

PERTSHIRE SOCIETY OF NATURAL SCIENCE
ORNITHOLOGICAL SECTION

Bulletin for January - April 1990

Winter Visitors - Some species including Whooper Swans, Pinkfeet and Fieldfares appeared to migrate northwards earlier than in some years. Bewick's Swan 4 with Whoopers and Mutes between 27 Jan and 29 Mar at Easter Rhynd. Also 7 at Vane Farm, 6 Jan. Whooper Swan 12 on Mill Dam 14 Jan despite nearby noise from drilling machine. Variable numbers on winter barley and floodwater at Easter Rhynd between December and mid April. Max number 112 birds and max jun 7. On Lindores Loch 23 Feb 84 inc 5 juvs., and flock of 42 Mute Swans was present. Several other sightings - last record 13 Apr. Several ringed birds sighted - three of which had been ringed in Iceland (JK) Pink-footed Geese Flocks of several hundred in Threapmuir, Bankfoot, Strathearn and Tibbermore areas. In a flock of 2,500 in Bankfoot/Murthly' area 25 Feb a Brown Hare running around caused some disturbance (CD&ES) Spring peaks of 8,300 Strathallan late April. Major departures nights of 29 & 30th April (MVB) On 30 Apr flocks of 80/400 over Glen Lyon in twilight and 200 over Ballinluig (WM) Greenland Whitefronted Goose - 6 Jan with Pinkfeet, Threapmuir. Greylag Geese - Various reports inc c500 North of Auchterarder late Jan., 1,500 Dalpatrick 8 Feb., 1,800 Drummond Pond 1 Apr., peak of 5,040 in Strathearn 3 Mar. Last report 1,000 Port Allen 22 Apr. Snow Goose 1 Apr (SRH) - had apparently been observed since January. Irregularly recorded in Perthshire. Barnacle Geese - several sightings with Pinkfeet, 18 Tibbermore 10 Feb., Brent Goose - "Pale bellied" form with Pinkfeet near Dunning 10 Feb.

Goldeneye - Numerous records, regular on R Tay to R Almond approx 20, and on Stormont Loch average 14.

Fieldfares - 200 at Foss 3 Jan and "several hundred" in grassfield at Leetown 5 Jan. 260 Muir of Orchil 11 March, Seemed fairly widespread from all reports. Redwings - Smallish numbers - max 70 nr Comrie 3 Mar. Brambling - 1 male 14 Feb., Crieff.

Summer Visitors - Earliest 1990 dates reported for ; - Osprey 15 Apr (JK) Common Sandpiper 23 Apr, Upper Glenalmond (S&MES)., 24th Dunkeld (DHH)., 29th Blairgowrie (SRH). Cuckoo - 30th April, nr Blairgowrie (SRH), Upper Glenalmond (S&MES). Sand Martin 18th March - White Moss Loch (MVB); 23rd - R Tay, Kercock (per ghillie via SRH) 24th Loch Balloch (MVB) 5th April, Blairgowrie area (DHH). Swallow - 26th April Sandyhall (DHH) 28th - Crieff (MMcE) (The gaelic word GOBHLACHAN GAIOTHE - "little forked one of the wind" seems very appropriate) Tree Pipit - 25th April - Cluny, Aberfeldy (WM); 28th - Tummel Bridge (several) (EDC). Redstart - 28th April - Loch Tummel (WM) Wheatear - 24th March - Sheriffmuir (MVB); 25th - Cochrage (SRH); 28th - Upper Glenalmond (S&MES). Ring Ouzel - 1st April - Strathtay (WM). Blackcap - 21st Feb to 8th Apr, when second bird present - Scone garden (JK); 28th - 2 Lady Mary's Walk, Crieff (MMcE). Chiffchaff - 24th March - Scone (heard and seen EDC) The earliest record in Perthshire bulletin over last decade (ed) 6th Apr near Aberfeldy (WM). Willow Warbler - 20th Apr (heard) - Blairgowrie (SRH); 23rd Apr - Upper Glenalmond (S&MES) plus others.

Selected Species Records - Black-throated Diver - 30th April, pair on Perthshire loch. Little Grebe - 14th Jan 2 on R Tay, Perth. Other reports inc. Drummond Pond, Glendams, Blairgowrie, and 3 White Moss Loch on 31st Mar. Cormorant - 11th Mar., 14 at Drummond Pond; 10th Feb., 9 at Monks Myre; 14th Jan., 79 on R Tay, Perth (inc leucistic) Shelduck - 9th Apr., 2 near Abernethy feeding in ploughed field. Mandarin - NONE recorded in winter wildfowl counts on R Tay, Perth. They had been there since the early 1960's and over sixty had been present, they seem to have declined rapidly - any suggestions as to the cause? Wigeon - good numbers from 15 locations. Max nos - 200 Drummond Pond 14th Jan; 450 Lindores Loch 22nd Feb., and 600 on flood water Pow Burn 4th Mar. Gadwall - 18th Feb., Dalreoch. Teal - 348 at Loch Freuchie 21st Jan., 300 on another loch 19th Mar and smaller nos Loch Clunie (18) Loch Faskally (45) and Dunalastair (24). Shoveler - 31st Mar, 5 male 1 female - White Moss Loch, "22nd Feb. - influx at Blairgowrie Lochs". Red-breasted Merganser - 11th Mar 6 R Tay, (Perth to Almond), 17th Apr - 2 pairs Loch Kinardochy, Foss., 24th Apr - 2 prs R Tay, Dunkeld. Goosander - 14 records inc., 24 birds at Drumore Loch 23rd Jan., and 15 on R Tay, Perth to Almond 11th Mar. Ruddy Duck - Several in Blairgowrie Lochs and 2 other lochs, max 1 male 3 female in breeding plumage Haremyre 6th Apr.

Buzzard - Reports from several areas over period, Two pairs nested in Lower Tay area. Black Grouse - 19th Feb - 10 in Sma' Glen (8 males 2 females). Grey Partridge - Jan., 13 Maddery/Crieff Road., 14 Scone, 14 Newton of Bamff, Alyth, 11 E Drimmie, Blairgowrie, 5 Glen Quaich. Oystercatcher - 10th Feb - 500 Scone Palace shingle; 25th Feb - 50 Stair Dam; 4th Mar - 250+ at Kinkell Bridge. Ringed Plover - 6th Apr, 2 at Kercock. Golden Plover - 19th Apr, pair - 4 eggs in nest., 3rd Mar 150 Dalreoch Bridge, 27th Apr - 78 nr Bridge of Cally. Lapwing - (gaelic ADHARCAN), peewit or green plover! 11th Feb - 190 Tulliemet, Ballinluig, 3rd Mar - 310 Logierait, 4th Mar - 160 beside flood pools at west end of Loch Freuchie. Snipe and Woodcock - singles in Blairgowrie area, Woodcock roding, Scone 11th Mar and at North Inch 1st Apr. Black-tailed Godwit - 24th Mar, North Kinkell - a rare bird in Perthshire. Curlew - 30 on Scone Palace shingle 14th Jan, and 110 on 10th Feb., 120 Glen Quaich 24th Mar. The long bubbling trill in spring must be one of the most beautiful sounds of nature in Britain. Redshank - 25th Feb, 3 North Kinkell, 11th Apr - 6 Cairnleith Moss.

Common Gull - 23rd Feb, 250 on flood water Logierait. Lesser Black-backed Gull - 6th Apr, 2 at Kercock. Stock Dove - 25th Feb - 14 nr Trinity Gask, 5th Apr 2 at Pitroddie and 3 Balcraig, Scone on the 7th. Tawny Owl - April - 4 pairs in Blairgowrie area hatched 11 young in nestboxes. Short-eared Owl - 27th Apr - pair nr Blairgowrie, and one at Dalnacardoch on 29th. "not many about?" (EDC). Kingfisher - 15th Apr, R Earn nr Comrie. Green Woodpecker - Reports from Kinfauns area (2/3), Pitroddie, Scone, S of Turleum, Glen Tarken, Nr Foulford Inn and Buchanty area. Great Spotted Woodpecker - Reports from Scone, Loch Clunie, Kinloch Rannoch. Grey Wagtail - 2 at North Inch and 5 Deil's Caldron, Glen Lednock. Dipper - by end of April 2 pairs had fledged young on R Ericht. Stonechat - 28th Jan, Greenloaning. Goldcrest - 12/13 Jan - Errol. Treecreeper - 17th Jan, Errol, 12th Mar Glen Tarken.

Jay - 25th Feb, nr Rumbling Bridge, Dunkeld. Raven - 14th Jan, - 15 Glen Quaich. Goldfinch - 7th Jan, 17 Glen Quaich - "more numerous this winter" (WM) 21st Jan, 20 at Blackford. Smaller nos in 4 other locations. Siskins - 13th Jan, 60 nr Aberfeldy and 60 Clunimore, Pitlochry, 16th Apr. At gardens in Auchterarder, Crieff and Scone up to 4 present. Linnet - 22nd Jan, 70 nr Aberfeldy, 3rd Mar c100 Blairgowrie. Twite - 6/28th Jan, 500 nr Braco, plus 200 Blackford on 13th. Flocks of up to 80 elsewhere. Redpoll - 3rd Jan - 40/50 Blairgowrie, 7th, 30 Cluny, Aberfeldy, 10th Mar - 50 Dalcrue Br, Almondbank. Snow Bunting - 28th Jan, 30 nr Braco and 8 Greenloaning. Feb - 2 at Errol with mixed finch flocks. Reed Bunting - Jan/Mar, 20+ on farm hedgerows at Errol.

Contributions; Dr M V Bell, E D Cameron, Miss S R Hacker, D H Howie, J Kirk, S Laing, Mrs W Mattingley, M McElroy, Mr & Mrs Pattullo, Miss M F Piper. C D & Mrs E Scotland, S & Mrs M E Shimeld, Mrs E Symon.

The following records of **Mammals** have been kindly contributed by Euan Cameron;- Grey Squirrel, 1st Apr, one at Glencarse Quarry and one on 2nd scent marking on garden fence. (Wild) Goat - 13th Apr - 3 nannies and 2 kids on Schiehallion - 4 escapees from Glengoulandie Deer Park! Blue Hare - 14th Apr 6 by Loch Turret. Fallow Deer - 10th March 5 at Hillocks of Gourdie, Blairgowrie, four were dark and the other golden - possible out of usual area? Roe Deer - one at Tummel Bridge 28 Apr and 2 Dalnacardoch 29 Apr.

Under our new constitution we can extend our interests to other wildlife so further contributions would be welcome. Records for May, June, July and August please to C D Scotland, Gruinart, Tullibardine Cresc, Auchterarder, Perthshire PH43 1LY.

Secretary - Miss Esther Taylor, 23 Verena Terrace, Perth has kindly agreed to be our new secretary, and is already involved in arranging our winter programme of lectures. The first meeting will be our Open Meeting on Friday 19th October 1990, when Martin Robinson, from Killiekrankie RSPB reserve will give us a talk.

Summer Outings. Some good outings still to come, - see last bulletin for details.

PSNS Weekend visit to the Ken-Dee and Solway area. 23/25th March 1990.

The omens for the weather were not good (but then what do the BBC know about the weather in Scotland?) and despite Steve's best endeavours not to turn up (My car failed its MOT today...), 8 hardy souls intent on a weekends birding gathered at the Ken Mure Arms Hotel in New Galloway on the Friday evening. The party consisted of 7 PSNS members and Sheila Horsburgh, from RSPB Edinburgh, who was made an Honorary Member for the weekend, but will require special vetting if she is ever to become a full member of this august Society (Bill and Ben indeed!). It did appear however that at least one PSNS member seemed probably more interest in looking at daffodils than birds....!

Joan Howie, Stewartry SOC secretary, gathered us all together on Saturday morning and led us out into the Kirkcudbrightshire countryside. We soon found ourselves in Sitka spruce forests around Clatteringshaws Loch, where due to the stiff breeze we were unable to locate the expected Siskins and Crossbills, but were eventually rewarded with good views of Peregrines mobbing a Raven. We had hoped to take advantage of the 'good' weather while it lasted., before scuttling back to Loch Ken. This proved a wise decision (bonus points, Joan), as heavy hail and rain showers moved in.

From the road on the west side at the southern end of the Loch we notched up Teal, Tufted Duck, Shoveler, Great Crested Grebe, Goldeneye, Coot and a few Pintail. Numbers were apparently down, as some wintering birds had moved out, but there was a good variety. Picnicing further along the road, we found a couple of flocks of Greenland White-fronted Geese with Greylags - it later turned out the Mary, clearly a keen celtic supporter, was under the mis-apprehension that there were "Green and White fronted Geese" in the vicinity.

Ray Hawley, the RSPB warden of the Ken/Dee Marshes Reserve, met us and escorted us into the Reserve. This consists of areas of mixed oak woodland, marshland and open water some of which is specially managed to maintain a high water table in spite of the artificially fluctuating water levels of Loch Ken. The main woodland area was most intriguing with large mature oak interspersed with birch, hawthorn, blackthorn and elder scrub, and looked well worth a visit in early summer. The hide overlooked the managed marshland and open water area, as well as some mixed scrub. Ray had had Bittern from the hide a few days earlier, and Barn Owl is apparently fairly frequent. Unfortunately, for both species it was a case of once 'bittern' twice shy (groan), but a Willow Tit made a brief appearance, and Ray, after several previous fruitless attempts managed to read the number on the ring of a colour ringed Cormorant from the Solway colony. Not for the last time on the weekend we looked in vain for Snipe.

On the way back to New Galloway we stopped off for a brief look for Barn Owls in suitable habitat (without luck). "Bill and Ben" (being ultra-keen, despite one being a botanist and the other an entomologist) went off looking for Barn Owls (just to be one up on Sylvia, actually), but only came up with a flock of c300 Fieldfares.

The evening, it was a case of totting up the day's records; naturally the non-ornithologists, trounced the opposition (the SOC/RSPB ladies), having to deduct from their score records such as "Gannet" (stuffed birds spotted in Bryan Nelson's window!) and Hedge Sparrow (when they had already counted Dunnock). Faced with an evening of watching Sky television and/or cricket, or listening to Mary's sound advice on how not to attract insects ('You don't want to wear a yellow frock when you go to Crete, Neale'), we decided to make our own entertainment. Unfortunately we failed in our attempt to get Sylvia to sing to us (perhaps just as well, but means it isn't possible to use Steve's quip about a Sylvia warbler - geddit?), so we were forced to resort to gambling. This consisted of a noisy card game called Newmarket, which apparently nearly everyone used to play with their Grannies. Sheila and Steve will definitely have to be on the next trip so we can win our money back.

Next morning, was bright and bracing, and Joan again led off. First stop was White Loch at Colvend (according to Steve actually named after Francis Buchanan-White) where the first Sand Martins were hawking for insects. Next was Rockcliffe, where there were a few Barnacle geese feeding with Pink-feet on the saltmarsh, and a Chiffchaff briefly sang in the woodland above the cliff. After elevenses at the Costa del Solway resort of Southernness, we walked along the shore to view the roosting waders which included Redshank, Dunlin, Bar-tailed Godwits, Grey Plover, Golden Plover, and after much hard work on behalf of the Ladies, Purple Sandpiper. The purpose of the walk was also to get close to a Barnacle goose flock feeding behind the sand dunes, but they disappeared before we reached them. However, while Ben was hunting for bugs in the saltmarsh and Bill was botanising, an Otter trotted out of the sea into the dunes. Other birds included a pair of Magpies, a stringy Merlin and a Red-throated Diver. Lunch was at Carsethorn where there was a flock of several hundred Scaup and a performing knot of Knot.

The final stop was Caerlaverock for those who didn't have to hurry home, again wildfowl numbers were down and we failed to find Gadwall and the 3 Light-bellied Brents, but there were large flocks of Pink-feet and Barnacle geese, as well as Golden Plover on the fields and Whooper Swans feeding in front of the main hide. But where had all the Snipe gone?

Present;- Tom and Mary 'Daffodil' Binny; Lily and Nan (the 'Hill walkers'); Sylvia 'I want to see a Barn owl!' Laing; Neale 'Bill' Taylor; Steve 'Ben' Hewitt; Sheila 'Mars Bar' Horsburgh.

Very special thanks are due to Sylvia for arranging accommodation and visits, and getting us up early; to Joan for spending so much time showing us round; to Ray for letting us see his Reserve; Steve's Mum for letting him borrow her car.

Another weekend outing is to be planned for October 1990, so lets hope we have an equally successfull time, anyone interested can contact Sylvia Laing.

PERTSHIRE SOCIETY OF NATURAL SCIENCE.

ORNITHOLOGICAL SECTION.

Bulletin for May - August 1990.

An interesting selection of bird and animal records has been received from some Members, but further contributions would help to make future Bulletins more comprehensive. Keep a note of what you see, and send it in - all records are of interest.

It may be that cold, wet weather has had an adverse effect on breeding - as reported by Dr. M.V.Bell concerning Wigeon, Mallard and Shoveler in Strathallan.

SUMMER VISITORS.

Earliest May 1990 dates reported, (see last Bulletin for other species), for :- Swift, 2nd, Perth (W.A.M.); 6th, 15 at Drummond Pond, (M.V.B); Pitlochry, (E.D.C.); 10th, Crieff, (S.&M.E.S); 14th, "lots" at Scone. House Martin, 5th, Glen Errochty, (E.D.C.); 17th, Blairgowrie, (S.R.H.), Auchterarder, (C.D.&E.S.). Grasshopper Warbler, 4th, Greenloaning, (M.V.B.), "a better year for this species", (W.A.M.). Sedge Warbler, 4th, "influx" at Blairgowrie, (S.R.H.); 18th, Tay Lodge, Errol, (D.H.H.). Whitethroat, 9th, Blairgowrie, (S.R.H.). Gadfen Warbler, 10th, (subsequently bred), Blairgowrie, (S.R.H.). Spotted Flycatcher, 11th, Cluny, Aberfeldy, (W.A.M.); 12th, Calvine, (E.D.C.).

SELECTED SPECIES RECORDS.

Black-throated Diver: three pairs known to have bred on separate lochs. Two pairs at another loch in May. Little Grebe: present at seven different lochs, including 7 at Drumore in August, and an adult with juveniles at Monk Myre, 22 Aug. Great Crested Grebe: 8th June, 7 at Marlee L.; 15th June, one pair plus two young, Hare Myre; 2nd July, 7 Loch of the Lowes; 11th Aug, 6 adults, 1 juv., L. Clunie, (low numbers of juveniles ? W.A.M.). Mute Swan, 2nd May, pair, Cowden L. and pair with five cygnets on St. Serf's l.; pair with five cygnets on White Moss L. on 27th June; 29th June, pair with four cygnets; 52, mostly adults, Loch of Lindores, 27 (21 adults, 6 cygnets), R. Tay near Earn mouth; "very poor season Strathallan - 8 pairs only fledged 6 young" (MVB). Pink-footed Goose: 2nd May, 120 flying North over Strathtay and 50 North through Glengoulandie; 7th May, 50 flying North in Blairgowrie area. Greylag Goose : 12th May, 3 L. Freuchie; feral birds at following locations:- 26th May, 25 near Kinloch Rannoch; 16th June, 20 flying towards Dunalastair / L. Rannoch, and on 23 August, c100 on stubble near Blairgowrie with c150 Canada Geese: Wigeon: 3rd June, female + 10 young on hill loch, Strathtay; 22nd Aug, 5 at Stormont L. Gadwall; 1st July, a pair, and on 27th Aug, 10, on small loch. Shoveler; 19th May, female and five ducklings on another loch; 29th July, four females or

juveniles (in eclipse). Pochard; pair bred at Haremyre, but young decreased from four to one. Goosander : pair nested near Blairgowrie. Ruddy Duck: bred at two sites - total five pairs. (See note at end).

Hen Harrier: several sightings in central Perthshire.
Buzzard: five reports of breeding; 19th Aug, birds soaring near Aberfeldy.
Osprey: 3 young reared successfully at one site. Kestrel: regular sightings.
Merlin: poorer breeding season in West and Central Perthshire (W.A.M.).
Peregrine: several sightings, including one swooping at a Curlew flock. Red Grouse: "more birds seen, appeared to have a good breeding season" (W.A.M.). Black Grouse: 6th May, 27 at lek site near Trinafour (E.D.C.) - quite a sight for a birdwatcher!
Grey Partridge: 30th July, 14 near Blairgowrie.

Ringed Plover: 11th August, pair plus two young at Kercock.
Golden Plover: bred near Blairgowrie, Glen Turret, Dalnacardoch, Glen Garry.
Lapwing: 8th July, 600 flocked in Strathallan, but quickly departed. Breeding good in Blairgowrie area, but not at upper River Almond. Dunlin: 9th June, one, Loch Broom; 23rd August, 3, North Murie. Snipe: 31st July, two chicks near Braco.
Woodcock: 1st May, one at Butterstone, Dunkeld. Whimbrel: (passage migrants), 18th July, one, SW Strathallan; 19th May, one near Blackford. Curlew: 19th August, 100+ at Burnside, Momorgan. Greenshank: 1st August, Kercock; 18th Aug, 4, Port Allen. (These waders have a very distinctive high-pitched, repeated call; Members who went on the Montrose Basin Outing had good views). Green Sandpiper: 29th Aug, two, Greenloaning, (passage migrants). Wood Sandpiper: 19th May, near Blackford, (rare passage migrant).

Common Tern: 1st June, fishing at Annaty Burn inflow, R. Tay, Perth. Tawny Owl: four pairs bred in nest boxes near Blairgowrie.
Long-eared Owl: 18th June, juvenile flying at midday, Lansdowne Golf Course, Blairgowrie. Short-eared Owl: 29th June, family of 8 fledglings near Aberfeldy.
Green Woodpecker: 30th June, Glen Lyon. Great Spotted Woodpecker: 18th June, in woods, Lansdowne G.C.; 3rd July, Trinafour.

Swallow: 194 young fledged, Blairgowrie area - a good year.
Redstart: pair nested in garden tree, Rannoch; other sightings Blairgowrie (mist netted), Glen Artney, Drumore L. Whinchat: pair bred near Blairgowrie; 5th May, several in Glen Errochty. Stonechat: pair bred near Blairgowrie; also near Trinafour; 5 pairs Central Perthshire - growing number of pairs found in suitable habitat (W.A.M.). Ring Ouzel: 3rd August, 12+ feeding on blaeberrries, L. Erich. Mistle Thrush: 27th July, 12+ round about farm, Errol, for 2 - 3 weeks (D.HH).

Chiffchaff: three records in May - Upper Glenalmond, near Strathtay, and Glen Lyon. Willow Warbler: 1st May, 2 in garden at Errol; 13th Aug, Auchterarder Golf Course; end August, 30 mist netted, Blairgowrie. Tits: "Quite a good year, with some large broods fledged" (S.R.H.). Long-tailed Tit: 1st July, flock of 32, Tummel Bridge. Starling: 14th July, Amulree to Logiealmond, "1,000s in /

in flocks of c10 up to several hundred, feeding on grassy hillsides. Tree Sparrow: 151 young fledged at Blairgowrie; 11th August, 10+ at Murthly. Siskin: 17th May, Sma' Glen; 24th August, 100 at Cluny, Aberfeldy. Twite: "Good numbers found in suitable habitats during breeding season" (W.A.M.). Crossbill: 13th June, small flock, Strathtay valley - "first birds heard after 'invasion' began. Many flocks around in plantations, rest of June, July and August" (W.A.M.); 29th June, Milton of Drimmie. Hawfinch: 8th June, Scone, and family party of four, 24th August. Reed Bunting: 18th May, Tay Lodge, Errol. Contributions: Dr. M.V. Bell, E.D. Cameron, Miss S.R. Hacker, D.H. Howie, J. Kirk, Mrs. W.A. Mattingley, C.D. & Mrs. E. Scotland, S. & Mrs. M.E. Shimeld.

MAMMAL REPORT.

The following combined records have been kindly contributed by Euan Cameron, Sandra Hacker and David Howie. They make interesting reading.

Hedgehog: road casualties are all too common, and wide-spread over our area. The farthest North of these was reported from Calvine, which raises the question of how far North up the A9 the creatures go - to Drumochter and beyond? Living animals were recorded from Bridge of Cally and Blairgowrie. Common Shrew also seems to be recorded mainly as "body", around Blairgowrie. Long-eared Bat: two were seen at Blairgowrie on 18th August, and one rescued from a shop store there was later released unharmed. Pipistrelle: the most commonly seen bat; several roosts are known in the Blairgowrie area. Blue Hare: four were seen on Cochrage Moor, Blairgowrie, on 6th June, and several on the North side of Loch Errochty on 10th July. Brown Hare: seen regularly on the flat farmland between Weem and Coshievillie; also in the Blairgowrie to Bridge of Cally area. Red Squirrel: 8th March, one seen gathering strips of bark for its drey, at Blairgowrie; other records from this area, Logiealmond Lodge and Old Scone; this last being a road casualty. Grey Squirrel: one at Almondbank on 28th June is the only record. Vole: A 'plague' of Field Voles reported from North Murie garden, which they enter from near-by "set-aside" land, over which Kestrels, Buzzards and Tawny Owls hunt regularly. Wood Mouse: one found dead in gear-box of S.R.H.'s boss's car! (Beware of buying a second-hand Peugeot!).

Stoat: 19th April, five dead on keeper's gibbet, Cochrage Moor; 3rd July, one watched hunting along a dyke at Trinafour. Weasel: 17th July, one at Drimmie, Blairgowrie, the only report. (Rarer than Stoat, or just harder to see?). Fallow Deer: 8th March, 8 at Kercock. Roe Deer: widespread, on open moorland as well as woodland and woodland edge; at N. Murie, does reared twin young each side of the A85 - let's hope they never try to cross it!

Not Mammals, but recorded, were an Adder, on the South side of Schiehallion, and Common Lizard. One Lizard was seen on the lower slopes of Schiehallion, but not on the same day as the Adder! One ran (?) - it seemed to flow - across the South Loch Rannoch road on 1st August. Finally, one was seen on Cochrage Moor on 9th July.

OUTING.

Members interested in a proposed outing to Endrick Mouth, Loch Lomond, (famed for wildfowl etc.), please contact Miss S. Laing - Almondbank, 83418.

FRIDAY, 19th OCTOBER.

The first meeting, which is open to all members of the P.S.N.S., will have a lecture by Mr. Martin Robinson, R.S.P.B., on " Killiecrankie Through the Year!" Bring along any friends who may be interested in becoming a Member.

SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Subscriptions are now due : Adults £5, Juniors 50p, including sub. to parent body.

RUDDY DUCK. Appeal for information.

Social Interactions of North American Ruddy Ducks.

After only 30 years of feral breeding in Great Britain, there are now nearly 3,000 North American Ruddy Ducks in the country. As the population continues to expand, competition between Ruddy Ducks and native British waterbirds may become a serious threat to the stability of this ecosystem. Already Ruddy Ducks have bred on the continental mainland, where hybridisation and competition with White-headed Ducks is now a real possibility.

I would be interested to hear from anyone who has witnessed aggression between Ruddy Ducks and any other species, including, if possible, the following details:

1. The other species involved in the interaction.
2. The initiator.
3. The victor.
4. The short-term results of the interaction; for example, desertion of a nest or evacuation of the site by the loser.
5. The long-term effects of the interaction; for example, a decline in numbers of a species or a decline in breeding success.

It is equally important to include details of interactions in which Ruddy Ducks are not the initiators or the victors.

The information will be included in my Ph.D. thesis on the ecology and behaviour of the Ruddy Duck in Great Britain, and anyone who sends information will be personally acknowledged. I will also supply a summary sheet of the information received from the appeal.

Barry Hughes,
The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust,
Slimbridge,
Gloucester GL2 7BT.

BIRD & MAMMAL RECORDS.

Notes for September to December, please, to C.D.Scotland, 'Gruinart', Tullibardine Crescent, Auchterarder, Perthshire, PH3 1LY.

(Keep those binoculars polished and ready! Ed.).

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BIRD REPORT.

Reading through the Report shows that there are records of a wide variety of species. Large numbers of wildfowl have appeared this winter, and the inclusion of Loch Leven observations has covered a wider area than normal in the Bulletin.

Departure of Summer Visitors.

The latest records were as follows:- Swallow - one at Crieff, 17th Oct (M.McE.), two, North Murie, 22nd Oct (D.H.B.H.). House Martin - several with Swallows, Auchterarder Golf Course, 21st Sept (C.D.S.), three near Bridge of Cally, 24th Sept (S.R.H.). Wheatear - one at Blackford, 30th Sept (M.V.B.). Chiffchaff - one at Scone, 23rd Sept (E.D.C.). Willow Warbler - one at Blairgowrie, 1st Oct (S.R.H.). Spotted Flycatcher - three on 10th and two on 13th Sept, Blairgowrie (S.R.H.).

WINTER ARRIVALS:

Bewick's Swan - 50 at L. Leven on 4th Nov (M.V.B.), 4 at Balhepburn, 23rd Nov, and two there on 24th Dec (J.K.). (Bewick's Swans are not seen in great numbers in Scotland, and 50 is a significant figure. Whooper Swan - 18 sightings, the earliest being one bird at Monk Myre on 12th Oct. 51 at L. Leven, 4th Nov and 33 (including pair with four juveniles) at Drumore Loch on 10th Nov. Other sites were Balhepburn, Rannoch, R. Tay at Perth, Dunalastair, Stormont L., Meigle, Rhynd, Carsebreck and L. Freuchie. Pinkfeet - first arrivals noted were 1,000 at a roosting loch on 16th Sept. There was a huge influx from 20th - 23rd Sept, with many thousands at L. Leven, Strathearn and Strathallan. By 7th Oct, massive flocks were in evidence. White-fronted Goose - one at Drummond Pond on 14th Oct and two of the Greenland race in Strathallan on 22nd Dec. Greylag - earliest records 7th Oct, including c600 at L. Clunie; maximum 3,600, Drummond Pond on 11th Oct (S.&M.E.S.); " c3,500 Strathearn from late October to year's end. Another poor Autumn Strathallan, with 1,240 on 1st Dec the maximum" (M.V.B.). Snow Goose - two at Pinkfoot roost, 7th Oct, considered to be Greater Snow Geese. Further record of Snow Goose with Pinkfeet, L. Leven, 4th Nov. Barnacle Goose - 22 Strathallan on 27th Oct was Autumn peak.

Goldeneye - 15 records, including 218 L. Leven on 27th Oct, 130, R. Earn mouth, 18th Dec, Dunalastair (63), R. Tay at Newburgh (35), Stormont L. (10), Marlee L. (51), Perth Bridge - Almondmouth (38), Drummond Pond (14), Lindores L. (10). Waxwing - flock of c30, Crieff, 10th Nov; 14 visited Crieff garden for several days from 15th Nov, stripping pink berries from a Vilmorin rowan tree (S. & M.E.S.); 18 on tree in Crieff, 28th Nov (M.McE.); six passed through Errol garden on 18th Nov (D.H.B.H.); 9 in hawthorn hedge near Perth on 2nd Dec (M.V.B.); 40, Oakbank Estate, Perth, roosting and preening, on 9th Dec (K.R.); plus other records. (Only one record for the same period in 1989).

Fieldfare - many reports, including some large numbers. Earliest near Aberfeldy on 25th Sept, (normally 7 - 10 days later). 60 near Aberfeldy on 12th Oct; 1,500 at Dunning, 400 at Aberuthven, 400 at Aberfeldy and 300 at Dunalastair on 28th Oct. D.H.B.H. reported that he " had never seen so many Fieldfares and Redwings. Every hedge and ditch moving with them, and sitting out in fields," - Errol, 31st Oct. Redwing - (see above), earliest were 6 at Cluny, Aberfeldy, on 27th Sept, earlier than normal; 30 at Kercock, 4th Oct; 100+ at Kinloch with 100 Fieldfares and a few Mistle Thrushes, 17th Oct; 150 at Dunalastair, 28th Oct.

Other Species:

Little Grebe - 11 reports, including 18 at Drumore L. 13th Sept; 7, L. Faskally, 13th Oct; 4, Perth Bridge to Almondmouth, 16th Dec. Great Crested Grebe - a large number at L. Leven - 212 on 27th Oct (M.V.B.); 20 at Marlee L. on 13th Sept; 8 at L. Clunie on 15th Sept and 6 at L. of Lowes on 26th Dec. Slavonian Grebe - one at L. Leven, 16th Sept and 3rd Oct, and one near Blairgowrie, 10th Oct, (S.R.H. - a regular Slavonian Grebe spotter!). Black-necked Grebe - one at L. Leven, 16th Sept, and two on 3rd & 14th Oct. Cormorant - 28, L. Clunie, 14th Oct; 293 at L. Leven, 4th Nov; 41 at North Inch, perched on trees, 16th Dec; 20 at L. of Lowes, 26th Dec. Mute Swan - various records, including, Monk Myre - 47 adults, 27 juveniles, 15th Nov, (Bird with blue ring from Northumberland); 63 at Carsebreck, 24th Nov; 31 adults with 8 juveniles at White Moss L., 18th Nov. Canada Goose - 60 at Blairgowrie, flying towards Ker cōck, 7th Sept; 9 going West over Myreside, 17th Sept; 50+ at L. of Craiglush, 7th Oct; 45 at Stormont L., 12th Oct; 64 at Crieff, 22nd Dec.

Shelduck - 16 at L. Leven, 16th Sept. Mandarin - two between Perth Bridge and Almondmouth, 16th Sept & 16th Dec. Wigeon - 1,155 at L. Leven, 16th Sept; 100 at L. Freuchie, 7th Oct; 328 at Carsebreck, 27th Oct; 120 at Drumore L., 31st Oct; 260 at L. Freuchie, 1st Dec. Gadwall - 258 at L. Leven, 3rd Oct; two pairs at Stormont L. in Nov; 30 at White Moss L., 2nd Nov. Teal - 476 at Carsebreck, 27th Oct; 200 at L. Freuchie, 25th Nov; 200 on another loch, 18th Dec. Mallard - large numbers reported, including 1,927 at L. Leven, 3rd Oct; 403, Drummond Pond, 11th Nov; 1,140, Carsebreck, 15th Dec; 1,108, Perth Bridge to Almondmouth, 16th Dec, (highest count in this area); 700 on loch, 18th Dec. Pintail - 92 on L. Leven, 3rd Oct. Shoveler - 540. L. Leven, 3rd Oct; 5, White Moss L., 18th Nov. Pochard - 14, Fingask Loch, 12th Oct; 18, L. Clunie, and 51 Drummond Pond, 14th Oct; 152, Carsebreck, and 956, L. Leven, 27th Oct. Tufted Duck - at Carsebreck, " lower numbers than usual in October and November; 134 on 31st Dec." (M.V.B.); 2,825 at L. Leven, 27th Oct, (L. Leven has the largest breeding population of this species in Britain); 64 at Drummond Pond, 18th Nov; 215, Perth Bridge to Almondmouth, 16th Dec, (lochs frozen over). Goosander - 94 at L. Leven, 3rd Oct; 22, Perth Bridge to Almondmouth, 16th Dec; 34, Stormont L., 29th Dec. Ruddy Duck - 4, Hare Myre, females or juveniles, 13th Sept; one, ditto, Carsebreck, 29th Sept.

Hen Harrier - one in glen, hunting and being mobbed by crows, mid-Nov.
Sparrowhawk - a female took a Blackbird in the Public Park, beside the main road, in Scone, 3rd Oct; one over the Annaty Burn, beside the Tay, 14th Oct. Buzzard - 11 records from the area, totaling 22 birds. Kestrel - three hunting Inchcoonans "set-aside", 23rd Sept; two at Blairgowrie, "female with dead Blackbird in talons, male following", 12th Dec (S.R.H.). Merlin - one in Sept and Oct. Peregrine - three records.

Black Grouse - two males, Dalnacardoch, 10th Nov. Red-legged Partridge - 13, Blairgowrie, 14th Dec. Grey Partridge - coveys of 10, 11 & 14 birds, Kercock, 4th Oct; 15, Glen Quaich, 24th Nov; 12 near Innerpefferay, 10th Dec; 16 Spittalfield, 26th Dec and 25, Logierait on 31st. Water Rail - one at Tay Lodge, Errol, 25th Nov. Coot - 1,515, L. Leven, 3rd Oct; c150, Monk Myre, 12th Oct; 273, Drummond Pond, 11th Nov, and 140, L. of Lowes, 26th Dec. Golden Plover - 50 - 60 with Lapwings on field at North Murie, 23rd Sept; 218, L. Leven, 27th Oct. Grey Plover - 6, L. Leven, 3rd Oct. Lapwing - 800 - 1,000, Crieff Road, Perth, 4th Oct; c200 Blairgowrie, 5th Oct, seen regularly; 2,470, L. Leven, 27th Oct; 140, Scone Palace Shingle, 16th Dec. Little Stint - three at L. Leven, 3rd Oct. Dunlin - 200, L. Leven, 16th Sept. Ruff - 26, L. Leven, 16th Sept; one, Greenloaning, 28th Oct. Snipe - two, Fingask L., Blairgowrie, 7th Sept; 7, Blairgowrie, 5th Dec; other occasional sightings. Woodcock - 5, Amulree, 15th Dec; 20 shot in two day's shooting in December, at Blairgowrie; otherwise regular sightings. Black-tailed Godwit - 4, L. Leven, 16th Sept. Curlew - 3 at Kercock on 4th Oct. Spotted Redshank - three, L. Leven, 3rd Oct. Greenshank - 7, L. Leven, 16th Sept.

Herring Gull - 22, L. Faskally, and 5 Great Black-backed Gulls, L. of Lowes, 26th Dec. Collared Dove - 37, Blairgowrie, 5th Dec. Long-eared Owl - two hunting "set-aside" at Inchcoonans for weeks at dusk in September. Short-eared Owl - dead bird at Inchcoonans, (hit power lines in high winds, D.H.B.H.). Kingfisher - two at Marlee L., 21st Oct & 11th Nov. Green Woodpecker - two adults and three young in Meikleour Woods on 17th Sept. Great Spotted Woodpecker - regular sightings in Blairgowrie: one in garden, Kinloch, Blairgowrie, 17th Oct; one, North Inch, Perth, 16th Dec. Meadow Pipit - "passage Strathallan late July to mid-October, peak early to mid-September", (M.V.B.); "lots", Scone to Pitroddie, moving South towards Tay, 8th Sept, (E.D.C.); 27, L. Freuchie, 24th Nov. Pied Wagtail - 30, Glen Quaich, 15th Sept. Grey Wagtail - two, Errol, 23rd Sept; two, L. Faskally, 13th Oct; single birds Blairgowrie, North Inch, Perth. Stonechat - a pair at Crieff, 23 - 26th Sept. (S. & M.E.S.). Song Thrush - one at Crieff, 12th Dec, the only one noted! Blackcap - one male mist-netted, Blairgowrie, 9th Sept, a female there on 15th; "female in Scone in December, on and off bird table" (J.K.). Long-tailed Tit - 14 in garden at Crieff, 3rd Oct; 27, Blairgowrie, 17th Oct; 20, L. Freuchie, 11th Nov; up to 14 at bird table, Scone, Nov - Dec.

Magpie - one near Gleneagles Hotel, 29th Sept. Jackdaw & Rook -mixed, flock of approximately 3,000 birds going to roost, Crieff Knock, 5th Dec and other nights. Carrion Crow - 40 near Trinafour, 10th Nov; 16, Scones Lethendy, 11th Nov. Raven - three, Tummel area, 10th Oct. Tree Sparrow - two near Madderty, 1st Dec; c50, Blairgowrie, Dec, in mixed flock of finches. Chaffinch - 500 near Gleneagles Farm, 24th Nov; 300, Acharn, 8th Dec; 600 Strathbraan, 9th and 800, Ballinluig, 26th Dec. Brambling - one near Braco, 15th Dec. Greenfinch - 5 in garden, Auchterarder, 28th Dec. Goldfinch - small parties up river bank, Perth Bridge to Almondmouth, 16th Sept; 40 - 50 & 10, Kercock, 4th Oct. Siskin - 70, Cluny, Aberfeldy, 16th & 17th Sep; 50, Dunalastair, 28th Oct; c100, Glen Errochty, 10th Nov; 13 at L. Clunie, 9th Dec; 120, Strowan, near Crieff, 22nd; 50, L. of Lowes, 26th, Dec. Linnet - c50, Woody Is., Perth, 16th Sept; c50, Forneth, Blairgowrie, 21st Oct; 300 near Gleneagles Farm, 24th Nov. Twite - 55, GlenQuaich, 24th Nov; 630, Braco, 31st Dec. Redpoll - 100, L. Rannoch, 1st Sept; c60, Scone, 8th Oct; 15, North Inch, 16th Dec. Crossbill - "in conifer plantations all over the county" (E.D.C.); up to 20, Braco area; 15 Gleneagles Golf Course; 59 in 1½ sq. km. of Murray's Hill plantation, above Fowlis Wester on 11th Nov (M.V.B.).

Contributors to the above, in some cases acknowledged by their initials, were:- D.Allan, Dr.M.V.Bell,(assisted at L. Leven by P.Moore & S.Newton), E.D.Cameron, Miss S.R.Hacker, D.H.B.Howie, J.Kirk, Mrs. W.A.Mattingley, Maureen McElroy, K.Ringland, C.D. & Mrs. E.Scotland, S. & Mrs.M.E.Shimeld.

MAMMAL REPORT.

The following records have been contributed by Dr. M.V.Bell, E.D.Cameron, Miss S.R.Hacker, D.H.B.Howie, K.Ringland and C.D. & Mrs. E.Scotland. Once again it is interesting to know the distribution of mammals in the area:- Hedgehog - more road casualties, unfortunately, including ones at Blairgowrie, 12th Sept, Almondbank and Dalcrue, 30th Sept. However, live ones were at Blairgowrie, two on 15th Nov, and Kirkton of Lethendy on 21st Oct. Brown Hare - Blairgowrie, 19th Sept. Red Squirrel - 16 records altogether, which is encouraging. Two near Muthill and two in Muirward Wood, Scone; singles, Muirton of Ardblair, Braco and Findogask in Sept. Singles, Rosemount, (pulling beechnuts off tree), in Blairgowrie, Rae L., Marlee House, Findogask, L. Faskally, Snaigow and near Caputh in Oct. Some of you may have read recently that it has been proved, after a ten year research project, that Grey do not drive away Red Squirrels. Apparently it is linked to food choices and digestion - Reds cannot digest acorns as well as the Grey species. (Somebody has been feeding us with the wrong information in the past!). Grey Squirrel - seen regularly at Balhomie, near Blairgowrie; singles at Crieff, Kirkton of Lethendy and Scone Den; and some elsewhere. Short-tailed Vole - one dead, river-side path by North Muirton, Perth, 14th Oct. Wood Mouse - one dead in oak wood at Blairgowrie, 29th Sept.

Red Fox - near Bridge of Cally, 24th Sept. Stoat - eleven individual reports, including roadside verges - sometimes at rabbit carcasses. One Ermine on Evelick Hill, 21st Nov; another, Monk Myre, 20th Dec. Weasel - one in Glenshee, and also a Wild Cat, killed in road accident, mid-Nov. Common Seal - one off Scone Palace fishing station, R. Tay, 14th Oct. Red Deer - 90 in Glen Artney, 3rd Nov. Roe Deer - 1 to 4 animals, Kinkell, near Methven, Murray's Hill, Pitroddie, Snaigow, Dalnacardoch, North Murie, Blairgowrie. Up to ten observed in Megginch Woods; approximately 20, Mill Dam, 7th Oct, and 25 near Braco, 1st Dec.

The following is a note from Mr. John Kirk, President of P.S.N.S. and a member of the Ornithological Section Committee. The proposed Reserve was discussed briefly at our last Committee Meeting, and it was agreed that known details be published, in order to give Section Members the opportunity, should they so wish, of supporting it.

Tay Estuary Local Nature Reserve.

For a number of years, thought has been given to the development of such a reserve, so that the rich birdlife and vegetation can be preserved. There is general agreement in the Dundee and Perth and Kinross Councils, the N.C.C., S.W.T., R.S.P.B., S.O.C. and Tay Ringing Group, on the desirability of the scheme. Opposition centres strongly from local wildfowling opinion. This is disappointing, in view of the amicable situation now existing at the Eden and the Montrose Basin Reserves, between wildfowlers and Conservation groups.

A working party from local conservation and Council representatives is being convened in the hope of furthering the Reserve development, and Section Members may wish to "lobby" their local Councillor by writing in support of the plan.

A copy of the suggested Reserve boundaries will be available at Section meetings.

J.Kirk.

New EDITOR.

Having now been involved with the Bulletin for over three years, the time has come for a change! The Committee is pleased therefore, that Mr. John Duncan has agreed to become Editor. Future contributions should be sent to him at :- Parkhill, Arnbathie, Scone, Perth.

The next Bulletin will cover January to April, 1991, inclusive. May I take this opportunity to thank all of you who have made contributions, or helped in other ways to ensure that Members received the Bulletin,

Cecil Scotland.

P S N S ORNITHOLOGICAL SECTION SUMMER PROGRAMME

1990

All outings leave from the Museum Car Park

				Leader
Wed	April 10th	6.30pm	Vane Farm Nature Reserve	Warden
Sun	April 21st	9.30am	Baron's Haugh Motherwell	Warden
Wed	May 1st	6.30pm	Abernethy Glen	Ranger
Wed	May 29th	6.30pm	Haugh of Kercock	C Scotland
Wed	June 12th	6.30pm	Loch Kinnordy	Warden
Wed	June 26th	6.30pm	Loch Freuchie	J Kirk
Sun	Oct 27th	9.30am	Lochs Cameron & Lindores Eden Estuary, Fife Ness	S Laing

* R S P B members should remember to take membership cards with them to nature Reserves.

Any further information about the cuttings can be obtained from the secretary, Miss Esther Taylor, Telephone Perth 21986.