

THE " BRITISH BIRDS " MARKING SCHEME.*

PROGRESS FOR 1936.

BY

H. F. WITHERBY.

NUMBER OF BIRDS RINGED.				<i>Trapped.</i>	<i>Nestlings.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
In 1936	..	..	..	19,235	29,428	48,663
„ 1935	..	..	..	16,066	30,364	46,430
„ 1934	17,835	31,816	49,651
„ 1933	10,466	27,975	38,441
„ 1932	7,643	22,950	30,593
„ 1931	7,041	22,513	29,554
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In 1909	..	2,171		In 1920	..	5,276
„ 1910	..	7,910		„ 1921	..	8,997
„ 1911	..	10,416		„ 1922	..	9,289
„ 1912	..	11,483		„ 1923	..	12,866
„ 1913	..	14,843		„ 1924	..	18,189
„ 1914	..	13,024		„ 1925	..	18,233
„ 1915	..	7,767		„ 1926	..	23,432
„ 1916	..	7,107		„ 1927	..	21,625
„ 1917	..	6,926		„ 1928	..	24,479
„ 1918	..	5,937		„ 1929	..	25,243
„ 1919	..	3,578		„ 1930	..	28,610
Grand Total	..	..	..	530,733		

THE total of birds ringed in 1936, the twenty-eighth year of our " Marking Scheme," is certainly very satisfactory and brings our grand total to over half a million. The number of trapped birds for the year is a record and represents over two-thirds of those ringed as nestlings. As the mortality among nestlings must be far greater than in birds able to use their wings, the increasing number of birds ringed by trapping

*For previous Reports see Vol. III., pp. 179-182, for 1909; Vol. IV., pp. 204-207, for 1910; Vol. V., pp. 158-162, for 1911; Vol. VI., pp. 177-183, for 1912; Vol. VII., pp. 190-195, for 1913; Vol. VIII., pp. 161-168, for 1914; Vol. IX., pp. 222-229, for 1915; Vol. X., pp. 150-156, for 1916; Vol. XI., pp. 271-276, for 1917; Vol. XIII., pp. 96-100, for 1918; Vol. XIII., pp. 237-240, for 1919; Vol. XIV., pp. 203-207, for 1920; Vol. XV., pp. 232-238, for 1921; Vol. XVI., pp. 277-281, for 1922; Vol. XVII., pp. 231-235, for 1923; Vol. XVIII., pp. 260-265, for 1924; Vol. XIX., pp. 275-280, for 1925; Vol. XX., pp. 236-241, for 1926; Vol. XXI., pp. 212-219, for 1927; Vol. XXII., pp. 253-258, for 1928; Vol. XXIII., pp. 258-263, for 1929; Vol. XXIV., pp. 234-244, for 1930; Vol. XXV., pp. 286-291, for 1931; Vol. XXVI., pp. 295-300, for 1932; Vol. XXVII., pp. 278-283, for 1933; Vol. XXVIII., pp. 302-308, for 1934; Vol. XXIX., pp. 339-344, for 1935.

should in time show an increase in the percentage of birds recovered and therefore a benefit to results, though it may be remarked that it will always be necessary to practise both methods.

Thirteen totals have reached over the thousand mark and amongst these all have reached that total before, except the Isle of May Observatory.

Dr. Moon has once again ringed over five thousand and his list as before is remarkable because it is made up almost entirely of nestlings of birds not breeding in colonies. Some of his totals are : Lapwing (1,332), Curlew (136), Redshank (61), Starling (597), Pied Wagtail (248), Song-Thrush (975), Blackbird (849).

Mr. Charteris has again achieved a very big combined total of nestlings and trapped and netted birds. Large numbers have been ringed by the last method at night in the winter—an exciting and strenuous pastime. His chief figures are : Chaffinch (1,166), Greenfinch (232), Redwing (55), large numbers of Blackbirds, Song-Thrushes and Starlings and Lapwing.

Mr. Cohen has ringed about eighteen hundred non-Passerines and twelve hundred Passerines. About half the total is made up by large numbers of three species : Swallow (301), Manx Shearwater (865) and Sandwich Tern (454).

Mr. Morshead has specialized for many years on trapping and this year has made the largest total in that category. Of these the biggest numbers are Starling (1,134), Greenfinch (479), Chaffinch (320) and Skylark (160).

The Oxford Ornithological Society has trapped large numbers of Passerine birds (Starling, 517), specialized on Kingfisher (67) and been afield to ring Lapwing (162) and Manx Shearwater (117).

Skokholm Bird Observatory's list is a combination of Passerine birds mostly caught in the migration trap and sea-birds ringed as nestlings or caught at their nests. Of the former there are some notable figures such as Willow-Warbler (188), Whitethroat (117), Meadow-Pipit (161) and Rock-Pipit (84) as well as some interesting birds which could be ringed only in this way such as White Wagtail (27) and Greenland Wheatear (25).

Mr. Mayall has devoted himself chiefly to nestling Passerines of which Nightingale (409), Swallow (181) and Linnet (249) figure largely. Mr. Robinson's list is also chiefly made up of nestlings, but of shore- and sea-birds, chiefly Sandwich (523) and Common (597) Terns and Lesser Black-backed Gulls (439). Mr. Boyd has trapped a great number of Starlings (842). Bootham School, who have again achieved a very large

total, have also trapped many Starlings (395) besides ringing numbers of nestlings of other birds. Mr. Wontner-Smith has a big total of Rooks (201) ringed as nestlings, while Rugby have ringed nestlings of Carrion-Crow (62), and Rook (169).

The Isle of May Bird Observatory has ringed some unusual species caught in their migration trap. Amongst these are single individuals of Barred Warbler and Continental Coal-Tit, two Bluethroats and several Continental forms, besides a number of Warblers.

There are many other lists of interest, but I must be content with picking out a few items. Mr. Hollom has again been successful in netting Gulls at night. In Lord Mansfield's list I note Mallard (184); in Mr. Harthan's, Chaffinch (406) trapped; in Mr. Garnett's amongst other migrants trapped, four Bluethroats and a Black Redstart; in Leighton Park School's, Fork-tailed Petrel (21); in Dartington Hall School's, twelve Gull Buntings; in Mrs. Hodgkin's, Arctic Tern (125); in Mr. Thomas's, Swallow (200); in that of the British Trust for Ornithology, Woodcock (194); in Mr. Boardman's, Mallard (118) and in Mr. Carr's, forty-five Bramblings.

Glancing at the number ringed of each species one finds considerable increases in Rook, Starling, Linnet, Mallard, Manx Shearwater, Oyster-Catcher, Lapwing, Kittiwake and Razorbill and decreases in some birds such as Swallow, Gannet and Woodcock, to which special attention was paid in 1935. There is also an increase in the numbers trapped of birds like the Warblers which unfortunately have shown very poor returns, but with the institution of migration traps these birds may yet occasionally yield returns of great interest by being re-caught on a future migration.

The percentage of recoveries remains fairly steady per species, and in small birds is of course greatly influenced by the amount of re-trapping. Many of the recoveries published during the year have been of great interest and add considerably to the facts already collected regarding the movements of various species. Attention must also be drawn to the excellent piece of work done by Mr. A. W. Boyd and Dr. A. Landsborough Thomson in working out the results of ringing Swallows (*antea* pp. 278-287).

Once again we have to express our great gratitude to Miss E. P. Leach for all the work she has done for the scheme with unremitting care and attention. The great increase of rings used during the last few years has entailed a corresponding increase in the labour of record keeping and all its attendant detail, and we are still more indebted to Miss Leach for carrying out this work now it is of such magnitude.

			<i>Nest-</i>			<i>Nest-</i>		
	<i>Trapped.</i>	<i>ling.</i>	<i>Total.</i>		<i>Trapped.</i>	<i>ling.</i>	<i>Total.</i>	
H. J. Moon ...	243	5,937	5,280	Perths N. H. Soc.	—	149	149	
G. Charteris	2,244	1,280	3,524	J. Barnes ...	1	145	146	
E. Cohen	1,349	1,675	3,024	Wellington Coll.	21	117	138	
P. Morshead	2,518	239	2,757	L. C. Kaye ...	17	117	134	
Oxford Orn. Soc.	2,098	541	2,639	B. T. Brooker and				
Skokholm B. Obs.	1,544	956	2,500	E. M. Cawkell	1	130	131	
A. Mayall ...	222	1,726	1,948	D. J. Robertson	4	123	127	
H. W. Robinson	127	1,782	1,909	A. H. Bishop ...	41	83	124	
A. W. Boyd	1,304	399	1,703	C. S. Clarke ...	—	122	122	
Bootham School	526	1,130	1,656	Winchester Coll.	23	96	119	
C. Wontner-Smith	209	1,149	1,358	M. Boardman ...	118	—	118	
I. o. May B. Obs.	561	492	1,053	H. Tully ...	87	28	115	
Rugby School ...	67	983	1,050	J. P. Moseley ...	6	107	113	
Midlothian Orn. C.	79	734	813	G. Brown ...	4	103	107	
R. G. Williams...	24	664	688	Miss Staunton ...	97	4	101	
P. Hollom ...	396	271	667	E. L. Arnold ...	13	87	100	
Earl of Mansfield	7	591	598	J. Staton ...	15	80	95	
A. J. Harthan ...	520	54	574	W. S. Cowin ...	66	29	95	
R. M. Garnett ...	313	224	537	Mrs. Morley ...	—	92	92	
Zool. Society ...	321	190	511	Miss Sharp ...	9	78	87	
G. P. P. Pollitt...	362	95	457	J. F. D. Scott ...	79	7	86	
R. Martinson ...	75	356	431	Repton School ...	22	61	83	
Miss Mitchell ...	144	267	411	W. Pollok-Morris	30	49	79	
Leighton Park S.	138	265	403	Mrs. Greenlees ...	—	79	79	
Dartington Hall S.	280	95	375	P. Allen ...	17	59	76	
St. Edmund's S.	2	370	372	O. J. Pullen ...	4	64	68	
Miss Ferrier ...	—	372	372	H. Greatorex ...	22	44	66	
London N. H. Soc.	78	276	354	K. B. Rooke ...	66	—	66	
Mrs. Hodgkin ...	5	334	339	Barnard Castle S.	45	20	65	
C. F. Tebbutt ...	157	160	317	N. H. Joy ...	—	64	64	
Sanct. ClubCamb.	303	5	308	C. W. S. Ellis ...	56	—	56	
W. A. Cadman ...	11	289	300	A. R. Marshall ...	17	34	51	
Sedbergh S. ...	50	238	288	M. Philips Price	6	42	48	
C. W. Heycock...	111	174	285	Miss Darlington	—	48	48	
J. Bartholomew	23	258	281	P. Carr ...	48	—	48	
J. F. Thomas ...	42	230	272	Lord David Stuart	—	46	46	
E. G. Holt ...	259	12	271	R. E. Knowles...	29	16	45	
Cheltenham Coll.	55	202	257	H. V. Bamford...	2	43	45	
Blundell's S. ...	23	227	250	H. Martin ...	30	14	44	
S. Marchant ...	49	200	249	R. C. Dixon ...	4	37	41	
E. Peake ...	247	—	247	E. M. Nicholson	—	41	41	
A. H. and W. J.				E. Blezard ...	—	39	39	
Eggeling ...	166	68	234	D. K. Bryson ...	1	38	39	
M. Williams ...	42	180	222	F. A. Craine ...	6	32	38	
W. E. Kenrick ...	201	20	221	C. H. Kaye ...	21	17	38	
R. H. Brown ...	—	209	209	J. Law ...	38	—	38	
E. U. Savage ...	—	195	195	Miss Henderson	1	34	35	
Brit. Trust for Orn.	2	192	194	W. M. Serle ...	3	32	35	
H. G. Alexander	181	5	186	M. W. Willson...	—	34	34	
C. Oakes and				W. M. Congreve	33	—	33	
E. Battersby	2	183	185	H. S. Greg ...	—	33	33	
F. J. Ramsay ...	143	37	180	Mrs. Lane ...	8	25	33	
T. R. Tallis ...	—	159	159	University Coll.				
Brit. Em. Nat. Ass.	37	121	158	Exeter ...	—	32	32	

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	NUMBERS OF EACH SPECIES RINGED.				Grand Total.	RECOVERED	
	1909 to 1935	Trapped.	Nest-lings.	Total.		of those ringed 1909-35.	Percentage.
Raven	107	2	8	10	117	7	6.5
*Crow, Carrion	883	7	153	160	1043	52	5.8
Rook	3593	33	468	501	4094	130	3.6
Jackdaw	2259	85	308	393	2652	93	4.1
*Magpie	603	11	112	123	726	20	3.3
Jay	354	14	14	28	382	20	5.6
Starling	37592	4814	1433	6247	43839	1581	4.2
Greenfinch	19643	1469	691	2160	21803	1391	7.0
*Goldfinch	322	21	17	38	360	7	2.1
Redpoll, Lesser	520	5	19	24	544	3	0.5
Linnet	7659	173	559	732	8391	56	0.7
Bullfinch	1282	30	75	105	1387	41	3.1
Chaffinch	19684	2754	582	3336	23020	687	3.4
Brambling	458	67	—	67	525	22	4.8
Sparrow, Tree	1829	55	85	140	1969	45	2.4
Bunting, Yellow	3953	308	110	418	4371	209	5.2
Bunting, Reed	1495	54	51	105	1600	65	4.3
Lark, Sky	3169	166	41	207	3376	33	1.0
Pipit, Tree	1538	8	95	103	1641	4	0.2
Pipit, Meadow	3772	251	110	361	4133	68	1.8
Wagtail, Yellow	800	16	74	90	890	4	0.5
Wagtail, Grey	625	2	35	37	662	1	0.1
Wagtail, Pied	4712	84	384	468	5180	66	1.3
Tit, Great	3197	471	173	644	3841	486	15.5
Tit, Blue	4432	765	102	867	5299	814	18.3
Shrike, R.-backed	721	3	41	44	765	2	0.2
Flycatcher, S.	3037	35	59	94	3131	8	0.2
*Flycatcher, Pied	909	13	53	66	975	5	0.5
Chiffchaff	710	32	7	39	749	4	0.5
Warbler, Willow	8492	326	12	338	8830	37	0.4
Warbler, Wood	925	1	19	20	945	2	0.2
Warbler, Reed	827	3	30	33	860	4	0.4
Warbler, Sedge	989	34	15	49	1038	2	0.2
Warbler, Garden	1092	10	48	58	1150	1	0.09
Blackcap	778	7	53	60	838	1	0.1
Whitethroat	3339	169	17	186	3525	15	0.4
Thrush, Mistle	3552	26	282	308	3860	72	2.0
Thrush, Song	53108	489	3335	3824	56932	943	1.7
Redwing	236	78	—	78	314	—	—
Ouzel, Ring	415	4	18	22	437	3	0.7
Blackbird	42469	1239	3292	4531	47000	1697	3.9
Wheatear	1466	54	27	81	1547	29	1.9
Whinchat	1479	11	42	53	1532	10	0.6
Stonechat	665	14	19	33	698	5	0.7
Redstart	1696	37	59	96	1792	7	0.4
Nightingale	1602	—	416	416	2018	4	0.3
Redbreast	17008	631	688	1319	18327	1410	8.2
Sparrow, Hedge	11317	493	324	817	12134	891	7.8
Wren	3462	36	23	59	3521	13	0.3
Dipper	988	—	66	66	1054	8	0.8
Swallow	34243	99	2092	2191	36434	309	0.9
Martin	9996	97	332	429	10425	62	0.6
Martin, Sand	4129	90	112	202	4331	10	0.2

*Of species so marked no record was kept of the number ringed from 1913 to 1920.

	NUMBERS OF EACH SPECIES RINGED.				RECOVERED		
	1909 to 1935	Trapped.	1936— Nest- lings.	Total.	Grand Total.	of those ringed 1909-35.	Per- centage.
*Swift	788	10	20	30	818	50	6.3
Nightjar	189	—	9	9	198	2	1.0
Kingfisher	516	12	68	80	596	24	4.6
Wryneck	343	1	—	1	344	6	1.7
Cuckoo	572	—	46	46	618	17	2.9
*Owl, Little	424	6	31	37	461	41	9.6
Owl, Long-eared	191	—	2	2	193	7	3.6
Owl, Barn	448	3	32	35	483	34	7.5
Owl, Tawny	728	2	50	52	780	41	5.6
Peregrine Falcon	57	—	5	5	62	7	12.2
*Merlin	165	—	2	2	167	39	23.6
Kestrel	677	1	20	21	698	74	10.9
*Buzzard	200	1	30	31	231	10	5.0
Hawk, Sparrow	397	3	16	19	416	55	13.8
Heron, Common	1722	1	52	53	1775	183	10.6
Sheld-Duck	382	8	23	31	413	17	4.4
Mallard	5323	159	196	355	5678	685	12.8
Teal	1016	16	3	19	1035	131	12.8
Wigeon	228	3	1	4	232	24	10.5
Duck, Tufted	141	10	—	10	151	26	18.4
Eider	782	2	15	17	799	36	4.6
Cormorant	1471	1	164	165	1636	273	18.5
Shag	1498	—	51	51	1549	148	9.8
Gannet	4817	64	245	309	5126	163	3.3
Shearwater, Manx	4731	1466	689	2155	6886	135	2.8
Wood-Pigeon	2366	1	123	124	2490	91	3.8
Dove, Stock	456	12	42	54	510	23	5.0
Dove, Turtle	506	25	6	31	537	46	9.0
Stone-Curlew	173	—	14	14	187	8	4.6
Oyster-Catcher... ..	983	1	150	151	1134	38	3.8
Plover, Ringed... ..	1039	—	110	110	1149	14	1.3
Plover, Golden	231	1	34	35	266	3	1.2
Lapwing	27928	17	3174	3191	31119	621	2.2
Sandpiper, C.	727	5	54	59	786	3	0.4
Redshank	1702	4	170	174	1876	63	3.7
Curlew, Common	2250	—	268	268	2518	88	3.9
Snipe, Common	1234	11	83	94	1328	69	5.5
Woodcock	4268	2	316	318	4586	304	7.1
Tern, Sandwich	11639	7	1523	1530	13169	200	1.7
Tern, Common... ..	15245	18	1253	1271	16516	426	2.7
Tern, Arctic	1337	1	273	274	1611	4	0.2
Tern, Little	602	1	30	31	633	3	0.4
Gull, B-headed	12902	269	73	342	13244	582	4.5
Gull, Common	1408	42	111	153	1561	40	2.8
Gull, Herring	5208	45	1086	1131	6339	96	1.8
Gull, L. Blk.-bkd.	9345	—	494	494	9839	359	3.8
Gull, G. Blk.-bkd.	383	4	12	16	399	12	3.1
Kittiwake	1086	7	257	264	1350	11	1.0
Razorbill	1833	65	281	346	2179	25	1.3
*Guillemot	1572	58	114	172	1744	29	1.8
Puffin	3456	172	96	268	3724	34	0.9
Rail, Land	366	2	19	21	387	4	1.0
Moor-Hen	1349	60	29	89	1438	31	2.3
Coot	129	5	—	5	134	11	8.5