

NOTES

SHORE-LARKS IN NORTH KENT.

WHILE walking along the sea-wall on the Isle of Grain on November 1st, 1936 with Messrs. J. E. Roberts and J. S. Wightman, I heard two birds fly over and suspected that they were Shore-Larks (*Eremophila a. flava*). The identification was confirmed when they alighted on some wrack at the edge of a small pool on the saltings. Their plumage was dull, but the yellow and black marking on the throat was quite prominent.

RICHARD C. HOMES.

THE NESTING AND REARING OF YOUNG BY AN UNMATED PIED WAGTAIL.

REFERENCE has been made previously (Vol. XXVII, p. 48) to a pair of Pied Wagtails (*Motacilla a. yarrellii*) that nested in the vicinity of my house in Worcestershire, the immediate surroundings of which are particularly favourable for watching their nesting habits. An open meadow of several acres with a stream running through adjoins the house and garden and the whole is practically closed in by woodlands.

During the spring of 1936 a pair of these Wagtails came here as usual and soon afterwards a second male bird was to be seen about the meadow for several days, but was evidently not welcomed, and it usually kept apart from the apparently mated pair. It is possible this male bird is the same as that referred to later. This pair subsequently nested in the gable of one of my outbuildings.

On April 25th I found a male bird on my tennis lawn within fifty yards of the nesting site, freshly killed with its head lacerated and I do not doubt it was the one of the nesting pair. During the following day only the hen bird was to be seen. On April 27th a cock bird was in the meadow in company with the female, but their actions did not appear to be very sociable, and when they rose on the wing they flew off in opposite directions, but next day a cock and hen were together on the outbuildings. The female had continued sitting in the meantime, but a day or so later I found the nest deserted and empty, having probably been visited by vermin. Another nest was then built under the eaves of the house roof immediately above the porch and entrance door and the male was constantly in company with the female. A brood of four young was successfully reared by both parents and a day or so after the young

left the nest, they all forsook the vicinity. This was about the middle of June.

Some two or three weeks later the hen bird only reappeared and I was particularly interested in its attachment to the vicinity of its former nesting site, and I frequently watched it passing in and out of the eaves without a thought that it was actually again nesting. At this stage I was away from home for four clear days and during this time a nest was evidently completed. On August 1st part of the shell of a recently hatched egg was found on the ground beneath and the bird seen carrying food to the nest. Only this one egg was apparently hatched.

During this period close watch was kept and Mr. Chas. Oldham made a special visit at my request and kindly helped in observations on August 13th and 14th. I will not give in detail all the observations made. On no occasion was a male observed and the hen Wagtail alone reared the single young one. She went away from the nest at night (my first actual note of this is on August 11th) and first appeared about 5 a.m. (G.T.) to begin feeding. The morning and evening flight-line taken to and from the nest passed high and directly over the Wyre Forest to the west so in all probability the roosting place was several miles distant.

The young one was flushed from the nest on August 15th, perhaps a day or so prematurely, and remained about the garden until August 19th before finally leaving. At that time the adult roosted in the bushes alongside the stream within my meadow. Occasional visits were made by an adult female and an immature bird until September 10th, a lone hen bird until about a month later.

Not only is it remarkable that an unmated Wagtail should carry out unaided the entire nesting and rearing of the young, but here arises also the question of a delayed fertilization by the parent bird. When coition actually took place must remain in doubt, possibly immediately before the hen bird returned to its former nesting site and I think it would be very unusual for this to take place away from the breeding haunt in such a species. The only alternative would be for fertilization to have remained effective from the second impregnation and that three of the four eggs were found to be unfertile tends to confirm this suggestion.

J. S. ELLIOTT.

COLLARED FLYCATCHER IN SUSSEX.

I WISH to put on record the occurrence of a fifth Collared Flycatcher (*Muscicapa albicollis*) in Sussex. The bird is an adult male and was shot by the gardener at Westfield

Place on May 5th, 1922. Pied Flycatchers (*M. h. hypoleuca*) had occurred several times on spring passage there and the gardener had been requested to look out for them and to shoot one. The result was the present specimen. It was given to me a few months later by Mr. W. H. Mullens with the request that I should not record it for a considerable period.

N. F. TICEHURST.

LATE BROOD OF DARTFORD WARBLER.

ON August 16th, 1936, in north Sussex, I examined a nest of a Dartford Warbler (*Sylvia u. dartfordiensis*) which held three young about 11-12 days old. As I have previously never found a nest of this bird with young so late as the middle of August, I think it is worth recording in view of its being a possible normal third brood. As to whether there had been any disturbance of previous clutches I am unable to say, but would mention that there do not appear to be more than two or three pairs in this particular haunt. HUBERT E. POUNDS.

CONTINENTAL SONG-THRUSHES IN RENFREWSHIRE AND AYRSHIRE.

THREE Song-Thrushes, a male obtained near Largs, Ayrshire, on August 25th, 1935, and two females from east Renfrewshire obtained on December 7th, 1935, and December 12th, 1936, respectively, have proved to be of the Continental race *Turdus e. philomelus*, on careful examination with the material in the Royal Scottish Museum.

These are, therefore, the first recorded examples of this race in Renfrewshire, and only the second for Ayrshire.

PHILIP A. CLANCEY.

FOOD OF NESTLING SWALLOWS.

BELOW will be found a further list of insects, brought by adult Swallows (*Hirundo r. rustica*) to their young during August, 1936, in Carmarthenshire; three other lists were published in Vol. XXVII., p. 231, Vol. XXVIII., p. 171, and Vol. XXIX., p. 244.

I am indebted to Dr. John Smart, of the Natural History Museum, South Kensington, who has very kindly identified the insects so far as their condition permitted.

Dilophus febrilis was again the most numerous of the Diptera, and two other orders are represented by a very small moth and a "flying ant." *Eristalis arbustorum* is much the largest of these insects, having a wing expanse = 22 m.m. and a length = 10 m.m.

Family.	Genus.	Species.	
<i>DIPTERA.</i>			
TIPULIDÆ	?		(1)
BIBIONIDÆ	<i>Dilophus</i>	<i>febrilis</i> L.	(21)
LEPTIDÆ	<i>Chrysopilus</i>	<i>cristatus</i> Fab.	(1)
EMPIDIDÆ	<i>Empis</i>	<i>livida</i> L.	(1)
DOLICHOPODIDÆ	<i>Poecilobothrus</i>	<i>nobilitatus</i> L.	(1)
SYRPHIDÆ	<i>Melanostoma</i>	<i>mellinum</i> L.	(1)
	<i>Eristalis</i>	? <i>arbustorum</i> L.	(1)
ANTHOMYIDÆ	?		(2)
<i>LEPIDOPTERA.</i>			
TINEIDÆ	<i>Ochsenheimeria</i>	<i>bisontella</i> Zell.	(1)
<i>HYMENOPTERA.</i>			
FORMICIDÆ	<i>Acanthomyops</i>	<i>niger</i> L.	(1)

The figures in brackets denote the number of specimens obtained; *D. febrilis* occurred five times, and the Anthomyidae twice.

J. F. THOMAS.

RESULTS OF RINGING AND TRAPPING SWALLOWS IN CARMARTHENSHIRE.

OWING to a reduction (about thirty per cent.) in the number of Swallows (*Hirundo r. rustica*) nesting during August, 1936, as compared with the same month of 1935, the results from re-trapping pairs in Carmarthenshire were rather poor, only 4 recoveries having been made out of 20 pairs as against 9 from 28 pairs in August, 1935 (see Vol. XXIX., p. 245).

Sheds 1-12.—Not nesting in August.

Sheds 13 & 14.—Both birds different.

Sheds 15 & 16.—Females different; males not caught.

Sheds 17-19.—One bird same (♂♀), mates different.

Sheds 20.—Male same; female not caught.

One bird, a male, turned up out of a pair ringed in 1931, and must therefore have been at least six years old; it was nesting 20 yards from its former site, a cottage which was then unoccupied, but which now has people living in it.

J. F. THOMAS.

PEREGRINE FALCON TAKING LAPWING ON GROUND.

WHILE in a boat on Loch Scammadale, Argyllshire, in August, 1936, I was able to observe at the distance of about 45 yards a large Hawk which by its large size, sharp wings and mustachial stripes could only have been a Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) drop from a considerable height on a Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*). The Lapwing was easily overpowered by the Falcon and made little attempt to save itself. After holding the Lapwing down for 4 or 5 minutes without making any attempt to kill, the Peregrine started to pluck

feathers from the neck and breast of the Lapwing. On seeing this I shouted and frightened the Peregrine which flew off up the glen. The Lapwing then got shakily up and flew to the other side of the loch, where it joined the flock to which it belonged.

D. R. LEVICK.

COMMON EIDERS IN SUSSEX.

RECORDS of the occurrence of the Eider (*Somateria mollissima*) off the south coast are rare so it will be of interest to note that on November 29th, 1936, when walking round Thorney Island, Chichester Harbour, we obtained an excellent view of a pair of these ducks swimming close in to the south-east corner of the island. Mr. P. A. D. Hollom informs us that he saw a drake and three ducks at the same place on December 19th.

C. W. GEOFFREY PAULSON
GRAHAME DES FORGES.

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER IN SURREY.

ON the morning of December 15th, 1936, I visited Barn Elms Reservoir and there observed one of the Divers, which I at once reported to Mr. A. Holte Macpherson, suggesting that it was a Great Northern. Dr. G. Carmichael Low saw the bird on December 16th and on the same date Mr. A. Holte Macpherson observed it again, and both agreed that it was a Great Northern Diver (*Colymbus immer*) in winter plumage but retaining a slight dark patch on either side of its neck.

It was a large heavy bird which dived frequently and remained under water longer than any of the aquatic diving species. It was still there on the 19th. EDWARD G. PEDLER.

FULMAR PETRELS IN NORTHUMBERLAND IN 1936.

THE following observations recorded for 1936 of Fulmar Petrels (*Fulmarus g. glacialis*) may be of interest.

BAMBURGH.—The Fulmars returned to Bamburgh Crag during December, 1935, and from January 3rd, 1936, steadily increased in numbers, the largest count being twenty-nine birds on February 22nd. Several pairs were sitting in June, and later in that month two broken eggs were found at the foot of the Crag. No chicks were seen and the site was deserted at the end of July.

DUNSTANBURGH.—The birds were first seen on January 2nd, 1936, the largest count being forty-two on May 2nd and 12th. Six eggs were laid during June—five of which had hatched out by July 16th. One chick only was reared and got away on August 31st.

A pair of Herring-Gulls nested for the first time on the same site and were probably responsible for the disappearance of the other chicks—they were seen several times attacking the Fulmars when in flight—the Fulmars making no attempt to defend themselves. The last bird was seen on October 5th.

CULLERNOSE POINT.—One bird was seen on January 4th—the largest count being forty-three on July 2nd. Six eggs were counted on June 9th. Two only hatched out, both chicks were taken when three weeks old on July 27th. The birds decreased in numbers after that time, the last being seen on August 3rd.

HOLY ISLAND.—A colony is established on the Castle rock, and one pair was reported to have bred on the Inner Farne Islands.

BERWICKSHIRE.—At Marshall Meadows, three miles north of Berwick-on-Tweed a colony was reported which was visited on June 15th—twenty-four birds were counted. Several pairs were seen sitting on the ledges of the sandstone cliffs which surround the bay. No details are recorded as to eggs or chicks.

MARY J. LEVETT.

SPOTTED REDSHANK IN SUSSEX IN WINTER.

ON December 6th, 1936, when walking along the east side of Emsworth Channel which is part of Chichester Harbour, I was fortunate enough to get good views of a Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*). The orange rather than red legs, the grey-brown upper parts except for the white rump and back and the characteristic call which I heard several times left me in no doubt as to its identity.

G. DES FORGES.

GREENSHANKS WINTERING IN MERIONETHSHIRE.

FOR the last four winters one, and sometimes two, Greenshanks (*Tringa nebularia*) have been found wintering on the coast of Merionethshire. I saw the first one on February 3rd, 1932, and it remained until April 12th. A single bird arrived again on October 16th and was seen at intervals until March 18th, 1933. It left some time between that date and April 7th. In the autumn of 1933 one arrived between October 21st and 27th and was seen frequently till April 7th, 1934. A second was first seen on February 1st and again on the 6th and 19th, but not later. That year one arrived on September 27th and was joined by a second on October 21st and except for between January 30th and March 18th, 1935, when only one was seen, both remained until April 5th. That autumn they arrived on October 2nd and 6th respectively and remained

until March 3rd, 1936, and one of them until the 31st. In 1936 the first appeared on September 18th and the second on October 10th. Both were seen on December 5th.

E. H. T. BIBLE.

STATUS OF SANDWICH AND ARCTIC TERNS IN PEMBROKESHIRE.

IT seems evident that occurrences of the Sandwich Tern (*Sterna s. sandvicensis*) on the Pembrokeshire coast are a good deal more frequent than was formerly supposed. Thus two more records can be added to those given by R. M. Lockley in his recent note (*antea*, p. 260), both earlier than the observations in 1936 mentioned by him.

On July 5th, 1934—certainly a very unusual date for the species here—I watched two Sandwich Terns fishing and resting on the beach at Goodwick; and on September 29th, 1935, Charles Oldham saw two at Newport.

An Arctic Tern (*Sterna macrura*) watched by me resting on shore at Goodwick on August 13th, 1935, was in my experience a more uncommon visitor to the county, though M. A. Mathew writing in 1896 stated (probably erroneously) that this species was "seen commonly on passage in spring and autumn." (*The Birds of Pembrokeshire*).
BERTRAM LLOYD.

UNUSUAL BIRDS IN OUTER HEBRIDES.—The following are mentioned among others as observed in various years between October and February, by Dr. J. W. Campbell (*Scot. Nat.*, 1936, pp. 79-80).

CARRION-CROW (*Corvus c. corone*).—Two, N. Uist, January 6th, 1935. Scarce in outer Hebrides but has been recorded as breeding.

ICELAND REDWING (*Turdus m. coburni*).—Five obtained N. Uist, February, 1935.

SPARROW-HAWK (*Accipiter n. nisus*).—One Benbecula, November 24th, 1933. Very rarely recorded from Outer Hebrides.

GREY PLOVER (*Squatarola squatarola*).—A few in Benbecula, November 15th to December 6th, 1933.

GREENSHANK (*Tringa nebularia*).—Considered a regular winter visitor to N. Uist and Benbecula.

SCARCE BIRDS ON THE ISLE OF MAY.—The Midlothian Ornithological Club has organized a series of observers to keep watch and work their migration trap on the Isle of May in spring and autumn. The results of these observations for the autumn of 1935 and the spring of 1936 are now published in *The Scottish Naturalist* (1936, pp. 127-130 and 159-162). To keep up these observations a considerable number of observers is necessary to cover the chief migratory periods and the Club will welcome volunteers for the purpose. In the

autumn of 1935 there was unfortunately no observer on the island between August 24th and 30th when a very large migration was noted on Fair Isle, but during September and the first half of October a good many interesting birds were identified and still more in the spring of 1936. The chief of these are noted below.

CIRL BUNTING (*Emberiza cirrus*).—One caught in the migration trap, September 2nd, 1935, and another on 22nd.

ORTOLAN BUNTING (*E. hortulana*).—One seen September 1st, another on 4th and on October 3rd and 4th, 1935. One on May 7th and 8th, three on 9th, two on 10th, three on 11th and one on 12th and 13th, 1936.

Five are also recorded as seen on the Bass Rock on April 12th, 1936. (J. Campbell, *Scot. Nat.*, 1936, p. 142.)

BLUE-HEADED WAGTAIL (*Motacilla f. flava*).—One on May 6th and 7th, 1936, and another with a pale crown and ear-coverts on the 12th. The latter was thought to be of the *beema* type but this must remain uncertain.

GREY-HEADED WAGTAIL (*M. f. thunbergi*).—One noted from May 10th to 12th, 1936, was watched at close range by Messrs. Munro and Sandeman and identified as of this form by its dark crown and ear coverts and absence of eye-stripe.

CONTINENTAL COAL-TIT (*Parus a. ater*).—A Coal-Tit caught in the migration trap on October 10th, 1935, was identified by Messrs. W. H. Thompson and L. S. V. Venables. The wing measured 66 mm. and the tarsus 16 mm., which point to the correctness of the identification, and the "stone grey" of the back, and pure white and black of the head were noticeable. This is the first definite record of the bird in Scotland.

REED-WARBLER (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*).—One, October 3rd and 4th, 1935, and one, May 17th, 1936, the latter trapped.

BARRED WARBLER (*Sylvia n. nisoria*).—One trapped, September 11th, 1935.

WHITE-SPOTTED BLUETHROAT (*Luscinia s. cyanecula*).—One was carefully observed at close range by Messrs. Munro and Sandeman on May 10th, 1936.

CONTINENTAL HEDGE-SPARROW (*Prunella m. modularis*).—Hedge-Sparrows trapped on April 14th, 16th and 18th, 1936, were assigned to this race, but it is not stated on what characters.

Other birds noted were Red-backed Shrike (*Lanius collurio*) May 5th to 7th, and 17th and 18th, 1936, Scandinavian Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus c. abietinus*) October 3rd and 4th, 1935, Lesser White-throats (*Sylvia c. curruca*) single birds, September 28th, October 3rd and 4th, 1935, and May 5th and several from the 6th, 1936, several Black Redstarts (*Phænicurus o. gibraltariensis*) between May 7th and 10th, 1936, one or two Wrynecks (*Jynx torquilla*) between May 9th and 11th, 1936, (one also at the Bass Rock on May 10th, see page 142), two Wood-Sandpipers (*Tringa glareola*) May 7th to 10th, 1936, and a Great Shearwater (*Puffinus major*) off the shore in early October, 1935.

BLACK REDSTART IN MIDDLESEX.—Mr. O. Höhn informs us that he had a good view of a Black Redstart (*Phænicurus o. gibraltariensis*) at the West Middlesex Disposal Works,

near Staines Reservoir on December 30th, 1936. The bird was either a female or young male.

SLAVONIAN AND BLACK-NECKED GREBES IN SHROPSHIRE.—Mr. E. Cohen writes us that on December 27th, 1936 in the neighbourhood of Ellesmere, he and his wife had very good comparative views of a Slavonian Grebe (*Podiceps auritus*) and a Black-necked Grebe (*P. nigricollis*) which were on the same water as Great Crested and Little Grebes.

LEACH'S FORK-TAILED PETREL IN HAMPSHIRE.—We are informed by Sir Thomas Troubridge that a Leach's Fork-tailed Petrel (*Oceanodroma l. leucorrhoa*) was picked up in a moribund condition about a mile from the shore at Beaulieu on November, 12th 1936, by J. Crouch, a keeper on the estate. The stomach was found to be empty, and the bird was thin and emaciated.

AVOCET RECORDED FOR ARGYLLSHIRE.—Mr. E. MacAlister records (*Scot. Nat.*, 1936, p. 164) that he watched an Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*) on Loch Seil on September 19th, 1936. The observer states that when he first saw the bird it was swimming near the shore and "wallowing with its head under water." This action sounds more like a young Sheld-Duck and no indication of how the bird was identified is given. The bird is very rarely recorded in Scotland.