

JED.

TRANSACTIONS
of the
WHARFEDALE NATURALISTS' SOCIETY
VOL. XII
JANUARY - DECEMBER 1957.

WHARFEDALE NATURALISTS' SOCIETY

Officers for the Session 1957-58

President	C. G. Booth, M.B.O.U.
Vice-President	H. A. Robinson
Hon. Secretary	Mrs. A. C. M. Duncan
Hon. Asst. Secretary and Librarian	Miss E. A. W. Gill
Hon Treasurer	H. J. Williamson
Committee	Mrs. O. M. Pennock, Dr. K. C. Crosbie A. C. M. Duncan, W. F. Fearnley H. Marjoram, E. S. Skinner.

Recorders

Botany	Mrs. A. C. M. Duncan.
Vertebrates (other than birds)	H. Marjoram
Ornithology	W. F. Fearnley
Geology	P. D. Lamming

MEMBERSHIP

In March 1957, the membership was 100 ordinary members, 5 juniors and 5 honorary members.

This total includes 14 founder members, joining in 1945, and 19 who joined between 1946 and 1950.

FINANCIAL POSITION

The balance on the account for the year ending March 31st, 1957 was £6.17.7d with a total balance in hand of £31. 4. -d.

At the Annual Meeting the subscription was kept at 10/-d and 2/6d for juniors.

YORKSHIRE NATURALISTS' UNION

The Society has continued to be affiliated to the Union, and members have attended meetings and excursions. Mr. E. S. Skinner was elected Chairman of the Vertebrate Zoology Sections for 1958.

YORKSHIRE NATURALISTS' TRUST

The Society is a member of the Yorkshire Naturalists' Trust.

EXHIBITION AND OPEN NIGHT

In March 1957 an Exhibition and Open Night was held in the Riddings Road Lecture Hall. Exhibits relating to all branches of the Society were on view, and during the two hours of opening many members and friends came to see the displays.

ANNUAL DINNER

This was held in March, 1957. Mr. Arthur Gilpin, F.R.P.S. and Mrs. Gilpin were the chief guests, and afterwards Mr. Gilpin showed some of his lantern slides of birds. About 50 members and friends attended.

THANKS

Once again the Society is indebted to all who have helped, including visiting lecturers, the Editor of the Ilkley Gazette, and the Ilkley Surveyor's Office.

SUMMER PROGRAMME 1957

Leaders

April 30	MIDDLETON	W. F. Fearnley
May 7	ADDINGHAM MOOR SIDE	Miss B. Knowles
May 14	LINDLEY	H. E. Adamson
May 19	FAIRBURN	E. S. Skinner
May 28	BURLEY	Miss M. Dalby
June 4	WEST END	Mrs. A. C. M. Duncan
June 18	UPPER DENTON	Miss J. C. Salter
June 23	BEMPTON and FLAMBOROUGH	H. A. Robinson
July 2	BOLTON ABBEY	Mrs. O. M. Pennock

WINTER PROGRAMME 1957-8

Oct. 1	Members' Slides	
Oct. 15	A visit to Assam	Miss L.I.Scott, M.Sc.F.L.S.
Oct. 29	A Visit to St. Kilda	A. D. Bateman
Nov. 12	What is a Naturalist?	W. Flesher
Nov. 26	Northern Bird Sanctuaries	W. Bennett
Dec. 10	In search of Birds	H. Marjoram
Jan. 7	Evolution of Mountain Scenery	C. Barringer
Jan. 21	Some British Wildfowl	C. G. Booth, M.B.O.U.
Feb. 4	Members' Slides and Recorders' Reports	
Feb. 18	Films	C. G. Booth, M.B.O.U.
Mar. 4	Water-Moulds	A. D. Greenwood, B.Sc.
Mar. 18	Birds at Home and Abroad	E. S. Skinner.
Mar. 28	Annual Dinner	
April 1	Annual General Meeting.	

WEATHER REPORT 1957

	JAN.	FEB.	MAR.	APR.	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG.	SEPT	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.
<u>TEMPERATURE</u>	degrees F.											
Highest Maximum	57	53	64	63	69	84	79	76	67	68	53	55
Lowest Minimum	29	22	29	29	33	36	45	43	37	33	26	21
Average	40	38	45	47	51	60	62	58	53	51	42	38

	JAN.	FEB.	MAR.	APR.	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG.	SEPT.	OCT.	NOV.	DEC.
<u>SUNSHINE</u> hours												
Monthly total	30.6	78.1	72.9	135.0	184.2	285.9	121.9	86.4	125.0	86.0	45.1	26.2
Annual total	1277.3 hours											

<u>RAINFALL</u> number of days												
.2 inches or over	4	7	3	0	3	2	3	7	7	3	5	4
Monthly total	2.71	3.16	2.04	0.31	1.43	1.87	2.22	3.91	5.69	3.25	1.81	4.25
Annual total	32.65 inches											

<u>WIND FORCE</u> number of days												
8 or more	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
6 - 7	2	-	-	1	-	-	2	4	7	6	4	10
4 - 5	9	4	14	17	7	6	18	16	14	9	11	5
1 - 3	19	23	17	12	24	20	14	10	8	15	15	12
calm	1	1	-	-	-	4	3	-	1	1	-	2

The year was in most respects an average one, the annual rainfall at 32.65 inches being somewhat below normal, and the sunshine at 1277.3 hours normal. The spell of dry weather began in March, continuing until July, and causing some anxiety to the water department. By the end of the first week in August rain alleviated the position. August and September were wet months, and the last day of the year had over 2 inches of rain.

On September 29th the Aurora Borealis was seen in the Ilkley district as well as over a large part of the county, the display not being outstandingly spectacular.

A. C. M. DUNCAN.

BOTANICAL SECTION

Work in 1957 was centred mainly on the immediate vicinity for the mapping scheme of the Botanical Society of the British Isles. For convenience of this report, the three 10 kilometre grid squares studied are designated:

A	Bolton Abbey district	44/05
B	Blubberhouses "	44/15
C	Ilkley "	44/14

The following list of species new to the Society's records shows how much can be gained from careful study of a comparatively small area.

	Found in grid squares	
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i> L.	B	C
<i>Carex acuta</i>	B	
<i>Carex lepidocarpa</i>	A	
<i>Carex laevigata</i>	B	
<i>Carex vesicaria</i>	A	B
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	B	C
<i>Cochlearia alpina</i>	A	

Botanical Section continued:	Found in grid squares		
✓ Coeloglossum viride.			C
✓ Daucus carota.			C
✓ Elatine hexandra Peplis porkula.		B	
✓ Eleocharis multicaulis.		B	
Equisetum fluviatile L.	A	B	C
Equisetum telmateia Ehrh.	A		C
Eupatorium cannabinum <i>repeated</i>	A		C
Euphorbia peplus L.			C
Festuca pratensis L.		B	C
Festuca rubra L.			C
Festuca gigantea (L) Vill.		B	C
Glyceria declinata Br. & Br.		B	
Glyceria plicata Fr.	A		C
Juncus acutiflorus Ehrh. ex Hoffm.		B	C
Listera cordata (L) R. Br.	A	B	
Myosotis caespitosa K. F. Schultz		B	C
Myosotis collina var. <i>mississina</i> Reiche			
Polygonum persicaria L.	A	B	C
Polygonum lapathifolium L.		B	
Potamogeton crispus L.			C
Quercus petraea <i>repeated</i>			C
Ribes uva-crispa <i>repeated</i>			C
Senecio squalidus ?		B	
Senecio sylvaticus L.		B	
Trientalis europaea	A		
Vaccinium intermedium (G.A.S)	A		

I am grateful to Miss M. Dalby and Miss R. Payne for their records, and to Mr. G. A. Shaw of the Y.N.U. for his help.

Mrs. F. Draper of Burley Woodhead has recorded the following aliens and casuals not recorded by the Society before:

Bupleurum rotundifolium <i>no.</i>	Centaurea diluta
Verbascum virgatum	Festuca heterophylla
Helianthus annuus	Alopecurus myosuroides

The continued spreading in Wharfedale of Veronica filiformis, Epilobium pendunculare and Impatiens glandulifera has been noted this year.

Permission was kindly given by Leeds Waterworks Board to search for plants on the reservoir banks, where about 70 species were found including those on the exposed parts when the water was low. Near to the reservoirs Miss Dalby found Juncus tenuis growing in felled woodland at a new locality for this species.

Following last year's heavy fruiting of trees, fruiting was very poor. It was interesting to note that ash keys and holly berries remained on the trees long after the winter was over.

J. E. DUNCAN
Recorder.

VERTEBRATE SECTION

A small bat was seen flying near Ilkley on March 8th by Miss Gill.

March 10th	Weasel seen at Riffa	H.M.
May 25th	Red squirrel in Grass wood	Dr. Crosbie
June 20th	Weasel seen carrying a small bird at Riffa	H.M.
August 15th	Nest containing 3 young hedgehogs found under a fowl house	H.M.

A hare was seen to swim across Lindley Reservoir on May 15th by the lodge keeper, apparently of its own free will.

A red deer was seen near Ilkley by Mrs. Pennock.

H. MARJORAM, Recorder.

ORNITHOLOGICAL SECTION

<u>Great Crested Grebe</u>	In usual haunts but rather fewer than last year. One with chick May 17th on Otley gravel pits.
<u>Little Grebe</u>	They are seen regularly on most local waters.
<u>Heron</u>	The Heron count was undertaken by the Society on April 22nd when 7 occupied nests were found at Harewood.
<u>Mallard</u>	On 23rd April 11 ducklings at Harewood.
<u>Teal</u>	Usual flock seen at Denton on many occasions.
<u>Pintail</u>	A drake on Lindley on February 24th, also one on the same water on December 22nd.
<u>Shoveler</u>	Two near Ben Rhydding filter beds January 21st..
<u>Goldeneye</u>	4 at Fewston April 12th 2 on Panorama reservoir October 27th.
<u>Snews</u>	3 female or juveniles seen at Harewood Park February 16th.
<u>Grey Geese</u>	Heard flying over Middleton in the early hours October 2nd.
<u>Pinkfooted Goose</u>	One opposite Riversdale on November 16th and seen on several subsequent occasions to end of year associating with Muscovy Ducks.
<u>Canada Geese</u>	Nine on 22nd April, Marsh Ghyll reservoir. 14 on April 27th also on Marsh Ghyll. A pair with 6 goslings near Fewston April 27th. 4 in Marsh Ghyll area 17th March. 61 at Fewston October 20th.
<u>Mute Swan</u>	A pair nested successfully on Ilkley Sewage Disposal Works. 6 cygnets hatched, 5 reared.

Ornithological Section (continued)

- Whooper Swan 11 adults and 2 juveniles on December 22nd at Grimwith.
2 on Swinsty reservoir on December 27th.
- Buzzard 1 on Ilkley Moor July 18th.
1 near Kettlewell October 5th
- Merlin 1 flew over Ben Rhydding filter beds March 2nd.
A pair known to have nested successfully on a moor near Ilkley.
- Kestrel Often seen during the year flying over the West side of Ilkley.
Seen to kill a young cuckoo on Ilkley Moor on August 7th.
2 at Ben Rhydding filter beds December 1st.
- Partridge Seen regularly on the West side of Ilkley also in Denton area and at Ben Rhydding where 10 were seen on 1st December.
- Corncrake Has been reported from the Leeds Road area where its persistent calling kept people awake at nights during May and June.
One heard calling at Addingham Moorside in May.
- Moorhen 34 at Ben Rhydding filter beds on October 20th.
- Coot On most of the local reservoirs but especially numerous on Denton Park and Farnley lakes.
- Lapwing About 250 at Langbar March 30th.
Flocking at the end of June 240 in field near Riversdale cafe June 24th. 800 in same place July 10th.
It has been reported that 5 nestlings were hatched from the same nest.
- Golden Plover Seen on Ilkley Moor 1st week in January.
200/300 at Langbar March 30th.
57 of Northern race at Langbar April 22nd.
22 Marsh Ghyll on 27th June.
- Snipe 4 Marsh Ghyll area heard to drum 17th March.
- Woodcock 1 on Ilkley Moor on March 23rd.
1 at Denton April 14th.
- Curlew Seen on the moor during the first week of January.
49 Marsh Ghyll on 3rd March. 12 in the same area on the 17th March.
11 resting in a field near Blubberhouses November 23rd.
- Whimbrel 1 heard calling at midnight at Ben Rhydding on July 4th.
- Green Sandpiper 1 near river at Ben Rhydding July 9th.
Reported on several days between 2nd and 25th August.
No doubt different birds on migration.
- Common Sandpiper 1 at Ben Rhydding filter beds April 18th.
1 at Marsh Ghyll April 22nd.

Ornithological Section (continued)

- Redshank 1 at Burley Swamp 10th February.
1 at Ben Rhydding filter beds 26th February.
Many seen during March and 12 at Ben Rhydding
gravel pits on April 16th.
- Greenshank From 11th August to the 18th one or two seen at
Ben Rhydding filter beds.
- Dunlin 3 at Esscroft April 5th.
- Lesser Black-backed Gull 30 near Riversdale 31st August.
On December 27th an estimate taken of the Gull roost
on Swinsty reservoir showed about 1,600 Blackheaded,
the remaining 700 included Herring, Greater and Lesser
Black-backs and Common. Failing light prevented a
more accurate count of the larger Gulls.
- Herring Gulls Often seen in the field opposite Riversdale Cafe.
2 birds on 3rd February building up to 75 by the
15th of the month. 40 together near the same place
on 3rd March.
- Blackheaded Gull About 150 on 17th March in Marsh Ghyll area.
- Black Tern 4 at Swinsty reservoir September 22nd.
- Common or Artic Tern 1 at Riversdale August 26th
1 at Ben Rhydding September 21st
1 at Lindley September 22nd also 4 at Swinsty
on same date.
- Wood Pigeon Bred in usual numbers.
- Cuckoo First heard on April 22nd on Ilkley Moor.
August 7th a young cuckoo was seen to be killed
by a Kestrel on moor.
- Little Owl Seen March 3rd near Marsh Ghyll reservoir.
Nestlings ringed at Addingham Moorside and at Middleton.
- Tawny Owl Nesting in an old Magpie's nest at Middleton.
- Nightjar Has been reported from 3 districts within a few miles
of Ilkley. Nests have been found in two of these areas.
- Swift 2 on May 2nd at Burley.
Several young ones saved from certain death when a house
was demolished in July.
Several in King's Road May 12th.
Passing through up to 21st September.
- Kingfisher This brilliantly coloured bird continues to be seen
flying up and down the river.
- Green Woodpecker 2 at Ben Rhydding January 21st.
1 in Fieldfare garden October 12th. Also in woods
on both sides of the river.

Ornithological Section (continued)

- Gt. Spotted Woodpecker Fairly frequent visitors to some bird tables.
- Swallow First seen April 7th at Otley Bridge.
2 in Ilkley April 14th, last date 29th September at Blubberhouses.
- House Martin 2 at Chelker April 7th
More than 40 at Ben Rhydding September 21st.
Last date September 29th at Ben Rhydding.
- Sand Martin First seen 17th March flying up valley.
27th March 50 over Ben Rhydding filter beds.
One ringed in August 1955 was found dead at Otley in May 1957. Quite a number of these birds have been ringed and it is interesting to note that recoveries of the previous year have been found roosting in the same place.
Last date September 21st at Ben Rhydding.
- Jay Seen in Panorama February 16th. They have been frequent visitors to the Middleton side where 4 have been ringed. During the last few years this species appears to have increased on the South side of the river.
- Blue Tit Appear to have increased in numbers during the later part of the year.
- Coal Tit Usually seen in gardens during the winter months feeding with other tits, but it is noticeable that they are much more timid than the others and do not remain to eat the food, but fly away taking the food with them. 5 have been ringed in 1957.
- Longtailed Tit A party with other tits at Ben Rhydding on 15th February. Flock of 20 at Fewston on February 24th.
2 were ringed during March.
- Nuthatch One in Weston Woods April 4th.
This species has also been seen at various times in Bolton Woods and in Harewood Park.
- Treecreeper One of these birds has been ringed and is a new species for our ringing records. Observers feel that the numbers of these birds have increased during the last year.
- Dipper 4 nestlings ringed on April 13th at Ilkley.
Juveniles a week old ringed at Harewood on 23rd April.
- Mistle Thrush Frequent visitor to local gardens. Family parties often seen flying up to the moors to feed.
- Fieldfare Seen on November 3rd at Bolton Abbey.
25 at Ben Rhydding on November 23rd.
About 100 on December first in field on west side of Ilkley.
- Song Thrush A Juvenile ringed April 14th at Middleton.

Ornithological Section (continued)

- Redwings 25 on January 25th in a garden in King's Road.
A few with Fieldfares on December 1st in a field on the west side of Ilkley.
300 near Farnley Hall on 15th February.
During the later part of the year very few of this species have been reported, this is probably due to the fact that there are very few berries on the trees this season.
- Ring Ousel First seen on Ilkley Moor on March 19th.
On March 23rd two pairs on the moor, the males singing, one male singing near Cow and Calf on the same day.
One near Grimwith on the 24th March.
3 pairs at Langbar April 22nd.
Several nests have been found during the season but unfortunately most of these came to grief, only 5 young birds were ringed.
- Blackbird A ringed bird was caught and released proving age to be over 7 years.
- Wheatear First seen on Ilkley Moor March 19th.
Seen at Grimwith March 24th.
- Stonechat One near Parsival Hall Appletreewick October 5th.
- Whinchat One Langbar Road May 6th.
Last date September 1st.
- Redstart One male at Harewood Park April 21st.
- Robin A bird ringed 2nd May 1952 as an adult was found dead on 17th October, 1957. This bird must have been not less than 6 years old.
- Blackcap One male at Harewood Park April 23rd.
- C. Whitethroat One seen in Ilkley April 24th.
Last seen September 1st.
- Willow Warbler 2 singing at Ben Rhydding April 6th.
1 at Harewood Park April 7th.
1 singing near Denton April 14th.
- Chiffchaff 1 heard singing at Harewood 30th March.
1 singing in Hebers Mount garden April 24th.
- Wood Warbler 1 at Bolton Abbey April 27th.
- Goldcrest Seen and heard frequently as previously.
- Spotted Flycatcher First seen 2nd May Ben Rhydding.
1 pair in Panorama Wood on May 20th.
- Pied Flycatcher First seen April 27th. Used one of the W.N.S. boxes for nesting; 3 nestlings ringed.
Also nested in a hole in a large elm tree at Middleton, nestlings reared successfully.

Ornithological Section (continued)

<u>Meadow Pipit</u>	May 6th nest with young at Middleton. 50 on March 23rd near Ben Rhydding filter beds.
<u>Tree Pipit</u>	First seen and heard Bolton Abbey April 27th.
<u>Pied Wagtail</u>	200 plus at Ben Rhydding filter beds on September 1st.
<u>White Wagtail</u>	One at Ben Rhydding filter beds April 20th.
<u>Grey Wagtail</u>	Distributed up and down the river and streams.
<u>Yellow Wagtail</u>	First date April 16th at Ben Rhydding. Last date September 1st also at Ben Rhydding.
<u>Great Grey Shrike</u>	None have been reported this year, this is the first time for several years and may be accounted for by the mild weather before Christmas.
<u>Starling</u>	1,500 in Marsh Ghyll area on 3rd March.
<u>Hawfinch</u>	3 or 4 at Bolton Abbey April 27th. 5 in same place on May 26th. Also seen in Ilkley and Beamsley. A pair nested at Middleton in the same tree as a pair of Wood Pigeons.
<u>Greenfinch</u>	About 70 at Ben Rhydding August 25th.
<u>Goldfinch</u>	Have been seen frequently during the year at Ben Rhydding and on the west side of Ilkley, usually feeding on thistle seeds.
<u>Siskin</u>	10 feeding on Alders at Ben Rhydding filter beds. Also seen at Riffa during the same month.
<u>Linnet</u>	20 at Ben Rhydding filter beds August 25th.
<u>Twite</u>	One at Grimwith November 24th.
<u>Common Redpoll</u>	Many reported from the Ben Rhydding area, seen feeding with Siskins there on November 17th.
<u>Bullfinch</u>	During September 8 in one garden 6 of which were caught and ringed. 6 at Ben Rhydding on 26th December. This species has certainly increased in our district, many reports have been received.
<u>Brambling</u>	20 at Harewood Park on April 7th.
<u>House Sparrow</u>	An albino reported from Ben Rhydding several times during the year. One young one reared by hand for 8 weeks, then ringed and released. Stayed in garden for about one month, has not been seen since.
<u>Tree Sparrow</u>	2 at Bolton Abbey April 20th.

W. F. FEARNLEY,
Recorder.

TRAP REPORT

During 1957 the members of our Society have ringed a total of 1,812 birds of 60 species against a total of 1,172 birds of 46 species in 1956. New species ringed this year are: Tree Creeper, Golden Plover, Corn Bunting.

We have had a number of recoveries and the following are worthy of note:-

- RING OUSEL - ringed as nestling near Ilkley 19.5.57, recovered Vergava, San Sebastian, Spain 20.10.57.
- CHAFFINCH - ringed Ilkley 24.9.56, recovered Claremorris (Co. Mayo) Ireland 7.2.57.
- SANDMARTIN - ringed as Juvenile 23.8.55 at Ilkley, recovered at Otley 27.5.57.
- LESSER BLACKBACK - ringed at Tarn Brook Fell 21.7.56, recovered Vagos, Nr. Aveiro, (Beira Litoral) Portugal 21.8.57.
- SONG THRUSH - ringed as juvenile Ilkley 12.6.57, recovered Isle of Man 30.11.57.
- BLACKBIRD - ringed in 1950 and caught and released at the end of 1957 (over 7 years old)
- WILLOW WARBLER - ringed as juvenile Ilkley, 7.8.55, recovered where ringed and released 15.5.57.
- ROBIN - ringed as an adult in Ilkley 2.5.52, recovered dead where ringed 14.10.57 about 6 years old.

W. F. FEARNLEY,
Recorder.

WILDFOWL COUNTS

As in previous years, members of the Society continued to do the Wildfowl counts on Lindley, Swinsty, Fewston and Grimwith Reservoirs.

Although all the reservoirs were full during the first three months, the numbers of wildfowl were very small. During August, September and October, water levels were rather low, particularly on Swinsty, and this may account for the small numbers counted in this period. With the filling up of the reservoirs in November came a considerable increase in numbers of ducks, particularly Pochard and Tufted ducks.

Details from the counts are as follows:

MALLARD An average of 20 per reservoir on January 7th. 90 on Lindley and 54 on Swinsty on February 24th. Numbers remained low until October 20th, when there were 86 on Fewston and 60 on Grimwith. Over 200 recorded on Lindley on November 24th and December 22nd and on Swinsty on December 15th.

Wildfowl Counts (continued)

TEAL	Very few recorded until March 24th, when there were 26 on Lindley. Small numbers recorded during the rest of the year, with a maximum of about 60 on Lindley on December 22nd.
WIGEON	Small numbers recorded on various dates. 20 on Grimwith on January 7th. 30 on Fewston on February 24th. 45 on Swinsty on December 22nd.
PINTAIL	One drake recorded on Lindley on the following dates: February 24th, November 24th, December 22nd.
SHOVELER	Not recorded during the year.
SCAUP	4 seen on Fewston on August 25th.
TUFTED DUCK	22 seen on Fewston on January 7th, and 22 on Lindley on August 25th. Recorded on most dates in small numbers increasing in November, and 65 recorded for Swinsty on December 15th.
POCHARD	15 seen on Fewston on January 7th. 23 on Fewston on October 20th. Influx in November with 70 on Swinsty on the 24th, and increased to 110 by December 22nd.
GOLDEN-EYE	Recorded January to March, and then absent until November. 33 seen on Fewston on January 20th. 13 on Fewston on December 15th.
GOOSANDER	Single bird recorded on Swinsty on January 7th. 6 drakes and 2 ducks were seen on the same reservoir on February 24th.
CANADA GOOSE	Usually seen on either Fewston or Swinsty. Maximum number was 69 on Fewston on August 25th. 41 recorded on the same reservoir on November 24th and December 15th. 4 were seen on Grimwith on March 3rd.
WHOOPEE SWAN	2 adults were seen on Fewston on December 27th and 11 adults and 2 juveniles were seen on Grimwith on December 22nd.

Thanks are due to the following observers for supplying details for the above records:-

Mr. C. G. Booth	Miss E. A. W. Gill
Dr. K. C. Crosbie	Mr. R. C. Parkinson
Mr. and Mrs. A. C. M. Duncan	Mrs. O. M. Pennock
Mr. W. F. Fearnley	Dr. R. W. Proctor
Miss M. R. Sanderson (Harrogate)	Mr. H. J. Williamson
Mr. R. Spencer (Threshfield)	

E. S. SKINNER.

N I G H T J A R

In 1957 the British Trust for Ornithology sponsored an Inquiry into the present status of the Nightjar, and the following records were obtained for the Wharfedale area. It is not thought that Nightjars are not nesting in other parts of the area, as it could not all be covered properly, due to the late hour of the day when the birds give evidence of their presence.

Birds were located in three areas, and were absent in one area where they were previously reported.

Site 1.

At 10.15 p.m. on June 21st, two birds were heard "churring", one male was seen. On 22nd June, a nest with 2 eggs was found in deep bracken.

Site 2.

At 10.10 p.m. on 19th June, two birds were heard "churring". On 6th July a nest containing two young, estimated at about 4 days old, was found in bracken. The male bird was found roosting on a piece of wood on the ground about 50 yards away. It is feared that this nest came to grief, as bracken cutters had cleared the area by 13th July.

Also on 13th July, a male was flushed in the same area with two young which were able to fly quite well.

Site 3.

A single bird was heard at 10.20 p.m. on 24th June. No further observations were made in this area.

Site 4. (Burley Moor)

No birds were heard in this area.

E. S. SKINNER.

IRRUPTION OF BLUE TITS

About the middle of September, 1957, a remarkable movement of Blue Tits (*Parus caeruleus*) began in South East England. The movement has been noted in many coastal districts and some inland ones, but particularly in East Anglia, along the South Coast, in the Irish Sea Area, Cheshire and Lancashire.

Among the birds trapped at Observatories individuals of Continental races have been identified, but the irruption is to some extent observed by the considerable dispersal of apparently local Tits during August and early September. It is suggested that at least some of the birds are of Central European Origin.

The trapping totals for our Society do not indicate any substantial increase during October, November and December. In 1956 the total was 70 and in 1957, 78. But at one trapping station there was an unusual increase in the middle of March. In 1955 three were ringed and two in 1956, but in 1957, 39 were caught and two found dead. These dead ones were examined by Alfred Hazelwood who reported:-

Irruption of Blue Tits (continued)
(Alfred Hazelwood's report)

"I must say I was delighted to see this pair of titmice for a rather odd reason. I had a similar bird from Blackburn which occurred in circumstances very similar to those you describe, but in October, 1955. A local enthusiast was ringing the passing flocks in his garden and subsequently found one dead. It was a first winter bird and of a remarkable blue-grey colour which I could not place. One bird is not a lot to go on and it has more or less remained on the shelf until your pair arrived. The ♀, also a first winter bird exactly matches the Blackburn example and the fully adult ♂ cannot be matched by anything from a fairly extensive series which includes birds from all over England, from Wales and Scotland as well as a small series from Germany. The three skins stand apart quite clearly in the way the mantle is more blue than green, the yellow of the underparts is degraded and the white nuchal spot almost obliterated by the blue wash".

An investigation is being carried out by Pettet and Sharrock of Southampton University and an exchange of information is proceeding.

C. G. BOOTH.

SAND MARTIN FLEA INVESTIGATION

Throughout Great Britain only one subspecies of Sand Martin is recognised - *Riparia r. Riparia* (L).

It is generally agreed that parasites evolve at a slower rate than their hosts because their environment is far more stable than that of their hosts.

In Great Britain the Sand Martin Flea, (*Ceratophyllus styx*) can be found in two forms occupying the south and the north of the area with an overlap area in Gloucester, Oxford, Hants, Norfolk and Wilts.

It appears therefore that there are two populations of Sand Martin, at least the "flea evidence" based on 38 spot records suggests this. Far more evidence is needed. In September 1957, nests from the Sand Martin Colony at Escroft were sent to R. S. George for examination. There were 47 male and 47 female specimens of the typical northern form of the flea. One of the specimens was not typical in the male genitalia - either extreme individual variation or a slight deformity. It has been sent to the British Museum (Natural History) for retention in the collections.

C. G. BOOTH.

Geological Section (continued)

Even assuming that the nearest source did supply the stone caution is necessary as it may have been transported from some other place higher up the valley by the river perhaps or during the ice-age. On the subject of the source of the stone the writer has noticed in journeys in the valley, areas newly cleared of trees which almost always seem to be plentifully strewn with boulders while adjoining land used as pasture is quite clear. The idea at once arises that the walls originated, in part at any rate, as part of the process of clearing the land for agricultural use. Whether or not this is a well established fact, the possibility does enhance the need for caution before applying the geology of the walls to the geology of the ground on which they are built.

P.D. LAMMING.
Recorder.
