



Report on Rare birds in Great Britain in 1997

M.J.Rogers and the Rarities Committee
With comments by Grahame Walbridge and Andy Stoddart

Systematic list of accepted records

The principles and procedures followed in considering records were explained in the 1958 Report (Brit. Birds 53: 155-158). The systematic list is set out in the same way as in the 1996 Report (90: 453-522). The following points show the basis on which the list has been compiled:

1. The details included for each record are (1) county; (2) locality; (3) number of birds if more than one, and age and sex if known (in the case of spring and summer records, however, the age is normally given only where the bird concerned was not in adult plumage); (4) if photographed, tape-recorded or video-recorded (and this evidence seen or heard by the Committee); (5) if trapped or found dead and where specimen is stored, if known; (6) date(s); and (7) observer(s), normally up to three in number, in alphabetical order.
2. In general, this Report is confined to records that are regarded as certain, and 'probables' are not included. In the cases of the very similar American *Pluvialis dominica* and Pacific Golden Plovers *P.fulva*, Long-billed *Limnodromus scolopaceus* and Short-billed Dowitchers *L.griseus* and Eastern *Phylloscopus orientalis* and Western Bonelli's Warblers *P.bonelli*, however, we publish indeterminate records, and this also applies to those of pratincoles *Glareola*, albatrosses *Diomedea* and frigatebirds *Fregata*.
3. The sequence of species, English names and scientific nomenclature follow the '*British Birds' List of Birds of the Western Palearctic* (1997).
4. The three numbers in parentheses after each species' name refer specifically to the total number of individuals recorded in Britain & Ireland (excluding those 'at sea') (i) to the end of 1957, (ii) for the period since the formation of the Rarities Committee in 1958, but excluding (iii) those listed here for the current year. The decision as to how many individuals were involved is often difficult and rather arbitrary, but the consensus of members is indicated by 'possibly the same' (counted as different in the totals), 'probably the same' (counted as the same in the totals), or 'the same' when evidence is certain or overwhelming. An identical approach is applied to records of a particular species recurring at the same locality after a lapse of time, including those that occur annually at the same or a nearby site. In considering claims of more than one individual at the same or adjacent localities, the Committee usually requires firm evidence before more than one is counted in the totals. A detailed breakdown of the figures for previous years is held by the Honorary Secretary.
5. Irish records, assessed and accepted by the Irish Rare Birds Committee, are included separately, following the subheading IRELAND.

White-billed Diver *Gavia adamsii* (18, 170, 4)

Dorset Portland Bill, age uncertain, 13th March (M.Cade).

Orkney North Ronaldsay, second-summer, 7th June (P.J.Donnely).

Shetland Fetlar, second-summer or third-summer, 24th-29th April (S.Hinde, D.Suddaby, T.Thomason *et al.*).

Sussex, East Newhaven, adult, 27th April (E.Urquhart).

1996 Shetland Mousa Sound. adult, 5th-6th May (Brit. Birds 90: 457), observers included S.Croft.

A rather poor year by recent standards, but two more records in the English Channel, including the first for Dorset.

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps* (0, 20, 4)

Cornwall Hayle, since 31st December 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 457) to 15th April.

Greater London South Norwood Lake, 26th January to 30th March, photo. (J.Flynn *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 116); presumed same, Tooting Bec Common, 5th December to 10th February 1998, photo. (G.Messenbird *et al.*).

Lancashire Dock Acres Gravel-pits, 24th May to 8th June, photo. (J.A.Girdley *et al.*). Also in West Yorkshire.

Northamptonshire Ravensthorpe Reservoir, 26th April (G.Pullan *et al.*).

Wiltshire Cotswold Water Park, 1st-15th August (G.M.Buchanan *et al.*).

Yorkshire, West Skelton Lake, 14th June to 17th July, photo. (P.R.Morris *et al.*); same, Mickletown Ings, 18th-19th July (per W.J.Hesketh). Presumed same as Lancashire.

A record year, though it is just feasible that the Greater London bird merely did a tour around Britain.

Black-browed Albatross *Diomedea melanophris* (2, 25, 0)

IRELAND

1967 & 1968 Cork Following a review of all Irish records by the Irish Rare Birds Committee, records on 1st June 1967, 1st October 1967 and 13th August 1968 are no longer accepted (Irish Birds 6: 64). See also 1967 Cork under 'Albatross', below.

1995 Cork 3 km southwest of Cape Clear Island, adult or subadult, 9th September (Irish Birds 6: 64).

1996 Cork Cape Clear Island, adult, 22nd August (Irish Birds 6: 64).

There has been none in Britain since 1995, when the adult at Hermaness, Unst, Shetland, put in its final(?) appearance, having returned to summer at the Saito outcrop in all but three years since 1972.

Albatross *Diomedea* (2, 37, 0)

IRELAND

1988 Cork 8 km southeast of Cape Clear Island, 8th July (Irish Birds 6: 64).

1968 & 1973 Cork Following a review of all Irish records by the IRBC, records on 13th July 1968, two on 26th August 1968, 3rd September 1968 and 17th May 1973 are no longer accepted (Irish Birds 6: 64).

1967 Cork Cape Clear Island, adult, 2nd September, previously accepted as Black-browed *D.melanophris*, now accepted as unidentified albatross (Irish Birds 6: 64).

The totals include those specifically identified.

Madeira/Cape Verde Petrel *Pterodroma madeira/feae* (0, 22, 1)

Norfolk Blakeney Point, 26th June (S.J.McElwee); same, Cley (S.J.M.Gantlett); same, Sheringham (I.K. & Mrs K.Johnson); same, Mundesley (M.Fischer).

1996 Cornwall Gwennap Head, 11th June (J.Hawkey).

1996 Scilly About 3.2 km southwest of Bishop Rock, 18th August (W.H.Wagstaff).

IRELAND

1974 Cork Cape Clear Island, 5th September (Irish Birds 6: 65), previously accepted only as an unidentified *Pterodroma* petrel (Brit. Birds 70: 445).

1989 Cork Old Head of Kinsale, 14th August (Irish Birds 6: 65), previously accepted only as an unidentified *Pterodroma* petrel (Brit. Birds 86: 453).

1994 Cork Mizen Head, one or possibly two, 24th August (Irish Birds 6: 65), not 'two' as previously stated (Brit. Birds 88: 497).

1995 Kerry Kerry Head, 26th August, probably same as Brandon Point nine hours later on same date (Brit. Birds 90: 458; Irish Birds 6: 65).

1996 Cork Cape Clear Island, 22nd August (Irish Birds 6: 64).

1996 Down St John's Point, 22nd August (Northern Ireland Bird Rep. 1996: 21; Irish Birds 6: 64).

Soft-plumaged Petrel *P.mollis* is now excluded by this Committee from the formula employed by the BOURC, no British or Irish record having involved a bird showing a combination of a complete (or near-complete) breastband and a short rounded tail, concolorous with the uppertail-coverts and back. In so far as exclusion of *P.madeira* is concerned, the Committee follows the view that its identification in the field as clearly separable from *P.fea* still remains to be rigorously tested. The 1974 Irish record becomes the first, predating the one at Porthgarra, Cornwall, during 12th to 14th August 1990 (Brit. Birds 85: 510; 87: 509).

Little Shearwater *Puffinus assimilis* (5, 93, 1)

Pembrokeshire Strumble Head, 12th September (G.H.Rees *et al.*).

IRELAND

1996 Clare Bridges of Ross, 16th August (Irish Birds 6: 66).

After two blank years in Britain, a typical record in what is the peak month, accounting for 27% of the total. This species continues to have the dubious distinction of having just about the highest rejection rate, but the Committee does not entirely subscribe to the view that the species is as rare in British & Irish waters as has been suggested in some circles; it is, however, an apparent anomaly that seven records of eight corpses fall in the period 7th March to 29th June.

Wilson's Storm-petrel *Oceanites oceanicus* (4, 23, 1)

Pembrokeshire Strumble Head, 5th September (C.Benson, R.H.Davies, G.H.Rees).

At sea Sea area Sole, 49° 07'N 07° 04'W, about 64 km southwest of Bishop Rock, Scilly, two, 10th August (M.S.Wallen *et al.*); about 11.3 km southwest of St Agnes, Scilly, 24th August (P.K.Greaves *et al.*).

IRELAND

1995 Cork Cape Clear Island, 27th July; two, 19th August (Irish Birds 6: 66).

1996 Cork Cape Clear Island, 17th August; presumed different, 18th August (Irish Birds 6: 66).

Mainland sightings are still very rare: the Pembrokeshire record is the third from that headland, but, in Britain, St Ives, Cornwall, leads the way with seven. Reports of up to four on the Scillonian pelagic trip were not substantiated by the details received by the Committee.

Frigatebird *Fregata* (0, 5, 0)

IRELAND

1995 Dublin Booterstown, female or immature, 22nd June (Irish Birds 6: 66).

Presumably the same individual as that seen earlier in the month in Cornwall and then in Dyfed (Brit. Birds 89: 487).

Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus* (150, 191, 6)

Hertfordshire Rye Meads, male, 17th-18th May, trapped 17th (A.J.Harris *et al.*).

Lancashire Marton Mere, male, 12th-23rd June (M.Jones *et al.*).

Norfolk Holme, male, 13th-16th June, probably since 11th (G.F.Hibberd, M.J. & Mrs D.E.Saunt, J.R.Williamson *et al.*).

Scilly St Mary's, female, 3rd-5th May, photo. (M.S.Scott *et al.*).

Shetland Lera Voe and Footabrough area, female, 12th-30th June, photo. (O.Cheyne, P.Sclater *et al.*).

Somerset Highbridge, male, 6th-10th April, photo. (R.J.Ingram, B.E.Slade *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: page 461 fig. 1).

1958 Somerset Locality withheld, male, intermittently, 21st June to 1st August; female, 18th, 27th July, 12th August (Brit. Birds 53: 160; 74: 396), locality was Huntworth.

1960 Cambridgeshire Locality withheld, male, female, intermittently, 21st June to 19th July (Brit. Birds 54: 180), locality was Stibbington Gravel-pits, Huntingdonshire.

1993 Dorset Radipole, male, 7th May (T.Baker).

A fairly typical year in terms of dates and numbers, though the Shetland record is noteworthy, being only the fifth for that archipelago: the last was way back in June 1965.

Night Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* (165, 377, 17)

Cornwall Skewjack, adult, 23rd April (K.A.Wilson).

Gwent Llandegfedd Reservoir, juvenile, 7th-30th July (J.R.Bennett, C.Jones, M.Plunket *et al.*).

Norfolk Little Dunham, juvenile, 26th-28th January (K.Bishop *et al.*). Holkham, up to five, 7th May to 28th August: two adults, 1st-29th June; two second-summers, 7th May to 28th August; subadult, 15th May to end of June (V.Eve, M.Tunmore *et al.*). Honing, juvenile, 2nd September (C.Lansdell).

Northumberland Holywell Dene, two adults, one second-summer, 11th-21st May (M.D.Plenty *et al.*).

Scilly St Mary's, adult, 11th June (M.S.Scott, N.Wheatley).

Somerset Shapwick Heath, adult, 13th May (Dr P.J.Knight *et al.*); two adults, 14th-15th June, one to at least 22nd (J.A. & Mrs K.L.Hazell *et al.*). Westhay Moor, two, age uncertain, 14th August (B.D.Gibbs, R.Musgrove); two, possibly three, 22nd, 28th (J.A.Hazell per B.D.Gibbs); presumed same as Shapwick Heath.

Wiltshire Cotswold Water Park, adult, 7th August (P.Adams).

1991 Devon Brixham, adult, February, date uncertain, photo. (J.Hingley).

1996 Clyde Strathaven, juvenile, 21st-24th July (A.I.English *et al.*).

Multiple occurrences are not, in themselves, unprecedented. In the last century, eight adults were collected from the River Erme at Flete, Devon, in May/June 1849 (Zoologist (1849): 2528) and, much more recently, up to nine were in Scilly in the spring of 1990. The summering birds in Norfolk and Somerset, mirroring the two adults in Kent last year, have, however, raised hopes that this species may be a future colonist. With regard to the free-flying collections (Brit. Birds 89: 487-488), the present situation in Norfolk is that: at Earsham, the colony no longer exists; but, at Great Witchingham, in addition to up to 30 individuals held in captivity in the park, there are thought to be up to 30 free-flying unmarked birds.

Squacco Heron *Ardeola ralloides* (95, 43, 5)

Cambridgeshire Ouse Washes area, first-summer, 7th to at least 9th July, photo.; same, Ely, 26th July to 2nd August (A.S.Cook *et al.*).

Devon Seaton, 15th May (P.Abbott, R.Anning, T.Wiley *et al.*).

Gloucestershire/Wiltshire Cotswold Water Park, 24th June to 1st July, photo. (G.A.J.Deacon, K.J.Greerson *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 121). Also in Somerset.

Somerset Rode, first-summer, 13th June (B.J.Widden *et al.*). Presumed same as Gloucestershire/Wiltshire.

Surrey Walton Reservoir, 17th June (D.M.Harris *et al.*).

Sussex, East Bodle Street, 18th-20th June (A. & Mrs J.Ainslie, A.Aldridge, W.R.Potter).

Wiltshire See Gloucestershire/Wiltshire above.

IRELAND

1996 Cork Ballycotton, 13th-17th June (Irish Birds 6: 66).

A good year, the arrival dates falling neatly into the already established peak period. This species has been recorded in seven of the past ten years, accounting for over half of the post-1958 total. This is perhaps surprising when the species has declined over much of its range in Europe, but it is most likely attributable to overshoots from an increasing Spanish population.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* (2, 86, 1)

Cheshire West Kirby, 30th April (C.I.Butterworth).

1987 Shropshire Near Westbury, adult, dead, January, date uncertain, mounted specimen held by R.Dodwell, photo. (J.Beecroft). Presumed same as Doxey Marshes, Stafford, 7th January, previously in Derbyshire (Brit. Birds 81: 542).

1992 Yorkshire, East Hornsea Mere, 14th May, photo. (T.D.Charlton, D.R.Middleton *et al.*).

1996 Pembrokeshire Skomer, 30th April (W.Parker, P.Pugh *et al.*).

1996 Yorkshire, South Thorne area, 12th October to 29th November, 22nd December (Brit. Birds 90: 459), dates were 11th October to 29th December, found/identified by B.P.Wainwright.

IRELAND

1996 Wexford Ring Marsh, 31st March (Irish Birds 6: 66).

A poor year by recent standards, though there was a blank in 1991. The additional 1992 record completes the picture for the influx of at least 19 in that year.

Great White Egret *Egretta alba* (10, 79, 8)

Cambridgeshire Fen Drayton Gravel-pits, 4th-5th December; same, Marsh Lane Gravel-pits, 6th-8th (J.Oates *et al.*).

Devon Axmouth Marsh, 21st July (A.J.Bundy *et al.*). Dawlish Warren and Countess Wear, 18th and 22nd October (I.W.Lakin, A.Rosier, K.Rylands *et al.*).

Glamorgan Kenfig, 22nd July (N.P.Roberts).

Greater London Brent Reservoir, 13th May (J.P.Charteris, A.M.Self, M.Wurr).

Hampshire Lymington, 19th August (G.Giddens).

Surrey Cranleigh, 22nd-23rd December (R.Stride *et al.*).

1996 Kent Bough Beech Reservoir, 5th-14th January (C.Bond *et al.*); same as East Sussex, West Sussex, Hampshire (Brit. Birds 90: 460).

IRELAND

Antrim Black Glen, 8th October to 29th November.

The first for Northern Ireland. Details of a much-publicised bird in Northamptonshire have not yet been submitted, as is also the case with the well-watched individual in Norfolk. In the Channel Islands, one was at St Saviour's, Guernsey, on 23rd October 1996.

Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* (many, 70, 2)

Lancashire Pilling Lane Ends, two, 20th-29th April (R.E.Danson, S.J.Dodgson, M.Jones *et al.*).

1996 Pembrokeshire Skokholm, 19th June (G.V.F.Thompson, J. & Mrs G.Threadgold); presumed same as Marloes, 16th (Brit. Birds 90: 460).

1996 Somerset Ston Easton, first-winter, 28th November, photo., (D.Clothier, Mrs B.Watts per K.E.Vinicombe).

IRELAND

1996 Cork Clogheen Marsh, Inchdoney, immature, 20th-21st June (Irish Birds 6: 67).

1996 Wexford North Slob, from 1995 (Brit. Birds 90: 460) to 15th May, and Tacumshin, immature, 6th July to 21st August, presumed same as North Slob individual (Irish Bird.6: 67).

A Yorkshire record remains to be dealt with. Although the Puna Ibis *P.ridgwayi* is known to be still at Whitwell, Hertfordshire, where it has been in residence since May 1980, there has been no recent evidence that it has been given to travelling far afield.

Lesser White-fronted Goose *Anser erythropus* (47, 87, 1)

Norfolk Holkham, adult, 12th-22nd January, photo. (A.I.Bloomfield, P.Tuck *et al.*).

With the now regular wintering of small numbers in the Netherlands, it is perhaps surprising that this species has not become more frequent on the East Coast.

Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*

***B. b. nigricans* (1, 75, 13)**

Anglesey Penrhos, 23rd-30th March, photo. (M.Robinson *et al.*).

Dorset Ferrybridge, 14th-17th January (G.Walbridge *et al.*).

Essex North Woodham Ferrers, 8th December 1996 to 1997 (Brit. Birds 90: 461), presumed same, South Woodham Ferrers to 7th March (A.W.Shearring *et al.*). Maldon, 5th January (S.D.Wood). Holland Haven, 18th January (P.Davis, M.L.Hawkes, S.J.Patient). Cudmore Grove, two, 26th-28th January, one since 25th, one photo. (S.J.Dodgson *et al.*). Holliwell Point, at least 1st February (C.McClure *et al.*).

Kent Otterham Creek and Horsham Marsh, 18th January to 2nd February (C.G.Bradshaw, J.A.Rowlands, Mrs A.Shepherd *et al.*); presumed same, Egypt Bay/St Mary's Bay, 16th, 23rd February (M.J.Orchard). Motney Hill, two, 7th April (A.Parker); one, 2nd-30th November (C.G.Bradshaw).

Lancashire Pilling Lane Ends, since 17th December 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 461), to 24th February (per M.Jones).

Norfolk Cley, 17th to at least 18th January (J.Jury, F.J.Watson *et al.*), presumed same as Salthouse and area, 23rd November 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 461). Lynn Point, 5th February (A.Collins). Titchwell, Thornham and Holme area, 5th December to 1998 (P.Bradley, G.E.Dunmore *et al.*).

Suffolk Falkenham, 23rd January (D.Low); presumed same, 1st-25th February (M.C.Marsh *et al.*); presumed returning individual last recorded 25th February 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 461). Cowton, 26th December to 6th January 1998 (J.H.Grant *et al.*).

1995 Kent Coombe and St Mary's Bays, 3rd, 26th December (J.Martin, D.Mercer, M.J.Orchard), presumed same as Gillingham, November-December 1994 (Brit. Birds 90: 461).

1996 Hampshire Needs Ore Point, 11th-29th May (A.Rhodes, D.J.Unsworth *et al.*).

IRELAND

1996 Londonderry Lough Foyle, adult, 7th October to 15th November (Northern Ireland Bird Rep. 1996: 29).

A record year. Some authorities, notably the Dutch rarities committee (CDNA), treat this form and the pale-bellied Brent Goose *B.b.hrota* as specifically distinct from the nominate dark-bellied Brent Goose (Dutch Birding 19: 21-28).

Red-breasted Goose *Branta ruficollis* (15, 33, 1)

Essex See 1996 Essex below.

Hampshire Keyhaven Marsh, first-winter, 17th February (D. & G.Walbridge), present 15th January to at least 30th March; also in Isle of Wight.

Wight, Isle of Compton, first-winter, 1st to at least 6th January (J.C.Gloyn *et al.*); also in Hampshire.

1996 Essex Old Hall Marshes, adult, 14th January (M.L.Hawkes); present, 3rd-4th; presumed same, Mersea Island, 21st December to 16th February 1997, photo. (M.L.Hawkes *et al.*). Presumed same as Holland Haven, 21st February 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 461), and as returning Essex/Kent individual, 1993-94.

The credentials of these birds are good, but escapees continue to pose the Committee problems. In Hampshire, a colour-ringed adult was picked up dead at Needs Ore Point on 17th February, and another adult, bearing a black colour ring, was at Warsash during 15th February to 8th April at least, in association with Brent Geese *B.bernica*, though known escapees usually keep less convincing company.

American Wigeon *Anas americana* (22, 311, 18)

Anglesey/Caernarfonshire Conwy Estuary and Llanfairfechan area, male, since 7th October 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 461), to 21st February, photo.; presumed same, 13th December to 1998.

Cambridgeshire Fen Drayton, male, since 30th December 1996 to 5th January (Brit. Birds 90: 461). Ouse Washes, male, 24th February, 11th March (M.A.Ward *et al.*).

Cheshire Frodsham, first-winter male, 13th October (W.S.Morton).

Cleveland Seal Sands and Greenabella Marsh, male, 4th-9th October (G.Joynt *et al.*).

Cornwall Stithians Reservoir, male, since 23rd November 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 462), to 21st February. Hayle, first-winter male, 3rd October to 1998, photo. (S.J.Dodgson *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: page 465 fig. 2).

Cumbria Hodbarrow, male, 20th May (C.Raven, S.C.Peters). Ravenglass area, male, 9th-16th November (S.J.Dodgson).

Devon Ilsley Marsh, Taw Estuary, male, since 10th October 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 462), to 9th February, photo.

Dorset The Fleet and area, male, 28th October to 1998 (N.Fowler *et al.*).

Durham Witton le Wear, male, 9th February to 25th March (M.Irvin *et al.*).

Fife Craiguscar Reservoirs, male, 9th March (J.S.Nadin *et al.*).

Kent Cliffe, first-winter male, 28th September to 14th October (P.Larkin, M.J.Orchard, R.C.Peters).

Lancashire Heysham, male, intermittently, 12th January to 14th February, photo. (P.J.Marsh *et al.*).

Lincolnshire Read's Island, male, 5th October (G.P.Catley).

Norfolk Welney, male, 24th January (J.B.Kemp).

Outer Hebrides Loch Leodasay, North Uist, and area, male, since 10th November 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 462), to 15th March.

Oxfordshire Stanton Harcourt, male, 7th July to at least 28th August, photo. (J.Baker *et al.*).

Pembrokeshire See 1996 Pembrokeshire below.

Shetland Loch of Spiggie, first-summer male, 24th May; same, Loch of Hillwell, 25th-28th (R.Baatsen, R.M.Fray, M.Lawson *et al.*).

Somerset Catcott Lows, male, 20th March (P.Amies, G.Evans, G.Suter).

Staffordshire Blithfield Reservoir, male, 9th-23rd February (P.D.Hyde, W.J.Low *et al.*).

Sussex, West Pagham Harbour, first-winter male, since 13th October 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 462), to 15th February.

Yorkshire, North Knaresborough, male, 16th-22nd March (R.Evison, I.Webster *et al.*).

1995 Gwent Dingestone, female, 26th August to 10th September (S.D.S.Bosanquet, A.E.D.Hickman).

1996 Hampshire Lower Test Marshes, male, since 22nd October 1995 (Brit. Birds 89: 491) to 25th March.

1996 Pembrokeshire Lawrenny, male, 27th December to 3rd January 1997 (C. & R.Stonier *et al.*)

IRELAND

1994 Cork Carrigadrohid, male, 20th-21st November, presumed to be one of two males near Macroom on 5th March 1995 (Brit. Birds 90: 462; Irish Birds 6: 68).

1996 Cork Lee Reservoir, male, 21st January, presumed returning individual. Reendonegan Lake, male, female, 21st January, one presumed returning individual. Rostellan, two adult males, one first-year male, 17th November to 24th December, one adult male presumed returning individual. (Irish Birds 6: 68)

1996 Donegal Blanket Nook, male, 2nd February (Irish Birds 6: 68).

1996 Tipperary Ashton's Callow, male, 8th November (Irish Birds 6: 68).

1996 Wexford North Slob, male in eclipse, 13th October; first-winter, 3rd November to 29th December (Irish Birds 6: 68).

Another good showing. The Caernarfonshire individual was present for its third winter. The last summering bird was a male in Angus & Dundee in 1984 (Brit. Birds 83: 448), so the Oxfordshire record is noteworthy, though cynics may well question the origins of such birds.

Common Teal *Anas crecca*

***A. c. carolinensis* (13, 428, -)**

IRELAND

1981 Dublin North Bull Island, male, 29th November, presumed returning individual (Irish Birds 6: 68).

This race was no longer considered by the Committee after 1990, but, for the sake of completeness, Irish as well as British records for the earlier period are updated. The Dutch rarities committee (CDNA) treats this form as specifically distinct from Common Teal on the basis of differences in morphology (Dutch Birding 20: 22-32).

Black Duck *Anas rubripes* (1, 20, 0)

Scilly Tresco, male, since 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 462) to 1st November.

1986 Yorkshire, East Broomfleet Ponds, male, 1st September (Brit. Birds 80: 527), now considered inadequately documented.

IRELAND

1996 Kerry Barrow Harbour, male, 19th September into February 1997 (Irish Birds 6: 68).

Rather disappointingly, details of a 'well-twitced' female present at Alturlie Point, Highland, from 13th January to 1st April 1997 have yet to be submitted.

Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors* (19, 200, 7)

Derbyshire Monsal Dale area, male, 1st March to 20th April, photo. (B.Crossthwaite, M.Lacey *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 113); probably same as Middleton Moor, 24th-27th August, 10th-11th November 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 463).

Devon Kingsteignton and Bowling Green Marsh, female, 27th March to 19th April (M.Knott, K.Rylands *et al.*).
Paignton, male, 25th-26th December (C.Bath).

Flintshire Point of Ayr, male, 2nd-12th October (R.Penson *et al.*).

Lincolnshire North Somercoates, first-winter, 28th September (G.P.Catley).

Norfolk Stiffkey Fen, male, 22nd-23rd December (V.J.Hanlon *et al.*).

Northumberland Holywell Pond, female, 5th January (C.Annan, T.R.Cleeves, M.Hepple *et al.*).

Suffolk Pipp's Ford Gravel-pits, Needham Market, female, 23rd September to 19th February 1998 (P.Whittaker *et al.*).

IRELAND

1977 Dublin North Bull, male, from 16th September to 14th March 1978 (Brit. Birds 71: 493) remained only to 5th March 1978 (Irish Birds 6: 69).

1978 Dublin See 1977 Dublin.

1995 Wexford Tacumshin, male, 8th April (Irish Birds 6: 69).

1996 Cork/Limerick Charleville Lagoons, male, from 27th December 1995 to 2nd January, not 1st January (Brit. Birds 90: 464; Irish Birds 6: 69).

A typical series of records. While the majority of records undoubtedly refer to genuine vagrants, the provenance of a few is increasingly being questioned in some quarters, examples being the long-staying drake in Derbyshire and the Suffolk individual.

Redhead *Aythya americana* (0, 1, 1)

Leicestershire Rutland Water, male, 4th-24th February (R.Mills, J.Wright *et al.*) (Brit Birds 91: page 469 fig. 3).

Only the second record, 'hot on the heels' of the first, a male at Bleasby, Nottinghamshire, during 8th-27th March 1996 (Brit. Birds 91: 149-154). Since Bleasby lies only about 50 km NNW of Rutland Water, and the timing of the two records is very similar, there is a widely held view that only one individual was involved. The Committee's view, at this stage, however, is that the evidence is circumstantial; but, if 'the bird' puts in a further appearance, that view is likely to change.

Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris* (1, 378, -)

1979 Highland Locality withheld, male, 14th April to 6th June (Brit. Birds 73: 500), locality was Bettyhill, Sutherland.

Assessment of records of this species since December 1993 is the responsibility of local recorders, but earlier records are still assessed and listed by the Committee.

Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis* (0, 18, 6)

Ayrshire Martnaham Loch, male, 13th-17th September, photo. (B.Orr *et al.*).

Cornwall Argal Reservoir, male, since 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 464) to 15th January; same, Stithians Reservoir, 21st January to 13th April, 10th July. Loe Pool, male, female, 18th June to 20th September, male to 27th, photo. (S.Bury, D.S.Flumm *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plates 114 & 115); first-winter female, 19th October (S.M.Christophers *et al.*).

Highland St John's Loch, Caithness, male, since 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 464) to 20th January.

Yorkshire, East Tophill Low, female, 9th January to 20th April, photo. (E.Hediger, R.Lyon, F.X.Moffatt *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 111).

IRELAND

Armagh Oxford Island, Lough Neagh, male, 31st December, presumed returning individual.

Londonderry Gransha Lake, male, 10th May.

1996 Kerry Lough Gill, male, 19th-24th March (Irish Birds 6: 69).

It is perhaps no great surprise that a crop of three females should appear so soon after the long-expected first in Cornwall, in the autumn of 1996. It really would have been a surprise, however, if the pair which took up residence at Helston Loe Pool had been the first species of Nearctic duck to have attempted to breed in Britain, though the birds' initial behaviour did raise such hopes. The Irish records are the second and third, following the male which put in annual appearances during 1988-95 in Northern Ireland.

King Eider *Somateria spectabilis* (62, 89, 7)

Fife Tayport, males, 10th January to at least 26th February, two, 25th January, 26th February (D.E.Dickson, N.Elkins, G.Smith *et al.*); presumed one of same, 2nd November (I.Wanders); both presumed same as 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 465.) Leven area, female, 15th July to 16th September (K.D.Shaw *et al.*); presumed same as Lothian, 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 465), and Methil, Fife, 1994 (Brit. Birds 88: 503).

Moray & Nairn Lossiemouth area, male, 12th January to at least 2nd February, 27th November to 11th December (per M.J.H.Cook); presumed same as 1996 below.

Northeast Scotland Girdleness, male, 23rd-31st July (S.A.Reeves *et al.*); presumed same, Blackdog, 27th September (O.Campbell per A.Webb).

Northumberland Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, and Lynemouth area, male, age uncertain, 10th-17th September (M.G.Anderson, I.Fisher *et al.*).

Orkney Stronsay, first-summer male, 6th May (J.F. & Mrs S.M.Holloway).

Shetland Fetlar, male, 23rd May (D.Suddaby); presumed same, Haroldswick, Unst, 24th (R.Baatsen, M.Lawson). Raewick, Redayre and Tresta area, male, since 14th September 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 465) to at least 23rd April; returned 7th November to end of year (per K.Osborn). Mousa Sound, two males, 2nd January (P.M.Ellis *et al.*), one since 17th November 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 465); presumed one of same, 22nd December (P.M.Ellis). Trondra, male, 23rd June to 24th July (J.D.Okill *et al.*). Whalsay, male, 11th November (N.D.Poleson *et al.*).

1989 Caernarfonshire See 1989 Gwynedd below.

1989 Gwynedd Aberdysynni, female, 13th August, presumed same as Black Rock Sands, 28th January to 23rd September 1989 (Brit. Birds 83: 454; 84: 463). Locality 28th January to 5th February was Black Rock Sands, Criccieth, Caernarfonshire; locality 29th May to 8th October was Aberdysynni, Meirionnydd (R.I.Thorpe *et al.*).

1990 Meirionnydd (then Gwynedd) Aberdysynni, female, 28th April to 8th May (R.I.Thorpe *et al.*); presumed same as 1989 above.

1995 Argyll Uisaed Point, male, 26th March to 1st April (A.Lambert, E.J.Maguire).

1995 Shetland Tresta Voe, male, 1st-29th June (Brit. Birds 89: 494), was not same as Sandwick, 26th November to at least 3rd December (per P.M.Ellis, P.V.Harvey).

1996 Moray & Nairn Lossiemouth, male, 13th October (I.Rowlands *et al.*); presumed returning individual of 9th October 1994 to 14th February 1995 (Brit. Birds 89: 493, then Grampian); probably same as Tayport, Fife, 26th November (Brit. Birds 90: 465).

IRELAND

Antrim Rathlin Island, adult male, 24th-29th April.

In Britain, the occurrences follow the now well-established pattern, but the Irish record represents only the fifth post-1958 individual there, and only the ninth ever.

Bufflehead *Bucephala albeola* (5, 4, 1)

Suffolk Heveningham Hall Lake, male, 29th November to at least 6th December, 1st-21st January 1998, photo. (A.Howe *et al.*).

Unlike the as-yet-undocumented East Yorkshire individual in 1997, this bird was definitely not carrying a ring, despite reports to the contrary, though that is not positive evidence in favour of a wild origin.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans* (5, 249, 9)

Cleveland/North Yorkshire Leven Valley, 28th April (G.Iceton).

Derbyshire Carr Vale, 22nd April (M.A.Beevers, R.Box).

Dorset Verne Common, 22nd April (C.E.Richards, C.White). Blacknor Point, Portland, two, 24th April (G.Walbridge, C.White, H.G.Wood Homer).

Dumfries & Galloway Loch Ryan, 9th August (C.Baines).

Orkney North Ronaldsay, 2nd-13th May, photo. (M.Gray *et al.*); presumed same as Shetland.

Shetland Kergord, Scalloway and Mid Yell area, 15th May to at least 18th August, photo. (P.M.Ellis, J.Mitchell *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 117) ; presumed same as Orkney.

Suffolk Benacre, 16th March (C.A.Buttle, A.Riseborough, D.Walden); same, Lowestoft, 16th (N.Skinner).

Yorkshire, North See Cleveland/North Yorkshire above.

Yorkshire, South Near Maltby, 27th April (R. & Mrs J.Hardcastle, A.Hirst).

1994 Essex Great Wakering, 28th April (P.Low).

IRELAND

1980 Cork Garryvoe and Ballycotton, 20th April to 13th May (Irish Birds 6: 71).

Claims of this easy-to-identify (but difficult-to-prove) species provide many a Committee member's headache: the recurring 'nightmare' is of multiple-recirculation batches, made up solely of reports of this species. The 1980 Co. Cork record becomes the first for Ireland, predating the one at Killoughter, Co. Wicklow, on 11th May 1981 (Brit. Birds 75: 496).

White-tailed Eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla* (many, 23, 1)

Ceredigion Tregaron, first-year, 12th November (P.E.Davis, L.R.Holliwell, A.Webb *et al.*).

Cheshire Chelford, first-year, 28th October (S. & Mrs G.Barber).

Norfolk Burnham Overy, first-year, 28th October (I.Barton, K.Rosewarne, C.Symes *et al.*).

The first since 1994. With the improving fortunes of the re-established population in northwest Scotland, an increasing number of unmarked immatures are 'on the loose', making it progressively more difficult to ascertain the likely origin of many individuals. The credentials of this bird are, however, as good as any; having possibly arrived from across the North Sea, it made good progress, traversing the country aided by a strong easterly tailwind, travelling the 210 km to Cheshire in under five hours. It then resurfaced in Wales, more than two weeks later, the sight of it 'attended to' by up to eight Red Kites *Milvus milvus* and a Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo* more than just reward for the party that was 'dipping' on a Rustic Bunting *Emberiza rustica* present the previous day.

In Ireland, an immature eagle *Haliaeetus* at Lough Beg, Co. Londonderry, on 22nd December 1996 was either this species or Bald Eagle *H.leucocephalus* (Northern Ireland Bird Rep. 1996: 38; Irish Birds 6: 71).

Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus* (100, 569, 17)

Dorset Durlston Head, female, 26th September (S.J.Morrison).

Kent Stodmarsh, male, 5th May (D.Tutt).

Leicestershire Kelham Bridge, near Ravenstone, first-summer male, 9th-10th June, photo. (I.Merrill *et al.*).

Norfolk East Ruston, male, 11th-17th May, photo. (J.S.Hampshire, A.J.Kane *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plates 118-120); presumed same, Hickling, 17th-18th (R. & Mrs L.Stimpson). Burnham Norton, male, 14th May (Mr & Mrs M.Stones, R.A.Stroud). Stiffkey, male, age uncertain, 29th May (A.I.Bloomfield, J.R.McCallum). Winterton, female, 8th June (I.N.Smith).

Norfolk/Suffolk Near Herringfleet, first-summer male, 14th May (P.R.Allard).

Northamptonshire Earl's Barton Gravel-pits, first-summer male, 7th-8th June, photo. (P.Britten *et al.*)

Outer Hebrides Balivanich, Benbecula, female, 23rd May (P.R.Boyer).

Oxfordshire Near Merton, female, 23rd to at least 25th June, photo. (B.Batchelor *et al.*).

Suffolk Westleton Heath, first-summer male, 11th May (J.C.Eaton). Minsmere, first-summer male, 14th-18th May (G.R.Welch *et al.*); female, 30th-31st May (D.Fairhurst, P.Green, G.R.Welch *et al.*). See also Norfolk/Suffolk above.

Surrey Near Shamley Green, first-summer male, 3rd July, injured, taken into care, photo., released in good health, Thursley Common, 30th May 1998 (D.M.Harris, Hydestile Wildlife Hospital *et al.*).

Yorkshire, East Spurn, first-summer males, 4th June (J.Cudworth); 7th-8th June, photo. (A.Archer, S.J.Standing).

1992 Lothian Yellow Craig, first-summer male, remains of, 5th July, photo. (A.Bain per I.J.Andrews).

A return to a more-typical series of records, with just one in autumn. The individual in the Outer Hebrides is only the second there, following a male on Benbecula during 16th-21st June 1973 (Brit. Birds 67: 318-319). In the Channel Islands, there was a female at Tourgis Hill, Alderney, on 18th June 1997.

Gyr Falcon *Falco rusticolus* (many, 123, 2)

Orkney Hoy, adult, white phase, 22nd March (S.Dunnet, J.R.L.Hogarth *et al.*).

Outer Hebrides Hirta, St Kilda, white phase, 19th April, photo. (K.Douglas, S.Murray).

IRELAND

1996 Donegal Tory Island, 24th April (Irish Birds 6: 72).

Very predictable in terms of both timing and location. The identification of this species has been well covered by Shirihai, Forsman, Christie & Gale in 'Field identification of large falcons in the West Palearctic' (Brit. Birds 91: 12-35).

Little Crane *Porzana parva* (68, 31, 1)

Kent Bough Beech Reservoir, male, 23rd-30th March, photo. (G.Harris, C. & Mrs M.Langton *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 122).

What was arguably the most appreciated find of the spring departed just before the Bank Holiday, disappointing many would-be observers. Four of the last five records have been in spring, so it is perhaps surprising that the peak month is November, with seven records.

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus* (98, 212, 4)

Avon Oldbury-on-Severn, 17th May (A.J.Middleton).

Caernarfonshire Cors Geirch, Pwllheli, first-year, 28th March to 1st April (R.I.Thorpe, E.Urbanski *et al.*).

Essex Rainham Marsh, first-year, 10th-20th September, photo. (S.Pickering *et al.*).

Norfolk Titchwell, from 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 468), throughout year.

Northamptonshire Earl's Barton Gravel-pits, 15th May, photo. (R.W.Bullock, P.Storr *et al.*).

1995 Essex Hanningfield Reservoir, male, female, 10th May (D.L.Acfield, J.T.Smith, R.Widgery *et al.*).

IRELAND

1987 Roscommon 2 km north of Clonmacnoise, 5th-6th May (Irish Birds 6: 72).

The 1995 Essex birds were additional to the two in the Pitsea and Coryton area on 19th-22nd May (Brit. Birds 89: 497), which were differently marked.

Collared Pratincole *Glareola pratincola* (31, 52, 0)

Lancashire Pilling Lane Ends, 7th July (L.G.Blacow, S.J.Dodgson, A.Sharpley *et al.*).

Norfolk Berney Marshes, 15th-17th May (P.R.Allard *et al.*); also entered Suffolk (per D.J.Holman); same, Burnham Norton, 26th (R.Q.Skeen), Titchwell, 1st-8th June, 6th July, intermittently, 14th-21st, photo. (M.L.Hawkes, S.J.Patient *et al.*), Holme, 9th July (per G.E.Dunmore), Snettisham, 19th (per G.E.Dunmore), also Cley, Holkham. Metton and Felbrigg area, first-winter, 12th-28th October, photo. (N.R. & Miss F.A.Stocks *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 123); also in Suffolk.

Suffolk Corton, 29th September (P.Ransome), presumed same as Norfolk.

1996 Suffolk Dunwich, 8th June (Brit. Birds 90: 468), finder/identifier was B.J.Small.

It is now safe to assume that the adult in Norfolk is that which has put in annual appearances since 1994; the total is therefore adjusted by one to reflect this. As a result, the other two birds become the first 'new blood' since that bird's arrival in 1994.

Black-winged Pratincole *Glareola nordmanni* (5, 26, 1)

Lancashire Martin Mere, 22nd August to 16th September, photo. (H.Shorrock *et al.*).

1996 Cumbria See 1996 Lancashire below.

1996 Lancashire Leighton Moss and Mid Foulshaw area, first-summer, 25th-28th August (Brit. Birds 90: 468), latter locality is in Cumbria; observed either there, Halforth or Arnside Marsh, 25th, 27th, 28th (I.R.Kinley, K.Tate *et al.*).

The longest-stayer ever; it is possible that it was the returning 1996 individual.

Semipalmated Plover *Charadrius semipalmatus* (0, 1, 1)

Devon Dawlish Warren, first-summer, mid April to 21st September, photo. (M.Ahmad, J.E.Fortey, I.W.Lakin, K.Rylands *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plates 106-109).

The long-awaited second, following the juvenile on St Agnes, Scilly, from 9th October to 9th November 1978 (Brit. Birds 73: 458-464). All the above-named observers are to be congratulated for their part in the finding, identification and high standard of submission of this record. The bird's prolonged presence at an accessible mainland site not surprisingly resulted in a mass twitch, and that, combined with the inevitable discussion that ensued, has resulted in a far wider understanding of the identification criteria for this 'difficult' species. In consequence, there will surely not be such a long wait for the next one?

Killdeer Plover *Charadrius vociferus* (91, 47, 0)

IRELAND

1996 Cork Cape Clear Island, first-year, 18th October (Irish Birds 6: 72).

1996 Offaly Shannon Harbour, 16th December (Irish Birds 6: 72).

American Golden Plover *Pluvialis dominica* (3, 206, 5)

Cumbria Bowness-on-Solway, adult, 2nd October, photo. (D.G.H. & Mrs M.West *et al.*).

Lincolnshire South Ferriby and Read's Island, age uncertain, 24th July to 13th August (G.P.Catley *et al.*).

Outer Hebrides North Boisdale, South Uist, juvenile, 2nd-3rd October (L.M. & R.J.Safford *et al.*).

Scilly St Mary's and Tresco, adult, 20th September to 12th October, photo. (J.Reynolds *et al.*). St Martin's, adult, 21st September; same, Tresco, 22nd; same, St Mary's, 23rd-24th (J.Reynolds, W.H.Wagstaff *et al.*).

1978 Kent Grove Ferry, possibly first-year, 29th April to 2nd May (Brit. Birds 75: 500), now accepted as *P.dominica*.

1982 Kent Elmley, adult, 16th-29th May (Brit. Birds 90: 469), now accepted as *P.dominica*, photo.

1995 Yorkshire, South South Anston, 31st August to 6th September (Brit. Birds 89: 498), identifier was M.Thomas.

IRELAND

1991 Kerry Blackrock, juvenile, 27th October (Irish Birds 6: 73).

1996 Cork Inchydoney, two adults, 25th October, one remaining until 29th October, other at Rosscarbery, 27th and 29th October (Irish Birds 6: 73).

1996 Offaly Shannonbridge, adult, 13th September (Irish Birds 6: 73).

1996 Wexford Tacumshin, 26th May, moved to Co. Wicklow, see below. Killag, juvenile, 18th October. (Irish Birds 6: 73)

1996 Wicklow Kilcoole, 6th-8th June, believed to be Tacumshin individual, see 1996 Wexford (Irish Birds 6: 73).

The Committee's review of 'Lesser Golden Plover' records has now been completed.

Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva* (3, 40, 0)

1996 Cambridgeshire Swaffham Prior Fen, first-summer, 14th-27th April, photo. (R.Grimmett, A.Long *et al.*).

The first blank year for a decade. This species shows a very strong bias of adults in late summer/early autumn, that period accounting for 70% of the records. The additional 1996 record is noteworthy, therefore, being only the third spring occurrence, following records in May 1992 and March 1996.

American/Pacific Golden Plover *P.dominica/fulva* (6, 265, 7)

Kent Pegwell Bay, adult, 12th June (D.C.Gilbert).

Suffolk Walberswick, first-summer, 26th May (C.S. & H.Waller).

1978 Kent See American Golden Plover.

1982 Kent See American Golden Plover.

1996 Cornwall Land's End, 28th January (R.Andrew).

The totals include those specifically identified.

White-tailed Lapwing *Vanellus leucurus* (0, 4, 0)

1984 Shropshire Locality withheld, 24th-25th May (Brit. Birds 78: 545; 79: 294), was near Telford.

Semipalmated Sandpiper *Calidris pusilla* (2, 84, 1)

Orkney Deerness, adult, 25th July (K.E.Hague).

IRELAND

1996 Donegal Tory Island, juvenile, 14th-15th September (Irish Birds 6: 73)

1996 Dublin Sandymount, juvenile, 21st-28th August (Irish Birds 6: 73).

1996 Wexford Tacumshin, juvenile, 6th-13th October (Irish Birds 6: 73).

Only the fourth record for the Northern Isles and the third adult, the previous two having been in late spring.

Western Sandpiper *Calidris mauri* (1, 6, 1)

Lothian Musselburgh, first-summer or adult, 9th-25th August, probably since 25th July, photo. (I.J.Andrews *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 125).

IRELAND

1996 Wexford The Cull, adult, 20th-21st August (Irish Birds 6: 73).

This represents only the eighth record, and the sixth for Britain, where the last twitchable birds were way back in 1973. Previous occurrences have been in September (three) and in August (two), with singles in May/June and July. One can fully sympathise with the initial confusion, particularly when one recalls the events of the infamous 'Felixstowe stint' back in 1982 (Brit. Birds 79: 617-621). This bird's true identity became apparent at the British Birdwatching Fair at Rutland Water in August 1997, when a photograph was shown to Killian Mullarney, who noted that the bird had completed its moult into winter plumage, the timing of which was a good two months too early for Semipalmated. Further close examination of the series of photographs revealed bill structure, face pattern, breast pattern and lone primary projecting beyond the longest tertial that confirmed the identification beyond doubt. It is possible that a winter-plumaged stint observed at the site on 12th June was the same bird. The 1996 Irish record is only the second there, following a juvenile at North Slob, Co. Wexford, during 3rd-6th September 1992 (Brit. Birds 86: 478).

Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta* (0, 3, 0)

IRELAND

1996 Cork Ballycotton, 15th-16th June (Irish Birds 6: 73).

Only the third record and the first for Ireland. Previous records were at Marazion, Cornwall, in June 1970 and a juvenile at Saltholme Pool, Cleveland, in August-September 1982 (Brit. Birds 89: 12-24; 85: 429-436).

White-rumped Sandpiper *Calidris fuscicollis* (24, 397, 2)

Norfolk Cley, adult, 9th-14th July (D.H.Russell *et al.*); another adult, 17th-19th (I.K.Johnson *et al.*).

1996 Lothian Aberlady, age uncertain, 25th August (I.M.Thomson).

1996 Norfolk Salthouse, 2nd-8th November (Brit. Birds 90: 471), to 5th only. See also 1996 Suffolk below.

1996 Suffolk Breydon, south shore, adults, 16th July, two 29th (Brit. Birds 90: 471), first date 23rd, not 16th (per D.F.Walsh); locality is in recording area of Suffolk but in administrative county of Norfolk.

IRELAND

1993 Wexford Tacumshin, adult, 8th August (Irish Birds 6: 73).

1995 Wexford Tacumshin, adult, 13th August; adult, 30th August (Irish Birds 6: 73).

1996 Kerry Blackrock, first-winter, 10th-15th October (Irish Birds 6: 73).

1996 Wexford Tacumshin, adult, 3rd-9th August; two adults and four juveniles during 5th-10th October: adult 5th-10th, juvenile 5th-6th, two juveniles 6th-10th, adult and juvenile 8th-10th (Irish Birds 6: 73).

1996 Wicklow Broadlough, adult, 7th September (Irish Birds 6: 73).

The poorest showing since 1992, but this Norfolk duo is thoroughly in keeping with the pattern of this species in Britain & Ireland, a subject which was recently discussed by M.J.Rogers (Brit. Birds 91: 283-285). The multiple occurrence in Co. Wexford in October 1996 is unprecedented, the date and predominance of juveniles further evidence that birds in the West arrive via a more direct, transatlantic route. The additional 1996 records advance the total for last year to a record 26.

Baird's Sandpiper *Calidris bairdii* (4, 196, 8)

Cleveland Coatham Marsh, adult, 10th August (M.A.Blick, M.Corner).

Cornwall Gannel Estuary, age uncertain, 3rd August (S.M.Christophers *et al.*). Hayle, juvenile, 31st August (L.P.Williams *et al.*). Devoran, juvenile, 10th to at least 18th September, photo. (M.May *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 126).

Gwent Llandegfedd Reservoir, juvenile, 26th September to 4th October, photo. (S.D.S.Bosanquet *et al.*).

Norfolk Cantley, juvenile, 30th September to 10th October, photo. (B.Jarvis *et al.*).

Scilly Bryher and Tresco, juvenile, 30th August to 12th September, photo. (B.Thomas *et al.*).

Yorkshire, East Tophill Low, adult, 16th August (T.Dixon, P.W.Izzard *et al.*).

1996 Derbyshire Carsington Water, adult, 23rd July (J.Bradley, S.L.Thorpe).

1996 Kent Sandwich Bay, age uncertain, 4th October (D.Howe) (Brit. Birds 90: 519), now considered acceptable.

IRELAND

1994 Cork Ballycotton, adult, 6th-7th August, juvenile, 27th-28th August (Irish Birds 6: 74).

1994 Kerry Blackrock Strand, juvenile, 3rd-5th September (Irish Birds 6: 74).

1995 Kerry Blackrock Strand, juvenile, 15th-17th September (Brit. Birds 90: 476), also 11th September. Smerwick Harbour, 15th September. (Irish Birds 6: 74)

1996 Clare Quilty, juvenile, 8th-10th October (Irish Birds 6: 74).

1996 Cork Ballycotton, adult, 31st May to 2nd June; juvenile, 25th-31st August (Irish Birds 6: 74).

A return to a more-typical pattern of a predominance of juveniles in the Southwest, but a couple more East Coast adults, indicating that some, at least, arrive via a circuitous route, more in keeping with the preceding species' pattern of vagrancy.

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper *Calidris acuminata* (5, 18, 1)

Cleveland Long Drag Pool, adult, 26th August, photo. (T.Francis *et al.*).

The third record for Cleveland and typically of an adult in what has become the peak month, boasting ten records. As is the case for other Far Eastern wader species, there is a paucity of records of juveniles, there having been only four such records (one in August and three in October).

Broad-billed Sandpiper *Limicola falcinellus* (23, 172, 3)

Kent Cliffe, 31st May, photo. (R.M.Andrews, P.Larkin *et al.*).

Lincolnshire Gibraltar Point, adult, 4th August, video. (M.Anderson, K.Wilson *et al.*).

Norfolk Scolt Head, 3rd-4th June (N.M.Lawton, M.E.S.Rooney).

1996 Norfolk Titchwell, juvenile, 31st August (P.W.Atkinson *et al.*).

IRELAND

1996 Cork Ballycotton, adult, 2nd May (Irish Birds 6: 74).

1996 Down Belfast Harbour Pools, 13th-14th May (Northern Ireland Bird Rep. 1996: 50), not 13th-14th July as given in Irish Birds (6: 74).

1996 Wexford Tacumshin, adult, 19th-20th May (Irish Birds 6: 74).

Another poor showing. Recorded annually since 1972, records of this species reached a peak in the 1980s, averaging nearly nine birds a year, with a record 13 in 1988. Since then, numbers have fallen to just over five per annum in the present decade.

Stilt Sandpiper *Micropalama himantopus* (1, 25, 1)

Suffolk Minsmere, adult, 7th-13th September, photo. (D.Eaton, B.J.Small *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 127).

The first since 1990. There are no surprises with the date or location, and this becomes the third record for that site. This species shows a very strong late-summer/early-autumn bias, arrival dates peaking in August (ten) followed by July (six) and September (five), with just a single in October; the remainder were all in spring (three in April-May). The sole record of a juvenile was in Ireland, in Co. Cork in September 1991.

Common Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

***G. g. delicata* (-, 1, 0)**

IRELAND

1991 Londonderry Coleraine, juvenile, shot, 28th October (Northern Ireland Bird Rep. 1996: 52; Irish Birds 6: 75).

A 'first' for Britain & Ireland and the West Palearctic. The Dutch rarities committee (CDNA) treats this taxon, colloquially known as 'Wilson's Snipe', as specifically distinct from Common Snipe on the basis of differences in morphology, vocalisations and drumming display (Dutch Birding 20: 22-32).

Great Snipe *Gallinago media* (180, 94, 1)

Shetland Fair Isle, 14th September (N.C.Ward).

The poorest showing since 1992, but one further record remains under consideration. Since 1958, 86% of the records have come from the eastern half of Britain and, of those, the Northern Isles account for half. Of the remaining 11 occurrences, five, inexplicably, come from Scilly prior to 1974.

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus* (9, 185, 5)

Breconshire Llangorse Lake, juvenile, 18th-21st October (V.A.King, M.F.Peers *et al.*).

Carmarthenshire Penclacwydd, age uncertain, intermittently, 30th November to 10th December (C.Harper, P.Rollin *et al.*).

Kent Elmley, adult, intermittently, 8th July to 7th December (G.W.Allison *et al.*).

Lothian Gladhouse Reservoir, juvenile, 2nd-8th October, photo. (M.A.Wilkinson *et al.*).

Norfolk Titchwell, adult, 10th June, photo. (R.Kimber, R.Q.Skeen *et al.*).

A fairly typical year. Dowitcher identification and ageing was recently reviewed by Dr R.J.Chandler (Brit. Birds 91: 93-106).

Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis* (12, 86, 2)

Lothian Musselburgh, adult, 18th-19th May, photo. (B.Robertson, G.Thompson *et al.*).

Sussex, East Icklesham and Pett Level, adult, 11th August (P.M.Troake *et al.*).

1994 Flintshire River Clwyd near Rhuddlan, adult, 9th-27th August, photo. (C.Rowley, R.I.Thorpe *et al.*).

Two very typical records in terms of dates; August (27 records) and May (25 records) are the peak months for arrivals. The Lothian individual is only the eighth for Scotland.

Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca* (12, 23, 0)

1996 Devon Braunton, 29th May (A. & Mrs P.Symons, J.Turner *et al.*).

IRELAND

1962 Antrim Bog Meadows, Belfast, 14th-16th April (Irish Bird Rep. 11: 20).

1995 Kerry Tralee Bay, 17th November to 3rd December (Irish Birds 6: 75).

This species has now occurred in every month except June; with this record, May and September are now the peak months for arrival (each with six records). The most popular location is Scilly, with four records, but, surprisingly, there has been only one post-1958 record there, way back in 1975.

Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* (35, 216, 6)

Cornwall Hayle, adult, 28th August to 12th September, photo. (C.C.Barnard *et al.*).

Kent Dungeness, adult, 22nd July to 8th August, photo. (P.G.Akers, C.Westlake *et al.*).

Lancashire Leighton Moss, juvenile, at least 13th September, photo. (J.Leedal, P.Woodruff). Banks and Marshside Marshes and Martin Mere, first-winter, intermittently, 18th October to 1998, photo. (T.Baker, B.Woolley *et al.*); with another first-winter, Banks Marsh, 26th December (P.J.Hornby, R.Jackson *et al.*), there or Martin Mere to 1998 (P.J.Hornby *et al.*).

Wight, Isle of Bembridge, 6th March (D.J.Brazier).

1996 Cheshire Gatewarth, intermittently, 11th-22nd April; same, Houghton Green, 23rd April to 1st May (Brit. Birds 90: 479), at latter locality, 21st April (F.Duff).

IRELAND

1995 Down Comber Estuary, 28th April (Brit. Birds 90: 479) was 28th August.

1996 Cork Lissagriffin, 8th-10th October (Irish Birds 6: 75).

1996 Wexford Ring Marsh, 4th-5th May, presumed same Tacumshin, 19th May to 21st July, presumed same The Cull, 18th August to at least 19th October (Irish Birds 6: 75).

The 'multiple' occurrence in Lancashire is not without precedent, but the only previous instances in Britain were both in 1953: duos in Kent in April and in Greater London/Surrey in September. Such occurrences have been more frequent in Ireland, though, with a record four together at Akeragh, Co. Kerry, in August 1973 (Brit. Birds 67: 322), with further multiples of three (once) and two (four occasions).

Solitary Sandpiper *Tringa solitaria* (6, 23, 0)

None in Britain, but a juvenile at Castel, Guernsey, Channel Islands, during 25th-28th August. The last in Britain was on Fair Isle, Shetland, in September 1992, but a major prize would be a truly twitchable mainland bird, of which the last one was in Cornwall in 1980.

Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus* (3, 44, 1)

Northeast Scotland Loch of Strathbeg, 9th May (S.Bowie, A.Burnett, C.Shaw).

1996 Clyde River Leven, 22nd-30th September (Brit. Birds 90: 479), correct locality was Clyde Estuary, Dumbarton.

IRELAND

1996 Wexford Rosslare Backstrand, adult, 24th August to 26th September (Irish Birds 6: 49-50, 75).

Only the sixth for Scotland, on a classic date. The Co. Wexford record is the first for Ireland.

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularia* (6, 112, 1)

Cleveland Long Drag Pool, juvenile, 16th-29th September, photo. (T.Francis *et al.*).

1975 Highland Locality withheld, pair with nest, four eggs, unsuccessful (Brit. Birds 69: 288-292), was on Skye.

Another poor year, but the last blank was in 1988. This species shows a strong southwesterly bias in Britain, that region accounting for some 35% of the total, so it is perhaps surprising that up to and including 1996 there were only 11 Irish records, representing less than 10% of the total.

Wilson's Phalarope *Phalaropus tricolor* (1, 264, 5)

Caernarfonshire Llanfairfechan, first-winter, 21st October, 3rd November (R.Evans per R.I.Thorpe); same as Flintshire.

Flintshire Point of Air, 24th September to 6th October, photo. (C.Rowley, R.I.Thorpe *et al.*).

Moray & Nairn Findhorn Bay, adult, 11th-12th September (D.M.Pullan *et al.*).

Northumberland Cresswell Pond, juvenile to first-winter, 22nd-27th September, photo. (R.Dodds, I.Fisher *et al.*).

Surrey Staines Reservoirs, first-winter, 5th-13th September, photo. (T.G.Ball, C. & D.K.Lamsdell, D.J.Morris *et al.*).

Yorkshire, East Beacon Ponds, Kilnsea, age uncertain, 2nd September (K.Gillon *et al.*).

1990 Cheshire Burton Marsh, juvenile to first-winter, 5th October (Brit. Birds 87: 529), first noted 2nd.

An average showing for the present decade. There were only 35 records prior to 1970, after which there was a marked increase, peaking in the 1980s, with an average of ten per year including the record year, 1980, when there were 20. Since then, there has been a noticeable slump.

Laughing Gull *Larus atricilla* (2, 79, 7)

Cornwall Drift Reservoir, adult, 22nd April, video. (J.P.Chapple, G.Hobin *et al.*). Maenporth, second-winter, 29th December (R.C.James, A. & C.Mason *et al.*).

Gloucestershire Hempsted, adult, 10th November (J.D.Sanders *et al.*).

Lincolnshire Cleethorpes, adult, 21st October (C.J.McNaghten).

Lothian Musselburgh, adult, 27th April (M.A.Wilkinson).

West Midlands Bartley Reservoir, adult, 12th October (S.Roberts *et al.*).

1996 Devon Portworthy Dam, 13th-21st September (Brit. Birds 90: 483), first noted, Chelston Meadow, 13th, daily to 21st, but roosted at Portworthy Dam (per M.K.Ahmad).

1996 Highland Dornoch, Sutherland, first-summer/second-winter, 13th August to 12th October, photo. (A.Vittery, A.Wight *et al.*).

IRELAND

Armagh Albert Basin, Newry, first-winter, 5th-12th March.

1996 Galway Nimmo's Pier, first-winter, 29th January to 5th February (Irish Birds 6: 77).

1996 Kerry Tralee, first-winter, 8th April to 10th May, presumed same Smerwick Harbour, 4th-5th June (Irish Birds 6: 77).

1996 Londonderry Coleraine, third-winter, 3rd-16th November (Northern Ireland Bird Rep. 1996: 60; Irish Birds 6: 77).

Another good year. The total for 1996 moves on to 11, equalling the previous record year of 1984.

Franklin's Gull *Larus pipixcan* (0, 33, 1)

Cornwall Gannel Estuary, Newquay, adult, 18th-20th November (S.M.Christophers *et al.*).

First recorded in Britain as recently as 1970 (Brit. Birds 64: 310-314), this species maintains its status as a true rarity. Despite that, it has been recorded in all but three years since 1980. There is no real pattern geographically, though a distinct peak exists in terms of 'arrivals', with two-thirds of the records falling in the period May-August. The theory that direct transatlantic vagrancy is unlikely is perhaps confirmed by its status in Ireland: a single record up to 1996 (in May 1993).

Bonaparte's Gull *Larus philadelphia* (11, 89, 3)

Cornwall Drift Reservoir, adult, 12th February (G.Hobin). Swanpool, Falmouth, first-winter, 22nd December (R.C.James); same, Maenporth, 22nd (J.P.Chapple).

Fife Kingsbarns Beach and Cambo Sands area, adult, 18th August to 12th September, photo. (R.A.Lambert, Dr J.Wilson *et al.*).

1996 Devon Plym Estuary, first-winter, present, 28th April to 5th May (Brit. Birds 90: 484), finder/identifier was M.K.Ahmad.

IRELAND

1996 Londonderry Roe Estuary, adult, 19th October to 3rd November (Brit. Birds 90: 484), stayed until 17th November.

Two very typical records, but the Fife individual becomes only the seventh for the Scottish mainland.

Ring-billed Gull *Larus delawarensis* (0, 1799, -)

1987 Sussex, East The Crumbles, Eastbourne, first-summer, 6th June (Brit. Birds 81: 564), now withdrawn by observer.

Records of this species were considered by the Committee only until 1987, but those for the earlier period are still assessed and listed here.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

***L. a. smithsonianus* (9, 19, 2)**

Scilly St Mary's, first-winter, intermittently, 18th December to at least 6th April 1998, photo. (W.H.Wagstaff *et al.*).

At sea Sea area Rockall, 57° 43'N 12° 24'W, juvenile/first-winter, 11th September, photo. (R.W.White).

IRELAND

Antrim North Foreshore Tip, Belfast, juvenile/first-winter, 15th February.

1996 Cork Ballycotton, second-winter, 31st August to 1st September (Irish Birds 6: 80).

1996 Louth Clogher Head, second-winter, 27th December (Irish Birds 6: 80).

Only the third and fourth records for Britain, following first-winters in Cheshire/Merseyside in February-March 1994 and in Merseyside in March 1995 (Brit. Birds 89: 504). With the recent plethora of papers/articles devoted to the taxonomy and field identification of the 'large white-headed gull complex', we can expect to see a steady increase in the number of claims of many forms of 'Herring Gull'. The identification of the North American form *L.a.smithsonianus* has been dealt with by Killian Mullarney (Birding World 3: 96-100) and Dr Philippe J. Dubois (Brit. Birds 90: 314-324). Some authorities, notably the Dutch rarities committee (CDNA), treat this taxon as specifically distinct from Herring Gull *L.argentatus*, on the basis of differences in morphology and vocalisations (Dutch Birding 20: 22-32).

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*

***L. g. kumlieni* (1, 54, 5)**

Derbyshire Ogston Reservoir, adult, 27th January (S.L.Thorpe).

Lancashire Marshside Marsh, adult, 5th March (Dr B.McCarthy).

Shetland Lerwick, second-winter, 26th January (K.Blomerly, P.M.Ellis, P.V.Harvey *et al.*); adult, 22nd October (P.V.Harvey). Scatness, adult, 21st December (P.M.Ellis, P.V.Harvey, J.D.Okill).

IRELAND

1994 Kerry Blennerville, adult, 8th March (Irish Birds 6: 80).

1996 Donegal Kilcar, third-year, 21st February. Killybegs, adult, 8th March. (Irish Birds 6: 80)

The first British record concerns a third-winter female in Shetland on 24th November 1869; this specimen is retained at the British Museum, Tring (Brit. Birds 88: 23; Ibis 140: 182).

Ross's Gull *Rhodostethia rosea* (2, 73, 5)

Northeast Scotland Kinnairds Head, adult, 31st January to 10th February, photo. (K. & Mrs L.Buchan, A.Webb *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 112).

Northumberland Black Middens, Tynemouth and Druridge Bay area, adult, 2nd May to 1st June (C.Bradshaw *et al.*).

Orkney North Ronaldsay, first-winter, 2nd October (M.Gray); adult, 16th November (M.Gray *et al.*). Point of Ayre, Deerness, adult, 22nd November (K.E.Hague); possibly same as North Ronaldsay.

IRELAND

1995 Galway Galway Docks, adult, 27th January to 1st February (Irish Birds 6: 81).

A return to better fortunes after the poor showing last year. In the past two decades, the only blank year was 1990.

Ivory Gull *Pagophila eburnea* (76, 40, 1)

Northeast Scotland Kinnairds Head, first-winter, 24th-25th October, photo. (D.Gill, J.Hamper, A.Rigg *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plates 104 & 105).

Since 1958, there has been only one record of a first-winter earlier in the year, at Burry Port, Carmarthenshire, during 10th-12th October 1988 (Brit. Birds 83: 466).

Gull-billed Tern *Sterna nilotica* (52, 206, 6)

Essex Holland Haven, 16th May (M.L.Hawkes, K.Marsden, N.F.Pepper).

Shropshire Venus Pool, 19th May (A.Matthews).

Somerset Dunster Beach and Bilbrook, first-winter, 4th-5th October, photo. (J.White *et al.*).

Suffolk Landguard, two, 1st May (N.Odin).

Wight, Isle of St Catherine's Point, adult, 5th August (J.C.Gloyn); presumed same, 11th (M.J.Sparshott).

1996 Gower Whiteford Sands, adult or second-summer, 14th September (D.Lewis, P.Parsons); presumed same as Carmarthenshire, Gower, intermittently, 4th July to 17th August (Brit. Birds 90: 486), also in Ireland (see below).

IRELAND

1996 Wexford Tacumshin, second-summer or adult, 18th August, same, Rosslare Backstrand, 25th August to 1st September (Irish Birds 6: 81), regarded as same as individual in Gower and Carmarthenshire, south Wales, during 4th July to 17th August and 14th September (Brit. Birds 90: 486 and above).

The numbers breeding in Denmark have declined to single figures in the 1990s (DOFT 90: 73; 91: 101-108).

Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia* (30, 212, 4)

Cornwall Stithians Reservoir, 28th July (G.Cockhill); presumed same, Penzance, 4th August (C.B.Cole).

Glamorgan Kenfig, 6th August (N.Donaghy).

Kent Pegwell Bay and Stodmarsh, 1st-2nd August, photo. (D.Feast, D.C.Gilbert, P.Milton *et al.*).

Norfolk Breydon, 30th July (S.Smith *et al.*).

1996 Suffolk Minsmere, two, 3rd-10th June (Brit. Birds 90: 487), also 11th (per D.F.Walsh).

A fairly average year and very typical dates. Amazingly, the Stithians Reservoir record is the first for Cornwall.

Lesser Crested Tern *Sterna bengalensis* (0, 7, 0)

Northumberland Farne Islands, returning female of 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 487), 3rd May to 31st July, photo., again paired with Sandwich Tern *S.sandvicensis*, incubating by 25th May, one egg hatched 10th June, young fledged by 8th July, colour-ringed young seen La Paracou, near Sables d'Olonne, Vendée, France, 23rd September (per B.N.Rossiter).

1993 Norfolk Scolt Head, 10th July, present 8th-15th, 21st (Brit. Birds 87: 533), probably male, now considered additional to Farne Islands individual (J.R.Williamson *et al.*).

1995 Cleveland Hartlepool, 15th July (Brit. Birds 89: 507), also Seaton Snook (M.Thomas).

1996 Kent Pegwell Bay, 22nd August (J.N.Hollyer, P.Milton, B.E.Wright *et al.*).

IRELAND

1996 Cork Ballycotton, adult, 7th-8th August (Irish Birds 6: 81), perhaps same as individual in Scilly on 2nd-4th August (Brit. Birds 90: 487).

It is perhaps worth noting that, of the four hybrid young that are known to have fledged - in 1989, 1992, 1996 and 1997 - the 1996 individual bears a red colour ring on each leg in addition to a BTO ring on the right leg, whilst the 1997 individual bears a yellow colour ring on the left leg with a red colour ring and a BTO ring on the right leg. In 1996, the breeding female, 'Elsie', stayed until 13th August, so the Kent record may have been of her. The Co. Cork record is the first for Ireland.

Forster's Tern *Sterna forsteri* (0, 27, 0)

IRELAND

1986 Dublin North Bull Island, adult, 16th November 1985 to February 1986 (Brit. Birds 79: 557; 80: 545), stayed until 14th March (Irish Birds 6: 81).

1996 Galway Nimmo's Pier, adult, 21st February to 24th May, same 20th October into 1997 (Irish Birds 6: 81).

Sooty Tern *Sterna fuscata* (16, 10, 0)

1989 Fife Isle of May, 14th July, photo. (Dr M.P.Harris, S.J.Holloway, R.Proctor).

At the time, the Committee's statement was that, despite hours of study, no firm decision could be reached concerning whether this species or Bridled Tern *S.anaethetus* was involved (Brit. Birds 87: 533). Interpretation of the features shown on a submitted photograph was far from straightforward, and the whole situation was compounded by the presence of an undoubted Bridled Tern at Hauxley and Seaton Sluice, Northumberland, just two days later (Brit. Birds 83: 468). It was, however, the unanimous view of the present members of the Committee that the submitted descriptions left no doubts that a correct identification had been made at the time and that the photograph, though not conclusively confirming the identification, in no way detracted from it. The presence of both species along the same stretch of coastline within days of each other is not without precedent: in July 1984, a Sooty Tern in Kent and East Sussex (Brit. Birds 78: 559) was followed by a Bridled Tern in Dorset (Brit. Birds 78: 557) just two days later.

Whiskered Tern *Chlidonias hybrida* (20, 101, 2)

Cambridgeshire Buckden Gravel-pits, Huntingdonshire, 2nd May (J.S.Clark, G.D.Elliott).

Norfolk Cley, 20th June (L. & M.Cunningham, A.Jowett) (Brit. Birds 91: page 480 fig. 4).

Two very typical records in the peak period for this species. The East Anglian region has accounted for nearly one quarter of the total. In the Channel Islands, there was one at St Ouen's Pond, Jersey, during 19th-20th May 1997.

White-winged Black Tern *Chlidonias leucopterus* (50, 664, 14)

Cornwall Polkerris, adult, 10th July (R.Lane).

Derbyshire Barbrook Reservoir, juvenile, 29th August (J.Atkin).

Essex Abberton Reservoir, juvenile, 7th September (C.McClure, S.D.Wood).

Fife Kinghorn, juvenile, 24th August (D.Ogilvie).

Highland Loch Maree, Wester Ross, adult, 26th May (C.Donald, D.Miller, E.Stuart).

Kent Cliffe, adult, 23rd June (P.Larkin, D.Mercer). Stodmarsh, adult, 24th August (D.Feast, J.Veal).

Norfolk Holkham, adult, 7th June (J.Lansdell *et al.*). Eccles-on-Sea, juvenile, 6th October (A.J.Kane). Sheringham, adult, 19th October (D.H.Sadler, T.Wright, M.Young-Powell); same, Salthouse, 19th October (G.E.Dunmore, D.J.Scott *et al.*); same, Cley, 19th October (R.Bradbury *et al.*).

Northeast Scotland Rattray and Loch of Strathbeg, adult, 18th May (A.J.Leitch *et al.*).

Pembrokeshire Strumble Head, adult, 15th October (S.Berry, G.H.Rees).

Somerset Cheddar Reservoir, juvenile, 7th September (T.Raven).

Yorkshire, East Hornsea Mere, juvenile, 21st August (Dr T.E.Giles); present, 18th-27th.

1967 Shropshire Willey Park, adult, 10th May (E.G.Phillips, J.P.Pullman).

1996 Cumbria Longtown, juvenile, 30th August to 6th September (Brit. Birds 90: 488), first noted 25th.

1996 Essex Abberton Reservoir, juvenile, 6th-11th August (T.J.Mendham *et al.*).

1996 Oxfordshire Farmoor Reservoir, juvenile, 24th August (J.Baker *et al.*).

1996 Wight, Isle of Cowes, adult, 28th September (D.J.Hughes).

IRELAND

1996 Dublin Swords Estuary, adult, 4th-7th August (Irish Birds 6: 81).

Oddly, the unprecedented influx that affected Denmark and Sweden in mid May 1997 (Brit. Birds 91: 248) was not reflected in Britain.

Brünnich's Guillemot *Uria lomvia* (2, 31, 1)

Shetland Fetlar, 26th-30th December (T.G. & J.Davies, D.Suddaby).

Amazingly, this very rare species has been recorded in all but two years since 1976. Although a large proportion of the total (18 records to date) is accounted for by corpses, nine of the last ten records have involved live birds: when will one stay for more than one day at an accessible mainland site?

Eurasian Scops Owl *Otus scops* (64, 24, 1)

Argyll Scarinish, Tiree, killed by cat, 6th April, photo., specimen now at National Museum of Scotland (Mrs E.Roberton, M.Williamson *et al.*).

This individual continues the rather sad saga of Scops Owls in Britain, so many of which (nine out of 21) have been found injured or dead.

Snowy Owl *Nyctea scandiaca* (many, 122, 3)

Highland Drumochter, Badenoch & Strathspey, male, 9th July, photo. (J.I.R.Martin, M.Ovall) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 153).

Outer Hebrides Mangersta, Lewis, male, 29th May to 19th June (C.Ryan *et al.*); presumed same, Drimsdale, South Uist, at least 28th June (B.Rabbitts, J.Shotton *et al.*).

Shetland Fetlar, female, 22nd March to 19th April (D.Suddaby, T.Thomason *et al.*).

1972, 1973, 1974 Outer Hebrides Localities withheld (Brit. Birds 66: 344; 67: 328; 69: 364); see original references for details. All related to Barvas Moor and Machair, Lewis.

1996 Highland Ben Macdui area, second-year male, 17th, 25th August (Brit. Birds 90: 489), previously noted 8th July (A.Amphlett), 28th July (I.Rowlands *et al.*).

IRELAND

1996 Mayo Inishkea North, 2nd February (Irish Birds 6: 82).

Three traditional venues. It is now six years since one graced England with its presence.

Alpine Swift *Tachymarptis melba* (150, 382, 10)

Dorset Weston, Portland, 27th May (G.Walbridge). Durlston Country Park, 29th July (C.E.Richards *et al.*).

Hampshire Hook-with-Warsash, 26th May (D.Treacher).

Northumberland Seahouses, 30th May (J.Walton).

Sussex, East Beachy Head, two, 17th May (J.Bujok, R.J.Fairbank).

Sussex, West Worthing, 14th May (P.James).

Worcestershire Cookley, 28th April (B.Westwood).

Yorkshire, East Hornsea, 4th May (N.Calbrade, P.J.Precey *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: page 499 figs. 5 & 6).

Yorkshire, South/West Bretton Park, 28th April (N.W.Addey, G.Taylor).

1996 Caernarfonshire Conwy River, 21st April (S.Dixon, I.Higginson).

1996 Cornwall Nanquidno, 12th June (K.A.Wilson).

A moderate showing only.

Pallid Swift *Apus pallidus* (1, 10, 1)

Norfolk Mundesley, 28th August (M.Fischer).

The first to be found in Britain in August, though one was in Ireland in August 1993 (Irish Birds 87: 541). This does little to establish a clear occurrence pattern, with records now falling in May, July, August, October and November.

Little Swift *Apus affinis* (0, 10, 3)

Dorset Hengistbury Head, 5th June (E.D.Lloyd).

Shetland Fetlar, 29th May (J. & T.G.Davies, D.Suddaby).

Wight, Isle of Bembridge and Foreland, 5th May, photo. (D. & M.Hunnybun, K.Turner *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plates 102 & 103); same, Brading Marsh area, 6th (J.V.Brighten, R.C. & Mrs S.M.Newell *et al.*).

A record three in a year, and the first opportunity for many to catch up with this diminutive swift. There seems no valid reason to link the Dorset and Shetland records with that on the Isle of Wight. With six records out of 12, May is now emerging as the best month for this species.

Blue-cheeked Bee-eater *Merops superciliosus* (2, 5, 1)

Shetland Bressay, Asta, Tingwall Valley and Lerwick area, 20th June to 3rd July, photo. (B.Anderson, P.Goddard, R.Johnson *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 128).

The seventh record of this exquisite species, all but one of which have been found in June or July.

European Roller *Coracias garrulus* (135, 92, 2)

Dumfries & Galloway Lochaber Loch, 14th June (A.W.Reid *et al.*); present, 3rd to 30th, photo. (Brit. Birds 91: plate 129).

Hampshire Locality in New Forest, 25th May (E.J.Wiseman).

1984 Man, Isle of Locality between Port St Mary and Port Erin, dead in water trough, about 20th June, photo. (S.Collister per M.Wright).

Two in a year is about average by recent standards. Details of an occurrence on the Isle of Wight had not yet been received by mid September 1998.

Calandra Lark *Melanocorypha calandra* (0, 5, 2)

Man, Isle of Langness, 17th-18th May, photo. (A.Kaye, J.Kneen, C.Sharpe *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 130).

Norfolk Scolt Head, 19th May (J.Brown, N.M.Lawton, M.E.S.Rooney).

After the comment in last year's Report, another finally does reach mainland Britain, providing the first accepted record for the Southeast for a species which had previously shown a distinct westerly bias. These two represent the fifth and sixth British records and are the first to occur in May, April having previously been the favoured month.

Red-rumped Swallow *Hirundo daurica* (7, 298, 15)

Dorset Blacknor Point, Portland, 27th May (G.Walbridge).

Essex Hanningfield Reservoir, 29th April (J.T.Smith *et al.*).

Kent New Hythe, 8th May (M.R.Garwood *et al.*). Cliffe, 10th May (R.C.Peters).

Lothian Tynninghame, 18th-20th May (Dr M. & Mrs B.D.Griffin, S.A.Maxwell *et al.*).

Norfolk Holme, 4th May (M.McCarthy *et al.*). Breydon, 17th November (P.R.Allard).

Outer Hebrides Eochar, South Uist, 21st-22nd June, photo. (S.R.B. & Mrs L.Thompson *et al.*).

Oxfordshire Farmoor Reservoir, 8th-12th May, photo. (N.J.Hallam *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 143).

Shetland Loch of Spiggie, 18th-21st May (P.M.Ellis, P.V.Harvey *et al.*).

Suffolk Livermere, 8th-9th May (J.Walsh *et al.*).

Surrey Guildford, 6th-7th, 11th-12th May (J.Gates *et al.*).

Sussex, East Beachy Head, 2nd May (P.D.Lanaway *et al.*).

Sussex, West Pagham Harbour, 2nd September (T.J.Edwards).

Wight, Isle of West High Down, 13th May (G.R. & M.J.Sparshott).

A typical spread of records, with no exceptionally early arrivals and, for the second year running, only one in the typical late-autumn slot. The West Sussex individual is more notable, as early-autumn occurrences are distinctly rare.

Cliff Swallow *Hirundo pyrrhonota* (0, 6, 0)

1996 Sussex, West Church Norton, juvenile, 1st October (T.J.Edwards).

This now becomes the earliest date, nine days earlier than the first British record, in Scilly in October 1983 (Brit. Birds 77: 37; 80: 550; 81: 449-452, 686). A Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia* was found at Beachy Head, East Sussex, the next day (Brit. Birds 90: 509).

Olive-backed Pipit *Anthus hodgsoni* (1, 201, 5)

Devon Brixham, 18th January to 9th April, photo. (M.R.Langman, N.Smallbones *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 131).

Kent Minster, 31st October (K.Thornton).

Scilly Tresco, 23rd October (R.A.Filby, T.Francis, D.Page).

Shetland Fair Isle, 26th September to 1st October, photo. (Dr R.Riddington, R.I.Thorpe, J.Young *et al.*); another, 27th September (J.M.Reid).

1993 Yorkshire, North Hawkser, 31st October (Brit. Birds 90: 493), locality is Hawksker.

A fourth poor year for this species, which produced some impressive influxes in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The wintering individual echoes those at Bracknell, Berkshire, in 1984 (Brit. Birds 77: 226,268,430-431) and Pitsea, Essex, in 1994 (Brit. Birds 88: 529).

Pechora Pipit *Anthus gustavi* (13, 50, 1)

Shetland Fair Isle, 26th-29th September, photo. (I.Foster, R.Taylor *et al.*).

IRELAND

1990 Cork Garinish, Firkeel, 27th-28th September (Irish Birds 6: 50-52, 83).

With only one occurrence, classic in both date and location, this is a reversal of the recent modest upward trend. The Co. Cork record is the first for Ireland.

Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus* (30, 328, 11)

Kent Dungeness, 19th October (W.Attridge).

Norfolk Waxham, 28th April (G.J.Etherington). Blakeney Point, 3rd-4th May (M.I.Eldridge, A.M.Stoddart *et al.*). Sheringham, 18th-19th May, photo. (K.B. & Mrs R.Shepherd *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 132).

Northumberland Farne Islands, 28th September (N.Williams).

Orkney Waulkmill Bay, West Mainland, 19th May (T.Dean, Mrs J.Robinson-Dean). North Ronaldsay, 30th September (M.Gray).

Scilly St Mary's, 29th-30th October (P.Trodd *et al.*).

Shetland Fair Isle, 14th May (Dr R.Riddington *et al.*). Foula, 20th May (A.R.Mainwood). Out Skerries, 24th May (P.Crockett, I.Gordon, E.Tait).

1995 Sussex, West Littlehampton, 23rd April (B.Akinola). Church Norton, 11th October (T.J.Edwards).

Would-be claimants of 'fly-overs' of this highly mobile species are reminded that a pipit must be seen and a full account given of preferably three or more calls by an observer with prior experience of the species.

Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola* (2, 102, 8)

Cornwall Maer Lake, Bude, male, 3rd-4th May, photo. (L.Dingain, C.Townend, S.Woods *et al.*).

Lancashire Newton Marsh, Ribble Estuary, female, 4th-7th May, photo. (P.Bainbridge, A. & L.Parnell *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 133).

Orkney North Ronaldsay, first-winter, 26th-28th September; another first-winter, 28th-29th (P.J.Donnely, S.D.Stansfield).

Scilly St Mary's, first-winter, 4th-8th September, photo. (M.S.Scott *et al.*); presumed same, St Agnes, 5th (N.Wheatley).

Shetland Sumburgh, first-winter, 21st August (P.M.Ellis *et al.*). Fair Isle, first-winter, 27th September to 1st October, photo. (M.Ponsford, Dr R.Riddington, K.E.Vinicombe *et al.*); first-winter, 28th October to 1st November (J.M.Reid *et al.*).

1996 Cornwall Porthgwarra, female, 14th May (G.G.Gynn, J.Lawman, D.Lewis).

1996 Hampshire Farlington Marshes, first-summer male, 6th July to 6th September, photo. (M.L.Hawkes, D.G.Hobern *et al.*).

1996 Northamptonshire Pitsford Reservoir, age uncertain, 15th-18th November (M.R.Alibone *et al.*).

1996 Shetland Foula, first-winter, 26th August (A.R.Mainwood).

Another good year with, as is becoming increasingly the norm, appearances in spring as well as the more usual scatter of records. Scilly in early autumn retains its current reliability for the species. In the Channel Islands, a juvenile was at La Claire Mare, Guernsey, on 19th August.

Cedar Waxwing *Bombycilla cedrorum* (0, 2, 0)

The record of one on Noss, Shetland, on 25th-26th June 1985, originally placed in Category D (Brit. Birds 86: 538), is now regarded as having related to a genuine vagrant and therefore precedes the Nottinghamshire bird of 20th February to 18th March 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 495) as the first record for Britain & Ireland (Ibis 140: 182).

Alpine Accentor *Prunella collaris* (29, 10, 1)

Pembrokeshire Strumble Head, 30th October, photo. (S. & Mrs S.Davies).

With five records in the 1970s, none in the 1980s and now a further five in the 1990s, this species remains as rare and unpredictable as ever, though this record does echo the occurrences in Scilly on 30th October to 9th November 1977 (Brit. Birds 71: 515) and in Cornwall on 4th November 1990 (Brit. Birds 84: 482).

Thrush Nightingale *Luscinia luscinia* (2, 120, 6)

Cleveland Hartlepool Headland, in song, 18th-19th May, photo. (R.C.Taylor *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 134).

Shetland Fair Isle, three: adult, 24th-30th May, trapped 29th (I.A.Dillon, Dr R.Riddington *et al.*); first-summer, 7th-10th June, trapped 7th, photo. (Dr R.Riddington *et al.*); probable first-summer, trapped, 26th (Dr R.Riddington, Mrs P.Thompson *et al.*).

Suffolk Hollesley, in song, 26th May to 1st June, sound-recorded (P.R.Catchpole, S.H.Piotrowski, R.West *et al.*). Landguard, 28th-29th September (S.Babbs, J.Dixon, S.J.Ling *et al.*).

Very much an average showing by recent standards, with some entirely typical dates and locations.

Rufous Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos*

L. m. africana/hafizi (0, 2, 0)

1991 Yorkshire, East Spurn, 6th-14th October, trapped 6th, photo, (J.Cudworth, B.R.Spence *et al.*).

The only previous documented and accepted record relates to one found dead on Fair Isle, Shetland, on 30th October 1971 (Brit. Birds 65: 341; 73: 519). The Spurn bird, by virtue of the strength of its supercilium and its biometrics, showed characters closer to *hafizi*.

Siberian Rubythroat *Luscinia calliope* (0, 1, 1)

Dorset Osmington Mills, first-winter male, 19th October, photo. (I.R.Hunt *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 135).

For many, probably the bird of the year, coming 22 years after the first, on Fair Isle, Shetland, in October 1975 (Brit. Birds 69: 346; 71: 516; 72: 89-94), though hot on the heels of more recent appetite-whetters on the Continent. The coincidence of date with the next species is noteworthy. There must be hope that the wait for the next one will not be so long.

Red-flanked Bluetail *Tarsiger cyanurus* (3, 13, 1)

Leicestershire Near Loughborough, first-winter, trapped 19th October, photo. (observers' names withheld) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 136).

A superb mist-net find of this delightful but retiring species, entirely typical in date, but the first inland record and a quality addition to the Leicestershire list. The observers did want to release the news at the time, but the landowner on whose property the ringing site is located apologetically declined permission.

Common Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

S. t. maura/stejnegeri (1, 254, 5)

Caernarfonshire Bardsey, female or first-winter, 29th October (A.F.Silcocks).

Norfolk Blakeney Point, first-summer male, 21st-23rd May (S.C.Joyner, A.M.Stoddart).

Pembrokeshire Strumble Head, female or first-winter, 6th October (C.Benson, G.H.Rees).

Shetland Fair Isle, female or first-winter, 6th November (Dr R.Riddington *et al.*). Fetlar, male, age uncertain, 8th-9th November (J. & T.G.Davies, D.Suddaby).

1993 Yorkshire, North Whitby, male, 10th-13th May, photo. (T.J.Barker, R.S.Slack, A.White *et al.*).

1995 Shetland Haroldswick, Unst, female or first-winter, 21st September (G.H., W.F. & W.R.H.Peplow). Norwick, Unst, female, 2nd to at least 3rd October (Brit. Birds 89: 515), was male.

1996 Norfolk Holme, male, 18th May, photo. (Dr I.Burrows, P.Lambley *et al.*). Ongar Hill, female or first-winter, 18th September (P.M.Wilson).

Another extremely poor year, in contrast to the high numbers of the late 1980s and early 1990s. The proportion of spring records continues to climb, with May records on the East Coast emerging as a clear pattern. A female or first-winter on St Martin's, Guernsey, Channel Islands, on 12th October (Brit. Birds 90: 496) was actually in 1995, not 1996 as stated.

Isabelline Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina* (1, 11, 2)

Caernarfonshire Bardsey, first-winter, 20th-21st September, photo. (A.F.Silcocks *et al.*).

Pembrokeshire Skokholm, first-winter, 24th-26th September, photo. (D.J.Astins, T.J.Price, G.Thompson *et al.*).

1996 Kent Church Hougham and Abbotcliffe, 6th October, photo. (J.A.Gibson, I.A.Roberts *et al.*).

Initially, there was some speculation as to whether the two Welsh records involved the same bird moving south, but the Skokholm individual had a complete set of replaced tertials whereas that on Bardsey did not.

Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe pleschanka* (3, 32, 4)

Lancashire Seaforth, male, 27th October, photo. (C.Sharratt, S.J.White *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 137).

Norfolk Sheringham, female, 20th October (K.B.Shepherd *et al.*).

Northumberland Seahouses, male, 29th October (J.Brown, A.Upton *et al.*).

Yorkshire, East Kilnsea, female, 21st-28th October; same, Spurn, 24th-25th, photo. (M.Askew, K.Gillon, L.Sollitt *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 138).

A distinct late-October influx. The Lancashire individual was only the second to penetrate to the West Coast (though three have occurred in Ireland).

Black-eared Wheatear *Oenanthe hispanica* (15, 39, 2)

Scilly St Agnes, male, *O.h.hispanica*, 5th-6th May, photo. (J.W.Hale, M.S.Scott, N.E.Wall, N.C.Ward *et al.*).

Shetland Fair Isle, first-summer male, *O.h.melanoleuca*, 17th July to 8th September (N.J.Riddiford, Dr R.Riddington, J.Watt *et al.*).

This species continues to resist attempts to define neat and predictable patterns of occurrence. The Shetland bird, which was remarkably elusive during periods of its prolonged stay, was only the second ever July arrival, the first having been in Caithness in 1969 (Brit. Birds 63: 284). Recent taxonomic interest in separating the *hispanica* and *melanoleuca* forms will doubtless lead to particularly close scrutiny of future individuals.

Desert Wheatear *Oenanthe deserti* (11, 43, 17)

Avon Near Clevedon, male, 19th November, photo. (R.Hunt, J.J.Packer *et al.*).

Cornwall Loe Bar, female, 28th November to 3rd December (S.Bury, R.Kemp *et al.*). Hannaford, male, 3rd-12th December (R.M.Belringer *et al.*).

Devon Beesands, male, 25th-26th October, photo. (G. & L.Carr *et al.*). Prawle Point, male, 29th-30th November (I.W.Lakin, J.C.Nicholls *et al.*).

Dorset Studland Heath, first-winter male, 5th-6th March, photo. (P.Chandler, S.J.Morrison *et al.*).

Gloucestershire Bishop's Cleeve, male, 10th December (P.H.Dymott, J.D.Sanders, T.Wright).

Kent Dungeness, male, 16th-17th October, photo. (R.Fowling *et al.*). Reculver, male, 8th-10th November, photo. (P.Bearat, D.C.Gilbert, C.Hindle *et al.*).

Lothian Thorntonloch area, female, 9th-13th November, photo. (K.Gillon, C.Scott *et al.*). Musselburgh, female, 1st December to 4th January 1998, photo. (A.Robinson *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 139).

Norfolk Snettisham, female, 7th-12th December, photo. (R.L.Harris, S.Taylor *et al.*).

Northeast Scotland Girdleness, male, 7th November (H.I.Scott *et al.*).

Northumberland Holy Island, male, 20th, 30th November (G.Moody per P.R.Davey). Bamburgh, male, 10th-15th December, photo. (S.Bloomfield *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 140).

Pembrokeshire Skokholm, female, 12th December (T.Purcell, G.Thompson).

Sussex, East Beachy Head, male, 30th November to 5th December, photo. (D.Cooper *et al.*).

An astonishing record influx, easily beating the five in 1994, in a phenomenon which was not confined to Britain. Its cause, however, may forever remain a mystery. The majority of the males were submitted as first-winters. Although this may well have been correct, it has to be remembered that adults undergo a complete post-breeding moult, as a result of which ear-coverts, chin and throat show pale fringes and are not readily distinguishable from those of first-winter plumage.

White's Thrush *Zoothera dauma* (29, 19, 1)

Shetland Foula, 29th September (A.R.Mainwood, J.Vaughan).

After a gap of three years, a return visit by this beautiful forest thrush. The late-September date and the remote location continue the recent pattern, though the older records exhibit a wider range of dates and venues.

Dusky Thrush *Turdus naumanni* (1, 8, 1)

Greater London South Woodford, first-winter, *T.n.naumanni*, 6th-11th January (Dr C.D. & Dr K.M.Whitfield) (Brit. Birds 91: page 504 fig. 7).

Consorting with Redwings *T.ilicacus* on an area of rough ground and, remarkably, only a few kilometres from the famous Woodford Green individual of 19th January to 9th March 1990 (Brit. Birds 83: 323). Although it went to a recirculation, the Committee finally concluded that there could be no doubt that the identification was correct. It is now ten years since the last individual of the race *eunomus* occurred in Britain.

Dark-throated Thrush *Turdus ruficollis* (3, 37, 3)

Derbyshire Hollingwood, first-winter male, *T.r.atrogularis*, 3rd January to 24th February, photo. (B.Hill *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 141).

Shetland Fetlar, first-winter female, *T.r.atrogularis*, 8th October (S.Croft, T.G. & J.Davies, D.Suddaby *et al.*). Bressay, first-winter female, *T.r.atrogularis*, 10th October, photo. (P.Goddard).

Further examples of what has become a clear recent pattern: autumn arrival, largely in the Northern Isles, followed by suburban wintering.

Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella certhiola* (3, 14, 4)

Shetland Fair Isle, first-winter, trapped 24th September, photo. (J.M.Reid, Dr R.Riddington *et al.*); 14th October (J.M.Reid, Dr R.Riddington, S.C.Votier). Sumburgh, 27th September, photo. (P.M.Ellis, S.Reeves *et al.*). Kergord, first-winter, 28th-30th September, trapped 28th, photo. (P.V.Harvey, K.Osborn, P.Sclater *et al.*).

1996 Shetland Fair Isle, juvenile or first-winter, trapped 17th September (Brit. Birds 90: 498), was not trapped.

Four in a year is the best ever, but Shetland retains its grip on what is still a major rarity.

Lanceolated Warbler *Locustella lanceolata* (9, 61, 4)

Caernarfonshire Bardsey, first-winter, trapped 27th September (P.Durnell, P.Potts, A.F.Silcocks).

Shetland Fair Isle, 26th September (J.M.Reid *et al.*); another, 27th, photo. (J.F.McConnell *et al.*).

Suffolk Landguard, trapped 26th September (A.D.Mitchell *et al.*).

The Northern Isles monopoly on this species seems to be well and truly breaking down, with a remarkable third occurrence for Bardsey and the third for East Anglia. Fair Isle does, however, retain its status as the prime locality. The almost simultaneous arrival of these individuals is noteworthy; how many more were there between these widely separate locations?

River Warbler *Locustella fluviatilis* (0, 26, 1)

Buckinghamshire Linford Gravel-pits, in song, 15th-16th June (R.D.Andrews, A.V.Harding, J.R.Wallington *et al.*).

1996 Northumberland Big Waters Country Park, in song, 2nd August (I.Fisher, A.H.Johnstone *et al.*).

The additional 1996 record could just possibly have related to the same individual as that present near Bellingham, Northumberland, on 16th-30th June (Brit. Birds 90: 499). In this case, however, the bird was not actually seen, although the description of the song was entirely convincing.

Aquatic Warbler *Acrocephalus paludicola* (47, 1078, -)

1969 Somerset Locality withheld, trapped 14th August (Brit. Birds 63: 285), was at Steart.

1975 Sussex, East Locality Withheld, nine juveniles trapped: three 10th August, two 11th, two 17th, another 18th, another 4th-5th October (Brit. Birds 69: 348; 72: 536; 88: 538), all were at Filsham.

This species is no longer considered by the Committee, but the statistics for pre-1958 and 1958-96 are up to date.

Paddyfield Warbler *Acrocephalus agricola* (2, 38, 5)

Berkshire Thatcham, trapped 7th September, photo. (J.Legg, D.Long, I.Weston *et al.*).

Orkney North Ronaldsay, first-winter, trapped 26th October (S.D.Stansfield *et al.*).

Scilly St Mary's, 9th-11th June (M.S.Scott *et al.*).

Shetland Fair Isle, 21st-23rd September, photo. (Dr R.Riddington, R.I.Thorpe, J.Young *et al.*); first-winter, 28th September to 3rd October, trapped 28th, photo. (Dr R.Riddington *et al.*).

1994 Shetland Fair Isle, adult, 22nd-26th September, trapped 22nd (Brit. Birds 88: 538), now considered first-winter (Dr R.Riddington).

The year 1997 continues the recent increased prominence of this species. For example, it was unrecorded on the Northern Isles in autumn prior to 1986, since when it has occurred there 14 times. The Berkshire individual echoes a previous inland occurrence, in Hertfordshire on 9th November 1981 (Brit. Birds 75: 519).

Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus* (23, 171, 3)

Angus & Dundee Loch of Kinnordy, intermittently in song, 30th May to 30th June, possibly to 24th July, photo. (A.Wight *et al.*).

Nottinghamshire Netherfield Gravel-pits, in song, 12th-29th June, photo. (M.C.Dennis, P.Smith *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 142).

Scilly St Mary's, in song, 19th-23rd May, photo. (J.P.Siddle *et al.*).

1969 Somerset Locality withheld, trapped 25th August (Brit. Birds 63: 285), was at Combwich.

1980 Sussex, East Locality withheld, male, 15th August (Brit. Birds 81: 582), was at Filsham.

The lowest turn-out for six years by this noisy late-spring songster.

Booted Warbler *Hippolais caligata* (1, 69, 0)

1996 Kent St Margaret's, 12th November (I.P.Hodgson).

1996 Sussex, East Icklesham, first-winter, trapped 30th September, photo. (S.J.R.Rumsey, J.Willsher *et al.*).

The first completely blank year since 1986.

Spectacled Warbler *Sylvia conspicillata* (0, 1, 1)

Suffolk Landguard, male, 20th April to 2nd May, trapped 26th April, photo. (M.C.Marsh *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 147).

After a long and chequered history of attempted entry to the British List, the first fully authenticated record was at Filey, North Yorkshire, on 24th-29th May 1992 (Brit. Birds 87: 554). Though initially elusive, this second individual proved later to be more accommodating and doubtless points the way to more records in the future.

Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans* (12, 386, 15)

Angus & Dundee Barry Buddon, Monifieth, male, 16th-18th May (C.D.Dyson *et al.*).

Caernarfonshire Bardsey, first-summer female, 14th-18th May, trapped 17th, photo. (C.J.Dunn, D.Moss, A.F.Silcocks *et al.*); first-summer male, 15th May, presumed same trapped 29th, photo. (C.J.Dunn, K.Goodrich, A.F.Silcocks *et al.*).

Dorset Portland Bill, male, 25th May (G.Morley, G.Walbridge *et al.*).

Highland Loth, near Helmsdale, male, 25th June (A.W.Lauder).

Norfolk Blakeney Point, female, 17th May, photo. (J.V.Bhalerao, G.E.Dunmore, M.I.Eldridge *et al.*).

Northumberland Tynemouth, in song, 3rd May (A.S.Jack).

Shetland Fair Isle, three: male, 10th May (Dr R.Riddington, S.Thomson *et al.*); female, 16th May (A.Bull, Dr R.Riddington *et al.*); age/sex uncertain, 28th-29th May (I.A.Dillon, Dr R.Riddington *et al.*). Bressay, male, 9th May (P.Goddard, J.Mitchell, A.Wheeler). Foula, male, age uncertain, 17th-27th May (A.R.Mainwood); male, probably first-summer, 25th May to 9th June, dead 11th, photo. (A.R.Mainwood *et al.*).

Sussex, East Beachy Head, in song, 24th-25th May (C.F.Ball, K.Murray *et al.*).

Yorkshire, East Beacon Ponds, Kilnsea, female, 19th May (K.Gillon).

1993 Dorset Portland, male, 9th April (J.Dunn).

1996 Scilly St Agnes, male, 30th March to 22nd April (J. & Mrs P.Hale, W.H.Wagstaff *et al.*).

IRELAND

1992 Wexford Hook Head, first-summer female, 17th May (Irish Birds 6: 85).

1996 Wexford Great Saltee, female, 20th-21st April; another female, 21st April (Irish Birds 6: 85).

A rather standard set of records of one of Britain's commonest rarities.

Greenish Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides* (13, 294, 17)

Borders St Abb's Head, 30th August to 2nd September (M.Culshaw *et al.*).

Caernarfonshire Bardsey, 14th-15th June, trapped 15th, photo. (C.J.Dunn, P.R.Massey, A.F.Silcocks); 31st August (A.F.Silcocks).

Cumbria South Walney, trapped 15th June, photo. (W.Makin, C.Raven *et al.*).

Northeast Scotland Near Johnshaven, 31st August to 2nd September (P.A.A.Baxter *et al.*).

Orkney Stronsay, 7th June, photo. (J.F. & Mrs S.M.Holloway, M. & Mrs L.Johnson).

Pembrokeshire Skokholm, 23rd June (G.V.F.Thompson *et al.*).

Shetland Quendale, 23rd-24th August, photo. (P.M.Ellis, A.Fitchett *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 145). Tresta, 24th August (P.M.Ellis, J.D.Okill). Kergord, 24th August (J.D.Okill). Out Skerries, 26th August, photo.; first-winter, trapped 28th August, photo.; another first-winter, trapped 29th, photo. (J.F. & Mrs D.R.Cooper, E.Tait). Fetlar, 28th August (P.M.Ellis, Dr I.R.Hartley, D.Suddaby *et al.*). Fair Isle, first-winter, 31st August, presumed same, trapped 1st September, photo. (M.A.Newell, J.M.Reid, Dr R.Riddington); another individual, 1st September (J.M.Reid, Dr R.Riddington).

Suffolk Landguard, in song, trapped 8th July, photo. (M.C.Marsh, N.Odin *et al.*).

1996 Durham South Shields, 7th-8th September (R.Ahmed *et al.*).

1996 Leicestershire Coalville, 17th September (M.J.Jarvis). Priory Water, 13th October (D.J.S.Gamble).

IRELAND

1996 Dublin Rockabill, 3rd June (Irish Birds 6: 85).

1996 Wexford Murrintown, first-winter, 14th-17th September (Irish Birds 6: 85).

Further reinforcement of the pattern of June occurrences around the Irish Sea. July records are, however, far less frequent. The August influx was typical, though this year almost exclusively a Shetland phenomenon. The 1996 acceptances from Leicestershire are further demonstration that scarce passerines can occur inland: the only difficulty lies in finding them. In the Channel Islands, one was in song at Torteval, Guernsey, on 11th-12th June 1996.

Arctic Warbler *Phylloscopus borealis* (19, 209, 3)

Shetland Out Skerries, 22nd August (J.F. & Mrs D.R.Cooper). Fetlar, 1st September (J. & T.G.Davies).

Yorkshire, North Whitby, 19th-20th October (T.J.Barker, R.S.Slack, A.White).

1996 Suffolk Corton, 16th-18th October (Brit. Birds 90: 502), was 16th-18th September.

An extremely poor showing and the worst since two in 1990, though the August individual, on a date more usually associated with the previous species, is the earliest since 1981.

Hume's Warbler *Phylloscopus humei* (0, 24, 3)

Kent Littlestone, 25th November (D.Walker *et al.*).

Norfolk Holme, 22nd October, photo. (J.Bishop, G.F.Hibberd *et al.*).

Sussex, East Sheepcote Valley, Brighton, 16th-22nd November, photo., sound-recorded (J.F.Cooper, R.J.Fairbank, I.J.Whitcombe *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 144).

1966 Sussex, East Beachy Head, 13th-17th November (P.Clement, A.Quinn, R.E.Scott *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 72: 124-126, 484-485).

1967 Norfolk Cley, 2nd December to 7th January 1968, sound-recorded (K.Allsop, D.J.Holman, E.M.P.Stanford).

1968 Norfolk See 1967 Norfolk above.

1970 Northumberland Low Hauxley, trapped 7th November (J.A.Ginnever, T.Hallam, E.R.Meek) (Brit. Birds 71: 464-465).

1988 Leicestershire Ashby-de-la-Zouch, 10th January to at least 18th February (M.S.Cavanagh, A.M.Stoddart *et al.*).

1989 Norfolk Winterton, 1st-8th December (P.Cawley, P.J.Heath, A.M.Stoddart).

1989 Northumberland Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, 18th-22nd November, photo. (A.S.Butler, J.McLoughlin, J.G.Steele).

1990 Yorkshire, East Aldbrough, 10th-14th November (P.I.Holt, A.Johnson, J.McLoughlin *et al.*).

1991 Angus & Dundee Auchmithie, 13th October, sound-recorded (G.Addison, C.Campbell, M.S.Scott *et al.*).

1991 Devon Efford Marsh, 10th-24th January (R.W.White).

1991 Norfolk Holkham Meals, 25th October to 1st November (A.I.Bloomfield *et al.*).

1991 Yorkshire, East Kilnsea, 29th October to 2nd November (A.J.Booth, J.McLoughlin).

1992 Devon Plymouth, 13th January to 10th March, sound-recorded (S.C.Madge, S.McMahon *et al.*).

1993 Pembrokeshire Strumble Head, 20th November (S.Berry).

1993 Yorkshire, East Flamborough Head, 5th-8th November, trapped 5th, photo. (P.A.Lassey *et al.*).

1994 Cleveland Hartlepool Headland, 11th November (B.Beck, C.Kehoe).

1994 Dorset Winspit, 26th November to 3rd December (G.Dutson, R.W.White *et al.*).

1994 Fife Isle of Isay, 10th November (A.Robinson).

1994 Northeast Scotland Bullers of Buchan, 10th-13th November (T.W.Marshall, A.Webb *et al.*).

1994 Orkney South Ronaldsay, 4th-6th November (M.Gray, E.R.Meek *et al.*).

1994 Staffordshire Westport Lake, at least 20th December (W.J.Low).

1994 Yorkshire, East Flamborough Head, 11th-15th November (J.C.Lamplough, J.McLoughlin *et al.*).

1995 Norfolk Great Yarmouth, 2nd January to 28th April, photo., sound-recorded (D.J.Holman, S.Smith *et al.*).

1995 Yorkshire, East Hornsea, 21st February to 16th March, sound-recorded (T.D.Charlton *et al.*).

1996 Scilly St Mary's, 4th-7th October, probably since 1st (W.E.Fletcher, M.S.Scott, J.P.Siddle *et al.*).

A long-awaited and welcome recognition of this species' occurrence in Britain, though treated until recently as a race of Yellow-browed Warbler *P.inornatus*. With no records prior to 13th October, and the majority falling in November, its occurrence pattern differs markedly from that of its Siberian cousin and most closely mirrors that of Pallas's Warbler *P.proregulus* and Dusky Warbler *P.fuscatus*, though a greater propensity to attempted wintering is clear. Identification was dealt with recently by Steve Madge and David Quinn (Brit. Birds 90: 571-575), who stressed the importance of vocalisations.

Radde's Warbler *Phylloscopus schwarzi* (1, 164, 8)

Cornwall St Levan, 19th October (P.G.Akers, D.J.Chown *et al.*).

Dorset Portland Bill, first-winter, trapped 22nd October, photo. (M.Cade, Prof. P.J. & Mrs C.R.Morgan *et al.*).

Norfolk Holkham Meals, 22nd October, photo. (J.B.Kemp, E.J.Reed *et al.*).

Northumberland Low Hauxley, first-winter, 18th-23rd October, trapped 18th, photo. (D.Middleton *et al.*).

Orkney St Margaret's Hope, South Ronaldsay, first-winter, trapped 19th October (J.A. & Mrs R.McCutcheon *et al.*).

Scilly St Mary's, 14th October (R.L.Harris); presumed same, 19th (D. & Mrs J.Bridges *et al.*).

Shetland Fetlar, 10th-15th October (S.Croft, T.G. & J.Davies, D.Suddaby).

Yorkshire, East Spurn, 19th-20th October (K.Gillon *et al.*).

A traditional line-up of dates and venues, with a wide geographical spread, and confirming the middle two weeks of October as the best bet for finding this species.

Dusky Warbler *Phylloscopus fuscatus* (1, 172, 16)

Devon Lannacombe Valley, trapped 23rd October, photo. (A.K.Searle).

Dorset Winspit, 23rd-24th November (S.J.Morrison, A. & C.Rogers, G.Walbridge *et al.*). Hengistbury Head, 30th November (S.Simmonds *et al.*).

Flintshire Point of Air, 11th-12th November (E.J.Abrahams, C.Rowley, R.I.Thorpe *et al.*).

Lothian Thorntonloch, 6th November (K.Gillon *et al.*).

Norfolk Holkham Meals, 20th-21st October (A.I.Bloomfield, J.R.McCallum *et al.*). Waxham, 23rd-25th October, photo. (K.K.Harrison, P.J.Heath, B.Jarvis).

Northumberland Farne Islands, 5th November (D.Munns, A.Upton *et al.*). Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, 18th-21st November (T.R.Cleeves, A.S.Jack *et al.*).

Scilly St Mary's, 22nd October (T.Francis, D.Page); 5th-6th November (J.P.Siddle *et al.*).

Shetland Out Skerries, 17th October (P.M.Ellis). Fetlar, 17th-19th October (S.Croft, D.Suddaby *et al.*). Fair Isle, 7th-8th November (Dr R.Riddington *et al.*).

Suffolk Corton, 23rd-24th October (C.A.Buttle *et al.*).

Yorkshire, East Spurn, trapped 28th September, photo.; same, Kilnsea, 5th October (L.J.Degnan, D.Page, M.J.Pilsworth *et al.*).

Another good showing by this increasingly frequent visitor, which is now starting to 'pull away' from the previous species. As usual, a high proportion of November records, though the Spurn individual reminds us that early birds can be looked for in late September. A fairly typical spread of locations, though the Flintshire bird is more noteworthy.

Radde's/Dusky Warbler *P.schwarzi/fuscatus* (2, 337, 24)

IRELAND

1994 Wexford Great Saltee, 24th May (Irish Birds 6: 85).

Western Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus bonelli* (2, 49, 0)

The 51 acceptable records of this newly defined species were listed recently (Brit. Birds 91: 122-123).

Eastern Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus orientalis* (0, 2, 0)

1987 Scilly St Mary's, 30th September, 8th-10th October, as Bonelli's Warbler *P.bonelli* (Brit. Birds 81: 585), now specifically reidentified as *P.orientalis* (Ibis 139: 197-201).

This individual now represents the first accepted record, predating the one in Northumberland on 20th-29th September 1995 (Brit. Birds 90: 503). At the stroke of a taxonomist's pen, this becomes Britain's rarest *Phylloscopus*.

Western/Eastern Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus bonelli/orientalis* (3, 137, 2)

Scilly St Agnes, 15th May (N.E.Wall). St Mary's, 15th May, photo. (J.P.Siddle *et al.*), possibly same as St Agnes.

In the Channel Islands, one was at Port Saumarez, Guernsey, on 23rd August.

Collared Flycatcher *Ficedula albicollis* (2, 17, 1)

Angus & Dundee Ethie Mains, first-summer male, 31st May to 1st June, photo. (S.R.Green *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 146).

This species retains its rarity and unpredictability, representing a magical find for anyone so fortunate.

Penduline Tit *Remiz pendulinus* (0, 115, 16)

Cornwall Hayle, male, 1st, 10th January (T.S.Hale, P.J.Vokes *et al.*); possibly present since 2nd December 1996.

Glamorgan Kenfig, sex/age uncertain, presumed since 11th November 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 503) to at least 9th March (D.G.Carrington *et al.*).

Kent New Hythe, sex/age uncertain, 14th-17th March (A.Woodcock *et al.*). Dungeness, male and one other, 26th-28th October (W.Attridge, O.Leyshon, N.E.Wall *et al.*); male same as East Sussex; another male, 6th November to at least 19th February 1998, possibly to 14th March (P.G.Akers, R.J.Price *et al.*).

Norfolk Hickling, male and three others, 20th December (A.J.Kane).

Scilly Tresco, juvenile, 28th October, photo. (G.Sellors *et al.*). St Mary's, age/sex uncertain, 7th-8th November (J.P.Siddle *et al.*).

Somerset Westhay Moor, male, female, 5th January to 8th March, photo. (T.Raven *et al.*). Berrow, male, female and first-winter, 14th-21st December (Dr D.Murdoch, B.E.Slade).

Sussex, East Icklesham, first-winter male, trapped 25th October, photo. (T.Squire *et al.*); also in Kent, previously ringed Sweden.

1996 Cornwall See Cornwall above.

1996 Kent Singleton Lakes, Ashford, two males, 14th November (J.Brookes, M.Hall).

An excellent showing by this long-mooted potential invader. The flock of four in Norfolk echoes the four at Titchfield Haven, Hampshire, on 4th November 1994 (Brit. Birds 88: 542).

Isabelline Shrike *Lanius isabellinus* (1, 45, 4)

Devon Berry Head, first-winter, 19th-23rd October (J.Howes, S.J.Lees *et al.*).

Orkney North Ronaldsay, first-winter, trapped 30th November (S.D.Stansfield *et al.*).

Suffolk Boyton Marshes, first-winter, 23rd November, photo. (G.Lowe, M.R.Morley, E.W.Patrick *et al.*).

Yorkshire, East Spurn, first-winter, 23rd September, photo. (R.Bolton, M.J.Pilsworth *et al.*).

A typical wide autumn scatter of dates and localities. Given current taxonomic moves, these attractive shrikes are doubtless destined for ever-more-critical scrutiny, though only the tiny proportion of adults seems likely to offer the chance of real enlightenment.

Lesser Grey Shrike *Lanius minor* (32, 123, 3)

Fife Isle of May, male, 1st-2nd June, trapped 2nd (K.Brockie, J.M.Wilson *et al.*).

Shetland Foula, sex uncertain, 28th May (P.Catry, J.R. & Mrs S.C.Gear, A.R.Mainwood).

Sussex, West Sidlesham, adult, 24th October, photo. (P.W.Bradbeer, S.J.Patton, I.J.Whitcombe *et al.*).

1996 Suffolk Walberswick, male, 25th May (D.Pearson, L.Townsend *et al.*).

An average small scatter of records, including yet another autumn adult.

Southern Grey Shrike *Lanius meridionalis* (1, 13, 1)

Northamptonshire Long Buckby, first-winter, *L.m.pallidirostris*, 3rd-4th November, photo. (R.D.Gossage, N.Roberts, P.K.Spokes *et al.*).

1989 Yorkshire, North Bishop Monkton, probably first-winter, *L.m.pallidirostris*, 31st October to 1st November, photo. (P.K.Bowman, R.Evison, C.Slator *et al.* per BBRC).

This migratory form, colloquially known as 'Steppe Grey Shrike', may well represent a distinct species. This inland occurrence follows the one at Swindon, Wiltshire, on 23rd-28th September 1993. The 1989 record was not submitted as relating to this species, but the photograph clearly shows it to be so (Brit. Birds 87: 560).

Rosy Starling *Sturnus roseus* (160, 319, 18)

Anglesey Rhosneigr, adult, 24th August (M.Davis, M.L.Hawkes *et al.*), present 20th-24th, photo. (Brit. Birds 91: plate 148).

Cornwall Lizard, adult, 17th July (Mrs A.M.Ball). Trevoze Head, juvenile, 20th September (S.M.Christophers). St Just, juvenile, 18th October (J.P.Chapple, G.Hobin).

Denbighshire Glan Conwy, juvenile, 22nd October, photo. (L.Brewin).

Essex The Naze, juvenile, 19th October (A.J.A.Dally).

Kent Dungeness, juvenile, 27th-28th September (M.C.Buckland, T. & Mrs K.Robertson *et al.*).

Lothian Aberlady, adult, 29th June (S. & Mrs K.Housden).

Norfolk Blakeney, juvenile, 20th-27th October, photo. (B. & Mrs A.Rumsey *et al.*). Beeston, adult, 15th November to 1998, photo. (S.Crowe, D.E.Nye *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 149).

Northumberland Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, juvenile, 1st September (S.C.Votier).

Scilly St Agnes, juvenile, 14th-20th October, photo. (Dr I.H.Leach *et al.*).

Shetland Fair Isle, adult, 7th-9th August (J.M.Reid *et al.*). Quendale, juvenile, 14th September (A.F.T.Fitchett); presumed same, 5th-8th October (G.J.Fitchett *et al.*). Fetlar, juvenile, 24th September (S.Croft, J. & T.G.Davies, D.Suddaby).

Sussex, West Pagham Harbour, juvenile, 31st December (T.J.Edwards).

Wight, Isle of Seaview, adult, 4th-9th June (M. & Mrs S.Newell).

Yorkshire, East Kilnsea and Spurn, juvenile, 27th-28th September (W.H.Priestley, A.Scutt, B.Wainwright *et al.*).

1990 Kent Foreness, juvenile, 10th September (Brit. Birds 86: 540), now considered acceptable (K.D.Lord).

1994 Perth & Kinross See 1995 Angus & Dundee below.

1995 Angus & Dundee Near Spittal of Glenshee, adult, 29th-30th June (Brit. Birds 90: 505), was in 1994; locality is in Perth & Kinross.

1996 Cornwall St Just, juvenile, 24th September to 21st October (J.Hawkey, M.P.Semmens *et al.*).

1996 Highland Dornoch, Sutherland, adult, 15th August (I.Dillon *et al.*), present 12th-21st.

IRELAND

1996 At sea Gas-platform off Kinsale, Co. Cork, adult, 9th-11th June.

1996 Cork Ballycotton, adult, 20th July to 5th September. Allihies, adult or first-year, 27th-28th July. Old Head of Kinsale, juvenile, 15th September. (Irish Birds 6: 86)

Another excellent year, with an unusually strong autumn influx on the East Coast. With the correction to the details of the 1994 Perth & Kinross individual, that year, with 31, now holds the record. In the Channel Islands, two juveniles were at Chouet, Guernsey, on 4th-5th October 1997.

Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis* (0, 6, 0)

Cumbria Waterside, male, since 13th July 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 505), throughout year.

The remarkable long stay of this individual continues, though no hybrids with the local House Sparrows *P.domesticus* seem yet to have been produced.

Red-eyed Vireo *Vireo olivaceus* (1, 109, 0)

IRELAND

1996 Cork Inch Strand, 5th October. Crookhaven, 6th-8th October. Cape Clear Island, 14th October. (Irish Birds 6: 86)

1996 Waterford Mine Head, 15th-24th October (Irish Birds 6: 86).

The 1996 total is now nine (cf. peaks of 13 in 1995 and 14 in 1985), in striking contrast to the total absence in 1997.

European Serin *Serinus serinus* (76, 1129, -)

1967 Dorset Locality withheld, pair bred successfully, May (Brit. Birds 61: 56, 87-88, 357; 64: 217), was in Swanage.

1969 Dorset Locality withheld, see original references for details (Brit. Birds 63: 290; 64: 217), was on Portland.

1978 Devon Locality withheld, see original references for details (Brit. Birds 72: 541; 73: 526; 74: 489), was at Thurlestone.

1981 Devon Localities withheld, see original references for details (Brit. Birds 75: 527; 76: 521), were at Budleigh Salterton and Starcross/Cockwood.

1982 Devon Locality withheld, see original references for details (Brit. Birds 75: 527; 76: 521), was at Starcross/Cockwood.

This species is no longer considered by the Committee, but the statistics for pre-1958 and 1958-96 are up to date.

Arctic Redpoll *Carduelis hornemanni* (30, 709, 7)

Norfolk Holkham Meals, 11th January (J.R.Williamson *et al.*).

Orkney Rendall, first-winter, trapped 7th November (J.B.Ribbands *et al.*).

Shetland Skaw, Unst, 5th October (P.M.Ellis, P.V.Harvey, M.G.Pennington *et al.*). Baltasound, Unst, 8th-23rd October (P.V.Harvey, M.J.MacLeod, M.G.Pennington *et al.*). Lambaness, Unst, *C.h.hornemanni*, 10th October (P.V.Harvey, M.G.Pennington, S.C.Votier). Foula, 16th October (A.R.Mainwood); 25th October (J.R.Gear, A.R.Mainwood).

1995 Cumbria Dalston, Carlisle, trapped 16th December, photo. (I.J.Armstrong, G.Horne).

1995 Norfolk Horsey, 5th November (J.Harris, J.Oates). Winterton, trapped 20th November, photo. (A.W.Bowles, K.Brett, D.Parsons).

1995 Staffordshire Near Newborough, 24th December; first-winter, 28th (D.I.M.Wallace).

1995 Yorkshire, North Hawkser, 11th November (Brit. Birds 90: 508), locality is Hawsker.

1995 Yorkshire, South Wath Ings, first-winter, 29th December (S.Exley, S.D.Stansfield *et al.*).

1996 Cheshire Thurstaston, 9th-10th January (Brit. Birds 90: 506), to 11th (C.J. & S.R.Williams); presumed same, 22nd (A.Butler, J.Clark).

1996 Lincolnshire Gibraltar Point, 14th-15th January (M.R.Briggs, K.M.Wilson).

1996 Outer Hebrides Stornoway, first-winter, 7th-14th January (R.D.Wemyss).

1996 Staffordshire Stepping Stones, Cannock Chase, adult, 16th-17th February (J.K.Higginson, P.D.Hyde, S.Turner *et al.*); another, 20th (P.French, J.Gullby, J.K.Higginson *et al.*); another, 7th-11th March (T.Hextel, J.K.Higginson *et al.*); first-winter, 8th March (P.D.Hyde).

An abrupt return to normality following the near 'white-out' of 1995/96. Other than in influx years, however, this remains a very rare bird, and high standards of documentation will continue to be required.

Two-barred Crossbill *Loxia leucoptera* (40, 78, 2)

Fife Isle of May, male, 8th-11th August, trapped 10th, photo. (I.M.Darling, F.D.Hamilton *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 150).

Norfolk Thetford Forest, male, trapped 21st August, photo. (S.F.Moores *et al.*).

1990 Northumberland Harwood Forest, male, 24th December to 16th March 1991, photo. (M.Henry, M.J.Sharp *et al.*).

1991 Northumberland See 1990 Northumberland above.

After a five-year absence, the occurrence of two in a year of a massive influx of Common Crossbills *L.curvirostra* is perhaps not surprising. There were much larger numbers in several nearby countries on the Continent (Brit. Birds 91: 252).

Blackpoll Warbler *Dendroica striata* (0, 35, 1)

Scilly Tresco, 12th October to 1st November, photo. (D.L.Acfield *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 151).

A typical record, though this species' appearances in Scilly are now less regular than previously.

Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas* (1, 4, 2)

Scilly St Mary's, first-winter male, 9th October to 2nd November, photo. (A.M.Bines, P.S.Read, I.R.Lewington *et al.*) (Brit. Birds 91: plate 152).

Shetland Baltasound, Unst, first-summer female, 16th-23rd May, trapped 17th, photo. (M.J.MacLeod, M.G.Pennington *et al.*).

A striking echo of the double occurrence in 1984, when one was on Fetlar, Shetland, in June (Brit. Birds 78: 570, 582-583), followed by another on Bryher, Scilly, in October (Brit. Birds 78: 582; 79: 434-435).

Hooded Warbler *Wilsonia citrina* (0, 2, 0)

An account of the second accepted British record, on St Kilda, Outer Hebrides (then Western Isles), on 10th September 1992 (Brit. Birds 86: 530), has been published recently (Scot. Birds 19: 123).

Dark-eyed Junco *Junco hyemalis* (1, 19, 1)

Cheshire Vicar's Cross, Chester, probably first-winter, 15th December to 19th April 1998, photo. (P. & Mrs P.Gillam, P.R.Hale *et al.*).

The tenth British record to have occurred in a garden. A close watch on the bird-table is clearly in order.

Pine Bunting *Emberiza leucocephalos* (2, 34, 0)

IRELAND

1996 Dublin Swords, adult male, 3rd-10th March (Irish Birds 6: 48-49, 87).

Rustic Bunting *Emberiza rustica* (34, 330, 11)

Borders St Abb's Head, female, 21st May (L.M. & R.J.Safford *et al.*).

Ceredigion Cors Caron, male, 11th November, video. (J. & Mrs W.Gale).

Devon Yelverton, 22nd-23rd March (A.W.G.John, J.F.Jones *et al.*).

Northumberland Holy Island, female, 17th May (R.Forster, M.J.Sharp).

Orkney North Ronaldsay, male, 10th June (S.D.Stansfield).

Scilly Tresco, 19th to at least 24th October (A.Butter *et al.*).

Shetland Fetlar, female, 21st May (J. & T.G.Davies, D.Suddaby). Fair Isle, probably female, 19th May (Dr R.Riddington); female, 24th-27th May (M.A.Newell *et al.*); 8th October (J.M.Reid).

1991 Meirionnydd Arthog Bog, 5th to at least 10th April (R.I.Thorpe *et al.*).

1996 Cornwall Nanjizal, 7th October (K.A.Wilson).

IRELAND

Antrim Rathlin Island, 19th-25th October.

The Devon individual provides further reinforcement of an emerging pattern of early-spring occurrences, presumably of birds moving away from wintering sites elsewhere in Britain or Western Europe. The Co. Antrim record is the first for Northern Ireland.

Little Bunting *Emberiza pusilla* (23, 626, -)

1986 Highland Locality withheld, near Inverness, male, 9th March to 26th April, possibly since 31st January (Brit. Birds 80: 567), was at Tarradale.

This species is no longer considered by the Committee, but the statistics for pre-1958 and 1958-96 are up to date.

Yellow-breasted Bunting *Emberiza aureola* (10, 181, 6)

Shetland Fetlar, female or first-winter, 22nd August (T.G. & J.Davies). Foula, female or first-winter, 1st September, possibly same, 6th (A.R.Mainwood). Out Skerries, female or first-winter, trapped 2nd September, photo. (J.F. & Mrs D.R.Cooper, E.Tait). Fair Isle, female or first-winter, 20th-23rd September (A.A.Murray, J.J.Sweeney *et al.*); another, 28th (M.A.Newell, Dr R.Riddington *et al.*).

1996 Northumberland Farne Islands, female or first-winter, 20th-23rd August (Brit. Birds 90: 551), correct observers were S.J.McElwee, M.S.Thomas *et al.*

Bucking the recent trend towards more widespread occurrences (Brit. Birds 90: 511, 517), the emphasis shifts back to the Northern Isles.

Black-headed Bunting *Emberiza melanocephala* (9, 122, 6)

Dorset Weston, Portland, first-summer male, 3rd June (G.Walbridge).

Kent Capel Fleet, in song, 30th June to 6th July, photo. (D.Belshaw, C.Morris, J.A.Rowlands *et al.*).

Man, Isle of Ramsey, male, 12th April (Mr & Mrs Henderson, C.M.Sharpe).

Scilly St Agnes, male, 3rd-4th June, photo. (Mrs P. Hale, M.S.Scott *et al.*).

Shetland Bressay, male, 14th-24th June (J.Garden, P.Goddard, A.M.Wheeler). Fetlar, female, 21st-26th June (D.Suddaby *et al.*).

A typical year in respect of number, dates and localities.

Red-headed/Black-headed Bunting *E. bruniceps* / *melanocephala*

(-, -, -)

IRELAND

1992 Cork Cape Clear Island, first-year female, killed by Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*, 3rd-4th October (Irish Birds 6: 87).

Appendix 1. Category D species accepted (see Ibis 136: 253)

White Pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus* (not known, 16, 0)

1971 **Surrey** Staines Reservoirs, three adults, 18th September (Brit. Birds 90: 518), was 19th April; presumed link with Norfolk record now probably invalid.

Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus ruber*

***P. r. roseus* (-, 8, 0)**

Kent Cliffe, since 1996 (Brit. Birds 90: 518), intermittently throughout year.

1995 **Essex** Abberton Reservoir, 29th-30th July (Brit. Birds 89: 529), 6th August (M.L.Hawkes).

Falcated Duck *Anas falcata* (0, 14, 0)

1994 **Yorkshire**, East Blacktoft Sands, male, 22nd May (A.Grieve *et al.*).

Daurian Starling *Sturnus sturninus* (0, 1, 1)

Northumberland Ponteland, male, 26th August to 5th September, photo. (J.Alder, D.R.Shannon, E.Slack).

A far from uncommon species in the cage-bird trade.

Appendix 2. List of records not accepted

This list contains all current records not accepted after circulation to the Committee. It does not include (a) those withdrawn by the observer(s) without circulation, after discussion with the Hon. Secretary; (b) those which, even if circulated, were not attributed by the observer(s) to any definite species; (c) those mentioned in 'Recent reports' in British Birds if full details were unobtainable; or (d) certain escapes.

In the vast majority of cases, the record was not accepted because we were not convinced that the identification was fully established; only in a very few cases were we satisfied that a mistake had been made.

1997 White-billed Diver Orcombe Point, Devon, 13th March; Applecross, Wester Ross, Highland, 20th October. **Madeira/Cape Verde Petrel** Eccles-on-Sea, Norfolk, 26th June; Flamborough Head, East Yorkshire, 3rd November. **Bulwer's Petrel** *Bulweria bulwerii* Eccles-on-Sea, Norfolk, 12th October. **Short-tailed Shearwater** *Puffinus tenuirostris* Flamborough Head, East Yorkshire, 27th July. **American Bittern** *Botaurus lentiginosus* Land's End, Cornwall, 10th October. **Great White Egret** Penclacwydd, Gower, 5th January; Yelland, Devon, 9th April; Dawlish Warren, Devon, 23rd October. **American Wigeon** Ashleworth Ham, Gloucestershire, 22nd February to 14th March; Stanwick Gravel-pits, Northamptonshire, 23rd February, 1st March; Boarhunt, Hampshire, 12th March; Exmouth, Devon, 26th October. **Canvasback** Eccleston Mere, Lancashire, 20th July. **Black Kite** Cove Bottom, Suffolk, 29th March; Hopton, Norfolk, 24th April; Aqualate Mere, Staffordshire, 3rd May; East Stratton, Hampshire, 4th May; Letwell, Nottinghamshire/South Yorkshire, 4th May; Cornwood, Devon, 16th May; Freshwater, Isle of Wight, 16th May; Kingsbridge, Devon, 17th May; Oatwoods, Staffordshire, 18th May; Norwich, Norfolk, 13th June; Christchurch, Dorset, 14th June; Woburn, Bedfordshire, 17th June; Plymouth, Devon, 27th June; Sculthorpe, Norfolk, 1st August; Latton, Wiltshire, 10th August; Stiffkey, Norfolk, 11th August; Manea, Cambridgeshire, 26th August. **Red-footed Falcon** Blakeney, Norfolk, 19th May; Cannop Valley, Gloucestershire, 29th May; Porthgwarra, Cornwall, 19th October. **Little Bustard** *Tetrax tetrax* Dartmoor, Devon, 10th March. **Black-winged Stilt** Trimley St Martin, Suffolk, 18th August. **Collared Pratincole** Willington Gravel-pits, Derbyshire, 26th April. **Pratincole** Llantwit Fardre, Glamorgan, 22nd August. **American Golden Plover** Musselburgh, Lothian, 6th September. **Pacific Golden Plover** Lynn Point, Norfolk, 21st August. **Semipalmated Sandpiper** Pagham Harbour, West Sussex, 8th-9th September. **Broad-billed Sandpiper** Greatham Creek, Cleveland, 25th November. **Great Snipe** Fair Isle, Shetland, 14th September; 19th September; Trimmingham, Norfolk, 27th September; Flamborough Head, East Yorkshire, 6th November. **Dowitcher** Spurn, East Yorkshire, 28th August. **Lesser Yellowlegs** Yantlett, Kent, 2nd February; Doonfoot, Ayrshire, 12th August. **Wilson's Phalarope** Queen Mother Reservoir, Berkshire, 5th September. **Great Black-headed Gull** *Larus ichthyaetus* Cley, Norfolk, 27th April. **Laughing Gull** Turnberry Point, Ayrshire, 10th February. **Bonaparte's Gull** Gouthwaite Reservoir, North Yorkshire, 26th March; Cotswold Water Park, Gloucestershire, 29th March; Farnham Gravel-pits, North Yorkshire, 10th April; Woolston Eyes, Cheshire, 3rd May. **Iceland Gull** *L.g.kumlieni* Rainford, Lancashire, 2nd January; Seaforth, Lancashire, 6th May; Kenfig, Glamorgan, 28th December. **Gull-billed Tern** Towan Head, Cornwall, 26th June; Portland Bill, Dorset, 1st October. **Caspian Tern** Llandegfedd Reservoir, Gwent, 29th-30th July. **Forster's Tern** Stithians Reservoir, Cornwall, 11th September; Evie, Orkney, 29th September to 3rd October. **Sooty Tern** Portland Bill, Dorset, 12th September. **White-winged Black Tern** Capheaton, Northumberland, 4th May; Tynningame, Lothian, 31st May. **Alpine Swift** Pernwell, Cambridgeshire, 26th May; Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex, 26th May; Landulph Marsh, Cornwall, 1st June; Benenden, Kent, 12th August. **Little Swift** Colchester, Essex, 6th June. **Pallid Swift** Wigan, Greater Manchester, 2nd June; Wierton Hill, Kent, 8th November. **Red-rumped Swallow** Cuckmere Haven, East Sussex, 12th April; Spurn, East Yorkshire, 23rd May; Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex, 26th May; Hollywood, West Midlands, 20th July. **Olive-backed Pipit** Newburgh, Northeast Scotland, 7th May. **Red-throated Pipit** Trevoze Head, Cornwall, 26th September. **Citrine Wagtail** Loch of Strathbeg, Northeast Scotland, 1st September; Bossington Beach, Somerset, 30th- 31st October. **Common Stonechat** *S.t.maura/stejnegeri* Kynance Cove, Cornwall, 22nd March; Isle of May, Fife, 25th May; Headon Warren, Isle of Wight, 19th October; Burnham Overy, Norfolk, 24th October. **Pied Wheatear** Sker, Glamorgan, 9th November. **Black-eared Wheatear** Towan Head, Cornwall, 14th August. **Desert Wheatear** Garlieston Bay, Dumfries & Galloway, 19th July. **Dark-throated Thrush** Essington, Staffordshire, 2nd January. **Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler** Trevoze Head, Cornwall, 4th October. **Paddyfield Warbler** Holland Haven, Essex, 25th October. **Subalpine Warbler** Calf of Man, 9th May. **Arctic Warbler** Ramsey Island, Pembrokeshire, 23rd September. **Dusky Warbler** Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, 22nd October. **Western Bonelli's Warbler** Sizewell, Suffolk, 24th October. **Nutcracker** *Nucifraga caryocatactes* Gunnislake, Cornwall, 22nd July. **Arctic Redpoll** St Kilda, Outer Hebrides, 29th April. **Black-headed Bunting** Machynlleth, Montgomeryshire, 7th July.

1996 Albatross Winterton, Norfolk, 13th January. **Little Shearwater** Peterhead, Northeast Scotland, 24th July. **Night Heron** Brent Reservoir, Greater London, 5th April. **King Eider** Dawlish Warren, Devon, 22nd September. **Black Kite** Great Leighs, Essex, 19th May; Medmenham, Buckinghamshire, 22nd July; Carnon Downs, Cornwall, 20th August; St Agnes Head, Cornwall, 8th September; Eastleigh, Hampshire, 16th September. **Lesser Kestrel** *Falco naumanni* Holland Haven, Essex, 4th-5th October. **Red-footed Falcon** Donna Nook, Lincolnshire, 3rd July.

Little Crake Tresco, Scilly, 11th October. **Baird's Sandpiper** Blithfield Reservoir, Staffordshire, 5th October. **Great Snipe** Loch of Spiggie, Shetland, 18th September; Blithfield Reservoir, Staffordshire, 9th October; Sandwich Bay, Kent, 8th November. **Marsh Sandpiper** Frodsham, Cheshire, 14th August. **White-winged Black Tern** Skomer, Pembrokeshire, 11th November. **Pallid Swift** Nanquidno, Cornwall, 19th August. **Red-rumped Swallow** Ramsey Island, Pembrokeshire, 17th May. **Blyth's Pipit** *Anthus godlewskii* St Mary's, Scilly, 6th-10th November. **Red-throated Pipit** Flamborough Head, East Yorkshire, 6th September; Burnham Norton, Norfolk, 26th September; Nanjizal, Cornwall, 10th October. **Subalpine Warbler** Nanjizal, Cornwall, 26th August. **Greenish Warbler** Flamborough Head, East Yorkshire, 21st September. **Penduline Tit** Radipole, Dorset, 21st July; Nene Washes, Cambridgeshire, 10th October. **Arctic Redpoll** Ecclestone Mere, Lancashire, 4th-30th January; The Bell, Borders, 21st January; Cannock Chase, Staffordshire, 1st, 7th, 24th March; Thorpe Marsh, South Yorkshire, 14th November. **Yellow-breasted Bunting** Warham Greens, Norfolk, 21st September.

1995 Sociable Lapwing *Vanellus gregarius* Frolesworth, Leicestershire, 23rd October. **Least Sandpiper** *Calidris minutilla*, Frodsham, Cheshire, 12th September. **Audouin's Gull** *Larus audouinii* Off St Catherine's Point, Isle of Wight, 14th August. **Lesser Crested Tern** Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex, 8th August. **Red-headed Woodpecker** *Melanerpes erythrocephalus* Swansea, Gower, 21st November. **Middle Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos medius* St Margaret's Bay, Kent, 19th August. **Black-eared Wheatear** Fair Isle, Shetland, 14th September; Trimley, Suffolk, 25th October. **Greenish Warbler** Canvey Point, Essex, 19th September; Whitburn, Durham, 29th September. **Rosy Starling** Oakwood, Derbyshire, 25th November. **Arctic Redpoll** North Stow, Suffolk, 9th November; Blythburgh, Suffolk, 19th November. **Yellow-breasted Bunting** North Ronaldsay, Orkney, 6th September.

1994 Black Kite Frampton Fen/Skegness area, Lincolnshire, 2nd-6th May. **Pratincole** Wrangle, Lincolnshire, 14th June. **Black Woodpecker** *Dryocopus martius* Benacre, Suffolk, 13th March. **Alpine Swift** Scarborough, North Yorkshire, 4th May. **Dark-throated Thrush** *T.r.ruficollis* Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, 18th October.

1993 Black Kite Oakthorpe, Leicestershire, 30th September. **Red-footed Falcon** Pulborough Brooks, West Sussex, 22nd June. **South Polar Skua** *Catharacta maccormicki* Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, Northumberland, 5th September. **Rustic Bunting** Gibraltar Point, Lincolnshire, 25th September.

1990 Citrine Wagtail Sandwich Bay, Kent, 8th-10th May.

1986 South Polar Skua Cley, Norfolk, 6th September.

1982 South Polar Skua St Ives, Cornwall, 14th October.

1980 Hume's Warbler Sandwich Bay, Kent, 11th November.

1974 Hume's Warbler Wells, Norfolk, 24th October.

Appendix 3. List of records not accepted but identification proved

This list provides a permanent record of those occurrences which, usually on the grounds of likely escape from captivity, find no place in any category, but which may, at some future date, merit further consideration. It does not include (a) any record of a species for which natural vagrancy is wholly unlikely, or (b) those records of presumed escapes already mentioned in the main text of this or earlier Reports.

Fulvous Whistling Duck *Dendrocygna bicolor* Ditchford and Stanwick Gravel-pits, Northamptonshire, four, 1st October 1997. **Hooded Merganser** *Lophodytes cucullatus* Barmstone, Hoveringham and Gunthorpe, Nottinghamshire, female or first-winter, 16th November 1996 to 1997 (Brit. Birds 90: 521), to 18th February; same, Grantham Canal, Vale of Belvoir, Leicestershire, 22nd May. **Spur-winged Lapwing** *Hoplopterus spinosus* Stodmarsh, Kent, 30th April, 3rd-9th June 1997; same, Pett Level, East Sussex, 13th-14th June; same, Dungeness, Kent, 15th June to 10th January 1998 (Brit. Birds 91: plate 124). **Pallas's Rosefinch** *Carpodacus roseus* Pateley Bridge, North Yorkshire, 2nd-6th June 1994; Vane Farm, Perth & Kinross, 28th-30th April 1997.

Appendix 4. List of selected records still under consideration

This list is not intended to be complete. Some decisions may have been arrived at and notified to County Recorders/observers prior to the publication of this Report.

1997 Black Kite Burnham Norton, Norfolk, 29th-31st May. **Laughing Gull** Houghton Green, Cheshire, 12th January. **Red-throated Pipit** St Mary's, Scilly, 10th October; Porthgwarra, Cornwall, 22nd-23rd October. **Radde's Warbler** St Agnes, Scilly, 18th-19th October. **Two-barred Crossbill** Kergord, Shetland, 6th July. **Trumpeter Finch** Whitby, North Yorkshire, 27th May. **Pine Grosbeak** Moreton, Cheshire, 26th April. **Yellow-breasted Bunting** Fife Ness, Fife, 15th October.

1996 Madeira/Cape Verde Petrel Pendeen, Cornwall, 24th August. **American Golden Plover** Witham Mouth, Lincolnshire, 10th March. **Greenish Warbler** Prawle Point, Devon, 24th September.

1995 American Wigeon Leighton Moss, Lancashire, 6th-16th October. **Semipalmated Sandpiper** South Huish, Devon, 8th-9th October. **Black-eared Wheatear** Great Orme's Head, Caernarfonshire, 20th October. **Hume's Warbler** Spurn, East Yorkshire, 3rd November.

1994 Black-headed Bunting Skomer, Pembrokeshire, 9th May.

1993 South Polar Skua Sea area Sole, 26th August. **Hume's Warbler** Bridlington, East Yorkshire, 11th February.

1985 Collared Flycatcher Holkham Meals, Norfolk, 12th-13th May.