

ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORD FOR DERBYSHIRE, 1935-36.

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F.Z.S., etc.

A wet and cheerless summer, following on a long and dismal winter, was not favourable to bird life, and migrants came irregularly. One curious feature of the season has been the late stay of Swallows and House-Martins on our south coast. Many important notes have been contributed by our increasing body of observers.

ARRIVAL OF MIGRANTS, 1936.

Tree-Pipit, *Anthus t. trivialis*. April 9th, Hazelwood, one (C.H.); 16th, Cromford (R.E.); 26th, Radbourne (W.M.); 27th, Yeldersley (J.W.); 28th, Ashbourne (K.H.); May 10th, Holmewood (C.B.C.).

Yellow Wagtail, *Motacilla f. rayi*. April 15th, Ashbourne (K.H.); 19th, Cromford (R.E.); Barton Blount (W.M.); 25th, Ednaston (J.W.); 27th, Coombs (W.S.); 29th, Hazelwood (C.H.); 30th, Holmewood (C.B.C.).

Spotted Flycatcher, *Muscicapa s. striata*. May 9th, Yeldersley (J.W.) and Hazelwood (C.H.); 16th, Radbourne (W.M.); 18th, Cromford (R.E.).

Chiff-chaff, *Phylloscopus c. collybita*. March 24th, Shirley Wood (J.W.); 28th, Ashbourne (K.H.); April 2nd, Lea (R.E.); 9th, Hazelwood (C.H.); 10th, Radbourne (W.M.).

Willow-Warbler, *Ph. t. trochilus*. April 8th, Radbourne (W.M.) and Shirley (J.W.); 10th, Cromford (R.E.); 12th, Hazelwood, many (C.H.); 15th, Ashbourne (K.H.); 20th, Buxton (W.S.) and Holmewood (C.B.C.).

Wood-Warbler, *Ph. s. sibilatrix*. May 8th, Cromford (R.E.); 10th, Yeldersley (J.W.).

Grasshopper-Warbler, *Locustella n. naevia*. May 25th, Radbourne (W.M.); 26th, Whitwell (G.W.).

Reed-Warbler, *Acrocephalus s. scirpaceus*. May 10th, Radbourne (W.M.).

Sedge-Warbler, *A. schænobænus*. April 30th, Butterley (C.H.); May 4th, Radbourne (W.M.) and Cromford (R.E.); 15th, Holmewood (C.B.C.).

Garden-Warbler, *Sylvia borin*. May 6th, Cromford (R.E.); 10th, Radbourne (W.M.), Yeldersley (J.W.) and Hazelwood (C.H.); 12th, Holmewood (C.B.C.).

Blackcap, *S. a. atricapilla*. April 12th, Hazelwood, one (C.H.); 30th, Cromford (R.E.); May 6th, Radbourne (W.M.).

Whitethroat, *S. c. communis*. April 18th, Cromford (R.E.); 29th, Smalley (W.M.); May 2nd, Ashbourne (K.H.); 4th, Hazelwood (C.H.); 5th, Holmewood (C.B.C.).

Lesser Whitethroat, *S. c. curruca*. May 3rd, Yeldersley (J.W.); 6th, Radbourne (W.M.); 9th, Hazelwood (C.H.).

Wheatear, *Enanthe æ. enanthe*. March 23rd, Cheshire border (W.S.); 24th, Shottle (C.H.); 30th, Sudbury (W.M.) and Buxton (W.S.); April 5th, Thorpe (J.W.); 19th, Holmewood (C.B.C.).

Whinchat, *Saxicola rubetra*. April 30th, Cromford (R.E.) and Holmewood (C.B.C.).

Redstart, *Phænicurus ph. phænicurus*. April 22nd, Ashbourne (K.H.); 26th, Cromford (R.E.); 30th, Wirksworth (J.W.); May 10th, Alderwasley (C.H.).

Nightingale, *Luscinia m. megarhyncha*. May 17th, Radbourne (W.M.).

Swallow, *Hirundo r. rustica*. April 15th, Hazelwood, two (C.H.); 16th, Matlock (R.E.); 18th, Radbourne (W.M.) and Ashbourne (K.H.); 21st, Buxton (W.S.); 24th, Tutbury (W.M.); 26th, Whitwell (G.W.); 28th, Holmewood (C.B.C.).

House-Martin, *Delichon u. urbica*. April 30th, Ashbourne (K.H.); May 4th, Radbourne (W.M.); 5th,

Buxton (W.S.); 6th, Matlock (R.E.) and Hazelwood (C.H.).

Sand-Martin, *Riparia r. riparia*. April 18th, Matlock (R.E.); 20th, Ashbourne (K.H.); 21st, Coombs (W.S.) and Holmewood (C.B.C.); 23rd, Hazelwood, one (C.H.).

Swift, *Apus a. apus*. April 28th, Ashbourne (K.H.); 30th, Hazelwood (C.H.); May 4th, Holmewood (C.B.C.); 5th, Sutton-on-hill (W.M.) and Matlock (R.E.); 12th, Buxton (W.S.).

Cuckoo, *Cuculus c. canorus*. April 23rd, Holmewood (C.B.C.) and Dalbury (W.M.); 26th, Whitwell (G.W.); 28th, Hazelwood, two (C.H.); 30th, Ashbourne (K.H.); May 3rd, Buxton (W.S.).

Turtle-Dove, *Streptopelia t. turtur*. May 13th, Holmewood (C.B.C.); 14th, Matlock (R.E.).

Sandpiper, *Tringa hypoleucos*. April 10th, Matlock (R.E.); 14th, Ashbourne (K.H.); 23rd, Coombs (W.S.).

Corncrake, *Crex crex*. May 3rd, Hazelwood (C.H.); 16th, Radbourne (W.M.).

Curlew are noted as arriving on the lowlands on Feb. 27th (R.E.) and Axe Edge, Buxton, March 14th (W.S.); Redshank on March 11th (R.E.) and Buxton, Mar. 26th (W.S.); Whimbrel, May 21st, Holmewood (C.B.C.).

AUTUMN DEPARTURES AND ARRIVALS.

Last date of Swallows at Buxton, Sept. 27th; Swifts, Aug. 9th (W.S.); last Swallow at Matlock, Oct. 7th (R.E.); last House-Martin, Hazelwood, Oct. 7th (C.H.); last Swift, Burton-on-Trent, Aug. 13th; last Willow-Warbler, Sept. 16th, Chiff-chaff 23rd, House-Martins had left by Oct. 18th, Sudbury last Swallows, Oct. 24th (W.K.M.).

Bramblings first noted at Yeldersley, Oct. 8th (J.W.); first Redwing, Oct. 5th (J.W.); Fieldfares very scarce:

Hazelwood, Nov. 1st (C.H.); two at Ashover, Nov. 22nd (R.E.); Redwing also few; arriving Oct. 20th (R.E.); Oct. 31st (W.K.M.).

Corrigendum.—In last years 'Report' (p. 98) the date of the first egg of the Great Crested Grebe at Hardwick should be Mar. 31st (not March 1st).

SYSTEMATIC LIST.

Hawfinch, *Coccothraustes c. coccothraustes*. A small flock was noticed feeding on cherry trees near Buxton, 10, VIII. They remained about a fortnight in the garden of Mrs. Frangopulo. Though not uncommon in the wooded valleys it is decidedly a rare bird here (W.S.).

Crossbill, *Loxia c. curvirostra*. A flock of about 30 among the tops of the spruces in Shirley Wood, Osmaston, 17, I. Weather very snowy (K.H.).

House-Sparrow, *Passer d. domesticus*. To the long list of misdeeds of this species must be added the destruction of a brood of Blue Tits at Ashbourne, when almost fledged, by some six Sparrows, on 11 and 12, VI. Not content with attacking the parents when bringing food to the nest, they dislodged a piece of brick and threw out the nest and young birds. The hole was then occupied by the Sparrows (K.H.).

Tree-Sparrow, *P. m. montanus*. It is interesting to find that this bird is common on the wind-swept and bare uplands in the Alstonfield district (N.E. Staffs.), where, out of 20 caught alive in a trap, half a dozen may be Tree-Sparrows. They naturally seek the shelter of the farms (B.P.).

Pied Wagtail, *Motacilla a. yarrellii*. The roost in the big rhododendron bush in Dr. Hollick's garden at Ashbourne was visited for about a fortnight prior to 10, I, and on that date eight arrived at dusk. By 20, I, the numbers had increased to about 40. On Feb. 10th,

there was a bitter E. gale and 20 of them huddled under the lee of the wall before roosting. All left mid-February, returning on 24, III, when 30-40 arrived about 6-30 p.m., staying for a week or more, but never more than about 50 in number (K.H.). In the garden at Buxton, roosts were noted at the end of Jan. and in Oct. (W.S.).

Nuthatch, *Sitta e. affinis*. One noted in the garden, Yeldersley Hall, for 2-3 days, 5, IX (J.W.).

Great Grey Shrike, *Lanius e. excubitor*. One seen near Hulme End, about 2 miles from Alstonfield, in Staffordshire, but very close to the county boundary, which is the R. Dove, on 13, I (B.P.).

Red-backed Shrike, *Lanius c. collurio*. As this species has apparently deserted its old haunt in the Dove valley, below Dovedale (F.J.), and was not noted in the Matlock district in 1936 (R.E.), it is of much interest to find that on 9, VI, a pair nested about 2 miles from Parwich and the hen was seen with food in her beak. In 1935, a cock was also seen about half a mile from this year's site in the first week of August (C. L. Collenette).

Grasshopper-Warbler, *Locustella n. naevia*. Rather irregularly distributed, but in some districts quite common. In a wood of 500 acres in the north-east of the county, G.T.W. estimates quite 300 acres as providing just the type of ground they like, and here twenty pairs breed annually. The males arrive from 24, IV, to the end of the month and may be heard trilling all day, but, presumably after pairing, day singing almost ceases and they are only to be heard in the evening.

White's Thrush, *Turdus dauma aureus*. Mr. G. N. Carter writes that on 14, IX, 1935, while shooting in 'the Peak District of Derbyshire' he twice flushed a bird, which he identified as of this species, and notes its size as possibly larger than Mistle-Thrush, undulating flight, white patches on tail and crescent shaped markings (Cf. also *Field* 25, I, 36, p. 189).

Mr. Carter informs us (*in litt.*) that the locality was at Priestcliffe, near Taddington, on the high ground north-west of Bakewell. There is no previous record for the county.

Nightingale, *Luscinia m. megarhyncha*. One arrived at Radbourne, 17, V, and stayed about a week; weather very cold with continual N.E. winds (W.K.M.). Also reported as heard on Darley Moor by Mr. Nash (Cubley), and confirmed independently. It is curious that in such a wet and cold spring this species should have visited us.

Stonechat, *Saxicola t. hibernans*. Another irregular summer resident, but resorts to the coast and lower levels in winter. In 1934, a male was seen on Don Moor on 11, III (C.W.). In 1936, a male was identified between Ashbourne and Osmaston, 11, III (K.H.); while at least one pair was noticed in the Parwich district in June (C.L. Collenette).

Short-eared Owl, *Asio f. flammeus*. Generally present on the Alstonfield moorlands and occasionally shot by keepers. One noted 24, III (Staffs.), by B.P.

Barn-Owl, *Tyto a. alba*. One seen hunting along hedgerows near Hazelwood Station, just below level of hedge, and once passed within four yards of the observer at 3-45 p.m. on 15, IV (C.H.).

Peregrine, *Falco p. peregrinus*. Ever since 1919 this fine species has made repeated attempts to breed on the Derbyshire moors, but in the interests of the Grouse, one or both of the birds is usually shot from the eyrie, and though eggs have been laid on several occasions it is very doubtful whether young have ever been reared. One locally shot bird had a pinkish-brown flush on the breast (C.W.). A Falcon reported as shot on the Derwent moors in December (A.F.A.).

Hobby, *F. s. subbuteo*. One seen clearly at close quarters, in the middle of the town of Ashbourne, in January! (B.P.). While the identification was appar-

ently correct, the date is so extraordinary that one can only suppose that the bird had escaped from some falconer.

Merlin, *F. c. aesalon*. In spite of the fact that the birds are regularly shot and the eggs or young destroyed, these little Falcons still attempt to breed in the old sites on the N. Derbyshire moors (C.W.).

Buzzard, *Buteo b. buteo*. As supplementing our note in the 'Report' of 1933-34, a pair was seen near Derwent on 21, I, 1934 (C.H.W.). One soaring near Ilam, Staffs. in June, 1936 (T.C.J.); while near the 'Eagle and Child,' just within the Cheshire border, B.P. twice saw this species (probably two different birds) on 25, III. If not killed off, will probably establish itself in time.

Honey-Buzzard, *Pernis a. apivorus*. Among the birds from Osmaston Manor, sent by Sir I. Walker to the Derby Museum, was one which I recognized as that shot at Osmaston and sent to Ashbourne, 10, IX, 1908. It was afterwards re-mounted and is a uniformly brown bird with a few light feathers. A fine bird with a barred breast was shot by a keeper near Castle Donington, within the Derbyshire boundary, about August, 1936, but the exact date has not yet been ascertained. It is deplorable that these useful and beautiful birds should be killed in ignorance so frequently (A.F.A.).

Heron, *Ardea c. cinerea*. The Ilam heronry (Staffs.) is reported this year as completely 'shot out' (T.C.J.). There is, however, little doubt that a pair bred this year in Shirley Wood; on July 14 two young birds accompanied by one old one were seen on one of the adjoining ponds (K.H.).

[The supposed 'Night-Heron' reported in a local paper as having been picked up dead in the winter of 1935-36, turned out to be only a Common Heron (F. Williamson)].

Gadwall, *Anas strepera*. One on middle pond, Osmaston, 26, IX (J.W.). There are very few previous records of this species for the county.

Teal, *Anas c. crecca*. Eighty-two counted on the Osmaston Ponds, together with Mallard, 4, II (J.W.).

Wigeon, *A. penelope*. A drake (in eclipse) and a duck on the Osmaston Ponds, 1, X (K.H.).

Shoveler, *Spatula clypeata*. Five on middle pond, Osmaston, with one Pochard, 30, III (J.W.).

Tufted Duck, *Nyroca fuligula*. To the list of breeding localities may be added Redmires Reservoir, near Sheffield, just over the Yorks. boundary, where about a dozen pairs nest (C.W.). Two broods of young, a few days old, brought from Hardwick Ponds across country to the reservoir at Holmewood (C.B.C.).

Velvet-Scoter, *Oidemia fusca*. 'G.H.A.' reported a black duck with a white patch on the wing which was shot on 26, XII, 1935, near Burton, and had been seen for over a week on the Trent. A wing and foot were sent up to the 'Field' office for identification, and proved the bird to be a Velvet-Scoter.

Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax c. carbo*. One in breeding plumage was flying about round the Redmires Dams on 9, VI 1935, and was attacked by Black-headed Gulls (C.W.). [Another is said to have occurred in the autumn of 1936 on the Trent, but no details have been obtained so far.]

Great Crested Grebe, *Podiceps c. cristatus*. Two breeding pairs reported at Kedleston in 1935 (Grebe census Report 1935): only one unmated male seen at Osmaston from 19, III, 1936, through the summer, but in Oct. another immature bird stayed for some days on the Wyaston Pond (K.H.); also reported nesting at Butterley, 30, IV (C.H.); and two seen on Coombs, 31, III (W.S.).

Storm-Petrel, *Hydrobates pelagicus*. An unrecorded specimen was obtained at Whitwell about 1900-1904 by G. G. Walker, and is still in the possession of G. L. Walker. This is the sixth definite record.

Ringed Plover, *Charadrius h. hiaticula*. One on Lings Reservoir, 10, IX (C.B.C.).

Golden Plover, *Ch. a. apricarius*. A flock of 20-30 flying over Ashbourne Green, 24, I (K.H.). In Alstonfield district (N. Staffs.) they began to breed 43 years ago and return annually to the same fields (B.P.). A flock of about 150 circling between Alvaston and Elvaston, 21, XII, 36 (F.W.).

Dunlin, *Calidris a. schinzi*. There seems to be no doubt that one or two pairs breed annually on the moors in the north of the county, but the only proven case so far has been outside the boundary. We hope to be able to publish more definite records later.

Snipe, *Capella g. gallinago*. One found its way into an empty cottage at Hazelwood, presumably through the hole for the copper, and was discovered next morning after spending the night there, 1, II (C.H.).

Woodcock, *Scolopax r. rusticola*. Although prior to 1906 none were met with in Whitwell wood, there are now about twelve pairs breeding there regularly (G.L.W.).

Black Tern, *Chlidonias n. niger*. Three watched for half an hour, hawking for flies about six inches above the surface of the water at Williamthorpe Reservoir, on 16, V, at 9-30 a.m. (C.B.C.). None have been recorded since 1908.

Black-headed Gull, *Larus r. ridibundus*. The colony inside the British Celanese Company's property at Spondon was apparently founded in 1931, and showed a decided increase in 1935, when from fifteen to twenty-five pairs appeared to be breeding inside the enclosure, as far as could be seen from the adjacent Power Station (W.K.M.). A pair noted by the Derwent near Ambergate, 25, IV (W.K.M.) and again on 11, VII (F.J.).

Lesser Black-backed Gull, *L. f. graellsii*. One near Ashbourne, flying N.E., 7, IV (K.H.).

Moorhen, *Gallinula ch. chloropus*. An albino, with

only about a dozen dark feathers, exists at Ednaston and has bred. Several of the chicks are reported as showing some white in their plumage.

Blackgame, *Tetrao t. britannicus*. Reported as on the increase in the north of the county, on the Yorks. border (C.W.). Now fairly common in Warslow (N. Staffs.). Over 100 have been killed on the estate this autumn, mostly cocks as the hens are not shot (B.P.).

The following have contributed to the record for 1936: A. F. Adsetts (A.F.A.); G. N. Carter, C. L. Collenette, C. B. Chambers (C.B.C.); R. Eglinton (R.E.); Miss K. Hollick (K.H.); Miss C. Hull (C.H.); T. C. Jeffrey (T.C.J.); Rev. F. C. R. Jourdain (F.J.); Capt. W. K. Marshall (W.K.M.); B. R. S. Pemberton (B.P.); R. E. Knowles; Dr. W. Shipton (W.S.); G. T. Walker (G.T.W.); C. H. Wells (C.W.); F. Williamson (F.W.); Miss J. Wright (J.W.).

All dates refer to 1936 except where otherwise stated.