

## Notes.

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ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORD FOR DERBYSHIRE, 1931-32.

By the Rev. F. C. R. JOURDAIN, M.A., M.B.O.U.,  
F.Z.S., etc.

1931.

Dr. W. Shipton sends us some notes on the arrival and departure of migrants for the Buxton district (except where specified), which are useful for comparison with other records.

March 27th, Wheatear; April 9th, Ring Ouzel; April 15th, Willow Wren; 16th, Common Sandpiper, Yellow Wagtail (at Coombs); 29th, Swallow; May 1st, Cuckoo; 12th, 2 Turtle Doves (at Radbourne, nr. Derby); 16th, Swift; 25th, House Martin. Corncrake was not heard till July 2nd.

In the autumn the last Swift was seen on Aug. 9th; a young Cuckoo at Eccles House, Chinley on Aug. 23rd and the last Swallow on Oct. 9th.

Goldeneye (*Bucephala glaucion*). An adult male on Williamthorpe Reservoir, Chesterfield, seen by Mr. C. B. Chambers on Nov. 1st. He has only once previously met with an old male, though immature birds occur in most winters.

[White-faced Whistling Duck (*Dendrocygna viduata*). A specimen of this American species was shot at Weston-on-Trent in October, 1931, but must have been an escaped bird and has no claim to be regarded as a British bird (F. Williamson).]

Woodcock (*Scolopax rusticola*). Two pairs were found breeding in the Chesterfield district by Mr. Chambers. The first had 4 eggs on April 15th and the second a full set

on April 21st. Definite breeding records from Derbyshire are few and far between.

Great Northern Diver (*Colymbus immer*). This is certainly the most interesting record of the season. It first arrived at the Williamthorpe Reservoir on Dec. 7th and on the evidence of the pumpman, appeared to be in an exhausted condition. It remained on the reservoir till Dec. 18th and was frequently observed by Mr. Chambers and others. Some feathers picked up on the bank by him were also submitted to Mr. H. F. Witherby, who compared them with skins of this species and the Black-throated Diver, with which it is sometimes confused in winter plumage. Three Mute Swans arrived on the 18th and invaded the Diver's territory and by 3 p.m. it had gone (see *Brit. Birds.*, xxv, p. 304). There are seven previous records of this species and it is very satisfactory to state that the identification was completed without the necessity of shooting the bird.

[Mr. Chambers also informs us that a stuffed specimen of the Bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*) has come into his possession, which was shot at Langwith on February 27th, 1922, but has not previously been recorded.]

1932.

Arrival of migrants. Mr. Chambers sends us the following records from the Chesterfield district: Wheatear, April 5th; Willow Wren, 20th; Yellow Wagtail, 22nd; Swallow, 24th and House and Sand Martins on 25th. Swifts were not noted till May 12th. In Dr. Shipton's notes from Buxton, he states that Mr. H. S. Gladstone, who was then staying with him, saw two Spotted Flycatchers on May 9th, while he also saw one on the 10th. This is an early date, and it is interesting to note that this species was seen on the south Hampshire coast on May 4th.

From the Dovedale district Mr. Grindey reports that ground nesting species suffered much, even on hilly

pastures, from the continuous rainfall in the early part of the season. Scores of nests became saturated and were abandoned by the birds.

Jackdaw (*Colæus monedula spermologus*). Mr. A. F. Adsetts showed me a curious variety sent in for preservation in May from near Burton-on-Trent, which had a good deal of brown on the primaries and not much grey on the nape, somewhat resembling the Algerian race (*C. m. cirtensis*).

Magpie (*Pica p. pica*). On November 12, Mr. E. Grindey saw a Magpie fly down on to the back of a sheep, which was resting on the ground with a flock of some seventy others. It hopped on to the sheep's head and picked off the ticks from round the eyes. It then visited six others in turn, and repeated the process. In one case the sheep was grazing and the Magpie hopped down the sloping neck till it reached the head. The sheep took no notice of it and the Magpie was still at work when he left. The farmer informed him that he had seen this take place on several occasions, so that the Magpie must be credited with at least one redeeming feature!

Greenfinch (*Chloris ch. chloris*). A pair in Dr. Hollick's garden at Ashbourne built three nests and hatched off three broods within a range of some 50 yards of one another.

Snow Bunting (*Plectrophenax nivalis*). Mr. J. Armitage has contributed a valuable series of observations (which have been published in *Brit. Birds*) on the influence of the presence of the food plant (*Molinia*), which provides the insect food on which this species lives, in determining its distribution during its stay on our moorlands in the winter months.

Mistle Thrush (*Turdus v. viscivorus*). A pair nested on a light iron girder carrying an endless rope which brings coal slack across a main road in the village of Holmewood near Chesterfield. The young left the nest and perched

on the girders, but owing to the number of passers-by, the old birds were afraid to approach them and they fell on to the road and perished. A new nest was begun on the following day, but the young again came to an untimely end and a third nest was unfortunately taken by boys. All three nests were within 5 or 6 feet of the roof of every passing motor-bus and over a much used roadway (C.B.C.).

Hedge Sparrow (*Prunella m. occidentalis*). Miss Severne reports a partial albino with white, symmetrically coloured primaries at Wirksworth from Christmas 1931. A pied bird was also seen at Thorpe in the summer of 1932 (E.G.).

Swift (*Apus a. apus*). Evidently breeding in crevices of the limestone at Raven's Tor, on the Staffordshire side of the Dove, north of the Doveholes (E.G.).

Little Owl (*Athene noctua vidalii*). Now common all round Buxton, chiefly along the London Road (W.S.).

Kestrel (*Falco t. tinnunculus*). Two pairs again breeding in Dovedale after some years absence (E.G.).

Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*). Dr. H. H. Hollick reports that of two pairs of Swans at Bradley, one male was killed. The remaining pair hatched off seven cygnets and after they were hatched the male bird joined the second hen. A nest was made and six eggs were laid and hatched out on July 15, but each day the cock marked out two cygnets and killed them. In this way he killed the whole of the second brood, and then brought the first female with her cygnets to the lower pond, but made no attempt to lead them by road to Ashbourne as in the previous year.

Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps c. cristatus*). Some interesting details of the Derbyshire stock will be found in the Census published in *Brit. Birds*, xxvi, p. 62, 102, 142 and 174. Altogether 21 pairs bred in the county in 1931 at 14 different localities. Nine localities which have been occupied at some time during recent years were deserted in 1931, but Osmaston-by-Ashbourne must not be included among these, as it has since been ascertained that it was

occupied by a pair both in 1931 and 1932 (Miss K. Hollick).

Dabchick (*Podiceps v. ruficollis*). Birds still incubating on two nests at Williamthorpe Reservoir on August 27th, a late date (C.B.C.). One picked up alive in the middle of the town of Buxton on October 19th (W.S.).

Stock Dove (*Columba oenas*). Mr. Armitage reports this species as breeding at several localities in the Buxton district, especially Chrome Hill, nesting in crevices of the limestone, hollows under grass tufts and rabbit burrows. Also evidently breeding in the Dove valley, north of the Doveholes (E.G.).

Ringed Plover (*Charadrius h. hiaticula*). A very tame bird on Axe Edge on May 17th (W.S.).

Dunlin (*Calidris a. schinzi*). Noted at Williamthorpe Reservoir on Oct. 21st (C.B.C.).

Green Sandpiper (*Tringa ochropus*). One seen at Scropton on July 20th (C.B.C.).

Curlew (*Numenius a. arquata*). A pair again visited Thorpe Cloud for a few days, but were driven off by visitors (E.G.). Captain Wilson informed Mr. Chambers that they had now disappeared from the meadows near the river Dove near Sudbury and were reported to be breeding in Sudbury Park.

It only remains for me to thank those who have contributed to the record: Messrs. J. Armitage, C. B. Chambers, E. Grindey, Dr. H. H. Hollick, Miss K. Hollick, Dr. E. Shipton and Mr. F. Williamson.

#### SOME NOTES ON LEPIDOPTERA, 1932.

By H. C. HAYWARD, M.A., F.E.S.

Most collectors seem to have found the season of 1932 rather unproductive of insects in various orders, in spite of the very fine weather of the summer months. Probably the wretched summer of 1931 must bear the responsibility for this. Although January and early February were