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EDITORIAL

To the majority of bird-watchers, the report of one or more rare species turning up, or a high density of often more common migrant species occurring in an area, is red-hot news.

In Britain examples of the latter which readily spring to mind are the Robin rush on the East coast in October 1951; the large falls of typical continental drift migrants on the East coast in the first week of September 1956 and 1958; the hordes of Goldcrests in mid October 1959; the avalanche of Blackbirds in November 1961; and the fantastic fall of drift migrants in East Anglia on 3rd September 1965.

All these phenomena cause great excitement and tremendous activity amongst bird-watchers, setting the 'grapevines' buzzing, and providing those fortunate enough to be on the spot at the right time, with considerable delight and pleasure. They often remain the talking-point in birding circles for months afterwards and in fact tend to identify the year.

Regardless of what else is going to occur, 1967 will undoubtedly be remembered for the 'Torrey Canyon' disaster though in contrast to other years, the memory will not be associated with delight or pleasure.

The numbers of auks brought ashore alive, 6,000, is not a vast total until we realise that they are all covered in oil.

Those members stationed in Cornwall, who helped in the emergency, know only too well the tragedy of the beaches. For those who have experience of the more usual 'wrecks' of oiled birds; and who recall the frustrations of trying to restore a few birds to good health, the enormity of the disaster and of the task facing the teams on the beaches, in the cleansing centres and the recovery centres, can be realised with a fair degree of apprehension. For the rest of us, the mind boggles.

Already the Television newsreaders tell us that children play once more on Cornish sand, that the sea-birds are clean (showing pictures of Herring Gulls), and that life returns to normal.

For many oiled birds, life will never return, let alone to normal; others even though successfully cleaned, are doomed; but there is hope for some, eventually.

The recuperation period is a long one, lasting months and the estimated cost of nursing just one bird back to health, is over £5.

The resources of the rescue organisations are already strained and more money is needed. The surest way that any of us can now help to lessen the effect of the disaster and ensure that the birds still alive in the recuperation centres return to the sea, is to send a donation to the Save the Sea-birds Fund. The Chairman will be happy to receive any donations.

Roger Norman
Editor.

A TOUR OF THE CORNISH COAST BY HELICOPTER AFTER THE 'TORREY CANYON' DISASTER

W.R.P. BOURNE.

On the morning of the 18th March, 1967, the super-tanker Torrey Canyon carrying 112,000 tons of crude oil from Kuwait to Milford Haven took an unusual route inside the Scillies and despite warnings from the Seven Stones lightship ran at full speed on to that reef some twenty miles west of Land's End. For a week attempts were made to salvage her while a growing pool of oil spread first south and then north with the wind, and then a westerly gale broke her back, and she was bombed and burnt out in an attempt to terminate the growing pollution. Subsequently the wind blew mainly from the north-west, so that the oil spread south-east at about ten miles a day, piling up on the north coast of Cornwall, the west side of the Lizard to the south, and finally the north coast of France at the time of writing, polluting the shore and killing thousands of seabirds as it went, despite the efforts of a fleet of vessels spraying detergent at sea and great defensive activity along the threatened coasts. At first the incident attracted great public attention, and a spate of reports circulated concerning its implications; at the request of the Chairman of the R.A.F. Ornithological Society its Vice-President, Air Chief Marshal Sir John Davis, secured the use of a helicopter to enable the British Trust for Ornithology to survey the damage, and this is both a report of its findings and an assessment of the value of helicopters for seabird surveys.

The flight was originally cleared for the senior research officer of the B.T.O., Robert Spencer, but by the time he had been traced he had already arranged to sail on a survey of the area of pollution in the Plymouth Marine Laboratory vessel 'Sarsia', and since I was taking Dr. Gustav Rudebeck of the Lund University Museum, Sweden, on a tour of the affected area it was agreed that we should go instead, in company with Dr. Ranwell and Dr. Donelly who were in charge of investigations for the Nature Conservancy. We were flown round the entire coast of Cornwall from Falmouth to Trevose Head by Fl.Lt. Lord in a Whirlwind helicopter of 230 squadron from St. Mawgan on the morning of 5th. April, and obtained ideal views of the whole coast, whose value was enhanced by the fact that we had already examined the south coast the day before, while Mr. A.G.Parsons had shown me the northern seabird colonies during the summer of 1965.

We flew fairly high across Cornwall when we set out, and while the helicopter provided an excellent means of spotting interesting-looking localities on the ground, we were too high to identify birds smaller than a kestrel, or actually count the eggs in Rook's nests, if the owners had got off for us. We had a fine view of the defences of the Duchy of Cornwall oyster beds in the Helford River, one boom supported by bobbles with a gate, and also a pipe of compressed air escaping as a curtain of bubbles, and saw what looked rather like our first small oil slick inside them. We then descended to follow the coast at cliff-top height a few hundred feet away from the beaches all round the coast. We flushed most of the unemployed birds in passing, but many of those guarding nests did not get up at all, but merely turned to look at us; colonies full of Cormorants and Shags waving their necks looked particularly ridiculous. Most of the human population of the beaches waved with what appeared to be great enthusiasm; maybe they thought it was Prince Philip.

We saw some dozens of oiled birds, mainly large auks which were often entirely black but still vigorous enough to jump into the sea at our passing, on inaccessible rocks off-shore at Coverack, the Lizard, and Mousehole; also one oiled Gannet off the Lizard which was apparently also spotted by many people on the ground. We could not see dead birds in the water or on the beaches, presumably because they float under the surface in the water and resemble rocks on the shore. We saw no oiled birds on the north coast; the oil came in first here, and perhaps they were by now all dead or had been picked up by the very efficient

beach patrols of that area. The only birds we saw swimming on the sea were two large divers, probably Great Northern Divers, off the dock at Penzance; they still seemed clean, but since they were seen easily and were the only ones we saw they may have been the only swimming birds to escape the holocaust.

There was little oil to be seen south of the Lizard, though a great slick was said to be out at sea there; but the whole of the west side of the Lizard peninsula was very heavily oiled, with great drifts of yellow-brown muck looking in the distance like sewage floating in the coves and cast up in the angles of the beaches; we knew from the day before that these patches were inches thick, and parties of cleaners were struggling ineffectually with them in the accessible coves. Despite the heavy oiling the breeding birds of this coast seemed comparatively unaffected; gulls and discrete colonies of Cormorants and Shags were defending nest-sites in what seemed full force on a series of magnificent offshore stacks, including the great gang of several hundred Greater Black-backed Gulls on Mullion Island despite the presence of a great patch of oil on the seaward side of their island, and while a minority of Shags in particular seemed to be oiled, few gulls were even marked.

Marazion Beach seemed untouched from the air, though we knew from the day before that it was poisoned, presumably by detergent, with razor-shells lying dead along the tide-line; I had never seen bodies within the shells before. The south side of the Land's End peninsula seemed comparatively untouched except for the oiled birds on the rock off Mousehole, and some Fulmars were still present there. All along the rocky shore, but especially in the Land's End area we flushed flocks of waders in surprisingly large numbers, Turnstones perhaps in a majority, but nearly as many slightly smaller with uniform backs and slight wing-bars, apparently Purple Sandpipers; we must have seen thousands of the two in the course of the flight. The north-west side of the Land's End peninsula was the most heavily oiled part of the whole coast, with great masses of oil piled up on the beaches and floating in the coves all along, and people hosing it with detergent in the coves, making a white stain that spread out to sea. Streaks and whisps of oil were still floating in from an area of naval activity, presumably with more detergent, to the north-west; but here again the surviving birds apart from a few Shags were doing well on the offshore stacks, with a few Kittiwakes around the known colonies at Logan Rock south of Land's End and near Morvah.

The remainder of the north coast was less heavily oiled, with patches of oil in the coves of the cliffs and long smears on the sand beaches at which people were working with earth-moving machinery; the southern beaches of St. Ives were clear and shielded by booms. Gulls, Cormorants and Shags were still on station on Godrevy Island, the Gull Rock, the Man and his man, the second Gull Rock, and off Trevose Head, and the Kittiwakes were present in full force and seemingly unoiled at Portreath and St Agnes Head, but the only auks seen were half a dozen Razorbills at Hell's Mouth near Godrevy Point; otherwise here, at Portreath and St. Agnes and on the Man and his man the auk ledges could be seen, and they were whitewashed but empty. The sea which was covered with a thin opalescent film of oil was empty too, and while young birds away at sea may come back to restock these colonies, the outlook for them in general seems very grim. Feral pigeons performed fantastic evolutions as we flushed them along this coast; once I may have had a brief view of a Peregrine near Godrevy.

The impression is that the oil has made a clean sweep of a small group of species which feed offshore on the water, including the auks, divers and grebes, while leaving other seabirds including the gulls, Fulmars and perhaps most Cormorants and Shags virtually untouched. This was confirmed by Bob Spencer and Henry Mayer-Gross in the 'Sarsia', who found few birds offshore in the oil, but many there when they passed beyond it. The full extent of the damage remains to be assessed, though the R.S.P.C.A. are said to have handled 7,000 oiled birds washed ashore already, and this can only be a fraction of the

total on this largely inaccessible shore, while an unknown but doubtless large number of birds must have been picked up by the mass of oil which has drifted to France and vast numbers of birds are likely to be killed along the coast there. It seems doubtful if the full total of the slaughter can even be guessed, though ringing recoveries already show that it involves birds from the Scillies, the Irish Sea and Rathlin off Northern Ireland, while many of the Guillemots appear to be of the northern race which does not breed south of central Scotland, and the Great Northern Divers at least must come from Iceland and Greenland. The pollution occurred just before the peak of spring migration in mid April, when vast numbers of seabirds would be moving north up the west coast of Europe into the oil, and the possible extent of the damage staggers the imagination. It is a mercy that it seems to be restricted to so few species.

Finally, a by-product of the trip was the opportunity to assess the value of a helicopter for bird surveys. It is clearly outstandingly useful, both for locating interesting sites worthy of further investigation on the ground inland, and for examining inaccessible cliffs and offshore stacks along the coast. We could see all the larger birds along the shore, and even Rock Pipits at times, though hardly all of those. It afforded an incomparably better view of inaccessible breeding sites than could have been obtained by any other means, and although this view was fleeting, it would doubtless be possible with photography to obtain a permanent record for subsequent counting and comparison with changes in later years. The main draw-back is the disturbance caused; one helicopter survey seems unlikely to cause birds to desert an area, but regular ones might, and they might cause serious damage at critical stages of the breeding cycle, causing startled birds to knock their eggs off precarious ledges or leave them exposed to gulls. However, it seems possible that even this danger is limited; it seemed mainly the unemployed birds which flew up, while many guarding nests failed to leave them even before they had eggs. It seems likely that at the worst birds are only flushed by a helicopter if it appears suddenly or comes too close, and there is a serious need for careful assessment of their tolerance of this type of disturbance, both to discover what use can be made of this invaluable method of survey, and the extent to which helicopters should be banned from the vicinity of breeding stations. However, it might be better if such trials were not carried out in Cornwall just at present.

BREEDING SURVEYS: THE PROBLEMS OF RANDOM SAMPLING IN SEA-BIRD COLONIES.

M. Carins

Since I arrived in Shetland, in May 1965, I have been conducting a survey of certain breeding species on Sumburgh Head. Owing to the problems involved in checking a large number of nests, only two species can be considered to produce enough eggs to give reliable results over a given period. The species used for sampling are the Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis glacialis*, all 'double-white', and the Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*. These two were selected from several possibilities because these birds appear less prone to egg-loss caused by observer interference during checks.

Other birds found in the area in sufficient numbers for sampling are Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*, 'Comic' Tern *Sterna hirundo and S.paradisaea*, Razorbill *Alca torda*, Guillemot *Uria aalge aalge*, and Puffin *Fratercula arctica*. It is also suspected that Eider *Somateria mollissima*, Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*, and Black Guillemot *Uria grylle* might be found in sufficient numbers.

In the case of the Guillemot, once the birds had left the nesting ledge whilst checks were being made, they remained away so long that egg-loss to resident Herring Gulls could be as high as 80%. The 'Comic' Terns were difficult to work owing to the difficulty of indentifying their nests in a mixed colony, and to the disturbance caused by the observer. Puffin and Razorbill were excluded because of the time taken in reaching sufficient nests or because of the nest disturbance involved. Kittiwake remain a possible third usable group but entail working from ropes, with greater dangers all round.

In each area surveyed the nests were recorded as soon as the first egg was laid, notes being kept of nest construction and size. Since all the nests were in similar areas in the case of Shag, or in three distinct zones in the case of Fulmar, the random factor was reduced to a minimum.

Early in the season it was possible to make frequent visits and each egg was measured and weighed (on 100g.or 300g. Pesola spring balances as the egg necessitated), an accuracy of 1 g. being considered reasonable. Although Pettingill (1956) considers that one should work to two decimal places, this was considered neither possible nor necessary. The colour of the egg was next checked against a colour-chart (Palmer, 1962). Thereafter each nest was checked at least once every eight days, work and weather permitting, each egg being weighed and new eggs being measured. In some cases there was an overlap of eggs, but the sequence of the majority was correctly determined. From incubation dates it was also possible to clear up the few mystery cases. Each nest was given a number and each egg lettered in order of laying. The position of each nest in the colonial area was plotted on a sketch-map.

The first variable to become apparent was in the accuracy of weighing. It was found that, although one might be able to weigh to an accuracy of 1 g. or less in ideal conditions, this became virtually impossible on a cliff-face in a near gale while hanging on by one's toes. It was also found that a variation in weight was caused by the moisture of the nest, adherent dirt, or the flaking of the egg-shell surface in the case of Shag eggs. These factors could only be allowed for in calculations by averaging.

A second variable was caused by some birds becoming accustomed to the observer. These had to be evicted from the nest to allow the eggs to be weighed. Shag usually attempted to climb back on to the nest with the observer, and the Fulmar's more effective deterrent added to his distraction. If I put a foot beside the nest of the more persistent Shag, they would usually wait until it was removed before returning, and the Fulmar could usually be persuaded to inch off the egg without 'spitting' oil if they were approached slowly.

During the season it was found that the random variation of egg-weights could be reduced by the simple expedient of removing the highest and the lowest 10% of the weights and averaging the remainder. This was only effective where ten or more eggs could be sampled for any given day of incubation, and owing to the variable nature of my visits it was necessary to have a continuous sample of fifty eggs to achieve a sufficient total on any day.

Table 1 shows provisional results achieved over the first twenty-two days of incubation in a Shag colony this year (1966). A graph of weight against days of incubation would illustrate it more clearly.

To reduce the egg variation to a minimum, the average of all fresh eggs was used as a basis for calculations. The loss of egg-weight was considered in grams lost from fresh weight, this loss being averaged for each day and subtracted from the average fresh weight-for-the-day weight.

To find the ratio of eggs laid to eggs lost each egg was marked with an individual reference as soon as it was discovered, since many eggs are lost in the early nests in a colony. The first two nests in the colony under observation demonstrate this point. Nest 1 never contained more than two eggs at any time, although four were laid – only one egg survived more than a week. Nest 2 lost the only two eggs seen in the first clutch, and about a fortnight passed before a second clutch (of three eggs) was laid.

As the season progressed, Shag egg-loss to gulls was much reduced, but it was not clear whether this was due to the greater availability of other eggs (Guillemot in particular) or to the more intensive brooding of the Shag.

In the case of Fulmar on cliff ledges disturbance due to the observer can cause eggs to be lost if the birds are badly startled, since they leave the nests so rapidly that they take an occasional egg over the edge with them. It also appears that nests on exposed faces suffer a high rate of egg-failure owing to chilling; and those nearest to the tops of cliffs (down to about 3 ft. from the top) suffer very severe loss (100% in 1965 & 1966), probably being due to disturbance caused by tourists.

Another major factor causing egg-loss, almost certainly due to a great extent to observer interference, is breakage, caused by a startled bird treading on an egg or by loose shale from the rock-face falling into the nest. This may cause a loss of 5 to 10% at the beginning of incubation but is rare after the first few days.

Table 1

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Days of Incubation	Weight (g.)	Eggs Checked
0	49	43
3	47.3	5
5	47.8	9
6	47.3	5
8	47.7	5
9	46.0	2
11	45.6	10
13	46.7	5
16	44.7	8
17	45.0	4
22	44.5	5

Table 11

Clutches	Heaviest	Lightest	Most Laid
15	55	43	5
	58	42	
	57	45	

Conclusion

The main factors causing egg-loss appear to be:-

Predation by gulls and Hooded Crows
Observer interference.
Random breakage in the nest.
Chilling.

The main variables appear to be:-

Individual variation between clutches and eggs.
Observer error due to difficulties in weighing under adverse conditions.
Assumptions based upon observations of unmarked eggs.
Averaging eggs where exact laying-dates are not known.
Insufficiently large samples.
Type of habitat.

Postscript

Further work in the colonies has shown that the stage of incubation can be calculated where the average loss of egg-weight is known for a range of eggs. Intermediate results indicate a range of at least fifty eggs is necessary to produce the weights to prepare a graph. Once the graph is prepared for a species there would appear to be no reason why it should not be applicable to all eggs of that species if the weight when laid is known. Thereafter periodic visits should suffice to confirm that incubation is proceeding normally.

Regional variation would appear to be negligible, since Snow (1960) in her survey on Lundy of 300 clutches in 4 years mentions an average loss of 1.4 gm. every eight days, whilst my shorter range of 40 clutches over 2 years gives a figure of 1.3 gm. in the same period.

The figures quoted in Belopol'skii (1957), Table 71, are not considered reliable since a total of eleven eggs (eight fresh eggs and three pecked open) is not enough. The range used could be wrong by over 10%. In fact the error is even greater than this, the drying out rate for the Shag being given as 8.8 gm. whilst my figures indicate 5.4 gm. and those of Snow a little over 5.8 gm.

My final figures are based on a range of 166 weights throughout incubation.

From my current data (since it is still being reduced at the time of writing) my evidence would suggest that measurements of weight should be accurate to 2.5% of the fresh egg weight to give reliable results.

The formula used by Snow to calculate the volume of Shag eggs was $V = (pi/6)lw^2$, where l is the length and w is the greatest width. To date no reductions have been made from my figures.

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BIRD NOTES OF ADEN PROTECTORATE - SALALAH & HABILAYN

J.J.Latham

During my tour of thirteen weeks from 15th December, 1965, to 13th March, 1966, I visited Salalah and Habilayn, in the Aden Protectorate, and made observations of some of the avifauna there. In particular I stayed eight weeks in Habilayn, 13.30N 44.50E, elevation 2,000ft, and five weeks at Khormaksar. At Habilayn I saw birds of desert, scrub, and mountains; at Khormaksar birds of sea and shore.

I also visited Salalah 17.03N 54.06E, elevation 55ft, for one day, which is situated in Muscat and Oman; so my notes are rather scanty for this R.A.F. outpost.

These notes are intended only to supplement the information in Meinertzhagen's 'Birds of Arabia' (1954), P.W.P. Browne's 'Notes on birds observed in South Arabia' (*Ibis*, 1950, 52-65), J.P. Paige's 'Bird notes from Aden and Oman' (*Ibis*, 1960, 520) and H.E. Ennion's 'Notes on birds seen in Aden and the Western Aden Protectorate' (*Ibis*, 1962, 560)

The geology, geography, and climate are adequately covered in Meinertzhagen's 'Birds of Arabia'. For the sake of convenience I have used Meinertzhagen's nomenclature and order.

SYSTEMATIC LIST

Fan-tailed Raven *Corvus rhipidurus*
Numerous at Habilayn from 16th December, 1965 to 10th March, 1966. 3-400 at Waalan near Dhala 28th February, 1966.

Indian House Crow *Corvus splendens*
20 plus in Khormaksar camp 16th December, 1965, 1 feeding young.

Tristram's Grackle *Onycognathus tristrami*
1 at Habilayn 14th January, 1966.

Pale Rock Sparrow *Petronia brachydactyla*
3 at Habilayn 27th December, 1965.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus indicus*
Numerous in Khormaksar camp area breeding from 15th December 1965 to 15th March, 1966. Weight of young birds as follows; 19th December, 1965, 2 males 19.5g; 1 male 21.5g; 1 female 20.5g. Mean length of tarsus 17 mm. Mean length of bill 10mm. All birds much paler than English House Sparrow.

Rüppell's Weaver *Ploceus galbula*
2 at Habilayn 16th January, 1966.

Silverbill *Lonchura malabarica*
2 at Habilayn 24th December, 1965

Rock Bunting *Emberiza tahapisi*
1 at Habilayn 28th December, 1965. 2 at Habilayn 21st January, 1966.

House Bunting *Emberiza striolata*
1 at Habilayn 27th December, 1965, 2 on 28th December, 1965.

Crested Lark *Galerida cristata*
10 plus at Salalah in camp area 31st January 1966.

Richard's Pipit *Anthus novaezealandiae*
1 at Habilayn 14th January, and 6th February, 1966.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*
2 at Khormaksar beach, 6 in Khormaksar camp area 15th December, 1965. 2 Habilayn 24th December, 1965. 2 Salalah 31st January 1966.

Arabian Zosterops *Zosterops abyssinicus*
1 seen at Habilayn 28th December, 1965, and 6th February, 1966. 8 at Habilayn 14th January, 1966. 2 at Habilayn 9th February 1966. 2 nests seen in local area.

Lesser Grey Shrike *Lanius minor*
1 at Habilayn 16th and 17th January, 1966.

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor*
1 at Habilayn 14th January, 1966, regurgitated pellet; calling and singing.

Bush Shrike *Tchagra senegala*
1 seen several times from December, 1965, to March, 1966, at Habilayn.

African Bulbul *Pycnonotus capensis*
1 at Khormaksar 15th December, 1965. 8 at Habilayn 24th December, 1965. Seen to be feeding one young at Khormaksar camp 10th March 1966.

Olivaceous Warbler *Hippolais pallida*
1 at Habilayn 27th and 28th December, 1965.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*
1 at Habilayn 6th February, and 6th March, 1966.

Ménétries' Warbler *Sylvia melanocephala*
1 in camp area Salalah 31st January, 1966.

Graceful Warbler *Prinia gracilis*
1 at Habilayn 27th December, 1965.

Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius*
1 Habilayn 14th January, and 5th February, 1966.

Desert Wheatear *Oenanthe deserti*
1 adult male at Habilayn 27th December, 1965. 2 at Salalah 31st January, 1966.

Isabelline Chat *Oenanthe isabellina*
1 at Habilayn 3rd January, 1966.

Blackstart *Cercomela melanura*
Present at Habilayn from December, 1965, to March, 1966. Maximum three. Nest building began 28th February, 1966., in dry grass. Hole in stone wall at Habilayn.

Black Bush Robin *Cercotrichas podobe*
2 Habilayn 24th December, 1965. Seen in Wadi from December, 1965 to March, 1966. Maximum 4.

Crag Martin *Hirundo rupestris*
1 Habilayn 16th and 28th December, 1965, and 21st January, 1966. 1 at Dhala 13th January, 1966. 5 at Habilayn 21st January, 1966.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*
2 over village at Habilayn, 3rd February, 1966.

Alpine Swift *Apus melba*
1 seen at Dhala 13th January, 1966.

Little Green Bee-eater *Merops orientalis*
2 at Habilayn 13th February, 1966. Seen to take insects and butterflies.

Little Grey Hornbill *Tokus nasutus*
Present at Habilayn in village area, Max. 20, all January, 1966.

Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus*
Reddish-brown phase. Several at Habilayn from 15th December, 1965, to 10th March, 1966. 50-100 at Waalan 28th February, 1966.

Steppe Buzzard *Buteo buteo vulpinos*
5 at Habilayn 15th December, 1965. 10 at Waalan, near Dhala 28th February, 1966.

Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus*
1 at Habilayn 3rd February, 1966.

Black Kite *Milvus migrans*
Several over Khormaksar camp 15th December, 1965, breeding on water-towers. Numerous at Habilayn from 24th December 1965, to 10th March, 1966. Max. 60 plus.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*
1 off Khormaksar beach 15th December 1965, and 10th January, 1966.

Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus*
2 at Dhala 13th January, 1966. 1 at Habilayn 6th March, 1966.

Griffon Vulture *Gyps fulvus*
1 or 2 in Aden area from December, 1965, to March, 1966.

Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*
3 on Khormaksar beach 23rd February, 1966.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*
Seen on Khormaksar beach all months from December, 1965, to March, 1966. Max. 9.

Reef Heron *Egretta gularis*
2 Khormaksar beach 18th December, 1965, white phase. 1 Khormaksar beach 22nd February, 1966, white phase.

Cattle Egret *Ardeola ibis*
3 Khormaksar beach 19th December, 1965. Seen in all months from December, 1965, to March, 1966, on Khormaksar beach.

Flamingo *Phoenicopterus ruber*
6 Khormaksar beach 18th December, 1965. 13 Khormaksar beach 9th January 1966. 7 Khormaksar beach 23rd February, 1966.

Lesser Flamingo *Phoenicopterus minor*
3 Khormaksar beach 15th December, 1965.

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia*
2 with Palm Doves at Habilayn 4th March, 1966.

Palm Dove *Stretopelia senegalensis*
Several at Habilayn from 24th December, 1965, to 10th March, 1966.

Lichtenstein's Sandgrouse *Pterocles indicus*
3 at Habilayn 4th March, 1966.

Golden Plover *Charadrius apricarius*
1 Khormaksar beach 19th December, 1965.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*
1 Khormaksar beach 19th December, 1965.

Ruff and Reeve *Philomachus pugnax*
5 Khormaksar beach 15th December, 1965.

Redshank *Tringa totanus*
1 Khormaksar beach 9th January, 1966. 2 Khormaksar beach 23rd February, 1966.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*
2 Khormaksar beach 18th December, 1965.

Common Sandpiper *Tringa Hypoleucos*
1 Khormaksar beach 18th December, 1965.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*
1 Khormaksar beach 18th December, 1965.

Curlew *Numenius arquata*
3 Khormaksar beach 9th January, 1966.

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*
1 Khormaksar beach 22nd February, 1966.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*
3 immature birds Khormaksar beach 19th December 1965.

Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica*
2 Khormaksar beach 9th January, 1966. Present February and March, 1966.

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne tschegrava*
7 Khormaksar beach 19th December, 1965. 30 plus Khormaksar beach 23rd February, 1966.

Crested Tern *Sterna bengalensis*
10 Khormaksar beach 18th December, 1965. 30 plus Aden harbour 22nd February, 1966.
20 Khormaksar beach 23rd February, 1966.

White-cheeked Tern *Sterna repressa*
4 Khormaksar beach 15th December, 1965. 6 Khormaksar beach 19th December, 1965.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*
20 Khormaksar beach 15th December, 1965. 60 plus Khormaksar beach 23rd February, 1966, - 8% immature.

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*
10 Khormaksar beach 23rd February, 1966.

Hemprich's Gull *Larus hemprichii*
Common in Aden harbour in all months, from December, 1965, to March, 1966.

A VISIT TO THE SWAN LAKE NATIONAL WILD-LIFE REFUGE, MISSOURI, U.S.A.

F. KIME

On 29th October, 1966, Fl.Lt. Phil Murton, Sgt. George Masson, and myself made a visit to the principal wild-fowl refuge located on the Mississipi flyway for migrating ducks and geese. The trip was planned to coincide with the peak period of the migration season and with Phil Murton's visit from Philadelphia.

'Swan Lake National Wild-Life Refuge' is situated 200 miles from St. Louis in North Central Missouri. The area covered by the Refuge is 11,000 acres, comprising two lakes, swamp land, and cultivated fields of clover, Indian corn, and sorghum. A further area is left as primary-growth deciduous timbers. The crops are left standing for the geese to feed on while resting during migration or during winter residence. A high proportion do, in fact, stop over for the winter.

On our arrival we made contact with the manager, Bob Timmerman, who, on learning our intention, gave us the run of the Refuge. Before letting us loose he escorted us around the Refuge, indicating the best vantage-points, and during the tour gave details of an aerial count which he had carried out a few days previous. 35,000 Canada Geese** *Branta canadensis* , 3,000 Snow Geese *Chen hyperborea* , 3,000 White Pelicans *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos* , and 200,000 ducks, including Pintail *Anas acuta* , Blue-Winged and Green-Winged Teal *Anas discors* and *Anas checca carolinensis* , Gadwall *Anas strepera* , Lesser Scaup-duck *Aythya affinis* , Wood Duck *Aix sponsa* and Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* were rather impressive figures.

Our main interest was the waterfowl, but passerines seen included Redwing Blackbirds *Agelaius phoeniceus* , locally known as Swamp Blackbirds, which show their brilliant red and orange epaulettes in flight; Cardinals *Richmondena cardinalis* , the largest red passerine in America; and Meadow Larks *Sturnella magna* , the broad white outer tail-patches being excellent identification marks if the harsh penetrating call is not heard. We had fine views of Yellow-shafted Flicker *Colaptes auratus* and Red-headed Woodpecker *Melanerpes erythrocephalus* , a very striking bird with its black and white body, and head and neck which look as if they had been dipped in bright-red paint - loud in plumage and loud in voice.

The Pectoral Sandpiper *Erolia melanotos* , being an annual if uncommon visitor to the United Kingdom, was a very useful wader to study at close quarters.

Some Red-tailed Hawks *Buteo jamiacensis* were seen both sitting motionless on a bare tree-limb and wheeling high overhead, showing the spread un-barred red-brown tail from which the species is named; and Marsh Hawks *Circus cyaneus* the European Hen Harrier, quartered the swamp land.

A lone Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus* , the American national bird, was sighted; this was a young bird just assuming the white adult plumage. It was first seen taking off from a copse of high trees and was followed as it planed out over the lake.

During our stay flocks of Canada Geese were observed feeding in all three types of cultivated field (clover, Indian corn and sorghum), and resting on the lakes, shores and swamps, while their continual coming and going provided a backcloth of whirring wings and call-notes, occasionally interrupted by a roar as a whole flock of 5,000 birds took to the air. Cannon-nets had been set at a baited area, but we were disappointed, the birds choosing to feed elsewhere.

The highlight of our visit was to come next morning, when having positioned ourselves, before dawn, between the lakes and the feeding-grounds, flock after flock, of about 50 birds each, passed by us until the numbers were uncountable, filling the air from horizon to horizon. The spectacle continued for about 15 minutes; and, as the sun appeared, the geese were moving, in small parties of 5-10 birds, in all directions.

Then there appeared from the north, flying at a height of 30 feet, a flock of over 200 White Pelicans. In line astern they appeared to float silently past with just the slightest murmur from the air passing through their wings. There followed further flocks of 100, 40, and 76, and then, as a finale, the combined flocks returned from the south heading towards Swan Lake.

We finally, but reluctantly, bade farewell to Bob and the overpowering presence of Canada Geese, humbler and wiser men, having witnessed one of nature's spectacles which is an American heritage, comforted in the knowledge that there are such people doing their utmost to protect this heritage against the pressures of civilisation.

* Now Sqdn. Ldr.

** The scientific nomenclature followed is that in Peterson's 'A field guide to the Birds'.

R.A.F.O.S EXPEDITION TO CYPRUS, 6th–22nd. SEPTEMBER 1966

By J.J.Latham

At 0600 hrs on the morning of the 6th September, 1966, a Brittania of RAF Transport Command touched down at RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus. Among those on board were Warrant Officer John Latham, Cpl (now Sgt) Eric Machell and Cpl Geoff Rivers, three of the four members of the first Expedition to be organised by the Society. The last member, F/Sgt Frank Walker, was to join the party on 16th September.

The main purpose of the Expedition was to ring, in conjunction with the Cyprus Ornithological Society and the Cyprus-based R.A.F. Mountain Rescue Team, all available pullus Eleonora's Falcon. In addition an intensive passerine ringing-programme was planned, in which Fl.Lt. Pearson and F.O. Stagg, two members of the C.O.S. (which was at the time without ringers) would be trained in the techniques of mist-netting and ringing. Raptor migration counts were also to be made.

When the team left Cyprus on 23rd September, 117 different species had been recorded, including one new subspecies and five unusual/rare species; 442 birds of 41 species, including 16 Eleonora's Falcon and one previously unringed species, had been ringed.

The following is a brief account of the Expedition, the full report having been submitted to the Cyprus Ornithological Society to be produced by that society as a separate bulletin.

Much of the ringing and recording was carried out in the vicinity of Akrotiri camp, where accommodation had been provided for the team; the playing-fields, sewage farm, and Salt Lake each being visited on seven or eight occasions and Bishops Pool on five occasions. The Happy Valley area and Troodos mountains were the only other areas to be visited more than once.

The temperature was near 90^{o} F on all but the final day, when only 74^{o} F was recorded. The wind, SW except on 17th, was strength 4 or 5 generally, but stronger on 7th, 10th, and 17th and almost calm from 12th to 16th. Skies were clear except for 9th and 10th, when cloud cover was 5/8ths, and 22nd, when there was a full overcast with showers.

Unexpected birds were recorded early on the trip, a Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis* and a dead Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisea* – the second record for Cyprus – being seen on the 7th.

On 9th, netting on Troodos Top had to be abandoned owing to the activities of limers. 6 Willow Warblers *Phylloscopus trochilus* were found dead. But 24 birds were caught at Seven Sisters base. Three Woodlarks *Lullula arborea* ,several Red-rumped Swallows *Hirundo daurica* , a Crag Martin *Hirundo rupestris* , and a Pied Wheatear *Oenanthe pleschanka* were the more interesting birds seen. The next day two White-winged Black Terns *Chlidonias leucopterus* , unfortunately found shot later, were seen at the sewage works.

There was a strong movement of Swallows *Hirundo rustica* , Sand Martins *Riparia riparia)*, and Red-rumped Swallows throughout the day on 11th, when Salamis and Larnaca Salt Lake were visited; and 8 Griffon Vultures *Gyps fulvus* , 17 Stone Curlew *Burhinus oedicnemus* , 6 Calandra Larks *Melanocorypha calandra* and another rarity,

Blue-cheeked Bee-eater *Merops superciliosus* , were seen. The greatest number of Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur* seen in one day, 119, was also recorded.

Early morning netting at the sewage farm on 12th produced 47 birds, including the rare (in autumn) Nightingale *Luscinia megarhynchos* , Olivaceous Warbler *Hippolais pallida* , Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti* , and Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria* , the last named being the first to be ringed in Cyprus.

11 Peregrine Falcons *Falco peregrinus* were seen just before dusk, flying out to the Salt Lake, where *Ca* 500 Sand Martins and 200 'flava' Wagtails *Motacilla flava* were showing roost behaviour.

A second visit to Troodos on 13th was highlighted by the sighting of four Pied Flycatchers *Ficedula hypoleuca* , two of which were caught, a species for which there have been no previous positive autumn records. A short extract from one of our note-books reads: 'After the harsh brown plains we swept into the Troodos Range, the green pines giving relief after the glare of the coastal lowlands. In the stunted pines Cyprus Coal Tits were heard calling and Short-toed Tree-creepers scampered acrobatically over the tree-trunks. Overhead, on still taut wings, the Griffon Vultures sailed majestically on invisible currents'.

780 Ft of mist-net was put up on the Salt Lake in the evening, and as a result the day's ringing-total was boosted to 60; Black Stork *Ciconia nigra* , Gadwall *Anas strepera* and a Merlin *Falco columbarius* were seen.

In a 3-hr migration watch on the morning of 14th 35 Common Buzzards *Buteo buteo* and a Lanner/Saker Falcon *Falco biarmicus/cherrug* were seen. The first Wrynecks *Jynx torquilla* were seen on this date. The first Short-toed Larks *Calandrella cinerea* turned up on 18th, 17 being seen on the playing-fields. A Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus* was seen, and predating Eleonora's Falcons *Falco eleonorae* foiled attempts to catch hirundines in the evening.

The heavy passage of Willow Warblers, which had been in progress since the first day, still continued on 16th, and the first Isabelline Wheatears *Oenanthe isabellina* were seen. The first 'assault' on the Eleonora's Falcons at Cape Garta was carried out in the afternoon, and 7 pulli were ringed. This was a good day for 'Buteo' migration; Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus* , Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus* , and Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus* were recorded in small numbers, with 103 Common Buzzard and 28 buzzard species. A migration watch at Cape Garta from 0900 hrs to 1230 hrs on the following day, however, was unproductive.

The 18th was the big day at the Cape, when the last available pulli Eleonora's Falcon (9) were ringed, one of them by Mr. George Savvides, President of the Cyprus Ornithological Society, and another by Mr Paul Nefifitou. Over 50 people attended the meeting, which was covered by press, radio and T.V. and lasted some 8 hours from 1030.

Passerine emigration was noted during the day, small numbers of Linnet *Acanthis cannabina* , Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus bonelli* (the first Bonelli's Warbler seen on the expedition was caught on 17th), and Willow Warbler moving south-east, and a continuous movement of hirundines to the south.

Reveille was 0245 hrs on the following day, and the morning was spent trapping and ringing at Happy Valley, the team returning to the Salt Lake in the afternoon. Large numbers of Willow Warblers were once again recorded, and Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra* , Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla* , and Cyprus Warbler *Sylvia melanothorax* seen for the first time in the period. Red-throated Pipit *Anthus cervinus* , noted on 18th, were again seen; 79 Corn Buntings *Emberiza calandra* and a flock of 17 Hoopoes *Upupa epops*

were recorded; and a Lesser Grey Shrike *Lanius minor* , which species had been seen more regularly with Masked Shrike *Lanius nubicus* up to the 12th, was caught.

69 birds were caught at the sewage farm on 20th, the final day of ringing. The Lesser Whitethroat was of the nominate race *Sylvia curruca curruca* . The Olivaceous Warbler and the previous two caught were of the eastern form *Hippolais pallida elaeica* .

The species total was further increased by a Black Kite *Milvus migrans* , Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus* , Common Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* and Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis* . A Cyprus Warbler was seen again, as was a Wryneck. A heavy migration of Bee-eaters *Merops apiaster* , Swallows, and Willow Warblers was in progress during the day, and a Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* was heard going over at 1930 hrs.

Bird watching was rather desultory on 21st, as much of the time was spent finalising clearance. A Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis* was new and a Common Sandpiper *Tringa hypoleucos* was heard calling over Limmassol Harbour at 2230 hrs.

The delays caused by unserviceable aircraft on the final day, was a blessing in disguise. During the day there was an interesting movement of raptors, including 6 Common Buzzards, 5 Lesser Kestrels *Falco naumanni* , over 100 Red-footed Falcons *Falco vespertinus* , and a steady passage of hirundines. Again from the notebook : 'At Akrotiri we saw the first of a long silent stream of Red-footed Falcons, and later that day, in the small pine-trees at the camp entrance, we were lucky enough to see a large party of mixed falcons from as close as 20 yards. Brightly coloured Lesser Kestrel; adult male, female, and juvenile Red-footed Falcons rested tiredly on the dead branches, allowing excellent comparison to be made of the plumage differences'.

There had evidently been an influx of wagtails, as there were many 'flava' on the playing-fields; those subspecifically identified included 5 Black-headed Wagtails *M. f. feldegg* , 2 Grey-headed Wagtails *M. f. thunbergi* , and 2 Ashy-headed Wagtails *M. f. cinereocapilla* .

Two 'alba' wagtails, one adult and one immature, also present, mystified the observers, and an hour was spent watching them. The tentative conclusion was that the adult at least was a Masked Wagtail *Motacilla alba personata* , and this was later confirmed by Dr. W.R.P. Bourne and Mr K. Williamson, who examined skins in the British Natural History Museum. This was the first record for Cyprus.

Most birds caught were weighed (pesola spring-balance) and measured. A list of all species ringed is appended, preceded by a table of weights and wing-lengths of selected species.

WEIGHTS & WING-LENGTHS OF SELECTED SPECIES

Species	No. Weighed	Wgt. Range (g)	Ave. Wgt. (g)	Wing-length Range (mm)
Sand Martin	29	11 - 15.5	13.2	99 - 117
Reed Warbler	9	10 - 15.5	12.8	64 - 69
Blackcap	15	15.5 - 27.5	21.1	72 - 79
Willow Warbler	137	7 - 12	9.7	60 - 72
Spotted Flycatcher	5	13.5 - 18.5	16.5	86 - 91
'Flava' Wagtail	64	13.5 - 22	17.2	76 - 89
Chaffinch	41	18 - 28	22.7	75 - 95

Ringing-totals (8th-20th September)

Eleonora's Falcon	(pullus)	16	Reed Warbler	11
Little Stint		2	Sedge Warbler	6
Curlew Sandpiper		1	Olivaceous Warbler	3
Barn Owl		1	Blackcap	16
Little Owl		1	Barred Warbler	1
Wryneck		3	Garden Warbler	2
Short-toed Lark		2	Lesser Whitethroat	2
Crested Lark		2	Willow Warbler	140
Swallow		12	Bonelli's Warbler	1
Red-rumped Swallow		1	Spotted Flycatcher	6
Sand Martin		32	Pied Flycatcher	2
Great Tit		9	Flava Wagtail	66
Coal Tit		1	Lesser Grey Shrike	1
Short-toed Tree-creeper		5	Masked Shrike	1
Wren		2	Red-backed Shrike	2
Wheatear		1	Greenfinch	1
Pied Wheatear		5	Goldfinch	16
Nightingale		4	Chaffinch	43
Cetti's Warbler		1	Ortolan Bunting	1
Great Reed Warbler		4	Cretzschmar's Bunting	7
			House Sparrow	9
				442

A paper on the analysis of the ringing-results is being prepared by Messrs Machell and Rivers; so it is not intended to discuss it fully here, but it is of interest that: (1) the mean weight of Willow Warblers was up to 20% higher than the mean weight of birds, caught at Chew Valley Ringing Station, Somerset, in the month previous; (2) the mean weight of Spotted Flycatchers was 18% higher than the mean autumn weight of those caught at Vom, Nigeria (1961-1965) but compared favourably with the mean spring weights from the same place; and (3) the weight range and average weight of Blackcaps compared favourably with weights from Vom (15.3 - 27.0 g.average 20.4 g.), the 27 g, (maximum weight) bird being caught on 3rd of April just before migration, like the Cyprus one.

In conclusion it is felt that the Expedition would not have been possible without the blessing of Lord Shackleton and Wg. Cdr. Hudson and the encouragement of Dr. W.R.P. Bourne, with his words of wisdom and advice. Thanks are also due to M.O.D. Movements for ensuring our indulgence passages both ways; co-operation by the Mountain Rescue Section, Royal Air Force, Akrotiri, on two hard days to guarantee the ringing of Eleonora's Falcon (pullus); and to the Chew Valley Ringing Station for comparative weights for Willow Warbler. Fl.Lt. M. Pearson and F.O. A. Stagg, both of R.A.F. Akrotiri, were instrumental in assisting in many ways and made our visit pleasant and sucessful. We must express our deepest thanks and heartfelt appreciation to the Station Commander of R.A.F. Akrotiri, Air Commodore North-Lewis, who afforded us accommodation and the amenities of his Station during our stay.

Reference

Smith, V.W. 1966. Autumn and Spring weights of some Palaearctic Migrants in Central Nigeria, Ibis 108; 492 - 512.

NOTICES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Solomons Expedition.

This expedition has now been postponed for at least six months. Mr. Shane Parker has had to withdraw and as Fl.Lt. J. Roots the leader designate has only recently been posted to FEAF it would be unreasonable to expect him to be away on the expedition from almost as soon as he arrives.

Sgt. W. Corris is the only other member of the party to date.

Seychelles Expedition.

The purpose of this joint service expedition is to conduct a survey of the Coral island of Aldabra which was bought two years ago by the British Government with a view to develop it as a staging post for R.A.F. VC 10 and belvedere aircraft.

Some species of Sea-birds, the Flightless Rail, Giant Land Tortoises and plants indigenous to the island could be affected.

Dr. W.R.P. Bourne has represented the Society at meetings between the Ministry of Defence and various organisations, headed by the Royal Society, interested in conserving the wildlife of the island.

A RAFOS representative has not been included in the final party, but the Society is likely to be of use if the base is established.

Ellesmere Island Expedition.

For economy reasons and because of difficulties with transport the size of the party has had to be reduced from 14 to 6. This excludes the RAFOS participant. The deputy leader of the expedition, Sqdn.Ldr. T. Mann, is however, a bird-watcher and will be able to do at least part of what would have been expected of the RAFOS ornithologist

Unst.

Although still arranged as private visits by individuals, this can be considered as important as some of the other expeditions. With enough support for the project a considerable number of pullus and migrant birds could be ringed and much valuable breeding census work carried out, some of the latter being of prime importance to the Sea-bird Group which is conducting a field survey of Seabird colonies this year, something which has never before been attempted in the British Isles on a national scale.

Our extremely able assistant secretary, F/S. Frank Walker, who is stationed at RAF Saxa Vord, will be on the island for the entire period - 1st May-1st August (though not always off duty) to act as co-ordinator and Sgt. Eric Machell who wrote such a knowledgeable account on the birds of Unst in the last Journal will be there for 2-3 weeks.

For the breeding census the intention is to divide the island into 54 sections of circa one square mile and count all breeding birds in each.

Accomodation would be at the RAF Unit, Saxa Vord, for serving members, food obtained on a 'casual meals' basis; and possibly at RAF Married Quarters for others. All accommodation is subject to the Commanding Officer's permission and intending visitors should contact F/S Walker re availability.

The journey to Unst can be effected by BEA flights (from London Airport to Sumburgh, Shetland cost between £12 and £15 single) or by British Railways to Aberdeen (about £13 2nd Class return from London) and then by boat (details from North of Scotland, Orkney and Shetland Shipping Co. Ltd. Mathews Quay, Aberdeen) to Lerwick and finally on to Unst.

Area Meetings.

There have been two field meetings to date, both held this year at Gibraltar Point Nature Reserve, Lincs., and accounts of them will appear in the July Newsletter. In future all proposed meetings will be publicised in the Newsletter published prior to the half-year in wnich they are to be held. i.e.Meetings planned for the period 31st July,

1967 to 31st December, 1967 will be published in the July '67 Newsletter.

Would members who are organising, hope to organise, or would like to suggest venues and dates for autumn meetings, please send the details to the Editor. Cleethorpes Lincs., by 20th June.

Common Bird Census.

This B.T.O. investigation was mentioned in the January Newsletter and it is hoped that some members have decided to participate.

The CBC is instrumental in gauging the pressures on bird-life by the ever-increasing demand of land for housing and industrial estates and the consequent attempts by the farming community to maintain crop production by improved efficiency e.g. contour ploughing, destruction of hedgerows and copses, toxic chemicals etc.

As many participants as possible are needed regardless of membership to the BTO.

The average numbers of hours spent in the field on one plot in one season, is 30, the frequency of visits being no greater than once a week. In contrast to some other enquiries, this becomes increasingly interesting with each successive visit to the census area as the distribution pattern of breeding pairs becomes more apparent; it is even more rewarding when two or more years' data can be compared.

This breeding season is already well underway but it is still worthwhile starting, if only to iron out the wrinkles in the system ready for next season.

By the way of encouragement it might be worth mentioning that when Fl.Lt. David Wright made the first tour of his area in Wiltshire recently, he saw, in addition to the usual common species, migrant Redstarts and Wheatears, a Sparrowhawk and a Common Buzzard.

Two field-study courses for Bird Census workers are being held by the BTO this spring, one at Malham Tarn, Yorks, 24-31st May, and the other on Bardsey Island, N.Wales 3rd to 10th June, both at a cost of £11.10.0 including accomodation. In addition Bardsey Bird Observatory is holding courses from 3rd to 10th June and 1st to 8th July.

Residential Short Courses.

The following have been selected from the list of Natural History courses issued by the Council for Nature and may be of interest to members.

24th - 31st May, Bird Study. Sponsored by Field Studies Council at Slapton Ley Field Centre, Slapton, Devon. Fee £11.10.0

31st May - 7th June. Spring Bird Course. Sponsored by Field Studies Council at Malham Tarn Field Centre, nr Settle, Yorks. Fee £11.10.0

28th June - 5th July. Birds in Summer. Sponsored by Field Studies Council Orielton Field Centre, Pembroke, S.Wales. Fee £11.10.0

26th July - 2nd August. Field Ornithology. At Norwich. Fee £12.15.0. Applications to Extra Mural Studies, University College of S.Wales and Mon., 27, Corbett Road, Cathoys Park, Cardiff.

Ringing.

Glyn Davies, Beesley Road, Banbury, Oxon., of the Banbury Ornithological Society, would like to contact any member seeking guidance in population studies, or ringing instruction. He also has a vacancy for a Class 'C' ringer.

Observation in Jordan.

Mr Bryan Sage is organising a birdwatching visit to Jordan next year and would like to see notes of observations made there.