

**The Royal Air Force
Ornithological Society**



Journal

Number 16

January 1986

Edited by Will Corris

& Ken Earnshaw

ROYAL AIR FORCE ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

PATRON

The Rt.Hon. Lord Shackleton, KG, OBE

PRESIDENT

Air Cdre. A.C. Curry, OBE, FBIM, RAF

VICE PRESIDENTS

ACM Sir John Davis, GCB, OBE, MA, RAF (Retd)
ACM Sir Robert Freer, GBE, KCB, CBIM, RAF (Retd)
ACM Sir John Gingell, KCB, GBE, RAF

Air Mshl. Sir Edward Gordon-Jones, KCB, CBE, DSO, DFC, RAF (Retd)
Air Mshl. Sir John Lapsley, KBE, CB, DFC, AFC, RAF (Retd)
Air Mshl. Sir Charles Pringle, KBE, MA, CEng.FRAeS, RAF (Retd)

AVM G. Young, CBE, RAF (Retd)

Air Cdre. J.B. Hobson, QHP, MB, ChB, MFCM, MFOM, DPH, MBIM, RAF (Retd)

COMMITTEE

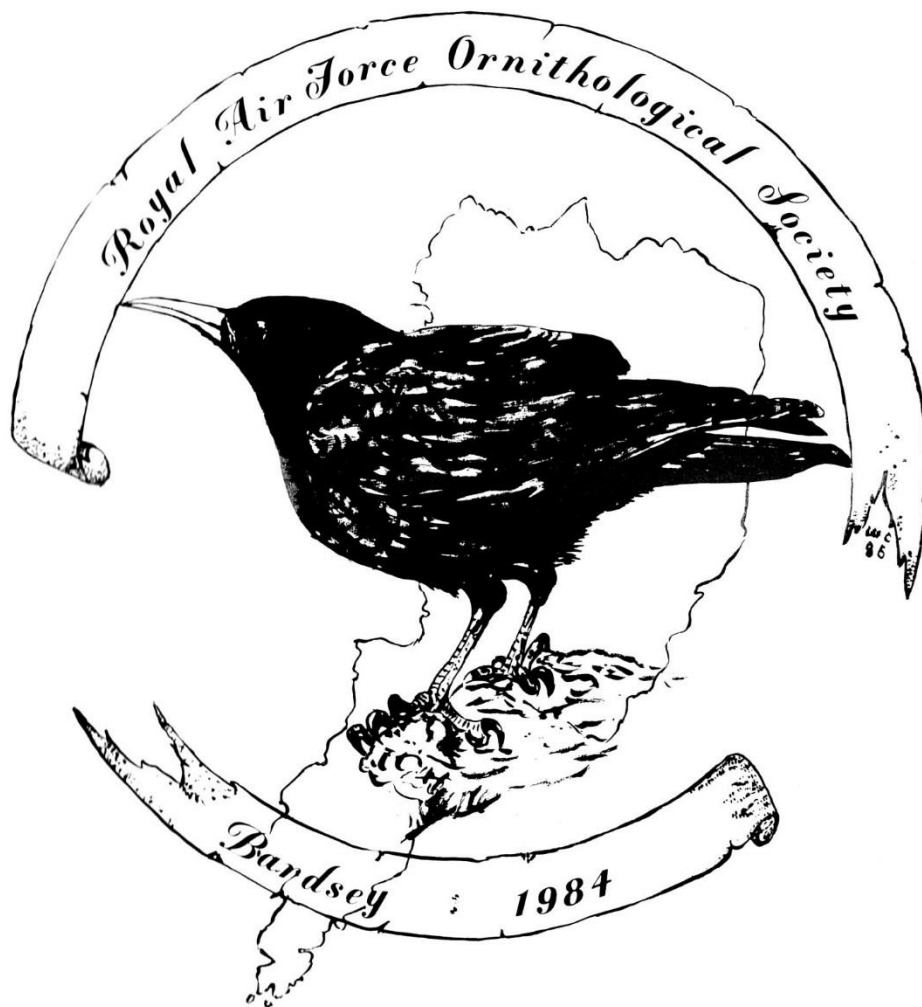
Chairman	Wg. Cdr. D. Hollins, MBIM
Secretary	Sqn.Ldr. M.J. Blair, BSc
Treasurer	Flt.Lt. S.J. Lumby
Membership Secretary	Flt.Lt. B.R. Withers
Expeditions Member	Maj. D.J.R. Counsell
Recorder	Mr W. Corris Mr K. Earnshaw
Journal Editor	Mr W. Corris Mr K. Earnshaw
Publicity & Sales	Sgt. D. Osborn
BCU Member	Sgt. D. Osborn
Librarian	Mr R. Frost
Civilian Representative	Wg.Cdr. D.B.D. Hamley, RAF (Retd)
Newsletter Editor	MAeOp J.C. Le Gassick
Field Meetings Co-ordinator	Mr R. Raynor

EX-OFFICIO COMMITTEE

Scientific Adviser	Mr I.H.J. Lyster, MSc, MIBiol
Scotland Representative	Chf.Tech. B. Etheridge
ICPB Representative	Wg.Cdr. C.B. Elford, FIPM, MBIM, RAF (Retd)
Site Dossier Co-ordinator	Sqn.Ldr. I.W. Thompson, BSc

CONTENTS

	page
1. Report on the RAFOS Expedition to Bardsey Island 25 May to 2 June 1984	1
2. Report on the RAFOS Expedition to Brunei 2 May to 27 June 1984	23
3. Report on the RAFOS Expedition to Herm, Channel Islands 27 April to 4 May 1984	79
4. Letters to the Editor	107



THE RAFOS EXPEDITION TO BARDSEY ISLAND
25 May to 2 June 1984

RAFOS conducted an expedition to the island of Bardsey during the period 25 May to 2 June 1984. Bardsey Island lies off the Llyn peninsula in North Wales. This report summarises the survey and ringing activities of the expedition.

The aims were:

1. To carry out a systematic observation of both resident and migratory birds and to record their numbers and movements.
2. To conduct a netting and ringing program in conjunction with the Wardens on Bardsey including a night ringing program of Manx Shearwaters.
3. To conduct dawn and dusk sea watches in conjunction with the observatory staff.

Permission to mount the expedition received a warm acceptance from the observatory wardens on Bardsey. Firm bookings were placed for 12 members of RAFOS to be accommodated at the observatory from 26 May to 2 June and for overnight accommodation in Pwlllelli on 25 May. On the morning of 26 May the 12 team members assembled in Pwlllelli with their equipment for the 2½ hour crossing to Bardsey in the observatory's ferry MV Mary K. The weather was sunny and mild with a light breeze. Rough water in Bardsey Sound and a low tide caused a minor landing problem at the island.

Once ashore, the team was made welcome by the observatory wardens and taken to their accommodation at Cristin. The team was split into three groups and a comprehensive itinerary of events was prepared to cover all habitats and aims until 2 June.

The systematic observation and recording of birds was conducted each day from dawn to dusk. The results are appended as the Systematic List. The ringing program was conducted daily in the early morning and, weather permitting, in the early evening. The Manx Shearwater ringing program was conducted every night, weather permitting, in the early hours of the morning. A ringing report is also included in this report. Two sea-watches were conducted in conjunction with Peter Hope Jones who was carrying out a series of sea-bird surveys from the island.

Throughout the period on the island the team experienced generally clear, bright weather by day with winds varying from fresh northerly through light westerly to fresh southeasterly. Occasional light rain gave way to heavy rain on the afternoon of 1 June until dawn next day. Normal communications to and from Bardsey do not exist. However, in emergency the VHF radio link between the lighthouse and Holyhead Coastguard would be available. This facility was not utilised by the team.

This was considered to be a successful RAFOS expedition. The time of year proved to be perfect to achieve the aims of the expedition. Very long hours were put in by all. In particular, the ringers often clocked up more than

20 hours ringing and observation in a given 24 hour period. However, the composition of 12 team members to cover such a small area proved to be overkill. It is strongly recommended that future expeditions to Bardsey Island should be limited to a maximum of nine members each time.

The team members wish to record their thanks to all those who contributed to the success of the expedition. In particular, to John and Vivian Wood, wardens of Bardsey, Robert Roberts, master of the MV Mary K who ensured return to duty in ferrying the team from Bardsey on 2 June despite very high seas in the fresh southeast wind, Mrs Evans and Mrs Harris, landladies in Pwllheli and to HQSTC Catering Staff and RAF Lyneham Catering and Supply Staffs.

List of expedition members with locations as at June 1984

Team A

Cpl. D. Osbourn	RAF Lyneham
Cpl. P. Triggs	RAF Valley
Sqn.Ldr. E. Robinson, rtd.	Wirral, Cheshire
Mrs G. Robinson	Wirral, Cheshire

Team B

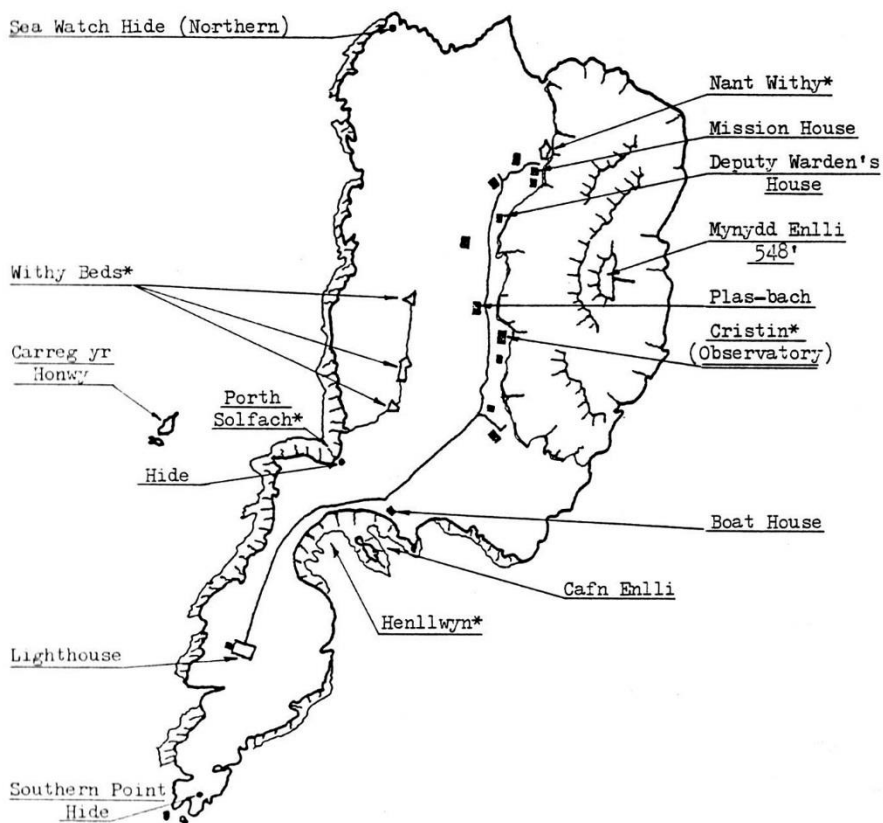
Sqn.Ldr. J. Sims	HQ STC
MAeOp J.C. Le Gassick	RAF Wyton
F/Sgt. J. Parker	RAF Halton
Mr M. Muddiman	Chesterfield

Team C

Flt.lt. A.M. Smith	RAF Barkston Heath	Expedition Leader Deputy Leader, Recorder and Ringing Coordinator
W.O. F.G. Smith	HQ STC	
Ch.Tech. J. Saunders	HQ STC	
Cpl. P. Olesen	RAF Neatishead	

Sketch Map of Bardsey Island

Identifying locations mentioned in the Systematic List
and indicating sites used for mist netting, observation
and bird ringing.



*Ringing Sites

The Systematic List of bird sightings produced in this report is the result of seven days intensive censusing based upon whole island surveys, sea watches and a ringing program. The order of common and scientific names used in this report follow 'List of Recent Holarctic Bird Species' by K.H. Vous. The technique of recording followed the standard practice, teams of up to four members completed daily surveys and sea watches. The results of these surveys were recorded at the evening call-over conducted by the warden. Any marginal identification was disregarded. The systematic list, giving details of the birds recorded, is followed by a summary of the expedition's ringing activities.

The heaviest part of the migration had passed before the team arrived on the island, however Sedge Warblers Acrocephalus schoenobaenus were plentiful on 27 May. On the same day and again on 30 May, single Black Guillemots Cepphus grylle were seen during sea watches. However, as seems to be becoming usual with RAFOS visits to the island, Bardsey came up trumps when, on the evening of 30 May during an open air call over, an immature male Scarlet Rosefinch Carpodacus erythrinus was discovered in the trees and bushes behind the observatory building. It stayed for some 15 minutes.

A number of nests were found and observed by team members. The most interesting was that of a Ringed Plover Charadrius hiaticula found near the lighthouse. This was possibly the second attempt at nesting by the one pair of this species on the island.

SYSTEMATIC LIST

Fulmar Fulmarus glacialis

Up to six recorded daily 26 May to 2 June.

Manx Shearwater Puffinus puffinus

Substantial numbers nest on the island, rafts of resting birds seen offshore daily.

Gannet Sula bassana

Daily reports, maximum number 32 recorded on 29 May.

Cormorant Phalacrocorax carbo

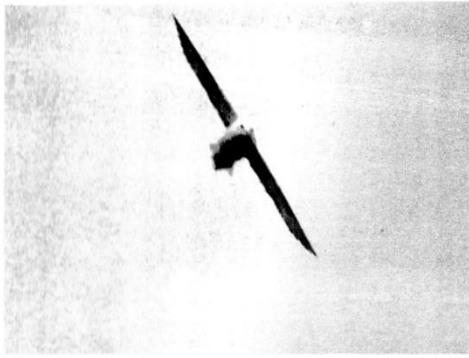
Sightings of small numbers of birds daily, 14 recorded on 30 May.

Shag Phalacrocorax aristotelis

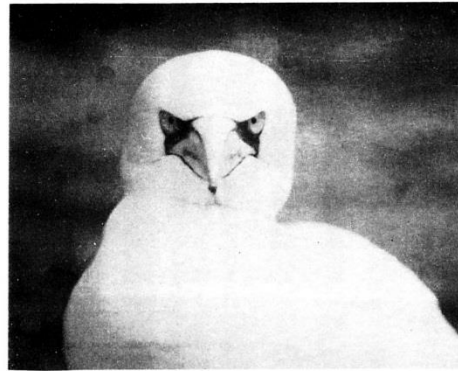
Up to 20 recorded daily, this species nest in small numbers.

Mallard Anas platyrhynchos

Solitary female seen flying near the observatory on 29 and 30 May.



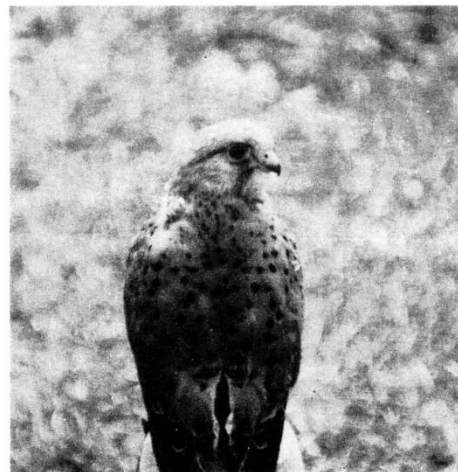
FULMAR



GANNET



SHAG



KESTREL

Peregrine Falco peregrinus
 A pair had successfully nested on the eastern side of the mountain, the parent birds were seen daily.

Kestrel Falco tinnunculus
 One record only, that of a female over the Mountain on the evening of 29 May.

Moorhen Gallinula chloropus
 Resident breeder, up to 16 full grown birds seen daily.

Oystercatcher Haematopus ostralegus
 Resident breeder, several nests were found by team members. A total of 197 birds was recorded during a whole island census carried out by team members on 29 May.

Ringed Plover Charadrius hiaticula
 One or two seen daily, apparently attempts had been made to breed before the team's arrival on 26 May. A nest with four eggs was found by team members on 30 May, this was adjudged to be a second attempt to breed.

Lapwing Vanellus vanellus
 A small number of breeding birds present and recorded daily 26 May to 2 June.

Sanderling Calidris alba
 One record only, that of a single bird in summer plumage, in company with two Dunlins on 31 May.

Purple Sandpiper Calidris maritima
 One to three birds recorded on rocks at South End on 26-27 and 29 May.

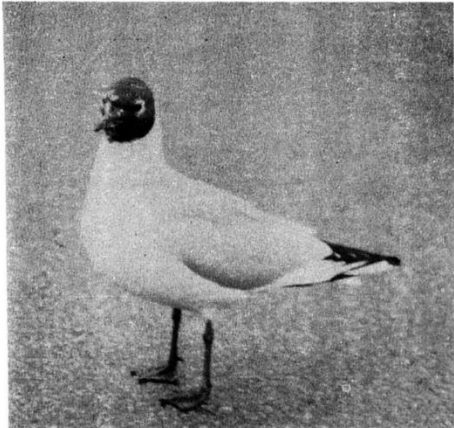
Dunlin Calidris alpina
 Two to three birds recorded daily, sightings usually from South End.

Whimbrel Numenius phaeopus
 Up to five recorded daily, 26 May to 1 June, usually seen on rocks at Carreg yr Honwy.

Curlew Numenius arquata
 Recorded daily, up to a total of nine birds, 26 May to 1 June.

Common Sandpiper Tringa hypoleucos
 Three reported on 26 May, one on 27 May and one on 29 May, all sightings were from the west coast rocks.

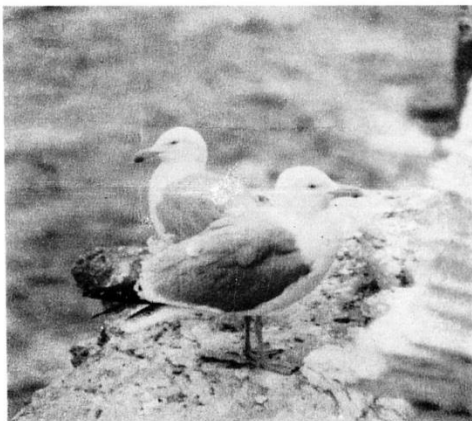
Turnstone Arenaria interpres
 Daily records, sightings range from a single bird seen on 31 May to 16 seen on 27 May.



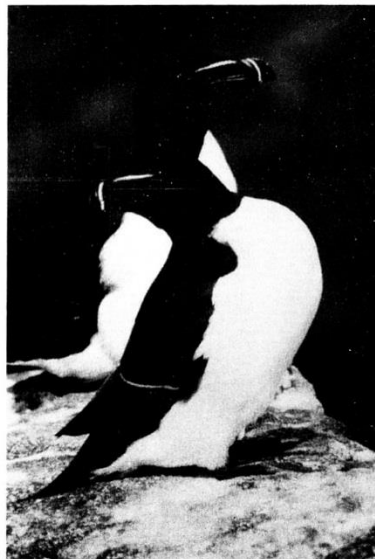
BLACK-HEADED GULL



GREATER BLACK-BACKED GULL



HERRING GULL



RAZORBILL

Arctic Skua Stercorarius parasiticus
 Three records, all of single birds reported during sea watches on 28, 30 and 31 May.

Black-headed Gull Larus ridibundus
 Three seen flying off shore at the South End on 27 May.

Lesser Black-backed Gull Larus fuscus
 Seen daily in some numbers, a breeding colony of up to 100 pairs exists at the North End.

Great Black-backed Gull larus marinus
 Daily reports, of one to three birds throughout the period 26 May to 2 June.

Herring Gull Larus argentatus
 Recorded daily, nesting colony at North End.

Kittiwake Rissa tridactyla
 Daily sightings, up to 50 birds recorded daily.

Common Tern Sterna hirundo
 One report only, that of a single bird seen flying a short distance off shore on 1 June.

Sandwich Tern Sterna sandvicensis
 Three seen over the bay at Cafn Enlli on 2 June.

Guillemot Uria aalge
 Seen in some numbers during sea watches, small numbers breed on the eastern coast.

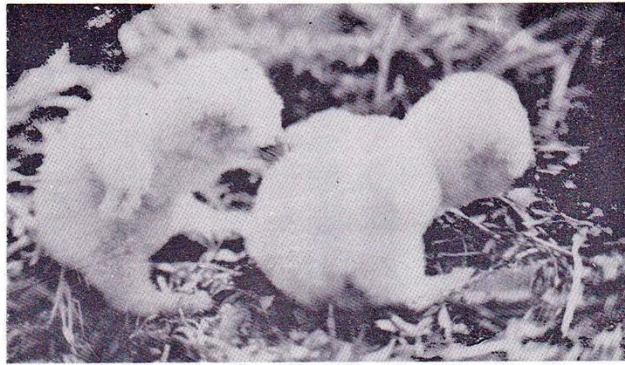
Razorbill Alca torda
 Considerable numbers seen daily and during sea watches, breeds on eastern coast rock faces.

Black Guillemot Cepphus grylle
 Two reports only, both of single birds, seen a short distance off shore during sea watches on 27 May and 30 May.

Puffin Fratercula arctica
 Small numbers seen daily. Maximum sighting: eight on 26 May.

Wood Pigeon Columba palumbus
 Up to 12 birds observed daily 26 May to 2 June.

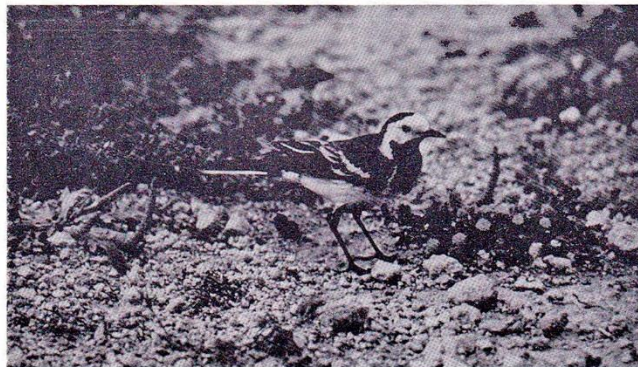
Collared Dove Streptopelia decaocto
 Four seen on most days, however on 30 May ten were recorded.



LITTLE OWL CHICKS



SWIFT



PIED WAGTAIL

Turtle Dove Streptopelia turtur
One sighting only, a single bird was seen on 31 May.

Cuckoo Cuculus canorus
Single bird sightings on 26, 27, 30 May and 1 June, two birds observed on 31 May.

Little Owl Athene noctua
Breeding resident, maximum count of seven on 1 June.

Swift Apus apus
Single bird observed on 29 and 31 May. Five seen over-flying on 1 June.

Sand Martin Riparia riparia
Small numbers, one to five birds seen over-flying throughout period 26 May to 1 June.

Swallow Hirundo rustica
Up to 60 reported daily, 26 May to 31 May. There was a marked increase on 1 June when well over 200 birds were seen over-flying, during the day.

House Martin Delichon urbica
Two to eight daily sightings reported, 26 May to 31 May. There was an increase in the numbers over-flying on 1 June, when 23 birds were counted during the day.

Tree Pipit Anthus trivialis
Four were recorded on 31 May, and one on 1 June.

Meadow Pipit Anthus pratensis
Resident breeder, seen daily throughout period 26 May to 1 June.

Rock Pipit Anthus spinoletta
Resident, breeding in small numbers, daily sightings reported.

Pied/White Wagtail Motacilla alba
Up to five records of Pied Wagtails daily 26 May to 1 June. Sightings of single White Wagtail males on 29 and 31 May.

Wren Troglodytes troglodytes
Small numbers recorded daily.

Dunnock Prunella modularis
Daily sightings, up to ten birds seen or heard on some days.

Robin Erithacus rubecula
One bird mist-netted on 29 May was the only record.

Redstart Phoenicurus phoenicurus
One or two sightings recorded on 28, 29, 30 and 31 May.

Whinchat Saxicola rubetra
The three birds seen on the afternoon of 26 May were the only records.

Stonechat Saxicola torquata
Two breeding pairs, males and females seen daily.

Wheatear Oenanthe oenanthe
Some well grown young birds of the year in evidence, with counts of up to 40 male and female birds daily.

Blackbird Turdus merula
Breeding resident, daily sightings 26 May to 2 June. Maximum count: 14 on 1 June.

Sedge Warbler Acrocephalus schoenobaenus
Recorded daily, 18 were mist-netted on 27 May, small numbers trapped on each day 28 May to 1 June.

Reed Warbler Acrocephalus scirpaceus
One seen and heard in Cristin garden 31 May and 1 June.

Whitethroat Sylvia communis
Recorded daily, several mist-netted, a maximum count of 20 on 27 May.

Garden Warbler Sylvia borin
Single sightings on 27 and 28 May, with a further two birds recorded on 1 June.

Blackcap Sylvia atricapilla
Two males present in Cristin withys 26 and 27 May, a further sighting, that of a female, on 29 May.

Wood Warbler Phylloscopus sibilatrix
One bird was seen on 26 May, a further five appeared on 28 May.

Chiffchaff Phylloscopus collybita
Small numbers reported daily, one to three birds throughout the period 26 May to 1 June.

Willow Warbler Phylloscopus trochilus
Two to five birds recorded daily, 26 May to 2 June.

Goldcrest Regulus regulus
A female was mist-netted on 30 May, the same bird was seen on the following two days.



CHOUGH



JACKDAW

Spotted Flycatcher Muscicapa striata
Daily records of up to 25 birds throughout period 26 May to 1 June.

Coal Tit Parus ater
One bird was present on 29 and 30 May, this is the first record for Bardsey in the month of May. Three previous spring records have all been in April.

Blue Tit Parus caeruleus
Single bird present in trees behind Cristin on 28 May was the only sighting.

Great Tit parus major
Male and female seen daily busily feeding young, this is the first recorded breeding for the Island, the nest was situated in a wall behind Cristin.

Magpie Pica pica
Breeding resident, up to 19 daily throughout period 26 May to 2 June.

Chough Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax
Breeding resident, up to eight sightings daily, birds carrying food observed entering a cave on the Western coast.

Jackdaw Corvus monedula
Daily records, up to 24 birds seen daily throughout the period 26 May to 1 June.

Carrion Crow Corvus corone
Breeding resident, four mature birds seen daily, a nest with two young in Christin withys.

Raven Corvus corax
Four birds recorded daily.

Starling Sturnus vulgaris
Resident, a number of nesting pairs carrying food in evidence. A census on 31 May produced a count of 60 mature birds.

Chaffinch Fringilla coelebs
A male and female present in trees behind Cristin on 27 May. A female was present in the same area on 28 and 29 May.

Goldfinch Carduelis carduelis
Two birds seen on 27 May, was the only sighting during the period of the visit.

Linnet Acanthis cannabina
Up to 14 recorded daily, 26 May to 2 June.

Scarlet Rosefinch Carpodacus erythrinus
An immature male was watched for some 15 minutes, in damson bushes at the rear of Cristin farm buildings on 30 May. It was seen quite clearly by most team members.

Ringling ReportFrank Smith

One of the aims of the visit to Bardsey during the period 26 May to 2 June was to conduct a netting and ringing program in conjunction with the resident wardens. To this end daily mist netting was carried out using the nets erected around the observatory and in the Withy Beds below Cristin. A nightly program of Manx Shearwater ringing was also undertaken in the well established nesting colonies.

Mist nets were unfurled at 05.30 hrs. daily, and ringing continued until 09.30 hrs. Further mist netting was carried out later in the day, between 16.00 hrs. and 18.30 hrs., when weather conditions were suitable.

The main passerine migration had virtually ceased when the party arrived on Bardsey on 28 May, and as can be seen from the following ringing totals, Sedge Warblers were by far the most plentiful of the passerines processed. Manx Shearwater ringing was attempted each night, when weather permitted, usually commencing at 01.00 hrs. and finishing at approximately 02.30 hrs. a short period only for the ringing team to complete its task. These nightly visits to the Shearwater Colonies accounted for a total of 123 birds being ringed. An overall total of 196 birds, of 14 different species, was processed during the period that the RAFOS team spent on the island. The one 'A' class ringer on the team was assisted throughout the week by very supportive team members who undertook recording, net furling and other helpful tasks.

Daily ringing totals

	Date								Total
	26.5	27.5	28.5	29.5	30.5	31.6	1.6	2.6	
Manx Shearwater			15	10	17		31	50	123
Dunnock					1				1
Redstart			1						1
Robin				1					1
Sedge Warbler		18	9	4	4	1	1		37
Whitethroat		6	1	1			1		9
Garden Warbler		1					1		2
Blackcap		1							1
Wood Warbler			1						1
Chiffchaff			2						2
Willow Warbler	1	2	1		1		2		7
Spotted Flycatcher		1	3		2		1		7
Magpie					2				2
Carrion Crow					2				2
Total	1	29	33	16	29	1	37	50	196

Wing lengths and weights of birds ringed

[illegible]

	Wing length (mm)	Weight grams.	No.	Wing length mean	Weight mean	Age Sex
	73 70 71 69 68	14.0 15.5 14.5 12.4 13.6	9	69.6	13.5	4 M 4 F 4 F 4 F 4
Garden Warbler	77 74	17.6 16.2	2	75.5	16.9	4 4
Blackcap	75	16.8	1			4 M
Wood Warbler	74	10.4	1			4
Chiffchaff	59 56	8.2 6.8	2	57.5	7.5	4 4
Willow Warbler	60 64 62 60 68 62 64	9.4 8.2 7.5 8.2 8.6 7.8 7.4	7	62.9	8.2	4 4 4 4 4 4 4
Spotted Flycatcher	84 86 83 86 89 85 87	12.2 13.4 13.4 13.6 15.4 14.5 14.2	7	85.7	13.8	4 4 4 4 4 4 4

Survey of Oystercatchers (*Haematopus ostralegus*) on Bardsey Island
Paul Triggs and Dave Osborn

During the period 26 May to 2 June, 1984, a survey was carried out to ascertain the number of breeding pairs of Oystercatchers on Bardsey Island. A census of all birds present on the Island was carried out on 29 May and a total number of 197 birds was recorded.

During this period a total of 36 pairs was recorded as probably breeding with 31 nests being located. The following information was amassed from these nest sites.

Composition of sites

Sandy beach	- 1 nest
Grassland covered with gorse clumps	- 5 nests
Rocky outcrops on shoreline	- 25 nests

Of the total nests found, 81% were on rocky outcrops along the shoreline, with 16% in gorse areas and 3% on sandy beach areas. The most likely fact for this nest distribution is the safety aspect. The rocky areas afforded more protection, especially from a detection angle, in some cases the incubating bird was exceptionally well hidden. The nests found in the gorse clumps consisted of a cup of dry twigs and were usually encircled by gorse bushes, helping to hide the bird. However, the pair which nested on Porth Solfach beach could well have been an inexperienced pair, as the nest was just an indentation in the sand on the landward edge of the beach. This area, being the only area of sandy beach on the island, was constantly being visited and subsequently the female bird was spending more time off the nest than on it.

Size of egg clutches

In order to enable correct determination of clutch sizes, all the sites were visited twice with the exception of the 'one egg' clutches found in the last two days of the study period.

<u>Clutch size</u> (including no. of chicks)	<u>No. of nests</u>
1 egg	3
2 eggs	15
3 eggs	12
4 eggs	1

This information corresponds favourably with the Collins 'Field Guide to Nest, Eggs and Nestlings', but of interest was the discovery of a four egg size clutch. The nest was discovered at 16.40 hrs. on 1 June when it contained two chicks and two eggs, the chicks were not more than 24 hours old; one of the eggs had a hole in it and the chick's beak was visible. On re-visiting the nest at 19.45 hrs. the third chick had hatched and was dry! A final visit on 2 June at 10.00 hrs. revealed the fourth chick hatched and independent of the nest; giving some indication as to the time period in which a clutch hatches.

Paul Triggs and Dave Osborn

where possible, depending on the gradient of the cliff face.

on Bardsey Island.

Listed below are the results of the conducted count:

Lesser Black-backed Gull

Number of nests:	with eggs	713
	with eggs and chicks	21

Herring Gull

Number of nestboxes with eggs	17
with eggs and chicks	17

to swoop at the intruder.

from the nearest colony and some three metres below an Oystercatcher's nest.

Parent Behaviour

On approaching a nest site, the observer would first sight the male bird, normally perched on a rock or high position, overlooking both the nest and surrounding areas. When the observer was sighted, the male bird would start calling an alarm to the female and as the observer approached nearer the alarm call would become more urgent. If the intruder was still approaching, the male bird would let out a distress call and start to fly off in trying to distract the observer/intruder away. If the female bird was given enough warning she would walk away from the nest, so that when she was spotted, the actual whereabouts of the nest would be uncertain. However, in instances when warnings were given late, the bird flew straight off. Both birds then waited at a discreet distance until the intrusion was over.

On disturbing the male bird, it soon became apparent whether the parents had chicks or not. When young were present, the male bird would become much more agitated and would call frantically to its mate. The female would remain hidden but call continually, presumably to keep the chicks aware of danger. If the female was flushed and the chicks located, both parent birds would continually call and circle the intruders until the nest site area was vacated.

Predation of Nests

During the survey, two cases of predation were observed: one on 29 May by a Magpie (both eggs were taken) and one on 1 June by a pair of Ravens (one egg was taken).

Summary and conclusions

Between 26 May and 2 June 1984, a survey was conducted on Bardsey Island with regard to the Oystercatcher breeding population. A total of 36 pairs was either confirmed or suspected of breeding; of these pairs, six were suspected of harbouring chicks, four of these were confirmed. From a geographical point of view, some 86% of total nests found were located on the western half of the Island. The logical reason for this would be the presence of the cliffs on the eastern side, where neither the terrain nor competition for breeding sites is conducive to a high density of breeding.

Due to the Island's environment, the Oystercatcher has been able totally to monopolise the wader breeding situation, with some 190 to 200 birds present on the Island. Recently, a precarious foothold has been established by both Lapwing Vanellus vanellus (approximately five pairs) and Ringed Plover Charadrius hiaticula (one pair), but due to lack of numbers and the Lapwings known vulnerability, we cannot see the Oystercatchers dominance being challenged for years to come.

Meterological Observations, Bardsey Island, 26 May to 2 June 1985

26.5.84 08.00 (Pwelli) 5/8 Cu. light breeze sunny, mild. Sea state 2 reaching sea state 3-4 in places.

27.5.84 05.45 Rain during night. 7/8 Cu. cool, light wind, freshening later. 1007 mb.

28.5.84 06.00 6/8 alto Cu. Dull overcast. Fresh northerly wind, dry. 1010 mb.

29.5.84 07.00 Sky clear, wind light and variable, becoming light westerly. 1011 mb.

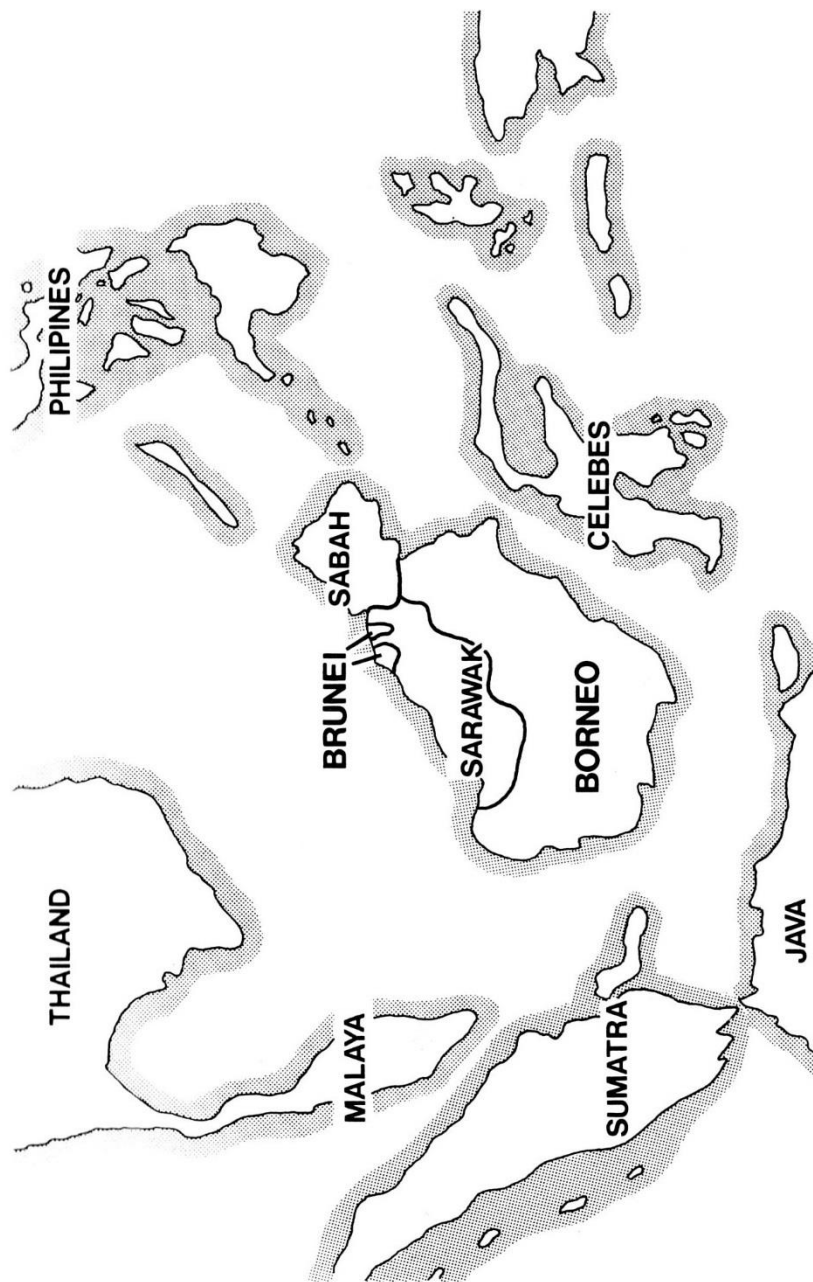
30.5.84 07.30 8/8 cloud, overcast, light breeze with light rain, poor visibility. 1009 mb.

31.5.84 05.30 2/8 alto stratus. Fine, wind fresh SE. 1004 mb.

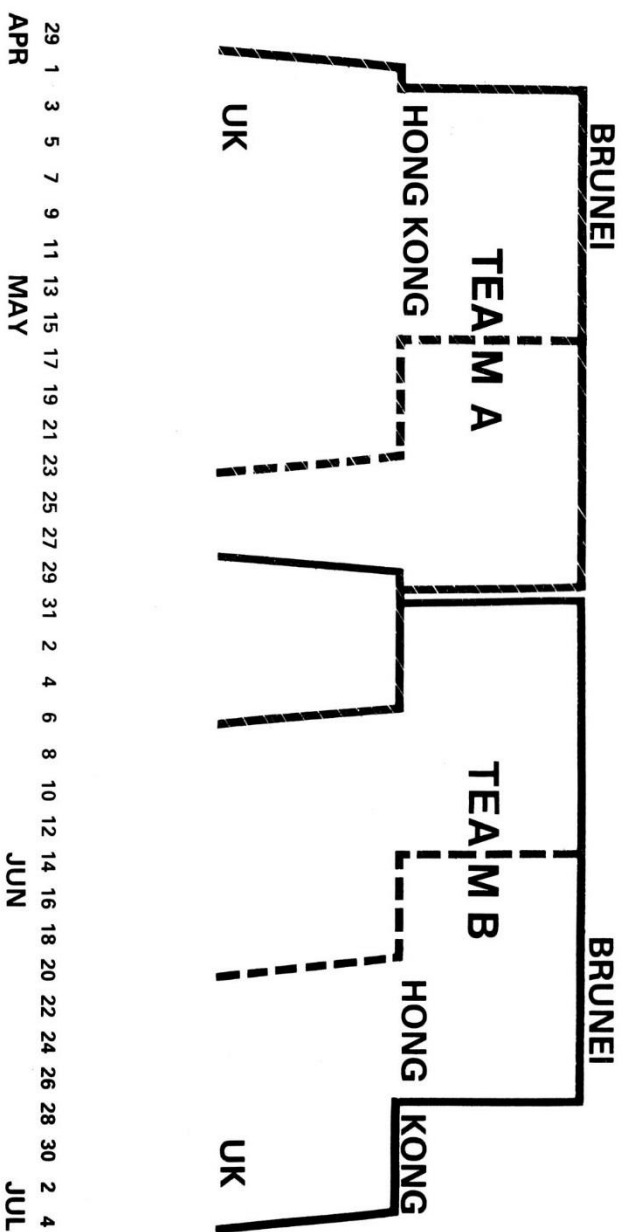
1.6.84 06.00 Heavy rain during night. Dull overcast with 7/8 stratus. Wind calm, mild becoming sunny in p.m. 1000 mb.

2.6.84 07.00 Wind fresh SE. 3/8 alto Cu. Fine and sunny. 1000 mb.





BRUNEI 1984 DEPLOYMENT



THE RAFOS EXPEDITION TO BRUNEI
2 May to 27 June 1984

The major overseas expedition conducted by RAFOS in 1984 was to the State of Brunei on the island of Borneo. This report summarises the activities and ornithological field results of the expedition.

The aims of the expedition were:

1. To observe, identify, record and, where possible, photograph birds within the State of Brunei.
2. To contribute ornithological information useful to the checklist of Brunei avifauna.
3. To carry out a netting and ringing program preferably in support of any indigenous activity.
4. To carry out arduous and adventurous training in the form of living and working in tropical jungle in areas remote from civilisation.
5. To produce detailed reports for the Brunei museum and for service sponsors.

The expedition comprised of two teams of eight and seven members respectively. Team A were in Brunei from 2 May to 30 May 1984 and team B from 30 May to 27 June 1984. Both teams staged through Hong Kong on the outbound and return flights with accommodation there in the Army barracks.

Considerable planning for the expedition was necessary and included a reconnaissance of the relevant areas in Brunei, research of recent ornithological activity, training sessions, etc. The hard work carried out by Major Mike Hodges, on secondment to the Royal Brunei Armed Forces, in ensuring that tents, transport and expedition necessities were available in Brunei greatly reduced the quantity of kit to be airlifted.

Team A arrived at the capital, Bandar Seri Begawan, on 2 May 1984 and were transported to the Binturan Ranges, on the coast some 35 miles from the capital, where they camped under canvas. The few days spent here allowed acclimatisation and familiarisation with the birdlife. During this period three visits were made to Lamunin some ten miles inland where some experience of jungle species was obtained.

The team then transferred to their main site at Labi some 20 miles inland. here they set up camp among some decaying bamboo huts in a clearing some 50ft. above the Rampayoh River. Systematic observations were made from about 05.30 until about 18.00 each day with some treks made along jungle paths. Movement off the paths is however painfully slow, noisy and seriously disturbs all the birds for a considerable distance. Recorded calls were used to lure elusive and shy birds out of the dark impenetrable understorey with variable success. As at Binturan and Lamunin, ringing was undertaken at Labi with considerable success.

After two weeks, half of Team A departed Brunei and returned to the UK. The remainder of the team continued to undertake the objectives of the expedition both at Labi and again back at Binturan. Team A departed the capital on 30 May when Team B arrived.

Team B also set up initial camp at Binturan where they remained for nine days during which they made four visits to lamunin. The team then transferred, in helicopters of the Royal Brunei Air Wing, to their main site in a remote montane jungle region of East Brunei called the Temburong which is geographically separated from the rest of the country. The camp site was located on a 15ft high bluff between the confluence of two small rivers. The site provided good viewing arcs. Accommodation was under wooden bashas constructed under the guidance of Mike Hodges.

Team B also undertook systematic observation and recording and an intensive ringing program. Again, half of the team, three members plus Mike Hodges, departed the Temburong after four nights with the three members departing Brunei on 13 June. The remaining four members stayed at the Temburong for a further eight nights and then with Clive Mann, a resident teacher very experienced in tropical birds, and a hired car, explored several areas of West Brunei for six days. Areas visited included Lamunin, Binturan, Seria mud flats, Jerudong, Muara coast and mangroves, Berakas, forests close to the capital, the Assistant High Commissioner's residence and the team's base in Penanjong. Ringing was not carried out during this six day period. The four members then departed from Brunei on 27 June 1984.

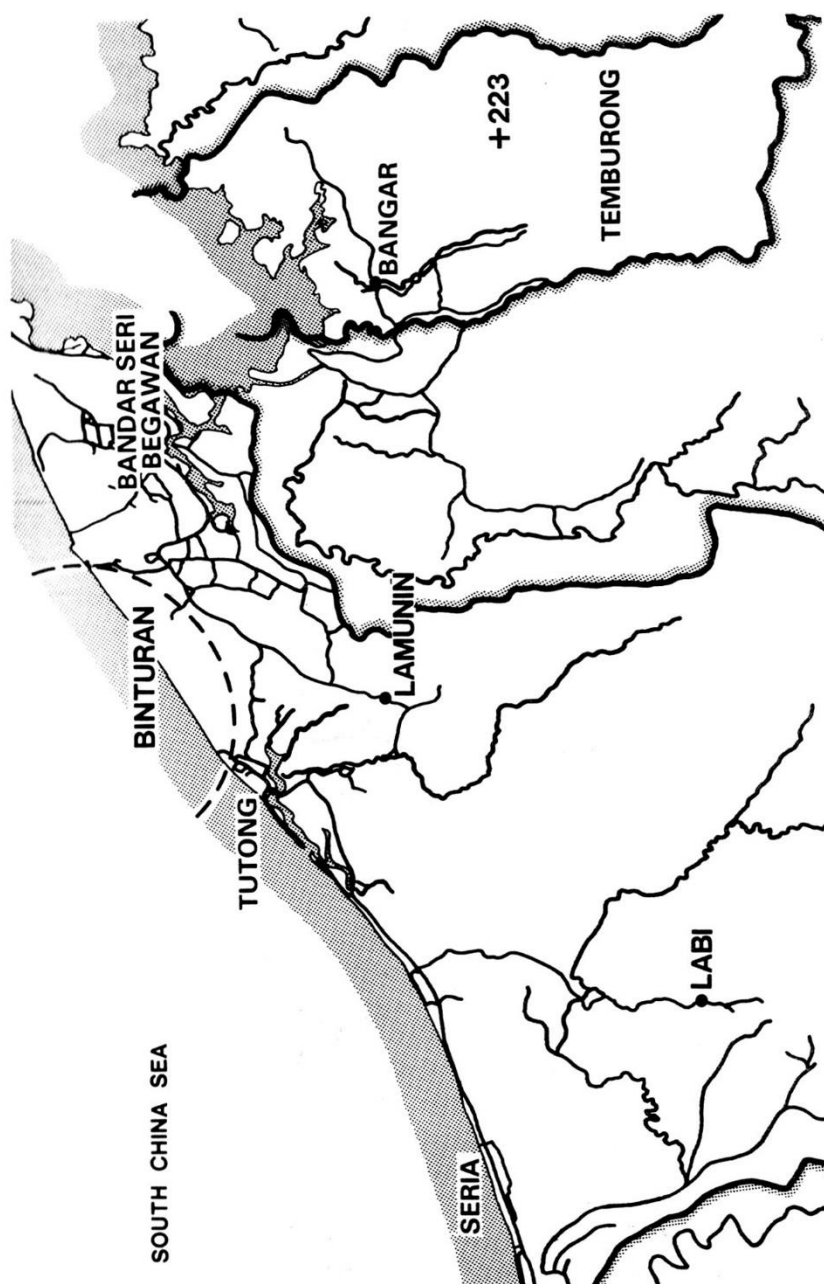
A general description is given below of each of the main areas surveyed by the two teams with a flavour of the ornithological experiences received. A full systematic list with scientific nomenclature appears elsewhere in this report.

Binturan

A number of firing ranges have been laid down either side of the track from Penanjong barracks to the sea. Growth on these was generally short, consisting of wire grasses and small clumps of leafy grasses. The seaward side gave way to Lalang grass up to two metres high with small patches of jungle. At the coast the Lalang grass abruptly met a straight beach cut by a few creeks whose edges were mangrove flanked. On the landward side of the track the Lalang grass areas were smaller and the jungle areas correspondingly larger with some remnants of primary forest. The whole area was crossed with streams and tracks. Chestnut Munias, Richards Pipits and Blue-breasted Quails favoured the ranges while Coucal species and Indian Cuckoos favoured the Lalang. The large-tailed Nightjar was found in both areas. Small patches of bushes and trees harboured yellow-vented Bulbul, Flowerpecker species and Eurasian Tree Sparrows. Other birds recorded in the area included White-bellied Sea Eagles, Broad-billed rollers, Blue-throated Bee-eaters, Changeable Hawk Eagle, White-collared and Stork-billed Kingfishers. The nests of Maroon and Banded Woodpeckers were found.

Lamunin

A number of water tanks have been constructed on a ridge. The associated clearance of the area outside the compound has produced a series of excellent sites for viewing across the jungle canopy 20-30 metres above the adjacent valley floor. Primary jungle was in evidence although most of the area showed



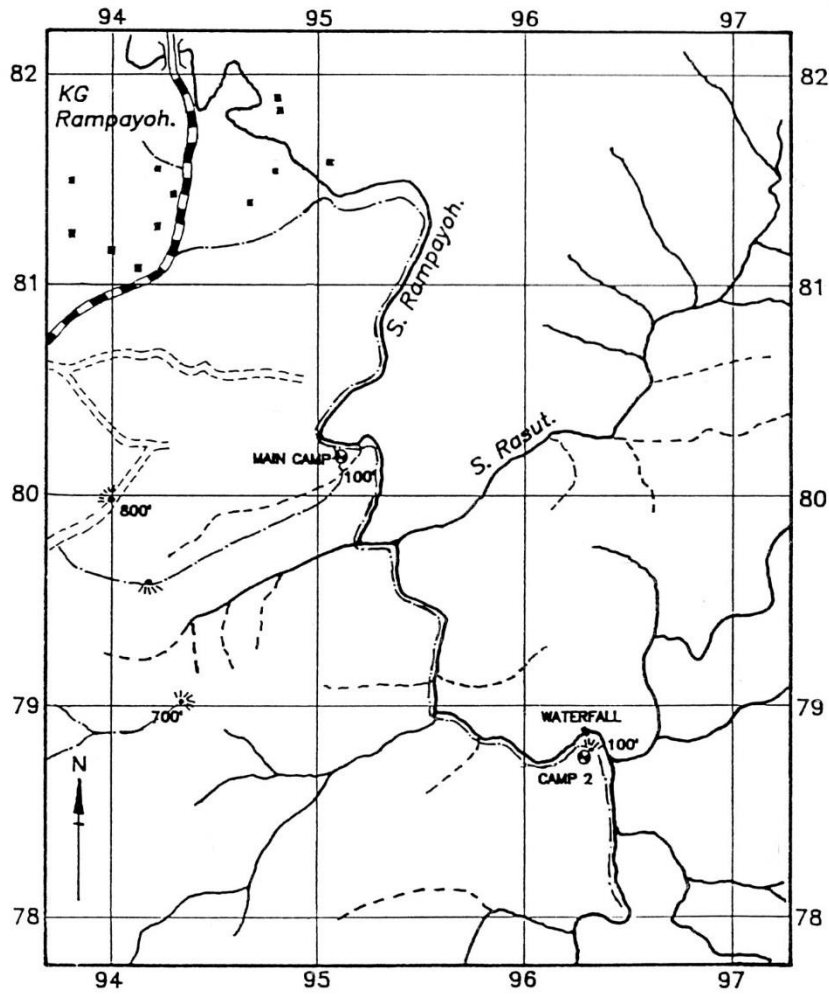
CAMP AT LABI

PJ 9580

114° 27'E 4° 21'N

KEY:-

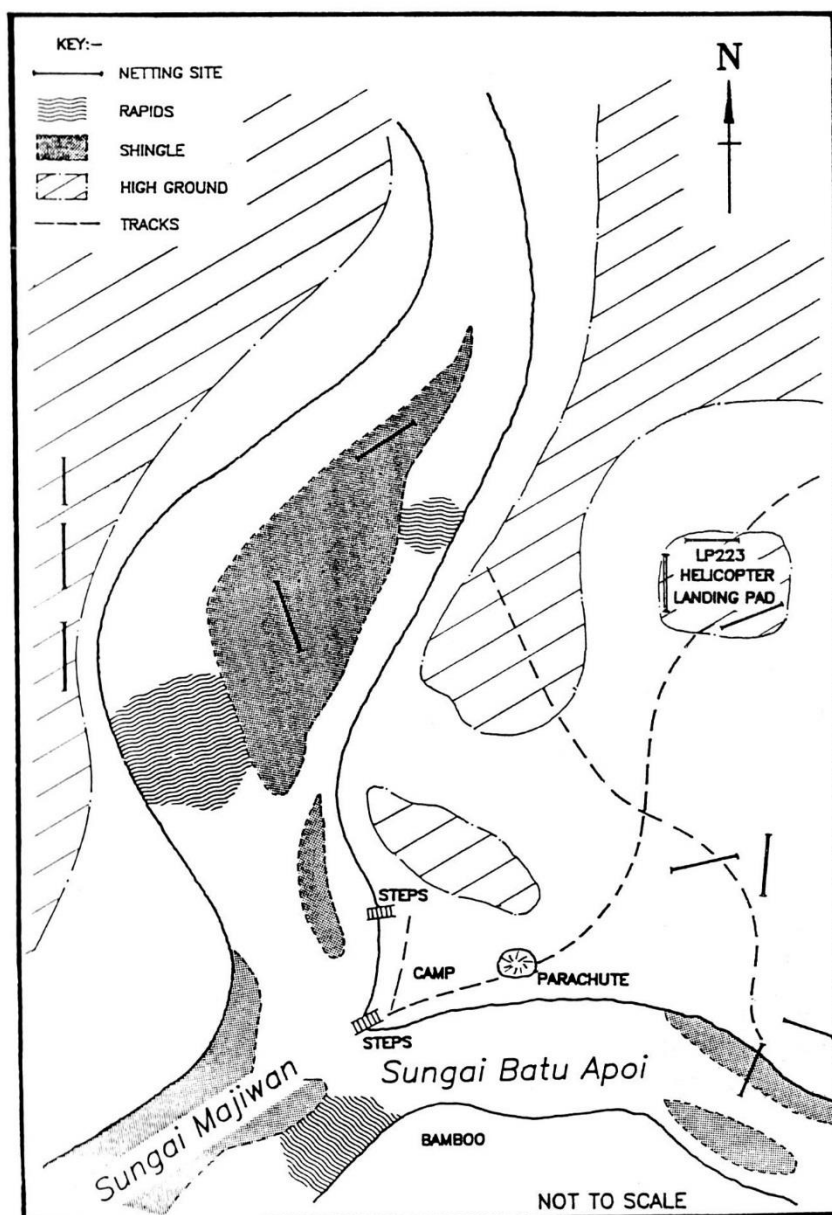
TRACKS	— · — · —
RIVER	~~~~~
SEASONAL RIVER	- - - - -
WATERFALL	— ● —
VIEWPOINT	⋆



CAMP AT SUNGAI BATU APOI, TEMBURONG

PE 760115

115° 11'E 4° 38'N



showed signs of regeneration from secondary jungle. Hornbill species abounded, the Rhinoceros, Black, Bushy crested, Wreathed, Wrinkled and Helmeted species being recorded. Other birds recorded included Bronzed and Greater Racket-tailed Drongos, Asian Fairy Bluebirds, Black-nest Swiftlets and Silver-rumped Swifts. Studied in the hand were such interesting species as Rufous Piculet, Diard's Trogon, Green Broadbill and Little Spiderhunter along with various flowerpeckers and sunbirds.

Labi

About 20 miles inland and southeast of Seria near the end of the metalled road a track runs off parallel with the Rampayoh River and leads to a grassy clearing with scattered straight trees in jungle some 50 ft. above the river. Large raptors were often seen but views were often short or hampered by unfavourable lighting conditions. Crested Serpent Eagle and Crested Goshawk were positively identified. Various flycatchers were recorded with the record of a Rufous-tailed Jungle Flycatcher appearing to be new for Brunei. Other species seen included Black-naped Monarchs, Brown Barbets and Purple-naped Sunbirds.

Temburong

This is an area in East Brunei close to the border with Sarawak in hilly primary jungle. Access is via helicopter, the landing pad being close by the camping site. There are numerous tracks in the vicinity created mainly by wild pig. A large dead tree nearby allowed, via a telescope, identification of such species as Large Frogmouth, Great Slaty Woodpecker and Mountain Imperial Pigeon. Birds examined in the hand included Emerald Dove, Mangrove Blue Flycatcher and the rare Chestnut-capped Thrush. Due to limitations of time the team could venture no more than approximately one mile from the site. Movement off the path being extremely difficult, usually because of thorns, and very noisy so scaring off most bird species. Even on paths little was visible. Walking down river beds gave the best chance of sightings.

Jerudong

This is an area, near the coast west of the capital, consisting of a small open marsh with some scrub and Lalang grass areas surrounding it. It also included 5km. away a small reservoir bordered by secondary jungle.

Muara

This area started at a small rocky peninsular several miles north east of Jerudong and ended at a medium sized mangrove swamp near the sports club close to the northeast tip of West Brunei. It includes the area of Berakas Camp. Its southern boundary is halfway between Berakas and the capital.

Bandar Seri Bagawan

This area is largely built up being as it is the capital but even there large areas of secondary jungle still exist within the city boundaries. Other habitats include gardens, open scrub, dense bush and a reservoir.

Seria

This lies near the sea in West Brunei near to the Sarawak border. The area is largely of mud-flats bordering a river as it enters the South China Sea. At the edge of the mud-flats were either mangrove, open scrub or sandy soil. It included the sandy foreshore in front of a low sea wall.

Birds of note at these last four sites included Cinnamon Bittern, Grey-tailed Tattler, White-browed Crane, Great Egret, Lesser Frigatebird and Little Green Heron.

Brunei lies almost on the equator and is in the tropical forest zone. Consequently the differences between the seasons is not great. There are two rainy seasons, the expedition coincided with the second normally lesser rainy season. Neither team encountered any really sustained periods of rain so there was little interruption to the ornithological work. Indeed, many locals commented that there had been very little rain for a long time, the whole pattern of weather being very different from that of previous years. It was considered likely that bird movements had been affected by the unusual meteorological conditions. Earlier in the year southern Borneo suffered a huge forest fire which caused a severe depletion of the Bornean faunal reservoir particularly for species principally or wholly resident in the southern half of the island. It may have rendered many extinct.

In a tropical area which not only had been subject to climatic disturbance, but which contains but a handful of dedicated ornithologists, it is highly likely that some of the findings of an ornithological expedition will go against received wisdom or will reveal a new aspect of knowledge about various species. This is all very good but what is of greater importance is that the vast bulk of the expedition's findings accord with those of the many dedicated and distinguished predecessors of the expedition.

To maximise success in observing birds in the tropical forest, the teams found that several basic measures have to be taken. Good sightlines have to be selected or prepared to cover perching points on clear trees, to be on or near a level of some part of the upper canopy, middle or lower canopy. Generally this can be best achieved alongside rivers, which give the additional sightlines to river banks, islands and beaches.

Of prime importance to observing birds is of course the reduction to a minimum of the observer's movements and noise making. However, an observer requires most of all good fortune in having birds appearing on the sightline being used, for long enough for identification to be attempted. Even then the proportion of small brownish birds which are identifiable at any distance is small.

With no great differentiation between the seasons, the trees in the jungle tend not to follow an annual cycle nor do they flower in synchronisation. Consequently those species of birds dependent upon flowers, nectar, fruit or the insects thereupon, appear in mixed groups at a tree at the appropriate time, remain for a few days then they move on. Despite this apparently random movement, many of the species are territorial and breeding success depends upon continuing availability of food sources within economic flying distance. So, if in a local area a particular food source becomes temporarily unavailable the young may die apparently in the midst of plenty. A study was undertaken by Dave Bingham of trees as a food source. His report is included.

The lack of rain appeared to have reduced the leech population, very few were encountered, but generally invertebrate forms of life were plentiful from scorpions to dragonflies to huge butterflies. Fish not only teemed in the rivers but were also found deep in the jungle in tiny rivulets with no obvious evidence of how they got there. Small tree lizards were abundant, large monitor lizards were found on the coast in ones and twos. Snakes were scarce but large swarms of aggressive hornets were far more menacing. Seabirds, although relatively few in number, were encountered more often than forecast. The same can be said of the waders.

An extensive ringing programme was undertaken, the result of which appear elsewhere in this report.

A systematic list is also included which lists all bird species recorded as positively identified by either team. The order, scientific and English names generally accord with King et al in 'A Field Guide to the Birds of South-East Asia' 1975. For those species occurring in Borneo but not covered by King, for reasons of distribution, the authority followed is Smythies 'Birds of Borneo' 3rd edition, 1981. Smythies was not used as the prime reference because it does not treat each species in a consistent sequence and because of arbitrary adoption of many of the scientific and English names from King 1975 and in the 3rd edition, however much useful local information in Smythies about the Bornean races is not found in King.

Acknowledgements

Both teams wish to record their indebtedness to many people for their assistance in enabling the expedition to take place and in making it the successful, enjoyable and worthwhile experience that it was. In particular, we express our thanks to His Majesty the Sultan of Brunei and his administration for permitting the visit to Brunei, to the British High Commissioner, the Royal Brunei Armed Forces and the British Forces in Brunei. We are very grateful for the cooperation of the Brunei Museum and to the University of Malaysia for providing rings. We very greatly appreciated the efforts of Major Mike Hodges, Captain Don Spate of the Royal Brunei Armed Services, Master Air Loadmaster Steve Sherrif on Loan Service and to QM Captain Ted Hodgetts of the 6th Queen Elizabeth's Own Gurkha Rifles. Special thanks are extended to Clive Mann for his invaluable assistance in being generous with his time and advice. Finally, thanks to the members of RAFOS and the RAF generally who were involved with the planning and execution of the expedition and the preparation of the various reports.

Edited contributions from

Major David Counsell
Sqn. Ldr. Mike Blair
Flg.Off. Nick Smith

LIST OF EXPEDITION MEMBERS

TEAM A

Sqn.Ldr. A.G. Jordan
Flg.Off. N.A. Smith
Ch.Tech. M.H. Rogers
Sgt. M. Lewis
Cpl. R.J. Rutherford
SAC R.J. McAughtrie
SAC J. Clarke
LAC G. Etherington

RAF Bampton
RAF Stafford
RAF Abingdon
RAF Cottesmore
RAF Boulmer
RAF Machrihanish
RAF Brize Norton
RAF Lindholme

TEAM B

Maj. D.J.R. Counsell
Sqn.Ldr. M.J. Blair
Flt.Lt. S. Williams
Sgt. D. Bingham
Cpl. K. Heron
SAC R.J. Bayford
SAC S.J. Fairburn

MOD(PE)MGWT1
RAF Swanton Morley
RAF Coningsby
RAF Swanton Morley
RAF Northwood
RAF Greenham Common
RAF CDA Thatcham

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES

During the expedition, 229 species were positively identified. The following list records these species and is followed by a list of sightings for which the identification is less than positive. After that appear the ringing report and a note on the study of jungle bird feeding behaviour. The sequence and nomenclature follow that in King (1975), with the nomenclature used in Smythies (1981) in parenthesis where this differs.

Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster*
One adult and two juveniles were seen off-shore at Binturan on 2 June.

Oriental Darter *Anhinga melanogaster*
A single bird was seen at Lamunin 4-6 May and up to three birds in same area 1-17 June. Two birds at Labi 7-18 May. Single birds seen on four occasions 1-17 June in the Ulu Teburong.

Lesser Frigatebird *Fregata ariel*
A splendid view was obtained of a single bird at Berakas on 24 June, flying directly overhead at 50 ft. altitude.

Great-billed (Dusky Grey) Heron *Ardea sumatrana*
One bird was seen in the Ulu Temburong on 15 June.

Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea*
Two birds were seen at Labi on 17 May and one on 18 May.

Little (Green) Heron *Butorides striatus*
One bird was seen on Pampayah River, Labi, on 14 May, three on the Brunei River near Bandar Seri Begawan on 25 May and two on Sungei Tutong River, 26 May. A further two at Jerudong Marsh 21 June and at Muara on 24 June. Up to eight birds seen at Seria on 25 June, one being badly oiled.

Great White Egret *Egretta alba*
Three birds were seen on the river mud flats at Seria on 25 June.

Cinnamon Bittern *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus*
Three birds were seen on both 21 and 24 June near Jerudong.

Storm's Stork *Ciconia stormi*
A single bird was seen flying across a river above the tree tops at landing pad 223 in the Ulu Temburong on 18 June.

Lesser Adjutant

Leptoptilos javanicus

Single birds were seen soaring at Labi on 15 and 16 May, and also at Lamunin on 3 June.

Brahminy Kite

Haliastur indus

One bird was seen to catch a small crab on the beach at Binturan on 3 May. A single bird was observed north of Labi on 23 May; four at Kampong Sengkarai on 26 May; two at Seria on 27 May and one at same place on 28 May. A single bird seen over Lamunin on 3 June.

On 24 June on the coast at Western Muara at dawn a party of about 14 birds was seen to fly inland from the coast, followed some minutes later by a further 10 birds, indicating a roost nearby. Finally two single birds were seen at Seria on 25 June.

White-bellied Sea Eagle

Haliaeetus leucogaster

This huge and regal bird was one of the most exciting to be seen. They flew along the coast at Binturan on most days, a pair were seen claw wrestling on one occasion. Another bird was seen to swoop into the troughs in the swell, similar to the action of the Osprey Pandion haliaetus when fishing. A single bird was also seen south of Tutong on 26 May.

Lesser Fish-Eagle

Ichthyophaga nana

Single birds were seen at Binturan on 2 May, and at Labi on 18 and 19 May perched about 40 ft. above the Pampayah River. One bird was also noted in the Ulu Temburong on 9 and 11 June.

Grey-headed Fish Eagle

Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus

One bird was observed flying along the coastline at Binturan on 3 May.

Crested Serpent-Eagle

Spilornis cheela

A pair with nest were seen most days of May at Binturan. Single birds were seen at Lamunin on 4 and 6 May. Four seen at Labi on 9 May. One over open country studded with secondary jungle at Binturan on 4 June, and a pair in the Ulu Temburong on 12 June.

Crested Goshawk

Accipiter trivirgatus

One was observed at Labi on 13 May and one was caught there on 15 May whilst hunting a Little Spiderhunter Arachnothera longirostra. One was also sighted in the Ulu Temburong.

Black Eagle

Ictinaetus malayensis

Only one sighting of a single bird at Labi on 15 May.

Changeable Hawk-Eagle

Spizaetus cirrhatus

Single birds were seen at Labi on 11, 12 and 14 May, dark phase examples. A pair were present at Binturan; a dark-phase male and a light-phase female, seen daily in June. Single birds were seen over open country at Gerudong, Muara and Seria on 21, 24 and 25 June, light-phase birds.

Blyth's Hawk-Eagle

Spizaetus alboniger

At Lamunin two birds were seen on 4 May and one on 5 May. Single birds were also observed at Labi on 10, 19 and 20 May, and an excellent view at Lamunin on 26 June when a bird perched high in a jungle tree was watched at eye level from the ridge.

Black-thighed Falconet

Microhierax fringillarius

Two birds were observed at Lamunin on 4 and 5 May, also in same locality on 2, 3 and 22 June. A single bird seen at Labi village on 16 May. Up to four birds were resident in the Ulu Temburong where it was seen daily throughout June. It was active throughout the day, but an ungraceful flier and clumsy when moving in branches.

Blue-breasted Quail

Coturnix chinensis

Five birds were seen at Binturan on 27 May when flushed from grass. A single bird was also seen at the same place on 5 June. An elusive bird more often heard than seen.

White-browed Crake

Porzana cinerea

Three adults and one juvenile were observed on a fresh water marsh at Jerudong on 21 and 24 June. The birds displayed no shyness.

White-breasted Waterhen

Amaurornis phoenicurus

One was observed scuttling across the road near Lamunin on 5 May, and two were seen with young in a marsh adjacent to Labi village on 16 and 19 May. It was commonly found by Team B in small ponds and marshes in the lowlands.

Lesser Golden Plover

Pluvialis dominica

Seven birds were seen at Seria on 25 June and were in full summer plumage; they were restless and were thought to be non-breeding birds.

Mongolian Plover

Charadrius mongolus

Six birds were seen at Seria on 25 June in non-breeding worn plumage.

Greater Sand-plover

Charadrius leschenaultii

Five birds were seen at Seria on 25 June with the Mongolian Plovers; they appeared much more settled than the other waders and were in finely-marked non-breeding plumage.

Common Sandpiper

Actitis hypoleucos

There were two birds on the beach at Binturan on 4 May and one at Berakas on 27 May.

Grey-tailed Tattler

Heteroscelus brevipes

An excellent series of close views of a single bird, seemingly in partial summer plumage, was obtained near mangrove by the Royal Brunei Yacht Club on 24 June. It moved frequently but seemed unconcerned.

Red (Common) Knot Calidris canutus
A single bird in full rufous summer plumage was seen at Seria on 25 June.

Rufous-necked Stint Calidris ruficollis
A single bird was seen on the shore-line at Seria on 26 May and another single bird in summer breeding plumage in same area on 24 June. Three birds in summer plumage seen at Berakas on 28 May.

Oriental Pratincole Glareola maldivarum
One exhausted bird was observed on the Binturan ranges on 3 May.

Black-naped Tern Sterna sumatrana
A pair of birds was seen just off shore at Western Muara on 24 June in association with more numerous Great Crested Tern, Sterna bergii.

Great Crested Tern Sterna bergii
A total of 40 birds was observed in small parties on 24 June at Western Muara.

Lesser Crested Tern Sterna bengalensis
Frequently seen in ones and twos, out to sea off Binturan, Muara and Seria. Occasionally seen just inland in fresh water pools left by downpours. Maximum count was 17 on 5 June.

Thick-billed Pigeon Treron curvirostra
Common in isolated dense wooded areas at Binturan up to 11 birds being recorded daily. Five birds were seen in secondary jungle at Lamunin on 25 June.

Cinnamon-headed Pigeon Treron fulvicollis
Single female birds were observed in the Ulu Temburong on 18 and 19 June.

Little Green Pigeon Treron olax
Common at Binturan and Labi, seen in most habitats from primary jungle to open country near built-up areas.

Pink-necked Pigeon Treron vernans
Also commonly seen at Binturan and Jerudong, occasionally seen at Lamunin in both primary and secondary jungle, once only in the Ulu Temburong when six birds recorded on 20 June.

Large Green Pigeon Treron capellei
Seen once in the Ulu Temburong; five birds were observed at Lamunin on 22 June and three on 24 June in the Jerudong area. One was caught at Lamunin on 3 June.

Green Imperial Pigeon

Ducula aenea

Observed once in the Ulu Temburong on 15 June and once at western Muara on 21 June, and a pair was seen in eastern Muara on 24 June. The bird does not fly in the hurried fashion usual in most pigeons but is altogether more leisurely in habit.

Mountain Imperial Pigeon

Ducula badia

A solitary example observed perched unconcernedly on a prominent dead tree near the camp in the Ulu Temburong on 20 June.

Spotted Dove

Streptopelia chinensis

Common and widespread in small numbers in open country being seen at Binturan, Muara, Gerudong and Seria. Common along the roadside between Seria and Bandar Seri Begawan. Maximum of ten recorded on 27 May.

Peaceful Dove

Geopelia striata

Three birds were observed in wooded urban surroundings at Bandar Seri Begawan on 23 June and at Seria on 24 June.

Green-winged Pigeon (Emerald Dove)

Chalcophaps indica

Single birds were seen at Lamunin on 4 and 6 May and also at Binturan on 1 June. Single birds and pairs were also seen in the Ulu Temburong. Five were netted in the Ulu Temburong.

Long-tailed parakeet

Psittacula longicauda

There were three at Lamunin on 5 May, and about 30 in three separate flocks on the Seria Turtong road on 26 May. Between 1-6, 23-24 June this bird was encountered at Lamunin, Binturan, Bandar Seri Begawan and Maura in jungle and open country.

Blue-rumped Parrot

Psittinus cyanurus

Seen only once in the Ulu Temburong on 19 June when four birds were observed.

Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot
(Malay Lorikeet)

Loriculus galgulus

Observed in small numbers at most locations, particularly in the Ulu Temburong.

Hodgsons's Hawk-cuckoo

Cuculus fugax

One bird was seen at Binturan on 6 May and there were further sightings at Labi on 20 and 22 May. One was also seen in the Ulu Temburong on 16 June.

Indian Cuckoo

Cuculus micropterus

Frequently heard and identified by its diagnostic call but rarely seen. Recorded Binturan, six birds seen at Lamburin on 6 May. Heard most habitats by Team B but never seen.

- Banded Bay Cuckoo Cacomantis sonneratii
Two records only; a female caught at Labi on 14 May and a male seen also at Labi on 16 May.
- Plaintive Cuckoo Cacomantis merulinus
Two birds were seen and heard at Lamunin on 4 May and at Labi on 9 May, one heard at Binturan on 24 and 28 May. A single bird seen in jungle close to the suburbs of Bandar Seri Begawan on 23 June.
- Drongo Cuckoo Surniculus lugubris
One was seen at Labi on 15 May and one at Lamunin on 6 June.
- Common Koel Eudynamys scolopacea
A male perched on a small bush in an open grassy area at Binturan ranges on 4 May.
- Chestnut-bellied Malkoha Phaenicophaeus sumatranus
One was seen in a tree at the roadside eight miles north of Labi on 23 May.
- Raffles' Malkoha Phaenicophaeus chlorophaeus
Found to be common in most habitats with frequent sightings of singles or pairs at Lamunin, Labi, Binturan, occasionally in the Ulu Temburong and once in jungle close to Bandar Seri Begawan, 23 June.
- Red-billed Malkoha Phaenicophaeus javanicus
Seen only at Lamunin and then only on three occasions, totalling five birds, in early June.
- Chestnut-breasted Malkoha Phaenicophaeus curvirostris
Perhaps the most striking of the malkohas, single birds were observed at Lamunin on 1 June and at Binturan on 4, 5 and 7 June.
- Greater Coucal Centropus sinensis
Fairly common in long grassland and other open areas containing dense vegetation. Frequently seen at Binturan, a maximum of six seen or heard at Lamunin on 5 May. Also seen or heard on three occasions in the Ulu Temburong, up to five birds between 15-20 June, but never seen for more than a few seconds.
- Lesser Coucal Centropus bengalensis
More common than the Greater Coucal being seen in all types of lowland habitat near the coast, frequently seen and heard in the Ulu Temburong, Binturan and Labi. one was caught and ringed at Labi on 24 May.
- Collared Scops-Owl Otus bakkamoena
The only owl species positively identified, a single juvenile perched unobscured in shade in a tree overhanging the river in the Ulu Temburong on 14 June.



BLUE-BREASTED BUTTON QUAIL



COLLARED SCOPS OWL

Brown Wood Owl

Strix leptogrammica

Recorded at Labi on 17 May single bird partially obscured by vegetation.

Large Frogmouth

Batrachostomus auritus

One bird was seen in the Ulu Temburong on 15 June. It appeared briefly, perched stiffly on a branch as a dark cloud passed over, then slipped swiftly away.

Malaysian Eared Nightjar

Eurostopodus temminckii

A single bird was put up in daylight from some bushes beside a sandy track through lalang grass in the jungle at Binturan on 5 June. Absence of white on the wings and tail was especially noted.

Large-tailed Nightjar

Caprimulgus macrurus

This nightjar is familiarly known as the 'tok-tok' bird because of its distinctive call. It was heard and seen frequently at Binturan at dusk and dawn. Away from this area it was recorded once only, a pair in Bandar Seri Begawan on 23 June.

Black-nest Swiftlet

Collocalia maxima

The most frequently encountered bird on the expedition, this species was observed in hundreds over every habitat. One was netted in the Ulu Temburong on 9 June.

White-bellied Swiftlet

Collocalia esculenta

One bird was observed at Binturan on 6 June, but others were probably overlooked among flocks of other Apodidae.

Brown Needletail
(Brown Spinetailed Swift)

Hirundapus giganteus

Large size of this swift made identification easy. Seen in small numbers above all habitats from 6 to 23 June.

Silver-rumped Swift

Rhaphidura leucopygialis

The second commonest member of the family noted during the expedition, it was seen daily in small numbers over all habitats, but was more numerous over jungle areas.

Fork-tailed Swift

Apus pacificus

Up to seven birds were observed on most days in the Ulu Temburong during the late afternoon. As far as we are aware, there are no previous records of these birds summering in Borneo and great care was taken in identification. The most distinctive feature is the flight pattern which is more elegant than that of other members of the family, the wings being held less stiffly in the beat. Confirmation of identification was acquired when expedition members stopped over at Hong Kong on their way home.

House Swift

Apus affinis

Usually observed in small numbers in lowland habitat, but about 100 were seen at Tutong on 26 May.

Asian Palm-Swift

Cypsiurus batasiensis

Recorded in small numbers near the coast on 1 and 24 June. Thought to be under-recorded due to its similarity to the Swiftlets.

Grey-rumped Treeswift

Hemiprocne longipennis

This species was seen principally at Lamunin, but reasonable numbers were also seen at Bandar Seri Begawan and in Muara. Two were spotted in a large flock of swiftlets at Labi on 17 May, and a further three by the road from Tutong to Seria on 26 May.

Whiskered Treeswift

Hemiprocne comata

Up to five birds were seen at Labi on 13 May, a pair was seen regularly perching and flitting from a favoured tree at the Labi camp.

Diard's Trogon

Harpactes diardii

A female was caught and ringed at Labi on 12 May, and a male in the Ulu Temburong on 2 June. The ringers noted that the feel of the bird in the hand was very different from any other they had experienced, in that they seemed fragile and unsubstantial for a relatively large bird.

Scarlet-rumped Trogon

Harpactes duvaucelii

A male was seen at Lamunin on 4 May and an immature male was netted and ringed at Labi on 10 May.

Blue-eared Kingfisher

Alcedo meninting

On five occasions 4 and 7 June at Binturan and on 13, 18 and 19 June in the Ulu Temburong single birds were seen of this handsome kingfisher.

Black-backed Kingfisher

Ceyx erithacus

Rufous-backed Kingfisher

Ceyx rufidorsus

These two species are considered conspecific, and intermediates occur (Sims, 1959) (King, 1975). Of 25 recorded observations, four birds had markings which clearly indicated that they were at the C. rufidorsus end of the scale. The remainder, all in the Ulu Temburong, showed varying amounts of black all the way to C. erithacus. Photographs clearly show the blue tint to the black feathers, depending largely on the angle of view.

Stork-billed Kingfisher

Pelargopsis capensis

Observed occasionally, in small numbers, in a wide variety of habitats from near-urban to primary jungle. It is difficult to avoid a sense of disbelief when observing this species, whether in flight or perched. Its huge bill projects so far that it seems to be in imminent danger of a nose-dive. It perches horizontally, unlike most kingfishers, and in flight appears to have great difficulty in turning corners. Ungainly though it may be, it is a fast flier.



BLACK-BACKED KINGFISHER



BLUE-EARED KINGFISHER



COLLARED KINGFISHER

Ruddy Kingfisher

Halcyon coromanda

A single bird was seen at Binturan on 2 June perched on a branch of a fallen tree half-buried in the sand. The tree was in the territory of a Collared Kingfisher, H.chloris, which became agitated, calling continuously and bobbing its head up and down, finally chasing the Ruddy Kingfisher away.

Collared Kingfisher

Halcyon chloris

This noisy bird was common in the lowlands and seen daily at Binturan, where up to ten birds were noted on 27 May and one was netted on 4 May. It is a wary species and promptly flies to another vantage point when approached. Territorial boundaries were respected, which suggests that occupancy had been established for some time.

Blue-throated Bee-eater

Merops viridis

A common species in open country, parties of seven or eight birds were frequently observed and heard. Large numbers were seen along the Seria-Tutong road and about 50 birds were noted at Binturan on 3 May. It was not noted in the Ulu Temburong.

Red-bearded Bee-eater

Nyctyornis amictus

Single birds were seen at Binturan on 4 and 26 May and at Lamunin on 6 May. A juvenile was observed in the Ulu Temburong on 18 June.

Dollarbird (Broad-billed Roller)

Eurystomus orientalis

Seen in small numbers at Binturan, Lamunin, Labi and Seria, this species was widespread but was not seen in the Ulu Temburong. It was usually found on an exposed perch.

White-crowned (White-crested) Hornbill

Berenicornis comatus

A pair was seen in the Ulu Temburong on 18 June; their feathered casques gave them a particularly dignified appearance.

Bushy-crested Hornbill

Anorrhinus galeritus

This was the most commonly seen hornbill and appeared, singly or in groups of up to 15, only in jungle areas. Although Smythies (1981) states that this is the only hornbill without white markings and King (1975) says the belly of juveniles is whitish, several birds at Lamunin were clearly identified by their blue gular pouches but also had white patches on the side of the neck.

Wrinkled Hornbill

Rhyticeros corrugatus

This species was common and widespread in jungle areas at Labi, Lamunin and Ulu Temburong where groups of up to ten birds were seen, on one occasion in company with Bushy-crested Hornbill, Anorrhinus galeritus.



Wreathed Hornbill

Rhyticeros undulatus

Observed on nine out of 16 days at Labi where a maximum of four birds was seen on 14 May. There were three sightings in the Ulu Temburong each of single birds on the 12, 15 and 16 June.

King (1975) suggests that Blyth's Hornbill, Rhyticeros plicatus, may exist across a similar range to the Wreathed Hornbill, the distinctive differences being that R.undulatus has a narrow black band on the gular pouch and corrugations at the base of the bill, these features were noted in the May sightings, but not on the three sightings in June, due to distance between birds and observers.

Black Hornbill

Anthracoceros malayanus

This species was confined to jungle areas. Five were seen at Lamunin on 4 May; three were observed at Labi on 14 May; and parties of up to seven were seen in the Ulu Temburong. Several had anomalous white markings.

Rhinoceros Hornbill

Bucheros rhinoceros

This bird was widespread in jungle areas, but generally in small numbers. However, 16 birds were seen at Labi on 13 May and the species was present there on 11 days. Birds with a full casque are most striking and the call is a roar of considerable intensity.

Helmeted Hornbill

Rhinoplax vigil

Two birds were seen at Labi on 13 May and two more were observed at Lamunin on 23 June. The remarkable call sequence can last for ten minutes, starting with rich honks which combine into maniacal laughter and are finally cut off by choking barks.

Gold-whiskered Barbet

Megalaima chrysopogon

One was seen at Lamunin on 4 May and one at Labi on 22 May, and there were also three sightings in the Ulu Temburong. However, its distinctive call, heard frequently at Binturan, Lamunin and Temburong, indicated that the species was reasonably common.

Red-crowned (Many-coloured) Barbet

Megalaima rafflesii

Two birds were seen at Lamunin on 6 May and one at Binturan on 24 May. The species seemed to be more widespread in non-jungle areas, and one was seen in Bandar Seri Begawan on 28 June.

Red-throated Barbet

Megalaima mystacophanos

A female was seen at Labi on 11 May and two birds were observed at Binturan on 5 June.

Yellow-crowned Barbet

Megalaima henrici

One bird was seen at Labi on 14 May and one at Lamunin on 6 and 22 June.

Blue-eared (Little) Barbet

Megalaima australis

The most abundant member of the family, this bird was encountered in all habitats. A maximum of eight birds was counted at Labi on 14 May.

Brown Barbet

Calorhamphus fuliginosus

Seen occasionally in groups: 15 birds in one flock at Labi on 20 May and a group at Lamunin. Less evident in coastal lowland areas. The local race, C.f.tertius, displays a pink-red chin and throat and one example also had a red bill.

Malaysian Honeyguide

Indicator archipelagicus

This bird is acknowledged by Smythies (1981) and King (1975) to be a rare and little known bird. An immature female was caught and ringed at Labi on 11 May. Field notes record an olive green crown grading into grey nape and cheeks; olive-green mantle and wings; brown tail; heavy, short-bill; white throat; greyish yellow underparts; white belly with cream wash on undertail coverts; light brown eye.

Rufous Piculet

Sasia abnormis

A male bird was caught and ringed at Labi on 11 May and at Lamunin on 2 June. Another bird was seen at Lamunin on 3 June.

Rufus Woodpecker

Micropternus brachyurus

Single female was seen at Lamunin 4 May, Binturan 6 May and Labi 21 May. Four birds were seen in close proximity in the Ulu Temburong on 11 June. A further two birds seen at Lamunin on 22 June.

Crimson-winged Woodpecker

Picus puniceus

Two sightings at Binturan, on 24 and 28 May, and one at Lamunin on 1 June.

Checker-throated Woodpecker

Picus mentalis

One bird was observed in the Ulu Temburong on 17 June.

Banded Woodpecker

Picus miniaceus

One bird was seen at Labi on 13 May, a male being seen in same area on 21 May. A pair found at the nest at Binturan 4-8 June. Three birds at Lamunin on 6 June, two seen in the Ulu Temburong on 18 June.

Olive-backed Woodpecker

Dinopium rafflesii

A single bird was noted at Labi, 10 May, a male seen same locality on 21 May.

Buff-rumped Woodpecker

Meiglyptes tristis

This strikingly marked woodpecker was encountered in most jungle habitats. Singles seen at Lamunin 4 May, 1, 6 and 22 June. At Labi on 11 May with a fine male there on 16 May; a single at Binturan on 2 June. A group of four in the Ulu Temburong on 9 June.

Buff-necked Woodpecker

Meiglyptes tukki

A male recorded at Labi 11-15 May. A single bird seen Lamunin on 1 June. A pair was netted and ringed in the Ulu Temburong on 14 June; the female was retrapped on 16 June when the male was seen close by.

Great Slaty Woodpecker Mulleripicus pulverulentus
 At Lumunin three birds were seen on 4 May and a single bird on 22 June. Single birds were also noted in the Ulu Temburong on 15 and 18 June.

White-bellied (Great Black) Woodpecker Dryocopus javensis
 Two birds were seen at Labi on 11 May and a further single bird there on 21 May. A solitary male was observed in the Ulu Temburong on 10 and 16 June.

Grey-capped Woodpecker Picoides canicapillus
 Single birds were observed at the roadside near Tutong on 26 May and at Lamunin on 22 June.

Brown-capped Woodpecker Picoides moluccensis
 Sightings were confined to coastal areas where good views of the birds were obtained. Two were seen at Binturan on 4 June, one at Jerudong Swamp on 21 June and two there on 24 June, one at Lamunin on 22 June and three near Bandar Seri Begawan on 23 June.

Grey-and-buff-Woodpecker Hemicircus concretus
 Single birds, including an immature on 21 May, were observed at Labi on six dates during May. Single birds were also seen at Lamunin on 3 June and Binturan on 6 June.

Maroon Woodpecker Blythipicus rubiginosus
 Single birds were observed at Lamunin on 5 May and 6 June.

Orange-backed Woodpecker Chrysocolaptes validus
 A pair of birds was seen at Labi on 16 May and another pair at Binturan on 4 June.

Dusky Broadbill Corydon sumatranus
 One bird was seen in the Ulu Temburong on 20 June and a pair at Lamunin on 22 June.

Black-and-red Broadbill Cymbirhynchus macrorhynchus
 One was caught and ringed at Labi on 12 May, other singles seen in same locality on 13 and 15 May. A nest was found in a tree beside a gravel road about four miles south of Labi village. It was an untidy mass of stems and leaves about 1 ft. deep about 15 ft. above grass verge level. One bird was seen in the Ulu Temburong on 10 and 13 June, and two at Muara on 24 June.

Black-and-yellow broadbill Eurylaimus ochromalus
 This species was seen daily in the Ulu Temburong. In addition, one was seen at Lamunin on 5 May and another in an isolated patch of jungle on the Binturan ranges on 7 June. The adults had a collar extending completely round the neck, unlike the illustration in Smythies (1981).

Green Broadbill

Calypomena viridis

Three were seen at Labi on 13 May, two of which were caught and ringed, and three were seen there again on 19 May, one of which was ringed. One was ringed at Lamunin on 2 June and two more on 3 June. Two were seen in the Ulu Temburong on 15 June.

Blue-headed Pitta

Pitta baudii

One was seen at Labi on 14 May. The species is endemic to Borneo and is not covered by King (1975).

Sand Martin

Riparia riparia

One at Binturan on 3 May, two at Berakas on 27 May.

Barn Swallow (Common Swallow)

Hirundo rustica

This species was reasonably common between Tutong and Bandar Seri Begawan, two or three being seen together daily on the Binturan ranges or near habitation. All appeared to be adults.

Pacific Swallow

Hirundo tahitica

This species was less common than H. rustica. At least two pairs with young were seen in Labi village on 16 May, and 20 at Tutong on 26 May. Many were seen from 20 June at Binturan, Jerudong, Tutong and Seria but Hirundo sp. were not as abundant as reported in October 1978 by Brown (1979).

Red-rumped Swallow

Hirundo daurica

One was seen amongst Black-nest Swiftlets and Pacific Swallows on 16 May. This is the latest date recorded of this species on passage in Borneo. Previous records were 14 Mar. 1966 at Tambunan, 21 Feb. 1971 in Brunei, 30 Dec. 1966 in Papar, 3 Nov. 1973 also Brunei, and 3 Nov. 1962 in Sabah.

Black-winged Flycatcher-shrike

Hemipus hirundinaceus

One at Lamunin on 1 June, three at Binturan on 4 June and one there on 5 June.

Large Wood-shrike

Tephrodornis virgatus

One at Lamunin on 4 May, two at Labi on 11 and 20 May and one there on 21 May.

Bar-bellied Cuckoo-shrike

Coracina striata

One member of Team B had the great good fortune to study through a telescope the only example seen, as it posed on a prominent dead tree some 300 metres from the camp in the Ulu Temburong. The bird was probably a male, as the barring on the flanks and rump was not prominent.

Lesser Cuckoo-shrike

Coracina fimbriata

One at Binturan 5 May and a female there on 27 May.



PIED TRILLER



STRAW-HEADED BULBUL



SCARLET MINIVET

Pied Triller

Lalage nigra

Common in all open lowland country at Binturan, on the road to Lamunin, in Muara, Bandar Seri Bagawan and Seria. One was ringed at Binturan on 27 May.

Scarlet Minivet

Pericrocotus flammeus

A pair at Lamunin on 5 May and two splendid pairs there on 1 June.

Green Iora

Aegithina viridissima

Up to five birds seen on nine days at Labi 7-22 May; a pair being caught and ringed on 10 May. A male was seen at Binturan on 31 May, a male was heard at Lamunin on 1 June.

Common Iora

Aegithina tiphia

Seen fairly often in small numbers in the Binturan area, in the Muara district and in the outskirts of Bandar Seri Begawan. Two at Lamunin on 5 May, 1-2 at Labi on 11, 13 and 16 May, two at Kampong Sengkarai on 26 May and one at the helicopter landing pad 223 at Sungai Batu Apoi on 11 June.

Lesser Green Leafbird

Chloropsis cyanopogon

Recorded on six days in May in singles or pairs; six seen at Labi on 21 May, a male caught and ringed on 14 May, ones and twos being seen in the Ulu Temburong between 10-15 June in the company of Greater Green Leafbird. A male at Lamunin on 22 June.

Greater Green Leafbird

Chloropsis sonnerati

Recorded in singles or pairs on five days in May at Labi, one female caught and ringed 13 May. Also singles or pairs in the Ulu Temburong between 10-15 June. One male seen at Lamunin on 22 June.

Blue-winged Leafbird

Chloropsis cochinchinensis

A male seen at Labi on 13 May, a female on 19 May and two birds on 20 May. Three seen in the Ulu Temburong on 18 June.

Straw-headed Bulbul

Pycnonotus zeylanicus

Four or five birds recorded in the Ulu Temburong on 13, 17 and 18 June, always in vicinity of rivers.

Black-and-white Bulbul

Pycnonotus melanoleucos

Two females recorded at Labi on 13 May, one being caught and ringed. Singles seen on three other days in May at Labi.

Black-headed Bulbul

Pycnonotus atriceps

First recorded when two caught in the nets on 13 May at Labi. Subsequently seen on 14 May, three birds; six seen same locality on 16 May. Single at Binturan on 24 May. Small numbers recorded in the Ulu Temburong 10-20 June, one at Muara 24 June.

Grey-bellied Bulbul

Pycnonotus cyaniventris

A pair caught and ringed at Labi 12 May, seen on three other dates in May. Only one record for June, a single in the Ulu Temburong on 19 June.

Puff-backed Bulbul

Pycnonotus eutilotus

At Labi a male was ringed on 13 May, a pair on 14 May and females on 16 May and 19 May.

Yellow-vented Bulbul

Pycnonotus goiavier

Very common in all open lowland areas, gardens and secondary growth. Five were seen in Labi village and eight at Tutong on 26 May. Eighteen were ringed, all at Binturan.

Olive-winged Bulbul

Pycnonotus plumosus

Common on Binturan Ranges, in gardens and plantations at Labi, and in small numbers in jungle at Lamunin and in the Ulu Temburong. Fourteen birds were ringed.

Cream-vented Bulbul

Pycnonotus simplex

Single birds were seen at Lamunin on 3 June and 6 June and in the Ulu Temburong on 11 June and 16 June. Six birds were ringed, one at Labi, four at Binturan and one at Sungai Batu Apoi. It is thought that only those birds which exhibit the white eye specific to mainland races, a characteristic shown by a proportion of birds in Brunei, can at present be positively identified as P.simplex. (Clive Mann in litt.) Birds with a light vent but red eyes could not be assigned to a confirmed identity.

Red-eyed Bulbul

Pycnonotus brunneus

Common on Binturan Ranges and in the Ulu Temburong, where eight were ringed. Present on only three days at Labi, and only two seen at Lamunin, 22 June.

Spectacled Bulbul

Pycnonotus erythrophthalmos

Recorded at Labi on eight days in May, at Lamunin on 3 June and 6 June, and at Binturan on 4 June. Four were ringed at Labi, three at Lamunin, and nine in the Ulu Temburong where it was plentiful.

Orchraceous Bulbul

Criniger ochraceus

This species was encountered only in the Ulu Temburong, where it was remarkably tame and ridiculously clumsy. One only was ringed, and it remained for several days in the area of the camp. It would feed on berries a metre or so above our heads, and it may be that the berries were fermenting and causing its extraordinary behaviour. It frequently raised its crest, and its eye stripe was more prominent than shown in Smythies (1981).

Grey-checked Bulbul

Criniger bres

Singles recorded on three days between 11-19 May at Labi, two being caught and ringed. Two seen in the Ulu Temburong on 18 June, one of which was ringed.

Yellow-bellied Bulbul

Criniger phaeocephalus

Team A saw this species only at Labi, where three were ringed. Team B ringed one at Lamunin on 6 June and seven at landing pad 223 in the Temburong. The yellow tip to the tail feathers, not illustrated in King (1975), is a considerable aid to the identification of birds moving in foliage. Voice (not recorded by Smithies (1981)). Team A record its call to be somewhat like that of a Blackbird, Turdus merula.

Hairy-backed Bulbul

Hypsipetes criniger

Team A saw this species on ten days at Labi, with a maximum of four on 15 May. Two were ringed.

Buff-vented Bulbul

Hypsipetes charlottae

Two were ringed at Labi on 11 May. One was seen at Lamunin on 22 June and four at landing pad 223 on 16-20 June. The distinctive white iris proved to be a useful recognition feature at close range, as this species is difficult to identify in the field.

Streaked Bulbul

Hypsipetes malaccensis

Recorded only on three days at Labi with a maximum of five on 13 May, seen at Binturan in May with nine present 26 May.

Bronzed Drongo

Dicrurus aeneus

This attractive acrobatic and restless bird, elegant in flight as well as appearance was seen at Labi on three dates in May. Two pairs were seen at Lamunin and six on 17 June in the Ulu Temburong.

Spangled Drongo

Dicrurus hottentottus

Team B saw single birds of this splendid species in the Ulu Temburong near landing pad 223 on 19 and 20 June.

Greater Racket-tailed Drongo

Dicrurus paradiseus

One to three birds were seen regularly at Lamunin, Labi and in the Ulu Temburong. A pair was displaying from a tree on the Binturan ranges on 6 May, and on 15 June in the Ulu Temburong a swirling group of at least six birds displayed fine pairs of rackets for several minutes.

Dark-throated Oriole

Oriolus xanthonotus

Up to three were seen in the vicinity of the Labi camp on 12 May; at Lamunin a male was seen on 3 June and a female or juvenile on 6 June; and in the Ulu Temburong a female was seen on 16 June and two males on 20 June.

Asian Fairy-bluebird

Irena puella

At Labi this species was seen on ten days, with six males and one female on 6 May, and five males and a female on 12 May. At least six were seen at Lamunin on 6 June.

Malaysian Treepie

Dendrocitta occipitalis

On 10 June two birds were seen for 6-7 seconds flying above the canopy on the other side of the river at landing pad 223. They had very long tails, and were considered to be probably D.occipitalis (which is sometimes said to be conspecific with D.formosae, Grey Treepie).

Slender-billed Crow

Corvus enca

This species was seen occasionally by itself or in small numbers at Binturan, Labi, Lamunin and Bandar Seri Begawan, six being seen at Labi on 13 May. It was common in the Ulu Temburong, up to 15 being seen on 16 June.

Velvet-fronted Nuthatch

Sitta frontalis

A very tame pair was seen at Lamunin on a dead tree where they were said to have nested. A maximum of eight was counted at Labi on 21 May, where one was ringed and where another pair was nesting at the top of a telegraph pole.

Black-capped Babbler

Pellorneum capistratum

A single bird was seen foraging on the ground in secondary jungle on the Binturan ranges on 23 May, and another was ringed at Lamunin on 3 June.

Short-tailed Babbler

Trichastoma malaccense

At Labi, two were seen on 14 May and one on 15 May; then on three successive days 14-16 June in the same place in the Ulu Temburong.

White-chested Babbler

Trichastoma rostratum

One was seen foraging in riverside vegetation near the camp at Labi on 19 May. Three were ringed in the Ulu Temburong on 16 June and another three birds were positively identified there on 18 June.

Ferruginous Babbler

Trichastoma bicolor

This handsome bird was ringed at Labi on 11 and 15 May. Two birds were seen at Lamunin on 6 May and two were ringed there on 2 June.

Abbott's Babbler

Trichastoma abbotti

Team A identified one at Labi on 21 May. In the Temburong jungle Team B identified one on 17 June and a family party of five on 18 June. It was possible to differentiate them from T.separium, Horsfield's Babbler, as in the adults the bill was large and the crown was the same colour as the back.

Sooty-capped (Plain) Babbler

Malacopteron affine

Team B found this species to be very common around the camp in the Ulu Temburong, where two were caught and ringed. One was recorded at Binturan on 5 June, and two at Lamunin on 22 June.

Scaly-crowned Babbler

Malacopteron cinereum

Singles were seen at Labi on 15 and 21 May. On 18 June a party of four was observed at very close range at the same time as a family party of Abbott's Babblers, at the camp site in the Ulu Temburong.

Rufous-crowned Babbler

Malacopteron magnum

One record only of a single bird at Labi on 16 May.

Chestnut-backed Scimitar Babbler

Pomatorhinus montanus

This distinctive but uncommon bird was seen in the Ulu Temburong on 15 June. It was near the top of a seed-bearing tree that was under siege from a host of busily feeding species.

Striped Wren-Babbler

Kenopia striata

One sighting of a single bird at Labi on 13 May.

Grey-headed Babbler

Stachyris poliocephala

On 14 June, upstream from landing pad 223 in the Ulu Temburong, at least six birds were seen in the top of secondary growth, six metres high. Two were definitely adults, showing the fine white streaking on the grey head, as shown in King (1975). The others were judged to be juveniles.

Chestnut-rumped Babbler

Stachyris maculata

This species was seen occasionally in small numbers in a variety of habitats, but always close to or in jungle. Five were seen near Labi on 13 May, a single on 31 May and 1 June at Binturan, one at Lamunin on 5 June. Maximum seven at Binturan on 7 June, also seen in the Ulu Temburong on 9 and 18 June, two and four respectively. Pairs of birds responded well to a recording of their bubbling chorus; sitting together on a branch, they would lean forward with the blue skin of their neck vibrating.

Black-throated Babbler

Stachyris nigricollis

Single record, a male caught and ringed at Labi on 9 May.

Chestnut-winged Babbler

Stachyris erythroptera

This species was seen only in continuous jungle, where it was the most common babbler. One was ringed at Lamunin on 5 May, One at Labi on 12 May, here the greatest number were seen, ten on 15 May. Also recorded in the Ulu Temburong, four on 10 June and in threes and fours from 15-19 June.

Striped Tit-Babbler

Macronous gularis

One was seen at Labi on 27 May and two in the Ulu Temburong on 10 and 15 June. One was also ringed in the Temburong on 9 June. It was found that the underparts are streaked brown, as illustrated in Smythies (1981) who describes the species as abundant but shy.

Fluffy-backed Tit-Babbler

Macronous ptilosus

A few birds were seen in continuous jungle. Two were ringed at Labi, one at Lamunin and two in the Ulu Temburong. The distinctive fine white plumes which protrude through the back feathers and extend to the base of the tail could only be seen in the hand. The structure of the feathers on the head and neck is surprisingly primitive when compared with other babblers.

Grey-and-brown Laughingthrush

Garrulax palliatus

This is a montane resident, but nonetheless a pair was seen near landing pad 223 in the Ulu Temburong on 17 June. This species is not covered by King (1975).

Brown Fulvetta

Alcippe brunneicauda

This undistinguished brown bird is hard to identify. One bird was seen at Lamunin on 22 June in the bushy undergrowth below the observation point, active and restless.

Magpie Robin

Copsychus saularis

This species is common in gardens and near habitation. In addition a few were seen at Binturan, at Lamunin and in the Labi area.

White-rumped Shama

Copsychus malabaricus

This bird was common in the Labi area and seen daily in the Ulu Temburong, and a few were also seen at Binturan and at Muara. Three were ringed at Labi, one at Binturan and two in the Ulu Temburong.

Rufous-tailed Shama

Copsychus pyrrropygus

One was seen at the Labi camp on 11 and 14 May, and a female or juvenile in the Ulu Temburong on 10 June.

Chestnut-naped Forktail

Enicurus ruficapillus

Only one confirmed sighting was achieved, when on 10 June near landing pad 223 in the Temburong a male bird flitted over a shaded rock pool in the Sungai Batu Apoi. At other times only momentary glimpses were had here and also at Lamunin.

Pied Bushcat

Saxicola caprata

This was a most unexpected sighting, as Smythies (1981) describes it as a rare vagrant, its occurrence in Borneo resting on two museum specimens. However, on 17 June beside the Sungai Batu Apoi near landing pad 223, two observers saw a male, black with white wing patch, moving among the small branches of a tree at a height of 15 metres. Viewing conditions were very good.

Chestnut-capped Thrush

Zoothera interpres

This very handsome thrush was by far the rarest bird to be ringed by Team B. It was caught on 18 June near the Sungai Batu Apoi, and had more white on the lower breast than is shown in Smythies (1981).

Yellow-bellied Warbler

Abroscopus superciliaris

One bird was seen on 5 June in secondary jungle at the edge of a clearing on the Binturan ranges. It was clearly different from Prinia flaviventris Yellow-bellied Prinia, and was with Aegithina tiphia Green Iora, Anthreptes malacensis Brown-throated Sunbird, and Hemipus hirundinaceus Black-winged Flycatcher-shrike. It is described by Smythies (1981) as generally a sub-montane resident.

Dark-necked (Black-necked) Tailorbird Orthotomus atrogularis

This species was numerous at Labi, where four were ringed and a pair was seen feeding two young on 16 May. One was also seen at Lamunin on 6 May.

Ashy (Red-headed) Tailorbird Orthotomus ruficeps

This was the most widespread of the tailorbirds, often coming to branches almost within arms length of the observer to scold and chide. Tiny and active, they are a source of continual fascination. Only one was ringed, on the Binturan ranges.

Yellow-bellied Prinia Prinia flaviventris

This bird was ubiquitous and numerous in grassland, and common in all other open areas in the lowlands and similar habitat as Lamunin and Labi. Five were ringed at Binturan.

Grey-chested
(White-throated Jungle) Flycatcher Rhinomyias umbratilis

Four were seen at Labi on 21 May, three being caught and ringed. Two were seen on both 13 and 14 June in the Ulu Temburong, where two were caught and ringed.

Rufous-tailed Jungle Flycatcher Rhinomyias ruficauda

Three birds were caught at Labi, one on 8 May and two immatures on 9 May. This species is described by Smythies (1981) as a montane resident, but was recorded near sea level on the Baram River by the Oxford University Expedition in 1955. The species is not mentioned by King (1975). The adult caught on 8 May had a yellowish buff throat and upper breast, whitish belly, reddish brown head and back, a square ended rufous tail, pink-mauve legs, a black bill with rictal bristles, a brown eye and an erectile crest.

Rufous-chested Flycatcher Ficedula dumetoria

Two birds were caught at landing pad 223 in the Temburong on 9 June whose markings fitted the description given in Smythies (1981). The more clearly marked bird was confirmed and ringed, but the other was classed as probable.

Malaysian Blue Flycatcher Cyornis turcosa

Five males and two females were identified in the Ulu Temburong between 9 and 19 June, of these two males and the two females were netted and ringed.

Large-billed Blue Flycatcher Cyornis caerulata

A female was ringed at Lamunin on 5 June and a male at landing pad 223 in the Ulu Temburong on 13 June. This species is endemic to Borneo and Sumatra and therefore not mentioned in King (1975). The key to flycatcher identification in Smythies (1981) was precise and helpful in identifying this species and a number of other difficult Flycatchers.

Bornean Blue Flycatcher Cyornis superba

A male was caught and ringed at Labi on 9 May. This is a Bornean endemic species of submontane habitat; most specimens being collected in the past over 2,000 ft., but it has been recorded twice in the lowlands at Sandakan and Kalabatan - Smythies (1981).

Spotted Fantail

Rhipidura perlata

One caught and ringed at Lamunin 5 May, another ringed at Labi on 10 May. Others were seen at Labi on five days with four on 15 May. One seen at Binturan on 2 June and three at Lamunin on 1, 2 and 22 June.

Pied Fantail

Rhipidura javanica

One or two were seen at Labi on several dates, and up to four at Binturan. One was seen at Lamunin and four were at Berakas and in the mangroves at Muara on 24 June.

Black-naped Monarch

Hypothymis azurea

The male has beautiful sky-blue plumage and the female, though duller, is also very striking in appearance. The species was reasonably common at Labi, where four were seen on 12 May and one was ringed on 8 May. A male and two females were caught at Lamunin on 2 June and a female was ringed in the Temburong on 15 June. A pair was also seen in forest near the stadium in Bandar Seri Begawan.

Maroon-breasted Flycatcher

Philentoma velatum

A male was ringed at Labi on 10 May and another male was seen there on 19 May.

Rufous-winged (Jungle) Flycatcher

Philentoma pyrhoptrum

A pair was ringed at Labi on 11 May and a male on the following day. Five were seen there on 15 May.

Asian Paradise-Flycatcher

Terpsiphone paradisi

A pair of these beautiful birds was ringed at Labi on 12 May, where the species was seen on 11 days. A male flew into the Temburong camp during ringing on 13 June, its long tail feathers rippling rapidly like white string, and a male, possibly the same bird, re-appeared on the following two days. The female was seen on 20 June as the party was waiting for the helicopter to lift them from the jungle.

Mangrove Whistler

Pachycephala cinerea

In the forest only a short distance from his home near Bandar Seri Begawan on 23 June, Mr Clive Mann was able to pinpoint the call of this bird, but it was only seen for a short while as it moved in the fairly dense canopy of secondary jungle.

Yellow Wagtail

Motacilla flava

Thirty-two birds were counted flying over the camp at Binturan on 3 May and another eight on 6 May. They were flying out to sea towards the north on migration.

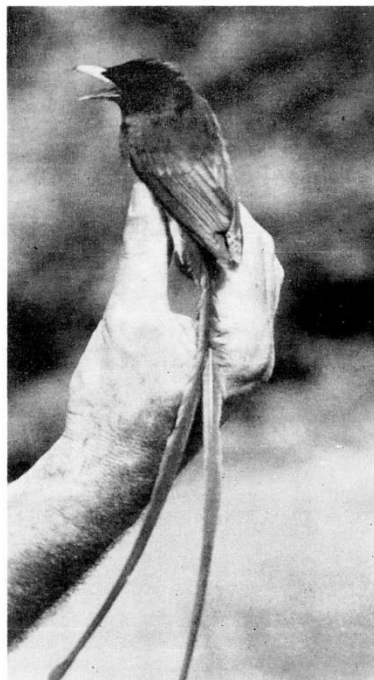
Richard's pipit

Anthus novaeseelandiae

Up to six birds were seen daily at Binturan in May. On 1 June a bird was seen to carry food for several hundred metres, and this behaviour was repeated on the following days. On 6 June an adult was watched feeding two of the three fledglings which accompanied it, and this was seen again on the following day. This confirmed the claim made by Major Michael Hodges RBAF (in litt.) that A. novaeseelandiae breeds in Brunei.



PIED FANTAIL FLYCATCHER



ASIAN PARADISE-FLYCATCHER



YELLOW-EARED SPIDERHUNTER

White-breasted Wood-swallow

Artamus leucorhynchus

These extraordinarily intolerant birds gathered together into angrily chattering groups and chased away other species, which therefore avoided them. The species appeared to be common in small numbers in most open lowland areas from Muara to Seria, where ten were sitting on telegraph wires by the road on 26 May. It is not mentioned in King (1975).

Philippine Glossy Starling

Aplonis panayensis

Found to be very common in the vicinity of human habitation similar to Sturnus vulgaris, the common Starling. Recorded at Lamunin 6 May, flying over the canopy in the evening presumably to roost. At Labi on 13 May, 12 birds, and at Kampong Sengkarai ten on 26 May; also seen in Bandar Seri Begawan.

Common Myna

Acridotheres tristis

Two birds were seen on 1 June and again on 3 June on the road to Lamunin, one also seen in Bandar Seri Begawan on 23 June. Smythies (1981) recorded that there was no evidence of this introduced species breeding in the wild yet.

Hill Myna (Grackle)

Gracula religiosa

This is a common bird in the jungle and was seen frequently in the Ulu Temburong. Thirteen birds perched in one tree at Labi on 16 May.

Plain Sunbird

Anthreptes simplex

This species was seen regularly in small numbers. At 12 cm, this is one of the larger sunbirds, but it was probably overlooked because of its unrelieved plumage. A pair was caught at Labi on 9 May, a further two in the same area 21 May. One at Kampong Sengkarai 26 May. Two were netted in the Ulu Temburong; a male at Lamunin on 3 June and a pair seen at Binturan on 22 June.

Brown-throated Sunbird

Anthreptes malacensis

This was probably the most widespread of the sunbirds and one of the most common. The name gives no indication of the incandescent appearance of the male bird. Two were ringed at Binturan and two in the Temburong. A pair was seen at Lamunin on 4 May and two were seen at Juradong on 24 June.

Ruby-cheeked Sunbird

Anthreptes singalensis

Smythies (1981) states that this jewel-like species is not often seen, but it was found frequently in the Ulu Temburong, where two were ringed, and at Labi, where one was ringed.

Purple-naped Sunbird

Hypogramma hypogrammicum

This species appeared to be less curious than other sunbirds, and is probably common. Nevertheless, it was found only in continuous jungle, and almost as many were netted as were seen free. Up to five were seen at Labi, where six were ringed; two were also ringed at Lamunin and three in the Ulu Temburong.

Purple-throated Sunbird

Nectarinia sperata

Recorded as a common resident by Smythies (1981) but was only recorded three times by Team A. One at Labi on 11 and 21 May, and two at Binturan on 25 May.

Copper-throated Sunbird

Nectarinia calcostetha

This species, which outshines all the other sunbirds, was seen on 23 June near Banda Seri Begawan, when with Mr Clive Mann. Five males and one female put in an appearance.

Olive-backed (Yellow-breasted) Sunbird Nectarinia jugularis

This was probably the second most common sunbird to be encountered. It was not as widespread as the others and was not seen at all in continuous jungle. The male bird's breast is a deep metallic blue and he takes on a mediaeval appearance, seeming to sport a breast-plate. A maximum of 30 was seen at Binturan on 5 May, where one was ringed.

Crimson Sunbird

Aethopyga siparaja

Despite the reference to it in Smythies (1981) as a common bird, only one was seen at Labi, 16 May, one at Binturan on 4 June and two at Lamunin, 3 May and 3 June, one of which was ringed.

Little Spiderhunter

Arachnothera longirostra

This species was encountered frequently at Labi, at Lamunin, and in the Temburong. Thirty-three were caught.

Thick-billed Spiderhunter

Arachnothera crassirostris

A single bird was seen at Binturan on 5 May and at Labi on 21 May.

Long-billed Spiderhunter

Arachnothera robusta

One at Labi on 16 May only record by Team A. Team B had three birds high in the canopy on the far side of the river from landing pad 223 in the Ulu Temburong on 10 June. Further singlebirds were seen in the same area on 19 and 20 June. On these occasions the very long bill and other identifying features were clearly seen, although the breast tufts appeared pale yellow or indistinct, not orange as described for the male in Smythies (1981).

Yellow-eared Spiderhunter

Arachnothera chrysogenys

This species was encountered only in the Ulu Temburong between 10 and 18 June, a maximum of 15 being seen around a fruiting tree by the Sungai Batu Apoi.

Grey-breasted Spiderhunter

Arachnothera affinis

One bird was seen in the Ulu Temburong on 18 June and another at Lamunin on 22 June.

Scarlet-breasted Flowerpecker

Prionochilus thoracicus

A male was ringed at Labi on 13 May, and single birds were seen there on another five days.

Yellow-rumped Flowerpecker

Prionochilus xanthopygius

This species is endemic to Borneo; it was seen in small numbers at Labi, maximum three on 21 May; and in the Ulu Temburong. Ten birds were ringed.

Yellow-breasted Flowerpecker

Prionochilus maculatus

This species was encountered only at Labi and in the Ulu Temburong, where it was seen on most days. Like many flowerpeckers it was curious, and would hop about on branches at arm's length from the observer. One was netted at Labi and ten in the Ulu Temburong.

Yellow-vented Flowerpecker

Dicaeum chrysorrheum

At least six of this none-too-common species were seen at Lamunin on 22 June.

Orange-bellied Flowerpecker

Dicaeum trigonostigma

This species was sparsely distributed, singles being seen at Lamunin 4-6 May, Labi 21 May and in the Ulu Temburong 2-22 June.

Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker

Dicaeum cruentatum

This species was found in most habitats except continuous jungle. A single bird seen at Labi 13 May, up to three birds at Binturan 25 May, also seen Bandar Seri Begawan on 23 June.

Everett's White-eye

Zosterops everetti

Designated as a submontane resident by Smythies (1981) ranging from the lower slopes of Kinabalu in Sabah to Poi range in Sarawak, yet a flock of 13 birds recorded at Labi on 18 May.

Eurasian Tree-Sparrow

Passer montanus

This numerous and ubiquitous bird was first recorded in North Borneo in September 1964 at Sandakan; in 1965 at Kuching, Sarawak by the present Journal Editor. Since then it has spread over all the countries and now fills the niche occupied in Europe by P.domestica; it nests under the eaves of houses and feeds in flocks on lawns and open spaces. This behaviour would not be found in the European race of P.montanus. In Brunei, many of the birds seen exhibited a very faded feather colour, yet feathers were in good condition.

Java Sparrow

Padda oryzivora

This, an introduced species, seems to exist in small numbers in separate localities. A pair was seen at Binturan on 1 June, eight in a swamp at Jerudong on 24 June and one at Seria on 25 June.

Dusky Munia

Lonchura fuscans

This species is confined to Borneo, and is not included in King (1975). Up to 100 were counted at Labi and a pair was nesting there in the fork of a branch at 3-4 metres above ground. Two young were being fed out of the nest on 8 May. In the Ulu Temburong the grass on landing pad 223 was the best place to watch them. A pair was seen at Binturan on 4 June, three near Jerudong on 25 June, and eight at Lamunin on 1 June. Two were ringed at Labi and 17 in the Ulu Temburong.

White-bellied Munia

Lonchura leucogastra

One of this somewhat rare and local species was ringed at landing pad 223 in the Ulu Temburong on 11 June.

Chestnut Munia

Lonchura malacca

This proved to be the commonest bird in lowland grassland, and flocks of 600 were counted at Binturan, where nine were ringed. it was also common in Labi village.



JAVA SPARROW

RECORDS FOR WHICH THE EVIDENCE IS NOT CONCLUSIVE

The following list contains species for which the record is probable but not definite. the list is included not only for the sake of completeness and for interest, but also because further observation and further discussion may help to shed light on the reliability of the reports and assist in extending our knowledge of the status of the species in question. In this context, it is the doubtful records which may be more important than the accepted and uncontroversial ones.

In addition to those below, of course, many doubtful sightings were rejected.

Egret sp.

Egretta sp.

Three white birds on the coastal lagoons near Seria were seen by Team A from a helicopter on 29 May. On 25 June, Team B saw three birds in the same area from the ground, but could not approach closer than 1 km. They assessed the species as Great White Egret, E.alba.

Red-naped Trogon

Harpactes kasumba

A female bird flew into the camp in the Ulu Temburong on 16 June while ringing was in progress, and was seen at close range. The brilliant blue skin round the eye contrasted strongly with the dark head, and the breast was pale orange. However, the identification was rated as no better than highly probable.

Rufescent Prinia

Prinia rufescens

In the lalang grass areas at Binturan ranges, P.flaviventris Yellow-bellied Prinia abounds. its markings, plumage and colour vary somewhat, but its jizz rapidly becomes familiar. On 31 May, two observers made notes of a bird which did not coincide with any P.flaviventris so far seen, but because it was their first day in the field they reserved comment. On 2 June two other observers made extensive notes of a bird, which after considerable difficulty was identified as P.rufescens, only to find that the first two observers had independently come to the same conclusion. P.rufescens is not recorded from Borneo, and is not mentioned in Smythies (1981). The consensus of opinion was that the illustrations in King were idealised, in that the heads seem disproportionately large and the tails shorter than life. Furthermore, all examples of P.flaviventris were much yellower underneath than the illustration, and had a large pale area around the eye. Nothing so divergent from P.flaviventris was seen at any other time on the expedition. However, because the birds were not caught, and because their nearest recorded sighting is over 1,000 miles away on the Malay Peninsula, the sightings must be classed as unconfirmed.

Reed-Warbler sp.

Acrocephalus sp.

Team A caught a large acrocephalus warbler at Binturan on 24 May, but as the light was failing fast it was released before it could be properly examined. It had a very large bill and a pronounced supercilium extending well behind the eye. It had white underparts and throat, and a hint of yellow on the undertail coverts. The brown of the tail was noticeably graduated. This was considered to be a Great Reed-Warbler A.arundinaceus (Eastern Great Reed-Warbler A.orientalis in Smythies (1981)). Team B saw a large warbler whose feathers were in excellent condition at a marsh near Jerudong on 24 June, and watched it for some 20 minutes at a range of about 10 metres. Mr Clive Mann advised that on balance it was probably a Clamorous Reed-Warbler A.stentoreus, not A.arundinaceus. The former has not been recorded in Brunei previously, but it is a sedentary species and probably breeds in small numbers in Borneo. The latter, on the other hand, is a passage migrant and a winter visitor to Borneo, and so an immaculate bird was unlikely to be present in summer.

White-browed Jungle Flycatcher

Rhinomyias gularis

This species is described by Smythies (1981) as a higher montane resident and is not mentioned in King (1975). A bird was identified as possibly of this species at Labi on 14 May. Its most noticeable features were its rufous tail, brown on the crown, mantle and wings, and a prominent supercilium. The eye was an olive colour and there was a hint of grey behind the eye. The breast, under the wing, belly and undertail coverts were white, with a hint of grey on the breast and a tinge of olive on the flanks. The upper mandible was dark horn coloured, the lower mandible was pale grey, and the legs were a slatey blue.

RINGING REPORT

by Major David Counsell

During the RAFOS expedition to Brunei in May-June 1984, birds were ringed at four sites: near the coast on the Binturan ranges (jungle and lalang grass), and in primary jungle at Labi, Lamunin and in the Ulu Temburong. Three hundred and twenty five birds of 76 species were caught, and reference to these is made in the annotated species list for the expedition, which should be read in conjunction with this report and where the scientific name of each species is given.

The following table gives the maximum, minimum and mean measurements for the wing, gape and weight of each species caught. For wing measurements, the maximum chord method was employed, as recommended by the BTO (Spencer, 1984) and Svensson (1984). The gape was measured from the tip of the upper mandible to the side of the mouth and this was done to assist a study undertaken in Brunei by Mr Clive Mann. Data are given to one decimal place. Further biometric detail is contained in the daily ringing records, which have been submitted to the University of Malaysia with a copy in the RAFOS library. Japanese mist nets were used to catch birds, and were rigged on bamboo poles which were cut locally. It was found that birds could be caught from dawn until about mid-morning, and in the last two or three hours before dark: nothing was caught during the heat of the day, whether the nets were set in clearings or under the jungle canopy. The weather was consistently hot and humid, and nets were furled during the frequent heavy rain storms. Rings were made from aluminium alloy by Lamborn Ltd., and were kindly provided by Dr David Wells of the University of Malaysia at Kuala Lumpur. Ring sizes were A,M,R,S,V, while the only guide available to the expedition (the List of Species and Ring Sizes, pp.152-156 from McClure 1966) gives sizes 01,02,03 etc. It was found that calipers were needed in order to measure accurately the diameter of tarsi, which vary considerably.

Of the 76 species caught, the most numerous was the Little Spiderhunter (33 caught). Only eight other species reached double figures.

Species	Qty	max	Wing mm min	mean	max	Gape mm min	mean	max	Weight g min	mean
Crested Goshawk	1									
Large Green Pigeon	1			190.0			32.0			
Green-winged Pigeon	5	144.0	139.0	143.0	22.0	19.0	19.7	120.0	98.0	108.0
Banded Bay Cuckoo	1			102.0			26.5			27.7
Lesser Coucal	1			147.0			29.0			93.0
Black-nest Swiftlet	1			123.0			6.0			11.6
Diard's Trogon	2	150.0	143.0	146.5	30.0	30.0	30.0	98.0	95.0	96.5
Scarlet-rumped Trogon	1			116.0			24.5			39.1
Blue-eared Kingfisher	3	65.0	63.0	64.0	49.0	45.0	47.5	23.0	19.0	20.5
Rufous-backed Kingfisher	12	61.0	56.0	59.5	45.0	37.0	41.7	21.9	13.3	17.3
Collared Kingfisher	1			108.0			59.0			65.0
Malaysian Honeyguide	1			95.0			19.0			37.0
Rufous Piculet	2	55.0	53.0	54.0	15.5	13.0	14.3	9.6	7.6	8.6
Buff-rumped Woodpecker	1			92.5			20.0			31.0
Buff-necked Woodpecker	2	105.0	105.0	105.0	26.0	26.0	26.0	49.0	47.0	48.0
Black-and-red Broadbill	1			109.0			30.5			63.0
Green Broadbill	6	102.0	93.0	98.8	24.0	15.0	20.1	56.0	46.5	51.4
Pied Triller	1			90.0			18.5			27.9
Green Iora	2	61.0	56.0	58.5	18.2	17.0	17.6	14.2	13.9	14.1
Lesser Green Leafbird	1			85.0			21.5			21.5
Greater Green Leafbird	1			90.0			25.5			39.8
Black-and-white Bulbul	1			86.0			20.5			24.0
Black-headed Bulbul	1			77.0			18.5			24.7
Grey-bellied Bulbul	2	77.0	74.0	75.5	15.5	15.0	15.3	23.2	21.5	22.4
Puff-backed Bulbul	5	96.0	89.0	92.4	24.0	19.0	21.7	38.4	32.9	35.6
Yellow-vented Bulbul	18	90.0	79.0	84.2	20.5	16.5	19.5	35.5	22.6	29.5
Olive-winged Bulbul	14	93.0	80.0	84.7	25.0	16.0	20.1	40.6	26.1	30.4
Cream-vented Bulbul	6	87.0	74.0	79.0	20.0	14.0	16.7	26.5	15.5	19.8
Red-eyed Bulbul	8	90.0	62.0	81.5	21.0	17.0	19.1	26.7	19.6	23.3
Spectacled Bulbul	16	77.0	71.0	74.4	19.0	16.0	17.3	19.1	15.2	17.7
Ochraceous Bulbul	1			112.0			28.0			41.1
Grey-cheeked Bulbul	3	109.0	102.0	105.3	27.0	25.5	26.3	48.0	35.0	41.0

Species	Qty	max	Wing mm min	mean	max	Gape mm min	mean	max	Weight g min	mean
Yellow-bellied Bulbul	11	102.0	86.0	92.9	25.4	20.0	22.7	35.5	26.0	30.0
Hairy-backed Bulbul	2	80.0	75.0	77.5	17.8	17.0	17.4	16.5	14.8	15.7
Buff-vented Bulbul	2	89.0	84.0	86.5	22.5	21.0	21.8	27.8	23.5	25.7
Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	1			73.0			17.0			13.6
Black-capped Babbler	1			73.0			22.0			26.8
White-chested Babbler	3	81.0	72.0	76.0	23.5	18.0	21.5	22.7	16.0	18.8
Ferruginous Babbler	4	93.0	80.0	84.3	24.0	21.0	22.4	26.9	23.5	25.2
Sooty-capped Babbler	2	75.0	72.0	73.5	20.0	19.0	19.5	16.5	14.0	15.3
Chestnut-rumped Babbler	3	87.0	84.0	85.3	24.5	21.5	23.3	32.1	25.5	28.2
Black-throated Babbler	1			76.0			22.3			30.7
Chestnut-winged Babbler	5	63.0	56.0	58.4	18.0	13.0	15.4	12.4	10.2	11.5
Striped Tit-babbler	1			67.0			16.0			13.1
Fluffy-backed Tit-babbler	5	85.0	69.0	75.0	23.0	18.0	20.6	23.04	18.6	20.6
White-rumped Shama	6	101.0	88.0	96.2	27.0	20.0	24.0	44.0	29.6	38.2
Chestnut-capped Thrush	1			99.0			24.0			39.6
Dark-necked Tailorbird	4	46.0	43.0	44.5	20.2	17.0	18.5	8.0	7.5	7.8
Ashy Tailorbird	1			44.0			17.5			7.9
Rufous-tailed Tailorbird	6	55.0	49.0	52.2	21.0	18.0	19.7	12.5	8.8	10.0
Yellow-bellied Prinia	5	47.0	43.0	45.4	16.0	15.0	15.6	8.8	5.5	7.9
Grey-chested Flycatcher	5	80.0	71.0	76.4	21.0	19.0	20.3	19.7	16.3	17.3
Rufous-tailed Jungle Flycatcher	3	72.0	65.0	69.0	17.5	15.2	16.7	15.7	13.6	14.9
Rufous-chested Flycatcher	1			79.0			18.0			17.0
Malaysian Blue Flycatcher	5	79.0	73.0	76.6	19.0	15.0	17.6	18.7	15.9	17.7
Large-billed Blue Flycatcher	2	76.0	74.0	75.0	21.0	21.0	21.0	18.0	15.9	17.0
Bornean Blue Flycatcher	1			75.0			21.0			15.4
Grey-headed Flycatcher	1			60.0			14.6			8.2
Spotted Fantail	1			81.0			15.5			14.0
Black-naped Monarch	5	72.0	66.0	69.8	17.0	15.0	15.5	12.0	10.0	10.9
Maroon-breasted Flycatcher	1			100.0			24.3			29.9
Rufous-winged Flycatcher	3	83.0	79.0	80.7	22.5	20.5	21.5	22.3	18.7	19.9
Asian Paradise-Flycatcher	2	98.0	91.0	94.5	29.0	27.0	28.0	25.5	23.7	24.6
Plain Sunbird	5	68.0	59.0	62.4	18.0	15.5	16.9	9.4	8.9	9.2
Brown-throated Sunbird	4	66.0	59.0	61.8	19.0	16.0	17.8	13.5	7.4	10.3

Species	Qty	max	Wing mm min	mean	max	Gape mm min	mean	max	Weight g min	mean
Ruby-cheeked Sunbird	3	55.0	54.0	54.3	15.0	13.5	14.0	8.6	8.2	8.3
Purple-naped Sunbird	11	71.0	65.0	67.4	25.0	19.0	22.2	14.2	9.8	11.8
Olive-backed Sunbird	1			46.0			17.5			6.0
Crimson Sunbird	1			47.0			16.0			5.0
Little Spiderhunter	33	73.0	60.0	64.2	45.0	33.0	37.3	16.0	8.8	11.9
Scarlet-breasted Flowerpecker	1			58.0			12.0			8.9
Yellow-breasted Flowerpecker	11	54.0	49.0	52.3	15.0	11.0	12.5	8.8	6.3	7.5
Yellow-rumped Flowerpecker	10	58.0	49.0	53.0	12.0	9.0	10.5	8.5	6.6	7.4
Dusky Munia	19	53.0	48.0	50.3	11.5	9.0	10.5	11.2	8.7	9.8
White-bellied Munia	1			51.0			11.0			10.0
Chestnut Munia	9	53.0	50.0	51.7	11.0	9.0	10.2	14.1	10.5	11.7

Total birds 325
Total species 76

A STUDY OF JUNGLE BIRD FEEDING BEHAVIOUR

by Sgt. David Bingham

Tropical rainforests have a greater diversity of bird species than any other type of habitat. This diversity is believed to be the result of the productivity and stability of the environment. Species have evolved to occupy ecological niches not found in less productive or stable habitats. For example in Europe the Song Thrush Turdus philomelas is equipped to exploit numerous food resources including insects, fruits, snails and worms. The food selected will be dependent upon availability and will alter with the seasons. In contrast, birds of tropical rainforests can specialise in a particular food resource, such as nectar, and be assured that the food will be available somewhere within their range. This specialisation enables the species to compete successfully for a particular resource. However, it also makes the species more susceptible to environmental disturbance.

During the RAFOS expedition we had an opportunity to carry out a small study on the feeding habits of a group of jungle birds. The camp in the Ulu Temburong was at the confluence of two rivers. Opposite the camp on the bank of one of these rivers two of the trees were in flower. The flowers were small, green and arranged on spikes approximately 170mm long. For this reason we gave the trees the nickname of 'catkin tree'. They were about 20m tall and grew 100m apart. Flower spikes and leaves littered the ground at the base of the trees. The leaves were holed by browsing herbivores, probably caterpillars. Specimens of leaves and flower spikes were collected and dispatched to the Royal Scottish Museum where they were identified as belonging to the widespread tropical group of trees known as 'Myrobalanes'. The actual species could not be identified without the fruit but the family was Terminalia, possible T.feolidissima Griff.

Our first full day's birding in the Ulu Temburong was on 10 June. Large numbers of birds were observed visiting the flowering trees, in contrast to the surrounding jungle where very little activity was seen that day. The birds remained in the trees throughout the day until the afternoon storm. They did not show the normal pattern of reduced activity as the day became warmer: this indicates that competition for a finite resource was disrupting the birds' normal behaviour patterns.

On 11 June an attempt was made to determine what species were using one of these trees and estimate the numbers present. The result of this survey, along with additional information on what the birds were feeding on, is shown in Table 1. Estimating the number of birds present was difficult because they were very active and constantly moved in and out of view. Activity in these trees ceased on 13 June.

Our survey indicates that the birds visiting the trees were either feeding on whatever was eating the leaves or robbing nectar from the flowering pods. The sunbirds may have been acting as pollinators, but this is not certain because the Brown-throated Sunbird Anthreptes malacensis has a reputation for robbing nectar.

In conclusion, the assertion that birds of tropical rainforests show specialised adaptations for exploiting food resources is supported by the number and diversity of species using the two flowering trees.

I gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Mr I.H.J. Lyster and Dr. G. Argent of the Royal Scottish Museum in species recognition.

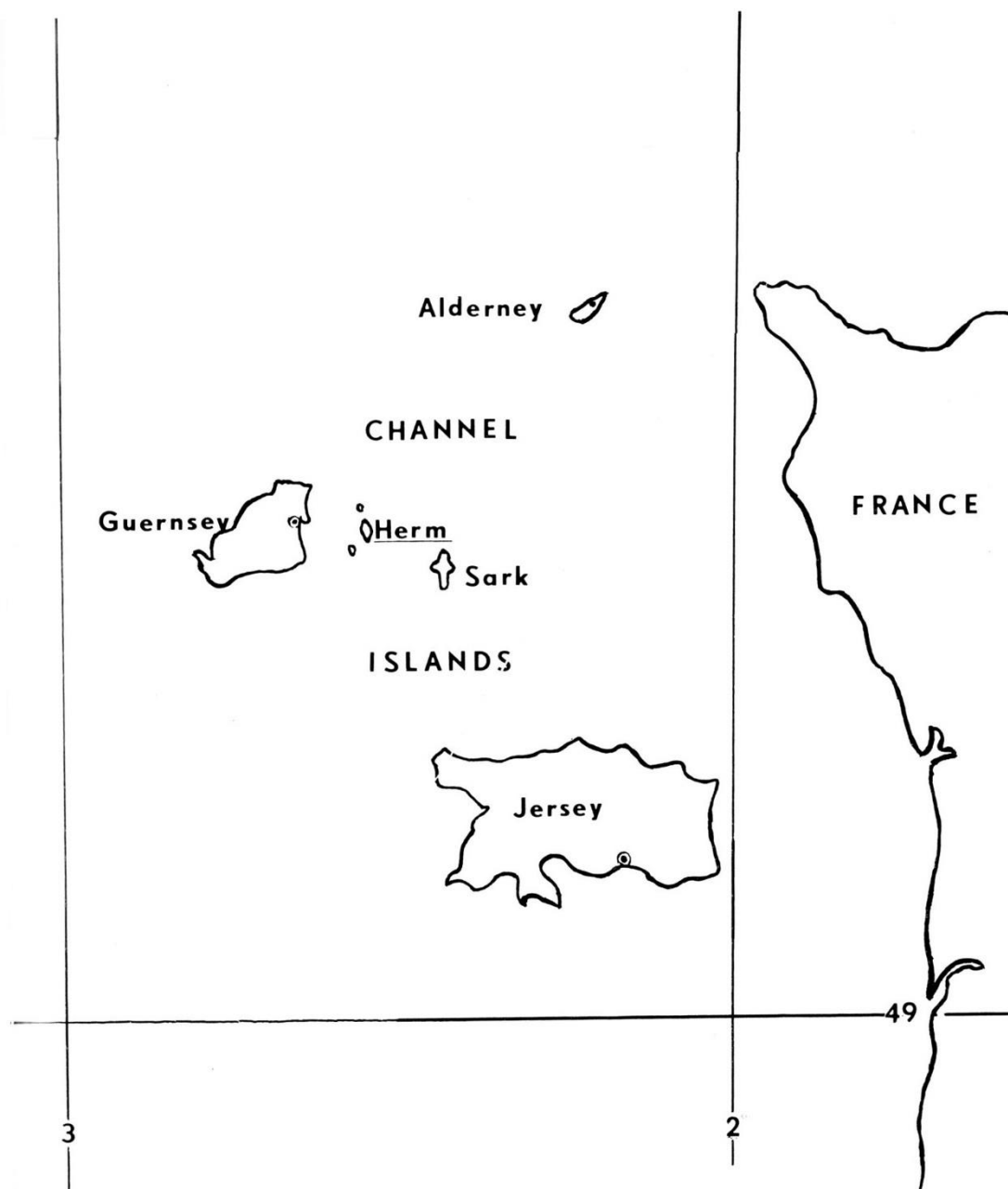


FLOWER/FRUIT SPIKES OF TERMINALIA SPECIES

FEEDING BEHAVIOUR OF JUNGLE BIRDS

SPECIES	NUMBER IN TREE	OBSERVATIONS	SUMMARY OF DIET FROM SMYTHIES (1981)
Blue-crowned Hanging Parrot <u>Loriculus galgulus</u>	6	Seen feeding on flower spikes	Durian flowers. Caged birds love sweet foods.
Lesser Green Leafbird <u>Chloropsis cyanopogon</u>	3	Moving around tree. Not observed feeding.	Berries, caterpillars.
Greater Green Leafbird <u>Chloropsis sonnerati</u>	3	As above	Fruit, insects
Blue-winged Leafbird <u>Chloropsis cochinchinensis</u>	1 (probable)	As above	Caterpillars, soft berries, grasshoppers, insects, small molluscs, ants, spiders, locustids, crickets, longicorns, cockchafters.
Babblers <u>Timaliidae</u>	20	As above	Insects
Brown-throated Sunbird <u>Anthreptes malacensis</u>	6	Seen feeding on flower spikes.	Caterpillars, insects, small beetles, spiders, butterflies, fruits. Individuals often seen piercing the corollas of trumpet shaped flowers (e.g. Loranthus) near their bases assumed to be feeding on the nectar within. Also flowers of tulip tree, banana, coconut.
Long-billed Spiderhunter <u>Aracnothera robusta</u>	3	As above	Spiders, soft insects
Yellow-eared Spiderhunter <u>Aracnothera chrysogenys</u>	10	As above	Small fruits, spiders, seeds.
Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker <u>Dicaeum cruentatum</u>	2	Moving around in tree. Not observed feeding.	Small figs, insects, green seed.
Total Birds: 54			





THE RAFOS EXPEDITION OF HERM ISLAND

1984

After a number of private visits to the Island of Herm, and after noting the wealth of bird life and lack of records on the island, Wg.Cdr. A.C.P. Seymour proposed to the RAFOS that a small, self-supporting expedition visit Herm to undertake a survey of the birds and compile a systematic list. This was agreed during the 1983 RAFOS AGM.

The aim of the expedition was to extend the ornithological knowledge of Herm by a programme of observation and ringing.

Herm is an island of about 500 acres, measuring some $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles long and $\frac{1}{2}$ mile wide, lying midway between Guernsey and Sark. At high tide the coastline is about $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles, but this is increased greatly at low tide, as the tidal rise and fall is one of the world's greatest, with Spring tide differences of up to 32 ft. The Island of Jethou, which is owned privately, lies a few hundred yards off the southwest tip.

Herm lies in a north-south attitude, with cliffs at the southern end and sandy beaches to the north; there is a spinal ridge running down the centre of the island, and the habitat varies from clusters of pine, broad-leaved woodland, furze, bracken, grass-covered common to sand-dunes and farmland.

The States of Guernsey purchased the island from the Crown in 1946, and it was let to a tenant on two conditions: that the public should be allowed to land on the island during daylight and that its natural attractions and peacefulness should be preserved. Major A.G. Wood is the second and current Tenant of Herm and took over the lease in 1949. The island has a constant population of 40, which expands in the summer to nearly 300; visitors to the island can stay in the island hotel or in self-catering cottages, or they may camp. The two main areas of 'population' are around the harbour on the western side, where the hotel, shops, restaurant and public house are situated, and around Le Manoir in the centre of the island, where the main cluster of cottages and the farm are located. There are no cars on the island and the only vehicles are a small number of tractors for the farm, and some 'chug-about' used by the Island Administration for transporting luggage and goods, and collecting rubbish. The island is covered by paths, some of which are remarkably steep for such a small island.

Permission was sought from the Tenant of Herm for a small, self-contained RAFOS expedition to visit the island in April-May 1984 for one week, and this was agreed; the team was offered the use of the largest self-catering cottage at half cost and free access to all parts of the island, including farmland and other areas normally denied to the public. With this backing, a team of eight members was selected.

In the initial stages, contact was made with Mr Tim Earl, a reporter on the Guernsey Evening Press and a local ornithologist with a knowledge of Herm. Mr Earl provided invaluable assistance and information (including the fact that Herm was probably the last ornithologically unsurveyed island around the United Kingdom), and asked to join the expedition for part of the time.

As team members were paying for their own fares to and from England, it was decided that the initial journey to Guernsey should be by Sea-Link, as this was the cheapest option. Accordingly, the team assembled at Weymouth to catch the ferry on 27 April for the over-night crossing. On arrival in Guernsey, the team was met by Tim Earl, who had kindly provided transport to move luggage to the Herm ferry. The ferry crossing from Guernsey to Herm takes about 20 minutes and boats ply regularly back and forth. On this occasion, as it was low tide, the ferry had to put into Rosiere Steps on the southwest corner of the island, which meant a longer walk for expedition members, although luggage was taken by 'chug-about' from Rosiere to the cottage, which was near Le Manoir.

Ornithological planning was left in the hands of Frank Smith. It was agreed that a daily sea-watch and a ringing programme should be undertaken, with the remainder of the team, in at least pairs, quartering the island systematically. No rigid programme was decided on, other than a pre-breakfast stint from 06.00 to 09.00, but it was accepted that a large degree of flexibility must be retained. This method was found to be most satisfactory as the daily callover coordinated activity, and areas of particular interest could be explored subsequently.

Sea watches proved generally disappointing and were abandoned as a regular requirement after a couple of days. Ad hoc sea watching, of course, was still continued.

The ringing programme was under the direction of Frank Smith, the only BTO ringer on the team, although Tim Earl, a Channel Island ringer, was able to provide valuable additional cover when he joined the team later. The ringing results were not as spectacular as had been hoped, or indeed as had been promised by the results in a short period on the first day, although a number of useful sites for future exploitation were identified. There were several re-traps which were of interest.

Because of the large number of waders, in particular Oystercatchers, and the apparent large number of Wrens, special attention was paid to these on two days of the expedition. It is of interest that these counts produced 145 Oystercatchers and 86 singing male Wrens.

Ornithological activities were concluded each day with a call-over by the Recorder (Frank Smith). The statistics which appear in the report are compiled from information provided at the daily call-over and it will be noted that the systematic list, the first for Herm, totalled 93 species (subject to confirmation), with 130 birds being netted, ringed and recorded.

Several birds of special interest were seen during the week and included the flock of Brent Geese, numbering about 100, which had spent the winter in Herm but had not yet left on migration, Marsh harrier, Hen Harrier, Sparrowhawk, Hobby, Peregrine, Hoopoe, Wryneck, Ring Ouzel and Red-breasted Flycatcher. The one failure was to obtain a sighting of Dartford Warbler, as it had been an aim of the expedition to establish its status on Herm. This failure was a disappointment as the Dartford Warbler is present on Guernsey.

The team was joined on one day by Miss Jill Kendrick, who is the Administrator for the Island of Jethou. Miss Kendrick was kind enough to invite the team to Jethou for a short visit the following day, which was a singular privilege

as the island is owned privately and members of the public are not generally allowed to land. The visit was disappointing ornithologically, but it was a delight to be able to see this very beautiful little island.

No official programme of photography was carried out, although most team members undertook their own.

Daily administration, including cooking, shopping and cleaning of the cottage, was undertaken by members of the team in rotation. Breakfast and dinner were at set times, and lunch was normally taken 'on the hoof' in the form of sandwiches and items of composition rations.

The weather was variable throughout the period of the expedition, although during the first four days it remained fairly consistent with sunshine, no cloud and a light easterly breeze; the mornings were quite cool, followed by warmer afternoons. On 2 May the wind increased to a moderate northeasterly, with total cloud cover, and was quite cold, although this was followed on 3 May by a warm, sunny, cloudless and windless day. 4 May, the last day of the expedition, was cool and cloudy, with the first rain of the week in the afternoon. The visibility on Herm was very good throughout the period, although sea mists occurred occasionally (especially in the mornings) limiting sea watching to about 2 km.

In conclusion, the expedition was considered to be a success in that it achieved its principal aim of compiling a Systematic List for Herm. This, it is hoped, will be a useful contribution to the ornithological knowledge of the Channel Islands. The team members had a most enjoyable and rewarding time on a beautiful island.

All the team members commented that they would like to return to Herm, and it was generally agreed that a follow-up expedition in about two years time, again during the spring migration, would prove of great use as comparisons could be made. In the meantime, it has been suggested to the Tenant of Herm that the systematic list should be used as a basis for providing a record book in which visitors and residents of the island can record their sightings; there must have been many exciting sightings in the past which have gone unrecorded.

Acknowledgements

I should like to express my particular thanks for their assistance and co-operation in making this small expedition such a success:

To Major Peter Wood, the Tenant of Herm, for allowing us to visit his island and for helping us so much.

To Adrian Heyworth, the Island Manager on Herm, and his staff for their particular assistance with administration, accommodation and general advice.

To Tim Earl for his assistance to the team.

To Mr and Mrs Long, the Channel Islands joint ringing secretaries who gave particular assistance to Frank Smith by supplying rings.

To Miss Jill Kendrick for allowing us to visit the Island of Jethou.

To Frank Smith for assuming the mantle of professional leader and adviser.

To the team members for making the week very much more than just an ornithological expedition.

And finally, to my PA, Yvonne Butler, for deciphering my handwriting and typing this report.

A.C.P. Seymour, Group Captain
Expedition Leader

List of Expedition Members

Wg.Cdr. A.C.P. Seymour	Expedition Leader
Chf.Tech. D.L. Boniface	
Mr P.C. Heathcote	
F.Sgt. B.T. Priaulx	
Sqn.Ldr. (rtd.) E. Robinson	
Mrs G. Robinson	
W.O. F.G. Smith	Recorder and Ornithological Leader
Mr P. Tithecott	

Recorder's Report

One of the aims of the visit to Herm was to carry out a survey of the bird population. To accomplish this task it was decided that daily walks covering the island, and sea watches should be undertaken by the team members to produce the best results; where possible these operations would be completed by team members working in pairs.

It soon became clear that the sea watches were not productive, there being little or no migrational movement at sea; they were therefore abandoned, and the extra manpower made available was channelled into the walking survey work.

Members commenced surveillance work at 06.00 hours each morning and continued throughout the day until 19.00 hours each evening. Good coverage of all habitat was achieved daily, with teams interchanging routes from day to day. All tracks, beaches and wooded areas, together with some individual fields, were scrutinized twice and sometimes three times per day using this method.

A comprehensive list of the birds present at a given time was accumulated during the week's stay on the island. An evening call-over was taken daily and the following systematic list was compiled as a result of these call-overs.

A secondary aim of the visit was to establish or substantiate the status of the Dartford Warbler, *Sylvia undata*, on the island. Our concentrated searches throughout the week, however, proved to be fruitless, with no sign of a Dartford Warbler. It must, I think, be concluded therefore, that the island is not now inhabited by this charming little bird, although they do continue to flourish on Guernsey, just a short distance away across the water.

The order of common and scientific names used in this systematic list follows 'List of Recent Holarctic Bird Species 1972-1977', K.H. Voous.

SYSTEMATIC LIST

- Black-throated Diver Gavia arctica
Recorded daily 29 April to 4 May. Six birds present in the vicinity of the harbour on 30 April.
- Fulmar Fulmarus glacialis
Up to ten birds recorded daily on east coast cliffs in the Moulinet area.
- Gannet Sula bassana
Small number recorded off shore on 29 and 30 April, 2 and 3 May. Maximum sighting, ten on 30 April.
- Cormorant Phalacrocorax carbo
Reports of two to four birds sighted daily, 28 April to 4 May.
- Shag Phalacrocorax aristotelis
Seen daily 28 April to 4 May, small number of breeding pairs. Maximum count of 75 birds recorded on 29 April.
- Grey Heron Ardea cinerea
Two sightings only, a single bird was recorded on 28 April and two were seen overflying on 3 May.
- Brent Goose Branta bernicla
Recorded daily, 28 April to 4 May, generally observed along west coast. The number present varied, there being 71 present on 28 April and 113 present on 29 April, on other days counts ranged from 80 to 92.
- Shelduck Tadorna tadorna
One record only, that of a single bird seen off the east coast on 3 May.
- Marsh Harrier Circus aeruginosus
A female was seen being mobbed by Carrion Crows and passerines over Monku on 4 May.
- Hen Harrier Circus cyaneus
A female recorded flying low over Cooper Down on 28 April.
- Sparrowhawk Accipiter nisus
A male and female were seen overflying the island on 30 April. Two further records both of male birds on 3 and 4 May.
- Kestrel Falco tinnunculus
Male and/or female recorded daily throughout period 28 April to 4 May.
- Hobby Falco subbuteo
Two sightings over Monku and Frying Pan on 30 April, a further report of a single bird on 3 May, over Moss.



GREY HERON



BRENT GOOSE

Peregrine Falco peregrinus
One record only, that of a bird flying south east over Monku-Cloture on 29 April.

Pheasant Phasianus colchicus
Recorded daily, 28 April to 4 May. Maximum count: 15 on 30 April.

Oystercatcher Haematopus ostralegus
Recorded daily throughout period 28 April to 4 May, 145 maximum count during census on 2 May.

Ringed Plover Charadrius hiaticula
One to three reported daily 29 April to 4 May, usually found on Mouissonniere Beach.

Grey Plover Pluvialis squatarola
Seen daily on Bear's and Mouissonniere Beaches. Maximum present: 18 on 1 May.

Knot Calidris canutus
Two recorded on Mouissonniere Beach on 29 April.

Sanderling Calidris alba
Up to 16 present on Mouissonniere Beach, 29 April to 2 May.

Curlew Sandpiper Calidris furruginea
Recorded once only, a single bird present at Mouissonniere Beach on 3 May.

Dunlin Calidris alpina
Daily sightings on Bear's and Mouissonniere Beaches. On 29 April there were 18 present at Mouissonniere.

Bar-tailed Godwit Limosa lapponica
Daily reports of between five and 42 birds, usually found on Bear's and Mouissonniere Beaches. Summer and winter plumage evident.

Whimbrel Numenius phaeopus
Up to eight recorded daily, 29 April to 4 May, all reports were from the northern end of the island.

Curlew Numenius arquata
Small numbers, two to six birds recorded daily, as with the Whimbrel the northern end of the island was favoured by these birds.

Redshank Tringa totanus
One report only, that of a single bird on Mouissonniere on 28 April.

Greenshank Tringa nebularia
A single bird was recorded on Mouissonniere Beach on 29 April.

Common Sandpiper Actitus hypoleucos
Two sightings of single birds, on 30 April and 3 May.

Turnstone Arenaria interpres
Recorded daily in varying numbers. Three only on 28 April, 105 on 2 May.

Little Gull Larus minutus
A solitary gull seen at Mouisonniere, was identified as this species. Field notes describing the bird can be found following this list. Full report to Societe Jersiase, Ornithology Section.

Black-headed Gull Larus ridibundus
Small numbers recorded between 29 April and 2 May. Ten birds present on 30 April.

Lesser Black-backed Gull Larus fuscus
Reported daily, maximum count of 30 on 28 April.

Herring Gull Larus argentatus
Breeding resident, recorded daily.

Great Black-backed Gull Larus marinus
Daily records of two to four birds, breeding pair on nearby island of Jethou.

Sandwich Tern Sterna sandvicensis
Between two to ten sightings recorded daily, throughout period 28 April to 4 May.

Common Tern Sterna hirundo
Up to 20 recorded daily, 28 April to 4 May.

Little Tern Sterna albifrons
Two reported sightings of two and three birds on 29 April and 30 April respectively.

Guillemot Uria aalge
Up to four recorded daily, most sightings reported off east and southeast coast, possible breeding on nearby Jethou.

Razorbill Alca torda
Daily sightings, 15 birds recorded on 3 May being the maximum. Probable breeding on Jethou.

Puffin Fratercula arctica
Recorded daily, usually between Meulettes and Putrainez off southeast coast. Maximum count: 27 on 29 April. Small breeding colony on Jethou.

Stock Dove Columba oenas
Two recorded on 28 and 29 April, a further sighting of a single bird recorded on 4 May.

Woodpigeon Columba palumbus
Up to 50 birds present daily, throughout the period covered by the survey.

Collared Dove Streptopelia decaocto
Between 20 and 25 recorded daily, 28 April to 4 May. On 1 May, ten were seen flying in over the north coast.

Turtle Dove Streptopelia turtur
Single sightings on 30 April to 4 May. Six birds recorded on 29 April.

Cuckoo Cuculus canorus
Up to five birds recorded daily 28 April to 4 May. Two birds observed flying out to sea off the north of the island, 3 May.

Swift Apus apus
Small number seen passing through daily, 28 April to 4 May. Maximum count: 17 on 2 May.

Hoopoe Upupa epops
Single bird sighted, near Barbara's Leap on 29 April. Single sightings daily thereafter between Pt. Sanzebourg and Barbara's Leap. Two birds seen in same area on 3 May.

Wryneck Jynx torquilla
One bird recorded present on the Hotel lawn 29 April; a bird, possibly the same bird, was present on 30 April, a second bird was seen in woodland near The Drive, below Le Manoir, also on 30 April.

Skylark Alauda arvensis
Up to eight sightings reported daily, 29 April to 4 May.

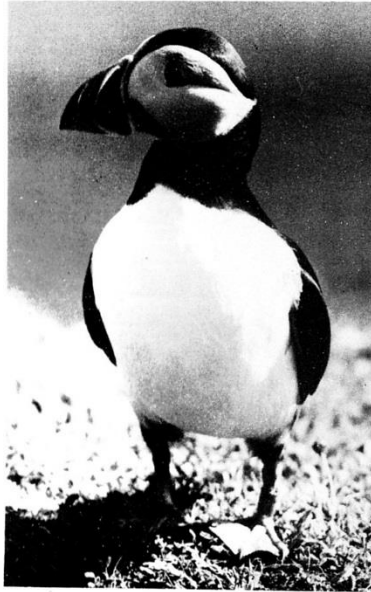
Sand Martin Riparia riparia
Two records only, sightings of single birds on 30 April and 1 May.

Swallow Hirundo rustica
Small numbers recorded daily, 28 April to 4 May. Probable breeding at Le Manoir farm buildings.

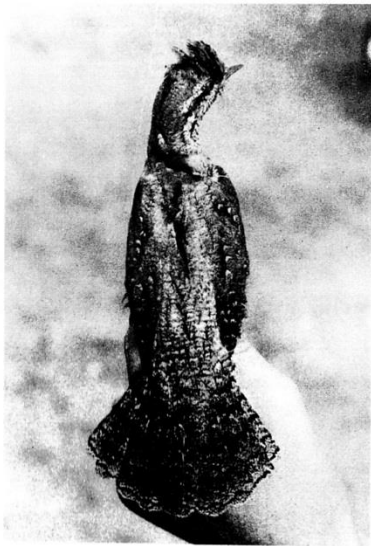
House Martin Delichen urbica
Seen in small numbers daily, 28 April to 4 May, there was a notable increase in number on 1 May.

Tree Pipit Anthus trivialis
One recorded on 29 April, six on 30 April when one was mist netted; one recorded on 4 May.

Meadow Pipit Anthus pratensis
Recorded daily, 28 April to 4 May, between eight and 46 birds counted.



PUFFIN



WRYNECK

Rock Pipit Anthus spinoletta
 Small numbers seen daily, throughout period 28 April to 4 May. Maxima 20 on 30 May.

Yellow Wagtail Motacilla flava
 Daily records 28 April to 2 May, up to seven sightings, usually in pasture, at Home Field and Panto.

Pied Wagtail/White Wagtail Motacilla alba
 Single Pied males were recorded on 28 April and 2 May. A White male was present on 2 May.

Wren Troglodytes troglodytes
 Numerous singing males reported daily, a census on 1 May recorded 34 singing males on the west side of the island, an estimated population of 90 to 110 pairs.

Dunnock Prunella modularis
 Possibly the most numerous passerine present during the period 28 April to 4 May, a census on 4 May suggests 100 to 120 pairs.

Robin Erithacus rubecula
 Up to 10 singing birds counted daily 28 April to 4 May.

Black Redstart Phoenicurus ochruros
 One female recorded in vicinity of Le Manoir, 28 and 29 April, also on 3 May; two females were seen in the same area on 30 April.

Redstart Phoenicurus phoenicurus
 One to eight sightings, male and female daily, 28 April to 4 May.

Whinchat Saxicola rubetra
 Up to four recorded daily, 29 April to 4 May.

Stonechat Saxicola torquata
 Up to eight records daily, both male and female, 28 April to 4 May.

Wheatears Oenanthe oenanthe
 Recorded daily, maxima 12 on 28 April, all sightings were from the north end of the island.

Ring Ouzel Turdus torquatus
 Two males, accompanied by one female, recorded in the Platmore-Cooper Down area on 29 April.

Blackbird Turdus merula
 Present and recorded daily throughout period 28 April to 4 May. Maxima 34 on 30 April.

Song Thrush Turdus philomelos
Daily records, 28 April to 4 May, a census on 1 May produced a total of 32 birds.

Mistle Thrush Turdus viscivorus
Two birds were seen in Monku Field on 29 April, a further sighting of a single bird in the same area was reported on 2 May.

Whitethroat Sylvia communis
Up to eight birds, usually singing males recorded daily, 28 April to 4 May.

Garden Warbler Sylvia borin
Small numbers recorded daily, 28 April to 4 May.

Blackcap Sylvia atricapilla
Daily sightings, 28 April to 4 May. A count of 13 was made in Panto Valley on 1 May. Females were most predominate throughout period.

Wood Warbler Phylloscopus sibilatrix
A total of 19 birds recorded on 30 April, in woods below Le Manoir. Single figure counts in same area thereafter.

Chiffchaff Phylloscopus collybita
Small numbers present throughout period 28 April to 4 May.

Willow Warbler Phylloscopus trochilus
As with the Chiffchaff, small numbers were present 28 April to 4 May. There was, however, an increase in the number present on 2 May.

Goldcrest Regulus regulus
A single bird, giving the appearance of a female, was recorded daily, in the woodland below Le Manoir, 30 April to 3 May.

Firecrest Regulus ignicapillus
One bird seen on 1 May and two birds seen on 2 May were the only records.

Spotted Flycatcher Musciapa striata
Three to four seen daily, 28 April to 1 May. on 2 May there was an increase in the number present, 17 individual birds being counted.

Red-breasted Flycatcher Ficedula parva
A female was observed for some 15 to 20 minutes in woodland below Le Manoir. Full report to Societe Jersiaise Ornithology Section. Field notes describing the bird can be found following this list.

Pied Flycatcher Ficedula hypoleuca
One female seen on 30 April and 1 May, a male seen on 2 May were the only sightings.

Blue Tit Parus caeruleus
 Small number, three to eight, recorded daily, 28 April to 4 May.

Great Tit Parus major
 Up to 12 reported daily, 28 April to 4 May.

Short-toed Treecreeper Certhia brachydactyla
 One mist-netted in Valley Panto on 28 April with further sightings of one or two birds on 29 April to 4 May.

Magpie Pica pica
 Recorded daily, maximum count 11 on 29 April.

Carriion Crow Corvus corone
 Up to ten recorded daily, 28 April to 4 May.

Raven Corvus corax
 Two to five adults recorded daily, 28 April to 4 May. One nest with five well grown pulli at Barbara's Leap.

Starling Sturnus vulgaris
 Plentiful, recorded daily, no specific count made.

House Sparrow Passer domesticus
 Plentiful, seen all round the island, no counts made.

Chaffinch Fringilla coelebs
 Recorded daily in small numbers, 28 April to 4 May.

Greenfinch Carduelis chloris
 Small numbers seen daily, 28 April to 4 May.

Goldfinch Carduelis carduelis
 Recorded daily, usually in pairs, but on occasions seven to eight in twittering charms.

Linnet Carduelis cannabina
 Up to 50 counted on some days, most birds favoured the north end or the fields near Fisherman's Cottage.

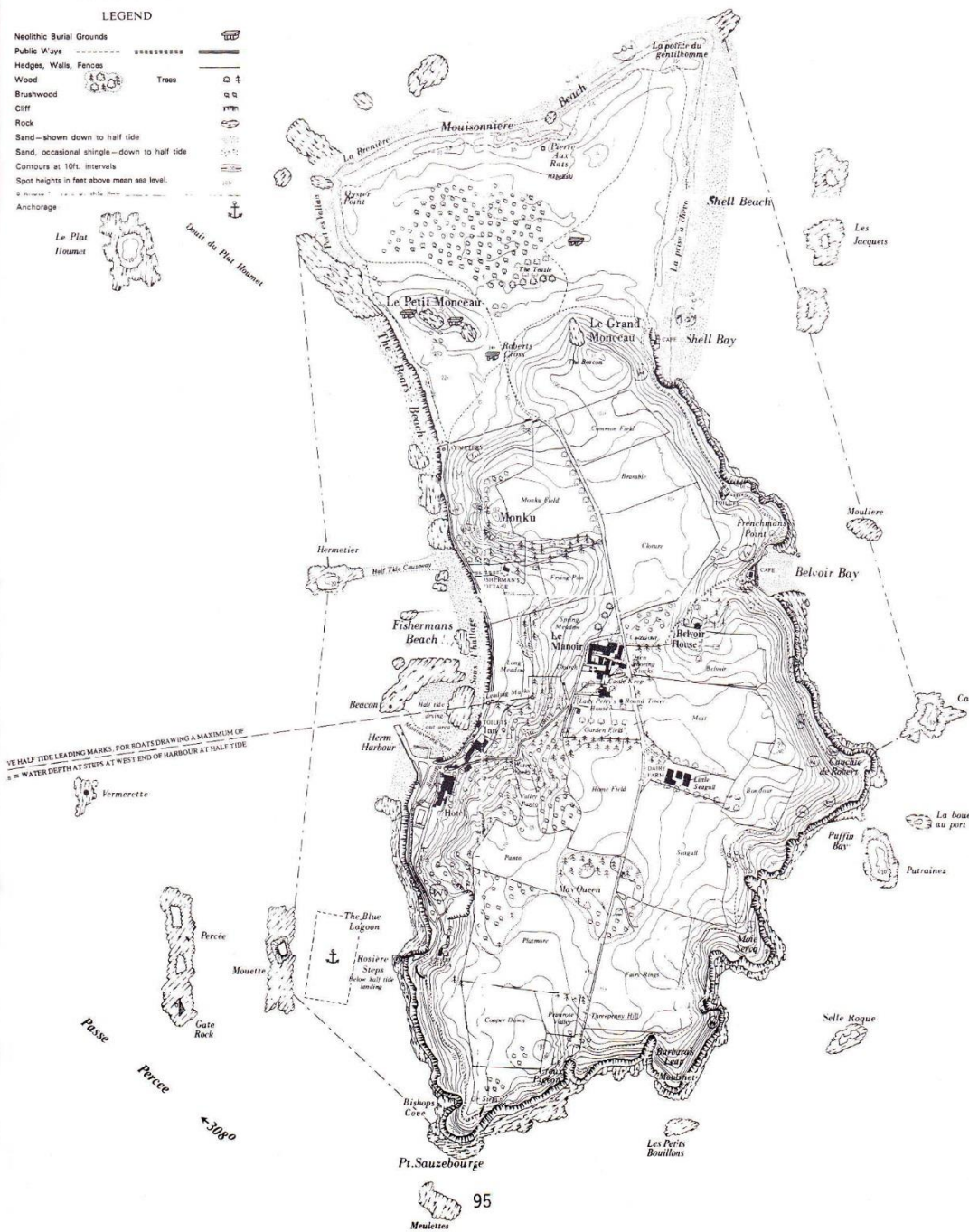
Bullfinch Pyrrhula phrrhula
 Up to four pairs seen daily, unattached females also seen, 28 April to 4 May.

Herm Island

CHANNEL ISLANDS

LEGEND

Neolithic Burial Grounds	
Public Ways	
Hedges, Walls, Fences	
Wood	
Brushwood	
Cliff	
Rock	
Sand—shown down to half tide	
Sand, occasional shingle—down to half tide	
Contours at 10ft. intervals	
Spot heights in feet above mean sea level.	
Anchorage	





RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER

Rare Bird Report

RAFOS Herm 1984

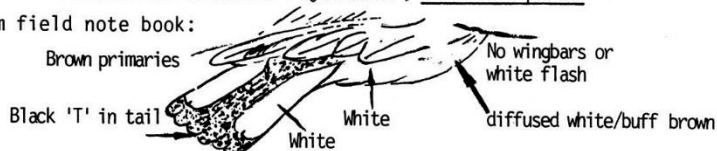
1. Date 30 April 1984
2. Time 10.45 to 11.15 hrs.
3. Place The Woods below Le Manoir.
4. Weather Clear and sunny.
5. Wind Generally easterly, fresh
6. Observers Frank Smith (10 x 40)
Eric Robinson (10 x 40)
Gwynth Robinson (8 x 30)
7. Distance 25-30 metres, down to 12-15 metres.
8. Description Whilst mist-netting, Frank Smith noted a small passerine 'hawking' near the nets, this first observation was made from some 25 - 30 metres, the observer closed to within 12-15 metres and watched the bird for approximately 10 minutes, before he was joined by the other two observers, the bird was then watched for a further seven to eight minutes. The bird was comparatively small and lightish brown in colour, with a distinctly marked tail, black and white, see sketch as drawn in the field. The eyes were large and black, breast to belly light buffish/brown, somewhat ochre coloured near edge of folded wing; then buffish/brown diffused to white on belly through black legs to vent. The back and wings were darker brown, there were definitely no wing bars.
Behaviour: the bird had an upright perching posture, with what can only be described as 'nervous' disposition, wings and tail being flicked quite often. Early in the observation it made several figure of eight type 'hawking' flights after prey and returned onto or near its original perch. During some of these sallies it came very close to the bottom two shelves of the mist-net. Later it was watched feeding phylloscopus fashion on the sycamore flowers, hovering beneath the leaves. The bird was about the same size as the Wood Warblers, Phylloscopus sibilatrix, which were present at the time and also feeding in the immediate area.

Conclusion

Female Red-breasted Flycatcher, Ficedula parva

Copy of sketch from field note book:

Some tail cocking
and general
appearance of
being 'nervous'



Frank Smith is quite familiar with Red-breasted Flycatchers, having observed and ringed them in the Mediterranean region.

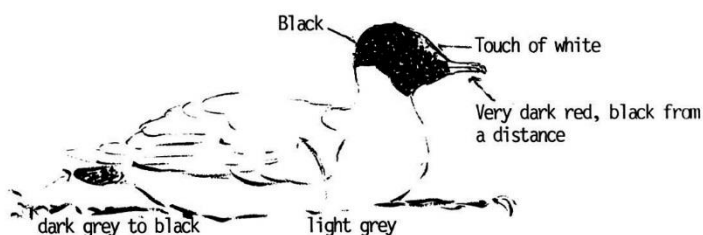
Rare Bird Report

RAFOS Herm 1984

1. Date Monday 30 April 1984
2. Time 16.00 hrs. approximately
3. Place Mouissonniere Beach, Herm
4. Weather Clear and sunny
5. Wind SE fresh
6. Observers Pete Tithecott
Bernard Priaulx
7. Distance 30 metres, but bird allowed observers to close to 10 metres.
8. Description A small gull was seen to settle on the sandy beach, observers first noticed coral red legs (the legs were short) before the bird sat down. Head was definitely black with small amount of white on forehead. Black was from throat to upper nape. Eye appeared black, one observer saw beak as being black while the other saw the beak as very dark red, the closer the observers got to the bird the more apparent became the bird's dark red bill. Body was white with light grey wing, darker grey towards the tips, this was in fact the underside of folded wing. On take-off the dark underwing was very noticeable, also the flight was very 'floppy', round wing tips with no contrasting leading edge. The bird was solitary, and flew over the observers on take off, but was not seen again.

Conclusion Little Gull, Larus minutus

Sketch



Throughout the period 28 April to 4 May, a continuous ringing programme was carried out by the one ringer in the party. Mist nests were set in areas near Le Manoir, with Valley Panto and the woodland either side of The Drive constituting the main ringing sites; some 360 feet of mist net was erected and used as required.

Valley Panto consists of pasture land, edged with thickly grown blackthorn coppice on the eastern side, and dense overgrown bramble scrub on the west. The blackthorn coppice rises steeply to form one side of the valley, and as the bushes were in flower at the time of the visit, they were an obvious attraction to passerines. During an exploratory walk on the afternoon of 25 April, a number of birds was observed feeding among the blackthorns and despite the overgrown nature of the coppice, three rides were hastily cut into the undergrowth, sufficient to allow the erection of mist nets. These nets were to remain in situ, and were used morning and evening throughout our stay on Herm, being left in a furred state overnight.

On the afternoon of 29 April, a further 100 feet of mist net was erected in mature woodland to the east of The Drive; these nets were also operated morning and evening on most days.

A third ringing site was identified and brought into use on 1 May. This site consisted of a small water out-run, in woodland near the Long Meadow. The trickle of water on this site was seen to be used by the birds to bath and drink. Fifty feet of mist net was erected and operated during afternoon and evening sessions until 3 May; the warm weather helped to make this site quite productive.

Two other sites were worked for short periods, but they did not prove effective. Mist netting was not easy on the island, the ground and undergrowth requiring extensive preparation before nets could be erected, and although the sites chosen were deemed to offer the most effective return none were as productive as had been hoped.

The somewhat modest ringing returns did not, however, fully reflect the time and effort expended. It is possible that with different weather conditions, the ringing returns at the sites used may well have been greater. The ageing and sexing of all birds processed was completed using 'Identification Guide to European Passerines' Lars Svensson, and BTO Guides.

The following controls are worthy of mention:

1. Jersey I 30325 Chiffchaff, Phylloscopus collybita
 Age/Sex 2. Ringing date 3.10.82.
 Quanteraine Valley Guernsey P.J. Vaudin
 Controlled date 1.5.84
 Valley Panto, Herm, Guernsey Frank Smith
2. Jersey C 098193 Greenfinch, Carduelis chloris
 Age/Sex 6 Male. Ringing date 15.1.83.
 Vauvert, St.Peter Port, Guernsey P.J. Vaudin
 Controlled date 3.5.84
 Valley Panto, Herm, Guernsey Frank Smith

Daily ringing totals

Species	Date							Total
	28.4	29.4	30.4	1.5	2.5	3.5	4.5	
Collared Dove						1		1
Swallow	5			2				7
Tree Pipit			1					1
Wren	1	2	1			1		5
Dunnoch	1	2		2	3			8
Robin					3			3
Blackbird				2	6+3*			8+3*
Song Thrush			1		5			6
Garden Warbler	1				1	1		3
Blackcap		1	1	3	1			6
Wood Warbler			1					1
Chiffchaff	1	3	1	4	3			12
Willow Warbler	3	1	1	2	5	2		14
Spotted Flycatcher		1			4			5
Blue Tit	1							1
Great Tit					3			3
Short-toed Treecreeper	1							1
Starling				1				1
House Sparrow	1				2	5	2	10
Chaffinch	1			1	3	3		8
Greenfinch	1			1	1	4	1	8
Goldfinch	1			1	1	4	1	8
Linnet						4		4
Total	18	10	7	19	44	25	4	127

* 3 pulli

Wing lengths and weight of birds ringed

Species	Wing length (mm)	Weight grams.	No.	Wing length mean	Weight mean	Age Sex
Collared Dove	180	142.5	1			4
Swallow	126 123 123 123 123 121 130	20.8 20.8 19.5 18.6 17.5 16.2 19.4	7	123.7	18.9	4 M 4 F 4 M 4 M 4 M 4 4 M
Tree Pipit	86	25.5	1			4
Wren	49 49 50 50 48	10.8 10.8 11.2 11.2 11.5	5	49.2	11.1	4 5 4 4 4
Duncock	70 73 72 71 72 78 68 70	22.5 25.8 23.2 24.8 23.2 22.6 21.8 24.2	8	71.8	23.5	4 4 F 4 M 4 F 4 F 4 F 4 M 4 M
Robin	72 69 72 73	23.0 20.0 18.8 20.2	4	71.5	20.5	5 4 5 4
Blackbird	121 136 128 128 122 125 129 128	92.0 90.0 83.0 78.0 87.5 85.5 95.0 78.0	8	127.1	86.1	4 F 4 M 6 M 5 M 4 F 4 F 5 M 5 M
Song Thrush	118 116 113 120 120 117	66.0 78.0 71.0 76.0 74.0 73.5	6	117.3	73.0	5 5 5 4 5 4

Garden Warbler	76 77 78	15.6 17.4 18.0	3	77	17.0	4 4 4
Blackcap	75 73 74 74 75 74	16.6 15.4 16.0 16.2 15.6 15.2	6	74.1	15.8	4 I 4 M 4 M 4 M 4 I 4 M
Wood Warbler	77	10.2	1			4
Chiffchaff	61 61 55 64 56 58 56 56 58 56 59 57	8.6 9.4 6.8 7.8 7.6 8.2 7.0 7.4 8.0 8.0 8.0 9.5	12	58.0	8.0	4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4
Willow Warbler	62 65 63 62 63 60 76 64 65 62 64 63 67 64	9.2 8.8 8.5 8.0 9.0 7.5 9.4 8.8 7.5 8.5 8.0 9.0 10.0 8.4	14	63.6	8.6	4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4
Spotted Flycatcher	85 82 87 88 84	16.2 14.6 15.3 13.5 15.5	5	85.2	15.0	4 4 4 4 4
Blue Tit	69	11.6	1			4
Great Tit	76 73 78	18.4 18.0 18.8	3	75.6	18.4	5 M 4 M 4 M
Short-toed Treecreeper	63	10.0	Hindclaw 8.5 Bill 19.0			4

Starling	130	82.5	1			4 M
House Sparrow	80 80 79 78 75 79 80 76 75 78	29.4 34.5 33.5 27.0 27.0 31.2 29.0 28.5 29.6 28.6	10	78.0	29.8	5 M 4 M 4 M 5 F 4 F 4 M 4 M 4 M 4 F 4 M
Chaffinch	80 90 89 84 84 89 87	22.8 23.6 23.0 23.8 23.0 24.4 23.0	7	86.1	23.4	4 M 4 M 4 F 4 F 4 F 4 M 4 M
Greenfinch	85 87 90 88	29.8 29.4 28.0 30.2	4	87.5	29.4	5 M 4 F 4 M 5 M
Goldfinch	78 78 79 76 75 80 78 76	16.8 16.4 16.6 16.2 15.0 17.0 17.0 18.5	8	77.5	16.7	5 M 4 M 4 M 4 F 4 F 4 M 4 F 4 F
Linnet	80 79 77 78	18.6 19.4 17.8 17.4	4	78.5	18.3	4 M 5 M 5 F 5 F

Weather

Date	Conditions	Temp. (°C)	Cloud (okta)	Wind	Force (Beaufort)
28.4.84	Sunny a.m. p.m.	10-15 16-18	0	E	2-3
29.4.84	Sunny cold a.m. p.m.	10 15	0	E	2-3
30.4.84	Sunny warm a.m. p.m.	12 16-18	0	N	2-3
1.5.84	Sunny cool a.m. warm p.m.	10-12 16-18	0	E	2-3
2.5.84	Cloud cold	10-12	8	NE	3-4
3.5.84	Sunny warm	14-18	0	-	-
4.5.85	Cloudy cool showers early p.m. followed by rain	13	8	-	-
5.5.84	Overcast cool a.m.	10-12	8	E	1-2

Note: All the above recordings are estimates and approximate.

Flowers, Trees, Shrubs, Animal and Insect List

Although no specific census of flowers, shrubs, trees, animals and insects was made, the following were identified and recorded during bird surveys:

Flowers

Lesser Celandine	<u>Ranunculus ficaria</u>
Common Fumitory	<u>Fumaria afficinalis</u>
Common Dog Violet	<u>Viola riviniana</u>
Sea Campion	<u>Silene vulgaris</u>
Red Campion	<u>Silene dioica</u>
Chickweed	<u>Stellaria media</u>
Common Storksbill	<u>Erodium cicutarium</u>
Gorse	<u>Ulex europaeus</u>
Birdsfood-trefoil	<u>Lotus corniculatus</u>
Salad Burnet	<u>Sanguisorba minor</u>
Creeping cinquefoil	<u>Potentilla reptans</u>
Bramble or Blackberry	<u>Rubus fruticosus</u>
Burnet Rose	<u>Rosa pimpinellifolia</u>
Navelwort or Pennywort	<u>Umbilicus rupestris</u>
Sea Holly	<u>Eryngium maritimum</u>
Alexanders	<u>Smyrnum alusatrum</u>
Ivy	<u>Hedera helix</u>
Goosegrass or Cleavers	<u>Gallium aparine</u>
Daisy	<u>Bellis perennis</u>
Dandelion	<u>Taraxacum officinale</u>
Thrift or Sea Pink	<u>Armeria maritima</u>
Primrose	<u>Primula vulgaris</u>
Scarlet Pimpernel	<u>Anagallis arvensis</u>
Common Forget-me-not	<u>Myosotis arvensis</u>
Ivy-leaved Toadflax	<u>Cymbalaria muralis</u>
Field Speedwell	<u>Veronica agrestis</u>
Bucks-horn Plantain	<u>Plantago coronopus</u>
Stinging Nettle	<u>Urtica dioica</u>
Butchers Broom	<u>Ruscus aculeatus</u>
Bluebell	<u>Endymion non-scriptus</u>
Lords and Ladies	<u>Arum maculatum</u>

Trees and Shrubs

Sycamore
Blackthorn
Elder
English Elm
Holm Oak
White Poplar
Common Ash
Snow Gum
Monterey Pine

Acer pseudoplatanus
Prunus spinosa
Sambucus nigra
Ulmus procera
Quercus ilex
Populus alba
Fraxinus excelsior
Eucalyptus niphophila
Pinus radiata

Butterflies, moths, bees

Red Admiral
Peacock
Holly Blue
Green Hairstreak
Brimstone
Small white
Speckled wood
Wall
Brimstone moth
Bumble bee species

Vannessa atalanta
Inachis io
Celastrina argiolus
Callophrys rubi
Gonepteryx rhamni
Argocheia rapae
Pararge aegeria
Lasiommata megera
Opisthograptis luteolata
Bombus sp.

Mammals

Greater white-toothed shrew
Bat species
Rabbit
Brown rat

Crocidura russula
Chiroptera sp.
Oryctolagus cuniculus
Rattus norvegicus

Reptiles

Slow-worm

Anguis fragilis

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Addendum to RAFOS Journal no.13

Occurrence of White-eyed Gull, Larus leucopthalmus, on Masirah Island

During the RAFOS expedition to Masirah Island, October to November 1979, a Gull was observed by expedition members during the first full day on the island. For reasons outlined below, the record was not submitted for inclusion in the Systematic List of the expedition report.

Early in the morning of 25 October 1979, M. Jennings, K. Heron, G. Pudney and W. Taylor observed a gull swimming some 30-40 metres offshore close by the jetty adjacent to the camp used by retainers working at the SOAF camp. The bird then moved on to rest on some rocks.

It was noticeably different from the numerous Sooty Gulls, Larus hemprichii, which were also present. Differences from the Sooty Gulls were:

- (a) bill much longer and more slender but uniformly dark rather than red with a black tip of the Sooty;
- (b) light coloured legs slightly yellowish;
- (c) head coloured more chestnut and the black greyer (lighter) than for Sooty gulls.

The gull was photographed by W.T.

It was identified by M.J. as a White-eyed Gull, Larus leucopthalmus. The bird was not seen subsequently by any member of the expedition.

The record was not submitted for inclusion in the Systematic List because it was treated with scepticism as it arose as a rare bird report from visitors within hours of their arrival on the island.

The photographic evidence was not subsequently seen until November 1983 by M.J. when positive confirmation of the sighting was achieved. This record should now be included in the Systematic List for the RAFOS Masirah 1979 expedition.

There are up to five previous records for this gull on Masirah Island. It is likely to be an irregular visitor but could probably be overlooked if amongst the ever present flocks of Sooty Gulls. Previous occurrences recorded are of individuals on 8 and 27 October 1974 and 3 November 1974 and 8 April 1975 (Griffiths and Rogers, 1975). C.M. Greaves reports (pers.comm. with M.J.) seeing one White-eyed Gull on Masirah, date unknown, but is understood to be the September record given by Gallagher and Woodcock (1980). M.D. Gallagher has advised (pers.comm. with M.J.) that there are no other records from elsewhere in Oman but that near Aden it occurs for most of the year in small to moderate numbers, fluctuating from year to year. The nearest breeding locality to Masirah is probably on the islands at the mouth of the Red Sea (von Warthausen, 1860 and Bark-Jones, 1964).

This addendum to the 1979 RAFOS Masirah report was submitted by M. Jennings and edited by K. Earnshaw.

A further addendum to the 1979 Masirah report concerning the occurrence of House Sparrow, Passer domesticus, on Masirah Island has been rejected.

EDITORIAL NOTE:

It is the policy of the journal to give the fullest freedom to contributors to express their opinions. Only by doing this can the Society carry out the terms of its charter. The views expressed in this Journal therefore are those of the authors alone, and do not necessarily represent the views of the Editor.

