

THE "BRITISH BIRDS" MARKING SCHEME.*

PROGRESS FOR 1913 AND SOME RESULTS.

BY

H. F. WITHERBY.

It is very satisfactory to be able to report the continued success of the BRITISH BIRDS Marking Scheme.

The number of readers who have helped in the ringing since my last report has increased to ninety, and the number of birds ringed is again much larger than previous records, as will be seen by the following figures :—

NUMBER OF BIRDS RINGED.				
In 1909	...	...	...	2,171
„ 1910	...	...	...	7,910
„ 1911	...	...	...	10,416
„ 1912	...	...	...	11,483
„ 1913	...	...	...	14,843
				Total 46,823

Mr. H. W. Robinson once again heads the list with the extraordinary total of two thousand two hundred and fifty-five, and this year Dr. H. J. Moon runs him close with one thousand nine hundred and twenty-four, a perhaps more remarkable total because Dr. Moon has ringed mostly small birds. Mr. F. W. Smalley with one thousand one hundred and forty-two is a splendid third, while Miss Pease, Messrs. B. Pickard, W. E. Suggitt, J. R. B. Masefield, and A. Mayall have all ringed over five hundred each. No less than twenty-two others have ringed one hundred and over, and as already mentioned the total number of ringers has increased, so that we have made an all-round advance.

The species ringed have been, as usual, very varied, and the number of individuals ringed of some species is now becoming very large. In the case of the Black-headed Gull we have ringed nearly twelve thousand,

* For the 1912 Report, see Vol. VI., pp. 177-183.

and this number should provide sufficient returns for a comprehensive report, and this Messrs. F. W. Smalley and H. W. Robinson have very kindly promised to undertake when sufficient time has elapsed to allow the bulk of returns to come in. It seems therefore unnecessary to ring more of this species, and I hope that other gulls may receive more attention in consequence.

The recoveries reported during the twelve months have been numerous, and now that the purpose of the ring is becoming more widely known, there is no doubt that a greater proportion of recoveries are reported.

Attention may here be drawn briefly to a few of the more interesting recoveries during the year. Adults of the Jackdaw, Starling, Robin, Chaffinch, Swallow, and Blackbird ringed in the breeding-season from 1910-12 were found in the same places in the summer of 1913. Examples of the Rook, Jackdaw, Starling, Meadow-Pipit, Willow-Warbler, Song-Thrush, Martin, and Woodcock ringed as juveniles in 1910-12, were reported from the places where they were reared in the breeding-season of 1913, while other juveniles have been reported in following summers from near the place at which they were ringed, and others far away. Of recoveries abroad we have had the two notable Swallows—Mr. Masfield's from Staffordshire to Natal, and Mr. Blyth's from Ayrshire to Orange Free State. A Starling has been reported from Holland; Mistle-Thrush, Wheatear, Whinchat, Mallard, Common, Sandwich and Little Terns, and Herring-Gull from France; Lapwings and Turtle-Dove from Portugal; a Pochard from Mecklenburg, and a number of most interesting records of Cormorants and Lesser Black-backed Gulls from France, Spain, and Portugal.

In my last report I promised some statistics with regard to the proportion of recoveries as compared to birds ringed, and I am now able to give some information on this point. Of the birds ringed to the date of my last report, viz. 31,980 in number, we have had reported

971, or 3.3 per cent. This, I think, must be considered a very good percentage on so large a total, but of course it must be understood that many of these recoveries will teach us little or nothing, and the percentage of really valuable recoveries is less than 3 per cent. On the other hand this percentage is certain to increase in the course of a few years.

The proportion of recoveries of different species varies from 100 per centum to nothing, and the following details of a few of those species of which we have ringed large numbers will perhaps be interesting:—

SOME PERCENTAGES OF RECOVERIES.

Species.	Number Ringed 1910-12.	Number recovered to date.	Percentages of recoveries.
Starling	3027	211	6.9
Greenfinch	775	11	1.4
Chaffinch	740	15	2.0
Meadow-Pipit	254	5	1.9
Pied Wagtail	183	7	3.8
Willow-Warbler	562	12	2.1
Song-Thrush	2128	28	1.3
Blackbird	1457	54	3.7
Redbreast	862	30	3.4
Swallow	1591	17	1.0
House-Martin	318	7	2.2
Cuckoo	44	5	11.3
Mallard	222	50	22.5
Lapwing	1266	24	1.8
Curlew	113	6	5.3
Snipe	79	7	8.8
Woodcock	141	15	10.6
Common Tern	2671	66	2.4
Black-headed Gull	7854	209	2.6
Lesser Black-backed Gull	333	10	3.3

NUMBER OF BIRDS "RINGED."

MR. H. W. ROBINSON (2255), Dr. H. J. Moon (1924), Messrs. F. W. Smalley (1142), B. Pickard (777), W. E. Suggitt (759), Miss A. Pease (680), Messrs. J. R. B. Masefield (553), A. Mayall (538), N. H. Joy (457), J. Bartholomew (438), M. Portal (375), A. W. Boyd (315), Mr. R. O. and Miss A. Blyth (273), Messrs. J. D. Patterson & W. B. Irwin (213), Miss C. M. Acland (210), Messrs. T. C. Hobbs (208), R. M. Barrington (200), E. W. Hendy (185), North London Natural History Society (Mr. W. E. Glegg, Hon. Sec.) (171), Captain W.

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Mackenzie (169), Messrs. A. Henderson (per Mr. A. R. Haig Brown) (160), C. Hyslop (Gamekeeper to Mr. H. S. Gladstone) (137), T. A. Coward (124), T. F. Greenwood (120), Dr. N. F. Ticehurst (117), Mr. J. M. Campbell (115), Messrs. E. F., J. K. and H. M. Stanford (113), Messrs. H. W. Ford-Lindsay (112), J. Steele Elliott (110), G. B. Hony (100), Mrs. Patteson (95), Messrs. A. Bankes (94), A. G. Leigh (94), Miss S. Mounsey Heysham (80), Mr. P. A. and Miss V. E. Buxton (74), Mr. A. T. Wallis (73), Miss M. H. Greg (71), Messrs. H. Bentham (64), W. W. Grant (63), W. T. Blackwood (56), W. J. Norwood Ryan (51), C. K. Parker (50), J. Murray (Gamekeeper to Mr. H. S. Gladstone) (47), W. Davies (41), G. W. Kerr (40), G. R. Starley & H. G. Wagstaff (39), J. P. Dolan (39), E. de Hamel (38), Miss J. Crookes (32), Mr. H. L. Popham (32), Colonel R. H. Rattray (32), Messrs. F. C. Cook (31), A. Broomfield (29), R. Burnier (29), Sir Richard Graham (28), Messrs. H. H. Storey (28), C. F. and M. F. D. Archibald (26), J. L. Bonhote (25), G. R. Humphreys (25), D. A. J. Buxton (23), E. A. Eason (21), and others who have ringed twenty or under each.

	'09	'10	'11	'12	'13	Total.
Crow, Carrion ...	—	11	6	—	5	22
Rook ...	—	1	64	35	23	123
Jackdaw ...	11	5	15	6	15	52
Magpie ...	—	7	4	4	7	22
Starling ...	21	428	1109	1469	1133	4160
Greenfinch ...	28	100	208	439	381	1156
Twite ...	—	—	—	—	24	24
Redpoll, Lesser ...	—	8	—	19	45	72
Linnet ...	20	65	63	64	148	360
Bullfinch ...	—	8	16	18	22	64
Chaffinch ...	6	103	271	360	331	1071
Sparrow, House ...	8	109	85	60	175	437
Sparrow, Tree ...	17	49	24	33	27	150
Bunting, Yellow ...	4	13	31	127	41	216
Bunting, Reed ...	2	8	40	17	39	106
Lark, Sky ...	1	20	39	138	390	588
Pipit, Tree ...	14	26	19	38	27	124
Pipit, Meadow ...	27	32	75	120	318	572
Wagtail, Yellow ...	1	—	—	—	22	23
Wagtail, Grey ...	5	6	13	23	17	64
Wagtail, Pied ...	12	29	42	100	114	297
Tit, Great ...	16	127	154	73	221	591
Tit, Blue ...	12	54	144	124	228	562
Tit, Coal ...	—	12	26	9	24	71
Tit, Marsh ...	—	25	3	3	17	48
Tit, Long-tailed ...	—	3	—	5	28	36
Wren, Golden-crested ...	—	16	15	—	1	32
Shrike, Red-backed ...	2	15	13	9	8	47
Flycatcher, Spotted ...	23	65	64	54	84	290
Chiffchaff ...	2	16	5	5	14	42

	'09	'10	'11	'12	'13	Total.
Warbler, Willow ...	50	107	139	266	251	813
Warbler, Wood ...	—	12	27	7	20	66
Warbler, Reed ...	—	4	10	14	60	88
Warbler, Sedge ...	1	4	12	21	43	81
Warbler, Garden ...	3	9	13	17	20	62
Blackcap ...	—	7	12	4	7	30
Whitethroat ...	22	53	33	21	43	172
Whitethroat, Lesser ...	1	19	5	15	20	60
Fieldfare ...	—	48	30	7	—	85
Thrush, Mistle ...	2	48	40	83	82	255
Thrush, Song ...	71	625	693	739	1197	3325
Redwing ...	—	7	20	4	5	36
Ouzel, Ring ...	—	—	9	22	20	51
Blackbird ...	83	505	421	448	626	2083
Wheatear ...	1	15	1	34	19	70
Whinchat ...	7	30	28	21	41	127
Stonechat ...	—	10	19	8	55	92
Redstart ...	1	15	35	26	31	108
Nightingale ...	—	11	4	—	8	23
Redbreast ...	41	217	322	282	355	1217
Sparrow, Hedge ...	18	117	198	226	268	827
Wren ...	9	38	62	76	101	286
Dipper ...	4	9	22	23	15	73
Swallow ...	113	463	594	421	653	2244
Martin ...	13	128	73	104	160	478
Martin, Sand ...	—	25	66	1	118	210
Nightjar ...	3	—	3	11	4	21
Wryneck ...	14	16	1	12	11	54
Cuckoo ...	4	4	13	23	23	67
Owl, Barn ...	—	10	—	19	14	43
Owl, Tawny ...	—	13	6	18	7	44
Hawk, Sparrow ...	—	5	19	11	5	40
Heron, Common ...	14	13	22	30	24	103
Sheld-Duck ...	1	24	2	10	1	38
Mallard ...	11	20	139	52	200	422
Teal ...	1	21	3	1	22	48
Duck, Tufted ...	3	—	2	—	20	25
Cormorant ...	—	3	25	54	266	348
Shag ...	—	4	—	23	15	42
Gannet ...	—	—	—	—	134	134
Shearwater, Manx ...	—	—	—	60	9	69
Wood-Pigeon ...	3	20	22	33	26	104
Dove, Stock ...	1	4	6	7	9	27
Dove, Turtle ...	1	11	11	—	10	33

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	'09	'10	'11	'12	'13	Total.
Oystercatcher	7	16	8	6	10	47
Plover, Ringed	—	35	12	20	28	95
Plover, Golden	—	2	2	13	7	24
Lapwing	56	254	280	676	558	1824
Sandpiper, Common	5	10	29	36	24	104
Redshank	5	19	12	68	28	132
Curlew, Common	14	10	34	55	15	128
Snipe, Common	1	23	21	34	22	101
Woodcock	6	10	68	57	83	224
Tern, Sandwich	57	79	24	22	203	385
Tern, Common	786	836	669	380	51	2722
Tern, Arctic	25	—	1	1	3	30
Tern, Common or Arctic	—	25	5	57	1	88
Tern, Little	—	31	13	85	35	164
Gull, Black-headed	417	1828	2949	2660	3915	11769
Gull, Common	—	184	248	27	11	470
Gull, Herring	5	117	48	178	82	430
Gull, Lesser Black-backed	12	137	62	122	454	787
Gull, Great Black-backed	1	8	13	1	2	25
Razorbill	—	31	3	—	2	36
Guillemot	—	23	—	—	—	23
Puffin	4	15	12	108	207	346
Moor-Hen	—	34	23	24	39	120
Grouse, Red	7	3	19	156	10	195
Pheasant	7	6	30	1	4	48
Partridge, Common	1	1	20	12	22	56

NOTE.—Forty-three species of which less than twenty individuals in all have been ringed, are omitted from this list