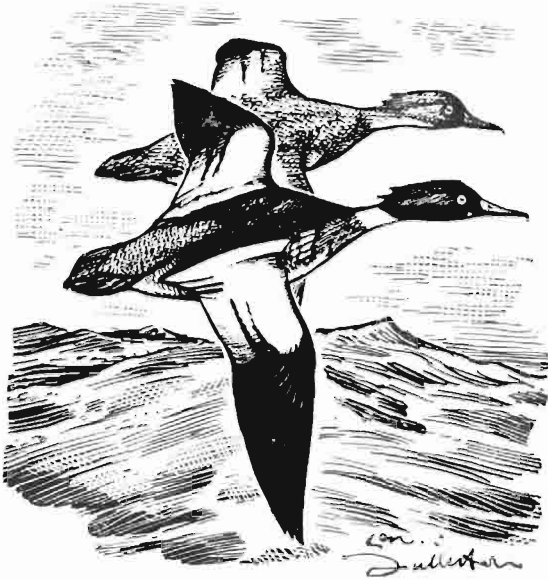


# SCOTTISH BIRDS



The Journal of  
The Scottish Ornithologists' Club

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*Vol. I. No. 2*

*Winter 1958*

Reprinted 1973

## THE SCOTTISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

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THE Scottish Ornithologists' Club was founded in 1936 and membership is open to all interested in Scottish ornithology. Meetings are held during the winter months in Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and St Andrews, at which lectures by prominent ornithologists are given and films exhibited. Excursions are organised in the summer to places of ornithological interest.

The aims and objects of the Club are to (a) encourage and direct the study of Scottish Ornithology in all its branches; (b) co-ordinate the efforts of Scottish Ornithologists and encourage co-operation between field and indoor worker; (c) encourage ornithological research in Scotland in co-operation with other organisations; (d) hold meetings at centres to be arranged at which Lectures are given, films exhibited, and discussions held; and (e) publish or arrange for the publication of statistics and information with regard to Scottish ornithology.

There are no entry fees for Membership. The Annual subscription is 25/-; or 7/6 in the case of Members under twenty-one years of age or in the case of University undergraduates who satisfy the Council of their status as such at the time of which their subscriptions fall due in any year. "Scottish Birds" is issued free to members.

The affairs of the Club are controlled by a Council composed of the Hon. Presidents, the President, the Vice-President, the Hon. Treasurer, one Representative of each Branch Committee appointed annually by the Branch, and ten other Members of the Club elected at an Annual General Meeting. Two of the last named retire annually by rotation and shall not be eligible for re-election for one year.

A Scottish Bird Records' Committee, appointed by the Council, produce an annual Report on "Ornithological Changes in Scotland".

Full details are given in the Syllabus of Lectures Card of the names of the present Office-bearers of the Club.

An official tie with small white Crested Tits embroidered on it can be obtained in dark green or navy blue by Members only from Messrs R. W. Forsyth Ltd., Princes Street, Edinburgh, or 5 Renfield Street, Glasgow, C.2, at a cost of 13s 9d post free. A small brooch in silver and blue can be obtained for the use of Members of the Club. Price 2s 6d each from the Hon. Secretary, or from Hon. Branch Secretaries.

Forms of application for Membership, copy of the Club Constitution, and other literature is obtainable from the Club Secretary, Mr George Waterston, 5 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh 2.

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### CLUB LIBRARY

The Club Library is now housed in the Secretary's Office at 5 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh, 2. The collection has recently been augmented by several gifts, and the Council appeals to Members to donate books and periodicals which they may wish to dispose of. We have no volumes of the "Ibis" prior to 1944. The Library is open during office hours for reference. Books or magazines, of which we have duplicate copies, can be obtained on loan.

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### NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

All notes dealing with birds in the eastern Lowlands, from Berwick-on-Tweed to Dundee, should be submitted to A. T. Macmillan, 66 Spylaw Bank Road, Edinburgh, 13; all other contributions to M. F. M. Meiklejohn, 20 Falkland Street, Glasgow, W.2. It would be helpful if notes were typewritten, if possible, and double spaced.

# SCOTTISH BIRDS

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Edited by M. F. M. MEIKLEJOHN, with the assistance of D. G. ANDREW and A. T. MACMILLAN. Business Editor, ARTHUR J. SMITH. Cover design (Red-breasted Mergansers) by LEN FULLERTON. *Published quarterly.*

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## Editorial

THIS second number of *Scottish Birds* will be seen to be larger than the first, thanks to the many members of the S.O.C. who have sent us their notes. These, as will be seen, are of high quality and interest, although we must make a request for greater geographical and chronological precision: to say that a bird occurred at Milton on Friday is not enough. Which Milton and which Friday is what is required. This number has brought the back records almost completely up to date, and it is now hoped to publish future ones in the issue of *Scottish Birds* after which they have been submitted.

The most striking ornithological event of 1958 has also been the most depressing—the attempted nesting of the Osprey and the subsequent destruction of its eggs. This has also been a “Crossbill year”, and drift migration was especially remarkable at the beginning of September.

With the publication of *Scottish Birds*, the *Edinburgh Bird Bulletin* and *Glasgow Bird Bulletin*, which have played such a useful part in Scottish ornithology in recent years, are committing a generous suicide. We hope to publish a short account of these periodicals in the next issue.

Again thanks are due to Mr Len Fullerton for his admirable cover design. It should be explained that it is intended to have a different typically Scottish bird for each quarter of the year.

Thanks should be given to all contributors, especially to Mr Alistair Smith, who has sent a voluminous collection of notes, many of which are printed here, and to Mr Finlay McIntosh, for his accurate correction of typed drafts.

## THE CONFERENCE OF THE SCOTTISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB 1958

The annual conference of the S.O.C. at Perth was quite as enjoyable and remarkable as usual. The week-end, 24th to 26th October, was fine and Perthshire was at its best, especially for the outings on Saturday afternoon. Nobody seemed to see anything very startling, but there was talk afterwards of geese, gadwall, godwits and black-necked grebes. There were perhaps fewer visitors from England than in past years, but we were glad to welcome a party of ornithologists from Northern Ireland who surprised us by their knowledge of the birds of Antarctica as well as their excitement over a short-eared owl on the Eden estuary. We worked our guests hard. Mr Kenneth Williamson gave a masterly summary of the work of British bird observatories and suggested some of the lines of future research, especially in the taxonomy of the living bird as opposed to the museum skin. Mr Derrick England brought an exhibition of his magnificent bird portraits, mostly of Scandinavian species, and also showed some remarkable colour films. Mr James McGeoch showed us the results of his latest visit, this time with a ciné camera, to North Rona and Sulisgeir, and further enhanced our high opinion of him as a photographer. Although taken under very difficult conditions and as yet unedited, this film contained some of the best material seen by an S.O.C. audience for many years. Two other talks, both illustrated with ciné film, took us to Antarctica with Mr Cecil Scotland and to Iceland with Miss Valerie Thom. There is no doubt that ornithologists travel more than most and that we are fortunate to have so many members and guests who are able now with the help of films to share their experiences with us on their return. An informal showing of slides on the first evening of the Conference took us to the 1958 International Congress at Helsingfors with Mr Ian Munro, to the bird observatories of south Sweden with Dr David Jenkins, and even to Antarctica and the Antipodes.

The undoubted success of the Conference was due largely to the hard work of the Secretary and the efficiency of the Chairman. Sir Charles Connell steered the increased subscription through the A.G.M. with persuasive logic, and *Scottish Birds* received a unanimous blessing. We parted with our old-established Treasurer, Mr A. G. S. Bryson, with sorrow and gratitude, and welcomed Mr Robert Hillcoat in his place. Sir Charles also conducted our affairs at the Annual Dinner in a way which almost compensated for the shortage of wine waiters, and the postprandial speeches were well up to the

expected standard. To Mr England must go the credit for quite the best story of a vicar's daughter we have heard for some time; to Miss Winifred Flower a bouquet for a polished and witty reply and a personal testimony to the social value of the fraternity of ornithosophists all over the world. Dr Ian Pennie laughed as heartily as the rest of us at his own Highland humour; and Mr James Ferguson-Lees replied for the guests with a plaintive reminder that only the latest alteration to the Constitution approved two hours before had voted him out of the Club and into the status of a guest whose subscription was about two years in arrears. After a slick tie-changing demonstration to affirm publicly his intention to mend his ways, he proposed a counter-toast to the Club, coupled with the names of Professor M. F. M. Meiklejohn and Mr George Waterston. In drinking it we pledged our co-operation to them both. We hope that in future some practical help will be given to the Secretary in organising the Conference so that he too can be allowed to enjoy it as much as the rest of us always do. It is after all thanks to his organisation that it has now reached proportions such that nobody could be expected to run the whole show single-handed.

C. K. M.

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## CORRESPONDENCE

With reference to the Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus* in Wester Ross (*antea* 1: 12), I have been checking up general west coast distribution and find that, though Baxter and Rintoul (*The Geographical Distribution and Status of Birds in Scotland*) give no record for Wester Ross, Harvie-Brown and Macpherson (*A Fauna of the North-west Highlands and Skye*) do so. They mention one sent from Braemore for preservation and, with less conviction, a sight record of "a flight" at Inveran. They also refer to a skin from Kyleakin Lighthouse which, as I have checked on large scale maps, stands on a twenty-acre odd island, forming part of the Parish of Lochalsh. This record, therefore, also belongs to Wester Ross.

J. W. CAMPBELL.

## REVIEW

WILD VENTURE, A Bird Watcher in Scotland, by KENNETH RICHMOND. pp.223. 25 photographs. London, Geoffrey Bles, 1958. 21/-.

Both the title of this book and its subtitle are apt: to its author Scottish bird-watching is a great adventurous enterprise, an adventure of the mind as well as of the body. Mr Kenneth Richmond's physical aspirations, sometimes of the Ben-Narnain-before-breakfast type, are matched by an equally agile mind, which is constantly re-examining those hoary old conceptions with which ornithology is littered, and adding spicy unorthodox arguments of his own.

As an ornithologist Mr Richmond must be one of the best all-rounders in Britain to-day. He studies great birds of prey and small passerines, wild fowl and game birds, waders and seafowl with equal enthusiasm; no bird is dull to him. Courtship and nest-finding, feeding and rearing young, the effect of meteorological considerations on such widely different topics as drift migration and the breeding distribution of the Ptarmigan, attempts to enter into the mind of various sick and wounded birds which he has nursed and grown to know intimately, rare birds and common birds—all are of interest to him. He indulges in motoring, mountaineering, university lecturing and broadcasting; numerous bird essays from a fertile pen; exquisite paintings in water colour and now, quite recently, bird photography—all these facets of the man and his book compel one to classify him alongside Wilsons Phalarope as a *rare avis*.

Besides the last named species, the Storm Petrel, Gannet and various waders are dealt with under "Sea and Shore Birds"; the Whooper Swan, six species of goose, the Red-throated and Black-throated Divers and the Red-necked Phalarope are discussed under "Wild Fowl and Waders"; Black Grouse, Ptarmigan and Capercaillie under "Game Birds"; and Golden Eagle, Buzzard, Hen Harrier, Goshawk, Iceland Falcon and Short-eared Owl under "Predators".

The book, including the dust-cover, is illustrated by photographs of varying technical quality. A number of them are of tame or sickly birds.

Finally—or should one not say "firstly"?—a graphic introduction describes how, through the eyes of this Tees-sider, the book is inspired as much by an enthusiasm for the Caledonian sternness and wildness as for the birds that are found there.

C. E. P.



Group outside Museum and Art Gallery, Perth, 1958

*Photograph by D. K. McLAREN.*

## REVIEW OF ORNITHOLOGICAL CHANGES IN SCOTLAND IN 1957

EVELYN V. BAXTER

The records published in 1957 are not very many nor very outstanding. The Scottish Birds Records Committee of the Scottish Ornithologists' Club have now reviewed them and present their report.

### BIRDS NEW TO SCOTLAND

#### RED-BREASTED GOOSE *Branta ruficollis*.

This species is now accepted for the Scottish List. One was seen in early October 1956 on a firth in N.E. Scotland (*Field* 1956: 1124), and what may have been the same bird was seen on the Beaully Firth on 20th January 1957 (*Scot. Nat.* 69: 118). Breeds in central north palearctic region.

#### SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER *Calidris pusilla*.

One trapped on Fair Isle, 28th May 1957 (*F.I.B.O. Bull.* 3: 111, *Scot. Nat.* 69: 145-147). Breeds arctic America.

#### COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto*.

A pair at Covesea, Morayshire, June 1957 (*Scot. Nat.* 69: 188). Part of the westward movement from the Near East. (See also under "Breeding Records").

#### GREAT GREY SHRIKE (Transcaspians race *Lanius excubitor pallidirostris*).

One trapped on Fair Isle, 21st September 1956 (*F.I.B.O. Bull.* 3: 111, *British Birds* 50: 246-249). First British record. Breeds Transcaspians.

### BIRDS NEW TO AREAS AND COUNTIES

#### LEACH'S PETREL *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*.

In the *Scot. Nat.* 65: 186 one was recorded from Househill-wood, Glasgow S.W. and referred to Lanarkshire; it should have been Renfrewshire (*Scot. Nat.* 69: 53). It is not the first record for Renfrew (see McWilliam, *Birds of the Firth of Clyde*, p. 101).

#### MANX SHEARWATER *Procellaria puffinus*.

The Committee cannot accept the record of one seen on Loch Leven, 25th July 1957 (*Field* 1957: 279).

#### SOOTY SHEARWATER *Procellaria grisea*.

One seen between Girvan and Ailsa, 16th June 1955, is the first record for Ayrshire (*Scot. Nat.* 69: 53).



**NIGHT HERON** *Nycticorax nycticorax*.

One seen at Dunfermline, 16th July 1957 (*Edin. Bird Bull.* 7: 79) was almost certainly a wanderer from the Edinburgh Zoo.

**SPOONBILL** *Platalea leucorodia*.

One seen at Tynninghame, East Lothian, 13th October 1957, and an immature bird (possibly the same) near Alloa between 14th November and 8th December 1957 (*Edin. Bird Bull.* 8: 9). The latter is the first record for South Fife and Clackmannan.

**AMERICAN WIGEON** *Anas americana*.

A male seen at Meikle Loch of Slains on 4th and 5th May 1957 (*Scot. Nat.* 69: 196) is new to Aberdeen.

**EIDER** *Somateria mollissima*.

Recorded off Grangemouth (*Edin. Bird Bull.* 7: 26). New to East Stirling.

**BARNACLE GOOSE** *Branta leucopsis*.

One seen near Ettrickbridge, 20th October 1957 (*Edin. Bird Bull.* 8: 12) is the first record for Selkirk.

**BEWICK'S SWAN** *Cygnus columbianus bewickii*.

One found dead on the Isle of May, 15th April 1956 (*Scot. Nat.* 69: 136) is new to the island.

**BUZZARD** *Buteo buteo*.

One seen at Loch Leven, 14th September 1957 (*Edin. Bird Bull.* 7: 80) is new to Kinross.

**HOBBY** *Falco subbuteo*.

One seen in Orkney, 26th June 1957 (*F.I.B.O. Bull.* 3: 197) is new to the island group.

**HONEY BUZZARD** *Pernis apivorus*.

A pair, N. Fife, April to 23rd July 1949. One shot. (*British Birds* 50: 142). The first definite record for N. Fife.

**WOOD SANDPIPER** *Tringa glareola*.

One seen near Elgin on 31st August and 1st September 1957 (*Scot. Nat.* 69: 184), and one seen at Chanonry Ness, Black Isle, on 3rd October 1956 (*British Birds* 50: 120) are new to Moray and Easter Ross respectively.

**SPOTTED REDSHANK** *Tringa erythropus*.

One seen on Islay on 6th December 1955 (*Scot. Nat.* 69: 125) is new to the Inner Hebrides.

**TEMMINCK'S STINT** *Calidris temminckii*.

One seen at Waulkmill Dam Reservoir is the first record for Renfrewshire (*Glasgow Bird Bull.* 6: 27) but not, as claim-

ed, the first for the Clyde area, as the Committee upholds the Ayrshire record of 1934 (*British Birds* 28: 209).

LONG-TAILED SKUA *Stercorarius longicaudus*.

One seen at Fair Isle on 23rd June 1956 (*Scot. Nat.* 69: 195) is new to the island.

BLACK TERN *Chlidonias niger*.

Eight near Chanonry Ness, Black Isle, on 20th October 1956 (*British Birds* 50: 120) are new to the Moray area and Easter Ross.

CRESTED TIT *Parus cristatus*.

One seen near Dornoch on 13th October 1956 (*Scot. Nat.* 69: 57) is new to S.E. Sutherland.

BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros*.

An adult male seen at Galashiels on 25th March 1957 (*Edin. Bird Bull.* 7: 60) is new to Selkirk.

GREY-HEADED WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava thunbergi*.

One seen on St Kilda on 7th July 1956 (*Scot. Nat.* 69: 109) is new to the Outer Hebrides.

LAPLAND BUNTING *Calcarius lapponicus*.

One seen on the Moor of Forvie on 30th September 1956 (*Scot. Nat.* 69: 60) is new to Dee and to Aberdeenshire.

#### BREEDING RECORDS

FULMAR *Fulmarus glacialis*.

Now established as a breeding species in Arran (J. A. Gibson, *The Birds of the Isle of Arran*. Rothesay: Bute Newspapers Ltd. 1956).

CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*.

Several pairs bred on the Lamb, East Lothian, in 1957 (*Edin. Bird Bull.* 7: 78). This is the first breeding record for the county.

GREATER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus*.

Bred in 1953 on Caerlaverock Merse and east of mouth of R. Lochar; one pair bred on Caerlaverock in 1956 (*Scot. Nat.* 69: 186-7). First breeding records for Dumfries.

HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus*.

Bred on Caerlaverock Merse in 1953, and probably in 1954 and 1955; several pairs in 1956 (*Scot. Nat.* 69: 186). First breeding record for Dumfries.

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo*.

At least six pairs bred at Carron Valley Reservoir in 1957

(*Edin. Bird Bull.* 7: 82), and has bred on Caerlaverock Merse in 1951 and subsequently, about 50 pairs in 1956 (*Scot. Nat.* 69: 186). These are the first breeding records for East Stirling and Dumfries respectively.

**COLLARED DOVE** *Streptopelia decaocto*.

A pair bred at Covesea, Morayshire, in 1957 (*Scot. Nat.* 69: 188). This is the first breeding record for Scotland.

**GREEN WOODPECKER** *Picus viridis*.

On 9th July 1957, three if not four birds were seen beside a recently used nest-hole on Archerfield estate near Dirleton (*Edin. Bird Bull.* 8: 13). The first breeding record far East Lothian. On 10th May an anxious female bird was seen near a freshly excavated nest-hole in Penicuik House grounds, Midlothian (*Edin. Bird Bull.* 8: 14).

**WREN** *Troglodytes troglodytes*.

A pair bred on the Isle of May in 1957 (*Edin. Bird Bull.* 8: 48). First breeding record for the island.

**REDSTART** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*.

Seen in summer and feeding newly fledged young at Paisley in 1956 (*Scot. Nat.* 69: 60). First breeding record for East Renfrew.

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## SHORT NOTES

### BLACK-NECKED GREBE IN ABERDEENSHIRE

While making a duck count on 16th April 1958 at one of the small lochans on Forvie Moor I saw a Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps caspicus* in full breeding plumage. It was feeding hard and I was able to approach within a hundred yards, and kept it under observation for half an hour. I last saw the grebe on 20th April.

ELIZABETH A. GARDEN.

(What was probably the same bird was seen by Mr Alistair J. M. Smith on the following day.—Ed.)

### SPOTTED REDSHANK IN MORAYSHIRE AND NAIRNSHIRE

On 8th September 1956, near the boundary between Moray and Nairn, opposite the Old Bar of Findhorn, I saw a Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus* feeding on the saltings with several Lapwings *Vanellus vanellus*. I flushed it and it rose to several hundred feet, and circled calling its lovely ringing

*Chee-wit* call over and over again. Now it was in Morayshire and now in Nairnshire, a most convenient state of affairs, as there seems to be no previous record from Nairnshire.

Three days later I put up a Spotted Redshank from the mud at the mouth of the River Nairn. It rose high, calling, and headed towards the west beach. Presumably this was the same bird.

ALISTAIR J. M. SMITH.

(Mr Smith has supplied a satisfactory plumage description of this bird.—Ed.)

#### DOWITCHER IN BERWICKSHIRE

On 29th September 1958 Sydney J. Clarke and I watched a Buzzard *Buteo buteo* soaring over the moor on Hule Moss, Berwickshire, and, at the same time, saw an unusual wader fly up from the moor, obviously flushed by the Buzzard overhead. At first sight, from a distance of about 150 yards, it suggested a Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*, being about the same size and showing a very large area of white on the rump and tail. A very long bill was seen and we both thought we saw bars on the tail. One of us (W.M.) thought there was a good suggestion of brown colour on the wings.

The bird was seen to land among some heather so we set out to try and stalk up to it. Within a few minutes we found it and were able to get within twenty feet! The bird seemed very tired, and thus we were able to take a description of it, as well as to draw pictures.

The same afternoon we returned to the site with Colonel W. M. Logan Home, but failed to find the bird; on the 31st, however, after dragging the Moss with a rope for about three hours, we flushed the bird again, but it unfortunately went down among some reeds which we could not get at as it was too boggy. This was the last we saw of the bird.

We concluded that the bird was a Dowitcher *Limnodromus griseus*, which has been recorded three times previously in Scotland, but not from Berwickshire or the Tweed area.

The following points were noted: size of Greenshank, but stout in shape. Bill very long and straight, dark brown or black in colour. The stout body was supported by very short legs, which were of a dark colour, but could not be seen very clearly on account of the heather. Crown, nape and hind neck dark brown. Face greyish white and front of neck greyish, shading into buff on upper breast. A very small dark stripe ran through the eye. Each of the feathers on the upper back and wing coverts had dark centres and were edged with buff and brown. The upper breast was very slightly tinged with brownish buff, shading towards the vent, which was very white. There were a few streaks of buff on the flanks. The bird

held its neck erect when it was alarmed or when it was among the longer heather.

W. MURRAY.

(Mr Murray has submitted sketches which leave no possible doubt of the bird's correct identification. They show two features not mentioned in the written account above, a pale eyestripe and the colour of the primaries, which appear as dark brown, some of the feathers having lighter patches.—Ed.)

### BAR-TAILED GODWITS MIGRATING THROUGH MORAY FIRTH

Between four and five p.m. on 2nd September 1956, from the east beach at Nairn I witnessed a large scale migration of Bar-tailed Godwits *Limosa lapponica*. My attention was attracted to this movement when some 1,500 godwits fell out of the skies at a terrific speed and alighted in a long line on the tide-line far out on the sand which was exposed at low tide. I searched the sky with binoculars and saw parties of this species flying at a great height from north-east to south-west along the Moray Firth. During the hour that I watched this spectacle I estimated that over 3,500 birds had passed. These were joined by the majority of those which had landed on the beach. I believe that the movement was in progress before I noticed it, and when I left it was still going on.

ALISTAIR J. M. SMITH.

### SEMI-PALMATED SANDPIPER ON THE ISLE OF MAY

On 19th September 1957 on the Isle of May the wind was in the north-west and there had been north-westerly gales on the second and third days before that. In the afternoon I flushed a tiny wader from a small pool among the rocks of the South Ness. It flew towering into the air and, on account of this, I took it at first for a Temminck's Stint *Erolia temmincki*. but it uttered a call-note different from that of that bird. It had probably only just reached the island since it had not been at the place at which I flushed it half an hour before and, when it alighted again at another pool, it went to sleep. I managed to approach within ten yards, and watched it for about twenty minutes with 12 x 50 binoculars, before it became alarmed and flew off to the North Ness. Here brief views of it were obtained by N. G. Campbell, Miss W. U. Flower, M. E. French, A. C. Geddes and J. E. King, who were at least able to hear the bird's distinctive note and see its distinctive back pattern. It was not found again.

*Size.* Certainly smaller than a Dunlin *Erolia alpina*. Seemed larger than Little Stint *Erolia minuta*, with longer bill and legs in proportion. This may be illusory with regard to the

legs, since the bird was standing on dry land, whereas the Little Stint is nearly always seen wading. *The Handbook* gives the same length for the tarsus in the Little Stint and the Semi-palmated Sandpiper (which I believe the Isle of May bird to be).

*Shape.* A rather stout and upright little sandpiper. The wings looked slender in flight.

*Voice.* An abrupt *chip* constantly uttered in flight. This description, written in my notebook at the time, has almost precisely similar wording to that in *The Handbook*. Mr James Anton, who knows the Semi-palmated Sandpiper in Bermuda, tells me that the note is the feature by which the species is most readily identified.

*Habits.* On the Isle of May frequented shallow pools of fresh water among rocks. When flushed towered like a Temminck's Stint.

*Plumage.* Crown and nape grey, flecked darker, crown being darker than nape. Paler buffish feathers on sides of crown, forming faint line visible when head lowered to preen. Face pale buffish grey. White eyestripe, broader behind eye. White patch under eye. Chin whitish. Neck and throat pale grey on sides, whiter in centre. Grey suffusion on upper breast ("young birds have greyish buff suffusion right across", I. C. T. Nisbet *in litt.* See also Shortt and Snyder, *Arctic Birds of America*). Buff patch at side of breast. Back not seen so well as bird was consistently trying to sleep until frightened away by some unknown agent, but predominantly blackish, with very conspicuous V—the most noticeable plumage character—meeting on rump: this V was white at the shoulders, yellowish lower down. The white feathers were raised by the sleeping bird's bill, being then very conspicuous. Underparts white. Dark colouring at bend of wing (see *Handbook* IV, 249). Wing coverts scaly looking and black with greyish-buff edgings, becoming greyer lower down, not so yellow as in the Little Stint. The visible part of the primary coverts, when wing closed, white, so that line of demarcation between them and flanks difficult to perceive. Primaries black, about same length as tail, but probably a little longer ("the extension of the wings beyond the tail is a better character than I first thought, always conspicuous in Baird's, and only rarely so in Semipalmated, though sufficient often to make it unreliable as a clinching character." I. C. T. Nisbet *in litt.*). Secondaries dark with buff edgings. Tail black, outer feathers edged whitish. No prominent wing bar. Bill and legs black; bill slightly swollen at tip. Eye dark. The feet were unfortunately not seen, being concealed by a rise in the rock on which the bird was standing.

*Identity.* I believe the bird to have been a Semi-palmated Sandpiper *Erolia pusilla*, probably, from the colouring of the

secondaries and breast, a juvenile. Especially in the colour of the breast, a feature not mentioned in *The Handbook*, information from I. C. T. Nisbet supports my identification. There is one previous record of the species from Scotland.

*Similar species.* I am too familiar with *Erolia minuta* and *temmincki* to confuse the Isle of May bird with either. From other American species of *Erolia* with which it is liable to be confused (*minutilla*, *bairdii* and *mauri*) it seems to be distinguished by the *call-note* and *swollen tip to the bill*. In addition from the American Stint *minutilla* by leg colour, lack of streaking on breast, buff breast colouring only on sides, and white feathering in dorsal V. From Baird's Sandpiper *bairdii* by greyish, rather than buffy, head back pattern, size and lack of streaking on breast. The Western Sandpiper *mauri* is rather a harder problem, but, in addition to the bill shape and call-note mentioned above, it lacked the warm brown nape and chestnut in the scapulars mentioned as diagnostic by Nisbet.

I would like to express my gratitude to I. C. T. Nisbet for the use of his field notes on American "peeps".

M. F. M. MEIKLEJOHN.

#### LITTLE GULL OFF EAST LOTHIAN COAST IN SUMMER

On the way to the Bass Rock on 6th August 1958 I saw a Little Gull *Larus minutus* in full adult plumage.

E. A. R. ENNION.

#### COLLARED DOVES IN MORAYSHIRE

The population of Collared Doves *Streptopelia decaocto* in Morayshire has now, 17th September 1958, increased to seven, four having been hatched this year, and I rather suspect that the old hen is sitting again. They came through the winter extremely well and seem to be quite at home. An interesting point is that I have never seen them more than 200 yards away, and they seem to mingle with the Wood Pigeons *Columba palumbus* on very amicable terms.

A. ADAM.

#### LITTLE OWL NESTING IN SCOTLAND

Mr William Fergie, the local postman, said that on 1st July 1958, and also on three days of the previous week, he had seen a very small owl near Edrom in Berwickshire. Together with my friend W. T. Murray, I immediately followed up this statement and on the same day (1st July) found a nest in an old ash tree about four feet from the ground. In it were an

adult female Little Owl *Athene noctua* and two almost fully fledged chicks. The nest was at the bottom of a cavity two feet deep and the tree was growing by the side of a quiet dis-used country lane. The ground surrounding the site consisted mainly of open fields where grew a variety of crops (oats, barley, turnips and potatoes). The only trees around were a few growing on the side of the lane. Armed with leather gloves, we removed the birds from the nest and ringed all three. The female (I suspect it was the female as it had a very obvious brood-patch) was remarkably quiet for an owl, and throughout the ringing and examination remained very calm: but the two chicks were the very opposite, scratching and snapping their beaks. One of them hissed like a cat. Inside the nest we found three pellets, which consisted entirely of the wing-cases of beetles *Carabus* spp. as well as the remains of an adult Song Thrush *Turdus ericetorum*.

The plumage corresponded exactly to published descriptions. The only plumage difference between the adult and young was in the underparts which in the latter were grey-white and unmarked. The eyes of the adult were brighter, being lemon-coloured and very clear; this, and the flat forehead gave the bird a very fierce expression. The eyes of the young were greyer.

The birds were also seen by Sydney J. Clarke, A. Cowieson, W. M. Logan Home, R. S. Murray and M. K. Young.

Breeding of the Little Owl in Scotland had been expected but this is the first nest to be found.

W. MURRAY.

#### SHORT-EARED OWL NESTING IN MORAYSHIRE

Towards the end of May 1939 I found the nest of the Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*, containing six eggs, on the east side of Birkenhill, near New Elgin, Morayshire. The nest was among heather, just clear of the plantation of Scots Pine which borders the marsh on the east side. The bird sat on four eggs for well over a week, when these suddenly disappeared. During the months of May and June in 1938 and 1939 a pair of Short-eared Owls were seen frequently in this vicinity.

There seems to be no previous breeding record for Morayshire.

ALISTAIR J. M. SMITH.

#### HOOPOES IN NORTH PERTH AND WEST INVERNESS

On 30th September 1958 N. Buttercase noticed an unusual bird at Borlick Farm, Aberfeldy. Subsequently it was seen daily in the vicinity of the steading. The weather at the time was unusually wet, even by this summer's standards, and the



bird appeared to be lethargic and distressed. On 3rd October, while perched in a tree, it allowed itself to be caught and it was identified as a Hoopoe *Upupa epops*. I saw it the next day, when it had revived somewhat and was said to have devoured some earthworms which had been provided. It was arranged for the Hoopoe to be freed when the weather improved, but unfortunately it died during the night of 4th October. I am indebted to A. Buttercase for bringing this occurrence to my notice.

There are a few old records of the Hoopoe in North Perth, but I have traced none for recent years, nor does it appear ever to have been detected previously in the Aberfeldy district or upper Strathhtay.

JAMES W. CAMPBELL.

In the early afternoon of 11th October 1958 I was being motored by a friend, Mr Russell Broom, up Glenloy, Inverness-shire, when a bird flew up from the side of the road which I instantly recognised as a Hoopoe *Upupa epops*. It alighted in an alder tree within twenty-five feet of the car and we watched it for about fifteen minutes. During this period it frequently erected its crest when the black tips showed very prominently. The very distinctive pattern of the black and white barring on the wings and tail was a very striking feature and contrasted strongly with the pinkish buff colour of the head, neck and breast. The long slender curved bill was also a distinctive feature of this bird, which I do not think could be confused in the field with any other British species. I was able to make a few quick sketches during the period of our observation.

J. A. ANDERSON.

(In *The Glasgow Herald* for 10th October 1958, Mr James Foster, giving details of identification, reports a Hoopoe from the Loch Treig area on 29th September, and one on 2nd, 3rd and 4th October from the Strone area, north of Fort William. Mr Foster suggests that these two records could apply to the same bird, and it is possible that Mr Anderson's bird was also the same.—Ed.)

#### WRYNECK IN SOUTH-EAST SUTHERLAND

As I was walking over an area of rough ground on the Dornoch golf-course, on the afternoon of 3rd September 1958, a slender brownish bird flitted up from the dense whin cover and perched on the topmost wire of the fence bordering the railway-line. For the moment I took the bird to be a Song Thrush *Turdus ericetorum*, owing, perhaps, to its rather elongated shape and passerine attitude when perched, but a closer examination revealed quickly the distinctive plumage markings of a Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*.

A minute or so later the bird flew on to the post of a fence, where it assumed a more upright posture, characteristic of bird-book portraits of the species. The outstanding details noted were the dark streaks extending from the nape through the mantle, the barred underparts and the rather long tail.

On that date and during the preceding few days weather conditions were highly favourable to migrational drift across the North Sea and many Wrynecks were recorded on the east coast of Britain.

D. MACDONALD.

### CRESTED TITS IN MORAYSHIRE

On several occasions during the months of October, November and January in 1945, 1946 and 1947, I encountered Crested Tits *Parus cristatus* among the Scots Pines and on the heather covered moor bordering the Spynie Canal, near Lossiemouth, Morayshire. I never saw less than four nor more than six, usually in company with mixed parties of Blue Tits *Parus caeruleus*, Coal Tits *Parus ater*, Goldcrests *Regulus regulus* and Tree Creepers *Certhia familiaris*. Once, on 12th January 1947, as I was waiting for the evening flight of duck in a dug-out quite close to the sea, a party of six Crested Tits came by feeding among the stunted heather. There was not a tree for at least a quarter of a mile.

I have never yet seen Crested Tits in or near the Spynie woods at any other time of the year and I feel that there may be a regular annual local migration of Speyside birds to this area during the winter.

ALISTAIR J. M. SMITH.

### BLACKCAP NESTING IN MORAYSHIRE

During the month of June 1939 I found the nest of a Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*, containing five eggs, on the Birkenhill, near New Elgin, Morayshire. The nest was situated about two and a half feet up in the centre of a clump of scrub birch with heather growing to eighteen inches. Two eggs were removed, one I regret to say by myself (at that time an enthusiastic egg-collector), the other by a friend.

The bird continued to sit and in due course three young hatched and reached the fledgling stage. At the time I found the nest I had never seen a Blackcap before, but during the fourteen days or so that I visited it regularly I saw both birds at close range on many occasions. Usually I had practically to remove the hen by force. From these experiences and my later familiarity with the species there can be no doubt as to the bird's identity.

ALISTAIR J. M. SMITH.

## LESSER WHITETHROATS IN SKYE AND WESTER ROSS

At 0745 hours, on 3rd June 1957, between Portree and Armadale, Isle of Skye, we both saw and heard singing a Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*.

JOHN IZZARD.  
H. P. MEDHURST.

On 6th and 7th June 1957, at Achintraid, Loch Kishorn, Wester Ross, I saw a Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca* and heard it singing.

P. W. G. GUNN.

(These observers have attached a satisfactory description of the Lesser Whitethroat's plumage and song.—Ed.)

## SUBALPINE WARBLER ON THE ISLE OF MAY

A female Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans* was ringed on the Isle of May on 16th July 1958 and retrapped on 22nd July. In the field it looked a very small almost mouse-like skulking bird, with rather dark drab-brown wings set off against lighter, greyer back and top of head. General impression was not unlike a small, slim Lesser Whitethroat *S. curruca*, lacking the dark ear covers and with more buff on the flanks and breast. A remarkably close field view would have been required to make out the red orbital ring or the white moustachial streak as distinct from the buffish white of the throat.

In the hand it lacked the bulk of a Common Whitethroat *S. communis* or even of a Lesser. This was confirmed by a weight, after a week presumably spent on the island, of 8.3 gms. The red orbital ring (note also the light *Sylvia* iris), wing formula, measurements, and plumage colour together added up to a Subalpine. The patchy state of the plumage and worn moulting tail feather indicated an adult or first summer bird, perhaps the latter from the presence of only slight buffish traces on the throat. It was in very poor condition, and unfortunately died on 22nd or 23rd July. A full description was recorded from which the following details have been taken. Wing measurement 55-56 mm.; 1st primary approximately one millimetre shorter than the longest primary covert. The bill was rather broad at the base, tapering to a fine point. The colour of the orbital ring was between brick-red and orange-red; it was complete but very narrow below the eye. The iris was light yellowish brown. The upper parts were mainly grey brown, paler and browner on the ear coverts, darker and browner on wings and tail; the outer tail feathers dull white on outer webs and rather prominently

tipped with whitish cream. The tail was very slightly graduated. The rather indistinct whitish moustachial stripe extended well back below the ear coverts. The sides of the breast and flanks were suffused with buffish brown, the centre of the breast and belly whitish. There was a very slight tinge of cinnamon across the breast. The legs were dull pink, straw yellow on the hind edge and on the soles of the feet.

It is impossible to say whether this bird was a new arrival on the island on 16th July, though a Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur* evidently was. Previously to the 14th the island had not been manned by ornithologists for several weeks and in any event the warbler might have remained undetected among the lighthouse-keepers' potato crop. The only previous occurrence for the Isle of May is of a male recorded by Baxter and Rintoul on 30th May 1924. The skin of the present bird is in the Royal Scottish Museum.

DONALD WATSON.

#### ARCTIC WARBLER IN ABERDEENSHIRE

On 2nd September 1958, a day of strong winds from an easterly quarter, with banks of mist rolling in from the sea, I was watching a number of drift migrants which I found skulking in or near a patch of dead thistles among the coastal marram dunes of Sands of Forvie, Aberdeenshire. There were Whinchats *Saxicola rubetra*, Wheatears *Oenanthe oenanthe*, Redstarts *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*, Meadow Pipits *Anthus Pratensis* and many Willow Warblers *Phylloscopus trochilus*. While I was checking on a pair of the latter apparently feeding among the dead vegetation, an unusual *Phylloscopus* presented itself on the top of a thistle about five yards away. I saw immediately that this bird had a fairly striking wing bar, and with the aid of 7 x 50 binoculars I took a mental description of the bird as it remained in full view for about half a minute. It then disappeared, and it was several minutes before it again appeared in a similar position for a similar length of time. This was the last time that I saw it, for its skulking habits made it impossible to isolate and I lost it among the marram dunes.

I noted then the following description: About the size of a Willow Warbler, but apparently slightly larger; this perhaps due to the brightness of its plumage. The underparts were off-white with noticeable traces of lemon on the breast. Back from mantle to tail was brownish green, grading to distinct green on wings—more green than *P. trochilus*. Prominent eyestripe and single wing-bar, both creamy yellow. Legs appeared dark, but colour noted accurately. This description seems to fit that of the Arctic Warbler. Williamson (*British*

*Birds* 45: 415) mentions that raising the crown feathers into a crest is a good field characteristic of the Arctic Warbler. I distinctly remember my bird doing this on one occasion, but I did not think of noting it at the time.

ALISTAIR J. M. SMITH.

(This record has been approved by Mr Kenneth Williamson. It is the first for Aberdeenshire, the Dee area and the mainland of Scotland. It should be remarked that the first week in September is the time when Arctic Warblers have been most often observed in Britain, and that in 1958 this week saw a numerous influx of drift migrants on the east coast of Britain. —Ed).

#### ALBINO PIPIT ON THE ISLE OF MAY

On the evening of 1st August 1958 my wife and I briefly saw an albino pipit among a gathering of Rock Pipits *Anthus spinoletta petrosus* around the Low Light, Isle of May. The general colour was a beautiful pale cream, with traces of brown on the wings. At the time I considered it a Rock Pipit, but the following week it was watched at close quarters by Mr Kenneth Williamson, who inclined to the view that it was a Meadow Pipit *A. pratensis*. Short of examination in the hand he thought the species could not be positively stated. The pale colour perhaps exaggerated the size—it certainly looked at least as big as a Rock Pipit. It was a charming and surprising vision among its drab companions, which pursued it relentlessly.

DONALD WATSON.

#### ROSE-COLOURED STARLING IN WIGTOWNSHIRE

On 14th and 15th August 1958 my neighbours in Wigtown saw "a queer-looking bird among the Starlings". After they had described it to me, I saw it on the 18th. Having put food on the bird table that morning, I stood by the window to watch; the Starlings came down as usual in hordes, and then I saw the "queer-looking" one. It settled on the ground below the bird table and ate the food which fell: this was wet bread with omeal stirred in. I would be, at the window, about nine feet from the table and I watched it for at least two minutes.

The back and breast of the bird were pale pink, against which the wings and head looked very dark. It seemed more bulky than the common Starlings, but that may have been because of the marking, and also the crest, which enlarged the appearance of the head. The beak seemed shorter and of a neutral shade, certainly not yellowish: legs similar. I saw

the bird in flight later the same day, and then not again.

This is the first record of the Rose-coloured Starling *Pastor roseus* in Wigtownshire.

MARY MCKINNA.

### LAPLAND BUNTINGS IN ABERDEENSHIRE

It seems desirable to record the occurrence of five Lapland Buntings *Calcarius lapponicus* on 23rd January 1953, near the point where the River Ythan is joined by the Tarty Burn, north of Newburgh village, Aberdeenshire.

During the forenoon of that day I walked up the south side of the Ythan towards Tarty, disturbing as I did so, small parties of Corn Buntings *Emberiza calandra*, Yellowhammers *Emberiza citrinella*, Linnets *Carduelis cannabina* and Greenfinches *Chloris chloris*. I then noticed an unusual bunting alight for a moment on a fencing wire about twenty yards away. I moved closer and several of these buntings flew up with a party of Corn Buntings. They quickly detached themselves and alighted on the ground near a patch of dead Rose-bay Willowherb *Chamaenerion augustifolium*. In this area I watched them in a good light with 7 x 50 binoculars for five minutes, at distances varying from two to fifteen yards. I readily identified them as Lapland Buntings *Calcarius lapponicus* with the help of *The Popular Handbook*, which I carried with me. I heard the call-note described in the literature as *ticky-ticky-teu* when I put these birds to flight. I also heard two notes which I would describe as *tzit* and *tyou*. There were two types of plumage involved: Type A. Similar in size to Yellow-hammer *Emberiza citrinella*. Upper parts mid-brown with faint chestnut tinge, streaked with dark brown. Buff tips to secondaries and wing-coverts gave impression of faint wing-bars. Chestnut collar very pronounced, more so than in *Handbook* plate. Buff to light brown stripe just over or through eye extending to nape. White chin. Necklace of dark brown or blackish streaks on sides of neck and more concentrated on upper breast. Belly and under parts white. Some slight streaking on sides of belly. Bill was yellow with brownish tinge. Legs dark brown. Type B. Both in similar plumage. Appeared like female Reed Buntings *Emberiza schoeniclus* except for slight trace of chestnut collar, and lightish crown stripe. A general brownness which I noted may suggest immature birds.

Wynne-Edwards (*Scot. Nat.* 69: 60 and *antea* 1: 32) records a Lapland Bunting from the Moor of Forvie, just over a mile away, in September 1956.

ALISTAIR J. M. SMITH.

## SNOW BUNTINGS FEEDING ON MOOR RUSH

Around Braemar, where Snow Buntings *Plectrophenax niv-alis* are generally common winter visitors, a favourite winter food seems to be the seeds of the Moor Rush *Juncus squar-rosus*. Often I have seen their unmistakable spurred tracks all over the snow wherever there are patches of rush heads sticking through, and several times I have watched flocks of them feeding there.

V. C. WYNNE-EDWARDS.

## TREE SPARROWS NESTING IN AYRSHIRE

During the breeding season of 1957 I made some visits to that area of northern Ayrshire from which I reported Tree Sparrows *Passer montanus* present in the spring and autumn of 1954 (*Scot. Nat.* 67: 71) and was successful in getting breeding records.

Nests were found on the following dates: 27th May, two; 2nd June, one; and 15th July, one. All were in holes in beech trees, the common hedgerow tree of the district, and all contained young. One of the nests found on 27th May was, on 7th July, discovered to be re-occupied, and what was probably the same pair of birds was once more carrying in food to the young. Thus a total of five broods are known to have been in the four nests found. What proportion successfully fledged I do not know, but a number of fledged young were seen, ten or twelve in all, mostly being fed or importuning adults for food.

All nests were in the parish of Dreghorn: three, including the double-brooded one, close to one another near Overton, and the fourth about a mile from these, near Dykehead. They were found without a great deal of effort and, as other Tree Sparrows were frequently seen in the area, I got the impression that only lack of time and opportunity prevented the certain discovery of more nests.

L. A. URQUHART.

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### *Requests for Information*

As is known, this is a "Crossbill year" and all information concerning Crossbills *Loxia curvirostra*, from areas where they do not normally occur, will be welcome.

The Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus* appears to have been unusually frequent during the autumn of 1958, and records are requested.

Any records indicative of extension of breeding range on the part of the Carrion Crow *Corvus corone corone* and Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita* are also asked for.

## Spring Observations on the Manx Shearwater and Small Petrels on St Kilda and Rhum

J. MORTON BOYD and PETER WORMELL

Large numbers of Manx Shearwaters *Procellaria puffinus* were seen flying over the sea off St Kilda on 17th April 1958, at about 1700 hours GMT. On the night of 21st April the first shearwaters were heard calling from the rocks on the Carn Mor at 2115 hours GMT, and birds began to arrive from the sea about thirty minutes later. A net set up round a boulder caught six in the space of fifteen minutes (2155 to 2210 hours GMT). Thereafter activity waned, although there were always some birds flying and calling. Calling from the rocks continued at fairly even intensity until 2230 hours GMT, when J.M.B. left. During this visit Leach's Petrels *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* were heard or seen. One Storm Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus* was calling in a *cleitan* (dry-stone cell) in the access gully to the Carn Mor.

The Carn Mor was visited again on 22nd April, when activity followed a somewhat similar pattern but was later by about thirty minutes, probably because of a clear sky and a moon. Only one Manx Shearwater was caught. At the peak of arrival from the sea, activity did not seem to be as intense as the night before, but there was much the same amount of calling from the rocks. No Leach's Petrels nor Storm Petrels were seen or heard. On 26th April activity was much reduced owing to the stillness and brightness of the night. Two Manx Shearwaters were ringed. No small petrels were seen or heard. On 3rd May, a dark calm night, the Manx Shearwater activity was fairly intense and the activity of the Leach's Petrels was striking. Although the latter were calling loudly and very frequently from the air, none was calling from the burrows. The numbers in flight were considerable and the birds could be clearly seen overhead.

It is reported from the Isle of Eigg that Manx Shearwaters arrive at the nesting areas there every year about the 19th of February. The exact date of arrival on Rhum in 1958 was not recorded but shearwaters were heard on most nights after 16th March, flying in over Kinloch towards Hallival and Askival. When these peaks were visited by P.W. on 6th April, snowdrifts still lay on parts of the shearwater breeding-grounds, but several birds were calling from their burrows. The shearwaters had not dug through deep snow to get to their holes, but tunnels which had been only partially blocked





Looking up Glen Harris to late February snows on the summits of Hallival and Askival in the Isle of Rhum. On those mountain tops are situated large colonies of Manx Shearwaters well over 2000 ft. above sea level.

*Photograph by courtesy of THE TIMES.*

had been cleared by the pushing and scratching of the birds.

The greatest concentration of burrows on Rhum is on the north-facing slope of Hallival between 2,000 and 2,300 feet. This area was visited on the night of 11th April when P. W. arrived at about 2200 hours GMT, to find much activity. Many birds were calling from their holes and flying overhead. A number of birds were sitting together in pairs, side by side, at the entrance to or just inside their burrows. 46 were caught and ringed between 2200 hours on 11th and 0100 hours on 12th April. Later visits to this same area were less successful. On 30th April, together with Dr W. J. Eggeling, P.W. found little activity. It was a clear calm night, and only six birds were ringed. The first record of an egg was not until mid-May.

Lockley (1942) found the first Manx Shearwaters returning to the Skokholm breeding grounds on 2nd February. It would appear that the first arrivals on Rhum and Eigg are about a fortnight later. Lockley found, however, that the shearwaters failed to arrive while the island was snow-covered and in the grip of cold east winds between mid-February and early March. They returned immediately at the onset of warmer weather and subsequent occasional white frosts were not enough to stop their nightly arrival. The presence of shearwaters on the summits of Hallival and Askival in the wintry conditions of early April 1958 would seem to be unusual.

*The Handbook* (Witherby *et al.* 1940) puts the arrival time of Leach's Petrels at the breeding grounds between "April and June". This seems accurate for St Kilda where, in 1958, it is fairly certain that the species arrived in numbers some time between 27th April and 3rd May, although individual birds may have been earlier. The Storm Petrel, according to *The Handbook*, arrives at its nesting places from the fourth week of April to early May. The bird heard on St Kilda on 21st April was probably therefore one of the first to return in 1958.

### References

- R. M. Lockley. *Shearwaters*. London, 1942.  
H. F. Witherby *et al.* *The Handbook of British Birds*, Vol. IV.  
London, 1940.

## The Scottish Ornithologists' Club

### REPORT OF COUNCIL — SESSION XXII 1957 - 1958

The Council have the honour to submit the following Report for Session XXI which was adopted at the 22nd Annual General Meeting of the Club at Perth on 25th October, 1958 :—

**MEMBERSHIP:** It is gratifying to be able to report a slight increase in Club Membership this year. Comparative figures are as follows :—

	31/8/54	31/8/55	31/8/56	31/8/57	31/8/58
Ordinary	804	842	755	723	738
Junior	101	121	132	132	148
Honorary	9	11	11	11	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>914</b>	<b>974</b>	<b>898</b>	<b>865</b>	<b>897</b>

**COUNCIL MEETINGS:** Four meetings of Council were held during the Session and much important business transacted.

**GENERAL MEETINGS:** A full programme of Lectures was carried out during the winter in 5 Branches. The Council wishes to express its thanks to all the Lecturers who gave so freely of their services, and would also like to thank Branch Officials for arrangements and hospitality.

**EXCURSIONS:** Apart from Excursions organised by Branches to various places of interest during the summer months, the Club also organised a weekend Excursion to Aviemore in May.

**REPRESENTATION:** Professor V. C. Wynne-Edwards officially represented the Club at the 12th International Ornithological Congress at Helsinki in June. Mr George Kerr represented the Club at an inaugural meeting in Glasgow of the Council of Nature which the Club Council has decided to support. The Secretary continues to represent the Club on the Council and Scientific Advisory Committee of the British Trust for Ornithology, thus maintaining useful liaison with ornithologists in the south.

**"SCOTTISH BIRDS":** Members will have learned with regret that the publishers of "The Scottish Naturalist" had been forced to discontinue publication of this old-established journal at the end of 1957 owing to lack of support from subscribers. After much deliberation, the Council has decided to issue a quarterly magazine—"Scottish Birds"—free to all Members of the Club on the understanding that the Club will agree to the subscriptions being increased from 20s to 25s for Members, and from 5s to 7s 6d for Junior Members. (See Minutes of 22nd Annual General Meeting). We are fortunate in persuading Professor M. F. M. Meiklejohn to edit this Journal and it is hoped that it will form a useful link for the whole membership of the Club. It is the earnest hope of the Council that "Scottish Birds" will follow in the fine traditions established in the past by "The Scottish Naturalist".

**SCOTTISH BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE:** This important Committee meets once a year to adjudicate on all records published annually. Reports have formerly appeared in "The Scottish Naturalist," but will now appear in "Scottish Birds". Our Hon. President Dr E. V. Baxter acts as Convener of the Committee.

**CLUB LIBRARY:** Our collection of books continues to expand and accommodation for them in the Secretary's Office is now presenting an acute problem. During the year we received a substantial addition as a result of the Bequest of the late Mr James Bartholomew of Glenorchard. Members are reminded that books can be consulted during Office hours; and where duplicates are available, may be borrowed.

**GENERAL:** To conclude, we can safely say that the Club continues to flourish, and plays an important part in the development of ornithology in Scotland.

For the Council,

CHARLES G. CONNELL,

President.

## Twenty-Second Annual General Meeting

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The Twenty-second Annual General Meeting of the Club was held in the Museum and Art Gallery, Perth, on Saturday, 25th October, 1958, at 6.15 p.m. There was an attendance of over one hundred members presided over by Sir Charles G. Connell, President of the Club.

**MINUTES:** The Minutes of the 21st Annual General Meeting held at North Berwick on 26th October, 1957, were read and approved.

**REPORT OF COUNCIL:** This was submitted by the President and adopted. (See preceding page).

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** The Hon. Treasurer made a brief report on the position of the Club's finances. Attention was drawn to the fact that during the year we had received a legacy of £100 from the late Mr James Bartholomew. The Accounts were approved.

**APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR:** Mr Arthur Walker, C.A., was re-elected Auditor for the ensuing Session.

**HON. TREASURER:** Mr A. G. S. Bryson, C.A., who had served the Club as Hon Treasurer for the past twelve years had informed the Council that he did not wish his name to go forward for re-election. On the motion of the President, Mr Bryson was accorded a very hearty vote of thanks for his outstanding services to the Club. The Council recommendation that Mr Robert Hilcoat, C.A., be elected in his place was unanimously approved.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS:** Mr William Austin and Miss Winifred U. Flower, being due to retire from membership of the Council by rotation, were accorded a hearty vote of thanks for their services. The Council recommendation that Mr A. G. S. Bryson and Lt. Col. J. P. Grant, Younger of Rothiemurchus be elected was approved.

**AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION:** Due notice having been given to all Members in the Agenda, the following amendments to the Constitution, recommended by the Council, were unanimously approved:—

(a) That under Membership 3 (h) "Any Member whose subscription is three years in arrears shall cease to belong to the Club", the words "is three years in arrears" be deleted and the following substituted:—"due on 1st October is not paid by the following 31st March".

(b) That under Membership 3 (e) "The Annual Subscription shall be £1; or 5s in the case of members who are under 21 years of age or in the case

of University Undergraduates who satisfy the Council of their status as such at the time at which their subscription falls due in any year", the words "£1; or 5s" be altered to read "25s; or 7s 6d". (This amendment was approved on the understanding that the Club would publish a quarterly magazine "Scottish Birds" issued free to all Members).

**BRITISH TRUST FOR ORNITHOLOGY:** Dr Bruce Campbell (Secretary of the B.T.O.) drew the attention of Club Members to the various co-operative enquiries organised by the Trust. He mentioned that the response to the Black-headed Gull Enquiry had been most disappointing; and very little information had been received on the enquiry on Inland Breeding Habitats of the Oystercatcher.

**VOTES OF THANKS:** The Meeting closed with a hearty vote of thanks to the Chairman on the motion of Dr E. V. Baxter.

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### WEEKEND MEETING AT DUMFRIES

The British Trust for Ornithology will hold the Annual Conference of Regional Representatives in the County Hotel, Dumfries, from Friday 30th January to Sunday 1st February 1959. Members of the S.O.C. are invited to attend the open meetings held during the weekend.

On Saturday morning, after the official opening, Donald Watson will talk on "The Birds of Dumfries-shire and Galloway" and an exhibition of his paintings will be on view during the Conference. After coffee there will be Excursions by private cars until tea-time. The Business Meeting of Representatives will take place before Dinner, after which Hugh Boyd (The Wildfowl Trust) will give a talk on "How many Geese?". Sunday will be devoted to an all-day Excursion to the Solway where it is usually possible to see seven races of geese at this time of year.

The Council hope that this weekend meeting will be well supported by members of the Club. Anyone wishing to attend should inform Dr Bruce Campbell, The British Trust for Ornithology, 2 King Edward Street, Oxford, who will supply full details.

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### BOOK NOTICE

"Fair Isle Bird Observatory Trust: Annual Report for 1957". (Mr George Waterston, Edinburgh. 5s).

Supporters of the Trust will be pleased to note a marked improvement in the financial affairs of the Observatory. The position is however still far from satisfactory, and an appeal is made for more subscribers—"Friends of Fair Isle", at a guinea per annum.

During the summer, the Observatory catered for a record number of visitors, and the new Hostel arrangements have functioned smoothly.

Some notable rarities were identified during the year, including an immature Mediterranean Gull (first Scottish record); an adult male Black-throated Thrush; a Thrush-Nightingale; and a Serin. During the year, 2,295 birds of 87 species were ringed. Among recoveries, the most spectacular was that of a 1954 Arctic Skua chick caught on a fishing vessel off Mossamedes, Angola, on November 3rd 1957. This is the second recovery of this species from south-west Africa.

Peter and Angela Davis are to be congratulated on an auspicious start to their administration of the Observatory.

M.I.W.

## The Scottish Ornithologists' Club

	REVENUE ACCOUNT	Year to 31/8/58	Year to 31/8/57
<b>INCOME :—</b>			
Subscriptions received ... ..		£778 15 0	£755
Add: Received in advance at 31/8/57 ...		10 0 0	14
		<u>£788 15 0</u>	<u>£769</u>
Less: Received in advance at 31/8/58 ...		10 5 0	10
		<u>£778 10 0</u>	<u>£759</u>
Income from Miss L. J. Rintoul's Endowment		40 5 10	40
Savings Bank Interest		12 10 2	12
Badge Sales		5 12 6	5
Eric Hosking Exhibition Net Proceeds		9 13 4	—
		<u>£846 11 10</u>	<u>£816</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE :—</b>			
Hobbies Exhibition expenses ... ..		£0 0 0	£4
Lantern Expenses		16 1 0	19
Lecturers' Expenses		62 9 7	72
Rents		61 15 7	71
Postages, printing, etc.			
Less: Donations, etc. £15 13 9 ... ..		173 13 7	183
Subscriptions to I.C.B.P., B.T.O. and R.S.P.B.		4 2 0	4
Conference and Conversazione Net Cost		28 0 1	6
Fee for Secretarial Services		400 0 0	400
Library Shelving		12 1 6	10
		<u>£846 11 10</u>	<u>£816</u>
Surplus for year carried to Balance Sheet ...		88 8 6	47
		<u>£846 11 10</u>	<u>£816</u>
<b>BALANCE SHEET</b>			
		As at 31/8/58	As at 31/8/57
Surplus at 31/8/57 ... ..		£493 7 9	£447
Add: Surplus for year per Revenue Account		88 8 6	46
Add: Legacy from J. Bartholomew ... ..		100 0 0	—
		<u>£681 16 3</u>	<u>£493</u>
Miss L. J. Rintoul's Endowment (the free annual income is available for the advancement of ornithology)		1000 0 0	1000
		<u>£1681 16 3</u>	<u>£1493</u>
Cash in Edinburgh Savings Bank ... ..		£580 3 8	£468
Cash in Royal Bank of Scotland ... ..		111 16 5	30
Cash in hand ... ..		0 1 2	5
		<u>£692 1 3</u>	<u>£503</u>
Less: Subscriptions received in advance ...		10 5 0	10
		<u>£681 16 3</u>	<u>£493</u>
£1,151 3½% War Stock at cost (Endowment) ...		1000 0 0	1000
		<u>£1681 16 3</u>	<u>£1493</u>

EDINBURGH, 30th September, 1958.—I have examined the foregoing Revenue Account and Balance Sheet of the Scottish Ornithologists' Club for the year ending 31st August, 1958, and certify that in my opinion they are correctly stated and sufficiently vouched.

ARTHUR WALKER, Chartered Accountant.