



THE
CLWYD
BIRD REPORT
1983

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Firstly an apology from the editors for failing to complete the report on time in spite of a good start following a special records meeting in February and an entirely new technology for sorting records. Whilst not wishing to make excuses for our failure perhaps a few words explaining the present system would help you understand our problems.

The most time consuming step is to sort through all the reports received and separate the records for each species and arrange the observations into chronological order. Only when this task is complete can analysis of the observations be made and the final report compiled.

This somewhat arduous task is easily handled by modern computers so the committee having suitable facilities at their disposal developed the necessary programmes and used them for the first time in the compilation of this report. A detailed description of the system is not warranted here but suffice it to say that the outcome of the exercise is that all records for each species are printed out in chronological order. This happens irrespective of how the individual records are entered so it is no longer necessary to make any attempt to pre-sort your observations before submitting them to the recorder. Once this stage is reached the manuscript can be produced in a few weeks and delivered to the printers.

Clearly none of this can go ahead until the records are received by the recorder. Last year some records did not arrive until as late as August in spite of the fact that we did ask for all records to be sent in by February. As a result the committee have reluctantly decided to set the closing date for the 1984 report as 28th February 1985. Any observations submitted after that date will not be included in the report.

On a happier note once again there has been an increase in the number of observers sending in records and in the quantity and quality of the reports.

Finally the Editorial Committee would like to thank all those observers who have contributed to this report by kindly submitting their records.

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF BIRDS RECORDED 1983

The nomenclature and systematic arrangement follows that of 'The British Birds' List of Birds of the Western Palearctic.

RED-THROATED DIVER

Gavia stellata

Small numbers were seen offshore in all months outside the breeding season (April/August). The greatest concentrations were reported from Pensarn/Llandulas with 31 birds on 22nd February, 14 on 5th November and 15 on 3rd December.

BLACK-THROATED DIVER

Gavia arctica

Single birds were reported at Rhos Point on 8th October and at Sealand from 22nd to 30th December.

LITTLE GREBE

Tachybaptus ruficollis

Regularly reported in small numbers in both Dee and Clwyd estuaries and on most inland waters.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE

Podiceps cristatus

Breeding confirmed at Llyn Helyg and Shotton and birds present at Pendinas Reservoir during summer. Small numbers seen on other waters and off-shore during winter but 15 present at Pensarn/Llandulas on 22nd February and 29 on 5th November

SLAVONIAN GREBE

Podiceps auritus

The only report involved 2 birds at Llandulas on 22nd February

BLACK-NECKED GREBE

Podiceps nigricollis

Single birds were present at Sealand from 24th January to the 17th March and from 23rd - 26th November.

FULMAR

Fulmarus glacialis

Reported off-shore in small numbers throughout the year. Notable counts included 250 at Prestatyn on 5th September and 200 on 10th, 42 at Rhos Point on 3rd December and 48 at Llandulas on the same day. The species bred successfully at Dyserth with perhaps 6 pair being involved.

MANX SHEARWATER

Puffinus puffinus

Only reports were as follows: 9 at Gronant on 28th May and 2 on 5th September, 6 at Prestatyn on 10th September and 5 at Gronant on the same day, 7 at Gronant on 11th September and 1 on 12th September.

STORM PETREL

Hydrobates pelagicus

At Prestatyn a single bird was reported on 17th October and 16 were seen moving west on 19th October. Also on 19th October 3 birds were observed at Gronant. These are the first records of Storm Petrel for several years.

LEACH'S PETREL

Oceanodroma leucorhoa

All records were from Gronant/Prestatyn between 7th September and 20th October with a maximum count of 51 birds moving west off Prestatyn on 20th October.

GANNET

Sula bassana

Small numbers reported off-shore in every month from May to November with up to 30 birds seen at Gronant on 29th June.

CORMORANT

Phalacrocorax carbo

Commonly reported throughout the year from both major estuaries, several inland lakes and off-shore. Maximum counts included 476 moving east at Rhos Point on 8th October and a similar movement involving 386 birds was observed at Rhos on 10th September.

SHAG

Phalacrocorax aristotelis

Infrequently recorded with single birds at Rhos Point on 5th November and 3rd December, 1 at Llandulas on 19th November and 1 at Gronant during September being the only reports received.

GREY HERON

Ardea cinerea

Reported in all months in Dee and Clwyd estuaries, from coastal areas and on inland waters. In all cases 10 or fewer birds were involved with 10 birds at Connah's Quay on 22nd October being the maximum count.

MUTE SWAN

Cygnus olor

Young birds were observed at Rhyl and Shotton but breeding was only confirmed at Rhuddlan. Outside the breeding season birds were reported in small numbers in Dee estuary and on larger inland waters with maximum counts of 17 on Rhyl Marine Lake on 17th January and 23 at Sealand on 15th October.

BEWICK'S SWAN

Cygnus columbianus

A small herd of up to 8 swans were present at Sealand between 5th and 29th January.

WHOOPEE SWAN

Cygnus cygnus

A single bird at Llyn Helyg between 23rd October and 21st November was the only report received.

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE

Anser albifrons

A flock of 13/14 birds seen at Sealand between 27th and 30th December.

GREYLAG GOOSE

Anser anser

Between the 9th and 16th April 2 birds were reported on a number of occasions on the saltings between Oakenholt and Connah's Quay. At Fenns Moss 3 birds were observed on 18th April.

SNOW GOOSE

Anser caerulescens

A bird was seen at Gresford Flash on 14th March.

CANADA GOOSE

Branta canadensis

Breeding confirmed at 4 sites in the county. Other reports included notable counts of 60 birds at Hanmer Mere on 6th February and 68 at the same locality on 30th December.

BARNACLE GOOSE

Branta leucopsis

A bird was seen at Gresford Flash on 23rd November and again on 31st December.

BRENT GOOSE

Branta bernicla

Only records were 3 at Connah's Quay on 4th November and 1 there on 2nd December.

SHELDUCK

Tadorna tadorna

Breeding confirmed at Shotton and Point of Ayr. Reported in substantial numbers in Dee and Clwyd estuaries with between 450 and 850 birds present at Point of Ayr during November-December.

WIGEON

Anas penelope

The majority of reports come from the upper Dee estuary with infrequent sightings of small flocks off-shore. The maximum count was of 260 birds at Connah's Quay on 23rd February.

GADWALL

Anas strepera

An increase in sightings over previous years with small flocks reported at Rhyl, Connah's Quay, Shotton, Sealand and Hanmer Mere. The highest counts were of 5 birds at Sealand on 4th March and 12 at the same locality on 2nd December.

TEAL

Anas crecca

Common, with substantial numbers reported in the Dee estuary where high counts of 3000 at Connah's Quay on 7th October, 500 at Shotton on 24th December and 700 at Sealand on 28th December were recorded. Other interesting observations included 35 off Pensarn on 3rd December and 42 at Llyn Helyg on 13th November.

MALLARD

Anas platyrhynchos

Common with frequent records from coast, estuaries and inland waters. Maximum counts included:- 750 at Hanmer Mere on 20th January, 570 at Point of Ayr during August/September and 500+ at Connah's Quay on 7th November.

PINTAIL*Anas acuta*

Almost completely confined to Dee estuary but single birds reported from Pendinas in November and Hanmer Mere on 30th December. Maximum counts included 1300 at Connah's Quay on 9th February and 2000+ there on 20th November.

GARGANEY*Anas querquedula*

The only report was from Shotton where a pair of birds in eclipse were seen on 22nd July.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL*Anas discors*

A pair of birds were seen at Sealand on the 8th and 9th September. This was the first record for the county and was subsequently accepted by the Rarities Committee.

SHOVELER*Anas clypeata*

A small flock was present at Sealand from January to early April with a maximum count of 48 birds on 7th January. Up to 10 birds were seen at Connah's Quay during August and between 10th and 23rd December 14 birds again present at Sealand. In early spring pairs were observed at Padeswood, Connah's Quay and Rhyl.

POCHARD*Aythya ferina*

Recorded at all major inland waters in the county. Highest counts were:- Hanmer Mere - 22 on 6th February and 11 on 30th December, Sealand - 95 on 24th September, Shotton - 67 on 13th November, Rhyl - 14 on 24th December, Dolwen Reservoir - 13 on 22nd February.

FERRUGINOUS DUCK*Aythya nyroca*

On the 24th October 3 males and 2 females were reported at Pant-y-Ochain.

TUFTED DUCK*Aythya fuligula*

Reported from several inland waters with significant counts as follows:- Hanmer Mere - 46 on 20th January, Sealand - 29 on 17th February and 56 on 26th December, Shotton - 24 on 19th February and 55 on 4th December. The close proximity of the pools at Shotton and Sealand and the very similar counts recorded at the two sites suggest that the birds were moving between the two waters.

SCAUP*Aythya marila*

Not infrequently reported off-shore between January-April and November-December but usually only 2-3 birds were involved. However, higher counts were recorded at Towyn - 18 on 11th March, Kinnel Bay - 110 on 26th November and Abergele - 80 on 4th December.

EIDER*Somateria mollissima*

Recorded at Rhos Point on two occasions: 4 males and 2 immature birds on 20th February and 10 birds on 31st March.

LONG-TAILED DUCK

Clangula hyemalis

Only recorded on 3 occasions - a male at Sealand from 6th January to 4th April, 2 adult males off Abergele on 26th October, 2 birds at Gronant on 6th November.

COMMON SCOTER

Melanitta nigra

During winter months commonly reported on coast between Point of Ayr and Rhos Point. High counts included 285 Pensarn/Llandulas 22nd February, 200 at Abergele 26th October, 650 Pensarn/Abergele 5th November, 102 Rhyl 19th November, 300 Kinnel Bay 26th November and 650 Pensarn/Llandulas 3rd December.

VELVET SCOTER

Melanitta fusca

On 23rd October 6 birds - 4 males and 2 females were observed at Connah's Quay.

GOLDENEYE

Bucephala clangula

Widely distributed with reports from inland lakes, estuaries and off-shore although most observations involved relatively few birds. Highest counts were: 22 at Sealand on 5th January and 20 there on 27th March, 17 at Connah's Quay on 26th November and 12 at Rhyl Marine Lake on the same day.

SMEW

Mergus albellus

This relatively uncommon species has not been reported for several years but a number of reports received this year could have involved 3 different birds. All records involved only one individual female or immature bird and were reported as follows:- Llyn Brenig - 5th January, Sealand 12th February, Connah's Quay 18th and 19th December, Sealand 24th and 30th December.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER

Mergus serrator

Numerous reports of birds off-shore between Point of Ayr and Rhos Point and occasional records from Rhyl Marine Lake and Connah's Quay. Maximum counts: 17 at Colwyn Bay on 22nd January, 15 at Rhos Point on 20th February, 17 at Point of Ayr on 19th November. On 3rd December a total of 103 birds were reported between Point of Ayr and Rhos Point as follows:- Point of Ayr - 5, Rhyl Marine Lake - 8, Llandulas - 19, Rhos Point - 19 and Pensarn - 52.

GOOSANDER

Mergus merganser

Reports of Goosander were more widespread this year with birds being seen at 7 sites on 11 occasions. Highest counts were from Hanmer Mere with up to 15 present in January and 22 there on 30th December, 6 were seen at Moelfre on 25th November and 5 at Pendinas in September.

RUDDY DUCK

Oxyura jamaicensis

All records were from Hanmer Mere with up to 32 birds there in January and 24 on 30th December.

MARSH HARRIER

Circus aeruginosus

A female was seen in the vicinity of Minera on 21st May.

HEN HARRIER

Circus cyaneus

During January-March and November-December there were numerous reports from the Dee estuary of birds hunting over the saltings. Sightings of birds in suitable breeding areas during summer were infrequent but breeding was confirmed at one site.

GOSHAWK

Accipiter gentilis

During April reported from two suitable breeding areas. In winter months single birds were seen on three occasions - 18th February at Padeswood, 20th November at Llyn Helyg and 4th December at Ddol.

SPARROWHAWK

Accipiter nisus

Reports from all over the county for every month of the year suggest that the species is now more widely distributed than the Kestrel.

BUZZARD

Buteo buteo

Apart from a bird seen at Connah's Quay on 1st September and one at Gronant/Prestatyn on 17th September all other records were from or close to the Clwyddian Range where the species is not uncommon.

KESTREL

Falco tinnunculus

Now less frequently reported than Sparrowhawk although the result may be distorted somewhat by observers not recording what they consider to be a common species. Certainly the pattern of observations indicates that although very common in coastal areas the Kestrel is now less common than the Sparrowhawk in many areas of the county

MERLIN

Falco columbarius

The majority of reports refer to birds wintering on the coastal strip where the species occurs fairly frequently. Only 3 reports of birds which may have been breeding were received and almost certainly involved the same pair.

HOBBY

Falco subbuteo

A bird was reported at Connah's Quay on six occasions between 28th July and 19th September and single birds were also seen at Cilcain on 21st May and at Prestatyn and Meliden on 30th July.

PEREGRINE

Falco peregrinus

Several records of birds during the summer months from suitable breeding areas and frequent sightings of falcons wintering on the coast.

RED GROUSE

Lagopus lagopus

Reported from most suitable moorland areas in the county. Maximum count: 60 on Ruabon Mountain on 9th January.

BLACK GROUSE

Tetrao tetrix

Regular sightings at Pendinas where 8 birds seen at lek and breeding later confirmed. Also reported at Cilcain, Minera and Eglwység Mountain.

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE*Alectoris rufa*

Recorded on 8 occasions from seven different areas of which 5 sightings were during the summer months and may have involved breeding pairs.

GREY PARTRIDGE*Perdix perdix*

Reported from Connah's Quay, Aston, Shotton, Sealand, Rhyl and Gronant. Coveys of 12 birds seen at Connah's Quay on 3rd and 9th of January and at Sealand on 29th December.

QUAIL*Coturnix coturnix*

The only record was of 2 birds present at Sealand from 16th to 27th July.

PHEASANT*Phasianus colchicus*

Common.

WATER RAIL*Rallus aquaticus*

A total of 12 records received from Point of Ayr, Padeswood, Shotton, Gronant, Llyn Gweryd and Connah's Quay. Birds were seen at Padeswood Pool during the breeding season but no evidence of breeding was reported.

SPOTTED CRAKE*Porzana porzana*

Only record was of a bird heard at Shotton on 18th June.

MOORHEN*Gallinula chloropus*

Common. Maximum counts were 34 at Pensarn on 10th December and 27 on River Clwyd on 16th February.

COOT*Fulica atra*

Common. Maximum counts:- 135 at Hanmer Mere on 20th January and 190 on 30th December, 147 at Ysceifiog on 20th November.

OYSTERCATCHER*Haematopus ostralegus*

Breeding confirmed at Shotton and Point of Ayr. Common everywhere along coast from Connah's Quay to Rhos Point with counts of 6,000-7,000 at Point of Ayr on 2nd February, 24th September and 6th November. Smaller numbers reported from Connah's Quay - 355 on 2nd January, Rhyl - 350+ on 2nd February, Llandulas 480 on 3rd December and Rhos Point - 200 on 27th December.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER*Charadrius dubius*

Regular sightings at Shotton and Sealand during May and June and juvenile birds reported at both sites during August but breeding was not confirmed. Also recorded at Gronant - 3 on 29th May, Connah's Quay - 1 on 24th April and Pendinas - 1 on 8th May.

RINGED PLOVER*Charadrius hiaticula*

Highest counts were recorded during spring and autumn passage with 30 at Sealand on 23rd April, 53 at Rhyl on 21st May, 110 at Point of Ayr on 7th August and 170 there on 4th September. Bred at Point of Ayr and Gronant.

GOLDEN PLOVER

Pluvialis apricaria

Widespread reports of flocks up to 100 or so and higher counts as follows:- 120 at Point of Ayr on 9th January, 400-500 at Sealand between 4th and 23rd of April, 135 at Kinnel Bay on 26th November, 600 at Sealand on 2nd December and 140+ at Point of Ayr on 3rd December. Birds observed displaying at 2 moorland sites but breeding was not confirmed.

GREY PLOVER

Pluvialis squatarola

The majority of records refer to wintering birds at Point of Ayr and Gronant with maximum counts of 99 at Point of Ayr on 16th January, 145 at Gronant on 28th February, 102 at Gronant on 6th November and 66 at Point of Ayr on 4th December

LAPWING

Vanellus vanellus

Large flocks of wintering birds reported from many areas with highest counts being 1450 at Sealand on 9th January, 650 at Point of Ayr on 2nd February, 4500 on Clwyd estuary on 17th December and 5700 at Kinnel Bay on 23rd December.

KNOT

Calidris canutus

Records suggest that numbers on the Welsh side of the Dee estuary are still lower than in former years. Maximum counts:- 500 at Point of Ayr on 1st January, 1260 at Point of Ayr on 13th February, 245 at Gronant on 28th February and 200 at Point of Ayr on 9th October.

SANDERLING

Calidris alba

Reports indicate a small wintering population of 100-200 birds concentrated between Point of Ayr and Kinnel Bay with significant increases during migration periods. Maximum counts: 45 at Gronant on 28th February, 140 at Gronant on 26th April and 200 there on 7th August, 100 at Point of Ayr on 9th October, 200 at Rhyl on 22nd November and 65 at Kinnel Bay on 26th November.

LITTLE STINT

Calidris minuta

Recorded at:- Point of Ayr - 1 on 22nd January, Gronant - up to 8 birds between 8th August and 14th October and Connah's Quay - up to 6 birds between 11th September and 25th November.

CURLEW SANDPIPER

Calidris ferruginea

Reported as follows:- Connah's Quay - 2 birds present on 3rd, 6th and 23rd August and again on 23rd October and singles on 4th September and 6th November, Point of Ayr - 1 on 24th September, Gronant - 2 on 25th October.

PURPLE SANDPIPER

Calidris maritima

All records confined to Rhos Point- 29th January - 3; 20th February - 6; 2nd March - 3; 3rd March - 2; 6th March - 5; 11th March - 2; 3rd December - 1.

DUNLIN

Calidris alpina

Common winter resident and passage migrant. Highest counts included:- 600 at Rhyl Marine Lake 15th January, 650 at Point of Ayr on 13th February, 900 at Gronant on 28th February, 1000 at Connah's Quay 29th April and 1300 there on 19th July, 1770 at Point of Ayr on 4th December and 840 there on 31st December.

RUFF

Philomachus pugnax

Only reported from Gronant, Shotton, Connah's Quay and Sealand and apart from one record of 2 birds at Sealand on 28th December all sightings were between June and September. Maximum counts were 16 at Connah's Quay on 9th August, 5 at Sealand on 11th August and 9 there on 18th August.

JACK SNIFE

Limnocyptes minimus

A considerable increase in sightings over the previous few years with 15 reports this year compared with only 2 in 1982. Single birds were seen at Shotton on 21st February, at Gronant on 25th March and at Connah's Quay on 1st and 2nd of September. Up to 6 birds were present at Gronant between 23rd October and 2nd December and a 'small flock' was reported at Llandyrnog on 8th August.

SNIFE

Gallinago gallinago

Frequent reports of birds from coastal strip with highest counts of 37 at Point of Ayr on 2nd February, 30 at Sealand on 11th August, 25 at Gronant 4th October and 47 at Shotton on 26th November.

WOODCOCK

Scolopax rusticola

Birds seen roding at Penymynydd, Llyn Helyg, Gwysaney, Cwm and Northop but outside the breeding season only reported on 6 occasions.

BLACKTAILED GODWIT

Limosa limosa

Apart from a few isolated sightings at Shotton and Gronant/Point of Ayr all reports were from Connah's Quay. The decline in numbers wintering on the Dee estuary observed over the past few years has been dramatically reversed this year. During January to March flocks of between 250-600 birds were regularly reported but the following autumn counts included 1880 on 25th October, 1700 on 19th November and 1200 on 26th November.

BARTAILED GODWIT

Limosa lapponica

Birds reported from Pensarn, Kinnel Bay, Point of Ayr, Gronant and Connah's Quay in small numbers but 105 birds seen at Gronant on 3rd November.

WHIMBREL

Numenius phaeopus

Over 30 reports of birds during spring (15th April - 8th May) and autumn (8th July - 6th September) migration periods. The species was recorded at Connah's Quay, Presatyn, Gronant and Point of Ayr with maximum counts of 36 at Connah's Quay on 8th May and 5 there on 13th and 25th July.

CURLEW

Numenius crquata

Moderate numbers reported along coast in all months except June with highest counts of 400 at Rhyl on 22nd of February, 840 at Point of Ayr on 2nd February and 1120 there on 24th September.

SPOTTED REDSHANK

Tringa erythropus

Occasional records from Gronant and Point of Ayr, but frequently recorded at Connah's Quay. During January/February 1-2 birds seen at Connah's Quay on five dates and another winter record of a bird there on 11th December. In the period July - November most reports involved up to 6 birds but 30 birds present on 20th August and on 23rd October.

REDSHANK

Tringa totanus

Common along coastal strip with high counts at several sites including 600 at Connah's Quay on 1st January, 640 at Point of Ayr on 10th September, 950 at Connah's Quay on 24th September and 200 at Rhyl Marine Lake on 24th December.

GREENSHANK

Tringa nebularia

Almost all records in the period July to September when the species was observed frequently at Connah's Quay, Shotton, Sealand and Gronant/Point of Ayr. Usually sightings involved fewer than 7 birds but during August up to 22 birds were seen at Connah's Quay and 11 at Shotton.

GREEN SANDPIPER

Tringa ochropus

Reported on 38 occasions and in practically every month of the year but only from 4 localities: Shotton, Sealand, Connah's Quay and Padeswood Pool. Most reports involved 1-4 birds but 7 at Sealand on 9th January, 6 at Shotton on 4th June and 8 there on 11th August.

WOOD SANDPIPER

Tringa glareola

Between 23rd July and 11th August single birds were seen on 6 occasions at Shotton and twice at Connah's Quay.

COMMON SANDPIPER

Actitis hypoleucos

There were several reports of 1-2 birds at Connah's Quay during January - February and numerous sightings of small flocks along the coast and inland during summer. Maximum counts involved 22 birds at Connah's Quay on 12th July and 9 at Shotton on the same date.

TURNSTONE

Arenaria interpres

Flocks of between 50 - 200 birds reported regularly at Rhos and Llandulas with smaller numbers at several other sites along coast. Maximum counts included ; 180 at Rhos Point on 11th March and 230 there on 3rd December, 136 at Llandulas on 3rd December and 35 at Rhyl on 7th December.

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE

Phalaropus lobatus

The only record was of a single bird seen close inshore at Rhyl on 22nd October.

ARCTIC SKUA

Stercorarius parasiticus

Regular sightings off-shore during August - October with maximum counts of 7 at Gronant on 5th September, 9 at Pensarn on 9th September and 10 at Prestatyn on 10th September.

GREAT SKUA

Stercorarius skua

All 16 reports were for the period 5th September to 8th November and usually involved only 1 or 2 birds but 4 seen at Prestatyn on 16th October and 7 on 17th. At Gronant on 8th November a Great Skua was seen to kill a duck.

LITTLE GULL

Larus minutus

Reported on 5 occasions as follows:- at Connah's Quay single birds on 30th January, 13th February and 20th March and at Gronant singles on 14th July and 21st December.

BLACK-HEADED GULL

Larus ridibundus

Common along coast and inland at all times of the year with maximum counts of 1300 at Kinmel Bay on 13th January, 2900 at Gronant on 23rd January and 4200 at Glan Conwy on 5th February.

COMMON GULL

Larus canus

During winter months considerable numbers reported from many areas with high counts as follows:- 4300 at Gronant on 23rd January, 660 at Sealand on 17th February, 1650 at Pensarn on 10th December and 800 at Gronant on 3rd December.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL

Larus fuscus

Less common during the winter months this year but 350 reported at Connah's Quay at 13th July and 280 there on 9th August.

HERRING GULL

Larus argentatus

Abundant. Maximum counts were 2175 at Point of Ayr on 2nd February and 2200 at Pensarn/Llandulas on 10th December.

GLAUCOUS GULL

Larus hyperboreus

Single birds were recorded on 3 occasions as follows: 2nd winter birds at Connah's Quay on 12th February and at Pensarn on 22nd February and a 1st year bird at Sealand on 17th March.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL

Larus marinus

Only notable counts were 124 at Gronant on 8th October and 200 at Pensarn on 13th November.

KITTIWAKE

Rissa tridactyla

Reported throughout the year off sea coasts and occasionally in estuaries. Highest counts were: 50 at Rhos Point on 21st May, 200 at Prestatyn 10th September, 220 at Rhyl on 2nd October and 60 at Rhos Point on 3rd December.

SANDWICH TERN

Sterna sandvicensis

Frequent records along coastal strip between April and October with highest counts of 227 on 16th July, 450 on 7th of August and 350 on 4th September roosting on the shore at Point of Ayr.

COMMON TERN*Sterna hirundo*

A record year for the Shotton Colony with 334 birds fledged and an estimated 175 pairs breeding. Maximum counts were 350 on 8th/9th May at the Shotton Colony and 280 at Gronant on 7th August.

ARCTIC TERN*Sterna paradisaea*

The only reports received were 1 at Sealand on 7th May, 1 at Gronant on 15th July and 1 at Shotton on 29th July.

LITTLE TERN*Sterna albifrons*

Another reasonably successful year at Gronant with 25 pair and about 30 young birds fledging. Maximum count was 458 birds at Gronant on 27th July.

BLACK TERN*Chlidonias niger*

Recorded on 10 occasions with birds seen at Sealand, Shotton, Connah's Quay, Gronant and Point of Ayr. Spring records included single birds at Sealand on 24th April and 2nd May and 1 at Shotton on 18th June. Other sightings were between July and October and only involved 1 bird except for reports of 2 birds at Connah's Quay on 30th July and 9th September.

GUILLEMOT*Uria aalge*

Occasionally seen off sea coasts and most records involved only 1 bird but 97 were present at Rhos Point on 8th October. A bird found dead at Gronant on 12th February had been ringed on Fair Isle.

RAZORBILL*Alca torda*

Single birds on 27th January at Colwyn Bay and on 2nd May at Rhos Point were the only records.

STOCK DOVE*Columba oenas*

Reported from 10 areas suggesting the species is more widely distributed than earlier records indicate. Maximum count was of 42 birds seen at Llandyrnog on 24th February. A nest found at Northop on the 4th May was the only breeding record.

WOOD PIGEON*Columba palumbus*

Common. Only notable count was of 80 birds at Padeswood on 4th December.

COLLARED DOVE*Streptopelia decaocto*

Well distributed in the country. Maximum count was 49 birds at Point of Ayr on 26th April.

TURTLE DOVE*Streptopelia turtur*

There were 3 reports of birds during spring migration with 2 at Point of Ayr on 6th May and singles at Gronant on 6th May and at Shotton on 7th. During the breeding season only reported from Erryrys and Wepre Woods.

CUCKOO*Cuculus canorus*

Frequent records 21st April–18th August. Only breeding record was of a well grown young bird being fed by Meadow pupils at Moel Arthur.

BARN OWL*Tyto alba*

Scarce. Only reports were of single birds at Rhuddlan on 1st February and 11th July and a pair at Gwernaffield on 11th July.

LITTLE OWL*Athene noctua*

Fairly common being reported from 12 widely separated areas with breeding confirmed at 3 sites.

TAWNY OWL*Strix aluco*

Common and widely distributed.

LONG-EARED OWL*Asio otus*

Only record was of a bird at Gronant on 9th November.

SHORTEARED OWL*Asio flammeus*

Frequently reported from coastal strip between January-Mid May and October-December. Birds were seen at two suitable breeding areas in late May.

SWIFT*Apus apus*

Earliest date was 26th April when a single bird was present at Shotton and last report was for 6th August at Gronant.

KINGFISHER*Alcedo atthis*

Single birds widely reported in all months of the year and 2 birds at Rosset on 3rd March but the species appears to be only thinly distributed.

GREEN WOODPECKER*Picus viridis*

Widespread and not uncommon.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER*Dendropocus major*

Frequency of reports suggest that the species has a similar population density to Lesser Spotted Woodpecker but this seems unlikely and may be due to observers not reporting all sightings.

LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER*Dendropocus minor*

Recorded in 8 localities but rather scarce. At least 2 males apparently holding territory at Hawarden.

SKYLARK*Alauda arvensis*

Common, particularly along coastal strip. Significant numbers observed on passage at Gronant during October with 4,300 seen on 21st and 1,500 on 22nd.

SHORELARK*Eleophila alpestris*

Singles at Point of Ayr 10th January-2nd February and at Gronant 23rd-25th October.

SAND MARTIN*Riparia riparia*

Numbers still very low compared with former years and small colonies at Hope and Kinnerton were only reports of breeding birds. Maximum count was 120 at Connah's Quay on 2nd May.

SWALLOW

Hirundo rustica

Earliest date was 10th April when 1 seen at Shotton and a very late bird was reported at Point of Ayr on 29th November. Few large concentrations reported but 500+ at Connah's Quay on 1st May and 100+ at Shotton on 16th July.

HOUSE MARTIN

Delichon urbica

Common. Latest date was 22nd October when a single bird was present at Gronant.

TREE PIPIT

Anthus trivialis

Significant numbers reported during spring passage with 20 at Connah's Quay on 24th April and 46 at Point of Ayr on 26th. Birds reported breeding at 8 sites where the species is often locally common.

MEADOW PIPIT

Anthus pratensis

Widely distributed as a breeding species and abundant in Clwyddian range. Passage birds observed on coast with 110 at Point of Ayr on 9th April and 150 on 26th and 70 on 4th September.

ROCK PIPIT

Anthus spinoletta

Small numbers seen on coastal strip during January-February and September-December. Highest counts were 4 at Rhos Point on 5th November and 5 at Point of Ayr on 6th.

WATER PIPIT

Anthus spinoletta spinoletta

A single bird was seen at Connah's Quay Sewage Works on 20th November.

YELLOW WAGTAIL

Motacilla flava

Locally fairly common with reports confined to coastal plain. Maximum counts were 30 at Gronant on 4th May, 23 at Connah's Quay on 14th May and 25 at Sealand on 30th May.

GREY WAGTAIL

Motacilla cinerea

Occasional records from coast during winter months and this year very few records of birds breeding although known from detailed studies to be a widespread breeding species in upland areas.

WHITE WAGTAIL

Motacilla alba alba

Spring passage observed at several localities between 3rd April and 6th May. Apart from 2 birds on Horseshoe Pass on 3rd April all reports are from coastal strip. Highest counts included: 22 at Connah's Quay on 18th April, 37 at Gronant on 26th April and 60 there on 29th and 12 at Sealand on 6th May.

PIED WAGTAIL

Motacilla alba

Common and widespread.

DIPPER*Cinclus cinclus*

Present on most suitable rivers and streams in upland areas of the county and breeding confirmed at 2 sites. On 10th December a bird was seen on the coast at Llandulas.

WREN*Troglodytes troglodytes*

Common.

DUNNOCK*Prunella modularis*

Common.

ROBIN*Erithacus rubecula*

Common.

BLACK REDSTART*Phoenicurus ochrurus*

At Gronant 3 birds were present in February and 1 in March. A female was seen at Tainant on 12th April and a male at Mold on 29th December.

REDSTART*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Slight increase in numbers of records this year and breeding confirmed at Prion and Cilcain.

WHINCHAT*Saxicola rubetra*

Ringling studies in Clwyddian Range showed population of breeding pairs to be high in several areas such as Cilcain, Moel Arthur and Tainant. Also recorded on coast during migration with 210 birds observed between Point of Ayr and Prestatyn on 7th May.

STONECHAT*Saxicola torquata*

Widespread and breeding confirmed at several sites along coast and in upland areas.

WHEATEAR*Oenanthe oenanthe*

First recorded on 19th March at Point of Ayr and last seen on 5th November at Gronant. Common breeding species in upland areas with one or two pairs breeding at sea level. Birds having characteristics of Greenland sub-species reported at Point of Ayr — 8 on 15th April and at Gronant — 9 on 6th May.

RING OUSEL*Turdus torquatus*

Present but very thinly distributed in upland areas. Only one report of breeding pair received.

BLACKBIRD*Turdus merula*

Common. Large concentration of 800 birds seen at Gronant in November.

FIELDFARE*Turdus pilaris*

Flocks of up to 250 birds reported from several areas between January and March and 150 birds at Buckley on 24th April and 50 still present on 1st May. During autumn high counts included 1,000 moving east at Prestatyn on 22nd October, 2,000 at Pendinas on 25th and 450 at Llyn Helyg on 23rd December.

SONG THRUSH*Turdus philomelos*

Common.

REDWING*Turdus iliacus*

Frequently reported in the periods 1st January to 8th April and 21st October to end of year. Highest counts included 750 at Sandycroft on 9th January, 500 moving east at Flint on 22nd October and a similar movement of 11,000 birds at Prestatyn on the same day, and 1,500 at Pendas on 25th October.

MISTLE THRUSH*Turdus viscivorus*

Common and widespread. Maximum count was 30 at Pendas on 31st July.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER*Locustella naevia*

Birds in song at Mancot, Llyn Helyg, Point of Ayr – 3 males on 14th May, Gronant and Coed Talon. Adults with young were seen at Point of Ayr on 3rd July.

SEDGE WARBLER*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Bred at Rhyl and Shotton and also reported at Gronant, Connah's Quay and Point of Ayr.

REED WARBLER*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Only reported at Shotton where about 10 pair estimated to be breeding.

LESSER WHITETHROAT*Sylvia curruca*

Birds in song at Point of Ayr, Hawarden, Padeswood and Shotton and a pair with young seen at Llanynys on 27th July.

WHITETHROAT*Sylvia communis*

Reported from several areas with 18 singing males between Point of Ayr and Gronant on 14th May.

GARDEN WARBLER*Sylvia borin*

Very few records and appears to be somewhat localised but good numbers in Loggerheads/Maeshafn area and in Tanat Valley.

BLACKCAP*Sylvia atricapilla*

Widespread winter records again this year and several reports of breeding birds.

DUSKY WARBLER*Phylloscopus fuscatus*

A bird believed to be a Dusky Warbler was reported at Point of Ayr on 14th November but the record was subsequently rejected by the Rarities Committee.

WOOD WARBLER*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Locally distributed but fairly widespread with frequent reports from Loggerheads, Wepre, Hawarden, Rhualt and Tanat Valley.

CHIFFCHAFF*Phylloscopus collybita*

Common. Single birds reported in January-February from Point of Ayr and Shotton and on 5th November at Llandulas.

WILLOW WABBLER*Phylloscopus trochilus*

Abundant.

GOLDCREST*Regulus regulus*

Common.

FIRECREST*Regulus ignicapillus*

Reported as follows, up to 2 birds at Point of Ayr 10th-13th January, 1 at Hawarden 14th-27th February, 1 at Llandulas on 22nd February and 1 at Point of Ayr 12th/13th November.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER*Muscipapa striata*

More frequently recorded this year with breeding reported at Rhuddlan and Hawarden.

PIED FLYCATCHER*Ficedula hypoleuca*

Breeding, mainly in nest boxes, reported from many areas and apparently widely distributed in upland areas.

LONG-TAILED TIT*Aegithalos caudatus*

Fairly common.

MARSH TIT*Parus palustris*

Common in upland areas.

WILLOW TIT*Parus montanus*

Apparently local and infrequently reported.

COAL TIT*Parus ater*

Fairly common.

BLUE TIT*Parus caeruleus*

Abundant.

GREAT TIT*Parus major*

Abundant.

NUTHATCH*Sitta europaea*

Fairly common.

TREE CREEPER*Certhia familiaris*

Fairly common.

GOLDEN ORIOLE*Oriolus oriolus*

A bird was present at Gwysaney from 4th to 14th June.

JAY*Garrulus glandarius*

Widespread. In late October a flock of 37 birds was seen at Prestatyn.

MAGPIE*Pica pica*

Abundant.

CHOUGH*Pyrhacorax pyrrhacorax*

Only reports were: 2 birds at Horseshoe Pass on 27th March and 22nd May and 1 seen at Moel Garegog in March.

JACKDAW*Corvus monedula*

Common. High counts included 650 at Rhyl on 9th January, 320 at Ysceifiog on 27th January and 578 at Glan Conwy on 5th February.

ROOK*Corvus frugilegus*

Common. Maximum count was 350 at Rhyl on 9th January.

CARRION CROW*Corvus corone*

Abundant.

RAVEN*Corvus corax*

Numerous reports from upland areas and 1-2 birds reported from coast during winter months.

STARLING*Sturnus vulgaris*

Abundant. At Shotton on 12th July number of birds using roost estimated at 10,000.

HOUSE SPARROW*Passer domesticus*

Abundant.

TREE SPARROW*Passer montanus*

Many more reports this year with flocks of 550 at Point of Ayr/Gronant in October, 150 at Shotton on 10th December and 200 at Sealand on 29th December.

CHAFFINCH*Fringilla coelebs*

Common. Highest counts were 300 at Shotton and 3,000 at Connah's Quay 16th-19th January and 300 at Gronant on 21st October.

BRAMBLING*Fringilla montifringilla*

Few records for early part of the year but commonly reported during autumn. Highest counts included: 400 at Gronant on 22nd October, 400 at Shotton on 23rd December, 400 at Sealand on 28th and 500 at Connah's Quay on 29th.

GREENFINCH*Carduelis chloris*

Common. Highest count was 1,000 birds at Gronant on 21st October.

GOLDFINCH*Carduelis chloris*

Common. A flock of 200 birds seen at Marion Mills on 13th September.

SISKIN*Carduelis spinus*

Frequent records from many areas with a maximum count of 150 at Gronant on 21st October.

LINNET*Carduelis cannabina*

Common winter flocks of up to 400 birds reported from several coastal sites.

TWITE*Carduelis flavirostris*

Small flocks reported at Connah's Quay, Gronant and Point of Ayr. Highest counts were 20 at Connah's Quay on 20th March, 18 at Gronant on 4th May, 37 at Gronant on 6th November and 30 at Point of Ayr on 3rd December.

REDPOLL*Carduelis flammea*

Common.

CROSSBILL*Loxia curvirostra*

Only records were: 4 at Moel Famau on 24th February, and 2 at Nerquis on the same day, 4 at Coed Clwyd on 16th April, Singles at Gronant on 6th November and Prestatyn on 29th December, 2 at Gwysaney on 8th June and 7 there on 11th December.

BULLFINCH*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Common.

HAWFINCH*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Not infrequently reported from Loggerheads, Halkyn and Gwysaney and isolated records from Cilcain - 3 on 18th April and Froncysyllte - 3 adults and 1 juvenile on 9th July. Maximum counts were 12 at Gwysaney on 18th April and 4 at Halkyn on 15th. This year breeding was confirmed but the site cannot be disclosed.

LAPLAND BUNTING*Calcarius Lapponicus*

Up to 2 birds seen at Gronant/Point of Ayr between 12th October and 10th December.

SNOW BUNTING*Plectrophenax nivalis*

Up to 30 birds at Point of Ayr/Gronant, 1st January to 26th March when a single bird seen at Gronant was last winter record. Birds first seen again at Gronant on 22nd October and 20 present at Point of Ayr on 24th December was highest count before the year end.

YELLOWHAMMER*Emberiza citrinella*

Fairly common. Maximum count was 100 at Drury on 19th February.

REED BUNTING*Emberiza schoeniclus*

Common.

CORN BUNTING*Miliaria calandra*

Birds in song reported at Connah's Quay and Sealand. Maximum count was 35 birds at Sealand on 2nd October.

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Every effort has been made to ensure that the above list contains the name of each contributor to this report. The Editorial Committee would like to apologise to any observer whose name has been omitted.