

**NOTES FROM THE ISLE OF MAN.  
1931 AND 1932.**

BY

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REPORTS from the Point of Ayre and Chickens Rock Lights show that on March 19th-21st, 1931, considerable migration took place, and at night great numbers of Curlews were heard passing over Douglas and Castletown. From November 6th to 17th another movement took place, sixty-one birds being killed at the Point of Ayre during that period. The species represented were the usual ones.

In 1932 the spring migration centred on March 26th, when many birds, especially Starlings, were killed at both lights. At the same time Curlews and Starlings passed over Ramsey in large numbers, flying very low, and several striking the lamps on the quay. On October 21st various species of Thrush were numerous at the Chickens, but no birds appeared at the lantern of the Point of Ayre.

In 1931 the Wheatear was reported on March 21st and in 1932 on the 18th. Swallows appeared in the former year on March 15th, and in the latter none are recorded till April 11th, the Chiffchaff on March 20th and 23rd. A dead Corn-crake was found on April 11th, 1931; the earliest record in 1932 was on the 27th.

The latest Wheatear in the two years was seen on October 13th; Swallows lingered to November 11th in 1931, and (in some numbers) to November 15th in 1932. Two House-Martins were seen on November 4th, 1931.

The White Wagtail has again appeared in numbers, both in spring and autumn. The Whinchat and Yellow Wagtail are regularly reported on passage.

The Great Northern Diver is reported at Peel regularly through May until the 22nd by Mr. F. S. Graves and Mr. G. Clementson. Mr. Graves, in both 1931 and 1932, has seen specimens with a distinct tuft on the forehead. "I have noticed this development for some years at this season (May) but have not seen it referred to; the tuft does not seem to be erectile." It was also observed on winter specimens.

A new Wild Birds Protection Act, repealing that of 1887, was enacted in Tynwald, May 31st, 1932, and promulgated July 5th. It is of a far-reaching character. While the former Act had a long list of protected species, the present has a short list of non-protected (all Crows, except Chough

and Raven, Hawks, except Kestrel, Starling, Sparrow, Cormorant, Shag, Wood-Pigeon and Little Owl). All nests and eggs of protected species are protected also. Taxidermists must register all wild birds dealt with. Pole-traps must be inspected at least daily.

Exemption from penalties is provided for persons "protecting property, crops, game or fisheries from immediate danger", and the Governor may grant exemption for special purposes. He may also vary the list of non-protected species and constitute "Bird Sanctuaries". The holder of a game licence may shoot "shore-birds" between August 11th and March 1st. The Lapwing is removed from the definition of "game" in the Game Act, 1882.

RAVEN (*Corvus c. corax*).—Two instances of nesting in trees were recorded in 1932, one nest being in a heronry (see under Heron).

HOODED CROW (*Corvus c. cornix*) and CARRION-CROW (*C. c. corone*).—Observations of the Carrion-Crow, sometimes paired with the Hooded, and of hybrids, are frequent in both years. The nest of a pair, of which the male was a hybrid, the female a "Greyback", was found by Mr. F. S. Graves near Peel in 1932, but was later destroyed.

CHOUGH (*Pyrhocorax p. pyrrhocorax*).—Seems to hold its ground well; some observers even think it increases. Flocks of twenty often reported.

GOLDFINCH (*Carduelis c. britannica*).—Appears to increase; has nested in Ramsey Park and at Peel, and is now frequently seen.

CROSSBILL (*Loxia c. curvirostra*).—Some, among them red birds, observed for a time in the outskirts of Douglas in the autumn of 1931 (Attorney-General R. B. Moore).

YELLOW WAGTAIL (*Motacilla flava rayi*).—A number of reports of the species, but not as nesting.

GREAT GREY SHRIKE (*Lanius e. excubitor*).—Two seen at Glenchass, March 30th, 1931, by Mr. C. F. Butterworth; afterwards, one only. Thought to have been observed also in autumn.

WAXWING (*Bombycilla garrulus*).—Two at Kirk Michael, November 7th, 1932 (*B.B.*, March, 1933).

BARRED WARBLER (*Sylvia n. nisoria*).—Mr. W. Berry reports one seen near Ballamoar, Jurby, October 27th, 1931, "a very well-marked bird".

GARDEN-WARBLER (*Sylvia borin*).—Reported often in spring, heard singing, and believed to have nested.

BLACKCAP (*Sylvia a. atricapilla*).—A few records in May.

REDSTART (*Phœnicurus ph. phœnicurus*).—A few observed in April. One was caught at Maughold Head Light, ringed and released.

BLACK REDSTART (*Phœnicurus o. gibraltariensis*).—Mr. J. J. Gill saw one for about a fortnight, October-November, 1931, at Glenduff Quarry, Lezayre. Single birds seen also by Col. Madoc, November 18th and December 21st, 1931, October 1st, 1932. They are reported as very tame.

NIGHTJAR (*Caprimulgus e. europeus*).—Nested on Peel Hill (Mr. G. Clementson), in Lonan (Mr. G. W. Adams), and probably on the Ayres.

**BARN-OWL** (*Tyto a. alba*).—Various reports seem to show that this Owl is not so rare in Man as once supposed. One, said to have been drowned in a water-butt, was taken at Ballasalla, March 5th, 1931.

**HEN-HARRIER** (*Circus c. cyaneus*).—Several times seen—a female, Glen Helen, April 16th, 1931, by Col. Madoc; one in Glen Roy, January 23rd, 1932, by Mr. G. W. Adams; one for some days, Andreas, December, 1932 (Messrs. J. Bell and F. A. Craine).

**HERON** (*Ardea c. cinerea*).—In 1931 a small heronry was established in fir trees, in a locality which the proprietor does not wish disclosed, and was again occupied in 1932. In the former year there were three pairs, in the latter eight nests were built, but the eggs and young were harried by Ravens, which attempted to breed in the same wood. Second clutches however were laid, and the young hatched out safely.

A colony is said to have existed, perhaps twenty years ago, at Ballaskoig in Maughold, and to have been scared away by a fire in the wood occupied.

**SWANS** (*Cygnus* sp.).—Of not infrequent occurrence. Forty were seen from the Point of Ayre Light, February 19th, 1932, passing east. An adult Bewick's remained in Ramsay Harbour from about April 16th to May 7th, 1932, with Mute Swans; on April 20th, a Whooper, and four Bewick's lighted on the sea outside Ramsey (Messrs. Bell, Craine and Berry and Col. Madoc).

*Cygnus olor* has become abundant in Castletown Harbour and on the southern shores; nested on the open coast in various places.

From January 5th to March 5th, 1931, an immature Whooper remained on the Eary Dam, inland, where its gradual change of plumage was carefully watched by Col. Madoc.

**GEESE** (*Anser* sp.).—The Grey Lag, White-fronted and Pink-footed are again reported, especially the first named, of which Mr. F. S. Graves sent a specimen to the Manx Museum.

**LONG-TAILED DUCK** (*Clangula hyemalis*).—Mr. F. S. Graves saw an immature bird on October 30th-31st, 1931, in the West Bay, Peel. Col. Madoc reports young birds, November 11th to December 16th, 1931, at Ronaldsway, and again occurrences in January, February, November and December, 1932.

**EIDER** (*Somateria m. mollissima*).—January 22nd and February 2nd, 1932, a number, male and female seen on the sea near Port St. Mary by Mr. C. F. Butterworth. Reported same neighbourhood in the following December.

**VELVET-SCOTER** (*Oidemia f. fusca*).—See F. S. Graves, *antea*, Vol. XXVI., p. 336.

**GOOSANDER** (*Mergus m. merganser*).—A female was shot near the Silverburn, January 4th, 1932, and sent to the Museum. Others recorded by Col. Madoc and Mr. G. W. Adams.

**SMEW** (*Mergus albellus*).—Occurrences, Rue Pt., Peel, Derbyhaven and Perwick (Mr. Adams, Col. Madoc and Mr. Butterworth).

**MANX SHEARWATER** (*Puffinus p. puffinus*).—A specimen sent to the Manx Museum by Mr. F. S. Graves had been found drowned in the net of a fishing boat, about six miles from Bradda Head.

**FULMAR** (*Fulmarus g. glacialis*).—See F. S. Graves, *antea*, Vol. XXVI., p. 337.

Reported also from the Chickens Lighthouse, and all summer on the sea between Pt. St. Mary and the Calf.

**BLACK-THROATED DIVER** (*Colymbus a. arcticus*).—Mr. F. Graves saw one at Peel, February 2nd, 1932, identifying it by its size compared with a Herring-Gull. Apparently rare in Manx waters.

TURTLE-DOVE (*Streptopelia t. turtur*).—In 1931 and 1932 reported by a number of observers. Mr. C. F. Butterworth saw one and sometimes two through June, July and August, 1931, and at the end of August three together. There is, however, no suggestion of nesting.

LAPWING (*Vanellus vanellus*).—A large flock, about 200, was seen at the Point of Ayre Light, February 5th, 1932.

REDSHANK (*Tringa t. totanus*).—Mr. H. M. Rogers ascertained the nesting of the Redshank in 1931 and 1932 in a second locality about a mile from that mentioned in 1928 and 1929. In 1932 there were two nests there. Messrs. J. Bell and F. A. Craine saw lately-hatched young at a third site. This is an increasing species also all round our coast.

GREENSHANK (*Tringa nebularia*).—One observed on Fort Island, January 12th, 1933.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa l. limosa*).—On November 18th, 1931, Col. Madoc saw one at Darlyhaven with a Curlew. From September 25th to October 13th, 1932, Mr. C. F. Butterworth carefully watched another which associated with Oyster-catchers and Redshanks, always in the same small area.

SANDWICH TERN (*Sterna s. sandvicensis*).—Birds were seen both in 1931 and 1932 and there is reason to believe that one pair at least nested.

ICELAND GULL (*Larus leucopterus*).—From October 5th, 1931, to March 15th, 1932, a "White Gull" frequented Ramsey, first the harbour, and later the South Promenade, and became a familiar object to many of the townsmen, who fed it with scraps from their houses. Mr. F. S. Graves describes the plumage as "dull white, the wings long and narrow, with white primaries; legs flesh-colour, eyes dark, bill dark, with dark spot at angle, and light horn at tip. The bird was shorter and more slender than the Herring-Gulls with which it associated, and the flight was buoyant. Mr. James Bell, who was the first to report it, told me that when he saw it first in the harbour the head and neck were faintly streaked, and the other Gulls made strange of it; later it was near them on the water, and feeding with them on scraps on the shore and promenade." It was certainly, as Mr. Graves says, the above-named species in a stage of immaturity (see also *N. W. Nat.*, December, 1932, p. 302).

GREAT SKUA (*Stercorarius s. skua*).—On March 29th, 1931, Mr. Butterworth saw one in the Port St. Mary neighbourhood, and Col. Madoc one on April 12th, 1931, off the Ayres. On October 8th, 1932, one also was seen from the Chickens Lighthouse, and Mr. Butterworth saw yet another twice on October 11th.

LITTLE AUK (*Alle a. alle*).—On January 21st, 1932, one was found at Creg-y-Creel, Port St. Mary, hurt or "oiled" (Butterworth). On December 18th, 1932, Col. Madoc saw one off Fort Id, after a fierce gale. Mr. Butterworth reports another occurrence at Port St. Mary in January, 1929.

Very little has been heard of "oiled" birds during the two years.