

ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORD FOR DERBYSHIRE, 1940.

By W. K. MARSHALL.

The great loss sustained by us all through the death of the late Rev. F. C. R. Jourdain is irreplaceable: it is impossible to come up to his high standard and war time difficulties seem to make it still more impossible. Thanks are due to all those who have contributed.

For Meteorological data in connection with the severe winter of 1939-40 I would refer to "British Birds," Volume XXXIV, p. 118.

SYSTEMATIC LIST.

Carrion-Crow, *Corvus c. corone*. A large number roost in winter in Radburne Rough (W.K.M.).

Rook, *Corvus f. frugilegus*. In the two Radburne rookeries there were 650 nests, the largest number since 1936, in spite of the hard winter and some tree felling. 380 young were shot (W.K.M.). On 28th September Rooks were making much noise in two walnut trees at Parwich shortly after daybreak and two were seen to fly off with nuts in their beaks. Walnuts getting ripe but only a few had fallen. Unshelled nuts, still in their green casing, found under the rookery trees (C.L.C.).

Mealy-Redpoll, *Carduelis f. flammea*. Some in a flock of Siskins and Lesser Redpolls on Alders near Ashbourne on 19th and 20th January (K.H.).

Meadow-Pipit, *Anthus pratensis*. An exceptionally good spring for this species, over thirty nests with eggs being located (J.A.).

Twite, *Carduelis fl. pipilans*. A few pairs bred on the higher slopes near Buxton (J.A.).

Crossbill, *Loxia c. curvirostra*. A party at Matlock Bath in early spring (R.E.).

Tree-Sparrow, *Passer m. montanus*. These always appear around Ashbourne in the spring. Ten in a ploughed field at Mapleton on 30th March. They are often seen in odd pairs here (K.H.). Nested at Radburne and Barton Blount (W.K.M.).

Pied Wagtail, *Motacilla a. yarrellii*. The roost in Dr. Hollick's garden was not used by any numbers of Wagtails this season, though a few odd ones were around it at sunset and sunrise. Between 12th and 15th January the bush was much thinned by the hard weather, so possibly it was less suitable than usual (K.H.).

Yellow Wagtail, *Motacilla flava rayi*. Penetrated further up the Derwent Valley than usual this year; several pairs bred near Hathersage (R.C.).

Blackbird, *Turdus m. merula*. A hen Blackbird (presumably the same bird) nested in a gorse patch for three successive seasons. She permitted handling whether sitting fresh or incubated eggs or when brooding young. Her mate during each season was extremely shy and wary (J.A.).

Song-Thrush, *Turdus philomelus clarkei*. On 28th September 20 or more on migration at Ashbourne (K.H.).

Willow-Tit, *Parus a. kleinschmidti*. Nested in Sudbury Coppice. Seen and heard at Radburne and Windley during the autumn (W.K.M.).

Nuthatch, *Sitta europoea affinis*. Reared young in a nest box in Shirley Wood (K.H.).

Redbacked Shrike, *Lanius c. colluria*. A pair seen at Buxton on 17th August: they stayed a day. I have never heard of this species being seen anywhere near here before (W.S.).

Nightjar, *Caprimulgus e. europoeus*. For the first time there were none on the Ambergate and Wirksworth moors.

A nest was found on Stanton Moor where I have not previously known it (R.E.).

Shorteared-Owl, *Asio f. flammeus*. Seen at Axe Edge on 25th April and on 30th July near Three Shires Bridge. There is no doubt that they nest in the district (W.S.). On a moorland plateau in the Peak district a pair reared at least three young (J.A.).

Longeared-Owl, *Asio otus otus*. Since 1924, when this species was well established and breeding in many plantations and woods around Buxton, the local stock has steadily deteriorated and many favourite haunts are now deserted (J.A.).

Black-Grouse, *Lyrurus tetrrix britannicus*. The following note of 7th June, 1938 has not been previously reported. A Greyhen's nest with nine eggs was found a few yards from the bank of the Top Derwent Reservoir. Mr. E. H. Peat, the Keeper, said that he had not previously seen a nest in the district (R.C.).

Kestrel, *Falco t. tinnunculus*. Two pairs reared young close to each other in Matlock Dale Quarry while blasting was going on (R.E.). Regularly seen in the country round Parwich from July to October (C.L.C.).

Red-footed Falcon, *Falco v. vespertinus*. One shot in North Derbyshire on 25th Spetember, 1939 (C.H.W.).

Merlin, *Falco columbarius oesalon*. On a preserved grouse moor above Buxton a pair nested and raised four young which were destroyed by a keeper. Elsewhere a few pairs brought off their young unhindered (J.A.). A pair seen occasionally on the River Derwent at Rowsley and Darley Dale (R.E.).

Common Buzzard, *Buteo b. buteo*. Two seen together on 11th August at Goyt's Moss. Two together anywhere in the County is exceptional (J.A.).

Sparrow-Hawk, *Accipiter n. nusus*. Reared four young from nest 10 feet from ground in Scotch Fir plantation 15 years old (S.W., W.K.M.).

Montagu's Harrier, *Circus pygargus*. Near Warslow on 13th May (H.C.).

Teal, *Anas c. crecca*. "Some Teal" at Chesterfield Corporation Reservoir at Owlbar on 15th September and 6th October but none on 20th October (R.C.).

Goldeneye, *Bucephala c. clangula*. 5th November one duck at Osmaston (K.H.).

Tufted-Duck, *Nyroca fuligula*. Several on 15th September; one on 6th and 13th October; none on 20th October at Chesterfield Corporation Reservoir at Owlbar (R.C.). Twelve near Cromford (R.E.).

Shelduck, *T. tadorna*. Two at Treeton just over the County Boundary in Yorkshire on 4th October (A.W.).

Pochard, *Nyroca f. ferina*. Two on 6th October at Chesterfield Corporation Reservoir at Owlbar were not seen later (R.C.). Several at Renishaw on 19th October (A.W.). After it had been very scarce in the Ashbourne district I saw a drake at Ednaston on 28th September (K.H.).

Scaup, *Nyroca m. marila*. One drake at Renishaw on 19th October (A.W.).

Great Crested-Grebe, *Podiceps c. cristatus*. Bred at Sudbury. The male arrived between 11th and 18th March when the lake was partially covered with ice (W.K.M.). Coombs Reservoir (W.S.). A pair and an odd bird at Osmaston, the pair rearing three young. One adult and one young still there on 5th November (K.H.). Two pairs and one young at Locko Park (A.W.W.). Melbourne 25th March (R.E.).

Golden Plover, *Charadrius apricarius*. About 150 at Barton Blount on 14th April (W.K.M.). One nest with four eggs on the North Derbyshire border on 1st June (C.H.W.). Flocks of about thirty seen around Ashbourne on 9th January, 24th February and 1st March, each time during a thaw. Heard flying over at night on 8th February. Other flocks at Blore and Aldwark in April

(K.H.). Good numbers bred in the Peak District but a proportion lost first and even second layings by Carrion-Crows. An exceptionally late laying brought about through crows' interference was a nest of three fresh looking eggs on 2nd August (J.A.). A large number breeding in the Longnor district (H.C.). Nine on 15th September and fifty on 13th October and 100-120 on 20th October at Chesterfield Corporation Reservoir at Owler Bar (R.C.).

Dunlin, *Calidris a. schinzii*. During the spring of 1926 Captain A. W. Boyd saw a pair near Axe Edge on suitable ground and presumably they were nesting there. In subsequent seasons I have searched in vain until 15th May, 1940 when I flushed a single bird from a cotton-sedge bog. It was a likely nesting place but a second bird could not be found and a close search the following week proved abortive (J.A.). Twelve on 6th October, five on 20th October, none on 27th October at Chesterfield Corporation Reservoir at Owler Bar (R.C.). One with black breast on 20th April at Williamthorpe Reservoir, four on 18th July, three on 10th to 17th August (C.B.C.).

Little-Stint, *Calidris Minuta*. One on 6th October with twelve Dunlin was easily identified by its very much smaller size, white throat and differently marked plumage, at Chesterfield Corporation Reservoir at Owler Bar. On the same day one was seen near Halifax. The previous night had been wild on the moors (R.C.). One at Williamthorpe on 22nd July (C.B.C.).

Ringed-Plover, *Charadrius h. hiaticula*. Heard on 15th May. Another was at Williamthorpe Reservoir from 17th to 27th August (C.B.C.).

Green-Sandpiper, *Tringa ochropus*. 15th January, Sub-bury. One bird frequently seen at Barton Blount during August and September (W.K.M.).

Greenshank, *T. nebularia*. One at Williamthorpe Reservoir on 21st August. On this and the only previous

occasion I have seen a Greenshank there, was when a Ringed Plover was there (C.B.C.).

Redshank, *T. t. britannica*. Not seen at Coombs Reservoir this year (W.S.). Two pairs nested as usual at Barton Blount (W.K.M.). Two near flood water at Clifton on 24th February (K.H.). Returned to breeding ground near Derby on 25th March, the first clutch of eggs being completed on 23rd April (S.W.).

Woodcock, *Scolopax r. rusticola*. A pair reared four young near Stanton Woodhouse (R.E.).

Curlew, *Numenius arquata*. One just hatched on 1st June (C.H.W.). One in Okeover Park, feeding in open bog in hard weather on 11th and 12th April. Two near Sturston on 12th April (K.H.). One nest with three eggs and two with four at Hartington and Longnor on 11th May. One clutch was the light variety (H.C.). Thirty-eight flying south-west at 3.45 p.m. on 17th January near Chesterfield. I cannot recall seeing curlew here at this time of the year (C.B.C.).

Herring-gull, *Larus a. argentatus*. One at Radburne on 22nd October (W.K.M.). Seen during the summer (W.S.).

Common-gull, *Larus c. canus*. Single birds in adult plumage in the Ashbourne district on 2nd March, 16th May, 25th August, 11th October (K.H.).

Blackheaded-gull, *Larus r. ridibundus*. Seen during the summer (W.S.). One near Ashbourne on 20th March (K.H.). Six on newly ploughed ground at Parwich on 27th October (C.L.C.). The nesting colony at Spondon does not seem to have diminished at all (A.W.W.).

Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax c. carbo*. Two, or probably three at Brampton Reservoir on 6th September. There were at least two as one was a white breasted young bird and a second had a dark breast. They were seen frequently during the afternoon, but only one at a time (C.L.C.). On 9th September one at Sudbury and I was informed that it had been there a few days. It was later

joined by another. Both left about the end of the month (W.K.M.). Two flew over Ashbourne on 16th April going North-West (K.H.).

Redbreasted-Merganser, *Mergus serrator*. Seen on the River Derwent at Matlock in February and on the River Trent at Willington on 12th March (R.E.).

Common-Tern, *Sterna h. hirundo*. Seen on the River Derwent at Rowsley in January (R.E.).

Corncrake, *Crex crex*. Heard on 17th April at Borrowash and 29th June at Spondon (A.W.W.). None heard (R.E.).

ARRIVAL OF SUMMER MIGRANTS.

Tree-Pipit. April 20th, Bradley (K.H.); 22nd, Sudbury (W.K.M.) and Stenson (S.W.); 24th, Radburne (W.K.M.); 25th, Holmewood (C.B.C.); 26th N.E. Derbyshire (A.W.); 27th, Matlock (R.E.); 30th, Buxton (W.S.).

Yellow-Wagtail. April 11th, Cromford (R.E.); 18th, Ashbourne (K.H.); 20th, Barton Blount (W.K.M.); and Sutton-on-the-Hill (S.W.); 21st, Buxton (W.S.), Twyford (H.C.) and N.E. Derbyshire (A.W.); 25th, Holmewood (C.B.C.); 30th (increase) Holmewood (C.B.C.); May 5th, N.E. Derbyshire (C.H.W.).

Spotted-Flycatcher. May 5th, Radburne (S.W., W.K.M.); 13th (increase), Radburne (W.K.M.); 15th, Ashbourne (K.H.); 14th, Matlock (R.E.).

Pied-Flycatcher. May 2nd, Shirley (K.H.).

Chiffchaff. March 20th, Ashbourne (K.H.), Whatstandwell (R.E.); 23rd, Radburne (W.K.M.); 24th, Ilam (S.W.); April 24th, N.E. Derbyshire (A.W.).

Willow-Warbler. April 3rd, Ashbourne (K.H.), Radburne (W.K.M.); 4th, Ambergate (R.E.); 7th, Holmewood (C.B.C.) and Ilam (H.C., S.W.); 16th, N.E. Derbyshire (A.W.); 17th (main body), Radburne (W.K.M.); 18th, Buxton (W.S.); 27th, N.E. Derbyshire (C.H.W.).

Wood-Warbler. April 24th, Turnditch (W.K.M.); 27th,

Matlock (R.E.), N.E. Derbyshire (A.W.); May 2nd, Shirley (K.H.).

Grasshopper-Warbler. May 4th, Radburne (W.K.M.); 19th, Darley Moor (new locality), (R.E.).

Reed-Warbler. May 4th-13th, Radburne (W.K.M.).

Sedge-Warbler. May 4th, Radburne (W.K.M.), Derby (R.E.); 6th, Ashbourne (K.H.); 9th, Lea (R.E.).

Garden-Warbler. May 2nd, Shirley (K.H.), Cromford (R.E.); 4th, Holmewood (C.B.C.), N.E. Derbyshire (A.W.); 7th, Radburne (W.K.M.).

Blackcap. April 20th, Shirley (K.H.); 23rd, Radburne (W.K.M.); 28th, Matlock (R.E.); May 5th, N.E. Derbyshire (A.W.).

Whitethroat. April 26th, Thorpe (K.H.), Radburne (W.K.M.), N.E. Derbyshire (A.W.); 27th, N.E. Derbyshire (C.H.W.); 28th, Holmewood (C.B.C.), Twyford (H.C., S.W.).

Lesser Whitethroat. April 17th, Leahurst (R.E.); May 1st, Radburne (W.K.M.); 3rd, Ashbourne (K.H.).

Wheatear. March 21st, Ballidon (Dr. Hollick); 22nd, Alstonfield and Parwich (S.W.), Cromford (R.E.); 23rd, Buxton (W.S.); 25th, Ashbourne (K.H.).

Whinchat. April 30th, Chesterfield (C.B.C.); May 11th, Derby (R.E.); 14th, Clifton (K.H.).

Redstart. April 20th, Yeldersley (K.H.); May 1st, Lea (R.E.).

Nightingale. Not recorded.

Swallow. April 4th, Allestree (R.E.); 8th, Barton Blount (W.K.M.); 14th, Stenson (S.W.); 16th, Borrowash (A.W.W.); 17th, Ashbourne (K.H.), N.E. Derbyshire (A.W.); 18th, Litton Mill (W.S.); 19th, Markeaton (H.C.); 20th, Radburne (W.K.M.), Holmewood (C.B.C.); 21st Spondon (A.W.W.), Matlock (R.E.); 26th, N.E. Derbyshire (C.H.W.).

Martin. April 18th, Allestree (H.C.); 20th Sutton-on-the-Hill (S.W., W.K.M.); 21st, N.E. Derbyshire (A.W.);

23rd, Ashbourne (K.H.); 30th Holmewood (C.B.C.); May 12th, Lea (R.E.); 15th, Buxton (W.S.).

Sand-Martin. April 2nd, Cromford (R.E.); 4th, Ashbourne (K.H.); 6th, Ashbourne (S.W.); 21st, Barton Blount (W.K.M.); 24th, Holmewood (C.B.C.), Darley Abbey (H.C.).

Swift. April 24th, one bird Ashbourne (K.H.); May 2nd, Tissington, Barton Blount, Dalbury W.K.M.); 3rd, main body, Ashbourne (K.H.); 5th, N.E. Derbyshire (C.H.W.); 6th, Derby (S.W., H.C.); 7th Matlock Bath (R.E.); 8th, Buxton (W.S.), N.E. Derbyshire (A.W.); 11th, Holmewood (C.B.C.).

Cuckoo. April 18th, Sutton-on-the-Hill (S.W.); 21st, Rowsley (R.E.), Findern (H.C.); 23rd, Radburne (W.K.M.); 24th, N.E. Derbyshire (A.W.); 25th, Buxton (W.S.); 26th, Holmewood (C.B.C.); 27th, Ashbourne (K.H.); 28th, Lathkill Dale (A.W.W.); May 11th, N.E. Derbyshire (C.H.W.).

Turtle-Dove. May 5th, Wirksworth (new locality) (R.E.), N.E. Derbyshire (A.W.); 7th, Mercaston (W.K.M.); 12th, Holmewood (C.B.C.); 13th Radburne (W.K.M.).

Sandpiper. April 18th, Ratcliffe-on-Soar (R.E.); 20th, Holmewood (R.E.), Sutton-on-the-Hill (S.W.); 21st, Ashbourne (K.H.), Barton Blount (W.K.M.); 26th N.E. Derbyshire (A.W.); 30th, Darley Dale (R.E.); May 1st, Litton Mill (W.S.).

LATEST RECORDS OF SUMMER MIGRANTS, 1940.

Martin. 5th September, Buxton (W.S.); 4th October, N.E. Derbyshire (A.W.); 8th, Feeding young, Mill Dale (S.W.); 11th, In nest, Chesterfield (C.B.C.); 15th, Holmewood (C.B.C.); 23rd, Ashbourne (K.H.); 27th, Markeaton (H.C.); 5th November, Allestree (S.W.).

Sand-Martion. 2nd September, Ashbourne (K.H.); 13th, Sutton-on-the-Hill (S.W.); 29th, N.E. Derbyshire (A.W.); 11th October, Derby (K.H.).

Swift. 3rd August, Buxton—large numbers on the 2nd (W.S.); 4th, Local birds left Ashbourne, but birds passed through until 20th August (K.H.); 16th, N.E. Derbyshire (A.W.); 24th, Weston-on-Trent (W.K.M.); Hathersage (R.C.); 3rd September, Markeaton (H.C.); 13th, Sinfin (S.W.).

Swallow. 3rd August, nest with four eggs, N.E. Derbyshire (C.H.W.); 28th September, Spondon (A.W.W.); 29th, N.E. Derbyshire (A.W.); 1st October, Buxton (W.S.); 7th, Holmewood (C.B.C.); 8th, Belper (H.L.B.); 10th, Ashbourne (K.H.); 14th, Sutton-on-the-Hill (S.W.); 17th, Darley Abbey (H.C.).

Cuckoo. 29th July, Kedleston (H.C.).

Chiff-chaff. 3rd September, two heard Parwich (C.L.C.); 12th, N.E. Derbyshire (A.W.).

Willow-Warbler. 26th July, fifteen seen migrating at Parwich (C.L.C.); 4th September, N.E. Derbyshire (A.W.); 14th, Ashbourne (K.H.).

Common Whitethroat. 3rd September, Holmewood (C.B.C.).

Spotted-Flycatcher. 6th September, Ashbourne (K.H.); 28th, N.E. Derbyshire (A.W.).

Wheatear. 7th October, Axe Edge (W.S.); 9th, Derby (S.W.).

Tree-Pipit. 11th September, Holmewood (C.B.C.).

Yellow-Wagtail. 8th September, Ashbourne (K.H.); 11th, Holmewood (C.B.C.).

Whinchat. 17th September, Holmewood (C.B.C.).

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES OF WINTER MIGRANTS.

All dates are in 1940.

Siskin. 19th November, Okeover, last seen 23rd January, about 20 Ashbourne (K.H.).

Fieldfare. 22nd October, Sutton-on-the-Hill (S.W.); 5th November, Radburne (W.K.M.); 14th, 50-70 Ashbourne (K.H.); last seen 1st March, Ashbourne (K.H.).

Redwing. 19th October, N.E. Derbyshire (A.W.); 20th, Owlter Moors, Longshaw, Hathersage (R.C.); Holmewood (C.B.C.); 26th, Atlow, about 100 (K.H.); 5th November, Repton (S.W.); 12th, Belper (H.L.B.); last seen 10th March, Ashbourne (K.H.).

Brambling. 10th November, Belper (H.L.B.).

SONG-PERIOD NOTES.

Holmewood. 21st February, Song Thrush; 23rd, Skylark; 26th, Missel-Thrush; 8th March, Yellow-Hammer; 9th, Blackbird; 18th, Chiff-chaff (C.B.C.).

Radburne. 4th February, Great-Tit; 5th, Blue-Tit; 8th, Chaffinch, Missel-Thrush; 23rd, Song-Thrush; 6th March, Green-Plover; 10th, Blackbird, Wren; 8th April, Stock-Dove (W.K.M.).

From 1st August, 1939 to 31st July, 1940 the Song-Thrush was heard on 190 days. The thaw started on 19th February and the first Thrush sang on 23rd February, all having left in the hard weather. A second commenced on 29th February. The Wood-Pigeon was heard on 158 days and was not heard between 7th October and 24th March except once on 27th November. The Robin was heard on 181 days. Willow-Warbler on 127, Hedge-Sparrow on 103, Wren on 234. (W.K.M.).

Sudbury. 10th March, Goldcrest (W.K.M.).

Matlock. 31st March, Common-Snipe (R.E.).

Parwich. 27th September, Song-Thrush (C.L.C.).

Ashbourne. 7th and 8th January during a temporary thaw and not again until 4th February, 15th February, Song-Thrush; 23rd, Missel-Thrush; 24th, Blackbird; 25th, Chaffinch; 26th, Green-Plover, Hedge-Sparrow; 27th, Wren, Blue-Tit, Skylark; 6th March, Greenfinch (K.H.).

North Derbyshire Moors. 1st June, Nightjar (C.H.W.).

NOTES ON THE EFFECT OF THE HARD WINTER OF 1939/40.

The result of the frost and snow of January and February was noticeable later in the paucity of normally resident species. Goldcrests seemed to have gone. I only heard one Cock Robin during a number of days where usually they are common. The Turdidae were noticeably scarce except round gardens. In May it was quite uncommon to hear an odd Blackbird, Thrush or Missel-Thrush singing in woods where usually there are many. On the Moors visitors were late in appearing, some Curlews were only arriving on 30th March. Migrants in the Valleys were normal, and Redstarts were especially numerous along the rough hillsides (R.C.).

The following notes refer to the Buxton area and the Valleys of the Wye, Dove and Lathkill.

Red-Grouse, no serious change; Black-Grouse in its few localised haunts almost exterminated; Tawny-Owl and Kestrel much reduced in numbers. In many familiar haunts there has been a temporary extinction of Kingfisher, Wren and Moorhen. Grey-Wagtails were missing from many former breeding sites. Herons found dead by frozen lakes and rivers. Corvidae, little change generally. Little-Owl extremely scarce and suffered heavily. Great numbers of Redwings were starved to death and little was seen of Fieldfares at any time (J.A.).

On 21st July, 1,200 to 1,500 Green-Plover near Parwich. Kestrel and Greater Spotted and Green-Woodpecker were seen there in July, August and September. At Windley Stock-Doves, Nuthatch and Little Owl were present. On 29th October eight Herons were seen near Tissington (C.L.C.).

In the Ashbourne district I think the birds came through the cold weather of early 1940 very well. On 3rd March a pair of Rooks were lining their nest with mud and on 10th March a Song-Thrush was building, although there had been 20 degrees of frost on 7th March. The only

birds which seem to have decreased noticeably here are Goldcrest, Goldfinch, Wren and Moorhen; the latter is rapidly recovering. (K.H.).

In the Matlock area the Goldcrest is nearly decimated but one or two survive in the Bolehill firwoods. No signs of recovery. Longtailed-Tit and Wren also, but a few of the former are left in Hill Carr Wood, Darley Dale, and there is some slight re-appearance. The Wren revived in Matlock Dale and Cromford in late summer. Kingfisher, Moorhen and Dipper suffered badly: I knew of four Kingfishers' nests and there is a fair recovery. Moorhen now nearly normal. Dipper did not nest on the Derwent at Rowsley and Darley Dale for the first time on record: now improving. Grey-Wagtail decimated; one survived at Rowsley; no nests and no signs of recovery. (R.E.).

Nuthatch cleaning out last year's nesting hole at Radburne 16th March; Blackbird, full clutch 24th March at Sutton-on-the-Hill; Green-Plover, full clutch 4th April (S.W.).

At Flash and Three Shires Head two Ring-Ousels' nests were found. Large numbers of Meadow-Pipits nested near Hartington (H.C.).

North East Derbyshire and the adjoining part of Yorkshire. My observations apply chiefly to the Sheffield and Barnsley districts.

Goldcrest. Appears to have suffered more than any other species. I have not seen or heard a single bird during the whole spring and summer. This applies not only to the areas above-mentioned where it is usually fairly well distributed but to other districts—Boston, Wroxham, Thetford, etc., where I have spent odd days.

Kingfisher. Apparently pretty badly hit. Only one nesting pair in eight usually occupied sites—although an odd bird was seen in June in one of the other sites I have no evidence of breeding there.

Wren. Also suffered very badly. It was apparently

completely missing from my own area for a time after the bad weather broke and I never saw or heard a bird of this species locally until the end of June when a few pairs began to take up quarters. The only nest seen being one with 6/c in mid-July. Lincolnshire and Norfolk districts visited were not so much affected apparently and birds were noted there early in Spring.

Linnet. Much less plentiful than normal but this was probably due to nearly all patches of gorse having been almost completely killed by frost. This I think drove the birds away, for stretches of gorse usually holding dozens of pairs were lifeless and untenanted. Some slight new growth appeared on the gorse in places where it was not quite destroyed and in late June and July a few pairs were nesting amongst this.

Thrush. Numbers about up to average but distribution affected. Amongst the rhododendrons, yews and evergreens in Rockley woods near Barnsley where it is usually very abundant hardly a nest was to be found. On the high ground in Derbyshire in hedges bordering the roads up to moor level it was even more plentiful than usual. This, again, in my opinion was probably due to a great extent to the very poor, half leafless, condition of most evergreens which doubtless adversely affected food supplies and drove the birds to seek other areas. It is not improbable that the same explanation may account for the absence of Goldcrests above referred to. Yew trees were particularly blighted by the frost and snow and were shedding all their needles in early spring instead of holding them until the new growth of summer. In this connection I have noted that whereas a large number of thick young yew trees in Rockley woods are usually full of nests of Thrush, Blackbird, Greenfinch, Bullfinch, Chaffinch, Goldcrest and other species, this season I could not find a single nest in them and every touch on the branches brought down showers of dead leaflets which

would have filled any nests. Doubtless for this reason the finches and other species were nesting chiefly in thorns, elders and other trees.

Blackbird. Certainly did not suffer at all and I have not only found numbers rather above the average everywhere but nesting commenced unusually early—I saw young by first week in April, clutches have averaged slightly above normal and, in one case I noted, *three* broods were reared in the same nest.

Tits. Of eighteen nesting boxes examined in one wood near Sheffield fifteen were occupied by Blue and Great Tits, clutches being large. This is a rather higher percentage than usual in this wood. On the other hand of 110 nesting boxes fixed in two woods in Thetford area, of which usually some 75 per cent. are tenanted, but this year less than 12 per cent. were in use.

The above are the only species in connection with which I have noted any abnormality in numbers or distribution (A.W.).

SOUTH DERBYSHIRE.

Blackbird. Numbers maintained—possibly due to artificial feeding.

Song-Thrush. All left in the hard winter. Reduced in numbers.

Goldcrest. Materially reduced. In Radburne Parish usually 6 nests; none in 1940. The only two pairs found were at Sudbury.

Wren. Materially reduced.

Tree-Creeper. Considerably increased. I suggest this may be due to our many Elm trees—particularly Wych Elm.

Robin. Materially reduced.

Longtailed-Tit. Usually 5 to 6 pairs breed in Radburne Parish; only two in 1940.

Nuthatch. Still 2 pairs as usual in Radburne Parish, and 1 at Windley.

Reed-Bunting. Reduced.

Wood-Pigeon. Materially reduced.

Stock-Dove. Materially reduced.

Sparrow-Hawk, Kestrel, Carrion Crow, Magpie. Usual numbers.

Skylark Increased from 1 to 3 pairs in Radburne Parish—possibly due to more arable.

Rook. Increased from 582 (1939) to 650 nests in two rookeries.

Hawfinch, Chaffinch, Greenfinch, Linnet, Bullfinch. Usual numbers.

Reed-Warbler. Materially reduced.

Whitethroat. Materially reduced.

Yellow-Hammer. Usual numbers.

Lesser-Whitethroat. Usual numbers.

Blackcap I have known 6 pairs in Radburne Parish. In 1940 1 male only came but did not stay. Reduced in other districts.

Garden-Warbler. Reduced.

All Tits, other than Longtailed. Usual numbers.

Hedge-Sparrow. Usual numbers.

Starling. Probably increased.

Jackdaw. Usual numbers.

Green-Plover. Usual numbers.

Redshank. Usual numbers.

Moorhen. Almost wiped out; many found dead and many probably taken by foxes.

Kingfisher. Reduced.

Heron. Reduced. Two found dead at Barton Blount.

Great Crested-Grebe. Usual numbers.

Tree-Pipit. Usual numbers.

Tawny-Owl. Probably increased—this may be due to the war.

Barn-Owl. Reduced.

Little-Owl. Somewhat reduced.

Jay. Usual numbers.

Willow-Warbler. Reduced.

Chiff-Chaff. Usual numbers.

All three Woodpeckers. Usual numbers.

Note. My experience of this district covers the past 21 years (W.K.M.).

In the Ecclesall Bird Sanctuary on 19th May nesting boxes just inside the Derbyshire boundary were examined with the following results. Tawny-Owl, one young. Tree-Creeper, C/2 and young. Great-tit, four C/10, one C/9, two C/6, one C/2. Blue-Tit, C/14, C/13, C/11, C/10, C/6, C/2 (C.H.W.).

In the above notes the following abbreviations are used:

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