

Rare breeding birds in the United Kingdom in 1975

I. J. Ferguson-Lees and the Rare Breeding Birds Panel



This is the third report of the Rare Breeding Birds Panel. The functions and methods of operation were identical to those described in detail in the first report (*Brit. Birds* 68: 5-23). The members of the panel during 1975 remained the same as in 1973-74: A. W. Colling, Peter Conder, R. H. Dennis, I. J. Ferguson-Lees and Dr J. T. R. Sharrock. Following his retirement as director of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Peter Conder resigned from the panel at the end of the year. With the necessary approval of the editorial board of *British Birds* and the councils of the British Trust for Ornithology and RSPB, his place has been taken since July 1976 by Ian Prestt, the new director of the RSPB.

The year 1975 will undoubtedly be remembered best for the nesting in Scotland by a pair of Spotted Sandpipers *Tringa macularia*. That remarkable event apart, however, it was an interesting year, with five other species featuring for the first time in these annual reports: Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*, Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*, Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*, Little Gull *L. minutus* and Hoopoe *Upupa epops*, though in only one of these cases (Little Gull) did a pair actually nest, and that was unsuccessful. The year's disappointments included the virtual and complete absences of, respectively, Montagu's Harriers *Circus pygargus* and Spotted Crakes *Porzana porzana*, the poor showing of Savi's Warblers *Locustella luscinioides* and the continued failure of Serins *Serinus serinus* to make their long-awaited establishment here. On the other hand, the repeated success of Goldeneyes *Bucephala clangula*, the great increase in the number of reported Goshawks *Accipiter gentilis*, the most successful year for Red Kites *Milvus milvus* this century and totals of over 80 singing Cetti's Warblers *Cettia cetti* and at least 65 singing Firecrests *Regulus ignicapillus* were all causes for satisfaction. With the publication of *The Atlas of Breeding Birds in Britain and Ireland* (1976), we have been able to make comparisons with the numbers of each species known or inferred in 1968-72, as well as with those published in our two earlier reports for 1973 and 1974 (*Brit. Birds* 68: 5-23, 489-506).

In this report, no locality or county is named unless the panel was given

permission to do so. County names are usually those used by the recorders supplying the records and, consequently, still include a mixture of old and new names. Where county names have been suppressed, the code letters used in the entries for each species are the same as in the previous two reports; thus, developments within any county can be followed, even though the identity of the county is not revealed.

As in past years, most records were supplied by county recorders, but some were submitted directly by observers. In such cases, we sought permission to inform the county recorder, and this was usually granted. The trend of increasing co-operation between county recorders and the panel regrettably reversed in 1975, the number of non-reporting counties, which had fallen from 15 in 1973 to three in 1974, rose to 34 in 1975 (see fig. 1), though we are delighted that records are now being supplied from Cornwall. With the co-operation of every county society, these annual reports could give a complete picture for the United Kingdom, which, as well as being of scientific interest, would be of great value in conservation planning (thereby helping the birds, in whose interests the non-reporting counties have presumably been withholding their data). We also regret to have to note that some reports received by the panel were obviously intentionally vague, thereby greatly lessening their value as permanent records and making more difficult the preparation of this report (which is only a part of the function of the panel), as well as producing an unnecessarily confusing result in some cases, because overlap between neighbouring areas could not

Fig. 1. Areas covered by this report. Records (or a negative return) were supplied to the panel by the recorders for all of the areas shown black. In some cases, individual observers supplied data for the counties left white, but records were not received from the local editor, so the picture may be very incomplete for these 34 areas. The panel does not collect records from the Republic of Ireland



be eliminated. We appeal to all county and regional societies to consider the value of the panel's work and to supply fully detailed reports for 1976 (and any new retrospective ones for 1973-75). Please always use the panel's special forms, which may be obtained free from the panel's secretary, **Dr J. T. R. Sharrock, 59 Curlew Crescent, Bedford MK41 7HY.**

Systematic list of 1975 records

Great Northern Diver *Gavia immer*

No records received, even of summering individuals. The pair with two young in Ross in 1970 (E. N. Hunter, *Scot. Birds* 6: 195) remains the only proven case.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Two records of single adults in summer.

Lanark Adult displaying on 25th May at same pool as one seen on 16th June 1974.

Perth One adult summered.

This species has never been recorded even attempting to nest in Britain, but it breeds commonly on the Continent north to central Finland and west to Denmark. The above records are of special interest in the light of the recent colonisation of, particularly, Scotland by other Fenno-Scandian birds.

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

Records from only 12 sites and survey incomplete in main county: 39-43 pairs reported, but less than 30 young seen, of which probably no more than half were reared.

Calthness One site with one to three pairs: (1) six or seven birds seen, and one pair with two young on 6th July.

Inverness Eight sites with total of 32-34 pairs: (1) 12-13 pairs and some young seen; (2) seven pairs reared nine or ten young; (3) three pairs failed; (4) two pairs probably failed; (5) six pairs, but no young seen; (6) (7) one pair failed at each; (8) what may have been the pair from (7) appeared at a different site during 7th-20th June and seemed to be nesting, but then moved to another lochan nearby, where they were probably unsuccessful.

Moray One site with four pairs: (1) four pairs on 3rd June, and broods of one, two and three young on 9th July, but only two young seen later.

Perth Two sites with total of two pairs: (1) one pair reared two, possibly three, young; (2) one pair in May and early June, but no evidence of nesting.

Success remains low and the species did not nest in Aberdeen after breeding there in 1974, but the continued colonisation of Perth for the third successive year is encouraging. Unfortunately, the survey was much less complete in Inverness than it was in either 1973 or 1974, the data coming from only eight sites compared with 18 and 19 in the previous two years. The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in 12 squares and probable in one, and the total population was 48-62 pairs during 1971-74. (See page 22 for 1974 addition.)

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Three sites in two counties, but data incomplete.

County A Two sites: (1) (2) pairs nested at each, but no information on numbers or success.

County B One site: (1) at least eight pairs at the main locality on 26th May, but eventual success not known.

There were apparently fewer at the site in county B than in either of the preceding years (up to 14 pairs in 1973, nine pairs and three single adults in 1974). The total population is now probably well below the maximum of 'less than 20 breeding pairs' noted in the *Atlas*, which recorded confirmed breeding in five squares and probable in two (one in the Republic of Ireland).

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Nine sites in two areas, with a total of about 21 pairs and breeding proved in several cases, but data probably incomplete.

Cambridge/Norfolk One site with about five pairs: (1) breeding population believed to be five pairs, but success unknown.

Orkney Eight sites on three islands with total of about 16 pairs: (1) one pair with five young on 1st June; (2) three pairs or females with young on 7th June; (3) one pair 'looking territorial' on 10th May; (4) one pair possibly bred; (5) two pairs possibly bred; (6) male at site where breeding proved previously; (7) minimum of three pairs or females with young on 23rd June and 15th July; (8) two pairs or females with young on 15th July. In addition, on the same island as (7) and (8), at least three other family parties were seen with flying young during 14th-16th July; there, too, as many as nine males were seen together on 26th May, and a total of 56 Pintails on 1st October included many juveniles.

Although breeding was reported from only two areas, compared with three in 1973 and five in 1974, the totals in both were higher and the results of the fuller (though still not complete) survey in Orkney are encouraging. The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in 35 squares (one in the Republic of Ireland) and probable in 11, putting the total population at 'under 50 pairs in most years'. (See page 22 for 1974 correction.)

Scaup *Aythya marila*

No records received, and a late report of proved breeding in Orkney in 1973 (page 21) is the only one since 1970 (three nests at one site in Perth) and 1967-71 (infertile clutches laid by unmated female in Suffolk). The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in four squares.

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Two pairs nested, one female hatching ten young, and a third probably did so at a second site.

Inverness Two sites: (1) a female with ten newly hatched young on 21st and 29th May, and a second female incubating five eggs on 21st; (2) a female attached to area of nest box on 29th May, but no young seen subsequently.

This was the third successive year with evidence of nesting by three pairs, following single pairs in 1970-72; all were again in nest boxes. Further, the breeding areas were not thoroughly searched in 1975 and it was thought possible that the number of pairs involved might have been as high as five. The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in two squares and probable in three.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

About 143 pairs reported, and a number of additional females, but again mainly at one site in Northern Ireland.

Caithness Five sites: (1) one pair on 27th May; (2) male and four females on 1st June and

still four females on 3rd July; (3) four females on 1st June; (4) three males and five females on 4th June; (5) eight females on 21st June; also seen on hill lochs 31st May-11th July, but no evidence of breeding anywhere.

Dunbarton/Stirling One site: (1) up to three, six and ten adults of both sexes, including at least seven pairs, in three localities at Loch Lomond during 13th-17th May, but no subsequent evidence of breeding.

Fermanagh One site: (1) breeding population of Lough Erne estimated at about 123 pairs, and over 120 young seen in 25 broods, but probably only 21+ young were reared.

Inverness One site: (1) female with three young about two weeks old on 7th July, near area where single females at two lochs in late June 1974. The main site (15 pairs and six nests found in 1974) was not visited.

Perth One site: (1) one pair on same loch as in 1973 and 1974, with six small young on 21st June, five of which were well-grown on 18th July.

Shetland Two sites: (1) at least five pairs, and nest with five eggs found on 29th June; (2) one pair possibly bred.

Once again, most (86%) of the pairs reported were in Fermanagh; the breeding success there, although not good, was much better than in other recent years (for example, only one brood of five seen in 1974). Elsewhere, we received no record of any in Argyll in 1975 and the data from Inverness are incomplete, but the continued presence at Loch Lomond, the most southerly site in Scotland, is satisfying. The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in 23 squares (five forming the Lough Erne site and three in the Republic of Ireland) and probable in five (one in the Republic), with an estimated total population in the United Kingdom of 110-150 pairs in Fermanagh and 30-50 pairs in Scotland.

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

At least 27 sites reported and confirmed pairs in 13 or more cases, of which at least three bred successfully.

Argyll One site: (1) one bird in display flight, but no evidence of breeding.

Inverness At least five sites: (1) one pair during summer; (2) one adult in display flight; (3) (4) (5) single birds seen. Certainly breeding in north Speyside and adjacent areas.

Sutherland One site: (1) one pair displaying.

Yorkshire Three sites: (1) one pair displaying on 2nd February (with second male) and 2nd March, rebuilt and decorated previous nest, but no further breeding activity after 23rd March; (2) one (sub-adult?) pair displaying, partly built and decorated new nest, but no further breeding activity after 27th March, although still in area; (3) birds regularly seen, but no evidence of breeding.

County D Nine sites, with successful breeding in at least two: (1) (2) single pairs each reared three young; (3) (4) birds seen at each, pair displaying at one and male found shot at end of breeding season, but no evidence of nesting and some may have been immatures or even the adults from (1); (5) one pair which bred successfully since 1968, except 1973, rebuilt nest but then abandoned it and male found dead later in season; (6) (7) single pairs nested, one having eggs robbed and the other young removed, but not clear whether only one pair involved; (8) (9) single pairs, but no further details.

County E At least one site, but no details.

County G Details from only two sites, though certainly breeding at others: (1) at least one or two birds; (2) first-summer male trapped, in area where Pheasants *Phasianus colchicus* reared, and released in county H.

County H Two sites: (1) two birds (one adult) during year; (2) two birds, but no evidence of breeding.

County I Pairs seen in summer at three sites, and possibly even a second pair at one, but degree of overlap uncertain and no evidence of breeding.

County J Two sites, with successful breeding in at least one: (1) one pair bred successfully and second pair possibly present; (2) one or more birds seen regularly, but no proof of breeding.

Goshawks are now more fully reported to the panel and the picture is becoming much clearer, even though no records of this species reached us from counties A, B, C and F in 1975. A number of recorders still wish the names of their counties to be suppressed for this species, but it is obviously widely scattered now and we can state that the number of pairs breeding in Scotland may well be in double figures, while the same probably applies in England. The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in 11 squares and probable in 20, putting the population in a range of ten to 30 pairs. We have no knowledge, of course, how many of these Goshawks are wild, feral or escaped, and it is suggested that some are still being released in Scotland. (See pages 21 and 22 for 1973-74 additions.)

Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

A total of 32 pairs, of which 28 nested (one twice); 16 of these were successful, rearing 25 young. At least nine non-breeders were also found, making a total April population of 73 or more birds.

County A No nesting attempts known.

County B One site, unsuccessful: (1) one pair laid eggs, but failed.

County C Total of 23 sites, 14 successful: (1) to (9) nine pairs reared two young each; (10) to (14) five pairs reared one young each; (15) to (19) five pairs laid eggs, but failed; (20) to (23) four pairs occupied sites, but did not nest.

County D Four sites, one successful: (1) one pair reared one young; (2) (3) (4) three pairs laid eggs, but failed.

County E Three sites, one successful: (1) one pair reared one young; (2) one pair laid eggs which were stolen, then laid again, but failed; (3) one pair laid eggs, but failed.

County F One site, unsuccessful: (1) one pair laid eggs, but failed.

A comparatively successful year and, indeed, the best this century. Not only was there one more nesting pair than in 1974 (and two more than in 1973), but the number of young reared more than doubled from 12 to 25 (14 in 1973). The nesting attempt in county F was the first confirmed there for 25 years. The *Atlas* put the population at about 26 pairs, with confirmed breeding in 19 squares and probable in two.

Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

Details of only one pair reported and data very incomplete.

Hampshire Breeding continued, but no details received.

Norfolk One site: (1) one pair present from 11th May to at least 30th July, with a third bird on 1st June, but no evidence of nesting.

The information received is again disappointingly inadequate and we do urge those concerned to deposit their records with the panel for summary in this report. The *Atlas* put the population at not exceeding a dozen pairs in any year, with confirmed breeding in seven squares and probable in one, but the data should be centralised so that trends may be detected. (See page 21 for 1973 addition.)

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Five males and seven females nested and reared a total of 18 young.

Norfolk One site, successful: (1) one pair reared four young. Three other birds summered in the county.

Suffolk Three sites, with successful breeding at two: (1) one pair reared five young, and a bigamous male was mated to three females, two of which reared four young each while

the third failed; (2) one pair reared one young, and a second female was also present but did not nest; (3) one pair nested, but the male disappeared and the female subsequently deserted.

The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in four squares and probable in two, concluding that it was 'unlikely that there were more than half a dozen nests in Britain in any year during 1968-72'. Six nests each were reported in 1973 and 1974, rearing 16 and ten young, and against this background 1975 must be regarded as an above average year. Yet the total is still far below the 1957-58 figure of nearly 20 pairs.

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*

Only two reports of single birds on single days.

Bedfordshire Female on 9th June in same locality and on same date as one in 1974, but no evidence of breeding.

Cornwall One in May in possible breeding area, but not seen again.

The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in 13 squares and probable in 18. In the early 1950s there were at least 40-50 pairs, including up to 20 in Devon and Cornwall where the species last bred in 1972; this total declined to 15-25 pairs by the mid 1960s, five to eight pairs by 1970 and two or three pairs by 1973. In 1974, for the first time, there were no confirmed records of breeding, and 1975 represented a further decline with no report of a pair or even of one bird seen regularly. The outlook for the future of the Montagu's Harrier as a British breeding species now seems very bleak. (See pages 21 and 22 for 1973-74 additions.)

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Again 14 pairs, of which nine laid eggs, but only seven successful in rearing the comparatively small total of 16 young.

Inverness One site at Loch Garten, unsuccessful: (1) one female and two males, both attempting to mate with her, in second half April; one male left and pair remained until September; one egg laid in flimsy nest in usual tree, probably on 9th May, but female could not incubate it and it was later removed for analysis; increase in display and nest-building in July, but no further eggs laid.

Perth One site at Loch of Lowes, unsuccessful: (1) single male nest-building during 6th-16th April, then left; female arrived on 17th and another male on 19th, pair remaining throughout summer and latterly building nest in 1970 tree, but did not lay eggs.

County A One site, unsuccessful: (1) one pair present from 17th April and female incubating in 1974 eyrie from May throughout June, but on 30th June it was found that the eggs had been stolen and replaced by three hens' eggs.

County B Six sites, four successful: (1) (2) single pairs each reared two young in 1974 eyries and these seen flying on 5th August; (3) one pair laid three eggs in 1974 eyrie and reared two young; (4) one pair reared three young in new nest; (5) one pair present for most of summer, but failed to nest; (6) one pair occupied new eyrie by early May, but later broken eggshells were reported under the tree and no adults were present in mid June.

County C Two sites, both unsuccessful: (1) one pair arrived in April and built new nest, but, although both birds remained until at least early August and also rebuilt old eyrie, failed to breed; (2) one pair had rebuilt eyrie by 18th June, but failed to breed and left by end July.

County D Two sites, both successful: (1) one pair laid three eggs in usual eyrie and reared three young; (2) one pair reared two young in 1974 eyrie.

County E One site, successful: (1) one pair laid three eggs in 1974 eyrie, of which one failed to hatch, and reared two young.

This was a disappointing year after 1973 and 1974, in each of which ten pairs were successful and reared 21 and 20-21 young; the fact that one

clutch was stolen is a sad reminder that nests are still at risk from egg-collectors. The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in seven squares and probable in four, but there were only about seven nesting pairs by 1971-72. Fourteen young Ospreys were ringed in 1975, bringing the total so marked to 101; the number of young reared since 1959 is now at least 129 and perhaps 132 or more. There were no foreign recoveries in 1975, but a male ringed as a chick at Loch Garten in 1969 was found dying in another county. Of 20 nesting adults examined through telescopes, five had been colour-ringed as nestlings in Scotland and two others carried metal rings alone.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Data incomplete: reported from only about 48 sites, with breeding proved by 30 pairs, of which 21 were successful in raising at least 33 young, two failed and six were of uncertain outcome.

Bedford Four observations of single birds at four localities between 3rd May and 5th August, but no evidence of breeding.

Berkshire Four sites, with breeding proved at two: (1) one pair with well-grown young in nest on 2nd August; (2) one pair with one young in nest on 2nd August; (3) one pair present, but nest not found; (4) up to two birds seen, but no evidence of breeding. Other observations of single birds continued to suggest that the species was 'probably under-recorded'.

Buckingham Four sites, but no evidence of breeding: (1) (2) single birds on 2nd and 7th June, and 25th June, at traditional sites; (3) one bird from late April through the summer; (4) one female shot in late July, cared for and released by falconer. Other observations of single birds continued to indicate that the species was 'much under-recorded'.

Devon 'A good season with young reared at several sites', but details withheld by county recorder.

Dorset At least 12 sites, with breeding proved at three or four: (1) one pair reared young; (2) one pair nested, but success unknown; (3) two pairs reared at least one young each, though possibility of overlap with (2); (4) one pair probably failed; (5) one pair seen regularly; (6) to (12) pairs reported, but no further details. Single birds elsewhere, and total number of pairs attempting to breed, according to county recorder, 'could easily be 20'.

Hampshire Only one site reported, with breeding proved: (1) one pair reared one young. No other records received from this county which had '13-15 pairs' representing 'less than 50% of the actual county total' in 1974.

Hereford Two or three observations of single birds in one part of the county, and one found with broken wing, but no evidence of breeding.

Huntingdon One site, with breeding proved: (1) one pair reared two or three young at 1974 site.

Oxford About ten sites, with breeding proved at six: (1) (2) (3) three pairs nested within radius of 6½ km, at least one rearing young; (4) one pair reared at least two young; (5) (6) single pairs nested; (7) (8) single pairs probably bred; (9) (10) single pairs possibly bred. Other observations suggested that 'the true total was higher than ten', according to the county recorder.

South Yorkshire One site, but no evidence of nesting: (1) one or possibly two birds remained throughout May-August.

Stafford A few observations 'doubtless related to passage birds'.

Surrey Twelve sites, with 13 pairs proved breeding: (1) two pairs reared three and two young; (2) two of three pairs reared two and one young, success of third unknown; (3) (4) (5) single pairs reared at least one young each; (6) one pair reared two young, and possibly a second pair; (7) one pair nested but failed; (8) (9) (10) single pairs reared at least two young each; (11) one pair probably nested; (12) one pair possibly nested. Single birds reported from three other areas in May and June.

Warwick At least one site, with breeding proved: (1) one pair reared three young. Wide

scatter and frequency of other observations led regional recorder to conclude that there might have been 'at least ten breeding pairs', but no other records were supplied to him. **West Midlands/Worcester** One site, but no proof of nesting: (1) one pair seen regularly from late July to late September.

Worcester At least one site, with breeding proved: (1) one pair bred successfully, but no further details. Numerous other observations led regional recorder to conclude that there was 'possibly more than one pair, but less than five'.

No reports or only odd individual records were received from several of the main counties (notably Sussex, Hampshire, Wiltshire and Somerset) and no details from Devon. This is unfortunate because a full picture of the numbers of this species would be valuable. The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in 95 squares and probable in 43, with an estimate which was 'close to, or may exceed, 100 pairs'. From the data supplied by the counties above, however, together with estimates based on what has been published elsewhere for the missing areas in recent years, it seems likely that the population in 1974-75 was in the range 81-148 pairs and probably of the order of 110-125 pairs. (See pages 21 and 22 for 1973-74 additions.)

Spotted Crake *Porzana porzana*

No records received. The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in two squares and probable in 20. More than half of these were in Scotland where, after no reports in 1973, birds were heard at four sites in 1974. The population seems clearly to fluctuate.

Dotterel *Eudromias morinellus*

More data than in 1973-74, but still very incomplete: reported from eight counties and statements of nesting by at least 17 pairs, but general comments from some of the main areas shows that others were proved breeding.

Aberdeen/Banff/Inverness/Perth/Angus General comment: 'Breeding population much as usual for recent years; average 0.3-0.8 young per adult on different hills.'

Aberdeen/Banff/Inverness Details from four sites: (1) two birds on 25th May; (2) at least two different adults with three and two young, probably other pairs failed; (3) adult with three chicks about one week old on 30th July; (4) adult with three young, and party of seven, on 3rd August.

Angus Details from one site: (1) two juveniles, and another party of eight or nine, of which two were juveniles, on 25th July. General comment: 'Seven pairs bred.'

Inverness Details from two sites: (1) one bird on 19th June, four adults and four juveniles on 31st July, probably other pairs failed; (2) one pair on 1st June and 27th July, but no proof of breeding. Present in another area, but no data available.

Perth Details from three sites: (1) one pair on 11th May at what was probably new site; (2) one pair with one young at new site first occupied in 1974; (3) five birds in party on 6th July at site now possibly in regular use. These represent the southern and western limits of the range in the Scottish Highlands.

County A Present, but no evidence of successful nesting.

County B One site: (1) one pair with nest and three eggs on 1st June, but found deserted on 12th June. The first proof of nesting in this county.

County C Five sites: (1) one pair laid three eggs, all of which hatched, and one or two young flew; (2) one pair laid three eggs which probably failed to hatch and no sign of any birds in June; (3) one pair in late May, but no further searches made; (4) (5) birds seen in May, but not found on later visits.

It is again impossible to comment on general trends, but the population was estimated at 60-80 pairs in 1950-60 and D. Nethersole-Thompson (1973, *The Dotterel*) put it at 56-74 pairs. The *Atlas* recorded confirmed

breeding in 26 squares and probable in six, concluding that in exceptional years up to 100 pairs may breed. The continued presence in counties outside the main range is most interesting (with breeding proved for the first time in one of them) and, in this connection, we note that one pair also bred successfully in Ireland in 1975 (*Irish Bird Rep.* 23: 3, 13). (See page 22 for 1974 additions.)

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

No proof of nesting, but territorial behaviour at three sites in June.

Orkney Display and song at two sites on 9th and 10th June.

Shetland Two birds alarm-calling on 1st June.

This species has never been proved to breed in Britain or Ireland, though it has long been regarded as a possibility and attempts have been suspected in Shetland and Down, as well as in northwest Ireland, and possibly elsewhere. There is no firm evidence that those in Orkney and Shetland in 1975 were other than late migrants, but, like the Sanderlings *Calidris alba* in 1973-74, it seems well worth putting them on record.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Reported from only six sites and data clearly incomplete; about 60 pairs nested at these, but only some 20 pairs fledged young.

Cambridge/Norfolk One site, with breeding proved: (1) up to 55 pairs nested in the area of the Ouse Washes, 21 of them on adjacent farmland, but only about 20 pairs fledged young.

Lincoln/south Humberside One site: (1) one pair, breeding suspected.

Orkney Two sites, both with breeding proved: (1) one pair seen from 21st June and large young on 17th August; (2) one pair with one young just able to fly on 23rd July.

County B One site, with nesting proved: (1) two pairs nested, but both failed and left the area.

County D One site, but no evidence of nesting: (1) one pair stayed late in spring and displayed, but then left.

No information was received from more or less regular sites in Cumbria, Kent and Somerset, but it seems likely that the total population was similar to those in 1973-74. The confirmed breeding in Orkney is noteworthy. The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in 15 squares and probable in 14. (See page 23 for 1974 addition.)

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

At least two pairs nested.

Caithness Two sites, with nesting proved at one: (1) one pair and nest with four eggs on 24th June, but no sign of birds in July; (2) only one bird seen, but song-fighting in early June and still present in mid July.

Inverness One site, with breeding proved: (1) one pair certainly nested and three young were seen on 22nd June; two other birds present from 22nd May to 26th June and sometimes a third.

Sutherland Two sites, but no proof of nesting: (1) single bird on 31st May; (2) two birds on 13th June.

These records suggest a slight increase in activity over the two previous years, and it is encouraging that two pairs were proved nesting (none in 1973, one in 1974), but the total is still well below the seven or eight pairs of 1972 (five pairs proved breeding). On the other hand, in that year there was intensive fieldwork in remote parts of Scotland for the *Atlas*, which altogether recorded confirmed breeding in five squares and probable in nine.

Spotted Sandpiper *Tringa macularia*

One pair nested and four eggs were laid, but were later deserted.

County A One site: (1) one bird first seen on 15th June, and a pair with a nest and four eggs on 27th June, deserted by 7th July, perhaps because of trampling by cattle or heavy rain; eggs sent to the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh, where two were found to contain partly developed embryos.

This remarkable record, the first of nesting by an American species in Europe, has already been fully documented (Gordon E. Wilson, *Brit. Birds* 69: 288-292).

Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*

Birds summered at only one site and no evidence of nesting.

Grampian Against a background of only two previous published records, the high total of seven single birds in May and July-August at two or three localities indicated unusual movements, even though there was not the slightest suggestion of nesting.

County B One site, but no evidence of breeding: (1) three birds, two of them possibly first-year, from mid May to at least mid June in the 1974 locality.

For the first year since 1969, none was seen at the locality in county A where breeding was proved in 1971, but it is encouraging that the site in county B has now been occupied in two successive years. The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in one square and probable in one.

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

No records received. There is no evidence that this species has ever nested in Britain, but single pairs were seen on mountains in two counties in 1973-74.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Three sites, with evidence of nesting by at least 17 females at two.

Cambridge/Norfolk One site, with evidence of nesting: (1) at least 12 females probably nested on the Ouse Washes, but success unknown.

Lancashire One site, with breeding proved: (1) of seven females which stayed at Martin Mere after the males left, five were seen coming urgently to feed at dawn and in the late afternoons, and it was believed that they were incubating; later, several behaved as if with young and two were seen with flightless young from early June.

County A One site: (1) one male and one female on 6th-7th June and one male on 16th June, but no evidence of nesting other than disappearance of female.

The number of Reeves on the Ouse Washes was about the same as in 1974, more than the eight in 1973, but still apparently well below the peak of up to 21 in 1971. The confirmed breeding in Lancashire is encouraging corroboration of the westward spread suggested by the *Atlas*, which recorded confirmed breeding in six squares and probable in two.

Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

About 158 pairs nested at six sites and reared at least 142-149 young.

Essex One site, with successful breeding: (1) one pair reared two young. The first proof of breeding in the county since at least 1953.

Suffolk Two sites, with successful breeding at both: (1) 107 pairs nested on Havergate Island, of which 86 pairs reared 79-80 young; (2) 41 pairs nested at Minsmere, rearing 60-64 young.

County A Three sites, with successful breeding at at least two: (1) at least four pairs nested, and one pair seen with young, but success unknown; (2) two pairs nested, each probably rearing one young, and a third pair also reported; (3) three pairs, but success unknown.

The total of breeding pairs was probably a few more than in any previous year (149 in 1973, 125 in 1974) and the number of young reared was far better than in 1974, when only 64 were recorded. The population at Minsmere was the highest ever and the spread to Essex is encouraging also. The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in five squares and probable in two.

Red-necked Phalarope *Phalaropus lobatus*

At least 19 pairs, possibly 24 or more, reported from seven sites, and at least 18 pairs nested, but data incomplete.

Orkney One site, but no proof of nesting: (1) one pair reported in early summer and a female on several occasions in mid July.

Outer Hebrides About four sites, with nesting proved at two: (1) one pair nested, but failed; (2) three pairs nested, but success not known; (3) (4) birds seen, but did not apparently nest.

Shetland Two sites, with nesting proved at both: (1) at least 13 pairs, possibly 18, nested at main site, but no details of success; (2) one pair nested on another island.

County A None recorded at two sites where breeding proved in recent years.

The data are inadequate to assess trends. The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in 17 squares (at least one in the Republic of Ireland) and probable in three. M. J. Everett (*Brit. Birds* 64: 293-302) put the British and Irish population at 54-65 pairs in 1968, 28-41 pairs in 1969, and about 45 pairs in 1970. It seems likely that the numbers are continuing to fluctuate within similar limits, or possibly a little lower.

Stone Curlew *Burhinus oedicnemus*

Only 30-45 pairs reported in five counties, and data very incomplete.

Dorset One to three sites: (1) one pair with nest and two eggs, but success not known; (2) (3) perhaps two other pairs.

Essex Two sites, but no proof of breeding: (1) two birds on several dates in the summer; (2) one bird on 17th May.

Norfolk General comment only: 'No survey undertaken, but known to be present at a number of localities.'

Norfolk/Suffolk Of 19 pairs in Breckland, ten were successful, five failed and four were not followed up. (Note considerable overlap to unknown extent with separate Norfolk and Suffolk entries.)

Oxford Three sites: (1) one pair bred successfully; (2) juveniles seen in summer; (3) one pair possibly nested.

Suffolk Probably seven pairs in coastal belt and 15-20 pairs in Breckland, but no details of success.

With no reports from Berkshire, Cambridge, Hampshire, Sussex and Wiltshire, it is impossible to assess the current situation. The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in 63 squares and probable in 19, estimating the total population at 'probably not less than 300 pairs, and may exceed 500'.

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

One adult bred with a Herring Gull.

Shetland An adult paired with a Herring Gull *L. argentatus* and successfully reared young.

Single Glaucous Gulls have occasionally summered in Britain, but this is the first record of one nesting, even though it was a hybrid pairing.

Hybridisation has previously been reported elsewhere between these two species, and also of Glaucous with Iceland *L. glaucoides*, Lesser Black-backed *L. fuscus* (presumed) and, at least in captivity, Great Black-backed *L. marinus* (Annie P. Gray, 1958, *Bird Hybrids*).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

No records received. One pair bred in Hampshire in 1968 and mixed pairs of Mediterranean and Black-headed Gulls *L. ridibundus* then and in subsequent years. Immatures are now regularly seen in summer in one or two other areas.

Little Gull *Larus minutus*

One pair nested unsuccessfully.

Cambridge/Norfolk One site: (1) one pair nested on the Ouse Washes among Black-headed Gulls *L. ridibundus*, but the eggs were taken by a predator.

Little Gulls have increased enormously as passage migrants and summer visitors in Britain and Ireland over the last 25 years and possible breeding was suspected in three cases during the *Atlas* years, but this is the first confirmed nesting record.

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

One pair nested unsuccessfully.

Cambridge/Norfolk One site: (1) one pair nested on the Ouse Washes, but did not hatch any young.

Apart from a pair in Ireland in 1967 and another elsewhere in East Anglia in 1970, the only accepted previous nesting records during the present century of this formerly regular breeding species were also on the Ouse Washes in 1966 (several nests, two with eggs, three young reared) and 1969 (seven nests, young hatched in five, but probably only one fledged). This latest record confirms that, if only the right conditions could be guaranteed, the Ouse Washes would probably become a regular nesting site. One pair attempted to breed in Ireland in 1975, but the nest and eggs were destroyed and the site was abandoned (*Irish Bird Rep.* 23: 20).

Snowy Owl *Nyctea scandiaca*

Two nests, and a pair at a second site, but only one pair bred successfully.

Shetland One male with two females on Fetlar: (1) female laid six eggs, of which four hatched, and reared four young; (2) female laid three eggs, but abandoned them.

County A Pair present during summer, but did not nest.

As in 1973 and 1974, the male on Fetlar was paired with two females which both laid eggs, but again one nest failed. Nevertheless, the four young reared at the other nest was the highest number since 1967. There have been several records of individuals summering elsewhere in Scotland in recent years and the pair in county A was an encouraging sign, even though nesting did not result.

Hoopoe *Upupa epops*

No record of breeding, but one bird summered.

Herefordshire One seen for several weeks, but no evidence of second bird or nesting.

This species nests in Britain only casually and intermittently: the most recent records were in Cornwall in 1968-69 and Sussex in 1971.

Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*

Eight birds holding territory or singing at six sites in five counties, and one pair bred successfully.

Aberdeen One site: (1) one bird singing on 9th June.

Inverness Two sites, with successful breeding at one: (1) one pair located on 12th June and later found nesting in a birch stump near a road, then five young near the nest and one being fed inside the hole on 17th July; (2) two birds singing about 100 m apart on 13th June.

Perth One site: (1) one bird considered to be holding territory, but not located on subsequent visit.

Ross One site: (1) one bird singing on 1st June.

Suffolk One site: (1) one stayed in a garden for some weeks during May-June.

Apart from a second-hand observation of one near Sevenoaks, Kent, in late May, the Suffolk record was the only report of this species in England in the breeding season, but the continued resurgence in Scotland is encouraging. The nest in Inverness was the first successful breeding recorded in that county since three out of five pairs were successful in 1969. The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in 14 squares and probable in 12, but 12 and four of those were in southern England where Wrynecks have all but disappeared and we have no nesting record since 1973.

Shore Lark *Eremophila alpestris*

One bird reported in mid summer.

Grampian One on one date in June, but habitat considered unsuitable for nesting.

It still seems possible that this species may colonise Scotland. In 1972, a male was found singing in the Scottish Highlands; in 1973, a male was again singing about 1 km from the 1972 site and a pair was seen regularly at a third site another 1 km distant between 10th July and 18th August, behaving as if they had young and also carrying food.

Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*

Reported in summer from three counties and at least two pairs nested.

Gwent One site, but no evidence of nesting: (1) one male seen in breeding season.

Hampshire One site, pair summering but no proof of nesting: (1) one pair present from May to at least end July, the male singing regularly early on and twice seen displaying.

Suffolk One site, with breeding proved: (1) at least two pairs bred, two nests found both being successful, and probably two further pairs.

There was also an unconfirmed report from a fourth county. The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in five squares and probable in one. The above records, although possibly incomplete, support the general trend of recent years towards regular breeding.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Reported from six sites in two counties, but only one pair proved breeding.

Grampian Four sites, but no evidence of breeding: (1) one bird scolding observer on 29th June, but not found later; (2) (3) (4) single birds on 21st June and 1st and 3rd July.

Staffordshire Two sites, with breeding proved at one: (1) one pair nested little more than a metre from the 1974 site, but no details of success; (2) one pair probably bred, as in 1974.

After the first nest in Orkney in 1967, the *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in 15 squares and probable in three, although not more than half a dozen pairs were found nesting in any year. The above records are fewer than in 1974 and again it seems likely that some have not been reported to us, though without the intensive *Atlas* fieldwork in Scotland it may well be that a higher proportion is being overlooked.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

A total of 20 sites in six counties, with eight pairs proved breeding and at least 19 other singing males.

Aberdeen Two sites, with breeding proved at both: (1) one pair hatched five young which failed, and similar empty nest nearby; (2) one pair reared three young, and third adult scolding nearby. The first proved breeding in the county.

Inverness Five sites, with breeding proved at two: (1) one pair carrying food into plantation on 22nd May, and another male singing not far away on 6th June; (2) adult carrying food into wood on 25th May; (3) (4) (5) single males singing on 26th-28th May (with a second on 26th), 1st June, and 17th and 30th June.

Orkney Two sites, with breeding proved at one: (1) one pair nested and reared young; (2) one pair sang and held territory, but no proof of nesting. The former is the first proved breeding in the county.

Perth One site, but no evidence of nesting: (1) one male singing in early May.

Ross Five sites, with breeding proved at two: (1) six males singing during April-June; (2) one male singing about 1st June; (3) one alarm-calling on 16th June; (4) one pair feeding young in nest, also one addled egg, on 19th June; (5) two pairs both hatched young.

Sutherland Five sites, but no evidence of nesting: (1) to (5) at least one singing male at each.

The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in 54 squares, probable in 25 and possible in 32 (mostly singing males), and suggested that the 1972 population was about 300 pairs. Even if every singing male represented a breeding pair, the 1973-75 totals were only 11, 26 and 27, but the first proved records in Aberdeen and Orkney are encouraging and it must be remembered that fieldwork in the final year of the *Atlas* was particularly intensive in Scotland. Clearly the species is now under-recorded. (See page 23 for 1974 addition.)

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Some confusion between 'sites' and 'towns', but reported from at least 46 sites with 50-52 pairs, of which 33 proved breeding and 17-19 probable, as well as at least 22 other singing males.

Bedford Single birds at three localities on 4th and 28th April and 7th September, but no suggestion of nesting.

Buckingham One site, with breeding proved: (1) one pair reared four young seen with the female on 25th June.

Essex Eight sites, with breeding proved at four: (1) one pair reared young; (2) one pair reared at least four young in three nesting attempts; (3) one pair bred; (4) five pairs carrying food, and broods of four and three seen; (5) (6) single pairs, but no proof of breeding; (7) (8) single males singing.

Kent Two sites, with evidence of nesting at both: (1) two males and one female from late April to at least 20th July and, although breeding not confirmed, young reported by power station staff; (2) one male on 7th August when empty nest (containing two feathers of Black Redstart) also found, but no evidence that it had been used.

Middlesex At least seven sites, with breeding proved at two: (1) one male singing on 9th April and 30th-31st May, and female seen on 17th April, but no proof of breeding; (2) one

male singing at 1974 site from 11th April and nest with four eggs found in early May; (3) one male singing on 31st May; (4) one pair bred successfully; (5) one pair at 1974 site in June, but no evidence of breeding; (6) at least two pairs present; (7) one ringed on 22nd May. General comment: 'Several previous sites apparently not checked during the year and few observers endeavoured to prove breeding.'

Norfolk Sites in three towns, with breeding proved in two: (1) eight pairs, of which at least two bred; (2) one pair bred; (3) three singing males.

Northampton One site, but no evidence of nesting: (1) one male singing from 28th May to 3rd June. A pair at another locality on 15th May was not seen subsequently and was presumed to be on passage.

South Yorkshire At least four sites in one urban area: (1) one pair laid three eggs, which proved to be infertile; (2) one pair reared nine young in two broods; (3) (4) single males singing, and possibly a third elsewhere.

Suffolk Sites in four towns, with breeding proved in three: (1) eight pairs bred and other males singing; (2) two pairs, one of which certainly bred successfully; (3) two pairs, both of which bred successfully; (4) one or two pairs, but no further details.

Surrey Eight sites, with evidence of breeding at three or four: (1) (2) single females carrying food on 14th-16th May and 23rd May; (3) one or two males singing throughout May-June, one female seen feeding young on 4th June, up to eight birds present in late August, and it was concluded that one or possibly two pairs bred; (4) one male on 9th May; (5) (6) single males singing on 22nd May and 9th June; (7) one male on 13th July and nesting suspected nearby; (8) two males on 2nd August and four juveniles on 16th.

Sussex One site reported, with breeding proved: (1) one pair reared one young about 450 m from where nesting was unsuccessful in 1973.

Warwick One site, but breeding not proved: (1) one pair seen in May and July probably nested.

West Midlands Six sites, with breeding proved at one: (1) one pair with young in nest, and a second singing male; (2) one pair throughout most of June-July and probably nesting; (3) two singing males during April-June; (4) (5) (6) three single males singing, but (6) may have been the male from (2).

The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in 36 squares, probable in 16 and possible in 16 (mostly singing males). The records reported to us are doubtless not yet complete (particularly for Kent and Sussex), bearing in mind that for 1973, with recent additions, we received information on 70 territories, while R. S. R. Fitter (*Brit. Birds* 69: 9-15), by waiting for the publication of all local reports, was able to amass 90 in what 'proved to be the outstanding Black Redstart year so far'. Nevertheless, the data are sufficient to suggest that this high population was maintained in 1974 and 1975. The reported total proved breeding in 1975 was less than in 1973 or 1974 (33 pairs, against 48 and 47), but the pairs probably breeding and the singing males resulted in a slightly higher grand total (at least 72, against 70 and 69). (See pages 21-22 for 1973 additions.)

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*

No records received. The female with a nest and eggs in Inverness in 1968 (J. J. D. Greenwood, *Brit. Birds* 61: 524-525) remains the only observation.

Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*

Now established in at least three counties, with over 80 singing birds and eight pairs proved breeding.

Devon Three sites, with breeding proved at the only one occupied in summer: (1) one male singing regularly from 24th May to 19th July, and family party of two adults and at least two newly fledged juveniles seen on 21st June; (2) up to two singing from January to

13th April and one from late August, increasing to at least two singing in October and eight in late December; (3) four birds trapped and ringed in November and December.

Kent Many sites, with breeding proved: in the Stour Valley and adjacent parts, a minimum of 61 singing birds was recorded and at least 27 of them were paired, five pairs being proved to nest.

Norfolk Five sites, with a total of 13 pairs and breeding proved at one: (1) five pairs recorded and two nests found; (2) to (5) one, two, two and three pairs and breeding strongly suspected in some cases, though not proved.

The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in only one square, probable in three and possible in two, which gives some indication of how much this new colonist has entrenched itself since 1972. Single pairs were proved breeding in 1972 and 1973, and then from five in 1974 the number has now risen to eight in 1975. Moreover, the total of singing birds has jumped from 15 or 16 in 1973 and 1974 to over 80 in 1975 and the species, until 1971 a rare vagrant here with only seven records in all, is fast becoming firmly established. The spread in northwest Europe has recently been documented (P. F. Bonham and J. C. M. Robertson, *Brit. Birds* 68: 393-408) and a paper on the Kent population will shortly be appearing in this journal.

Savi's Warbler *Locustella luscinioides*

Only three singing males in two counties and only one pair proved breeding.

Kent Two sites, with breeding proved at one: (1) one pair reared four young, which left the nest on 31st May or 1st June; (2) apparently unmated male singing in site where two pairs were recorded in 1974.

Norfolk One site, but no evidence of breeding: (1) one singing on 31st July and 1st August in new area.

Suffolk None recorded, despite searches, at either of the two regular sites, the first year since 1968 that the species has not been found in the county.

The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in four squares and probable in eight. There were 13 singing males in 1973, eight in 1974 and now only three in 1975, which was perhaps the most disappointing year since the species began to recolonise England in 1960 or earlier; the absence from Suffolk is particularly discouraging.

Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*

Again 40-70 pairs estimated in the main area, and five singing males in two other counties.

Kent One site, but no evidence of breeding: (1) one singing from 10th to 28th May, when a second was heard briefly; three singing on 19th June, two on 6th July and only one again on 8th.

Warwick Two sites, but no suggestion of nesting: (1) one male singing from early June, and trapped and ringed in July; (2) one male singing for two days at the end of June.

Worcester No change in the main area from 1973-74, with 40-70 pairs probably breeding; intensively surveyed sites 'gave results slightly above average and dry summer allowed good breeding success'.

No reports were received from, for example, Gloucester or Sussex and the picture is incomplete. The total number of pairs seems likely still to be about the 50-80 level reported in the *Atlas*, which recorded confirmed breeding in 12 squares and probable in seven.

Dartford Warbler *Sylvia undata*

Data incomplete, but breeding in at least four counties and 250-300 pairs reported from one of the two main ones.

Devon Two main areas, with breeding proved in one where a pair reared two broods, the first county record since 1970; 16-25 birds estimated to be present in September and October.

Dorset No full count, but total probably 250-300 pairs; the cold spring hampered first broods and fires destroyed a lot of second ones, but in most areas it was considered a good breeding season and many pairs successfully reared one or two broods.

Hampshire No details received, but present in numbers.

Surrey Three sites, with evidence of breeding at each: (1) one pair again bred successfully where young were reared in 1973 and 1974; (2) two newly fledged young attended by an adult on 27th July; (3) probably one pair bred, and two juveniles seen on 7th August. General comment: 'Recolonisation of traditional sites has begun'.

No details were received from Hampshire, which holds nearly half the total numbers, or from the Isle of Wight and Sussex, nor was there a complete count in Dorset, but the data we have suggest that the population was probably at about the 1974 level of around 560 pairs. The increase from 11 pairs in 1963 (following the cold weather of the preceding two winters, which drastically reduced the species from about 460 pairs in 1961) may now have started to level off, though the consolidation in Surrey and the confirmation of breeding in Devon are highly satisfactory. The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in 23 squares and probable in six.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*

Over 100 birds and at least 65 singing males recorded at 23 sites in ten counties in summer, but evidence of only 14-16 pairs and just two proved breeding.

Bedford One site: (1) one male singing for about ten days in early June.

Berkshire Eight sites, but no birds stayed and no evidence even of territories: (1) one on 13th May; (2) single birds on 13th May and 8th June; (3) five on 4th June; (4) one on 4th-6th June, joined by a second on 7th; (5) to (8) four single birds on single dates during 8th-29th June.

Buckingham Four sites, with breeding proved at one and 50 singing males in all: (1) 46 singing males at the main 1971-74 site, including 30 located on 10th June alone, at least 11 known to have mated and two young seen on 30th July, when the last song was also heard; (2) three males singing on 19th June; (3) one male singing on 19th June; (4) one bird on 13th June.

Essex Three sites: (1) single males, thought to be three different individuals, singing on 3rd May, 10th May, and 27th May-14th June, and what was probably a second on 14th June nearly 1 km away; (2) one male singing during 25th May-8th June; (3) two birds on 25th May, not seen subsequently.

Gwent: One site: (1) up to four birds, with a maximum of three singing males, between 6th May and 24th June.

Hampshire One site: (1) no full report from the New Forest, but one male singing on 23rd June and observer commented, 'Numbers seem to have declined in recent years, and my personal maximum was six males in late May 1970.'

Northampton Two sites: (1) one male singing from 29th May to 8th June; (2) one male singing from 6th June to 12th July, two birds seen on 10th-11th June and male ringed on 28th June, but no evidence of breeding though a juvenile male was ringed nearby on 21st November. These records followed an influx in late March and early April when single birds were recorded at five localities.

Suffolk One site: (1) one male singing in early summer.

Warwick One site: (1) at least one pair, with the male singing consistently, but details not reported either to the regional recorder or to us.

Worcester One site, with nesting proved: (1) three, possibly four, males singing and 'several' females seen; at least two, probably three, pairs reported to have nested, but the only evidence supplied to us related to a nest 15 m up in a larch *Larix*, which was later

destroyed, probably by grey squirrels *Sciurus carolinensis*. This was the first nesting record in the county.

Reports from more counties than in any previous year and the total of singing males was also much higher, owing particularly to a considerable increase at the main site in Buckinghamshire where, from 23, 11 and 24 during 1972-74, the number rose to 46. Proof of breeding, however, or even pairing, was obtained in few cases; in this connection, the *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in three squares, probable in ten and possible in seven (mostly singing males). Once again, we have little information from the original site in Hampshire, where singing males first appeared in 1961 and breeding was proved in 1965 and subsequently. (See pages 22 and 23 for 1973-74 additions.)

Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*

A total of at least 49 pairs in five counties, almost all proved breeding and many successful, 37 of them rearing 79-80 young.

Bedford One site, with breeding proved: (1) one pair reared three young. This is the first breeding record in the county since 1968.

Essex Two sites, with evidence of breeding at one: (1) one pair from 31st May to 30th June, and a second male on 29th June, but nesting not proved; (2) one pair with three juveniles, presumably reared locally, for a week in late August.

Kent One site, with breeding proved: (1) one pair with two or three newly fledged young being fed on 21st July.

Norfolk A total of five pairs at four sites outside Breckland, with breeding proved in each case. Eight pairs proved breeding in the Norfolk part of Breckland, but it is not clear whether these are all covered by the Norfolk/Suffolk entry.

Norfolk/Suffolk A total of 25 pairs known to have bred successfully in Breckland, rearing at least 47 young.

Suffolk A total of 15 pairs nested in the coastal belt, of which nine were successful and reared 24 young; results of remaining six not known. About ten pairs reported in the Suffolk part of Breckland, but it is not clear whether these are all covered by the Norfolk/Suffolk entry.

The pattern is similar to those of 1973 and 1974, although the total number of pairs reported is a little higher, particularly as the Hampshire figures (three to six pairs in 1974) have not been supplied this time. The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in 65 squares and probable in 22. The population of 172 known pairs in 1960 had fallen to about 81 by 1971, the year of the last census (C. J. Bibby, *Bird Study* 20: 103-110). Possibly the decline has now halted, at least temporarily, and Norfolk and Suffolk are now certainly the strongholds. The first breeding in Bedfordshire for seven years is encouraging.

Serim *Serinus serinus*

No records received. After the first breeding record in Dorset in 1967, the *Atlas* was able to record only one instance of confirmed breeding, in Sussex in 1969, and five of probable breeding during 1968-72, since when none has been reported apart from vagrants in spring, autumn and winter (see *Brit. Birds* 69: 355-356 for 1975 records).

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Evidence of 7-19 pairs at about 12 sites, and two to four pairs proved breeding, but data incomplete.

Aberdeen/Banff/Inverness Details from three or four sites: (1) at least one pair, and a female with five young in the nest, on 3rd July; (2) one pair located on 7th July and the female seen carrying food into an area of boulders; (3) one male feeding young on 3rd August, though possibly same area as (1); (4) one male singing in new site. General comments from this region: (a) 'Seemed rather scarce'; (b) 'Fewer'; (c) 'Breeding population and number of males both well down, and only one brood known to have been reared, possibly only one female present'—although the above records, of which (1) and (2) certainly relate to different sites, confute the last part.

Aberdeen/Perth One site: (1) one female on 25th July.

Inverness Four sites: (1) one bird in flight on 27th May; (2) one pair on 1st June, and eight birds on 14th July suggested successful breeding, though no information on composition of flock; (3) four males singing and two females on 6th June, but site not revisited and no proof of breeding; (4) one female in flight.

Inverness/Ross Three sites: (1) one male singing and displaying on 5th July; (2) at least three males singing and displaying with one female, plus two other males, on 9th July; (3) one male at another site near (2) on 9th July.

The *Atlas* recorded confirmed breeding in four squares and probable in three. The data are inadequate to comment on subsequent trends. (See page 23 for 1974 addition.)

Additions and corrections for 1973

(*cf* *Brit. Birds* 68: 5-23)

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Orkney One site: (1) one female with two young on 13th July.

This is the only record for 1973 and, indeed, the only one for 1972-75 (see page 5).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Yorkshire One site: (1) one pair laid four eggs in regular area, but nest subsequently deserted and two of the eggs sent for analysis.

County D Details from two additional sites: (1) one female occupied territory until 16th March, a male seen with her on 3rd April, pair then left site and what were thought to be the same birds eventually reared young at the second site originally mentioned; (2) reported that one pair hatched four young, of which 'two taken by falconer and two reared successfully'.

Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

Hampshire One site: (1) one pair reared two young.

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*

Cornwall The species was recorded in the summer, but did not breed and we have no further details.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Cornwall One site: (1) one pair reared at least one young.

This record raises the 1973 total to over 60 pairs, with 17 proved breeding and 12 rearing at least 24 young. We still have no details for Hampshire or Sussex.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Buckingham One site: (1) one pair laid two eggs, but nest was subsequently deserted and is now at the British Trust for Ornithology, Tring.

South Yorkshire One site: (1) one male singing in April and a dead young one later found squashed on road, in same urban area as breeding proved in 1975.

These records raise the 1973 totals to 19 counties, with 48 pairs confirmed breeding.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*

Hampshire Additional record: (1) two males singing on 7th July.

These two birds were the only ones reported in 1973 from the original area in the New Forest, except for a pair seen with three fledged young. Assuming them to be additional to that pair, they raise the total of males reported that year to 18.

Additions and corrections for 1974

(cf *Brit. Birds* 68: 489-503)

Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*

Aberdeen Additional site: (1) one pair with two young in August.

This record raises the number of pairs in Aberdeen in 1974 to two, and the totals to 25 sites and 58-63 pairs.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Derry (CORRECTION) The nest recorded under Antrim/Derry was in the latter county.

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Yorkshire Two sites: (1) one pair rebuilt and decorated nest, and were thought to have laid eggs as the female began to sit, but on 4th May there was no sign of the adults and the tree had apparently been climbed; (2) one pair seen displaying over wood on 21st February and noted there until 4th May, but no evidence of nesting.

County D Details from four sites: (1) one pair with two eggs on 30th March and three on 2nd April, first young hatched on 8th May and three young left the nest on 16th June; (2) one pair successfully reared two young; (3) two pairs may have nested; (4) one pair successfully reared three young.

County K One site: (1) one pair reared two or, possibly, three young in new area.

These records raise the total in county D to at least six pairs at four sites, with three pairs rearing young, and the grand total to at least 16 pairs, of which at least six bred successfully. The birds in county K were not seen in 1975.

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*

Bedford Female seen in June, but no suggestion of nesting.

Cornwall The species was recorded in the summer, but did not breed and we have no further details.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Cornwall One site: (1) one pair reared at least one young in 1973 site.

This record raises the 1974 total to over 90 sites, with at least 36 pairs proved breeding and at least 25 of them successful, rearing 49 or more young.

Dotterel *Eudromias morinellus*

Perth Site (1) under 1975 was also occupied in 1974.

County A One site: (1) one pair hatched at least two young.

These records raise the number of counties to six.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Orkney One site: (1) one pair defended a territory during the summer, but it seems certain that they did not nest.

This record raises the number of sites to ten.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Inverness Additional site: (1) one pair, and one of the adults carrying food into a wood on 28th May.

This record raises the total to 26 sites, with about 20 pairs probably breeding.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*

Hampshire Two sites: (1) (2) single males singing on 22nd April and 24th June.

These two birds were the only ones reported to us in 1974 from the original area in the New Forest.

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Sutherland Additional site: (1) one female near mountain summit on 30th May.

Additions and corrections to this report, and also to those for 1973 and 1974, will be greatly welcomed by the panel: they should be sent to Dr J. T. R. Sharrock, 59 Curlew Crescent, Bedford MK41 7HY, and will form an addendum to the 1976 report. Records for 1976 should be submitted to the relevant county or regional recorder (see 'Brit. Birds' 69: 232-236), who will then pass on all his county's records on the panel's special forms.

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