

Fair Isle Bird Observatory

BULLETIN



Edited by
ROY H. DENNIS

Vol. 5 No. 4 (New Series)

PRICE 5/-
(Issued free to "Friends of Fair Isle")

Fair Isle Bird Observatory Trust

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Hon. Secretary.

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FAIR ISLE BIRD OBSERVATORY BULLETIN

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DECEMBER 1964

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30. Birds of Fair Isle—Part IV

(CONCLUDED)

PETER DAVIS

- SAVI'S WARBLER *Locustella luscinioides*. One obtained, of two seen, 14th May 1908.
- RIVER WARBLER *Locustella fluviatilis*. One trapped 24th September 1961, seen again 25th. First British record.
- GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia*. Scarce and irregular on spring and autumn passage; about twice as many spring as autumn records. Spring occurrences 16th April to 29th May, mostly second and third weeks May; seen in nine of past fifteen springs. Autumn records 30th August to 15th October, mostly late September; seen in six of past sixteen autumns. No record of more than two at once in spring, and only single birds in autumn.
- LANCEOLATED WARBLER *Locustella lanceolata*. Ten records. Once in spring, 4th May 1953; the rest in autumn, between 9th September and 1st November, mostly late September. One 9th September 1908 was the first British record.
- PALLAS'S GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella certhiola*. One seen 6th-9th October 1949; one trapped 2nd October 1956.
- REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*. Rare in spring; probably annual in autumn (every year since 1955) in very small numbers. In spring, single birds obtained or trapped on four occasions, 11th May 1936, 10th June 1915, 23rd June 1963, and 29th June to 2nd July 1962; a few other sight-records have been claimed. Autumn birds recorded between 3rd August and 24th October, mostly late September, no record of more than three on one day.
- MARSH WARBLER *Acrocephalus palustris*. Thirteen birds trapped or obtained in spring (ten since 1950); and eight in autumn (six since 1950). Spring dates are between 29th May and 30th June; autumn ones between 16th August and 6th October. The species has apparently become more frequent in recent years; eight of the spring records are since 1959.
- BLYTH'S REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus dumetorum*. Six or seven occurrences; one (obtained) 29th-30th September 1910 (first British); four or five present (four obtained) on 24th, 26th, 29th and 30th September and 1st October 1912; one obtained 24th September 1928.
- PADDYFIELD WARBLER *Acrocephalus agricola*. One seen 26th September 1925, obtained on 1st October; one trapped 16th September 1953.

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*. Regular in small numbers in spring; rare and irregular (though each year since 1958) in autumn. Spring dates 1st May to 27th June, mainly last three weeks of May; seldom more than ten present, but up to 25 recorded. All autumn records are of single birds, between 28th July and 5th October, mostly mid-August to mid-September.

AQUATIC WARBLER *Acrocephalus paludicola*. Seven acceptable records: 23rd October 1914, 4th October 1935, 20th August 1950, 11th August 1956, 6th to 10th and 15th September 1958, 14th-18th September 1960, and 23rd August 1962. All except the 1950 bird were obtained or trapped.

THICK-BILLED WARBLER *Acrocephalus aedon*. One trapped 6th October 1955. First British record.

MELODIOUS WARBLER *Hippolais polyglotta*. One trapped 16th September 1955. A *Hippolais* almost certainly this species was seen 1st September 1962.

ICTERINE WARBLER *Hippolais icterina*. Scarce and irregular in spring and autumn; about twice as frequent in autumn as in spring. Spring records are all between 22nd May and 11th June, and all single birds except for three early June 1911; seen in seven of past fifteen springs. Autumn birds seen between 5th August and 19th September, usually singly but up to three on one day; seen in nine of past sixteen autumns, though every year 1957-63.

BOOTED WARBLER *Hippolais caligata*. One obtained 3rd September 1936 (first British); one trapped 29th August 1959, seen to 31st.

BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla*. Regular in spring and autumn, in very variable numbers; has a marked tendency to "trickle" through, rather than arrive *en masse*, even in years of abundance. Spring records 7th April to 1st July, mainly late May and early June, seldom more than three at once and never more than six. Autumn movements 24th August to 5th December, mainly late September and first three weeks October, a few regularly in early November, and often late November, in recent years; often up to ten and occasionally up to 30 at peak. One ringed 25th October 1950 was recovered in South Ronaldsay, Orkney, on 6th November; one ringed 19th October 1959 was at Elche (Alicante), Spain on 26th April 1960; and one ringed in Fife in July 1963 was caught at Fair Isle on 10th September 1963.

BARRED WARBLER *Sylvia nisoria*. No spring records; annual in small numbers in autumn. The extreme dates are 3rd August and 9th October, most records second half August and first half September; often up to three and rarely up to eight seen on best days. All records are of young birds.

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin*. Regular on spring and autumn passage; usually in rather small numbers. Spring records range from 24th April to 29th June, but seldom appears before third week of May, and most birds are seen last ten days of May and first ten days of June; daily totals rarely exceed five birds, and no record of more than twelve. One on 9th July 1959. Autumn migrants 31st July to 7th November, once 25th (1963), mostly late August and September and rarely after mid-October; often up to twenty and rarely up to 50 present at peak.

WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis*. Regular in spring, sometimes in considerable numbers; annual but invariably in very small numbers in autumn. Spring dates 11th April to 7th July, mainly last three weeks of May; often up to 15 and rarely up to 60 recorded on best days. Autumn records 21st July to 15th October, mostly end August and first three weeks September; sometimes only single birds, rarely more than five, and no record of more than ten at peak.

LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca*. Regular on spring and autumn passage; usually in small numbers. Spring birds usually much outnumber autumn ones. Spring records 23rd April to 25th June, but rarely seen before second week of May; most occur mid-May to first week of June; daily maxima seldom reached ten birds in recent years, once 15 (11th May 1950) and once 50 (20th May 1951). Was probably much commoner before 1912, for Clarke described it as the commonest of warblers after the Willow; but no record of large numbers after 1912 except for a report of "hundreds" 7th-16th May 1936. Autumn records 8th August to 25th October, mainly September; sometimes only one or two seen, but often a succession of small arrivals; seldom more than four and never more than six at peak. Birds showing the wing-formula of the Siberian race *S. c. blythi* (first recorded for Britain at Fair Isle in October 1921) have been obtained or trapped on many occasions in September and October, mainly late September.

SUBALPINE WARBLER *Sylvia cantillans*. Five records: male obtained 6th May 1908; single males (all trapped) 20th-27th May 1951, 9th June 1951, and 12th June 1958; a female trapped 13th and seen 14th June 1958.

WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus*. Regular in spring and autumn, in variable numbers but usually the commonest warbler; more numerous in autumn than in spring in most years. Owing to confusion with the Chiffchaff, the earliest and latest dates are rather uncertain. In spring, reported seen as early as 23rd March, but earliest acceptable record is for 8th April; the main movements occur in May, with light passage early June, and stragglers

recorded to 1st July. Peak numbers in some springs less than ten, often 20 to 50, once 300 (15th May 1960); also a report of "vast numbers" 12th-15th May 1911. Acceptable autumn records are from 29th July to 28th October, with old sight-records for 4th and 22nd-23rd November; main passage second half August and first week September, fewer to early October; often 30-50 birds at peak, and up to 500 recorded (5th September 1956). Many of the migrants at both seasons are referable to the Northern form *Ph. t. acredula*.

CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita*. Regular passage-migrant in spring and autumn, in small numbers; usually more numerous in autumn. Earliest spring date unknown, but said to have occurred many times in late March; three "Willow Warblers" seen 23rd March 1954 were more probably this species. Observatory spring records range from 31st March to 1st July; mostly second half April, with odd birds through May in most years, and irregularly in June; no record of more than seven on one day. Autumn records from 21st July but rarely before early September, main movements usually first three weeks October, fewer into early November in most years, and stragglers recorded until 27th, also "early December" 1944; sometimes only odd birds in autumn, but often 5-10 at peak, no record of more than 16. Spring birds are mainly of the typical form and the Scandinavian form *Ph. c. abietinus* or intergrades, though Siberian Chiffchaffs *Ph. c. tristis*, are said to have been identified in May. Autumn birds include a few resembling the typical form (chiefly early in the passage), the main October movements being composed largely of "Northern" Chiffchaffs with good examples of *tristis* occurring sparsely in October-November and much outnumbered by specimens closer to *abietinus*.

BONELLI'S WARBLER *Phylloscopus bonelli*. A first-winter bird trapped on 22nd September 1961.

GREENISH WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochiloides*. Six records. One trapped 2nd and seen 3rd June 1949; single birds (all trapped) on 19th September 1950, 15th-23rd July 1955, 7th-9th September 1960, 19th August 1961; and one seen 4th September 1961.

DUSKY WARBLER *Phylloscopus fuscatus*. One trapped 14th October 1961.

WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*. Scarce and irregular in spring; almost annual, in very small numbers, in autumn. Recorded in only five springs, but in thirteen autumns, between 1948 and 1963; but in the early years of the century it was apparently more frequent in spring than in autumn. Spring records are between 26th April and 18th

June, mostly May; usually single birds but once four present (6th May 1952), and "many" 12th-18th May 1910. A report for 29th March 1954 seems very improbable. Autumn records 30th July to 22nd September, mainly August, seldom more than two present and no record of more than four (22nd August 1963).

ARCTIC WARBLER *Phylloscopus borealis*. Seventeen dated records (ten in seven years since 1950, including each year 1959-62), and others are said to have been seen. All were in autumn, and all between 27th August and 28th September, except for single records on 30th July and 18th October. All single birds apart from two present on 30th August 1950. Two different individuals occurred in September 1954 and three in September 1959.

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER *Phylloscopus inornatus*. Regular in small numbers on autumn passage; seen every year 1948-63 except 1952. Acceptable records are between 29th August and 29th October, with one reported 24th November 1925; mainly late September and early October; sometimes only single birds, more often several records of one or two individuals each autumn, but up to six recorded on one day. The *Handbook* refers to a spring occurrence on 31st March 1936, but no details of this record are known.

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus*. Regular on spring and autumn passage; usually far more in autumn than in spring. Spring occurrences between 17th March and 1st June, mainly mid-April; no record of more than six on one day. Autumn records 23rd August to 22nd November, main passage end September and especially early October; occasionally only odd birds but often up to 20 at peak, and up to 300 (5th October 1959) on record.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata*. Regular in spring and autumn, generally more numerous in spring. Spring records 20th April to 4th July, but seldom seen before second and often not until third week of May, main movements late May and first week June, stragglers later. Peak numbers reached double figures in only four springs since 1949, maximum 40 on 3rd June 1963; but Clarke refers to big "rushes" in the early part of the century, as on 12th-15th and 20th May 1910, and large numbers were reported 7th-16th May 1936. Has always been rather scarce in autumn; recorded on 2nd August (1952) and between 20th August and 22nd October, with peak numbers at any time between late August and early October; seldom more than five and never more than twenty on best days. One ringed 27th August 1960 was recovered at Valdagno (Vicenza), Italy on 27th October 1960.

PIED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa hypoleuca*. Regular in spring

and autumn. Spring records 1st May to 24th June, mainly mid-May, seldom more than three to five birds present at peak, but up to 40 recorded (13th May 1960), and said to have occurred in "enormous numbers" 7th-12th May 1936. Autumn occurrences from 22nd July to 29th October (but rarely before mid-August or after mid-October), main movements end August and early September, often 10-20 at peak and up to 200 (5th September 1956) on record. Was apparently less numerous in autumn in the early decades of this century than in recent years. One ringed 21st September 1960 was recovered at Zarauz (Guipuzcoa) Spain about 23rd October 1960, and one ringed 31st May 1961 was at Agadir, Morocco, on 9th May 1963.

RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa parva*. A few most years (every year 1957-63) in autumn; four or five spring records. Spring dates are between 20th May and 21st June (the last being perhaps a bird seen earlier on 4th-5th June). Autumn records 25th August to 7th November, mostly late September and early October, though the record total of five birds was on 5th September 1958. Most records are of single birds.

HEDGE SPARROW *Prunella modularis*. Regular on spring passage, almost annual in autumn. Spring records are between 11th March and 21st June, mainly end March and April, only stragglers in late May and in some years in early June. Birds often trickle through over a period of weeks with no pronounced peaks; few records of more than ten present, none of more than thirty except for an arrival of 150 18th-20th April 1962. Autumn occurrences 5th September to 13th December, mainly late September and early October (but peak said to have been "last week October" before 1912; often only odd birds but occasionally up to 15 (23rd September, 3rd and 6th October 1961) recorded. The great majority at both seasons are of the pale-bellied Continental (typical) form, but birds resembling the darker British *P. m. occidentalis* or "Hebridean" *P. m. hebridium* forms occurred 4th-6th April 1961 (two or three), 17th-18th March 1963 (at least four) and perhaps 14th May 1949. One ringed 29th April 1961 was caught at Heligoland on 18th May 1961; another ringed 27th April 1962 at March, Cambridgeshire, on 3rd May 1962; and one ringed 30th March 1963 at Isle of May on 11th April 1963; all suggesting that spring birds reach the island by overshooting, and quickly return south.

ALPINE ACCENTOR *Prunella collaris*. Single birds seen 6th October 1908 and 27th-28th June 1959; said also to have occurred on 14th September 1930 and 24th September 1933, but no details available.

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*. A common breeding bird; numerous on passage in spring and autumn; few winter records. First appears in March (early date, 9th) but not in numbers until mid-April; departs mainly in late August and early September, with stragglers into October. Eggs are laid from early May (perhaps occasionally late April), mainly mid-May onwards; some may be double-brooded but most late nests are probably replacements. According to Clarke (1912) the species was then "not a native bird," but the same writer had described it as a "common summer visitor" in 1906. Passage-migration occurs chiefly from mid-April to mid-May and from mid-August to late September, with moderate falls in early October and small arrivals to mid-November in some years. Last dates are from first week November onwards, and occasional birds attempt to winter but rarely survive until January. One stayed to 14th January 1952, and records on 19th January 1915, 27th January and 14th February (both before 1912) may refer to such wintering individuals. Ten local young birds have been recovered in the first autumn and winter: in S.W. France (three, October to January), Portugal (four, September to January), and S.W. Spain (three, October to January), while another was in S.W. Spain in February of its third year. Of nineteen others ringed in late August to early October, thirteen were recovered within six months: in Fife (November), Holland (February), S.W. France (three October, one February), N. Spain (October), Portugal (November and January), S.W. Spain (October and December), and Morocco (November and January); while six were recovered in later years (up to 4½ years later) in Belgium (December), S.W. France (October), Portugal (January), S.W. Spain (November and January) and N. Italy (November).

TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis*. Regular in spring and autumn, in very variable numbers. Spring records 14th April to 24th June, mainly May, and seldom seen before last week April or after first week June; often up to 15-20 on best days, once 100 (13th May 1960) and once 500 (6th May 1952). Autumn movements 11th August to 25th October and once 9th November; mainly September; peaks rarely exceed 10-20 birds but up to 100 (20th September 1957) and once 500 (4th-5th September 1956) on record.

PETCHORA PIPIT *Anthus gustavi*. About fourteen acceptable records, since the first British record on 23rd-24th September 1925, and said to have been seen but not recorded on many other occasions. All dated records are between 18th September and 19th November, mostly late September and early October, but one is reported to have occurred

in "late August" 1931. All were single birds except for two or three (one obtained) on 27th October 1930.

RED-THROATED PIPIT *Anthus cervinus*. About five spring and nine autumn records; said to have been seen on other occasions but not recorded. The spring records were in 1936, 1952, 1954, 1958, and 1959, all between 8th and 31st May, and all single birds except for "six" 8th May 1936. The autumn occurrences were between 16th September and 1st November, in 1908 (two records), 1931, 1937 (two), 1957, and 1960 (three); all were single birds.

RICHARD'S PIPIT *Anthus novaeseelandiae*. Irregular in autumn (though each year 1957-63), mainly single birds but several records of up to three and once five (14th November 1951). Recorded once in August (two between 17th and 24th, 1953) otherwise all between 21st September and 14th November, mostly end September and early October. Said to have occurred once in spring, April 1935.

TAWNY PIPIT *Anthus campestris*. Four documented records: one obtained "spring" 1933, one observed 6th June 1963, one 15th-17th September 1951 (trapped 17th) and one obtained 8th October 1935. One is also said to have been seen in early May 1943.

ROCK PIPIT *Anthus spinoletta*. A common breeding bird, present in numbers at all seasons, though some (probably all birds of the year) emigrate in autumn. Passage is difficult to detect, but increases are noted in most years in late August or September, occasionally early October; and rarely in early May. Birds resembling the Scandinavian race *A. s. littoralis* have been obtained or seen on several occasions in mid-May; an American Water Pipit *A. s. rubescens* was observed on 17th September 1953. The breeding birds are mainly on the coast, but some inland on the hill ground; eggs are laid from early or mid-May, mainly second half of May. Local young have been recovered up to 2½ years later in Orkney (December), Caithness (December and January), Banffshire (January), and Aberdeenshire (April), while one ringed in July 1956 was found long dead at Den Helder, N. Holland, in March 1958. Local name (probably applied sometimes to Meadow Pipit also): "Stinkle."

WHITE/PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba*. The White Wagtail (typical form) is regular in spring and autumn passage; a pair bred in 1909, 1910, 1911, about 1933, about 1944, and 1963. Earliest spring date is 8th March, first usually arrive second half March, but in some years not until early April. Main spring movements late April and early May; often fails to reach double figures on best day, occasionally 10 to 20, no recent record of more than 25; but "abundant,"

"very considerable movement" are terms used early in the century. Stragglers occur in some years to June, more rarely in July; single birds have remained for some days or weeks at midsummer. Autumn passage starts end July or early August, main passage late August and early September; usually 20 to 40 birds at peak, and up to 200 recorded. In some years all depart by late September or early October; stragglers fairly often in late October and rarely early November, last date 17th. One ringed 22nd April 1963 was found dead in N.E. Yorkshire two weeks later; one ringed late August 1957 was in Mauretania in October of the following year; and one ringed 4th September 1954 was caught on a fishing-boat in the Moray Firth two days later. A chick ringed at Skipalon, N. Iceland, on 18th July 1962 reached Fair Isle on 26th August of the same year. The Pied Wagtail *M. a. yarrellii* is regular in spring in very small numbers. Records extend from 1st March to 30th June, but mostly second half March and first half April, few later; often up to three present but no record of more than five. This race is said to have bred once, between the wars, but no details are known. A few autumn records were made in the early decades of the century, between 22nd July and 1st October, "mostly August," but none have been definitely identified in recent years.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*. Almost annual in spring, scarce and irregular in autumn. A pair bred successfully in 1950. Spring records are between 16th March and 6th June (except 1950), with no marked peak-period (though with more observations in early April this may prove to be the best time). Autumn occurrences 27th September to 31st October, mainly early October, and once "November." Mostly single birds and no record of more than two at either season, apart from the 1950 family. One ringed 1st June 1954 was recovered in Orkney seven weeks later.

YELLOW-HEADED WAGTAIL *Motacilla flaveola*. Five records. Single birds, trapped, on 20th-24th September 1954 (first British), 1st-5th October 1954, and 22nd-25th September 1962, others seen on 17th-22nd October 1960 and 4th-13th September 1961.

YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava*. The species occurs regularly in spring and most years in autumn (all except three autumns 1948-63) in very small numbers; seldom more than two or three present, and no record of more than six present in spring or eight in autumn. The extreme dates appear under the races listed below. The Blue-headed (typical) form has been the most frequent race, identified in spring between 19th April and 13th June

(mostly first three weeks of May); up to five seen at one time. Autumn records between 24th August and 20th November (mostly September and first week October), up to seven on best day. The Grey-headed form *M. f. thunbergi* occurs most years in spring, recorded between 25th April and 9th June but mostly last three weeks of May, with up to five on best days; and has been identified on rare occasions in autumn, between 4th September and 6th November, no more than two at once. A male bird showing the characters of Sykes's Wagtail *M. f. beema* was obtained on 18th May 1910, and specimens resembling the Eastern Blue-headed *M. f. simillima* were collected on 9th October 1909, 25th September 1912, and 4th November 1908. The British Yellow Wagtail *M. f. flavissima* appears most years in spring, having been reported 25th March to 1st April 1954 and otherwise records of up to four birds between 21st April and 11th June, mostly late April and early May. There are no autumn records of this form.

WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus*. Three spring records, 20th February 1937, 3rd-4th April 1944 (two), and 22nd April 1960 (recently dead). Odd birds appear most years in autumn (each year 1957-63), with larger numbers in irruption years such as 1943 ("several hundreds" in mid-October), 1949 (twenty 10th-12th November), 1957 (ten 13th November), and 1963 (fifty 2nd November). The extreme dates are 14th October and 21st December, the majority of records being in November.

GREAT GREY SHRIKE *Lanius excubitor*. Irregular in spring, almost annual in autumn, in very small numbers. Spring records are between 2nd April and 7th May, mostly mid-April, all single birds. Autumn occurrences are between 3rd September and 15th November, mainly October; with one 21st December 1962; mostly singles but up to five (4th November 1963) on record. A bird showing the characters of the Steppe Shrike *L. e. pallidirostris* was trapped 22nd September 1956.

LESSER GREY SHRIKE *Lanius minor*. Seven spring records, including two old sight-records of which no details are known; all single birds, between 25th May and 5th June. In autumn, two undocumented records for "third week October" 1944 and 1st November 1940; and three birds in 1955, on 16th and 19th September (two) and 8th October; two of these were trapped.

WOODCHAT SHRIKE *Lanius senator*. Six spring records and one in autumn. The spring birds were on 4th June 1913 (female, obtained), 31st May 1945, 22nd-23rd May 1953, and single males 23rd-25th May 1957 (trapped), 12th-15th May 1960, and 2nd-22nd June 1963 (trapped). A juvenile was

seen 29th August 1960 and trapped 1st September.

RED-BACKED SHRIKE *Lanius cristatus*. Birds of the western form *L. c. collurio* are regular in spring and autumn (since 1948, absent only in spring 1952), but in very small numbers. Considerably more spring than autumn birds. Spring dates 8th May to 2nd July, mainly late May and first week June; often up to three present but no record of more than seven, except perhaps in 1910 when "very common" 12th-23rd May. Autumn dates 9th August to 6th October, mainly end August and early September, usually only single birds and no record of more than four present. Nearly all autumn birds are juveniles. A male Red-tailed Shrike *L. c. phoenicuroides* or *isabellinus* was present 12th-13th May 1960 (trapped).

STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris*. A common breeding bird; many of the breeders are resident, though some, mainly juveniles, emigrate in autumn. Abundant on passage in spring and autumn, mainly late March-early April and October-early November; with weather-movements occasionally during the winter. The local birds, which mostly resemble the poorly-defined Shetland form *S. v. zetlandicus*, lay eggs late April to mid-May; some (probably under half the breeding population) are double-brooded. Most of the migrants are Continental (typical) birds; many large movements are nocturnal, seen at the lighthouses, with little or no corresponding increase on the island next day; diurnal movements rarely occur and are usually of small proportions. Nineteen local juveniles ringed in summer and early autumn have been recovered up to five years later as follows: three in Shetland (February, October, November), nine Orkney (4 January, 2 May, July, November and December), Caithness (January), Ross (December), Aberdeenshire (June), Angus (March and September), in the North Sea near Dogger Bank in October, and on a vessel 20 miles south of Iceland in late February. The summer recoveries in Orkney and Aberdeenshire suggest that some local-born emigrants remain to breed further south. Four other birds of doubtful origin, recovered in Shetland (October and February), Orkney (January) and Aberdeenshire (March) were most likely also of local stock. Eight passage-migrants were recovered later; three in Norway (at Tromsø in March, at Trondhjem in April, and in Aust Agder in April), one in W. Russia (May), one Denmark (July), one N. Ireland (January); while the remaining two made southward movements within a short time of being ringed in spring, one to Norfolk only eleven days after ringing, the other found on board a ship in the North Sea within a month of ringing.

ROSE-COLOURED STARLING *Sturnus roseus*. Irregular visitor.

About eighteen dated records (eleven in eight years between 1948 and 1963) and the species is said to have been seen on many other occasions. Three records, all old ones, were in spring: single males in "spring" 1907 and 1908, one for several days in June 1937. One present 2nd July 1951. The remaining birds were between 29th July and 15th November, mostly August and early September, and mainly adults in August and juveniles later in the season; usually only single birds but two present on one occasion (12th September 1958).

HAWFINCH *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*. Nine records (five since 1951), all of single birds; eight between 12th April and 19th June, and one 22nd July.

GREENFINCH *Chloris chloris*. Formerly a regular and sometimes fairly numerous autumn migrant, and annual but scarcer in spring; numbers wintered, or remained well into the winter, in some years. In the observatory period it has been decidedly scarcer and less regular, though a few are seen most years either in spring or autumn or both. Spring records mainly late March to mid-April, odd birds occasionally into May (late date, 20th May); no more than three birds at once in recent years. Autumn records are from 3rd October, mainly mid-October to early November, and none later than 9th December recently; often only odd birds and no record of more than twelve on best day since 1948 (19th October 1959).

GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis*. One seen 9th September 1929, one 11th and 13th May 1954.

SISKIN *Carduelis spinus*. Occurs most years on autumn passage (since 1948, every year except 1948, 1951, and 1954) in very variable numbers. Probably irregular in spring (though each year since complete coverage started in 1958), always in very small numbers. Spring records extend from 13th March to 6th July, mainly mid-April to early June, seldom more than one or two present and no record of more than four. Autumn records 8th September to 24th December, mainly end September and early October, with later movements in the larger irruptions. In some years very few; in recent irruption years (1953, 1959 to 1962 inclusive) between 30 and 120 present at peak; described as "exceptionally abundant" 28th September to 4th October 1909, also "a good many" 29th September 1913.

LINNET *Carduelis cannabina*. Small numbers annually in spring, and irregularly in autumn; occasional midsummer records; a good many old winter records, but none in recent years. Spring passage early March to early June, mainly end March to early May, rarely more than five

present and no record of more than twelve (14th-15th April 1961). A few occurrences late June, July, and August, mostly odd birds but up to five in July. Autumn records well-spread from early September to mid-November with a slight predominance in late September and early October, no record of more than three birds. Up to three birds seen in all months late November to late February in ten years between 1911 and 1937, but none since then.

TWITE *Carduelis flavirostris*. A fairly common breeding bird, though formerly much more numerous. The species is now a summer visitor to the island, arriving from late February or early March, mainly late April and first days of May; departing mostly in early October, with a few into November. Early in the century, the autumn population was "to be reckoned in thousands," and "numbers" remained for the winter. In the past decade the population has declined steadily, probably accelerated by the impact of toxic chemicals from 1961; and there is no record of birds wintering since a few did so in 1951-52, though some appear occasionally in all winter months. Eggs are laid from end May or early June, mainly mid-June onwards; with replacements (probably not second broods) in July. Some light passage (probably of Shetland birds) is detected between late August and early October in most years. One ringed 2nd October 1949 was found in Westray, Orkney, on 31st January 1950, and another ringed 26th July 1953 was recovered on board a ship between Germany and Denmark (presumably in the North Sea) in October 1953. Local name (obsolete): "Lintie."

REDPOLL *Carduelis flammea*. The species occurs most years in spring, in very small numbers; rarely at midsummer, and annually in autumn, in very variable numbers; a few occasionally remain for all or part of the winter. The Mealy Redpoll (typical form) appears in most years and is the only form noted in winter or from June to mid-August. Winter and spring records cover all periods up to 16th June, with most occurrences between late March and late May; no recent record of more than six, but "most numerous" 8th May 1911. The July records are all since 1960: 24th July 1960, 11th-22nd July 1962 (up to four), and 9th July 1963. Other autumn records extend from 6th August to the end of the year, but seldom seen before mid-September, and most of the larger arrivals have occurred late October and early November. There were massive irruptions in late October 1910 and 1923 (over 100 on 22nd October 1923), but nothing on the same scale more recently, when arrivals have only once reached double figures (up to 13 in early November 1962). Most records of wintering, or of visitors during the winter, follow autumns when the

race occurs in above-average numbers. Winter scores rarely more than three or four birds. The Greenland Redpoll *C. f. rostrata* is subject to wider fluctuations in numbers than the Mealy, at any rate since 1948. It appears most years in autumn, but much less frequently in spring. Spring records (in 1936 and six years since 1949) are between 1st April and 23rd May, mostly end April to mid-May, no more than four recorded on one day. Autumn records fall between 26th August and 5th December, mostly September and early October, so that arrivals tend to be earlier than in Mealy Redpoll. The main recorded irruptions were in 1905 ("extremely abundant" late September), 1925 (30-40 from 28th August), 1955 (from 26th August, up to 13 mid-September, up to 30 reported mid-November), and 1959 (up to 20 in September); in other years seldom more than five and no more than ten at peak. The Lesser Redpoll *C. f. cabaret* or *disruptis* has nine records (six in four years since 1957); all of single birds except for three on 16th May 1936. Six records were in spring, between 24th April and 16th June, and three in autumn between 12th September and 21st October.

ARCTIC REDPOLL *Carduelis hornemanni*. The Hornemann's Redpoll (typical form) has seven dated records, only one in the observatory period (1950). All were in autumn, between 18th September and 12th November, in 1905 (three records, one of three birds), 1925, 1932, 1935, and 1950. Coues's Redpoll *C. h. exilpes* was obtained three times in 1910 (26th October, 3rd and 5th November) and on 22nd October 1923, all with irrupting Mealy Redpolls; an adult female and three immatures were present on 19th October 1961 (two trapped). Other "Arctic" Redpolls are said to have occurred on a good many occasions "in winter," but the name is sometimes applied to birds of the Greenland race of *C. flammea*.

SERIN *Serinus canarius*. A female obtained 22nd May 1914, a male seen 25th May 1957.

BULLFINCH *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*. Seen most years in autumn; less frequent in spring; an occasional visitor during the winter. All specimens examined have been referable to the Northern (typical) form. Autumn records, apart from one reported 4th September 1936, are all from 16th October onwards, mostly end October and early November; up to a dozen were noted in November 1906, and a "more remarkable visitation" in late October to December 1910, while "flocks" were reported in October 1934; otherwise no record of more than five, and rarely more than two present. In a few years, birds have remained until the end of the year, otherwise occasional records of one or two December to

- late February. Spring migrants have appeared between 27th March and 8th May, no more than two at once.
- SCARLET GROSBEAK** *Carpodacus erythrinus*. Annual in autumn, in very small numbers; many records of up to three, but none of more than four at once. The extreme dates are 24th August to 21st November, mostly September and rarely after mid-October. Winter records were made on 11th January 1930 (three) and 9th February 1945 (adult male), and spring birds were seen on 2nd April 1926 and 7th April 1944. All the autumn birds have been immatures.
- PARROT CROSSBILL** *Loxia pityopsittacus*. Recorded only in autumn 1962 and spring 1961. The autumn birds arrived 27th September (twenty increasing to 33 on 4th October), and after a decrease a second wave of twenty-five 11th-12th October (34 trapped and two others examined). Two present (male trapped) 20th March 1963.
- CROSSBILL** *Loxia curvirostra*. Irregular in summer and autumn, between 24th May and 5th November; no records outside this period. Large irruptions were recorded in 1909, 1927, 1929, perhaps 1930, 1935, 1953, 1956, 1959, 1962, and 1963, peak numbers ranging from 50 to 300. Odd birds or small parties were seen in 1910, 1911, 1919, 1957, and 1958. All large arrivals have been between late June and mid-August, with few records after September. One ringed on 6th July 1953 was recovered at Bergamo, N. Italy, on 25th August 1953.
- TWO-BARRED CROSSBILL** *Loxia leucoptera*. Seven or eight acceptable records, and said to have been seen on other occasions. The dated records are one in June (13th, 1908), three in July (4th, 1953; 10th, 1909; and 29th-31st, 1962) all the rest in September, on 2nd and 5th, 1927; 12th (three birds) and 18th, 1930; and 29th (three), 1939.
- CHAFFINCH** *Fringilla coelebs*. Regular in spring and autumn, in very variable numbers; odd birds have wintered, or visited the island in winter, in some recent years, and there are a few records of summering on the island. The species apparently wintered regularly in some numbers early in the century, when a much larger acreage was under grain crops. Spring passage is from March to May or early June, mainly late March and early April; often less than twenty birds at peak, but up to 1000 (1st April 1958) recorded. Autumn movements September to November, mainly end September and October, usually 50 to 200 at peak and up to 500 noted (an exceptionally early arrival on 21st September 1961). Most of the migrants resemble the Scandinavian (typical) form; birds with the characters of *F. c. hortensis* (middle Europe) have been caught in spring.
- BRAMBLING** *Fringilla montifringilla* Regular in spring and

autumn; formerly wintered on the isle, but not recently, though odd birds still appear at rare intervals December to February. Spring passage March to May or early June (late date, 15th), mainly April; seldom more than ten at peak but up to 80 (22nd April 1962) on record. Much commoner in autumn, seen from 10th September but rarely appears before the end of that month, main movements in October with smaller arrivals into November; usually 50 to 200 at peak, and up to 500 (21st October 1955) recorded.

CORN BUNTING *Emberiza calandra*. A few bred in 1905 (and perhaps earlier), and at least one pair in 1911. Except in these years, has been an irregular visitor in autumn and winter, and probably annual (all but one year since 1949) in spring. Apart from one 6th August 1952, the extreme dates are 11th September to 8th June, mostly late October-November and late March to May; but a good many records for all midwinter months. Seldom more than two present, but up to six recorded in winter (January-February) and up to thirteen (22nd-23rd October 1959) in autumn.

YELLOWHAMMER *Emberiza citrinella*. Annual in spring, and occurs most years in autumn; formerly more frequent as an occasional visitor in winter, a few over-wintered in 1913-14, but very few recent records December to February. Spring records late February or March to June (late date, 23rd), mostly end March and early April but often seen until late May; usually fewer than five at peak but up to eleven on record (27th February 1926), and "considerable passage" 26th April to 3rd May 1926. Autumn records begin "second week September," but rarely before early October, main period late October and early November; no more than five at once except for 12 on 26th October 1961 and 15 on 20th October 1959; and "unusually numerous" 17th October 1910.

PINE BUNTING *Emberiza leucocephala*. A male obtained 30th October 1911; first British. (Some authorities treat this species as a race of *E. citrinella*).

BLACK-HEADED BUNTING *Emberiza melanocephala*. Four records: a female 21st September 1907 and 13th September 1951; a male 27th May 1929 and 5th-13th June 1962. The last was believed to be an "escape."

RED-HEADED BUNTING *Emberiza bruniceps*. Eight records, all of males and all since 1950. Probably all or most were "escapes," one undoubtedly was from the condition of the flight-feathers. Three occurred in spring, between 20th April and 7th June, in 1957 and 1961 (two). Five in autumn, between 22nd July and 22nd September, in 1950, 1951, 1953,

1958, and 1960. (Now often treated as a race of *E. melanocephala*).

YELLOW-BREASTED BUNTING *Emberiza aureola*. Eight records. Single birds in "September" 1907 and 1909 (collected) were not correctly identified until several years later; an adult male obtained 13th July 1951, and five records of immature birds (one possibly adult female), all between 3rd and 16th September, in 1946, 1958, 1962, and 1963 (two).

ORTOLAN *Emberiza hortulana*. Almost annual in spring and autumn; seen in all but four springs and four autumns 1948-63. Spring dates 30th April to 23rd June, mostly May, rarely more than two present but up to sixteen (9th May 1952) recorded), and "a few on every croft" 8th May 1914. Autumn occurrences 18th August to 11th November, mostly end August and early September and rarely after September, usually only one or two present and no record of more than five at once.

RUSTIC BUNTING *Emberiza rustica*. Six spring records, and ten or eleven in autumn. Appears to have had three periods of relative abundance, as four of these records were between 1908 and 1913, three in 1925-27, and seven or eight in 1957-63 (the remaining two were in 1938 and 1946). The spring dates are between 11th May and 30th June (three in each month), and the autumn ones between 19th September and 26th October (all but two arrived in late September). All single birds except for two 14th May 1957 and 27th September 1927. One ringed 12th June 1963 was recovered on the island of Kios (Aegean Sea) in mid-October 1963.

LITTLE BUNTING *Emberiza pusilla*. Rare in spring (ten records, six in five years since 1950); almost annual in autumn (every year since 1957). Spring dates are 4th April to 19th May, mostly May; nearly all single birds but two on two occasions. Autumn dates 26th August to 17th November, mostly mid-September to mid-October, usually single birds (but often several in a season), occasionally two and up to six recorded at once.

REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus*. Regular in spring and autumn, usually in very small numbers. Spring birds from 13th February; one or two rather irregularly in February and March, regularly April-May with peak period in May; a few June records, to 19th. Peak numbers exceeded ten on only three occasions in 1949-63, maximum 30 6th May 1952; but "hundreds" recorded 12th May 1910 and 7th-16th May 1936. Autumn dates 4th September to 28th November, mostly October; seldom more than five present and no record of more than 17 (5th-7th October 1959). One ringed 6th October 1959 was found at Ste. Eulalie-en-Born (Landes), France on 16th January 1960.

SONG SPARROW *Melospiza melodia*. A male trapped 27th April 1959 remained until 10th May. First British record.

LAPLAND BUNTING *Calcarius lapponicus*. A few almost annually in spring; regular in very variable numbers in autumn. Spring records 20th March to 1st June, but rarely before mid-April or after mid-May; often up to three but no record of more than six (24th April 1961). Autumn dates 23rd August to 3rd December, mainly September and seldom after late October. Maxima of under ten birds in eight years 1948-63; highest recorded numbers forty 10th September 1949 and 19th September 1962, seventy 9th September and eighty 12th September 1953, and ninety 13th September 1960. In earlier years no record of more than twenty, and over ten only in 1912 and 1925.

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis*. Regular on passage in spring and autumn; a few overwinter and larger numbers occur with weather-movements in winter; occasional summer records. Spring movements mainly late February to early April, often up to 200 and occasionally up to 600 at peak (28th February 1958); smaller numbers to early May and in most years late May; a few June records and single birds (perhaps present since spring) between 6th and 30th July in three recent years. A pair is said to have summered, and was suspected of breeding on Ward Hill, "one year" about half a century ago. Other autumn dates are from 20th August onwards, though seldom before early September; occasional large movements in second half September and early October (2000 16th September 1949 but usually under 200 at this time); main passage normally mid-October to mid-November (300-800 on best days), with occasional large falls to mid-December. Winter population often under 50, but passage of up to several hundreds occasionally late December to March, often moving south out of Shetland with the onset of hard weather or returning north after the end of a cold period. One ringed 31st October 1955 was caught at Spurn, Yorkshire, 28th January 1956; another ringed 7th April 1959 was at Fogo Island, Newfoundland, 1st May 1960. Local name (obsolete): "Snaafool."

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus*. A numerous resident; no evidence of migration. Abundant in the early years of the century (autumn numbers said to have reached 800), but a marked decrease, thought to have been due to "some disease of an epidemic nature" in 1926, and reduced to about ten pairs in 1927, only four pairs 1928. This was followed by a gradual recovery ("two or three score" in 1935). In recent years the breeding population has been of the order of 50-100 pairs, but probably only 30-40 pairs in 1963. The birds are normally confined to the crofting area in the south, but occasionally wander as far afield as the North

Lighthouse (chiefly in late summer and autumn) and a pair bred at North Haven in 1960 after an unsuccessful attempt in 1959.

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus*. Resident up to about 1924, perhaps bred 1930 and 1933, at least one pair 1936, and one to three pairs annually 1961-63; irregular spring and autumn visitor, mainly in the recent period of expansion. The size of the pre-1924 population is not known accurately, but there is a record of 40 seen in February 1911. The colony's disappearance was followed by isolated records in April 1926, May and August 1927 (perhaps survivors of the breeding stock); from 1927 no exact dates are recorded until 31st August 1936, when three adults and one or two juveniles were seen by L. S. V. Venables, who was informed that "two or three pairs" had bred. One was recorded 5th-6th June 1937, but no further records known until two birds 4th May 1955; followed by up to three in late May 1957 and one 5th September 1957. In 1958 there was one 4th April and up to 15 in mid-May, two of which summered; they were joined by up to eleven others in late August, but all had gone by 12th November. In 1959 there were only odd records in October-November, but in 1960 two appeared 27th March and up to seven in May and early June. In autumn 1960 odd birds arrived from 23rd August, increasing to 27 on 8th October; eleven of these wintered on the island. They were joined by others in mid-April 1961 and the flock increased to 20 in late May; some passed on, but at least three pairs bred, not laying until July, and others summered as non-breeders. Seven birds survived the winter of 1961-62, but in March and April only three remained and although fresh immigrants brought the total up to ten in late May, only one pair bred; eggs were laid in early June. Over twenty birds were seen in September 1962, but only six wintered successfully. One or two immigrants arrived in late March 1963, and a big arrival on 21st May brought the numbers up to over 30 for a short time, but only three pairs were proved to nest.

31. Additions to Parts I to III

BLACK-THROATED DIVER *Gavia arctica*. This species is added to the list; one seen on 15th and 20th November 1963. An earlier undated record for about 1930 was regarded as not proven.

RED-NECKED GREBE (Vol. 5, p. 5). A seventh record, 16th September 1963.

SLAVONIAN GREBE (p. 5). A record for 15th August 1944 (earliest in autumn) was overlooked.

- MALLARD (p. 7). A record of 50 on 27th January 1937 (highest score on record) was overlooked.
- GADWALL (p. 8). A record of two on 18th June 1937 (only June record) was overlooked.
- LONG-TAILED DUCK (p. 9). A record of one 14th-15th August 1944 (only August occurrence) was overlooked.
- SHELDUCK (p. 10). Records of two birds 21st January and 2nd February 1937 (only winter records) were overlooked.
- WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE (p. 10). Records of four 6th-7th May and two 10th May 1937 were overlooked. These are the only recorded spring occurrences except in 1961, and later than those.
- BRENT GOOSE (p. 10). Three on 12th October 1963 were of the pale-breasted race.
- ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD (pp. 34 and 90). Records of one 20th-22nd January and 4th-6th February 1937 (only mid-winter records) were overlooked.
- TURNSTONE (p. 39). Totals of 100 on 26th September and 135 on 31st October 1963 were the highest ever recorded.
- LITTLE STINT (p. 43). One or two birds 5th-12th October 1963 were the latest autumn occurrences except for the old November record.
- CURLEW SANDPIPER (p. 44). One 5th-8th September 1963, the sixth autumn record.
- RUFF (p. 44). A mixed flock of waders seen 16th September 1937 was believed to contain possibly 100 Ruffs. This overlooked record mentions larger numbers than have been recorded at any other time.
- GREY PHALAROPE (p. 44). A phalarope seen 14th September 1963 was probably of this species.
- POMARINE SKUA (p. 71). A ninth record, 21st-30th October 1963.
- COMMON TERN (p. 74). The occurrence of over 120 during a hurricane on 26th September 1963 was the largest number ever recorded. Birds identified 27th were the latest definite record for the species.
- LONG-EARED OWL (p. 77). A record of eight on 4th November was the largest number definitely identified on one day.
- SHORT-EARED OWL (p. 78). Twenty were identified on 8th November 1963; the largest number on record.
- WRYNECK (p. 79). Six on 31st August 1963 was highest autumn total in the observatory period.
- HOUSE MARTIN (p. 80). A total of 25 on 6th September 1963 was the highest autumn total in the observatory period.
- SAND MARTIN (p. 81). A total of ten 5th September 1963 was the highest autumn score on record.

DIPPER (p. 83). P. A. D. Hollom has supplied a previously unrecorded specimen obtained 10th May 1946. This is a brown-bellied bird (probably *C. c. aquaticus*), and supplants the 1963 record as the first of this form. It is also the latest spring record of the species.

Many of the above additions are derived from a log-book for 1937 which was discovered in August 1963 among some old papers at the observatory and whose existence was previously unknown to me. If any reader has old records which have evidently not been incorporated in the published bird-list in this and the previous three issues of the *Bulletin*, and which should be included in the revised version to be published as a separate booklet, we should be very glad to learn of them in the near future. They could be sent either to Roy Dennis at Fair Isle or to me at Beech Grove, Tring.

P. D.

32. The Rarer Birds of Summer and Autumn 1963

ROY H. DENNIS

BLACK-THROATED DIVER. One swimming off the south Lighthouse at Skadan on the 15th and 20th November; this constituted a new bird to the Fair Isle list.

RED-NECKED GREBE. One off the Sloager, Bunes on 16th September. 7th record for Fair Isle.

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD. One flew in from the south, at Skadan, on 3rd November, and stayed on the hill ground until the 10th November.

HEN HARRIER. A fine ♂ from 25th to 29th November.

QUAIL. One on Meones, 15th August.

CURLEW SANDPIPER. Single birds on Skadan from 5th to 8th September and 3rd to 9th November constituted the 7th and 8th records for Fair Isle). R.H.D. and C. J. Booth saw two at Virkie, Shetland, on the 1st September).

POMARINE SKUA. One from 21st to 30th October, trapped and ringed on the 30th. It was a second-winter pale phase bird, probably male.

GREAT-SPOTTED WOODPECKER. Only one recorded this autumn, 4th and 5th November at Shirva.

SHORT-TOED LARK. A reddish bird of one of the southern races was found in the stubbles at Stoneybreck on 25th September, and remained on the isle until 14th October. It spent most of its time on the stubbles at Stoneybreck, Taing and Busta.

SHORELARK. One at Taing from 2nd to 6th November.

- BLACK REDSTART.** Singles on 31st October, 12th, 30th November and 2nd December, all females.
- BLUETHROAT.** Rather scarce; 2 on 19th, singles on 20th, 27th and 28th September, and 2nd and 3rd October.
- MARSH WARBLER.** Singles trapped on 29th and 31st August and 2nd September.
- ICTERINE WARBLER.** One in the oats at Busta on 3rd and 4th September.
- BARRED WARBLER.** A small autumn passage from 9th August to 19th September, mainly one or two, but 4 on 4th and 3 on 5th September. A late bird on 3rd and 4th October. 7 of these were trapped and ringed.
- YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER.** One in the Gully 1st October, one at Upper Leogh on the 2nd and one at Midway on the 7th October.
- RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER.** 2 on 19th and singles on 20th, and 22nd September and 3rd October. 2 were trapped and ringed.
- RICHARD'S PIPIT.** One at Dronga on 7th October and one in the crofting area on 11th, 13th and 17th October.
- BULLFINCH.** ♂ on 31st October and 1st November. ♀ from 6th to 11th and another ♀ from 17th to 20th November, all northern birds.
- SCARLET GROSBEAK.** Singles on 4th and 9th and 3 at Lower Leogh on 8th September.
- YELLOW-BREASTED BUNTING.** One, probably adult ♀, at Gaila on 3rd-5th September and an immature (trapped) at Shirva 13th-16th September. 7th and 8th records for Fair Isle.
- ORTOLAN BUNTING.** ♀ at South Felsigeo on 18th August, and an immature at Shirva from 23rd to 26th August, trapped on 24th and one at Kennaby on 10th October.
- RUSTIC BUNTING.** A ♂ at Setter and Taing on 24th October, seen again at Taing on 26th.
- LITTLE BUNTING.** One at Lower Leogh on 2nd November, trapped and ringed in afternoon; seen at Shirva on 4th November.

33. The general pattern of migration in Autumn

1963

ROY H. DENNIS

The autumn passage got off to a good start with a large scale invasion of Crossbills; the first indication of this big irruption was the passage of 34, which flew south over the isle on the 13th July. The end of July produced a strong

movement of Common Gulls (600) and waders, especially Knot, of which there was a flock of 44 on the 31st. Waders and gulls continued to dominate the scene during the first few days of August, but 15 Crossbills were noted on the 4th in easterly weather. The wind continued easterly with overcast skies and fog patches during the next few days; Common Gulls had increased to 600 on the 5th and 3 Green Sandpipers and 2 Wood Sandpipers were present. Wader numbers were even better on the 6th and Sedge Warbler and Lesser White-throat arrived on the 8th. The wind became N.W. on the 9th and, surprisingly, Barred Warbler, Willow Warbler and Wood Pigeon turned up. Crossbills had increased to ca. 40 on the 10th and they further increased to ca. 140 on the 12th in moderate northerly winds.

Conditions were quiet until the 15th, when, with a N.E. wind, we received a small fall of continentals: Whinchat, 4 Willow Warblers and two Pied Flycatchers. A Quail was also recorded. Continentals increased on the 16th; numbers were 8+ Whinchats, 7+ Willow Warblers and two Barred Warblers, with the Crossbill flock total 90. Much the same conditions prevailed on the 17th and 18th, Willow Warblers reaching 50 on the 18th, and an Ortolan Bunting was present. Waders and gulls were moving on the 19th and a Wryneck was observed. Most species decreased overnight on the 19th; Little Stint and Shoveler were recorded on the 20th. Small passerines trickled in on the 22nd in south easterly weather; these were mainly Willow Warblers (ca. 60 seen), but 4 or 5 Wood Warblers and 2 Barred Warblers were seen. Although the wind remained S.E. over the next few days, only small arrivals were experienced until the 25th when Common Gulls reached 500, other migrants being 25 Redshank, 13 Garden Warblers and 3 Pied Flycatchers. Little change occurred until the 29th when the wind backed S.E.; this period produced our main Warbler and Chat movements of the autumn and is reviewed in para. 34. After this interesting period the weather turned westerly and the only good bird was a Curlew Sandpiper on the 5th, which constituted the 7th record for Fair Isle.

The weather remained westerly during the next week, Greenland Wheatears arrived on the 8th and 10th, also 8 Lapland Buntings on the 10th. Surprisingly, a Yellow-breasted Bunting was found in the Shirva area on the 13th, a young bird which we finally netted there on the 16th; on that day a Red-necked Grebe was seen at the Sloager. It remained rather quiet until the 19th when the wind reached gale force, S.E.; most birds which arrived sheltered in the north and west cliffs. A very good selection of continentals was found and included 245 Common Gulls, 15 Whinchats,

20 Redstarts, 25 Willow Warblers and 40 Pied Flycatchers; other species were 2 Bluethroats, 12 Garden Warblers, 5 Goldcrests and 2 Red-breasted Flycatchers. Most of the passerines departed overnight: Pintail, Siskin, and Brambling, were recorded on the 20th. Very little of note was recorded in the subsequent spell of westerly weather, until a S.E. gale, on the 24th, produced a southern type Short-toed Lark at Stoneybreck on the 25th.

The wind increased to storm force 10, W.N.W. on the 26th and heralded an arrival of waterfowl and waders: 13 Wigeon, 11 Teal, 45 Greylags, 15 Pinkfeet, ca. 100 Turnstones and an exceptionally large and unusually late arrival of terns. There were about 105 terns in North Haven, almost all Common Terns, but with at least 4 Arctic Terns in the flock. After dark we managed to dazzle-net 7 Common Terns on North Haven beach, which is a record for the observatory's ringing totals. Our first fall of Redwings occurred on the 2nd October, when Long-tailed Duck increased to 10 and there was a Yellow-browed Warbler at Leogh. The weather was fine and settled on the 3rd, and ideal for inter-island migration; pipits, Skylarks and Bramblings were coming in from Shetland and passing south over the isle; we also found a Barred Warbler and a Red-breasted Flycatcher.

The weather remained westerly, gale force at times, until the 23rd October, when waders and thrushes, ca. 1000 Redwings, 300 Fieldfares and 150+ Blackbirds were the principal migrants. In the intervening period, there was rather little migration, but we recorded the following interesting species: Great Grey Shrike (4th), Red-backed Shrike (6th), Yellow-browed Warbler (7th), Richard's Pipit (7th), 3 Brent Geese and Glaucous Gull (12th), 200+ Common Gulls (15th and 16th), Long-eared Owl (21st) and Pomarine Skua (22nd). Numbers decreased after the 23rd, except finches, especially Bramblings which increased to 22+ on the 24th; on this day, there was a Rustic Bunting at Setter and Taing and a very late Crossbill at North Haven.

A period of mainly south to south-east weather from the 26th October to the 5th November produced some of the most interesting movements of the autumn, especially thrushes, Waxwings and shrikes. This period is dealt with in para. 35. The weather continued easterly until the 13th, but most species had decreased markedly after the 5th. A Woodlark arrived on the 7th, and a Mealy Redpoll which arrived on the 5th was joined by two more on the 9th. Owls increased on the 7th, when we had a total of 34 on the isle, mostly Short-eared Owls but 4 Long-eared Owls were identified; the next day we saw 20 Short-eareds in the same field at Busta. On the 15th, there was a Black-throated Diver at

Skadan, 3 Rooks and a Wheatear. The rest of November was rather quiet, with small movements of sea-ducks, waders, gulls and thrushes, although a fine ♂ Hen Harrier arrived on the 25th and a Black Redstart on the 30th.

34. The late August/early September Movements of 1963

ROY H. DENNIS

Fair Isle received a good arrival of both continental and Icelandic species on the 29th August, and when the wind backed south east in the evenings, we hopefully looked forward to a rush of continental migrants and, in fact, we enjoyed six days of easterly weather, with plenty of interesting arrivals, until it became westerly on the 5th. The scale of migration was comparable to 1956 and 1958, but numbers were smaller than in 1956 except in the case of Garden Warblers.

On the 29th, Wheatears increased very markedly and 39 were trapped; these appeared to be of Icelandic origin and over a third were adults. Meadow Pipits were plentiful and small parties flew north to south over the island. 40 White Wagtails were involved in this arrival and 3 Merlins were seen. Of the continentals, Willow Warblers numbered 30+, some of which certainly came in during the afternoon; other arrivals were 12 Garden Warblers, 2+ Barred Warblers, a Marsh Warbler, 8 Whinchats, a Goldcrest and a Pied Flycatcher. A high proportion of these birds departed during the night of the 29th/30th and the only notable increase, on the 30th, was in Common Gulls (200+). Odd Garden Warblers and Willow Warblers and one or two Pied Flycatchers trickled into the isle in the afternoon. Only one Barred Warbler was seen.

Pressure was still high over central Norway on the 30th/31st and the wind was easterly on the 31st, backing N.E. force 4-5 by evening. Small passerines were arriving on the isle throughout the day. Most of the Common Gulls had left and there was a small passage of Cormorants passing south from Shetland. At least 6 Wrynecks were seen, the highest autumn score in the Observatory's time. Other arrivals were House Martin, 18 Whinchats, 5 Redstarts (all but one recorded in the afternoon), 2 Reed Warblers, a Marsh Warbler and at least one other unstreaked *Acrocephalus*. A mist net was put up in the reeds below Schooltown and a Reed Warbler and a Marsh Warbler were trapped simultaneously, which must be unique for Fair Isle. A ♀ Blackcap, a Barred Warbler, 30

Garden Warblers, 50 Willow Warblers, 6+ Pied Flycatchers (mostly at noon), a Tree Pipit and a juvenile Red-backed Shrike were recorded.

The wind remained north east overnight and on the 1st September there were few important changes but most of the census figures for chats and warblers, excluding Wheatear, were a little higher. The excess was made up once more by continental night migrants arriving during the day. New records or evident increases were a ♂ Wigeon, ca. 20 Ringed Plover, adult Cuckoo, Swallow, an early Ring Ousel, another Barred Warbler, 2 Blackcaps, 4 Whitethroats, 2 Wood Warblers, Spotted Flycatcher and a *flava* Wagtail. Wrynecks had decreased to 4 and White Wagtails had increased to 45.

September 2nd was rather a quiet day, the wind being light northerly. Meadow Pipits and Wheatears increased and Garden Warblers decreased. The rest of the warbler numbers were stable; seven Knots, even more Ringed Plovers, a Swift and 2 Barred Warblers were seen. 2 live Wrynecks were seen and two were found dead from starvation. The wind veered to north east overnight and the 3rd was very wet and overcast, even so we found two very exciting birds on the isle. A female or immature Yellow-breasted Bunting at Gaila and an Icterine Warbler at Busta. The over-all warbler picture was much the same as on the 2nd, but there had been an arrival of hirundines, 10 House Martins, 2 or 3 Sand Martins and 7 Swallows. A flock of 100 Common Gulls and an early Redwing were seen.

Our last day of easterly weather, on the 4th, produced a few new species but otherwise the numbers were much the same as the last few days. Species noted were 2 Green Sandpipers, a Whimbrel, 3 Sand Martins, more Blackcaps (6), and Barred Warblers (4), a fine adult ♂ Red-backed Shrike and an immature Scarlet Grosbeak at Shirva. The Yellow-breasted Bunting and the Icterine Warbler were still present. During this period we trapped and ringed 305 birds of 26 species, with Wheatear (78), Garden Warbler (42) and Willow Warbler (32) topping the species totals; 2 Wrynecks, 3 Barred Warblers, 2 Reed Warblers and 2 Marsh Warblers were also ringed.

35. The Late Autumn Rush of 1963

ROY H. DENNIS

After a period of early morning fog, the 26th October was a fine day, with a light southerly wind; a very welcome change after weeks of westerly weather. A large fall of thrushes occurred overnight and they were milling about all

over the isle on the 26th; the final totals were 900 Fieldfares, 1000 Redwings, 50 Blackbirds, 22+ Bramblings and 2 Sparrowhawks. Fieldfares, Redwings, Skylarks and Starlings were observed moving at the Lighthouses during the night. On the 27th, the island was covered with birds; by far the most impressive was the huge arrival of Fieldfares; at least 2000 were on the isle, mostly in the central area between the traps and Stoneybreck. The last time that the Observatory recorded an arrival of Fieldfares on Fair Isle of this strength was in October, 1952. Redwings had increased to 1200 and Blackbirds to 440+. A trickle of other continentals was present and included 3 Ring Ouzels, another Chiffchaff, 2 Goldcrests, Great Grey Shrike, 2 Redpolls, 48 Bramblings and 10 Chaffinches. The wind was light southerly and it was overcast, with poor visibility and drizzle.

The conditions were similar on the 28th, but the wind backed south-east. Fieldfares were present in much the same numbers, but Redwings decreased overnight to 450 and Blackbirds and Bramblings increased respectively to 655+ and 95. 2 Waxwings arrived, a Great Grey Shrike was at the Reeves, 3 Short-eared Owls and 2 Long-eared Owls were in the crofting area. Most species decreased on the 29th and 30th, except Blackbirds which reached 600 on the 30th. The 31st produced more variety; diving ducks were more numerous and there was an arrival of gulls: 150± Herring Gulls, 100 Great Black-backed Gulls and 140 Common Gulls. Waders also increased, especially Woodcock (40-50) and Turnstones (134); 2 Waxwings, a Bullfinch and a Black Redstart were noted.

The S.E. wind increased to force 5-7 on the 1st November and we had a great Blackbird day. At least 1000 were on the island and we trapped and ringed 99 of them. Woodcock increased to ca. 70 and small continentals included 4 Great Grey Shrikes, three of them trapped and ringed, 5 Robins, Blackcap, 2 Waxwings, Hedge Sparrow and, lastly, a Moorhen. Waxwings increased to 50+ on the 2nd; 27 of them flew in off the sea at 0900 hours and proceeded N.W. over the Observatory. Most of them were on the hill ground feeding on the berries of the prostrate Juniper; some were in a very weak condition. Blackbird numbers remained constant at about 1000; waders, gulls, Fieldfares and Redwings decreased, but Skylarks and Lapwings increased. There were about 50 Woodcock reported, and Little Bunting, trapped at Leogh, Shorelark and 6 Goldcrests were new.

Most of the thrushes had decreased overnight on the 2nd/3rd, and the 3rd was a day for quality rather than quantity. A ♂ Crossbill arrived at North Haven in the morning, a fine Rough-legged Buzzard flew in off the sea at Skadan; I had very good views of the latter when it flew past me, at 70 yards

range, at the Head of Tind. It flew on and started to hunt over the fields at Taft, before drifting away towards the hill, where it was seen until the 10th November. A Curlew Sandpiper and a Great Northern Diver were also seen at Skadan. Three flocks of Greylag Geese arrived over the island about mid-day and at least 86 were present on the isle in the afternoon. The geese stayed overnight and at least 150 were present on the 4th, which is probably the largest flock to have landed on the island for many years. Long-eared Owls increased to 8 and there were two Short-eared Owls as well as 5 unidentified "eared" owls. All the thrushes had decreased, Waxwings totalled 25 and Great Grey Shrikes peaked at 5. There was a big increase in Snow Buntings to ca. 500, and 2 Sparrowhawks, 2 Merlins and a Great-spotted Woodpecker were recorded.

The 5th heralded the last day of real activity, when most species had decreased and the only new bird was an emaciated Coot at Springfield, bearing a German ring. In the ten days, we ringed 499 birds of 23 species; the majority were Black-birds but Greylag, Pomarine Skua, Long-eared Owl, Great Grey Shrikes (4), Waxwings and Little Bunting were also ringed.

36. The Winter Birds of Fair Isle in 1963-1964

ROY H. DENNIS

I am indebted to Gordon Barnes of Setter for keeping a daily ornithological record throughout the months of December, January and February. During this period he recorded 63 species on the isle. It was a remarkably good winter with no really severe weather and February was one of the calmest and sunniest in memory. The most noteworthy events of the winter were the movements of thrushes, especially in the first few days of January, and the out of season occurrences of Waxwing and Crossbill.

CORMORANT. 1-2 seen several days in December.

HERON. 1 on 14th December, and probably same bird throughout January and February.

GOLDENEYE. ♂ from 8th to 21st December and 7 days in January and 6 days in February.

LONG-TAILED DUCK. ♀ on 8th December.

VELVET SCOTER. ♂ on 8th December.

SHELDUCK. 2 on 15th February.

GREY LAG GOOSE. A flock of 3 on isle until 9th December and 6 on 21st December.

WHOOPER SWAN. 1 on 20th December.

HEN HARRIER. ♀ from 6th to 8th December.

- MERLIN. ♀ on 6th December, 14th January and on 6 days in February.
- WATER RAIL. 1 on 12th, 19th, 25th January and 23rd February.
- MOORHEN. 1 on 3rd February.
- COOT. 1 on 13th December.
- OYSTERCATCHER. 1 on 13th December and 20th January. Arrivals from 22nd February (1) to 9 on 29th.
- LAPWING. 1 on 12th-15th December, 8th, 16th and 26th January, and 1-2 on 9 days in February.
- RINGED PLOVER. 1 on 27th and 2 on 28th-29th February.
- GOLDEN PLOVER. 1 on 6th and 25th February.
- TURNSTONE. About 6 wintered, but 17 on 23rd December and 11 on 2nd January.
- WOODCOCK. 4 on 10th and 1 on 15th December, 1 on 5th January, 1st, 8th and 15th February.
- CURLEW. 1 on 21st December.
- REDSHANK. 1-3 wintered, 9 on 18th February.
- PURPLE SANDPIPER. 1-3 wintered.
- DUNLIN. 1 from 30th December to 2nd January.
- COMMON GULL. 4 on 1st January and small numbers January and February.
- BLACK-HEADED GULL. 1 on 7th and 21st December.
- WOODPIGEON. 1 from 24th to 28th February.
- LONG-EARED OWL. 1 until 8th December.
- SHORT-EARED OWL. 2 on 5th January.
- SKYLARK. 2-5 wintered. Arrivals of 17 on 27th, 50 on 28th and 100+ on 29th February.
- CARRION CROW. 1 wintered from 8th January.
- ROOK. 1 from 26th and 2 from 28th February.
- MISTLE THRUSH. 1 on 20th December.
- FIELDFARE. 20 on 2nd decreasing to 1 on 28th December. An arrival of 100+ on 1st January; high numbers (25-50) remained all month with peaks of 150+ on 7th, 100+ from 12th to 21st January. 100+ on 1st February, decreased to 50+ on 6th and then small numbers, maximum 11, throughout February.
- SONG THRUSH. 2 on 27th February.
- REDWING. 6 on 1st, 2 on 10th and singles on 25th and 31st December. An arrival of 75 on 1st January decreased to 20+ on 2nd and 10+ on 3rd January. 1-2 wintered from 13th January to 29th February.
- BLACKBIRD. Small numbers wintered, up to 5 in December and 7 in January and February, except 20+ on 27th February.
- BLACK REDSTART. ♀ on 2nd December.
- ROBIN 4 on 1st and 1 until 27th December. 1 on 23rd January, 4th, 11th, 27th and 29th February and 2 on 28th February.
- MEADOW PIPIT. 1 on 26th January, 2nd, 13th and 26th-29th February (3).
- WAXWING. 1 on 4th December, 12th and 13th January, first

January record for Fair Isle.

TWITE. 10 on 3rd, 1 on 9th and 5 on 27th December. 1-2 from 3rd to 11th January and 1-2 on 5 days in February, except 8 on 13th.

CROSSBILL. 1 on 27th January, first winter record.

CHAFFINCH. 1 on 10th and 26th December, 14th-26th January and 1st-21st February.

SNOW BUNTING. About 20 wintered, but peaks 50+ on 31st December, 35+ on 23rd and 50+ on 26th January.

TREE SPARROW. Small flock probably wintered, but only seen as follows: 8 on 2nd and 5 on 3rd December and 1 on 5th February.

The following species were also recorded: FULMAR, GANNET, SHAG, MALLARD, TEAL, WIGEON, EIDER, PEREGRINE, GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL, HERRING GULL, BLACK GUILLEMOT, ROCK DOVE, RAVEN, HOODED CROW, WREN, ROCK PIPIT, STARLING and HOUSE SPARROW.

37. Recoveries 1963.

Sixty-five recoveries of ringed birds came in during the year, and full details of these are given in the following list. The international code of symbols for the method of recovery is employed: v—caught or trapped and released with ring; †—shot or killed by man; x—found dead or dying; xA—found long dead; ()—caught alive and not released, or released without ring; /?/—method of recovery unknown. Where the exact date of recovery is unknown, the date of the finder's report is given in brackets. Ringing details of each bird (ringed at Fair Isle unless otherwise stated) are given on the first line, and recovery details on the second.

SHAG

518670 pull. 24.6.58

/?/ 0.8.62 Off Fecamp (Seine Maritime), France. 49°45'N 0° 23'E.

1013449 pull. 25.7.60

xA 21.4.63 St Ola, Kirkwall (Orkney). 65 miles S.W.

1022500 pull. 2.7.62

x 13.4.63 Scrabster, Thurso (Caithness), 90 miles S.W.

1026704 pull. 7.7.62

xA 9.6.63 Swarraness, Sandness (Shetland). 55 miles N.

1026932 pull. 20.7.62

x 29.6.63 Sanday (Orkney). 40 miles S.W.

1042017 pull. 27.6.63

x 23.8.63 Skellister, Nesting (Shetland). 60 miles NNE.

1042253 pull. 4.7.63
 x 4.11.63 North Ronaldsay (Orkney). 30 miles WSW.
 1042262 pull. 4.7.63
 x 2.10.63 Burravoe, Yell (Shetland). 75 miles N.

MERLIN

2044373 1st W. ♀ 30.10.62
 x 2.1.63 Deerness, Pomona (Orkney). 60 miles SW.

OYSTERCATCHER

382253 pull. 2.7.56
 v 1.11.63 Gronant, Prestatyn (Flintshire) 440 miles S.
 SSO5253 pull. 13.7.63
 v 3.9.63 Holbeach Marsh (Lincolnshire) 460 miles S.

SNIPE

725171 f.g. 29.8.60
 † ca 19.1.63 Durrus, near Bantry, Cork 620 miles SW.

WOODCOCK

2020916 f.g. 9.11.60
 x 25.5.63 Bullarer (Bohuslä), Sweden 58°42'N. 11°35'E.

REDSHANK

P14630 Ad. 14.8.62
 /?/ 18.4.63 Hafenkroog, near Büsum (Schleswig-Holstein),
 West Germany 54°08'N 8°52'E.

ARCTIC SKUA

3075585 pull 15.7.59
 () 1.11.63 Off Ilha da Berlenga (Estremadura), Portugal ca
 39°25'N 9°32'W.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL

412660 pull. 9.7.59
 () 22.8.63 North Sea, 50 miles SE by S of Aberdeen ca 210
 miles S.
 AJ16237 Ad. 11.11.60
 x 2.4.63 Near Molde (Møre og Romsdal), Norway 62°44'N
 7°08'E.
 AJ16294 Ad. 13.12.61.
 † 27.6.63 Between Norvagen and Honningsvåg (Finnmark),
 Norway 70°59'N 26°00'E.

HERRING GULL

AJ37253 Ad. 13.12.61
 x 16.4.63 Stavnesosen, near Nordfold (Nordland), Norway
 67°50'N 15°30'E.
 AJ52571 pull. 6.7.63
 xA 21.10.63 Gedney Marsh, Sutton Bridge (Lincolnshire)
 470 miles S.

COMMON GULL

EC28823 pull. 19.6.63 Ringed in Noss, Scousburgh, Shetland.
x 26.7.63 Noss.

BLACK-HEADED GULL

382235 pull. 30.6.55. Ringed at Spiggie, Mainland (Shetland).
x 9.1.63 Near Ness of Ork, Shapinsay (Orkney). 28 miles SW.

RAZORBILL

AT67632 pull. 30.6.61
x 17.3.63 Beadnell Bay, Northumberland 275 miles S.
AT90545 pull. 14.7.62
† 17.11.63 Off Flostad (island) east of Arendal (Aust Agder),
Norway 58°27'N 9°00'E.

GUILLEMOT

AT90695 pull. 25.7.62
x 9.2.63 Whitburn, Sunderland, Durham 315 miles S.

SWIFT

BA10205 Ad. 30.4.62
x 0.6.62 Nordero, (island) Lake Storsjon, near Ostersund
(Jamtland), Sweden. 63°09'N 14°27'E.

SKYLARK

B88752 1st W. 2.10.56
xA 15.1.63 Freiston Marsh, Boston, Lincolnshire 455 miles S.

SONG THRUSH

725284 f.g. 29.9.60
x 20.2.63 Devesos, near Ortigueira (Coruna), Spain 43°38'N
7°48'W.
Cx14763 Ad. 24.3.63
x 20.5.63 Skaelskør (Sjaelland), Denmark 55°16'N 11°18'E.
CK18813 f.g. 31.3.62
x 10.2.63 Holmes Chapel, near Middlewich, Cheshire 435
miles S.

REDWING

CK00203 1st W. 29.9.61
() 2.1.63 Vielle-St Girons (Landes), France 43°56'N 1°18'W.
CK21516 1st W. 20.10.62
x ca 26.1.63 Ballarena, near Limavady (Londonderry), Ire-
land 355 miles SW.

BLACKBIRD

725420 Ad. 13.10.60
x ca 28.10.63 Sokndal (Rogaland), Norway 58°22'W 6°20'E.
725480 1st W. ♀ 20.10.60
v 17.4.63 Heligoland, Germany 54°11'N 7°55'E.
725582 1st W. ♂ 26.10.60
x ca 21.1.63 Glenties, Donegal 405 miles SW.

725891 1st S. ♂ 8.4.61
 † 0.10.62 Pusservik, Floroe (Sogn & Fjordane), Norway
 61°36'N 5°04'E.

CK00918 Ad. ♀ 8.11.61
 () 20.7.62 Mullhytttenno, near Svanta (Orebo), Sweden 59°08'
 N 14°25'E.

CK18502 Ad. ♂ 27.3.62
 x 6.2.63 Coleraine (Londonderry) 355 miles SW.

CK18608 1st W. ♂ 30.3.62
 † 15.11.63 Eidsund, Ombo Island (Rogaland), Norway
 59°14'N 5°57'E.

CK18784 1st W. ♂ 31.3.62
 x 30.4.63 Jokkmokk (Norbotten), Sweden 66°37'N 19°50'E.

CK21881 1st W. ♀ 9.11.62
 x 10.2.63 Abergavenny, Monmouth 530 miles SSW.

CK21888 Ad. ♂ 10.11.62
 /?/ 26.1.63 Drumcong, near Drumshambo (Leitrim) 450 miles
 SW.

CK21928 Ad. ♀ 11.11.62
 x 31.11.62 Bardsey Island Lighthouse, Caernarvonshire,
 Wales 480 miles SSW.

CK27549 Ad. ♂ 8.11.62
 x ca 24.1.63 Killanglen (Co. Kerry), Ireland 593 miles SW.

CX00806 1st W. ♂ 6.11.62
 x 12.1.63 Stranraer, Wigtownshire 350 miles SSW.

CX03867 1st S. ♂ 20.3.63
 † 22.4.63 Loten, near Hamar (Hedmark), Norway 60°56'N
 11°15'E.

CX03732 Ad. ♂ 16.3.63
 x 31.7.63 Edsvara, near Falkoping (Skaraberg), Sweden
 58°15'N 12°55'E.

CX03870 1st S. ♂ 20.3.63
 x 10.4.63 Kirkeham, Hidra Island, off Flekkesfjord (Vest Ag-
 der), Norway 58°12'N 6°35'E.

CX14660 Ad. ♂ 22.3.63
 x 14.10.63 Nakna (Ostergotland), Sweden 58°42'N 16°10'E.

CX14762 Ad. ♂ 24.3.63
 x 9.4.63 Forde (Hordaland), Norway 59°37'N 5°30'E.

CX14765 Ad. ♀ 24.3.63
 † 3.11.63 Aursland, Sokndal, Rogaland, Norway 58°22'N
 6°22'E.

V76432 1st W. ♂ 23.4.58
 x 22.3.63 On board boat, at sea between Shetland and
 Faeroes 61°30'N 4°59'W.

WHEATEAR

606492 1st W. 14.9.59

/?/ 17.4.62 Moorsele (West Flanders), Belgium 50°50'N 3°10'E

BA39306 Juv. 9.8.63

† 27.9.63 Gergal (Almeria), Spain 37°07'N 2°31'W.

ROBIN

H88627 Ad. 25.4.63

() 4.5.63 Ottenby (Oland), Sweden 56°12'N 16°24'E.

PIED FLYCATCHER

H46812 Ad. ♀ 30.5.61

() 9.5.63 Inezgare, near Agadir, Morocco 30°27'N 9°38'W.

HEDGE SPARROW

H88319 Ad. 30.3.63

v 11.4.63 Isle of May 235 miles S.

MEADOW PIPIT

89322 Juv. 30.7.60

† 15.2.63 Jerez de los Cabelleros (Badjoz), Spain 38°20'N 6°45'W.

H87870 f.g. 30.8.62

() 9.11.63 Sanlucar de Barrameda (Cadiz), Spain 36°46'N 6°21'W.

WHITE WAGTAIL

H88604 1st S. ♂ 22.4.63

x 8.5.63 Dalehouse, Loftus, Yorkshire 340 miles S.

STARLING

CX00618 1st W. ♂ 28.10.61

x 4.2.63 Sandwick, Shetland 35 miles NNE.

CX14789 f.g. 27.3.63

x 9.4.63 Blakeney Point, Norfolk 460 miles S.

CX16052 Ad. ♂ 2.4.63

x 0.5.63 On board boat, Norwegian Sea, 65°00'N 8°00'E.

CX16153 Ad. ♂ 17.4.63

v 21.5.63 On fishing boat, North Sea, 270 miles NE of Lowestoft, ca 54°00'N 4°00'E.

RUSTIC BUNTING

H88887 Ad. ♀ 12.6.63

† ca 15.10.63 Kambos, Island of Chios, Aegean Sea, Greece 38°20'N 26°02'E.

R. H. D.

38. Ringed Strangers at Fair Isle, 1963

Eight birds ringed elsewhere were recovered on the island during the year.

CORMORANT

London 5000826 pull. 26.6.62 Taing Skerry, Gairsay, Orkney.
x 24.4.63 Fair Isle.

SHAG

London 1004243 pull. 6.8.58 Foula, Shetland.
Ring only found on beach, ca 5.4.63 Fair Isle.

MERLIN

London 3091418 pull. 8.7.63 South Nesting, Mainland, Shetland.
v 13.9.63 Fair Isle (sexed ♀).

COOT

Vogelwarte, Heligoland 3011645 pull. 4.7.63 Rantum-Becken
54°50'N 8°18'E.
v 5.11.63 Fair Isle.

HERRING GULL

London AJ71351 pull. 1.7.63 Noss, Shetland.
v 11.9.63 Fair Isle.

BLACK-HEADED GULL

Kobenhaven 541667 pull. 10.6.61 Tange So, M-Jutland
56°20'N 09°35'E.
v 19.3.63 Fair Isle.

REDWING

Reykjavik 816939. Ad. 9.4.63 Reykjavik, Iceland.
v 22.10.63 Fair Isle.

BLACKCAP

London AK98577 Ad. ♀ 21.7.63 High Valleyfield, Culross,
Fife.
v 10.9.63 Fair Isle. Aged/sexed Ad. ♂.

R. H. D.

39. Selected Bird Notes from Shetland, Autumn, 1963

Reports from several of the Shetland islands have been incorporated into one section in this bulletin. In future years, it is hoped to produce one report per year on Shetland birds and it will take the form of an annual Shetland Bird Report to be published in each spring bulletin.

In 1963 Shetland lost two very good bird-watchers; Chris J. Booth, his wife and son moved to Cornwall. Chris has always

supplied the F.I.B.O. bulletins with very useful and interesting bird notes, and we will certainly miss him. The R.S.P.B.'s representative in Shetland, Charles Inkster of Yell, died in June. Fitting tributes to this fine Shetland bird watcher have already appeared in other ornithological journals. The R.S.P.B. have appointed Robert J. Tulloch of Reafirth, Mid-Yell, as their new representative in Shetland. Bobby has already been to Fair Isle and is rapidly becoming an expert on Shetland birds; all bird watchers visiting Shetland are invited to contact him at the above address or tel. Mid-Yell 19. Tom Henderson of Spiggie, a well known friend of many of our Fair Isle visitors, has been appointed Curator of the new Museum in Lerwick.

Records from Unst were supplied by Eric Machell and Magnus Sinclair, who gratefully acknowledge records from Messrs A. D. Mouat, A. J. T. Nicolson and A. M. Thomson; from Yell by R. J. Tulloch, from Mainland by Chris J. Booth, with additional records from Dennis Coutts, Alf Rider and R.H.D.

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER. Max. 40 off Quendale, 15th Dec. 15 between Hascosay and Fetlar on 29th Nov., and 10 at Aywick, Yell, 31st Dec.

RED-THROATED DIVER. Last seen in Unst, 4 on 8th September.

RED-NECKED GREBE. One at Spiggie on 27th Oct. and 3rd Nov. (C.J.B.)

SLAVONIAN GREBE. 2 at Urafirth on 10th July; 2 at Spiggie on 3rd Nov. and 1 at Sullom Voe on 8th Dec.

LEACH'S PETREL. One found dying at Uyeasound on 8th Dec. (E.M. & M.S.)

FULMAR. A dark phase bird near Sandwick on 9th August.

HERON. Seen regularly in Unst from 19th August to end-Nov., peaks of 4 on 31st August and 7 on 3rd Oct. A few wintering in Yell, max. 12 on 29th Nov.

MALLARD. Max. in Unst, 30 on 19th Oct. and 32 on 19th Nov.

SHOVELER. A ♀ at Spiggie on 10th Nov.

TUFTED DUCK. First on Loch of Tingwall, 22nd Sept., max. of 50 there on 29th Dec. 29 at Spiggie on 24th Oct.

GOLDENEYE. 60 on Loch Spiggie on 27th Oct., and 34 on Basta Voe, Yell on 5th Dec.

VELVET SCOTER. 14 at Dales Voe on 8th Dec. 3 at Sumburgh on 25th Oct.

LONG-TAILED DUCK. 150 around Hascosay during Nov., scarcer than usual in Unst.

GOOSANDER. One adult ♂ and 2 "redheads" at Sullom Voe 8th Dec. and probably same birds at Loch of Tingwall on 15th Dec. Single "redhead" in Mid-Yell and Basta Voes end Nov-6th Dec.

- SHELDUCK. 2 at Virkie, 29th Dec.
- GREYLAG GOOSE. 44 at Quendale and 11 at Spiggie on 3rd Nov.
- WHOOPEE SWAN. Counts at Loch Spiggie—62 (7 1st W.) on 19th Oct., 75 on 22nd Oct., 127 (7 1st W.) on 25th Oct., 145 (7 1st W.) on 27th Oct., 155 (14 1st W.) on 3rd Nov., 109 on 10th Nov., and 24 on 24th Nov. In Unst, 1 on 22nd and 2 on 24th Oct. 9 wintered on Kirkloch, Cullivoe.
- GOLDEN EAGLE. Immature picked up dead in Yell on 27th Nov.
- ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD. One at Sand on 12th Nov. (C.J.B.)
- KESTREL. Single birds in Unst on 7th, 17th, 18th Aug., 8th and 9th Sept., and 6th and 22nd Oct. Single birds in Whiteness area on 1st, 5th Sept., 13th and 21st Oct. 1 in Yell on 29th Nov., and 2 on 11th Dec. One at Spiggie on 1st Sept., 22nd and 24th Oct, and one at Sumburgh on 25th Oct.
- RED GROUSE. Max. 11 at Sandwater 19th August.
- CORNCRAKE. Heard calling in Unst from 3 localities.
- MOORHEN. Max. 15 at Loch Hillwell on 22nd Sept.
- COOT. Singles at Loch of Tingwall 15th Dec., and Spiggie on 22nd Oct.
- GREY PLOVER. One in Unst on 7th Sept., and one at Virkie on 9th Nov.
- JACK SNIFE. 2 at Spiggie on 23rd Oct.
- WHIMBREL. Moving south from Unst 6th to 22nd Aug.
- BAR-TAILED GODWIT. 20 in Unst on 8th Sept., and at least 6 wintered at Virkie.
- GREEN SANDPIPER. One at Noss on 8th August (C.J.B.)
- GREENSHANK. One in Unst on 30th Aug., and 2 at Spiggie on 1st Sept.
- LITTLE STINT. 2 at Graven on 24th Aug., and 1 at Virkie on 6th Sept.
- CURLEW SANDPIPER. 2 at Virkie on 1st Sept. (C.J.B. & R.H.D.)
- SANDERLING. 12-22 in Unst, 30th Aug. to 8th Sept. 2 on 23rd Sept., and a late bird at Sumburgh on 20th Oct.
- RUFF. 4 at Graven on 24th Aug., and one in Unst on 31st Aug.
- GREY PHALAROPE. One found dead at Sellafirth, Yell on 18th Sept. (R.J.T.)
- GLAUCOUS GULL. 1st S. bird at Lerwick 2nd Sept. (R.H.D.)
Immatures in Unst 26th Oct., Yell on 3rd and 9th Nov., Voe, mainland on 31st Oct., and Sumburgh on 11th Nov.
- COMMON/ARCTIC TERNS. Last of the Unst breeding birds departed on 8th Sept., 43 there on 29th Sept. and 4 on 14th Oct.
- SANDWICH TERN. One in Unst on 22nd July (E.M. & M.S.)

LITTLE AUK. An oiled bird found in Unst on 1st Dec., was cleaned and released.

CUCKOO. Juvenile in Unst during last week of Aug.

WOOD PIGEON. Max. 15 at Kergord on 8th Dec.

LONG-EARED OWL. One at Kergord on 19th July. 2 at Lerwick, 3rd Nov. and one found dead at Lerwick on 11th Dec. (2, presumed this species, at Westsandwick on 8th Nov.).

SHORT-EARED OWL. One at Spiggie on 24th Nov.

SNOWY OWL. One near summit of Ronas Hill on 4th July (C.J.B.)

WRYNECK. One near Spiggie on 31st Aug (R.H.D.)

SWIFT. Mainland, 2 on 1st July and singles on 31st July and 10th August. Unst, 3 on 9th Sept., and singles on 14th July and 11th Sept.

SWALLOW. Pairs attempted to breed at Haroldswick and Mid-Yell, both unsuccessful.

RAVEN. A gathering of 46 at Boddam Voe, Dunrossness on 1st Sept. (R.H.D.)

CARRION CROW. One at Sandwick on 27th Oct.

ROOK. Flocks up to 40 in Whiteness area in autumn.

JACKDAW. Max. 40 at Kergord on 8th Dec., and one in Unst on 9th Nov.

FIELDFARE. Small influxes on mainland, 19th, 23rd and 26th Oct., singles in Unst on 5th and 6th Oct., but main arrivals on 27th Oct., when large numbers on Mainland, 50 in Unst and large flock were reported arriving in Yell on evening of 26th Oct.

REDWING. First on mainland, 3rd Oct., and single in Unst on 4th Oct. Influxes on mainland on 14th, 16th Oct., and large numbers on 3rd Nov. Peak of ca. 100 in Unst on 25th Oct.

BLACKBIRD. Small numbers seen on mainland on 15th and 26th Oct., and large influxes on 27th Oct., and 3rd November. A large movement noted in Unst on evening of 26th Oct., and many in Yell during first week of Nov.

WHEATEAR. Small numbers in Unst, Sept., and Oct., except 21 on 11th Sept. Last seen 31st Oct. A large influx on mainland on 24th Sept. and late birds on 3rd and 10th Nov.

WHINCHAT. 2 at Sandwick on 2nd Sept., and one at Spiggie on 2nd Sept. Singles in Unst on 1st-3rd and 8th Sept.

STONECHAT. ♂ at Urie Lingey, Yell on 2nd Nov. (R.J.T.)

REDSTART. Small numbers in Unst from 31st Aug., to 4th Oct., peak 4 on 4th-6th Sept. Singles on mainland on 3rd, 6th Sept, 2nd Oct., and 3rd Nov.

- BLACKCAP. Singles on mainland on 27th Sept., 5th and 8th Oct.
- GARDEN WARBLER. One on 29th Aug. and 2 on 3rd Oct. in Unst. 2 on 1st and 9th, one on 2nd and 16th Sept., at Whiteness. Singles at Spiggie on 31st Aug., and 2nd Sept., and one at Quendale on 1st Sept.
- WHITETHROAT. Singles at Whiteness on 26th Aug., and 2nd Sept.
- LESSER WHITETHROAT. One at Whiteness, 19th Oct.
- BARRED WARBLER. One at Mid Yell in last week of Sept. (R.J.T.)
- WILLOW WARBLER. In Unst, 2 on 16th, 1 on 24th, 1 or 2 on most days 30th Aug. to 11th Sept. One at Spiggie on 31st Aug., and 6 there on 2nd Sept.
- CHIFFCHAFF. Singles in Unst on 24th, 25th Sept., and 2 there on 2nd and 1 on 5th Oct.
- GOLDCREST. Singles on mainland 8th, 31st Oct., 1st, 4th, and 6th Nov., and 3 on 3rd Nov. Singles in Unst on 6th Oct., 1st and 4th Nov.
- SPOTTED FLYCATCHER. One in Unst on 8th Sept., and singles at Spiggie on 1st and 2nd Sept.
- PIED FLYCATCHER. Odd birds in Unst from 11th Aug., to 20th Oct., peaks of 2 on 31st Aug., and 3 on 1st Sept. One on mainland on 11th Oct.
- WAXWING. One at Lerwick on 25th Oct., 14 at Voe on 2nd Nov., 3 at Lerwick on 3rd and 4th Nov. (D.C.) In Unst, 14 on 2nd, 10 on 3rd, 16 on 4th, 22 on 5th, 12 on 6th, 1 on 7th, heard on 8th, 3 on 11th and 1 on 16th Nov. 2 in Yell on 28th Oct., and 5 on Fetlar on 2nd Nov.
- GREAT GREY SHRIKE. One near Loch of Tingwall on 19th Oct.
- REDPOLL. 5 mealy birds at Spiggie on 10th Nov.
- BULLFINCH. Singles in Unst, 1st-6th and 16th Nov. (E.M. & M.S.). 2 at Lerwick, 10th Nov. (D.C.)
- CROSSBILL. Seen in Unst regularly 14th July-9th Sept., max. 12+ on 16th July. Small flock at Kergord on 16th and 19th July. 3 at Lerwick on 20th July and 3 at Weisdale on 30th July. 2 at Tingwall on 1st and 1 at Urafirth on 17th Sept., and 2 late birds at Lerwick on 1st Nov.
- CHAFFINCH. One in Unst 23rd Oct., and small flocks noted on Mainland on 30th Oct. Noted in Yell on Oct. 23rd.
- BRAMBLING. Singles in Unst on 10th, 26th Oct., and 1st-9th Nov. First noted on Mainland on 16th Oct., influx on 26th Oct., small numbers present until 7th Nov.
- CORN BUNTING. Small flock in Yell on 7th, 19th and 21st Dec.
- REED BUNTING. One in Unst 28th Nov. Singles at Quendale on 6th Oct., and 3rd Nov.

LAPLAND BUNTING. 2 on 3rd Oct. in Unst. (E.M. & M.S.)

SNOW BUNTING. Singles in Unst from 11th Sept., 24 on 3rd Oct., and max. in Nov. was ca. 50.

TREE SPARROW. One at Mid Yell Oct./Nov., and 3 at Spiggie on 10th Nov.

R.H.D.

40. Birds from the Good Shepherd

GRAHAM BUNDY

Sea-watching has become increasingly popular in recent years, but the observatory logs have only sparse notes regarding the crossing between the isle and Grutness. It is hoped that this short essay describing what was probably a typical autumn trip, will stimulate future visitors to make a constant watch and note everything seen, however seemingly insignificant.

On 3rd September 1963, birds were not so much in evidence as on the return trip to Grutness described below. Fulmars and Gannets were constantly in view, especially the former although numbers dwindle away from the coasts. A ♂ Redstart flew around the boat several times before making off in a westerly direction, this was the only passerine noted on the outward trip. The only petrels encountered were 2 Leach's, distinguished from the smaller, shorter winged Storm by the characteristic buoyant flight.

The Good Shepherd left Fair Isle at 0645 hrs. B.S.T. on 17th September, with Alan and Tony Vittery, John Jones and myself perched in the lifeboat making a constant watch during the buoyant three hours journey to Grutness, about 25 miles north.

Although Shags greatly outnumber Cormorants in Shetland, up to 14 of the latter were seen flying south together. A single Red-throated Diver flew south followed by two larger divers, almost certainly Great Northern. The only duck, apart from the usual raft of Eider, about the coasts, was a single Wigeon flying south quite high over the sea. About half-way across we encountered a loose flock of Storm Petrels, at least 20 individuals being concerned, with them were two Leach's Petrels. A Sooty Shearwater swung closely by and went south, while shortly afterwards two glided up quite close to the stern before banking away and also going south. The large colonies of auks and Kittiwakes have mostly dispersed from the breeding cliffs in this area by September. Altogether 17 Kittiwakes were seen, mostly immature, while only 7 Puffins and one Guillemot were located, all on the sea close to the boat. An exception to this

of course is the Black Guillemot, which is common around the islands, but none was seen on the crossing. A single Lesser Black-backed Gull of the *graellsii* race flew south while we were still about half-way across, followed by a "Comic" Tern and two Sandwich Terns, the latter being a rarity in Shetland. Six Great Skuas were seen away from the coasts, the majority of skuas having by now dispersed. The only passerines were six Meadow Pipits and two Wheatears, all of which after flying up to the boat proceeded flying south west into a moderate wind, these all being seen about 13 miles from the nearest land.

Space does not permit inclusion of observations made on the St. Clair between Aberdeen and Lerwick, although a watch on that steamer can also be of interest. It is hoped that future visitors will note anything of interest en route to Fair Isle. The boatmen on the Good Shepherd will hand any notes made on the return journey to the warden.

FAIR ISLE BIRD OBSERVATORY

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

Roads Bird Trap Boundaries

