would constitute the first for Great Britain and Ireland is published by us, even if we consider it acceptable, until it has been passed by the Records Committee of the British Ornithologists' Union. The only two outstanding records in this category are still under consideration. One of these, however, concerns the specific identification of a dowitcher and is published here under the heading "Short-billed or Long-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus griseus* or *scolopaceus*)" in accordance with the special treatment that we have decided to give to indeterminate records of these very similar birds and of one other "species pair"—the Melodious and Icterine Warblers (*Hippolais polyglotta* and *icterina*). In both these cases of two birds of more or less equal rarity and bearing a close resemblance to each other, we are publishing observations which clearly refer to one species or the other without its being possible to say which (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 153-154). Otherwise, this report includes only records which are considered to be specifically certain; no "probables" are admitted.

Once again we wish to express our sincere appreciation of the co-operation extended by the vast majority of local organisations and individual observers who have assisted us in many ways and without whose valued help we could not possibly function effectively. Preliminary work has already begun on our 1960 report which it is our intention to publish as early as possible in 1961. With this aim in view, we very much hope that full details of each occurrence will be sent to the editorial address in Bedford (or to Kenneth Williamson in the case of the observatories) as soon as possible after the event and not held back until the end of the year. We shall also be very grateful if readers will check their records and notify us of any errors in either this report or the previous one.

### SUPPLEMENTARY SYSTEMATIC LIST (WITH CORRECTIONS) OF 1958 RECORDS ACCEPTED

#### **Ferruginous Duck** (*Aythya nyroca*)

**Middlesex:** Queen Mary Reservoir, ♂, 8th December (D. W. Taylor).

#### **Red-breasted Goose** (*Branta ruficollis*)

**(Correction):** The bird previously stated to have been present near Amberley (Sussex) from 8th to 15th February (*Brit. Birds*, 51: 193 and 53: 162) actually stayed until the 17th of that month (A. B. Sheldon).

#### **Goshawk** (*Accipiter gentilis*)

(elsewhere than in the southern half of England)

**Kirkcudbrightshire:** Loch Ken, 1st March (C. Cowper, F. Hamilton, K. S. Macgregor).

#### **Lesser Yellowlegs** (*Tringa flavipes*)

**Devon:** Exe Estuary, 10th August (R. G. Adams).

**Pectoral Sandpiper** (*Calidris melanotos*)

(Correction): The bird trapped at Skokholm (Pembrokeshire) on 26th September (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 165) was actually present from 23rd September to 11th October.

**Iceland Gull** (*Larus glaucooides*)

Co. Kerry: Tralee, adult showing the characters of Kumlien's Gull (*L. g. kumlieni*), the race of the Iceland Gull which breeds on Baffin Island in arctic Canada, 10th January (F. King).

**Mediterranean Black-headed Gull** (*Larus melanocephalus*)

Suffolk: Pakefield, adult, 17th October 1957-16th March 1958 (P. R. Colston, M. J. Carter, B. E. Newport *et al.*).

**White's Thrush** (*Turdus dauma*)

(Correction): The date of the Fair Isle occurrence (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 168) was 6th November, *not* 18th September.

**Melodious Warbler** (*Hippolais polyglotta*)

Devon: Lundy, trapped, 10th September (W. B. Workman).

Isles of Scilly: St. Agnes, trapped, 16th September (P. R. Colston, B. E. Newport, E. G. Philp).

**Greenish Warbler** (*Phylloscopus trochiloides*)

Devon: Lundy, trapped, 2nd-6th November (R. H. Dennis, W. B. Workman).

**Arctic Warbler** (*Phylloscopus borealis*)

Aberdeenshire: Sands of Forvie, 2nd September (A. J. M. Smith).

This record was listed as rejected in our 1958 report (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 157), but after further consideration is now accepted.

**Richard's Pipit** (*Anthus novaeseelandiae*)

Devon: Lundy, 4th October (R. H. Dennis, W. B. Workman).

**Tawny Pipit** (*Anthus campestris*)

Isles of Scilly: St. Agnes, 16th September (P. R. Colston).

**Red-throated Pipit** (*Anthus cervinus*)

Co. Wexford: Great Saltee, party of three, 1st, 6th and 7th September (J. F. Card, J. J. M. Flegg, D. F. Musson *et al.*).

**Woodchat Shrike** (*Lanius senator*)

Devon: Lundy, adult, 29th-31st July; immature, 30th August and (believed same bird) 1st-4th September (R. H. Dennis, W. B. Workman *et al.*).

Norfolk: Buxton Heath, ♂, 15th June (E. Daniels).

Isles of Scilly: Gugh, immature, 14th-15th September (P. R. Colston, B. E. Newport, G. L. Scott).

**Black-headed Bunting** (*Emberiza melanocephala*)

**Co. Wexford:** Ballymore, 28th November (T. J. Underwood).

While this species is not imported on anything like the same scale as the Red-headed Bunting (*E. bruniceps*) (see *Brit. Birds*, 53: 172, and page 429 below), and though its geographical range is such that it is much more likely to occur here, the fact remains that each year moderate numbers are brought into this country from India and sold reasonably cheaply for about £1 each. Black-headed Buntings are therefore not uncommonly found in aviaries and there must always be the possibility that records of apparently wild birds refer to ones that have escaped. In the present case it should be added that 28th November is a very late date for a wild individual of a species that is only a summer-visitor to SE Europe and has a south-easterly autumn migration to its winter-quarters in India.

**Rustic Bunting** (*Emberiza rustica*)

**Fair Isle:** first-winter ♂, trapped, 23rd September-9th October (P. Davis, P. Hope Jones).

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF 1959 RECORDS ACCEPTED

**White-billed Diver** (*Gavia adamsii*)

**Ross-shire:** Inverness Firth, two, 4th February (Rev. J. Lees); the same observer saw one of these birds again on the 5th (with J. Macintosh), 6th (with Dr. M. Rusk) and 11th (with A. Anderson), and the other again on the 8th.

**Purple Heron** (*Ardea purpurea*)

**Cambridgeshire:** Fulbourn Fen, 4th-5th April (G. M. S. Easy, C. A. E. Kirtland, A. E. Vine *et al.*).

**Essex/Suffolk:** R. Stour Marshes, Flatford/Cattawade, juvenile, 2nd-3rd October (R. V. A. Marshall *et al.*).

**Norfolk:** Cley, 9th May (R. A. Richardson).

**Little Egret** (*Egretta garzetta*)

**Cornwall:** Godrevy, 18th October (R. Gendall, A. G. Parsons); Hayle Estuary, 9th November to end of year (Dr. G. Allsop, Rev. J. E. Beckerlegge, Rev. B. F. Harvey *et al.*); possibly one individual.

**Devon:** Puslinch, Yealm Estuary, 24th November-17th December (L. I. Hamilton, O. D. Hunt, F. R. Smith *et al.*).

**Hampshire/Sussex:** one which first appeared at Langstone Harbour (Hampshire) on 26th July (D. F. Billett, J. Simons, A. Walker) was next seen on Thorney Island (Sussex) on 30th July (H. Lockett) and from 3rd to 23rd August divided its time between Fishbourne and Manhood End (Sussex) (S. J. K. Eames, G. Rouse, Dr. J. Stafford *et al.*).

As previously suggested (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 159), it is conceivable that the Snowy Egret (*E. thula*) of North America might occasionally

cross the Atlantic. It is indistinguishable in the field from the Little Egret and regarded by some authorities as conspecific with it.

### Black Stork (*Ciconia nigra*)

**Northumberland:** Cullernose Point, 10th May (Sir John Craster, W. S. Craster, F. Gregory *et al.*).

### Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*)

**Devon:** Tamar Lake, 25th September (S. T. Matthews, W. J. Moyle *et al.*, per Mrs. F. E. Carter); Braunton Marshes, 27th September (M. Huxtable, I. Taylor, A. J. Vickery); probably one individual.

**Flintshire:** Dec Estuary, 16th September-4th or 6th October (C. Carter, Miss M. Henderson, P. Summers *et al.*).

**Co. Westmeath:** Lough Ennel, first-winter ♀, shot, 9th October (Rev. P. G. Kennedy); now preserved in the National Museum, Dublin.

### [Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*)

**Cheshire/Lancashire:** Merseyside, two, 6th September-18th October (R. H. Allen, D. Arkle, S. G. Hopkins *et al.*).

There can be no reasonable doubt that these were the two birds which had escaped from Belle Vue Zoo, Manchester, on 16th August.]

### Teal (*Anas crecca*)

**Co. Wexford:** Killag, ♂ showing the characters of the Green-winged Teal (*A. c. carolinensis*), 18th April (H. Hvass, P. J. Roche, Baroness Weddell-Weddellsborg *et al.*).

### Red-crested Pochard (*Netta rufina*)

**Devon:** R. Plym Estuary, the ♀ which was stated to have been present from 8th November 1958 to 3rd April 1959 (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 161) actually remained throughout 1959 and was still there at the beginning of 1960 (L. I. Hamilton *et al.*); what was considered to be the same bird was also sometimes seen at Kitley Pond on the R. Yealm from 17th August onwards (R. M. Curber, P. F. Goodfellow *et al.*).

**Essex:** Abberton Reservoir, ♀, 5th February (R. Harkness); present from 20th September-5th November, three on 30th September, five (one adult ♂) on 25th October, otherwise one to two (R. G. H. Cant, M. S. Freeman, C. F. Mann *et al.*); Nazeing gravel-pit, ♀, 5th September-6th November (T. W. Gladwin, B. S. Meadows, B. S. Nau *et al.*); Hanningfield Reservoir, adult ♂, 11th November (Miss D. R. Crofts, Miss S. R. Crofts).

**Glamorgan:** Lisvane Reservoir, Cardiff, ♂ and ♀, 14th November (O. Griffith, Mrs. A. Heathcote).

**Lincolnshire:** Tallington/Deeping, ♂ and ♀ together and two ♂♂ and ♀ together on various pits from mid-November to about mid-December (A. Cook, N. Dudley, R. E. M. Pilcher); never all five seen on one day, so there may have been only three altogether, but the birds were always in one of these two combinations.

**Norfolk:** Bayfield, Brinton and Kelling Hall lakes, ♂, 15th-31st December (R. P. Bagnall-Oakeley, J. Forster, General Sir Gerald Lathbury *et al.*; see also *Brit. Birds*, 53: 271-272).

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**Northamptonshire:** Pitsford Reservoir, ♂, 5th and 10th September (G. E. Dunmore, M. Goodman, G. D. Hamilton-Grey); Ravensthorpe Reservoir, one to two (♂ and ♀), 3rd October-22nd November (M. Goodman, J. L. Moore, L. S. Taylor).

**Nottinghamshire:** Gunthorpe gravel-pits, immature ♀, 12th-14th August (A. Dobbs, Mrs. H. Dobbs, W. Priestley).

**Oxfordshire:** Stanton Harcourt, ♂, 19th December 1959-10th April 1960 (Dr. Bruce Campbell, W. D. Campbell, M. H. Rowntree *et al.*).

**Surrey:** Enton Ponds, near Godalming, ♂, 5th August (G. S. Elliott, R. M. Fry).

**Sussex:** Chichester gravel-pits, the ♀ which appeared on 6th December 1958 (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 161) was last seen on 26th January (Miss W. P. White *et al.*); Weir Wood Reservoir, ♂ in eclipse, 13th and 24th July (R. L. Rolfe).

**Yorkshire:** Hornsea Mere, two, 26th September; four, 27th September; four (one ♂), 18th October; two, 13th December (G. R. Bennett).

Once again we would draw attention to G. A. Pyman's paper (*Brit. Birds*, 52: 42-56) on the present status of this species in Great Britain and Ireland. It has previously been mentioned (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 161) in connection with the Devon record that a female escaped from a collection in the same general area three to four years previously. No other escapes which could be said to point to the origin of any of the remaining birds listed above have been notified, although, unquestionably, a few Red-crested Pochards wander away from collections (including such places as St. James's Park, London) every year. On the other hand, the majority of the east coast occurrences fit in well with the pattern of previous years and the autumn records from Abberton Reservoir and Hornsea Mere in particular are likely to refer to wild visitors from Holland or the Baltic.

### Ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*)

**Berkshire:** near Reading, adult ♂, 19th-27th April (*Brit. Birds*, 52: 427-430).

### Ferruginous Duck (*Aythya nyroca*)

**Devon:** Slapton Ley, 14th-15th November (M. J. McVail, A. C. Sawle *et al.*); Creedy Park, near Crediton, two, 29th December (G. H. Gush).

**Lincolnshire:** Baston pits, near Bourne, ♀, shot, 21st November (N. Dudley *per* R. E. M. Pilcher).

**Norfolk:** near Norwich, adult ♂, 28th February-31st March (C. A. Wright); considered likely to have been the individual seen in the same locality in 1958 (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 161).

**Northamptonshire:** Hollowell Reservoir, 18th October (G. D. Hamilton-Grey).

**Co. Wexford:** North Slob, ♂, shot, 14th November (P. J. Roche); now preserved in the National Museum, Dublin.

We have also received details of a number of occurrences of this species early in 1960 (which will be published in the next report) and it is clear that there was a sizeable influx during the course of the winter of 1959-60.

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**Surf Scoter** (*Melanitta perspicillata*)

**Outer Hebrides:** South Harris, adult ♂, 4th September (Dr. J. W. Campbell *et al.*).

**King Eider** (*Somateria spectabilis*)

**Shetland:** Bigton Wick (between St. Ninian's Isle and Mainland), adult ♂, 24th June (E. A. Grove, T. Henderson, W. Kay *et al.*).

**Co. Cork:** Baltimore, ♂, 29th January-24th February (T. H. Somerville).

**Lesser White-fronted Goose** (*Anser erythropus*)

**Kirkcudbrightshire:** adult, 30th January-4th February (H. G. Alexander, A. D. Watson *et al.*)

**Snow Goose** (*Anser caerulescens*)

**Aberdeenshire:** Loch of Strathbeg, 21st December (Dr. A. Lyell, B. A. Lyell).

**Inverness-shire:** between Pityoulish and Tulloch, immature, 5th April (W. K. Richmond).

**Perthshire:** Longforgan, 12th-13th January (H. Boase).

**Co. Wexford:** North Slob, the white phase bird which was present during the winter of 1958-59 (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 162) remained at least until 10th March (T. J. Underwood); blue phase, 14th November 1959 (probably earlier)-19th April 1960 (Miss G. Doran, Major R. F. Ruttledge *et al.*).

We mentioned in our first report (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 162) that three birds were known to have escaped from a collection near Dumfries in 1958. We are indebted to Hugh Boyd for the information that four Lesser Snow Geese (*A. c. caerulescens*) wandered from Slimbridge about February 1957 and have not since been traced.

**Red-breasted Goose** (*Branta ruficollis*)

**Gloucestershire:** Slimbridge, adult, 24th January-12th March (P. J. Olney *et al.*).

**Goshawk** (*Accipiter gentilis*)

**Inner Hebrides:** Loch Ballygrant, Islay, 28th April (B. E. Cooper, S. Greenwood).

**Co. Kerry:** Blennerville, 7th August (F. King).

**Kite** (*Milvus milvus*)

(elsewhere than in Wales)

**Devon:** Dartmoor, two, 13th April (A. J. Ingram); one remained until 12th July (H. G. Hurrell, F. R. Smith *et al.*).

**Isle of Man:** Ballaugh, 9th January-early February (J. C. Crellin, P. R. Foulkes-Roberts).

**Gyr Falcon** (*Falco rusticolus*)

**Cheshire:** Hilbre Point, 31st October (A. Bell, J. Gittings, Dr. R. J. H. Raines).



**Red-footed Falcon** (*Falco vespertinus*)

**Dorset:** Burton Bradstock, first-summer ♂, 16th-17th May (R. Gipps, N. Henson, J. R. N. Newsome *et al.*).

**Hampshire:** New Forest (Bishop's Dyke), five (adult ♂, first-summer ♂ adult ♀ and two immature ♀♀), 16th May; four, 17th May; three, 18th May; four 23rd-24th May; one, 28th-30th May; one (adult ♂), 6th June (H. G. Alexander, M. Goodman, J. H. Taverner *et al.*).

**Kent:** Lydd-on-Sea, 28th May (C. J. Booth, D. L. Court).

**Lancashire:** Leigh, ♂, 15th March (F. R. Horrocks); a notably early date.

**Norfolk:** Cley, ♂, 9th May (A. Jones, R. A. Richardson *et al.*); Blakeney Point, ♂, 15th May (R. Gaze), possibly the Cley bird; near Acle, juvenile, dead, 27th September (H. F. Ashton).

The marked influx in the spring of 1959 (which is known to have extended to southern Sweden) should be noted. The Hampshire occurrences appear to constitute the first record of a party of Red-footed Falcons in Great Britain or Ireland.

**Crane** (*Megalornis grus*)

**Co. Durham:** Teesmouth, adult, 29th July-1st November (E. G. Brown, F. G. Grey, W. K. Richmond *et al.*).

**Hampshire:** Beaulieu River, adult, 5th-29th November when found dead (D. F. Billett, E. J. Wiseman, D. Wooldridge *et al.*).

**Norfolk:** Cley, 10th May (P. R. Clarke, R. A. Richardson, P. Williams).

We have no recent evidence of any European Cranes having escaped from captivity. The remains of the Hampshire bird were submitted to I. F. Keymer of the Central Veterinary Laboratory of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Weybridge. There was a considerable amount of fat in the abdominal cavity and it had apparently died as a result of some injury.

**Little Crane** (*Porzana parva*)

**Hampshire:** Farlington Marshes, ♂, 14th-20th September (M. Bryant, J. Simons, E. J. Wiseman *et al.*).

**Shetland:** Uyeasound, Unst, ♂, picked up dead, April (S. T. Saxby); now preserved in the Royal Scottish Museum.

**Little Bustard** (*Otis tetrax*)

**Suffolk:** Leiston, ♀ of Eastern form *O. t. orientalis*, shot, 3rd December (H. Drake *per* R. Spencer); now preserved in R. Spencer's possession.

**Kentish Plover** (*Charadrius alexandrinus*)

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

**Dorset:** Portland Bill, ♂, 23rd March (F. G. Caldwell, J. Lane, D. C. Mole); Ferrybridge, Portland, ♂, 25th April (Miss M. D. Crosby, E. H. Lousley, R. H. J. Nash).

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**Essex:** Walthamstow Reservoirs, ♀, 19th April (J. Fitzpatrick).

**Lincolnshire/Norfolk:** Wisbech sewage-farm, ♀, 21st May (J. A. W. Moyes).

**Nottinghamshire:** Nottingham sewage-farm, ♂, 18th April (H. Barlow).

**Co. Antrim:** Lough Neagh, 18th October (W. Finlay, S. Penney).

### Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*)

**Huntingdonshire:** Little Paxton gravel-pit, 7th-9th March (I. J. Ferguson-Lees, C. W. G. Paulson-Ellis, C. F. Tebbutt).

### Short-billed or Long-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus griseus* or *scelopaceus*)

**Cheshire:** Frodsham, 18th October (R. H. Allen, D. Arkle, S. G. Hopkins *et al.*).

**Northumberland:** Killingworth, 28th September-1st November (V. F. Brown, F. G. Grey, B. Galloway *et al.*).

**Sussex:** Thorney Island, 2nd-11th November (G. des Forges, D. D. Harber, Dr. C. Suffern *et al.*).

A brief statement regarding the two species of dowitcher will be found in our first report (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 164-165), but it is hoped to set out the position more fully in a forthcoming issue of this journal. While in the cases of the Cheshire and Northumberland birds the actual species must remain in doubt, it is expected that the Sussex one will be confirmed as a Long-billed Dowitcher (*L. scolopaceus*).

### Great Snipe (*Capella media*)

**Essex/Middlesex:** Girling Reservoir (Essex) and Ponders End sewage-farm (Middlesex), 12th-17th September (D. King, B. S. Meadows, F. Riley).

**Hertfordshire:** Rye Meads sewage-farm, 26th December (B. S. Meadows, F. Riley).

### Lesser Yellowlegs (*Tringa flavipes*)

**Devon:** Torridge Estuary, near Instow, 30th August (R. L. Smallwood).

### White-rumped Sandpiper (*Calidris fuscicollis*)

**Sussex:** Thorney Island, 9th-28th November (R. J. Johns, Dr. C. Suffern, R. J. Wilmshurst *et al.*).

**Co. Dublin:** Dun Laoghaire, two, 26th August (O. J. Merne).

**Co. Kerry:** Ballyheigue Strand, 28th January (F. King).

The January bird was the first one ever recorded in Great Britain or Ireland in winter.

### Pectoral Sandpiper (*Calidris melanotos*)

**Breconshire:** Talybont Reservoir, near Brecon, 13th-26th September (D. Griffin, J. Griffiths).

**Essex:** Hanningfield Reservoir, 29th August-6th September (J. A. Baker, S. Hudgell, G. A. Pyman *et al.*).

**Hampshire:** Farlington Marshes, 26th-27th July (M. Bryant, C. R. Tubbs *et al.*).

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- Kent:** Murston clay-pits, 24th-25th October (L. J. Davenport, R. P. Tipper).  
**Yorkshire:** Newton Ings, Fairburn, 17th September-12th October (M. Densley, G. R. Naylor, C. Winn *et al.*).  
**Dunbarton:** R. Endrick, 18th October (M. Forrester).  
**Co. Antrim:** Duncrue Street Marsh, Belfast, 30th October (H. Dick).  
**Co. Dublin:** North Bull, 9th-10th September (J. O'Mahony).  
**Co. Kerry:** Blennerville, 12th August (F. King).  
**Co. Wexford:** Great Saltee, trapped, 24th-26th September (F. King, N. Picozzi, P. Rudge *et al.*).

**Broad-billed Sandpiper** (*Limicola falcinellus*)

- Lincolnshire/Norfolk:** Wisbech sewage-farm, 18th May (J. M. S. Arnott).

**Black-winged Stilt** (*Himantopus himantopus*)

- Dorset:** Lodmoor, Weymouth, adult ♀, 14th-15th May (H. G. Alexander, Miss M. D. Crosby, B. King *et al.*).

**Wilson's Phalarope** (*Phalaropus tricolor*)

- Flintshire:** Dee Estuary, 30th August-4th September (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 29-30).  
**Northamptonshire:** Pitsford Reservoir, 8th-12th September (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 30-32).

**Pratincole** (*Glareola pratincola*)

- Northamptonshire:** Ecton sewage-farm, with dark underwing, 23rd August (G. E. Dunmore, M. Goodman, L. S. Taylor *et al.*).

This bird possessed the characters of the Black-winged Pratincole (*G. nordmanni*), but only one European species of pratincole is now recognised in this country, *nordmanni* being regarded as a colour phase of *pratincola* (*Ibis*, 98: 161).

**Cream-coloured Courser** (*Cursorius cursor*)

- Devon:** Dawlish Warren, 11th-14th October (Miss G. Hughes, Miss M. Robinson, P. A. Tyler *et al.*).

**Mediterranean Black-headed Gull** (*Larus melanocephalus*)

- Dorset:** Portland Bill, immature, 12th September (Dr. J. S. Ash, A. J. Horner, E. J. Pilcher *et al.*).  
**Co. Durham:** Hartlepool, as previously reported (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 166), adult, 17th August 1958-8th March 1959; also adult, 9th August 1959-20th March 1960 (D. G. Bell, P. J. Stead *et al.*).  
**Essex:** The Naze, adult, 28th July-27th September (G. A. Pyman, M. S. J. Snoxell, J. H. Sparks *et al.*).  
**Hampshire:** Langstone Harbour, adult, 4th January (D. F. Billett, M. Bryant, E. J. Wiseman) and 24th January (E. J. Wiseman); immature, 1st November (D. F. Billett, G. H. Rees).  
**Sussex:** The Wicks, adult, 22nd April (R. H. Charlwood); Hove, adult(s), 30th June, 3rd and 24th September and 4th October (G. A. Sutton); Portobello, Brighton,

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adult(s), 12th July (G. A. Sutton), 5th-6th September (M. H. Port, G. A. Sutton) and 4th October (D. D. Harber); Langney Point, adult, 19th July (R. H. Charlwood); Selsey Bill, adult, 18th July (A. B. Sheldon); immature, 9th August (M. A. Jennings, B. A. E. Marr *et al.*); adult, 29th August (A. B. Sheldon); and adult, 12th September (J. Reynolds); Manhood End, adult, 27th September (M. H. Port, G. A. Sutton); Palace Pier, Brighton, adult, 24th December (L. P. Alder).

**Yorkshire:** Spurn Head, adult, 2nd May (K. Hardcastle, C. Winn).

It is probable that a substantial proportion of the Sussex records of adults relate to one individual. In Co. Durham and Essex what were presumably the same individuals were appearing for the fourth consecutive year in the same localities.

### Sabine's Gull (*Xema sabini*)

**Anglesey:** Llanddwynn Island, two immatures, 26th December, one remaining until 4th January 1960 (L. S. V. Venables, Miss F. Walton, P. D. Walton *et al.*).

**Cornwall:** The Island, St. Ives, immature, 22nd September; and immature, 28th October (N. R. Phillips); Harlyn Bay, near Padstow, immature, 10th October (H. Mayer-Gross).

**Dorset:** Portland Bill, adult, 12th September (B. A. E. Marr, E. J. Wiseman, D. Wooldridge *et al.*).

**Kent:** Cliffe, immature, 29th March (P. Bance, W. E. Barratt, B. E. Madagan); Elmley Ferry, adult, 12th September (L. J. Davenport, M. J. Lane, D. K. Marden).

**Northumberland:** Seaton Sluice, immature, 14th November (G. Bruce, B. Galloway, C. Watson).

**Sussex:** Langney Point, immature, 10th October (D. D. Harber).

**Isle of Wight:** off St. Catherine's Point, immature, 16th October (A. Y. Norris).

**Co. Down:** Kinnegar, immature, 19th August (M. C. Gray).

### White-winged Black Tern (*Chlidonias leucopterus*)

**Dorset:** Ferrybridge, Portland, adult, 7th-8th June (R. Chainey); Radipole Lake, Weymouth, immature, 19th-21st August (Miss M. D. Crosby, R. F. Moore, K. Williamson *et al.*).

**Essex:** Hanningfield Reservoir, immature, 5th-20th September (S. Hudgell, N. H. Pratt, G. A. Pyman *et al.*).

**Hampshire:** Langstone Harbour, immature, 14th September (N. Money, E. J. Wiseman).

**Kent:** Murston clay-pits, immature(s), 28th August (J. J. M. Flegg) and 29th August (J. J. M. Flegg, D. F. Musson); the first-named observer considered that two different birds were involved, but in our view this cannot be substantiated.

**Lincolnshire:** Grantham sewage-farm, Marston, adult, 3rd June (Mrs. L. Cave).

**Sussex:** Selsey Bill, 18th April (M. A. Jennings, A. B. Sheldon); Sidlesham Ferry, 13th-16th May (Mrs. N. Petrie-Hay, A. B. Sheldon, M. Shrubb *et al.*) and 30th May (D. Langford, A. B. Sheldon), apparently two separate individuals.

### Whiskered Tern (*Chlidonias hybrida*)

**Somerset:** Chew Valley Reservoir, 23rd-25th June (H. H. Davis, B. King, M. A. Wright *et al.*).

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A paper by K. Williamson on the juvenile and winter plumages of the marsh terns, with sketches by D. I. M. Wallace, was specially prepared at the Committee's request and published recently in this journal (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 245-252, plate 36).

**Gull-billed Tern** (*Gelochelidon nilotica*)

**Hampshire:** Christchurch Harbour, 2nd September (H. J. Clase).

**Norfolk:** Weybourne, two, 12th May (P. R. Clarke).

**Suffolk:** Covchithe Broad, 19th June (C. M. Veysey).

**Sussex:** Langney Point, 15th June (L. P. Alder).

**Caspian Tern** (*Hydroprogne caspia*)

**Essex:** Abberton Reservoir, 2nd August (D. G. Gordon-Smith).

**Norfolk:** Hickling Broad, several dates between 10th September and 2nd October (P. D. Kirby, D. R. Rye, J. D. Wood *et al.*).

**Co. Donegal:** Tory Island, 30th September (R. G. Pettitt).

**Great Spotted Cuckoo** (*Clamator glandarius*)

**Orkney:** Rendall, immature, 14th-30th August (E. Balfour).

**Snowy Owl** (*Nyctea scandiaca*)

**Anglesey:** Valley, 27th March (A. J. Mercer *et al.*).

**Hawk Owl** (*Surnia ulula*)

**Lancashire:** Bleasdale Fells above Chipping, 13th September (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 446).

**Alpine Swift** (*Apus melba*)

**Devon:** Taw Estuary, 15th August (B. S. Meadows).

**Northumberland:** Holywell Ponds, 31st May (Dr. J. D. Parrack).

**Bee-eater** (*Merops apiaster*)

**Dorset:** near Hampreston, 11th May (G. Brasnett).

**Herefordshire:** near Aymestrey Quarry, 4th June (F. W. Marston).

**Suffolk:** Havergate Island, 3rd July (R. J. Partridge).

**Sutherland:** Halladale River, 14th August (Miss M. Henderson).

**Co. Cork:** Cape Clear Island, immature, 17th-18th October (P. Burke, J. T. R. Sharrock, Rev. J. Walsh).

**Roller** (*Coracias garrulus*)

**Middlesex:** Staines Reservoir, 26th September (E. E. Green).

**Surrey:** Oxshott, 23rd-29th May (D. Parr).

**Shetland:** Northmavine, 20th July for three or four days (J. Peterson).

**Short-toed Lark** (*Calandrella cinerea*)

**Cornwall:** Tintagel, 10th August (B. W. Edwards).

**Norfolk:** Cley, 14th October (M. J. Carter, E. J. L. Welham).

**Fair Isle:** ♀ showing the characters of the Eastern race *C. c. longipennis*, trapped, 21st November; another of exactly similar appearance but unringed, 23rd November (P. Davis, R. H. Dennis).

**Co. Wexford:** Great Saltee, 22nd May (G. van Gelderen).

**Crested Lark** (*Galerida cristata*)

**Devon:** Exmouth, the bird which was stated to have stayed from 29th December 1958 to 3rd January 1959 (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 167) was actually seen again on 10th January (S. D. Gibbard).

**Red-rumped Swallow** (*Hirundo daurica*)

**Kent:** Murston clay-pits, 28th August (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 222-223).

**Bearded Tit** (*Panurus biarmicus*)  
(elsewhere than in East Anglia)

**Buckinghamshire:** near Winslow, 15th September (I. M. Walker); Marsworth Reservoir, four (two adult ♂♂), 22nd-29th November, then at least two (three on 13th December) until 13th March 1960 (H. Cole, F. Knight, K. A. Landon *et al.*).

**Gloucestershire:** Frampton-on-Severn, 1st November (T. Evans); another bird, 13th December (W. Dunkin, D. Harding, R. D. Harding).

**Lincolnshire:** near Anderby, two (one adult ♂), 6th December (L. G. Taylor).

**Oxfordshire:** Cassington gravel-pits, three (one adult ♂), 28th November, two remaining until the end of the year and a ♀ until March 1960 (Dr. Bruce Campbell, W. D. Campbell, Miss H. Cooke *et al.*).

**Sussex:** Pett Level, up to six or more (two adult ♂♂), three trapped, 26th October-21st November (H. A. R. Cawkell, R. E. Scott, W. J. Vinall *et al.*); The Crumbles, two (one adult ♂), 4th November (R. H. Charlwood).

**Warwickshire:** Baginton Marsh, near Coventry, three (at least one ♂), 2nd November (J. Cresswell, P. F. Crook).

**Yorkshire:** Spurn Head, eleven (at least three ♂♂), six trapped, 17th October; seven, 18th-19th October; three flying south, 20th October (R. Chislett, R. F. Dickens, D. A. Rushforth *et al.*); Hornsea Mere, three (one adult ♂), 18th October (G. R. Bennett, M. K. Martin), possibly the birds seen at Spurn on the 20th.

Though resident in Norfolk and Suffolk, this species is very seldom recorded outside these counties and so the list of observations given above is quite remarkable. Following a steady build-up in recent years and an exceptionally good breeding season, it is clear that there was something of an eruption of the East Anglian population in the autumn of 1959 (it has been suggested that some of the birds might have come from Holland, but we understand the numbers there are so small that this is unlikely). In fact, there were several reports from East Anglia of Bearded Tits making "restless flights" away from the reed-beds and at Minsmere, Suffolk, one party was actually seen by

H. E. Axell to go right off out of sight. Besides the records given above, the species was also reported in Essex during the last months of 1959 and one was seen in Cambridgeshire. In addition, early in 1960 several birds reached Hampshire and Shropshire, the latter being the most westerly county concerned in the irruption: the details of these 1960 records will appear in our next report.

**Dusky Thrush** (*Turdus eunomus*)

**Co. Durham:** Hartlepool, first-winter ♂, from 12th December 1959 (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 275-276, plate 35); it is now known that this bird was last seen on 24th February 1960, not 20th February as previously published.

**White's Thrush** (*Turdus dauma*)

**Co. Durham:** South Shields, 7th November (S. Hayes).

**Great Reed Warbler** (*Acrocephalus arundinaceus*)

**Dorset:** Portland Bill, 15th May (R. Chainey, B. King).

**Essex:** North Fambridge, two, 28th-29th August (J. T. Friedlein).

**Kent:** Dungeness, trapped, 3rd August (B. P. Austin, J. F. Harper, W. D. Park *et al.*).

Except in the case of the bird trapped at Dungeness, the descriptions do not rule out the Clamorous Great Reed Warbler (*A. stentoreus*) of southern Asia and Egypt, especially the less rufous race *brunnescens*. The existence of other brown and buff warblers of comparable size—notably the Thick-billed Warbler (*Phragmaticola aëdon*) and Gray's Grasshopper Warbler (*Locustella fasciolata*)—must also be borne in mind in identification of this species (see *Brit. Birds*, 53: 168).

**Marsh Warbler** (*Acrocephalus palustris*)

(elsewhere than in England)

**Caernarvonshire:** Bardsey Island, trapped, 30th June (R. W. Arthur *et al.*).

**Fair Isle:** two trapped, 12th and 13th June (P. Davis, R. H. Dennis).

**Aquatic Warbler** (*Acrocephalus paludicola*)

**Berkshire:** Ham sewage-farm, 13th September (E. E. Green).

**Cornwall:** Marazion Marshes, 2nd September (B. King).

**Dorset:** Portland Bill, trapped, 9th August (F. R. Clifton, K. Williamson *et al.*); at least one, probably two, 23rd August (Dr. J. S. Ash, R. F. Hemsley, R. J. Jackson *et al.*); 24th August (R. F. Hemsley), possibly a different bird.

**Hampshire:** Stanpit Marshes, Christchurch, 9th-12th August (R. Burt, J. H. Morgan); three trapped, 6th September (F. R. Clifton, D. J. Godfrey *et al.*), 8th September (F. R. Clifton, Mrs. Clifton, R. J. Jackson) and 19th September (F. R. Clifton, A. J. Wise *et al.*).

**Kent:** Dungeness, trapped, 2nd August (B. P. Austin, J. F. Harper *et al.*).

**Isles of Scilly:** St. Agnes, 27th August (B. P. Pickess, D. I. M. Wallace *et al.*); 30th August (P. J. Morgan, R. C. Righelato, D. I. M. Wallace *et al.*); trapped, 6th

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September (B. King, Prof. M. F. M. Meiklejohn *et al.*); trapped, 8th September (Prof. M. F. M. Meiklejohn *et al.*).

**Surrey:** Beddington sewage-farm, trapped, 20th September (J. Cooke, P. J. Morgan, R. C. Righelato).

**Sussex:** north of Pagham Harbour, 29th August (M. Kendall); The Crumbles, 9th September (D. D. Harber).

**Isle of Wight:** St. Catherine's Point, 31st August (A. Searle, E. J. Wiseman *et al.*).

It is obvious that this species, which is now known to occur annually in these islands, was particularly well represented during August and September 1959, when the number recorded was not far short of half the British and Irish total up to 1939.

### Melodious Warbler (*Hippolais polyglotta*)

**Caernarvonshire:** Bardsey Island, trapped, 1st September (R. W. Arthur).

**Dorset:** Portland Bill, 27th-29th August (Miss T. F. Almack, A. Searle, K. D. Smith *et al.*).

**Kent:** Dungeness, trapped, 2nd August (C. J. Booth, W. D. Park, G. R. Shannon *et al.*).

**Pembrokeshire:** Skokholm, trapped, 18th August (Mrs. K. E. I. Barham, R. D. Wilson).

**Isles of Scilly:** St. Agnes, 7th September (Prof. M. F. M. Meiklejohn, Miss H. M. Quick, L. J. Reed).

**Co. Cork:** Cape Clear Island, 3rd September (L. Cornwallis, B. H. B. Dickinson, J. T. R. Sharrock).

Although there are only half as many records of this species for 1959 as for 1958 (*cf. Brit. Birds*, 53: 169, and page 412 above), they follow the same pattern, showing that what was formerly regarded as a very rare vagrant is an annual wanderer in autumn to the Irish Sea area and the south coast of England.

### Icterine Warbler (*Hippolais icterina*)

**Dorset:** Portland Bill, first-winter, trapped, 21st August (P. R. Angell, J. Brock, K. Williamson *et al.*); another, 23rd August (Dr. J. S. Ash, R. J. Jackson, D. C. Mole *et al.*).

**Kent:** Dungeness, trapped, 25th September (B. P. Austin, S. Boddy, M. A. Webster *et al.*).

**Pembrokeshire:** Skomer, 30th May (J. W. Donovan, N. H. Pratt, R. H. M. Ryall *et al.*).

**Yorkshire:** Beacon Lane, Kilnsea, 31st August (D. J. Standring); Spurn Head, three (two trapped), 2nd September (Lt.-Col. H. G. Brownlow, D. D. Harber *et al.*), and single birds seen on 3rd and 4th September (G. R. Edwards).

**Fair Isle:** one, 24th-26th May; at least five different birds in August—one 12th; two (one trapped) 13th; one trapped 14th; one 20th; two (one trapped and bird of 13th retrapped) 21st; two (one trapped and a ringed bird seen) 23rd; ringed bird seen 27th; bird trapped on 21st retrapped 29th (P. Davis, R. H. Dennis).



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**Co. Cork:** Cape Clear Island, trapped, 26th August (L. Cornwallis, B. H. B. Dickinson *et al.*); 2nd September (L. Cornwallis, M. F. Seddon *et al.*); two, 21st September (J. T. R. Sharrock).

**Co. Wexford:** Great Saltee, two first-winter, both trapped, 4th September (T. Ennis, J. T. Lang, R. G. Wheeler *et al.*) and 7th September (T. Ennis, R. Moss, M. A. Ogilvie).

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

Birds which were of one or other of these two species were reported from Portland Bill (Dorset) on 25th and (probably the same individual) 28th August (R. F. Hemsley, P. N. M. Partington, D. Wooldridge *et al.*); Holme-next-the-Sea (Norfolk) on 21st August (C. D. T. Minton); Gugh (Isles of Scilly) (two) on 27th August (D. I. M. Wallace); St. Catherine's Point (Isle of Wight) on 22nd August (M. Burnop, E. J. Wiseman *et al.*); Helmsdale (Sutherland) on 3rd September (H. A. Course); Cape Clear Island (Co. Cork) on 31st August (L. Cornwallis); and Great Saltee (Co. Wexford) on 21st September (M. C. Gray). The reasons for the publication of these indeterminate records of Melodious/Icterine Warblers were discussed in our 1958 report (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 153 and 169).

**Olivaceous Warbler** (*Hippolais pallida*)

**Co. Donegal:** Tory Island, trapped, 29th September (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 311-312).

**Booted Warbler** (*Hippolais caligata*)

**Fair Isle:** trapped, 29th-31st August (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 123-125).

**Rufous Warbler** (*Agrobates galactotes*)

**Devon:** near Prawle Point, 20th October (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 225-226).

**Greenish Warbler** (*Phylloscopus trochiloides*)

**Sussex:** The Crumbles, 10th September (D. D. Harber).

**Co. Cork:** Cape Clear Island, 17th-24th October and 30th October-1st November (J. T. R. Sharrock); although the two series of observations were made in different parts of the island and the descriptions taken were not identical, we do not regard it as established that two birds were involved.

**Bonelli's Warbler** (*Phylloscopus bonelli*)

**Caernarvonshire:** Bardsey Island, two trapped, 18th August-5th September and 10th September (*Brit. Birds* 53: 276-278).

**Arctic Warbler** (*Phylloscopus borealis*)

**Devon:** Lundy, trapped, 6th September (W. B. Workman *et al.*).

**Fair Isle:** three trapped, 1st, 8th and 17th September (P. Davis, R. H. Dennis).

**Yellow-browed Warbler** (*Phylloscopus inornatus*)

**Kent:** Folkestone, 22nd September (D. F. Musson); Sandwich Bay, trapped, 27th September; another, 30th September; another trapped, 3rd October (D. F. Harle).

**Pembrokeshire:** Skokholm, trapped, 2nd October (Mrs. K. E. I. Barham, K. D. Smith).

**Fair Isle:** 26th September; trapped, 2nd-5th October; trapped, 12th October; 14th October (P. Davis, R. H. Dennis).

**Outer Hebrides:** Butt of Lewis, 9th-12th November (A. MacEachern).

**Fife:** Isle of May, trapped, 2nd October (Prof. M. F. M. Meiklejohn *et al.*).

**Co. Cork:** Cape Clear Island, 19th September (J. T. R. Sharrock).

**English Channel:** on board R.M.S. *Queen Elizabeth* between Cherbourg and Southampton, last seen 10-15 miles from St. Catherine's Point (Isle of Wight), 12th October (Dr. I. C. T. Nisbet).

**Firecrest** (*Regulus ignicapillus*)

(elsewhere than in England and Wales)

**Fife:** Isle of May, ♂, trapped, 30th September-3rd October (D. R. Grant, Prof. M. F. M. Meiklejohn, R. W. J. Smith *et al.*).

**Co. Cork:** Cape Clear Island, seven, 10th October, one ♂ remaining until 12th (J. T. R. Sharrock).

These are the first and third fully authenticated records of this species in Scotland and Ireland respectively.

**Alpine Accentor** (*Prunella collaris*)

**Fair Isle:** 27th-28th June (P. Davis, R. H. Dennis, C. J. Pennyquick *et al.*).

**Richard's Pipit** (*Anthus novaeseelandiae*)

**Somerset:** near West Huntspill, as previously stated (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 171), one was present from 21st December 1958 to mid-February 1959.

**Fair Isle:** three, 8th October (P. Davis).

**Tawny Pipit** (*Anthus campestris*)

**Dorset:** Portland Bill, 5th September (K. V. Edwards, L. A. Mummery, D. Wooldridge); 6th September (Dr. J. S. Ash, A. J. Hold, K. D. Smith *et al.*); 11th September (D. E. Fry); two, 28th September (P. H. Dymott, T. O. James, Dr. A. B. Watson *et al.*).

**Sussex:** The Crumbles, 9th September (D. D. Harber).

**Co. Cork:** Cape Clear Island, adult, 9th October (J. T. R. Sharrock).

**Red-throated Pipit** (*Anthus cervinus*)

**Norfolk:** Scolt Head, adult ♂, 15th-18th May, joined by a ♀ or immature on 16th only (R. Chestney, P. J. Mountford, J. F. Peake).

**Fair Isle:** one on 18th May (P. Davis, J. Stout *et al.*) had probably been present since 16th.

**Yellow Wagtail** (*Motacilla flava*)

**Essex:** The Hythe, Colchester, ♂ showing the characters of the southern European Ashy-headed race *M. f. cinereocapilla*, 7th-8th April (C. F. Mann, J. H. Sparks *et al.*).

**Middlesex:** Perry Oaks sewage-farm, ♂ as above, 10th-11th May (J. Shepperd) and 31st May-12th June (B. A. Marsh, A. Quinn, J. Shepperd *et al.*).

**Woodchat Shrike** (*Lanius senator*)

**Dorset:** Chideok, near East Chaldon, 2nd May (Mrs. G. E. Evans, W. J. Evans); Portland Bill, immature, 9th September (P. J. Fullager, D. C. Mole, J. H. Morgan *et al.*).

**Essex:** Foulness Island, ♂, 6th-7th June (G. Downey).

**Kent:** Dungeness, immature, trapped, 13th August (B. P. Austin *et al.*).

**Northumberland:** Craster, adult, 25th May (W. S. Craster, Dr. E. A. R. Ennion).

**Isles of Scilly:** St. Agnes, immature, 26th August (B. P. Pickess, D. I. M. Wallace, Mrs. K. Wallace); immature, 27th August (D. I. M. Wallace *et al.*); considered to have been two separate individuals.

**Co. Wexford:** Great Saltee, immature, trapped, 30th August-9th September (T. Ennis, R. Moss, M. A. Ogilvie *et al.*).

**Red-backed Shrike** (*Lanius cristatus*)

**Dorset:** Portland Bill, juvenile showing the characters of one of the *isabellinus* group of central Asia, known as the Red-tailed or Isabelline Shrikes, 10th September (P. J. Fullager, J. H. Morgan, K. D. Smith *et al.*). It was described as a generally pale shrike; head greyish-brown, conspicuous black bar behind eye; upper-parts pale greyish-brown; wings darker with a large pale greyish area at base of primaries; under-parts off-white, closely barred buff; tail rich rufous red, appearing darker towards tip, quite noticeable at considerable range; rump apparently also rufous; bill pale.

The *isabellinus* group is now generally regarded as conspecific with the Red-backed Shrikes (*collurio*), and by some authorities both are united with the Brown Shrikes under *Lanius cristatus*. There are four races in the Red-tailed group—*isabellinus* itself, *phoenicuroides*, *speculigerus* and *tsaimadensis*—but we do not consider that it is possible to relate the Portland bird to any particular one of them. It will be remembered that an adult male Isabelline Shrike was identified on the Isle of May in 1950 (*Brit. Birds*, 44: 217-219 and frontispiece): this was referred to as *Lanius isabellinus* in accordance with the treatment in what was then the latest work on the taxonomy of shrikes, G. Olivier's *Monographie des Pies-Grièches du Genre Lanius* (1944). Subsequently, however, various authors such as H. Johansen (1952, *J. Orn.*, 92: 198-202) have supported the earlier findings of B. K. Stegmann (1930, *Orn. Monatsb.*, 38: 106-118) and several others that the Red-backed (*collurio*) and Red-tailed (*isabellinus*) Shrikes interbreed freely where their ranges meet and produce a variety of intermediates. As a result C. Vaurie (1955, *Amer. Mus. Nov.*, no. 1752, pp. 2-7) treated them as conspecific and this is how they appear in his *The Birds of the Palearctic Fauna* (1959, see

esp. p. 96). Other authorities—Col. R. Meinertzhagen and G. P. Dementiev, for example—go further and unite both with the Brown Shrikes (*cristatus*) since interbreeding with them also takes place (see references listed by Annie P. Grey, 1938, in *Bird Hybrids*, p. 202) and the three groups replace each other geographically in a range which, united, extends from western Europe to eastern Asia. It is thus that they are treated by Dementiev in *The Birds of the Soviet Union* (vol. 6, pp. 11-28) and by the B.O.U. Taxonomic Committee in its recommendations in 1956 (*Ibis*, 98: 167). As stated in the introduction to this report, it is our policy to follow the decisions of the latter Committee, and we therefore refer both the Portland and the Isle of May birds to *Lanius cristatus*. The Isabelline Shrike can no longer stand on the British list as a distinct species.

#### Rose-coloured Starling (*Sturnus roseus*)

**Dorset:** Portland Bill, immature, 6th September (Dr. J. S. Ash, D. E. Fry, H. Nash *et al.*).

**Nottinghamshire:** Woodthorpe, Nottingham, adult, second and third weeks October (Mr. Archer, Mrs. J. Marland *et al.*, per A. Dobbs).

**Somerset:** Street, adult, 26th July (J. B. Gillett *et al.*).

Rose-coloured Starlings are regularly imported in captivity, but this is chiefly in winter and they seldom regain the full pink plumage.

#### Serin (*Serinus canarius*)

**Co. Cork:** Cape Clear Island, 4th October (J. T. R. Sharrock).

#### Scarlet Grosbeak (*Carpodacus erythrinus*)

**Suffolk:** Benacre, trapped, 2nd-4th September (R. Hephher, A. G. Hurrell, M. J. Seago).

**Fair Isle:** two (one trapped), 29th-30th August; four (one trapped), 31st August, two remaining until 2nd September; one trapped, 7th-10th September; one trapped, 15th-25th September (P. Davis, R. H. Dennis).

**Fife:** Isle of May, trapped, 28th August (W. E. Curtis, D. Hope, A. Macdonald *et al.*).

**Shetland:** Foula, one 2nd-5th September and another 5th-6th (J. V. Boys).

Scarlet Grosbeaks are imported from India every year and sold in this country as Rose Finches, the name by which they are known in other parts of the English-speaking world. There is virtually no doubt that all the above records refer to genuinely wild birds, since the species is a regular autumn wanderer to Fair Isle and the other dates agree well, but out-of-season occurrences or ones away from the east coast must be open to some suspicion. All the above were females or immatures, as is usually the case with the individuals that reach these islands.

**Two-barred Crossbill** (*Loxia leucoptera*)

**Inverness-shire:** Newtonmore, adult ♂, dead, 21st August (R. Perry); now preserved at Aberdeen University.

**Shetland:** Foula, immature, 21st August (J. V. Boys, R. I. Duncan, H. G. Rees).

Unusual numbers of Two-barred Crossbills were seen in Denmark, Norway and Sweden in August and September 1959.

**Song Sparrow** (*Melospiza melodia*)

**Fair Isle:** ♂, 27th April-10th May (*Brit. Birds*, 52: 419-421, plate 70).

**Red-headed Bunting** (*Emberiza bruniceps*)

**Caernarvonshire:** Bardsey Island, ♂, 22nd July (R. W. Arthur *et al.*); ♂, 29th-31st August (Mrs. S. Cowdy, Miss F. Walton *et al.*).

**Kent:** Dungeness, ♂, trapped, 18th May (G. J. Harris, R. E. Scott *et al.*).

**Pembrokeshire:** Skokholm, ♂, 16th-24th May (Mrs. K. E. I. Barham, R. D. Wilson).

**Outer Hebrides:** Roareim, Flannan Islands, ♂, 24th June (T. B. Bagenal, D. Baird, Dr. W. J. Eggeling).

**Co. Wexford:** Great Saltee, adult ♂, trapped, 2nd September (P. P. Creed, F. King, A. Rogers *et al.*).

We have previously pointed out (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 172) that Red-headed Buntings, most of them males, are now imported into Great Britain and other western European countries in enormous numbers each year as cage-birds. In view of this and having regard also to the species' range, there can be little room for doubt that the vast majority, if not all, of the increasing number of records of *bruniceps* at large refer to ones that have escaped. It is relevant to add that R. A. Richardson, who examined the feathers shed by the Great Saltee individual when it was trapped, found that their condition was consistent with those of an escaped cage-bird.

**Yellow-breasted Bunting** (*Emberiza aureola*)

**Co. Donegal:** Tory Island, ♀, 18th September (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 229).

**Rustic Bunting** (*Emberiza rustica*)

**Fair Isle:** 15th October (J. Stout).

**Fife:** Isle of May, immature, trapped, 6th May (J. Hoy, D. B. D. Jones, Mrs. G. Waterston *et al.*).

**Co. Cork:** Cape Clear Island, ♂, 9th October (J. T. R. Sharrock).

**Little Bunting** (*Emberiza pusilla*)

**Caernarvonshire:** Bardsey Island, trapped, 11th and 16th October (R. W. Arthur).

**Fair Isle:** adult, trapped, 17th October (P. Davis, R. H. Dennis); first-winter, 19th-27th October (P. Davis).

**Fife:** Isle of May, 17th-18th September (M. E. French, N. G. C. Campbell, J. E. King *et al.*).

BRITISH BIRDS

APPENDIX—OBSERVATIONS IN “RECENT REPORTS AND NEWS” NOW REJECTED

For the sake of the completeness of this journal, we are continuing our practice of listing claimed occurrences which have appeared in the “Recent reports and news” feature but which we are now unable to accept after full consideration of the available details. Records of this kind rejected since the publication of our first report are set out below under the years to which they relate:

1958

Surf Scoter	North Bull, Dublin, 9th November ( <i>Brit. Birds</i> , 51: 528 and 52: 72)
Solitary Sandpiper	Castlerock, Co. Derry, 25th May (51: 280)
Mediterranean Black-headed Gull	Kinnegar, Co. Down, 6th September (51: 363) Off Scarborough, Yorkshire, 12th October (51: 530)
Short-toed Lark	Hilbre Island, Cheshire, 4th April (51: 205)
Richard’s Pipit	Staines Reservoir, Middlesex, 12th April (51: 207) Lundy, Devon, 17th-21st September (51: 434)

1959

Crane	Slimbridge, Gloucestershire, 4th April (52: 140)
Little Bustard	Near Eversleigh, Wiltshire, 5th May (52: 272)
Dowitcher	Aberlady Bay, East Lothian, 1st November (52: 439)
Great Snipe	Farlington Marshes, Hampshire, 4th April (52: 204) Leighton Moss, Lancashire, 20th September (52: 439) Rye Harbour, Sussex, 26th September (52: 439) Cambridge sewage-farm, Cambridgeshire, 12th-22nd (actually 12th and 19th) October (52: 439)
Lesser Yellowlegs	Seahouses, Northumberland, 30th September (52: 439)
White-rumped Sandpiper	Near Seascale, Cumberland, 3rd October (52: 439)
Black-winged Stilt	Holy Island, Northumberland (two), 13th April (52: 204)
Mediterranean Black-headed Gull	Langstone Harbour, Hampshire, 20th September (52: 440)
Sabine’s Gull	Gibraltar Point, Lincolnshire, 6th September (52: 440) Tring Reservoirs, Hertfordshire, 26th September (52: 440) Selsey Bill, Sussex, 2nd November (52: 440)
White-winged Black Tern	Farlington Marshes, Hampshire, 20th August (52: 320)
Gull-billed Tern	Poole Harbour, Dorset (seven), 3rd May (52: 272)
Caspian Tern	Windermere, Lancashire/Westmorland, 15th August (52: 320)
Alpine Swift	Clyro, Radnorshire, 14th August (52: 320)
Roller	Tory Island, Co. Donegal, 30th September (53: 42)
Scops Owl	Bardsey Island, Caernarvonshire, 25th May (52: 279)
Short-toed Lark	Southwold, Suffolk, 3rd June (52: 279)
Crested Lark	Bodmin Moor, Cornwall, 14th June (52: 280)
Nutcracker	Keresley, Warwickshire, 4th January (52: 32)

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Marsh Warbler	Fair Isle, 30th June (52: 280)
Aquatic Warbler	Between Brasted and Westerham, Kent, 23rd-24th August (52: 319)
	Ham Island, Old Windsor, Berkshire, 29th August (52: 319)
Greenish Warbler	Holkham, Norfolk, 12th October (53: 45)
Yellow-browed Warbler	Sandwich, Kent, 4th (actually 9th) October (53: 45)
Richard's Pipit	Sandwich Bay, Kent, 1st October (53: 47)
	West Huntspill, Somerset, 4th-18th October (53: 47)
	Cape Clear Island, Co. Cork, 14th October (53: 47)
Tawny Pipit	Whitstable, Kent, 4th (actually 1st) September (53: 47)
Ashy-headed Wagtail	Off Cross Sands Light-vessel, Norfolk coast, 10th May (52: 274)
Rose-coloured Starling	Near Bridge (Kent), Sussex, 19th-20th December (53: 96)
Arctic Redpoll	Hilbre Island, Cheshire (three), 16th (actually 17th) October (53: 47)
Little Bunting	Cape Clear Island, Co. Cork (from one to five), 29th August-11th October (52: 319 and 53: 48)

The claimed occurrences of single Mediterranean Black-headed Gulls on 19th and 25th September 1959 and of a Sabine's Gull on 4th September 1959, all at Portland Bill, Dorset (*Brit. Birds*, 53: 440), were subsequently withdrawn. The above lists do not include rejected observations mentioned in the "Recent reports and news" if the reference to them was as no more than "probable" or "unconfirmed".