

# ORNITHOLOGICAL RECORD FOR DERBYSHIRE, 1934-35.

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

The Spring of 1935 will be remembered for the destructive frost which scorched and blackened the trees on the night of May 16th all over the country, and was followed by snowfalls in many districts. The rainfall was much below the average till the late Autumn, when heavy and continuous rains redressed the balance and removed all danger of drought.

## ARRIVAL OF MIGRANTS, 1935.

On the whole many of our Spring migrants arrived rather earlier than usual, but more observers are needed in order to get a true record of their movements. The following list is based on the notes contributed by Misses C. Hull and K. Hollick, Dr. W. Shipton, Capt. W. K. Marshall and Messrs. R. Eglinton and C. B. Chambers.

Tree Pipit, *Anthus t. trivialis*. April 18th, Matlock (R.E.); 20th, Mercaston (W.M.); 21st, Ashbourne (K.H.); Hazelwood (C.H.).

Yellow Wagtail, *Motacilla f. rayi*. April 16th, Matlock (R.E.); 19th, Ashbourne (K.H.), 21st. Radbourne (W.M.); 23rd, Hazelwood (C.H.).

Red-backed Shrike, *Lanius c. collurio*. Not met with this year, Matlock (R.E.).

Spotted Flycatcher, *Muscicapa s. striata*. May 9th, Brewood, Staffs (R.E.); 12th, Hazelwood (C.H.); 17th, Radbourne (W.M.); 24th, Ashbourne (K.H.).

Chiff-chaff, *Phylloscopus c. collybita*. March 26th, Radbourne (W.M.), an early date; April 13th, Hazelwood

(C.H.); 14th, Matlock (R.E.); 15th, Shirley Wood (K.H.).

Willow Warbler, *Ph. t. trochilus*. April 11th, Ashbourne (K.H.); Matlock (R.E.); 12th, Radbourne (W.M.); 16th, Buxton (W.S.); 17th, Hazelwood, in numbers (C.H.).

Wood Warbler, *Ph. s. sibilatrix*. April 28th, Matlock (R.E.); May 18th, Shirley Wood (K.H.).

Grasshopper Warbler, *Locustella n. naevia*. April 25th, Ambergate, several (R.E.).

Reed Warbler, *Acrocephalus s. scirpaceus*. April 21st, Radbourne (W.M.).

Sedge Warbler, *A. schænobæus*. April 23rd, Hazelwood (C.H.); May 1st, Ashbourne (K.H.); 7th, Cromford (R.E.).

Garden Warbler, *Sylvia b. borin*. May 5th, Matlock (R.E.); 11th, Hazelwood (C.H.); 13th, Yeldersley (K.H.).

Blackcap, *S. a. atricapilla*. April 19th, Matlock (R.E.); 29th, Sudbury (W.M.); May 13th, Yeldersley (K.H.).

Whitethroat, *S. c. communis*. April 21st, Radbourne (W.M.); 23rd, Hazelwood (C.H.); 25th, Matlock (R.E.); 26th, Clifton (K.H.).

Lesser Whitethroat, *S. c. curruca*. April 24th, Sudbury (W.M.); May 19th, Hazelwood (C.H.).

Wheatear, *Enanthe æ. ænanthe*. March 28th, Mercaston, one male (W.M.); April 11th, Matlock (R.E.); 13th, Buxton (W.S.).

Whinchat, *Saxicola r. rubetra*. April 24th, Ashbourne (K.H.); 27th, Matlock (R.E.); 30th, Hazelwood (C.H.).

[Nightingale, *Luscinia m. megarhyncha*. Reported from Borrowash and Mickleover, but doubtful (R.E.).]

Redstart, *Phœnicurus ph. phœnicurus*. April 25th, several passing, Hazelwood (C.H.); 28th, Matlock (R.E.).

Swallow, *Hirundo r. rustica*. April 7th, one Bradley (C.H.); 9th, Thorpe (K.H.); 10th, Radbourne (W.M.); 11th, Matlock (R.E.); 12th, Hazelwood, Calton Moor, many (C.H.); 13th, Coombs Res., Buxton (W.S.).

House-Martin, *Delichon u. urbica*. April 11th, Matlock (R.E.); 15th, Hazelwood (C.H.); 16th, Litton (W.S.); May 1st, Ashbourne (K.H.); 2nd, Radbourne (W.M.). Earlier than usual this year.

Sand-Martin, *Riparia r. riparia*. April 9th, Thorpe (K.H.); 11th, Matlock (R.E.); 15th, Hazelwood (C.H.)

Swift, *Apus a. apus*. May 2nd, Ashbourne (K.H.); 9th, Matlock (R.E.); 10th, Derby (W.M.); 11th Hazelwood (C.H.), latest date in 18 years watching; 12th, Buxton (W.S.).

Nightjar, *Caprimulgus c. europæus*. June 24th, but few this year, Matlock (R.E.).

Cuckoo, *Cuculus c. canorus*. April 20th, Radbourne (W.M.); 21st, Hazelwood (C.H.); 28th, Matlock (R.E.); 30th, Ashbourne (K.H.); May 5th, Buxton (W.S.).

Turtle-Dove, *Streptopelia t. turtur*. May 9th, Brewood, Staffs. (R.E.); Radbourne (W.M.); 20th, nr. Derby (K.H.); June 16th, Cromford (R.E.).

Sandpiper, *Tringa hypoleucos*. March 31st, Barton Blount (W.M.), an early date; April 13th, Coombs Res; Buxton (W.S.); 18th, Matlock (R.E.); 29th, Ashbourne (K.H.).

Corncrake, *Crex crex*. Apr. 27th, nr. Chesterfield (C.C.); May 11th, Hazelwood (C.H.); not noted till June 21st, Matlock, and very scarce through-out the county (R.E.).

#### DEPARTURES.

Swallows last seen at Buxton, Sept. 19th (W.S.); Hazelwood, Oct. 7th (C.H.); Radburne, 10th (W.M.); Chesterfield, 11th (C.C.).

House-Martins. Hazelwood, Oct. 3rd (C.H.).

Swift. Buxton, Aug. 17th (W.S.); Hazelwood, 23rd (two) (C.H.); Radbourne, 29th (W.M.); Chesterfield, Sep. 2nd (C.C.).

Cuckoo. Last heard, Hazelwood, July 1st (C.H.); young seen Radbourne, Aug. 30th (W.M.).

Fieldfare, *Turdus pilaris*. Arrived Radbourne, Oct. 23rd (W.M.); Hazelwood, 25th (C.H.).

Redwing, *T. musicus*. Arrived Dalbury, Oct. 20th (W.M.); Hazelwood, 25th (C.H.).

#### SYSTEMATIC LIST.

Rook, *Corvus f. frugilegus* L. In 1935 there were 628 nests in the two rookeries at Radbourne, compared with 754 in 1934; a considerable decrease (W.M.).

Hawfinch, *Coccothraustes c. coccothraustes* (L). These birds are always rather local and uncertain in distribution in the Dove valley: two or three noted among alders on the Bentley brook above Ashbourne on January 4th and several at the Lodge Farm, Ashbourne, April 30th (K.H.).

Greenfinch, *Chloris ch. chloris* (L). A decided increase in numbers, both as a breeding species and winter resident, noted in the Buxton district during the last ten years (J.A.), but always very common in the lower Dove valley.

Bullfinch, *Pyrrhula p. nesa* Math. and Ired. Remains scarce near Buxton, only two records of odd birds between 1924 and 1934, but two seen in Grinlow Plantations, Buxton, and one at Brown Edge on Sept. 29th (J.A.).

Brambling, *Fringilla montifringilla* L. Very few records from the High Peak: about fifteen seen at Wormhill, nr. Buxton, on March 3rd, feeding on beech-mast, and 7-8 together with Chaffinches at Topley Pike on November 3rd (J.A.). One captured in an intoxicated condition on a heap of spent hops at Darley Dale, January 26th and subsequently released (A. E. S. Smith).

House-Sparrow, *Passer d. domesticus* (L). A young bird, unable to fly, found in the Buxton Gardens on February 8th. An extraordinary case of early breeding, and the more remarkable at so high an altitude (W.S.).

Long-tailed Tit, *Aegithalos c. roseus* (Blyth). Large flocks in the lower Dove and Manifold valleys throughout the winter of 1934-35, and unusually plentiful in various parts of the county in autumn 1935 (J.A.).

Goldcrest, *Regulus r. anglorum* Hart. For the second year in succession, in the same wood, there was a nest of this species built on the *upper* side of a branch of a young Scotch pine, instead of being slung hammock-wise from the under side of a spruce fir branch, the normal site. Both nests were destroyed by Carrion Crows (W.M.).

Waxwing, *Bombycilla garrulus* (L). A pair on November 26th, on a tree by the main road near Ambergate, one of the birds was chasing flying insects (R.E.).

Reed-Warbler, *Acrocephalus s. scirpaceus* Herm. There were fewer nests in the isolated colony of this bird at Radbourne than in 1934 (W.M.).

Song-Thrush, *Turdus e. ericetorum* Turt. A pair reared a family of three in a *Forsythia* bush against a porch at Hazelwood, which flew on May 18th. On the 24th the nest was repaired and used again for a second brood. Four young were reared from five eggs and flew on June 1st (C.H.).

Hen-Harrier, *Circus c. cyaneus* (L). A female bird well seen at Coombs Reservoir on January 4th, the distinctive points (white rump, etc.) being clearly seen (W.S.).

Sparrow-Hawk, *Accipiter n. nisus* (L). One killed by striking against glass roof over courtyard at Hazelwood, probably in pursuit of prey, August 14th (C.H.).

Whooper, *Cygnus cygnus* (L). Reported by a reliable observer as being present on Coombs Reservoir in the early Spring of this year (W.S.).

(In 1928 there were large numbers present as the following note shows:—

"March 12th, 1928. East wind and frost later: 38 Whoopers on Coombs, a fine sight. One was apart

from the rest, evidently badly wounded, as there were marks of blood on the back. I thought he was dead, as he was drifting towards the outlet, but when about 150 yards away he woke up and paddled slowly away. March 14th. Swans all gone, including the wounded one" (W.S.). Dr. Shipton also informs us that he has seen Whoopers at Coombs between 1928 and 1935, but has no records of the exact dates).

Bewick's Swan, *C. b. bewickii* Yarr. (Four Bewick's Swans, two adults and two juveniles with ashy necks, visited Coombs on March 7th, 1927, but had all gone on the following day). See *Brit. Birds*, XX, p. 295 (W.S.).

Garganey, *Anas querquedula* L. Mr. E. M. Nicholson reports a Garganey clearly identified on the pool at Kedleston on August 3rd (see *Brit. Birds*, XXIX, p. 153).

Shoveler, *Spatula clypeata* (L). Noted on Coombs, April 14th (W.S.).

Goosander, *Mergus m. merganser* L. A male sent January 27th, 1929, and a female on December 6th, 1933, both from Weston-on-Trent. The latter was full of fish, one weighed  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb., and 20 were about the size of sardines (C.D.).

Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax c. carbo* (L). We have received reports from two sources of a bird, or birds, which from a comparison of dates almost certainly belong to the same individual. An immature Cormorant seen flying low over Corbar, Buxton, heading towards Coombs Moss, September 20th. This bird had a light patch on the underparts, which was clearly seen (J.A.). On the 22nd either this bird or another, also immature, was seen on a rock in the R. Derwent at Matlock Bath (J.A.). On the 25th a Shag was reported as arriving on the Cromford section of the Canal. It was severely harried by Rooks, but remained for about a week, haunting the stretch between Ambergate and Whatstandwell. Though originally recorded as a shag, Mr. Armitage's identification is now accepted (R.E.).

Great Crested Grebe, *Podiceps c. cristatus* (L). One at any rate, seen this spring on Coombs, the first for several years (W.S.). At Sudbury it was first seen on the lake on February 15th (W.M.), and at Allestree on March 8th (R.E.). A pair, on Miller's Pond, Hardwick, had an egg by Mär. 1st (C.C.).

Grey Phalarope, *Phalaropus fulicarius* (L). Following the heavy gales in September one of these birds appeared on the canal at Cromford on September 19th. It was very tame and remained for about a fortnight. There are about eleven previous records for the county (R.E.).

Curlew, *Numenius a. arquata* (L). Noted on Beeley Moor, March 22nd. Three flew over Hazelwood, calling, on August 3rd at 10 a.m. (C.H.).

[Black-headed Gull, *Larus r. ridibundus* L. Several pairs reported to have nested on the new river banks, south of Derby, but confirmation is required (R.E.)].

Little Auk. *Alle a. alle*. One picked up about 2nd week October, in a field by the Chesterfield—Matlock road on Stanedge Hill (C.C.).

Black Grouse, *Tetrao t. britannicus* With. & Lonnb. These fine birds still exist in small numbers along the uplands on the North Staffordshire boundary, but though the following note actually refers to a place outside our limits, it is of sufficient interest to warrant publication here. "On May 11th there were eleven Blackcocks and one Greyhen on the ground on Warslow Moor, N. Staffs., about a hundred yards from the road. The cocks were all fighting and displaying, calling and chasing one another. They all got up after a few minutes and flew low over our heads to the other side of the road; then they flew back and repeated the movement, flying low over our heads four times in all. This was about 6-30 p.m." (K.H.).

All the above notes refer to 1935 except where otherwise stated. We have to thank all who have contributed

notes, viz.:—Misses C. Hull and K. Hollick, Drs. W. Shipton and C. F. Druitt, Captain W. K. Marshall and Messrs. C. B. Chambers, R. Eglinton, J. Armitage and A. E. S. Smith.