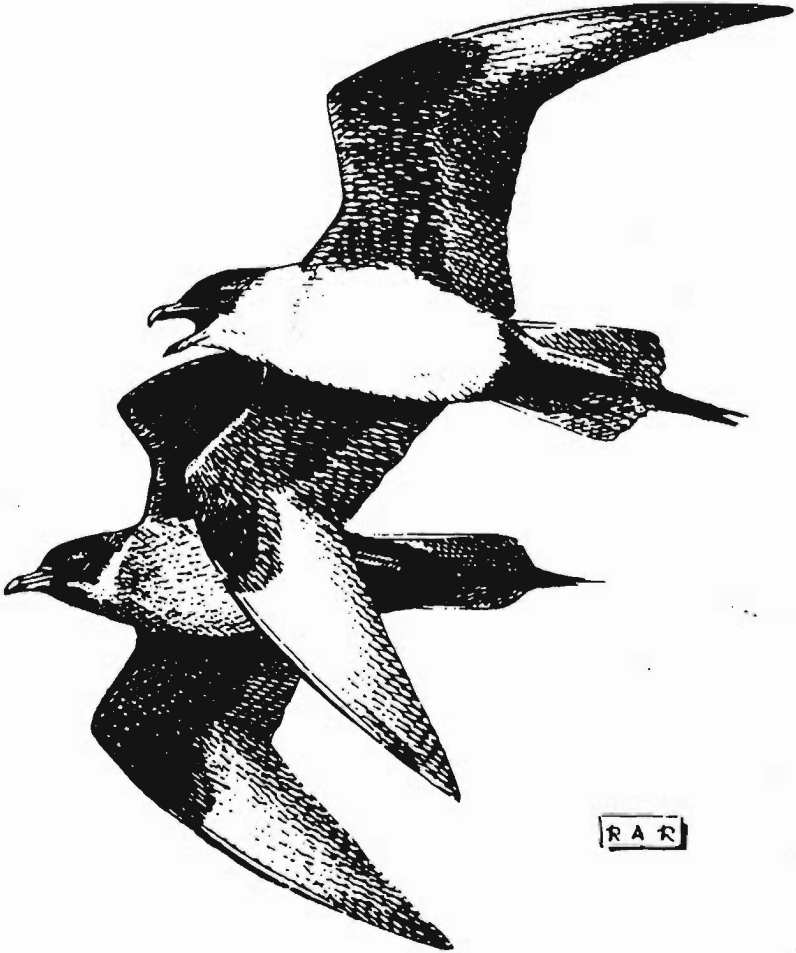


FAIR ISLE BIRD OBSERVATORY
Report for 1995



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Fair Isle Bird Observatory

Report no. 48

1995

Edited by Roger Riddington

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Chairman's Report

Roy Dennis

I have just read Roger's report on the birds of Fair Isle in 1995. As always it is just such a fascinating read – a mix of the common, the unusual and the rare; of migrants, winter visitors and the fortunes of the seabirds. The spring was lacking in falls of the commoner migrants but we've never had such a year for Common Rosefinches. Then there was the White Stork seen the day after it left Mosstodloch, a place I often pass through in Morayshire. Fair Isle added to its amazing species list with an Olivaceous Warbler in June and a Mediterranean Gull in October.

Sadly, I didn't get the chance to visit Fair Isle in 1995, but I did see the island standing out beautifully in a clear blue sea, 27,000 feet below, when en route to northern Norway. Looking down, I could imagine the great colonies of seabirds as well as the bustle of island life that early June morning. Later, when reading the monthly reports, I noted that an Osprey visited the Isle that day.

It was a successful year at the Bird Observatory and we are most grateful to the marvellous effort put in by Roger and Wendy. They had an enthusiastic staff and the season was a good one despite set backs such as the faulty boiler. Unfortunately visitor numbers were still rather low, but are showing some signs of improvement. Now is the time to return to Fair Isle, or encourage your friends and acquaintances to do so. And remember there's even room in September!



The Observatory

To make our visitors' enjoyment of the island even better we joined Scottish Natural Heritage in organising a ranger service at the Observatory. New ideas and practices were brought in to make certain that visitors to the island received the advice, information and guidance required for a good holiday. Alas, it's still not possible to order a Lanceolated Warbler!

During the year there were various changes in the board of FIBOT. Pat Sellar stood down as Chairman at the AGM in February and we thank him most sincerely for

ably steering the Trust over the last five years and are very grateful that he remains on the Board. Professor Peter Slater retired from the Board after 32 years in continuous office, first as a Trustee, later as a Director and finally as Vice-Chairman. We are greatly indebted to him for his devotion to Fair Isle and wish him an early return to the island without the burdens of office.

Our sincere thanks also go to Alastair Cunningham who retired as marketing director after six years. During the summer, Ken Shaw retired from the board when he moved to his new post at Loch Leven and we thank him very much for his support over the years. We welcomed the return of David Okill, as Vice-Chairman, and the new appointment of Mike Wood, a Fair Isle regular.

Finally, I close with my sincere thanks to all the friends who responded so magnificently to our appeal in mid-summer. It is mentioned in the Financial Report, but we were most gratified by your support. Now we can look forward to the future and in next year's report we will outline our plans for FIBOT's 50th birthday in 1998.

Administrator's Report

Wendy Christie

Another year has passed by – all too quickly it seems! – and although there are many positive things happening at the Lodge, we are unfortunately still plagued by some of last year's worries.

Transport costs to the Isle are still high, and this continues to have a significant effect on visitor numbers. Although bed-nights this year were slightly lower than 1994 (2181 as opposed to 2220) we are hoping that the downward trend will begin to right itself next year. At the time of writing, bookings for 1996 are already looking more promising than bookings for 1995 at the same time last year. Visitors came from both home and abroad, and we were pleased to welcome both old faces and new. Again, we had several groups of visitors to the Lodge: Graeme Rowe brought an exuberant group of Young Ornithologists, Wendy Dickson led a group from Island Holidays, Neil Arnold accompanied the Dorset Naturalists, and we were pleased to welcome back Gary Miller from Natural Habitat Holidays (based in Colorado) with another team of enthusiastic visitors. We were pleased also to welcome some of the Directors to Fair Isle during the year. Our newest Director, Mike Wood, travelled to Fair Isle twice, while John Wood, David Okill, Ian Grier, Antony Bryant, and Peter Evans all visited during the course of the season.

We began the 1995 visitor season with a new 30 kilowatt generator (purchased with grant aid from both Shetland Enterprise and Shetland Islands Council), which thankfully caused us no problems throughout the year. We were also able to rely on the 25 kilowatt generator which had been newly overhauled. Unfortunately the boiler didn't fare so well. As well as more minor problems throughout the season, we spent almost six weeks without heating or hot water for the Lodge guest rooms, bathrooms, and the kitchen during summer. We thank both the guests and the staff for their tolerance during this period. The plumbing system as a whole is a constant worry, and achieving a long term solution is becoming a priority. The Lodge roof continues to raise concern, and leaked in the autumn despite work on it during the summer. Due to extensive damage following a recent spell of rain, we will need to redecorate several rooms before the Lodge opens again in May. Yet another maintenance problem is the state of the windows, with approximately one quarter of the fittings needing replacement.

Each year the success of the Lodge depends very much on the calibre of the staff, and Roger and I feel that this year we were extremely lucky to have such a dedicated team. We would like to thank them for their commitment to their tasks and to the observatory throughout the season. The catering team was led very ably by Nigel ('no-one goes hungry while I'm the cook') Milius. Nigel's assistant was Tieren Johns, and the general assistants were Janet Mitchell and Victoria Lund. Nigel left us at the beginning of September to embark on his latest adventure – another three years' cooking in Antarctica. He was replaced by Ann Prior, a familiar face to many visitors. We are delighted that Ann will be returning to cook for us during the 1996 season – perhaps this is the impetus some

folk need to make a return visit! The atmosphere amongst the staff for the whole of the season was a very pleasant one, and for that we sincerely thank everyone involved.

Since last winter, I have been working hard to put as much information as possible onto the Observatory computer. I hope this will help to increase the efficiency of all of the administration at the Lodge. We have recently joined the world of electronic communications, so the Observatory can now be reached by e-mail, thus avoiding the lengthy delays we often experience with conventional post due to bad weather. (Our e-mail address is fairisle.birdobs@zetnet.co.uk). We are also setting up an advertising page within the Internet system, which will potentially provide us with a world-wide advertising audience.

Earlier this year the decision was made by the Directors of the Trust to have as much FIBOT work as possible generated from the Lodge. To this extent, I have now taken over the marketing for the Observatory. One important event in this context was the visit of Dominic Mitchell (editor of Birdwatch magazine) for a week in September. The weather during Dominic's visit wasn't ideal, but we are hoping this isn't reflected in the article he is writing about the Observatory for the May issue of his magazine! We are grateful yet again for the sterling efforts of Tim Loseby and his wife Irene, for their efforts in promoting the Observatory. Each year, Tim presents a series of superb slide-shows to a wide variety of audiences throughout the south of Britain. In addition, Tim and Irene generate considerable interest at the British Birdwatching Fair (held at Rutland Water in August) with their Fair Isle stall. It was therefore a pleasure to offer them our hospitality at the Lodge this October.

During the summer the work of the Friends of Fair Isle was also brought to the Observatory. Although there has been a lot of disruption with the Friends of Fair Isle during the past few years, we are confident that the operation will run very efficiently and smoothly from now, particularly since the task of updating all of the membership data onto the Observatory computer has now been completed.

As with every year, our thanks are due to a great number of people for helping us with our problems throughout the season. Kenny Stout and Patrick Ross-Smith deserve a special mention for their help, most notably with the plumbing system. We are also indebted to Malcolm Adamson for his time and energy spent installing the new generator, as well as tackling electrical and plumbing problems. Brian Wilson, Bill Murray and John Best helped us throughout the year with a variety of tasks, and Barry Sinclair lent a helping hand with some electrical problems. David Okill, Paul Harvey and Elizabeth Eastham, and Kevin Osborn all helped out in many ways, not least by putting essential items to both boat and plane.

To end on a sad note, a tragic sequence of deaths in the late autumn shook the island community. Edith Stout of Midway passed away in early November, followed shortly afterwards by her second son, Ted, born and brought up on Fair Isle, although he lived on Shetland with his wife and family. The deaths of Maggie-Jean and J. O. Laurenson from Shetland, parents of Florrie Stout, occurred during the same period of the year. Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to the members of the Stout family after such a traumatic end to the year.

Warden's Report

Roger Riddington

In ornithological terms, 1995 will not go down as one of the all-time great Fair Isle years. That is not to suggest that it was mediocre, or uneventful; far from it. Like every year, it had its moments of great excitement.

Both spring and autumn migration proved to be entertaining and of great interest. The numbers of most common passage migrants were very low in spring, but a good variety of scarce and rare species were recorded. In autumn, a blistering spell in early September brought large falls of common migrants and rarities in almost equal measure. Late September and early October were dominated by westerly weather and rather quiet, but the latter half of October brought several rewards. A total of 196 species was recorded this year, though records of three species (Black-eared Wheatear, Serin and Pine Bunting) are still under review by appropriate Records Committees. This is average or just below, compared to recent years, which reflects the omission of several regular species this year, including Hen Harrier, Tree Sparrow and Lanceolated Warbler. This was balanced by two species new to the island – Olivaceous Warbler in June and Mediterranean Gull in October – plus sightings of six species recorded less than ten times on Fair Isle: Hermit Thrush (2nd), White Stork (3rd), Stone Curlew (7th), River Warbler (8th), Canada Goose (9th) and Great Reed Warbler (10th). These were in addition to a Pine Bunting (which showed signs of hybridisation with Yellowhammer) in October, and the first Bean Goose since 1983 in December.

Fair Isle's seabirds enjoyed a mixed season. For most species it was an average year, but the opposite ends of the spectrum were represented by Gannet and Bonxie (both of which reached new record population levels, and enjoyed high breeding success), as against Kittiwake and Arctic Tern (both of which suffered rather poor productivity despite, in the case of Arctic Tern, the largest breeding population ever). This was adjudged to be the result of a sandeel shortage from early July.

In terms of ornithological work, the season went well. Fieldwork for the 10th season of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee's (JNCC) seabird monitoring contract proceeded with few problems, helped by the fact that the species for the all-island census this year was Puffin, which is counted in April, not in June at the busiest time of the year for us. The report was produced by the September deadline. Also, work for the second year of a Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) contract to monitor diet of five seabird species (Gannet, Shag, Bonxie, Kittiwake and Arctic Tern) went much more smoothly this year after an exploratory first year's work in 1994. In migration terms, 1995 was the first year of Fair Isle's contribution to the European-African Songbird Migration project, funded by the European Science Foundation, which aims to collate standardised information on migration throughout Europe and Africa. Data is collected for a restricted range of species, principally chats and warblers, and requires a systematic trapping routine, which Fair Isle employs anyway. Data collection went well this year, from mid-April until the end of May, then again from mid-August until mid-October, and we look forward to next year with the benefit of this year's experience. This project

gives a much-needed focus to our routine trapping of passerine migrants.

A major new venture this year was the establishment of the Fair Isle Ranger Service, funded by SNH, and operated by FIBO. The scheme is organised throughout Scotland by SNH, although this is the first ranger service in the Northern Isles. The primary objectives of the scheme are 1) facilitating enjoyment, awareness and understanding of the natural heritage; 2) encouraging public access to natural habitats, and 3) sensitive management of sites for public enjoyment. In essence, participation in the ranger scheme (which has been funded on a part-time basis) meant a formalisation and improvement in our information, interpretation and education functions, especially with respect to the visitor introduction talk, slide-shows and guided walks. The first year's work was accomplished successfully, after much preparation early in the season.

A minor achievement this year was the conversion to computer-submitted ringing records to the BTO, something made possible by the new Observatory computer. All of our census data is still stored in long-hand, however, and it may be an important next step to begin entering log data onto the computer as it is collected.

Other than work undertaken by Observatory staff, research work at FIBO this year was again dominated by Peter Evans' Starling project. However, this has been given a new lease of life in 1995, through collaboration with Juliet Vickery of Edinburgh University. The level of fieldwork was increased this year, with Rick Smith, a full-time research biologist, working here from mid-April until July. The analysis of past years' data is well underway, and we look forward to new publications in the near future. Apart from Starlings, we were pleased to welcome Caroline Askew back for a short visit in June to top up her sample of colour-ringed Kittiwakes at the Goorn colony.

Ornithological staff this year were Kester Wilson as Assistant Warden (who, in addition to his fieldwork duties, produced a delightful series of paintings of 1995 birds to brighten the upstairs area of the Lodge) and Chris Hewson, who brought his ornithological skills to bear on the seabird monitoring officer's job. Mark Newell, far from being put off by two months as a domestic assistant in 1994, returned as a volunteer for the whole of the 1995 season. His hard work contributed enormously this year.

In addition to these three, I would like to thank a number of people who helped with the bird work this year. Ian Grier and Richard Pike were warmly welcomed back again to boost our seabird ringing efforts, and other welcome help was received during the season from Graham Appleton, Ian 'Blind' Barton, Wendy Christie, Colin Clouston, Jenny Gill and Nigel Milius (whose enthusiasm for ornithology, particularly Storm Petrels, was only marginally less than for his cooking!); plus Graham Rowe and his YOC troupe and Gary Miller's group from Natural Habitat holidays. The two JHMF recipients, Sean Brennan and Phillippe Guichard, both of who came in the summer, showed commendable aptitude for all aspects of our summer work. I am always appreciative of visiting birders' contributions to the log counts, but the enthusiastic recording of Nick Riddiford and Jim Watt outside the main migration periods has added enormously to the completeness of the systematic list. Ed Brown did a wonderful job identifying some of the more difficult seabird diet samples.

As editor of this report, I would like to express sincere thanks to all contributors to the report, whether in the form of articles, (Ian Barton, Alexander Bennett, Wendy Christie, Colin Clouston, Roy Dennis, Mark Newell, Dave Wheeler and John Wood), vignettes (Ian Fisher, Richard Johnson, Mark Newell, Andy Smith, Steve Votier and Kester Wilson) or proof readers (Wendy Christie, Roy Dennis, Dave Okill and Mark Newell). Last but by no means least, we are as always eternally grateful for financial contributions from Shetland Oil Terminal Environmental Assessment Group (SOTEAG), Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), and continued clothing sponsorship from J. Barbour & Sons Ltd.

The National Trust for Scotland: Fair Isle 1995

Alexander Bennett

Fair Isle is regarded widely as a successful community in its ability to live in harmony with its environment, whilst at the same time allowing a degree of development of the social structure. It was particularly pleasing therefore, that Fair Isle should be recognised with the *Crofting Township of the Year* award for 1995. Presented jointly by the Scottish Crofters Union and Scottish Natural Heritage, it recognises the environmentally sensitive nature of good crofting management practices and acknowledges the continuing importance of crofting to the Fair Isle community. This award, together with a battery of other designations – Special Protection Area, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Council of Europe Diploma, Environmentally Sensitive Area, National Scenic Area – helps to strengthen Fair Isle's case, not merely in local or national terms, but in the wider political boundaries of Europe and beyond. I cannot think of a more fitting tribute to the Fair Isle community for all their hard work and efforts in recent years as this millennium draws to a close.

As a community, Fair Isle suffers the slings that any community on the mainland endures, but, as I have said in the past, Fair Isle has the ability to bounce back, especially so when Edith Stout of Midway died in November 1995. Edith will be missed for the warmth of her welcome, always taking time to invite visitors to her house. The Stout family suffered another tragic blow a few weeks later when Ted Stout, son of Edith and Jimmy, died on Shetland from a cerebral hemorrhage. However, such is life that Fair Isle welcomed three new Islanders in 1995: a daughter, Amy, to Ruth and Iain Stout; a daughter Erin, to Phil and Linda Grieve and a daughter, Martha, to Emma and Ewen Thomson. It is now a matter of fact that by far the largest section of the population on the island lies within the 1-5 year old category, which can only be encouraging for the future of the Isle.

One particularly notable event happened during the year. The Kirk now boasts two magnificent stained glass windows and an electric organ, given by Jerry Stout of Lower Leogh in memory of his wife Aggie, who died in February 1993. Not only is this a fitting tribute to Aggie, it is also a testament to the quality of the craft industry, which is very much alive and healthy, and carrying on the old traditions of cottage industries, in this case in the hands of Patrick and Clare Ross-Smith at Burkle.

Stackhoull Stores (the shop), under the management of Fiona and Robert Mitchell, goes from strength to strength. They, like their counterparts on the mainland, were faced with improvements to meet the new Environmental Health standards through the Food Safety Acts. Some renovations were carried out, with a new porch, new roof, windows and some internal improvements including a toilet for the use of disabled visitors. Let's hope that this key facility on the island will be left in peace now by the authorities to get on with the job of serving the community.

Each year the Trust organises a cruise of the northern waters of Europe, and this has frequently circumnavigated Fair Isle. Likewise this year, but on this occasion, the Trust

took the opportunity to join with the Fair Islanders to hold a small reception on board for the various key authorities and people involved in Fair Isle over the years, all to mark the 40th anniversary of the Trust's ownership of Fair Isle. It was a chance to say thank you for the help and to take a moment to look forward to the opportunities available to the Isle.

Finally, I would just like to spend a few moments considering what the future holds for Fair Isle. Fair Isle has never been backward at coming forward and is well recognised for this. It is nice, therefore, to report that two initiatives are poised to move ahead, the development of the autonomous renewable energy scheme and a move to marine protection area status. The renewable energy scheme is the next and logical development of the present wind turbine, which has now reached the end of its designed life. A new 110 kilowatt aerogenerator will be installed on the Brecks o' Busta and the existing 60 kilowatt generator will be refurbished; together they will share the consumers' demand, depending on wind direction. It is anticipated that the Islanders could realise up to 95% reliance on wind energy, with the small balance coming from diesel in times of calm conditions! The other initiative is to move towards the designation of a Marine Protection Area for the waters around Fair Isle. This will involve the coming together of numerous parties, not least of which will be the Fair Isle Community Association, FIBOT, Shetland Fishermen's Association, SNH, RSPB, the Scottish Office and of course the Trust. This project, of Millennium status, will come under the auspices of the various Tourist Board initiatives, *The Celebration of the Coast*. With so many designations in place to protect the land, it is illogical that the seas around the island, which support not only the human population but also the bird populations, are unprotected. This initiative, hopefully, will complete the wholeness of the approach to the ecology and future sustainability of the Isle.

It is the fact that Fair Isle is prepared to take these initiatives which sets it aside from most other communities, and if these experiences can be used as a model for other remote communities then Fair Islanders and the Trust will take some comfort from that.

Fair Isle
– a visit with the assistance of the Ian Pitman Fund

Colin Clouston

There was an air of doubt whether I would fly from Tingwall on Friday. The lady from British Airways had said that it was ‘hit or miss’ whether we could land on Fair Isle. ‘Great’ I thought, ‘first time I go away from home by myself and I’m stranded alone hundreds of miles away’. The situation was repeated on the way home from Fair Isle, only then I really felt that I had good company and wasn’t alone at all.

When I did get off the ground only ten minutes late, my mind was full of expectations. Part of me thought that Fair Isle was full of hay meadows and small beaches, while other thoughts were of a rugged, untamed landscape carved by the elements. Arriving on the island, I found a mix of both. Hay in the south and heather moorland in the north.

As I stepped off the small plane, I was instantly aware of the teeming bird life. Terns and skuas flew by in huge numbers. This was amazing, but I didn’t instantly take to the place. Maybe this was because I was alone or maybe this was a place that grew on you. It was definitely the latter because by the time I had to leave I really liked the place.

I was met by Wendy, the Administrator at the ‘Obs’ and was given a small talk about general rules and mealtimes. After that I was on my own for the very first time. I had no responsibilities and no obligations to anyone. At first I felt awkward not having anybody to tell me what to do, but by the time came to go home, this feeling was great! I could do what I wanted, when I wanted and it was magic.

The first major event happened that Friday evening. There was a group of Young Ornithologists staying there and this was their last night. They were all playing a game and everyone was watching. I looked along the row of faces and one stood out. I had definitely seen this one guy before, but this group was from England. It was only later on that I learnt his name was Ben, and then it clicked – he had been on a trip with me to Handa in 1989. He had left our area and we had lost contact, and now here he was on Fair Isle. It was quite amazing!

It was birds that I had gone to see, and that’s what I did. On my first morning I went round the north and west of the island, taking in the highest point, Ward Hill. At 712 ft it’s not very high but it gave great views of the whole island. In the afternoon I went ringing Black Guillemots or ‘Tysties’. This involved scrambling down near-vertical cliffs to get to only a few young chicks. Getting to see a chick at close quarters was well worth the crazy climb down. The best bird of the day was a Whimbrel, which I had only seen once before. The first day seemed quite long due to an early start and a late night and was very memorable. The rest of the days just faded together and the time flew past.

I helped count and ring Skuas, both Arctic and Great. I had encountered skuas before, so their vicious dive-bombing came as no surprise. On the four occasions I went out to count them we covered nearly half the island and it was very tiring. My lack of energy

and tiredness was not helped by three late night Storm Petrel ringing sessions. We hung up mist-nets and played on a tape recorder the sound of a female calling. Many Storm Petrels in the North Sea flocked to this call and were caught in our net. This usually continued until 2.30 or 3.00 a.m. During my stay we must have ringed over 230 petrels. I was told this was quite low! Other birds which I ringed included Fulmars, Rock and Meadow Pipits and Wheatears. This trip gave me vast experience in handling all kinds of birds. I also did numerous counts, including Great Black-backed Gulls, Kittiwakes and a variety of waders, all of which were recorded in the log at the Obs.

My stay was lengthened by two and a half days as a result of fog, and I was delighted about this! The trip not only gave me a few new species to my list, but also taught me independence and how to deal with life's problems. By the time I had to go I really loved the island and its marvellous people. I would go back in an instant, and its only a matter of time before I return.

The Ian Pitman Fund was set up in memory of a stalwart supporter of FIBOT and Fair Isle, and one of the founder members of the Bird Observatory. It is administered by the National Trust for Scotland, and its aim is to encourage young people to visit Fair Isle for research or general interest. It therefore works alongside the John Harrison Memorial Fund, and a successful applicant can expect to receive approximately £100-£150 towards the cost of their trip. Anyone interested in applying should write to Anthony Bryant, NTS, Abertarff House, Church Street, Inverness IV1 1EU.

ORNITHOLOGY

MONTHLY SUMMARY

In order to provide a chronological account of migration and ringing activities during the season, the following account has been derived from the observatory 'grapevine', which is copied to all British observatories on a monthly basis. Each month has four sections: (i) weather and overall summary; (ii) ringing details, featuring numbers ringed, the most common species and any unusual species ringed; (iii) main movements, falls irruptions etc. and finally (iv) rarities and scarce migrants. For some months, a fifth section, detailing any noteworthy sea passage, is included.

MARCH

SUMMARY/WEATHER:

Apart from a few days of south-easterly gales early in the month, winds were predominantly from a western quarter. Reflecting this, March 1995 proved to be a very quiet month, with very little in the way of unexpected records.

RINGING (excl. pulli): (a) *No. ringed in month, all spp.* 26.

(b) *Top ringing spp. for month, with totals.* Blackbird (18), Redwing (4).

(c) *'Unusual' ringing activity.* Nil.

MAIN MOVEMENTS, FALLS, IRRUPTIONS etc.

1st Oystercatcher 42.

11th Oystercatcher 130, Ringed Plover 27, Golden Plover 6, Redshank 70, Turnstone 225, Woodpigeon 10, Skylark 240, Meadow Pipit 8.

15th Lapwing 42, Dunlin 5, Skylark 400, Meadow Pipit 25.

24th Marsh Harrier 1, Oystercatcher 110, Turnstone 205, Bonxie 1, Skylark 370, House Martin 2, Blackbird 30, Starling 700.

EARLY OR LATE DATES FOR MIGRANTS

Marsh Harrier (male, 24th): previous earliest Fair Isle record, April 21st.

House Martin (2, 24th): previous earliest Fair Isle record, April 19th.

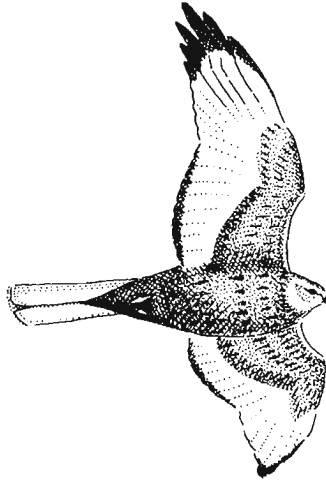
Overwintering species this year included Goldeneye (2, possibly 3), Buzzard and Black Redstart.

RARITIES/SCARCE MIGRANTS

Marsh Harrier adult male, 24th-25th.

Buzzard overwintering bird present throughout the month.

Stonechat female, 11th-15th.



Marsh Harrier

APRIL

WEATHER SUMMARY: Winds were almost exclusively from the western quarter for the first half of April, and from the northern quarter during the latter half of the month.

RINGING (excl. pulli): (a) *No. ringed in month, all spp.* 209 of 19 species.

- (b) *Top three ringing spp. for month, with totals.* Redwing 50, Robin 43, Blackbird 24.
- (c) *'Unusual' ringing activity.* Common Sandpiper 1, Woodpigeon 4, Olive-backed Pipit 1.

MAIN MOVEMENTS, FALLS, IRRUPTIONS etc.

- 1st Whooper Swan 15, Chiffchaff 1
- 4th Lapwing 45, Meadow Pipit 45, Black-headed Gull 11, Common Gull 17.
- 5th Snipe 80, Turnstone 165; Tufted Duck 1, Stonechat 1, Black Redstart 1, Goldcrest 2, Yellowhammer 1.
- 9th Meadow Pipit 110, Redwing 50; single Lesser Black-backed Gull, Wheatear, Rook.
- 10th Common Gull 49, Skylark 425, Meadow Pipit 250, Redwing 110.
- 11th Lapwing 43, Purple Sandpiper 15, Snipe 90, Turnstone 175, Pied Wagtail 9, Wheatear 40, Goldcrest 8; single Iceland Gull, Dunnock, Chiffchaff.
- 12th Skylark 515, Meadow Pipit 200; single Red-breasted Merganser, White Wagtail.
- 13th Oystercatcher 180, Common Gull 37, Wheatear 105, Redwing 170; single Arctic Tern, Sand Martin, Willow Warbler, Lapland Bunting, Yellowhammer.

- 14th Ringed Plover 31; single Great Northern Diver, Long-tailed Duck, Swallow.
 18th Greylag Goose 30.
 19th Purple Sandpiper 21, Turnstone 185.
 20th Woodpigeon 7, Snow Bunting 38.
 21st Wigeon 4, Curlew 53, Snow Bunting 52.
 22nd Sparrowhawk 1, Common Gull 40, Swallow 12, Alba Wagtail 16, Northern
 Wheatear 100, Black Redstart 3, Chiffchaff 12.
 23rd Pintail 2, Dunnoek 8, Robin 40, Black Redstart 5, Ring Ouzel 15, Song Thrush
 11, Brambling 45; single Kestrel, Redstart, Whitethroat, Siskin, Linnet.
 25th Short-eared Owl 1, Common Sandpiper 1, Tree Pipit 1, Mistle Thrush 1, Red-
 start 2, Grasshopper Warbler 2.
 27th Whimbrel 1, Common Gull 65.
 29th Northern Wheatear 250, Goldcrest 25.

NOTABLE ABSENTEES, SPP. WELL BELOW STRENGTH

Thrushes (max. 20 Blackbirds, 16 Fieldfares, 11 Song Thrushes) and Robins (max. 40).

EARLY OR LATE DATES FOR MIGRANTS

Arctic Skua (10th), Arctic Tern, Sand Martin (13th), Swallow (14th), Whitethroat (23rd).

RARITIES/SCARCE MIGRANTS

White Stork	1, 28th (3rd Fair Isle record).	Olive-backed Pipit	1, 24th-25th.
Shelduck	2, 22nd-26th; with 4, 23rd-25th.	Great Grey Shrike	1, 25th.
Gadwall	female, 10th.	Hawfinch	1, 22nd.
Goosander	male, 10th.		
Buzzard	One wintering bird throughout, with a second on 29th-30th.		

MAY

WEATHER SUMMARY: Light S/SW winds until 6th. One day of light E/variable winds on 7th, then a run of persistent N/NW winds from 8th-20th. Cold, with hail showers and sunny intervals. Last ten days predominantly SE, generally warmer, with light winds and quite foggy.

RINGING (excl. pulli): (a) *No. ringed in month, all spp.* 283 (33 species)

(b) *Top three ringing spp. for month, with totals* Starling 125, Northern Wheatear 30, Chiffchaff 8.

(c) *'Unusual' ringing activity* Nightingale 1, Marsh Warbler 2, Red-breasted Flycatcher 1, Common Rosefinch 1.

MAIN MOVEMENTS, FALLS, IRRUPTIONS etc.

- 1st Yellow Wagtail 2, Dunnock 11, Fieldfare 50, Blackbird 13, Whitethroat 1, Brambling 35, Siskin 5, Ortolan Bunting 1.
- 3rd Whimbrel 12, Tufted Duck 2, Black-headed Gull 28, Common Gull 70, Long-eared Owl 2, Blackcap 2.
- 4th Woodpigeon 5, Swallow 16, Tree Pipit 3, Sedge Warbler 1, Common Rosefinch 1.
- 5th Golden Plover 30, Common Gull 50, Jackdaw 2, Carrion Crow 16, Hooded Crow 4.
- 6th Purple Sandpiper 15, Meadow Pipit 125, White Wagtail 14, Chiffchaff 4.
- 7th Black-tailed Godwit 1, Arctic Tern 100, Grasshopper Warbler 1, Whitethroat 3.
- 8th Grey Plover 1, Swallow 10, House Martin 6, Sedge Warbler 1, Lesser Whitethroat 2, Willow Warbler 7.
- 11th Meadow Pipit 125, Northern Wheatear 210, Redpoll 3.
- 13th White Wagtail 19.
- 16th Golden Plover 24, Greenshank 1, Black-headed Gull 10, Northern Wheatear 270.
- 23rd Bluethroat 4, Northern Wheatear 220, Whitethroat 4, Red-backed Shrike 1.
- 24th Quail 1, Swallow 40, Bluethroat 8, Lesser Whitethroat 6, Chiffchaff 6, Red-backed Shrike 2, Redpoll 3, Common Rosefinch 2.
- 25th Red-backed Shrike 3, Common Rosefinch 5.
- 27th Bluethroat 11, Marsh Warbler 2, Willow Warbler 6, Red-breasted Flycatcher 1, Brambling 17.
- 28th Tree Pipit 9, Lesser Whitethroat 6.
- 29th Collared Dove 5, Willow Warbler 7, Spotted Flycatcher 5, Red-breasted Flycatcher 1.
- 30th Swallow 40, House Martin 40, Icterine Warbler 1.
- 31st Black-tailed Godwit 1, Whitethroat 4, Garden Warbler 6, Blackcap 4, Pied Flycatcher 1, Common Rosefinch 17 (record day total).

NOTABLE ABSENTEES, SPP. WELL BELOW STRENGTH

Small numbers of almost all 'common' migrants: hirundines, chats, warblers, flycatchers. No records of Wood Sandpiper, Swift, Wryneck, Wood Warbler this year yet.

EARLY OR LATE DATES FOR MIGRANTS

Common Rosefinch 4th (earliest ever on Fair Isle).

Ruff 2nd (18th spring record).

RARITIES/SCARCE MIGRANTS

<i>BBRC species</i>	Thrush Nightingale	1, 25th
	River Warbler	1, 27th (8th for Fair Isle)
	Subalpine Warbler	1 male, 27th
	Rustic Bunting	3: 1 29th-30th, 1 30th-June 1st, 1 31st-June 1st

Scarce Migrants

Little Grebe	1, 4th	Short-toed Lark	1, 1st-2nd; 1 or 2, 22nd-31st
Canada Goose	1, 27th-28th	Nightingale	1 10th, 1 15th-20th
Quail	1, 21st; 1, 24th	Bluethroat	Almost daily from 17th, max. 11 27th
Spotted Crake	1, 10th	Marsh Warbler	3 individuals, 27th-31st
Marsh Harrier	1 female, 2nd	Red-breasted Flycatcher	1, 27th; 1 29th-30th
Hobby	1, 31st	Red-backed Shrike	1-3, 23rd-28th
Stone Curlew	1, 14th	Common Rosefinch	1, 4th-11th; 2-5, 24th-30th, 17 31st
Shorelark	5, 14th	Ortolan	1, 1st

JUNE

WEATHER SUMMARY:

Winds variable, mostly SW during the first 5 days. Then predominantly northerly winds until mid-month. A real mix of weather during the latter half of the month, no set pattern and little migration.

RINGING (excl. pulli): (a) *No. ringed in month, all spp.* 316 (also >2,000 pulli, mostly seabirds)

(b) *Top three ringing spp. for month, with totals* Guillemot 100, Razorbill 46, Starling 31.

(c) *'Unusual' ringing activity* Olivaceous Warbler 1, Arctic Warbler 1

MAIN MOVEMENTS, FALLS, IRRUPTIONS etc.

No falls or obvious arrivals of any species: just a trickle of rarities, scarce migrants (see below) and 'common' migrants, mainly during the first half of the month.

RARITIES/SCARCE MIGRANTS

<i>BBRC species</i>	Olivaceous Warbler	1, 5th-13th (first spring record for U.K, first for Fair Isle).
	Subalpine Warbler	1, female, 13th.
	Arctic Warbler	1, 27th (earliest ever U.K. record).
	Rustic Bunting	2, 1st.

Scarce Migrants

Osprey	1, 20th.	Marsh Warbler	1-3 most days 1st-13th.
Hobby	1, 1st-2nd.	Icterine Warbler	1 1st-2nd, 1 27th.
Short-toed Lark	1, 1st.	Common Rosefinch	7 on 1st, down to 1 by 11th. Then 2 19th, 1 21st.
Bluethroat	2, 3rd, 1 17th.		

JULY

WEATHER SUMMARY:

Relatively warm, pressure generally high, winds mostly light and variable.

RINGING (excl. pulli): (a) *No. ringed in month, all spp.* 474

(b) *Top three ringing spp. for month, with totals:* Storm Petrel (278), Puffin (51), Starling (19).

(c) *'Unusual' ringing activity:* Marsh Warbler 1. Storm petrelling sessions yielded very low returns.

MAIN MOVEMENTS, FALLS, IRRUPTIONS etc.

16th Oystercatcher 140, Purple Sandpiper 33, Redshank 45.

17th Redshank 68.

18th Oystercatcher 150, Bar-tailed Godwit 1, Black-headed Gull 17.

20th Oystercatcher 112, Whimbrel 6, Turnstone 27.

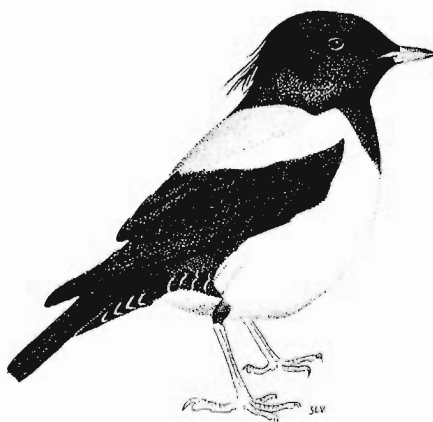
21st Long-tailed Duck 1, Sanderling 5, Black-headed Gull 20, Woodpigeon 1, Collared Dove 4.

26th Knot 19, Turnstone 26, Common Gull, 170.

29th Teal 3, Greenshank 1.

30th Knot 20, Turnstone 33.

31st Common Gull 470.



Rose-coloured Starling

EARLY OR LATE DATES FOR MIGRANTS

Goldeneye: male, 4th-6th (first mid-summer record). One summering Chiffchaff, joined by a second on 22nd. Blackcap, one on 19th.

RARITIES/SCARCE MIGRANTS

Honey Buzzard	1, 16th
Corncrake	1, 14th
Marsh Warbler	1, 10th-11th
Rose-coloured Starling	1, adult, 16th until the month's end.

AUGUST

WEATHER SUMMARY: Dry, warm. SE winds in short supply.

RINGING (excl. pulli): (a) *No. ringed in month, all spp.* 1, 178.

(b) *Top three ringing spp. for month, with totals* Storm Petrel (838), Wheatear (83), Twite (51).

(c) *'Unusual' ringing activity* Leach's Petrel 1 (tape-lured), Icterine Warbler 1, Barred Warbler 3, Redpoll 1 *rostrata/islandica*, Common Rosefinch 3.

MAIN MOVEMENTS, FALLS, IRRUPTIONS etc.

5th	Redshank 80, Turnstone 127.
11th	Black-headed Gull 15, Common Gull 615, Barred Warbler 2.
13th	Golden Plover 45, Barred Warbler 2.
18th	Ringed Plover 24, Dunlin 18, Whimbrel 12, Wood Sandpiper 1, Tree Pipit 2, Icterine Warbler 1, Barred Warbler 2, Garden Warbler 7, Wood Warbler 2, Willow Warbler 15, Pied Flycatcher 6.
19th	Wigeon 2, Golden Plover 75, Lapwing 34, Knot 10, Sanderling 8, Snipe 50+, Greenshank 2, Whinchat 2.
20th	Grey Heron 7, Green Sandpiper 3, Common Gull 100.
22nd	Teal 3, Golden Plover 54, Curlew 28.
26th	Curlew 55, Purple Sandpiper 17, Turnstone 115, Whinchat 2, Barred Warbler 6, Willow Warbler 9.
29th	Woodpigeon 1, Tree Pipit 3, Common Rosefinch 3, Lapland Bunting 5
31st	Snipe 55, Green Sandpiper 1, Meadow Pipit 310.

NOTABLE ABSENTEES, SPP. WELL BELOW STRENGTH

No moderate or large falls of passerines.

EARLY OR LATE DATES FOR MIGRANTS

Citrine Wagtail 17th, Lapland Bunting 27th (both early)

RARITIES/SCARCE MIGRANTS

<i>BBRC species</i>	Great Snipe	1, 31st.
	Citrine Wagtail	1, first-winter, 17th.
	Rose-coloured Starling	Adult, present throughout the month.

Scarce migrants.

Leach's Petrel	1, trapped, 1st.
Shelduck	1, 14th.
Corncrake	1, 12th; 1 31st.
Spotted Redshank	1, 26th.
Icterine Warbler	1, 18th.
Barred Warbler	2 11th, 2 13th, 2 18th then 2-6 daily 21st-31st.
Common Rosefinch	1-2 12th-17th, then 3-4 29th-31st.

SEPTEMBER

WEATHER SUMMARY:

Predominantly eastern-quarter winds during the first two weeks provided an exciting period for migrants. In contrast, almost pure westerlies in the latter half of the month were predictably unrewarding.

RINGING (excl. pulli): (a) *No. ringed in month, all spp.* 401, 44 species.

(b) *Top three ringing spp. for month, with totals* 1. Garden Warbler (45) 2. Blackcap (43) 3. Meadow Pipit & Redstart (35).

(c) *'Unusual' ringing activity* Little Stint 1, Wryneck 1, Paddyfield Warbler 1, Barred Warbler 2, Greenish Warbler 1, Arctic Warbler 1, Yellow-browed Warbler 3, Red-breasted Flycatcher 1, Common Rosefinch 1.

MAIN MOVEMENTS, FALLS, IRRUPTIONS etc.

1st Knot 22, Curlew 33, Meadow Pipit 365.

2nd/3rd Oystercatcher 50, Golden Plover 65, Little Stint 6, Ruff 7, Snipe 100, Bar-tailed Godwit 1, Whimbrel 6, Wryneck 2, Tree Pipit 5, Alba Wagtail 60, Redstart 8, Whinchat 20, Wheatear 200+, Lesser Whitethroat 9, Whitethroat 13, Garden Warbler 10, Willow Warbler 60, Pied Flycatcher 12, Lapland Bunting 9.

6th Meadow Pipit 420.

7th Grey Heron 5, Ringed Plover 54, Tree Pipit 15, Goldcrest 5, Pied Flycatcher 12.

8th/9th Teal 10, Little Stint 12, Wood Sandpiper 2, Wryneck 4, Tree Pipit 30, Yellow Wagtail 6, Redstart 70, Whinchat 30, Reed Warbler 7, Lesser Whitethroat 13, Garden Warbler 65, Blackcap 13, Willow Warbler 180, Spotted Flycatcher 8, Pied Flycatcher 14, Ortolan Bunting 4.

10th Ruff 13, Tree Pipit 45, Flava Wagtail 12, Alba Wagtail 70, Redstart 85, Sedge Warbler 7, Reed Warbler 11, Spotted Flycatcher 22, Pied Flycatcher 20.

11th Purple Sandpiper 15, Dunlin 25.

13th Wigeon 12, Blackcap 30.

14th Wigeon 17, Teal 18, Dunlin 30, Jack Snipe 6, Common Gull 62, Yellow Wagtail 12, Garden Warbler 45, Wood Warbler 7, Goldcrest 9.

- 16th Golden Plover 80, Grey Plover 1, Robin 20, Redstart 155, Whinchat 42, Wheatear 145, Lesser Whitethroat 12, Whitethroat 15, Willow Warbler 115, Spotted Flycatcher 26, Pied Flycatcher 25, Brambling 11, Snow Bunting 4.
- 17th Whinchat 50, Song Thrush 12, Sedge Warbler 12.
- 18th Pink-footed Goose 15, Goldcrest 20.
- 19th Red-breasted Merganser 5, Blackcap, 35.
- 23rd Pink-footed Goose 70, Snow Bunting 9.
- 30th Water Rail 3, Jack Snipe 10, Yellow-browed Warbler 6.

NOTABLE ABSENTEES, SPP. WELL BELOW STRENGTH

Thrushes

EARLY OR LATE DATES FOR MIGRANTS

Glaucous Gull 4th (early).

RARITIES/SCARCE MIGRANTS

BBRC species

Great Snipe	Three: 1 1st (from August); then two more during 8th-23rd
Pechora Pipit	1, 13th-17th
Citrine Wagtail	1, 6th
(Black-eared Wheatear	1 14th)
Paddyfield Warbler	1, 9th-17th
Great Reed Warbler	1, 30th. (10th for Fair Isle, 1st autumn record)
Greenish Warbler	Three: 1 7th, 1 9th, 1 18th
Arctic Warbler	Two: 1 2nd-3rd, 1 14th
Rose-coloured Starling	Two: adult until 1st (from July); juvenile 8th-16th
Yellow-breasted Bunting	Four: 1 6th, 1 8th, 1 8th-10th, 1 10th-19th

Scarce Migrants

Osprey	1, 16th-18th	Marsh Warbler	1, 9th.
Spotted Crake	1, 17th-21st	Icterine Warbler	1, 6th-9th (2, 7th); 1, 14th-17th.
Corncrake	1, 9th; 1, 18th	Barred Warbler	1-4, 3rd-16th
Dotterel	2, 15th	Yellow-browed Warbler	4, 18th; 6, 30th
Spotted Redshank	1-2, 1st-13th	Red-breasted Flycatcher	1, 10th; 1 13th; 1 30th
Glaucous Gull	1, 4th; 1, 30th	Red-backed Shrike	1, 8th-16th
Richard's Pipit	1, 15th-23rd	Common Rosefinch	1-3, 1st-10th; 1, 14th-16th
Wryneck	1-4, 3rd-19th	(Serin	1, 3rd)
Bluethroat	1, 6th; 1-5, 13th-21st; 1, 30th	Ortolan Bunting	daily 7th-18th, max. 7, 13th
		Little Bunting	1, 9th-10th, then 1-3 13th-17th

OCTOBER

WEATHER SUMMARY: Winds predominantly between south and west. Few days with eastern-quarter winds, and these just 'local', off east-moving depressions.

- RINGING** (excl. pulli): (a) *No. ringed in month, all spp.* 566 (36 species)
(b) *Top three ringing spp. for month, with totals* Redwing 189, Song Thrush 69, Blackcap 55.
(c) *'Unusual' ringing activity* Hermit Thrush 1, Yellow-browed Warbler 1, Red-breasted Flycatcher 1, Little Bunting 1.

MAIN MOVEMENTS, FALLS, IRRUPTIONS etc.

- 1st Song Thrush 225, Redwing 45.
2nd Brambling 45.
5th Barnacle Goose 140, Wigeon 16.
7th Linnet 60, Snow Bunting 27.
8th Barnacle Goose 100, Golden Plover 65, Skylark 565, Song Thrush 195.
10th Long-tailed Duck 13, Linnet 100 (F.I. record count).
12th Water Rail 5, Golden Plover 120, Jack Snipe 15, Stock Dove 1, Song Thrush 500, Redwing 6000.
13th Whooper Swan 7, Pink-footed Goose 12, Greylag Goose 90, Wigeon 19, Snipe 60, Chaffinch 25, Siskin 45.
14th Meadow Pipit 400, Robin 65, Song Thrush 225, Redwing 1500, Goldcrest 125, Blackcap 32, Reed Bunting 12.
15th Wigeon 30, Kestrel 3, Snipe 80, Chaffinch 35.
16th Greylag Goose 24, Barnacle Goose 82, Brambling 35, Siskin 90.
20th Great Northern Diver 1, Whooper Swan 6, Pink-footed Goose 24.
25th Greylag Goose 73, Long-tailed Duck 15, Black-headed Gull 52, Common Gull 90.
26th Long-tailed Duck 43, Lapwing 65.
29th Great Northern Diver 1, Snow Bunting 45.
30th Blackbird 45, Redwing 1500, Blackcap 40.
31st Woodcock 30, Woodpigeon 3, Long-eared Owl 2, Blackbird 150, Fieldfare 100, Redwing 3000, Goldcrest 45, Redpoll 4.

NOTABLE ABSENTEES, SPP. WELL BELOW STRENGTH

Blackbird, Fieldfare, Chiffchaff.

EARLY OR LATE DATES FOR MIGRANTS

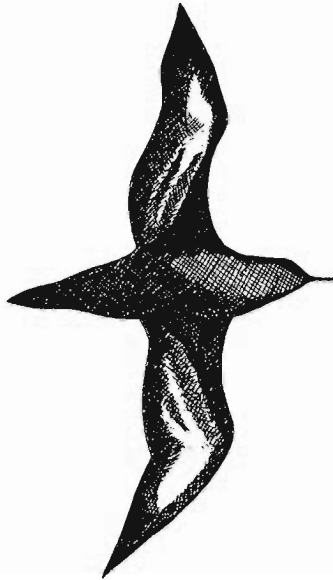
Lesser Whitethroat 29th, Whitethroat 30th-November (latest ever), Ortolan 26th-27th (latest ever).

RARITIES/SCARCE MIGRANTS

<i>BBRC species</i>	Siberian Stonechat	1, 14th-21st.
	Hermit Thrush	1st-winter, 19th (2nd for Fai Isle, 5th for Britain).
	Rustic Bunting	1, 2nd-4th; 1, 8th-10th.
	(Pine Bunting/Yellowhammer hybrid)	1st-winter male, 29th-30th.

Scarce Migrants

Slavonian Grebe	1, 5th-6th; 1 26th.	Bluethroat	1-2 birds 1st-11th.
Greenland Whitefront	Singles 25th, 26th, 31st.	Stonechat	1 2nd-3rd, 1 14th-15th.
Shoveler	1, 1st; 1, 11th-16th.	Yellow-browed Warbler	1 1st-2nd; 1-3, 13th-15th
Corncrake	1 14th.	Red-breasted Flycatcher	1 2nd-3rd, 1 10th-11th.
Dotterel	1, 18th-20th.	Red-backed Shrike	1, 1st-9th.



Sooty Shearwater

<u>Mediterranean Gull</u>	1, 2nd-w, 25th	Great Grey Shrike	1, 31st-Nov.
Glaucous Gull	Singles 1st, 9th; 2 25th-26th.	Common Rosefinch	1, 4th-7th; 1, 11th-16th.
Short-toed Lark	1 12th-24th; 2 16th	Ortolan Bunting	1, 13th, 1 15th, 1 26th-27th
Richard's Pipit	1-3 throughout month	Little Bunting	1 6th, 2 11th, 1 29th-30th.

SEA PASSAGE

11th Red-throated Diver 4, Great Northern Diver 1, Sooty Shearwater 1, Common Scoter 22 north (F.I. record).

SYSTEMATIC LIST

RED-THROATED DIVER *Gavia stellata*

Scarce but regular migrant, mainly late spring and autumn

Reported on six dates in the spring, between May 31st and June 20th, then sporadically through the summer period. In autumn, recorded slightly more frequently, between August 22nd and November 1st, with four on October 11th and November 1st the best counts.

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER *Gavia immer*

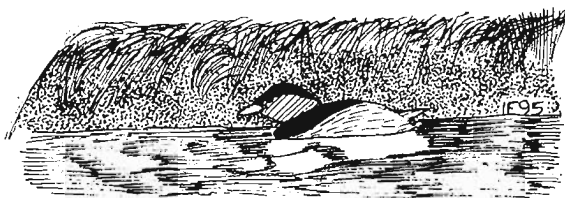
Scarce autumn migrant

One in winter plumage was seen drifting north off Furse on April 14th. In autumn, there were at least three records between September 29th and mid-October, then three sightings of a first-winter bird off South Light between October 29th and November 9th, which presumably relate to the same individual.

LITTLE GREBE *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Vagrant

In spring, a summer-plumaged individual in Furse on May 4th was seen to drift north with the tide. Then in autumn, one on Golden Water on November 7th. Recorded for the fourth year in succession.



Little Grebe

SLAVONIAN GREBE *Podiceps auritus*

Very scarce autumn migrant

Two autumn records: one in North Haven on October 5th-6th, with another off Furse on October 26th.

FULMAR *Fulmarus glacialis*

Resident, breeds

The breeding population experienced a small increase this year (3.8% at monitored plots), compared to 1994 figures. In terms of productivity, Fulmars had another successful year, fledging an average of 0.49 chicks per occupied site at the five monitoring plots.

'Blue' Fulmars were recorded only during the autumn, mostly singles passing by at sea, although seven passed South Light on October 24th.

SOOTY SHEARWATER *Puffinus griseus*

Regular autumn migrant

There were no sightings during the spring, but a good series of autumn records. One seen on the crossing of August 17th was the first of the year, and records continued until two seen off South Light on October 17th. Sightings were daily for a period of ten days in late September, culminating in the highest count of the year, ten on September 25th.

MANX SHEARWATER *Puffinus puffinus*

Scarce autumn migrant, occasional in spring

In spring, singles were reported on the crossings of June 6th and 20th. In autumn, singles were seen heading south off Bunes on August 11th and 28th, with the last record, one on the crossing of September 9th.

STORM PETREL *Hydrobates pelagicus*

Summer visitor, breeds

Birds were reported sporadically from the Good Shepherd during the summer, the first ones on June 17th. Rather lower than average numbers were attracted to tape-lures this year, with a total of only 1152 ringed. Correspondingly, there were lower numbers of controls, especially foreigners. The last sighting was a grounded juvenile on September 18th, released successfully in North Haven.

LEACH'S PETREL *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*

Scarce migrant, summer and early autumn

The sole record was a single bird trapped in the early hours of August 1st near the Observatory.

GANNET *Sula bassana*

Breeds, seen offshore all year

The Fair Isle population enjoyed another successful year, increasing again to 975 occupied nests. Numbers look set to break the 1,000 barrier next year. Productivity was similarly good, with 0.75 chicks fledged per nest.

CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Regular autumn migrant, small numbers in spring

An adult was recorded on several dates in January, but after that, three on May 29th was the only spring record. Autumn passage began with two on August 20th, and there were sporadic records until the year's end, the best count being 7 on September 13th.

SHAG *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Resident, breeds

During the breeding season, the steady decline in numbers recorded at monitored sites for the past six years continued in 1995, with a mean decrease of 5.9%. Productivity was roughly average this year, with 1.38 chicks fledging per occupied nest.

GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea*

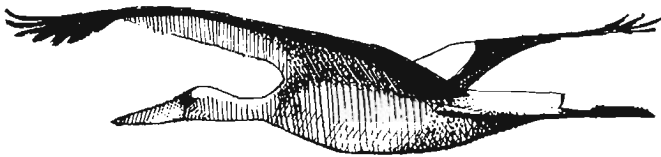
Regular autumn migrant, small numbers in spring

Occasional records came in all months of the year except May. Autumn passage saw almost daily records from the end of August to early October, with a peak count of 7 on August 20th.

WHITE STORK *Ciconia ciconia*

Vagrant

A magnificent adult was discovered at Busta at about 5 pm on April 28th, and remained on the Isle for the rest of the evening, visiting many of the southern crofts. This individual had been observed to leave the Grampian coast at Mosstodloch early in the morning on the 28th. It presumably departed from Fair Isle early on the 29th (a bright, sunny morning) and was then seen at Northdale, Unst (Shetland) from April 29th-May 11th. This constitutes the third record for Fair Isle, following two previous sightings, on April 4th-6th 1930 and May 25th 1975.



White Stork

WHOOOPER SWAN *Cygnus cygnus*

Regular autumn migrant, irregular in spring

In spring, seven on March 30th, three on 31st, then 15 on April 1st-2nd. Autumn passage began on September 24th, when 19 flew south, and there were sporadic records of up to ten birds between then and November 9th. In December, one flew north on the 2nd.

BEAN GOOSE *Anser fabalis*

Vagrant

One, probably a first-winter of the nominate race *fabalis*, was discovered with Greylag and Eurasian White-fronted Geese on December 6th, and remained on the island until the 21st. This is the first record on Fair Isle since September 1983.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Regular autumn migrant, occasional in spring

There were no spring records. Autumn passage lasted between September 18th and November 3rd, with records most days and a maximum of 70+ on September 23rd. Two long-staying individuals account for autumn passage stretching beyond October 20th.

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons*

Very scarce and irregular autumn migrant

One of the best years on record for this species. In late October, three single birds of the Greenland race *flavirostris* were recorded, an adult on the 25th and first-winters on the 26th and 31st. Then in December, strong, cold easterly winds brought an unprecedented series of records, beginning with the arrival of nine European White-fronts (*A. a. albifrons*) on the 5th, which increased to 28 the following day. Numbers increased still further in subsequent days, with a maximum count of 38 birds on the 12th: 33 *albifrons* (27 adults, six 1st-winters) and five *flavirostris* (one adult). Nineteen members of this flock left the island on the 12th, but the remaining 19 (all *albifrons*, 14 adults, five 1st-winters) stayed, 17 remaining into 1996. This is only the fifth time the race *albifrons* has been recorded on Fair Isle.

GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

Small numbers (up to 15) were recorded sporadically during January and February. Spring passage was light, mostly in mid-April, with a maximum of 30 on April 18th. From the spring, a bird with a slightly damaged wing remained through the summer in the Springfield-Meones area. In addition, 15 flew south on July 1st. In autumn, passage was again rather thin, with daily records from late September until early November involving a maximum of only 90 on October 13th. A party of up to 15 was present from November until the year's end.

CANADA GOOSE *Branta canadensis*

Vagrant

One was discovered in North Haven on May 27th, and it remained on the island the following day. This is the 9th record for Fair Isle; all previous eight have been

in spring, and like these, the 1995 individual was a large bird, from British or Scandinavian feral stock.

BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis*

Regular autumn migrant

Records came from autumn only, with two on September 28th being the first. These preceeded virtually daily records from October 5th-31st, an excellent autumn passage, with a peak count of 140 on the 5th. There were a number of records of individuals with darvic rings during this period; these proved to have been ringed on Spitzbergen, and several were seen on their wintering grounds at Caerlaverock, on the Solway Firth, soon after leaving Fair Isle. In December, two on December 2nd were joined by a third on December 7th. These remained until December 21st, driven out by thick snow cover on that date.

SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna*

Irregular spring migrant

In January, a female was seen between the 12th and the 17th. In late April, a pair arrived on the 22nd, and four were present from the 23rd-25th, with two staying until the 26th. Finally, a single was reported on August 14th. A typical series of records.

WIGEON *Anas penelope*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

Following occasional records of up to six birds in January, spring passage kicked off with four on April 21st. There were then records of one to six birds most days until June 4th. In autumn, two on August 19th, then virtually daily records between August 28th and November 5th. Most counts were of single figures, but 30 on October 15th was the maximum. There was a further sequence of records from late November, with two to five birds recorded between November 25th and the year's end, with 11 on December 5th and 10 on 8th.

GADWALL *Anas strepera*

Vagrant

A female was seen flying past the Observatory, then later in South Harbour, on April 10th.

TEAL *Anas crecca*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

One was seen on January 5th, the only record before spring passage began on April 1st. One to eight birds were recorded intermittently until May 30th. There were

occasional sightings from July 27th, but the bulk of autumn passage was from late August to early November, with a peak count of 18 on September 14th. As for Wigeon, there were winter records too, with one to three between December 5th and 30th.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

Five formerly wild (but now at best semi-wild) birds remained at Field all year. Breeding records probably relate to these birds, and at least two clutches hatched successfully. Otherwise, it was a poor year for genuine migrants, with few spring records in April/May and autumn only marginally better. The peak count of such 'non-residents' was a miserly nine on October 20th.

PINTAIL *Anas acuta*

Very scarce spring and autumn migrant

In spring, a pair was seen on April 23rd, with another female seen between April 30th and May 2nd. In autumn, two on September 16th was the only record.

SHOVELER *Anas clypeata*

Irregular spring and autumn migrant

In October, a female was seen on the 1st, with another female from the 11th-16th. Then in December, a moulting 1st-winter drake was present on Easter Lothar water from 14th-18th. This latter individual is the first winter record of Shoveler for Fair Isle.

POCHARD *Aythya ferina*

Vagrant, mostly autumn

One record only, a male on Golden Water, December 5th-7th.

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula*

Scarce but regular spring migrant, irregular in autumn

Most records were from the spring. A male was seen on April 5th, and a female stayed from April 15th-17th. Then in May, a pair was seen on 3rd-4th, with another pair 19th-22nd, the male remaining until the 24th. In summer, a male stayed from July 13th-20th. The last record of the year was of two birds on September 19th, one remaining until the 27th.

EIDER *Somateria mollissima*

Resident, breeds

Present throughout the year. In spring, two surveys of the entire coastline revealed counts of 454 on April 14th and 417 on April 21st. The peak spring count is an

increase of 12% on a comparable count in 1994. In the winter, 570 were counted on December 16th, including an impressive flock of 475 on flat calm seas off South Light.

LONG-TAILED DUCK *Clangula hyemalis*

Regular autumn migrant, very scarce in spring

One on January 2nd and five on February 28th were the only records early in the year. In spring, there were singles on three dates in April, the first on the 14th, and on nine dates in May, plus three on May 6th, with the last record of spring on May 21st. One was seen on July 10th-11th, and the same or another on July 21st. In autumn, records stretched between September 20th and November 10th. Most were recorded on seawatches in October, the max. count of 43 on October 26th including 35 south past South Light. Towards the end of the year, there were single males on November 28th and 29th, then three on December 14th and two on the 16th.

COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra*

Scarce spring, autumn and winter migrant

There were only four records in the year: a female sheltering in South Haven on March 5th; an amazing flock of 22 north past South Light on October 11th (a record count for Fair Isle); two females off Bunes then North Light on December 11th-16th; and finally a female off Hesti Geo on December 27th.

GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula*

Scarce but regular autumn migrant, irregular in spring

Records of one to three birds from January-April probably refer to wintering individuals from 1994. A late female was seen on May 27th. A male on July 4th-6th is the perhaps the first true summer record for Fair Isle. Autumn passage began on September 30th, and there were records of one to five birds until the end of the year, with daily sightings in late October/early November.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator*

Regular autumn migrant, more scarce in spring

Early spring records were a male on March 5th and a female on April 12th. In May, a female was seen on the 5th and 8th, followed by three on the 10th and two on the 11th. Then in June, a male was present on 9th-11th, with two females on the 27th, one staying to the 29th. In autumn, there was a thin scatter of records between September 14th and November 22nd, six on September 20th being easily the best count.

GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser*

Rare migrant in winter, spring and late autumn

One record only, a sparkling drake in South Harbour on April 10th.



Goosander

HONEY BUZZARD *Pernis apivorus*

Vagrant

One was seen flying west over Goorn on the morning of July 16th, and subsequently spent several hours around the south part of the island. The first record since 1992.

MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus*

Vagrant

Yet another very good year for this attractive raptor. A stunning adult male was discovered quartering the island on March 24th, and remained until the 25th. Easily the earliest ever record for Fair Isle, the previous best being April 21st. A female was seen on May 2nd, drifting north after landing briefly on Malcolm's Head.

SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

A light spring passage lasted from April 21st to June 6th; most records were of single birds, apart from three on April 30th, two of which remained on May 1st. In autumn, sightings fell between September 8th and November 5th, again mostly single birds, but with three on October 14th-15th.

BUZZARD *Buteo buteo*

Very rare spring and autumn migrant

The overwintering bird from 1994 remained until May 14th, joined by a second individual from April 29th-May 1st, with possibly a third seen on May 14th.

OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus*

Very rare spring and autumn migrant

One was seen flying over the island on June 20th. In autumn, one stayed for three days, September 16th-18th, favouring the east cliffs.

KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

Early in the year, one was logged on January 3rd-4th. The bulk of spring passage fell between April 23rd and May 29th, all records being of single birds. There were also three late spring/summer records, June 13th and 22nd, and July 7th. Most of the autumn passage occurred during September, the first sighting on September 2nd, with four recorded on the 13th and 17th. There were sightings on just four dates in October, including three on the 15th, with the last on the 23rd.

MERLIN *Falco columbarius*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

There were records on three dates during February-March, but most spring passage occurred between April 4th and May 20th, all singles, apart from three dates when two were recorded. In autumn, there were regular sightings from September 10th until November 8th, again mostly singles but three on a few dates and four on September 27th. A late female was seen on November 25th.

HOBBY *Falco subbuteo*

Vagrant, mostly spring

An immaculate adult bird was found near Busta Geo on May 31st, and remained on the Isle until June 2nd. The 30th record for Fair Isle.

PEREGRINE *Falco peregrinus*

Scarce spring and autumn migrant; formerly bred

In spring, there were sporadic records of single birds on just eight dates between February 20th and May 19th. In autumn, records were more frequent; mostly singles, but with two on September 12th and November 17th. One seen on November 25th and on four dates in mid-December, may relate to a single, wintering individual.

QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix*

Rare spring and summer visitor; has bred

There were two records of single birds in spring, flushed from Dumlins Sink on May 21st, and from Gilsetter on May 24th.

WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus*

Regular autumn migrant, scarce in spring

Sightings on several dates in January and February involved at least two individuals. 'Spring passage' was probably confined to one individual, with sightings between June 1st and 7th. The species was much more common in autumn, the first on September 8th, followed by virtually daily sightings until the end of the year. A maximum count of five was logged on both October 12th and November 5th. At least three, possibly more, individuals remained into December.

SPOTTED CRAKE *Porzana porzana*

Extremely rare autumn migrant; has been recorded in spring

In spring, an obliging individual spent the morning of May 10th in the wet area east of the ringing hut. Then in autumn, a much more elusive bird frequented the maze of small ditches in Da Water, between September 17th and 21st.

CORNCRAKE *Crex crex*

Rare spring and autumn migrant; formerly bred

In spring, one on June 12th, then a midsummer record from July 14th. In autumn, there was an excellent series of records, with sightings on five dates. In August, singles at Wirvie on August 12th and 31st may conceivably relate to the same individual. In September, there were records on the 9th and 18th, then finally a late bird on October 14th.

MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus*

Irregular spring and autumn migrant

In spring, one in Meadow Burn on April 25th and then one around Field from May 29th to June 2nd. The only autumn record was the discovery of some (fresh) remains in late October, but a live bird was seen in the Meadow Burn area between December 4th and 29th.

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus*

Summer visitor, breeds. Also passage migrant, spring and autumn

An early bird on January 17th preceded the steady build-up of spring records during the latter part of February, and March. There were few records of more than a hundred before April, although 130 on March 11th was a good early count. Spring passage was heaviest in mid-April (177 on April 13th) and again at the end of May, when there were approximately 100 non-breeding birds. Censusing of nesting birds revealed approx. 71 pairs, an increase on the 60 estimated in 1994. Movements of post-breeding flocks and autumn migrants were prominent during late July and early August, with 150 on July 18th and 140 on August 1st. The species was recorded virtually daily throughout August, September and the first

half of October, mostly in single figure numbers after mid-September. There were occasional records of singles during November and December.

STONE CURLEW *Burhinus oedicnemus*

Vagrant

One spent the afternoon of May 14th around South Harbour and on Meones. The 7th record for Fair Isle; five of the previous records have been in spring also, including the last, in 1992.

RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula*

Summer visitor, small numbers breed. Also regular autumn migrant, scarce in spring

Small numbers were recorded during the first three months of the year, before the main build-up of numbers in April and May. The highest spring count was 33, on April 17th-18th and again on the 30th. Fourteen pairs bred, a small increase on the twelve pairs in 1994. Autumn passage was marked in late August and early September, with a count of 54 on September 7th being the best of the year. Single-figure numbers were recorded throughout late September, and sporadically during October and early November.

DOTTEREL *Charadrius morinellus*

Very rare spring and autumn migrant

Two were seen on Vaasetter on September 15th, then a late bird frequented the Setter area between October 17th and 19th, loosely associating with Eurasian Golden Plovers.

EURASIAN GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria*

Regular spring and autumn migrant; has bred

There were occasional sightings of up to ten during January-March, but the majority of spring migrants passed through between early April and early June. Numbers were rather small, however, with a maximum count of only 30 on May 5th. Occasional records continued through June and July, before autumn migration, which lasted from mid-August to early November. Double-figure counts were recorded most days, though 120 on October 12th was the only one of more than a hundred. One to four were recorded occasionally during the rest of November, with two on December 27th.

GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola*

Scarce autumn migrant

In spring, one visited the beach at South Haven briefly on the morning of May 8th, only the 14th spring record for the island. Then in autumn, one was present between September 16th-24th.

LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus*

Summer visitor, small numbers breed. Also regular spring/autumn migrant, occasional in winter

During the first three months of the year there were regular sightings of up to 40, before daily passage from late March, the maximum count being 45, on March 24th and April 4th. The number of nesting pairs was estimated at nine, down from twelve in 1994. Autumn passage spanned mid-August to the end of October. Counts were again modest, with no flocks of more than 35 until the last week of October, which saw five days of 60+ and 95 on October 28th.

KNOT *Calidris canutus*

Regular autumn migrant, scarce in spring

Spring passage was very thin, with singles on three dates between May 2nd and 5th, then two on May 29th. In autumn, sightings were almost daily between late August and early October, with peaks of 25 on July 27th and 22 on September 1st. The last record was one on October 26th.

SANDERLING *Calidris alba*

Regular autumn migrant, scarce in spring

No records in spring, but in autumn, regular sightings from July 20th until September 24th. The highest count was eight on July 23rd. In October, a late bird was present on Meones between October 26th and 28th.

LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta*

Scarce autumn migrant

Autumn passage lasted from September 3rd until the 26th, with records most days and a maximum of 12 on the 9th-10th. Since most years record only single figure counts, this must rate as better than average.

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea*

Very scarce autumn migrant

The only record was a juvenile at South Light, present from September 10th-17th.

PURPLE SANDPIPER *Calidris maritima*

Regular spring and autumn migrant; also overwinters

Records came from all months of the year, with the following counts being the maxima: 45 on January 6th, 40 on February 23rd and 33 on July 16th. This may be an under-recorded species in that few birdwatchers time their visits to South Light (the main site for this species) to coincide with high tide.

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*

Regular spring and autumn migrant. Has bred

Occasional sightings of one to five were reported during the first four months of the year, but May witnessed virtually daily records, though of small numbers, eight on May 17th being the best. Sporadic records continued through June and early July, before autumn movements began, with birds seen most days until the end of October. Numbers were greatest in mid-September, with a peak of 30 on the 14th. There were records on four dates in November, the last on the 15th.

RUFF *Philomachus pugnax*

Regular autumn migrant, rare in spring

A male in the Walli Burn area on May 2nd was quite a rare sight for Fair Isle (there are less than 20 spring records). In August, there was one on the 14th, two the following day and then one on the 22nd-24th. Records were daily in September between the 2nd and the 24th, with a maximum of 13 on the 10th.

JACK SNIPE *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Regular autumn migrant, scarce in spring

Two records from January and on five dates during late November/December suggest that Jack Snipe are well able to cope with Fair Isle winters. In spring there were sightings on four dates between April 22nd and May 9th, although probably less than four individuals were involved. In autumn, passage lasted from September 6th until early November, with up to 15 recorded on both October 3rd and 12th.

COMMON SNIPE *Gallinago gallinago*

Small numbers breed. Also regular spring and autumn migrant, some overwinter

Present throughout the year, the highest numbers in spring occurring in mid-April (with 80 on April 5th and 7th, and 90 on the 11th), and the largest counts of autumn passage being 100 on September 2nd and 80 on October 15th. The breeding population was surveyed by counting drumming males, and was estimated at more than 30, the highest ever recorded here. During cold, snowy weather in late December, there were good counts of 60-80 on the 21st-22nd. On the 23rd there were at least 200 in the southern part of the island alone; many of these were in poor condition and perished before the year's end.

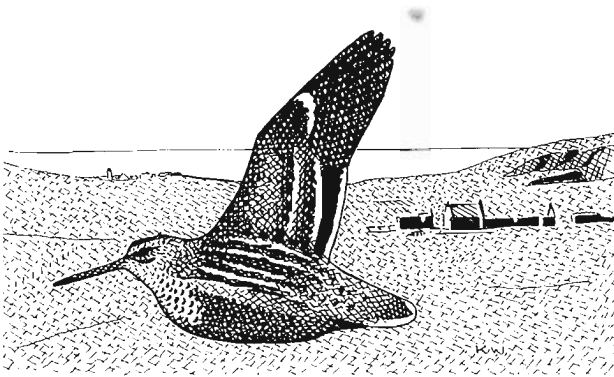
GREAT SNIPE *Gallinago media*

Vagrant

A bumper year, the best since 1987. One arrived at Pund on August 31st, and was seen again the following morning. Then a presumed second individual was seen at Taing on September 8th, which remained until at least September 19th, favouring

rough areas on the east side of the island. A third individual arrived on or before September 17th, and was seen predominantly in the Pund area, at times giving observers unprecedented opportunities to watch this species on the ground. This bird was last recorded on September 23rd.

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.



Great Snipe

WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola*

Regular spring and late autumn migrant, occasionally winters

There was no spring passage as such this year, merely sporadic records of one to two birds between January and May 1st, with four on February 26th. Autumn passage was perhaps the poorest for many years; after an early bird on October 2nd, most records fell between October 22nd and November 14th, and a maximum count of only 26 was logged on October 31st. Occasional late birds were recorded throughout the rest of the winter.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa*

Rare spring and autumn migrant

There were two records of single birds from the spring, one on May 7th and another on May 31st.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica*

Regular autumn migrant, rare in spring

Spring records comprised one on May 17th and two on June 7th. In autumn, one on July 18th, then a juvenile from September 3rd-6th, a single on the 10th and finally one on the 13th-14th.

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

In the spring there were virtually daily records from April 27th to June 10th, with a peak count of twelve on May 3rd. Occasional records of one to two individuals continued through June and early July. Autumn passage from mid-July saw daily records until the end of the month, then sporadic sightings through August and September, with a maximum of twelve on August 18th, and the last one seen on September 25th.

CURLEW *Numenius arquata*

Small numbers breed. Also regular spring/autumn migrant, occasionally over-winters

Sightings came from every month of the year. Numbers in spring were highest from late March through to mid-April, with 16 on March 25th, 17 on April 13th and 53 (including a flock of 43 north) on April 21st being the highest counts. The breeding population enjoyed one of their best ever years, with seven pairs nesting. In autumn, passage was strongest in late August-early September, peak counts being 55 on August 26th and 33 on September 1st. However, the highest numbers of the year occurred in the last week of December, with up to 85 at that time.

SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus*

Very scarce and irregular autumn migrant, rare in spring

A good series of autumn records this year. One on August 26th was the first, then one on September 1st was the forerunner of a purple patch in early September. One stayed from the 4th-6th, possibly until the 8th, when there were two. These two stayed until the 10th, one remaining to the 13th. A minimum of three individuals were judged to have been involved.

REDSHANK *Tringa totanus*

Regular spring and autumn migrant; rare breeder and overwinters most years

Present throughout the year, with some good numbers recorded early in the year, notably 85 on January 3rd. During the spring migration, counts were highest in March and April, with 70 on March 11th and 65 on April 13th. Although one or two were recorded intermittently throughout June and early July, there were no signs of a concerted nesting attempt this year. Autumn migrants began to build up during the latter part of July, and during August-October numbers were between 20 and 60 most days. Peak counts were 80 on August 5th and 75 on October 6th. Up to 40 remained during November-December.

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*

Regular autumn migrant, scarce in spring

Spring passage comprised single birds on April 22nd, May 2nd and May 16th. In autumn, one on July 29th preceeded virtually daily records from August 18th until September 20th. These were mostly of one or two individuals but three were recorded on five dates. It is likely that a few long-staying birds were involved in this sequence of records.

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus*

Regular autumn migrant, scarce in spring

In spring, one stayed from May 2nd-4th, with possibly the same bird again on the 7th. Autumn passage was also unremarkable, with singles on July 22nd, August 16th-17th, 31st and September 13th, with three on August 20th.

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola*

Scarce migrant, spring and autumn

This species was one of several notable absentees from the spring. In autumn, a single was seen on August 18th, then two on September 9th, one of these remaining until the 17th.

COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleuca*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

Spring records were more-or-less daily from April 25th until May 29th, mostly one or two birds but six on May 16th and three on the 18th. In autumn, one to three were seen between September 3rd and 19th, with a late bird at Furse from September 24th-October 8th.

TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres*

Regular spring and autumn migrant; small numbers throughout the year

Present virtually throughout the year, with counts of 100+ recorded regularly from January until early May and from August until the year's end. Peak counts were 250 on January 17th, 350+ on February 15th, 250 on February 22nd and 230 September 25th.

ARCTIC SKUA *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Summer visitor, breeds. Passage migrant in small numbers

The first sighting was on April 10th, two were seen on the 12th, and numbers built up steadily from the 13th. The number of apparently occupied territories decreased again this year, by 6.5% to 87. The restriction of Arctic Skuas to the

periphery of the Hill breeding area was evident again. Those pairs which did nest had a reasonably successful breeding season, 65-70 chicks fledging, a productivity rate of 0.75-0.80. The last birds were seen out to sea on September 24th.

GREAT SKUA *Stercorarius skua*

Summer visitor, breeds. Passage migrant, small numbers

The first of the year was on March 24th, with daily sightings from the 29th. There was a dramatic increase in the breeding population this year, by almost 29% to 130 occupied territories: a new record for the island. Territories were recorded in areas south of the normal breeding area, on Vaasetter and Brecks o' Busta. Breeding success was also high, with an estimated minimum of 150 chicks fledging. The last sighting of the year was one north off South Light on November 3rd.

MEDITERRANEAN GULL *Larus melanocephalus*

Vagrant

On October 25th, a second-winter was observed circling over the sea off Wirvie, accompanied by approx. 25 Black-headed Gulls. This constitutes the first acceptable record for Fair Isle. Unfortunately, its stay on Fair Isle was very brief, and this very special bird was enjoyed by one observer only. What was undoubtedly the same bird was discovered at Virkie, Shetland, on the early morning of the 26th, where it stayed until the 27th.

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Larus ridibundus*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

One or two birds were recorded on a few dates in March, but then sightings were logged on most days from April 4th to early June, 28 on May 3rd being the best count. There were sporadic records during June and early July (including 12 on June 20th), with autumn movements resuming on a daily basis in mid-July. Numbers were highest in late July, with a max. of 20, and again in late October, with 52 on the 25th. Occasional sightings continued to the end of the year.

COMMON GULL *Larus canus*

Summer visitor, small numbers breed. Also, regular spring and autumn migrant

Between one and five birds were recorded virtually daily throughout the year. Spring passage was heaviest from mid-April to mid-May, maxima of 65 April 27th and 70 May 3rd. Five pairs were estimated to have attempted breeding in 1995, and at least three chicks fledged. Autumn passage was marked in late July and early August, with over 100 on eight dates, including 470 on July 31st and 620 on August 11th. Ninety on October 25th was a good count late in the autumn.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus*

Summer visitor, breeds. Also passage migrant, spring and autumn

An adult was the first of the year, rather late, on April 9th. Sightings were then daily from the 12th. There were no noteworthy counts in the autumn, though sightings were daily until early September. An adult on September 20th was the last record of the year.

HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus*

Resident, breeds. Also hard-weather migrant, autumn and winter

Present all year. There were four counts of 1000 or more storm-driven birds, the two largest being 3200 on January 31st and 4000 on February 3rd.

ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucooides*

Scarce and irregular in winter and spring

In spring, an adult was seen on March 10th, then in April there were sightings of first-winter birds on five dates between April 11th-23rd, including two on the 12th; perhaps no more than two individuals were involved. The only other record this year was a first-summer on June 8th.

GLAUCOUS GULL *Larus hyperboreus*

Scarce but regular migrant, spring, late autumn and winter

In the early part of the year, there were records of single first-winters on January 31st and March 5th, then an adult on May 7th. In autumn, an early adult was seen outside the Observatory on September 4th, then a first/second-winter on September 30th, single first-winters on October 1st and 9th and two first-winters on October 25th-26th. In December, two first-winters on the 1st, one remaining to the 2nd, an adult on the 10th and another first-winter on the 22nd. A far from outstanding year.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus*

Resident, breeds. Hard-weather movements observed in autumn and winter

Present throughout the year, with the largest counts of weather-driven birds being 1800 on January 31st, 2000 on February 3rd and 1000+ on October 25th.

KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla*

Summer visitor, breeds. Autumn passage migrant

There were regular sightings of small numbers passing the island out at sea during the winter months. Breeding birds were back on the cliffs from early March, and overwinter survival from 1994 was similar to the previous winter, with just under

80% of marked adults returning to the Goorn colony. Yet again a small decline was registered in the population, on average 5.9% at the ten monitoring sites. Breeding success was the lowest since 1991, with a mean of 0.89 chicks fledged per pair. Shortage of sandeels late in the season may be the biggest factor in this statistic, and casual observations suggest that post-fledging mortality may have been high among young birds. Seawatching revealed southward movements of up to 50 birds per hour in late September and October.

SANDWICH TERN *Sterna sandvicensis*
Irregular migrant, spring, summer and autumn

Two were reported on May 19th, with a single on June 5th.

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo*
Summer visitor, small numbers breed

The first bird of the year was seen on May 9th, and there were records most days after that. Six pairs attempted to breed on the island this year, but no fledged young were observed. The last sighting was one on August 1st, although there were records of Common/Arctic Terns on several dates in September, the last on the 26th.

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea*
Summer visitor, breeds

One on April 13th was unusually early, and indeed breeding birds did not start to arrive until six on May 3rd, increasing to 100 by the 7th and 400 by the 12th. The breeding population reached an all-time record this year, an estimated 1200 pairs nesting, 1175 of these at the Tarryfield colony. The fortunes of these birds swung to and fro: a good start saw most pairs hatch chicks, but food shortages in the early part of July caused widespread starvation, and in the end only an estimated 200 chicks fledged. Breeding birds began leaving at the end of July, and the last confirmed sighting was a first-winter in the Havens from at least September 3rd until the 9th. See entry for Common Tern also.

GUILLEMOT *Uria aalge*
Summer visitor, breeds. Also autumn passage migrant

Numbers of breeding birds again showed a decline at monitoring plots this year, the mean decrease being 14.6%. Productivity, at 0.67 chicks fledged per breeding pair, was close to the average over the past ten years. Passage of up to 50 birds/hour past the island was recorded in October.

RAZORBILL *Alca torda*
Summer visitor, breeds

Productivity at Easter Lother was measured at 0.49 chicks per breeding pair, rather lower than values recorded in recent years. Most breeding birds had left inshore

waters by the end of July, although seawatching produced sporadic records through the autumn and into the winter.

BLACK GUILLEMOT *Cephus grylle*

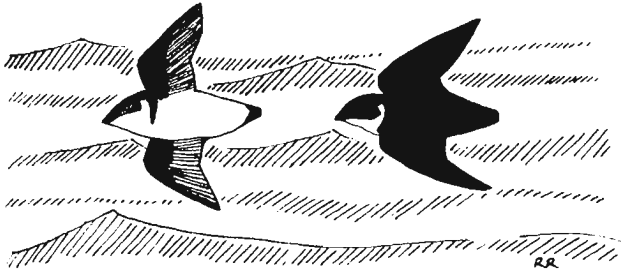
Resident, breeds. Dispersive

Two whole-island counts in April revealed a maximum of 277 adults in breeding plumage, a decrease of 8.9% on the 1994 count. However, this is probably an underestimate of the true breeding population, which was estimated to be 313 individuals, only 3.1% lower than the comparable estimate from 1994. Breeding success was improved on 1994, with 32 sites yielding 23 chicks, a productivity rate of 0.72. If data from Busta Geo (a former stronghold that seems to be being deserted rapidly) are excluded, productivity was 0.85 chicks per pair on average, slightly above the mean for the past ten years.

LITTLE AUK *Alle alle*

Regular winter visitor

There were sightings of up to three birds passing the island on four dates in late January/early February, the only records from the early part of the year. In autumn, birds were recorded between October 26th and the end of the year: the best counts were 25 in two hours on November 1st and 18 in 90 minutes on December 1st.



Little Auks

PUFFIN *Fratercula arctica*

Summer visitor, breeds

The first birds of the year were three off Lericum on April 2nd, and birds were ashore at most colonies over the following few days. Overwinter survival from 1994 was very high, with almost 90% of marked individuals returning. The whole island population was surveyed in 1995, and counts took place in late April. The final count of 17,386 individuals was corrected by means of observations at the colour-ringed population at Roskilie, to give an estimate of 42,000 breeding

individuals for the island. This is very similar to the last survey in 1989, when the overall estimate was 42, 500 individuals. Breeding success was high again this year, with 0.74 chicks fledged per occupied burrow. The overall situation for Puffins on the island would appear to be healthy at the moment. Most birds had left Fair Isle waters by mid-August. There were occasional records offshore during September and early October, with a late bird off South Light on October 24th.

ROCK DOVE *Columba livia*

Resident, breeds. Also spring and autumn migrant

The highest counts in spring and autumn were both unremarkable: 35 on April 22nd and just 20 in mid-October.

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas*

Rare spring and autumn migrant

One record only this year: one briefly near Utra on October 12th.

WOODPIGEON *Columba palumbus*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

In spring, there were records on most days from March 7th until June 6th. All counts were in single figures apart from ten on March 11th. Singles were seen on five dates from mid-June until the end of July. In contrast to the spring, autumn passage was very poor. Two on August 4th and one on August 29th-30th preceded a completely blank September. In October, there were singles on the 2nd and 14th, three on the 31st and then the last of the year on November 4th.

COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto*

Regular spring migrant, rare in autumn

Spring passage lasted from April 16th to June 27th, with records of one to five birds most days, six on May 17th and June 20th, and 13 on June 19th. As is often the case on Fair Isle, a few birds arrived in mid-July, between one and four between the 4th and 22nd. Autumn records were few and far between: singles were logged on August 23rd, September 16th and 20th.

TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur*

Scarce but regular spring and autumn migrant

Spring passage was light, one or two on several dates between May 14th and June 15th. Autumn was awful, in common with its congeners: one on July 31st and one which stayed around the Auld Haa from September 16th to October 10th.

CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus*

Regular spring migrant, scarce in autumn

Another species for which 1995 will go down as one of history's lean years. There were just two, possibly three records all year: single birds on May 24th, possibly the same on the 27th, with one on June 2nd.

LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus*

Regular autumn migrant, scarce in spring

There was only one spring record, two birds seen on May 3rd. The species was also desperately scarce in autumn, with singles on just five dates between October 10th and November 12th, and two on October 31st.

SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

After the first of the year on April 25th, there were singles on eleven dates in spring, the last on June 23rd, with two individuals recorded on May 28th. In autumn, one or two birds were seen daily from September 14th-21st, then one or two occasionally from October 2nd to November 7th, with four recorded on October 18th. A late bird was seen on December 7th.

SWIFT *Apus apus*

Regular migrant in spring, summer and autumn

A typically thin scatter of late spring/summer records this year. The first was seen on June 16th, with one to three daily on June 20th-23rd. After that, singles on five dates in July and August, with the last one reported on August 16th.

WRYNECK *Jynx torquilla*

Scarce but regular migrant, spring and autumn

After only the fourth blank spring in the history of the Observatory, there was a reasonable passage in September, with one to four birds recorded most days between the 3rd and the 19th, then a late single on October 1st.

SHORT-TOED LARK *Calandrella brachydactyla*

Rare spring and autumn migrant

A good year for this species. In spring, there was one on May 1st-2nd, then a series of daily records between May 22nd and June 1st which involved two individuals. Then in autumn, one from October 12th to the 24th, with a second bird claimed on the 16th.

SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis*

Summer visitor, breeds. Also regular spring and autumn migrant, small numbers overwinter

Small numbers, rarely more than 30, were present during the winter months. Spring passage was strongest between mid-March and mid-April, with six counts of 350 or more between March 15th and April 16th, and a maximum of 515 on April 12th. Autumn passage built up gradually through September, with almost daily counts of over 200 from September 26th-October 15th. 565 on October 8th was the highest count of the year.

SHORE LARK *Eremophila alpestris*

Spring and autumn migrant, very scarce and irregular

Five were reported flying over Barkland towards Pund on May 14th.

SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia*

Regular spring migrant, scarce in autumn

There were three April records, after the first on the 13th, then sporadic sightings of up to four during May, with the last spring record being a single on June 5th. Singles were also seen on July 16th and 20th, and then in September, one on the 10th and one on the 16th-18th.

SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*

Regular spring and autumn migrant; occasionally breeds

The first this year was on April 14th, followed by occasional records in the latter half of April, including 12 on the 22nd. Sightings were daily during the first eleven days of May, and again from the 21st, as the regular late spring passage peaked in late May/early June, with a maximum count of 40 on May 24th and 30th. Sightings continued through June, and sporadically during July, but sadly there were no real signs of breeding this year. Autumn passage was very slim, with one to three recorded occasionally from August 11th to October 3rd.

HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbica*

Regular spring migrant, scarce in autumn. Has bred

Two flying north over the Observatory on March 24th were abnormally early (the previous earliest record is April 19th!). The next sighting was not until May 2nd, and there were records through to June 25th. As for Swallow, there was an obvious increase in movement in late May/early June, with a peak count of 40 on May 30th. Occasional records continued through June to mid-July, but, like other hirundines this year, autumn proper was very poor. Five on August 16th were the only record from that month, then in September, one or two between the 7th and 17th.

RICHARD'S PIPIT *Anthus novaeseelandiae*

Scarce autumn migrant

The first of the year was reported on September 11th, followed by one seen daily from the 15th-23rd. In October, there were sightings most days from the 2nd-14th, involving a minimum of two, possibly three birds. Three were reported on the 16th. After mid-month, there was one on the 22nd-23rd and the last of the year on the 31st, staying until November 1st. A total of at least eight individuals. A large pipit seen at Quoy late in the afternoon of October 26th was either this species or Blyth's Pipit, *Anthus godlewski*.

OLIVE-BACKED PIPIT *Anthus hodgsoni*

Extremely rare autumn migrant

A most unexpected record was the first spring occurrence of this species on Fair Isle, a bird trapped at the plantation on April 24th, remaining the following day. Sadly, it was observed being taken by a female Sparrowhawk on the afternoon of the 25th. Excluding mid-winter records, this individual is only the fifth spring record for Britain. In autumn, one was discovered late in the afternoon of November 9th at the Auld Haa, but showed very well to the few remaining observers on the island before darkness fell.

Both accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

Although one was seen on April 25th, the main spring passage lasted from May 2nd until June 5th, with records most days and a peak of nine on the 28th. One to three were seen on three dates in August, the first on the 18th, but sightings were daily in September from the 2nd. The bulk of autumn migrants moved through Fair Isle mid-month, with 45 on the 10th, and 40 on the 11th-12th and the 17th. Numbers tailed off in the latter part of the month, but there continued to be records of up to three birds most days until October 16th.

PECHORA PIPIT *Anthus gustavi*

Vagrant, autumn

One was discovered in the Walli Burn/South Harbour area on September 13th, and remained faithful to this area, despite short visits to other parts of the island, until the 17th. This species has now occurred in nine of the last eleven autumns on Fair Isle.

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*

Summer visitor, breeds. Regular spring and autumn migrant

Small numbers (up to 25) were seen from mid-March, with numbers increasing in April to a peak mid-month. Counts of 250 on April 10th and 200 on the 12th were

the highest numbers during this spell, although another wave of migrants in early May saw counts of non-breeders of over 100 on several dates between May 6th and 15th. Migrants again were evident from the end of August, with peak numbers in early- to mid-September. There were nine dates when 300 or more were logged during the first three weeks of the month, with the highest count of 420 on the 6th. Numbers were generally smaller through October, but with most daily counts of more than 100 until the last week, and 400 on the 14th. Occasional stragglers occurred during November and into December.

ROCK PIPIT *Anthus petrosus*

Resident, breeds. Also spring and autumn migrant

Present all year, with the only count of the population being 120 on April 20th. Individuals showing characteristics of the Scandinavian race *A. p. littoralis* were recorded on eight dates between April 16th and May 17th, these records perhaps relating to no more than three individuals.

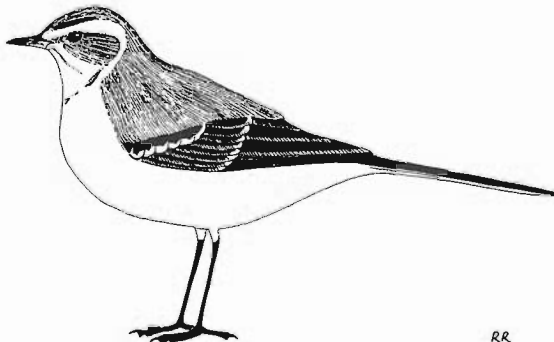
YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

Spring passage was concentrated in May, with singles on 11 dates and two on the 1st. Two late spring sightings involved singles on June 10th and 19th. Of those individuals which it was possible to assign to race (approximately two-thirds), most were the British race *M. f. flavissima*, with two records of *M. f. flava*. In autumn, records were concentrated into the period September 8th-23rd; sightings were virtually daily during this time, with a peak count of 12 on the 10th and 14th.

CITRINE WAGTAIL *Motacilla citreola*

Vagrant, autumn



Citrine Wagtail

A first-winter on the beach at South Haven on August 17th was a very early record, easily the earliest ever for Fair Isle (previous best August 27th), and the second-earliest autumn record for Britain. Another first-winter was seen briefly at Field on September 6th.

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*

Irregular spring and autumn migrant; has bred

Only one record in spring, a single on May 30th-31st. In autumn, one on September 7th and one 17th-18th. October sightings were regular throughout the month, with one or two on 14 dates and the last on the 31st.

PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba*

Regular spring and autumn migrant; occasional breeder

Pied Wagtails *M. a. yarrelli* began moving through the island in mid-March, with the first on the 10th. Passage built up steadily through April and into May, with White Wagtails *M. a. alba* slowly becoming the more common form after the first on April 12th. Numbers were greatest in mid-May, with 25 on May 13th-14th, involving 18-19 White Wagtails. Few White Wagtails were seen after the end of May, but Pied Wagtails remained through the summer with at least three pairs nesting successfully.

Migrants were evident again from mid-late August, with numbers building up steadily to peak counts in early September: 60 on the 2nd and 70 on the 10th. After a count of 50 on the 18th, numbers dwindled quickly, and there were counts of less than 15 during late September and October until the last on October 24th.

WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Resident, breeds. Also very occasional spring and autumn migrant

Present all year. The breeding population was censused by counting singing males, which indicated an estimated 34-35 pairs (similar to 1994), though possibly as many as 40 pairs.

DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis*

Regular spring and autumn migrant. Has bred

In spring, one on March 13th-16th, then two singles in mid-April before a spell of daily sightings from April 22nd-May 4th, with a maximum of 11 on May 1st. There were up to five records during the rest of May, with two long-staying individuals and the last sighting on June 2nd. For the second year in a row, autumn passage was almost non-existent, with occasional records of just one to three between September 17th and November 10th.

ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

There were regular sightings of one or two birds during the winter months at both ends of the year. The majority of spring passage was squeezed into the period between April 20th and May 10th, with 40 recorded on four dates in late April. Autumn migrants appeared from September 7th, with daily records from that date until mid-November. There were few counts of more than 20, the exceptions being 65 on on October 14th, 30 remaining the following day and 25 on the 16th.

THRUSH NIGHTINGALE *Luscinia luscinia*

Vagrant, usually spring

One was seen well along the main burn at Brunt Brae on May 25th. The first record since 1992.

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

NIGHTINGALE *Luscinia megarhynchos*

Vagrant, usually in spring

One was seen at Midway on May 10th; what was possibly a different individual was then seen at Shirva from the 15th-20th.

BLUETHROAT *Luscinia svecica*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

A reasonable spring passage this year, the first on May 17th, then almost daily records until the end of the month, increasing to a peak count of 11 on the 27th. In June, two were seen on the 3rd and one on the 17th. In autumn, a male on September 6th, one to five daily from the 13th-21st and then one from September 30th to October 11th, with two on three dates during this latter period.

BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochurus*

Regular spring migrant, scarce in autumn

A male was seen on January 5th, and three sightings in March probably relate to this overwintering individual. Spring migrants passed through in small numbers between April 5th and June 9th, mostly ones or twos and by no means daily, but with three to five on April 22nd-25th. Most autumn records relate to a very long-staying immature bird that lived around the Reevas from August 9th to October 6th; additional singles were recorded on September 7th and October 3rd. There were late records, again of single birds, on November 13th and December 5th.

REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

Spring passage was very light, with just intermittent records of one or two from April 23rd until May 31st. In contrast, the autumn was one of the very best on

record. The main movement was in September, after the first sighting on the 3rd. The first main influx was 40 on the afternoon of the 8th, the numbers logged increasing to 70 on the 9th and 85 on the 10th as the whole of the island was covered. Numbers fell to 35 by the 12th, then up to 80 as more birds arrived on the 13th. Two more quieter days followed before a count of 155 on the 16th, 100 remaining on the 17th, and 70 on the 18th. From then, numbers tailed off quickly, with daily counts of single figures until the middle of October. A late record was a single on November 7th-9th. In terms of previous autumn records, there have been two falls when 1000 were estimated (in September 1956 and September 1957), with the next best count a mere 70 in September 1980.

WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

In spring, there were records of one to three on several dates between April 24th and June 6th. As for Redstart, however, a mediocre spring was the forerunner of a good autumn. There were sightings of one or two during August, following the first autumn record on the 11th. In September, the main falls were 20 on the 3rd, 30 on the 8th-9th and then 42 on the 16th, increasing to 50 on the 17th. From this point, numbers decreased steadily but there were records of up to five most days until mid-October. There were singles on several dates until the end of October, with the last on the 31st.

STONECHAT *Saxicola torquata*

Scarce and irregular migrant, spring and autumn

There were two records of western-race birds in spring, a female on March 11th-15th and then one on April 5th. In October there were two further records: one on the 2nd-3rd and one on the 14th-15th.

An immature or female of one of the eastern races (probably *maura/stejnegeri*) frequented the Taing-Da Water area from October 14th-21st.

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

NORTHERN WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Summer visitor, breeds. Also regular spring and autumn migrant

The first spring migrant was a male on April 9th, a rather late first date, but sightings were daily after that. Most April birds seemed to move through quickly, with isolated large counts of 105 on the 13th, 100 on the 22nd-23rd and 250 on the 29th. Throughout May there were daily counts of 150-200, with three counts in excess of 200; 270 on 16th was the highest. Autumn migrants began to swell the numbers of local juveniles again from mid-August, with several counts of 200

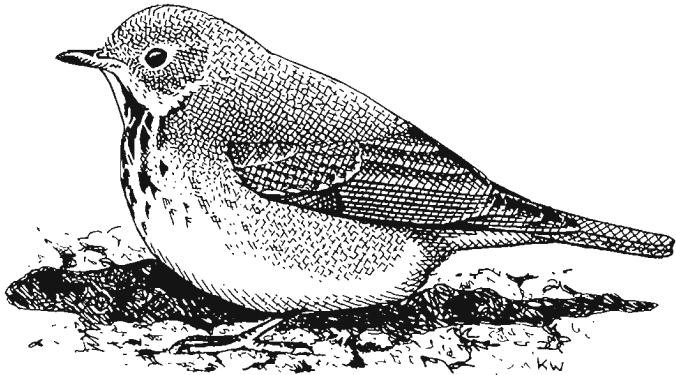
before the end of the month. The main September fall was 200+ on the 2nd-3rd, after which 145 on the 16th was the only arrival in excess of 100. Records were daily throughout October, though mostly single figure numbers, and the last one was seen on November 4th.

HERMIT THRUSH *Catharus guttatus*

Vagrant

In what was widely touted as the best autumn ever for American passerines in the U.K., Fair Isle claimed its moment of glory when, during strong westerlies, a first-winter Hermit Thrush was trapped at the Observatory on October 19th. It was light (24.7g) but seemed healthy, and was released at the plantation. It fed close by for the rest of the day, but was not present the following day. This is the second for Fair Isle (following one on June 2nd 1975, the first British record), and the fifth for Britain.

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.



Hermit Thrush

RING OUZEL *Turdus torquatus*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

Spring passage lasted from April 15th until June 6th, but most migrants were recorded between April 23rd and May 1st, when there were daily records of 5-15. Outwith this period, just occasional sightings of one to three were recorded. Autumn passage was very poor, and confined to October: with a single on the 1st, one to three daily during the 12th-16th, then two on the 31st. In December, a very late individual was seen on December 5th.

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula*

Regular spring and autumn migrant. Has bred, small numbers overwinter

Present throughout the winter period in small numbers, mostly less than 25, but with a late count of 50 on December 11th. Spring passage was very light, from the end of March until June, with a paltry 30 on March 24th being the highest count and most days seeing just single figures only. One or two remained into June, with the last on the 22nd. Two birds appeared in late July, and a male remained on the island into mid-autumn. Autumn passage was also ultimately forgettable, with just occasional singles recorded up to the end of October, when 45 on October 30th and 150 on the 31st (the highest count of the year) restored some respectability. 40-50 were seen most days in the first half of November, with numbers tailing off quickly after that.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris*

Regular spring and autumn migrant, often overwinters

Up to 25 were seen during January, February and early March. Spring passage was poor, log counts most days through April and early May being of single figures only, with an isolated count of 50 on May 1st. The last spring sighting was one on May 22nd. Autumn passage followed the trend set by Blackbird: isolated records of one to three from August 9th until the end of October, when there were 100 on the 31st. There were 20-50 most days during the first half of November, with 100 on the 15th. Then in December, 40 were present on the 6th and 70 on the 11th.

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos*

Regular spring and autumn migrant; has bred

There were occasional records of one to four from January to mid-April, then daily records of up to 14 in late April-early May. One or two were seen intermittently for the rest of May. In autumn, there were small numbers during September, never more than 15, but October was a dramatic improvement. A fall of 225 on the 1st increased to 265 on the 2nd, with 185 still present on the 3rd. Another arrival occurred on the 8th, with 195, before the largest fall of the year, 500 on the 12th. Most of these were gone the following day, but a new arrival on the 14th saw 225 on the island. Numbers gradually declined after this, with a last arrival on the 31st, of 50. Only occasional ones and twos were seen during November-December.

REDWING *Turdus iliacus*

Regular spring and autumn migrant. Has bred and sometimes overwinters

Single-figure counts were recorded more-or-less daily during January-March, but spring passage in April was markedly better than for other thrush species, with counts of 50 or more on 12 dates, and 170 on the 13th. Small numbers, mostly less than five, were present through May, with two singles in June, the last on the 12th. In autumn, there were one to three most days in September, but October brought

good numbers. 45 on the 1st was the first arrival of note, after which things went quiet until 6000 arrived overnight on the 11th-12th. Most of these moved on that day, with large flocks watched leaving the island, high to the south-east, late on the 12th. A new wave of 1500 arrived on the 14th, and numbers remained high for a few days subsequently. There were over 250 on island for the rest of the month, with a last large arrival of 1500 on the 30th, increasing to 3000 on the 31st. In November, 750 remained on the 1st, but these soon moved on, subsequent daily records of 40-200 for the rest of the month. Then in December, 20-50 were counted regularly, with 100 on the 11th.

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus*

Scarce and irregular spring and autumn migrant

In spring, one frequented the base of Malcolm's Head from April 25th-30th, with another seen near the Plantation on May 9th. In autumn, one was seen at Wester Lothar on November 4th, presumably a different bird near the Observatory on the 6th, and then one at Taft from November 17th-December 11th, joined on November 24th by a second individual. What may have been the Taft bird was seen at North Felsigeo on December 14th.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia*

Scarce spring and autumn migrant

In spring, one or two were seen most days from April 25th until May 11th, then one from May 25th-28th and the last spring record, one on June 1st. In autumn, one or two were seen most days between September 3rd and 25th, with a late one on October 2nd and a probable on the 8th.

RIVER WARBLER *Locustella fluviatilis*

Vagrant

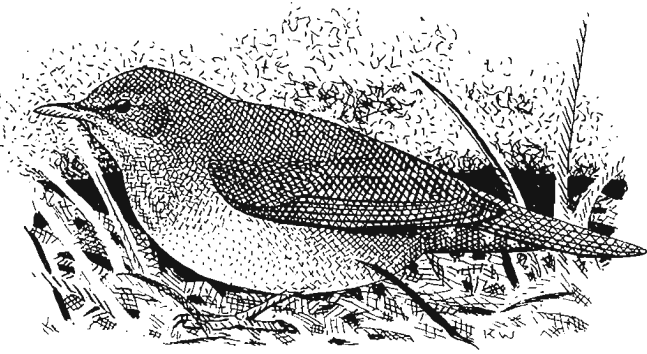
One was discovered at the eastern end of Bull's Park on the morning of May 27th, and delighted many observers with its approachability. It was not seen that afternoon. This is the 8th record for Fair Isle, the eight records now being equally split between spring and autumn.

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Regular spring migrant, scarce in autumn

In spring, there were regular sightings of between one and four birds from May 4th until June 13th. In autumn, an adult on August 2nd was the only record that month. In September, records were almost daily from the 8th to the 22nd, with a peak of 12 on the 17th. After that, one last sighting, a single bird on October 7th.



River Warbler

PADDYFIELD WARBLER *Acrocephalus agricola*

Vagrant

Recorded for the fourth year in succession, a first-winter was discovered at North Leogh on September 9th, moving to a large oat crop at Pund the following day and remaining here until the 17th. It was trapped and ringed on the 11th. This is the 11th record for Fair Isle, the eighth in autumn.

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

MARSH WARBLER *Acrocephalus palustris*

Rare spring migrant, has occurred in autumn

A good series of spring records, with 7 individuals involved. Two arrived on May 27th, one remaining until the 28th, the other to the 30th. A singing male at Barkland on the 31st remained until June 3rd, then three new birds arrived on June 5th. One of these stayed until the 10th, whilst the last individual of this good spell arrived on the 13th. In mid-July, one on 10th-11th was a mid-summer rather than spring record. Finally, one was seen at Easter Lothar on September 9th.

REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Rare spring migrant, scarce in autumn

In spring, just three records of single birds: on May 28th, June 3rd and June 12th-14th. Autumn was a great improvement, and after a short spell in mid-August, when one to three birds were recorded most days from the 11th-17th, records were daily in September from 8th-25th. Most counts were in single figures, except the peak count of 11 on the 10th. The last record was one on September 30th

GREAT REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*

Vagrant

A tail-less individual was discovered during the afternoon of September 30th in the crop at Quoy; it spent the afternoon alternating between here and Springfield, but was not present the following day. This is the 10th record for Fair Isle, and the first in autumn.

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

OLIVACEOUS WARBLER *Hippolais pallida*

Vagrant

A first-summer was trapped at the plantation in the early morning of June 5th: it was released back at the plantation after ringing and remained here, scarcely ever leaving the immediate environs of the plantation, until June 13th. This is the first record for Fair Isle and Shetland, and at the time of writing is considered to be the 13th for Britain. See *Birding World* 8(6) 218-220.

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

ICTERINE WARBLER *Hippolais icterina*

Scarce spring migrant, irregular in autumn

In spring, one at Midway from May 30th-June 2nd, then a late record of one at the Plantation (accompanying an Arctic Warbler!) on June 27th. In autumn, one on August 18th, one from September 6th-9th, with two on September 7th, and finally one from September 14th-17th.

SUBALPINE WARBLER *Sylvia cantillans*

Extremely rare spring migrant

Recorded for the fourth spring in a row, two individuals were seen in 1995. A first-summer male was at North Shirva briefly, late in the afternoon of May 27th, then a female at Lower Stonybreck on June 13th moved to Shirva and spent the rest of the day there.

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

BARRED WARBLER *Sylvia nisoria*

Regular autumn migrant

A good autumn passage, recorded most days between August 11th and September 16th, with an estimated 22 individuals involved. The peak count was six on August 26th.

LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

Spring passage commenced on May 8th, with records until June 14th. Most were seen at the end of May, however, with daily records at that time, and a maximum of six on

May 24th and 28th. In autumn, there were daily records for the whole of September, after two on September 1st, with peak counts of 13 on the 9th and 12 on the 16th. One or two were recorded on five dates in October, with the last on the 29th.

WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis*

Regular spring migrant, scarce in autumn

Following an early first record on April 23rd, all other sightings in spring fell between May 1st and June 8th. Records were slightly more frequent than Lesser Whitethroat, but with a maximum count of only four, on three dates in late May. In autumn, there were singles on August 11th and 14th, then virtually daily records through September, with arrivals of 12-13 on the 8th-9th, 14-15 on the 13th-14th and 15 again on the 16th. One or two were recorded most days in late September and early October, with an exceptionally late record, a first-winter from October 30th-November 1st, the latest ever record for Fair Isle.

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

A very poor spring passage, concentrated into the period from May 17th-June 6th. There were daily sightings at the end of May and in early June, but numbers were small, with a maximum of just six on May 31st. Autumn migrants arrived in much better numbers. Ones and twos were recorded occasionally throughout August, then in September, the main arrivals were 10 on the 2nd-3rd, 65 on the 9th, 45 on the 14th and 40 on the 16th. Sightings were then occasional during late September and early October, with two late singles on November 4th and 8th.

BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

In spring, logged regularly from April 30th until June 8th, but in very small numbers: four on May 31st was the highest count. In mid-summer, a female was a surprise record on July 9th. Autumn migrants were seen most days during September and October, the extreme dates being September 2nd and November 13th. Twenty or more were recorded on nine dates in September, with 35 on the 19th the peak count; the highest count of the year was reserved for October, however, with 40 on the 30th. A lingering male remained for at least the early part of the winter, with sightings in late November, and on December 4th.

GREENISH WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochiloides*

Vagrant, mostly autumn

There were three autumn records, the first since 1992. A first-winter was trapped at the plantation on September 7th, one was at Shirva on September 9th and the last was watched in Kirki Geo, South Harbour, on September 18th.

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

ARCTIC WARBLER *Phylloscopus borealis*

Very rare autumn migrant

Matching its close relative, the Greenish Warbler, blow by blow, there were three records this year. One trapped at the Plantation on June 27th is (depending on how one defines 'spring' and 'autumn') potentially the first spring record for Britain. It is certainly the earliest ever record, beating one trapped on Fair Isle on July 3rd, 1982. In autumn, a first-winter was at Field on September 2nd, trapped at the plantation the following morning, with a third individual between Kenaby and Quoy on September 14th.

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Scarce autumn migrant

In September, there were two very discrete and short-lived arrivals, with four on the 18th and seven on the 30th, one of the seven remaining until October 2nd. Apart from that, a single on October 14th-16th was joined by two more on its last day.

WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Scarce spring and autumn migrant

Along with Wood Sandpiper and Wryneck, this species was another notable omission from the spring. In autumn, one on August 11th and two on the 17th preceeded records on twelve dates in September, the last on the 19th. Most day totals were of one or two individuals, with the notable exception of September 14th when seven equalled the autumn record for Fair Isle.

CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

An early bird arrived on April 1st, but most spring migrants passed through from mid-April to early June. Numbers were greatest at the end of April, with five counts of ten or more, and 15 on the 28th-29th. A smaller peak occurred at the end of May, with a maximum of six on the 24th. One individual summered again this year, living happily in the Observatory garden, and was joined briefly by a second on July 22nd-23rd. Autumn passage was a great disappointment, with just one or two recorded most days between August 3rd and November 15th. Three were recorded on six dates in October /November, and four on October 13th.

WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

Spring passage was light, and rather evenly spread from April 13th until June 20th. There were few counts in excess of five, with the peak of seven achieved on three

dates in May. Autumn passage was one of the highlights of the year, daily records from mid-August to late September after the first on August 4th. Fifteen was the peak count in August (on the 18th), but major arrivals in September were 60 on the 2nd-3rd, 180 on the 8th-9th, with 150 remaining on the 10th, and finally 115 on the 16th. Numbers were down to single figures by the last quarter of the month, with one on October 2nd the last of the year.

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

In spring, recorded intermittently from April 5th until May 10th, mostly in small numbers but with 25 on April 28th. Autumn passage stretched from August 31st to November 19th, the main arrivals being 20 on September 18th, 125 on October 14th and 45 on October 31st.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata*

Regular spring migrant, scarce in autumn

Spring passage was short and unremarkable, with one to five birds recorded most days from May 19th to June 7th, and then a late single on June 27th. In autumn, one on August 19th, then a series of daily records in early- to mid-September, with peaks of 22 on the 10th and 26 on the 16th. A late record concerned a single at Easter Lothar on October 8th-9th.

RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula parva*

Very scarce autumn migrant, rare and irregular in spring

In spring, one on May 27th, with a second on May 29th-30th. The autumn passage was reasonably good, with five birds recorded: September 10th, 13th and 30th, and then October 2nd-3rd and 10th-11th.

PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

Scarce in spring, with one May 17th-18th, then singles each day May 31st-June 4th, with two on the 6th, and a late male on June 20th. In autumn, one on August 4th and two on the 12th preceded daily records of up to six from the 17th-24th. In September, records were daily for the first three weeks, with peaks of 12 on the 3rd, 20 on the 10th, 18 on the 14th and 25 on the 16th. A single on October 3rd-4th was the last record of the year.

RED-BACKED SHRIKE *Lanius collurio*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

Spring passage was very short-lived, with one to three birds daily from May 23rd-28th, and a single on the 30th. Two males and two or three females were involved.

Autumn passage also failed to break records, with just two long-staying individuals: one from September 8th-16th, and one October 1st-3rd, presumed the same on 6th-8th.

GREAT GREY SHRIKE *Lanius excubitor*

Irregular spring and autumn migrant

In spring, one was seen briefly at Barkland on April 25th. In autumn, one at the Reeves on October 31st moved to the Gilsetter/Plantation area on November 1st-2nd. A second individual of the autumn frequented Lower Station on November 4th-5th.

JACKDAW *Corvus monedula*

Irregular spring and autumn migrant

In spring, three on March 17th, then one or two daily from May 4th-10th. There was only one autumn record, two birds on October 28th-29th.

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus*

Scarce spring migrant, irregular in autumn

In spring, singles were seen on March 15th and 17th, and on three dates in April. Eleven on April 28th was easily the best day of the spring. In May, one or two were seen most days between the 4th and 10th. There were daily records of between two and nine in late October (from the 22nd) and early November; three remained from at least November 3rd-12th, with one of these staying until December 25th.

CARRION CROW *Corvus corone*

Resident, breeds (*C. c. cornix*); also spring and autumn passage migrant (*C. c. corone*)

Hooded Crows *C. c. cornix* were present all year, with few migrants noted as such. Up to four in early May were probably passage birds, since they fed in a flock with Jackdaws, Rooks and Carrion Crows.

Carrion Crows *C. c. corone* were recorded in spring between April 7th and June 2nd. Single figure numbers were seen most days, but 10-16 logged daily on May 2nd-7th, and 13 on May 17th. Two were seen on July 7th, then occasional records of one or two from September 12th to October 23rd.

RAVEN *Corvus corax*

Resident, breeds. Also, irregular migrant, spring and autumn

Present all year. The only counts were 12 on April 8th, and seven on September 24th; all of the latter flock were deemed to be migrants.

STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris*

Resident, breeds. Also regular spring and autumn migrant

Present all year, with flocks of up to 150 noted in the winter months. There was an obvious spring passage in late March (with peak counts of 700 on the 24th and 550 on the 29th) and to a lesser extent in April, with 390 on the 9th and 585 on the 19th. Few large flocks were recorded in autumn.

During the nesting season, 85 nests were monitored to record breeding success and other parameters. The 1995 season was later than normal, with the median hatching date of first broods being May 27th (typically this is around May 22nd). Mean clutch size was 4.5 eggs, with reasonably good hatching success leading to a mean brood size of 3.4 chicks, both values being roughly average for the Fair Isle population.

ROSE-COLOURED STARLING *Sturnus roseus*

Vagrant

There were two records this year, approximately the 27th and 28th for the island. An adult, probably a male, was seen near the plantation on the early trapround of July 16th, and remained on the island until September 1st. Although very mobile during the early part of its stay, it usually roosted with Starlings at Swartz Geo, and during August, it was very faithful to the Shirva area and the Houll. Then in September, a juvenile was found near the Chapel on the 8th, and was seen at various sites on the island until the 16th.

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus*

Resident, breeds

Present all year. Two attempts to count the breeding population in April yielded 125 on the 17th and 105 on the 18th.

CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

An early male was seen on April 2nd, but the rest of the spring passage occurred between April 13th and June 5th, with sightings of one to three birds most days. In autumn, sightings from September 18th again involved small numbers seen most days, but in mid-October, 25 were present on 13th-14th, increasing to 35 on the 15th. Numbers then declined gradually until the end of October. In November, between two and eight were seen daily for the first two weeks, with a long-staying male remaining around the Observatory from then until December 11th.

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

In spring, the extreme dates of passage were April 15th and May 20th, with sightings of up to ten most days and a marked peak at the end of April. Fifteen on the

22nd preceded a count of 45 on the 23rd, that number declining gradually until other arrivals occurred, 26 on the 29th and 35 on May 1st. Autumn passage lasted from September 12th until November 15th. Again small numbers were seen most days, with increased movement in early October: 45 on the 2nd, 32 on the 14th and 35 on the 16th being the main arrivals. A late female was seen at Quoy on December 11th.

GREENFINCH *Carduelis chloris*

Scarce migrant, spring and autumn

There was a marked spring passage, with almost daily sightings of one to four birds, from April 15th until June 10th, and six on April 20th. Singles were seen on four dates in mid- to late-June, the last on the 27th. Autumn passage was very poor by comparison, with two to three between October 7th and 12th, and one to two November 5th-7th.

GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis*

Very rare spring and autumn migrant

Recorded for the fifth spring in succession, with a single from May 3rd-7th.

SISKIN *Carduelis spinus*

Regular autumn migrant, scarce in spring

In spring, records of up to five birds most days from April 23rd until May 17th, with later singles on May 22nd and June 30th. In autumn, one September 19th-20th, preceding the main passage in mid-October. Sightings were almost daily from October 7th to November 10th, with numbers building up gradually mid-month; 45-50 were logged each day from October 13th-19th, with 90 on the 16th. Late singles were recorded on three dates after November 10th, the last on November 25th.

LINNET *Carduelis cannabina*

Regular spring migrant, irregular in autumn

A very poor spring (with single males on April 23rd and May 24th and a female on May 25th-26th) paved the way for a record-breaking autumn passage. One was seen on September 19th, but 60 arrived on October 7th. This alone easily broke the existing record (of 45 in October 1985), but after recording 43 on October 8th, more birds arrived: 73 on the 9th and 100 on the 10th. Numbers declined quickly after the 10th, with three on the 15th being the last record of that spell. Later in the autumn, there was one on October 26th-27th, and three on November 6th.

TWITE *Carduelis flavirostris*

Summer visitor, breeds. Small numbers overwinter

Present throughout the year, with most counts in the winter months being less than 30. Numbers built up through April, with most counts in May being 70-90, 105 on

May 23rd being the spring peak. In autumn, numbers were highest in September, when the population of young birds from the island was swelled by migrants. There were five counts of 250 or more, with a maximum 400 on the 27th.

REDPOLL *Carduelis flammea*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

In spring, there were intermittent records of one to three birds from May 3rd until June 9th. The vast majority of these were Mealy Redpolls, *C. f. flammea*. In autumn, one on August 9th, then one from August 27th to September 5th, joined on this last date by a second. Both of these were trapped and proved to be of north-western origin (*islandica/rostrata*). Occasional records of one or two Mealties continued through September and October, but November witnessed a major arrival of Mealy Redpolls, enjoyed on all the northern isles, and to a lesser extent throughout the whole of Britain. The first main arrival on Fair Isle was 45 on November 4th, with further arrivals mid-month, and minimum counts of 25 on the 13th and 33 on the 15th. There were few records for the rest of November, with most counts in single figures, but another large arrival occurred in the first week of December, with 38 on the 8th the highest count here. Small numbers remained into mid-December. An estimated minimum of 200 passed through in November-December.

ARCTIC REDPOLL *Carduelis hornemanni*

Very rare autumn migrant; has occurred mid-winter and spring

Associated with the arrival of Mealy Redpolls documented above, there were inevitably records of Arctic Redpolls. Fair Isle recorded at least four: a first-winter male trapped on Ward Hill on November 4th was present until the 10th, an adult male at Taft then Schoolton on November 11th-13th, then singles on December 5th (on the airstrip) and at Field on December 10th. The individual trapped was of the race *exilipes*; the other three were almost certainly of this race too.

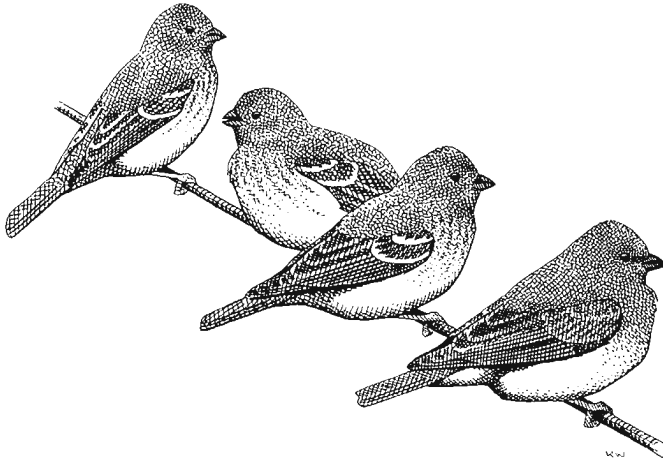
Individual of November 4th-10th under consideration by British Birds Rarities Committee; others accepted.

COMMON ROSEFINCH *Carpodacus erithrynus*

Scarce but regular spring and autumn migrant

The spring passage this year broke all previous records. An early sighting on May 4th, presumed the same on May 7th-11th, was the forerunner of an amazing spell in late May-early June. Two to five were seen daily from May 24th-30th, but an estimated 17 (including two red males) were present on the 31st. Seven remained on June 1st, and daily sightings continued until the 11th. Late records were two on June 19th and one on June 21st. Thus 1995 saw the earliest spring sighting (beating the previous record of May 8th) and the highest daily total (previous best 12 in

1992). In autumn, there were two individuals in mid-August (the first on the 12th) then one to four daily from August 29th until September 10th. One from September 14th-16th was the last of the year.



Common Rosefinches

BULLFINCH *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Irregular spring and autumn migrant

There were four sightings of a male in January and February, and this may have been the same as one seen on the cliffs at Finniquoy between April 26th and May 12th. In autumn, a female was seen around the Houll between November 15th and 28th.

HAWFINCH *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Very rare spring migrant

One was seen at Pund on the morning of April 22nd, then later, flying over the Observatory.

LAPLAND BUNTING *Calcarius lapponicus*

Regular autumn migrant, scarce in spring

In spring, one to three were seen occasionally from April 13th to May 24th. Autumn passage witnessed virtually daily records from August 27th to October 21st. There were seven counts of eight or nine in mid-September, the highest numbers of the year.

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Regular spring and autumn migrant; often overwinters

Present throughout January, February and early March, with numbers seldom exceeding 20. There was a light passage in April, mostly of less than ten birds per day, but 38 on the 19th increased to 52 on the 20th, and 20 on the 27th increased to 26 on the 29th, with the last spring record on May 4th. In autumn, the first occurred on September 14th, and numbers slowly increased: 45 on October 29th was the peak count for that month. Larger numbers were seen in November, with 80 on the 3rd, 80 on the 9th increasing to 185 on the 10th, then 130 on November 23rd. A large flock, of 80-105, remained in the south part of the island, well into December, though dwindling to 60 after mid-December.

PINE BUNTING *Emberiza leucocephalos*

Vagrant

A male discovered at Lower Stonybreck on October 29th was seen well when it moved to Midway, and clearly had yellow edges to the base of the primaries. Such individuals are thought to indicate hybrid (i.e. Pine Bunting/Yellowhammer) parentage. This bird was present the following day, October 30th. See Birding World 8 (11) 430-431.

Under consideration by British Birds Rarities Committee.

YELLOWHAMMER *Emberiza citrinella*

Irregular spring and autumn migrant

In spring, one from April 5th-10th, with further singles on the 13th and 25th. In autumn, there were three records of single birds, all from October: on the 14th, 16th and 20th.

ORTOLAN BUNTING *Emberiza hortulana*

Irregular spring and autumn migrant

Just one spring record this year, a male seen briefly at Leogh on May 1st. In autumn, there was an excellent series of records, the best for some years. There were daily sightings from September 6th-18th, with four or five each day between 9th and 14th and a peak of seven on the 13th. In addition, one was seen near the plantation on October 13th, and the latest ever record for Fair Isle was one at Field on October 26th-27th.

RUSTIC BUNTING *Emberiza rustica*

Very rare spring and autumn migrant

In spring, one on the cliffs at Easter Lothar on May 29th, preceded three days of multiple sightings. On the 30th, the original bird was still present, now in the south of the island, and joined by a second individual, which stayed until June 1st. A third was seen on May 31st-June 1st. In autumn, two more records, one on October

2nd-4th visited a number of the southern crofts, then finally one at Dumlin's Sink on October 8th-10th. Second only to 1993 for number of records during the last 15 years.



Rustic Bunting

LITTLE BUNTING *Emberiza pusilla*

Scarce and irregular autumn migrant; vagrant in spring

No spring records, but an excellent series in autumn, with eight different individuals seen. One on September 9th-10th was the first, then followed daily records of one to three birds from September 13th-17th. In October, the fifth individual of the autumn was recorded on the 6th, with two together at Setter on the 11th. Finally one was trapped at the plantation late on the 29th, roosted overnight and released the following morning.

YELLOW-BREASTED BUNTING *Emberiza aureola*

Very rare autumn migrant

Four autumn records, another species of bunting which enjoyed a good year in 1995. One at Leogh on September 6th was followed by two on September 8th, one at Upper Stoneybreck and one at Shirva, the latter staying until the 10th. It was joined on the 10th by a fourth individual, initially at the Auld Haa, which remained until the 19th.

Accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Regular spring and autumn migrant

Sightings of one on January 19th, March 6th and 9th may relate to a single, overwintering individual. Spring passage lasted from April 4th until May 29th, with sightings of one to four birds most days, and six on May 10th, increasing to seven on May 11th. Autumn passage was almost solely in October, with almost daily sightings for the first three weeks and a maximum of 15 on the 15th. Late singles were seen on October 31st and November 5th.

Update of British Birds Rarities Committee Decisions

1993

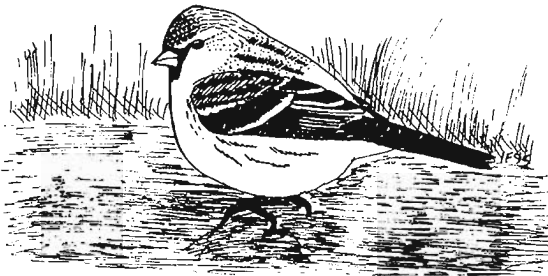
Blyth's Pipit	October 31st-November 4th	Accepted
Lanceolated Warbler	September 17th (Lower Leogh)	Under consideration

1994

Pechora Pipit	September 25th	Accepted
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1995

Black-eared Wheatear	September 14th	Under consideration
Serin	September 3rd	Under consideration (Scottish Birds Rarities Committee)



Arctic Redpoll

The 1993 Blyth's Pipit is the first record from Fair Isle to be accepted by BBRC. One on October 13th-22nd 1988 is still under consideration.

Species Descriptions

Two species were recorded in 1995 that were new to Fair Isle, Olivaceous Warbler and Mediterranean Gull. An account of the Olivaceous Warbler was published in *Birding World* (Vol 8, 1995, pp 218-220) and the description was considered (and accepted) by the British Birds Rarities Committee. Since the other newcomer to the Isle, Mediterranean Gull is not a UK or Scottish rarity, an account of the sighting is presented below, together with a description of the bird.

Mediterranean Gull

October 25th, 1995. Severe S/SE gales overnight, and remaining windy through the day (F6-7+), veering SSW later. Bright and sunny during the morning.

Walking north from the Observatory after breakfast, I discovered many birds holed up on the sea in the Furse area, mostly Eiders, with a few each of Long-tailed Duck, Wigeon and Teal, plus a number of 'small' gulls. Further north, in Wirvie Geo, there was a mixed group of Common and Black headed Gulls, which I started to count. Twenty-three Black-headed Gulls! A good number and worth checking again. As I did so the gulls took off, flew out of the geo and split into two groups, some returning, some remaining airborne.

It was then that I noticed a gull coming down the cliff line from the north. It seemed different in that it lacked any obvious wing pattern (obvious on the other gulls when viewed head-on). I reckoned it to be a small- to medium-sized gull, and kept watching. It turned and started to go back the way it had just come . . . at which point, a few choice words seemed to do the trick! Each time the bird turned I saw small black subterminal spots on the longest primaries, the wings themselves looking almost white in the strong sunlight. The legs were noted as reddish at this point. It was then that I realised it was a Mediterranean Gull, although at this time I was unaware of the fact that it was a first for Fair Isle! I watched the bird come closer and I started to look for the other relevant features. The tail was unmarked, the bill heavy (deep) and appeared all dark (colour and pattern not visible). The head pattern was also good for Mediterranean: dark back from the eye and streaking forming a band over the crown. I made a quick sketch of what I had seen and looked at the bird once more before I left to get the others at the Observatory. It could only have taken 15 minutes to return but we didn't see the bird again despite a thorough search all that day and early the next morning.

Plumage details.

Upperparts Very pale grey, almost white in the strong sunlight.

Underparts White.

Head White with dark patches from eye back, looking uniform brown (darkness difficult to tell). This changed to a streaked band across the top of the head.

Wings Upper/underside as body colours. Appeared almost translucent in the strong sun, this showed off the black subterminal marks really well. There was also more black up the leading edge of the wing.

Tail White.

Bare parts Bill all-dark, eye dark, feet and legs reddish. Bill deeper than both Common and Black headed Gulls around, almost of uniform thickness down its length.

In general bigger than Black headed Gull and appeared rounder winged than either Common or Black headed Gull and much paler than either.

Ian Barton

Postscript. What was almost certainly the same individual was found during the early morning of October 26th at Virkie, Shetland. Due to the intensity of the search on Fair Isle, it seems likely to have left the island soon after being found, with the strong southerly winds assisting its passage to Shetland. Here it stayed for two days to become the third Shetland record.

RINGING REPORT

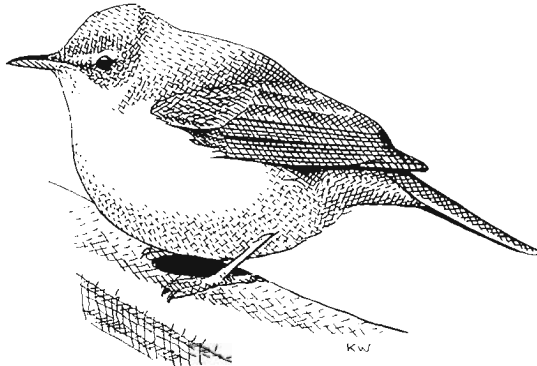
A total of 7421 birds, of 90 species were ringed in 1995. As usual, seabirds formed a large part of the ringing work of the Observatory, with six species accounting for almost 57% of the total, as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. The ten most commonly ringed species, with totals, on Fair Isle in 1995; 1994 totals in parentheses.

Storm Petrel	1152	(1851)
Arctic Tern	1138	(458)
Guillemot	977	(722)
Starling	572	(279)
Shag	410	(468)
Razorbill	293	(320)
Redwing	262	(128)
Great Black-backed Gull	230	(185)
Meadow Pipit	205	(175)
Northern Wheatear	194	(138)

Two new species were ringed by the Observatory in 1995, Hermit Thrush and Olivaceous Warbler. The Hermit Thrush has the added distinction of being the first individual of this species to be ringed in Britain. Record totals for two species of seabird were achieved in 1995; for Great Skua, 164 beating the previous best of 151 in 1994, and for Great Black-backed Gull, 230 bettering the 210 ringed in 1992. In addition, records were broken for Woodpigeon (5) and Pied Wagtail (45). As well as the two new species, other rarely-ringed species for FIBO were Olive-backed Pipit (the 9th) and Paddyfield Warbler, the 7th, but ringed for the third consecutive year.

For the second year in succession, it is pleasing to report that the traps survived the winter relatively unscathed, with only minor patching work required in the spring. Trap improvement this year focused on the Observatory trap, where a new stock-proof fence was erected, move cover planted and a stone dyke constructed, leading into the mouth of the trap. These various improvements were richly rewarded on October 19th when the Hermit Thrush chose to shelter in the Obs. trap!



Olivaceous Warbler

Table 2. Numbers of birds ringed and recovered/controlled on Fair Isle in 1995, together with cumulative totals from 1948.

<i>Species</i>	<i>Ringed as:</i>		<i>Total</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Recovered/Controlled</i>	
	<i>Juv/Ad</i>	<i>Pullus</i>	<i>1995</i>	<i>1948-95</i>	<i>1995</i>	<i>1948-95</i>
Little Grebe	–	–	–	10	–	–
Great Crested Grebe	–	–	–	1	–	–
Red-necked Grebe	–	–	–	1	–	–
Slavonian Grebe	–	–	–	3	–	–
Fulmar	2	129	131	15443	4	144
Storm Petrel	1152	–	1152	21542	63	828
Leach's Petrel	1	–	1	41	–	1
Gannet	–	18	18	267	–	5
Cormorant	–	–	–	7	–	–
Shag	30	380	410	19677	7	505
Grey Heron	–	–	–	20	–	–
Whooper Swan	–	–	–	33	–	6
Bean Goose	–	–	–	1	–	–
Pink-footed Goose	–	–	–	11	–	1
White-fronted Goose	–	–	–	3	–	1
Greylag Goose	–	–	–	20	–	7
Barnacle Goose	–	–	–	3	–	–
Shelduck	–	–	–	4	–	–
Wigeon	–	–	–	16	–	1
Teal	–	–	–	45	–	2
Mallard	–	–	–	12	–	1
Pintail	–	–	–	1	–	1
Shoveler	–	–	–	1	–	–
Pochard	–	–	–	3	–	–
Ring-necked Duck	–	–	–	1	–	–
Tufted Duck	–	–	–	15	–	15
Scaup	–	–	–	4	–	–
Eider	–	–	–	138	–	1
Long-tailed Duck	–	–	–	15	–	1
Velvet Scoter	–	–	–	2	–	–
Goldeneye	–	–	–	17	–	1
Red-breasted Merganser	–	–	–	3	–	–
Goosander	–	–	–	3	–	1
Marsh Harrier	–	–	–	1	–	–
Hen Harrier	–	–	–	2	–	–
Goshawk	–	–	–	1	–	–
Sparrowhawk	11	–	11	290	–	18
Red-footed Falcon	–	–	–	1	–	–
Kestrel	–	–	–	45	–	8

<i>Species</i>	<i>Ringed as:</i>		<i>Total</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Recovered/Controlled</i>	
	<i>Juv/Ad</i>	<i>Pullus</i>	<i>1995</i>	<i>1948-95</i>	<i>1995</i>	<i>1948-95</i>
Merlin	2	—	2	177	—	11
Peregrine	—	—	—	6	—	1
Quail	—	—	—	7	—	—
Water Rail	11	—	11	286	—	3
Spotted Crane	—	—	—	17	—	—
Little Crane	—	—	—	1	—	—
Baillon's Crane	—	—	—	1	—	—
Corncrake	—	—	—	38	—	2
Moorhen	—	—	—	90	—	3
Coot	—	—	—	14	—	1
Great Bustard	—	—	—	1	—	—
Oystercatcher	—	13	13	1349	1	66
Little Ringed Plover	—	—	—	1	—	—
Ringed Plover	—	5	5	553	—	6
Dotterel	—	—	—	4	—	—
Eurasian Golden Plover	—	—	—	20	—	—
Grey Plover	—	—	—	1	—	—
Lapwing	—	6	6	301	—	6
Knot	—	—	—	89	—	2
Sanderling	—	—	—	90	—	—
Western Sandpiper	—	—	—	1	—	—
Little Stint	1	—	1	74	—	—
Temminck's Stint	—	—	—	2	—	—
White-rumped Sandpiper	—	—	—	1	—	—
Baird's Sandpiper	—	—	—	1	—	—
Pectoral Sandpiper	—	—	—	5	—	—
Curlew Sandpiper	—	—	—	5	—	—
Purple Sandpiper	—	—	—	151	—	1
Dunlin	1	—	1	496	—	7
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	—	—	—	1	—	—
Ruff	—	—	—	33	—	1
Jack Snipe	—	—	—	122	—	3
Snipe	9	8	17	383	—	4
Great Snipe	—	—	—	1	—	—
Woodcock	7	—	7	363	—	19
Black-tailed Godwit	—	—	—	1	—	—
Bar-tailed Godwit	—	—	—	9	—	2
Whimbrel	—	—	—	15	—	—
Curlew	—	4	4	117	—	5
Spotted Redshank	—	—	—	3	—	—
Redshank	1	—	1	246	—	2

<i>Species</i>	<i>Ringed as:</i>		<i>Total</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Recovered/Controlled</i>	
	<i>Juv/Ad</i>	<i>Pullus</i>	<i>1995</i>	<i>1948-95</i>	<i>1995</i>	<i>1948-95</i>
Greenshank	–	–	–	9	–	–
Green Sandpiper	–	–	–	55	–	1
Wood Sandpiper	–	–	–	17	–	–
Common Sandpiper	1	–	1	49	–	1
Turnstone	–	–	–	72	–	–
Red-necked Phalarope	–	–	–	6	–	–
Grey Phalarope	–	–	–	3	–	–
Pomarine Skua	–	–	–	1	–	–
Arctic Skua	–	50	50	3499	–	65
Great Skua	–	164	164	1624	–	25
Black-headed Gull	–	–	–	45	–	1
Common Gull	–	–	–	181	–	3
Lesser Black-backed Gull	–	5	5	1358	–	30
Herring Gull	–	23	23	4050	3	93
Iceland Gull	–	–	–	1	–	–
Glaucous Gull	–	–	–	35	–	1
Great Black-backed Gull	–	230	230	2656	1	92
Kittiwake	19	91	110	6182	4	35
Common Tern	–	–	–	463	–	3
Arctic Tern	–	1138	1138	5536	2	19
Guillemot	149	828	977	23958	14	787
Razorbill	52	241	293	6866	10	181
Black Guillemot	2	20	22	1553	–	19
Little Auk	–	–	–	9	–	–
Puffin	77	111	188	11622	–	29
Rock Dove	–	–	–	25	–	–
Woodpigeon	5	–	5	61	–	2
Collared Dove	10	–	10	238	–	3
Turtle Dove	1	–	1	70	–	2
Cuckoo	–	–	–	99	–	1
Snowy Owl	–	–	–	1	–	1
Long-eared Owl	–	–	–	215	1	13
Short-eared Owl	–	–	–	17	–	–
Nightjar	–	–	–	4	–	–
Swift	–	–	–	17	–	1
Hoopoe	–	–	–	3	–	–
Wryneck	1	–	1	198	–	–
Great Spotted Woodpecker	–	–	–	25	–	–
Short-toed Lark	–	–	–	7	–	–
Woodlark	–	–	–	2	–	–
Sskylark	1	6	7	802	–	3

<i>Species</i>	<i>Ringed as:</i>		<i>Total</i> <i>1995</i>	<i>Total</i> <i>1948-95</i>	<i>Recovered/Controlled</i>	
	<i>Juv/Ad</i>	<i>Pullus</i>			<i>1995</i>	<i>1948-95</i>
Shorelark	–	–	–	5	–	–
Sand Martin	–	–	–	8	–	–
Swallow	–	–	–	239	–	2
House Martin	–	–	–	140	–	1
Richard's Pipit	–	–	–	10	–	–
Blyth's Pipit	–	–	–	1	–	–
Tawny Pipit	–	–	–	3	–	–
Olive-backed Pipit	1	–	1	9	–	–
Tree Pipit	10	–	10	605	–	–
Pechora Pipit	–	–	–	9	–	–
Meadow Pipit	139	66	205	9099	–	45
Red-throated Pipit	–	–	–	7	–	–
Rock Pipit	114	5	119	8818	–	29
Yellow Wagtail	–	–	–	10	–	–
Citrine Wagtail	–	–	–	5	–	–
Grey Wagtail	2	–	2	28	–	1
Pied Wagtail	40	5	45	622	–	4
Waxwing	–	–	–	36	–	–
Dipper	–	–	–	13	–	–
Wren	16	–	16	726	–	–
Dunnock	10	–	10	2135	–	6
Robin	121	–	121	7454	1	36
Thrush Nightingale	–	–	–	24	–	–
Nightingale	1	–	1	27	–	–
Siberian Rubythroat	–	–	–	1	–	–
Bluethroat	3	–	3	244	–	2
Red-flanked Bluetail	–	–	–	2	–	–
Black Redstart	–	–	–	138	–	–
Redstart	40	–	40	1643	–	1
Whinchat	6	–	6	567	–	2
Stonechat	–	–	–	54	–	–
Northern Wheatear	175	19	194	15431	–	72
Pied Wheatear	–	–	–	1	–	–
Black-eared Wheatear	–	–	–	3	–	–
Rock Thrush	–	–	–	1	–	–
White's Thrush	–	–	–	1	–	–
Hermit Thrush	1	–	1	1	–	–
Grey-cheeked Thrush	–	–	–	2	–	–
Ring Ouzel	3	–	3	465	–	8
Blackbird	115	–	115	20349	2	315
Eye-browed Thrush	–	–	–	1	–	1

<i>Species</i>	<i>Ringed as:</i>		<i>Total</i> <i>1995</i>	<i>Total</i> <i>1948-95</i>	<i>Recovered/Controlled</i>	
	<i>Juv/Ad</i>	<i>Pullus</i>			<i>1995</i>	<i>1948-95</i>
Dusky Thrush	-	-	-	1	-	-
Black-throated Thrush	-	-	-	1	-	-
Fieldfare	3	-	3	614	-	1
Song Thrush	87	-	87	2525	-	29
Redwing	262	-	262	7978	1	71
Mistle Thrush	-	-	-	22	-	-
Pallas' Grasshopper Warbler	-	-	-	6	-	-
Lanceolated Warbler	-	-	-	25	-	-
Grasshopper Warbler	1	-	1	102	-	-
River Warbler	-	-	-	7	-	-
Savi's Warbler	-	-	-	3	-	-
Aquatic Warbler	-	-	-	22	-	-
Sedge Warbler	3	-	3	392	-	-
Paddyfield Warbler	1	-	1	7	-	-
Blyth's Reed Warbler	-	-	-	2	-	1
Marsh Warbler	5	-	5	94	-	-
Reed Warbler	7	-	7	192	-	1
Great Reed Warbler	-	-	-	6	-	-
Thick-billed Warbler	-	-	-	1	-	-
Olivaceous Warbler	1	-	1	1	-	-
Booted Warbler	-	-	-	7	-	-
Icterine Warbler	1	-	1	90	-	-
Melodious Warbler	-	-	-	11	-	-
Subalpine Warbler	-	-	-	24	-	-
Sardinian Warbler	-	-	-	1	-	-
Barred Warbler	6	-	6	362	-	1
Lesser Whitethroat	9	-	9	603	-	1
Whitethroat	15	-	15	840	-	-
Garden Warbler	76	-	76	3074	-	3
Blackcap	113	-	113	4377	-	19
Greenish Warbler	1	-	1	20	-	-
Arctic Warbler	2	-	2	32	-	-
Pallas's Warbler	-	-	-	2	-	-
Yellow-browed Warbler	4	-	4	107	-	-
Radde's Warbler	-	-	-	1	-	-
Dusky Warbler	-	-	-	4	-	-
Bonelli's Warbler	-	-	-	1	-	-
Wood Warbler	3	-	3	98	-	-
Chiffchaff	26	-	26	955	1	3
Willow Warbler	59	-	59	3174	-	6

<i>Species</i>	<i>Ringed as:</i>		<i>Total 1995</i>	<i>Total 1948-95</i>	<i>Recovered/Controlled</i>	
	<i>Juv/Ad</i>	<i>Pullus</i>			<i>1995</i>	<i>1948-95</i>
Goldcrest	35	—	35	1387	—	2
Firecrest	—	—	—	1	—	—
Brown Flycatcher	—	—	—	1	—	—
Spotted Flycatcher	6	—	6	690	—	3
Red-breasted Flycatcher	3	—	3	53	—	—
Collared Flycatcher	—	—	—	1	—	—
Pied Flycatcher	10	—	10	851	—	—
Coal Tit	—	—	—	1	—	—
Blue Tit	—	—	—	2	—	—
Great Tit	—	—	—	9	—	—
Treecreeper	—	—	—	1	—	—
Golden Oriole	—	—	—	8	—	—
Isabelline Shrike	—	—	—	2	—	—
Red-backed Shrike	—	—	—	176	—	—
Lesser Grey Shrike	—	—	—	6	—	—
Great Grey Shrike	—	—	—	110	—	1
Woodchat Shrike	—	—	—	13	—	—
Jackdaw	—	—	—	4	—	—
Rook	—	—	—	5	—	—
Carrion Crow	—	—	—	44	—	—
Raven	—	—	—	26	—	—
Starling	301	271	572	23045	—	185
Daurian Starling	—	—	—	1	—	—
Rose-coloured Starling	—	—	—	3	—	—
House Sparrow	31	—	31	1389	—	3
Tree Sparrow	—	—	—	99	—	1
Chaffinch	11	—	11	2333	—	11
Brambling	21	—	21	2948	1	13
Greenfinch	3	—	3	184	1	1
Goldfinch	—	—	—	6	—	—
Siskin	5	—	5	331	—	1
Linnet	2	—	2	139	—	1
Twite	115	—	115	52647	1	5
Redpoll	5	—	5	587	—	1
Arctic Redpoll	1	—	1	19	—	—
Two-barred Crossbill	—	—	—	1	—	—
Crossbill	—	—	—	455	—	2
Parrot Crossbill	—	—	—	37	—	—
Common Rosefinch	5	—	5	143	—	1
Bullfinch	—	—	—	97	—	—
Hawfinch	—	—	—	11	—	—

<i>Species</i>	<i>Ringed as:</i>		<i>Total</i> <i>1995</i>	<i>Total</i> <i>1948-95</i>	<i>Recovered/Controlled</i>	
	<i>Juv/Ad</i>	<i>Pullus</i>			<i>1995</i>	<i>1948-95</i>
Tennessee Warbler	-	-	-	2	-	-
Savannah Sparrow	-	-	-	1	-	-
Song Sparrow	-	-	-	3	-	-
White-crowned Sparrow	-	-	-	1	-	-
White-throated Sparrow	-	-	-	2	-	-
Lapland Bunting	-	-	-	45	-	-
Snow Bunting	1	-	1	520	-	3
Pine Bunting	-	-	-	2	-	-
Yellowhammer	-	-	-	54	-	-
Ortolan Bunting	-	-	-	18	-	-
Cretzschmar's Bunting	-	-	-	1	-	-
Yellow-browed Bunting	-	-	-	1	-	-
Rustic Bunting	-	-	-	14	-	1
Little Bunting	1	-	1	32	1	1
Yellow-breasted Bunting	-	-	-	6	-	-
Reed Bunting	1	-	1	380	-	2
Pallas's Reed Bunting	-	-	-	2	-	-
Black-headed Bunting	-	-	-	3	-	-
Corn Bunting	-	-	-	3	-	-
Red-headed Bunting	-	-	-	5	-	-
Chestnut Bunting	-	-	-	1	-	-

Ringing recoveries/controls reported to FIBO during 1995.

For some of the seabirds, where longevity records are of interest, notable recoveries or retraps from Fair Isle are also reported. The international code of symbols denoting method of recovery and age is used.

Manner recovered/controlled:

- v - caught or trapped by man and released with ring
- vv - ring number read in the field, or sight record of identifiable colour rings
- vB - breeding where recaptured
- +
- x - shot or killed by man
- x - found dead
- xF - found dying or freshly dead
- xL - found dead (not recent)
- () - caught or trapped alive and not released, or released without ring
- /?/ - manner of recovery unknown

Age when ringed/recovered, given in EURING code:

- 1 - pullus/nestling
- 2 - fully grown, year of hatching unknown
- 3 - hatched during calendar year concerned

- 4 – hatched before calendar year concerned, but exact year unknown
 5 – hatched during previous calendar year
 6 – hatched before previous calendar year, but exact year unknown etc.
 J – still in juvenile plumage
 Sex – m denotes male, f denotes female

The coordinates of Fair Isle are 59°32'N, 01°37'W.

Part I. Birds ringed on Fair Isle and reported elsewhere.

FULMAR. Four recoveries were reported during 1995, all of them in foreign waters. Three were found in Germany, two of these ringed on Fair Isle as nestlings (one in 1972, one in 1983) and one as an adult in 1976. Another adult, ringed in 1981, was recovered in Denmark.

STORM PETREL. 63 individuals ringed on Fair Isle were controlled elsewhere and reported during 1995. These are summarised in the following table:

Table 3. Storm Petrels ringed on Fair Isle and controlled/recovered elsewhere; reports received during 1995.

Mainland, Shetland	5	Mousa, Shetland	4
Yell, Shetland	26	North Ronaldsay, Orkney	7
Auskerry, Orkney	1	Eilean Nan Ron, Highland	2
John o' Groats, Highland	1	Faraidh Head, Highland	7
Wick, Highland	1	Collieston, Grampian	1
Nolsoy, FAEROES	1	Rost, Nordland, NORWAY	1
Oygarden, Hordaland, NORWAY	1	Heroy, More og Romsdal,	
Kristiansund, More og Romsdal,		NORWAY	4
NORWAY	1		

This represents a typical spread of returns from Fair Isle Storm Petrel ringing, with the lion's share to Shetland and Orkney, another concentration on the Norwegian coast, and one or two to Faeroes and the Scottish mainland. The rather lower than average numbers trapped in 1995 (at least compared to the last five years) probably accounts for the fact that sites along the English North Sea coast and the Portuguese Algarve failed to feature in our records. Of note among the controls is that of a bird ringed at midnight on August 10th 1994, controlled a mere 45 minutes later on North Ronaldsay, 25 miles to the south; a minimum average speed of more than 33mph! Also reported to us this year was a bird ringed on Fetlar with a ring registered to FIBO, on 14 June 1967. This was controlled at Toft, mainland Shetland, on 19 August 1995; since it was fully-grown when ringed, it was probably over 30 years old at recapture.

SHAG. Seven recoveries were reported in 1995, all of birds ringed as nestlings. Four were found in Orkney, two in Shetland, and one at Sogn og Fjordane, Norway.

OYSTERCATCHER. One ringed as a nestling in July 1981 was found dead on the shore at Gosford Bay, Firth of Forth, in August 1995.

HERRING GULL. Two ringed as nestlings were recovered, one during its first summer in Orkney, one as an adult in Shetland. In addition, one ringed as a first-winter in November 1982, was recovered sometime in 1994 at Terschelling, The Netherlands (803 km, 149°).

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL. A nestling ringed on Sheep Rock in June 1994 was a 'road casualty' at Kirkwall Airport in October of the same year!

KITTIWAKE. Four recoveries were reported during 1995. Two nestlings (ringed in July 1982 and July 1994) were found at Criccieth, Gwynedd (752km, 192°) and Stoer Bay, Highland, respectively. Two more were recovered in the Faeroes, a nestling ringed in 1977 recovered at an unknown location in 1991, and an adult ringed in 1993, recovered at sea in January 1995.

ARCTIC TERN. Two more recoveries of nestlings reflect the increasing numbers being ringed at the Fair Isle colony in recent years. One ringed in 1994 was found at Guipuzcoa, Spain in September of that year (1796 km, 180°, 64 days): a bird that was 'found with an injury and died two days later'. The other, ringed in 1995, was reported in Monrovia, Liberia in August (5963km, 188°, 59 days); it was found alive but captive in the bush outside the town.

GUILLEMOT. 12 reports of birds ringed as nestlings were received, which are tabulated below. In addition, birds ringed as adults in 1980 and 1981 were reported from Vrasville, France and Titchwell, Norfolk, respectively. Circumstances of recovery/control for these birds were as follows: two were oiled (including the Norfolk bird, which was found alive, cleaned and released), one shot, three drowned in fishing nets, six were simply found dead, and two were sight records.

Table 4. Location and age of Guillemot recoveries from Fair Isle: birds ringed as nestlings.

Age at Recovery (years)	<1	1	2	3	4	4+	Total
Orkney	1	–	–	–	–	–	1
Northumberland	–	–	–	–	1	–	1
Skomer, Dyfed	–	–	–	1	–	–	1
Norway	3	–	1	–	–	–	4
Denmark	1	–	1	–	–	–	2
France	2	–	–	–	–	–	2
Faeroes	1	–	–	–	–	–	1

RAZORBILL. Twelve recoveries were reported during the year, eleven of these ringed as nestlings (tabulated below in a similar maner to those for Guillemots, plus an adult ringed in 1992, recovered two years later in France . Causes of death were: oiled (three), fishing nets (two) and simply found dead on the beach (five).

Table 5. Location and age of Razorbill recoveries on Fair Isle: birds ringed as nestlings.

Age at Recovery (years)	<1	1	2	3	4	4+	Total
Eire	–	1	–	–	–	–	1
Sweden	–	–	–	1	–	–	1
Germany	1	–	1	–	–	1	3
France	1	–	–	–	–	1	2
Portugal	2	–	–	–	–	–	2

LONG-EARED OWL.

GH19596 3F 12.11.94 Fair Isle
 x 20.07.95 near Varde, Jylland, DENMARK
 742 km, 126°, 250 days.

The second record of a Fair Isle-ringed Long-eared Owl moving to Denmark. Most recoveries of this species have related to autumn-ringed birds moving east to the continent, to Scandinavia and other countries bordering the North Sea south to France.

ROBIN.

J319850 6– 29.04.95 Fair Isle
 v 07.05.95 Ellekrattet Skagen, Jylland, DENMARK
 735 km, 106°, 8 days.

The third record of a Robin moving to Denmark after being ringed on the Isle.

BLACKBIRD.

RJ90150 3M 10.11.92 Fair Isle
 x 04.07.95 Kuopio, FINLAND
 1622 km, 75°, 966 days.
 RR02006 3M 05.11.94 Fair Isle
 x 24.01.95 Iona, Strathclyde
 453 km, 218°, 80 days.

Blackbird recoveries from Scandinavia are not especially unusual, but of 164 from this region since 1948, this is only the fourth that has made it to Finland.

REDWING. An adult ringed on 11.04.95 was controlled on North Ronaldsay on 28.04.95. On Fair Isle, it weighed 65g, but on North Ronaldsay this had increased to 88g!

CHIFFCHAFF. One ringed on Fair Isle on 22.04.95 was controlled on North Ronaldsay on 26.04.95.

BRAMBLING. A first-winter female ringed on 08.10.94 was controlled on North Ronaldsay two days later.

GREENFINCH. A first-winter female ringed on 18.10.94 was controlled at Kirkwall, Orkney the following spring, on 09.04.95. This is notable as the first recovery or control involving a Fair Isle-ringed Greenfinch.

TWITE. Continuing this year's theme of passerines to Orkney, a first-winter male ringed here on 12.09.94 was controlled on North Ronaldsay on 09.11.94. Only the fifth Twite control/recovery from Fair Isle, and the third to Orkney.

LITTLE BUNTING.

J319564	3-	27.09.94	Fair Isle
	x	04.10.94	Cleeton Oil Platform, at sea, North Sea 619km, 168°, 7 days.

Another species for which an individual ringed in the autumn of 1994 provided the first Fair Isle recovery.

Part II. Birds ringed elsewhere and recovered/controlled on Fair Isle.

STORM PETREL. The origins of 66 individuals, controlled on Fair Isle, were reported during the year:

Table 6. Storm Petrel controls/recoveries on Fair Isle; reports received during 1995.

Mainland, Shetland	1	Mousa, Shetland	2
Yell, Shetland	16	North Ronaldsay, Orkney	7
South Ronaldsay, Orkney	1	Eday, Orkney	1
Auskerry, Orkney	1	Holm of Papa, Orkney	1
Eilean Nan Ron, Highland	2	Wick, Highland	1
Faraidh Head Highland	2	Aberdeen, Grampian	1
Newclochton, Grampian	1	Ailsa Craig, Strathclyde	1
North Rona, Western Isles	1	Seahouses, Northumberland	1
Nolsoy, FAEROES	2	Streymoy, FAEROES	1
Vagsoy, More og Romsdal, NORWAY	8	Ulstein, More og Romsdal, NORWAY	1
Kristiansund, More og Romsdal, NORWAY	1	Heroy, More og Romsdal, NORWAY	8
Faro, Algarve, PORTUGAL	5		

Another impressive batch of foreign imports, typically dominated by Norwegian birds. Of particular interest here, perhaps, are the two from Mousa, which were ringed as nestlings at the colony there. Both were controlled here in the summer of 1995; one was born in 1992, the other in 1993, providing welcome positive evidence of the age of pre-breeding wanderers in Fair Isle waters.

WHOOPEE SWAN.

Z61632	4M	16.12.86	Caerlaverock, Dumfries and Galloway
	x	19.03.94	Fair Isle

AMERICAN WIGEON.

87662817	1J	13.08.86	near Albert, New Brunswick, CANADA
	v	21.09.86	Fair Isle (3838 km, 82°, 39 days)
	+	30.11.86	Wexford, Eire (3761 km, 91°, 108 days)

A sad end to what is arguably Fair Isle's most famous foreign control; this was brought to our attention during 1995.

ARCTIC TERN.

CE79322	1	26.06.80	Whalsay, Shetland
	x	26.07.95	Fair Isle
			98km, 202°, 5508 days.

98km from Whalsay to Fair Isle, but how many in between? This individual was an unfortunate victim of the cat predation that continues to be a problem to some of our ground-nesting seabirds. However, it does provide an indication of the origins of some of the birds which have colonised Fair Isle so dramatically over the last ten years.

REDSTART.

J838648	5M	18.05.95	Low Hauxley, Northumberland
	v	21.05.95	Fair Isle
			468km, 360°, 3 days.

The fifth Redstart to be controlled on Fair Isle during the spring passage.

BLACKBIRD.

CV07685	4M	21.06.86	Sanday, Orkney
	v	14.04.95	Fair Isle
			62 km, 60°, 3219 days.

Ringed by a former Fair Isle schoolteacher on Sanday, this control is also notable for the fact that the bird was retrapped on Sanday in 1994, before its move to Fair Isle. Clearly an individual that opted to begin travelling late in life!

STARLING. Two controls, from the same ringer, at Broadhaven, Wick, Highland. A first-winter male ringed in January 1993, and a first-winter female ringed in February 1994. These were discovered breeding on Fair Isle in 1995, but not together. Presumably these are Fair Isle-born birds which have moved off the island in winter in flocks bound for the same area of the Scottish mainland.

SISKIN.

J210560	5F	10.04.93	Hutton Gate, Cleveland
	v	12.10.94	Fair Isle
			558 km, 357°, 550 days.

One of very few controls involving Siskins for Fair Isle. Perhaps this one was on its way back to Cleveland?

Butterflies on Fair Isle in 1995

Mark Newell

1995 was an exceptional year for butterflies on Fair Isle, with the greatest number of sightings for 15 years. Although Fair Isle is not noted for attracting a large variety of species, 1995 was memorable for recording fully five species, including the first record of Swallowtail. The total of 115 sightings ('butterfly-days') is bettered only by 1980, when there were 500 sightings, and only the second year since then to record over 100 sightings in a year (there were 106 in 1992).

Swallowtail *Papilio machaon*. The first Fair Isle record and the first live record for Shetland, following a specimen found dead at Voe on August 2nd 1994. The Fair Isle sighting was seen all too briefly flying over Upper Leogh on 9th September. It is most likely to have been of the Continental race. Previous Scottish records have been regarded as escapes or deliberate releases from captivity. However, the breeding range of Swallowtail includes Norway, and a flight across the North Sea is much the same distance as from any other possible release in mainland Britain.

Red Admiral *Vanessa atalanta*. Of 60 in 1995, virtually all were in July and September, with two in August and two on 14th October. The year's first sighting was on July 8th, with a peak count of ten on September 10th.

Small Tortoiseshell *Aglais urticae*. The first sighting was on June 18th, followed by 14 other records; seven in July, six in August and a late individual on October 14th.

Painted Lady *Cynthia cardui*. The total of 33 sightings was slightly down on 1994 but spanned a longer period, with the first on May 29th and the last on October 7th. During the intervening months June was devoid of sightings while the majority of records occurred in the last week of July and the first week of August, with at least six present on July 27th.

Peacock *Inachis io*. Probably the best year ever on Fair Isle for this species with a total of six. There were only twelve records for Shetland prior to 1994. The first sighting was on July 16th, with one more record in this month, and the remaining four in August, the last on the 18th.



Swallowtail

The Fair Isle Weather in 1995

Dave Wheeler

January. With winds reaching gale force on 17 days and storm force on two days, the month was wild as is common in the Northern Isles. Gusts of hurricane force (>63 kt) or more were reported on eight days. Frost was more frequent than usual and the nine days of snow cover were almost twice the average for the month.

Fair Isle: Rain 122.9%, sun 131.5%, mean temperature -0.3°C , (compared to the 1974-94 average).

UK: Mild, but cold in Scotland. Generally dull and wet, but sunny in Scotland.

February. A higher than average frequency (228%) of winds from between SW and NW (with an Arctic maritime origin) resulted in a cool month. Despite being wet, the month was also sunny.

Fair Isle: Rain 166.4%, sun 147.6%, mean temperature -0.4°C .

UK: Mild, and the wettest on record.

Winter (Dec – Feb). Snow was observed to fall on 53 days – the highest total on record, and well above the mean value of 35.7 days. There were 18 days with snow cover – the fourth highest total on record (mean 12.4). Both air frost 16 (13.2) and ground frost 39 (32.6) were more frequent. The wettest winter on record, with 363.8 mm or 132.1% of the average. Surprisingly, it was also the second sunniest on record with 141.7 hrs, or 139.9% of the average.

Fair Isle: Rain 132.7%, sun 142.8%, mean temperature $+0.1^{\circ}\text{C}$.

UK: Mild, and the wettest on record.

March. Another cold month and again snow was more frequent than normal – the total of 22 days with snow observed is the highest on record for March. The 28th was a particularly cold day, with a minimum of -4.3°C and a maximum not rising above freezing.

Fair Isle: Rain 99.0%, sun 117.4%, mean temperature -0.9°C .

UK: Cool and sunny with near average rainfall.

April. With the wind direction at 0900 GMT from between W through N to NE on 24 mornings, it was a cold month. Snow fell on 10 days (mean 6.3) while the 14 days (7.5) with hail reported is the highest April total since records began. The month's mean sea temperature of 6.8°C (mean 7.4°C) is the lowest April figure on record.

Fair Isle: Rain 133.1%, sun 84.5%, mean temperature -0.3°C .

UK: Dry, mild and quite sunny.

May. The island's second coldest May on record. Following a cold spring, May's mean sea temperature of 7.8°C is also the second lowest on record – at 0.9°C below the long-term mean. With a cold sea, fog was reported on Fair Isle on seven of the last nine days

of the month. A brilliant aurora display was observed on the 2nd, with noctilucent clouds seen on the 19th and 23rd.

Fair Isle: Rain 72.4%, sun 103.1%, mean temperature -0.6°C .

UK: Dry and sunny with near-average temperatures.

Spring (Mar-May). The third coldest spring recorded since 1974. Winds were from between W and N for 50% of the time, and were from a northerly direction on more occasions than in any previous spring. The season's mean sea temperature of 7.0°C (average 7.7°C) was only 0.1°C above the lowest ever value of 6.9°C .

Fair Isle: Rain 102.8%, sun 100.0%, mean temperature -0.6°C .

UK: Mild, dry and sunny.

June. Cold and dull at first, warm and sunny during the last ten days. Mostly dry. The blocking anticyclone that had been to the west of the British Isles during much of the spring – together with persistent low pressure over Scandinavia – continued to feed northerly winds down over northern Scotland during much of June.

Fair Isle: Rain 79.6%, sun 96.1%, mean temperature -0.2°C .

UK: Dry, dull in the east. Near average temperatures.

July. A dry and sunny month with persistent fog at times. The month's maximum temperature of 18.0°C (29th) is only the second time that this figure has been reached since August 1982. Though fog was reported at some time during the day on 17 occasions, it was the sunniest July recorded on Fair Isle.

Fair Isle: Rain 80.5%, sun 138.5%, mean temperature $+0.0^{\circ}\text{C}$.

UK: Very dry and sunny in the south-east, normal elsewhere. Very warm.

August. As the month progressed, there was every prospect that – like the rest of the UK – it was going to turn out the warmest ever. A subtle shifting of the persistent high – responsible for the hot weather during much of the summer over most of the UK – resulted in N to NW winds spreading cooler conditions in over the Northern Isles from the 24th onwards making this month only the third warmest on record. Despite this, and though there were only ten days when the temperature reached 15.5°C , the average daily maximum temperature of 14.9°C for the month equals the previous high set in August 1991.

Fair Isle: Rain 41.3%, sun 109.0%, mean temperature $+0.9^{\circ}\text{C}$.

UK: Extremely dry and very sunny. Very warm.

Summer (Jun–Aug). It was Fair Isle's third driest summer since records began, but only the fifth warmest since 1976. Since 1989 – unlike the rest of the UK – we have had three sunnier summers.

Fair Isle: Rain 64.0%, sun 113.3%, mean temperature $+0.3^{\circ}\text{C}$.

UK: Over the UK as a whole, summer 1995 (Jun – Aug) was the driest this century (35% England and Wales), the hottest since 1976 (CET $+2.4^{\circ}\text{C}$) and the sunniest since 1989.

September. Very wet in the north-east of Scotland, but less so on Fair Isle – the frontal systems not pushing much further north than Orkney. However, with winds regularly from a south-east direction – bringing mild and moist air northwards – fog and low stratus were frequent until mid-month. The 23rd saw a breakdown in the relatively settled conditions, with the first major depression of the autumn tracking north-east through the Faeroe-Iceland area, bringing an unsettled, windy end to the month with severe gales at times. Temperatures, which had been above average all month, then fell to well below average – with sleet observed on the last four days.

Fair Isle: Rain 137.7%, sun 85.2%, mean temperature +0.8°C.

UK: Even by mid-month much of northern Scotland was reporting it to be the wettest month on record.

October. With southerly winds predominating – from between SE and SW on 23 days at 0900 GMT – it was Fair Isle's warmest October on record. Mean daily temperatures were 1.4°C above the average and the 9th, with a maximum of 15.5°C, was the warmest October day ever recorded. As a result of a predominantly moist southerly air flow, fog, mist and low cloud were more frequent than normal. Despite this it was sunny month with below-average rainfall. It was also a windy month with gales recorded on 13 days – almost equalling the October record of 14 gale-days in 1976. On two days winds exceeded severe gale F9, with storm F10 SSW winds – gusting to 76kt – on the 25th. Winds gusted to over 50kt on seven days.

Fair Isle: Rain 91.3%, sun 127.6%, mean temperature +1.4°C.

UK: Very dry in the south-east, wet in the west. Also sunny and very warm.

November. This was the fourth month in succession that the mean temperature on Fair Isle was above average. It was less windy than usual, with gales reported on only two days. Winds were predominantly from a SW direction, with only one significant outbreak of Arctic air around mid-month.

Fair Isle: Rain 59.3%, sun 98.7%, mean temperature +0.7°C.

UK: Dry in the south-east, but wet elsewhere; mild.

Autumn (Sep–Nov). With a mean daily temperature of 9.6°C, this was Fair Isle's warmest autumn on record. The previous warmest – 1989 – had a mean daily temperature of 9.2°C. Despite all of the season's months being milder than normal, sleet or snow was reported on 12 days – well above the average of 7.3 days.

Fair Isle: Rain 93.5%, sun 101.0%, mean temperature +1.1°C.

UK: Wet, with about average sunshine. Warm.

December. Dry, cold and sunny – if any December can be described as sunny! Early on the 18th, a cold front moving south in a developing Arctic airstream, crossed over Fair Isle and introduced much colder weather to the Northern Isles. Troughs associated with polar lows moving south down the Norwegian coast brought overnight snow showers

to the north – giving Fair Isle a thin snow cover by early on the 19th. The snow cover lasted until the end of the month. Blizzard conditions were experienced on Christmas Eve, when easterly winds quickly increased to storm force – gusting to 82 knots – and visibility fell to 100m or less in heavy, wet blowing snow.

Fair Isle: Rain 47.9%, sun 166.0%, mean temperature -1.4°C .

UK: Wet in the south and east, dry in the west and north. The coldest December since 1981.

Meteorological Data, Fair Isle 1995.

Temp. (°C)	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YEAR
Mean	4.0	3.8	3.6	5.3	6.9	9.6	11.5	12.8	11.3	10.2	7.4	3.8	7.5
Maximum	9.5	8.6	9.4	9.1	12.8	16.0	18.0	19.5	15.7	15.5	11.4	10.1	(7.6)
Minimum	−3.6	−3.6	−4.3	−0.3	0.6	5.5	4.2	7.5	3.2	3.6	0.0	−4.5	
Rainfall (mm)													
Monthly	127.8	103.7	83.5	65.7	28.2	33.1	41.1	25.3	130.8	96.8	68.8	51.1	855.7
Max. daily fall	13.2	17.9	13.4	13.3	5.3	15.9	10.3	6.5	17.8	13.0	17.4	13.3	(907.7)
Sunshine (hrs)													
Total	34.1	84.1	114.4	126.6	200.5	163.3	191.1	159.7	99.1	92.3	36.3	26.4	1327.9
Max. daily	4.7	6.9	9.1	12.5	12.7	16.9	15.6	13.6	8.6	8.7	5.0	5.5	(1220.6)
Wind Speed (knots)													
Mean	23.3	18.7	18.4	15.8	12.4	12.4	11.6	10.1	15.1	19.0	15.4	16.4	15.7
Max. gust	75	59	63	50	47	49	41	37	62	76	49	82	(16.2)
No. of days													
Hail	15	21	19	14	9	0	0	0	5	3	7	15	108
Snow/sleet	18	18	22	10	9	0	0	0	4	2	6	17	106
Rain, >1mm	27	26	28	21	16	12	13	12	23	23	17	19	237
Wet, >9mm	23	20	20	14	8	5	10	6	17	10	15	10	168
Ground frost	15	14	20	10	8	0	1	0	0	1	4	15	88
Wind (direction at 09.00)													
North	4	2	5	7	6	9	2	6	5	0	4	8	58
North East	1	0	1	5	1	1	0	1	3	0	1	4	18
East	2	1	1	1	2	2	5	1	7	1	4	4	31
South East	1	0	1	2	7	1	7	6	3	5	4	5	42
South	8	2	7	1	6	2	6	4	1	15	5	3	58
South West	6	9	7	2	1	1	5	8	3	5	3	1	51
West	4	9	6	7	3	9	5	2	4	5	6	3	63
North West	5	5	2	5	5	5	1	3	3	2	2	2	40
Calm	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	4

(Figures in brackets are the mean for the period 1974–1994)

Fair Isle Bird Observatory Trust: Financial Report & Accounts

John Wood

A summary of the Trust's accounts for the year ended 31st October 1995 appears on the following pages. The full statutory accounts and independent accountant's report can be inspected at the Bird Observatory on Fair Isle.

It is disappointing to report that visitor numbers remained at similar levels to 1994. Our financial position remains satisfactory, but would have been very much less so had it not been for the magnificent response by Friends of Fair Isle to an appeal for additional funds by our chairman, together with generous support from a number of charitable trusts following a parallel fund-raising effort (by our one-time chairman and long-time friend, David MacLehose). Some external funding also arose from the initiation of a Ranger Service on Fair Isle, funded by Scottish Natural Heritage and operated by Observatory staff, as outlined in the Warden's report.

The Directors wish to thank all those who have given their financial support during the year, and particularly the Gannochy Trust and Leslie Mary Carter Charitable Trust for their special generosity.

Income & Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st October 1995

	1995		1994	
	£	£	£	£
LODGE INCOME		52,911		54,183
Less: EXPENDITURE				
Supplies	21,298		18,964	
Staff Costs	25,826		19,807	
Administration	6,745		8,122	
Establishment	19,073		21,025	
Selling	2,766		4,404	
Financial & Legal	<u>6,323</u>		<u>5,555</u>	
		(82,031)		
(77,877)				
OPERATING DEFICIT		(29,120)		
(23,694)				
OTHER INCOME				
Interest	1,153		1,809	
Subscriptions	5,304		4,254	
Grants – JNCC	3,673		2,977	
Ranger Service	2,750		–	
Donations	23,523		6,251	
Gain on Matured Investment	<u>–</u>		<u>452</u>	
		36,403		15,743
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) BEFORE DEPECIATION		7,283		
(7,951)				
Depreciation Charge	(14,866)		(13,157)	
Deferred Grant Income Release	<u>3,378</u>		<u>3,055</u>	
		(11,488)		
(10,102)				
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR YEAR		(4,205)		
(18,053)				
Statement of Accumulated Surplus				
Balance at beginning of the year		90,275		99,251
Deficit for year	(4,205)		(18,053)	
Release from Appeal Reserve	<u>9,077</u>		<u>9,077</u>	
		4,872		8,976
Balance at end of year		<u>95,147</u>		<u>90,275</u>

Balance Sheet as at 31st October 1995

	1995		1994	
	£	£	£	£
FIXED ASSETS				
Tangible Assets		174,602		178,023
Investments		<u>10,857</u>		<u>10,857</u>
		185,459		188,880
CURRENT ASSETS				
Stocks	5,546		5,519	
Debtors	12,382		4,413	
Cash at Bank and in hand	<u>32,670</u>		<u>955</u>	
	50,598		11,287	
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Creditors – amounts falling due within one year	(<u>66,434</u>)		(<u>25,564</u>)	
		(<u>15,836</u>)		(<u>14,277</u>)
		169,623		174,603
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Creditors – amounts falling due after more than one year		(<u>12,783</u>)		(<u>13,558</u>)
		<u>156,840</u>		<u>161,045</u>
Representing:				
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS		95,147		90,275
Appeal Reserve		<u>61,693</u>		<u>70,770</u>
		<u>156,840</u>		<u>161,045</u>

Fair Isle Endowment Fund: accounts for the year to 31st October 1995

	1995	1994
	£	£
REVENUE ACCOUNT		
Investment Income (Gross)	338	259
Investment Income (Net)	172	174
Deposit Interest (Gross)	4	99
Tax Refund	<u>73</u>	<u>69</u>
	<u>587</u>	<u>601</u>
Management Fees	282	76
Balance due to FIBOT	<u>305</u>	<u>525</u>
	<u>587</u>	<u>601</u>
CAPITAL ACCOUNT		
Investments at cost		
10% Treasury Conversion Stock 1996		
£2,593 Stock	2,749	2,749
Henderson Administration		
960 High Income Units	638	638
5.5% Treasury Stock 2008/12		
£2,875 Stock	<u>2,497</u>	<u>2,497</u>
	5,884	5,884
Balance at Debit of Capital	<u>(95)</u>	<u>(95)</u>
	<u>5,789</u>	<u>5,789</u>
Represented by:		
Balance per last account	<u>5,789</u>	<u>5,789</u>
Gain on Maturity Investments	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>
	<u>5,789</u>	<u>5,789</u>

The John Harrison Memorial Fund.

This fund is administered by the Fair Isle Bird Observatory Trust. John Harrison was a young birdwatcher from Norfolk, who visited Fair Isle three times, but whose life was tragically cut short. The fund was established in his memory at the instigation of the late Richard Richardson. Grants are given each year to help young people, between the ages of 15 and 21, with the cost of travel and their stay at the Observatory.

Successful applicants are responsible for making their own travel arrangements and booking at the Observatory, where they must stay for a minimum of one week. They are strongly encouraged to visit during July or August, to experience seabird and/or migration work, and to assist with Observatory work. Application forms are available from the Warden at the Observatory; they must be returned no later than October 31st for consideration in mid-December.

The John Harrison Memorial Fund: accounts for the year to 31st October 1995

	1995	1994
	£	£
REVENUE ACCOUNT		
Interest Received	<u>879</u>	<u>863</u>
Grants Paid	400	700
Transfer to Capital	303	121
Management Expenses	<u>176</u>	<u>42</u>
	<u>879</u>	<u>863</u>
 CAPITAL ACCOUNT		
Investments at Cost		
£900 13.25% Treasury Stock 1997	870	870
£1,400 9.5% Treasury Stock 1999	1,435	1,435
£6,400 9% Treasury Conversion Stock	<u>6,411</u>	<u>6,411</u>
	8,716	8,716
Cash	<u>1,247</u>	<u>944</u>
	<u>9,963</u>	<u>9,660</u>
 Represented by:		
Balance per last account	9,660	9,519
Donations	-	20
Gain on Realisation of Investments	-	-
Transfer from Revenue	<u>303</u>	<u>121</u>
	<u>9,963</u>	<u>9,660</u>

NOTES

Fair Isle

The Island that loves visitors

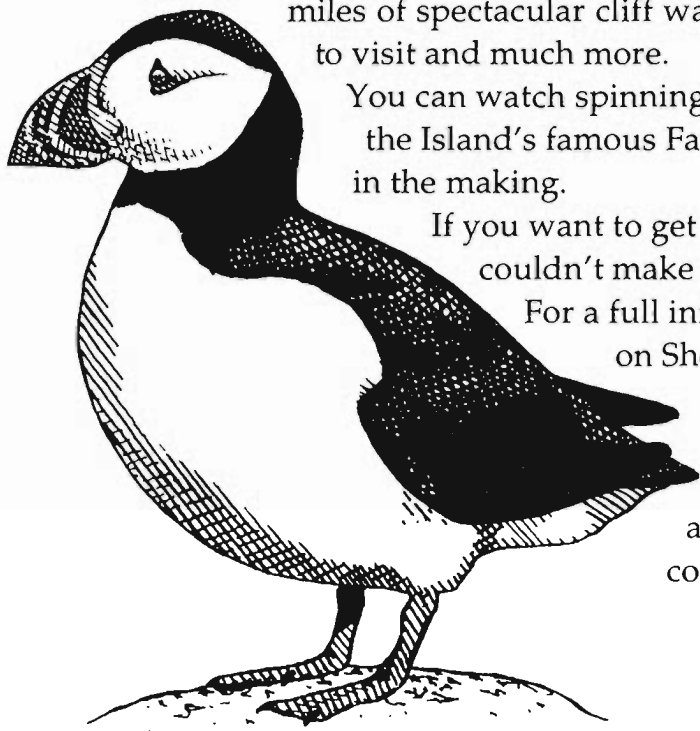
On Fair Isle - just three miles long by a mile wide - there's some of the best birdwatching in Britain. But as well as the birds, you'll find the friendliest welcome, miles of spectacular cliff walks, a museum to visit and much more.

You can watch spinning, weaving, and the Island's famous Fair Isle knitwear in the making.

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For a full information pack on Shetland and Fair

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Kyle of Lochalsh on A87



Mountains & Wild Land

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*For further details contact
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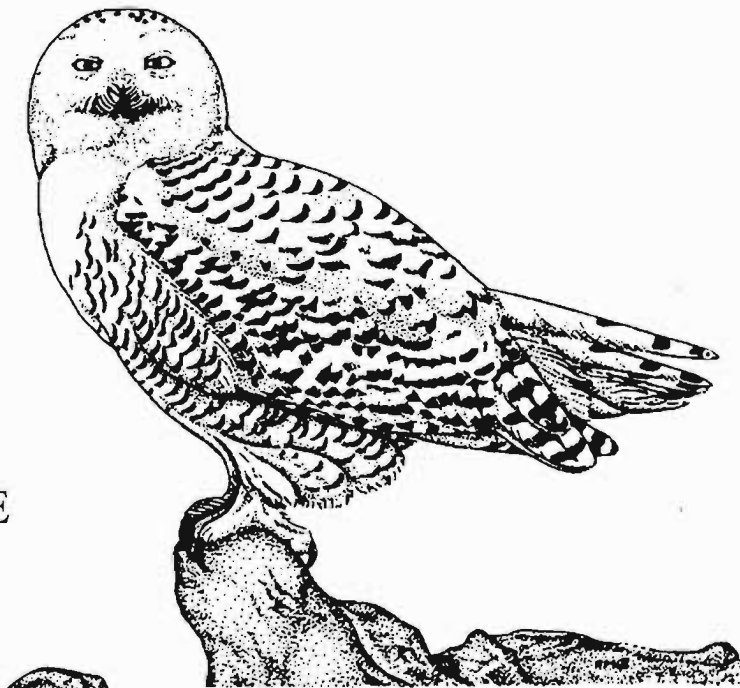
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