

ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORD FOR DERBYSHIRE, 1933-34.

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F.Z.S., etc.

It is with very deep regret that we have to chronicle the death of Ernest Grindey, who has contributed many notes and observations to these records during the past thirty years. He spent practically the whole of his life in the parish of Thorpe and from boyhood took a deep interest in the bird life of the Dove Valley. Knowing every yard of the ground and having lived so long in the district, he was familiar with its bird life, in which he took the deepest interest and never ceased to watch and study them even when the advance of a painful illness kept him from outdoor work. His health was never good, and he passed away on March 13, 1934, at the early age of 52; a born naturalist and a man who was respected and liked by everyone. Many records which otherwise would have been lost, will help to keep his memory green.

Two years of drought have followed one another in succession, but on the heavier lands the effects have been less seriously felt than in other parts of England as far as bird life is concerned, although the water shortage has been very serious in some districts.

ARRIVAL OF MIGRANTS, 1934.

A remarkable feature has been the early arrival of a small party of Swifts. In Hampshire one was recorded on April 17, two at different localities on the 20th, and quite a number on the 23-24th, while one bird reached Ashbourne by April 19th. Yet the main body did not reach England till nearly a fortnight later, practically at the normal time.

The following list is compiled from the observations of Misses C. Hull and K. Hollick, Capt. W. K. Marshall, Dr. W. Shipton and Messrs. J. Armitage, R. Eglinton, Rev. F. C. R. Jourdain.

Tree Pipit, *Anthus t. trivialis*. April 21st, Yeldersley (K.H.); 24th Clifton (F.J.); 25th Hazelwood (C.H.); 29th Radburne (W.M.); May 1st Chesterfield (C.C.).

Yellow Wagtail, *Motacilla f. rayi*. April 12, Ashbourne (K.H.); 17th Matlock (R.E.); Hartington (J.A.); 23rd Radburne (W.M.); 29th Hazelwood (C.H.).

Red-backed Shrike, *Lanius Collurio*. Young Wood on July 22, Matlock (R.E.).

Spotted Flycatcher, *Muscicapa s. striata*. May 16, Matlock (R.E.); 17th, Radburne (W.M.) and Hazelwood (C.H.).

Chiff-chaff, *Phylloscopus c. collybita*. April 12th, Matlock (R.E.); 14th, Hazelwood (C.H.); 15th Radburne (W.M.).

Willow Warbler, *Ph. t. trochilus*. April 12th, Matlock (R.E.); 14th, Ashbourne (K.H.); 15th Radburne (W.M.), Chesterfield (C.C.) and Hazelwood (C.H.); 16th Buxton (J.A.).

Wood Warbler, *Ph. s. sibilatrix*. May 2nd, Matlock (R.E.); 4th, Hazelwood (C.H.); 7th Radburne (W.M.).

Reed Warbler, *Acrocephalus s. scirpaceus*. May 2nd, Radburne (W.M.).

Sedge Warbler, *A. schænobænus*. May 17th, Ashbourne (K.H.) and Matlock (R.E.); 24th, Hazelwood (C.H.).

Garden Warbler, *Sylvia borin*. May 3rd, Matlock (R.E.); 6th, Radburne (W.M.); 13th Hazelwood (C.H.); 26th, Ashbourne (K.H.).

Blackcap, *S. a atricapilla*. May 3rd, Matlock (R.E.), 26th, Yeldersley (K.H.).

Whitethroat, *S. c. communis*. April 24th, Clifton (F.J.); 29th, Hazelwood (C.H.); May 3rd, Matlock (R.E.); 7th, Shirley (K.H.) and Radburne (W.M.).

Lesser Whitethroat, *S. curruca*. April 29th, Hazelwood (C.H.); May 1st, Radburne (W.M.).

Wheatear, *Ænanthe æ. ænanthe*. April 8th, a pair, Buxton (W.S.); 9th Radburne (W.M.); 17th many between Hartington and Buxton (J.A.); Chesterfield (C.C.).

Whinchat, *Saxicola rubetra*. April 19th, Radburne (W.M.); 30th Hazelwood (C.H.), May 1st Chesterfield (C.C.).

Redstart, *Phœnicurus ph. phœnicurus*. April 26th, one Hazelwood, hen (C.H.); 29th, cock Hazelwood; May 2nd, Matlock (R.E.).

Swallow, *Hirundo r. rustica*. April 12th, Matlock (R.E.); 14th, Okeover (J.A.) and Ashbourne (K.H.); 15th, Radburne (W.M.) and Hazelwood (C.H.); 16th, Fenny Bentley (W.S.); 18th Chesterfield (C.C.); 23rd Buxton (W.S.).

House-Martin, *Delichon u. urbica*. May 3rd, Hazelwood (C.H.); 8th Radburne (W.M.); 12th Ashbourne (K.H.); 13th, Matlock (R.E.); 20th Buxton (W.S.).

Sand-Martin, *Riparia r. riparia*. April 13th, Matlock (R.E.); 14th, Ashbourne (K.H.); 16th, Hazelwood (C.H.) and Swarkestone (J.A.); 21st, Radburne (W.M.).

Swift, *Apus a. apus*. April 19th, one, Ashbourne (K.H.); May 4th, Hazelwood (C.H.); 9th, Ashbourne (K.H.); 12th, Matlock (R.E.), near Buxton (W.S.); Chesterfield (C.C.).

Nightjar, *Caprimulgus e. europæus*. First heard July 2nd, Matlock (R.E.).

Cuckoo, *Cuculus c. canorus*. April 27th, Radburne (W.M.); 29th, Hazelwood (C.H.) and Buxton (W.S.); 30th Chesterfield (C.C.); May 7th, Shirley (K.H.).

Turtle-Dove, *Streptopelia t. turtur*. May 27th, Chesterfield (C.C.); 29th Radburne (W.M.); 30th, Matlock (R.E.); June 5th, Shirley (K.H.).

Sandpiper, *Tringa hypoleucos*. April 17th, Ashbourne (K.H.) and Matlock (R.E.); 20th, Buxton (W.S.).

Corncrake, *Crex crex*. May 11th, Radburne (W.M.); 22nd, Hazelwood (C.H.); 26th, Osmaston (K.H.); June 4th, Matlock (R.E.).

SYSTEMATIC NOTES.

Raven, *Corvus c. corax* L. One sent from Foremark, Derby on Sept. 4th, 1934. This species might re-establish itself if it were not for the gun (F.W.).

Hooded Crow, *C. c. cornix* L. One clearly seen March 27th, associating with Rooks, near Ladyhole, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles E. of Ashbourne (K.H.). Reported as occurring not infrequently in Sudbury Park, attracted by carrion (W.M.).

Siskin, *Carduelis spinus* (L). Two males at Farnah Hall, March 28th (C.H.); noted by R. Dove, nr. Okeover, Apr. 8 (Capt. J. S. Reeve), one, male, Radburne, May 17th (W.M.).

Corn Bunting, *Emberiza calandra* L. Very local in the county. Formerly a few near Chaddesden (R.E.) and generally on hills between Winster and Bonsall (*ib.*).

Reed-Bunting, *E. s. schæniclus* (L). Found wintering in considerable numbers at high levels in Peak District, feeding on *Molinia* (see J.A. in *Brit. Birds*, XXVIII, Dec., 1934).

Pied Wagtail, *Motacilla a. yarrellii* Gould. The roost in Dr. Hollick's garden at Ashbourne was occupied this spring, but on a smaller scale and not for so long. Two Yellow Wagtails also joined in it on April 12th. A flock of 10 Pied Wagtails appeared on March 27th and the maximum of about 80 was reached on April 12th, but none were noted after April 14th (K.H.).

Greenland Wheatear, *Enanthe oe. leucorrhœa* (Gm.) Two large, light-coloured Wheatears, perching on hawthorn bushes at Sinfin, near Derby, on April 16th, were identified at close quarters as belonging to this race. One flew to the top of a 40 ft. tree and stayed there for some time (J.A.).

Dipper, *Cinclus c. gularis* (Lath.). Two pairs noted on the Derwent as far down as Lea Mills, near Cromford; one seen in early summer on the Langley branch of the Markeaton brook, just above the public park and on Aug. 23rd, one on the Kedleston branch, about a mile above the junction of the two streams. Possibly their presence so far south may have been due to the effects of two years drought (R.E.).

Swallow, *Hirundo r. rustica* L. Latest date on which noted near Derby, Oct. 26th (F.W.).

House-Martin, *Delichon u. urbica* (L). Although stories are current about Martins 'walling-up' House-Sparrows, first hand evidence is nearly always lacking. Mr. Harrison of the Ruck o' Stones gave the following details of a case of this kind. A pair of Martins built on a small wooden bracket, fixed under the eaves of a cowshed for them. In 1932 when the Martins arrived, a House-Sparrow had taken possession of the old nest. The Martins after vainly attempting to force an entrance and eject the Sparrow, built up the entrance to the nest and thus sealed him in. They then built another nest on to the original one and reared their young in it. About four or five days elapsed between the arrival of the Martins and the building of the second nest. When they had left, Mr. Harrison opened up the sealed nest and found the remains of a Sparrow inside. He had never heard of a similar case and used to look at the nest daily while the struggle was going on but the Sparrow was always in possession (K.H.).

Buzzard, *Buteo b. buteo* (L). The coniferous plantations round the Derwent valley reservoirs are now growing a fair size and a pair of Buzzards has haunted the locality all through the winter of 1933-34, but in August I was informed by the keeper that he had only seen one about lately (F.J.).

Heron, *Ardea c. cinerea* L. A pair nested in an oak

tree at Farnah Hall last spring (reported by Miss A. Salt to C.H.). Two or three pairs at Newton Solney (R.E.).

Shelduck, *Tadorna tadorna* (L). Mr. A. W. Smith of Wheatley House, Darley Dale, informs me that the two Shelducks reported last year were shot on Nov. 15th, 1932.

Wigeon, *Anas penelope* L. A duck was shot at Darley Dale on Nov. 6th, 1930 and a drake on Nov. 10th, at the same place; also 3 on Nov. 1st 1932 (A. W. Smith). Few ducks come to the Derwent Reservoirs, but what there are are chiefly Wigeon and Teal (F.J.).

Shoveler, *Spatula clypeata* (L). One shot at Darley Dale by Mr. Smith, Sept. 14th, 1931.

Pochard, *Nyroca f. ferina* (L). A drake shot at the same place, Nov. 6th, 1932.

Tufted Duck, *N. fuligula* (L). This species has now colonized nearly all the pools and lakes in the county. A pair bred on the Stew ponds, Taddington Dale (W.S.). Also noted on Bradley and Brailsford ponds (F.J.). Kedleston lake, Butterley Reservoir, Ponds near Trent Lock, Bear Pond, Alderwasley and Alton Manor, Idridgehay (C.H.) as well as Cromford Pond, Farnah Pond, Hardwick lakes and Wirksworth Mill Dam (C.H.).

Common Scoter, *Oidemia n. nigra* (L). A female was shot at Darley Dale by Mr. Smith on November 10th, 1932; a drake was also seen at the same time but escaped. This bird is an occasional straggler and has been shot or definitely identified on over a dozen occasions.

Red-throated Diver, *Colymbus stellatus* Pont. Struck telegraph wires near Midland Station, Derby, 6th Dec., 1934, and kept alive one night (F.W.).

Dunlin, *Calidris a. schinzii*. One of the Derwent Keepers informed me that there had been a remarkable increase in the number of Dunlin on his ground near the reservoirs (F.J.). Three birds (with a Ringed Plover) seen near Chesterfield, Sept. 3rd to 7th (C.C.). Two were shot out of a flock of seven at Darley Dale on Oct. 12th (A. E. S. Smith).

Green Sandpiper, *Tringa ochropus* L. Two birds flushed from a backwater of the Trent, near Repton on Feb. 10th (K.H.).

Redshank, *T. t. totanus* (L.). A pair noticed on Ecclesbourne, nr. Windley, and in 1933 at Hazelwood. This seems to be a fresh extension (R.E.). Also nested again at Axe Edge (W.S.).

Curlew, *Numenius a arquata* (L.). Reported as increasing on Matlock Moor and elsewhere (R.E.).

Whimbrel, *N. ph. phaeopus* (L.). Two flying over Heath, near Chesterfield, whistling note attracted attention (C.C.).

Great Snipe, *Capella media* (Lath.). One shot on the sewage farm at Spondon near Derby, Sept. 11th, 1933 and sent to Adsetts for preservation (F.W.).

Black-headed Gull, *Larus v. ridibundus* L. The gullery at Leash Fen near Baslow, in spite of the efforts of gamekeepers to suppress it, seems to be increasing (R.E.). A good many noted on Coombs Reservoir on March 2nd (W.S.). There is also a colony on the grouse moors of the north-west (F.J.).

Great Skua, *Stercorarius s. skua* (Brünn). This is a most interesting addition to the county list. On October 14th Dr. W. Shipton was at Sheldon, 8 miles from Buxton and had to pull up to avoid a bird in the middle of the road. It flew slowly away and settled 50 yards further on, and began to peck at some offal. He was able to get within 10 yards of it and to note all the distinguishing characters, heavy flight, general brown colouration with lighter feathers on mantle and wings, white patch on wing, blackish hooked bill and feet, short rounded tail and general size about that of a Herring-Gull. The bird appeared to be exhausted.

This bird has now become so numerous in the Shetlands, that all protection was withdrawn in 1933, except at one or two breeding places. Dr. Shipton notes that there was

a violent N.W. gale in the same night (*Cf. Brit. Birds, XXVIII*).

Red Grouse, *Lagopus s. scoticus* (Lath.). A covey of 8 young grouse, three-quarter grown and able to fly well, with an old bird, met with on Axe Edge on June 14th, an early date (W.S.).

In the preceding notes all dates refer to 1934, except where otherwise stated. Our thanks are due to all who have sent contributions to the Report: Misses K. Hollick and C. Hull; Messrs. A. F. Adsetts, J. Armitage, C. B. Chambers, R. Eglinton, Capt. W. K. Marshall, Dr. W. Shipton, Messrs. A. W. Smith, A. E. Smith and F. Williamson.

Mr. C. B. Chambers also adds that in 1933 a pair of Common Sandpipers hatched off a brood at Williamthorpe Reservoir. They have not bred there for about 15 years.