

REVIEWS.

LOCAL REPORTS.

Report of the Oxford Ornithological Society on the Birds of Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire, 1942. Edited by B. W. Tucker (University Museum, Oxford).

THIS report, which shows how well the society maintains its activity, contains as usual many interesting records. Among them Aquatic Warbler, Water-Pipit, Rough-legged Buzzard and several waders are worth special mention, and the continued breeding of Marsh-Warbler and Hobby near Oxford is a matter for satisfaction. Three easily accessible localities have merited special attention: the classic locality of Port Meadow has attracted Whcoper and Bewick's Swans, White-fronted Geese and Smew; at Sandford, near Oxford, and at Slough a number of uncommon waders have been seen. Bird-marking and organized work, which in the past have been a valuable part of this society's activities, have necessarily suffered. A.W.B.

London Bird Report for 1942. (Edited by R. S. R. Fitter and E. R. Parrinder). Supplement to *The London Naturalist*. 1s. 6d.

APART from the usual annotated list the report contains articles by Mr. Fitter on "Black Redstarts in London and Middlesex in the Summer of 1942" and "Iceland and Glaucous Gulls in the London Area in the Winter of 1941-42." There are also shorter articles on "Pied Wagtails attacking other Birds" and "A Bigamous Mute Swan," by H. J. Burkill and on "Probable Drumming by Green Woodpeckers," by W. A. Wright.

Annual Report of The Clifton College Natural History Society, 1942.

THE majority of the notes in the Ornithological Section relate to birds observed in the neighbourhood of Bude, North Cornwall. There are brief sections also dealing with observations in Devon and in the vicinity of Bristol.

Annual Report of Gresham's School Natural History Society, 1943.

IN the Ornithological Section the notes deal entirely with observations made at Newquay, Cornwall, from May, 1942 to March, 1943. They conclude with a list of 48 species reliably recorded as having bred within a ten-mile radius. The Report also includes a Paper on the Natural History of Bishop Loch (near Glasgow) by R. J. Cruickshank which is mainly an account of the birds seen on or near the loch.

Annual Report of the Oundle School Natural History Society, 1943.

THIS contains a brief section on birds observed between April, 1942 and March, 1943. Perhaps due to the mild season the numbers of ducks and geese seen along the river was much below the average, a pair of Scaup on February 7th being the most unusual visitors. A flock of about 100 Long-tailed Tits was seen in Lilford Park on December 19th. A list of 103 species of birds seen by Major I. R. English in the Middle East (Egypt, Libya, Iraq, Palestine and Cyprus) is printed at the end of the Report. W.B.A.

Cornwall Bird Watching and Preservation Society: Annual Reports, 1931-42. Edited by Lt.-Col. B. H. Ryves and others.

WE have received from the Society a complete set of these Reports, which contain much valuable information on Cornish birds. As might be expected in a publication for which Col. Ryves is largely responsible much attention is given to detailed observations on breeding, and there are also special articles on the breeding of Wood-Lark (1938), Cirl Bunting (1941) and Tree-Creeper (1942), containing valuable original data. From 1936 on the systematic notes are divided into two sections under the headings status and habits. This arrangement has much to commend it, but a tendency to multiply separate short sections of miscellaneous notes by individual observers might, we think, be curtailed with advantage. A large proportion of such notes might well be included in the main systematic section, and their treatment as separate items tends to make the Reports unnecessarily complicated for reference.

The history of the more notable breeding species, such as Chough, Raven, Peregrine and Buzzard, is very carefully recorded from year to year. During the period covered the number of definitely known breeding pairs of Choughs in any given year has not exceeded four, though there may have been five in 1941. In 1942 three sites were known to be occupied, but one was unfortunately wrecked by a landslide.

Some of the most notable of the rare visitors mentioned, such as Spotted Sandpiper (1924), American Bittern (1928), Yellowshank (1936), Red-breasted Snipe (1937), Yellow-billed Cuckoo (1938), Black Kite (1938 and 1942) and Greater Yellowshank (1939), have already been recorded in *British Birds*, and the breeding of Pintail in W. Cornwall in 1938 has been mentioned in *The Handbook*. Under the present severe limitations on our space it is impossible to review the other records and observations at all fully, but mention may be made of the records of: Little Bittern (1922), cliff nests of Heron (1931-1933), Dotterel (1931 and 1938), Rough-legged Buzzard (1932, 1934 and 1941), Marsh-Harrier and Night-Heron (1932), White-winged Black Tern (1933), probable Red-footed Falcon (1935), Rose-coloured Starling (1937), Shore-Lark (1938), Whooper Swans (1938 and 1939), Little Bustard and Crane (1939), Red-necked Phalarope and Common Tern in winter (1940), large number of wintering Chiffchaffs (1941), Ruddy Sheld-Duck and a number of Little Auks (1942). Spoonbills have been reported every year since 1938 and a few Grey Lag-Geese have been recorded with some regularity in recent winters. A record of a flock of about fifteen Kentish Plovers on Lelant Beach on August 31st, 1926, is so surprising that it should perhaps be accepted with a certain reserve, although on the characters given (noted at the time) the identification appears to have been correct. On the other hand a record of a Dartford Warbler in 1940 does not seem to us sufficiently authenticated and more details seem desirable about a Honey-Buzzard recorded in 1939.