

Fair Isle Bird Observatory

BULLETIN



Edited by
PETER E. DAVIS

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

Since the establishment of the Bird Observatory on Fair Isle in 1948, copies of a *Bulletin* have appeared from time to time in stencilled form, and have been issued to all “Friends of Fair Isle” who have expressed a wish to receive them.

We have now decided to produce copies in print, and this first number of the New Series is being sent in this instance to *all* our subscribers. Should you wish to continue to receive the *Bulletins* as they are issued—please notify me on the enclosed postcard. Copies will only be issued to paid-up subscribers—“Friends of Fair Isle”.

The number of *Bulletins* issued annually will depend on the amount of financial support given to us; and I would like to take this opportunity of appealing to you to continue your subscription.

GEORGE WATERSTON,
Hon. Secretary.

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FAIR ISLE BIRD OBSERVATORY BULLETIN

VOL. 4 No. 1 (New Series)

DECEMBER, 1958

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1. Mediterranean Gulls at Fair Isle—A New Bird for Scotland

PETER DAVIS

At about four o'clock on the afternoon of August 31st 1957, six bird-watchers, David Jenkins, Peter Jones, Ian Balfour-Paul, Malcolm Ogilvie, Martin Bell and the writer, were approaching Hesti Geo from the south, when we spotted a smaller gull near a group of Common Herring, and Greater Black-backed Gulls on the slopes north of the geo. It was behaving in a peculiar way, running about and pecking rather like a wader, whilst all the other birds were more or less stationary. We rounded the geo, and got between this bird and the sun, but as it kept running up the terraced hillside our views were necessarily brief, and the nearest clear view was from about forty yards, before it took flight, circled, and disappeared behind the slopes. A search then, and a longer one in the evening, failed to relocate it.

The bird resembled an immature Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*), but somehow the "jizz" was wrong. It seemed to me, who had the closest view, rather stouter in the bill, perhaps longer in the leg, and a trifle larger than a Blackhead should be. The head was predominantly white, with a dusky streak through the eye, and there appeared to be a few dark streaks or speckles on the forehead. The nape-band was speckled dark chestnut, less distinct on the sides of the neck and incomplete on the throat; the mantle was pale with brownish blotching, the wing-coverts showing more marked chestnut markings, the under-parts white. The tail also was apparently white, but was not well seen. When the bird flew, we were able to see little of the upper surface of the wings, since it was soon well above us, but David Jenkins and I were sure that there was no white leading-edge, and that the primaries seemed much darker than those of a Black-head.

The dark wings naturally give rise to the suspicion that we had seen a Mediterranean Gull (*Larus melanocephalus*), but it was evident that we must hope for a better look at the bird.

On September 1st it was not to be found, but on the 2nd it was again seen, this time by H. G. Alexander, above Hesti Geo. He was joined by Malcolm Ogilvie and Anders Edfert, and they were rewarded by better views at down to thirty yards, both in flight and on the ground. A few details were added to the description of the plumage, notably that the flanks were strongly streaked with brown and that the tail had a narrow dark tip. The eye was seen to be dark, and the legs dull buff. The bill also was dark, and failed to give to

H.G.A. the impression of stoutness that I had had on the first day. Most important, the primaries were well seen, and H.G.A. noted that the first two, and probably three, were entirely dark, whilst the rest seemed to be white for the basal half. The gull was not found again after this examination.

Our collective notes did not satisfactorily describe a *Larus melanocephalus* bird of the year; there seemed to be too much white on the primaries and too little brown on the mantle. We realised therefore that if our bird belonged to this species it was more probably in its second year, i.e., about fifteen months old. Unfortunately this plumage is not described in the *Handbook*.

H.G.A. undertook to examine a series of skins in the British Museum (Nat. Hist.) and reported his findings as follows:—

“On 4th October, I was able to examine specimens of *L. ridibundus*, *L. melanocephalus*, and *L. philadelphia* (Bonaparte's Gull) at the British Museum. Examination of the skins fully confirms the statements by Witherby, Tucker, and others, namely that in every plumage of *L. ridibundus* there is enough white on the inner and even on the outer web of the primaries to prevent such a bird from ever appearing to have an entirely dark tip to the wings, as our Fair Isle bird did in flight. The same is true of *L. philadelphia*. The amount of black or dark brown on first winter birds is greater than it appeared to me to be on our bird. It is perhaps of interest that the first British recorded specimen, from Barking Creek, Essex, January 1866, is a bird in this plumage. It appeared to me to be a browner bird, with more dark in the wing, than our bird. Further, I could not find any in immature plumage with such a small amount of black at the tip of the tail as the Fair Isle bird. One specimen seemed to approach very near to the Fair Isle bird in general body colour, that is to say, a rather blotchy bird. Several of the specimens at South Kensington, which have the black head and pale grey mantle of the adult plumage, still have a considerable amount of black on the tips of the wings. Evidently this is not unusual.

It is, of course, impossible to open the wing of any bird preserved as a skin in such a way as to get the effect of a wing opened in flight. As far as I could estimate, none of the specimens at South Kensington show an opened wing exactly fitting the impression I got from the Fair Isle bird when it was in flight; but this may well be because the second year autumn plumage does not seem to be represented. We all know that there are great variations in the exact sequence of plumage in *L. ridibundus*, so it seems reasonable to suppose that the same may be true of *L. melanocephalus*.

I conclude, then, that the Fair Isle bird was a second-year *L. melanocephalus*: this in spite of the brown patches on the nape and mantle, which at first sight suggested a Black-headed Gull of the year”.

Before Mr Alexander's report had reached the isle, I had already seen a second Mediterranean Gull, this time a first-winter bird. This bird was seen for only a matter of seconds, but in entirely satisfactory circumstances, at Skaddan on the morning of October 14th. It flew by at a distance of barely twenty yards, below the level of the cliff-top, and the upper parts were therefore easily seen. The primaries were quite dark except for a few whitish patches near the base of the inner ones, the mantle and wing-coverts were more uniform brown than in the August bird, and the dark streak through the eye was very clear. As soon as these features were noted, the bird disappeared behind a jutting point of rock, and could not be found again, but there was no possible doubt as to the identification.

The nearest breeding-grounds of the species are in Greece, and on the western shores of the Black Sea; a few have also nested in Hungary in recent years, and there has been a notable increase in the number of English sight-records, mainly from south and east-coast localities. The bird's appearance in Scotland was therefore to be expected; though one may compliment these two individuals in choosing to reveal themselves at Fair Isle. Apparently this is the most northerly latitude so far recorded for the species.

2. Lanceolated Warbler at Fair Isle

The sixth Fair Isle example of the Lanceolated Warbler *Locustella lanceolata* appeared on September 21st 1957, in the famous “warbler ditch” at the foot of the South Leogh croft. The occurrence has been fully reported in *British Birds* 51: 243.

This bird, a miniature Grasshopper Warbler with a well-defined gorget of close parallel vertical streaks on the breast, breeds in European Russia and Siberia, and normally migrates to India and south-east Asia. It has been recorded eight times in the British Isles.

Our bird was exceedingly tame, often creeping within a yard of our feet, and was easily caught with the aid of a piece of string netting and a portable catching-box, thus adding another species to the already impressive list of rare warblers captured by this technique.

3. Black-throated Thrush, a new bird for Fair Isle

As already recorded in *British Birds* 51: 195 and Plate 33, an adult male of the Black-throated Thrush *Turdus ruficollis atrogularis* was trapped in the Double Dyke on December 8th 1957, and remained on the isle until about January 22nd 1958.

This thrush is a bird of Fieldfare size and most striking appearance, with an enormous black bib extending over most of the breast. The upper parts are grey-brown, the belly off-white, and the tail has brown central feathers and blackish outsers. The bill is brown, apart from a prominent orange-yellow patch on the lower mandible.

The normal distribution is from the extreme east of European Russia eastwards into Asia; part of the population is resident there, whilst the bulk migrates to India for the winter. Probably the residents are prone to hard-weather movements, for the four earlier British examples (three England, one Scotland) all occurred in the winter. The recent bird had the misfortune to strike one of the coldest Shetland winters for several years, and finally disappeared in the middle of a cold spell with deep snow.

4. The "September Rush" of 1957 at Fair Isle

PETER DAVIS

A spell of mainly easterly winds between September 16th and 22nd 1957 brought our largest influx of migrants of the year. Indeed, with the exception of the avalanche of September 4th-5th 1956, which seems to have been greater in numbers though less diverse in species, the period was unrivalled in the recent history of the observatory.

The first two weeks of September, with unsettled westerly weather, had seen very few migrants on the isle. By the 15th, however, a dying depression was moving south-east into Norway, and winds became east or north-east, with finer weather, in the north of Scandinavia, and northerly in Shetland: on the 16th continental species began to arrive. An Osprey (the first in the observatory's lifetime), three Little Stints, six Scandinavian Lesser Blackbacks and three Willow Warblers were the highlights of the day, whilst some Meadow Pipits also came in.

Meantime the warm front of a wave-depression west of Scotland was swinging across Britain from the south-west, and the wind at Fair Isle suddenly veered south-east in the late evening of the 16th, though it remained north of east in Shetland. Fine easterly weather was also spreading across

Scandinavia, with a southward extension of the Spitzbergen High, and we had "classic" conditions for a movement of birds into the north isles overnight.

The birds logged on the night of the 17th were satisfactory, though by no means exceptional in quality or quantity. A few Lapwings and Snipe, a Turtle Dove, a small number of Skylarks, a Song Thrush, two Redstarts, odd Blackcaps, Barred and Garden Warblers, Common and Lesser Whitethroats, some twenty Willow Warblers, two Yellow-browed Warblers, two Pied Flycatchers, a Tree Pipit, and a Lapland Bunting. An interesting melee of northern and southern species, but far better things were to come.

By evening on the 17th, the warm front and its south-east breeze extended from Orkney to the Low Countries, and was almost stationary. The northern High had enveloped Scandinavia, and a new complication was entering the weather pattern in the form of a depression over west Russia, moving westwards to the Baltic with its associated fronts. This was perhaps the broom sweeping birds in our direction, a development which was to have its major effects at Fair Isle on the 19th and 20th. Cloud-cover was now fairly complete over the Baltic, south Scandinavia, and the North sea, and this may have contributed to the disorientation of a vast number of migrant birds.

Already, on the 18th, there were two north-eastern species, Scarlet Grosbeak (three immatures) and Little Bunting. Most other species seen on the previous day had slightly increased (Barred Warblers to three), Skylarks were definitely more numerous, and five Dunlin, eighty Common Gulls, four Whinchats, a Chiffchaff, and a Spotted Flycatcher were new to our list.

Weather conditions showed no great change on the 18th-19th, though the Orkney Low centre was drifting south-east in the North Sea, and winds went to North East in Shetland. The Russian Low was now over Latvia, with N.E. to E. winds in the Baltic area. At dawn on the 19th there seemed to be few extra birds on Fair Isle, but night-migrants came in steadily throughout the day, and by nightfall their numbers were reaching quite respectable proportions. The roll-call estimated that Redstarts had gone into three figures, Tree Pipits to fifty or more, Wheatears were augmented, and Snipe, Whinchat, Garden Warbler, Spotted and Pied Flycatcher were all into double figures. (It should be emphasised that with only four observers at the observatory, some birds were undoubtedly overlooked). Other species included five Kestrels, a Ruff, two Swifts, two Wrynecks, odd Swallows, House and Sand Martins, a Fieldfare, four Song Thrushes, two Redwings, three Bluethroats, a Robin, an Icterine Warbler, several Blackcaps, Whitethroats and Lesser Whitethroats, three new

Barred Warblers, about twenty Willow Warblers, two Chiffchaffs (probably *abietinus*, the Scandinavian form), a juvenile *flava* wagtail, Chaffinch, Brambling, and the Lapland Buntings. The Grosbeaks and the Little Bunting were still present.

The 20th was our big day. The North Sea Low had filled overnight, and much of Scotland and west Scandinavia was now under the influence of a big anticyclone centred near Iceland. The skies were clearer in this area, though still clouded to the east and south. The North-east winds were largely unchanged. An occlusion of the Russian Low was sweeping across the Baltic, late on the 19th. At Fair Isle few birds had moved out overnight, (there were still many of the previous day's ringing), but many more had arrived. Redstarts were in tremendous numbers, certainly well into four figures; Wheatears had increased greatly; Skylarks, the thrushes, Willow Warblers, Tree and Meadow Pipits, and Snow Buntings at least doubled their earlier numbers. (Snow Buntings had been present for some days in small numbers, but had shown no increase in the rush period till now). A Buzzard, a "ring-tail" harrier (probably Hen), a Glaucous Gull, at least four new Bluethroats, a Reed Warbler, two Goldcrests and a Siskin were among the other birds recorded. Other species of warblers and the flycatchers, showed little change; but great numbers of these were not to be expected in northern Europe so late in the season.

During the 20th, the Russian Low faltered, and began to drift slowly away to the north-east. Before night the clear skies, already over the North Sea, extended to much of Scandinavia and N. Germany, with calm, or light easterly winds. With such conditions no further big arrivals were to be expected, and at Fair Isle the 21st was a less busy day. Redstarts and the pipits had decreased very markedly overnight, warblers and flycatchers proportionately less, and Whinchats and Wheatears hardly at all. Probably some of these were newcomers, moving south from Shetland. A few new species were found, including two Jack Snipe and two Short-eared Owls, and there were two major eastern rarities—as sometimes happens in the tail of a big drift-movement. A Richard's Pipit was seen in Gilsetter (see para. 5) and a Lanceolated Warbler caught at Leogh (para. 2).

The 22nd saw a further decrease in all the common migrants, and only two new species, Water Rail and Short-toed Lark—two very grey individuals attributed to the eastern form (para. 5)—were recorded. By the evening a warm front from the Atlantic deprived us of our fine weather, and announced three weeks of unsettled conditions which were to be even less productive than early September. Most of the remaining birds from the rush had gone by the 26th, though odd Redstarts and Whinchats were on the isle until early October.

5. Rare Larks and Pipits at Fair Isle in 1957

PETER DAVIS

During the morning of July 19th 1957, I was called to Stackhool to examine an unusual red lark which Alan Till had seen there. Miss E. Garden and Peter Jones were already there, and I was able to confirm their opinion that the bird was a Short-toed Lark *Calandrella brachydactyla*. It was much the reddest bird of the species that I had seen, seeming almost pink in flight, and the colour of the mantle was almost as red-brown as that of the crown. Birds I saw in the Camargue in 1950, and one at Skokholm in April 1956, clearly referable to the western form *C. b. brachydactyla*, were much closer to the *Handbook* description of "pale, sandy-looking" birds, with mantles paler in shade than the crown. A redder form, *hermonensis*, has been described from the Levant and North Africa, but it would be unwise to be dogmatic about an isolated occurrence outside the normal range, since many of the larks are extremely variable. These very red birds have previously appeared at Fair Isle, the most recent being on May 4th and November 14th 1955 (see *Bull.* 3: 14). The 1957 bird roved the crofts until August 8th, but was very elusive, and was most often seen whilst taking a dust-bath in the west road below Midway.

On September 22nd, during the big September "rush", two other Short-toed Larks were found near Easter Lothar Water. They were very grey birds, hardly recognizable, at first glance, as being of the same species as the July bird. The general effect was of a dull, sandy-grey plumage, though the crown and mantle had darker brown striations, and the wing-coverts were edged with dark spots and sandy-buff tips. The primaries were widely edged sandy-buff giving a warmer appearance to the closed wing. This was more pronounced in one bird than in the other. The white of the lower breast and belly was less pure than in the summer bird. Clearly these two larks should be referred to the eastern form *Calandrella b. longipennis*, a record that accords with the appearance of a Richard's Pipit *Anthus richardi* and a Lanceolated Warbler *Locustella lanceolata* on the previous day.

The Richard's Pipit of September 21st was first seen in Gilsetter by Peter Jones, Geoffrey Trimmingham, and myself, and gave excellent views at down to twenty yards range. Very likely there were two birds on the isle at this period, for one was seen near Lunna Geo on the following day, at Gilsetter again on the 23rd, and on the Rippack on the 24th. The "che-reep" call was very distinctive. Richard's is a large, long-legged pipit, and the Fair Isle example stood head-and-shoulders above nearby Rock and Meadow Pipits. The upper parts

were dark dull-brown with warmer brown edgings to the feathers, the outer tail feathers white. Superciliary and underparts were dull white, with striations on upper breast and a buffish tinge on the flanks and sides of the breast. There was a fairly distinct dark eye-streak, and the ear-coverts were buffish with darker edgings. The long legs seemed pale pinkish or orange-brown. The twenty or so Fair Isle records have nearly all been in late September or October, but one late August 1953 (see *Bull.* 2: 14).

The second rare pipit of the autumn was a Red-throated *Anthus cervinus*, on October 22nd. As I clambered up to the mouth of the gully trap towards dusk on this grey afternoon, a small bird went away from the entrance and over the bank to the Gilsetter marsh, giving an unfamiliar call not unlike a Tree Pipit's single note, but harsher and louder. I soon picked up the bird again, and pursued it over the wet tussocky ground until the light failed. It would allow me within 15 yards, then fly for about 50 before plumping back to earth, and give the same call once, each time when it was flushed. Eventually I had a fair idea of its appearance; a pipit of about Meadow or Tree size, with a very broad and distinct vertical barring on the breast, and a clear, creamy-white supercilium; the mantle rather dark, closely stippled with darker brown. The rump was not well seen, but was clearly streaked rather than uniform in colour. A lengthy search of the marsh on the following morning yielded no further trace. Some seven or eight previous autumn occurrences at Fair Isle are on record, and three in the spring.

6. Autumn Migrants at Fair Isle, 1957

PETER DAVIS

(For a general summary of the movements, see *F.I.B.O. Annual Report for 1957*.)

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER *Gavia immer*. One seen frequently from November 14th to the end of the season; two December 8th.

RED-THROATED DIVER *Gavia stellata*. Singly July 3rd, 18th, September 11th, 20th.

SLAVONIAN GREBE *Podiceps auritus*. One October 14th.

SOOTY SHEARWATER *Procellaria grisea*. One off Bunes September 15th. Others were seen on the crossing about this time.

CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*. Seen often from late July to late November. Main passage in September, with twenty-five 2nd and 20th, fifty 6th and 17th.

HERON *Ardea cinerea*. Odd birds late June and July, and seen regularly from August to December; maxima: eleven August 9th, eight 30th and September 30th. At least two wintered.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*. One July 21st, two August 14th.

Up to three seen frequently in late August and September, and up to eight (October 24th) occasionally in October and November.

TEAL *Aras crecca*. Up to four on most days between August 24th and October 25th One November 23rd.

WIGEON *Anas penelope*. Small numbers usually present September 8th to November 11th, maxima six September 17th, five October 3rd. Twenty ducks passing on November 11th were probably this species.

PINTAIL *Anas acuta*. One September 19th.

GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula*. One October 27th, two November 1st, one 4th and 19th, December 11th and 12th.

LONG-TAILED DUCK *Clangula hyemalis*. A few frequently from October 2nd, maximum six 19th.

VELVET SCOTER *Melanitta fusca*. Single drakes, July 12th and October 4th.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator*. Two records in July, and odd birds frequently from September 18th to November 30th; four September 30th.

SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna*. One (moult) July 31st to August 5th, three August 26th, one September 8th.

GREY LAG GOOSE *Anser anser*. Twelve October 16th, twenty-two 22nd, nine 23rd.

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons*. A young bird October 16th to 19th, shot on the last day. This was a very dark individual with orange-yellow bill, probably referable to Greenland form *flavirostris*.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus*. Two "probables" September 20th; ten October 14th.

Other Grey Geese were: six October 3rd, four 28th.

WHOOPEE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus*. One September 15th, 17th, two 29th. Up to eight on several days October 11th to 29th, two December 2nd, three 4th.

BUZZARD *Buteo buteo*. One September 20th.

SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus*. Scarce this autumn. One August 10th, 27th, October 21st to 24th.

HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus*. A "ring-tail", probably this species, on September 20th-21st.

OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus*. One September 16th and 17th. The first post-war record.

HOBBY *Falco subbuteo*. One September 1st and 4th. A juvenile, this bird was considered to be too dark, and too boldly streaked below, for a Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus*.

MERLIN *Falco columbarius*. One August 3rd, and a few on most days from the 23rd until November 9th (maxima: four September 11th, five 24th). One November 26th and 27th. Nine of the ten birds caught were of the Iceland form *subaesalon*, the other indeterminate. A bird trapped on Septem-

ber 8th was recaptured on October 6th and 18th, an unusually protracted stay.

KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus*. One or two often present from August 11th, and up to six (24th) in late September. Last seen October 18th.

WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus*. Two juveniles caught August 8th, one retrapped on the 15th. One September 22nd, October 16th, 18th, and 22nd. One or two on eleven days of November, between the 4th and 22nd, three 13th. One December 11th, 16th, 17th.

CORNCRAKE *Crex crex*. A summering bird was last recorded on August 2nd. One August 31st.

MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus*. One June 27th, November 4th, and December 16th.

LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus*. Most of the local birds moved out early in July, but one or two birds usually present throughout August and September. There was some light passage in the latter month, with maximum eight on the 18th, and irregularly in October-December (ten October 15th and 18th, November 28th; thirty-three November 30th; thirteen December 4th).

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus*. The local stock gradually moved out in late August and September, and there were probably also a few passage birds at this period. The last were seen on October 6th.

RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula*. Some passage from July 12th, but the main movements were between August 15th and September 10th. The best days were August 24th-25th and 27th (twenty), 28th (twenty-five), 29th-31st (thirty-five) and September 3rd (sixteen). Smaller numbers were present through September, and the last bird was seen on the 30th.

GOLDEN PLOVER *Charadrius apricarius*. Single birds occasionally in late June, late July, and early August. Fairly regular from August 20th through September (maxima: ten August 22nd, eleven September 12th, ten 26th) and occasional in October (ten, 4th). One November 19th and 22nd.

DOTTEREL *Charadrius morinellus*. One August 31st, three September 3rd, one 5th.

TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres*. Four on July 12th, seven 26th-27th. Present in widely fluctuating numbers from August 12th to the end of the year; forty to seventy seen on August 26th, September 7th, 14th, 15th, October 9th, 22nd, 28th to November 2nd and November 28th.

SNIPE *Capella gallinago*. Small numbers often seen from July 28th to the end of the season; ten on September 19th.

JACK SNIPE *Lymnocyptes minimus*. Two September 21st to 23rd and single birds occasionally through October and early November (four October 19th). Two December 16th.

- WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola*. Seen daily from October 22nd to November 19th, with one very large influx on October 31st (when over two hundred were shot by the islanders) and a smaller arrival November 12th. Odd birds between November 29th and December 10th
- CURLEW *Numenius arquata*. Seen on most days from June 21st to the end of October, and occasionally in November and December. The main movements were in early July (thirty-five 1st) and late August/early September (one hundred August 25th, thirty September 1st).
- WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus*. Up to five (30th) in late June, up to three on most days in July, and one or two frequently until September 16th.
- BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica*. Three July 16th, one 17th.
- GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus*. One July 30th, one August 11th to 13th, one 15th, two 16th.
- WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola*. One July 21st-22nd, August 20th, 22nd.
- COMMON SANDPIPER *Tringa hypoleucos*. One June 24th, three July 14th, one frequently in the rest of the month. Seven August 10th, up to three on most days to the 25th. One September 9th and 10th.
- REDSHANK *Tringa totanus*. Always present from mid-June to the end of the year. Fifty or more August 31st and October 31st. Two birds caught on September 17th were of the Iceland form, *robusta*, from the measurements.
- SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus*. One August 31st.
- GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*. One July 23rd, 25th, and on seven days in August. Two August 31st and September 1st.
- KNOT *Calidris canutus*. Seen on most days between August 7th and September 16th; maxima: ten 24th, sixteen 25th, and fourteen 7th.
- PURPLE SANDPIPER *Calidris maritima*. Seen irregularly from August 24th onwards, but attained double figures on only three days, October 21st (ten), 31st (fifty), and November 1st (fifteen).
- LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta*. One August 27th-29th, three September 16th, one 18th, 19th, three 21st, one 23rd, 24th, 29th.
- DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*. One July 6th, 7th, 10th. Frequent between July 31st and September 25th, with twenty August 24th and five September 18th. Two October 1st, one 11th and 17th.
- SANDERLING *Crocethia alba*. Three July 19th, one 26th, two August 5th. Seen on most days August 15th to September 23rd, maximum eight August 26th.

- RUFF *Philomachus pugnax*. One July 29th to August 1st, August 9th to 11th, seven 25th to 27th. One September 1st, two 6th and 7th, one 10th, 12th, and 19th.
- GREAT SKUA *Catharacta skua*. Late birds over the island on October 19th and November 2nd.
- ARCTIC SKUA *Stercorarius parasiticus*. A late bird on October 16th, over a month after the last of the Fair Isle birds had gone.
- LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus*. Six dark-mantled adults, presumably of the Scandinavian (typical) form were seen on September 16th, one on the 19th.
- COMMON GULL *Larus canus*. Usually present from June to October, and odd birds occasionally in October and December. The peak passage days (over one hundred on each date) were August 5th, 14th, 24th-25th, 28th, September 7th, 18th, and October 20th.
- GLAUCUS GULL *Larus hyperboreus*. Single immatures September 20th and November 10th.
- ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucoides*. At least one on December 12th.
- BLACK-HEADED GULL *Larus ridibundus*. Seen on most days from June to September, irregularly in October, and once in November and December. The largest numbers were twelve June 2th and ten August 1st and 21st, sixteen 28th, ten September 12th.
- MEDITERRANEAN GULL *Larus melanocephalus*. Immatures August 31st to September 2nd, and October 14th. The first records for Scotland.
- WOOD PIGEON *Columba livia*. One July 14th, November 11th, 13th, 14th.
- TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur*. Seen on twelve days between August 9th and September 21st, with two August 24th and 31st, three September 12th.
- CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus*. Two juveniles on July 14th and 15th.
- LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus*. One October 17th and November 21st.
- SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus*. Two August 3rd, one September 5th, two 21st, one 30th, and October 3rd.
- SWIFT *Apus apus*. Seen frequently in late June and early July, maximum twenty-five July 3rd. Odd birds occasionally till September 24th.
- HOOPOE *Upupa epops*. One October 11th to 17th.
- WRYNECK *Jynx torquilla*. Two September 19th, one 20th.
- SHORT-TOED LARK *Calandrella brachydactyla*. One July 19th to August 8th, two September 22nd, one until the 24th (see para. 75).

SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis*. It was difficult to detect small additions to the resident population, but there were considerable influxes September 18th to 20th, and probably a few passage birds in October and early November.

SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*. Small numbers frequently until July 19th. One or two daily, September 19th to 26th.

HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbica*. Seen on most days to July 3rd; one 11th, one August 4th to 6th, September 19th, four September 21st, three 22nd.

SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia*. One September 19th.

CARRION CROW *Corvus corone*. One July 28th.

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus*. One from November 4th, joined by a second on December 15th. These two wintered on the isle.

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus*. One November 17th.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris*. Usually present from September 19th. The main arrivals were two hundred October 16th, three hundred 31st, and November 4th, one hundred November 30th, and hundred and fifty December 2nd.

SONG THRUSH *Turdus ericetorum*. A juvenile, thought to be of the typical form, on July 4th. One September 2nd. Seen irregularly from September 17th to the end of the year; maxima: ten September 20th, 23rd-24th, October 15th, twenty November 7th. Most of these were undoubtedly of the Continental form, *philomelos*.

REDWING *Turdus musicus*. Usually present from September 19th to the end of the season. The biggest arrivals, (three to seven hundred) on October 15th-16th, 31st, and November 4th, were of Continental birds *T. m. musicus*, but there was also a good passage of birds of the Iceland form *coburni* throughout October and the first half of November, and the 160 birds ringed were divided almost equally between the two races.

RING OUZEL *Turdus torquatus*. One October 16th, and a very late bird November 22nd.

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula*. Movements from mid-October to early December, the best days being October 31st (three hundred), November 3rd-4th, and 12th-13th.

BLACK-THROATED THRUSH *Turdus ruficollis atrogularis*. An adult male December 8th, which remained until late January 1958 (see para. 3). A first record for the island.

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*. There was no big "August rush" in 1957. Some light passage out of Shetland in late August and early September, and other arrivals of probably continental origin on August 31st and September 19th-20th. (The latter was the biggest arrival of the fall). Long-winged birds of Greenland or Iceland stock (*leucorrhoea-schioleri*) passed in very small numbers from the end of August through September and early October, the best day being

- September 7th. Only odd birds were seen in late October, but one as late as November 5th.
- WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra*. Two August 31st and one September 10th. Otherwise, seen only during the "September rush" and its aftermath (September 17th to early October), being uncountable on September 20th. One late bird on October 28th.
- REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*. Apart from one August 13th, the species was seen only in the rush period from September 17th. Exceedingly abundant September 20th, a few until October 4th.
- BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros*. One October 25th, two 26th, one until the 28th. Again two on November 4th, and one to the 6th.
- BLUETHROAT *Cyanosylvia svecica*. Three September 19th, four or more 20th, smaller numbers to the 24th, one 27th. One October 20th and November 11th. The males caught were all of the Red-spotted, typical, form.
- ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula*. One September 19th, two 22nd, one 25th-27th. One or more always present from October 22nd to the end of the year; maxima: three November 4th, four 13th and 14th.
- LANCEOLATED WARBLER *Locustella lanceolata*. One September 21st (see para. 72).
- REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*. Single birds trapped August 29th and September 20th.
- ICTERINE WARBLER *Hippolais icterina*. One August 8th and September 20th.
- BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla*. Two or three daily September 17th to 23rd. Single birds (five males, three females) on nine days between October 9th and November 14th.
- BARRED WARBLER *Sylvia nisoria*. One August 22nd, four 31st. One September 5th, and up to three daily September 17th to 20th.
- GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin*. One July 31st, August 9th, two 17th, one 26th to 29th. Seen on eleven days in September, maximum twelve or more on the 19th and 20th. One October 14th and 18th.
- WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis*. One August 23rd and 30th, September 1st. Present on most days September 17th to 26th, maximum five on the 19th. One September 30th, October 1st, 14th, and 15th.
- LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca*. One August 23rd and September 12th. Usually present September 17th to 25th, at least four seen on the 19th. One October 15th to 22nd. Birds with wing-formula of the Eastern form, *blythi*, were trapped on September 12th and 21st.

- WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus*. Seen on August 3rd, and on seven days later in the month, with a maximum of four on the 16th and thirty on the 31st. Present on most days in September, with at least twenty on the 17th-19th, and fifty on the 20th. One October 1st and 2nd.
- CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita*. One August 31st and September 18th, two or more 19th-22nd. No October records. Seen on most days in November, with seven on the 4th and 12th; last recorded on the 27th. Two birds trapped on September 19th resembled the Scandinavian form, *abietimus*, and most of the November birds favoured *tristis*, the Siberian race. Two of these were caught, on the 12th and 15th.
- WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*. One August 12th and 16th.
- YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER *Phylloscopus inornatus*. Two September 17th, one 22nd.
- GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus*. One August 23rd, two September 9th, 10th, 20th, one 23rd. Three October 26th, one 28th; two November 3rd, three 17th, one 20th.
- SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata*. Seen each day from September 18th to 25th, with at least ten on the 19th to 21st.
- PIED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa hypoleuca*. One August 12th, five 31st, one September 5th. Present from September 17th to 25th, with twenty or more on the 19th and 20th.
- RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa parva*. Single immature birds trapped on November 4th and 5th.
- HEDGE SPARROW *Prunella modularis*. One September 5th and November 11th.
- MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*. Seen passing south in small numbers on many days in late August and September; the largest movements were on August 20th, 23rd, September 5th, and there was a big overnight arrival on September 21st. Decreased fairly steadily throughout October, and only a single bird seen in November, which stayed at North Haven until the 19th.
- TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis*. Seen daily from September 17th to 28th, with over a hundred on the 20th. One October 1st, and 23rd-25th.
- RED-THROATED PIPIT *Anthus cervinus*. One October 22nd (see para 5).
- RICHARD'S PIPIT *Anthus richardi*. One (perhaps two) September 21st to 24th (see para. 5).
- ROCK PIPIT *Anthus petrosus*. A definite arrival on August 23rd, and passage suspected on other dates about this time.
- WHITE WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba*. One July 21st and August 1st to 7th. Present on most days August 12th to September

- 22nd, though exceeding ten only between August 19th and September 3rd. The main arrivals were on August 19th-20th (fifty) and 23rd (two hundred).
- GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*. One October 3rd.
- YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava*. Those seen closely (two in late September and three of the October-November birds) were all immatures, but appeared to be of the Blue-headed form *M. f. flava*. The records were: one September 19th, two 20th, one 23rd, three 24th, one 25th. One October 9th, two 11th. An exceptionally late bird "resident" at Springfield and Busta from November 6th to 20th.
- WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus*. One November 12th, ten or more on the 13th, smaller numbers to the 17th. One 29th and 30th.
- GREAT GREY SHRIKE *Lanius excubitor*. One November 4th.
- RED-BACKED SHRIKE *Lanius cristatus collurio*. An adult female August 9th to 23rd. One September 3rd.
- STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris*. Little obvious movement. Some slight increase on August 25th, September 4th, October 15th. The local birds decreased slowly through October and November, particularly on November 7th, but fair numbers wintered.
- ROSE-COLOURED STARLING *Sturnus roseus*. One August 4th.
- GREENFINCH *Chloris chloris*. Two November 4th and 5th.
- SISKIN *Carduelis spinus*. One September 20th to 24th, another 23rd to 27th. One November 13th, three 16th, two 17th.
- TWITE *Carduelis flavirostris*. Some diurnal passage observed August 22nd, otherwise movements imperceptible. The local birds decreased gradually through September and October, and the last departed about November 11th. Single birds November 20th, December 4th and 7th.
- REDPOLL *Carduelis flammea*. Greater Redpolls *C. f. rostrata* were scarce this year. One was seen September 8th, two 13th; one October 6th to 13th, with another on the 12th; one 17th and 26th. About ten birds on September 16th, and odd ones to the 21st, may have been of this form. A male Lesser Redpoll *C. f. cabaret* was seen on October 20th and trapped on the following day.
- SCARLET GROSBEAK *Carpodacus erythrinus*. Three immatures September 18th and 19th, one till the 21st.
- CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra*. One August 24th.
- CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs*. One or two daily September 19th to 25th. Seen on most days in October, from the 3rd but no more than four (8th and 26th). Present in November until the 20th, maxima one hundred and twenty 4th, one hundred and fifty 6th and 7th. One December 2nd and 3rd.

Males trapped in November were considered to be of the Scandinavian (typical) form.

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla*. One September 19th and 23rd, October 1st and 10th. Seen frequently from October 14th to November 15th, maxima ten October 18th and November 5th-6th.

CORN BUNTING *Emberiza calandra*. Two October 19th and 20th. Two November 15th, one remaining until December 2nd.

YELLOWHAMMER *Emberiza citrinella*. One October 15th.

LITTLE BUNTING *Emberiza pusilla*. Singly September 18th to 20th, November 2nd and 13th.

REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniculus*. One October 18th, 26th, November 4th to 6th and 12th.

LAPLAND BUNTING *Calcarius lapponicus*. Fewer than for many years. Single birds on nine days between August 23rd and September 17th, three or four present September 19th to 22nd, one 30th, one November 4th and 13th.

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis*. Five August 25th, two 31st. Seen almost every day from September 12th to the end of the year, with main arrivals September 22nd (100), October 22nd (130), 26th (200), 29th (400), November 1st (250), 8th (300), 28th (250), December (250), and 13th (150).

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus*. One September 5th.

7. Recent Fair Isle Ringing Recoveries

SHAG: A 1957 chick from South Haven was found dead on the shore at Longhope, Hoy, Orkney, on December 12th 1957.

MERLIN: A first-winter bird, caught in the Double Dyke trap on September 3rd 1957 was captured on board a ship a few miles off Bremerhaven, Germany, on October 11th; it died in that port three days later. This was our first Merlin recovery from Germany, but unfortunately it was the only 1957 capture for which a racial assessment was impossible, owing to the intermediate measurements. From what is known of the wintering areas, it was most probably of continental origin.

ARCTIC SKUA: AT 19785, a 1954 chick from the Jarm's Cup territory, provided the second recovery of this species in Angola (Portuguese West Africa), when it was "fished on board" a vessel near Mossamedes (15°10'S) on November 3rd 1957. AT 19822, another 1954 youngster reared by the Mire of Vatnagard pair, was found with a broken wing at Spiggie, Dunrossness, Shetland, on June 5th 1957.

REDWING: The exceptionally heavy Redwing passage of October 1956 has already added four recoveries to the six reported in all previous years. Although more than 200 of the 333 birds ringed in that year were of the Iceland form, only one of these has been recovered; this was X 89094, ringed (like all the others) as a first-winter bird, on October 25th 1956, and found dead at Alford, Aberdeenshire, on April 22nd 1957, probably on return passage. The three birds of the Continental race were are all of exceptional interest, providing the first recoveries of Fair Isle-ringed Redwings in France and Spain. X 89037 was found at Haudrecy, near Charleville, (Ardennes) France, on November 28th 1957; it was originally caught on October 23rd 1956. S 88682, ringed on October 7th 1956, was killed at Bouzac, near Libourne, (Gironde) France, on March 6th 1958; and X 88686 ringed on the same day, was killed near Alameda, Malaga, on the south coast of Spain, on December 2nd 1957.

One bird ringed in the 1957 season, on October 17th, has also been reported, from Athlone, Eire, on January 24th 1958. This, too, was a first-winter bird of the Continental form, bearing ring number S 87423.

Fair Isle has no monopoly of Redwing-ringing, and we were reminded of this, in a most exciting way, when a bird taken in the Double Dyke trap on October 16th 1957 was found to be carrying a ring with the inscription "Stavanger Museum, Norway," and the number 744654. This bird had been ringed as a barely-fledged juvenile at Auglend, about two miles from Stavanger, on July 7th 1956.

BLACKBIRD: There were three further additions to the already substantial crop of foreign recoveries. W 14806, a first-winter male of October 31st 1955, was found at Byrkjelo, (Sogn og Fjordane), Norway, on November 6th 1957; W 14840, an adult male ringed March 28th 1956, was at Eresfjord (More og Romsdal), Norway, on July 21st 1957; and S 87608, a first-winter female ringed on October 31st 1957, was found dead at Castlebar, Co. Mayo, Eire, on December 16th.

WHEATEAR: C 66842, ringed as first-winter male on September 10th 1957, was killed at Sanlucar de Barameda, near Cadiz, Spain, on October 21st.

MEADOW PIPIT: Three recoveries show the normal passage of Fair Isle-ringed birds down the Atlantic seaboard of Europe; a fourth is of exceptional interest, being the first of our Meadow Pipits to be found in Italy. C 66082, a local-born juvenile ringed on July 17th 1957, was recovered near Lisbon, Portugal, on October 5th; C 66217, ringed as full-grown on August 24th 1957, was at Le Boucau (Basses Pyrenees), France, on October 17th; and C 66883, also marked as full-grown, on September 16th 1957, was shot at

Ludon-Medoc (Gironde), France, October 16th. The Italian recovery was C 47721, ringed as a first-winter bird on September 1st 1956, and killed at Vicenza (Venezia), Italy, on November 11th 1957.

STARLING: Two local birds were found dead in Orkney; X 30838, a juvenile of July 25th 1955, was in Westray on May 5th 1957; and X 88921, ringed as adult male on September 21st 1956, was in Stronsay on January 24th 1957.

8. Various Notes from Shetland

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus*. One in Mousa, August 2nd and 3rd 1957, two East Loch of Skaw, Whalsay, August 16th (D. R. Wilson). One Tros Wick, Dunrossness, August 20th (F. Holroyde).

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris testacea*. One at Tros Wick, August 19th (F.H.). There are fewer than ten Shetland records for the present century.

RUFF *Philomachus pugnax*. One Tros Wick, August 20th (F.H.).

ROLLER *Coracias garrulus*. One found injured by Miss H. Thompson in Mid Yell, September 18th ("Shetland News", 1.x.57). This was probably the same bird subsequently found dead and taken to C. Inkster. September 18th was the first "big day" of a remarkable rush of birds at Fair Isle (see para. 4). There is only one previous record of the Roller in Shetland, at Whalsay in Autumn 1930.

HOOPOE *Upupa epops*. One seen by Mrs Winton at Kergord, Weisdale, August 12th to September 10th (per G. T. Kay).

CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita*. A bird apparently of the Siberian form *P. c. tristis*, with no yellow on the underparts, was found freshly dead near Spiggie on December 13th, and taken to T. Henderson. Birds of this type were at Fair Isle until late November.

9. Bird Notes from Haroldswick, Unst, Autumn 1957

MAGNUS SINCLAIR

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER *Gavia immer*. One calling inshore October 22nd. Also seen November 5th and 12th.

FULMAR *Fulmarus glacialis*. Six on September 11th were the last seen in the bay. Three arrived back on November 4th, and some were seen on most days after this.

HERON *Ardea cinerea*. One on August 9th, 10th, 25th and 30th. In September one 4th and two from 21st to 23rd. Two October 1st, five 3rd and two 21st.

LONG-TAILED DUCK *Clangula hyemalis*. A party of six inshore on October 21st.

GREY LAG-GOOSE *Anser anser*. Three flying east on October 14th.

WHOOPEE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus*. First seen were six adults and three young on October 29th; and there were two old and three young birds on November 6th.

KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus*. One in the first week August and one September 19th. Singly from October 14th to 20th with two 21st.

CORNCRAKE *Crex crex*. One flushed September 7th.

OYSTERATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus*. Most breeding birds had left by mid-August. Three passed through on September 20th, and one seen at Skaw on October 13th.

GOLDEN PLOVER *Charadrius apricarius*. There were nine on July 13th and about 100 on 28th, and about the same number in the first week of September, with about 100 on the 21st. On October 7th about 300 seen, and then numbers dropped off towards mid-month, but 300 or more again on the 21st. Another increase November 1st, and a flock of c.400 on the 9th. Flocks of 100 present till the end of the month.

TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres*. One July 22nd and two 28th. Twelve August 24th and one September 6th. Arrivals in mid-October and there were nineteen inland on pasture on October 24th. One feeding in potato rig on November 30th.

SNIBE *Capella gallinago*. A flock of ten and another of twenty-five on September 22nd. Smaller parties seen 23rd, 26th and 27th. Eight October 1st, ten 15th, and twenty 19th.

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus*. Two flying south August 25th, and one September 9th.

RUFF *Philomachus pugnax*. An immature on July 25th. In September four birds arrived 15th and five 19th; one seen 21st, and five again 23rd, one of which had a broken leg, and was present for several weeks. It was joined by another on October 9th, and both left on 21st.

ARCTIC SKUA *Stercorarius parasiticus*. The last were two on September 12th and a dark-phase bird November 29th.

GREAT SKUA *Catharacta skua*. Two still at Saxa Vord breeding grounds on October 5th. Single birds at Skaw on 13th and Haroldswick 15th. Last seen were two on 27th.

GLAUCOUS GULL *Larus hyperboreus*. One immature November 2nd.

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna macrura*. Most breeding birds had left by the end of August. Last seen September 19th.

SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*. Two from July 18th to 20th and two 29th.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris*. One October 27th, and a flock of

- forty with Redwings on 31st. A small flock again next day, and one November 5th.
- REDWING *Turdus musicus*. First one seen on October 14th, with nine next day. Singly on most other days in October, with about fifty 31st. In November, small numbers up to the 12th, with twenty 11th.
- WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*. In October, single birds from 2nd to 11th and 18th to 20th, with two 21st. Last seen, one on 24th.
- REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*. A female September 21st.
- BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros*. A female stayed from November 5th to 8th.
- WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus*. Singly from September 19th to 23rd.
- GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus*. A female on September 19th and 21st.
- WHITE WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba alba*. One August 15th and a flock of ten flying over on 19th were probably this race. Singly on most days to end of month. In September, one 1st and 8th, two 9th, and one until 12th.
- REDPOLL *Carduelis flammea*. A very light bird November 7th; a possible 14th, but this one was much darker.
- CHAFFINCH *Fringila coelebs*. Two November 4th, and one 15th.
- BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla*. A single bird October 15th.
- SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis*. Heard September 14th; thirty October 4th and 5th, small numbers 7th, 10th and 14th, three 24th and 31st. A flock of fifty November 1st, and c.160 on Saxa Vord hill on 4th. Small parties seen on most days till end of month, with increases on 6th (50), 11th (100), 12th (250), and 16th (100).

10. Autumn Migration in Orkney, 1957.

E. BALFOUR

A number of waders and other birds were noted from the end of July onwards. There was a considerable rush of passerines from September 18th to 21st, and a smaller movement in late November and early December.

SYSTEMATIC LIST

WHOOPEE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus*. First arrivals were a family of six at the Loch of Brochan on October 1st; one day later than in 1956.

- SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus*. One at Binscarth Wood, December 1st.
- GOLDEN PLOVER *Charadrius apricarius*. Several about on September 18th.
- WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola*. A few on November 30th and December 1st.
- BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica*. A flock of about fifty at Kettletoft Bay, Sanday (several in red plumage) on July 31st.
- GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*. One in Sanday July 31st, and several on the Mainland on August 29th.
- KNOT *Calidris canutus*. A few seen on North Ronaldsay on July 30th.
- RUFF *Philomachus pugnax*. One seen in Sanday, July 31st.
- SANDWICH TERN *Sterna sandvicensis*. A small party arrived at Isbister Oyce on August 8th, and stayed until late September.
- GREAT TIT *Parus major*. One at Binscarth Wood, December 1st.
- WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*. Many from September 18th to 21st.
- REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*. A few seen on September 20th and 21st.
- ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula*. Several in Binscarth Wood, September 21st.
- GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin*. A few seen at Binscarth and other places on September 20th and 21st.
- WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis*. Two at Birstane Wood September 21st.
- WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus*. Several seen at different parts of the Mainland from September 18th to 21st.
- GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus*. Several seen at Binscarth and one at Rendall on September 20th and 21st.
- SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata*. A few at Binscarth on September 21st.
- PIED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa hypeleuca*. A few at Binscarth on September 21st.
- MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*. Large numbers all over Orkney from September 18th to 21st.
- PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba*. Several seen on September 20th and 21st.
- WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus*. Three seen in Kirkwall November 15th (H. G. Brownlow) and one 21st.
- CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra*. Two juveniles seen August 15th.

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifrigilla*. Eight to ten at Binscarth on December 8th.

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis*. Some 400 on November 12th and much larger flocks throughout December.

11. Notes on Migration at Birsay, Orkney, in September 1957

P. J. SLATER

LITTLE STINT: Three birds were present from 15th-22nd.

REDSTART: One on 21st, three on 22nd, two from 23rd-25th. As this only refers to the area round the village, many more were probably present.

BLACKCAP: A male seen on 22nd remained for only a few minutes.

GARDEN WARBLER: On 22nd a bird of this species spent the morning in the village.

LESSER WHITETHROAT: One present for two hours on 22nd.

GOLDCREST: Two different birds were recorded. One on 21st and another on 22nd.

PIED FLYCATCHER: One seen on 21st and one on 22nd were almost certainly different birds.

GREATER REDPOLL: One was seen on 20th.

SNOW BUNTING: A male was seen on 15th.

12. The Winter Birds of Fair Isle in 1957-58

PETER DAVIS

In the twentieth chapter of his monumental work *Studies in Bird Migration*, William Eagle Clarke gave an account of the birds seen at Fair Isle during 1908. This was based on the observations of his trainee, George Stout, and though mainly concerned with bird-movements, it includes three lists of the residents, the regular winter visitors and the occasional winter visitors. These lists evidently refer, not to 1908 in particular, but to the years 1905-11 in general. Further details of the birds' winter status are given, under the individual species' headings, in the succeeding chapter of the book.

My wife and I remained on Fair Isle until December 20th 1957, and returned on January 29th 1958. Several of the islanders gave us records for the intervening period, so that it is possible to form an adequate picture of the winter's birds, and to consider what changes have taken place in fifty years.

The only other winter notes in the observatory files are

from a diary kept by Pat Robertson in the winter of 1950-51, and more detailed records compiled by James A. Stout in 1951-52. These will be referred to, where appropriate.

Fair Isle in winter is not an attractive place for most birds. Though the climate is normally mild, and prolonged snow-cover or severe frosts exceptional, the frequent salt-laden gales reduce the vegetation to a minimum. Insect-life virtually disappears, and the autumn crop of natural seeds is quickly depleted. Feeding-time, for diurnal birds, is reduced to as little as six hours at the shortest day.

At this season, the moorland and rough pasture, which cover some three-quarters of the isle, are almost empty of birds. The most favoured habitats for land-birds are the intertidal zone and the stubbles and stackyards of the crofts. Since Eagle Clarke's time, the island's human population has decreased by half, and the area under cultivation has been reduced even more. This has evidently resulted in a far smaller winter population of seed-eating birds and perhaps also of scavenging birds.

The winter of 1957-58 was unexceptional until the third week of January. Thereafter it was unusually hard, with four distinct periods of complete snow-cover up to mid-March, each lasting for up to a week. The weather was generally cold, and there was always snow in some part of the isle until late March. Gales, on the other hand, were abnormally few, and lacked severity. Arrivals of birds due to hard-weather movements, which are sometimes a feature of such winters (see *Bull.* 2:112 for a description of one of these), were however on a rather small scale this year. The resident small birds seemed not unduly troubled by the snow, since many of them resorted to the tide-line.

The list that follows includes all the species that were winterers in Eagle Clarke's day or in 1957-58. My definition of a wintering species is that some individual birds of the species remained on or near the isle throughout December to February inclusive. The position in November and March, which are equally part of the winter, is too obscured by the presence of passage-migrants.

WINTER RESIDENTS :

FULMAR: The breeding population was still very small in Eagle Clarke's day, and apparently the species was seen only occasionally in winter. In 1957-58 birds were seen every day, with varying numbers on the cliffs on most days.

CORMORANT: Fifty years ago this was "quite common" as a winter resident (though none bred). None were seen between late November 1957 and early March 1958, except for five on February 3rd.

SHAG: Continues very common in the winter.

HERON: Eagle Clarke said this bird occurred "somewhat rarely" in winter. At least two wintered in 1957-58. In 1952, birds were only present from the end of January.

LONG-TAILED DUCK: Common offshore all winter, fifty years ago. Appeared irregularly in 1957-58, though birds were usually to be seen on the crossing, mainly on the Shetland side.

EIDER: Still winters, though in smaller numbers than breed.

PEREGRINE: Resident in Eagle Clarke's time. None seen between early January and mid-March in 1957-58.

TURNSTONE: Not included in Eagle Clarke's lists, though elsewhere he mentions that it occurred occasionally in winter. A few were present throughout the 1957-58 winter, as in 1951-52.

SNIPE: A few wintered in Eagle Clarke's day and in 1951-52. Odd birds were seen at fairly frequent intervals through the 1957-58 winter. Very liable to hard-weather movements.

REDSHANK: "Quite exceptional" in winter, fifty years ago. A few were present throughout the winter in 1951-52 and 1957-58.

PURPLE SANDPIPER: A "common" winterer in the early years of the century. Still winters, but in rather small numbers.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL and HERRING GULL: Still winter, though said to be in smaller numbers than formerly.

GLAUCOUS GULL: A winter visitor which occurred "in some numbers" in Eagle Clarke's time. Quite scarce and irregular now.

KITTIWAKE, RAZORBILL, LITTLE AUK, and GUILLEMOT: Still winter in the neighbouring seas, as they did fifty years ago.

PUFFIN: Should probably be in the same category, though not mentioned as more than occasional in Eagle Clarke's lists.

BLACK GUILLEMOT: A fair number still winter.

ROCK DOVE: This bird had been exterminated, shortly before Eagle Clarke's time. Although it has long been reinstated as a breeder, it seems unlikely that any wintered in 1951-52, or in 1957-58, but a few were seen at long intervals.

SKYLARK: Small numbers wintered, fifty years ago. Apparently there were at least thirty all winter in 1951-52, but there seemed to be even fewer than this by February 1958. Eagle Clarke decided the wintering birds were different from the breeders, since the species was absent for part of the autumn. Birds were always present in autumn 1957, but the population may possibly have changed. Almost confined to the Kennaby-Springfield part of the crofts.

RAVEN: Still resident, though possibly augmented by wandering birds at intervals.

HOODED CROW: Still resident.

ROOK: Only very occasional in winter in the 1900's. Two wintered in 1957-58. In 1951-52, there were up to three before the third week of January, when a cold-weather movement brought in nearly forty, most of which remained until March.

WREN: The local population is resident, and was confined to the beaches in the snowy weather, though penetrating inland in the milder spells of the 1957-58 winter.

FIELDFARE: Appeared only in cold weather, and remained only a short time, in Eagle Clarke's day. There appears to have been a small resident stock in the recent winters, though numbers were very liable to fluctuation.

SONG THRUSH: A few all winter in the 1900's. Apparently irregular in 1950-51 and 1951-52, but odd birds were to be found all winter in 1957-58. It is not certain that these were always the same. This is another species very prone to fluctuations, particularly with hard weather in Europe.

BLACKBIRD: A few all winter, both fifty years ago and recently. At least four birds ringed in the late autumn remained until March 1958. Three of these lived at North Haven, and up to twenty birds lived in the centre and south of the isle.

ROBIN: Small numbers wintered in the 1900's and in 1950-51 and 1951-52. One bird, ringed in November 1957, survived the 1957-58 winter.

ROCK PIPIT: Still winters all round the coasts, extending inland except in complete snow-cover. Numbers probably lower than the breeding stock.

STARLING: To judge from ringing results, the adults are resident. Widespread on the low ground except in thick snow, when mainly on the tide-line.

TWITE: Seems to have been commoner as a breeding bird in the 1900's and many wintered. Up to a dozen birds wintered in 1951-52, but none were seen between early December 1957 and late March 1958. The species still winters fairly commonly in Shetland. Probably the isle no longer offers an adequate food-supply.

CHAFFINCH: Wintered regularly in small numbers in Eagle Clarke's time. Only an irregular visitor in recent winters, except for one which survived in 1953-54 (*Bull.* 2:112). Two of the autumn immigrants remained until late January 1958.

BRAMBLING: Status the same as that of the Chaffinch in the 1900's. Not recorded in December-February in the recent winter notes.

SNOW BUNTING: A common winter resident fifty years ago. In recent years there seem to have been very few residents,

though large influxes may occur at intervals throughout the winter.

HOUSE SPARROW: Probably quite sedentary.

TREE SPARROW: Bred in Eagle Clarke's time, and remained in the winter. No recent winter records.

ANNUAL VISITORS IN WINTER

The following species occurred fairly frequently in the recent winters, as in Eagle Clarke's period:—

MALLARD, WIGEON: Small numbers, often remaining for some days or even weeks.

TEAL: Odd birds or very small parties; less frequent than the other ducks.

LAPWING: Small parties at rather frequent intervals, often remaining for some days.

CURLEW: Odd birds at intervals, mainly in cold spells.

COMMON GULL: A few at intervals.

BLACK-HEADED GULL: Odd birds, but less frequent than the Common Gull.

REDWING: Quite frequent; mainly odd birds or small parties, but sometimes larger parties in hard-weather movements.

CORN BUNTING: Odd birds seen in 1951-52 and 1957-58, but was evidently more frequent fifty years ago.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 1957-58 WINTER

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER: One or two present until late Dec.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE: One in North Haven from February 12th. Its corpse was on the beach ten days later. Only the second record for the isle.

SLAVONIAN GREBE: One in the haven on February 12th, and seen at intervals until mid-March.

GOLDENEYE: One December 7th, and several records in February.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER: Several records in February.

WHOOPEE SWAN: Two December 2nd, three 4th. One arrived in late December and lived in the Pund-Barkland crofts until about February 4th.

WATER RAIL: One seen at intervals in the first three weeks of December. (This is one of the autumn immigrants that may sometimes winter on the isle. Apparently one did so in 1951-52, and two in 1953-54 (*Bull.* 2:112).)

MOORHEN: One December 16th.

WOODCOCK: Odd birds in December and early January.

JACK SNIBE: Two December 16th, one February 8th and 9th.

ICELAND GULL: One December 12th.

REED BUNTING: A male on February 12th.

13. Migration in Northern Lewis in April 1957

B. A. E. MARR, G. H. REES AND E. J. WISEMAN

We visited Lewis mainly to watch and record migration and particularly to see if any passage up the East coast existed and whether the Butt of Lewis was of any significance as a departure point for birds of Iceland/Greenland destination. In this the aims were much the same as with the two previous expeditions (*Bull.* 2:238-246 and 3:12-37).

We were watching around Stornoway on 14th and 15th, at Tiumpán Head from 16th-19th, at Tolsta Head on 19th-20th and at the Butt from late on 20th-26th. Most of the time was spent sea watching so little penetration to inland lochs was made.

The weather was variable with frequent rain and fresh to gale Westerly winds up to 21st. On the 22nd, the wind was Southerly and light and on the following days was light and variable. On 24th a dense sea-fog rolled in at the Butt in the morning, cleared in the afternoon and came in again in the evening. Otherwise it was mostly bright with showers, and good visibility.

The following is a selected list:—

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER *Gavia immer*. Reasonably common off the E. coast with a maximum of eighteen off Tiumpán Head.

RED-THROATED DIVER *Gavia stellata*. One off Tiumpán Head on 17th, two flying North off Tolsta Head on 20th, one coasting W. at the Butt on 26th.

LITTLE GREBE *Podiceps ruficollis*. A pair in summer plumage and "whinnying", on Loch Stiapavat, 21st-25th.

MANX SHEARWATER *Procellaria puffinus*. Varying numbers passing off Tiumpán Head, 16th-19th, mainly moving Northwards, e.g. 266 to N in 3½ hr. on 17th, 45 to N in 10 min. 19th (maximum) and 2 to N in 2 hr. on 18th (minimum). Nineteen passed N in nearly 2 hr. on 20th at Tolsta Head. At the Butt movement was mainly E to W with maximum of 241 in 4 hrs. 50 mins., on 24th.

FULMAR *Fulmarus glacialis*. Common about the cliffs at Tiumpán Head and Tolsta Head. 70 birds were counted at Tolsta. We saw them on the cliffs down the W coast as far as Badan Fhithich and 267 were counted between the Eye of the Butt and the Lighthouse. One over Loch Stiapavat on 25th. On 24th a "blue" Fulmar passed E close in at the Butt.

GANNET *Sula bassana*. Small numbers moving mainly N off Tiumpán Head. Few seen at Tolsta Head. At the Butt there

were two continual streams of birds; one, the larger, arriving from NE and ENE and coasting parallel with W coast. The other was in the reverse direction. Small numbers were also seen to arrive from along the E coast. Maximum sample hourly counts gave the following figures: 587 on 22nd; 667 on 23rd; and 709 on 24th; on the Westerly moving course and 177 on 22nd; 126 on 23rd; and 268 on 24th, in the opposite direction. Flocks often contained more than 50 birds, the largest recorded having 71.

CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*. An immature at the Butt 21st-24th.

SHAG *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*. Common at Tiumpán Head and Tolsta Head. Twelve occupied nests were found at the Butt.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*. Odd birds and pairs found on various lochs and up to six at Stiapavat.

TEAL *Anas crecca*. At Loch Stiapavat there were 12 on 21st, 9 on 22nd and 1 on 25th.

WIGEON *Anas penelope*. An immature male on Stiapavat on 22nd.

LONG-TAILED DUCK *Clangula hyemalis*. 11 on Loch Brannahuie and 5 nearby in Broad Bay on 16th. 1 male coasted E at the Butt on 22nd.

COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra*. 5 S to N off Tiumpán Head on 17th and 4 S to N there on 18th. At the Butt: 4 W to E on 25th and 4 W to E on 26th.

EIDER *Somateria mollissima*. Three (2 males) at Tolsta Head on 19th. One male coasted W at the Butt on 22nd.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator*. Two S to N off Tiumpán Head on 18th, 3 coasted W at Butt on 22nd and 2 did likewise on 25th.

SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna*. At the Butt: 4 imm. E to W out to sea and 1 ♀ coasted E—W on 22nd; 5 in from the sea from NW coasted E on 23rd. Two singletons ($\frac{1}{2}$ hr. apart) came in from NW and coasted E on 25th, two coasted W on 26th.

GREY LAG GOOSE *Anser anser*. One at Loch Stiapavat on 22nd departed N at 1100 hr. On 23rd a different bird arrived at the Butt from the E, turned inland and was later found in a tame and tired condition at Loch Stiapavat. It had gone by the next day.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus*. 21 arrived at the Butt from the W coast on 21st but broke formation and settled inland. On 23rd flocks of 13 and 44 arrived at Butt from along E coast and departed NW out to sea. On 24th a total of 228 in four flocks passed the Butt, SE to NW and a party of 45, was seen moving in the same direction over

Eoropie sands; on 25th a flock of 55 passed the Butt SE to NW.

The following unidentified grey geese, probably mainly Pinkfeet, were also seen: 7 S to N off Tiumpán Head on 17th and 17 moving NNW off Tolsta Head on 20th. At the Butt: on 22nd a total of 438 passed SE—NW out to sea; on 23rd 12 did likewise; on 24th 139 passed out to sea on the same course and 10 were seen coasting Northwards at Port of Ness.

WHOOPEE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus*. 12 at Tolsta Head on 19th. 2 were on Loch Stiapavat from 21st-26th. There was also a separate flock of 6 on Stiapavat on 21st, and 22nd and at 1900 hr. on the latter day they departed N after much preliminary calling. One on Loch Baravat on 26th.

MERLIN *Falco columbarius*. A female at N. Tolsta on 20th. A ♀ which flew N out to sea at the Butt on 21st and was lost to sight chasing a small bird, may have departed. Otherwise one or both birds of a pair were seen hunting between the Butt and Eoropie, 21st-26th.

MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus*. Up to 10 seen at Stiapavat 21st-26th.

COOT *Fulica atra*. One on Loch Stiapavat on 21st and 22nd.

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus*. Commonly seen about the coast. In addition, at the Butt: 4 flew NW to SE off the sea on 22nd, 7 flew N out to sea and 11 coasted W on 24th; one N to S off sea. 5 out to sea N and 4 out NNE, all on 25th.

GOLDEN PLOVER *Charadrius apricarius*. 75 near Stornoway on 15th; 44 at Butt on 21st. 40 there on 25th and 25 on 26th; 72 at Swanibost on 21st. At Loch Stiapavat there were 73 on 21st; 60 on 22nd, 13 on 23rd and 34 on 24th. All those critically viewed here were in Northern *Ch. apricaria altifrons* plumage.

TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres*. One in Stornoway Harbour on 16th. At the Butt 3 coasted W on 22nd, a flock was heard passing over after dark on 23rd and there was one at the foot of the cliffs on 25th.

SNIBE *Capella gallinago*. One flew NW to SE over the sea down E coast off the Butt on 21st.

CURLEW *Numenius arquata*. Two flew E from Broad Bay, past Tiumpán Head on 17th; 2 flew in SE to NW and one passed N to S at Tiumpán Head on 18th. One flew in SE to NW and passed S to N at Tolsta Head on 20th. At the Butt: one coasted W on 21st, one N to S off the sea and two E to W out to sea. One 22nd, one arrived up W coast and departed ENE on 23rd, five arrived up W coast on 24th, one coasted E and the rest flew NE out to sea; one coasted W on 25th and two coasted on 26th.

- WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus*. Seen only at the Butt: a flock of nine arrived up E coast and returned the same way when reaching the Butt on 25th and one coasted W to E; one coasted W on 26th.
- BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa*. Two, in summer plumage, at Loch Stiapavat on 21st, departed to the N in the evening.
- REDSHANK *Tringa totanus*. Breeding at Loch Stiapavat. In addition there was a flock of 3 there on 21st and a flock of 22 on 22nd which left to the N at 18.55 hrs.
- GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*. Two coasted W at the Butt on 22nd.
- DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*. On 21st at the Butt, three flew in off the sea from the E and settled by the pools. One at Loch Stiapavat on 21st and 22nd.
- GREAT SKUA *Stercorarius skua*. One moving S off Tiumpán Head on 16th, at least 4 off shore there on 17th and 3 on 18th. Two chasing gulls off Tolsta Head on 20th. Two off the Butt on 22nd.
- LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus*. At the Butt: 19 coasted W on 23rd, one coasted E on 24th and 2 coasted E on 25th.
- HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus*. At the Butt: 6 flew in from sea N to S on 23rd and two flew out N on 24th.
- BLACK-HEADED GULL *Larus ridibundus*. At the Butt: 2 flew in from the sea NNE to SSW and carried on inland on the 22nd; 3 flew in N to S on 24th and 2 flew in from E on 26th.
- KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla*. 225 birds in two colonies at the Butt.
- AUK *Alca impennis*. Flocks of up to 30 birds were frequently passing W to E off the Butt on 26th too far out for specific identification. Nothing like this had been seen on previous days.
- RAZORBILL *Alca torda*. Off Tiumpán Head, 16th, 19th, were mostly moving South in small numbers. Seen on the ledges at Tolsta Head and 33 passed N to S on 20th. At the Butt up to 14 were seen.
- LITTLE AUK *Plautus alle*. One in winter plumage, off the Butt on 25th.
- GUILLEMOT *Uria aalge*. Seen in small numbers (up to 33) off Tiumpán Head and the Butt.
- BLACK GUILLEMOT *Cephus grylle*. Up to 17 at Tiumpán Head and 10 at Tolsta Head. Up to 18 at the Butt where a W movement was noted, viz.: 41 on 21st, 36 on 22nd, 7 on 23rd, 12 on 24th, and 17 on 25th.
- PUFFIN *Fratercula arctica*. One passed W at the Butt on 24th.

ROCK DOVE *Columba livia*. A few were seen around Tolsta village. Nine pairs located at the Butt and up to 14 seen feeding in fields at Eoropie.

SWALLOW *Hirunda rustica*. One moving NW over Stornoway on 15th, one at the same place on 16th and one moving S over Traigh Mhor on 19th.

RAVEN *Corvus corax*. Generally common. Six coasted E to the Butt on 26th.

HOODED CROW *Corvus cornix*. At the Butt: 3 flew out to sea on 22nd, two returned and the third flew on N out of sight; six coasted E on 26th.

REDWING *Turdus musicus*. Seen in gardens at Stornoway, Portnagurañ, N. Dell and Port of Ness up to 21st. At dusk on 20th many were leaving the Butt—N. 5 were seen to leave the ground and fly out to sea and 24 calls were counted in 5 mins. when it was too dark to see. (None were passing an hour later). Heard passing after dusk at the Butt on 23rd. (17 calls in 5 mins.).

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*. Commonly seen. Numbers indicated small arrivals and departures at Tiumpan Head and the Butt.

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*. At the Butt: on 21st 67 flew in NE to SW in 1 hr. and in the following 2 hrs. three flew in NE—SW, one N—S and one coasted W; on 22nd 10 N—S off sea in 1 hr. 25 mins. and 4 NE—SW in a further 5½ hrs.; on 24th 6 NE—SW in 50 mins.; on 25th 1 NE—SW and 1 out ENE.

WHITE WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba*. One at Stornoway on 16th, one at N. Tolsta on 20th. At the Butt numbers were small and fluctuated daily (max. 6). One at Eoropie on 24th.

TWITE *Carduelus flavirostris*. Widespread in small numbers, max. 36 at Eoropie on 22nd.

CORN BUNTING *Emberiza calandra*. Not seen to any great extent.

The objects of the expedition were realised in full. Passage at the East coast consisted of Manx Shearwaters, Gannets, Scoter and a few geese, moving Northwards. Watching at the Butt showed that geese departed in a NW direction and that many other species were on the move.

Apart from two Grey Lags all the geese identified were Pink feet. Their migration was witnessed at all times of the day although on 2 days there were definite early morning "rushes". The main flight line was from along the East coast with a departure out to sea—NW, at the Butt. One small party arrived from the direction of the mainland passing out to sea—NW. Only one flock arrived at the Butt along the W coast but returned inland after twice false starting their de-

parture. However, two parties were seen to pass through the Stiapavat Valley (E coast to W coast), neither of which reached the Butt and the second one appeared to leave NW out to sea. In addition, a skein of 200 was seen to pass over Stornoway, NW at 1600 hrs. on 25th (per W. A. J. Cunningham).

Geese leaving Skye or the mainland would be likely to strike the E side of Lewis and either fly across the island to the W coast or follow the leading-line of the E coast northwards. We see no reason why, upon arrival at the W coast, birds taking the former course should not depart directly out to sea (NW). Negative evidence for the Butt, the observations of Smith & Walker (1954) at Barvas, the report by a crofter, to St Clair, Usher and Gardner-Medwin, that geese fly down the Dell River and straight out to sea, and our own Stiapavat Valley records, all support this assumption. At the same time, our own records show that geese *do* follow the East coast northward with a departure out to sea towards Iceland/Greenland, from the Butt. Although some birds of this "stream" probably cut overland at various places to reach Lewis's western shore and depart, the main trend appears to have been to coast to a place where NW departure is uninterrupted by land, i.e., the Butt of Lewis, which would therefore be the place where passage was the most in evidence.

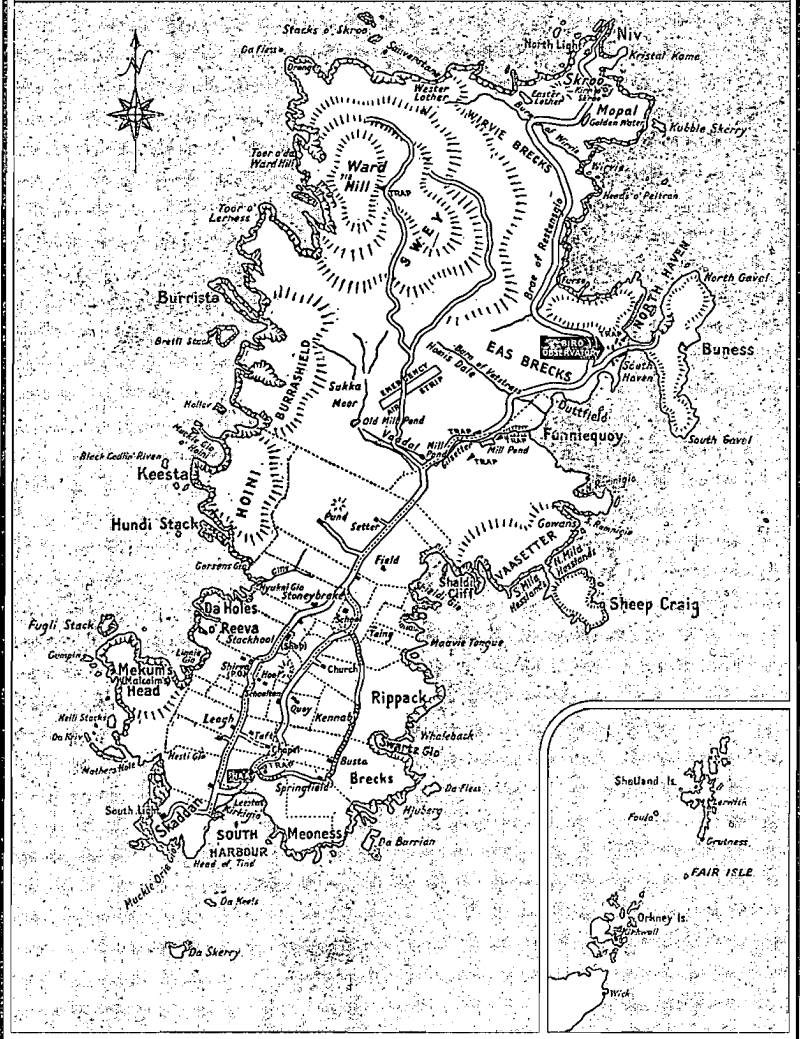
Other birds thought to be of Icelandic origin were recorded and the departure of the Whooper Swans, Black-tailed Godwits, Redshanks and Redwings support the assumption. Movement of Golden Plover, Wheatear and White Wagtail was indicated by daily fluctuation of numbers and Meadow Pipits were seen to arrive from the mainland direction—possibly to disperse upon the island to breed. There were various movements of other birds which suggest confusion upon reaching the Butt, and inexplicable records of Shelduck and Curlew movement. The Black Guillemot passage is of note as it may have consisted of birds arriving at the breeding area.

We feel that the expedition was very successful and establishes the Butt as an important observation point.

FAIR ISLE BIRD OBSERVATORY

0 100yds. 440yds. 880yds. 1 mile

Roads Bird Trap Boundaries



Matthew

Edin